



OHIO CHRISTIAN

THE OHIO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE | 2019, ISSUE 2

Student Oriented

SHINING INTO THE FUTURE // PAGE 26

C O N T E N T S

- 05 Dr. Sample Introduced as New Provost
- 08 Promoting Transformational Change
- 12 Advancing Our Students
- 14 Serving God Cross-Culturally
- 16 Learn to Engage Culture
- 26 Congratulations to our Newest Graduates
- 29 Dr. Izzard Serves Georgia



ACCREDITATION

Higher Learning Commission
Teacher Education Accreditation Council

PRODUCTION TEAM

Jessie Behnke | Macy Cantrell
Keegan D'Alfonso | Dave Hirschler
Karin Howard | Dana Lapish | Cara Riker

PHOTOGRAPHY

Miranda Bobst | Logan Detty
Nathan Hirschler | Steve Thompson

Ohio Christian University's core values guide every decision we make. Each issue of Ohio Christian Magazine seeks to elevate and demonstrate one of those values in action.

Christ-Centered

We honor and obey Jesus Christ to advance God's purpose in the lives of everyone.

Biblically Based

Our programs cultivate a deep and enduring faith that affirms the authority of scripture.

Student Oriented

Our students are the driving force for curriculum that integrates faith and learning.

Ministry Motivated

Our emphasis on ministry prepares each student, from every major, for a lifetime of service in the Church and in society.

Leadership Focused

We prepare leaders to serve and transform their professions, churches, and communities.

Academically Excellent

We provide an environment for the acquisition of both knowledge and wisdom.

Subscribe to the digital version
[OHIOCHRISTIAN.EDU/MAGAZINE](https://ohiochristian.edu/magazine)

ADDRESS CHANGES

Send address changes and news to
alumni@ohiochristian.edu



*Ohio Christian University
prepares students to serve effectively
in the church and society by
providing a holistic, Christ-centered,
biblically integrated education
in the Wesleyan tradition.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In 1942, a handful of German university students living under the tyranny of the Nazi Third Reich, formed an underground resistance group known as *The White Rose*. Having come to the full realization of Hitler's plans, motives and intentions, and the growing news of the Holocaust happening all around them, they determined that,

"We are Christians, and we are Germans; therefore, we are responsible for Germany!"

As a result, this handful of university students decided with great conviction and courage to publish their news in a periodical newspaper known as *The White Rose*. At the beginning they would distribute their paper secretly, but as their conviction grew stronger, so did their courage, and soon they began to deliver their paper to universities all over Germany. As would happen to many who resisted the Third Reich, these students would pay the ultimate sacrifice for their actions.**

How can one explain that after ten years of Nazi rule, with its incessant political indoctrination beginning as early as in

preschool, these students, who had largely grown up under the influence of this regime, resolved to take a stand against Nazi tyranny?

While their entire story is too long to recount here – the lesson their story teaches is just as relevant today for American college students as it was over 70 years ago. *There is a meaning to education. There is a sense of responsibility that comes with knowledge.* Because these courageous acts were implemented by Christian university students, we are compelled to ask as a Christian university –

What beliefs and choices did these students make that led to the worldview that they were somehow responsible for the well-being of their neighbors (Jews), and further, for the moral direction of their country?

What did their journey from adolescence to adulthood entail that led them to form a worldview complex enough to make sense of their own moment in history, and to then have the clarity of conviction and courage to act?

To be **student oriented** in our approach to the total educational enterprise that is Ohio Christian University means to

design a living and learning community that helps inform and direct the formation of a Christian worldview about what is real and true and right. It means asking –

How do we help our students to understand that the Christian vision of life and world is both character forming and culture forming?

To be **student oriented**, and not merely subject oriented, means to examine our teaching so that it connects a Christian worldview with a way of life. It means that we enable our students to develop the habits of heart which will direct them to integrate belief and behavior. Faith and action.

For a student to truly understand the content of his faith, she must see them lived. Thus, a truly Christian university - which encourages the Christian worldview to be incarnated in the lives of their mentors – provides the best means for their faith to be grasped in a way that makes sense of life, for life.

That is what it means, to be **student oriented**.

**Excerpts on *The White Rose* taken from *Fabric of Faithfulness*, by Steven Garber (1996).

“Being a student
is easy. Learning
requires actual work.”

– *William Crawford*



DR. SAMPLE INTRODUCED AS NEW PROVOST

KEEGAN D'ALFONSO

Ohio Christian University is proud to introduce Dr. Bradford Sample as our new provost. Sample previously served as the Vice President of Enrollment and Vice President for Academics and Student Services for the Adult & Graduate Studies (AGS) program. Provost Sample holds a doctorate in history and has served in higher education administration for almost two decades.

Sample grew up in Cloverdale, Indiana in a working-class family where he was taught a strong Christian ethic for work. This work ethic served him well as he pursued his goal to become a history professor, sometimes working three jobs to pay for his education as he climbed the academic ladder.

Though God never opened any doors for Sample to be a full-time history professor, he never lost his passion for students and respect for the faculty members he serves. Provost Sample has brought that passion into every administrative role he has held, specifically in building retention activities that serve students and expands their capacity to be lifelong learners.

“I think that we are morally obligated to provide students who we enroll, who we accept, with the tools for their success. And if we are doing that, I think that we are acting ethically.”

Bradford Sample, Provost

Some of the tools Sample has helped develop for students during his role as Vice President

in the Adult & Graduate Studies program was the incorporation of reading methods into AGS classes, tutoring, invasive advising, and academic coaching. These programs provide students ladders to achieve their goals if they work hard.

In his new role as provost, Sample continues to have a big vision for Ohio Christian. One of his long-term goals is to unify the AGS and Traditional programs into one program with traditional and online classes sharing a single catalog. This would be part of a broader initiative to move the university to a “schools-based system” where disciplines will be clustered together.

Provost Sample also cares deeply about his family. He met his wife, Michelle, when they were both students at Indiana University during his undergrad years. Sample said they had to keep their relationship a bit secret at the time because he was her supervisor in the cafeteria. “I had to be ‘mean’ to her and give her the worst jobs so if anyone found out later there wouldn’t be a sense of favoritism,” he said. Despite this, their relationship progressed well, and they were married in 1991, two weeks after graduation.

He and his wife are the proud parents of two children; Caleb, 17, and Grace, 15. Both children were born in South Korea and joined the Sample family after a decade of marriage. They felt called to adopt even before they were married and were overjoyed as God provided for them throughout that process. Currently, both of his kids attend Fairfield Christian Academy, however, Sample is excited for next year when his son plans to begin classes at OCU.



BUSINESS COMPETITION PUTS TRAINING INTO PRACTICE

CARA RIKER

On April 9th, Ohio Christian University's School of Business and Government® hosted the annual awards banquet for its Business Plan Competition. Five finalists in the competition were awarded recognition as well as cash awards for their business plans. This annual competition gives business students a chance to put into practice what they are being taught in classrooms. Its purpose is to give students a real-world opportunity to develop a business plan and present it to a panel of distinguished businesspersons. For many students, these business plans represent an aspiration they have or a business they already have in progress.

This year's first-round competition judges were Dr. Monty Lobb, Dean; and Professor Dale Lear, Business Program Director. Final-round judges were Michael Linton, owner of Accurate Heating & Cooling; Curt Crocker, Managing Partner at Reservoir Venture Partners; and John Roberts, professor at Ohio University and tenured executive with over 25 years of experience primarily in financial services where he spent over 24 years with J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.

Brooke Lezotte, winner of the first-place prize said, "I am so thankful to go to a university that offers opportunities like this. I was so excited to discover that my business plan is something that I can actually do, and the judges believed I would be successful at it in the future, which is a dream come true. It was such a blessing to participate in this event and I am so grateful for the experience I gained in doing so."

Other prize winners included Allen Mattam, Britt Piorkowski, Nick Kulaga, and Rachel Hicks. Ohio Christian University strives to equip students with real-life experience that gets them out of the classroom and outside of their comfort zones.

COACHING PROGRAM FOSTERS STUDENT SUCCESS

ROBIN PATRICK // SCOTT MARSEE

In the fall of 2018, Ohio Christian University launched a personalized coaching program aimed at providing hands-on assistance to students within the Adult & Graduate Studies program. Leaders within the pilot program recognized that many students could benefit from advocacy extending beyond traditional assistance offered by admissions, financial aid, academic advisors, and other student support staff. Rather than specializing in a specific area of support, coaches assist in a wide variety of activities to ensure students are addressing external challenges and engaging the right resources within the university.

The program's approach allows coaches to foster relationships with students through frequent, informal touchpoints. Sessions often take place in-person or via email, telephone, or video conferencing and initially focus on accessing university applications, exploring course assignments and timelines, and navigating policies and procedures. As students advance, coaching sessions provide additional opportunities to enhance critical skills such as organization, prioritization, and time management. Led by a team of three fulltime staff members, the program utilizes tactics grounded in the mission of the university and aims to make student progress an everyday agenda.

Since its inception, the program has seen a 6% increase in first course persistence of new students and a 7% increase in second course pass rate. Surveys conducted on its impact indicate students share a belief in the mission of the program and its effect on academic progression. As a result of coaching efforts this far, many students have remarked feeling more prepared for college success.



The program exists as a part of a broader initiative within OCU to improve student experiences and simplify the path to personal achievement. In the spring of 2019, an online new student orientation was developed to expand academic support as students prepare for classes. Coaches now begin working with students in the orientation so the relationship begins before the student starts their first academic course. As these activities expand, leaders within the program hope to utilize feedback received from students in order to better understand the greatest challenges students encounter and how to best address them.

STUDENTS TRAVEL TO ALABAMA

MACY CANTRELL



Students recently traveled to Alabama with the university's athletic department and School of Business and Government[®] to learn about careers in the sports business field and network with professionals in the industry. Some of the places that students visited during the trip were the Southeastern Conference (SEC) headquarters, the United States Sports Academy (USSA), and Reese's Senior Bowl. While getting a lot of valuable experience, they also made time to volunteer with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in the evenings doing outreach at the Reese's Senior Bowl and Light of the Village (LOV) after school program.

Katilyn Bush was one of the individuals who attended. Bush attends Ohio Christian University and is dual majoring in sport management and business with a biblical minor. When talking about the trip, she said one of her favorite parts was volunteering at LOV, "It was really touching to see a small amount of people make such a big difference in a community. You could see the joy and love they had for their jobs the whole time."



PROMOTING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

CARA RIKER // MACY CANTRELL

In the interest of following the mission of Ohio Christian University, both the Adult & Graduate Studies and Traditional programs have a passion for the spiritual lives of the students. The connections made with students that ultimately point them to God are some of the most important things taken away from being an OCU student.

As Director of Spiritual Formation, Kevin Bennie has a pivotal role in the lives of traditional students. Many see him as a person to reach out to due to his oversight of chapel. He points the influence he has back to God, and he has seen transformation in student's lives. When asked about his experiences he said, "I get to be one voice of truth and grace on their journey. It really is such a privilege when students share their hearts and lives with me, and I trust the Lord with transformation in their lives." His mission is for students to approach chapel with an open mind and heart and ultimately connect with God.

In the upcoming year, Bennie plans to bring renewal to the campus's spiritual development in various capacities. For chapel this year the theme "Abide" will be used throughout services in reference to John 15:4-5, focusing



on being alive in Christ and bearing fruit. Having this theme guides students into a deeper relationship as they focus on specific areas of their walk. “Jesus calls us to remain connected to Him in every moment of life, so that we might flourish and bear the kind of fruit to which every Christian is called.”

A core goal of the spiritual formation office is to prepare students for their service in the world and church to equip them with an understanding of spiritual disciplines. The spiritual discipline for the fall semester is lectio divina, “a way of meditating on God’s Word and a good way to practice abiding with Christ.”

Kenneth Daft gives many students spiritual help by being the Chaplain of Adult & Graduate Studies. In this role, Daft supports students with any issues and anxieties they experience and talks through their problems. He has the opportunity to help them overcome obstacles and connect with God. Daft is able to impact the lives of students in a positive way because of the love he has for his job.

“It is such a wonderful opportunity to be able to make a difference in someone else’s life.”

Kenneth Daft, AGS Chaplain

Having breakthroughs with students are one of the most rewarding parts of his work. To see a change in someone and bring them joy is very fulfilling. Because of this, Kenneth Daft truly enjoys the work that he does.

In both the Adult and Traditional programs, the spiritual enrichment of students is of utmost importance. Having people like Bennie and Daft as part of the University helps create an open environment for students to talk freely. The hope is that through these positions students are ultimately pointed to God in the highs and lows of their education.





DONORS HONORED AT ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET

CARA RIKER // KEEGAN D'ALFONSO

Ohio Christian University recognized donors at the annual Scholarship Banquet in March 2019. The banquet is a decade long tradition that recognized the contribution of over \$150,000 in scholarships from 68 separate donors. The generous contributions of the donors helped 63 students through 96 scholarships continue to thrive and pursue God's calling to become servant-leaders in their community either vocationally or through pastoral ministry. All of the student awardees were in attendance and the parents of recipients were encouraged to attend to meet the donors supporting their children's education.

Davi Da Silva ('19) and Marissa McCrary ('20) were among the awardees who shared the impact the donors had on them individually through their financial gifts.

Da Silva, from Brazil and recipient of the Oliver Sharp Memorial Scholarship, talked about the grace God extended in order for him to be able to attend a school like OCU. Da Silva said "it is a way to see God's grace in a tangible way and confirm God's grace and that represents God's desire for me to be here as an international student." He added that the scholarship is more than tangible, however, as it encourages him in his faith and conviction to attend Ohio Christian. McCrary, a team leader in OCU's Worship Collective, was awarded the C. Ponder Frederick Memorial Scholarship, Joe C. and Carol R. Brown Scholarship, John and Dolores Conley Scholarship, and the Noel C. Martin Scholarship. McCrary shared how thankful she is for a school that allows her to do ministry work even now, as she prepares for her future.

President Dr. Jon Kulaga spoke at the end of the evening, taking the time to share about the students' callings and how missions in today's world is very different from how we once thought.

Kulaga underscored that today, students are more called to 'go' into the world, using their vocation and industry, field or expertise as their ministry as opposed to previous generations who would give up their education to do mission work. Kulaga further stated that Ohio Christian is helping prepare students who want to make a difference in the lives of those around them, in the lives of those with whom they work, in the country in which they live, and in every industry they choose to enter. General Superintendent of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union Reverend Mike Holbrook ('78) closed the evening with a benediction of gratitude for all the donors who made an impact.

Through the support of donors, the university continues to grow in its ability to assist deserving students in obtaining scholarships to accomplish their goals.

Mark Taylor, the former Vice President of Advancement said, "We have established an endowed scholarship fund where we are able to award the earnings to deserving students. These endowed scholarships continue to grow every year and help underwrite a portion of the students' education costs."

Ohio Christian is thankful for every donation and for prayer support as it is through these that many students are able to receive a Christian education.



STUDENT GAINS REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MACY CANTRELL

When Cayla Allen ('20) first started her college career, she wanted to be a teacher. Later on, she could no longer see herself working in a classroom for the rest of her life. It was at this time that she started working towards an emergency and disaster management degree. One of the benefits of this program is how versatile it is. After receiving a degree, students are qualified to work in areas ranging from a local non-profit to large, international organizations.

“What really drew me into this career were the endless opportunities to serve Christ first and most importantly, and then people, secondly, as we are all called to do.”

Cayla Allen '20

One of the great things about the Emergency and Disaster Management program is the hands-on experience that students get. Allen said, “The thing about the program that has improved my skills the most is the faith-integrated

education and secondly, the in-class discussions about applying my knowledge to real-life scenarios, which also allows me to be creative.” While being a part of the of the program at Ohio Christian University, Allen has been given many opportunities to gain real world experience. “First, I have served on two disaster relief deployments through OCU with The Salvation Army; one in Puerto Rico (2017) and one in Florida (2018), which were my favorite experiences. Secondly, I have taken several trainings through The Salvation Army, certifying me in different areas such as first aid, CPR, ServSafe, and to be an instructor for several courses.” Most recently, Allen has landed an internship with the Athens County Emergency Management Association, which will give her even more experience.

The professors in this program are very dedicated to educating their students and helping them achieve their goals. When asked about the staff at Ohio Christian, Allen said, “My professors here at OCU are some of the most qualified and experienced people I have ever met, and I hope I never take for granted what they have provided me with to get where I am today and where I will be in the future.”

HONORS PROGRAM ADVANCING OUR STUDENTS

CARA RIKER

The Honors Program at Ohio Christian University has expanded in recent years and now consists of students from every department with new members added every fall. Students are admitted by invitation and must meet various requirements including a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above and written references focused on the student's academic abilities. The Honors Program seeks to prepare students for graduate level studies by introducing them to seminar-style and peer-led discussion. Students complete the program with a culminating research project in their field with a faculty advisor, which is presented to their peers for review.

Through this program, students are exposed to literature from various authors and apologists like William Lane Craig and Hugh Ross that they are then able to discuss in-depth. Students have also had the opportunity to participate in lectures focusing on other cultures including the Hopewell Indian Mounds. In every session students are challenged to improve their critical thinking skills.

During the spring semester, students in the Honors Program read *Embracing Exile* by T. Scott Daniels. Throughout the reading, students were challenged to understand the reality that Christians are called to live a strange life. An ongoing theme in the book is that it is possible and expected that Christians live a life of exile where they are different from the culture while simultaneously a blessing.

“Embracing exile is not a pause in the missional purpose of God’s people. Embracing exile may in fact be setting God’s people free to rediscover their true mission and the powerful reasons for their divine creation in the first place.”

T. Scott Daniels ~ Embracing Exile

The mission of the Honors Program is to create students who are passionate about their academic pursuits and integrating their faith into their lives. Their beliefs are strengthened as they study the intersection of faith and controversial topics. As the program continues to evolve that mission remains the same.



“Being part of the Honors Program has been an amazing growth experience for me. It has challenged me to participate in high-level thinking and discussion, all while learning more about my faith and how to apply it to real world issues.”

Autumn Paugh '21



“Light yourself
on fire with passion
and people will come
from miles to watch
you burn.”

— John Wesley

SERVING GOD CROSS-CULTURALLY

CARA RIKER

JAPAN

For the first two weeks in June, Ohio Christian University students traveled to Tokyo and Shimonoseki, Japan in partnership with World Gospel Mission. The team of seven students and a staff leader partnered with missionaries in Japan, working in a culture where less than 1% of the population is Christian. When they first arrived, the team toured Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples to better understand the culture that shapes Japan.

The team served with various local ministries including Fun Fun English, which provides a non-threatening way for local people to come into the church. A large majority of the Japanese population is ill-informed on what a Christian church is. In Shimonoseki, the team distributed flyers to local students to help them get involved in the church. OCU students helped host a day camp in various capacities including sharing testimonies, performing skits, and giving a sermon.

In this culture, ministering to people can take many years of attending church and friendship.

“It is very difficult to draw people to Christ, but the missionary hearts showed otherwise. They celebrated over small things like simple conversations with someone or even slight progress over the span of years of ministering to someone. It made me realize how often we take for granted the small victories, in our eyes, that Christ gives us in our daily ministry.”

Adina Rosenlib '20

Ministry is different in every part of the world and when partnering with the missionaries in Japan, students saw small victories of faith firsthand. Even on a Christian campus in Japan there are few believers and they are constantly being asked why they believe in what they do. Everyone is searching for something in life and we are praying for the missionaries in Japan and the people they come into contact with as they point them to God.



UGANDA

At the end of May, a team from Ohio Christian University traveled to Uganda to serve alongside World Gospel Mission missionaries already working in the area. This trip would best be described as a vision trip rather than the typical mission work some may think of. The team got to see many different ministries the missionaries are working with as well as support them through fellowship and prayer.

During the two weeks the team was abroad, they worked with a wide range of ministries, one of which is known as the Dignity project, providing women and girls with reusable feminine products allowing them to stay in school. They also partnered with a ministry called Tutapona which means “we will be healed” in Swahili. Tutapona is a nonprofit organization that does pain and trauma counseling focused on war and violence. They concentrate on group counseling and teaching how communities can help heal one another. The team was also able to visit refugee settlements as well as participate in Bible studies with the staff.

TAPP ministries or Tumaini Aids Prevention Program is another program the team supported. This ministry works

with women and children who have tested HIV/AIDS positive and were completely exiled by their communities. TAPP works to empower them and provide them with an income through various avenues like crafts and child sponsorships.

“We were able to bless them by giving them food and other supplies and they treated us so well with what they did have. Even though they don’t have much, they wanted to show us that they have God and that was honestly one of the most moving things that I took back home with me.”

Jacob Waugh '19

Being able to see all of the different ministries missionaries are partnering with is a unique opportunity that was not lost on the team. While many see mission trips as pouring concrete or painting a building, an equally effective ministry is being a support to the people involved.





LEARNING TO ENGAGE CULTURE

KEEGAN D'ALFONSO

Students and faculty of the Religion and Ministry department, along with pastors and ministry leaders, were encouraged at the “Engage: Evangelism at the Intersection of Faith & Culture” conference hosted by Ohio Christian University. In April 2019, over 550 individuals attended the one-day conference meant to encourage, equip, and empower Christians to engage culture in all areas of life and ministry.

The Engage conference was an inaugural event, in partnership with the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, for what will hopefully be a long tradition of preparing believers to engage with culture. With Christianity increasingly marginalized and many Christians uncertain on how to share their faith, we must better prepare to answer those who challenge the reason for the hope within us.



Today, faith and culture are at a crossroads, fundamentally disagreeing with each other. The current shift in American culture requires us to consider what it means to live and evangelize in a broken world. If we, as Christians, take the necessary steps and engage those within the intersection provided to us, we can influence the culture around us.

George Barna, founder of the Barna Group, was the keynote speaker for the event. The Barna Group is a leading marketing research firm focused on the intersection of faith and culture. Other speakers at the event included Pastor Ken Murphy of Cypress Church in Columbus, Ohio, and OCU alumnus Dwight Mason ('83), pastor of NewPointe Community Church and author of *Only God*. Both lead large congregations that are effectively reaching their communities for Christ by equipping their members to serve their communities with lives that reflect the Gospel.



Mason encouraged attendees to develop their Christian walk saying, "You can't go to the next level in ministry until you go to the next level in Jesus Christ." He emphasized how each believer has a personal responsibility on engaging the culture around them. "You're either allowing or creating the culture that you have in your family, as well as in the church, as well as in your workplace," Mason said.

The speakers addressed how believers can engage the culture around them and serve the church. Regarding the intersection of faith and culture,

"God's view of service encompasses everything we do, wherever we are. The Gospel is to be lived out and spoken about in every corner of the country – no matter what we do, and no matter who is the object of our service because we are ultimately serving the Lord."

Jon Kulaga, President



Those who attended the conference heard this message consistently throughout the day and left prepared to engage their corner of the world and to deliberately make decisions to positively impact the culture around them.

For the Religion and Ministry students, the conference further developed them to meet the goal of the department to engage their culture with a sharpened mind, an evangelistic focus, and a heart warm toward God and others.

Religion and Ministry professor, Dr. Caleb Friedeman said, "Engage 2019 provided an excellent opportunity for OCU students and faculty to hear from Christian leaders who are on the cutting edge of evangelism in the twenty-first century. One insight that resonated with me and my students was George Barna's point that if the church wishes to evangelize effectively, we must focus on discipling children before age 13."

COMMUNITY ACTION DAY 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

CARA RIKER

April 11th proved to not just be a nice day to be outside, but a great day to serve the community of Circleville and surrounding areas. In its 20th year, Community Action Day brought out over 400 students to serve residents and businesses in need. A tradition at Ohio Christian University, classes were cancelled, and students were able to go into the public and implement the service attitude taught at OCU.

With help from the World Alliance for the Volunteer Economy and RPHF Solid Waste District, students were equipped to effectively serve and feel prepared to do so. The cool morning broke into sunshine as students served in various capacities. Whether it be pulling weeds at a house, picking up trash at A.W. Marion State Park, or working at the Hopewell Mounds, students took joy in the tasks. An integral part of the OCU tradition, Community Action Day aims to motivate students to live out the Christian faith through action and not just word. This day helps teach what it can really mean for believers to be the hands and feet of Christ.

Students were encouraged not just to serve but to have fun while doing it. Tori Henley ('20) said "Since I was a freshman, Community Action Day has been one of my favorite days of the year. Each student always comes back more joyful than they left, it's something I will always treasure." This tradition is not taken lightly by students and is a day they look forward to as a way to show love to those who need it most. OCU takes seriously the servant lifestyle and for 20 years now has proclaimed "It's gonna be a great day!"





CLUBS HELP STUDENTS FIND THEIR NICHE

CARA RIKER

For many college students, pursuing their passions outside the classroom is an integral part of their experience. Below is a highlight of clubs offered on campus. Students may also create their own club if what they want is not an option.

The Summit: As a ministry of World Gospel Mission, The Summit connects students' passions to what God is doing globally. Students hear from missionaries from various countries every week and the ministries they are involved in. The Summit shows students their passions are able to be used cross-culturally.

Awaken: Awaken is a new ministry on OCU's campus where students meet weekly in both small group and worship settings. Students are able to have a time of worship, testimony, prayer, and discussion. This ministry creates a space for students to share burdens and have accountability to one another.

Delight: As a chapter of Delight Ministries, women on campus meet weekly to foster intentional Christ-centered friendships and community. Delight works to show women their stories have an impact no matter what stage they are at in life and seeks to bolster authenticity.

Student Environmental Association: Known as SEA, the Student Environmental Association formed this past spring and is working to make sustainable changes both on campus and in the lives of students. Through SEA, students learn the importance of caring for what God has given His people.

Craft Crew: Beginning with a way to teach students knitting, Craft Crew provides students a relief from the stress of classes while teaching them skills they can hone and maintain for life. By providing community and relaxation, Craft Crew seeks to strengthen friendships.





INSPIRING REVIVAL

CARA RIKER

One of the most important weeks every semester on Ohio Christian University's campus is Revival Week. This spring, the university was blessed to have Jason Baugh, Associate Pastor of Life Church in Cookville, Tennessee. Throughout five services, Baugh preached a series called "The Journey." Students were taught many lessons throughout his sermons and the prayer of the campus was that a renewal would change hearts.

"Simply being around the things Jesus is doing will not change or transform you."

Jason Baugh, Associate Pastor of Life Church

In the crowds during Jesus' ministry there were many near him but few experienced change. Proximity to Jesus does not promise transformation, an active relationship does.

In a setting of students waiting for the next step in life, Baugh reminded them that God's plan is never on pause. God has a plan for everyone before graduation, before marriage and before children. During one service, the Dead Sea became the focal point of the entire lesson. The Dead Sea only ever receives water and nothing flows out of it, much like some Christians. Believers rely on blessings from God and those around them but often forget to give any of it back to God, creating a toxic environment.

Revival is something students, staff and faculty alike look forward to on Ohio Christian's Campus. Caitlin Murphy ('20) said, "I think there's something special about a group of people coming together with one purpose in mind: to worship God. Seeing us all unified in that is amazing."

With services like this taking place at the beginning of the semester, a posture of worship and faithfulness is revitalized in everyone to continue forward.

FILM & ART FEST

A CREATIVE AVENUE FOR STUDENTS

DAVI DA SILVA

The Film and Art Festival at Ohio Christian University offers a space where students can use a vital part of the college experience and self-discovery: Creativity. With many athletic and academic opportunities present, it is essential that the artistic aspect of higher-education is both valued and encouraged.

The idea behind the festival is creating a space where students can show their videography works to be acknowledged and enjoyed by their peers. Participants receive prizes for their acting, writing, filming, editing, directing and other involvement. The ability to have creativity in the academic space bolsters many aspects of university life. Through the Film and Art Festival art is promoted, creativity is explored, and a pattern of excellence is established.

As created masterpieces of God, expressing creativity plays an important role in living faithfully. Ohio Christian seeks to provide students the means of serving Christ in all areas of their lives.



ENGAGING YOUTH WITH BIBLICAL TRUTH

DAVE HIRSCHLER



In early March, over 50 youth leaders from more than 30 churches and organizations converged on the Ohio Christian University campus for the second annual Youth Leadership Conference. The subject of the day was the importance of actively engaging youth with the reality of biblical truth in their formative years. Dr. Walt Mueller, expert in youth culture, and President of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding, began the conference with a dive into youth culture and practical ways of engaging that culture.

Topics covered included mental health and suicide, building a Christian worldview, and practical ways of working with church leadership. Participants networked with one another, shared best practices, and engaged others in their field.

Mueller concluded the day with insight into how media is shaping the youth of the day. He highlighted that this generation is different than their predecessors due to technology putting the world at their fingertips. Students can be, say, and do anything they want with just a few keystrokes.

The overarching goal of the conference was for ministry leaders, youth leaders, and educators to understand their prime responsibility in imparting the critically important truth that their identity and worth is found in Christ.

TRAILBLAZERS

OCSAA

2018-2019
Championship Site

Host

River States Conference (RSC) Basketball,
Cross Country, and Track and Field Meetings

3.12

Average Athletic
Department GPA



CHASE THE LION

RYAN WALL

The Ohio Christian University Athletic Department held their annual awards banquet on Sunday, April 28th in the Maxwell Center gymnasium. Hosted by Dr. Larry Olson, the 2019 Chase the Lion (CTL) Awards recognized 11 individuals and two teams for their outstanding accomplishments throughout the 2018-19 academic year.

Prior to the banquet, former student-athlete Kimberly Uetrecht was inducted into the Trailblazer Hall of Fame. Attending Ohio Christian University from 2009-2012, Uetrecht was a member of the inaugural women's soccer team on campus. Serving as a versatile player that could fill multiple positions, Uetrecht was named to the NCCAA Mid-East Region Team all four years. In her senior season, Uetrecht was awarded the NCCAA Michelle Akers award in recognition of her leadership, character, and success. She now serves as head coach of the women's soccer program at NCAA DIII North Park University in Chicago, IL.

Super Bowl XLVI Champion and former Ohio State Buckeye Jake Ballard attended as the keynote speaker, highlighting his career in the NFL and his journey back to Christ. After struggling with injuries throughout his career, an early retirement from the NFL would lead to him realizing his true identity in Christ through the help of his future wife, Olivia.

Highlighted by prestigious individual and team accomplishments, the CTL Awards touch on each of the department's five smooth stones (academics, servant leadership, community engagement, competition, and faith). Every year, the CTL Awards end with the presentation of the Chase the Lion Award, given to the athlete that best represents the department's mission and vision. To the right is a summary of the 2019 award winners.



Ariel Young
CTL WINNER 2019



Zach Mason
CTL WINNER 2018

Drake Dickerson '22 // Lancaster, OH
MALE NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR
Presented by Sean Lovell

Helaina Limas '22 // Medina, OH
FEMALE NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR
Presented by Jessie Behnke

Corey Wyman '21 // Circleville, OH
MALE MOST IMPROVED ATHLETE
Presented by Dr. Gerald Mershimer

Brooke Lezotte '20 // Waynesville, OH
FEMALE MOST IMPROVED ATHLETE
Presented by Dr. Sylvia McDonald

Canaan Gardner '20 // Tarlton, OH
MALE PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR
Presented by Joseph Wuest

Rachel Sargent '21 // Pt. Pleasant, WV
FEMALE PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR
Presented by Kimberly Uetrecht

Rachel Lawwell '20 // Pataskala, OH
PLAY OF THE YEAR
Presented by Eric Fehr

Women's Soccer
GAME OF THE YEAR
Presented by Kevin Bennie

Men's Basketball
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD
Presented by Natalee Rogerson

Jake Warren
COACH OF THE YEAR
Presented by Jake Ballard

Tanner Popp '21 // Chillicothe, OH
MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
Presented by Dr. Jon Kulaga

Alyssa Turrentine '20 // Lima, OH
FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
Presented by Lena Kulaga

Ariel Young '19 // Dublin, OH
CHASE THE LION AWARD
Presented by David Bireline

“The traveler sees
what he sees. The
tourist sees what he
has come to see.”

– G.K. Chesterton

COMMENCEMENT
SPEAKER
KRISTEN MUZZY

MACY CANTRELL



Kristen Muzzy, President and co-founder of the World Alliance for the Volunteer Economy, was the 2019 Commencement Address speaker. Her motto is, “Never give up and always yield to God’s calling.” Muzzy is a survivor of human trafficking. She was sexually abused as a young child and teenager, then was abducted and taken into human trafficking for four years. Even with losing all self-confidence, she kept a relationship with God. After learning to cope through the grace of God, she became motivated to work hard because she wanted to become someone.

At the beginning of her speech, Muzzy prompted graduates to take a moment of appreciation for the love and support from family and friends in attendance. The crowd immediately came to its feet to celebrate the people who have helped them achieve their goals. Muzzy’s speech encouraged the audience to grow their relationship with God and to hold tight to it, even during difficult times. She spoke on anxiety about the future, and reassured students that it is no mistake that they are here, and that God has a plan for them. Her address was meant to encourage graduates to know their capabilities, saying, “You are enough. God moves mountains; what can’t he do with us?”



HONORARY DOCTORATE RECIPIENT **TERENCE CHATMON**

MACY CANTRELL

The Georgia campus was honored to welcome Terence Chatmon, President of The John Maxwell Leadership Foundation and Equip Leadership, as the 2019 Commencement speaker. Chatmon is also a published author and has held senior executive roles with The Coca-Cola Co., Johnson & Johnson, and Citibank. Before beginning his address, Chatmon was recognized for his accomplishments and presented with an honorary Doctor of Christian Leadership degree by Ohio Christian University President Dr. Jon Kulaga.

During the speech, Chatmon motivated graduates to do their best, saying, “Your light will shine bright, because you are now in a position to make a difference.” He then explained to graduates that they made a statement by earning their degree, and that it is not just for them, but for other people as well. By getting their degree they would be able to use their achievements to help people.

“Invest in others daily so that they can see the light that’s within you come out and make a difference outside.”

*Terence Chatmon,
President of The John Maxwell Leadership Foundation*

One thing Chatmon wanted graduates to learn from his speech was how to be rich in significance. He wanted to emphasize to graduates that in order to be or feel significant in life, they have to make a difference in the lives of others. Chatmon ended his speech with the statement, “Richness comes not by what you collect, but by what you give away.”





COMMENCEMENT 2019 CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES

KEEGAN D'ALFONSO

Ohio Christian University recognized 890 graduates in its 70th-year Commencement Ceremonies in April and May. There were 664 associate, bachelor, and master level graduates invited to the Ohio ceremony, and 126 Georgia graduates were invited to the ceremony in Jonesboro, Georgia at the Clayton County Performing Arts Center.

Commencement speakers for Ohio and Georgia were Kristen Muzzy, President and co-founder of the World Alliance for the Volunteer Economy, and Dr. Terence Chatmon, President of The John Maxwell Leadership Foundation and Equip Leadership, respectively. Muzzy focused her address on God's love while Chatmon spoke on being rich in significance.

"You have intrinsic value, no one determines your worthiness, your weightiness beyond who the God is that has given it to you."

*Terence Chatmon,
President of The John Maxwell Leadership Foundation*

OCU President, Dr. Jon Kulaga also addressed the crowd of nearly 1,300 students, family and honored guests declaring,

"We are living in a time where Christians have never been more needed – to be out in society being salt and light." He further challenged them stating that "your community needs you, your city needs you, and your country needs you".

Other highlights from the Georgia ceremony included special music performed by 2019 OCU graduate, OCU staff member, and recording artist Portia Houze, and recessional songs led by OCU staff member Dion Bryan.

A reception was held the prior evening at the OCU Morrow Campus where Georgia Regional Dean, Paula Roberson welcomed everyone to the campus and highlighted several faculty members and students for their hard work and dedication.

Graduation was not all *Pomp & Circumstance* however, President Kulaga and the commencement speakers all emphasized the importance of being kingdom focused in their speeches. As Terence emphasized to the graduates at Georgia, to "let their light shine, to be salt and light" we pray that there will be 890 new lights shining Christ's love in their chosen vocations.



GIVING TO THE NEXT GENERATION

CARA RIKER

Any incoming traditional student can be classified as Generation Z (Gen Z) and with this generation comes new perspectives that have not been seen prior. Gen Z is more debt-focused than their predecessors with more of a saving mindset than spending. The World Economic Forum found that 72% of Gen Z say cost is the most important factor when making a purchase, and 66% of students plan to attend in-state to save on tuition. While Millennials are saving 15% more than Gen Z, they have 169% more debt. Because Gen Z is predominantly aiming for a sense of security, students are searching harder for an affordable college education.

Gen Z looks at finances as something that will bring them a sense of security. Ultimately, for Christian Gen Zer's, their goal is to be good stewards of what they have received. Similarly, Ohio Christian University seeks to give these students their best chance of becoming good stewards not just financially but in every facet of life. Ohio Christian University

students cannot be narrowed down to one single profile but the conclusion that can be reached is that they are being used for the glory of God.

With 49 states being represented in the student body among various nationalities, tuition should not be what keeps students from attending Ohio Christian. While degrees offered, amenities, and environment are important; tuition assistance is quickly becoming more important than anything else provided.

For many students, the scholarships they receive are what allows them to pursue their degree. Donating to the Ohio Christian University Impact Fund helps to ensure there are students sitting at the right seat with a Christian voice.

"To me, the scholarships were important as a student because they provided a way for me to achieve the goals that God gave me as well as get a quality education at a Christian institution."

Haley Robbins '19

Ministry is no longer preaching from the Bible on a Sunday morning. Being the Bible to coworkers, supervisors and corporations has grown to be a vital ministry for society today.



of OCU students receive some form of financial assistance in order to meet all their educational financial obligations.

To impact a student's life, donate to
ohiochristian.edu/give



DR. IZZARD SERVES GEORGIA

KEEGAN D'ALFONSO

Ohio Christian University strives to have faculty members who not only serve their students with excellence, but also serve their community in big ways. Dr. Laklieshia Izzard, an affiliate professor for the Social Science Department at the Ohio Christian University Atlanta site, exemplifies this goal for Christian service to the community. Her newest role as President of the American Counseling Association of Georgia (ACA of Georgia), will allow her to serve counselors across the entire state.

Izzard is a licensed counselor and clinical supervisor with a doctorate in counselor education and supervision, and a master's in mental health counseling. In her role at Ohio Christian, she primarily teaches psychology, substance abuse counseling, and human services courses at the campus in Morrow, GA and online. In her new role as president of ACA of Georgia, Izzard said she wants to be impactful in changing peoples' lives.

"My theme for the year is collaboration and action through professional development, advocacy, and service," Izzard said. "And my vision for the year is collaboration and community partnership and impactful excellence."

Laklieshia Izzard, Affiliate Professor

Izzard served on the Founding Executive Board to create the ACA of Georgia branch in 2016 and is the third Founding President of the organization, which now has almost 2,000 members. While the previous presidents focused on creating the foundational structure for this new branch, Izzard will build on their work and has introduced the first strategic plan for the ACA of Georgia.

Her strategic plan is focused around four primary goals: professional and leadership development, community and public awareness, technology and communication, and advocacy. She couldn't have developed these goals on her own, however.

"My faith is absolutely a driving force for me," Izzard said. "Because there is no way that I would have been able to identify what these primary needs really are for the state of Georgia without seeking counsel and guidance from the Almighty God."

Part of Izzard's plan to serve the community will include a presentation at Georgia Piedmont Technical College on mental health awareness for GED students. The ACA of Georgia will also adopt a veteran's transitional home and collect items at every event to assist with whatever needs the transitional home has.

These are just a handful of ways ACA of Georgia will serve the public. "We want to make sure we are an active voice in our community," Izzard said. "We want our communities to be able to come to us as a resource."

Faculty members like Izzard, who are respected experts in their field, are the reason OCU is able to provide students a rigorous education that prepares them to be world-impacting Christian servant leaders.





2019 GRADUATES A SNAPSHOT OF GRACE

CARA RIKER

TRADITIONAL: Abigail McDonald

This spring, Abigail McDonald graduated from Ohio Christian University with her associate degree while simultaneously graduating high school. At the age of 16, McDonald finished as salutatorian of her high school class. She knew attending college as a young student could be both intimidating and challenging but going to OCU, she never felt that her age made a difference in her experience. The staff, faculty, and her classmates always made her feel more than welcome as an equal. “They could’ve treated me differently because of my age but they didn’t,” she said as she reflected on her favorite part of OCU. She chose Ohio Christian because she knew it was a safe environment for her to be challenged and have new experiences. Because of OCU, McDonald feels prepared to continue her social and academic career.



ADULT & GRADUATE STUDIES: Cathy DeLorco

Cathy DeLorco (‘19) completed her studies as the Honor Graduate for the Adult & Graduate Studies program this spring. First attending college and obtaining an associate degree in nursing, DeLorco worked in an extremely secular industry for many years. After recovering from a disability, she began to feel God pushing her to return to school. “Returning to college was a major part of the journey that God has planned for me; therefore, my attention was anchored on Christ and the educational experience.” The prayers and support from her cohorts and professors helped DeLorco reach her goal of graduating with honors. “The college experience is much more than achieving goals. It’s developing and growing our relationship with Christ and others in our lives. God wants to use us and our education for His glory.” DeLorco completed her studies with a bachelor’s degree in substance abuse counseling and is excited for what God has moving forward.

**Affordable.
Biblical.
Compassionate.**



Christian Healthcare Ministries

**Don't let the rising cost of healthcare dim your future dreams.
Pursue your passions and join CHM:**
health cost sharing at its best.

1-800-791-6225 • 330-848-1511

chministries.org





1476 Lancaster Pike | Circleville, OH 43113

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBUS, OH
PERMIT NO. 1429



Ohio Christian University
HOMECOMING
& Family Day

RECONNECT | REMEMBER | CELEBRATE
OCTOBER 11–12, 2019

ohiochristian.edu/homecoming

Weekend includes...

Carrollton Concert (10/11)

Family Activities

Free Food

Alumni Athletic Events

Games on the Lawn

Trailblazer Celebration with awards

Traditional Alumnus of the Year

Online Alumnus of the Year

Ministry Alumnus of the Year

Josiah Rodriguez 5K Scholarship Run/Walk

Hope to see you in October!