

SOUTHEASTERN

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2021



Dr. Meghan Griffin
**SOUTHEASTERN'S
NEW PROVOST**

ALSO FEATURING
A Decade of Discovery:
President Ingle
Celebrates 10 Years

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SOUTHEASTERN

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KENT J. INGLE, D.MIN.

I remember the first time I set foot on Southeastern's campus more than a decade ago. I had flown from the West Coast with my wife, **KAREN '17 (Ed.D.)**, to interview for the position of president. The meetings that day started at 7 a.m. (which was 4 a.m. our time) and lasted until 10 p.m. In every group of constituents that I met with, I recognized that God had incredible plans for this university.

When I became president, I embarked on a journey of listening to better understand the unique talents of each person at Southeastern. One day, as I was walking around campus, I made my way to the garden beds where one of our groundskeepers was working. I stopped and thanked him for the incredible work he was doing to keep our campus looking beautiful. He responded, "I am not sir. I am helping give students a world-class education."

The powerful thing about Southeastern is every person who plays a part of our community — whether they are faculty or staff members — works toward a common goal of providing a premier Christian educational experience for our students.

I truly believe that there is no place like Southeastern. Over the past decade, I have watched God raise up leaders in numerous fields who are making an impact for the Kingdom. I have seen more than 8,000 students graduate, begin their careers and serve the world with inspired purpose.

Our successes today are a culmination of efforts by every individual in our community. The remarkable faculty and staff members we have at Southeastern are walking alongside students daily to help them discover and develop their divine designs.

I always look forward to reading our alumni magazine and seeing how God is using so many of our alumni to serve their

communities. In this issue, you will read about alumni like **DAVID DOCUSEN '01, '15 (MAML), '19 (D.Min.)** who is using his book to advocate for racial and economic justice. Former basketball player **LINWOOD ROSS '19** is pouring into the lives of youth every day at the Boys and Girls Club. Another basketball player, **LARRY TAYLOR '16, '18 (MBA)** is ministering to youth around the world through basketball camps.

In these pages, you will find the inspirational story of a mother, **GAYLE HARRIS '21 (M.Ed.)**, and her two daughters, **JACQUELYN '21 (M.Ed.)** and **TIFFANY '21 (M.Ed.)**, who have not only graduated together with the same degree, but also have been teaching at the same school for three years. Finally, you will read about **FAITH "DANI" NAWARA '10** whose primary responsibility is to help Facebook employees around the world safely return to their offices in the midst of COVID-19.

Additionally, this magazine features the many upcoming changes in leadership on our campus, including our beloved provost, **DR. WILLIAM C. HACKETT, JR., '19 (Ed.D.)** returning to teaching full time in the classroom. It also shares stories about the incredible successes of our athletic programs — highlighting national championship wins in our wrestling and track and field programs.

I hope you are encouraged as you read about how God has continued to bless our incredible university. As alumni and friends of our institution, you play a significant part in the success that Southeastern is today. I want to thank you for your commitment to and prayers for Southeastern.

My prayer is that in the next 10 years, God further advances our university as we steward the callings he has placed on the lives of our students. May Southeastern, through its alumni, students, faculty and staff, continue to make its mark for the Kingdom.

LEADERSHIP REQUIRES A FRAMEWORK

Join Kent Ingle as he talks to the world's most innovative leaders about how they develop thriving teams.

NEW Framework Leadership podcast
released every Monday.





JOEL K. JOHNSON '92

What a wonderful year we have lived through at SEU! I believe that this upcoming year is going to be our best ever. Despite all that was going on in the world, your alma mater led through difficulty and adversity in a way that would make you proud.

Looking over the interaction Alumni Relations has had with the alumni recently, I am so proud to say that we are currently interacting with more alumni on a regular basis than ever before. Through our social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Vimeo, we are regularly communicating with over 10,000 of you. Our monthly newsletter goes out to over 7,000 of you via email. Our alumni donor base has increased by over 150 alumni since last year. Why mention all these numbers? To let you know how much our community is growing and thriving.

New programs have been launched, and more developments are coming that will help you with professional networking, professional development, connecting with alumni and mentoring students. To see a part of this overall initiative, visit SEUspark.org to create a free networking and mentoring account.

What can you look forward to in 2021-22?

- More opportunities to meet face to face with your local classmates. We need your help in putting these events together. If you want to be a part, please email alumni@seu.edu.
- Virtual alumni nights where you can “gather” with alumni from your major and hear about what is currently going on in that department
- Updates on when SEU events may be occurring near you — including athletics, musical groups, guest speakers and alumni events
- Yearly opportunities to impact students through giving directly to scholarships — Giving Tuesday in November, spring Carry the Torch Day and the annual Student Relief Fund campaign
- More interactive moments to learn about what is happening at SEU in the day to day

For any questions relating to Southeastern and how we are serving our alumni and current students, please feel free to reach me at jkjohnson@seu.edu or 863.667.5400. Looking forward to talking with you soon.

carry the
TORCH
SOUTHEASTERN
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
made for / more

**IF YOU LOVE SEU, YOU WILL LOVE
BEING A MEMBER OF THE
SEU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.**



Membership Information



10% Discount at the SEU Bookstore
(online or on campus)



Discounts on athletic tickets



On-campus dining discounts
(Tuscana Ristorante and Portico)



10% off Homecoming package pricing



Access to the campus pool
and exercise facilities



Access to Steelman Library and
online databases

Join the SEU Alumni Association at SEU.edu/alumni or by calling 863.667.5400.



A DECADE *of* DISCOVERY

PRESIDENT INGLE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS



When President Kent Ingle was interviewed for his current position at Southeastern University, he was asked what his vision was for the university. He said he didn't have one. Instead, he desired to embark on a listening journey to understand the potential of the people at Southeastern.

"As a leader, you have to take the time to listen in order to understand the potential of the people before you can create a vision," said Ingle. "During my first year, we created a massive listening exercise for our entire university in order to craft our mission."

A part of that vision was stewarding the calling God placed on students' lives by helping them discover their divine design. "Our students' educational journey will be some of the most formative years in their lives. We want to help them to discover and develop the destiny God has placed on them so they can go out and serve Christ, the church and the world," said Ingle.



Curricular Development

Over the last 10 years, due to the steady rise in enrollment, SEU has been recognized by The Chronicle of Higher Education as the sixth fastest-growing master's level university in the U.S.

Co-Curricular Development

Whether it's competing on the field or serving overseas, SEU has expanded our co-curricular offerings and campus facilities.



Experiential Learning

Since opening our first extension site in 2012, SEU now has 175 sites in more than 40 states with an enrollment of 2,594.

Return on Investment

SEU's growth has generated an increase in annual revenue, giving and institutional aid.





Since Ingle has been president, the university has seen a tremendous increase in enrollment from 2,546 students in 2011 to nearly 10,000 in 2020. Due to the steady rise in enrollment, SEU has been recognized by The Chronicle of Higher Education as the sixth fastest-growing master's level university in the U.S.

One of the greatest areas of growth has resulted from the university's partnerships with local churches and businesses, known as extension sites, across the nation. At these sites, students are enrolled in accredited degree programs and have the opportunity to gain practical experience at an affordable price. The first site was opened in 2012. Since then, 175 sites have been launched in more than 40 states with an enrollment of 2,594 students.

"Our vision is to continue to meet students where they are. We want to reinvent higher education so that it is affordable and accessible for all students," said Ingle.

Through these partner-sites, Southeastern students have invested more than two million hours of service in the local church through practicums. In the 2019-2020 academic year, 2,640 students were enrolled in classes to prepare for ministry-

related positions, making Southeastern the largest Pentecostal university in the U.S. Almost 75% of these students studied at one of SEU's partner sites.

Curricular development has been another pillar of focus for Southeastern. Since 2011, the university has added 95 new degree programs, including its first doctoral program — a Doctor of Education — in 2014. Since then, the university has introduced doctoral programs in the fields of leadership (Ph.D. and DSL) and ministry (D.Min.). A key degree added to the undergraduate level was nursing, which is the fastest-growing program on campus.

Outside of the classroom, Southeastern has continued to enhance the student experience. The athletics department has introduced nine new varsity sports, including football. In their listening exercise, the university's leadership team found people wanted a football team.

"There's something about football that leads to building community," said Ingle. "We heard people asking over and over again why we don't have football. We wanted it to be something that could bring our SEU community together, reach outside to our city and even extend to Central Florida."

With a growing student body, Southeastern has continued to develop its Lakeland campus. Over the past 10 years, the university has expanded more than 400,000 square feet of educational, residential and student-services space. A few of these new facilities include a football stadium, a building for the College of Natural and Health Sciences, a live/learn facility and the Welcome Center.

"The university continues to flourish because of the dedication of the SEU community," said Ingle. "When we remain committed to our mission and steward the calling God has placed on students' lives, he will continue to bless us."

To read more about Ingle's tenure at SEU, visit [SEU.edu/presidentsreport](https://seu.edu/presidentsreport).

Check out this quick link to the report:



Open the camera on your smartphone and hover over the QR code to open the website.

ON CAMPUS



Introducing DR. MEGHAN GRIFFIN SOUTHEASTERN'S NEW PROVOST

Dr. Meghan Griffin was expertly suited to take the reins as Southeastern's next provost. Previously serving as the associate provost and dean of the College of Unrestricted Education, Dr. Griffin has experienced many aspects of a higher education institution in both the public and private sectors. Her new role officially began in May of 2021.

It was through an extensive, nationwide search that led to Dr. Griffin's appointment to the provost position. As a member of Southeastern's community since 2017, Dr. Griffin was the final choice after a series of campus interviews with community constituents and a faculty vote.

"Dr. Griffin has proven herself to be a visionary and dynamic leader in her current role, and we are looking forward to her continued leadership with a focus on quality and innovation as the university's chief academic officer," said President Kent Ingle.

As provost, Dr. Griffin will oversee all of Southeastern's academic partnerships, extension site program offerings and the traditional campus academics in Lakeland.

"My job is to catch the opportunities the Lord brings to Southeastern, equip our academic leaders and faculty for those opportunities ahead and to keep a very clear picture in mind as to what our university is in its entirety," said Dr. Griffin. "If I can do that, the rest follows."

It is this mindset that contributes to Dr. Griffin's qualifications, combined with the range of skills she's gained through

past job experiences. Before coming to Southeastern, Dr. Griffin worked for seven years at Palm Beach Atlantic University in student services, rising in extension site leadership. In addition, she served in the Florida state college system for six years as an associate professor of management and as a department chair, teaching online and traditional populations. Dr. Griffin also connected to one of the university's largest partners, Classical Conversations, as a homeschooling parent and classical education advocate.

Dr. Griffin emphasized, "I could have never orchestrated a career history on my own that would have led me to this role. I've learned that as you follow the Lord's leading, you find at the end that every single thing he led you through was in preparation for the season you now find yourself in."

She first learned of Southeastern as a child when the pastor of her home church, Dr. Mark Rutland, became the university president in 1999. However, it wasn't until she had been serving as a faculty member at Daytona State College that she gave the school another thought. "I had really started struggling with the fact that I couldn't bring a faith-based outlook to my classes," said Dr. Griffin. "That was when I decided I needed to get back to Christian higher education."

Passionate about Southeastern and its many moving parts, Dr. Griffin was motivated to apply for the provost position due to the nature of the institution's capacity for innovation and excellence. "It has everything to do with where we

are right now. It's our institutional identity — new opportunities, new partners, new ideas — that made me consider this role," remarked Dr. Griffin.

Looking forward to the upcoming year, one of her top priorities is to get every member of the Southeastern community aligned under a shared vision. By producing more motion and interaction among various sites and partners, Dr. Griffin hopes to promote inclusivity across the entire Southeastern network.

"Where Southeastern is heading requires all of us," said Dr. Griffin. "So I'm really excited to make our network more visible to all of our students and alumni no matter where they are."

She also envisions a season filled with growth among Southeastern's international partners. "I truly see that as our next turn — dotting the map across the globe. I think we're going to be able to create and capture opportunities overseas," she said. "What I love most about SEU is our focus on serving students and local churches."

Dr. Griffin will be following in the footsteps of **DR. WILLIAM C. HACKETT, JR., '19 (Ed.D.)**, who is retiring from the provost position and transitioning into the role of provost emeritus. Dr. Hackett will also continue to teach in the Barnett College of Ministry and Theology. (*Read more about Dr. Hackett and his legacy at Southeastern on page 46*).



“Dr. Hackett has been a wonderful mentor, not only to me, but for so many others on our campus,” said Dr. Griffin. “I am so honored that I get the opportunity to engage with him as our provost emeritus.”

With a renewed sense of calling, Dr. Griffin is prepared to tackle this new year and overcome the lingering challenges presented by the pandemic.

“Despite all of the hardships we’ve endured this past year, I want everyone to know that our calling is still fresh. If we can be confident in that sense of calling and trust in how the Lord has led us exactly where he wants us, there’s nothing we can’t do,” observed Dr. Griffin.

Dr. Griffin resides in Lakeland with her husband of 17 years, Lee, and their three children, Rachel, Wesley and Bradley.

Meet Southeastern’s New Provost Q & A with Dr. Griffin

Q: Do you have a must-see show that you’ve been watching lately?

A: Me and my kids just finished watching Netflix’s adaptation of Lemony Snicket’s “A Series of Unfortunate Events.” We loved it! And of course, like everyone else, we’re waiting for the return of “Stranger Things.”

Q: Are you an active podcast listener? If so, what are some of your favorites?

A: Yes, definitely! One of my absolute favorites is “The Enneagram Journey” with Suzanne Stabile. She’s an amazing interviewer, and she facilitates really intriguing discussions. Some of my other go-to’s are Malcolm Gladwell’s podcast, “Revisionist History,” and “The Monday Morning Pastor” with J.R. Briggs.

Q: What is your favorite restaurant in Lakeland?

A: I personally really love Scarpa’s Italian. As a family, we like Mojo Federal downtown for barbecue.

Q: How do you like to spend your free time?

A: For me, free time is family time. We enjoy going to the beach and watching the sunset. We also just took our first camping trip to Fort DeSoto, which was so much fun. The moments where I can get outdoors and lose track of time are always a good way to relax.



College of Arts & Media

SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

2021-2022

PERFORMANCE SERIES

FALL 2021

SEP

- 09 **ART EXHIBIT: PHOTOGRAPHY**
6:30 P.M.
Free Admission
CAM Gallery, SEU
- 17 **CONSTITUTION DAY**
10:30 A.M.
Free Admission
Science Lecture Hall, SEU
- 20 **FACULTY GALA**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
First Presbyterian Church

OCT

- 25 **MUSICAL THEATRE REVUE**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
First Presbyterian Church
- 27 **WIND ENSEMBLE CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU

NOV

- 01 **STRING ORCHESTRA CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
First Presbyterian Church
- 02 **VOICE FACULTY RECITAL**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
All Saints' Episcopal Church
- 04 **JAZZ ENSEMBLE CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU
- 10 **BRASS QUINTET CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
CAM Band Room, SEU
- 12 **PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU
- 15 **CHORAL CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
First Presbyterian Church
- 19 **CONTEMPORARY BAND CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU

DEC

- 01 **ART EXHIBIT: BEST OF FALL 2021**
6:30 P.M.
Free Admission
CAM Gallery, SEU
- 02 **FALL FILM SHOWCASE**
7:00 P.M.
Free Admission
Buena Vida Auditorium, SEU
- 03 **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU
- 04 **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**
7:30 P.M.
\$5 / Student \$3
Bush Chapel, SEU
- 05 **AN AFTERNOON MELODY**
2:00 P.M.
Free Admission
Polk Museum of Art



SCAN TO PURCHASE TICKETS

SEU WELCOMES FOUR NEW DEANS

This summer, Southeastern welcomed four new academic deans, including an alumna.



Dr. Aimee Franklin

DR. AIMEE (VINSON) FRANKLIN '07 is the new dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences, stepping in after Dr. Deborah “Debbie” Hazelbaker’s retirement at the end of the 2020–21 academic year.

“As an SEU alumna and faculty member, I have witnessed firsthand the outstanding faculty, staff and students in the departments of math, nursing and science. I look forward to serving alongside administration and faculty in order to serve the incredible students in our college and on our campuses,” expressed Dr. Franklin.

Beginning her journey with Southeastern as a student, Dr. Franklin graduated in 2007 with a bachelor’s degree in pre-medicine and biology. She went on to earn a Ph.D. in Neuroscience from the University of Alabama Birmingham and conducted extensive research on Fragile X Syndrome (FXS), the most commonly inherited form of autism. She received numerous institutional awards and funding for her research, as well as grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute of Neurological Disease and Stroke. Dr. Franklin returned to Southeastern in 2014 as an associate professor of biology, leading students in a number of biomedical research projects.

In support of Dr. Franklin’s succession of this new role, Provost and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Meghan Griffin said, “I have no doubt that the college will flourish under Dr. Franklin’s leadership. Her love for Jesus, her excellence in the classroom and her ability to impact students is evidence of her divine design as a scientist, educator and leader.”



Dr. Jeffrey Paul

Dr. Jeffrey Paul was appointed to the position of dean of the Jannetides College of Business and Entrepreneurial Leadership. Dr. Paul took over the role in July of 2021 after Dr. Lyle Bowlin’s retirement at the end of the 2020–21 academic year.

“I am humbled to join the Southeastern family. The opportunity to work with the administration and leadership team here is an exciting prospect. These are truly talented people with a heart for serving students,” said Dr. Paul. “The students at SEU are called to a higher purpose, and I cannot wait to learn from them as we pursue excellence together.”

Prior to accepting this position, Dr. Paul served as an associate professor of management and marketing and as the chair of the Fenimore Fisher Graduate School of Business at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla. He has held faculty positions at the University of Tulsa, Illinois State University and Oklahoma State University. As an active researcher, Dr. Paul is currently a co-editor for the *Organizational Management Journal*, as well as a reviewer for three other journals. Additionally, he has industry experience working as the vice president of strategy and planning for a public oil and gas exploration company.

“Dr. Paul has all of the qualifications you want in a business dean: solid publication record, excellence in teaching, mentorship of faculty, program leadership and an incredible depth of faith. Dr. Paul is a leader among leaders, and his presence will be a gift to our campus community,” said Dr. Griffin.



Dr. Nathaniel Pearson

As the newly-appointed dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Dr. Nathaniel Pearson officially assumed the role in July of 2021. Dr. Pearson follows in the footsteps of Dr. Erica Serrine, who had served Southeastern since 2014.

“From the moment that I stepped onto Southeastern’s campus, it was clear that I was surrounded by men and women who are committed to pouring their lives into the next generation of influencers who will change this world for the better,” Dr. Pearson reflected. “It was a great privilege to connect with and hear the hearts of the faculty of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences. I knew that these were people that I wanted to work with and for.”

Before accepting this position, Dr. Pearson was serving as the inaugural Elvin and Fleta Patterson Sims Director of the Berry Center for Integrity in Leadership at Berry College in Rome, Ga. He has filled executive positions at both Cabrini University and West Virginia University and earned a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies from Gonzaga University and an M.A. in Counseling from Regent University. Dr. Pearson has also worked as a counselor, family therapist and site director for many family counseling centers, as well as being the executive director and pastor of Bellevue Foursquare Church. He is an interdisciplinary scholar focused on social services leadership and compassion fatigue in helping professions.

“Dr. Nathaniel Pearson brings interdisciplinary leadership to the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences,” said Dr. Griffin. “He will be an incredible asset not only to the college, but also to the campus-wide community as we work to refine our internal leadership development programs in every discipline.”



Dr. James V. Shuls

Beginning in July of 2021, Dr. James V. Shuls joined the Southeastern community as the new dean for the College of Education. Dr. Shuls stepped in for the previous dean, Dr. James A. Anderson, who had served the university since 2015. As dean of the college, Dr. Shuls will also be working closely with the American Center for Political Leadership.

“I am extremely honored to join the faculty of SEU. The college has a great record and tradition of producing high-quality educators who have a passion for shaping the lives of their students,” remarked Dr. Shuls.

Prior to accepting this new role, Dr. Shuls was an associate professor and the chair of the Educator Preparation & Leadership Department at the University of Missouri — St. Louis. He is currently a distinguished fellow of education policy at the Show-Me Institute in St. Louis, Mo., where he previously served as the director of education policy. Dr. Shuls earned his Ph.D. in Education Policy from the University of Arkansas, and has conducted comprehensive research in teacher labor markets, school finance and school choice. He also has extensive experience in the classroom, teaching kindergarten, first, second and fifth grades.

“Dr. Shuls will be a pace-setter on our team of deans,” said Dr. Griffin. “Dr. Shuls is already successful as a thought leader and education policy advocate, and we’re going to see his capacity unleashed at Southeastern.”

AARUSHI PRATAP CRAFTED TO CREATE



At a young age, Aarushi Pratap was diagnosed with autism, and this became a catalyst as she began to display her thoughts and emotions through works of art. Since her early beginnings, Aarushi has designed clothes for a school fashion show, started selling her own handmade accessories and was on the small select team of artists who made the new Special Olympics logo for the 2022 games.

“I think autism is my superpower and that it has a talent within it. I think God has given me talent through my autism,” said Aarushi.

Shortly after her diagnosis, Aarushi’s parents began to see her love for the arts. For Aarushi, drawing was not just a

form of artistic expression, but a way to communicate.

Eventually, Aarushi was drawn to the world of fashion. At the age of thirteen, Aarushi designed dresses for her first fashion show. Though she was quite young for this endeavor, she received wonderful and positive feedback from the crowd, inspiring her to continue designing and creating clothes. Her parents then bought her first sewing machine and she taught herself to sew. She has gone on to create many beautiful pieces of clothing for herself and her customers. Notable amongst them are her creations which were auctioned at fundraisers to benefit the Special Olympics.

Alongside her artistic endeavors, Aarushi has a passion for sports and the Special Olympics. She has competed in many different categories, including bocce ball, swimming, cheerleading, basketball and stand-up paddleboarding. Aarushi had the incredible opportunity to combine her love of art with the Special Olympics when she was selected to contribute to the 2022 games logo. She was chosen as spokesperson for the logo and traveled to New York to do a live interview with Fox News.

“Special Olympics Florida nominated me for the design team. Nine athlete artists from all over the United States were picked to design the logo for the 2022 USA games, and I was one of them,” says Aarushi.

When it came time to look into higher education options after high school, Aarushi was ecstatic to learn of Southeastern University's Link program. "I came to SEU because I believe it has a wonderful program for students with disabilities to have happier and better lives," said Aarushi.

The Link program is a postsecondary educational opportunity designed for students who have mild social and intellectual disabilities. With a focus on the development of personal independence and employability, the Link program offers a multitude of resources to the attending students to help them prepare for adulthood. Each student is given peer mentors, social mentors, academic mentors and an athletic assistant to help ensure success in all aspects of their lives throughout the duration of the program.

For Aarushi, the Christian environment of Southeastern has been a beacon of joy and excitement in her first year on campus. "God has given me a chance to make many friends, in and outside of the Link program," said Aarushi. "I have been able to build relationships with people I've met at chapel and in the library. God has given me a community of support here at Southeastern, for my learning and for my art."

Many of the activities and events that Aarushi experiences on campus, she illustrates through drawings and watercolors.

Jewelry is another outlet for Aarushi's talent. When she is not crafting with pencils, paint and digital design elements, Aarushi makes handmade clothing, masks and ornamental jewelry, all of which she sells on her Etsy shop, "Aartarooni." Aarushi has been able to display and sell her clothing and accessory items on campus as well.

During the spring 2021 semester, Aarushi took part in an internship with We Are SEU, the internal student marketing department on campus. Through this internship, Aarushi used her creative talents to elucidate the inner workings of the team as they set the publication into production. She also hand embroidered many designs and photos from the magazine onto shirts, masks and frameable fabric, making moments of the magazine tangible and collectable. Amid the internship, Aarushi began to take her talents to a digital format by making illustrations through her computer software, and making an intricate graphic design of the Issue 16 cover image.

In the semesters to come, Aarushi is excited to partake in internships on and off campus to expand her work-related experience in her chosen concentration of art and fashion. Aarushi also looks forward to making many new friends and memories. She dreams of having her own fashion brand in the future.





Jack Miller in the POCK-IT shirt

JACK MILLER

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN HIS 'POCK-IT'

Jack Miller has put every penny he has into his patent-pending activewear line, POCK-IT Apparel. Dedicated to developing his business, he was willing to do whatever it took to get it off the ground, working two campus jobs and even selling his car. Jack launched POCK-IT Apparel in September of 2020, and since then, he has sold and shipped his products to 13 countries around the world.

Originally from Linlithgow, Scotland, Jack is currently pursuing a global MBA degree and playing on the Fire men's soccer team at Southeastern.

The initial idea behind POCK-IT Apparel materialized during Jack's senior year of high school in 2014 while he was representing his school in the Challenge Enterprise Weekend. The event was created to give a platform to the next generation of entrepreneurs. Jack's challenge was to invent a product unique to the world of health and fitness.

He recollected, "This was when everything really started."

As someone involved in athletics from the age of seven, Jack was able to spot a gap in the market through his own personal experience. After testing existing products, he realized there was no practical or comfortable way to store his phone while running. This discovery led him to invent POCK-IT Apparel's original design, an activewear shirt with a built-in pocket on each sleeve, structured to carry technological devices and other essentials such as car keys.

"My goal was to achieve hands-free exercise in the most functional way possible," said Jack.

Around the same time Jack was further investigating his product idea, he was also preparing to move to the U.S. to attend college. As a result, his business plans were put on pause to pursue his degree and play collegiate-level soccer.

During his senior year of undergraduate studies at Wingate University in North Carolina, Jack was inspired to pick up where he left off when participating in a competition modeled after "Shark Tank." After presenting a rough prototype of his design sewn together by a fellow classmate, he ended the competition as the only student to be fully funded.

Jack spent the next two years testing his design and searching for a manufacturer to produce the shirt at the quality and appearance he imagined.

Jack immersed himself in research and analysis to ensure his product would meet the desires and needs of fitness enthusiasts. While he was still in North Carolina, Jack conducted a market survey of over 300 athletes in order to incorporate authentic feedback into his design process.

By the time Jack came to Southeastern, he had worked with six different manufacturers before finalizing the model and finding the right fit. In November of 2020, he presented his idea at Catapult's LAUNCH Pitch Night in Lakeland and was awarded a grant that fully funded his patent.

Since that point, Jack has marketed his business purely through social media. Not only does he handle all of the content creation for his account, but he also learned how to code in order to make his own website.

"I don't feel like I'm working when I'm working on my business, because it's what I love to do," said Jack. "I've loved getting to learn about every aspect of running it."

Jack packages and ships out all of the orders from his apartment. "I funded it all on my own, so I've had to learn how to be cost-effective," he said.

He's also had to develop creative solutions to various obstacles along the way. After he sold his car to invest more in his business, Jack was having difficulty getting his orders to the post office. He noticed there was a postal worker who seemed to drive by his apartment every day. Jack decided to introduce himself and gave him a free shirt.

"Now, he comes and knocks on my door every day to see if I have any packages, and then he takes them for me," laughed Jack.

As for the future of POCK-IT Apparel, Jack dreams of maximizing his presence in the Lakeland community. He hopes to see his line of athletic wear in local retail stores and develop licensing agreements with local clubs and organizations. He even plans to guest speak in some business classes at a couple of local colleges. Set to graduate in December of 2021, Jack intends to eventually work full time expanding POCK-IT Apparel.

"All of the amazing learning experiences I've taken from this journey have been so worth it," expressed Jack. "Anyone who has an idea, go at it full force — give it your all. If it doesn't work out, it's never going to be a failure because you will have learned so much from it!"



The Women's Basketball team celebrates after advancing to the NAIA National Tournament with their undefeated run through the NAIA Opening Round.

BASEBALL

In the NAIA Preseason Coaches' Poll, the Fire were voted No. 1 in the NAIA and were also selected as the Preseason Sun Conference favorite. The Fire lived up to the hype after securing their third Sun Conference Tournament title in program history and became the first Sun Conference team since 2013 to win the regular season and tournament titles in the same year. The Fire were chosen as a host site for the NAIA Baseball Opening Round where they went undefeated to secure their third trip to the NAIA World Series. At the World Series, SEU went 1-2. Senior Nick Bottari was The Sun Conference Player of the Year and one of four All-Americans on the team this year.

Bottari was also the Polk County Male Collegiate Athlete of the Year and the recipient of the Commissioner's Award for Perseverance at the Polk County All Sports Awards.

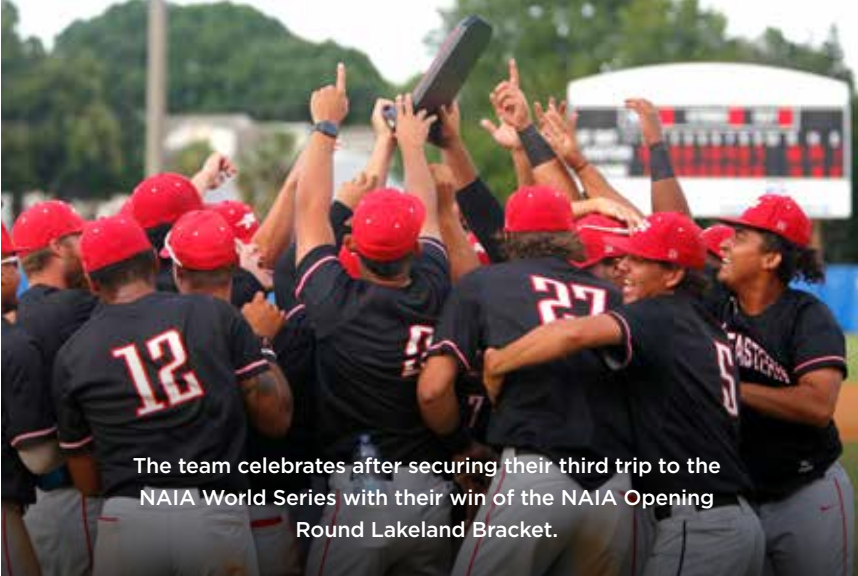
MEN'S BASKETBALL

With their backs against the wall late in the season, the Fire rallied to defeat the Ave Maria Gyrenes 75-72 to secure their spot in The Sun Conference Tournament. The Fire took on top-seeded Warner University in the quarterfinal matchup and were defeated by a score of 79-57 to end their 12-17 season. Reggie Mesidor captained the Fire and was named Second Team All-Sun Conference after leading the team in scoring with 400 points and

averaging 14.8 points per game. Mesidor also recorded 115 rebounds, 64 assists, 38 steals and six blocks while shooting 42% from the field and 38% from the three-point arc. The Fire brought in more awards at the conclusion of the season, including an Academic All-District title for Riley Minix and a Sun Conference Champion of Character award for Devon Ford.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

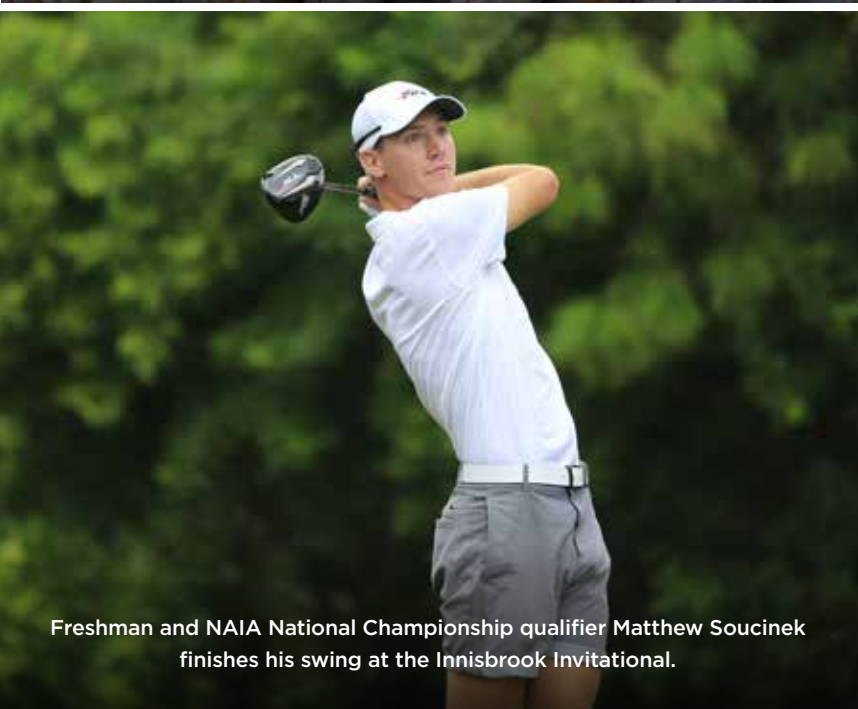
The Fire underwent another successful year this season with an overall record of 26-3 and a perfect 20-0 Sun Conference record, securing their sixth-straight Sun Conference regular season and fifth Sun Conference Tournament championship.



The team celebrates after securing their third trip to the NAIA World Series with their win of the NAIA Opening Round Lakeland Bracket.



Senior Devon Ford takes contact under the basket.



Freshman and NAIA National Championship qualifier Matthew Soucinek finishes his swing at the Innisbrook Invitational.



Ana Uribe hits her tee shot to begin the second round of play at The Sun Conference Championship at LPGA International.

Because of their stellar season, the Fire were granted the opportunity to be a host site for the NAIA National Tournament Opening Round where the first-seeded Fire defeated Xavier University to secure their spot in the NAIA National Championship in Sioux City, Iowa. The Fire were defeated in the Round of 16 by eventual national semifinalist Indiana Wesleyan. Gabrielle Ozoude was named Sun Conference Player of the Year and Second Team All-American after averaging 17 points and nine rebounds per game. She ranked 21st nationally in blocks with 40 and shot 52.1% from the field. Sophomore Haley Howarth was also named to the honorable mention All-American team after

averaging 13.6 points per game, 64 assists, 67 steals and ranked fifth in the nation in 3-pointers with 83.

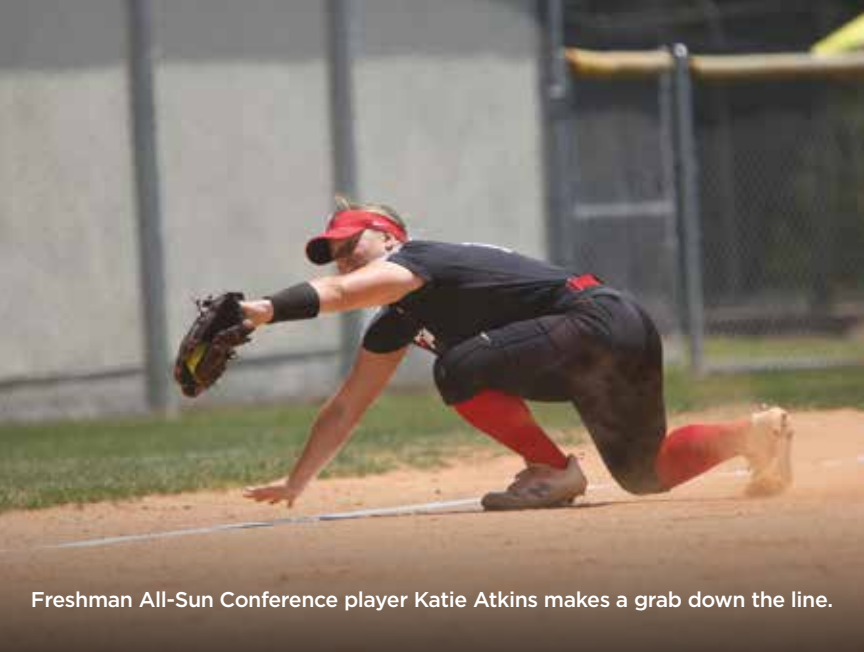
MEN'S GOLF

The Fire secured their bid into the NAIA National Championship for the first time since the 2018 season and the fifth time in program history while being ranked No. 13 in the nation. Just one stroke separated the Fire from third place in The Sun Conference Tournament. Freshman Matthew Soucinek and sophomore Noah Endicott were selected for the All-Sun Conference team. Soucinek won three events over the season, posted a scoring average just over 74 and was named Third-Team NAIA All-American.

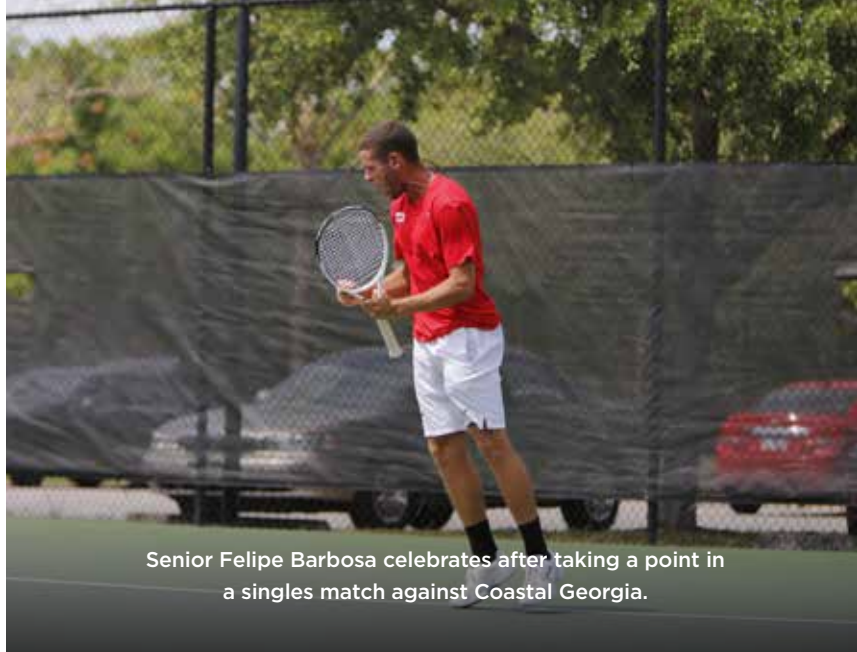
Endicott posted a scoring average of 74.3 and secured six Top 10 finishes. The duo helped the Fire post five Top 3 finishes in nine tournaments and a team average score of 300.65. Soucinek tied for 22nd at the NAIA National Championship for the best finish by a freshman in program history. Soucinek and Endicott were also selected to the Academic All-Sun Conference Team along with teammate Jacob Soucinek.

WOMEN'S GOLF

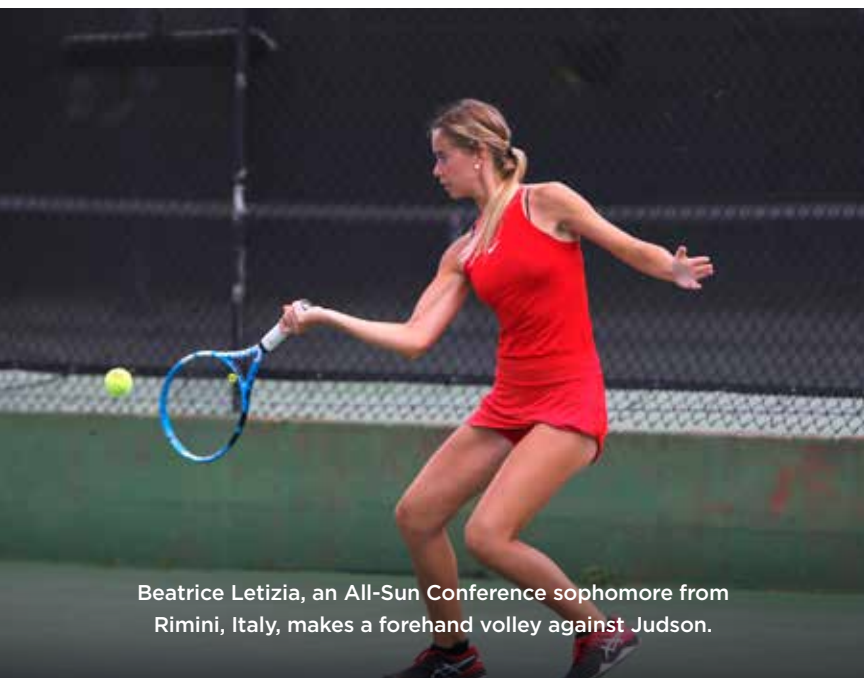
In The Sun Conference Tournament, the women finished second behind No. 2 Keiser after posting a team score of 887 to finish 15 strokes from first place. The team finished the regular season ranked



Freshman All-Sun Conference player Katie Atkins makes a grab down the line.



Senior Felipe Barbosa celebrates after taking a point in a singles match against Coastal Georgia.



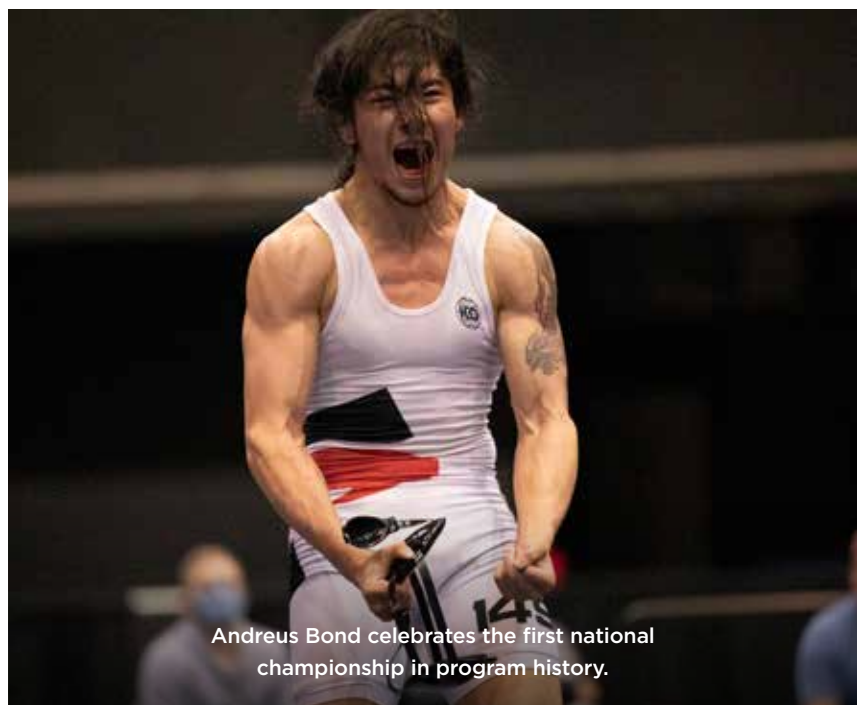
Beatrice Letizia, an All-Sun Conference sophomore from Rimini, Italy, makes a forehand volley against Judson.



Kyle Manuel launches the shot put during the Embry-Riddle Spikes Classic.



Courtney Gales carries the baton towards the finish line in the 4x400 Relay to give Southeastern its first individual national championship at indoor nationals.



Andrus Bond celebrates the first national championship in program history.

No. 4 in the NAIA, qualified for the NAIA National Championship and posted its best finish at the national championship in program history at third. Ana Uribe, Valentina Espinosa and Danielle Owens were all selected for First Team All-Sun Conference honors and all earned NAIA All-American honors. Owens was the first freshman in program history to earn all-conference honors and Sun Conference Freshman of the Year. Head Coach Steve Phelps was named Sun Conference Coach of the Year.

SOFTBALL

With one of the strongest starts in program history, the Fire took down five NAIA Top 20 opponents in the first weeks of play, including a sweep of No. 7 University of Mobile and a 3-2 win over No. 6 ranked Columbia College. They opened Sun Conference play with a sweep of Sun Conference regular season champions Webber International University with a pair of walk-off wins in the bottom of the seventh. The Fire also broke into the NAIA Coaches' Top 25 Poll for the first time in three years and spent time as one of the top defensive teams in the country after ranking second with 165 assists and fourth with 390 total putouts. The Fire were one win away from securing a spot in their conference tournament and ended the season with a 29-22 record. The Fire placed three on the First Team All-Sun Conference, including Katie Atkins, Erica Stahl and Britt Robinson. Sophomore Megan Froehlich was also named The Sun Conference Champion of Character.

MEN'S TENNIS

After receiving their first NAIA National Ranking since 2016, the Fire ended their historic regular season ranked No. 21 in the nation and were able to secure their first ever appearance in the NAIA National Championship Tournament after receiving an at-large bid. In The Sun Conference Tournament, the third-seeded Fire fell to the top-seeded Keiser University to finish the 2021 season as TSC Tournament Runner-Up in their first-ever appearance in the TSC Final. At nationals, the Fire lost a back-and-forth battle with Grace College, 4-2. The Fire also had six athletes selected for The Sun

Conference Men's All-Academic Team including Alexandre D'Aboville, Omar Fiorenzato, Felipe Barbosa, Timothy Nacca, Santiago Haas and Alec Lichter.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

The Fire ended the season 5-7 on a year that was highlighted by a 6-1 victory over the College of Coastal Georgia, which was receiving votes in the NAIA Top 25 at the time. Sophomore Beatrice Letizia was named to the All-Sun Conference Second Team after posting a 7-3 overall singles record and was ranked as high as No. 13 in the NAIA Women's Tennis Singles' Rankings.

MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD


During the indoor track and field season, Southeastern won the first Sun Conference Indoor Track and Field Championship after posting a team score of 295.5. John Perez-Dunn was named the Outstanding Track Athlete of the Year after earning top honors in the mile, 1000 Meters and 3000 Meters. The Fire claimed many more first place finishes at The Sun Conference Indoor Championship, including the 60 Meter Hurdles, 60 Meter Dash, 600 Meters, 4X400 Meter Relay, Shot Put and the Weight Throw. Nick Dodson was also named Coach of the Year after the men's performance at the TSC Championship meet. After their performance, the Fire had eight different athletes qualify for the NAIA Indoor Track and Field National Championship with three advancing to the finals and 10 athletes claiming All-American Honors. In the outdoor season, the men were voted first in the TSC Outdoor Track and Field Preseason Poll. After scoring 261 points in the TSC Outdoor Championship, the Fire secured their second Sun Conference Title and finished a season sweep in the league in the running events with the cross country and indoor track titles in hand. Davonte Vanderpool was named the TSC Outdoor Track Athlete of the Year after breaking the conference record in the 110 Hurdles, and Zach Nichols was the Field Athlete of the Year after winning the Hammer. As a team, the Fire were fourth at the NAIA Outdoor Track and Field Championships with nine All-Americans.

WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Along with the men's TSC Indoor Championship title, the women also earned the TSC Indoor title after picking up 14 wins in the 20 events. Among the 14 wins was the Outstanding Track Athlete of the Year, Julia Rohm, who finished first in the 3000 Meter. The Fire also won the 200 Meter, 5000 Meter, 60 Meter Dash, 600 Meter, 60 Meter Hurdles, 4X400 Relay and others. Princess Nwankwo was named Outstanding Field Athlete of the Year after winning the Weight Throw and Shot Put. The women had nine qualify for the NAIA Indoor National Championship where the 4x400 Relay team consisting of Yuriah Bigos, Miyah Ford, Namiah Simpson and Courtney Gales claimed the first-ever National Championship for the Fire. The women were also picked as the favorites to win the TSC Outdoor Title to begin the season and did just that after scoring 302 points to claim its second Sun Conference Outdoor title. Head Coach Nick Dodson claimed Sun Conference Coach of the Year for both the indoor and outdoor season. At the outdoor championships, Jaqual Bush won the program's first individual outdoor championship by winning the 200 Meter Dash. The Fire finished fourth as a team at the outdoor championships in just their second appearance with 12 All-Americans.

WRESTLING

The Fire wrestling program had a historical year with four All-Americans, 13 Academic All Mid-South Conference honors, eight All-Conference honors, one Champion of Character, six NAIA National Championship qualifiers and two National Champions. Jesse Pryor, Adrian Ayala, Andreus Bond, Kyle Kirkham, Kohl Drake and Isaac Crowell all earned a trip back to Wichita, Kan., for the NAIA National Tournament with Bond and Kirkham claiming the first National Titles in Fire Wrestling history. Bond was an 11-4 winner over Life's Denver Stonecheck in the 149-pound match. Kirkham scored a takedown with just two seconds left in his match for a thrilling 4-2 win at 165 pounds. Pryor finished the tournament sixth in the nation at 285, and Crowell finished seventh in the nation at 125.



DAVID DOCUSEN
**FINDING THE
BEAUTY OF GOD ACROSS
DIVIDING LINES**



NEIGHBORLINESS

FINDING THE BEAUTY OF GOD ACROSS DIVIDING LINES

DR. DAVID DOCUSEN '01, '15 (MAML), '19 (D.Min.) is on a God-given mission to spread awareness and advocate for racial and economic justice.

Using his book “Neighborliness: Finding the Beauty of God Across Dividing Lines” as a guide, David travels all over the country and works with churches looking to transition from their pre-established outreach programs to more holistic community development.

“It’s one thing to feed a family, and it’s another thing to help a family out of poverty,” said David.

Approaching communities at a high poverty level holistically is about bringing measurable and sustainable change to every aspect of the neighborhood. It usually consists of engaging the resources

of residents, nonprofit organizations and the business community.

By consulting with the church’s leadership and preaching to the congregation as a whole, David hopes to help churches develop strategies specific to their own communities.

David first felt the tugging of God towards this cause in his role at Center City Church in Charlotte, N.C., where he had been the lead pastor for 10 years. It was within this position that he began to notice the racial and economic disparities not only in Charlotte, but across the country. David eventually resigned from Center City Church in order to fully devote his time and attention to spreading the message of “Neighborliness” through his new organization, The Neighborliness Center.

The Neighborliness Center focuses on utilizing academic research, advocating

for fair policies and designing practical resources for churches and organizations to explore biblical justice and holistic community development within their neighborhoods.

In the opening scene of his book, David recounts the exact moment God gave him awareness. It was a typical Sunday, and David mounted the stage fully prepared to deliver his sermon as usual. However, when he glanced out at the crowd this time, he couldn’t help but pause with the weight of a sudden realization.

“Everyone looked alike,” recalled David. “I realized the church I was pastoring looked nothing like the city in which it was located.” Situated in Elizabeth, a wealthy to middle-class neighborhood right outside the heart of Charlotte, Center City Church’s congregation consisted of mainly middle-class, white young adults in their 20s and 30s.



In the months that followed, David continued down a path of inward reflection as God began to open his eyes to the lack of diversity in his circle of influence. He knew he had to explore his own heart before he began addressing the issues he saw. As he began to recognize this, David started making new connections with people across racial lines, and they were able to speak into what God was showing him.

“I began to understand that if my friendships and relationships were largely homogenous, my eyes would not be able to see the beauty of God in His fullness.”

It was during this time that the Lord provided an opportunity for David to move his church to a new location directly on the dividing line between economic classes in West Charlotte. “There were houses worth half a million dollars sitting directly across the street from homes that cost under \$40,000,” said David.

The move was not easy, and between the time of the announcement and the actual relocation, Center City Church lost half of its entire congregation.

David admitted, “People were nervous about going to that side of town.”

Partnering with six nonprofit organizations, the church moved to a renovated warehouse turned community center. The congregation gathered for church on Sundays, and during the week, the surrounding community was offered access to education, employment, healthcare and housing.

It took time, but eventually neighbors started coming out for services on Sunday. The church began to diversify. Within the walls of their place of worship, people felt safe to explore relationships across dividing lines. There seemed to be more curiosity, more engagement and less defenses.

“It was a really complex, beautiful and uncomfortable journey toward learning about each other,” said David. “Rather than seeing black and white or rich and poor, people began seeing each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.”

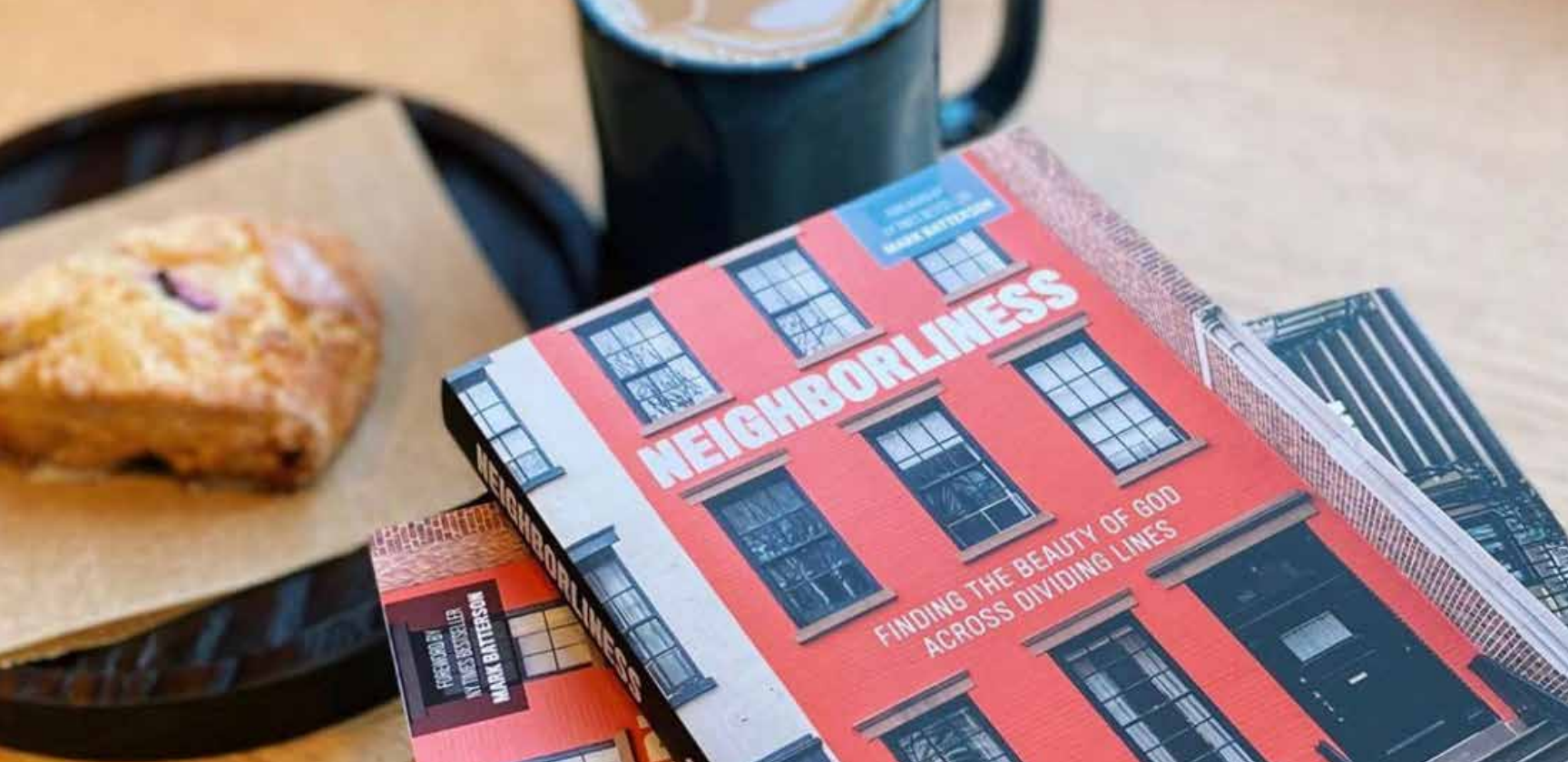
Inspired by the context of Center City Church’s ministry and the relationships

he had been forming through the church’s move, David joined the doctoral program at Southeastern. His original intent was to further research the cyclical patterns of generational poverty, but this area of study led him down a different, yet connected path, exploring racial and economic justice.

“Throughout my doctoral studies, I kept being drawn back to the greatest commandment of loving God and loving neighbors in Mark 12:28-34,” said David. “I realized that if we collectively focused on what Jesus said was most important, we would never have racial and economic injustice in our culture.”

David graduated from the program with his Doctor of Ministry degree in 2019, and that fall he began writing his book, “Neighborliness.” David was able to use his findings on systemic inequalities to relay applicable, real-life stories.

“What I hope people see is a really practical tool that can guide them through the uncertainty of reaching across dividing lines and starting those conversations about issues they might



have been hesitant and unsure to talk about,” said David.

Originally, the book was not planned to be released until August of 2020, but in light of events and protests occurring across the country in the summer of 2020, David’s agent pushed the release to mid July.

Finally having his work available to the public delivered a sense of relief for David, as he carried the weight of the message God put on his heart for almost five years. “It was a joy and a burden,” said David. “I had to continue to give it over to the Lord.”

Numerous churches are now purchasing the book for their entire congregation or with the intent of leading small groups and book studies. Specifically having this in mind, David included a study guide in the back of the book for this purpose.

“I believe the ending of the book is the beginning of a conversation,” said David. “We cultivated a language for people to be able to ask productive questions about each chapter.”

Just recently, David signed a global distribution deal with HarperCollins Christian Publishing to update and re-release “Neighborliness” in February of 2022.

He is also producing a “Neighborliness” video series for small groups and an online training program for leadership teams of churches and organizations. In addition to introducing churches to the online training, David is beginning to work with networks of churches across the country through hosting a series of seminars about biblical justice.

David is a firm believer that education is action. “It prepares us for relationships with people who are different from us.”

When he is not hopping from city to city, David keeps busy with many other commitments. He currently teaches practical theology as an adjunct professor for a Southeastern extension site.

In addition, he writes and acts as a member of the executive board for Relevant Magazine, as well as writing for Influence Magazine.

David is also on the board of Freedom Communities, an organization he helped build that works with residents, nonprofit organizations and business leaders from the Charlotte community to give neighbors in the area equitable access to education, employment, healthcare and housing. They currently have three different mixed-income housing developments where they help families find pathways to home ownership and affordable healthcare.

David lives in Charlotte with his wife, Dara, and their four children: Max, Mary, Jack and Ben.

“Neighborliness: Finding the Beauty of God Across Dividing Lines” is available for purchase on Amazon in all forms. You can also find it on the Alumni Bookshelf at seu.edu/alumni. Special pricing for groups and practical resources for churches can be found on neighborliness.com.



Russ Steinhorn

RUSS STEINHORN

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING KEY TO SUCCESS

The COVID-19 pandemic provided a unique set of challenges and circumstances for all of us.

For former Southeastern baseball player **RUSS STEINHORN '08**, it presented a unique opportunity.

Serving the St. Louis Cardinals organization as the minor league hitting coordinator, Russ got called up to be part of the Cardinals' game day coaching staff when the team had multiple players and coaches out after testing positive for COVID-19 in August.

During the 2020 MLB season, Russ was working with a group of reserve players in Springfield, Ill., and got a call from the director of player development and general manager saying they needed him to fill in and be the hitting coach.

"It's normally a three-person job," said Russ. "But my first call-up was by myself. All three of the guys that I was filling in for had to quarantine, and I was baptized by fire at the highest level of baseball."

For two weeks, Russ worked with the Cardinals in the midst of a playoff push and helped sluggers such as Paul Goldschmidt, Matt Carpenter and Dexter Fowler. Since Russ was in major league spring training and then summer camp with the team, all parties were familiar but didn't know each other that well.



Russ started developing relationships with the Cardinals' hitters to see what areas he could assist them with individually on game day.

"When guys start to take ownership of their own career and start having success, you learn quickly that your window of opportunity is very short, so you better be prepared to give them the proper information, and at different phases you learn to talk to them or talk with them," said Russ.

The Orlando native knew pretty early he wanted to go into coaching and teaching and holds a math education degree from Southeastern. He wanted to follow in his father's footsteps, who was a science teacher and girls' basketball coach. During his time at Southeastern, Russ started to

discover another aspect of coaching that intrigued him.

"When I got into college and started to see the family-like atmosphere and culture that could be created, I wanted to be a college coach to make an impact on the players' lives long term."

After graduating in 2008, Russ coached in the New York Collegiate Baseball League with Delaware State head coach J.P. Blandin. Following that summer, Blandin had an open graduate assistant position and offered it to Russ. The position didn't pay and he had to work side jobs to make ends meet, but the experience and relationships proved to be valuable.

He then went on to work at UNC Greensboro for a year as a volunteer assistant until Delaware State had a full-time position open. During the 2012 season, the Hornets had one of their better offensive seasons. One day, Russ had a voicemail from Sig Mejdal, the director of decision sciences for the Houston Astros at the time.

The Astros were in the midst of a rebuild and Mejdal mentioned to Russ that there might be a hitting coach position open.

"God works in mysterious ways," said Russ. "If I wouldn't have gone to Delaware State or New York to coach, none of this ever would have happened."



Russ Steinhorn (right) and other members of the Cardinals' coaching staff take the field for a Spring Training workout in Jupiter, Fla.

His first assignment was as the short-season hitting coach. Then, he was the manager of the Astros' Dominican Summer League Team. "That was a tremendous experience because you have to learn to communicate with people that can't communicate with you," said Russ. "Their faith was so strong that it made me a better person to see where they come from, how hard they have to work, and how much they glorify God and constantly pray; they are all there to help their families."

Russ then spent another season as the Class A full season manager of the Quad Cities River Bandits before coming back to the collegiate level and spending the 2018 season as the director of player development at Clemson University.

In 2019, Russ came back to the pros as an assistant hitting coordinator with the Philadelphia Phillies. Another relationship helped get him to St. Louis. The Cardinals' major league hitting coach Jeff Albert was the Astros' hitting coordinator when Russ was a coach in the organization.

As the minor league hitting coordinator, Russ is in charge of all Triple-A hitters on down to the rookie leagues. "When you are at an affiliate, your direct responsibility is those 12-13 guys. They can move up and you won't see them again until spring training, but when you are the coordinator, you can follow them through their career and impact them from when they sign through when they go to St. Louis," said Russ.

Russ still keeps tabs on the Fire baseball program and is excited by the growth of the campus he grew up just down the road from. It was totally different in 2004 when Russ arrived; there was no football, the Ted A. Broer Stadium had just been built and improvements were underway on the dorms. Seeing the growth potential of Southeastern led Russ to want to continue his baseball career and education there.

"I knew it was going to be a little challenging going in, but it was definitely worth it," said Russ. "I knew I could grow as a person and

as a baseball player, so it was a perfect opportunity for me."

He built long-lasting relationships with his Southeastern teammates that he still values to this day. Russ called the teams that won four consecutive NCCAA National Championships very tight-knit that did everything together.

"There's nothing wrong with the big campuses, but being at a university like Southeastern, I think the relationships last a little bit longer if they are on a personal level," said Russ.

Relationship building has allowed him to have such a successful coaching career. His general approach is to learn a person's story and learn what goals they have.

"If I try to make an impact on a person's life without getting to know them, it will be challenging to get them to have the buy-in of what we are trying to accomplish on or off the field," said Russ.

2021 SEASON

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A portrait of Faith "Dani" Nawara, a woman with long dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark purple turtleneck and a black jacket. The background is a solid blue color.

FAITH "DANI" NAWARA
**BUILDING THE FUTURE
AT FACEBOOK**

FAITH “DANI” NAWARA ’10 never imagined that her unique background in business management and law would land her a selective position with Facebook. Currently working as a senior change and HR project manager, Dani’s primary responsibility is to help Facebook employees around the globe safely return to their offices in the wake of COVID-19.

Growing up in Florida with close ties to her family, Dani chose Southeastern with little deliberation. During three short but intense years, she served in leadership roles within the Student Body Leadership Council, participating on the worship team and tutoring at the Academic Center for Enrichment (ACE). She was also involved in various off-campus events, including 5K races, special needs projects and food/toy drives for families in need. Her favorite memories at Southeastern include hanging out with friends at Chartwells and running around Lake Hollingsworth.

Dani attributes much of her professional development to her classes. “I am grateful, and deeply appreciative, of the business faculty that took the time to explain concepts to me along the way,” she said. Dani credits Dr. Beth Leslie with transforming her communication skills and Dr. Tim Welch with inspiring her to pursue law school. Dr. John Royer, who helped her secure an internship with a local Lakeland nonprofit, also played a significant role in her professional development. While Dani was on the fence about returning to pre-med (her original degree choice), Dr. Royer saw the potential and passion in her for consumer marketing, and his perceptive guidance was a catalyst for her career.

After graduating from Southeastern in the winter of 2010 with a degree in marketing and management, Dani worked full time at her family’s early learning childcare business before securing a job as a program manager for HR at TriNet, a private business services company. During

her three years there, she blossomed from an inexperienced 23-year-old into a highly respected employee who saved the company close to \$1 million per year in expenses and costs.

At the beginning of her time at TriNet, she was accepted into the University of Florida’s MBA accelerated program. She completed her degree while working at TriNet, and following graduation, she spent the next few years as a remote program manager at Automatic Data Processing (ADP), flying around the U.S. and managing her own team of analysts. Her life became a whirlwind as she also attended Stetson University College of Law, playing airplane ping pong between her ADP destinations and evening law classes in Tampa.

When COVID-19 struck in early 2020, Dani’s career came to a halt. She had completed her law degree, yet she found herself unemployed for the first time in over a decade. By her 27th fruitless interview, she was desperate. “My JD hanging next to my MBA on the wall, I cried out to God,” she said.

A few days later, Dani received an email from a placement agency regarding a senior project manager role with an anonymous Big Tech company. She moved forward with the application and landed an interview with Facebook. In November of 2020, she was hired onto a special HR crisis team that needed someone with a substantial background in program management, law and IT — the perfect fit for Dani’s expertise.

Dani initially came on board to help manage Facebook’s Global Return to Office COVID-19 contact tracing program. Within a week, she handed this program to another Facebook team while creating a tactical project framework for the company’s Equity and Diversity Report. A month later, she transitioned back to the HR & Crisis Incident Management program, the first of its kind, which serves

an immediate purpose helping Facebook employees adjust to the pandemic and also prepares the company for future crises.

“It’s cool knowing that I’m trailblazing and pioneering something completely new and different at a Big 4 Tech company,” Dani remarked. “It’s a career highlight and milestone for me: leading and collaborating with some of the best and brightest individuals out there. There is not a day that goes by that I do not learn something new from my colleagues who are located all over the world.”

The onboarding process was rough since Dani had little to no guidance. As a result, she was forced to become comfortable with uncertainty. This allowed her to “fail forward” (as Facebook would say), transforming the way she thought about work.

Dani noted that intentional communication is crucial. “At Facebook, I built positive rapport by taking notes and sharing them with my networks.” She also enjoys the unique social life that accompanies her role. “The biggest smile comes on my face when I get to interact with different cultures. Given that I have not been able to travel during COVID, connecting and interacting with such diverse individuals has really been a blessing.”

In late March of 2021, Dani launched a community blog called “The Bae Bee,” a place where people all over the world can share their journeys, experiences and inspirations.

As for the future, Dani has big dreams — all built on a philosophy she has followed since her undergrad years: “If I build my future, then my future will be ready for me.” Her dream is to start her own business and have a big family. Currently located in Sarasota, Fla., Dani spends her spare time working out, baking, hanging out with friends and family, and traveling.



LARRY TAYLOR BASKETBALL WITH A VERTICAL VISION

LARRY TAYLOR '16, '18 (MBA) is an investor in the next generation. Orchestrating numerous basketball camps locally and globally through his outreach program, Vertical Vision, Larry has discovered how to incorporate his natural gifts with his passion for mentoring.

After a full history of playing collegiate-level basketball, including two years on the men's team at Southeastern, Larry was not ready to push his love for the game aside following graduation. "I did not want to let the ball stop bouncing just because I stopped playing," he recalled. "I kept asking God over and over again, 'How can I continue to bless others with the game of basketball?'"

Enlisting the help of his former Southeastern teammates **MATTHEW CROWE '16** and **JOSUE CELESTIN '18**, Larry began hosting basketball camps throughout southwest Florida and in Texas.

"I wanted God to be able to use me in a way that impacted communities and empowered our youth," he said.

In answer to his prayer, Vertical Vision was born. Larry began expanding the scope of his mission, organizing clothing drives for Boys and Girls Clubs in the local communities and donating scholarships to students in need. During his undergraduate years, Larry raised enough money to give scholarships to two Southeastern students, **TALISHA NELMS '19** and **JUAN BUITRON**. When Larry returned as a graduate student, he was able to provide another scholarship for a Fire football player — **ROBERT "BOB" GREATHOUSE III '18**.

"I wanted to help students who were so determined to accomplish their vision even in the midst of chaos in their personal lives," said Larry.

His next step with Vertical Vision landed him in Guangzhou, one of the largest cities in China. After connecting

with a friend who was running an underground church in Guangzhou, Larry was able to host a series of basketball camps there in the summers of 2018 and 2019.

Ranging from three to five days, the camps were created for children of all age groups. In 2018, Larry traveled with the sole company of his sister, who ended up staying in the city a year longer to work as a teacher.

Although he had assistance from translators, Larry realized that if he came back to China for another summer, he would need more individuals who could help him with leading drills and teaching the fundamentals. In 2019, he recruited his dad, Kurt, and his former Fire men's basketball teammate **LINWOOD ROSS '19**.

When it came to structuring the camps, a specific skill was emphasized each day. They covered ball-handling, shooting techniques, how to play defense and physical conditioning.



Linwood (left) and Larry (right) pose with their campers.

Once the training was finished, Larry or one of his travel partners would share the gospel with the kids. “In a way, we had to be super careful how we talked about the Bible because we were running the camp in a public area,” he pointed out.

Larry was also able to attend a few services in the underground church. “It was eye-opening to see people who were choosing to go worship and hear the word of God regardless of the risks,” he said. “It was more powerful than anything I’ve ever experienced.”

Although basketball is becoming increasingly popular in China, knowledge and understanding of the actual game is not as well known. “It was amazing to see the amount of gratitude and appreciation the parents had for someone coming to teach the game,” said Larry. “When the camps were over, families would give me handwritten thank you notes. One family even made me a traditional Chinese folding fan.”

“I wanted God to be able to use me in a way that impacted communities and empowered our youth.”

Once it is safe for international travel, Larry plans to return to Asia and host a camp in the Philippines.

In the meantime, he stays busy in his current position as the athletic director and head of the physical education program at St. Charles Borromeo School in Port Charlotte, Fla. Larry is responsible for the athletic program for over five sports. He also oversees physical education classes and curriculum for all grade levels ranging from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade.

Larry expressed, “I’ve learned that when you work hard and serve others — God takes care of the rest.”

He attributes this outlook to the teachings of his former Southeastern coaches, Roy “R-Jay” Barsh II and Randy Lee. In addition to his two years on the men’s basketball team during his undergraduate studies, Larry also served as a graduate assistant for the team while he was earning his master’s in Business Administration.

“It’s not often that you see former teammates helping each other out, even after they’ve stopped playing together,” said Larry. “It speaks a lot to the culture and community Coach Barsh and Coach Lee created at Southeastern.”

In the future, Larry dreams of creating his own youth travel program for kids who lack opportunities to play basketball in other settings. He also continues to look for more ways in which Vertical Vision can grow. “The main thing God asks us to do is just stay available,” he said. “With Vertical Vision, I just let God do his thing.”



LINWOOD ROSS A HEART FOR SERVING

LINWOOD ROSS '19 has always had a heart for serving those in need. As a Southeastern graduate with a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication and Media Studies, Linwood did not expect to end up working for the Boys and Girls Club, let alone for four years. Now occupying the role of program director at John L. Sanders Boys and Girls Club in Lakeland, Fla., Linwood pours into the lives of local youth every day.

Growing up with both parents as pastors, Linwood saw firsthand what it looks like to have a heart for helping others. "I never thought I had that same servant's heart within me. I just always thought I was an athlete and put myself in that box," he said. "The Boys and Girls Club opened me up to new and different things."

The first time someone pointed out his charitable nature was while Linwood was playing for the Fire men's basketball team at Southeastern. His coach, Roy "R-Jay" Barsh II, selected him to receive the Champion of Character award.

"I guess he had seen what I was doing outside of school and in my own time, but I was never looking for recognition so it really surprised me," he commented. "I didn't even know he noticed."

At that time, Linwood had just begun his journey with the Boys and Girls Club working at James J. Musso, a different branch of the club in Lakeland. "It's crazy because a lot of the kids I worked with back then are now entering high school, heading off to college and even starting their careers," he said. "It's definitely rewarding to see

them doing so well. That's the whole goal of the position to me — to better the kids' lives."

Linwood originally accepted his current role as program director after his graduation from Southeastern. Shortly after that, he was offered a job within the organization as a digital marketing specialist, handling all of the marketing and branding for Boys and Girls Clubs in Polk County, including eight different locations.

Although this second opportunity excited him, Linwood was not ready to give up his heavy involvement with the kids. Instead, he adapted the position's demands so he could work remotely during nights, weekends and from home. He creates everything from graphics to videos for social media, newsletters, website copy and even event promotion.



“It was amazing to see so many people appreciative of Linwood and his skill at our Vertical Vision camp in China. It was truly a blessing to have him there.”

— Larry Taylor

He has still been dedicated to showing up every day, even during the pandemic. For months clubs were closed, but workers and volunteers stayed active running a meal delivery service for struggling families in the surrounding community.

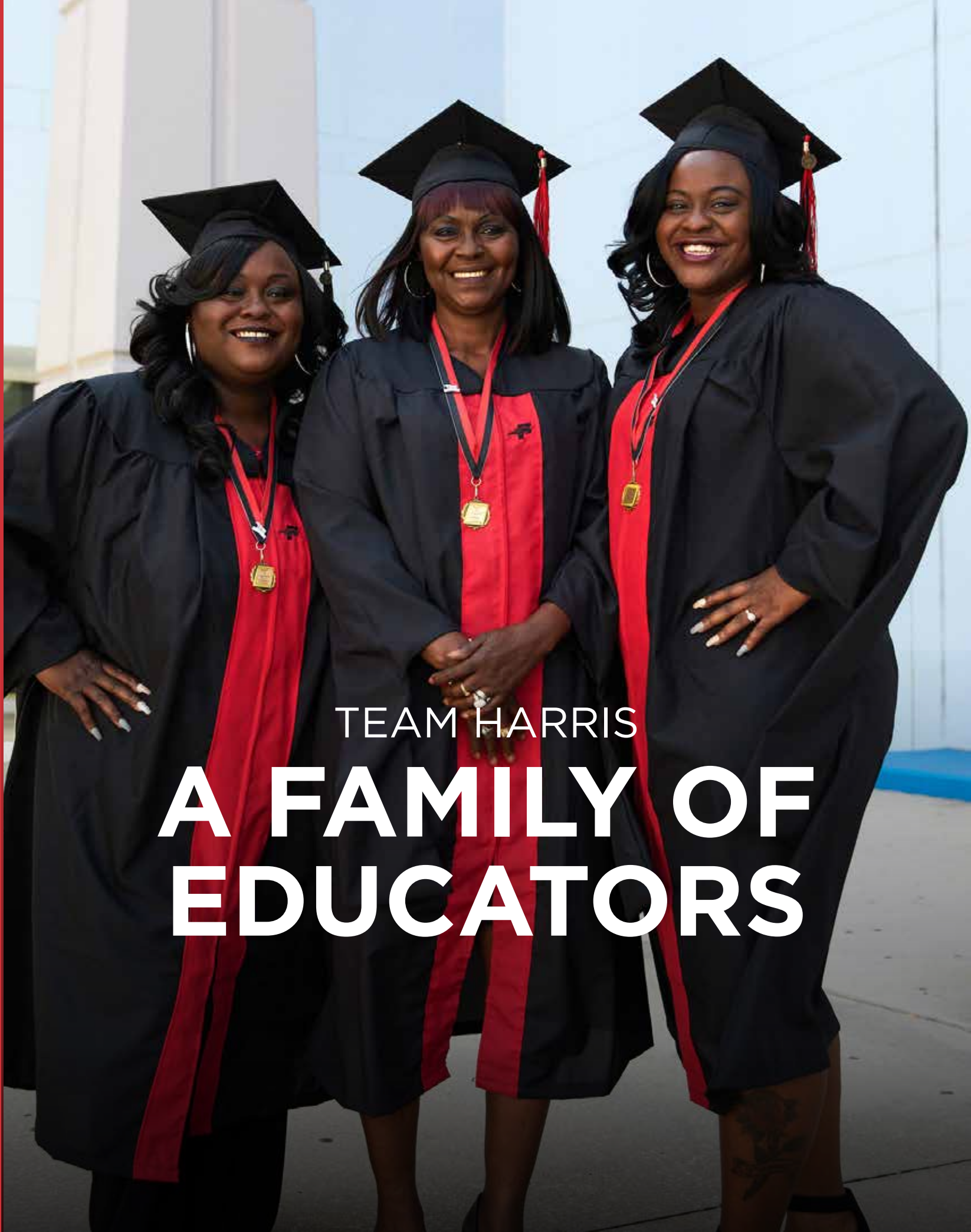
In Linwood’s typical day at the club, he oversees the schedules for programs and activities for children from kindergarten to eighth-grade, including the time set aside for homework and tutoring, sports games, guest speakers (pre-COVID-19), crafts and free-time. In the past, he has arranged helpful educational sessions for the kids to learn about topics such as financial literacy.

Linwood expressed, “My favorite part about working with the kids is being able to help shape their minds. In today’s culture, there’s so much pressure from social media to be a certain person or live a certain life. I’m able to speak into their lives and plant seeds so that as they get older, they’ll hopefully remember those things that I told them and develop healthy habits.”

As for the future, Linwood has many ambitions. He dreams of furthering his communications career and eventually building his own relief program for the homeless population in Lakeland.



Linwood (far left), Larry (middle right) and Kurt (far right) with translator (middle left)



TEAM HARRIS

A FAMILY OF EDUCATORS

It is no surprise that **GAYLE HARRIS '21 (M.Ed.)** and her daughters, **JACQUELYN '21 (M.Ed.)** and **TIFFANY '21 (M.Ed.)**, have become known as “Team Harris” to their friends, coworkers and professors. Not only have they been teaching alongside each other at the same school for three years, but they also graduated from Southeastern together in the spring of 2021 with their Master of Education in Elementary Education degrees.

Gayle always dreamed of getting her master’s degree with her eldest daughter, Jacquelyn, who she had worked with for 11 years at Lake Forest Elementary in Jacksonville, Fla. She never imagined that it would be possible to be joined by her youngest daughter, Tiffany, as well.

“It just happened to be at the best time in each of our lives to do it together,” said Gayle.

A representative from Southeastern visited their current school, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary in Jacksonville, and after learning about the master’s program in education and its affordability, Gayle encouraged her daughters to sign up. What she hadn’t told them was that she had signed up too. She kept it a surprise until everything had been finalized.

Gayle recollected, “I told my daughters, ‘I’m going to lead by example. I want both of you to further your education, and I’m going to do it with you.’”

“I told my daughters, ‘I’m going to lead by example. I want both of you to further your education, and I’m going to do it with you.’”

— Gayle

From that point, the Harris women embarked on their educational pursuit, holding weekly meet-ups to check in on one another’s progress and collaborate on homework. Tiffany joked, “We didn’t let each other procrastinate on assignments ever — we had constant text messages.” There was a healthy competition when it came to their studies, as they would often use challenges to motivate themselves by seeing who could score the highest on a certain project.

“Gayle, Jacquelyn and Tiffany were very conscientious and demonstrated a noteworthy zeal to learn and grow professionally,” said Dr. Thomas J. Gollery, professor of doctoral studies of education. “I was very impressed with their energy and willingness to grow in an area outside their expertise and comfort zone.”

They also managed to take every single class together. “One of the most memorable moments was when it was time to register for classes,” said Tiffany. “My mom would come to my house the night that registration opened at 12 a.m., and we would scramble to get three spots for each of us in every class we signed up for.”

“It was stressful, but definitely memorable,” laughed Jacquelyn.

The Harrises attribute their enriching experience to the professors that taught their courses. “Our time at SEU was so magical because it started off with an excellent teacher, Dr. Gollery,” said Tiffany. “He helped us maintain that same excitement and passion we got in his class with every class we took.”

She continued, “You think when you’re in college, you’re just a number, but our professors — especially Dr. Samuel Bennett — made the effort to keep it personal.”

“Sometimes we almost felt like we were the only ones at SEU,” added Jacquelyn.

When the chapter closed on the Harrises’ time at Southeastern, it brought with it a bittersweet feeling. “We really loved it,” said Gayle. “I think Southeastern was the best choice for us.”

Through the whole experience, they were able to keep their journey a secret from everyone but their immediate family. “The Team Harris motto is ‘The best kept secret is one that isn’t revealed at the start of the race, but announced at the finish line,’” quoted Gayle.

As for the coming years, each member of Team Harris has plans for how they’ll be using their degrees in the future. Gayle is aiming to become a math specialist for the Duvall school district in Jacksonville, and Tiffany’s goal is to eventually be an



instructional coach for teachers at her school. Jacquelyn is determined to stay in the classroom and utilize the knowledge she gained from the master's program to ensure she's using the best strategies and techniques with her students.

"I know that the Harris Team will use their graduate degrees to further help others in the Jacksonville community," said Dr. Bennett. "What a blessing they have been to me as their professor and academic advisor and to many other SEU graduate students during their program completion. SEU is a better place because of students like them."

In addition to being a very close-knit bunch, the Harrises are an entire family of educators. Gayle's husband taught for 36 years before retiring four years ago,

"I know that the Harris Team will use their graduate degrees to further help others in the Jacksonville community."

— Dr. Bennett

and her son is currently a Spanish teacher in Houston, Texas.

As a result of the pandemic, all three of the Harris women taught virtually this year for varying grade levels at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary. Gayle teaches third grade, Jacquelyn teaches second grade and Tiffany teaches fifth grade. They plan to return to the classroom in the fall unless the opportunity to work

remotely arises once more for all three of them.

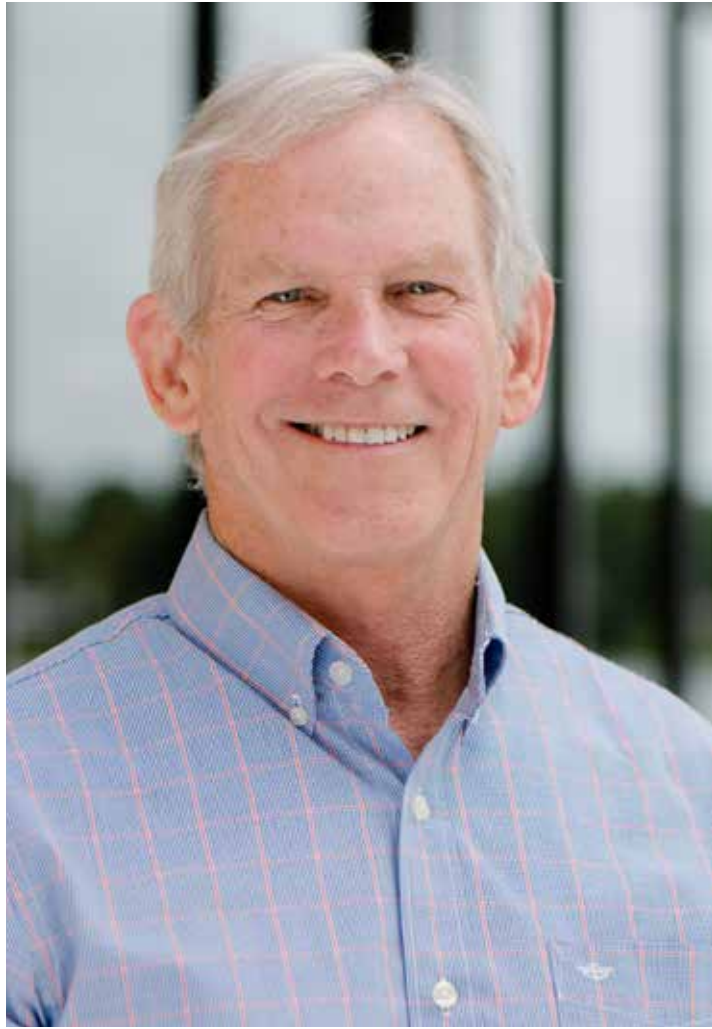
"We never persuaded our kids to get into teaching. They must have just seen the joy it brought me and my husband," said Gayle.

Tiffany agreed, "It was an innate ability — like second nature to us."

Outside of their work life, the Harris family enjoys getting together for Sunday dinners every week and shooting pool. They also travel twice a year to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Jacquelyn is married with two children of her own, and Tiffany is engaged to be married in October of 2021.



Gayle, Jacquelyn and Tiffany meet with Dr. Bennett before the Commencement ceremony.



DR. WILLIAM C. HACKETT, JR.

A TEACHER, A MENTOR, A FRIEND

Over the span of 33 years, **DR. WILLIAM “BILL” C. HACKETT, JR., ’19 (Ed.D.)** has served Southeastern University and its community with integrity. As provost and professor of practical ministry, Dr. Hackett has dedicated his time to students, staff and faculty alike. Following the close of the 2020-21 academic year, he retired from his position as provost and transitioned to the role of provost emeritus while continuing to teach classes on campus.

Dr. Hackett originally began his journey at Southeastern in 1988 as a full-time faculty member. Leading up to that time, he had not even been looking for a job as he was teaching at the Western Bible Institute, now known as Western Bible College, and pastoring a church full time in Phoenix, Ariz. However, a man named Dr. John Higgins, a connection he made in college through his Greek professor, had become the vice president of academic affairs at Southeastern and was looking for a new hire. He came across Dr. Hackett’s old application that had been sent in years before and remembered him. Dr. Higgins offered him the job, and Dr. Hackett was able to meet with his church board and take time to pray with them about making the transition. After receiving many affirmations from the Lord, Dr. Hackett accepted the position and moved to Florida with his wife, Judy, a registered nurse, and their two children, **MOLLY OWEN ’94, ’13 (MEEL)** and **JOSHUA ’97, ’12 (MEEL)**.

Though he started as a member of the faculty, Dr. Hackett became the vice president of academic affairs after Dr. Higgins left Southeastern and continued

to teach classes. When Dr. Mark Rutland became president of Southeastern, Dr. Hackett stepped down from the vice president position back into full-time teaching and into student development. For seven years, he lived on campus as a resident director for the South Apartments, now known as South Pointe. He eventually moved off campus but continued serving in student development for four more years while still teaching full time.

“Teaching has probably been my favorite role,” said Dr. Hackett. “Students give me life — that’s why I’m here.”

Dr. Hackett teaches practical ministry and Bible courses, and for the last 10 years he’s been honored to serve as provost under President Kent Ingle. Dr. Hackett typically teaches two classes a semester. This year he had the opportunity to oversee a few new courses under the master’s degree program in pastoral care and counseling. Out of all the classes he’s taught over the years, new and old, Homiletics is one of his favorites. “It’s just amazing to hear students begin to preach and see them in action,” stated Dr. Hackett.

One of the most significant things Dr. Hackett learned within the classroom was the importance of personal connections between professors and their students.

“I always say, ‘more is caught than taught,’” commented Dr. Hackett. “Students are going to remember you more as who you were as a faculty member — if you took time with them outside of class — rather than the content you taught.”

As a long-standing professor, Dr. Hackett has seen many of the students he had at the undergraduate level go on to do great things or even return to Southeastern in administration or as faculty members. “It’s so special to see the fruit of your ministry as God works through you. I’ve been able to see some of my former students get into their divine design and really live it out,” he said.

In his spare time, Dr. Hackett focuses on his many hobbies and passions. Living on a lake has led to one of his favorite pastimes, boating and fishing, which he especially loves to do with his family. Every Sunday after church, Dr. Hackett and Judy get together with Molly and their son-in-law, **DR. CHRIS OWEN ’93, ’06 (MAML)**, their grandchildren **ETHAN OWEN ’19** and **MADISON (OWEN) GADD ’20** and their spouses for a fun family meal. At times, they are joined by Joshua, his wife and their two children, Declan and Nora.

Exercise is another big part of his life, as he is dedicated to staying healthy and active. He also has a passion and great interest in cars, specifically antique vehicles. He has owned a total of 72 cars and 17 motorcycles in his lifetime.

Although Dr. Hackett is stepping down from his position as provost, he will still be actively involved in leadership meetings as provost emeritus. In the fall, Dr. Hackett plans to take on more classes and even get involved in other areas where he can serve the university.



DR. CAMERON MCNABB NEH GRANT RECIPIENT

Dr. Cameron McNabb, associate professor of English, was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant for her book project, “Dramatic Prosthesis: Disability Studies and Drama.” Dr. McNabb’s award, one of only eight granted in all of Florida, will allow her time to research and write the book, which will focus on the representation of disability in theatrical performances.

The NEH grants for 2021 totalled \$224 million for 225 diverse humanities projects. The organization was created in 1965 as an independent federal agency to support research and learning

in history, literature, philosophy and other areas of the humanities.

Dr. McNabb, who is starting her tenth year at Southeastern, previously served as the editor for “The Medieval Disability Sourcebook,” which is an open-access volume on disability in the Middle Ages. The receipt of the NEH grant is encouraging to Dr. McNabb as she notes, “This book project will offer an innovative look at how disability studies can be applied to theater and drama, and I am honored to be included among the NEH’s awardees.”

Dr. Meghan Griffin, provost and chief academic officer, recognized the importance of McNabb’s grant. “SEU faculty are committed to Christ, to students and to excellence in their disciplines,” she said. “Dr. McNabb exemplifies these commitments and we’re proud of her contributions and recognition as a scholar.”

Dr. McNabb teaches courses including the History of English; Introduction to Shakespeare; and Medieval Philosophy, Theology and Literature. In addition, she has published numerous peer-reviewed articles in the journals *Early Theatre* and *Studies in Philology*.





FACULTY FAREWELLS

SEU celebrates three professors who retired this academic year.



SHEAREN K. FREDERE

After 32 years of service at Southeastern, Shearen K. Fredere retired from her position as chair of the department of mathematics and associate professor of mathematics in the College of Natural and Health Sciences.

Fredere originally joined the faculty in 1989 as an assistant professor of math and education. Prior to that she served 11 years in the Polk County School System. Fredere was awarded with the Most Outstanding Faculty Award for the 2020–21 academic year. Viewing teaching as a calling and the classroom as a mission field, Fredere has left an indelible mark not only on her students, but the Southeastern community as a whole.

Fredere's future plans include spending time with her grandchildren, relaxing on the beach and adding to her growing list of visited countries. She also plans to volunteer with the Take Heart Project — a ministry that creates educational opportunities for orphans and widows in Kenya.



DR. JOHN DAVID ROYER

Dr. John David Royer retired from his position as professor of marketing for the Jannetides College of Business and Entrepreneurial Leadership. Joining the Southeastern community in 2007, Dr. Royer has taught a wide range of upper-level marketing and business courses.

Dr. Royer has over 30 years of applicable business experience, working with companies such as Walgreens, Pier One Imports and Staples. He has been able to offer his students an extensive glimpse into the fields of marketing, management and human resources. Dr. Royer will be remembered for his creative and thoughtful approach to the classroom.

Dr. Royer looks forward to moving to cooler weather in North Florida, spending time traveling and relaxing by the pool. He will always carry fond memories of his time at Southeastern and the lasting relationships he has built with his students and colleagues.



DR. GRACE VEACH

Following 20 years of service at Southeastern, Dr. Grace Veach retired from her role as chair of the Arts and Sciences department for the School of Unrestricted Education. Dr. Veach had previously served as library director and dean of library services for the Steelman Library. She also taught a variety of English courses after completing her second master's degree and Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition.

Prior to coming to Southeastern, Dr. Veach had worked as a librarian at Wheaton College and Decatur Public Library. She has published works on Kenneth Burke, Latinx literature, teaching composition, St. Augustine and information literacy. She edited a two-volume series on teaching information literacy and writing studies published by Purdue University Press in their "Information Literacy Handbook" series. She was instrumental in developing "Writing Across the Curriculum" and the writing intensive program at Southeastern, and chaired the foundational core committee during the last revision of the general education. Dr. Veach's extensive knowledge and passion for learning has helped to propel the academic culture at Southeastern.

Dr. Veach and her family will be relocating to Portugal where they will watch sunsets, excavate ruins, host visitors and attend many, many metal concerts.



ALUMNI & FRIENDS **RECEPTION**

AUGUST 5, 2021
GENERAL COUNCIL

PLEASE JOIN US AUGUST 2 - 6

at General Council 2021 in Orlando, Fla.! SEU will have an incredible booth set up in the exhibit hall all week.

The Alumni and Friends Reception will be held on Thursday, August 5, at 8:30 p.m. in the Valencia Ballroom of the Orange County Convention Center. This event provides a great time to reconnect with friends and to make new alumni connections.

In 2019, over 800 alumni attended, so please make plans to join.

You do not need to attend General Council to come to the Alumni and Friends Reception. It is open to all, and there is no charge to attend the reception. For more details, email alumni@seu.edu or call 863.667.5400.





DR. LYLE L. BOWLIN IN THE BUSINESS OF SELFLESS SERVICE

Dr. Lyle L. Bowlin has been a widely respected and active member of the Southeastern community for 19 years. As a significant proponent to the university's growth and success, he has held a variety of positions within the institution. Dr. Bowlin officially retired at the end of the 2020-21 academic year.

For the past five years, Dr. Bowlin served as the dean of the Jannetides College of Business and Entrepreneurial Leadership, as well as teaching an array of finance courses.

Dr. Bowlin joined the faculty at Southeastern — Southeastern College at the time — in 2002 as an associate professor. Prior to that, he worked for 15 years at the University of Northern Iowa teaching finance and entrepreneurship courses and directing the small business development center. He also had an extensive background

in the grocery industry, serving 12 years for Hy-Vee, a midwestern supermarket chain. Within that time, Dr. Bowlin managed four different stores, one of those being the largest store in the chain.

Dr. Bowlin was in the midst of earning his doctor of business administration degree at Nova Southeastern University, when he connected with one of Southeastern's first business professors, Dr. Steve Adkins. The College of Business had just added marketing and accounting in 2000 and management and information systems in 2001. Dr. Bowlin was invited to travel to Southeastern with his wife, Linda, to interview for an associate professor position.

"It was on the plane ride back when me and Linda both agreed that Southeastern was where we were supposed to go next," remembered Dr.

Bowlin. "I always felt that the Holy Spirit brought me here, and he's never directed me away."

Over the years, Dr. Bowlin has occupied a wide range of roles. He has been the chair of the business department, the founding dean when Southeastern became a university in 2005 and the provost for two years.

"I've done a lot of different things here — and I've loved them all — but the main reason I stayed at Southeastern for all these years is the students. I really believe that God called me here to develop Christian business leaders," emphasized Dr. Bowlin.

He continued, "No matter what the student's major is, I love being able to just talk with them and help them to see who they are in their walk with Christ."



Dr. Lyle and Dr. Linda Bowlin



Drs. Lyle and Linda Bowlin with their daughter, Amy



Dr. Bowlin in the classroom

Dr. Bowlin has been married to his wife, Linda, for 49 years. Dr. Linda Bowlin was a long-standing professor and chair of the criminal justice department at Southeastern for 15 years. Retiring two years ago, Linda designed and implemented the criminal justice major.

Together, the Bowlins were known for their heavy involvement in Fire Athletics. With Linda as the assistant women's basketball coach and faculty athletic representative, the Bowlins had connected and formed relationships with many athletes. In addition, their daughter, **AMY BOWLIN '05**, also played basketball and volleyball during her time at Southeastern.

Dr. Bowlin recalled, "Some of my favorite memories at Southeastern come from my one-on-one moments with student athletes. Getting the chance to fill in for parents on senior nights and being there for them in those special moments was always so rewarding."

DREW WATSON '18 (MBA), director of athletics, attested to their impact saying, "Lyle and Linda have been what we call in athletics, 'super fans,' as they have been faithful attendees of events in multiple sports over the years. Their commitment goes beyond just attending games. Lyle has been a mentor to various coaches over the years and is an active part of the recruitment process in many sports. Linda served as faculty athletic representative for years and spent countless hours not only making sure our student-athletes were eligible, but providing the academic support needed to keep them eligible. We wish Lyle the best in retirement and look forward to seeing both him and Linda at our events in the years to come."

In his retirement, Dr. Bowlin is excited to spend more time delving into his hobbies and having the freedom to travel. He looks forward to dedicating time to stock research and analysis, as well as improving his golf game. Dr. Bowlin and Linda also

plan to travel the country and spend time in each of the nine states that they have never been to, which will include seeing autumn in Vermont, taking a summer cruise in Alaska and taking a train across the Rocky Mountains.

Although Dr. Bowlin is excited to begin this new adventure, he admits that there are many things he'll miss about Southeastern, especially the students.

"It's been such a privilege for me to be a part of this university. I don't care if anyone remembers my name — as long as we always keep in sight the purpose of this university, who we serve and why we serve," said Dr. Bowlin. "One of my greatest pleasures has been seeing the success of all my students and helping them become who God calls them to be."



DRS. LARRY & DEBBIE HAZELBAKER A LIFETIME OF LEADERSHIP

With a combined total of 66 years at Southeastern, it is safe to say that **DR. LARRY HAZELBAKER '75** and Dr. Deborah “Debbie” Hazelbaker have been instrumental in the development and expansion of the university. They have each played their own part in cultivating a culture of excellence within academics and the Southeastern community. After passing on the baton to the next set of leaders, Larry and Debbie officially retired at the end of the 2020–21 academic year.

Debbie had been serving as dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences, a role she has held for almost 25 years. Larry had been acting as the program planning director for the master’s program in Pastoral Care and Counseling, as well as teaching online in the College of Unrestricted Education. He taught courses including Foundations of Counseling, Crisis Intervention and Self-Care for Pastors.

Although their journey at Southeastern began in the late ’80s and early ’90s,

Debbie and Larry’s story began in 1970. They first met at Debbie’s home church, Parkway Assembly of God in Indianapolis, Ind., while Larry was on tour with his family, “The Singing Hazelbakkers.” They were a group of evangelists who traveled and sang gospel music in churches across the U.S. A year after meeting, Larry and Debbie were married. Debbie moved to Florida to join Larry in his music ministry, and they are now going on 50 years of marriage.

In 1975, Larry graduated from Southeastern with a bachelor’s in history and Bible. Shortly after, Larry and Debbie both became associate pastors at Faith Temple Assembly of God in Plant City, Fla.

“I remember being a student here at a time when we didn’t even have air conditioning in some of the buildings,” said Larry. “It’s been amazing to watch this place grow and evolve into what it is now. Debbie and I like to think that we were a part of that.”

In the spring of 1986, Larry returned to Southeastern as an adjunct professor of psychology.

He had been working at First Assembly in Lakeland — which eventually became Carpenter’s Home — when the first chair of Southeastern’s psychology department, Dr. L. Grant Daniel, came to visit him.

“He was looking for an integrationist — someone who could unite both psychology and theology,” Larry recalled.

Since that point, he has worked as a full-time professor of psychology, vice president for advancement, chair of the department of psychology and dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

As for Debbie, her first experience at Southeastern was substituting for a geology professor who had been on leave. The students liked her so much that they petitioned for her to return,



and she did as an adjunct professor for a full year. Transitioning in 1992 as a full-time math professor, it wasn't long before Debbie was appointed chair of the department. In 1996, she became division chair which eventually became her most current role as dean.

When Debbie joined the department of natural sciences, there was only one lab and no majors. She led the charge and fundraised for more labs and the eventual launch of the biology and pre-med programs. It was under her guidance that the natural sciences division eventually separated into its own college.

"The crown jewel in everything I've seen during my time at Southeastern has definitely been watching my department grow. We went from not even having a major to having our own building," said Debbie.

Although they feel confident in their decision to move into the next phase of their lives, Debbie and Larry will miss the family they have established

with their fellow faculty members and students. Larry reflected, "That's honestly the hardest part of stepping away. All these years, Debbie and I have been like professor parents to our students. This has truly become our community — our family."

Debbie added, "I've met two of my closest friends at Southeastern. Some of my best memories are things we did together here, and the faculty parties where we all relaxed and got to know each other."

In their retirement, they plan to travel, pursue their passions and spend time with family. They have two daughters, **MELISSA (HAZELBAKER) RIXON '00** and **AMANDA (HAZELBAKER) BEAN '06, '12 (M.A.)**, and five grandchildren ranging in age from six to 21.

Debbie wants to travel to Alaska and the Mediterranean. Her dream is to see Kilauea, an active shield volcano

in the Hawaiian islands. As a couple, their favorite weekend getaway is St. Augustine.

Debbie also looks forward to spending time with her friends and on activities such as crocheting and swimming. Larry plans to continue to practice Taekwondo — a hobby in which he has reached a sixth-degree black belt and participated in for 30 years. He will also dedicate time to being in his recording studio.

Most of all, Debbie and Larry are happy to be embarking on this new season together.

"One of the reasons we've been together for so long is that we've always allowed each other to be who we are," said Debbie. "Above all else, we always support each other in our dreams and aspirations."



SHERMAN '05 and CRISTINA (FELIU) '04 MERRICKS



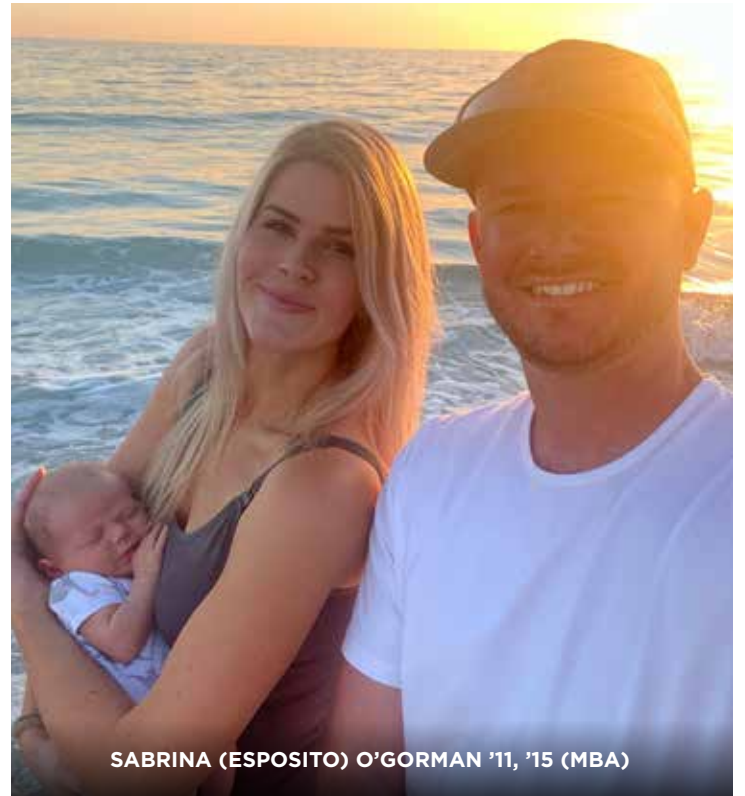
MOLLY (RICE) BRYANT '18 (MBA)

CLASS NOTES

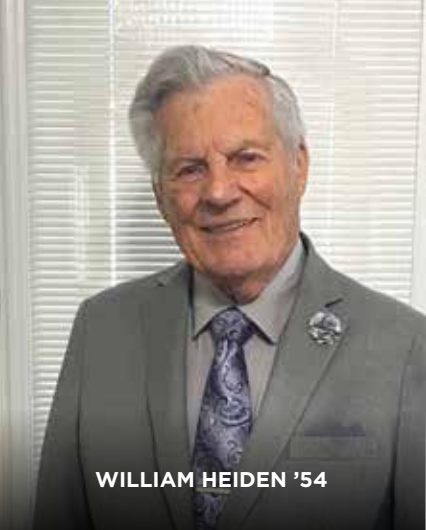
IN THE LIVES OF SEU ALUMNI



ALLIE (MASON) '17 (MBA) and CHASE CHEEK '10, '17 (MBA)



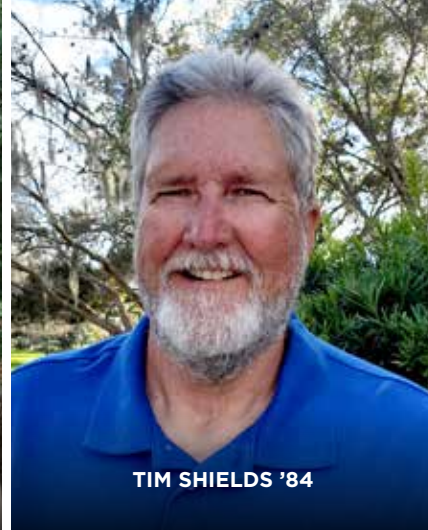
SABRINA (ESPOSITO) O'GORMAN '11, '15 (MBA)



WILLIAM HEIDEN '54



OLAN HILL '63



TIM SHIELDS '84



TROY BRYANT '85

1954

WILLIAM HEIDEN served in the U.S. Air Force from 1947 to 1954 during the Korean War and has been working as an ordained minister with the West Florida District Council of the Assemblies of God since 1956.

1962

DAVID and PEGGY (FOREHAND) '61 NORRIS retired in 2007 after many years of serving in ministry. David has worked as the interim pastor for five churches in North Carolina.

1963

OLAN HILL worked as a teacher for seven years and an elementary principal for 25 years before serving in various ministerial positions. He pastored Sydney Assembly of God in Dover, Fla., for 11 years and served as the associate pastor for Pleasant Grove Assembly of God in Plant City, Fla., for 22 years. Additionally, he was an administrator for STAR Ministries and International Bible Media Ministries. Both his son and grandson attended Southeastern: **DR. CHARLES HILL '93** and **JONATHAN HILL '19**.

1964

EVELYN (KELLY HEMMING) TAYLOR has retired after 30 years of serving the Polk County school district as a teacher, administrator and district supervisor. In addition, she participated in the League of Christian Schools for 20 years. She enjoys spending time with her children, Mark and Kelly, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

1984

TIM SHIELDS retired from a career in education in 2016. He currently teaches Sunday school at Lakes Church in Lakeland, Fla., and is an assistant baseball coach at George Jenkins High School.

1985

TROY BRYANT works as a chief broadcast engineer for Urban One radio and TV stations in Columbus, Ohio.

1987

MARTY ISAACS celebrated 31 years of marriage with his wife, Dawn. They have four children: Daniel; **MARIAH '15**, a physician assistant at Great Lakes

Orthopedics in St. John, Ind.; Blake and Natalie.

LISA (GIBILISCO) ROSA has accepted a position as the interim associate dean of academic affairs for Polk State College in Lakeland, Fla.

1989

SCOTT MEEHAN teaches middle school at Windy Ridge K-8 in Orange County, Fla. He works part time as an adjunct professor at Belhaven University and as senior advocate educator for Mancine Enterprises. Alongside a career as an educator, Scott is also a published author of novels, short stories and nonfiction books. Retiring as a major in 2005, he served for 25 years in the U.S. Army and has embarked on four deployments to the Middle East. He and his wife, **TRENA (BASS) '76**, are looking forward to celebrating their 40th anniversary this fall.

1990

CHRISTOPHER ELLIOT serves as the children's pastor at Wave Church in Virginia Beach, Va. Additionally, he teaches at a Southeastern extension site and oversees two daycare centers, the first of which he launched in 2001. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Christie, and his daughter, Parker.



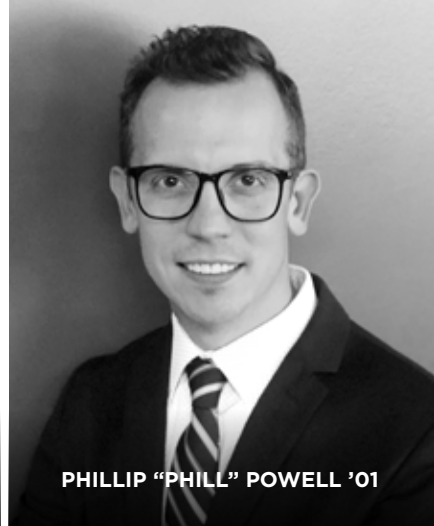
LISA (GIBILISCO) ROSA '87



SCOTT MEEHAN '89



CHRISTOPHER ELLIOT '90



PHILLIP "PHILL" POWELL '01

1998

DAVE DANGERFIELD serves as the youth pastor at LifeBridge Assembly of God in Oak Hill, W.Va.

2000

CHRISTINA KEISER taught in Lakeland, Fla., at Evangel Christian School for two years after graduation. Christina then transferred to the Polk County school district where she has been teaching for 18 years. She recently completed her 20th year of teaching.

2001

PHILLIP "PHILL" and SHANNON (MEYERS) POWELL have been married for 19 years and have two children. Currently, Shannon is a fifth grade teacher in Indianapolis. Phill has been promoted to a new role within Express Employment Professionals as the managing partner and vice president of operations for the Indianapolis South and Columbus franchises. He has been working with Express Employment Professionals for 14 years in various capacities.

2003

AARON RIOS, lead pastor at Garden City Church in Beverly, Mass., has released a worship EP, "Hiding Place." He also hosts "PRESS ON: With Aaron Rios," a weekly podcast intended to enrich and encourage listeners in their faith. Prior to his current position, Aaron was the associate and worship pastor at NewLife Church in Leominster, Mass. He and his wife, Sarah, have five children.

LT. HOLLY SHORT serves as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. She received her master's in divinity from Fuller Theological Seminary and is ordained by the Assemblies of God. Holly has been deployed across the globe and has received various campaign and service awards, including the Navy Commendation Medal. Additionally, she is a Fleet Marine Force Qualified Officer. Currently, Holly serves at the United States Naval Academy.

2005

JENNY (VIELMA) MEDINA currently lives in Morocco, North Africa, with her husband and two children, Henry and Hoseas.

SHERMAN and CRISTINA (FELIU) '04 MERRICKS are the founders of Dynasty CrossFit in Gainesville, Fla. Sherman's second entrepreneurial venture,

LASSO Framework, focuses on helping businesses with sales and marketing.

2006

ANTHONY CAMPAU left government service to practice law at Clark Hill PLC and to serve as a visiting fellow in regulatory policy at The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C. Previously, he served as chief of staff and counselor at the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, as a core member of the Regulatory Reform Team on the Trump Presidential Transition Team and as a law clerk to the Hon. Neomi Rao, Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. He earned a J.D. and LL.M. in securities and financial regulation from Georgetown University Law Center. He and his wife have three children.

RAFAEL '06, '13 (M.A.) and MARIE (EILAND) '94, '10 (M.A.) RODRIGUEZ have joined the staff at Abiding Hope Worship Center in Okeechobee, Fla., as pastor and associate pastor. Having served in southern Asia as youth ministry workers and in various church roles, both are equipped with a wide range of ministerial experiences.



AARON RIOS '03



LT. HOLLY SHORT '03



RAFAEL '13 (M.A.) and MARIE (EILAND) '94, '10 (M.A.) RODRIGUEZ



SETH PENDERGAST '08

2008

BROOKE (CHERRY) BURKHOLDER '12 (M.S.) has been a counselor for eight years and is currently the school counselor at Garden Grove Elementary School in Winter Haven, Fla. She is passionate about teaching social skills and fostering meaningful relationships with students.

SETH PENDERGAST has published research in the Journal of Research in Music Education (JRME). The work is titled, "Secondary Students' Preferences for Various Learning Conditions and Music Courses: A Comparison of School Music, Out-of-School Music, and Nonmusic Participants."

DAVID WING is the director of bands at Venice High School in Sarasota County, Fla.

2009

DR. LINDSEY (RUBUS) MASSENGALE has developed and launched a virtual education consulting business, Journeying Thru Learning, which provides teaching and learning opportunities for students of all ages, needs and abilities.

PAMELA PARRY serves as the minister of worship for Atlanta Vineyard Church, overseeing the worship department.

2011

SABRINA (ESPOSITO) O'GORMAN '15 (MBA) and her husband, Cody, welcomed their son, Easton Eliot Edward O'Gorman, on February 3, 2021. Sabrina serves as the director of student services for Southeastern University.

NICHOLAS "NICK" RENO is the program director of REACH — Responsibility, Excellence, Accomplishment, Character, Heart — Programs in Clermont, Fla. This outreach program aims to strengthen community bonds, serve children and families, and offer sport and summer camp opportunities.

2013

LINDSEY (GRIST) SMITH is a patient care coordinator at Red Mountain Grace, a nonprofit that provides housing for patients and families receiving long-term medical care in Birmingham, Ala. She earned her master's in social work from Union University and has served as an adoption case worker and in other various positions within the nonprofit sector for the last five years. Lindsey is passionate about helping families and representing the city of Birmingham.

2014

DANIEL "DANNY" LAMAstra has published a book, "Pursuing the Call: A Practical Guide for New and Prospective Missionaries," which provides Christ-centered advice and encouragement for those embarking on the mission field. Currently, he serves in El Salvador with Christ for the City International.

2017

ALLIE (MASON) '17 (MBA) and **CHASE CHEEK '10, '17 (MBA)** welcomed their daughter, Lana Rae, on January 6, 2021. Allie serves as the director of campus visits and events for Southeastern University.

KELSEY WHALEN (M.Ed.) has been named the 2021 Teacher of the Year at Lake Gibson Middle School in Lakeland, Fla.

2018

MOLLY (RICE) BRYANT (MBA) and her husband, Lee, welcomed their son, Maddux George Bryant, on January 21, 2021. Molly has been working as the project manager for the executive vice president and as the COVID-19 case manager for Southeastern.



**DR. LINDSEY (RUBUS)
MASSENGALE '09**



NICHOLAS "NICK" RENO '11



LINDSEY (GRIST) SMITH '13



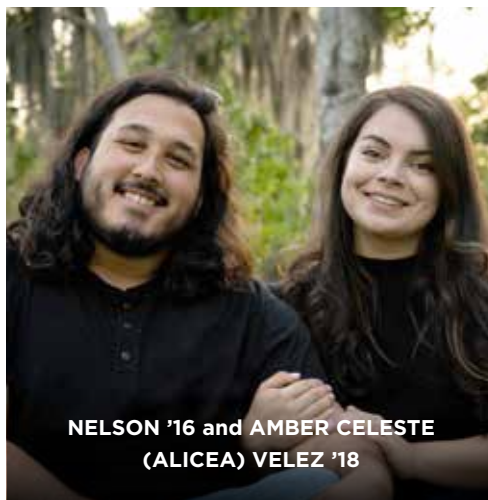
DANIEL "DANNY" LAMASTRA '14



KELSEY WHALEN '17



ALEX (HEWSON) NILIUS '18



**NELSON '16 and AMBER CELESTE
(ALICEA) VELEZ '18**



**STEVEN and AMBERLEE
(WESTENBERG) ASCARI '19**

ALEX (HEWSON) NILIUS graduated with a master's in kinesiology from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has been accepted into the human movement science Ph.D. program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She and her husband, Josh, welcomed their first child, Tucker, in November of 2020.

AMBER CELESTE (ALICEA) VELEZ has accepted a position as an elementary music educator at James S. Stephens Elementary School in Polk County, Fla. Her husband, **NELSON VELEZ '16**, has accepted a position as a resident director for South Pointe, Valencia and Buttercup housing at Southeastern.

2019

STEVEN and **AMBERLEE (WESTENBERG) ASCARI** got married in October of 2020. They met

while working together on Southeastern's student-led magazine, We Are SEU.

GIANNA ELYSE CARRASCO is pursuing her master's in commercial music performance at Liberty University.

RENA DAVIS (M.S.) has been promoted to a clinical supervisor position at WestCare Foundation in St. Petersburg, Fla. The foundation provides a wide spectrum of health and human services, which include substance abuse treatment, mental health programs and homeless shelters.

RACHAEL (GRABENSTEIN) HOGAN has been accepted into the doctorate of physical therapy program at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Va.

CONNOR KEITH works as the marketing assistant for Brooks Law Group in Winter Haven, Fla.

CAILYN (BENTLEY) KEREKES has accepted a position as an elementary music educator at New River Elementary School and at West Zephyrhills Elementary School, both in Pasco County, Fla.

LANE and **KIERSTEN (WEAVER) WHITAKER** moved to Tampa in August of 2019. Kiersten works as a registered behavioral technician and is pursuing her master's degree in applied behavior analysis at the University of South Florida (USF). Lane works for Webstaurant as an outbound logistics specialist and plans to pursue an MBA at USF within the next few years.

2020

ANA (RAMOS) BREGEL has been accepted into the music therapy equivalency distance program at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in Vigo County, Ind.



GIANNA ELYSE CARRASCO '19



**RACHAEL (GRABENSTEIN)
HOGAN '19**



ALNARDO MARTINEZ '20 (M.S.)



MCKENZIE ALONS '21



MARISSA HEALEY '21



BREANNA HICKEY '21



EMILY LUNGMUS '21



ASHLI SMITH '21

KIMBERLY BRUNETTO has accepted a position as an elementary music educator at Twin Lakes Elementary School and Potter Elementary School, both in Hillsborough County, Fla.

ELIZABETH CARRERA has been accepted into the master of arts in theology program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

KELLEY HERRIGER has accepted a children's pastor role at Glad Tidings Church in Ocoee, Fla., and has recently obtained her license as an Assemblies of God minister.

ALNARDO MARTINEZ (M.S.) is currently working at the Child Mind Institute in New York, N.Y. As a clinician in the Anxiety Disorders Center and in the School and Community Program, Alnardo conducts various assessments and helps treat adolescent and childhood OCD. He also works in schools providing

small group trauma treatment to elementary and middle school students.

IESHA MARTINEZ has accepted a position as an elementary music educator at SLAM! Apollo in Hillsborough County, Fla.

SIERRA YODER has accepted a position as a choir, piano and guitar teacher at Corner Lake Middle School in Orange County, Fla.

2021

MCKENZIE ALONS will begin an English Ph.D. program at the University of Rochester in the fall. McKenzie's application and acceptance into the fully-funded program partially depended on her honors' thesis, entitled "Hamlet as Music: A Study in the Semantics of Symphonic Poetry."

MARISSA HEALEY is pursuing her master's in athletic training at Louisiana State University.

BREANNA HICKEY is pursuing her master's in athletic training at the University of Central Missouri.

EMILY LUNGMUS is pursuing her doctorate in physical therapy at Florida Southern College.

DAYNA MCDONALD is pursuing her master's in occupational therapy at the University of St. Augustine.

ASHLI SMITH has accepted a ministry associate position with Project Rescue in Spain. This global initiative provides resources and shelter for women and children who have been trafficked.

IN MEMORIAM

1957

RAYMOND “RALPH” TAYLOR passed away on August 5, 2020, after celebrating 50 years of marriage with **EVELYN (KELLY HEMMING) TAYLOR '64**. He is survived by his wife, children, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

1970

REV. JOHNNY JONES passed away on March 2, 2021, at the age of 80. Rev. Jones served as an ordained minister with the Assemblies of God for over 50 years. He pastored several churches in Alabama, including serving for 25 years as senior pastor of First Assembly of God in Montgomery. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Kay, two children, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

1983

REV. SCOTTIE FULCHER passed away on March 17, 2021, at the age of 58. Rev. Fulcher received a three-year degree from Southeastern College and married his wife, Phyllis, in 1984. He worked for Nabisco Brands and served in part-time ministry positions until surrendering to a call to full-time ministry. He served as senior pastor of First Assembly of God in Butler, Ala., from 1998 until his death. He is survived by his wife, three children and several grandchildren.

SEND US YOUR CLASS NOTES

All submissions due by November 19, 2021, for the next issue.

Email: alumni@seu.edu

Submit online at SEU.edu/alumni

Mail to: University Advancement
Southeastern University

1000 Longfellow Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33801

ALUMNI NEWS



SPARK NETWORKING SITE

Southeastern's Alumni Association has officially launched their own professional networking site, SEU Spark. This platform is completely free to use and makes it possible for both alumni and current students to connect. There are numerous possibilities for mentoring, exchanging resources and reconnecting with the Southeastern community.



SEU TECH PROGRAM

A brand new program known as SEU Tech is now available for Southeastern alumni with exclusive discounts. SEU Tech offers certified classes in full stack, front end and back end software development, data science and cybersecurity. No prior experience in these fields is required. The course content is designed by industry experts, and there are flexible learning options available.

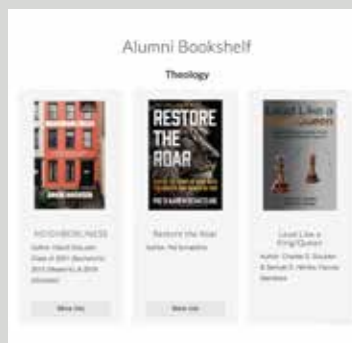
SEU alumni who enroll in the 33-week SEU Tech programs will receive \$1,000 off the tuition rate. For more information, contact admissions counselor Matt Cummiskey at macummiskey@seu.edu.



CARRY THE TORCH PODCAST

Southeastern's Alumni Relations has launched a "Carry the Torch Podcast" hosted by alumni relations director Joel Johnson. Designed to be an on-the-go resource, "Carry the Torch" keeps alumni connected to the university, fellow graduates and current students. The podcast has included guest speakers such as provost emeritus **DR. WILLIAM C. HACKETT, JR., '19 (Ed.D.)**, alumni **CANDACE (SHOEMAKER) '12, '14 (MBA)** and **MATT '09, '14 (MBA) GROSS**, and members of the student government association.

New episodes are released once a month. To suggest potential guests or to be featured on the podcast, email alumni@seu.edu.



ALUMNI BOOKSHELF

The Alumni Association is also excited to be debuting a brand new space for Southeastern alumni to showcase their written work known as the Alumni Bookshelf. This page was created for alumni, students, faculty and staff to share and promote their books of all genres. Featured categories include Bible studies and devotionals, biographies, children's books, current culture, fiction, nonfiction and theology.

Be sure to visit SEU.edu/alumni for more details on all of these opportunities.



COMMENCEMENT

Congratulations to the Graduating Class of 2021!

Due to the nature of the pandemic, Southeastern held two ceremonies for the graduating class of 2021. The first ceremony featured graduates from the College of Education, the College of Natural & Health Sciences and the Jannetides College of Business & Entrepreneurial Leadership. The second ceremony included graduates from the Barnett College of Ministry & Theology, the College of Arts & Media and the College of Behavioral & Social Sciences.

Graduates from both ceremonies came from a variety of 72 extension sites and 12 countries. With 860 graduates this spring, the total number of Southeastern alumni is now 19,637. Notable graduates were **JOY BISHARA '21** and **LYDIA POGU '21**, two of the 276 female students who had been kidnapped by the Boko Haram in Chibok, Nigeria, on April 14, 2014.

Outgoing provost **DR. WILLIAM C. HACKETT, JR., '19 (Ed.D.)** was the commencement speaker for both ceremonies. **BREANNA MUELLER '21** and **ELY MARTINEZ '21** were the student speakers.



President Kent Ingle presents Dr. William "Bill" Hackett with the 2021 President's Award.



Student speaker Ely Martinez



Dr. Hackett and Executive Vice President Dr. Chris Owen



Student speaker Breanna Mueller



Drs. Kent and Karen Ingle with graduates Joy Bishara and Lydia Pogu





DR. TERRY ROBERTS '72

A graduate, the husband of an alumnus, the parent of a graduate, an adjunct professor and a Trustee. Each of those terms describes my relationship with SEU.

In 1967, after graduating high school and sensing a call to vocational ministry, I enrolled as a freshman at “Southeastern Bible College.” I chose Southeastern because my older sister (**BECKY ROBERTS WOODS '63**) had graduated from there with an education degree, and she sang the school’s praises. She also met her husband, **DON '72**, there.

At Southeastern, professors like Crandall Miller, Royce Shelton, Ruth Breusch, Edgar Lee and Bashford Bishop made a huge impression and influenced me to pursue a relationship with God and the passionate knowledge of His word and ways.

At Southeastern, I met **SANDRA DENHAM '71**, who would become my wife and life-long ministry partner. Through the influence of her parents, I received the call to pastor my first church. Her brother **RON '69**, also a Southeastern graduate, would become one of my best friends, a fellow pastor and a source of wisdom and encouragement for my pastoral ministry.

I made other friends at Southeastern — including **MILTON DYKES '71**, **RON MCGEE '71**, **VICTOR SMITH '72**, **DAVID GRANT '68**, **RON MCMANUS '70** and **TERRY RABURN '08 (MAML)**, **'20 (D.Min)**. Those friendships have benefited me in countless ways, and in some cases, opened doors of ministry to me.

When our daughter **AMY '02** was ready to consider college, she chose our local community college, and I was okay with that because it was close and cheap. The day

I delivered her enrollment application to that college, I had a “God moment.” I heard the Lord whisper to my heart, “If Amy attends Southeastern, she will be influenced by anointed leaders from all over the world.” I responded, “Yes, Lord. But she doesn’t want to go to Southeastern. If you want her there, you will have to change her heart.” A few days later, as we sat at dinner, Amy said with tear-filled eyes, “I know we don’t have the money for me to go to Southeastern, but I really want to go there.” I told her about my experience a few days prior, and I said, “We will find a way for you to go there!” And we did: parent and student loans. And it was worth every penny! After graduation, Amy went into education and eventually earned her Ed.D. Today, she is the middle school principal of Providence School in Jacksonville, Fla., a large, world-class Christian school. Her husband is the head football coach, and their twin children are rising ninth graders there.

As a member of the SEU Board of Trustees, I have sat among giants — people like Tommy Barnett, Rich Wilkerson and Mark Batterson. I have been inspired and challenged by the leadership of our president, Dr. Kent Ingle, a man who walks with God. I have marveled at the growth of the SEU student body — numerically, spiritually and academically. I have rejoiced over the continuing development of our beautiful Lakeland campus and the addition of many extension campuses to our Southeastern family.

Years ago, someone calculated that more than 35 members of our extended family had attended Southeastern. I’m sure that number is much higher now. Southeastern has had a huge impact on my family and me, and I find joy in supporting this wonderful school, so that others may experience that impact as well.

BIO

Dr. Terry Roberts graduated from SEU in 1972 with a B.A. in Ministry. He earned an M.A. in Bible at Columbia International University in 1998 and a D.Min. in Church Leadership at AGTS in 2014. He and his wife, Sandra, are founding pastors of Trinity Church (Assemblies of God) in Columbia, S.C. Terry is the author of “Passing the Baton: Planning for Pastoral Transition” and “Beyond Reconciliation: Experiencing Koinonia across the Racial Divide.” Currently, Terry serves SEU as an adjunct professor and a member of the Board of Trustees.



Whether for philanthropic pursuit or love of sport, join the Fire Club and invest in transforming the lives of Fire student-athletes.

For more information on your involvement, visit SEUFire.com



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