

# THE PILLARS

Summer 2021



## "TAILS" OF SUCCESS



*The mission of Houston Baptist University  
is to provide a learning experience that instills in students  
a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence  
as a result of our central confession, "Jesus Christ is Lord."*

**H**BU is a transformative place. As the years go by, we hear more and more testimonies from students and alumni as to how the University has changed their lives. All kinds of factors are involved in these stories of transformation—the Christian commitment of HBU, the friendships begun and nurtured here, the opportunity for close relationships with faculty and staff, memorable experiences in student life, discovering your interests, passions, and calling, and also finding your future spouse.

All of these factors contribute richly to the University's power to change a life for the good.

These basic commitments of HBU grow more significant and distinctive, it is sad to note, as our culture continues to become more secular.

We offer experiences here that are increasingly in short supply. Whereas some universities use their orientation programs to separate students from their families, churches, moral traditions, and upbringing, we are committed to reinforcing the Christian faith and the values that families traditionally teach. Many universities now promote a "cancel culture" that finds only fault with the past—tragically forgetting that all of us are flawed human beings in need of forgiveness. HBU, however, promotes not only learning about history

but learning from history, having both the courage to face and critique what's gone before us and the humility to learn from it without assuming that the world starts over with us.

Many universities now greatly limit free speech, the role of faith, and the open exchange of ideas. HBU, on the other hand, is committed to the truth—to pursuing it and learning it through tolerant discussion and listening to one another. We are committed to humble and courageous transparency, believing that freedom of expression and the interchange of ideas can enable all of us to learn, grow, and become better individuals, family members, and citizens of our communities and the kingdom of God.

When our alumni get together, it is always inspiring to hear their stories, just as you will be inspired by reading accounts of changed lives in this edition of *The Pillars*. It's not surprising that so much transformation happens at HBU, because it is one of those special places where the power of a cutting-edge education and the power of the gospel come together in a unique synergy to change lives for the good.



Dr. Robert Sloan  
HBU President

*Dr. Robert Sloan became president of HBU in 2006. Under his leadership, the University has grown in enrollment and now offers 70 undergraduate, 41 master's, and three doctoral programs. Notably, he led the adoption and pursuit of the Ten Pillars Vision, began the Honors College, reinstated NCAA Division I sports, and paved the way for new academic offerings including the doctorate programs and the Engineering programs. During Dr. Sloan's tenure, the University opened the Morris Cultural Arts Center, University Academic Center, the Hodo Residence College, Husky Stadium, and The Pillars at HBU development. His leadership and contributions, as well as those of First Lady Sue Sloan, are extensive and greatly treasured.*

  @DrRobertBSloan

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**EDITOR'S LETTER**



Luke records how the early church came together and “reported everything God had done through them (Acts 14:27).”<sup>1</sup> Similarly and quarterly, it is our privilege through the **Pillars** to report to you all that God is doing at HBU – and as each person shares their stories, we know the secret is that God is at work.

I have listened carefully to over 200 people who have filmed our HBU podcast, **Think About It**, with me. God is at work transforming and enriching the lives of men and women through HBU. The HBU distinctive is heartwarming to report. Students, independent of one another, tell

me the same thing: Faculty, staff, and coaches **care** about me. In our socially isolated, technologically driven age, this is a notable distinction. I learned a long time ago in ministry – people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care! HBU cares about every single student! Amazon cannot ship **care** to you.

I often hear, too, HBU is a **family**. Could there be any more endearing term than the single word **family**? I have found in multiple decades of speaking to youth; nothing moves young people emotionally like talking on the family. The family, as God designed, is so core to our being. HBU faculty recognize that every student is created in God’s image, and each has a divine plan designed for their lives. We are stewards before God to nurture His dream and destiny for each student.

You will be inspired by the good news of the changed lives as reported in this issue. And, there is a lot of good news to write at Houston Baptist University!

Dr. Jerry Johnston  
[jrjohnston@hbu.edu](mailto:jrjohnston@hbu.edu)



<sup>1</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Ac 14:27). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.



Kiza serves as HBU's Husky mascot. She demonstrates there are many pathways to success through HBU!

# HBU Sets Students up for Success

## Educationally, Spiritually, Vocationally

Time in college often serves as a transition between adolescence and adulthood. Students discover what they want to do and who they want to be. HBU students don't have to make these determinations alone.

Student Success Center staff members help guide students as they navigate classes, majors, and academic paths. The Spiritual Life Office helps equip students through spiritual education and discipleship programs. Faculty members guide learners as they build knowledge in preparation for career

and postgraduate pursuits. Student clubs, organizations and athletics programs give students peer support and growth opportunities. And the Office of Career and Calling connects students and alumni to internships and jobs.

College degrees correlate with higher earning power, career satisfaction, and career options.

HBU's unique approach addresses the mind and spirit, the social and developmental needs of students, and the career readiness of graduates. It's HBU's commitment to ensure students are set up for success.



# Michael Basquez

*Psychology major & Studio Art minor*

I grew up in Spring, Texas and graduated from Spring High School in 2017. My parents and older sister have always encouraged me to be myself and to work hard for what I believe in. They have helped raise me into someone who loves to serve and help others.

My goal is to obtain my Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and work with children and adolescents on achieving their life goals and living with mental illness while living up to their full potential.

When looking at colleges, I wanted a school that I believed had the best education and also was the most affordable. HBU offered me a scholarship that not many schools offer. After attending the Gen1 Summer Bridge, I met so many amazing faculty and staff that welcomed me

and made me feel at home. It was something that I had never experienced before and instantly fell in love with the community aspect of HBU. Wonderful professors and mentors helped me transition into HBU and be successful.

I serve as the Student Government Association President where I work to serve the student body by making their voice heard on campus. I served as the First-Year Experience Intern where I worked closely with planning Welcome Days, hiring and training the Peer Mentor team, and overseeing the Freshman Council. Over the summer I was a mentor for the Summer Launch program. I am also a part of the Student Foundation, an officer for the Hispanic Student Organization and the Christians for Israel Association. I am also on various student and

faculty/staff committees. Aside from leadership, I work part-time in the University Bookstore and in the Academic Success Center for Tutoring in Psychology, Art, English, and History courses.

God has given me the amazing opportunity of serving in so many ways and has been my guide throughout my college journey. It is good to know that God always has a plan for me and is being revealed to me every day. My faith has been the foundation of who I have become throughout my college experience. Being able to pour back into a campus that poured into me is something so amazing; God has used HBU as a place for spiritual development and Christian community.

I have been blessed with many opportunities and

challenges at HBU that have helped shape who I am today as a graduating senior. I've learned that failure doesn't mean the end, but rather it means an opportunity for growth toward bettering yourself and learning new ways to be successful. If there is one thing I learned throughout my time at HBU it's that being adaptable is key. Whether it was beginning my freshman year with a hurricane, or ending my senior year in a pandemic, I know that God was there with and me brought me all the way. He will be there as I continue on after undergrad. I never thought I would have been challenged and encouraged to grow in many areas such as professionally, academically, in leadership, and spiritually. HBU has been a place that has changed my life.

# Stephanie Duke

MEd '05

**A**t 45 years old in a second career, I can with certainty say I am exactly where I am meant to be. Originally from Tomball, graduating high school in 1994 before graduating from the University of Oklahoma, one would think I had no idea what I wanted to do by looking at my journey. Trying to emulate my grandfather who was a geologist with Conoco, I started out as a geology major. But I quickly realized I unfortunately could not distinguish between different types of rocks – that wasn't for me. I changed to biochemistry thinking that I wanted to go to medical school. The summer I was scheduled to take the MCAT, I realized that was not what I wanted to do. I loved my philosophy classes, so I ended up changing plans at the last minute and graduating with a philosophy degree.

In hindsight, I realize the medical piece and the philosophy side too were always about wanting to learn more to help people. I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do, and I moved to Colorado. I took a job teaching at a juvenile justice facility, which was also connected with a residential treatment program, and started a Master's in Education in Methodology and Curriculum with the

University of Northern Colorado. I realized there's a lot more out there than I had been exposed to and there were a lot of people who needed more efficient systems of support.

I like interpreting data and figuring out how to help teachers help kids in the classroom. I came back to Texas and began working as a teacher in CyFair ISD while I completed a supplemental educational diagnostician and master's degree program. I went to HBU for the Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction. What I liked about the program was the professors and cohort were very diverse with a wide range of background experiences. Everyone brought something unique to the table and then we were able to collaborate and share our skills.

Over my 14-year career in education, I worked as a classroom teacher, educational diagnostician, assisted with RTI programs (Response to Intervention), dyslexia programs, early childhood programs, and special education assessments, all in the hope to better serve and meet the needs of students. I thought I was a secondary person but at the end of my 14 years in education, I went back in the

classroom before going to law school and taught third grade. It was one of my best years in education. All of my experiences have built upon each other.

I saw there was a need especially to help those in special education make the transition after high school to become autonomous and independent and have the skills to advocate for themselves. Whether it's higher education or employment, I began to think beyond K-12. To be even more effective in advocating for the needs of the disability community, I decided to earn a law degree at Thurgood Marshall School of Law. I knew I wanted to stay in public service and felt like that would give me a more diverse experience and exposure to cultural and diversity issues.

I graduated with a JD and work as an Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow at Disability Rights Texas. Disability Rights Texas is the protection and advocacy agency for the state of Texas. Disability Rights Texas works to ensure individuals with disabilities are treated with respect and dignity and afforded equitable opportunities. My work now focuses on making sure the disability community has equitable opportunities throughout

disasters in preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. With disasters like Harvey and situations like COVID-19, it's important we provide the needed assistance and resources for every individual in our community.

Disasters, unfortunately, are not going away. While disasters themselves do not discriminate, the inequalities which already exist are just exacerbated. Thus, secondary issues to the safety and well-being of disaster survivors are encountered in disaster lawyering. Substantive issues in employment, housing, education, and healthcare can all be critical after a disaster. While there are systemic issues that require systemic change, helping one client makes a substantial impact.

Even though I'm in a different field than education now, my experiences and background make me a better attorney.

For students who are planning a career, I advise them to keep an open mind. You never know what's around the corner or how your experiences will fit in and be beneficial.

*EJW page:* <https://www.equaljusticeworks.org/fellows/stephanie-duke-2/>

# Vincent Nguyen

*Cinematic Arts major*

I was born in Guelph, which is a small city in Ontario, Canada, and I was raised in Houston and attended John Foster Dulles High School. I live with both of my parents and I have an older brother who is a neurosurgeon. My family is very supportive of my decisions. They've helped me get to where I am today, and I am very grateful for that.

My career goal in life is to either become a director or a professional video editor. My personal goals in life are to share my faith with others, give back to my parents, and to have a healthy family.

When searching for colleges, I was looking for a small Christian college. From many offers that I've received, Houston Baptist University looked to be the perfect college for me. I was born with an autoinflammatory disease with a periodic fever, so doctors said that I wouldn't be able to graduate high school. I graduated high school with a 3.7 GPA, but then doctors said that I wouldn't be able to attend and make it through college. Here I am, nearly done with my second year. In overcoming that challenge and attending college, I found out who I truly was as a person.

Something that has surprised me about college is all the amazing and genuine friendships that I have made so far. Friends are like family to me, and HBU has helped me make memorable friendships. I am currently a Commuter Assistant, and next year, I will be a Resident Assistant. I am also involved with Young Life and I am the Historian for the Table Tennis Club here at HBU.

Faith has a very important role in my life. God has our life planned out for us, and all we have to do is take His hand and let Him guide us in the right direction. Whenever I have any problems going on, I always pray to God for guidance and healing.

There are ups and downs in my journey to success, but there is an end. There are relieving moments and scary moments throughout my journey to success. Everything happens for a reason, so instead of giving up, we have to take steps forward. HBU is an amazing university. It has helped me find genuine and lasting friendships, it has helped me discover myself, and it has helped grow my faith.

# Quincy Collins

'05



I grew up on the southwest side of Houston and attended Sharpstown High School. During my senior year, the HBU Jazz Band performed at my high school during college recruiting day! After hearing their amazing performance, I knew HBU was the school for me. HBU helped me understand more about Christianity and provided me the tools to strengthen my relationship with Jesus Christ. Music Performance was my first major as an undergrad. I had a goal to go on tour and play with various bands all over the country. I started organizing musical events and making connections to make this goal a reality.

During my time as a student, I created an event called "Praise Jubilee." This concert was held during convocation and was opened to students, faculty and staff. Organizing this event over several years allowed me the great opportunity to share my passion for music and the message of Christ with the HBU family and the city of Houston.

Because of HBU's dual degree program, I selected Business Finance as a second major. I quickly realized that financial planning, sales, and anything that had to do with finance was more than a second major; it was also my second passion. Mr. Richard Parker, the CFO of HBU at the time, became my mentor. He scheduled weekly

meetings with me to discuss my progress and my future plans. For one hour each week, we discussed anything and everything that was on my mind. These chats with Mr. Parker became an invaluable contribution to my self-evolution as a young man headed into the real world. I was young and extremely ambitious, looking for guidance on what to do next in life, and he provided just that. Mr. Parker was the big brother I needed, and his support will forever be cherished and honored.

Also, during my time at HBU, I met Martinique "Nikki" Bowman Collins, who has been my devoted wife for 17 years. Shortly after we graduated together in 2005, I worked as a financial analyst and eventually transitioned to the telecommunications industry, where I have enjoyed working for more than 10 years. I am proud of the life that Nikki and I have built together with our talented and intelligent children, Quincy II, 12, and Sydney, 7.

I have always been active in my church, and about seven years ago, a church member's home caught on fire and destroyed everything she owned. Members of the congregation all scrambled to collect the things she was desperately in need of, such as household items, clothing, and a place to live. I came up with the idea to ask all of my musician friends if they would help me

provide her family with food. We collected nearly \$800, purchased food and other critical items, and delivered them to her family. That was a turning point in my life. It was the moment I realized we have so much to be thankful for, and we owe it to our community to give back. It was at that point we decided to collect donations and provide food to families in need every year. I had discussions with community leaders and police officers in Fort Bend County and learned that there are so many kids who are food insecure and do not have access to adequate meals outside of school. That's when my mission became clear – we need to feed kids and their families during the Thanksgiving holiday! We came up with the idea of delivering a week of groceries to families in need. That mission is what I now call Families Helping Families in Houston, a nonprofit organization that has evolved into something greater and more impactful than I could have ever imagined.

During our second year of operation, we delivered groceries to 20 families. Because my family and I live in Fort Bend County, we asked Fort Bend ISD school counselors and police officers to identify families in need. Building on our success, we desire to make a larger impact each year by collaborating with additional school districts in Houston

and the surrounding areas.

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to socially distance, our delivery model has adjusted to a drive-through pick-up event. In 2020, the pick-up location was on the Smart Financial Centre parking lot, and volunteers loaded cars with groceries. We were able to provide groceries to 300 families last year. In 2021, our goal is to serve 3,000 families. Without volunteers, donors, and my FHF team, none of this would be possible. I am beyond grateful for their support.

One of my favorite memories as a kid was when my grandparents would take me to feed the homeless in downtown Houston. During the cold winter months, they would make homemade beef stew and pass it out to people on the street. My grandparents are the reason why I do what I do. With limited money and resources, they instilled in me the importance of giving back, not by their words, but by their actions. I saw firsthand the true meaning of doing Jesus' work. I take their priceless teachings and use them to build a foundation and legacy for my children. We are beyond blessed and have much to offer those of all faiths, races, and cultures.

Please visit [fhfhouston.com](http://fhfhouston.com) to learn more, to donate, or to volunteer.

# Allison Klinge

*Legal Studies major and Spanish minor*



I grew up in Katy, Texas and I graduated from Classical Conversations (a homeschool co-op) in 2018. I also took dual credit courses at The HBU Academy and The Saint Constantine School.

I have a really amazing family. My brother Dylan will actually be attending HBU as a freshmen next year, so I'm super excited for him to be here. My parents are wonderful, supportive people.

I am studying law to work as a lawyer for an organization that helps victims of human trafficking. My dream job is to work as general counsel for International Justice Mission. After a long law career, I'd love to either run for a local office, or go back to school and get a doctorate in English or philosophy.

When deciding where to go for my college experience, I was looking for an institution in which I could have a classical education with lots of discussions, and a strong Christian community, both of which I've been able to find at HBU. The education through great texts that I've been able to receive through the Honors College at HBU is unlike any other program I considered elsewhere.

I learned pretty quickly that attending HBU didn't mean I could stop actively pursuing Christ. Once I got into Kaleo Discipleship, met my mentor Josie, found an amazing church community in Houston, and developed relationships with strong Christian friends, I began to grow in my faith again.

As a college student, I've been really surprised by all the opportunities I've had here. The summer of my freshmen year, I traveled to Spain for a month to study Spanish for my minor. The entire experience feels so surreal to me; I never imagined that I would have that kind of opportunity in my undergrad, and especially not as a freshman! Since then, I've had the opportunity to travel to Israel with Passages, attend amazing networking events, and intern for Texas Right to Life, all because of opportunities and connections I've had through HBU.

I am involved with Residence life. I've been an RA on campus for two years, and I will be coming back next fall for a third. I am involved with Passages through HBU. I have been to Israel, I work as a brand ambassador for Passages at HBU, and I've been hired to be a fellow with Passages to return to Israel (pending placement once they resume trips). I am an Honors College scholar, finishing up my third and final year of Honors. And finally, I am involved with Kaleo Discipleship.

During this time in my life, there are three things that have been most important to me: my relationship with God, of course, and how it continues to develop during my time at HBU; my time in academia and the opportunities I have had to read and discuss great works of literature; and of course, the strong friendships that I've been able to develop, which I believe will last me a lifetime.

# Jennifer Torres

'18

I graduated from HBU with a bachelor's degree in Medical Humanities. I was born and raised in the Houston area and graduated from L.V. Hightower Highschool, located in Missouri City. My early dream was to become a doctor. When I was looking for a college, I remember my main priority was finding a school that provided me with great support and encouraged my faith. I felt and still feel that the Lord should be present in everything I do, which is why HBU was the perfect school for me. It also came with the benefit of being close to home and it being a small community. HBU also had a great biology program, which is the major I started off with during my freshman year of college. During that time, I realized that my calling was not to be a doctor, but I felt that the Lord needed me elsewhere. After praying about what I needed to do and what path to take, along came Medical Humanities. It was a new major during my sophomore year, and I became one of the first students to select it as my degree.

During my time at HBU, I worked as a resident assistant and in the Bradshaw Fitness Center. My two jobs opened many doors for me that guided me to where I am now. I was able to participate as a TRIO student, allowing me to have the strong academic support that I needed at the time. Without the support of my professors, advisors, and success coaches at HBU, I can honestly say that I

may not have been able to get through the hurdle of an undergraduate degree. My TRIO academic advisor guided me through job interviews, resume edits, and graduate school research. He was able to fully prepare me for my future outside of HBU. All the professors I had during this time also guided me into the direction that I needed to follow and always provided me with feedback to help me succeed.

After going with HBU Career and Calling to the Children's Assessment Center to tour around and learn about their services, I was able to find a job there after I graduated. I worked for the CAC for a year until I realized that my calling was to become a clinical social worker. I attended the University of Houston and earned my Master of Social Work (MSW). I intern at Texas Children's Hospital Meyer Center for Developmental Pediatrics and Autism Center.

My parents have been my biggest supporters, along with my two sisters. Success to me means being able to give my parents back everything they gave me and listening to the Lord. I believed I had a set plan for my life when I started HBU, but little did I know that God had something else in store for me. I can look back through all the trials and tribulations I went through and know that I overcame everything. I can genuinely say the Lord guided me to where I needed to be in life, which is where I am now.





# Devonyae Pearson

*Marketing major and Psychology minor*

I am a Dallas native and went to West Mesquite High School. I plan to pursue a career in marketing and sales.

When I first began my college search, I thought I wanted a big college with lots of people around. When I got accepted to HBU, I liked the idea of a smaller university; it made me feel a lot safer. I liked the idea of being seen and known because of the smaller campus, which could lead to a much more intentional educational experience.

It was a bit of a challenge searching for a university because I did not have many family members who have gone through this same process. I was able to do some searching and make the decision to attend HBU with the help of family and friends. Once I got to HBU, I had to figure out my place here. Even though it is a small campus, you still have to step out of your comfort zone and find the campus activities that best suit you. Once I did that, it made life here a lot easier.

As a student, I've been in the HBU Honors College. I have been involved on campus as a Resident Assistant, the VP of Records for the Student Government Association,

and an Executive Member of the Student Programming Board. I have also helped the Admissions department by being a Summer GO Leader and a CHAT Team Lead.

I really appreciate the supervisors that I have been able to work with at HBU, namely the staff in Residence Life and the Student Involvement Department. They have been very influential to my time here and have really pushed me to be the best version of myself. They have given me great opportunities and challenges to really grow as a student and as an individual. I also love that I attended a university that encouraged me to think about my faith. My relationship with God has really been strengthened by this experience and it has forced me to dive deeper into how I want my life to glorify Him.

My journey to success has been very educational. Every moment leading up to my graduation has taught me something about myself that I never knew, and taught me something about the world that I never knew. The main thing I wanted out of a college was to experience life. Everything that I have been through and accomplished here at HBU has helped me to do just that.

# Dr. Keith Newman

'86

I grew up in Houston and graduated from Northbrook High School in Spring Branch ISD. I went to HBU, and then after my freshman year of college, I joined the Houston Police Department. After a few years, I returned to HBU and double-majored in History and Christianity. I graduated in 1986. My wife, Carolyn, also graduated from HBU.

I knew I wanted the integration of faith and learning for my higher education experience and HBU offered that to me. It also served me well as a commuter student. I found the faculty to be caring and concerned about my educational pursuits and for me as a person. I have fond memories of Drs. Collins, Boyd, Tucker, Taylor, and others who invested in me. Most of my journey was as a working adult with a crazy schedule, but I found HBU to be a place that was pursuing excellence and encouraging my growth academically as well as spiritually. I still have great memories of chapels and convocations and I have

never had anything but gratitude for HBU.

Since my start as a Husky, I've had three careers: nine years with the City of Houston PD in the radio, patrol, juvenile, and homicide divisions; 17 years as a pastor in the Church of the Nazarene; and 17 years in Christ-centered education. Assignments included Vice President for University Relations at Mount Vernon Nazarene University and Chancellor for Indiana Wesleyan University – Marian, prior to my current assignment at Southern Nazarene University (SNU).

After earning my bachelor's, I eventually went on to earn a master's from Southern Nazarene University and a Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership from Spalding University. I was elected as the 15th president of SNU in March 2017 and assumed the office in August 2017. Just outside of Oklahoma City in Bethany, SNU has a rich, 122-year history of Christian higher education. SNU offers 45 degrees on the residential campus and a Professional

and Graduate Studies program with on-campus and online options. SNU serves 2,200 students.

Carolyn and I have been married for almost 39 years and we have two married children, Andy and Alana, as well as two grandchildren, Avery and Baylin. My wife and I were first-generation college students; our children have both graduated from Christ-centered universities and also earned master's degrees. We've been privileged to live in a number of states (Texas, Arkansas, California, Ohio, Indiana, and now Oklahoma), and I've traveled to all 50 states and 27 countries.

In 2018, I published "LiveLast" based on the words of Jesus in Mark 9:35. The book shares the message that true success comes through serving others. Jesus defined it for the disciples and for us in Mark 9:35 when he instructed us to choose last place and put others first. It was countercultural then and now. At SNU, we like to call it "LiveLast leadership."

If success is service, and I believe it is, then any success I have experienced has been the fruit of what was modeled for me by my mother, by people I went to church with, by professors and staff members, and by the colleagues I have been blessed to serve with over the years. As a first-generation college student who grew up as the oldest child in a single-parent family, I never dreamed that I would have the opportunities afforded me. Truly it has been an Ephesians 3:20 kind of life for me. I am grateful!

I am very thankful for the way HBU has maintained its commitment to a historic mission of providing a Christ-centered educational experience. I was privileged to serve with HBU President Emeritus Dr. Edward Hodo on a board and loved his wisdom and example. Dr. Robert Sloan has helped take HBU to new heights and I am cheering the University on. Galatians 6:9 is my prayer for HBU!



## HBU Office of Career and Calling Connects Huskies with Work Opportunities

**G**raduation is an exciting time for students, but it can also bring about anxiety as young men and women contemplate what's next. Thankfully, there is a bridge at HBU that assists freshmen through alumni in their vocational journeys.

An HBU education serves as a launching pad for students as they prepare for job roles and graduate school. The HBU Office of Career and Calling is key for connecting students to the next steps in their journeys. In the office, students meet with the friendly faces of Aaron Swarts, Director, and Debra Bell, Assistant Director. True to the department's name, they help direct students and alumni toward confidence in themselves and in their callings.

The office offers online workshops, classes, panels, conferences, mock interview practice, resume-writing help, and more. Partnerships with Dress for Success and Career Gear help ensure students look and feel their best for every opportunity. While many business operations have changed post-pandemic, internships and jobs are still available.

Swarts and Bell have implemented Handshake, an online resource that hosts virtual career fairs with employers, a job searching function, appointment-setting, and resume feedback. They help students and alumni put their best foot forward through LinkedIn and via each networking opportunity.

Although students still meet with Swarts and Bell in person, they have often met virtually during the past year. They have helped students adapt to the changing job-search environment as well.

"For many years, I've said the core of what we do is 'connecting students with employers.' So instead of in-person networking or luncheons, we've had to pivot to a much more virtual approach," Swarts said. "The silver lining is that the new tools we're using are not going away, so we will continue to serve residential and online students, as well as alumni, using multiple methods."

The main message he conveys is that his office is ready to help. "Just like HBU students, we have continued to learn and grow in our roles in Career and Calling, and we always want to strive for new ways to connect with students. One initiative that we're continually improving upon is the idea of 'Career Services On Demand' – meaning we are here for students, but we also have added many of our resources online to access anytime. We love meeting with students and alumni, helping them navigate their time in and after college, and even helping them 'discover their calling'" Swarts said. "We look forward to serving students and alumni by connecting them with employers, whether that be in a virtual chat room or in McNair Hall!"

Visit [HBU.edu/Careerandcalling](https://www.hbu.edu/Careerandcalling) for more information.

## Alpha Kappa Alpha

**W**hen Jessica Ikoya came to HBU, she wanted to become involved. As a commuter student, she went out of her way to find her niche on campus. She joined the African Student Association, was a manager for the Elite Dance Team, and joined Order of Omega and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. "I've always had a good way of balancing my time; I know how to plan my classes," she said.

Ikoya majors in legal studies and psychology and is a student worker in the Graduate Admissions Office. Although becoming involved as a student was never a requirement, it was always a goal for Ikoya, and something in which she saw great value.

In January 2020, Ikoya was named president of the HBU chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, a traditionally African-American sorority that emphasizes service, scholarship, and sisterhood. She's overseen multiple projects including meal and clothing drives and distributions.

"A favorite activity was during Thanksgiving when we made boxes and went to houses and knocked on doors," Ikoya remembers. "The faces and emotions of the recipients were priceless. I never really saw myself becoming president but I'm glad I grew into it. It gave me more skills like being able to talk

in front of people and reaching out to people. I have to get in contact with speakers, to learn how to plan more, get acquainted with people on campus, and make business decisions. It made me step up more. It takes work to make events happen.

It's taught me to talk to people; engage, remember names and faces – you might need them and they might need you."

For other students who are contemplating activities on campus, Ikoya encourages them to dive in. "Some people are intimidated when they see all the organizations at the Student Org. Fair, but everyone's very welcoming," she said. "Go to whatever piques your interest."

Even as she has given of herself, Ikoya has gained much in return. "There were times where I felt like maybe I can't do this – I don't know if this is for me, but I have to push myself because I know what I'm capable of and I have to believe in myself and know I can do it. It takes a lot of inner strength and prayer to keep going in the process," she said. "It's been great to develop my people skills, my presentation, and confidence getting in front of people. Being part of something like this is an overwhelmingly good feeling."

Visit [HBU.edu/Studentinvolvement](https://www.hbu.edu/Studentinvolvement) for more information.

*Across dozens of student clubs and organizations, HBU learners find meaningful outlets learning, serving, and connecting with fellow students. Many students and alumni say their involvement is a highlight of their college experience.*



*"As a member of the American Red Cross, members help not only in the greater Houston community, but we help communities in other countries."*

**-Daisy Lopez**

## American Red Cross

**F**irst-generation student Daisy Lopez recalls why she initially chose HBU. "When I was looking for schools, I really liked HBU because of the smaller class sizes. I also enjoyed my time during the tour and meeting with the admissions counselors," she said. "Everyone was really kind to me and that stood out. It appealed to me that it is a Christian university because my faith is an important part of my life. I valued that HBU would allow me to grow in my faith."

Lopez, a biochemistry/molecular biology major, has been involved across campus in numerous ways, including as a TRIO intern; a member of Alpha Epsilon Delta, a pre-health professions organization; and a historian for Tri Beta, a biology honor society.

"I thought it was valuable because I've always really enjoyed being involved and helping others," she said. "Through these organizations, I was able to do that."

Since her freshman year, Lopez has been a member of the HBU chapter of the American Red Cross. Members of the organization participated in projects including smoke

alarm distributions, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, Attack Poverty, medical supply sorting through Project C.U.R.E., and more.

As president, Lopez organized four blood drives in coordination with the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Bank. She estimates the blood given in the drives can help save around 300 lives.

Her experience with the well-known organization will help her in her ultimate goal of becoming a doctor, Lopez said. "As a member of the American Red Cross, members help not only in the greater Houston community, but we help communities in other countries. These experiences allow us to gain more interaction with others and also provide us with more opportunities to be compassionate to people of many backgrounds," she said.

Being involved in extracurricular activities is all about preparing for life after college. Lopez said, "I think it's important to get involved on campus because you're able to gain, not only friendships, but leadership experience that you can't attain just from being in the classroom."



## Filipino Student Association

**B**efore she came to HBU, Lauren Kay De La Calzada saw her older brother, Ralph, involved at HBU and serving as president of the HBU chapter of the Filipino Student Association. Seeing the connections he made and the fun he had drew Lauren to the same role as president several years later.

"I saw that relationship between FSA and HBU Nursing created who he is today," De La Calzada, also a nursing major, said. "I wanted to be surrounded by a group of people who wanted the same things."

FSA exists to help students learn, share and grow. Their mission includes giving back to communities in The Philippines. The chapter has organized projects including a Christmas gift drive, the funding of WiFi to a community, and a school library drive. "It was great to see college students come together to make that happen," De La Calzada said.

Although the FSA hasn't conducted traditional events lately incorporating culture and dance, the organization hasn't let the restrictions of COVID stop them from making

the biggest impact possible. "Going into the time as president, it wasn't what I expected," De La Calzada said. "Usually the activities are set in stone, but we had to adjust and make new plans. I've grown in patience. There is a plan and God does move in different ways. He puts us in places we're meant to be in to further His Kingdom that way."

To other HBU students, De La Calzada said opportunities for involvement abound. "I think it's great to join an organization here on campus that's in line with what you're interested in and find a group of people who want to see you grow in whatever you want to grow in," she said. "You're here to get the degree, but you also want to find other things that help you grow as a person. It's super important to find that community. And if there is a group that isn't here yet, I highly encourage students to start something - you can make it happen and find the people. I don't always remember sitting in a class two years ago necessarily, but I remember ultimate frisbee, eating with friends, and laughing with them. I think these involvements are what I'll remember when I leave."

*"You're here to get the degree, but you also want to find other things that help you grow as a person."*

**-Lauren Kay De La Calzada**

# Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty Complex Construction Underway



As students move between classes, it's not unusual to see them looking down at their phones, catching up on texts and social media. Dr. Chris Hammons, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, hopes to make them look around with a new sense of wonder.

On March 2, HBU broke ground on the latest addition to its campus. The classroom building will be used to teach history, government, law, economics, and philosophy. The future complex is made possible by a leadership gift from one of the University's founding fathers, Dr. Stewart Morris Sr., and his family. Morris recently celebrated his 101st birthday. He is a veteran of the Second World War and helped start the University in the 1960s. American history was always a passion for Morris, his late wife, Joella, and their children, Carlotta, Lisa, and Stewart Jr. One of the classrooms attached to the main building will be dedicated to teaching economics and the principles of free enterprise, also important to the family.

Dr. Robert Sloan, HBU President, said the ideals the building will represent are especially necessary. "The first freedoms are so critical, not only to American culture, but are absolutely critical to a Christian university," he said.

Dr. Morris said, "It's important that our young people learn why our nation's founders created the government we have today. If you want to make it last, you have to understand where it came from and how it works."

Hammons hopes the new classroom building – modeled after Independence Hall in Philadelphia – will inspire a new generation of students to ask important questions. "What kind of people do we want to be? What kind of nation do we want to live in? These are foundational questions worth asking," said Hammons, who has taught at HBU for more than 20 years. "We see an increasing number of students who come to us without any real understanding of our nation's history or founding principles. They often have little interest in the democratic process."

The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty is dedicated to teaching HBU students and fellow Texans about the importance of our nation's history and founding principles. The Center offers student seminars, faculty lectures, and teacher workshops throughout the year. The Center has also taken students on class trips to Boston, Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, and the Alamo. Most events in the recent academic year were postponed due to COVID restrictions.

Dr. Morris was an early supporter of the Morris Family Center's mission and wanted to help create a place to house the Center's academic programs and events. The building will not only look like Independence Hall from the outside, but the first-floor rooms are modeled after the historic spaces where the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were drafted. Students will recreate historic moments in American history such as the debate over independence or the Constitutional Convention.

The new building is an extension of the Morris Family Center's mission. "We wanted to create an environment that would make students feel like they are right there, at the start of our nation, facing some difficult choices," Hammons said. He notes that the building is not a museum, but rather a "teaching theater" that will add a sense of time and place to classroom discussions and lectures. "Whether it's 1776 or 2021, the questions we face as a nation are largely the same. We can learn a great deal from the past," he said.

The impact of the new facility will extend beyond the HBU campus. Dr. Hammons said the Morris Family Center will continue with its teacher workshops and public lectures, but also plans to create curriculum for fifth-graders (the state mandates that they

study the American Revolution). "We have some great things planned for use of this building, and I can see Independence Hall at HBU becoming an educational field trip destination for school kids across the state," Hammons said.

Hammons says that college students today often question our nation's past and even the concept of patriotism. He hopes the new building will inspire them to reconsider some of the information they have been given.

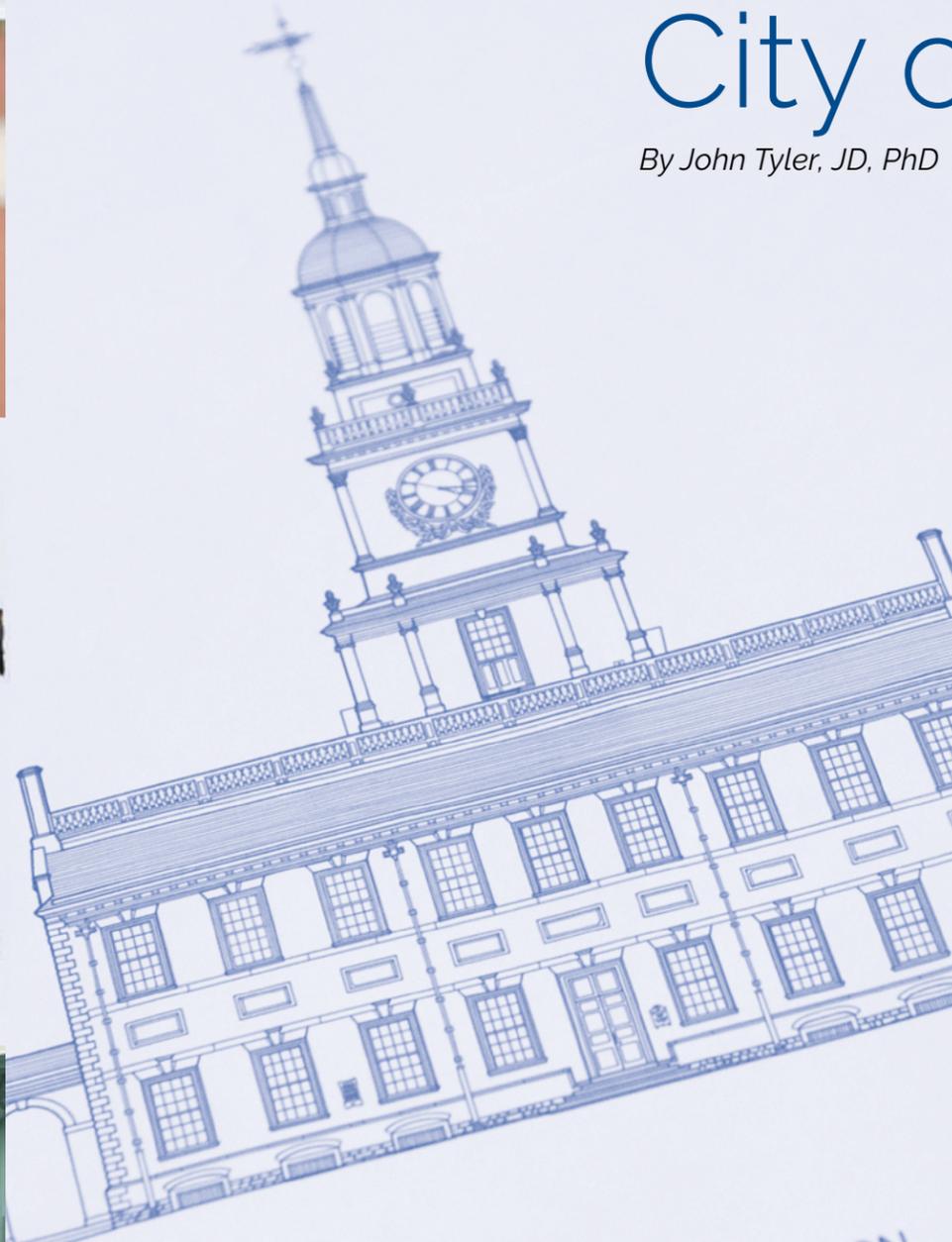
"Within the rooms of this building we will ask tough questions – questions about what it means to be a nation truly dedicated to liberty and justice for all and what role our Constitution plays in that effort," he said. Most importantly, he hopes students realize that our representative republic requires them to look up from their current distractions and pay close attention to what's going on around them. "Hopefully if they are still on their phones by the time they get to this new building," Hammons joked, "it will be to take a selfie for their friends and family with the 'Independence Hall' complex as the backdrop!"

*The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty Complex construction is underway! Give to help complete the project and to further the work of the Center at [HBULaw.org/Donate](https://HBULaw.org/Donate).*



# Building a Shining City on a Hill

By John Tyler, JD, PhD



**T**he Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty is dedicated to the "promotion of American Founding Principles, the Rule of Law, and the Preservation of Liberty." Our mission is to promote and preserve our nation's history and founding principles. Our new home will feature a main building modeled after Independence Hall and two adjoining classroom buildings. These facilities will recreate the physical environment in which our foundation documents were born, giving a new birth to our founding principles in the minds and hearts of our students. These unique facilities symbolize our commitment to three principles.

First, the Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty recognizes the existence and fundamental importance of natural law to our founding principles. Natural law maintains that human conduct is subject to eternal and unchanging moral laws.

These moral laws originate, not in human legislation, but in a divine lawgiver. These moral laws govern all people, at all times, and in all circumstances. Human happiness depends on obeying these moral laws and pursuing justice.

Our lives and liberties are given to us by our Creator. As such, no mortal may lay claim to own us, use us, infringe on our liberty, or harm us in any way without our consent. No government can take away our rights to life, to liberty, and to pursue our own destiny. These rights exist prior to government, not as a result of it. In the political realm, natural law prevents tyranny by protecting individual rights and limiting government power. In the legal realm, natural law prevents injustice by abolishing unjust laws.

Second, the Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty is committed to the establishment and preservation of sovereign and just laws. Our system of ordered liberty requires a

government of sovereign laws, not sovereign men. This means that rightly constituted laws must wield supremacy over political officials. Political officials are subject to the same laws as other citizens, and they are obligated to enforce the laws. They have no power to ignore the laws or suspend their enforcement.

Third, the Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty is committed to the establishment and preservation of liberty. Liberty is not a means to a higher political end. It is itself the highest political end, necessary for security and for pursuing the best and highest objects in life. The U.S. Constitution is the greatest charter of liberty in human history, and it adopts the wisdom of 24 centuries of success and failure in laws and government.

The founding generation established our Constitution, but no constitution can enforce itself. Every succeeding generation, therefore, has the duty of preserving and maintaining our Constitution. To fulfill this

duty, we must equip our students with a thorough understanding and appreciation of the Constitution's principles, including the sovereignty of law, a mixed constitution, the separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, and the protection of private property and individual liberties.

As we help our students develop their minds, we must also help them develop their hearts. Despotisms are common, but representative republics are rare, and they cannot endure without the political virtue of their citizens. We must therefore foster a love of justice and liberty in our students. We must encourage them to truly love their neighbors as themselves. This mission is only possible, of course, if we love the Lord our God with all our hearts and souls as well as our minds. We can then achieve our goals of building our shining city on a hill, establishing justice, and preserving the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.



"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

Matthew 5:14

# HBU Piper Professor

*Higher education provides a unique opportunity to shape the knowledge and wisdom of students for the trajectory of their lives. Professors carry out the noble occupation of preparing learners for careers and personal lives filled with purpose and success. Each year, the HBU Colleges and Schools select their Piper Professor Nominee. These individuals represent the very best in teaching and professional development in each college. Nominees are recognized for their effectiveness in the classroom, their work with students in advising and mentoring, their dedication to teaching, admiration and respect from their colleagues, scholarship in their field, and contributions to the University. Congratulations to the HBU 2020-2021 Piper Nominees!*

## Congratulations to HBU's 2020-2021 University Piper Professor Dr. Gregory Keiffer

**D**r. Gregory Keiffer has been named HBU's University Piper Professor for the 2020-2021 academic year. Dr. Keiffer, Assistant Professor of Management, joined the Archie W. Dunham College of Business faculty in 2017 and teaches in both graduate and undergraduate degree programs. He specializes in human resource development, organization development and change disciplines. Areas of teaching include compensation and benefits, staffing and performance management, training and development, organization development and change, and social media marketing. He greatly enjoyed leading groups of graduate business students on two international management experiences, one to the Czech Republic and Austria and the second to Costa Rica and Panama. His research interests encompass gamification, generational cohorts, employee engagement, and quantitative analytical methodologies, including propensity score analysis. Dr. Keiffer has published several journal articles and has delivered 15 academic conference presentations since 2016. Current research collaborations include evaluating the measurement invariance of quantitative survey responses between generational cohorts in the hospitality industry and developing analytical methods to ascertain partial measurement invariance when noninvariance is first found. Dr. Keiffer currently serves as the Interim Dean for the Dunham College of Business, supporting fellow faculty members in their work to advance the mission of the University. Before his



tenure at HBU, Dr. Keiffer enjoyed a 21-year corporate career in the marketing and advertising industry working with several of the premier brands in the world. Dr. Keiffer earned a BBA in management and computer information systems management from HBU, a MBA from HBU, and a PhD in human resource development with a specialization in organization development and change from The University of Texas at Tyler.

After two decades in a corporate career, Dr. Keiffer realized he could make a greater impact on young, future business leaders by teaching them in a college setting rather than developing them after they landed in a corporate setting. "It was risky for me to entertain leaving an established and safe corporate career. With the support of my wife and family, we made the sacrifices necessary for me to reinvent myself educationally through a doctoral program in the human resource development discipline. This discipline is concerned with enhancing organizational effectiveness through formal and informal initiatives at all levels of an organization, including the development of employees. The blend of corporate experiences, studies in an academic discipline concerned with developing employees, and parental perspective, allows me to offer students a unique worldview. My teaching goals are for students to realize they gained significant knowledge, had challenging opportunities for mindset growth, and had an educational experience with someone who truly cares about their personal journey."

# HBU Celebrates the 2020-2021 Piper Professor Nominees



## Dr. Jason Maston, *School of Christian Thought*

Dr. Jason Maston, Associate Professor of Theology, has been teaching at the university level for 10 years. He began his career in Scotland and joined the faculty at HBU in 2015. He has also been an invited lecturer in Australia. His primary teaching area is the New Testament. Recently, he has also ventured into theology and church history. In his classes, he strives to develop independent students who are capable of drawing from Scripture and church history to address contemporary questions. Dr. Maston's research focuses on the New Testament with particular interests in the

Second Temple Jewish context, the relationship of Judaism and Christianity, and Christology and anthropology. He has written or edited several books and his articles appear in some of the top international New Testament and theology journals. He has coedited the popular textbooks "Reading in Context" (published by Zondervan) that are used in classrooms across the US; one of which has been translated into Korean. He is on the editorial board of the journal, Religious Studies Review, and is associate editor for a 19-volume series on New Testament Theology to be published by Cambridge University Press.



## Dr. Joseph Pelletier, *College of Education and Behavioral Sciences*

Dr. Joseph Pelletier, Associate Professor of Psychology, began his teaching career at California Baptist University shortly after completing his doctorate. Due to his commitment to his students and involvement in countless organizations and events, he was a Professor of the Year finalist for three years in a row. Upon arriving at HBU, he immediately became involved with Student Success and Psi Chi, the national honor society for psychology. While at HBU, he has served as chair and committee member on dozens of thesis and dissertation committees in both the MAP and EdD programs. As a first-generation student, Dr. Pelletier is a member of TRIO and has been a speaker at organizational events. Also a member of Kaleo, Dr. Pelletier embraces the call of discipleship for both students and faculty. During his four years at HBU, he has published over a dozen articles and conference presentations including several collaborative projects with graduate students. Dr. Pelletier's recent research has

examined contemporary social issues including gun control, media violence, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Through his research, Dr. Pelletier brings an unapologetically Christian perspective to fields of study that are often hostile to such viewpoints. Additionally, Dr. Pelletier currently serves as Chair of the Department of Psychology and Interim Chair of the Counseling Department. Dr. Pelletier's teaching incorporates a strong Christian worldview while still being grounded in empirical science. He prides himself on bringing a diversity of perspectives into the classroom and encouraging students to think critically without being judgmental. Dr. Pelletier has been a Goolsby Professor Award finalist for the last two years. He views education as the lifelong pursuit of God's truth, a perspective that characterizes his teaching and interactions with students.



## Prof. Joshua Sikora, *School of Fine Arts*

Prof. Joshua Sikora, Associate Professor of Cinema and New Media Arts, joined HBU in 2013 as the founder and director of the Cinema & New Media Arts program, which has grown to now encompass five degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including the recently launched MFA in Screenwriting. Strategically building upon HBU's robust fine arts programs and liberal arts traditions, Professor Sikora's vision for the Cinema & New Media Arts curriculum has always been to immerse students in a rich heritage of art and storytelling, while pointing them toward groundbreaking new opportunities in multimedia creation. More than merely technical preparation for a job, he sees this as a way of fostering in students a deep understanding of creativity, communication, and collaboration—skills to be leveraged in any field students may find themselves in, especially as technology and business continue to evolve in the 21st century. In and out of the classroom, Dr. Sikora is dedicated to mentoring students not just in their craft or

career, but in an eternal pursuit of goodness, truth, and beauty. Committed to lifelong learning, Dr. Sikora models for his students a humility and passion to continually grow through his own artistic endeavors and scholarship. He has contributed as an editor and contributor to the Critical Companions to Contemporary Directors series published by Lexington Books, with a research focus on the work of Terrence Malick, George Lucas, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Hayao Miyazaki. Prior to joining HBU, he also founded a new media production company, through which he has helped independent filmmakers craft television series, web series, and feature films for the past 15 years. He most recently produced the award-winning short film, The Way That I Take (2020), written and directed by HBU colleague Chris Hartwell and featuring a crew of HBU Cinema & New Media Arts alumni.



### Dr. David Davis, *School of Humanities*

Dr. David Davis, Associate Professor of History, has taught European history at HBU since 2010. His instruction stretches across HBU's curriculum, from dual-credit courses in the Academy and seminars in the Honors College to graduate courses in the Master of Liberal Arts and the MA in History. He specializes in courses on the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the history of Britain. His research interests include early modern religious belief and practice, late medieval and early modern science, and the history of the book. Dr. Davis' Western Civilization surveys, along with his course on medieval science, are some of the most popular at HBU,

which is evidenced by his two Opal Goolsby Outstanding Teaching Award nominations. Along with serving on a variety of University committees, Dr. Davis is a member of the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, regularly participating in the Center's lectures and workshops series; he is a regular speaker at local classical schools and historical

organizations. Also, Dr. Davis is committed to the advancement of research in his field, as an essential component in developing his skills as a teacher. In 2017, the Royal Historical Society made Dr. Davis a lifetime fellow of their society, recognizing his contributions to the study of history, including his two academic books, *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures* and *From Icons to Idols*, and 20 peer-reviewed articles, chapters, and reviews in top-tier academic journals. His current project, *The Culture of Revelation in England, 1400-1700*, will be published by Oxford University Press in 2021. Finally, he is a contributor to *The Wall Street Journal*, *The American Conservative*, and *The New Criterion*, where he enjoys writing about a broad range of topics from Hieronymus Bosch and William Shakespeare, to the history of philosophy and his beloved state of Texas.



### Dr. Brenda Whaley, *College of Science and Engineering*

Dr. Brenda Whaley, Professor of Biology, is an alumna of HBU who returned to join the Biology Faculty in 1996. Dr. Whaley is a recipient of a \$10,000 grant from the Avantor Foundation which funds the undergraduate research of the students she mentors in *C. elegans*, a microscopic worm that lives in the soil in the Houston area. Her research students comment that she provides the right balance of guidance and autonomy which allows students to develop new lab skills and practice their own data analysis and critical thinking. Dr. Whaley has enjoyed serving the University in the role of the SACSCOC Administrative Assessment

Officer since 2010. More recently she chaired the QEP Development Committee which produced plans for HBU's upcoming Quality Enhancement Plan entitled "Mission Metacognition." In addition, Dr. Whaley works with her husband to lead a small group in her church. Her awards include HBU Faculty Woman of the Year, the HBU Opal Goolsby Excellence in Teaching Award, the Christa McAuliffe In Search of Excellence Award from the Houston West Chamber of Commerce, and Best of COSE Dean's Award. Dr. Whaley was named HBU's University Piper Professor in 2003 and 2004.

## The Mayfield Award

The Mayfield Award for Outstanding Staff member was named to honor Dr. Ray V. Mayfield, Sr. and Dr. Ray V. Mayfield, Jr., both of whom served the University in a variety of capacities. Each year, this award recognizes one male and one female staff member with outstanding job performance, service to the University and service to the community.



### Tiffany Charles *Campus Visit & Event Coordinator, Enrollment Management*

Tiffany Charles serves as the Campus Visit & Event Coordinator. At HBU since 2016, she is well-respected by her team, staff and students. Tiffany was described by a colleague as a person who "goes above and beyond with scheduling

and management of events for the Admissions team. She is constantly here and ready to spread the word about HBU."



### Michael Tims *Photographer, Innovation and Strategic Marketing*

Michael Tims serves as the University Photographer. He began working at HBU in 2001 and has worn many hats. He takes portraits for the University, photos for Admissions and other promotions, at events, for *The Pillars Magazine*, sports images, and so much more. He is often at evening and weekend events and has been seen "running between buildings to capture

multiple events." Additionally, he has been part of the "Color the Campus" project. As one colleague stated, "he has elevated HBU's branding."

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NOVEMBER 11, 2021  
HOUSTON BAPTIST UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

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SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD  
Esther Wong

PRESIDENT'S AWARD  
Colonel Newton Cole  
Barbara Taylor-Cox '81 & Ray Cox '81



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## HBU President Robert Sloan on Each SOE Honoree

From the founding, sustaining, and flourishing of Houston Baptist University, Dr. Stewart Morris and his family have been profoundly significant during the 60-plus years of HBU. **The Joella & Stewart Morris Foundation** is the recipient of the first Houston Baptist University Legacy Award for all the family has done and continues to do at HBU. Dr. Morris, your lasting influence, your determination, and your personal sacrifices for the University have been deep and wide and profound.

The Spirit of Excellence Award is one of the University's highest honors, and we present it to **Esther Wong**. She has inspired and encouraged us. Esther's mother, Julia Tan, left a legacy that she has continued through her own philanthropy, supporting so many Christian causes. We are grateful Esther chose HBU to honor her mother through the establishment of the Spahr-Tan Center for International Education.

What a privilege it is to present the President's Award to **Barbara Taylor-Cox '81 and Ray Cox '81**. When I think of all the things you have done for HBU, the list would be many pages long. All of us who know you, know of your wonderful and steadfast love for the University. And, all of us know you give God thanks for your deep and inspiring Christian witness.

It was such an honor to be able to award the President's Award to **Colonel Newt Cole** at an event in the fall. I have a deep respect for his ministry as an Air Force Chaplain, minister at Tin Cup, and mentor to young pastors. He had such an impact for the cause of Christ in this world and his legacy will continue at HBU through the Linda & Colonel Newton V. Cole Endowed Scholarship for Christian Thought. (Colonel Newton Cole: September 7, 1928 – March 30,

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To join us for the celebration, scan the QR code or visit [HBU.edu/Spiritofexcellence](http://HBU.edu/Spiritofexcellence)

# Mid-19th Century Dutch “Stations of the Cross” Paintings Given to the University by the Balkum Family

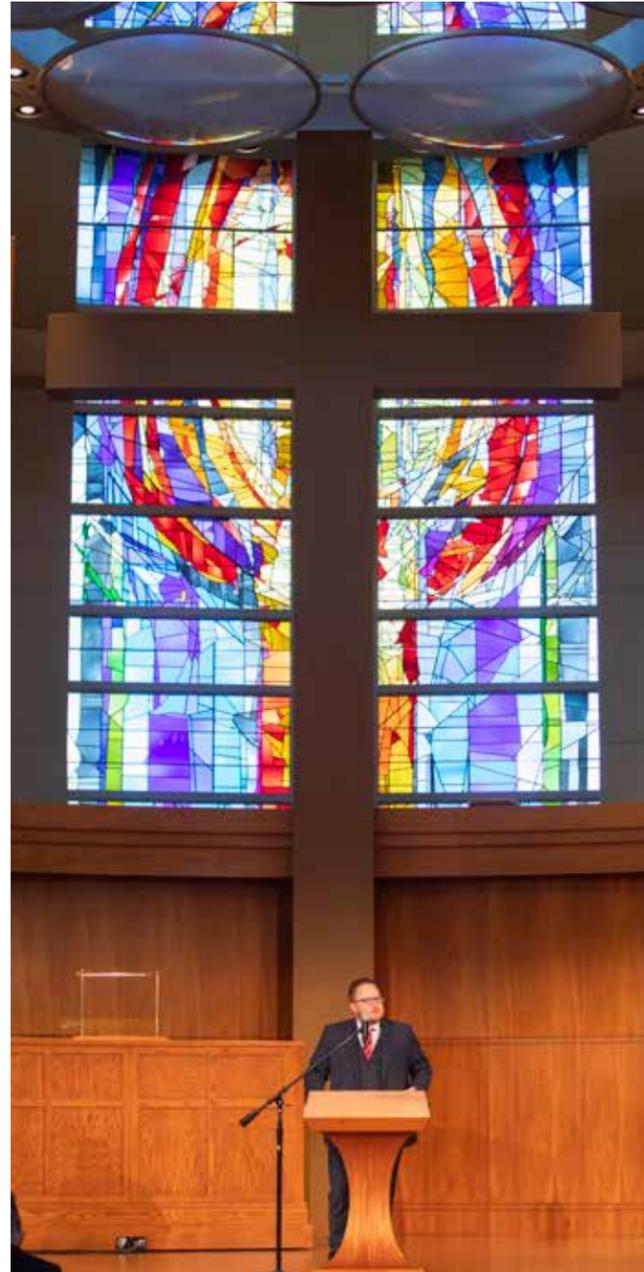
**H**BU was honored to receive 14 “Stations of the Cross” paintings donated by Kim '83 MA '87 and David '84 MA '06 Balkum. The 14 unique, mid-19th century Dutch paintings depict the Passion of Jesus Christ. The University hosted a dedication reception in March, with a viewing tour of the paintings, which are placed in the Hinton Center, Atwood I, and the University Academic Center.

The meaningful images are meant to inspire passersby with the saving message of Jesus Christ. For the Balkum family, HBU was a natural choice for the paintings' destination. Kim and David's children, Laurianne '10 and Lesleigh '13, and son-in-law, Josh Jones '13, all attended the University and cherish their experiences growing in faith with HBU professors, mentors, and friends.

David Balkum said, “The University's founding verse, John 14:6, focuses our faith on Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. At the heart of the 'Stations of the Cross' is the solemn and introspective reminder that there was a cost, paid by another, to open the way, the truth, and the life to us. Jesus' promise and prophecy, played out in these 14 distinct acts, is that, upon being lifted up, men will be drawn to Him, just as we are through these paintings. As we consider that cost, our hope is that this gift will continue to focus our hearts, souls, and minds on our Savior and His sacrifice.”

Colette Cross, HBU Director of Discipleship, said, “We look forward to actively integrating this gift by the Balkums within the spiritual life commitment on our campus.” Students will answer questions about the paintings as part of Community Life and Worship (CLW) credits.

“Each day as students, faculty, and staff walk through the Hinton Center, Atwood I, and the University Academic Center to their various business, education, Christianity, humanities and fine arts classes, and see these paintings, our prayer is they will serve as an important visual reminder for all to remember that they are loved more than they can ever imagine,” Cross said. “We hope they'll think of what it truly means to put into action Luke 9:23: 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross daily, and follow me.' By having these 14 paintings available year-round, they will serve as a constant reminder of the powerful love and devotion that the cross provides as we grow deeper in our faith and live in Imago Dei, the image of God.”





## Renowned School of Christian Thought Professor Explores Oldest Texts Referencing Jesus

*Dr. Craig Evans again combines faith and scholarship in his latest book, **Jesus and the Manuscripts: What We Can Learn from the Oldest Texts**. The John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins explains some of the takeaways from his research and examination of the ancient manuscripts and historical artifacts.*

### Tell us about your latest book and the manuscripts you studied.

"It's about all the manuscripts in which Jesus appears. That would include the Qur'an, the Jewish Talmud, and extracanonical writings we have even from the first, second and third century. We went to several places to see the oldest codexes, including Dublin, Ireland; Manchester, Cambridge and Oxford, England; Geneva, Switzerland; and Rome, Italy. The book is designed for scholars, but I translate everything – every Greek, Latin, Hebrew phrase, Aramaic, and German writings – in the scholarly literature. Anybody can read my book. I have had some non-scholars read it and go, 'Boy, that was deep,' but they were able to get through it and understand it, so I feel good about that. It's not just for

scholars but for laypeople. It does have some beautiful photographs in the back and I've heard people express appreciation for that. They see manuscripts they've never seen before."

### How is Jesus portrayed in the texts?

"Even in the stories about Jesus as a child, I suggest that there's a three-way conversation with Christians, Muslims, and Jewish rabbis and teachers. The complexity of the witnesses outside of the New Testament in several languages is compelling. Pagans were invoking the name of Jesus for protection, for health, and for healing. Two of these magic traditions – one on a ceramic cup and one on papyrus – both seem to date to about the middle of the first century. Which means Christianity

as a movement was barely two decades old, and people already know that Jesus' name is powerful. They don't know much about him, they can't tell the story correctly, maybe they don't know anything about what the Christians actually say, but within just a few years, Jesus is known well outside the Church and outside of the land of Israel as a powerful healer and a protector against evil spirits. I find that fascinating. So I talk about that in the book as well."

### How common is it to find Jesus referenced?

"You quickly learn just how well-documented Jesus is. You expect an emperor to be well-known. Jesus is right up there with Augustus and Julius Caesar for being extremely well-known and for people writing biographies. It's a rare figure

in antiquity that gets as much press coverage as Jesus, which flies in the face of the silly mythicists who say things like, 'If Jesus was really who the Gospels say he was, why don't we hear more about him?' You hear as much about him as any emperor. How much more do you want? And Christianity as a movement doesn't sweep the Roman Empire until the fourth century, and did so with no violence and no armies marching around conquering cities and killing people. The Gospel spread and overcame all kinds of obstacles, persecution, resistance, and so on. What I'm trying to do in my book is make that clear and well-documented so even a scholar who is an expert in one or two of these areas really can't push back. I do my homework and I cover all the ground."

### How does the scholarship affect the study of canonical (biblical) texts?

"One chapter talks about how the printing press impacted the way we understand Scripture.

The idea that it should be the King James version and nothing else or it's this particular version of the Greek text – this never would have happened had it not been for the printing press. Everybody knew that handwritten manuscripts varied a little bit and you would compare them – two or three different ones and say, 'Oh yeah that's the original reading or this is slightly off.' Everybody knew that back when all manuscripts were handwritten. And that's what the word manuscript means: manu – hand, and script – writing. I suggest that because Jesus appealed to Scripture, not just according to the Hebrew, but appealed to Scripture in the Aramaic, I think it opened the door for his apostles to appeal to the Old Testament and in Greek. That created a paradigm where the canon of Scripture could be Hebrew, it could be Greek, it could be Latin; that's okay. And I think that's something important that we all need to understand. It isn't just this one version of a book of the Bible. It's okay to have two or three versions, which is the way it is in the Church. And the Church is not messed up. It actually reflects a pragmatic and experiential approach to Scripture that you see in Jesus Himself and His teaching. But if the laity, the people in the pews in the church and the pastors – if they know their stuff, then they stand on very firm ground and they can offer a solid defense for the truthfulness and the reliability of the Gospels."

## School of Christian Thought Recent Notable Works

### David Baggett

The Moral Argument: A History (Oxford University Press), 2019

### Ben Blackwell

Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich and Jason Maston, eds. Reading Revelation in Context: John's Apocalypse and Second Temple Judaism. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019

Ben C. Blackwell, Randy Hatchett, Engaging Theology: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Introduction, Zondervan Academic, 2019

### Tim Brookins

Brookins, Timothy. Reading 1 Corinthians. Reading the New Testament. Smyth & Helwys, 2020

### Craig Evans

(ed. and trans. by Li Chun; Hong Kong: InPress Books, 2019) xv + 131 pp. = Who is Jesus? Archaeology, Text and Context (only published in Chinese).

Editor, with David Mishkin, Handbook of the Jewish Roots of Christianity (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 2019) xx + 354 pp. + 28 figures.

Author, Jesus and the Manuscripts (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 2020) xxxiii + 650 pp.

Author, with John J. Collins and Lee M. McDonald, Ancient Jewish and Christian Scriptures: Old Questions and New Developments (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2020) xvii + 252 pp.

Author, with Bart D. Ehrman and Robert B. Stewart, Can We Trust the Bible on the Historical Jesus? (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2020) xii + 100 pp.

Editor, with Jeremiah J. Johnston, Scribes and Their Remains (LSTS 94; SSEJC 21; London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020) xv + 320 pp.

Editor, with Aaron White, Who Created Christianity? Fresh Approaches to the Relationship Between Paul and Jesus (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 2020) xv + 472 pp.

Editor, with B. J. Oropeza and Paul T. Sloan, New Studies in Intertextual Interplay (LNTS 632; SSEJC 20;

London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020) xii + 267 pp.  
Editor, with B. D. Chilton, A. Avery-Peck, D. L. Bock, D. M. Gurtner, J. Neusner, L. H. Schiffman, and D. Oden (eds.), A Comparative Handbook to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke: Comparison with Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran Scrolls, and Rabbinic Literature (The New Testament Gospels in their Judaic Contexts 2; Leiden: Brill, 2021).

### Randy Hatchett

Ben C. Blackwell, Randy Hatchett, Engaging Theology: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Introduction, Zondervan Academic, 2019

### Chris Kugler

Chris Kugler, Paul and the Image of God (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2020).  
Chris Kugler, The Next Christian Faith: A Brief Sketch (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021).

### Jason Maston

Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich and Jason Maston, eds. Reading Revelation in Context: John's Apocalypse and Second Temple Judaism. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019

### Mike Licona

W. David Beck and Michael R. Licona, eds. Raised on the Third Day: Defending the Historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus; Essays in Honor of Gary R. Habermas (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020).

### Philip Tallon

The Absolute Basics of the Wesleyan Way, Seedbed, 2020

### Michael Ward

Contributed essays in: The Story of the Cosmos: How the Heavens Declare the Glory of God, ed. Daniel Ray and Paul Gould (Harvest House, 2019)  
The Inklings and Culture, ed. Laura N. Van Dyke, Monika Hilder, and Sara L. Pearson (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020)



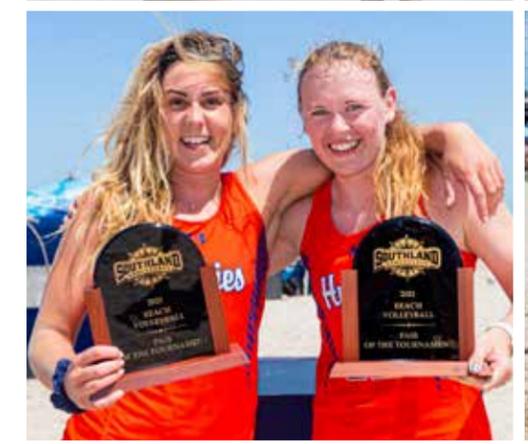
## 2021 Beach Volleyball Team Takes Inaugural Championship

**H**BU came out of the loser's bracket and upset No. 1-seed Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in the final match, 3-1, to capture the first-ever Southland Conference Beach Volleyball Championship on April 25 at the Islander Courts at The Water's Edge in Corpus Christi.

The second-seeded Huskies jumped out of the gate, winning the first set in four of the five matches. The No. 4 pair of Lauren Huggins and Alison Stanfill edged Rachel Young and Brooke Adkisson, 25-23, then Danielle Okeke and Natalie Bennett won at the No. 3 spot, 21-18. Emily Ramirez and Taylor Horsfall kept the Islanders alive, winning, 21-16, 21-13 at two. In the number one match, HBU's Brennan Miller and Maddie Butters outlasted Giuliana Corrales and Brooke Pertuit in three sets, taking the third, 15-12.

HBU reached the championship by eliminating third-seeded Stephen F. Austin, 3-2, in the final of the loser's bracket earlier that day. The Ladyjacks had defeated the Huskies Friday to send them to the loser's bracket. HBU then defeated No. 5 New Orleans and No. 4 Central Arkansas Saturday to set up the rematch with SFA.

Huggins and Stanfill were named the Pair of the Tournament, then went on to claim Southland Conference Pair of the Year and first-team all-conference honors. Stanfill was also voted Freshman of the Year. Bennett and Okeke were also first-team all-conference selections and Head Coach Cameron Sittler earned Coach of the Year.



# Husky Standout Mikayla Vivens Joins 1,000 Kill-1,000 Dig Club In A Unique Season

By Philip McKenzie

**W**hen the HBU women's volleyball team stepped onto the court on March 13 against a Central Arkansas team even with the Huskies in the standings, they were determined to take a conference victory that would help set the pace for the upcoming Southland Conference Tournament. The Huskies won their hard-earned victory, but it was senior Mikayla Vivens who left with more than just a win. Vivens joined HBU's 1,000 Kill-1,000 Dig Club with her fifth kill of the match. Two days prior to the matchup with UCA, Vivens earned her 1,000th dig in a 3-0 victory over Northwestern State. As remarkable as it was to reach 1,000 digs and kills within the span of 48 hours, it also made her just the sixth player in program history to achieve the feat.

For Vivens, the journey to 1,000 is a process that had begun long before her first collegiate game. It began as a child when she picked up a volleyball for the first time. When asked about her first steps in the sport she noted that initially, she had little interest in volleyball.

"Originally I didn't want to play volleyball," Vivens said as she reminisced. "I was always into basketball, track and football."

Her mother, a volleyball coach herself, introduced Vivens to the game. Vivens said, "She threw me into it, and I ended up being good." It was at 9 years old that the San Antonio native first stepped onto the court and truly began her journey to where she is today.

It wasn't just a one-way shot to college achievements, however. Vivens continued to refine her skills, practicing day after day to turn herself into the athlete and player she wanted to become. It was not about being a good hitter or being a solid defender; it was about being all of that in one. she wanted to be a complete player, a 1,000-1,000 player.

"I want to contribute everywhere on the floor, all of the time," Vivens added. This drive was born from a high standard, both from her family and herself. She continued, "As I was [growing in volleyball] it was about being the best..." and this continued to be one of her greatest motivators, until one day it changed: "... now it is about playing for my team."

As a senior, in a year as turbulent and crazy as the 2021 spring season was due to the COVID-19

## HBU Volleyball 1,000 Kill-1,000 Dig Club

<b>Elele Ekadeli</b> (2001-02)	1,389 Kills	1,029 Digs
<b>Jessica Barrera</b> (2005-08)	1,447 Kills	1,402 Digs
<b>Heather Leaverton</b> (2009-12)	1,196 Kills	1,218 Digs
<b>Jessica Wooten</b> (2013-15, 17)	1,467 Kills	1,373 Digs
<b>Bailey Banks</b> (2015-17)	1,175 Kills	1,082 Digs
<b>Mikayla Vivens</b> (2017-present)	1,071 Kills	1,075 Digs

pandemic, Vivens and her teammates found themselves staring down a season that at times seemed like it may not even happen. From playing a season in the spring, instead of the usual fall, to cancellations and match postponements, the confusion was new and unexpected.

Through it all, Vivens and her teammates continued to practice and improve. "We never knew when we were going to play... [we had] to stay ready in case we could play," she said. The possibility of a chance to play was enough drive for the Huskies, and for Vivens, helping her teammates get the season they deserved found its way to the top of the list.

Dealing with the uncertainty and the additional obstacles presented during this unique season, the Huskies gave it their all, consistently maintaining a spot in the top third of the conference standings. Vivens, a three-time all-conference honoree, certainly played an important role. On March 11 against Northwestern State when she recorded her 1,000th dig, she had no idea she'd reached the mark until someone told her. It was only then that she realized how close she was to doubling her achievement. "Someone after the game [told me], 'Oh, you're five away from 1,000 kills.'" And so it came in their next match, only two days later when the Huskies battled Central Arkansas. In a 3-1 victory for the Huskies, Mikayla posted a double-double with 15 kills and 14 digs, breaking through for her second 1,000 to join the 1,000-1,000 club. It was only when she looked over and saw her teammates celebrating – spelling out "1,000" with their arms – that she herself felt the thrill. "I was happy because my teammates were happy!" she added about the marks that helped etch her name in program history.

With the season ending with a loss to eventual champion Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in the SLC tournament quarterfinals, Vivens is set to return for one final season this fall. As she continues to recover from a shoulder injury early in the season that limited what she was able to do, she feels as if once she's back to full capacity she'll be able to show just how much is left to accomplish with the Huskies taking aim at a Southland Conference title. While the day may come where she must hang up her jersey, the picture of her collegiate career isn't finished yet. And Vivens isn't one to stop playing, not while there's still time on the clock.



# HBU Names Lance Berkman as New Head Coach

**H**BU has hired Lance Berkman as the fifth head coach in the program's history, Director of Athletics Steve Moniaci announced at a press conference on campus on May 31. "We really do think with this hire we have elevated not just the baseball program, but the whole athletic department," Moniaci said. "Certainly, we have always had what was known around town as a pretty good baseball team, but we want to get beyond that. We want to establish a program that is known regionally and then nationally. With Lance's help and some others we think are going to come along shortly, we think we can get there, but it all starts with the person who is in charge of that program and the person who is going to be in charge of our baseball program for a long, long time - I hope - is Lance Berkman."



"I want to say thank you to Steve and Dr. Sloan for the opportunity," Berkman said. "This is something I've wanted to do for a long time, even before I retired from playing baseball. I knew that I wanted to coach and, for me, there's no better level than Division I college baseball. It's really the last highest level where guys play for the name on the front of the jersey, not the name on the back. When you get in front of kids at this time of their life, you can really influence them for the good, which is a big part of the reason I wanted to be in coaching. This is kind of a dream come

true for me and I'm just so grateful for the opportunity." Berkman played 15 seasons in Major League Baseball, 12 with the Houston Astros, two with the St. Louis Cardinals and one each with the New York Yankees and Texas Rangers. The 1997 NCBWA National Collegiate Player of the Year at Rice, Berkman hit .431 with 41 home runs, 134 RBIs and 109 runs to lead the Owls to their first College World Series appearance. He hit .385 for his collegiate career with 67 homers and 272 RBIs to earn All-America honors twice, was elected to the Rice Hall of Fame in 2005 and the College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2015.

Since retiring from Major League Baseball in 2013, Berkman spent four seasons as the head coach at Second Baptist High School, guiding the Eagles to the TAPPS 4A state championship in 2016. Most recently, he was an assistant coach at the University of St. Thomas, where the Celts went 17-16 in only the second season of the program's existence.

Berkman takes over the HBU program from Jared Moon, who led the Huskies to three conference championships, an NAIA World Series appearance in 2007, an NCAA Regional appearance in 2015 and finished his career as HBU's all-time leader with 401 wins in 16 seasons at the helm of his alma mater.

HBUHuskies.com #DawgsUp

# Caleb Johnson Signs With Chicago Bears



**H**BU linebacker Caleb Johnson signed a contract with the Chicago Bears as an undrafted free agent shortly following the conclusion of the 2021 NFL Draft Saturday, May 2.

Johnson is the first player in HBU history to sign a contract with an NFL team.

The San Diego native was named the Southland Conference Co-Defensive Player of the Year for the fall season. Johnson recorded 49 tackles, leading the league and ranking fourth in the nation with 12.2 tackles per game. Johnson posted double-digit tackles in every game with 12 against North Texas, 13 against Texas Tech, 11 against Louisiana Tech and 13 against Eastern Kentucky. He was also the most outstanding leader, both on the field and off, as he was named one of the four captains and earned the Garrett Dolan Leadership Award for a second time.

He finished his collegiate career ranked third all-time at HBU with 278 tackles, second with 10.0 sacks and is the Huskies' all-time leader with seven fumble recoveries.



# Dodd Named HBU Women's Soccer Head Coach



**C**hris Dodd was announced as the next head coach of the HBU women's soccer program by director of athletics Steve Moniaci on May 24.

"I'm pleased to announce that Chris Dodd has agreed to assume the role of head women's soccer coach, taking over for Misty Jones," said Moniaci. "I'm looking forward to Chris building on Coach (Misty) Jones' legacy for our program over the next couple of years and am excited for the future of this sport."

Dodd, who graduated from HBU in 2011 with a degree in kinesiology and studio art, has been on the Huskies' staff since the 2014 season, serving this past season as associate head coach after being assistant coach the six seasons prior. In his time with the program HBU has won two Southland Conference tournament championships, earning two bids to the NCAA Tournament.

"It is a very exciting opportunity to take over as head coach of the women's program

at my alma mater," said Dodd. "This program is special to me and I am looking forward to building on its history of success. We have a solid core of returning players and are adding a promising group of incoming freshmen."

A former standout goalkeeper for the HBU men's soccer program, Dodd has held responsibilities in all aspects of the program and has worked extensively with HBU's goalkeepers, with the Huskies averaging nearly five shutouts per season during his tenure. Since 2014, 13 HBU players have been named first or second team all-SLC with 14 more receiving honorable mention all-conference honors.

Dodd succeeds former head coach Misty Jones who resigned from her position as head coach. Jones coached the Huskies since restarting the women's program in 2006 and guiding the Huskies through the school's transition from NAIA to NCAA Division I.

HBUHuskies.com #DawgsUp

# 2020-21 HBU Athletic Awards

Varsity Athlete Academic Award:

**Ashley Arnes**  
Women's Soccer

**Sierra Humphrey**  
Softball

**Brent Pronger**  
Baseball

**Megan Rickert**  
Women's Soccer

**Sarah Venker**  
Softball

Frances Curtis & Mildred Boone Spirit Award:  
**Coleman Robinson** - Football

Galdino Lucero Service Award:  
**Debora Burnett** - Financial Aid



**CHAMPION**  
Robbie Robertson Male Athlete of the Year:  
**Denim Rogers**  
Track & Field



**CHAMPION**  
Jan Edds Female Athlete of the Year:  
**Kaitlin Smith**  
Track & Field

## 1960s

**Jennifer Ferguson '68** was recently selected to be featured in the Marquis Who's Who and the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award Program for her achievements in education. She was a professor in Kinesiology and the first volleyball coach at HBU. Dr. Ferguson was instrumental in the creation of the volleyball team, as well as building and growing the Kinesiology department.

## 1970s

**Rosalyn Fabianke '71** is a Physical Education and Fitness Consultant.

**David Anderson '74** is the Vice President of Investments for the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

**Beeler Glen '76** is a Customer Service Representative for Emerald Lawns.

## 1980s

**Richard Artman '81** is a Teacher and Coach for Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools.

**Mark Edworthy '83** is the CityRise Network Director and Missouri City Campus Pastor.

**Mark Pacacha MBA '84** is the National Sales Manager for Seneca Millwork.

**Ken Bartholomew '85** is the Minister of Music and Administration at First Baptist Church Durant.

**Denise Juarez '85** is a Senior Volunteer Engagement Specialist at the American Red Cross.

**Tommy Jones '85** is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Air Tool Exchange and Rental Company.

**Benny Agosto, Jr. '86** is now the Managing Partner of Abraham Watkins (previously Abraham, Watkins, Nochols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner), and was recently recognized as one of the Top Latino Lawyers of 2020 for the fifth consecutive year.

**Hugh Poland '86** is the Pastor of Discipleship at Woodridge Baptist Church.

**Otto Nilson Fanini MBA '86** was recently recognized by Continental Who's Who as a Top Distinguished Engineer in the field of Electrical Engineering for his professional leadership at Baker Hughes Incorporation.

**Brena Baumann-Gonzalez '87** is the Senior Director of Development for the University of Houston Law Center.

**Robert Odom '87** is the owner of Modular Homes of America.

**Michael Paul '88** is a Business Relationship Manager for JPMorgan Chase.

## 1990s

**Cynthia McDowell '90** is a Coffee Specialist in Sales and Customer Service for Nespresso.

**Jill Almaguer '90** is a Senior Project Manager for the Memorial Hermann Health System.

**Gina Vickery Mann '91** is a Pre-K 3 and 4 Teacher in Aldine ISD.

**Annie Dragoo '92** was recently named an Arts Educator of the Decade by Broadway World.

**Jack Mann '92** is the Director of Transportation in Spring ISD.

**Duc Nguyen '92** is a Trust Advisor for Virtus Partner from FIS.

**Tom Kennedy '94** is the co-owner and COO for Precise Standards & Solutions, Inc.

**Tony DiCamillo '95** is working in Business Development at See Tickets.

**Suzanne Weatherly '95** is the English Department Chair at LoneStar College University Park.

**John Smith '96** is the CRO for TixFAN.

**Brenda Tillman '97** is a Managing Consultant at BD Tillman Enterprises.

**Shelley Brooks '97** is a Registered Nurse for Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital.

**Wilbur Couch '97** is an AIM teacher at Spring Branch ISD and recently earned an MEd in Autism Spectrum Disorders.

**Russell Bentley EMBA '97** is the Vice President of WSP USA Inc. working on Carbon Capture and Sequestration projects.

**Sandra Allen '98** is a teacher at HISD.

**Ryan Clark '99** is the Worship Pastor at First Baptist Church of Pampa.

**Andrea Rodriguez Dulany '99** is the Development Communications Coordinator at Trees of Hope.

**Paul Lyle '99** is a Pastor at Summer Creek Baptist Church.

**Sharon Nelson '99** is a Clinical Educator for Houston Methodist Hospital.

## 2000s

**Shenane Boston '00** is a Manager for TDCJ Human Resources.

**Irene Briggs '00** is a Program Coordinator for Lone Star College Tomball.

**Brent Busby '00** is working at BASF.

**Christine English '00** is the owner of a Horse Riding and Leases business.

**Gabriella Font '00** is a Customer Success Executive at Tripadvisor.

**Stephanie Garcia '00** is a Middle School ELA Teacher at George I. Sanchez Charter School.

**Kathleen Robbins '00** is the owner of Rich Blessings Kitchen.

**Rochelle Chamberlain '01** is a Hospital and Clinical Practice Education Manager for Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Hospital.

**Cory Ferguson '01** is a Business Manager for O'Leary Funeral and Cremation Services.

**Crystal Kubena McDonald '01** works as a Physical Educator in Lamar Consolidated ISD.

**Doran Woods '03** is the Managing Director for Enable Ministry Partners.

**Korinthia Miller '03** is an Attorney at the Law Office of Korinthia Miller.

**Meggi Stewart '03** is the Client Services Director at Pregnancy Resource Medical Center.

**Stephanie Smith '04** is a Medical Logistics/Contracting Officer for the US Army.

**Justin Jacobson '04** is the Director of Event Management at St. Martin's Episcopal Church.

**Tracy Maness '05** is a Staff Writer for The Katy Rancher.

**Viola Morales '05** is the Associate Director of Continued Ministry and Program Coordinator at Family Life Ministry- Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

**Adrienne Joseph '06** is an RNIII for Houston Methodist Willowbrook.

**Suzanne Elrod '07** is the Assistant Principal at LISA Academy.

## 2010s

**Lizzet Austin '10** is a Bilingual Teacher at Goose Creek CISD and was recently awarded District Bilingual Teacher of the Year and Teacher of the Year.

**Adrian Jackson '12** is a Commercial Underwriter at Pioneer Bank, SSB.

**Giovanna Pennick '12** is a School Counselor for Elsie Ninth Grade Center in Alief ISD.

**John Ghosn '13** is a Family Physician for Memorial Hermann in Needville, Texas.

**Meghan Christensen '13** is an Assistant Softball Coach at the University of Houston-Victoria.

**Brittany Christiansen '13, MA '16** is a Licensed Professional Counselor for The Vine Wellness Group.

**Alicia Joseph '14** is the Director of Human Resources for iOffice.

**Andre Turner '14** is a Middle School Math and Robotics Instructor at Northland Christian School.

**Lauren Bozeman '14** is a K/1 Teacher at Garfield County School District 16.

**Karim Jivani '15** is an Associate Attorney for Coane and Associates.

**M. Tyler Jones '15** is a Science Teacher and Swim and Water Polo Coach for CFISD.

**Jon Crutchfield '16** is the Owner of Studio C CAD/CAM.

**Alexia English '16** is a Career Advisor at Baylor University.

**Blake Fick '16** is a Lung Transplant Coordinator at Texas Children's Hospital.

**Lorena Lozano '16** is a Registered Nurse for Harris Health System.

**Breana Badger '17** works for JSC Federal Credit Union as a Lead in Financial Wellness.

**Daniel Constable '17** is a Quality Analyst for Veteran's Evaluation Services.

**Kyle Garza '17** is a High School Teacher at Oaks Christian School.

**Brooke McIntire '17** is a Content Manager for The Colson Center.

**Jonathan Richie '17** is a Researcher, Writer, and Presenter for WallBuilders.

**Andrea Chevalier MEd '18** is the Head of School at Denton Calvary Academy.

**Erin Harvey Constable '18** is a Quality Analyst for Veteran's Evaluation.

**Sharonese Birch '18** is a Project Specialist at Houston Methodist Hospital.

**Katerina Scott '18** is a Church Secretary for St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

**Leigh McLeroy '18** is the Owner and Principal of Words that Work.

**Byron Barlowe '19** is a Researcher and Mentor at Probe Ministries International.

**Russell Marsella MAA '19** is the Managing Director of Legal Services and Associate General Counsel for Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island.

**Sarah McIntyre '19** is a Women's Ministry Coordinator at River Pointe Church.

**Pervis Hall '19** is a Pastor at The Way Fellowship.

**Wendy Taboada '19** is a Sixth-Grade Teacher at Splendor ISD.

## 2020s

**Richard Eng '20** is a Pastor of Worship and Student Ministry at Trinity Church.

**Atalie Wu '20** is a Registered Nurse at St. David's Medical Center.

**Alex Markos '20** is a Grammar School Latin Teacher at the Geneva School of Boerne.

**Alessandra Okaitland '20** is a Registered Nurse for Harris Health.

**Lucas Holt '20** is a Producer at Relevant Radio.

**Vanessa Haynes '21** is working in Logistics for Amazon.



**Gabriel O'Neale '14 & Katie O'Neale '15** welcomed their first child Micah Gabriel O'Neale on October 1, 2020.

**Chelsea Clinton Cox '17 and Aaron Cox '12** welcomed their second son Cohen Everett Cox on March 18, 2021.

**Colleen (Moore) '15** and her husband Tyler Phillips welcomed their second son Jude Hutt Phillips on October 6, 2020 at 1:53 p.m. weighing 9 lbs. 12 oz.

**Alexa (Rojas) '13, MEd '19** and her husband **Justin Paul, '12, MBA '18** welcomed with love their son Noah Travis Paul on May 6, 2021 at 1:54 a.m. weighing 6 lbs. 6 oz. and 20" long.

**Christa (Hall) '11** and her husband Tim Langolf welcomed with love their daughter Olivia James Langolf on November 7, 2020 at 11:36 a.m. weighing 6 lbs. 8 oz.

**Dr. Mark Bing MLA '88** passed away on January 9, 2021. Mark practiced medicine for 36 years and was instrumental in expanding medical care in Katy.

**Patricia Ann Dixon Burton '00** passed away on March 14, 2021. Patricia graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree from HBU.

**Lester Lee Cain MEd '00** passed away on January 1, 2021 after a lengthy battle with cancer.

## Friends of the University:

**Dr. Gloria Biles** passed away on February 1, 2021. She was an Associate Professor at HBU from 1984-2002.

**Dr. Robert (Bob) Earl Driver, Sr.** passed away on December 16, 2020. He was an Associate Professor of Business and Economics at HBU from 1988-2001.

**Virginia Claire Skipper Gaultney, PhD** passed away on February 3, 2021 in Austin Texas. She was an adjunct professor at HBU and a member of the Guild.

**Marilyn Ruth Henson** passed away on March 26, 2021. Marilyn was a former faculty member at Houston Baptist College.



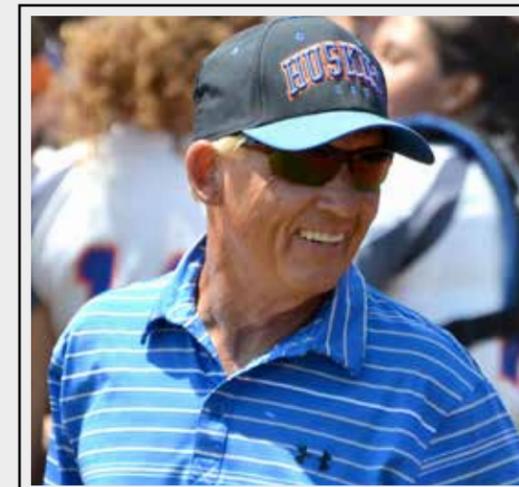
projects in the Houston area.

**Kenneth Wayne Rogers** passed away on January 28, 2021. He was a Financial Aid Officer at HBU for 41 years and is remembered for his dedication to helping students attend college.

**Charles Wilson** passed away on January 2, 2021. He was an architect who designed the main entryway to campus, as well as many other



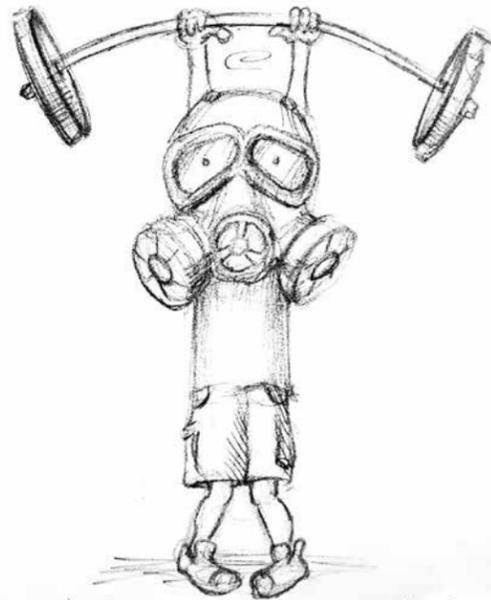
**Retired Colonel Newton V. Cole** passed away on March 30, 2021, at the age of 92. Entering the Air Force in 1951 during the Korean War, he is the youngest chaplain to join the armed forces at the age of 22. Ambitious and goal-driven, he was promoted to "Full Bird" Colonel in 1974. His overseas assignments include Newfoundland, England, Southeast Asia, and Japan, where he served as Staff Chaplain US Forces Japan and Fifth Air Force. He retired in 1987 after 36 years of service. Among his awards and decorations are the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, the Airman's Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal. Newt had a special bond to HBU.



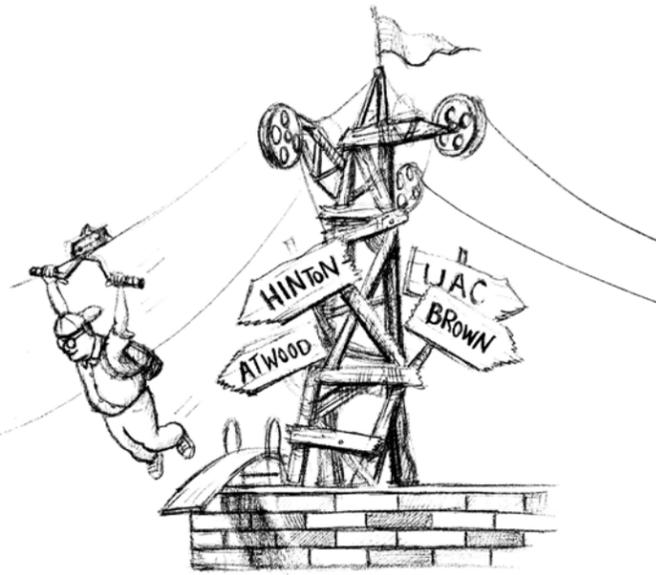
The HBU community was devastated by the loss of long-time softball assistant coach **Roger Willhite**, who passed away at the age of 76 on May 31. Willhite had been by head coach Mary-Ellen Hall's side for 28 seasons, helping her amass 839 wins, the most in HBU history in any sport.

Willhite was voted the 2016 National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) Assistant Coach of the Year and, along with Hall, was recognized by the NFCA in 1999 and 2005 as the NAIA Coaching Staff of the Year. He was also honored by HBU as the University's Mayfield Staff Award in 2007.

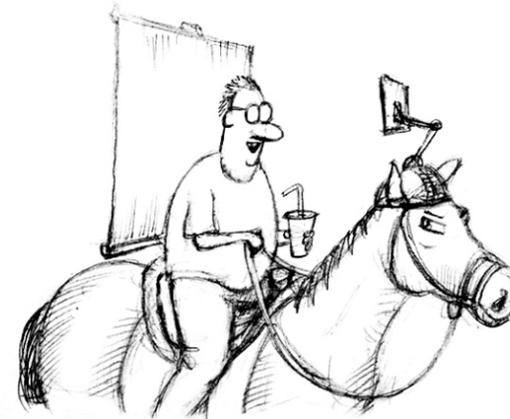
A native of Oklahoma, Willhite is survived by his mother, Mildred, his wife, Rita, his daughter, Rachelle, and son-in-law, Bryan. He has three grandchildren: Bryce, Macie and Faith. Rachelle was a member of the softball team, who was inducted to the HBU Sports Hall of Honor in 2006, and Bryce is a manager on the softball support staff.



Brian loves relaxing at the Bradshaw



The Freshman Class couldn't understand why their request for a zip-line atop the Hodo building was turned down..



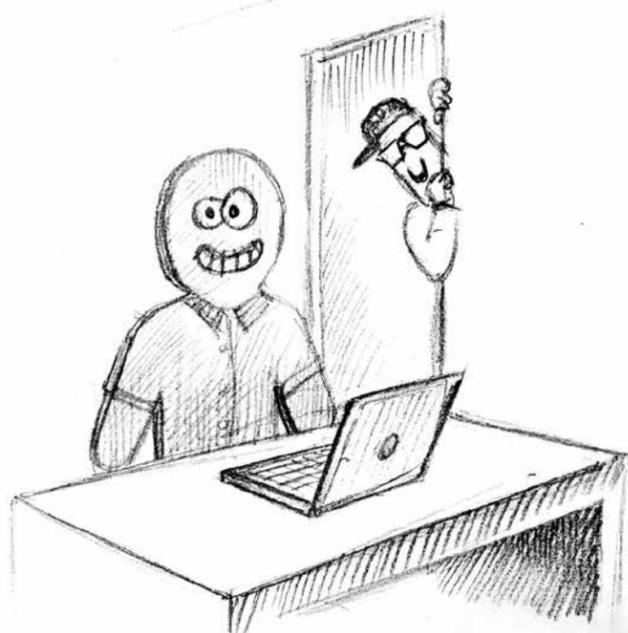
Students have gotten creative with their Zoom setups...



Carl was looking forward to his break until he saw the Honors College reading list...



Professor Sikora never could figure out why The Cinema Department's drone was always dead..



Alas, Dr. Hartenburg was not fooled..



The Freeze, Day 4



### About the Artist

Joel Stanulonis is Assistant Professor of Art in the department of Visual Art at Houston Baptist University. He received his BFA from HBU in 2012 and earned an MFA at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. Joel specializes in classical representational painting and teaches studio courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels. In 2015, Joel received the

national MFA feature from New American Painting Magazine, and was twice a finalist for the Hunting Art Prize. His work is in the permanent collection of the PAFA museum in Philadelphia and in private collections around the US.



On day 3 of the freeze, Cindy began wondering how to season the cat.



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