

THE BAPTIST EDUCATOR



News Journal of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities

Volume LXXX, No. 2 • 2nd Trimester 2016

Understanding Our Students: These Millennials Really Are Different

Dr. David P. Gushee, Mercer University

The following Hester Lecture was delivered by Dr. David Gushee at the 2015 annual meeting of the IABCU in St. Louis, Missouri.

The purpose of this lecture is to explore what current data can tell us about the millennials whom we are educating. Using research especially from Public Religion Research and the Pew Research Center, this lecture will explore such matters as the religious practices, moral beliefs, and political affiliations of millennials in general and evangelical Christian millennials in particular, with implications considered for our work in Baptist Christian higher education.

I. The Decline of Christianity and the Rise of the Unaffiliated

Consider the chart on page 4, developed by Public Religion Research for this presentation.

I notice the following things about this data:

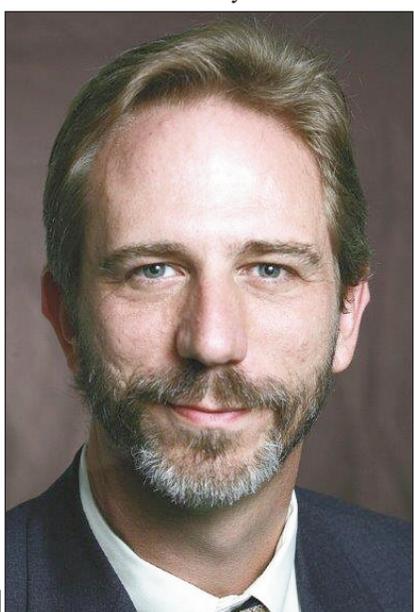
- Most kinds of religious affiliation are down among millennials, especially white millennials. The rates of the unaffiliated are up dramatically. Those identifying with either evangelical or mainline Protestant traditions are down considerably.
- Many of our institutions are located in the South and many of our students are Southerners. The trend toward weakening religious affiliation among evangelicals still occurs among Southern millennials, but the numbers are not quite as dramatic.
- The gap between the numbers of white evangelical and white mainline Protestants has narrowed almost to nothing among millennials in general, though it still shows up among Southern millennials.

Many other studies have found a generalized “rise of the

unaffiliated” and decline of Christian religious identification in the United States.

A May 2015 Pew Research Center report called “America’s Changing Religious Landscape” (www.pewresearch.org) offered the following findings relevant to our consideration:

- Between 2007 and 2014, the Christian share of the population fell from 78.4% to 70.6%, about one percent per year.
- These declines were sharpest among Catholics and mainline Protestants, but evangelical Protestants declined modestly as well. The Catholic share of the US population declined by 3%, the mainline Protestant share declined by 3.4%, and the evangelical share declined by 0.9%.
- Meanwhile, the religiously unaffiliated share of the population rose sharply, by 6.7%, also about one percent per year. While non-Christian faith affiliation is growing modestly (up 1.2%), the main rise is among the unaffiliated.
- Generational factors are clearly playing a role in the declining Christian



Continued on page 4

Hester lecturer Dr. David P. Gushee is the Distinguished University Professor of Christian Ethics & Director of the Center for Theology and Public Life at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia.

Contents

- 1 Hester Lecture
- 2 Residence Halls at MC
- 3 Religious Liberty
- 7 New Opportunity School for Women
- 8 Legal Notes
- 9 Hardin-Simmons President
- 10 BUA New Campus
- 11 Ouachita Mental Health Conference
- 14 Georgetown Player Rejoins Team
- 15 Carson-Newman Signs Agreement with South Korean School

Vol. LXXX, No. 2
2nd Trimester 2016

Publisher: Dub Oliver, President and Board Chair, IABCU
Managing Editor Ashley Hill, Executive Secretary, IABCU

The Baptist Educator (ISSN 0038-3848) is a news magazine published three times a year for administrators, faculty, staff, trustees and friends of member schools by the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
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An annual subscription to *The Baptist Educator* is \$10.00 for one printed and two digital issues.

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New Residence Halls at Mississippi College Wow Students

Equipped with the latest technology, offering plenty of living space and featuring balconies with a view, the \$16 million complex continues to generate rave reviews from MC students.

University Place remains one of the biggest talking points at the 5,152-student Baptist university months after its debut in August 2015.

Mississippi College senior Andrew Wilson believes he’s living the dream after becoming part of the initial wave of students moving into the eight units last summer.

“My favorite part of living in University Place is having my friends over to cook,” says the 21-year-old Brandon, Mississippi resident. “I love to meet with friends to kick the soccer ball around, throw the Frisbee or just sit and chat,” Andrew says. “It’s a microcosm of the Quad in the center of the Mississippi College campus.”

Featuring French doors leading to balconies on the upper decks, each of the modern development’s buildings showcase six separate units housing four residents.

Each unit offers spacious open living quar-

ters and a sizeable kitchen. The units are equipped with high-speed Internet connectivity, electronic key systems, electronic security systems, and many more modern amenities. University Place also offers units in compliance with the American Disability Act and an area coordinator’s apartment. New sidewalks and welcoming green spaces are a part of the lifestyle package.

MC’s vice president for enrollment services, Jim Turcotte says he cannot compare this 21st Century residence hall to dorm life he experienced as a student here in the early 1980s.

At University Place “students can be at college and live in surroundings that are just like home and better than home for some,” adds Turcotte, the dean of students.

The state-of-the art facilities are seen as a terrific way to attract prospective students to America’s second oldest Baptist college. “Amenities in residence halls have an impact on recruiting and retention,” says Steve Stanford, vice president for administration and government relations. “Students today have high expectations, and certainly seek the comforts and conveniences of home in their ‘home away from home.’”



Mississippi College’s first new residence halls in nearly two decades deserve “A” grades. The gathering areas between its three-story brick buildings are popular among students.

Comment From The President: Religious Liberty

Dub Oliver, IABCU President and Board Chair and President, Union University

Even as I began writing this column, several of our member institutions were engaged in oral arguments before the Supreme Court. The case is known as *Zubik v. Burwell* (Zubik being the bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh and Burwell the Secretary of Health and Human Services). Interestingly, these oral arguments were being heard on the sixth anniversary of President Obama signing the Affordable Care Act into law, and they follow religious liberty concerns that have existed since the Department of Health and Human Services first published the mandate related to contraceptives on August 1, 2011.

The question before the Court is whether the government can force ministries like our universities to violate our faith by providing services that the government could easily provide through its own exchanges. While some want to describe this issue as an issue of women's health, this issue is not about women's health. It is about religious liberty. It is about whether the government will force religious people and organizations to do something we believe is wrong. All of us want women to have access to quality health care. That commitment can be seen easily in the health insurance and benefit programs we offer our employees. What we seek is that our religious views be respected.

While almost one-third of all working Americans are exempt from the HHS mandate (for example, employees of Exxon, Chevron, Pepsi, Visa, and others), the government claims that it has a compelling interest to ensure that our health plans include all FDA approved contraceptives, including abortifacients that we consider morally objectionable.

It seems the word of the day during the oral arguments was "hijack." The written transcript of the hearing showed that "hijack" and "hijacking" were heard a total of seven times. The term was first spoken by plaintiffs' attorney Paul

D. Clement, complaining about the government attempting to put us into the role of "conscientious collaborators" in the violation of our religious beliefs.

That, to me, is the most frightening aspect of this entire episode. We have no idea where this road will end. Today, the government is trying to force us to provide our employees with abortion causing drugs. What's next? If the govern-

ment can force Catholic nuns to dispense birth control, what can't the government do? If the government can decide that our institutions are not religious enough to have the right to religious liberty, what can't the government do? If the government can just decide that religious beliefs are less important than its chosen policy goals, what can't it do?

On Friday, March 25, 2016, the justices will meet in a private conference to vote on this case. By the time we gather in Asheville for the

IABCU Annual Meeting, we will be only days away from the decision. Let's continue to pray for those involved in this case, and for all of our Christ-centered institutions.

As we continue to advance our respective missions, may we always cherish religious liberty and may we stand together for religious liberty for all even as we speak the truth in love.

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Dub Oliver

	All Americans	All Gen X (35-49)	All millennials (18-34)	Southern millennials	White evangelical protestant millennials	Southern white evangelical Protestant millennials	White evangelical Baptist millennials	Southern white evangelical Baptist millennials
Religious Affiliation								
N=	52,741	9,672	12,528	4,544	1,333	648	451	306
White evangelical Protestant	18	17	11	15	100	100	100	100
White mainline Protestant	14	12	10	11	#	#	#	#
Black Protestant	8	9	8	13	#	#	#	#
Hispanic Protestant	3	4	5	6	#	#	#	#
Other non-white Protestant	2	2	3	2	#	#	#	#
White Catholic	13	12	8	5	#	#	#	#
Hispanic Catholic	8	10	10	9	#	#	#	#
Other non-white Catholic	2	2	2	2	#	#	#	#
Jehovah's Witness	1	1	1	1	*	*	#	#
Mormon	2	2	2	1	#	#	#	#
Orthodox Christian	1	*	1	1	#	#	#	#
Jewish	2	1	1	1	#	#	#	#
Muslim	1	1	2	1	#	#	#	#
Buddhist	1	1	1	1	#	#	#	#
Hindu	1	1	1	1	#	#	#	#
Unaffiliated	22	22	33	29	#	#	#	#
Unitarian/Universalist	*	*	*	*	#	#	#	#
Other religion	1	1	1	1	#	#	#	#
Don't know/Refused	2	2	2	1	#	#	#	#
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Source: PRRI, American Values								

Continued from page 1

share of the US population. With each generation, Christian identification weakens:

Silent Generation (1928-1945): 85%

Baby Boomers (1946-1964): 78%

Generation X (1965-1980): 70%

Older Millennials (1981-1989): 57%

Younger Millennials (1990-1996): 56%

- However, religious disaffiliation is rising in each age cohort, with the younger generations leading the way. So the decline of the Christian share of the population is not at all confined to the millennials.

- “The Christian share of the population is declining and the religiously unaffiliated share is growing in all four major geographic regions of the country. Religious “nones” now constitute 19% of the adult population in the South (up from 13% in 2007), 22% of the population in the Midwest (up from 16%), 25% of the population in the Northeast (up from 16%) and 28% of the population in the West (up from 21%). In the West, the religiously unaffiliated are more numerous than Catholics (23%), evangelicals (22%) and every other religious group.”

What are we to make of these findings in our role as leaders of Christian higher education? I suggest the following implications:

We must acknowledge that higher proportions of our students will be religiously unaffiliated and will come from such homes, even though Christian higher education is marketed

for Christians. This means that Christian colleges are sites in which many thousands of students will be exposed to Christians and Christianity in a substantial way perhaps for the first time. This presents profound evangelistic and discipleship opportunities and obligations for us. We are not simply building on the religious education provided by families of our students. This should affect how we think about what we offer on campus.

We need to take seriously the reasons why religious affiliation is declining in the United States as we craft the religion courses and co-curricular programming that we are requiring, and inviting, these unaffiliated students to experience.

One problem, however, is that even Christian analysts do not agree on the reasons for the decline. A typical conservative reading is that it is primarily “lukewarm” Christianity that is fading, and so we need to offer robust, doctrinally and ethically conservative Christianity. But other analysts, some of them evangelical as well, argue that Christian affiliation is declining precisely because of overly rigid or conservative presentations, or experiences, of Christianity, especially among the young. Others, including myself, have long argued that conservative Christian engagement in “culture wars” politics has hurt us, especially among those who feel targeted by that politics.

These conflicting diagnoses do not lead to easy answers related to what we need to do in Christian higher education about ministering to students in a context of growing religious disaffiliation. But it is clear that we need to be acutely aware of this context if we would serve our students well.

II. Millennial Christian Attitudes Toward Social Issues and Politics

Drawing again upon the work of Public Religion Research made available to me for this presentation, I offer several pieces of data related to millennial attitudes toward various important social issues as well as partisan identification and political ideology.

a) Abortion

Abortion is a rare issue in which American attitudes are holding steady. Attitudes are less tied to age cohort than many other issues, and are heavily connected to religious beliefs.

Among all Americans, 55% believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases, while 41% believe it should be illegal in all or most cases. Among all millennials, the numbers are 56% and 41%, respectively. Faith really seems to make a difference on this issue, but it does not appear to be tied to age. Among white evangelical Protestant millennials, only 30% believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases, and 68% believe it should be illegal in all or most cases. Opposition to abortion intensifies among Southern white Baptist evangelicals, where the numbers are 24% and 73%.

b) Gay Marriage

It should be remembered that the PRRI research I am citing was conducted in 2014, a year before the Supreme Court decision legalizing gay marriage nationwide. The research shows strong generational, religious, and regional differences. As of 2014, 54% of all Americans surveyed strongly favored or favored gay marriage, while 38% opposed or strongly opposed it. But among millennials, 68% favored and only 26% opposed gay marriage. Support dropped somewhat among Southern millennials, with 61% favoring and 34% opposing gay marriage.

Once religious faith is factored in, however, attitudes harden. Among white millennial evangelicals, 43% favor gay marriage and 53% oppose it. Regional distinctions also matter consistently. Among Southern white millennial evangelicals, 38% favor gay marriage while 57% oppose it.

c) Party Identification

As of 2014, PRRI reports that 22% of all Americans claim Republican identification, 31% identify as Democrats, and a full 40% claim to be independents. Among millennials, the respective numbers are 17%, 29%, and 47%.

Once again, religious and regional differences surface. White evangelical millennials identify as Republican at 39%, Democrat at only 12%, and independent at 44%. Among Southern white evangelical millennials, the respective numbers are 42% Republican, 11% Democrat, and 43% independent. It is still the case, forty years after the emergence of the Christian Right, that white evangelicals, including millennials, are deeply committed to the Republican Party.

Otherwise, the major trend is the rise of political independents, which must be related to a weakening confidence in the two major political parties. The Republican Party overall appears to be weakening, but the trend is strongly reversed among white evangelicals, a pattern even more clear in the South, where white Democrats are increasingly a rare species. Party identification is increasingly tied to race, region, and religion.

d) Political Ideology

The same basic pattern holds true when political ideology is tested. Overall, millennials are more liberal and less conservative than the American population as a whole. But white evangelical millennials reverse the trend, and Southern white evangelical millennials are the most conservative of all. Still, even among Southern white Baptist evangelical millennials, the most conservative cohort studied, only 51% identified as conservative, leaving 29% moderate and 15% liberal.

What are we to make of these findings as they pertain to our students and our ministry to and with them? Perhaps the following:

It is easy to confuse majority opinion on Christian college campuses with consensus. But there is no consensus on social issues, partisan identification, or political ideology on our

campuses. Just as we cannot assume that all of our students are Christians, we cannot assume they are all opposed to gay marriage and abortion. We cannot assume that they are all Republicans or all conservatives. We must come to terms with the actual diversity of our student body, even if on many political and social matters there is a majority of students who share the general ethos of our largely conservative constituency.

We also need to remember that students on our campuses are some combination of millennials-in-general and Southern, Baptist, evangelical, millennials in particular. This means, for example, a weakening sense of party identification, lower religious affiliation, and somewhat more liberal attitudes on gay marriage will likely characterize our overall student body in comparison to their teachers and administrators.

But the more devout students, those who more deeply inhabit their Baptist and evangelical identities, will be somewhat distinct from the other millennials wandering around our campuses. They will be much more likely to be opposed to gay marriage, more intensely anti-abortion, more conservative politically, and more likely to identify as Republican. We might need to be aware of likely stresses or even potential fractures in our student population when issues arise that expose these fault lines.

Racial and regional considerations must also be taken seriously. The data consistently reveals intensified conservatism among white Southern millennials in relation to other millennials, with white-Southern-Baptist-evangelical millennials the most conservative of all. All of us know that while most or all of our students are millennials, they are certainly not all white or Southern, let alone evangelical or Baptist. This predicts likely tensions along ancient racial and regional fault lines as these are reflected in our student bodies and might erupt around specific conflict points.

Election years such as this one are very likely to expose these fault lines.

We can expect that heightened passions around politics could prove troublesome. Consider strongly pro-GOP students pushing their views hard as young budding Democrats feel a bit intimidated or even offended. In my years serving in Christian higher education, I routinely encountered the discomfort of a minority of dissenting liberal/Democratic students in the face of peers who proclaimed that a vote for anyone other than a Republican was a sin against God. Surviving vestiges of racism also play a part when white students are less sensitive to racial dynamics or worries of the relatively small number of racial/ethnic minority students among their peers.

The research shows overall that in many ways our students really are different from those of us older folks who represent earlier generations. But on the other hand, deep patterns of religious, moral, and political conviction still surface among a substantial share of our student population. Navigating both the continuities and discontinuities between ourselves and our students, and among our students, is an important current challenge in Baptist Christian higher education. ●



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Bluefield College Offers Hope to Appalachian Women Through New Opportunity School for Women

Women from Appalachia who haven't had access to higher education or whose circumstances have left them in poverty or some other financial or personal predicament now have hope for a new beginning, thanks to the new Opportunity School for Women at Bluefield College.

In fact, the New Opportunity School for Women at Bluefield College is looking for women to be a part of its next life-changing program – a three-week residential experience on the BC campus, May 15 through June 4, 2016, designed to help participants confront their circumstances, overcome their conditions, and pave the way for a new and better life.

Founded by Jane B. Stephenson in 1987 at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, out of an urgent need to help women in Appalachia become better educated and employed, the New Opportunity School for Women (NOSW) is designed to improve the educational, financial and personal circumstances of low-income, under-educated, middle-aged women in the Appalachian region.

“From the first step I took onto the Bluefield College campus I knew I had come to a loving, caring place,” said Stephenson. “Every person I met was concerned about others and wanted to help people become bet-



Women who complete Bluefield College's New Opportunity School for Women describe it as a life-changing experience.

ter educated and have a fulfilling life. Statistically, we knew that West Virginia and certain parts of Virginia had many people that were low income, especially many women. So, Bluefield seemed an ideal place for an expansion site for the New Opportunity School for Women.”

The NOSW fulfills its mission through residential programs at its college sites. The 2016 residential program at Bluefield College starts May 15, and the college is already accepting applications for the three-week experience that Meg Quinn, director of the BC NOSW, says is life-changing.

“If you are willing to learn, and you want to improve your life and your life circumstances, then this program is for you,” said Quinn, “especially women who just need a boost up and loving support. We have people here who will believe in you and help you realize you can do things you never thought you could. It is amazing how three weeks can change your life.” The BC New Opportunity School is open to women with a high school diploma or GED (or those working toward a GED). There is no cost to attend, and all books, meals and campus housing are covered by grants and awards. Funds are also available for childcare and transportation, if needed.

The three-week session, May 15 through June 4, includes academic study, cultural experiences, personal development, job search training, college preparation, and leadership development. Participants work 50 hours per week on a curriculum that includes a distinctive focus on Appalachian literature, creative writing, personal reflection, the Appalachian culture, and cultural experiences in theater, museums and historical sites.



Participants of the New Opportunity School for Women become part of a sisterhood of support even after graduation.

The NOSW program also includes personal support in the form of career counseling, group reflection, makeovers, dress for success resources, and health screenings – all designed to create a sense of pride and self-worth. In fact, the NOSW care continues even after the residency with coaching, career guidance, workshops, reunions, internships, higher education opportunities, scholarship opportunities, clothing resources, and continued networking with the “sisterhood” of NOSW graduates.

“We are here to encourage, love and support the participants of this program and help them realize how strong they really are,” said Quinn, a 2010 alumna of the NOSW program who went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Lees-McRae College before becoming the first NOSW graduate to advance to director of the program. “We have the tools and the help they need. Take a chance and come find out how to be the best you can be.”

To find out more about the New Opportunity School for Women, even apply online for the May 2016 session at Bluefield College, visit www.bluefield.edu/nosw. Interested applicants may also contact Quinn by phone at 276-326-4257 or by e-mail at nosw@bluefield.edu. ●

Legal Notes by James D. Jordan

SEX: The Little Word That Just Keeps Growing



To paraphrase an old ad campaign, “Title VII, you’ve come a long way, baby.” But what I really want to know is, “Where’ya headed?”

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the law that made it illegal to discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. There is a persistent story that “sex” was thrown into the legislation only to make it easier to defeat the bill, but that’s a story for another day.

A brand new federal agency called the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission set up shop in July, 1965, with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., at the helm. Both the power and the reach of the EEOC were limited, and its enforcement of the new law prohibiting sex discrimination in employment was pretty modest. Among the EEOC’s very first actions were a ruling that newspapers could not publish separate “help wanted” sections for men and women (a ruling which upset a lot of newspaper publishers) and deciding that a employment policy requiring female employees to be fired when they married violated Title VII.

In the last 50 years, the definition of “sex discrimination” has grown almost as much as the EEOC’s budget and influence. In 1980, the EEOC issued controversial new guidelines declaring that the creation of a sexually charged hostile work environment was unlawful under Title VII. Six years later the Supreme Court agreed, banning sexual harassment in the workplace. In 1989, the Supreme Court ruled that Title VII prohibited employers from making employment decisions on the basis of gender stereotypes – that is, because a male employee did not act like a man, or

because a woman was not feminine enough. In 1998, the Supreme Court decided that same-sex harassment (e.g., male-on-male) was illegal under Title VII. In 2012, the EEOC held that discrimination against a transgender individual because of that person’s gender identity is, by definition, discrimination based on sex in violation of Title VII.

In July, 2015, the EEOC held for the first time that sexual orientation discrimination is, by its very nature, discrimination because of sex. In announcing this new stand, the EEOC’s said:

Will the EEOC’s position on gender discrimination ultimately be adopted by the Supreme Court and become the law of the land?

When an employee raises a claim of sexual orientation discrimination as sex discrimination under Title VII, the question is not whether sexual orientation is explicitly listed in Title VII as a prohibited basis for employment actions. It is not. Rather, the question [is] whether the [employer] has “relied on sex-based considerations” or “taken gender into account” when taking the challenged employment action. . . . A complaint alleging that an [employer] took his or her sexual orientation into account in an employment action necessarily alleges that the agency took his or her sex into account.

Now, in March, 2016, the EEOC has

begun filing its first lawsuits against private employers claiming that sexual orientation discrimination violates Title VII. From one point of view, the existing case law does not favor the EEOC in this expansion of Title VII. Several of the US Circuit Courts of Appeal are on record stating that sexual orientation discrimination does not violate Title VII. As recently as 2012, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals said, “[U]nder Title VII, sexual orientation is not a protected classification. Thus, harassment or discrimination based upon a person’s sexual orientation cannot form the basis of a cognizable claim.”

Viewed from another angle, however, extending Title VII protection for claims of sexual orientation discrimination is a natural evolution of the law. Some commentators considered it to be inevitable as soon as the law was interpreted to prohibit gender stereotyping. After all, they argue, the biggest gender stereotype of all is that men ought to be attracted to women, and vice versa.

The EEOC likes its chances in this fight. In a recent news release, it said :

The Commission has obtained approximately \$6.4 million in monetary relief for individuals, as well as numerous employer policy changes, in voluntary resolutions of LGBT discrimination charges under Title VII since data collection began in 2013. A growing number of court decisions have endorsed the Commission’s interpretation of Title VII.

Will the EEOC’s position on gender discrimination ultimately be adopted by the Supreme Court and become the law of the land? It is beyond doubt that Congress never intended such a result when it adopted Title VII in 1965.

However, consider the words of the late Justice Antonin Scalia when he wrote the Court's majority opinion in the 1998 case of *Oncale v. Sundowner*:

We see no justification in the statutory language or our precedents for a categorical rule excluding same-sex harassment claims from the coverage of Title VII. As some courts have observed, male-on-male sexual harassment in the workplace was assuredly not the principal evil Congress was concerned with when it enacted Title VII. But statutory prohibitions often go beyond the principal evil to cover reasonably comparable evils,

and it is ultimately the provisions of our laws rather than the principal concerns of our legislators by which we are governed.

Even before the Supreme Court's decisions on same-sex marriage, many legal observers considered it a slam dunk that the Court would eventually extend Title VII protections to cases of LGBT discrimination. However, the legal storm clouds are gathering on another issue. Suppose a church which holds the theological position that homosexuality is a sin declines to hire a janitor who is in a same-sex marriage. Will that be permis-

sible religious discrimination under Title VII or unlawful sex discrimination under Title VII? A recent Supreme Court ruling should make religious employers secure in their right to be free from discrimination claims when making employment decisions about ministerial employees. Whether an employee who is not directly engaged in ministry will have a valid Title VII claim when he or she is fired for a reason which is both religious discrimination and sex discrimination is not so clear.

So, I ask again, "Title VII, where's it headed?" •

Eric Bruntmyer Named 16th President of Hardin-Simmons University

(Abilene, TX) – Eric I. Bruntmyer has been selected as the 16th President of Hardin-Simmons University by action of the university's Board of Trustees during their regular Spring meeting on February 26th.

Bruntmyer, 47, currently serves as the Vice President for Financial Affairs and Chief Financial Officer for Dallas Baptist University. He will begin his new role on June 1, and will succeed Dr. Lanny Hall, who will assume new duties as HSU's Chancellor upon his departure from the presidency.

Dr. Michael Waters, Chair of HSU's Board of Trustees and the university's Presidential Search Committee, made the official announcement at a luncheon immediately following Friday's Trustee meeting.

"After a national search and consideration of a large candidate pool, it is our belief that Mr. Bruntmyer's professional strengths and personal character will serve HSU well for years to come," said Waters. "His academic credentials, legal training, and servant's heart provide a unique opportunity for continuing HSU's commitment to Christian higher education in the Liberal Arts tradition."

Bruntmyer created, implemented, and monitored the university's budget in his role at DBU, helping the university increase revenues from \$40 million to more than \$108 million from 2003 to 2015.

While at DBU, Bruntmyer was also one of the attorneys for DBU, developed and launched an Intensive English program in South Korea, and helped manage numerous areas and departments across campus.

"It has been a blessing to serve DBU in a variety of capacities and work with such wonderful and competent teams," said Bruntmyer of his time as a senior administrator at DBU.

An adjunct professor, Bruntmyer has taught numerous doctoral, masters, and undergraduate courses for DBU, Tarrant County College and Dallas County Community College including courses in Higher Education Law and Finance, Financial and Managerial

Accounting, Business and Public Law, Texas State and Local Government, and Conflict Resolution Management.

Active in both his administrative duties and teaching responsibilities, Bruntmyer's passion for leadership in Christian higher education is born out of his faith and desire to serve.

Bruntmyer, who began undergraduate work at Texas Tech University, earned his Juris Doctor Degree with a concentration in Business and Litigation in 1994 from Baylor School of Law. In 2006, he also earned a Masters of Business Administration degree, with a concentration in Accounting, from Dallas Baptist University.

Prior to his leadership at DBU, Bruntmyer was in private practice as an attorney.

A member of the State Bar of Texas and the Dallas Bar Association, Bruntmyer holds membership in many professional organizations including the National Associate of College and University Business Officers, Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, and the National Association of College and University Attorneys. •

Bruntmyer has been married to his wife, Elise, for 24 years and they have five children. Bruntmyer and his family are active members of First Baptist Church of Arlington where he and Elise teach Sunday School.



Baptist University of the Americas Makes Plans To Move To New Campus

Baptist University of the Americas (BUA) students will enjoy a modern campus when they move into one building that provides more square footage and up-to-date facilities for Fall 2016.

The 68-year-old university on the Southside of San Antonio that educates Hispanic ministers from 23 countries is relocating its entire campus operations and personnel during the Summer. The university is moving from eight outdated buildings to a medical office building built in 2006 but unused due to foreclosure. BUA has been on its current campus since 1965.

BUA President René Maciel says God has plans for the future of BUA. “God placed a newer building with more square footage, more parking spaces, and new furniture, computers and phones within walking distance of the current campus.”

As the university seeks more donors and friends for the I-35 campus, Maciel said God placed a newer building with more square footage, more parking spaces, and new furniture, computers and phones within walking distance of the current campus.

“God is still leading us.” Maciel told the staff. “He has provided this new home in His way and in His timing.”

“It’s almost too good to be true that God would lay something like this in our lap,” Maciel said. The building has more than 42,000 square feet, and officials estimate they could serve 400-500 students. They plan to stay in the facility for 7-10 years as they gradually raise funds for construction on 80 acres of land close by.

The office building will require some modifications and some medical equipment will be sold. It has space that can be expanded for classrooms, a library and a chapel.

“It’s a turning point in our history. God has great things in store for BUA,” Maciel said. “We won’t even have to change the sign on the highway to get to us.”



Baptist University of the Americas is moving from the eight outdated buildings it has occupied since 1965 to a medical office building built in 2006, but unused due to foreclosure.

IABCU Annual Meeting Attendees

*** Our reserved block of rooms will expire on **April 15.** Please reserve your room before then to receive the \$239 rate. ***



Ouachita Counseling Conference on “Depression” Equips Health Professionals and Ministers

By Rachel Gaddis

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University’s Pruet School of Christian Studies hosted the sixth annual Conference on Issues in Christian Counseling at OBU on Friday, Feb. 26. Sponsored by Ouachita, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the one-day conference brought together a total of 160 mental health professionals—counselors, nurses and social workers—and pastors from around the state to examine the issue of “Depression.”

In the opening session, keynote speaker Dr. Frank Page focused on depression and suicide, sharing his family’s personal experience with both issues. He encouraged conference participants to adopt “a theology of life” in their faith walks and practices. Page, the president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, is the author of several books, including “Melissa: A Father’s Lessons from a Daughter’s Suicide.”

“We know suicide is a horrible experience. The pain that is left behind for family and friends is a pain that may deaden over time but never heals completely,” he explained. “Normally suicide has one of the presenting symptoms as overwhelming depression.

“We need a Christian theology of suicide and a Christian theology of mental health and illness from a Christian response,” Page emphasized. “There are many people who are not darkening the doors of your church because of depression. Some feel like people in the church don’t understand. Guess what? Many don’t.”

Stating that the Bible deals with depression and suicide, Page referenced the depressed psalmist in Psalm 42 and seven Biblical examples of suicide: Abimelek (Judges 9), Samson (Judges 16), King Saul and his armor bearer (1 Samuel 31), Ahithophell (2 Samuel 17), Zimri (1 Kings 16) and Judas (Matthew 27).

Citing 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Page said, “The theology of life begins with a recognition that we do not belong to us. In our culture today, everyone teaches, ‘You belong to you.’ Well, that’s not what we believe. A

Christian theology promotes a stewardship of God’s ownership of everything, including our own lives.”

Page also stressed the need to confront negative responses and bad theology and challenged mental health professionals and pastors to “minister the word of God and God’s comfort to those who are depressed and hurting.”

“Practice the ministry of presence,” Page said. “Our Lord does not leave us, but sometimes that ministry is best performed by those in the helping community—in church and in the medical professions and psychological professions. You are the hands and feet and heart of Jesus reaching out to those around you.”

“There are many people who are not darkening the doors of your church because of depression. Some feel like people in the church don’t understand. Guess what? Many don’t.”

Following Page’s address, participants had the opportunity to choose from a variety of breakout sessions related to their field or interests. Session topics included ethical considerations with therapy-resistant clients, child sexual abuse, depression and counseling people of faith, pastoral care of the depressed person, cultural and social influences on depression and pharmacotherapeutic management of depression, among others.

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) approved most of the breakout sessions for Continuing Education credit. Credit was available to licensed alcohol and abuse, professional and marriage and family counselors; national career counselors; nursing professionals; and social work professionals.

During the conference’s lunch session Dr. Bill Viser, coordinator for the conference and professor of Christian ministries at Ouachita, reminded counselors of the importance of self-care. Titled “When Helping You Is Killing Me,” Viser’s session distinguished between burnout and depression and provided strate-

gies to combat burnout. Participants were given time to talk about when they were most susceptible to burnout and their personal strategies for preventing it.

“All we want to do is highlight something that can happen to any of us,” Viser said. “If we don’t practice good strategies, if we don’t practice taking care of ourselves, it can and it will happen to us. We need all the good caregivers we can get in the field and don’t want to lose any.”

This was Luther Harris’ third year to attend the Conference on Issues in Christian Counseling. As a pastor and a chaplain for Life Touch Hospice in El Dorado, Ark., Harris encounters depression on a regular basis. Specifically in his role as a chaplain, he ministers to patients and their family members as they approach the end of life.

“It makes it hard if they have not accepted that they are dying, and depression tends to take an overwhelming stake in their lives at that moment,” Harris said. “Through this conference I’ve learned a great deal about how to approach it, what to look for – and not just from the perspective of Life Touch, but from the perspective of a pastor.”

Amir Rostampour said this also was his third year to attend the conference. While Rostampour currently serves as the young adults pastor at New Life Church in Conway, Ark., his degrees are in counseling. He first attended the conference as a counseling intern and later as a practicing therapist.

He noted that Ouachita’s annual Christian Counseling Conference “is the only thing I know of in the state that brings the two worlds of counseling and Christianity together.”

For Tami Montgomery, an LPC with Arkansas Counseling and Psychodiagnostics in Arkadelphia, Ark., attending the conference for the first time has given her “a whole different perspective on depression.”

“It’s refreshing for me that this is not a hellfire and brimstone perspective of depression,” she said, “and that as Christians we do recognize that it exists.” ●

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Schedule for the 2016 IABCU ANNUAL MEETING

<p>Saturday, June 4</p> <p>5:00 Asheville Tourists Baseball Game</p> <p>Sunday, June 5</p> <p>12:00-9:00 Registration</p> <p>1:30-4:00 IABCU Board Meeting</p> <p>5:00-6:30 First Plenary Session and Hester Lecture by Warren Cole Smith</p> <p>7:00 Guided Evening Tour of Biltmore House</p> <p>8:30 Dessert Reception at Stable Loft Cafe</p>	<p>Monday, June 6</p> <p>7:30-8:45 Breakfast Program: Legal Update by Guenther and Jordan</p> <p>9:00-10:30 Second Plenary Session and Hester Lecture</p> <p>10:00 Spouse Tour: Guided Historic Garden Tour with Lunch in Stable Café Loft</p> <p>10:45-12:00 Breakout Sessions</p> <p>12:15-1:30 Lunch at the Inn on Biltmore Estate Dining Room with Presentation from Baptist Scholars</p> <p>1:30-2:00 Break</p>	<p>2:00-3:15 Breakout Sessions</p> <p>3:30-5:00 CGE Executive Committee Meeting</p> <p>6:00 pm Reception and Banquet and Lioncrest</p> <p>Tuesday, June 7</p> <p>8:00 Breakfast and Roundtable Discussions</p> <p>9:00-10:30 Third Plenary Session and Hester Lecture</p> <p>10:45-12:00 Annual IABCU Business Meeting</p> <p>12:00 Adjourn</p>
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Meet Our Breakout Speakers

CHRIS WITHERS

Former VP for Institutional Advancement at University of Richmond. President of his own consulting firm, serving over 50 mid Atlantic non profit organizations by providing "personalized fundraising counsel" to grow their financial resources.

DAN BUSBY

President of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and author of TRUST: The Firm Foundation for Kingdon Fruitfulness.

JIM GUENTHER

Partner in Guenther, Jordan & Price, which serves as outside counsel to two national religious denominations and has represented colleges, universities, and seminaries in a dozen

states across the South and Southwest.

JAIME JORDAN

Partner in Guenther, Jordan & Price, where he concentrates on the law of higher education. Practice involves compliance with federal regulations, including Title IX; the application of religious exemptions under the law; student disciplinary issues; and other matters of concern to colleges and universities.

CAM ARMSTRONG

Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Curriculum & Student Affairs at Baylor University. Cam will discuss findings from her dissertation "Measuring the Educational Outcomes of Southern Baptist Universities: A Comparison to Other CCCU Institutions, Catholic Institutions, and Nonsectarian Institutions."

Georgetown College Football Player Rejoins Team After Leg Amputation

By Jerry Boggs, Georgetown News-Graphic.

Football requires tremendous strength. Players spend hours in the weight room building their muscles. But in a sport filled by men of great strength, one Georgetown College player stands alone.

Kody Kasey has a strength that can't be measured by the weight he lifts or the reps he turns in. It's a strength that has him setting his sights on returning to the field less than a year since his right leg was amputated just below the knee.

On Oct. 28, 2014, Kody Kasey was excited about Georgetown College's homecoming game his sophomore season. Homecoming was against the University of the Cumberlands. It was a sunny, warm fall day. "I had family coming down, and my lady friend came down. I was thinking, 'This is a good day,' Kasey said.

"And then ... it just took a turn for the worse." Kasey's life changed on a routine punt return play.

"I was driving my guy back, and all of a sudden I got hit and I got really dizzy. I didn't know what happened," he said. "Everything was in slow motion and I slowly fell to the ground."

Kasey knew what had happened as soon as he saw a strange bulge below his knee. He was taken to Georgetown Community Hospital and underwent surgery that night. A rod was inserted to stabilize the broken bone. However, doctors soon discovered a problem.

"My bone didn't grow for like six months, which is really unusual, especially for someone as young as I was. I just didn't understand why," he said. "Later we found out I had an infection in my leg and that was the real cata-

lyst for the rest of the events to come."

Kasey ended up having nine surgeries on his injured leg over the course of the next year. During that time, Kasey spent practically a year on crutches and was unable to regain motion in his ankle.

"When this happened to me, all my teammates were there to lift me up and they were all there to support me through everything," he said. "They were just devastated as well as me every time I found out I had to have a new surgery."

During Kasey's hospital stays, he got regular visits from his teammates as well as Georgetown College coaches, including head coach Bill Cronin and defensive coordinator Shan Housekeeper.

Housekeeper recruited Kasey and saw him become an all-conference player as a freshman. "He's exceptional," Housekeeper said. "He's everything you would want your son to be. He has great integrity. His work ethic is outstanding and his attitude is unmatched as far as having a positive outlook on life."

The support of the team and coaches has been validation of Kasey's decision to attend GC. "It's sad to say, but some people just don't have that support sometimes when they're going through these kind of things," he said. "That's why I just thank God so much that he brought me here and I am here at Georgetown College."

A year after suffering the break, Kasey was still battling to get better. But the outlook was not good. The infection and the surgeries were taking a heavy toll on his body. Additionally, the immobile right ankle caused him pain whenever he did try to walk on it. Kasey said he never really thought amputation was a possibility, but in the deepest recesses of his mind, a shadow loomed.

"It's hard ... You have to contemplate whether you want to get your leg cut off or not," he said. "It doesn't take just a toll on me. It's the whole family. It was something we had to ponder for a good amount of time."

But the moment came

when Kasey had to tell the doctors how to proceed with his injured leg. Kasey chose to take the new journey with a prosthetic leg.

"I really had to dig deep spiritually and mentally. I made the decision. I'm going to go through with this," he said. "That's probably — if not one of the most — THE most important or biggest decision I'll ever make."

Kasey underwent surgery to amputate his leg on Nov. 16, 2015. He got his prosthetic on Jan. 6 of his year. He walked out of the hospital that day.

Kody Kasey believes he is going to play football again for Georgetown College. He's sure of it, and Housekeeper is just as sure of it. "If anybody in the world can handle it, he can." Kasey didn't waste any time getting started on his comeback.

On Feb. 16, Housekeeper posted a video to his Twitter account showing Kasey completing box jumps. With his amputated leg wrapped in a white bandage, Kasey was jumping onto a platform about waist-high. Time after time, he leapt onto the platform, steadied himself and jumped back down.

Kasey's work in the weight room has inspired not only his teammates, but coaches too, Cronin said. "He's a special individual, there's no doubt about it," Cronin said. "All of us can be inspired by his story." The two never really discussed whether or not Kasey would rejoin the team, Cronin said. "He never said it and I never said it. I saw something in his eyes that said, 'I'm coming back and I'm not done with football,'" Cronin said.

Kasey hasn't set any major milestone goals. He's just working to improve his strength and agility. "I'm determined to just work my butt off," he said. "Because I'm trying to get back. I just want to be in the best shape I can and set myself up for the best opportunities. I just want to get back out there with my brothers, really."

"I'm just starting, you know. There's still so much I have to grow. I haven't even gotten my blade yet," he said. "I'm supposed to get a blade soon." A blade-type prosthetic is used by amputees to run and play sports, including football.

"There's just so much more to go. I'm just so happy. I wake up every day with a smile," he said. "I've got moves to make. I'm making progress. There's opportunities ahead of me. "There's no reason to be down about that." ●



Kody Kasey grimaces as he strains to wrestle a bar away from a fellow football player during a workout drill recently. Kasey is back working out with the team just three months after undergoing surgery to amputate his right leg below the knee. His goal is to return to the field.



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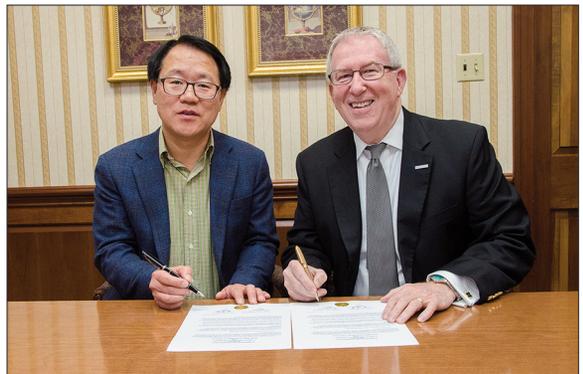
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Carson-Newman University Signs Agreement With South Korean High School

Carson-Newman University has signed an agreement with Daegu High School in South Korea. University officials met Thursday on Carson-Newman's campus with representatives from the Korean school. The memorandum of understanding allows for the opportunity to share cultural and academic assets and opens the door for top sophomore and junior Korean students to attend Carson-Newman in pursuit of English language training.

This year Carson-Newman has some 130 international students from 34 countries studying at the University. Daegu High School is located in Daegu City, which has a population of 2.7 million people.

Carson-Newman University President J. Randall O'Brien (right) signs an official agreement with Sitae Ryu, vice president of Daegu High School in South Korea.



Each year the IABCU job board lists hundreds of job openings from our member schools. Go to <http://www.baptistschools.org/job-board/job-openings/>



to see our current list. To post openings from your campus, contact Ashley Hill at AshleyHill@BaptistSchools.org.