

# CITU

## TODAY

SPRING 2026

# The Engage Program

*Seminary Reimagined*

# CIU **TODAY**

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**On the cover:**

Engage Program Director, Dr. Mike Galdamez and Seminary Dean, Dr. David Croteau, talking with Will Stroud, one of the program's first graduates.



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# Guarding the Future of CIU

In recent years, we've watched many colleges and universities lose their way — drifting from the very principles upon which they were founded. When core values are compromised, vision becomes blurred, and the next generation suffers the consequences. In other words, they get off track.

In this edition of CIU Today, we return to a train illustration to review eight historic non-negotiables, each vital to keeping CIU on the right track for the future. In the following we discuss The Guarding Rail, CIU's culture consisting of CIU's five Core Values and three Corporate Behaviors.

Our five enduring Core Values — **Authority of Scripture, Victorious Christian Living, World Evangelization, Prayer & Faith and Evangelical Unity** — are literally set in stones on campus and are well-known to our alumni. They define who we are and why we exist.

But we also hold to three important Corporate Behaviors that complete our on-campus culture, helping us to stay on track.

## Attitude Matters

We stress that Attitude Matters. These attitudes in particular, are from Philippians 2. We desire for every employee to have a humble heart (Phil. 2:3-4) where we consider others more important than ourselves. We also ask the faculty and staff to have servant hearts (Phil. 2:5-7), in other words helpful attitudes considering no act of service beneath them. We also insist on joyful hearts (Phil. 2:17-18) that radiate in our words.

## Relationships Matter

We regularly remind our faculty and staff that Relationships Matter based on Colossians 3:12-14. As a result, we should be hearing, when appropriate, nine powerful words: "I was wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me." These words start with me, the President.

## Excellence Matters

Finally, our Guarding Rail, our culture, includes Excellence Matters. We base this cultural component on Colossians 4:17, "... Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." We often tell people interviewing for a position that we are not hiring them to do a job, but recruiting them to fulfill a vision, one that will bring Christ great glory. As a result, we want to be and do our very best.

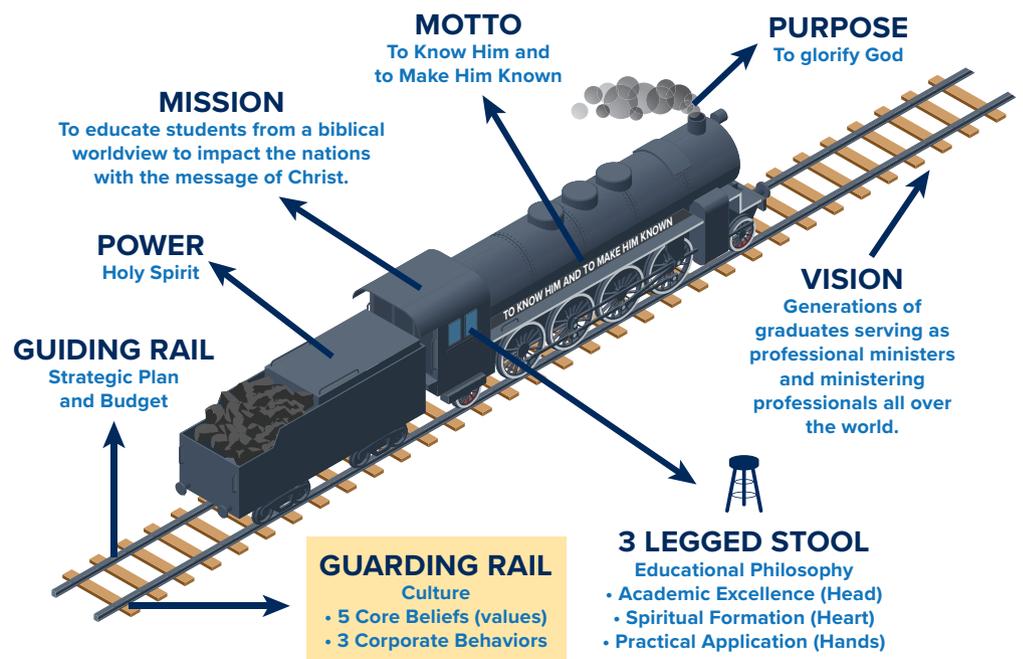
As we look to the future, our Core Values and Corporate Behaviors will continue to guide our every decision and every new initiative. A strong, clear culture will help keep the main thing, the main thing.

Thank you for your prayers and support that help keep us "on track." In the next edition of CIU Today, we will highlight another of the eight non-negotiables from our train illustration.



For His glory,

**Bill Jones**  
President





# Investing in Your Future & the Next Generation

**CIU OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS THAT MAKE  
CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE.**

## Featured Scholarships

**CONTINUING  
ALUMNI**

**ALUMNI  
LEGACY**

**ALUMNI  
REFERRAL**

### Opportunities for You & Your Community

- ✓ **Advancing your career or ministry?**  
These scholarships are for you.
- ✓ **Know a future student in your community?**  
Share this with them.
- ✓ **Together, we can make CIU more accessible  
to prepare leaders for impact.**

**\$500** Visit  
Scholarship

Visit campus and receive \$500  
toward your tuition.

Learn more  
and explore aid ▶





▲ South Carolina Superintendent of Education *Ellen Weaver*

## From the Superintendent of Education to Graduates:

# Choose Words Wisely

Columbia International University’s 2025 fall commencement speaker was South Carolina Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver who encouraged the graduates to carry hope and life-giving words out into the world. Noting that the world is full of cheap words and empty hope, Christians can choose to bring real and meaningful hope to those who need it.

“Words shape our witness ... what words will you choose?” Weaver asked, noting that words are powerful, with the ability to harm or heal.

For example, Weaver spoke about certain Holocaust survivors and families of murder victims who choose forgiveness, bringing life and hope through their words and preventing more evil.

“Will your speech sound like the world’s?” Weaver asked adding, “Or like the King’s, full of grace and truth?”

Just over 300 students were awarded degrees at the fall commencement from associate degrees to doctorates. ■

▼ Prison Initiative Commencement procession



## CELEBRATING CIU GRADUATES “Behind the Walls”

As a hallway door swung open, 10 men dressed in caps and gowns walked into a large, open room to the familiar strains of Pomp and Circumstance, played at every commencement ceremony. But visible beneath the hem of the gowns were the orange pant legs the men were used to wearing every day. The familiar orange worn by inmates in the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC).

In procession, they took their seats past family and friends who had gathered in the Visitation Room of the Kirkland Correctional Facility in Columbia for the annual December event. They represent the 16th cohort of the Prison Initiative, a ministry of CIU, in partnership with SCDC.

The Prison Initiative started in 2007 and includes two years of courses leading to an accredited Associate of Arts degree, designed to prepare inmates for ministry within the prison system as chaplain’s assistants. This 2025 commencement included two student-inmates who had advanced to bachelor’s degrees. Since its inception, 214 men and women have graduated from the program serving in 21 institutions with a recidivism rate among graduates of only 5%.

Afterward, one of the graduates (names are withheld) praised the CIU professors who come to the prison to instruct them.

“They have done so much for us. It’s unbelievable,” the graduate began. “They work with you; they make sure you get the education you need. They spend a lot of time helping us. It’s just amazing to feel like a human being for just a few hours and not being treated like another number.”

And he was happy he could share the day with family.

“It’s amazing. My mother hasn’t stopped crying yet. She’s a very proud mama.” ■



## Increasing Enrollment = More Plans for Student Housing + Science Building

CIU has been approved for new student housing by the city of Columbia as enrollment continues to grow.

The decision comes as CIU experiences record enrollment growth. The fall freshman class of 285 students is the largest in CIU history, creating the need for more on-campus housing. The city approval is for one to three apartment buildings, housing 120 students and located next to Pine View Apartments.

The growth brought local media interest with CIU President Dr. Bill Jones telling News 19 WLTX in Columbia:

“We’ve filled up five apartment buildings and six dormitories, so we need more space,” Jones said adding, that CIU’s growth can be attributed to CIU’s new health and science programs.

“It has been very exciting. This (school) year, one third of our incoming class indicated they wanted to go into the sciences,” Jones said. “So, after we start the first apartment building, we begin work on a new science building.”

Construction on the apartment building is scheduled to begin within the next year.

CIU’s total enrollment that includes on-campus and online students is over 3,200 students. ■



Scan the QR code to see the full News 19 WLTX report on CIU’s growth.



Adrianna Rogers, current DBA program student ▲

## DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION Ranked #3 in the Nation by Forbes

Forbes Advisor Education ranks CIU’s online Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.), as one of the best in the nation for 2025, ranking it at #3.

A Doctor of Business Administration degree is the highest academic credential available in business. Forbes notes that “earning this degree can make it easier to maintain your job while you gain specialized knowledge and skills to stand out from the crowd.”

Forbes ranked CIU #3 because instead of a dissertation, D.B.A. students participate in a mentorship program that provides individualized guidance and career advice.

Dr. Kevin Jones, dean of CIU Global, CIU’s online programs, emphasizes what Forbes acknowledges, that this approach gives business professionals an advantage in the workplace.

“The doctoral project is a way to influence the student’s organization or context by applying research to real business challenges, rather than focusing purely on theory,” Jones said.

Jones adds that the program is especially attractive to professionals “who value leadership, ethics, and possibly a faith-based worldview in their business practice.”

The Forbes ranking also noted that “CIU boasts the highest overall graduation rate of all the schools on our list, showing its commitment to student success.” ■



Learn more about CIU’s D.B.A. program: [ciu.edu/program/doctor-business-administration](http://ciu.edu/program/doctor-business-administration)



## BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES PROGRAM

### Awarded NIH Grant Supplement

CIU's Biomedical Sciences program was awarded a \$250,000 Administrative Supplement to its existing Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This additional funding will expand CIU's research capacity through the acquisition of advanced instruments for cell imaging and molecular analysis, strengthening both faculty research and hands-on learning opportunities for students.

Dr. Jeong-Ho Kim, professor of Biomedical Sciences and principal investigator, who leads the NIH-funded research program, explains that his research explores how nutrients and metabolites regulate cellular functions.

"By acquiring a high-quality fluorescence microscope, a multimode microplate reader, and other advanced research instruments, we will be able to perform experiments with the precision and sensitivity needed to uncover complex cellular mechanisms," Kim said. "The discoveries from this work will deepen our understanding of glucose homeostasis and may help develop new strategies to manage and treat metabolic diseases, such as diabetes and cancer."

Kim is a longtime NIH-supported scholar whose work focuses on the molecular pathways that regulate metabolism. His research exemplifies CIU's commitment to integrating rigorous scientific training with a faith-based academic mission. ■



Learn more about  
**CIU's Biomedical  
 Sciences program:**  
[ciu.edu/program/bs-biomedical-sciences](http://ciu.edu/program/bs-biomedical-sciences)



## U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT:

# CIU Among the Best

CIU ranks among the best universities in the Southeast in three categories in the 2026 Best Colleges rankings released by U.S. News & World Report.

**CIU is #7 in for Social Mobility** among Regional Universities (South), and **#17 for Best Value** among Regional Universities (South).

The Social Mobility ranking is important for students who are economically disadvantaged and less likely to finish college. The survey indicates CIU is among the best in making sure these students succeed.

Provost Dr. Jim Lanpher says the high Social Mobility ranking reflects CIU's mission to make a quality education possible for every student who desires to be educated from a biblical worldview.

"This honor reflects our Christ-centered commitment to providing access, support and opportunity so that students from every background can flourish in their calling," Lanpher said.

CIU is also celebrating **another year in the top 50 among Regional Universities (South) at #45**. CIU has ranked in the top 50 for several years in a row. ■



# “The Third Space”

## Where Diverse Backgrounds Come Together

In honor of Black History month, Columbia International University dedicated a week of chapels to celebrating ethnic unity in Christ. Along with great worship music, Dr. Jeff Philpott and Dr. Malcolm Walls, pastors at Sandhills Community Church in Columbia, preached every chapel in an engaging panel format.

They emphasized the need to remember the history of African Americans and their involvement in the church, because without knowing the history, there can be no improvement.

Philpott, a CIU alumnus who also serves on the CIU Board of Trustees, said that “we need to look back on the atrocities and victories, but look forward to forge a new history and future.”

Each message centered around Ephesians 2, which emphasizes Christ’s grace that makes all who are saved brothers and sisters.

The main takeaway was for students to “find the third space.” When two people each take a step closer to the cross, they end up in a space together. This place is where everyone from diverse backgrounds can come together and worship the Lord. As Philpott said, “getting over ethnic division starts with the cross.”

Because of the importance of the “third space,” churches need to be intentional about diversity. The differences between people do not need removed, because as Walls said, “unity implies differences.” Both men emphasized that to be unified, the body of Christ needs humility.

Several students commented on how engaging the chapels were, because of the powerful preaching and the playful dynamic of Philpott and Walls.

Paris Acquah said that “having a discussion format made me feel like the audience was part of the conversation. We were not preached at but invited to take a step closer to cultural unity with the speakers.”

Another student, Katie Lawson also commented that “they spoke on pressing cultural issues in a biblical context and had the courage to mention things most people do not in a church setting.” ■



▲ Dr. Malcolm Walls (left) and Dr. Jeff Philpott.

CIU Students for Life in D.C. included (left to right) Campton Spires, Eli Jordan, Jen Mynhier, Kendal Brookins, and Braxton Claypool ▼



## CIU Students for Life Take Part in Annual March

The first members of the newly formed CIU chapter of Students for Life braved cold weather to take part in the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 23. The March for Life began in 1973, months after the Supreme Court ruling in Roe v. Wade that enshrined a constitutional right to abortion. Today the March goes on even though the Supreme Court has more recently returned the issue to the states.

“I went to the National March for Life to show my support for the pro-life movement, and to get the opportunity to learn more about the women and children affected by it and how we can support and defend them,” said CIU junior Jen Mynhier, the president of CIU’s Students for Life.

The CIU students also attended other events held in conjunction with the March for Life.

“During the National Pro-Life Summit, I attended an Advanced Apologetics breakout room where I got to learn about pro-life responses to difficult cases such as rape and where the life of the mother is in danger,” Mynhier said.

Mynhier returned to campus ready to impart what she learned with fellow students.

“I hope to share the truth about abortion and life at conception with my peers,” Mynhier said. “I think that the most common reason people get abortions is because of ignorance about the procedures and the alternatives, including financial assistance and/or adoption.”

Students for Life is a national organization serving more than 1,300 campus groups nationwide. ■



▲ From the attic: Phil Keaggy's first album with the name of an old friend who introduced me to Contemporary Christian Music written on the cover. (Hope she meant for me to keep it!)

## Aging with Phil

By Bob Holmes, Senior Writer

A couple of years ago I was asked to give my Christian testimony at an informal gathering of the youth at my church. I shared with them, as I have in previous issues of CIU Today magazine, how as a former morning radio personality, God led me out of secular Top 40 radio of the 1970s and '80s.

When I finished my testimony, a hand shot up from one of the girls in the group.

“What did you listen to if you didn't listen to rock music anymore?”

“Two words,” was my response. “Phil Keaggy.”

While I was still rockin' 'n rollin' back there in the '80s with the likes of Madonna, Michael Jackson and Tears for Fears, a friend of mine at church gave me a copy of one of Keaggy's record albums (you know, a circular piece of vinyl that's making a comeback these days). It was my introduction to the world of Contemporary Christian Music.

Frankly, the title cut from that 1973 album “What a Day,” was the only song on it that I liked. But I

was hooked, because Phil at that time sounded a lot like my boyhood favorites, The Beatles, but with God-glorifying lyrics.

I finally had the opportunity to see Phil Keaggy perform in person a couple of times in the 1990s on the stage of Shortess Chapel at CIU. Seeing him live made me even better appreciate his amazing talent on the guitar for which he is best known.

And it was just last November that I saw him perform again to a packed house — at age 74. It was at The Cove, The Billy Graham conference center in Asheville, North Carolina. His talent has not faded with age, even as he made jokes about hurting his back as he attempted difficult guitar chords.

Yes, Phil has stood the test of time. My adult children are familiar with his work probably because I played a lot of his albums on cassette tape (remember those?) and on CD. One recent Father's Day, my son gave me a portable record player (did I mention vinyl is back?). That led me

to rummage through a musty case of record albums in the attic.

And there it was. The “What a Day” record album. The name of my friend in Johnstown, Pennsylvania who gave me the album was written across the top. (Man, I hope she didn't just loan it to me.)

It was not only the contemporary Keaggy sound that drew me to that title cut, but the lyrics — a vision of those chosen from the foundation of the world, gathered around the throne. There are instructions to play this song at my funeral. Because “What a day that will be.”

*When we get Home,  
our Eternal Home  
There'll be no more sick  
and dying  
No one is sad, no one is alone  
And there will be no more crying  
He will wipe away every tear  
From His children's eyes  
And put a smile upon their faces  
What a happy day when we see  
Our Lord in Paradise  
Crowned as King of Kings  
What a day that will be  
Oh what a day that will be!* ■

**“I finally had the opportunity to see Phil Keaggy perform in person a couple of times in the 1990s on the stage of Shortess Chapel at CIU.” —BOB HOLMES**

# CIU Says Good-Bye to **3** DEDICATED EMPLOYEES

*By Bob Holmes, Senior Writer*

**C**olumbia International University senior Marci Scardino was so excited when she signed up for a class with **Dr. Anita Cooper**, that she called her dad to tell him. That's because her dad, Mark Scardino (Class of '92 and '93) also had Cooper for a professor over 30 years ago.

"I felt a special connection to her because she remembered my dad," said Ms. Scardino, at a retirement reception for Cooper. "So when she saw my last name, she said, 'Oh, Scardino! Is your dad, Mark?' It's kind of cool how she remembered that."

Marci Scardino was just one of dozens of CIU students, former students, faculty and staff who attended the reception for Cooper who served as a CIU professor and director of the Bible Teaching program for 40 years.

Cooper is just one of three longtime CIU employees who retired in 2025. The others were Advancement Officer Frank Bedell with 40 years of service and Director of Human Resources Don Jones with an amazing 47 years.

***"... the knowledge of the glory of the Lord ..."***

"My favorite thing is the privilege I had to teach these wonderful students," Cooper told those at her retirement gathering. "And the hardest thing about leaving is not being able to hear their stories and about their dates and engagements and what the Lord has taught them from other professors and learn from them as they continue their walk with the Lord.

"I've taught so little, compared to what the students have taught me ... watching their walk with the Lord, and their incredible embrace of the Scriptures."



**Dr. Anita Cooper** receives a plaque from College of Arts & Sciences Dean, Dr. David Dewitt. It reads: "You Have Changed The World Because You Have Touched So Many Lives."

Cooper quoted her favorite verse from Habakkuk 2:14,

*For the earth will be filled  
With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,  
As the waters cover the sea.*

She said her prayer has been that her students would be a part of fulfilling that verse.

## ***His Dad was His Professor***

**Frank Bedell's** first association with CIU was as a Ben Lippen student in the 1970s when CIU's college preparatory Christian school was located in Asheville, North Carolina. After high school, he then enrolled at CIU (then called Columbia Bible College) and after graduating with his



**Frank Bedell and his wife Marti (Casper) Bedell (Class of 1980).** Because of assigned seating by alphabet, she sat behind him in chapel. He says meeting her is one of his fondest CIU memories.

undergraduate degree in 1980, he became a staff member serving in a half dozen different roles over the decades.

Bedell says key people in his CIU and Ben Lippen education included Ben Lippen Headmaster Jack Layman, CIU Professors Buck Hatch, Charley Wenzel, and Cliff Bedell — his father. What was that like?

“He was always careful to make sure his children knew we didn’t get any favors because we were related,” Bedell said at a retirement lunch. “It allowed me to see my dad in a different light and not just as my father, but as a professor, a skill set that he really was blessed with. I enjoyed his teaching,”

Bedell has three other siblings who graduated from CIU and now he is delighted to tell others that he has a granddaughter who is a CIU freshman.

## 24,720,120 Minutes

When **Don Jones** walked into the Rikard Dining Room just days before retiring, he stood with his mouth opened in surprise as he pointed at a message displayed on an easel, detailing his “time” as a CIU employee. It read:

47 YEARS OF DEDICATED MINISTRY  
 564 MONTHS  
 17,167 DAYS  
 412,002 HOURS  
 24,720,120 MINUTES

“I was shocked. I was totally shocked. I had no idea they were going to do anything like this,” Jones said, noting other decorations such as photos of him through the years and a sign that read, “The Legend has Retired.” “I thought we would check in and shake a few hands. So, I’m really shocked.”

Jones and his wife Marty (Class of ’72) would certainly shake more than a few hands. For over an hour and a half, current and former CIU employees lined up to congratulate Jones who has been around long enough to have at least a touch point with all of CIU’s eight presidents in its 102-year history.

Jones graduated from CIU in 1969, having enrolled under CIU’s second president Dr. G. Allen Fleece. But even before that, Jones says his parents used to take him to the Victorious Christian Life Conferences held on the original Ben Lippen campus in Asheville.

“There is a picture of my older brother and me standing with Robert C. McQuilkin (CIU’s first president) at Ben Lippen. I guess I could say I go back that far.”

## “My Greatest Privilege”

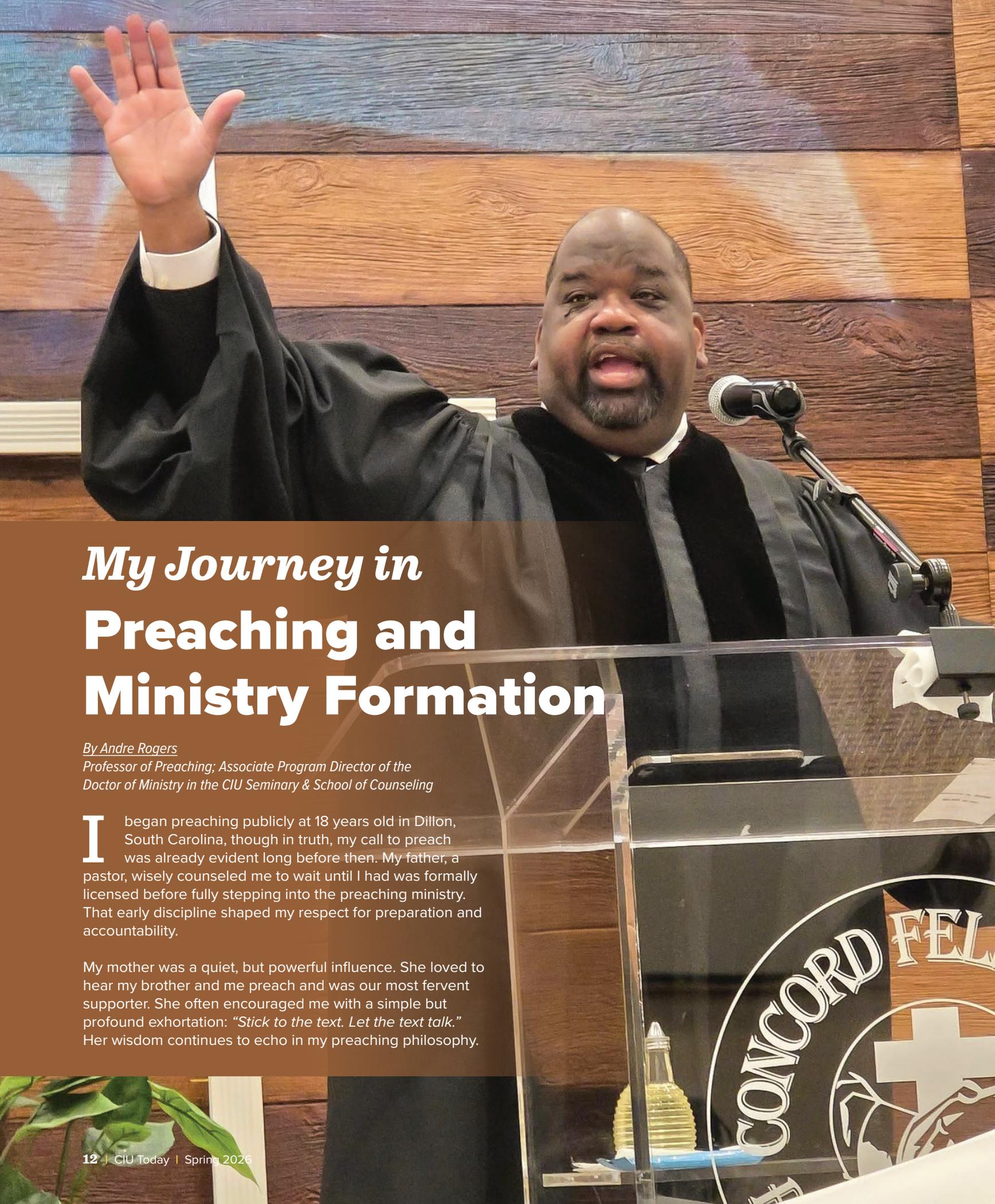
Combined years of service for Anita Cooper, Frank Bedell and Don Jones total 127 years! Compare that to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that shows the average American worker has been at the same job for just under four years. But at CIU, there are employees who have been around not for four years, but for four decades.

Frank Bedell was asked what he will tell people who ask about the place where he served for so many years.

“I would tell them that I worked at a place that was pivotal in my spiritual development,” Bedell said. “Early in my career with some arrogance I would say to myself, ‘I hope I don’t end up working here at school,’ and then, the Lord allowed me to be humbled. Now I think it has been my greatest privilege to invest my time here.” ■



**Don Jones with his wife Marty.** Behind them are daughter Julie Jones Payne (Class of 1999) and her husband Jackson Payne. Seated are grandchildren Jack-Jack Payne and Lily Payne.



# *My Journey in* Preaching and Ministry Formation

*By Andre Rogers*

*Professor of Preaching; Associate Program Director of the  
Doctor of Ministry in the CIU Seminary & School of Counseling*

I began preaching publicly at 18 years old in Dillon, South Carolina, though in truth, my call to preach was already evident long before then. My father, a pastor, wisely counseled me to wait until I had been formally licensed before fully stepping into the preaching ministry. That early discipline shaped my respect for preparation and accountability.

My mother was a quiet, but powerful influence. She loved to hear my brother and me preach and was our most fervent supporter. She often encouraged me with a simple but profound exhortation: “*Stick to the text. Let the text talk.*” Her wisdom continues to echo in my preaching philosophy.

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***“For more than two decades at CIU, I have had the privilege of teaching CIU students how to structure sermons with clarity and faithfulness.”***

**—DR. ANDRE ROGERS**

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### ***Other Early Influencers***

My childhood pastor, Bishop John W. Barber, prayed over my life and regularly told me that God wanted to use me mightily. That sounded really good to me! My first sermon was preached on Dec. 1, 1991. The church was packed, and afterward people told me they saw something in me that day — an affirmation that pointed toward pastoral ministry.

One of the great privileges of my early formation was being mentored by Dr. Ralph Richardson, then president at Carolina Bible College in Fayetteville, North Carolina, (now Carolina College of Biblical Studies). Dr. Richardson instilled in me a deep love for the Word of God and modeled a discipline that has remained with me ever since: *never listen to a sermon without taking notes while you are preaching.* He viewed preaching as both proclamation and discovery — an ongoing act of theological reflection that could inform future sermons and teaching.

When I later enrolled at Columbia International University, I was further shaped by CIU’s president at that time, Dr. Johnny Miller. He modeled the value of *scholarly depth* in ministry, teaching me that pastoral faithfulness must be wedded to academic rigor, that is, to be biblical, but also be a biblical scholar.

### ***From Student to Professor***

For more than two decades at CIU, I have had the privilege of teaching CIU students how to structure sermons with clarity and faithfulness. Many have gone on to fruitful and impactful ministries.

Two foundational texts written by retired CIU professor Dr. Donald

Hamilton remain cornerstones of my preaching and teaching: “The Homiletical Handbook” and “Preaching with Balance.” Though I introduce students to contemporary voices and newer preaching models, these classic works continue to anchor the program.

I have read extensively from figures such as the plain-spoken Vance Havner to the formal preaching instruction of Dr. Crawford Loritts, a former chairman of the CIU Board of Trustees. Preachers who have influenced me through the centuries include Puritan Jonathan Edwards to Evangelist Billy Graham. Students in my courses will encounter not only homiletical methods, but also my own preaching “address” — where I’m coming from theologically and pastorally.

### ***Staying on Track***

I work closely with a trusted group of preaching colleagues, including my father, Elder Harvey Rogers III. Together, we function as a theological think tank, sharpening one another through critique and prayer. And although I have already earned a Doctor of Ministry degree, I am currently studying for doctoral work in Practical Theology, with an emphasis in preaching, under the mentoring of CIU Seminary Professor Dr. Mike Langston.

Technology has increasingly shaped modern sermon preparation, from tools such as Logos Bible Software and digital research platforms to presentation aids such as PowerPoint, handouts, lighting, and audiovisual aesthetics. While these tools can enhance clarity and engagement, I caution students to remember that technology must always serve truth.

I often tell my students that *you can only preach about 25% of the Bible*

*early in life*, but when you are married, raising children, and navigating vocational pressures, you gain experiential authority to teach the whole counsel of God. I draw illustrations from my personal and professional life, from films, sports, current reading, and conversations with colleagues — always seeking to bridge text and life.

Prayer remains central to my preaching process. When I’m stuck, I pray more, read more Scripture, and allow the Word to shape my heart before it reaches the pulpit. As a pastor, I intentionally sit under the preaching of others at least once a month so that I can be fed as well as feed.

I encourage students to read widely — not only Scripture and theology, but also history, literature, sports journalism, and even business reports — to become well-rounded communicators of truth. I urge them to read their preaching text at least 25 times, and to match every minute in the pulpit with intentional time in prayer, asking that *God’s message — not merely the preacher’s words — be heard.*

### ***Clean Living***

Finally, after everything I have seen in ministry, I remind students: *Keep your life as clean as your message.* Live what you preach. Don’t preach upstairs and live in the basement. A lack of spiritual engagement inevitably leads to a lack of spiritual enthusiasm. And ethically speaking, do not allow ChatGPT or any tool to write your sermon in full. God’s people want to hear a word from the Lord — not from artificial intelligence. ■

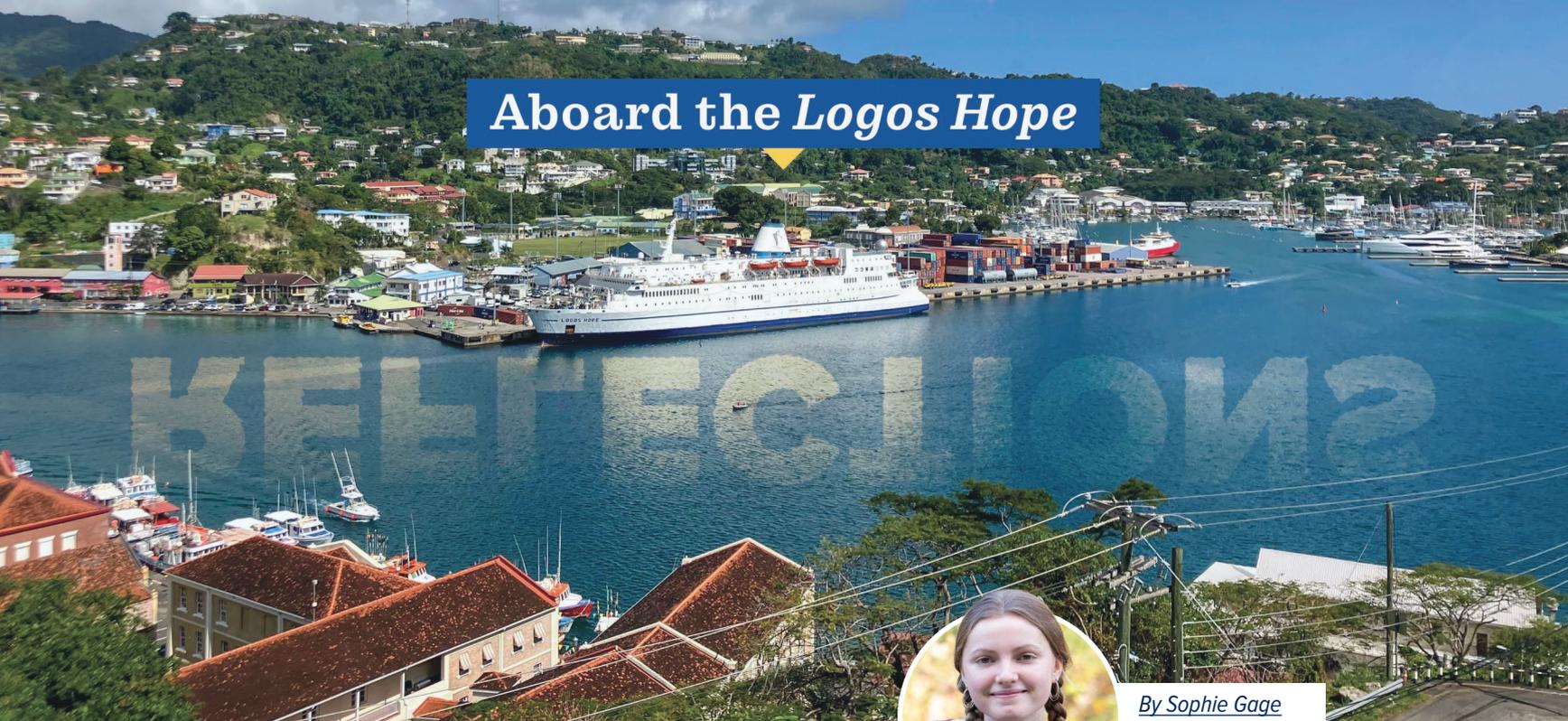


**Learn more about the Doctor of Ministry program:**  
[ciu.edu/program/doctor-ministry](https://ciu.edu/program/doctor-ministry)

# REFLECTIONS

## FROM A DECKHAND

### Aboard the *Logos Hope*



By Sophie Gage  
CIU Student Writer

“Some went out on the sea in ships...  
They saw the works of the Lord,  
his wonderful deeds in the deep.  
For he spoke and stirred up a tempest  
that lifted high the waves.  
They mounted up to the heavens and went  
down to the depths;  
in their peril their courage melted away.  
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he... stilled the storm to a whisper. ”

—Psalm 107:24-28

*“God have mercy on us,”  
the Chief Mate prayed  
from behind the dead  
radar panel, hands  
gripping the railing.*

Every alarm possible blared on the bridge of the *Logos Hope* in the dark of an Indian Ocean night. Lights flashed red that I didn't know existed; a cacophony of beeping raised my hair on-end. I held onto a windowsill as our ship rolled to the portside. Chairs, maps, binoculars, and anything else in



Sophie Gage paints the Logos Hope



Sophie Gage poses with fellow deckhands

the control center of the ship flew to the side as I watched a wall of water rise above my head out the window.

The helplessness that I felt in this moment remains unparalleled. At the time I was 19 years old and serving as a volunteer on a ship called the Logos Hope, the world's largest floating bookstore, partnering with local ministries around the world. We had unknowingly sailed right into an unyielding storm off the coast of South Africa. When I stared at that towering ocean wave, I was confronted with the reality that our lives relied solely upon God's merciful help.

## Missionary Kid

The idea of "help" is pivotal in the Christian faith. I grew up as a missionary kid watching my parents raise support and battle the questions of why God does not provide in the ways we expect. My parents may not have been facing a literal tidal wave at the time, but they were in a storm of financial need that revealed our total dependence on God. After four years, God paved the way for us to move to Germany.

Many people ask my parents why they chose Germany as their mission field. Isn't Europe a Christian continent? We moved to a village in southwest Germany in 2014, and I grew accustomed to beautiful, empty churches and a culture of self-dependence.

I attended an international school called Black Forest Academy, which houses a community of many missionary and third culture kids. Outside of school, I went with my mom to work with refugees from North Africa and the Middle East. This made a big impression on me as I saw the contrasting needs of the immigrants and Germans. I learned that material possessions are not a measure of satisfaction, and it highlighted the need that we as Westerners have to pursue things of true value.

## After High School

As graduation neared, I heard of the *Logos Hope* for the first time. I didn't think much of it until God placed a series of unexpected people in my life who had served on board the ship themselves and encouraged me to join.

I took a leap of faith and, after raising support from my incredible community, flew to Kenya to climb aboard.

At first, life on the ship was difficult. I joined with a large group of strangers from around the globe who all had just about one thing in common: Jesus. After our training, we were handed an envelope with our job assignment inside. I was to become a deckhand, which meant six weeks of further training in security, navigation, mooring and gangway operations,

and a lot of other things that were on the technical side of keeping our home ship-shape.

I could hardly believe that this was my job (and neither could my parents) but I learned countless life lessons as we sailed around the coast of Africa and eventually crossed the Atlantic to the Caribbean region. Every day I had to sacrifice my own pride in order to submit to God's strength, and trust that everything would work together for good. In a way, the fast-paced and difficult lifestyle on board made me draw closer to God than I ever had been, and the storm off the coast of South Africa was no exception. If I trusted that God had a purpose in bringing me to the ship, then in the midst of that storm, there was no reason to fear.

Now at CIU, I hope to remember to wholly rely on God in a very different life circumstance while I pursue studying Disaster Relief and Emergency Management. I still have a desire to help others, but those times in rough seas serve as a reminder that God is our ultimate source of help.

***Let us remember Who is carrying us through the storm.*** ■



# *Why I Am Passionate About* **MISSION TRIPS**

*By Kevin Jones, Ph.D., Dean of CIU Global*

**P**eople often ask me why mission trips continue to hold such a central place in my life and ministry. After all, they are demanding. They require time away from family, significant financial investment, emotional energy, and a willingness to be uncomfortable. Yet I remain deeply convinced that few experiences shape hearts, expand vision, and awaken calling quite like a well-led mission trip. For me, mission trips are not simply about travel or service projects; they are about transformation, both for the communities we serve and for those who go.

At their core, mission trips are about presence. In a world driven by speed, efficiency, and digital connection, there is something profoundly countercultural about showing up in person, sitting in someone's home, listening to their story, and sharing life face-to-face. I have learned that people rarely remember our programs, but they never forget our

presence. When we cross borders and step into unfamiliar cultures, we communicate something powerful: you matter enough for me to come to you. That simple act affirms dignity and opens doors that no amount of funding or strategy alone can accomplish.

Mission trips are also sacred classrooms. They expose us to realities we could never fully grasp from a book, documentary, or sermon. I have watched students, professionals, pastors, and retirees return home changed; more compassionate, more prayerful, more generous, and more aware of the global body of Christ. When you worship in a small concrete church or in a grass hut, or simply in an outdoor setting, with believers who own very little but sing with great joy, your understanding of faith shifts. When you meet families who walk miles for clean water, your prayers become more urgent and more grounded. These



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***“When we cross borders and step into unfamiliar cultures, we communicate something powerful: you matter enough for me to come to you.”***

**—DR. KEVIN JONES**

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experiences have a way of stripping away distractions and re-centering our lives on what truly matters.

Another reason I am passionate about mission trips is that they restore perspective. In comfortable contexts, it is easy to become consumed by minor inconveniences and personal ambitions. However, when you witness resilience in the face of poverty, illness, or social instability, you gain a renewed sense of gratitude and a deeper understanding of your responsibilities. I have seen people realize, often for the first time, that they are not merely consumers of faith but stewards of influence, resources, and opportunity. Mission trips awaken a sense of calling and an understanding that our lives are meant to be poured out for something greater than ourselves.

Mission trips also cultivate humility. When we enter a community as learners rather than saviors, we begin to recognize the wisdom, strength, and faith already present there. Some of the most profound spiritual lessons I have learned have come from believers who had far less materially but were rich in trust, prayer, and perseverance. These encounters remind us that God’s kingdom is not

built on wealth, status, or power, but on faithfulness, obedience, and love. They teach us to serve alongside others, not over them.

Perhaps most importantly, mission trips help us see people as people, and not as projects. It is easy to reduce global challenges to statistics, charts, and reports. But mission trips give those numbers faces and names. They introduce us to children who want to be teachers, farmers who pray for rain, pastors who shepherd flocks with limited resources, and mothers who hope for a better future for their families. These relationships linger long after the trip ends, shaping how we pray, give, advocate, and live.

My passion for mission trips is also fueled by their long-term impact. A single trip can plant seeds that grow for decades, redirecting careers toward service, inspiring families to commit to generosity, awakening churches to global engagement, and forming partnerships that bring sustainable development, education, and spiritual support to communities worldwide. I have seen mission trips spark movements, not just moments.

Ultimately, I believe mission trips reflect the heart of the gospel. God

is a sending God. He crossed the greatest distance to come to us, entering our world, our suffering, and our brokenness to bring hope and redemption. Every time we go, we participate in that same story; imperfectly, yes, but sincerely. We go not because we have all the answers, but because we are willing to love, listen, and serve.

That is why I remain passionate about mission trips. They change the way we perceive the world, others, and ourselves. And in the process, they draw us closer to the heart of God. The One who is always moving toward people, one relationship at a time. ■



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### **What is CIU Global?**

CIU Global offers **19 fully online degree programs** in disciplines such as Business, Education, Organizational Leadership, Health Care Administration, Nursing, and Disaster Relief and Emergency Management. All of the programs are designed to meet the unique needs of working adults.



# The Engage Program

## *Seminary Reimagined*

*By Bob Holmes, Senior Writer*



**I**t's no secret that earning a master's degree in seminary can be challenging. But what if there was someone there to encourage, mentor, and even train you in the practical aspects of ministry every step along the way until you graduate?

That is a key feature of Columbia International University's Engage Program offering a flexible, self-paced path for those pursuing a Master of Arts in Ministry Studies or a Master of Divinity in Ministry Studies. It's being offered through CIU's Columbia Biblical Seminary (CBS).

Program Director Dr. Mike Galdamez describes the Engage Program, sometimes referred to as Competency-Based Theological Education (CBTE), as having two buckets of classes. One with content courses that can be taken online or on campus. The other bucket includes ministry skills — competency-based projects usually performed at the student's church or place of ministry under the oversight and guidance of a mentor.

"It's very much contextualized to (the student's) ministry," Galdamez explains. "When they accomplish it, they turn that project in to a professor on campus and it gets graded."

### **"QUALITY TIME WITH ME EVERY WEEK"**

Lucky Detty, one of the first graduates of the program, says it was enriching for him to have "someone walking through it with me."

Detty is the founder and lead pastor of Reconciliation Ministries in Columbia, South Carolina, an outreach to those struggling with addictions, pointing them to hope, healing and reconciliation to God.

"There was a mentor spending quality time with me every week, pouring into me, and helping me put into practice the things that I was learning in the classroom," said Detty.

▲ Above: **Lucky Detty** baptizes at Reconciliation Ministries.

▲ Below: Seminary Dean **Dr. David Croteau** prays for **Will Stroud**.

That mentor was CIU alumnus Ben Byxbe ('05,'17), a business and nonprofit consultant who also assists The Cola Network, focused on city-wide gospel-centered initiatives in Columbia.

"I was really excited when that Engage Program came online," Byxbe said. "Lucky was one of the first students to sign up for it. It was a privilege to walk alongside him ... we got to fill the syllabus with what books he wanted to read and my recommendations in that mix."

"I believe there is so much value in having a practitioner walk with a student," Byxbe said.

## IT'S ALSO ABOUT CHARACTER

Students, mentors, and CBS faculty have noticed that the Engage Program equips mentors to recognize areas of character growth and address them with wisdom, care, and effectiveness.

Seminary Dean Dr. David Croteau points out that because the mentorship aspect of the Engage Program can last for over 30 months, it is a gift to students and to the ministry when character concerns are identified early in the program, allowing time for growth and intentional development.

"Eight weeks in, they are working with a mentor. So a mentor has years with the student," Croteau explained. "When you have years with them, you should be able to gain a clear understanding of their character strengths and areas for growth."

## TIME- AND COST-EFFECTIVE "EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED"

In the Engage Program, students earn their degree at their own pace through a cost-effective, pay-as-you-go \$500 monthly subscription. A degree can be completed for as little as \$8,000 for a Master of Arts degree, or \$14,000 for a Master of Divinity degree depending on the student's pace.

Will Stroud of Ridgeway, South Carolina was a regional manager at an auto parts store for 17 years when he says God called him into full-time ministry, and was serving as a pastoral intern at Awaken Church in Columbia when he enrolled in the Engage Program. He and Lucky Detty, were the first Engage Program graduates to cross the stage of Shortess Chapel in the May 2024 commencement.

"I knew I needed to advance my education, but I didn't want to put ministry on hold to do it," Stroud said. "I worked at my own pace for most of the courses — no semesters, no rigid deadlines. The program was exactly what I needed. It combined real hands-on ministry with the academic training required to complete my seminary degree."



▲ Will Stroud meets with Engage Program Director **Dr. Mike Galdamez** (left) and Seminary Dean **Dr. David Croteau**.

Stroud is now the full-time Pastor of Disciple Making at Awaken Church. Portions of his Engage project on spiritual formation is now being used by Awaken Church in a New Members Class and a Discipleship Class.

## ENGAGE PROGRAM'S BIG FINANCIAL BLESSING

Last fall, CIU received a \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to accelerate a full rollout of the Engage Program. Lilly Endowment's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative is intended to help theological schools across the United States and Canada.

CBS's Croteau calls the grant "an affirmation of CBS's mission to equip biblically grounded leaders focused on impacting the nations with the message of Christ." While Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion, says, "The grants will help these schools engage in wide-ranging, innovative efforts to adapt their educational programs and build their financial capacities so they can better prepare pastors and lay ministers to effectively lead the congregations they will serve in the future."

## EIGHT YEARS IN THE MAKING

For Croteau, getting the Engage Program to become reality has been a lot of administrative hard work. So, seeing the program's first graduates receive their degrees is a dream come true. Eight years passed from concept to commencement.

"Seeing two students graduate who are so in love with the program ... I cried." ■



Learn more about CIU's Engage Program by scanning the QR code or email Program Director **Dr. Mike Galdamez** at [mike.galdamez@ciu.edu](mailto:mike.galdamez@ciu.edu)

# HOMECOMING

2025



Class of '75

Dr. Bill Jones speaks at the President's Banquet

*By Sophie Gage, Maya Speece and Bob Holmes*

## **Reminiscing. It's a big part of homecoming class reunions.**

And the 2025 Columbia International University Homecoming was no different as the classes of '65, '75, '85, '95, '05 and '15 returned to campus to celebrate their class reunion milestone years, meet old friends and discover what is new at CIU.

In the cafeteria, as the class of 1975 reminisced, they were asked how things changed since they attended. They emphatically stated, "everything!"

The group recounted the days when no one had personal cellphones and everyone had to use a pay phone in the hallway of the dorms. In Chapel, everyone had to sit in alphabetical order and attendance was taken manually. The women back then were thankful for a rainy day so that they could hold hands with their boyfriend. An umbrella would hide the view of the couple holding hands which was not allowed.

Faith Hansen recalled how Christian Service Learning (CSL) was instrumental in helping her discover her career.

"CSL was great in helping me figure out if Bible Teaching was for me," Hansen said. "We got to get out there and help people."

Meeting on the Quad was the Class of '85 where Cyndi McAllister recalled how revered professor Buck Hatch helped her through trying times with wise counsel.

## **50 Years of Grad Life Council**

Meanwhile, over two dozen former members of the Grad Life Council (GLC) gathered on campus and online to reminisce as they celebrated an organization that has brought together CIU graduate and seminary students for fellowship and encouragement for five decades. It was hosted by current Grad Life Council faculty advisor Dr. Ben Noonan, who narrated a history of GLC that began soon after the Robertson McQuilkin Building was completed in 1974, designed for graduate classes.

"GLC was born out of a need to foster community among a rapidly growing body of grad students," Noonan said.

Among the former GLC leaders to review the history was Joe Copeland, a GLC president from the Class of '79. He recalled how when meeting with Seminary Dean Dr. Terry Hulbert, he was informed that the women were complaining that the men were not dating them. The administration discerned that the problem stemmed from a CIU rule in place at the time that students should refrain from study on Sundays. Consequently, the guys were studying well into Saturday night for their Monday classes. The solution: Classes were only held Tuesday through Friday, freeing up Monday to study.

"By the time I graduated, there were a large percentage of engagements — and I was one of them," Copeland said.

# A Look Back and a Look Ahead



Grad Life Council Reunion



Rob Morgan chats with CIU Today Student Reporter Sophie Gage

## President's Banquet

The annual President's Banquet, cultivated an atmosphere full of warm reunions and memories from CIU's past. Each meticulously decorated dinner table held a centerpiece of flowers framed by original mailbox doors that students were historically assigned.

Among those speaking was one of the first graduates of the CIU Nursing program. Hannah Place, from the Class of '25, was employed soon after graduation by Prisma Health in Columbia.

"I was told by so many people that nursing would be the hardest and worst years of my life," Place began, "But God allowed me to not simply survive, but genuinely thrive within the (CIU nursing) program. And that is in no small way because of the consistency and intentionality that goes into every way this program is designed."

CIU President Dr. Bill Jones then noted the necessity to continue to expand CIU academic programs so CIU not only trains "professional ministers" such as pastors and traditional missionaries, but also "ministering professionals" such as nurses.

After quoting the CIU mission statement of "educating students from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ," Jones added, "We're going to impact not just the nations, we're going to have a huge impact on this nation, and I'm excited about that."

## Encouragement from Rob Morgan

Popular Christian author and CIU alumnus Rob Morgan (Class of '74) encouraged alumni with a breakfast devotional on prayer, saying, "We are more effective now than ever ... God never forgets a single prayer" and adding that God can use anyone who is willing — no matter your age, you can be more useful to God now than ever before.

## Advice for Current Students

Meanwhile, along with their wealth of stories from the past, many alumni had words of wisdom for current students of their beloved CIU. Kelly Faulk, of the Class of '85 encouraged students to "involve yourself in things on campus, you won't regret it." While Ronny Wilson of the same class said, "Meet everyone you can, they might become the friends you have all throughout your life." ■

SAVE THE DATE

**HOMECOMING 2026**  
**NOVEMBER 6-7**

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Check out a full lineup of homecoming activities at [CIU.EDU/HC](https://ciu.edu/hc)

DR. LAWANDA HOLLIMAN ('24)

# Leadership is the Disciplined Stewardship of Influence

*An Interview with Dr. Lawanda Holliman, founder of Design High Performance™*

*By Sandra Archer Young*



Dr. Lawanda Holliman

**D**r. Lawanda Joseph Holliman is a retired U.S. Army colonel, the product of parents who, according to Holliman, taught her that “I could be anything I wanted to be as long as I did the work.” She is a proud CIU alumna, earning a Ph.D. in Organization Leadership in 2024. As the founder and CEO of the leadership development company Design High Performance™, Holliman supports leaders through workshops, corporate training, executive coaching, leadership advisory services, and more.

Holliman shares what she has learned about leadership over the years in this Q&A.

**Q: What was it like working through the ranks of the military as an African American female?**

My first assignment was to Korea, where I arrived already Airborne qualified. I was assigned to what was then one of the most forward-positioned units in the U.S. Army prior to Desert Shield and Desert Storm. I was in my early 20s, leading soldiers who were in their 40s and 50s. Experience, age, and perspective did not naturally align and acceptance was not automatic.

I entered an environment where I knew no one, and where my presence alone challenged expectations. In 1990, our

unit operated in direct support of the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea. At the time, I was the only female officer in that space. Others would follow later, but at that moment, there were none.

**Q: How did you feel?**

Isolation best describes how it felt. Yet alongside that isolation was clarity. I had a mission. I had responsibility. And I was committed to doing the work with discipline, integrity, and resolve, regardless of comfort or consensus.

**Q: What did the military teach you?**

The Army taught me how to work across differences: different backgrounds, different belief systems, different communication styles, and different expectations. The military demands accountability and performance regardless of the circumstance. You can be set up for failure or set up for success. I chose to be set up for what I was supposed to be doing. I was taught that at home.

**Q: What else did the military teach you?**

As a logistician in the military, I recognized that in my responsibilities of equipping the force and making sure that the right equipment was in the right place at the right

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*I entered an environment where I knew no one, and where my presence alone challenged expectations.”*

**DR. LAWANDA HOLLIMAN ('24)**

time with precision, if I didn't have the right people there, what good is the equipment? If people didn't feel safe, didn't feel seen, heard, or understood, would they be willing to trust that I need you to do this and that? You learn life lessons quickly when you're in life-and-death situations.

I was also taught in the military to treat people well. I had soldiers who would go to bat for me, who I am still connected with to this day. Results matter, but people sustain those results; none of the work matters without people who feel trusted, capable, and necessary. So how we make people feel matters.

**Q: How did you find out about CIU? Why did you decide to pursue a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership?**

Being from Columbia, I was familiar with CIU. I attended Columbia College and I knew CIU as Columbia Bible College. My decision to attend CIU was spiritual. As I was walking one day, I clearly heard the Lord say, "This is where you're going to go." I obeyed. And I was not disappointed.

My first class was Steward Leadership. I loved it. I started sharing with others that this is exactly what God wants from us — to understand that we don't own, we are managers. That had been my philosophy in the military, but I didn't have the terminology. I knew about servant leadership, but I had never really considered steward leadership. We integrated Scripture and the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. It was the perfect collision of the leadership discipline, the faith element and biblical scholarship.

**Q: What is your definition of leadership?**

Leadership is the disciplined stewardship of influence. Two of the three men with the talents in Matthew 25 multiplied their work, but one didn't. That tells me that the one who didn't go out and follow his master's plan lacked discipline in his stewardship. People take shortcuts because they like short, quick answers. But leadership is the disciplined stewardship of the influencer, and we all influence people, whether we intend to or not.

There's this school of thought where people say "Oh, not everybody is a leader." Well, says who? You're either

leading yourself or you're leading others. And typically, it's both.

**Q: What role does faith play in creating leaders? In the business world, the word faith might not be understood or received.**

I've been in some sticky situations. In the military, you can't proselytize. But in my unit, while I may not have been invited to the parties, people came to me for prayer. So, they knew my faith.

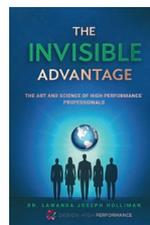
Some people have faith in the divine or the universe. But the kind of faith that I'm talking about is the faith in Christ that provides a foundation for integrity, which is a very practical concept that humankind can understand.

**Q: If you're working with a secular audience, how do you find ways to talk about faith?**

Faith anchors leadership in purpose, and we were all created for a purpose. People relate to that language. I try to make sure that I honor what I'm there for. If I am a Christian leader, then I meet people where they are, just as Christ did with the woman at the well.

**Q: What do you believe is the biggest challenge facing Christian leaders today?**

Sustaining integrity under pressure. Christian leaders are navigating polarized environments. There is an increased demand for performance along with the complexity of cultural tension. The challenge is learning to lead with truth and grace without compromising either. It's delicate. But God is God all by Himself. I don't have to hate you to love Him. ■



Dr. Lawanda Holliman's book, **"The Invisible Advantage: The Art and Science of Being Emotionally Attuned and Intentional,"** is published by JATNE Publishing.





Robbie McAlister preaching in Ukraine



## ROBBIE MCALISTER ('94)

# Looking Back on a Life of “Kairos” Moments

## *It All Began With a Chat With a Neighbor*

*By Bob Holmes, Senior Writer*

**B**ack in the 1980s, Robbie McAlister told his next-door neighbor that he wanted to plant a church.

“What kind of training have you had?” the neighbor asked.

“Well, I’ve been disciplined in my church,” McAlister replied.

“You need to go to Columbia Bible College,” the neighbor responded, referencing what is now Columbia International University.

As it turns out, McAlister didn’t know anything about Columbia Bible College. But he did get to know the school and his neighbor much better after that conversation.

His neighbor was Robertson McQuilkin, the third president of Columbia Bible College.

Enrolling in the Seminary at Columbia Bible College would be the first of many experiences in McAlister’s life that he refers to as “kairos” moments, crucial times when he carried out a new venture at God’s prompting and direction.

McAlister earned a graduate degree in Missions from CIU in 1994 and a Doctorate in Missions in 2007. That’s quite a turn for a man who earned an undergraduate degree in engineering from Clemson University and began a career in the textile industry. But soon after he became involved in church planting in the Columbia area and while attending CIU, he was developing an even greater vision for the world and The Great Commission with the assistance of the CIU seminary dean, Dr. Ken Mullholland.

▲ (Top) **Robbie McAlister** (on left) with a Ukrainian woman whose home was destroyed during the Russian invasion and Wade McGuinn owner of McGuinn Homes. They were able to help restore housing for the woman in partnership with the REALIS Christian Foundation in Kyiv.

▲ (Left) **Robbie McAlister** (in center) at a refugee camp in Lesvos, Greece. The man on the ground is an Afghan refugee. They are joined by a member of a Southern Baptist church in Lexington, South Carolina.

“He absolutely agreed with me that we need to deploy more people to reach the unreached,” McAlister told CIU Today during an interview over lunch in the CIU cafeteria.

### Checking the Phone Book

When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, and The Soviet Union collapsed, the atheistic grip on Eastern Europe ended. That opened the way for McAlister to travel on a CIU summer mission trip to Ukraine, expanding his vision. Upon his return to the United States, he did an informal count of the number of churches in the Columbia area by looking through the closest thing to what would be an internet search today — the yellow pages of the telephone directory. This was one of those “kairos” moments for McAlister.

“Why are we expending so much energy on an area so flush with churches, when there are places in the world that are not only unreached, but receptive (and) in a unique moment — a kairos moment?” McAlister questioned. “God laid it on my heart to be a person who is looking around the world for kairos moments where God is uniquely working through contextual factors, to create receptivity, accessibility and intersection with unreached people groups so that we can actually finish the (Great Commission) task.”

That moment in the phone book, led to a 10-year ministry in Ukraine that included assisting with an accredited Christian school, church-planting, training local leaders and initiating an association of Baptist churches.

When he returned to the Columbia area, he assisted in leadership at Riverbend Community Church while

working on his CIU doctorate in Missions. By 2017, Riverbend sent McAlister to the mission field once again, this time ministering during a refugee crisis developing in Europe. He organized short-term teams to assist in the refugee camps. Most of the refugees were Muslim.

“For those four years I was again trying to understand that kairos moment,” McAlister said. “God created a moment where there was accessibility to unreached people groups and receptivity (to the gospel) like I’ve never seen before. Most of (the refugees) were Muslims who were escaping terroristic regimes and repression. So they were questioning everything including Islam. We gave out Bibles. We were able to serve them and love them.”

### More Work Back Home

More recently, McAlister has been involved in ethnic engagement in South Carolina, assisting with church plants among Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitians and Filipinos.

He has also served as a consultant with the Evangelical Immigration Table, an arm of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in association with World Relief. He lobbied for just and good immigration laws and reform, taking him to the U.S. southern border and to Washington, D.C.

### The War in Ukraine

Now in his late 60s, McAlister is heading back to Ukraine, to assist a nation at war with Russia. “I never thought we’d see a war there,” McAlister thought aloud. “The opportunities there for the gospel demands my commitment.”



▲ Robbie McAlister ('94) and his wife Criss.

He still has a network of pastors and other colleagues there ministering around the country, building houses for those who’ve lost theirs in the war, and feeding widows and war orphans.

“There is a real value in the ministry of presence of just showing people in crisis that you care,” McAlister said. “As long as I’m adding value to what they are doing, then I’ll go over there.”

Through it all, McAlister makes sure he gives credit to Criss, his wife of 42 years, “a great champion of everything we’ve done.”

### Alumni Leadership

McAlister serves on CIU’s Alumni Association Leadership Council (AALC), including three years as president, which included CIU’s 100th anniversary year. He looks back fondly on the school that gave him a heart for the nations.

“What really amazed me at CIU, it seemed like almost every professor had been in ministry before they taught,” McAlister said. “They weren’t just academicians. They were practitioners who were academically sound and they were able to contextualize the academics with the practice. That really meant a lot to me.”

McAlister’s voice rises with excitement.

“They were doing the very things I wanted to do. I get goose bumps thinking about it.” ■

**“Why are we expending so much energy on an area so flush with churches, when there are places in the world that are not only unreached, but receptive (and) in a unique moment — a kairos moment?”**

**ROBBIE MCALISTER ('94)**



## CHRISTIAN MARKLE ('13)

# Mentoring the Vulnerable: *CIU Alumnus Leads Ezekiel Ministries*

*By Sandra Archer Young*

**I**t was damp and overcast outside, but inside the large block building annexed to Grace Church in Columbia, South Carolina, one could hear children racing through the hallways, laughing and giggling as staff members prepared a group activity. Later the same children expressed the same excitement as they engaged in a conversation about different styles of music.

This is what mentoring children looks like at one of the Columbia area campuses of Ezekiel Ministries. Ezekiel Ministries offers children in Columbia, Lexington, and White Knoll, group mentoring through afterschool programs located at area churches. The same children are provided with one-on-one mentoring by believers who meet with a child once each week. Overseeing this

mentoring ministry is CIU alumnus Christian Markle who became the executive director in June of 2025.

“We see these kids from 2:30-5:30 p.m. each day and we’re working on faith, identity, relationships, and life skills in really practical ways,” Markle explains. “But then we also have one-to-one mentors focused on building trust and walking with kids for the long haul.”

Working on identity means helping children recognize who they are, what their gifts are, and helping them build an identity in Christ on a solid foundation. Group and one-on-one mentoring aim to equip kids to know how to build healthy peer relationships and relationships with caring adults.

Mentors come from 44 churches in the South Carolina Midlands. Seventeen of these churches officially partner with Ezekiel, promoting the ministry, supporting recruitment, and giving financially. Among these churches are Radius Church, Riverside Community Church, First Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, Newspring Church, Mt. Horeb Church and Columbia Presbyterian Church.

In his role at Ezekiel Ministries, Markle organizes partnerships not just with area churches, but also with public schools. Principals and social workers refer children to the ministry based on three criteria.

“Across all of our sites, we intentionally serve children who are navigating significant barriers to stability, whether that’s economic hardship, limited adult support at home, or difficult life circumstances,” says Markle. “What we offer is relationship. And we consistently see that children growing up in financially vulnerable environments are the least likely to have access to enough long-term, dependable relationships with caring adults. That’s where mentoring can be truly transformational.”

Markle, now 34, is uniquely gifted to carry out the role of executive director for an organization founded to meet the needs of impoverished children. Since his graduation from CIU in 2013 with degrees in Communication and Bible, he has served in development positions with Oliver Gospel Mission, United Way, and Healthy Learners, a children’s health ministry sponsored by the Catholic Church.

The history of Ezekiel Ministries began in 2009 when Columbia resident Josh Whitlock conducted Bible Clubs in Columbia’s Gates Community. His commitment to this geographical area eventually shifted from Bible Clubs into a ministry of group and one-to-one mentoring in additional communities. The ministry evolved into a nonprofit organization in 2014. That’s when Markle got involved.

“I loved the work it was doing as it tied into my God-given passions to disciple



**“  
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circumstances.”**

**CHRISTIAN MARKLE (‘13)**



children from hard and vulnerable places through the gifting of the local church,” says Markle. He stayed connected to the ministry and to Whitlock over the years. When Whitlock felt led to pursue a different outreach opportunity, Ezekiel Ministries’ Board of Trustees extended an offer to Markle to lead the organization.

According to Markle, what moves churches to send members to participate in this unique ministry are societal injustice, compassion for children, and the desire to share the gospel. These same factors have also drawn over 450 businesses, foundations, and individuals to support Ezekiel Ministries each year, among them Southeastern Freight Lines, House of Raeford, Rogers-Slater Foundation, Coca-Cola Consolidated, McCrory Construction, and Loewen Commercial & Industrial Pressure Washing.

Mentoring isn’t new to Markle who has benefited from numerous mentors in his adult life.

“I can point to dozens of people in my life who stepped in and were used by God to show me His love and show me what my identity in God looked like. Or to call things out in me both good and bad and say you believe a lie here, but this is what God says is true,” says Markle. “A youth pastor here, a college minister there, a professor, or a friend in church — God has brought the right people into my life, time and time again.”

At Ezekiel Ministries, mentoring can translate into the simplest of tasks: helping a child learn how to ride a bike, improve reading and writing skills, learn to drive a car or mow the lawn and more importantly, plan for the future.

Markle hopes to grow the ministry to reach more children, and offer additional ministry sites, and mentors.

“Everyone has a passion for some category of changing the world for good. And what I love is being able to ignite those passions and give that passion a gateway to run,” says Markle. “We all have resources — time, talent and treasure. I love helping people use them.” ■

# CIU Alumnus Lands Job at Augusta National

Brandt Toburen

By Bob Holmes, Senior Writer

Columbia International University alumnus Brandt Toburen was playing a round of golf with friends when his mobile phone rang on the 18th hole. The caller ID read: Augusta National.

“My heart started beating really fast,” recalls Toburen, a 2025 graduate of CIU’s Sport Management major. “I answered it ... and I was offered an official position.”

That call was a dream come true for Toburen, who also played on the CIU Rams golf squad for three years. He began the seven-month seasonal job at Augusta National in December, a time when one of the most prestigious golf courses in the world was already gearing up for the famous Masters Tournament in April.

## An Important Assignment

Toburen is assigned to a preparatory four-person merchandise team that readies the

entire merchandise operation at Augusta National. That is a more important job than you might think. Toburen calls the Masters “the most profitable and popular merchandise operation, and they are only open nine days each year.”

Toburen was told to expect a 100-hour work week on the days leading up to the tournament.

“It’s definitely a tall task, but it was something I’ve been looking forward to embracing and being a part of.”

Working in the golf business is not new to Toburen. He has served as an assistant golf pro at another prestigious golf course, the Old Edwards Golf Club in Highlands, North Carolina where he learned various aspects of the business including informing members on daily conditions, making sure tee times were running on schedule, assisting in the golf shop, and offering golf instruction. It is also there where he met Russell Henley, one of the top professional golfers in the world.

## CIU: “Not Just a Number in a Classroom”

Toburen credits CIU’s Christian environment, the Sport Management program, and his professors for preparing him for these opportunities.

“I really enjoyed how much the professors invest in you. They care about you. They look out for you,” Toburen said. “You are able to develop a personal relationship. You are not just a number in a classroom like at some big universities.”

He also notes that the structure of Sport Management classes helped set him up for success.

“It was very presentation-based. A lot of the time you are standing up in front of crowds and working on your public speaking and your relationship skills — that’s very important in life today ... because I think technology can hinder that. It is something that will be very good to me to be successful in the sports industry.”



▲ CIU soccer head coach Anthony Gehman

## New Men’s Soccer Coach Calls Appointment “Lifelong Dream”

The CIU Rams new head men’s soccer coach comes with an impressive winning resume.

Anthony Gehman comes to the Rams following a successful tenure as head coach at Penn State Harrisburg, where he compiled a 61-17-17 record over five seasons. During his time with the Nittany Lions, Gehman guided the program to three conference championships, four conference finals appearances, and three NCAA Tournament berths, while building a nationally competitive program rooted in player development and culture.

Gehman says that coaching at a Christian university has been a career goal.

“It’s been a lifelong dream of mine to coach in an environment where the number one priority is to create and foster relationships to build the kingdom of Christ,” Gehman said. “I look forward to creating a championship-quality mentality and environment that pursues excellence at the highest level.”

Gehman replaces Bill Brindley who is now the athletic director at Augusta Christian Schools in Augusta, Georgia. He concluded his eight-year CIU tenure by guiding the Rams to the 2025 National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Division I Men’s Soccer National Championship semifinal and was named the 2025 NCCAA South Region Coach of the Year. ■

## Memories as a CIU Ram

Toburen also carries with him fond memories of his time with the Rams golf team. In his last collegiate tournament, the team fell only three strokes short of making it to the NAIA National Championship. And while there was disappointment, he says the deep bond he developed with teammates was one of love and appreciation.

“It is something I look back on and was very thankful to go through with them because I don’t think we were ever more connected as a team leading up to that tournament and being in the thick of the fire together.”

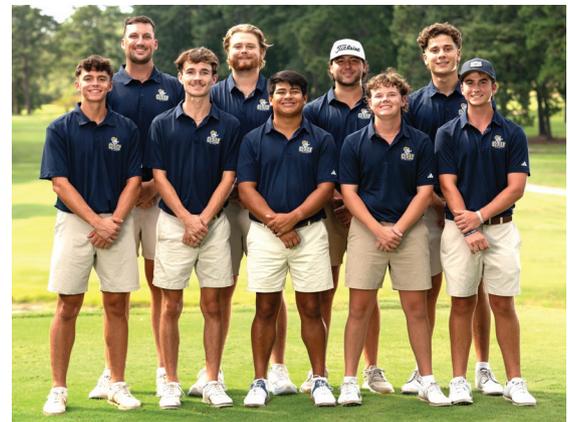
## Spring in Augusta, Georgia

Now that it’s spring, the famous azaleas of Augusta National are blooming and at least for a season, even people who don’t know a 3-iron from a pitching wedge are curious to see who will wear the Green Jacket — the famous prize donned by the tournament winner at what Toburen calls, “the greatest golf club in the world.” ■



## CONGRATS TO COACH WEISS!

Women’s Volleyball Coach Katie Weiss was named the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Division I Women’s Volleyball National Coach of the Year after guiding CIU to a 28–8 overall record in 2025. Weiss was also named the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC) Coach of the Year. Under her leadership, the Rams captured their fourth consecutive AAC Tournament Championship and secured a fifth straight AAC regular-season title. ■



## MEN’S GOLF TAKES REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP — AGAIN!

CIU men’s golf clinched its third consecutive National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) South Region Championship in September, pulling away from the field at Goshen Plantation Golf Course in Augusta, Georgia, with a 14-stroke victory.

Braydon Hileman led the Rams in the final round with a 2-over-par 74 to finish tied for fourth overall. Nate Caughman and Luke Hammond each carded a 75 (+3), with Caughman finishing the tournament as the individual runner-up and Hammond joining Hileman in fourth. Andrew Haarlow rounded out CIU’s team scoring with a solid 76, while Santos Espinosa added an 81. ■

# The Legacy of a Praying Doctor

## For Rosemary, the Power of Prayer Was a Priority

By Sandra Archer Young

Dr. Rosemary Lambert-Falls is a petite, but feisty medical trailblazer. She earned her degrees in an era when women were discouraged from pursuing a career in medicine. But in her lifetime, she treated hundreds of individuals in South Carolina who battled breast cancer and blood diseases.

Yet Rosemary is more than just an accomplished physician. She is also a regular donor to Columbia International University.

When asked why she and her late husband Thomas Falls began giving to CIU, Rosemary responds without hesitation.

"I like the programs they offer where you take the Lord into the workplace," she explains. "CIU equips these students to be good at their workplace job and great at sharing the Word."

Rosemary grew up in the farming community of Aynor, South Carolina where she accepted Christ at an early age. Her father, Johnny Lenneau Lambert, farmed but also operated the community's grocery store. Her interest in medicine started with her father who was a pre-med student until World War II forced him to abandon his studies and join the military.

"My dad was a hard Marine on the outside, but he would give anybody anything if it would make their life



Dr. Rosemary Lambert-Falls

better," says Rosemary. "We had this local store, and people would come and honk their horns at night. And Daddy would get up to see what they needed, whether it was milk for the baby or money for their medicine." His lifestyle of compassion and empathy ignited the same flame in Rosemary.

Her interest in medicine emerged at an early age when a sibling received a gift he never played with.

"My older brother had a chemistry set and a microscope. And I took them away and used them," Rosemary recalls. "I wasn't old enough to know what I was doing. But I remember pricking my finger and looking through the microscope."

As a teenager, her interest in medicine continued to develop. She spent her first weekend in college reading her genetics textbook from cover to cover. Eventually, she settled on studying oncology and hematology. After obtaining board certification in internal medicine, medical oncology, and hematology, she helped found South Carolina Oncology Associates.

Angela Conder, Dean of CIU's School of Nursing knows of her legacy firsthand. Her mother was Rosemary's nurse practitioner.

"I've known her since I was five or 10 years old," says Conder. "She and her now late husband, Mr. Tom Falls,

were a huge part of my life growing up. She was one of the reasons why I wanted to go to medical school.”

According to Conder, Rosemary was one of the few female partners when the oncology practice was established. Conder witnessed firsthand the challenges Rosemary faced and how she “navigated her experience there with grace.”

If you could talk to one of her former patients, he or she would recall Rosemary’s tenacious spirit and her genuine empathy for others. But they would also testify to her conviction that prayer works. Rosemary understood that as a doctor, prayer was never a last resort. Eventually she came up with a unique strategy that invited God to intervene in the lives of her patients.

She assembled a crew of three women, all friends, and called upon them regularly to intercede for certain medical procedures that she feared might be difficult for a patient. This “prayer team” was charged to pray on their knees for five minutes before a procedure.

Many of her patients knew about her prayer team that regularly, according to Rosemary, “prayed us through.”

“I had a patient who had to have a spinal tap every other week for six weeks. One time, however, I couldn’t get the needle in. And the patient asked me about the prayer team: ‘Are they all praying? Has one of them stood up?’” says Rosemary, laughing.

In addition to scheduling intercessory prayer for her patients, she also believed that medical treatment should be coordinated around the patient’s schedule and activities. Her husband Tom, who was later diagnosed with cancer, benefited from that belief.

“I’ve always believed in treating patients where they are,” says Rosemary. “We traveled wherever we could. As long as he could play golf, he was happy. So that’s what we did. If he needed treatment, we might be in San Antonio, but he’d be on the golf course after treatment.”

Rosemary shared the story of a young mother who was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer. She was preparing for her first ski trip, a trip that was already paid for. Unfortunately, she needed treatment immediately. Rosemary contacted her prayer team and then announced her plan to her patient.

“This is what we’re going to do,” directed Rosemary. “You stay right here and you start praying. I’m going to make a phone call to see if we can arrange your therapy on the ski slopes.” God intervened and the request for an accommodation was granted. Rosemary viewed prayer as an essential tool in her profession.



Dr. Rosemary Lambert-Falls and her husband Stan Price. ▲  
(Photos provided)

“I’ve given treatment on cruise liners,” says Rosemary. “All of it was through prayer and God who moved everybody’s heart.”

Rosemary retired in 2012, but she is still energetic. After her first husband passed way, she married former childhood sweetheart, Stan Price. They can be found traveling across the United States, Europe, or Israel, a favorite location. When this “praying doctor” reflects upon her life, she cannot help but be grateful.

“It’s been a whirlwind life,” she says, “but I wouldn’t trade it for anything — except heaven.” ■

***She assembled a crew of three women, all friends, and called upon them regularly to intercede for certain medical procedures that she feared might be difficult for a patient.***

**1 HOWARD BLAIR ('50)** will soon celebrate his 100th birthday. He is still active and loves to travel. ✉ [BlairCAJKCC@gmail.com](mailto:BlairCAJKCC@gmail.com)

**JAMES GERBER ('65)** is now retired after over 50 years of ministry in Florida, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Michigan and Colorado. He and his wife are now living in Charleston, South Carolina near their daughter and her family, and their son, who is the director of The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in the Charleston area. ✉ [golfgerber@gmail.com](mailto:golfgerber@gmail.com)

**MARILYN MORAVEC ('71)** is retired and living at Peace Village, independent living in Palos Park, Illinois. She teaches a Bible study there and writes devotionals for the Village Voice. ✉ [mmidwest75@gmail.com](mailto:mmidwest75@gmail.com)

**JOEL ('72)** and **SARAH (WATKINS) MCCALL ('74)** recently retired from Equipping Leaders International in East Africa where they provided seminary-level training for African pastors. Joel now serves as associate pastor at Christ Covenant Church (PCA) in Knoxville, Tennessee. Joel and Sarah have been married 53 years and have been in full-time ministry since graduating from CIU in 1972. ✉ [joelmccall2@gmail.com](mailto:joelmccall2@gmail.com)

**JOHN "RANDY" RIDDLE ('76)** is now pastor emeritus at Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Conway, South Carolina and serving as a Pee Dee Presbytery pastor-at-large. ✉ [barnabaspal1940@gmail.com](mailto:barnabaspal1940@gmail.com)

**2 MARTIN BANKS ('85)** was named by the South Carolina Supreme Court as special circuit judge for the First Circuit in April 2025. Martin and Kathy are also overjoyed to announce the marriage of their daughter Emma Kate to John Vogt on Oct. 11, 2025. ✉ [martin.banks@gmail.com](mailto:martin.banks@gmail.com)

**3 STEVE MARTIN ('89)** and his wife have walked alongside others through the questions and challenges of life and faith, as fellow travelers learning to see the story more clearly. Steve's book, "The Return of Heaven," points toward the hope of a coming restoration where loss, longing, and meaning finally begin to make sense. ✉ [Spmartin136@gmail.com](mailto:Spmartin136@gmail.com)

**JACK ('89)** and **LYNNE BROOKS ('90)** are retired. Jack was the pastor of Georgetown Evangelical Free Church in Georgetown, Kentucky. Lynne was a pediatric occupational therapist in Grant County, Kentucky. Jack survived a stroke and heart attack a few years ago and is now ministering to other people who have experienced strokes and heart attacks. ✉ [revjab@gmail.com](mailto:revjab@gmail.com)

**4 STEVE DICKEY ('90)** retired in 2023 after serving 33 years in pastoral ministry. He and his wife, Phyllis, are involved in their local church and enjoy spending as much time as they can with their family, including their seven grandchildren. ✉ [sedsr57@gmail.com](mailto:sedsr57@gmail.com)

**5 JERRY SLATE ('91)** is the principle author of the forthcoming book, "Reforming World Missions: Recovering a Biblical and Confessional Missiology." Jerry serves as one of the pastors of Berean Baptist Church in Powder Springs, Georgia, which he planted in February 2003. He and his wife, Angela, have been blessed with six children. ✉ [jerry.slate@berean1689church.org](mailto:jerry.slate@berean1689church.org)

**DAVID IHDE ('93)** U.S. Army, retired, serves as administrator of the food distribution program at West County Line Baptist Church in Opp, Alabama. He reports that several people have come to the Lord through this program. ✉ [dihde67@hotmail.com](mailto:dihde67@hotmail.com)



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**CAMERON ('94)** and **LAURAL (MONTIEL) ENNS ('93)** live in a suburb of Mexico City where they continue to long for a greater multiplying impact for the eternal glory and praise of the Lord and Savior. ✉ [leaders4theking@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:leaders4theking@yahoo.com.mx)

**PETER ('94)** and **ELLEN (VAN BUREN) CANNIZZARO ('94)** celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary! Ellen is semi-retired, after 35 years in special education. They have been in ministry for 37 years and are co-founders of SoulQuest Ministries, a nonprofit providing counseling, mentoring and soul care. They live in a log home in Pennsylvania with their four cats and use their home, Little Moose Lodge, as a retreat center. ✉ [ellencanx@gmail.com](mailto:ellencanx@gmail.com)

**6 KAREN (JETER) THOMPSON ('99)** enjoys teaching children who require special attention. She is a foster parent, and wrote a book titled "Chloe's Journey Through Foster Care." ✉ [heaven63.kt@gmail.com](mailto:heaven63.kt@gmail.com)

**7 DERYL ('11)** and **AMANDA DAVIS** retired after 33 ½ years with the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention. ✉ [d.ray.davis@icloud.com](mailto:d.ray.davis@icloud.com)

**ROBERT ('93)** and **ANITA (WOODS) SULLIVAN ('92)** Robert and Anita are serving as adjunct professors at Ambassador International University, Chongwe, Zambia. They are guest speakers and Anita is a soloist. ✉ [sullivanministry@gmail.com](mailto:sullivanministry@gmail.com)

**8 EDNA KWAN LEE ('05)** is a licensed professional counselor and supervisor and licensed mental health counselor in New York and Texas. She lives in Houston offering a compassionate and action-oriented approach to therapy. ✉ [edna\\_kwan@yahoo.com](mailto:edna_kwan@yahoo.com)

**9 MELISSA (HARDY) WETZEL ('05)** has served in Christian education as a Bible teacher and director of curriculum and instruction. She is also an adjunct professor at Regent University, teaching classes on Christian school leadership. She and her husband, Dave, are active in their church and have four amazing children. ✉ [toberealm@hotmail.com](mailto:toberealm@hotmail.com)

**MARISSA (FRANKS) BURT ('06)** coauthored the book "The Myth of Good Christian Parenting: How False Promises Betrayed a Generation of Evangelical Families" published by Brazos. Marissa lives in Washington state with her husband Fr. Aaron Burt and their family. ✉ [marissa.burt@gmail.com](mailto:marissa.burt@gmail.com)

**10 ARSIDA (NDONI) PETERSON ('15)** offers online telehealth therapy for teens and adults suffering from anxiety, depression, trauma and life changes. Her goal is to make counseling flexible and accessible, especially for people balancing school, work and family life. ✉ [arsidapetersonlpcs@gmail.com](mailto:arsidapetersonlpcs@gmail.com)



**TRISTEN** and **LYDIA (FREDERICK) ('19) RAINES** were married in October 2025. They are living in North Carolina while Tristen pursues his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology and Lydia manages the office of a catering company. Proud parents are **KEN ('98)** and **SUZANNE FREDERICK**. ✉ [lydia.frederick2@gmail.com](mailto:lydia.frederick2@gmail.com)

**11 ELI ('21)** and **ANNA (BENNETT) SNEAD ('22)** welcomed Daisy Jane into their family in January 2026. ✉ [annacathbenn@gmail.com](mailto:annacathbenn@gmail.com)



**12**

**DAVID ('19)** and **SARAH (KNIGHT) ('21) FREDERICK** along with big brother, Levi, and grandparents **KEN ('98)** and **SUZANNE FREDERICK** welcomed Rowan Elise into their family. ✉ [sarafrederick23@gmail.com](mailto:sarafrederick23@gmail.com)

**12** **LEE STILLINGER ('23)** recently celebrated 30 years of service with Child Evangelism Fellowship. The past 10 years he has been the director of South Carolina's 12 offices. The dedicated staff partners with hundreds of South Carolina churches to reach tens of thousands of children with the gospel each year. ✉ [Stillingerlr@yahoo.com](mailto:Stillingerlr@yahoo.com)

**13** **LAVETRA SULLIVAN ('24)** received the Calhoun County (South Carolina) High School Teacher of the Year award. Congratulations. ✉ [vetrasullivan@yahoo.com](mailto:vetrasullivan@yahoo.com)



**13**



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## IN MEMORIAM

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**LOUISE BOWIE GEROW ('45)** – Mar. 2025  
**RICHARD BENNETT ('48)** – Apr. 2024  
**ELLA SANDERS CRAIG ('49)** – Sept. 2025  
**JOHN PAUL DERUITER ('49)** – Feb. 2025  
**THEO "TOTTIE" KEMPER EVANS ('50)** – July 2025  
**WILLIAM "BILL" HARDING III ('50)** – Jan. 2026  
**ETHELYN SMITH HYDE ('51)** – Sept. 2025  
**ERNEST BOEHR ('52)** – May 2024  
**JOSE "RAY" MARCOS ('52)** – Feb. 2025  
**NANCY HOXTER HURLBURT ('53)** – Jan. 2025  
**MARJORIE HOMEIER ELLIS ('54)** – Nov. 2024  
**MIRIAM BRYANT HARMELING ('54)** – Nov. 2024  
**CLARENCE "SONNY" HELMS ('54)** – Mar. 2025  
**JUNE SALSTROM ('54)** – Nov. 2024  
**PAULA HAZEN FREY ('57)** – Feb. 2025  
**HERBERT SHOEMAKER ('59)** – Feb. 2025  
**ROBERT ALDERMAN SR. ('60)** – Sept. 2025  
**GLORIA GAUDIN REPP ('60)** – July 2025  
**DENNIS SWIGART ('60)** – Jan. 2025  
**NAOMI MAUDE SMITH ('61)** – Apr. 2025  
**CYNTHIS DUBOIS BROWN ('62)** – June 2025  
**ROBERT "BOB" KILGORE JR. ('62)** – July 2025  
**ESTHER WONG LEUNG ('62)** – Oct. 2024  
**BARBARA RUPP SHAW ('62)** – Apr. 2025  
**ALICE GRAVES THOMAS ('62)** – Jan. 2025  
**BETTY JOYCE ROEBUCK WILSER ('62)** – Apr. 2025

**NOLA ALLMAND CAMPBELL ('63)** – Mar. 2025  
**FRED DUBOIS ('63)** – Dec. 2025  
**PHILLIP LATTA ('64)** – Aug. 2025  
**WILLIAM "BILL" WHITE ('64)** – Dec. 2024  
**DONALD FAIRCLOTH ('65)** – July 2025  
**EDWARD "TED" JONES JR. ('65)** – Aug. 2025  
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**CAROL LARSON HERTZ ('66)** – Sept. 2025  
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 – Mar. 2025  
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**DONNA PHELPS COOK ('69)** – Feb. 2026  
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**JOHN SCHUPP ('71)** – Nov. 2025  
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 – Sept. 2025  
**HENRY LAZENBY ('74)** – Mar. 2025  
**JEFFERY COBERLY ('76)** – Sept. 2025  
**JOHN CROWE ('76)** – Feb. 2025  
**WILLIAM LEETCH ('76)** – June 2022  
**GEORGE RIDENOUR JR. ('77)** – Jan. 2026  
**WILLIAM "BILLY" BARBER ('80)** – Oct. 2025

**DANNIS SIMMONS ('80)** – May 2025  
**CHARLES BENNETT ('83)** – Jan. 2024  
**CHARLES SELANDER ('84)** – Sept. 2024  
**DAVID SCOTT ('85)** – May 2024  
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**JAMES WILLIAM MATTSO ('86)** – Sept. 2024  
**RALPH MOTSINGER ('87)** – Feb. 2024  
**JOSEPH "ANDY" MURRAY ('89)** – Sept. 2025  
**DAVID SCOVILL ('89)** – Oct. 2025  
**JOSUE RAIMUNDO ('90)** – Dec. 2025  
**DAVID PAUL HARVEY ('94)** – Apr. 2025  
**LILLIE THOMAS BURGESS ('95)** – Jan. 2026  
**TAMMY SHAW HASSAN ('97)** – Sept. 2025  
**GREGORY MOORE ('97)** – Nov. 2025  
**CLARENCE KOEPLIN ('99)** – Sept. 2024  
**LESLIE KIPUME MASONDE ('00)** – Aug. 2024  
**ELIZABETH POTTER MERRELL ('03)** – Apr. 2025  
**CHARLES FANT ('09)** – Nov. 2025  
**SHELBY MOON ('09)** – Aug. 2025  
**RICHARD SAMUEL JOHNSON ('10)** – Mar. 2025  
**MARION MERRY (Current Praying Ladies Group)**  
 – Mar. 2025  
**LARRY WAGNER (Retired Counseling Faculty)**  
 – Oct. 2025  
**PHILLIP STEYNE (Retired Graduate School of  
 Missions Faculty)** – Nov. 2025



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CIU has built one of South Carolina's most successful nursing programs – and is expanding into health and science education. We want every exam room to become a mission field.

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To meet the need, a new, 40,000-square-foot Health & Science Center is in the planning and fundraising phase. Designed with state-of-the-art labs, and simulation skills training, this facility will equip graduates to serve confidently in hospitals, clinics, and mission settings.

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