

# NOW

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

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ARTS AND SCIENCES



**LeTourneau**  
UNIVERSITY

# A Message From The President



DR. ALVIN O. AUSTIN  
*President*

**L**eTourneau University's School of Arts and Sciences has never been as strong as it is today. Arts and sciences curricular concentrations at LETU include biblical studies, Christian ministry, computer science, English, history-political science, mathematics, the natural sciences such as biology, chemistry and physics, as well as Spanish and cross-cultural studies. From our excellent faculty and state-of-the-art facilities to our experiential learning style and low student-to-faculty ratio, our commitment to the arts and sciences is showing, and our reputation for excellence is growing.

For example, in the past decade, three out of four of our students who applied to medical school were accepted. Several recent graduates have told us they appreciate the firm educational foundation they gained at LeTourneau University. These graduates have been prepared to become leaders in their fields as they pursue God's calling on their lives.

Classes in the arts and sciences touch the lives of every student. Core courses in biblical studies, natural sciences, English, speech, history, political science and mathematics are an integral part of a well-rounded education. These subjects are building blocks for other majors. For example, our engineering majors benefit from our strong course work in mathematics and the sciences. Our computer science majors benefit from strong English and speech communication courses. Our international business majors benefit from strong language and history/political science courses.

The sciences at LeTourneau University are based on our Christian worldview that God created, and sustains, the universe. We believe the study of science brings us closer to, not farther from, a deeper knowledge of God.

In our science laboratories we have updated not only the quality of our equipment, but the quantity of equipment. That gives our students more "hands-on" opportunities to learn and prepare for further study. Instead of having six microscopes in a lab, we have 30. Instead of our professors preparing the gels for their students' experiments, the students prepare their own, enabling them to be involved in their experiments from the very beginning.

Our equipment is as good or better than that found in state schools, but with our smaller class counts, our faculty members are better able to ensure quality faculty-to-student interaction. We also have several undergraduate students who participate with their instructors in research projects, and some students have already had their work published. Other universities reserve that level of faculty-to-student interaction for graduate students.

We are blessed to have the leadership of our arts and sciences dean, Dr. Amiel Jarstfer, and our many excellent faculty members who continuously review and adapt our programs with new offerings to meet the needs of the 21st century. Recently, we launched a new degree in digital writing that combines English with computer science. We also recently launched new concentrations for our Christian ministry degree that blend management courses with biblical understanding.

The partnership between our computer science program and corporations like IBM gives our students the benefit of job experience while still in college, and often opens doors for employment after they graduate.

These new programs are possible through our strength in teaching the arts and sciences, defining a LeTourneau University education that blends faith with ingenuity. ■

# NOW

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY



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**FAITH BRINGS US TOGETHER.  
 INGENUITY SETS US APART.**

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**“BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME; BEHOLD NOW IS THE DAY OF OUR SALVATION.” II Cor. 6:2**

**LeTourneau University** is an interdenominational Christian university located in Longview, Texas, offering academic majors in the aeronautical sciences, education, engineering, the humanities and sciences. LeTourneau University also offers business degrees and teacher certification programs at five educational centers around Texas in Austin, Bedford, Dallas, Houston and Tyler.

LeTourneau University's "NOW" magazine welcomes letters from readers. Letters must be signed, address issues or events raised in the magazine and may not exceed 250 words. All letters may be edited for length or clarity. Any letters deemed potentially libelous will not be published. Opinions expressed in letters in the "NOW" magazine do not necessarily reflect those of LeTourneau University.

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# Beginning with Biology

Written by Kris Erickson

**M**any scientists believe Christianity has no place in the laboratory, or the classroom. Alumna Sabrina Shandley and others would disagree. Through Shandley's work and study in the field of immunology, she sees the conflict between science and faith daily. She is just one of the many LETU biology alumni who are now influencing their world for Christ.

Many of our young biology graduates go on to achieve higher levels of education, taking with them a strong foundation in the sciences and a commitment to Christ. For Shandley, the laboratories of the United States are just as much a mission field as the jungles of Africa. It all began with biology.



## Sabrina Shandley

LETU Degree: 2002 Bachelor of Science in biology

Now at: The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Degree sought: Doctor of Philosophy in Immunology

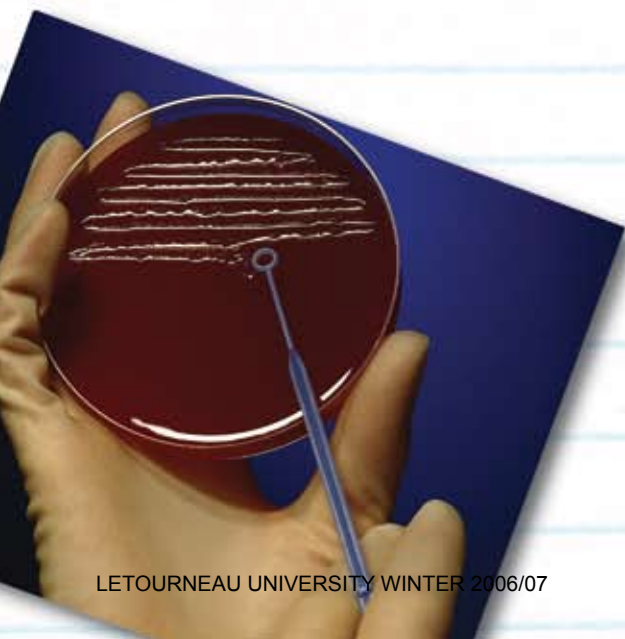
"It is very difficult to be a scientist and be a Christian, but at LeTourneau the two coexist," Shandley said. "In my experience, the scientific community views God as a child's imaginary friend. Meaning, science sees believers as children, less knowledgeable, naive, even gullible, and God is their imaginary friend. This attitude, of course, is not necessary to be a good scientist. Every Christian who is a scientist must reconcile this to their own satisfaction. Without a doubt, a believer sees science differently than a non-believer. Where I see a beautiful, elegant design, they would see a puzzle or a sequence of evolutionary events leading to an end process. The co-existence of science and Christianity is truly special at LeTourneau."

Sabrina Shandley is researching the autoimmune disease, myasthenia gravis, as she works toward graduation. "Traditionally, when studying an autoimmune disease, researchers focus on the immune system, how it has gone wrong and the pathology it causes. In the lab I am working in, we study how a muscle contributes to its own fate during myasthenia gravis. The interaction between muscle and autoimmune cells is the focus of our lab's work," Shandley said.

As a student at LETU, Shandley developed a passion and drive to teach science. "Dr. Jarstfer gave me the opportunity to be a lab assistant for three years," Shandley said. It was through this experience she realized her love of teaching and appreciation for research. At LETU, she also developed a Christian worldview regarding science.

*"Without a doubt, a believer sees science differently than a non-believer. Where I see a beautiful, elegant design, they would see a puzzle or a sequence of evolutionary events leading to an end process."*

*—Sabrina Shandley*





## Shannon Toews

LETU Degree: 2006 Bachelor of Science in biology

Now at: The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Degree sought: Doctor of Medicine

Shannon Toews is a first-year medical student. "In the anatomy lab, we have a practical test where the professor will pin or put string around a certain structure on our cadavers, and we have to name it. We rotate stations at a buzzer. I felt I had a head start because my biology lab tests were exactly like that at LETU," Toews said.

While at LETU, Toews enjoyed the intellectual debates hosted by the science department discussing the history of the earth and evolution. She also felt cared for by her professors. "I never left Dr. Jarstfer's office without him praying for me and my future," she said.

After dissecting sharks and cats at LETU, Toews was ready to dissect human cadavers in medical school. She said her favorite dissections were the heart and lungs, "The lungs feel so cool... like a combination of a sponge and bubble wrap with super tiny bubbles. It's hard to believe that it has the surface area of a tennis court!"

Toews misses LETU's unique atmosphere. "I left some of my best friends when I graduated. I miss random fights with roommates with marshmallow guns, sliding down the berm in the rain, playing soccer with my team, water balloons through my window at 2 am... the little things."



## Maggie Sleigh

LETU Degree: 2006 Bachelor of Science in biology

Studying through: Creighton University's School of Pharmacy and Health Professions

Degree sought: Doctor of Pharmacy

Maggie Sleigh is a first-year pharmacy student. "If I had to do it over again, I would go to LETU. I am a better person because of it," Sleigh said. "My spiritual education and biblical knowledge equipped me to be strong in my faith."

On entering graduate school, Sleigh said she was ready. "When I took the PCAT [an admissions test for pharmacy school], I had seen everything on the test. I was really prepared. I am ahead in my classes, and my test scores have been above average," she said.

Sleigh said providing pharmaceutical care is not just about filling prescriptions. "It's also about relationships with customers, keeping up with meds and how consistently the patient is taking their meds," she said.

Sleigh said pharmacology offers a great opportunity to build relationships, but said it is the relationships she built with her LETU science professors that have helped keep her going in graduate school.

"The profs in the science department continue to encourage me," Sleigh said. "I know they are praying for me. When I feel all alone in this secular environment, it's good to have the encouragement of people who care about me and support me."

## Kirsten Grimm

LETU Degree: 2006 Bachelor of Science in biology and chemistry minor

Now at: Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health, Atlanta, Ga.

Degree sought: Master of Public Health in Global Epidemiology

Kirsten Grimm is a research assistant in the influenza labs at the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

"Originally, I wanted to do mission work in sanitation education or nutrition. My two LETU mission trips to Estonia in 2004 and 2005 really got me thinking more about missions," said Grimm. She considers her years at LETU to be the best three years of her life because of the opportunities she had to build relationships and grow spiritually and academically. "At LETU I was able to grow and deepen my spiritual walk with the Lord. I was equipped to stand strong and not be influenced by what other people think.

"The Lord used those years to shape me into the person I am, and looking back, it is definitely where He wanted me," she said.

Grimm said the quality academic foundation she received at LETU helped prepare her for graduate school. "My LETU professors gave me personal attention. I know that they really care. Dr. Hood challenged me to think, and to know why I believe what I believe. My grad school classes are hard, but I was prepared. It's just the next step," she said.

## Lindsey Brown

LETU Degree: 2005 Bachelor of Science in biology with a research concentration

Now at: University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

Degree sought: Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Sciences with an emphasis in cellular development

As Lindsey Brown continues her studies in the field of science, she is thankful for her preparation at LeTourneau University. "My biology classes at LETU were taught from a biblical worldview that gave God credit for His creation. It is so helpful to have that grounding when graduate school tries as hard as possible to indoctrinate students to a secular humanistic worldview," she said.

"I believe that as a Christian and a scientist, I have a distinct advantage over my colleagues," Brown said. "God is a God of order, not chance and chaos, so studying His creation is studying how He orders and patterns.

"LETU provided me an environment in which I was able to grow both spiritually and academically. It prepared me to enter the workforce as an adult," Brown said. "I learned so much about my field, life and faith from my professors. . . It grounded me in the truth, which is so important for young adults who are then living and working in a secular environment."

## Jeannie Thompson

LETU Degree: 2004 Bachelor of Science in biology

Graduate Degree obtained: 2006 Master of Public Health with a concentration in epidemiology, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Jeannie Thompson was a graduate research assistant on a longitudinal adolescent development research study in the College of Public Health at OU. As a part of her graduate study, Thompson worked with the Oklahoma State Department of Health analyzing data for several non-reportable parasitic diseases occurring in Oklahoma. She is currently teaching a statistics course as an adjunct professor at Oklahoma City Community College.

"My experience gave me a solid foundation,"

Thompson said of her hands-on, undergraduate education at LETU. "I have a well-rounded education, and I am not only prepared with knowledge, but with life skills."

Thompson said LETU's caring and encouraging professors made an impact on her. "They not only spoke to us about living a life for Christ, but they modeled it in their everyday lives," she said.

"In the science field there are so many people who attribute everything to evolution and not to God's design. . . The majority of my classmates and coworkers do not have a personal relationship with Christ," Thompson said. She said her Christian worldview influences people around her. "I am asked about why I act the way I do, and why I believe what I do," she said.



*Left: Kirsten Grimm, Lindsey Brown  
Below: Jeannie Thompson,  
Christopher Schwann, Rebekah Fisher*



## *Christopher Schwann*

LETU Degree: 2002 Bachelor of Arts in biology with a minor in Latin American studies

Now at: University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas

Degree sought: Doctor of Medicine

Christopher Schwann is a second-year medical student currently performing research on two topics: Traumatic Brain Injuries' (TBI) Lesion Expansion and Treatment, and the Detection of Suicidal Ideation in an Emergency Room Setting.

"LETU helped me prepare for the academic rigors that I now face," Schwann said.

He had no idea what to major in when he first came to LETU. "I started in computer science, then business, and took a biology course in there somewhere. I loved the biology course and decided maybe I'd shoot to get into physical therapy school, though I thought it was doubtful. Dr. Jarstfer and I had a few advising sessions where he strongly encouraged me to consider medicine as a future career. When I finally decided to pursue medicine, I was very behind in the prerequisites and admissions process. Dr. J. and I talked through a lot of it, and I really benefited from his sound advice...

I don't think I would be in medicine, or have the incredible friends that I do now, had it not been for my time at LETU... God knew what He was doing when He put me at LETU," Schwann said.

While attending medical school, Schwann has become involved in organizations such as the Dallas Life Foundation, the Emergency Medicine Student Association and Southwestern Christian Fellowship.

"Christ said, 'Whatever you do for the least of these, you have done for me.' As a doctor, I have the opportunity to do a great deal for the 'least of these.' I'm pretty stoked about that privilege," Schwann said.

## *Rebekah Fisher*

LETU Degree: 2000 Bachelor of Science in biology with a pre-medical focus

Now at: Family Medicine Practice in Chicago, Ill.

Graduate degree obtained: Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies

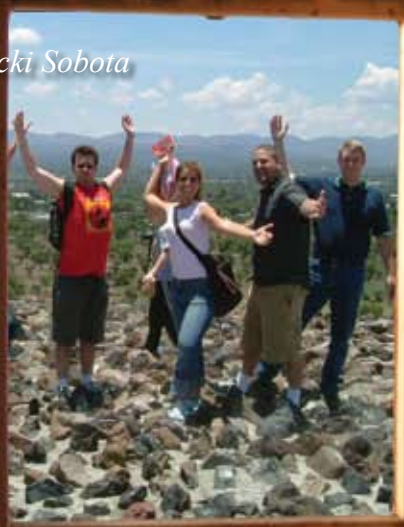
Rebekah Fisher is a certified physician assistant at Family Medicine Practice in the greater Chicago area. She said her pre-med classes at LETU helped her get the experience she needed for graduate school and encouraged her to seek excellence. "I was encouraged by Dr. Martin Batts to seek to influence pagan culture with the Gospel instead of running from it. His words have stuck with me for six years now. I constantly remind myself that being the best you can be in your field, without compromise, is one of the best witnesses to the world."

Fisher considers herself fortunate to practice medicine in a Christian clinic. "It is very easy to share my faith with patients, or to pray with them," she said. "I have had the opportunity to share Christ with patients on their death beds. Talk about feeling sent by God!

"I have recently joined a solo physician whose clinic's mission is to provide healthcare to all who come to her door," Fisher said. "We are currently seeking to collaborate with volunteers to help us organize, serve and raise funds to further this cause... All of the world is in need of medical care. The mission opportunities are endless." ■

# MEXICAN EXCHANGE

*Written by Jacki Sobota*





cathedral's steeple could be seen from my bed, a large cross reaching toward the morning sky. Before me: Puebla, Mexico. For two weeks, about 20 students and I traveled from LeTourneau University to Mexico to study the Spanish language with Sr. Arturo Morales, our Spanish professor, and his family. While in Mexico I tasted a new culture and saw more of God's beauty in this world around me. I would return to America with a deep sense of longing for more of Mexico, its history and its people.

Our hotel had been converted from an ancient monastery, retaining the essence of bygone times. Stone steps wound up to the rooms and further up to the rooftop. From the roof, I could see the beautiful city, full of cathedrals, a view of endless rooftops, hanging flowers and an ancient Aztec sun on the horizon. Leaning over, I could see the narrow streets below, lined with small *tiendas* selling everything from Mexican candy to jewelry. So many people were walking to unknown destinations. Cars squealed as they rounded corners, barely missing tourists like me.

In the mornings following breakfasts of *huevos rancheros*, fresh tropical fruit, coffee, toast and French toast, Sr. Morales held class for the intermediate and advanced students. For a few hours, we would discuss basic grammar, vocabulary and foundational language concepts. Lunch and dinner were elaborate, with delicious cuisine of traditional Mexico. For example, they gave three to four choices for appetizer, soup, entree, and dessert: *enchiladas*, *tostadas*, chicken and beef dishes, the authentic *molé*, and ice cream or pastries.

Following lunch in the afternoons, we were assigned to guides, *acompañantes*, who lived in Puebla. One was a retired bull fighter. Another was a medical doctor. Another was a young college student. Every afternoon they showed us the city and practiced speaking Spanish with us. I walked the streets with my *acompañante*, amazed at the sights. The peddlers on the streets had carts full of pineapples and oranges. One man was squeezing the oranges and selling the juice. The people were all so friendly, with such ease and peace in their smiles. Little children with wide, innocent, brown eyes would approach my side, eager to sell me their *dulces*, *vestidos* and *ropa*. They would always smile at me and giggle when I struggled to imitate their words in Spanish. I can only imagine how silly I sounded.

Some afternoons, we visited cathedrals in the area, including the Cathedral of Puebla and the Cathedral of San Francisco of Acatepec. As a student of history, I was impressed by the endless details, the religious paintings, the gold trim and the severe statues of Mary, the saints and Christ. Once, when we visited a cathedral during Mass, I remember a woman kneeling before Mary, placing white flowers and candles at the statue's feet.

After many hours of study and taking our exams, my friends and I would venture out to explore. Once

we came to a special street called *Calle del Parian*. It was full of native handcrafts, dresses, jewelry, leather, ceramic plates and cups. My desire to learn more Spanish vocabulary grew daily as I grew more confident in my bargaining skills. I became eager to speak with the people. My favorite authentic Mexican candies were found on a street called *La Dulcería*, which was lined with candy stores. Some mornings, we walked to the coffee shops in the square of the city, and sat in patio chairs, watching people walk by.

One night, we saw an authentic Mexican bullfight. There was so much blood, I felt like I was in ancient times. While the blood and death of the bull were difficult for me to watch, I realized the culture of Mexico runs deep with traditions like bullfighting. So with this perspective, I was honored to have witnessed such a profound symbol of Mexico's customs.

The Teotihuacán ruins of the Aztecs and Cholula were breathtaking sites we visited on the weekends. Rising to the sky, the temples had no need for translation. Long before the Spanish influence, they were here. The long-lost native tongue of the Aztecs still lives and breathes in the Spanish language today.

One Sunday, we all went to a Baptist church in Puebla. It was small, yet full of joyful believers praising God in Spanish. I was astonished to realize that I understood most of the sermon and songs throughout the service. Because Spanish was being spoken to me on a daily basis and my mind was constantly trying to translate and speak it, I realized how much my Spanish fluency had progressed. In celebration of Mother's Day, the sermon was about Mary, taken from Luke 1:26-38. The verse, "Nothing is impossible with God," translates "*Nada hay imposible para Dios.*" This verse proved to be so appropriate for my time in Mexico. Those words echo in my heart in both languages. We are the Lord's servants and have no reason to learn a language for prestige or for a grade, but for God alone, to share His love with others. In even greater detail, Professor Morales assigned us to read and translate First, Second and Third John in Spanish. This was a wonderful assignment, reading and memorizing the Word in another language, savoring the beauty of this Romance language.

I feel as if I grew in wisdom and understanding in those two weeks. I enjoyed listening and speaking, even bartering in Spanish with merchants for a homemade white dress. I expanded my experiences by tasting lamb for the first time, beholding the wonders of the Aztec pyramids and growing daily in knowledge and love for a culture so near to my home. ■

*Jacki Sobota is a junior English major from Conifer, Colo. She studied Spanish in Puebla, Mexico, as part of a study-abroad program offered by LETU.*

# News and Notes

## DR. AUSTIN RECEIVES HENRY O. GOSSETT AWARD



LeTourneau University President Dr. Alvin O. Austin was named the 2007 Henry O. Gossett Award winner at the university's annual community banquet Nov. 4. The Henry O. Gossett, Jr.

Community Partner Award is named in honor of Henry Gossett for longtime service to the university through the President's Advisory Council.

## PACT INTERN OF THE YEAR

Laurie Taylor, a graduate of LETU's Postbaccalaureate Accelerated Certification for Teachers (PACT) program in Houston was named Intern of the Year for early childhood through 4th grade at the annual conference of the Consortium for State Organizations of Texas Teacher Educators. Taylor teaches at Rustic Oak Elementary School in the Pearland Independent School District.



## PAUL ABBOTT NAMED ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

LeTourneau University alumnus Paul Abbott was honored as the Alumnus of the Year at the university's annual homecoming banquet Oct. 14 in Longview, Texas. Abbott graduated from LeTourneau College in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Technology. He and his wife, Betty, own and operate Covington Aircraft, a world leader in aircraft engine overhaul and repair, based in Okmulgee, Okla. Abbott has provided outstanding support to LeTourneau University, currently serving on the Board of Trustees as well as the Aeronautical Science Advisory Council. Through his support and promotion, the university completed the Martin Donner Engine Test Facility in the spring of 2006 at its Longview campus in memory of his

former college roommate, who later became a beloved aeronautical science faculty member.

## LETU HOSTS FIRST MISSION AVIATION CONFERENCE

More than two dozen representatives from missionary aviation organizations from across the globe met at LeTourneau University Nov. 16 and 17 for the university's first mission aviation training summit to discuss changes in missionary aviation brought on by technology. The increased use of turbine-powered airplanes and the introduction of technically advanced aircraft, like the Quest Kodiak, will require a new approach to pilot and technician training for missions. Fred Ritchey, dean of aeronautical science, said LETU is in a unique position to partner with organizations to explore what the new approach to training should look like, for both traditional students interested in mission aviation, and for current mission aviation staff needing additional training. Organizations including JAARS, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Samaritan's Purse, AIM Air and New Tribes joined representatives from Dynamic Aviation, Covington Aircraft Engines and Quest Aircraft at the summit.



## LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY MOURNS DEATH OF BUILDING'S NAMESAKE

LeTourneau University mourned the loss of trustee emeritus and friend Shelby Elliot Belcher, Jr., 90, who died at his home in Brent, Ala. Dec. 14. A longtime trustee and supporter of the university, Belcher is the namesake of the university's newest building, the S. E. Belcher Jr. Chapel and Performance Center, slated to open in the spring. His influence is seen throughout the Longview campus, having played a significant role in every major building project in the last 20 years. The university's bell tower, which anchors the campus mall, is named in memory of his first wife and former high school sweetheart, Jeannette Steele Belcher, who died in 1991.

"Elliot Belcher loved LeTourneau University and believed in the value of Christian education," said LeTourneau University President Dr. Alvin O. Austin, who spoke at Belcher's funeral service in Alabama. "A humble and caring man who loved the Lord, he gave the lead gift of \$5 million to the university for our new chapel and performance center knowing he might never have the opportunity to sit in it. I am honored by the family to be asked to be a part of his funeral service."



### LEGS PROJECT ATTRACTS NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE

The Nov. 17 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* featured a full-page story on the 11 LeTourneau University engineering students who are designing a low-cost prosthetic leg for amputees in under-developed nations. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* is the nation's oldest and largest trade journal for college and university educators and administrators. The publication has a total readership of more than 400,000 worldwide. *Chronicle* writer and Southwest Bureau Chief Katherine Mangan traveled to Longview in October to report on LeTourneau's LEGS Project. LEGS stands for LeTourneau University Engineering Global Solutions. To read more about the LEGS program, go to [www.legsresearch.org](http://www.legsresearch.org).



### LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY NOW MAGAZINE WINS KATIE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

LeTourneau University's NOW magazine was named best magazine among corporate and nonprofit magazines by the Press Club of Dallas at the 48th annual Katie Awards for journalism excellence Nov. 18. The Katie Awards recognize excellence in print, broadcast media and mass communication in a five-state area including Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The magazine was a finalist for the award in 2005.

### LETU RESEARCH CONFIRMS BUBBLE FUSION RESEARCH

LeTourneau University physics professor Edward R. "Ted" Forringer, Ph.D., and senior David Robbins presented two papers confirming the existence of fusion in collapsing bubbles at the American Nuclear Society (ANS) winter conference in Albuquerque, N. M. In addition, the two also co-authored a paper on bubble fusion with sophomore Jonathan Martin that has been peer-reviewed and accepted for publication in *Transactions*, a publication

of the American Nuclear Society. A second paper with Robbins as lead author, along with Forringer and Martin, is being reviewed for publication. Forringer says fusion holds promise for clean, cheap and abundant "green" energy.



### CCCU HONORS DR. AUSTIN

LeTourneau University President Dr. Alvin O. "Bud" Austin was recently honored by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). President Austin received a certificate of appreciation for his service to the CCCU and for his contributions to higher education.

CCCU President Paul Corts and Chairman of the CCCU Board of Directors David S. Dockery expressed appreciation to Dr. Austin for his service, not only to the CCCU, but to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for which Austin served on the executive council of the Commission on Colleges.

The plaque reads, "We commend Dr. Austin for his remarkable accomplishments at LeTourneau University where his leadership has transformed the university over the past two decades." ■



### FLIGHT TEAM WINS FIRST PLACE AT NIFA COMPETITION

LeTourneau University's aeronautical science team won first place overall in the National Intercollegiate Flying Association's 2006 Region IV SAFECON competition at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and qualified to attend the national NIFA competition in Columbus, Ohio, May 7-11. The LETU "Sting" Precision Flight Team won first place in ground events and third place in the flying events, with scores totaling first place overall and 116 points ahead of the second place team. They competed against teams from eight other universities in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Missouri. Brad Wooden, team coach, flight instructor and faculty adviser, coaches 13 flight students on the LETU Sting Precision Flight team. Several LETU students took first place trophies in individual events.

# Global Perspective on Education

*Written by Kris Erickson*

**W**hile teaching overseas, Chair of the History and Political Science Department Dr. Paul Kubricht found that more than ever, the best job opportunities overseas will go to graduates with multilingual abilities.

Kubricht took a one-semester sabbatical, from January to May of 2006, to teach classes at the International University of Vienna, Austria. He taught two undergraduate courses in Contemporary U.S. Foreign Policy (WWI to present) and History of Political Thought, and one graduate course in International Relations.

His students came from Eastern Europe, Germany, Austria, Kazakhstan, Russia, the Middle East and Africa and most spoke several languages. For many of these students, education was the only way to escape impoverished conditions or get ahead, Kubricht said.

"They had no problem with the language barrier," said Kubricht, who taught in English. "They were very interested in an American university degree and learning American language patterns. Many of them already know one or two local languages. The majority are trilingual, which puts them in a very good position for international employment."

While in Austria, it became clear to Kubricht that these international students will have an obvious advantage over his students at LeTourneau in the future international job market.

"The challenge for LeTourneau University students interested in international affairs or business is the commitment to being bilingual or trilingual," Kubricht said. A student only fluent in English may compete against trilingual students for international positions. To be professionally competitive, American students must have the commitment to become multilingual.

To assist LETU students in gaining the necessary language skills, Kubricht said students

should not only study foreign languages but live in another culture for three to six months. "I want students to dig deeper in their understanding of different languages and cultures," he said. "I want them to ask themselves, who are these people? How do they think? It's important that our students learn the culture."

Currently, Kubricht encourages students to take advantage of Best Semester, the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities' (CCCU) off-campus study program. Students can apply to study for one semester in China, Latin America, the Middle East, England, Russia, Australia, or Uganda, taking classes while being immersed in that country's culture. Students take classes such as African Traditional Religions, Islam and Christianity in Contemporary Uganda, Conflict and Change in the Middle East, Russian, Arabic, Spanish or Chinese History.

LETU alumnus Christopher Schwan studied in Latin America in the Best Semester program and said his cultural immersion reinforced his sense that Americans shouldn't just continue to live comfortably in the United States and forget about the rest of the world. He believes every LETU student should study abroad.

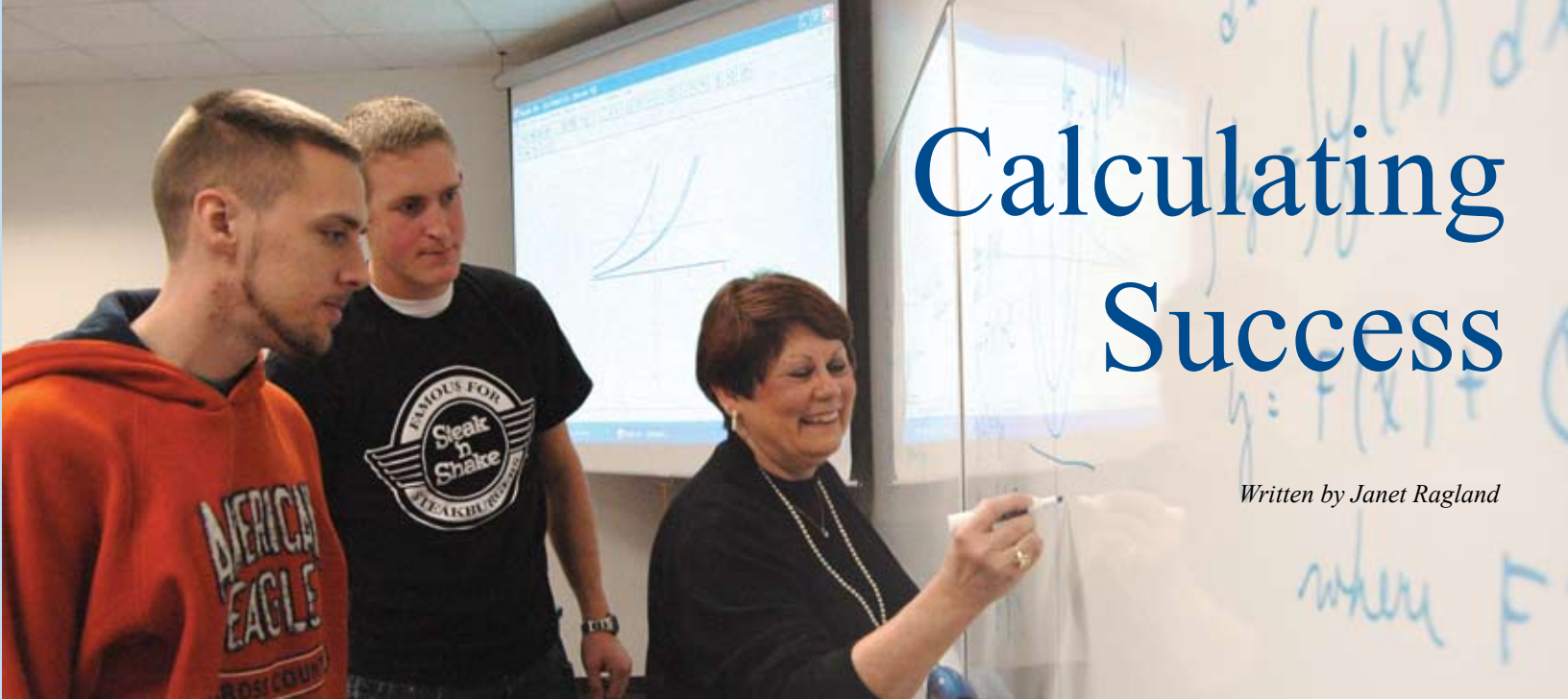
"It broadens students' worldviews and shows them firsthand what it's like to not be an American," Schwan said. "It exposes students to a more realistic worldview."

LeTourneau University is looking at programs that better prepare students to compete on an international level.

"There are a lot of programs out there, we just need to find the right one for LeTourneau," he said.

"Our students are competing with an educated world for international jobs," he said. "We must think creatively about the best way to provide this global education. It requires a shift in American thinking." ■





# Calculating Success

*Written by Janet Ragland*

**L**eTourneau University is known as a top engineering school. Students majoring in engineering must take rigorous mathematics in high school to be prepared for the rigors of Calculus I during their first semester.

Some have not. So what does the university do when incoming engineering freshmen haven't received the necessary math preparation?

LETU math professor Lois Knouse has found an answer that works. She designed an intensive, accelerated math program specifically for engineering majors that offers Precalculus and Calculus I in sequence during five-day-a-week classes during the first fall semester. The course is designed for students scoring between 550 and 630 on their SAT in math, or between 24 and 27 on their ACT in math. The course readies students for Calculus II in the spring semester.

"Several years ago, we observed many of our prospective engineering and science majors were entering with a deficiency in mathematics," Knouse said. "They were struggling to successfully complete Calculus I in their first semester, causing them to be behind, not only for mathematics but for their other courses that require it as a prerequisite."

For example, Calculus I is a prerequisite for Physics I, which is only offered in the spring. If students fail to enroll in Physics I during their spring semesters, they become a year behind in physics. Once behind, it's difficult to catch up since Calculus II is a prerequisite for Statics and Electrical Circuits I, which is usually taken during the third semester.

"This was an unacceptable situation," Knouse said. "We decided to try a different approach to prepare students for these courses while still maintaining the course sequences for the different curricula involved."

Classes meet every weekday at 8 a.m. Content includes a review of Trigonometry and seven weeks of Precalculus, followed immediately by seven weeks of Calculus I. Homework is assigned every night.

After the first two weeks of Precalculus, students are

given a test. Those who fail are counseled to change into the regular, semester-long, Precalculus class.

When Knouse began offering this new program in fall of 2004, Precalculus and Trigonometry (as separate classes) were required of freshmen lacking the higher math. Students who took Precalculus and Trigonometry did not receive engineering math credit, only course credit. Then, in the spring of their freshman year, these students were ready for Calculus I, but were already behind a semester in math. Using this new program, by the end of their first semester, freshmen are prepared for Calculus II, putting them back on schedule.

Results have been encouraging.

Of the 33 students who began the program in fall 2004, 26 completed Precalculus and 23 completed Calculus I. Of the 21 who enrolled in Calculus II in the spring, 18 successfully completed it. Most of those who did not succeed changed majors. Success rates in fall 2005 and 2006 continue to show the program is working.

Since the program began, 35 students have been ready for Calculus III or Differential Equations by their third semesters and were on track for their engineering courses.

"Several students have said they might not have successfully completed Calculus I and Calculus II without the review of Precalculus," Knouse said.

Nathaniel Horton, a junior materials joining engineering major from Tennessee, was in the first class in 2004.

"It is a very good program," he said. "Prior to coming to LETU, I had no calculus experience. I took five math courses during high school, just not calculus. Most of my math courses were focused in probability, statistics and advanced algebra-based math.

"I have seen this course's benefits," Horton said. "Our course work in metals and physical chemistry behavior involved a lot of partial differential calculus. After the initial course, I moved on and went successfully through Calculus III and Differential Equations without the slightest trouble." ■

# Sports Update

*Written by Shane Meling, Sports Information Director*



When student athletes arrived on campus in mid-August, there was a distinct air of anticipation for the upcoming fall athletic season. The anticipation turned into delight as men's soccer, women's soccer and volleyball combined for one of the best athletic falls in school history.

## **MEN'S SOCCER**

Head Coach Tom Wait led the YellowJackets to a 12-5-2 season record; the best since the team went 14-5-1 in 1998. The Jackets also won the most American Southwest Conference games in school history, but were left out of the conference playoffs due to a tie-breaker.

Despite the disappointment, the year has been a great success.

For the season, the Jackets outscored their opponents 41-22. Goalkeeper, Willie Cloyd, set a school record, 1.13 goals against average. Ryan Potter and Daniel Iya led the Jackets scoring for the year as Potter finished with eight goals and 10 assists and Iya had 12 goals and one assist.

## **WOMEN'S SOCCER**

Head Coach Troy Edwards led the LadyJackets to the best season in school history with a 10-7-2 regular season and an 8-4-1 record in the ASC. The team advanced to the conference playoffs for the second year in a row.

The team was led by its trio of outstanding goal scorers: senior Erica Sudeck, sophomore Amanda Norton and freshman Angie Muszynski. Sudeck led the team with an

LETU single season record in goals (19), assists (8) and points (46). She concluded her career as the most decorated player in the program's history.

The team finished out the season on the road with a 6-3 victory at University of the Ozarks and a 3-0 loss at UT-Dallas.

## **VOLLEYBALL**

The volleyball team stormed out of the gates this season winning five of its first six matches, including a season high four-match winning streak. The LadyJackets finished the season 10-19 for their best record since going 14-21 in 1997. They also picked up four American Southwest Conference victories—the most since the 1998 season. The LadyJackets missed the playoffs by one game, making this year their best ASC finish to date.

Two LadyJackets eclipsed the 1,000-career-digs mark for the first time in the school's history. Senior Juliana Metcalf concluded a brilliant career with 1,061 digs and 644 kills. Junior Bethany Suderman was close behind with 1,036 digs from her libero position. Suderman led the team with 3.92 digs per game in 2006.

Sophomore setter Abigail Hews had another record-setting season with 961 digs. She had the top two single-season assist marks in school history. She was named the ASC East Division Setter of the Week twice during the season and was second on the team behind Suderman with 2.87 digs per game. ■



# A Legend Among Us

Mary Ann Otwell



Written by Janet Ragland

A small sign outside Mary Ann Otwell's office door in the Solheim Recreation and Activity Center reads, "Legend." The four-time Hall of Famer didn't put it there. LeTourneau University Athletic Director Duane Trogdon gave her the nickname.

"When I came and interviewed for the Athletic Director's job a few years ago, I noticed her picture was all over the gym for the national championships her women's basketball teams had won," Trogdon said. "Everybody else just picked up on it from there."

While Otwell's official titles include assistant professor of kinesiology, assistant athletic director and senior woman administrator for athletics, it is really "Legend" that fits her best.

Otwell truly is a legend in women's basketball. She launched the women's basketball program at Panola Junior College and led them to back-to-back national junior college women's basketball titles in 1977 and 1978. From 1974-78, she compiled a 102-40 record and was twice named the National Junior College Athletic Association National Coach of the Year.

That record opened the door to a successful coaching career at Stephen F. Austin State University where Otwell assisted the renowned head

coach Sue Gunter before Otwell assumed the head coaching position herself, racking up a 61-29 record.

At LeTourneau University she started the women's basketball program in 1993, having come out of retirement to build the program from the ground up. Within five years, she had back-to-back National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) national championships: in 1996-97 and 1997-98. When she retired from coaching after more than two decades, she had a record of over two wins for every loss, and she never had a losing season.

But it wasn't just the life her players played on the courts that mattered to Otwell. She has always invested energy into the spiritual lives of all of her students and continues to live her faith as an example.

"I hope my students see in me a reflection of Christ," Otwell said. "I know I may be the only Bible they read. You never really know what these kids are hearing, or whether they are in church or not, so in my classroom devotions I think it's important that they hear from me that sin is sin. I speak boldly to them because I care where they spend eternity."

Otwell grew up in Arkansas, living on a farm and picking cotton after school. Though her family was poor, she had faith to see her dreams come true.

Otwell attended Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and

played basketball and tennis. She led the Tigerette basketball team to state championships during both seasons she played in 1961 and 1962. She was the team's leading scorer and was selected for All-State both years. Otwell was also named to the National Women's Basketball League All-Star team after the 1962 season.

In tennis, Otwell won three consecutive AIC singles titles, having been a runner-up her freshman year. In doubles, she was an AIC champion all four years. After earning her undergraduate degree from OBU, she later earned a Master of Science in Education with a concentration in kinesiology from Arkansas State University.

Otwell had already been inducted into three athletic halls of fame when her undergraduate alma mater asked to honor her with induction into the OBU Hall of Fame this past November.

Otwell had been inducted into the National Junior College Athletic Hall of Fame, the Panola Junior College Hall of Fame and the LeTourneau University Hall of Fame.

"When you look at her career and her coaching in college, she is a legend," Trogdon said. "If she was a Division I coach in today's culture of women's coaches, she would be at the top nationally. Very few have achieved the record she has. She has been successful at every level."



Josh Bruning and Mark Smith

Andrew Sloma

# Computer Science Program Paves Way To Big Blue

*Written by Janet Ragland*

LeTourneau University computer science undergraduates began researching software flaws for IBM in 2002 as part of a cooperative agreement between the university and the computer giant. Students found design flaws in designated software by abusing it while they documented how it performed under stress.

"This partnership gave our students practical experience in software verification techniques, which verifies that no matter what you do to the program, it will perform exactly as the documentation says it will," said computer science professor Dr. Craig Varnell. "LeTourneau University is one of only two universities to have this kind of partnership with IBM."

Due to the excellent work of the LETU students, IBM has expanded the program this semester to include students in software development for IBM's i-Series operating system.

"This advancement gives our students the unique opportunity to do real-world development while still undergraduates," Varnell said. "Two of our graduates who came through this program now work for IBM as fulltime employees. Several of our current students will do six-month cooperative agreements at IBM in Rochester, Minn. This experience makes our students extremely marketable after graduation."

Andrew Sloma, a 2002 computer science graduate, was LETU's first co-op student with IBM. He's been working for IBM for nearly five years.

"I started out as a tester for the SQL support on the server, and moved into a development position shortly thereafter," Sloma said. "I am currently working as a system's programmer for DB2 on the IBM System i server. The job is unique in the sense that I am developing operating system code. With the consolidation of operating systems across the industry over the last decade, I look at this as a pretty cool position."

Sloma is now managing the partnership between IBM and his alma mater.

"My experience at LeTourneau was very positive," he said. "In many ways the field of computer science is very dynamic, and it requires universities to stay proactive in responding to changes within the field. The LeTourneau – IBM relationship is a great example of how LeTourneau is striving to stay in-sync with the industry. It also provides more than just technical know-how. It allows students to experience problem solving in a 'real world' environment." Sloma said his small classes made interaction with professors and students easy.

"Classes that focused on teamwork projects prepared me for the team-oriented environment in which I now work," Sloma said.

Mark S. Smith is a 2006 graduate who also works at IBM in Rochester as a software engineer/developer. He worked in the IBM project course for two semesters and says IBM is a good first job out of school.

"Most of what I do is a form of problem solving, and I love it," he says.

"IBM is a relaxed environment and invests a lot in developing new employees," he says. "There is definitely

a form of culture shock after you leave the academic world of LeTourneau. I'm still trying to get used to the idea of staying in the same place for a while and not changing homes every semester."

Smith says the IBM internship stretched him.

"There were a lot of technical terms we had never seen before and the students were required to divide the work and assign roles among themselves," he said. "The project required programming in a language I didn't know (SQL) on a platform I had never heard of (AS/400). My teammate and I read through several 'heavy' books in a frantic attempt to learn enough to get the job done. At the close of the project, our ability to rapidly adapt to a new environment and exceed the expectations left a positive impression on our partners at IBM.

"In the end, I got my first glimpse at what a profession in computer science might actually be like," Smith said. "Real world experience is very valuable and can often be hard to come by in a university atmosphere. The relationship with IBM provides the opportunity to merge the industrial world with the academic world and allows students to gain the experience employers are looking for."

Smith said his relationships with his professors made a difference.

"Dr. Varnell often used a hands-off approach to the project and allowed the students to organize it themselves. The success or failure of the project was in the hands of the students and this provided a more realistic experience. While on the project, I would often spend hours in Dr. Varnell's office talking to him about the project and other things going on in my life at the time. I found the professors were often open to their students and didn't mind

taking time out of their day to help, or even just talk.

"LeTourneau is not just about developing a career, but developing individuals as well," Smith said. "College is that time in life when individuals form the opinions and ideals which they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. LeTourneau is a community that takes an active interest in not just developing skills in a profession, but also developing well-rounded people."

Josh Bruning, a junior computer science major from Stanton, Iowa, who plans to graduate in 2008 and enter a graduate school, is just completing a six-month co-op with IBM.

"This is a very good job to have while in college...certainly well beyond my expectations," Bruning said. "My job experience as a co-op has included design and planning, implementation using programming and basic graphic design and deployment of the software to customers. My schedule is very flexible...as long as I average 40 hours a week, I can come and go as is convenient for me."

A National Merit Scholar, Bruning says he plans to return to IBM in Rochester during the summer on a three-month co-op as a co-op/intern programmer.

"Because of the partnership between LeTourneau and IBM, Dr. Varnell had established a correspondence with my first manager," Bruning said. "I was able to easily enter the software industry because of my performance in school and in spite of my lack of professional experience. IBM is a very well-known and respected company—so my experience here will be recognized. This experience will definitely help me to get a better job when I enter the workforce." ■



## From The Admissions Office

*Written by James Townsend, Director of Admissions*

This fall, I realized just how much technology affects our students' lives. I taught one section of Cornerstones of Life Learning – a required course for all new freshmen at LETU. Through spending time with these students, it was clear that technology has a massive impact on their lives.

Today, students consider an e-mail or a text message to be as personal as a phone call. For example, they send holiday and birthday greetings by text message, MySpace and Facebook.

To reach these college-bound students, LETU Admissions is using the Web. Our site has several online resources for students and parents. Brand new is "the room," our interactive college dorm room, and LETU "realities," our online magazine. More admissions information is at [www.letu.edu](http://www.letu.edu).

Don't worry, we haven't thrown the phones away! Reach us at 800.759.8811 and 903.233.4300.

We hope that you'll share this with your friends, children, grandchildren and any other college-bound students you know. If they are interested in admission for the fall 2007 semester, they should apply now! Financial aid awards begin March 1, 2007.

# MBA Classes Help The Homeless

*Written By Janet Ragland*

**S**tudents in Dr. Michael Dobbs' MBA capstone classes at the Dallas and Bedford education centers of LeTourneau University are getting some real-world experience putting their graduate education to work, even before they finish their degrees. Instead of using business model examples and exercises from a book, the MBA students have done actual business strategy assessments for a few Dallas-area charities, including Interfaith Housing Coalition.

IHC helps homeless children and their families establish stability and find affordable housing. Many of these families are single mothers with small children who are fleeing abuse. Some live in their cars, having been evicted from their apartments and homes.

IHC provides apartments for 90 days to help get women and their children off the street. Budget and financial counseling is provided, as many of these women are buried

under a mountain of debt. IHC volunteers meet with clients weekly and help them set goals, sharpen interviewing skills and write resumes. IHC helps the women find jobs, loans them clothes for interviews and provides bus passes to get to job interviews. If clients don't work 40 hours a week, they must spend 40 hours a week looking for work. IHC's goal is to get these families off welfare and make them self-sufficient.

Dobbs said he reviewed several organizations before choosing this one for his MBA students to assess. "This is like their senior project," Dobbs said. "The capstone class is the last MBA class before students split into their concentrations. In this project, our students can pull from a lot of different areas they have already studied, such as accounting, management, organizational behavior and business strategy. It's a hands-on, practical use of what they have already learned."

The MBA students assess from a purely economic standpoint the costs to society of these families remaining homeless. Students present the best, worst and likely case scenarios that can include drug addictions, prison and foster care. Knowing the costs to house an inmate for a year, and how much a child in foster care costs per year, helps the MBA students quantify the benefits of IHC's goals, Dobbs said. "Compared to a North Texas Food Bank that's feeding 57,000 families a month, the 100 families a year that Interfaith Housing Coalition helps might not seem as important, but when you consider the long-term economic effect of helping families

be self-supporting and stable, then its impact is huge.

"It came to millions of dollars of economic impact," Dobbs said. "Interfaith Housing Coalition could take that data and use it in their fundraising materials. We told them, 'This is the story you can tell, and here are the numbers to back it up.'"

IHC Executive Director Linda Hall said the work the students did for the nonprofit has made a tremendous impact in showing a social return on investment in a language donors understand.

"We've used LeTourneau University's assessment of our social return on investment in every proposal we've generated, and we quote their data in every tour we give," Hall said. "We needed to be able to show we are good stewards of our money, and that we are making a difference and operating efficiently. LeTourneau's outside verification helped us do that."

Dobbs was recently a nominee for LeTourneau University's prestigious Robert H. Selby Award for excellence in teaching.

"I was very happy to be a Selby nominee and represent those of us out at the satellite campuses who are doing some good work," he said.

Dobbs says it takes a lot of organization and administration to make these programs work, but it is worth it when the students receive practical learning application and see the benefits of their work.

"We're not going to Africa, but into the inner city of Dallas where our work is helping Interfaith Housing Authority build a future for the homeless," Dobbs said. ■



**Dr. Michael Dobbs**



# From the Alumni Office

Written by Allison Gardner, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations



Last spring the Alumni Association held bowl-a-thon events in Indianapolis, Ind., Minneapolis, Minn., Wichita, Kan., and Chicago, Ill., that each raised over \$1,000 to fund a scholarship for a student from each city to attend LeTourneau University in the fall of 2006. A note from one of the scholarship recipients reads:

*"I came to LeTourneau expecting to receive a top-notch education to prepare me for my life ahead. There is no question that the education level here is superior. However, after spending even just a few weeks here, I found that I will acquire much more than just a quality education. The friendships that I have formed with other students will, undoubtedly, be life long. These friends are true friends. They push me to grow closer to Christ and to go beyond my expectations and supposed limits."*

Mark your calendars and help a student from your area to study at our wonderful alma mater. We will hold our 2nd Annual Midwest Scholarship Challenge on March 3 and March 10, 2007. You will receive a letter in the coming weeks with complete event information if you live in Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Wichita, Chicago or Longview. Alumni and friends do make a difference!

## Homecoming

Alumni from across the decades celebrated on campus during Homecoming 2006 with a variety of 60th anniversary events. Check out some snapshots from the weekend and mark your calendar now for Homecoming 2007, October 26-27. We are in the process of planning reunions for the following groups:

- Dorm 4
- WRH – Northwest and Northeast wings
- Varsity Men's and Women's Soccer and Women's Volleyball



Homecoming 2007 will be a special event for us as we welcome a new president to our alma mater. So phone your LETU buddies and plan to be here!

# Class Notes

## MEMORIALS

**Paula (Hudson) Seaburn ('65)** died Oct. 4, 2006 in Clinton, Mo. She is survived by her husband of 41 years, Gene Seaburn ('66), three daughters and seven grandchildren.



**Johnny Williams ('72 MABS)** died Oct. 8, 2006 after a long illness. Johnny was the vice chancellor for administration and finance at the University of Mississippi. He

is survived by his wife, Carolyn, and their three children.

**Russell J. Tatro ('78 RE)** died June 1, 2006 in Burlington, Mass. He is survived by his wife, Wendy, and two daughters.

**Cynthia Y. Carter ('03 BBA)** died Oct. 18, 2006 as the result of a car wreck. She is survived by her husband, Amani Carter, and her three children.

**Deise Hunt ('03 ISEL)** died Dec. 9, 2006. Deise lived in Gilmer, Texas, where she was an elementary school teacher. Deise is survived by her husband, Larry, and her six children.



**Glen R. Sharp ('04 BBA)** died July 31, 2006 from a heart attack. Glen lived in Keller, Texas.

## BIRTHS



**Peter Van Wieren ('97 ME/WE)** and his wife, Tonnie, have a beautiful baby girl.

Elena Ruth was born Oct. 17, 2006. The Van Wieren family lives in Ypsilanti, Mich., where Peter works as an engineer.



**Jason ('96 EE)** and **Holli Burnfield** have five daughters. Layla was born Sept. 5, 2006 and was welcomed home by Iona, 7, Isabel, 5, Emily, 4 and Holli Faith, 3. The Burnfield family lives in Norman, Okla. Holli writes music which they are recording. Jason works as an electrical engineer at Tinker Air Force Base.



**Paul ('00 ATFL)** and **Amy Hildebrandt** have a son. Samuel Musa was born Oct. 10, 2006. Paul works for Dynamic Aviation and is based in Kingston, Jamaica.

**Jason ('01 ASAE)** and **Jaime (Benge) ('00 BUMK) Brewer** have a daughter. Morgan Grace was born Sept. 21, 2006. She joined big brother, Dylan, 3. Proud grandmother is **Nina Benge ('02 BBM)**. The Brewers live in Sulphur Springs, Texas, where Jason works for Legend Aircraft.



**Andrew ('01 ME)** and **Dacia Olson** announce the birth of Lydia Doris on June 29, 2006. She joins big sister, Abigail, 2. The Olson family lives in Champlin, Minn., where Andrew is a project engineer at Medtronic.

**Kyle ('03 ME)** and **Clara (Edge) Danielson ('02 BUBS)** announce the birth of Seth Michael on July 4, 2006. Kyle is an assistant superintendent with a residential construction company. Clara is a stay-at-home mom. They live in Bellevue, Wash.

**Phillip ('06 ASFL)** and **Melissa Winn** have a second child, Colin Carter, born Sept. 26, 2006. He joins big brother, Preston.



## MARRIAGES



**Rob Lund ('96 EE)** married **Sarah Baker** Aug. 11, 2006 in Colorado Springs, Colo. Sarah is a teacher and Rob is an electrical engineer

at Liteye Systems.

**Gordon Bullivant ('99 ME/WE)** married **Ashley Engler** June 24, 2006 in Ferndale, Wash. Ashley is a teacher and Gordon is a mechanical engineer designing oil refineries at VECO USA, Inc. in Bellingham, Wash.



**Tiffany Barnes ('03 BUBS)** married **Josh Stockebrand** Aug. 12, 2006 in Denver, Colo. Tiffany graduated from the University of Colorado School of Law in December 2006. The couple

currently lives in Parker, Colo.

**Andy Carter ('03 ASAE)** married **Andrea Arbuck** June 10, 2006. They live in Pleasant Dale, Neb., where Andy works for Duncan Aviation.





**Tim P. Clark ('03 CSBS)** married Kristine Batalden June 3, 2006. They live in Rochester, Minn., where Tim works for IBM as a software engineer. Kristine serves with several local ministries.

**Jannet Davis ('05 BBA)** married Kenny Mucui. They live in Longview, Texas. Jannet works for Lone Star Steel as a labor relations assistant.

**Pete Shull ('05 ME/CE)** married **Charissa Sherwood ('06 ENGL/HIPL)** July 8, 2006. They live in Redwood City, Calif.

**Caleb Roepke ('05 WE)** married **Kristin Ness ('05 BME)** August 21, 2006. The couple resides in Lakewood, Colo.

## ALUM NEWS

### 60'S



**Robert Goetz ('60 ME)** of Gainesville, Fla., was pleased to meet a fellow LETU grad, **Valerie (Formichella) Tweten ('04 MK)** while attending a Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce event in Massachusetts earlier this year. Valerie and her husband, **Aaron ('01 ATFL)**, a pilot for Cape Air, have lived in Martha's Vineyard for two years.

### 70's

**Paul ('73 MI)** and Linda **McMillan** live in the Dominican Republic where they serve with the Potter's Wheel Mission out of Michigan. They work with the Bible Center of Juan Tomas, the Fountain of Life School and the Bible Church of Juan Tomas.

**Jim Kohring ('74 BUAT)** and his wife moved from Denver to Nigeria in January 2006. Jim is a senior production engineer and Sharon is the facilities liaison officer for Schlumberger in Port Harcourt. Their daughter, Jeri, is a teacher in Thailand. Their son, Brad, is a church worship leader

in Palmer, Alaska. Their youngest son, Joey, attends Hillsong Leadership College in Sydney, Australia.

**Samuel Lopez de Victoria ('75 EE)** recently received his doctorate in family psychology from Cappella University. He has a private practice as a psychotherapist and is a professor at Miami Dade College. Sam was a pastor and church planter for 25 years. He and his wife of 27 years, Jane, live in Miami, Fla.

**Ken Pierce ('78 ATBS)** and wife, Diane, live in Grand Prairie, Texas. Ken works as a team manager for Microsoft.



**Dan (79 EE)** and **Martha Duda** had the opportunity to travel to Zambia last June where they posed in front of the church where they were married in Choma, Zambia. The Duda family lives in Irving, N.Y., and serves as clergy presenters for Marriage Encounter Wesleyan.

### 80's



**Dan ('80 EE)** & **Lillian Hoobyar** work with CrossWorld missions in Brazil where they are reaching out to the Ingariko people. The Hoobyars have three children, David, Joel and Sarah.

**Faith (Brader) Olson ('81)** lives in Driftwood, Texas, with her husband, Steven, and children, David, 15 and Hannah, 11. Faith is self-employed as a document analyst.

**Mark Irwin ('87 EET/MET)** and his wife, Cathie Joe, have relocated their family to Kodiak, Alaska, where Mark works for Kodiak Launch Complex as head of communications.

**Leon R. Ferraez, Jr. ('89 BUBA)** started his own law firm in St Petersburg, Fla. Ferraez, L.L.C. practices business law, estate planning and real estate.

### 90's

**Mary Collins ('92 BBA)** and husband, Billy, live in Copan Ruinas, Honduras. They work as missionaries with the International Mission Board.

**Kris Jacobson ('90 BUAT)** is back home living in Gladewater, Texas, and working at LeTourneau University as the assistant director of financial aid. Kris was previously employed at the University of North Texas.

**Scott Herring ('91 BUBS)** and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Norfolk, Va., with their five children. The Herrings are missionaries with Wycliffe Bible Translators working toward their first assignment.

**Chris Bena ('93 ATFL)** is now a 737 first officer with Alaska Airlines based in Anchorage, Alaska. He and wife, Amber, have three children, Kyle, 6, Ashley, 3 and Avery, 2.

**Andrew ('93 ATBS)** and **Tamra Falconer** live in Christchurch, New Zealand, with their son, Sebastian, 10 months. Andrew is the manager of Falcon Electroplating.

**Richard Pharr ('93 BBM)** lives in Austin, Texas, and is the owner of RLPharr Health Ventures.



**Dan Stairs ('83 MTAT)**, **Tom "Bart" Doyle ('94 ATFL)** and **Rod Moyer ('94 ATBS)** met in Nairobi, Kenya when Bart was on his way to Yei, Sudan. Rod works with Samaritan's Purse, Dan works with Africa Inland Mission and Bart flies for American Eagle.

**Grady Harrison ('94 MET)** and his wife, Nichole, live in Wichita, Kan., where Grady works as a senior engineer for Cessna Aircraft Company. The Harrisons have two children, Luke, 7 and Avery, 5.

# Class Notes

**Peter ('95 ATBS) and Bridget (Kulp) ('94) Herr** live in Boles, Ark. with their children, Jessica 9, Charles 7, Danielle 2 and Abigail 2. Peter works as an Inspector for Rose Aircraft Services, Inc.

**Patricia (Fincher) Harless ('95 BBM)** won the election for Texas state representative for district 126 this November. Patricia lives in Houston with her husband, Sam, and son, Justin. She owns Fred Fincher Motors.



**Bryan Johnson ('96 EE)** lives in Vacaville, Calif. and is doing post-graduate work in physics at University of California Berkley. Bryan and his wife, Amy, have four children.

**Steve Rundus ('96 ME)** has accepted a position as a thermal/airflow engineer on the new 787 Dreamliner at Boeing in Everest, Wash. Steve and his wife, Lisa, reside in Marysville, Wash.

**Marc Thaler ('96 BBM)** works as a senior mortgage consultant with Willow Bend Mortgage. Marc and his wife, Bonnie, live in Plano, Texas.



**Adam Burda ('97 AT)** graduated from Coast Guard Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as an ensign in September 2006. He is currently in Navy flight school in Pensacola, Fla.,

training as a Coast Guard aviator.

**Christopher Clark ('98 ATBS)** and his wife, Darlene, and son, Nathan, are back in the states for furlough from Papua, New Guinea.

**Seth Decker ('99 ASAS)** lives in Kingston, N.Y., with his wife, Julie, and their three children. Seth works as an A&P mechanic for New York Cessna Citation Service Center.

**Brian Hurd ('99 BBM)** is the new vice president for development at Houston Baptist University as of Jan. 1, 2007. He previously worked in development with the Salvation Army and Dallas Theological Seminary.



**Matt Nelson ('99 CMSA)** works as a QA engineer II with Isilon Systems, Inc. He and his wife, Abbie, are licensed by the State of Washington as a foster home for children up to age 4.

**Jason Phipps ('99 ATFL)** is a first officer with SkyWest Airlines. Jason lives in Liverpool, N.Y., with his wife, Shawna, and son, Zachary, 3.

## 00's

**Kevin Markham ('00 BUBS)** lives in Fairbanks, Alaska, with wife, Kiana, and children, Merrienne, 4, and Carl, 2. Kevin works as an account manager for Coca-Cola of Alaska. The Markham family is active in the Bethel Church.

**Beth Tucker ('00 BBM)** was promoted to postmaster of Alto, Texas, in June 2006. Beth has a daughter, Alexandra, 9.

**Jason Fennell ('01 MA)** lives in Longview, Texas, and works as an account manager for Educational Options, Inc. Jason and his wife, Amy, have two children, Ashley and Autumn.



**Michael Curylo ('02 CSE)** works for Lockheed Martin on the F-35 program as a senior systems analyst. Michael completed his Master of Science in systems engineering from Southern Methodist University in August 2005.

**Dan Bassett ('03 ME)** is moving his family to Perugia, Italy. Dan has been offered a job with Let People Move which works in biomechanics, orthopaedics and sports rehabilitation.

**Rick Matthews ('03 BBA)** is attending the Babcock Graduate School of Management at Wake Forest University, getting an MBA in Operations Management. Rick and his wife, Helen, live in Clemmons, N.C., where Rick is a claims adjudicator for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Scott Campbell ('04 BME)** received an MS in biomedical engineering in May 2006. He works as a bioengineer at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for children in Dallas, Texas. Scott and his wife, **Elaine (Ball) ('02 BYBS)**, live in Grand Prairie, Texas.

**Janet Copeland ('05 BBA)** lives in White Oak, Texas, and works as a customer support analyst for EDP Enterprise, Inc.

**Jonathan Marney ('05 MIS)** is completing his second year of an MBA program in Orlando, Fla. Jonathan is an executive intern at PraXes in Winter Park, Fla.

**Ariel Rakes ('05 ASFS)** works for SkyWest Airlines as a first officer. He and his wife, Kristen, live in Ventura, Calif.

**David Stotera ('05 ME)** lives in Michigan and attends Lawrence Technological University, earning his Master of Science in mechanical engineering with an automotive concentration. David also works for Aerotek and is assigned to DaimlerChrysler as an engineer.

## FACULTY/STAFF



Former professor **Richard "Dick" Spottswood** died Nov. 20, 2006. He was an engineering professor at LeTourneau for 39 years.

*Keep in touch with us by sending us an e-mail to [alumni@letu.edu](mailto:alumni@letu.edu).*

# Friends of LeTourneau University

Written by Kris Erickson

Alvin Knaub and his late wife, Carol, spent a lifetime teaching in the Christian school setting. After her death in 2001, Alvin endowed a scholarship at LeTourneau University in her memory. The Carol L. Knaub Endowed Scholarship benefits students whose parents are teachers in a Christian school system in the United States.

Alvin came to know the Lord during a revival meeting in the late 1960s in Batavia, N.Y. It was just the beginning to his commitment to Christian service. He didn't always want to be a Christian educator. He wanted to become a basketball coach at a large state university, but God had a different plan.

"We were attending a Christian Alliance church, and I was working at a camp," he said. "The lady who lived next door had a friend who knew of an opening for a physical education and science teacher at the Harford Christian School in Maryland. I applied and got the position."

When the Knaubs first arrived, the school had next to nothing for students interested in sports. Alvin worked hard to raise money to begin the school's physical education and basketball program. He spearheaded both junior high and varsity sports, everything from baseball to basketball. The Knaubs worked at the Harford Christian School in Darlington, Md., for 10 years.

The Knaubs worked at other Christian schools throughout the nation: Manahath School of Theology in Hollidaysburg, Penn., Independent Methodist School in Mobile, Ala., and Harrisburg Christian School in Harrisburg, Penn., where Alvin served as athletic director and physical education teacher. He coached every sport including basketball, track, field hockey and baseball.

"I like to teach and instruct; I like to see the kids," he said. "I appreciate the philosophy, trying to get the kids to be Christ-like, trying to make it a Christ-centered activity."

The Knaubs' two sons, Aaron ('96 BUBS) and Brian, both were involved in sports as young adults. When it came time for Aaron to choose a university, Alvin wanted it to be Aaron's decision. "I never wanted him to go to a college just to play sports," he said. "I wanted him to go where he wanted to go."

Aaron chose LeTourneau University and played basketball for the YellowJackets. He was a walk-on and later received an athletic scholarship. While at LETU, he made good friends. "He almost didn't come back home!" Alvin said. Aaron is now a Maryland State Trooper. He and his wife, Margaret, have three children.

Faithfully, the Knaubs traveled once

a year to watch Aaron play ball. They always appreciated the LeTourneau University environment.

"In setting up this scholarship fund, I wanted each recipient to be from a Christian family and Christian school situation," Alvin said. "I thought this scholarship would help a student who doesn't have the economics to go to a private Christian school."

Alvin firmly believes in the value of Christian education.

"A Christ-centered education goes hand-in-hand with family values," he said. "Not that a Christian can't go to a secular school, but the Christian beliefs and way of life are important for students."

"I wanted a person to get a direct benefit from the scholarship," he said. "When Aaron went to LETU, he got some help, and I felt it was important. It's personal. One of these days I hope to add more to it." ■



For more information on opportunities to touch the lives of LeTourneau students, contact: Bryan Benson, director of development, LeTourneau University, P.O. Box 7333, Longview, TX 75607, or visit our Web site at: [www.letu.edu/plannedgiving](http://www.letu.edu/plannedgiving), 800-259-5388, 903-233-3809.

# SAVE THE DATE

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Thursday, April 19, 2007, 11 a.m.



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