

# GRACE

— S T O R Y —

VOL. 40, ISSUE 3 / FALL 2020

COVER STORY

## Moving in Grace

Grace welcomed a near record-breaking 459 new students to campus this year. We took the annual incoming class photo during The Hike, a one-day orientation retreat, exercising a little creativity to maintain social distancing. We flew a drone up 100 meters, took pictures in three different groups and combined the photos to produce an arrow — which represents our aim this year to journey together, in wisdom and with purpose.

[WWW.GRACE.EDU](http://WWW.GRACE.EDU)



# OUR GOALS



The year 2020 hasn't afforded many of us the vision to see things coming, much less the absolute clarity that 2020 would imply.

This has been the most unpredictable of my 46 years in higher education — a heart-wrenching time of upheaval in the lives of so many people including our alumni, faculty, staff, coaches, and the students and families we serve.

On Oct. 30, as our fall semester was weeks away from ending, our campus learned that Bethany Nesbitt, one of our senior students living on campus, had died. Bethany had been in isolation and was being treated for COVID-19. Bethany died from a pulmonary embolism, which is well known to be one of the common effects of COVID-19 from which she was suffering.

It's hard to put into words the grief we are feeling. Bethany was the youngest of nine children of Steve and Brenda Nesbitt. She was set to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and was planning on pursuing a career as a child life specialist. On Nov. 5, we held a memorial service for Bethany on campus. Hundreds of students, faculty, staff, friends and family showed up or tuned in virtually as we honored Bethany with words from her family, her closest friends and her hallmates. We remembered her compassionate heart, her quick-witted sense of humor and her encouraging spirit that so deeply touched our campus and all who came in contact with her. But most of all, we corporately acknowledged the presence of Bethany's Lord and Savior — the One who is with us in our grief and the One who is face-to-face with Bethany today. With full assurance, we recognized that Bethany is now experiencing God's goodness in ways we have yet to experience.

In the midst of our grief, we are able to hold onto hope. We know we will see Bethany again. We trust in God to bring us peace when we don't understand, comfort when we can't find relief and strength when we feel powerless.

When we chose "journey" back in 2019 as our campus theme for the 2020-21 academic year, we had no idea how it would serve as an anchor for us in the middle of so many challenges, disappointments and grief: COVID-19, racial injustice, financial uncertainty, political divisions, natural disasters — and the loss of Bethany.

What we know to be true about our journey is that God is with us. We are never alone. When we sit and when we rise, He is there (Psalm 139:2). We also know that on this journey, we will have trouble (John 16:33). Our paths are rarely as we've planned or imagined them to be; they often meander into uncharted, unfamiliar, difficult territory.

But because we know God is with us and because we know the end of the story, we are secure. As the winds whip up the waves around us, we can find our feet firmly planted on the promises of God.

This semester has brought us more hardships than I could have anticipated, but we give praise to God for the grace He has granted us to walk through it — and to do it together.

We rejoice over the ways God has abundantly provided for us this semester. This fall we welcomed a near record-setting entering class of 459 students; it is the second largest class in school history. In light of the economic challenges, we are giving our students every advantage in the marketplace that we can. The spring of 2021 will mark a new partnership with Purdue University through a cooperative agreement to enable Grace students to earn credits online toward a Purdue master's degree. This will position them to complete their master's rapidly after graduating and then enter the workforce with two degrees. Additionally, Grace Theological Seminary is offering new and more affordable Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) programs, and we've reduced our online tuition by an average of 19.5%.

Besides growing numbers, thriving programs and new initiatives, we continue to hear stories of our graduates leading lives of purpose even in difficult circumstances. You will find some of them in this issue of *Grace Story* — including Bethany's (see Page 33).

I hope you see the sentiment in these stories that highlights the presence of our God in all of it.



*Bill Katip*

William J. Katip, Ph.D. (BA 74)  
President

# inside

VOLUME 40 | ISSUE 3 | FALL 2020

5

## Annual Report

Although the historic circumstances over the last year have presented unique challenges for Grace, there's plenty to celebrate. Read how the institution is adapting and ensuring it can continue to offer students the kind of thoughtful scholarship and career preparation they need to lead lives of purpose.

8

## The Intern, the Graduate and the Investor

Find out how 25-year-old Laura (Hoke BA 16) Cok managed to fund the construction of a \$30,000 school building in Tanzania, Africa, and why it's brought her unimaginable joy, an unexpected platform and a vision for more.

19

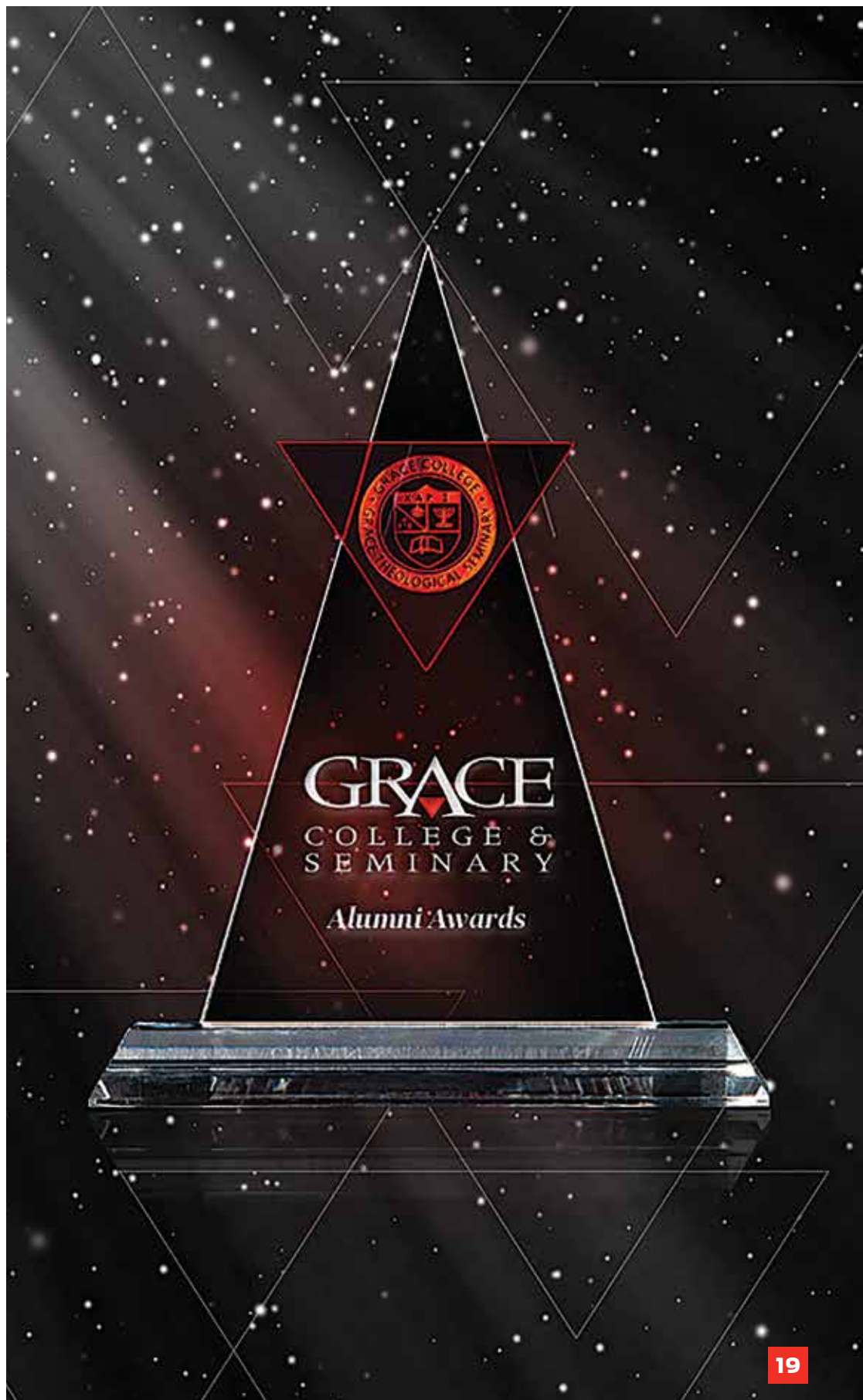
## Alumni Award Winners

Discover this year's Grace College & Seminary alumni award winners. They exemplify everything we hope our graduates will be: compassionate, skilled leaders who are on mission for Christ. And don't miss the insightful advice they each have to offer.

25

## Two at the Top and One Who Gets the Credit

Quentin Blackford (BS 99) and Matt Abernethy (BS 03) were two of the eight winners of the esteemed San Diego Business Journal 2020 CFO Award. They've grown their businesses into multimillion- and billion dollar companies. Read what's behind their success and why the only person they give credit to is Jesus.



# Financial Activities 20

51,159,216 TOTAL REVENUE

TUITION	70.92%	FUNDRAISING	8.67%	AUXIL
\$ 36,282,244		\$4,436,107		\$2,014
ROOM & BOARD	16.08%	GRACE COMMUNITY EDUCATION	0.83%	INVES
\$8,224,359		\$427,040		\$(224

5



8



25



# GRACE STORY

## Institutional Mission

Grace is an evangelical Christian community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence and preparing for service.

## Grace College & Seminary Administration

President: Dr. Bill Katip BA 74

Vice President of Advancement & Marketing: Dr. Drew Flamm

Director of Alumni & Community Engagement: Denny Duncan BS 80

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BS 10, Dr. Paulette (Macon BA 64, CERT 77) Sauders

## On The Cover

In August, Grace captured its incoming class of 459 students during The Hike, a one-day orientation retreat for new students. They make up the second-largest incoming class in the institution's history, topped only by the incoming 2016 class of 469. This year's class is also the most socioeconomically and racially diverse class in Grace's history.

Comments may be sent to [gracestory@grace.edu](mailto:gracestory@grace.edu).

Opinions expressed by individuals in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Grace College & Seminary.

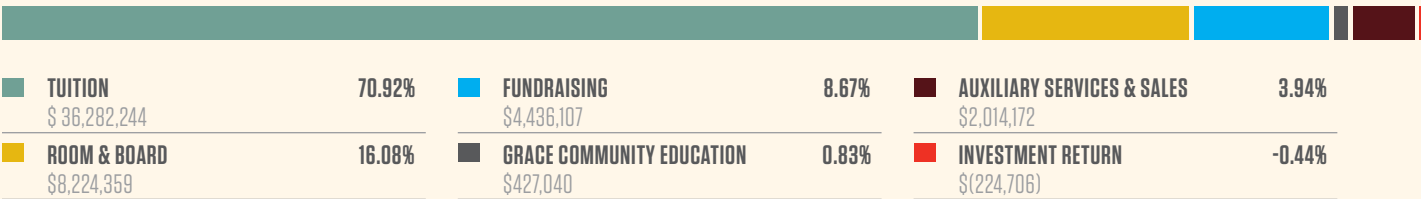
Grace College & Seminary reserves the right to edit alum note submissions.

# GRACE COLLEGE & SEMINARY

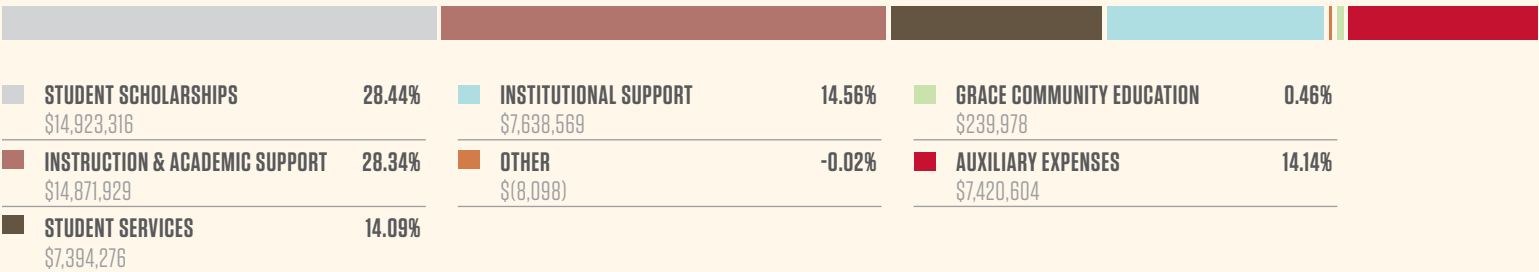
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800-544-7223, [www.grace.edu](http://www.grace.edu), [gracestory@grace.edu](mailto:gracestory@grace.edu)

# Financial Activities 2019-20

51,159,216 TOTAL REVENUE



52,480,574 TOTAL EXPENSES



## Enrollment Statistics

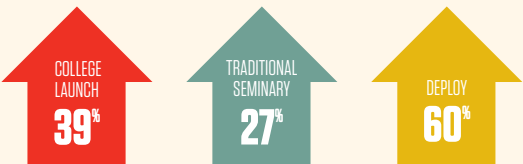
New Residential Undergraduate Students

361 400 459  
FALL 2018 FALL 2019 FALL 2020

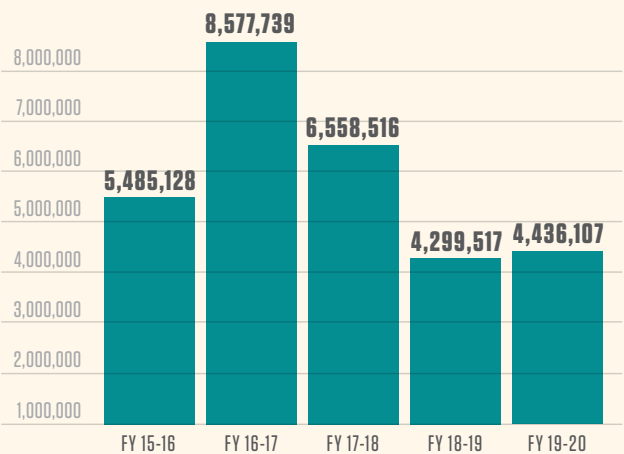
3-Year Graduation Rate

26% 26% 36%  
2015 2016 2017

PROGRAM INCREASES: FALL 2020



## 5-Year Giving History



# *Year in Review*

## *Behind the Numbers*

Grace College & Seminary's financial position over the past year reflects the unique challenges facing small, private Christian colleges that existed before but were intensified during a worldwide pandemic. No one could have predicted the consequences of COVID-19's arrival in March 2020, which forced Grace to send our students home and complete the spring semester remotely. These factors, combined with lower than expected enrollment classes in 2017 and 2018, had a negative impact on revenues in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Previously enacted cost cutting measures were put into effect; however, they were not sufficient enough to avoid our expenses exceeding our revenues for the year. While Grace had already begun a multi-year budget balancing effort, the pandemic and its pending financial impact on the institution forced us to reevaluate our financial plan. During the summer of 2020, our board of trustees tasked us with balancing the budget amidst the unknown enrollment impact COVID-19 might have on the 2020-2021 freshman class. We approached every area of the organization and embarked upon a thorough review of every budget in the organization. We also renegotiated several major contracts this summer. **These efforts have produced a balanced projected budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.**

Because our operational costs are met through tuition revenues, we continue to focus on recruiting and retaining students. Despite the economic uncertainty and safety concerns the pandemic has created, we are encouraged to report that the most recent freshman class was the **second highest new enrollment** in the school's history. **College Launch**, our program which allows high school juniors to earn an associate degree, had record enrollment. Additionally, **Deploy**, our competency-based seminary program, grew as did our **traditional seminary program**.

We cannot thank you enough for the constancy of your prayers and generosity. With God's wisdom, we will continue to confront unfolding challenges strategically so that students can experience an exemplary, innovative, affordable and preparatory education — centered on Christ.

Forward in Grace,



Doug Baumgardner,  
VP of Financial Affairs &  
Chief Financial Officer



Paul Blair,  
Chief Operating Officer



# Grace Schools Board of Trustees

*The Grace Board of Trustees exists to define the mission, and to influence, support and nurture the development and accomplishment of the institution's vision by the administration, faculty and staff. Members serve for a three-year term and may serve for up to five consecutive terms.*

**Mr. Matt Abernethy (BS 03)**

Encinitas, CA  
Term: 2020-23

**Mr. Robert Bishop (BS 69)**

Leesburg, IN  
Term: 2018-21

**Mr. William Burke (MAMin 07)**

Lewis Center, OH  
Term: 2018-21

**Dr. Kip Cone (BA 90, MDiv 96, DMin 18)**

Winona Lake, IN  
Term: 2018-21

**Mr. Gregory Dosmann (BS 86)**

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Term: 2019-22

**Dr. Kelly (Manahan BA 90) Geisler**

Indianapolis, IN  
Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2020-23

**Mrs. Jennifer Hollar**

Warsaw, IN  
Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2020-23

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Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2018-21

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Term: 2018-21

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Term: 2018-21

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Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2018-21

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Term: 2020-23

**Mr. Daniel Sandoval**

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Term: 2018-21

**Mr. Andrew Serafini**

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Term: 2019-22

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Term: 2019-22

**Mr. Scott Silveus**

Warsaw, IN  
Term: 2020-23

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Willowstreet, PA  
Term: 2019-22

**Mr. Robert Vitoux**

Fort Wayne, IN  
Term: 2018-21

**Mrs. Letitia Williams (MAMin 10)**

Oak Park, MI  
Term: 2018-21

**Rev. Michael Yoder (BA 93, MDiv 96)**

Lewis Center, OH  
Term: 2020-23

**Ms. Janine Zeltwanger (BS 85)**

Indianapolis, IN  
Term: 2018-21

**Dr. William J. Katip (BA 74)**

Winona Lake, IN  
President

## Celebrating 15 Years of Service



Dan Allan (BA 80, MAM 16) has been the senior pastor at Grace Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio, for over 30 years. He's been an elected member of the Grace Board of Trustees for nearly half as long. In July 2020, Allan completed 15 years of service on the board. "Dan is a strategic leader who listens deeply, synthesizes information effortlessly, walks in compassion, smiles easily — and makes others do the same — and who quickly finds the practical application to any innovative idea," says President Dr. Katip (BA 74). "He's been a shining example to his flock and to this board. I'm so thankful for the great love he has for Grace and the manner in which he has served us."





Laura (Hoke BA 16) Cok

Laura (Hoke BA 16) Cok was just one day away from graduating from Grace. “I never want to forget this,” she says, as she recounts what happened that day — a day when anxiety about her future turned into divine provision for the present and an opportunity for a personal dream to materialize.

### THE OFFER

As a sophomore, Cok applied for and was awarded a co-op internship with DePuy Synthes (Warsaw, Indiana), a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson and a market leader in developing orthopaedic devices. She was notified of the internship through Grace’s School of Business network. “Huge companies like J&J want to attract the best talent and so often scout for it at much larger schools,” explains Cok. “But because of Grace’s proximity and relationship with the orthopaedic industry, [Grace] students have opportunities that other students at smaller colleges don’t.”

# THE INTERN, THE GRADUATE & THE INVESTOR

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK

“YOU KNOW, WHEN HE INTERVENES — AND HEAVEN GETS CLOSER TO EARTH, WHERE YOU FEEL THIS OVERWHELMING SENSE OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOURSELF”

Cok continued in her co-op with DePuy Synthes through college and gained invaluable work experience. As graduation approached, she applied for a full-time position with the company and was invited to an industry meeting in Orlando, Florida, as part of her interview process.

On the final night of her trip, after completing her last exam online in her hotel room, Cok was still without an offer. As her hopes waned, she was asked to join Jane Loos, senior marketing manager for DePuy Synthes, for a meeting. Cok remembers Loos saying, “Laura, I want to hire you. The reason

the paperwork is taking so long is that I was negotiating a higher salary for you.”

The reality was, Loos couldn’t wait to hire Cok. “I used to call her the ‘co-op extraordinaire,’” says Loos, “and told her we were going to print business cards that said that.” Cok had proved her competency and character to the company. She was exactly the kind of graduate that DePuy Synthes looks to hire. “She is very positive, curious, committed and coachable,” says Loos.

### THE DREAM

Cok’s first roommate at Grace was Chris Kim, an exchange student from Korea, whose parents are Korean missionaries to a small island off the coast of Tanzania. Cok was so moved by Kim’s stories of her parents’ sacrifice, including living without their daughters who remained in Korea or the U.S. for their education. “I had such reverence for that sacrifice,” says Cok, and a dream sprang forth in her to support the Tanzanian people and the work happening there.

Now, Cok had been given the means to realize that dream. In the same way Loos was paving a way for Cok’s career, Cok wanted to do the same for the next generation. “Education is an avenue to give children in poverty an opportunity,” says Cok. “Jane gave me an opportunity, and I wanted to do it for someone else.”

### THE OPPORTUNITY

For the next three years, Cok faithfully deposited her extra income into a savings account. She believed it would grow and eventually fund a school, but she was realistic about the time frame. “I thought maybe I’d be

in my 40s by the time I had saved enough money,” says 25-year-old Cok.

But in 2018, Cok found out about the Johnson & Johnson Matching Program. “I felt for sure like the kid standing with two fish and five loaves. I felt like I had this little amount, nowhere close to what would be needed. And then it was multiplied,” Cok enthuses.

J&J’s matching gift turned the \$10,000 Cok had saved into \$30,000, and Cok decided it was worth seeing if there was a specific need



Students work in the new school building Cok’s donation enabled.

she could meet. “I ducked into a conference room at DePuy Synthes, and I called Compassion International.” Cok spoke to May Thomsen, a corporate relations manager at Compassion, and by the end of the call, they were both in tears. “I felt the weight and the joy of the moment,” says Cok.

So did Thomsen. “While many young people may save for a new car or a beach vacation, Laura felt a specific call on her heart and began saving to make a difference in the lives of children living in extreme poverty, and that is remarkable,” says Thomsen.

Without telling Thomsen how much money she had to donate, Thomsen put together a proposal of some of the major needs Compassion’s church partners had. Shortly after their conversation, Thomsen sent Cok a proposal that included the option to build a school in Tanzania. And the cost — \$30,000. The vision God had given Cok three years earlier was now the project bid she held in her hands.

### THE BLESSING

Cok immediately agreed to the proposal. After donating the money to the project in November 2018, the school in Tanzania opened in April 2019. Now 233 kids are attending school with four new classrooms that are no longer overcrowded. They can sit together by age and receive lessons tailored to their learning levels.

Cok is already strategizing with Compassion about how to continue to support the growth opportunities and needs of the church and its education center that she helped fund. “I want to continue to support the same community and church in Tanzania. They don’t have hygienic bathroom facilities in the center, so that might be my next project.”

Ultimately, she hopes others will be inspired to give, but not just because it’s the right thing to do. “There has been such joy in giving,” Cok says. “This isn’t me striving to be a good human. Jesus gave Himself to me to give me peace with God; I give out of response to that.”

And in God’s economy, the more we give, the more He gives. “We never think that giving of ourselves will expand our view of God or our horizons,” says Cok, “but that’s how He rolls.”



The construction of the school in Tanzania, funded by Cok, was completed in April 2019.



“WHILE MANY YOUNG PEOPLE MAY SAVE FOR A NEW CAR OR A BEACH VACATION, LAURA FELT A SPECIFIC CALL ON HER HEART AND BEGAN SAVING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN LIVING IN EXTREME POVERTY, AND THAT IS REMARKABLE.”



## EPILOGUE:

In December 2019, Cok moved to Toledo, Ohio, in order to be nearer to her then fiancé, Jay Cok, who attends medical school there. Although it's uncommon for DePuy Synthes employees to work remotely, Loos wanted to retain Cok. “Laura has demonstrated five years of success here and has consistent performance, so when she brought [the move] to our attention, it was easy for me to align to support her,” says Loos. Before the pandemic, Cok worked from home or a coffee shop, but Loos reported she was just as productive. “You wouldn't know she wasn't in the building.”

In May 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, Laura Hoke and Jay Cok adapted their plans and were married in a small, backyard wedding. Laura continues to work from home, now along with many of her colleagues, because of COVID-19.



Even in the midst of so much change, Cok has continued to intentionally invite others into the ministry opportunities through Compassion and her church partnership in Tanzania. Thomsen is already anticipating what God will do through Cok's cheerful obedience. “While she has made such a significant difference in the lives of children in Tanzania, I cannot even imagine how tremendous her impact will be as she recruits others to share in her joyful support of this important cause.”

To join in Cok's work, consider giving a gift to Compassion's “Where Most Needed” fund or sponsoring a child. In light of COVID-19, “Where Most Needed” gifts are being directed toward things like hygiene kits and emergency meals. You can give at [www.compassion.com/donate](http://www.compassion.com/donate).



# GraceWire

NEWS AROUND CAMPUS



(Left) Grace student leaders, (left to right) Shelby Nees, Nicole Toth, Kayla Menczynski, Sarah Maynard and Mackenzie Pickell, don "Journey" campus theme shirts and eagerly welcome new students and their families (right collage) to Grace over the weekend of August 14.



# Grace Sets Near-Record Enrollment

Grace is celebrating its 2020 incoming class of 459 students — the second-largest college enrollment in school history. Despite the uncertainty caused by a global health pandemic and economic recession, Grace's incoming class is 13% larger than last year and is the most socioeconomically and racially diverse of all time.

The new class also includes an impressive number of athletes. A total of 145 incoming students will compete in one of Grace's 18 varsity sports, eight JV teams or five club sports, including the new Esports team. Grace enrollment totals 1,901 students this semester.

"In addition to these growing numbers, we are excited by the growth in many of our academic programs and the new initiatives we are undertaking to equip our students for their future. We know our graduates continue to make a difference in the world even in the midst of a pandemic," said Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). "The lives they are leading provide assurance that our mission matters, and there is hope in our journey."



# Grace Partners with Purdue University



In the midst of an evolving higher education landscape, Grace continues to create new ways for students to earn advanced degrees. In the spring of 2021, Grace will begin a partnership with Purdue University through a cooperative agreement.

The partnership enables Grace students to earn credits online toward a Purdue master's degree, positioning them to complete their master's rapidly after graduating from Grace. "It is a privilege to partner with a world-class institution such as Purdue to provide our students with new educational opportunities," said President Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74).

Grace and Purdue are exploring a variety of other opportunities involving expanded bachelor's course options for Grace students, professional certificates and graduate course offerings.

"Grace has been a fabulous partner as we have jointly worked towards this novel, innovative agreement designed to directly benefit Grace's students," said Gerry McCartney, executive vice president for Purdue Online. "And it enables Purdue to better fulfill its Land Grant mission."

"We see it necessary to continue to invest in, diversify and accelerate our degree offerings," said Katip. "In light of the economic challenges, we are giving our graduates every advantage in the marketplace that we can. We want to develop service-oriented leaders with a high level of competence regardless of the field they pursue, from business to education, ministry to the arts and sciences."

## GTS Makes Seminary Degrees More Affordable

Grace Theological Seminary is offering new and more affordable Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree programs which have seen increases in enrollment this fall semester.

The seminary has modified the required credit hours for these degrees to save students time and money. Additionally, more concentrations are available for students to focus on specific areas of interest, including chaplaincy, women's leadership, exegetical studies and more. The M.Div. can be completed as part of the school's accelerated degree option which allows students to earn their bachelor's and master's simultaneously.

The D.Min. degree can now be completed within three years and has added new concentrations, including interdisciplinary studies, advanced expository preaching,



Dr. Freddy Cardoza, dean of Grace Theological Seminary, meets with students.

intercultural studies and pastoral studies. "We are taking some big steps forward this year as a seminary," said Dr. Freddy Cardoza, dean of Grace Theological Seminary. "We've condensed credit hours and decreased the cost of these degrees while keeping the academic rigor and applied ministry experience. Finding excellent advanced ministry degrees at an affordable price is rare. But at Grace, we made it possible," said Cardoza.

For more information about these programs, contact Director of Seminary Admissions Rob Neufer at [robert.neufer@grace.edu](mailto:robert.neufer@grace.edu).



# Remodel Health Sponsors Lancer Golf Classic



On August 6, under clear blue skies at Stonehenge Golf Club (Winona Lake, Indiana), Grace held its 23rd annual Lancer Golf Classic. Each year, the Lancer Golf Classic is an integral fundraiser for providing equipment, scholarships and facility upgrades to more than 250 student athletes on the 18 varsity athletic teams at Grace. The outing was a tremendous success, and Grace was pleased with the partnership and support of Remodel Health, the event's first title sponsor. Remodel Health helps organizations, including Grace, find affordable health coverage for their employees.

Earning the team win at the tournament, with an outstanding 17-under 54 in the golf scramble, were Jerry Clevenger, Andy Butterbaugh, Abigail Fishel and Dr. Tom Johnson. The Lancer Golf Classic raised around \$10,000 in support of Grace Athletics. A special thanks to all who joined the tournament and made a significant difference in the experience of Grace Athletics. If you would like to support Lancer athletics, visit [www.gclancers.com/give](http://www.gclancers.com/give).

# Academic Programs Add Advanced Equipment



Exercise Science Program's new COSMED VO2 gets put to the test.



The Engineering Department added a new Haas Mini-Mill machine to offer students more real-world experience.

Several traditional undergraduate programs have implemented new, innovative features for students this fall. The Department of Engineering and the Exercise Science Program both added state-of-the-art equipment this year, taking their programs to the next level.

The Exercise Science Program purchased a COSMED VO2 max machine. Exercise Science Director Christina Walters is using the technology to enhance students' learning and unleash more community service opportunities. "The exercise science program is all about learning how to best serve clients, and this machine will significantly enhance our ability to serve them well," said Walters. "One of our long-term goals is to train students to do fitness assessments for Lancer athletic teams and for community members."

The Engineering Department purchased a Haas Mini-Mill, commonly known as a computer numerical control (CNC) machine. This will expose students to machinery used on the manufacturing floor and position them to step into a future job with confidence. "From day one, we designed the mechanical engineering program to ultimately prepare students for a career. Our students will be competitive in the application process because they'll have a high level of competence with machinery used on manufacturing floors," said Department of Engineering Chair Dr. Fred Wentorf.

For more information about the exercise science program, visit [www.grace.edu/major/exercise-science](http://www.grace.edu/major/exercise-science), and to learn more about the mechanical engineering program, visit [www.grace.edu/major/mechanical-engineering](http://www.grace.edu/major/mechanical-engineering).



ATHLETICS NEWS ON AND OFF THE COURT



Victoria Lucido (#4) and Grace's women's soccer team walk out for the starting lineup before a match at home in September.

## FALL SPORTS PERSIST IN PANDEMIC

COVID-19 has altered much of life in the last nine months, and the world of athletics at Grace is no exception. "We have adapted in every way possible to keep our sports seasons in play," says Director of Athletics Chad Briscoe. "We've been dedicated to creating a safe, healthy space for student-athletes to train and compete during the pandemic, and we are thankful for everyone's efforts."

In order to keep student-athletes and coaches safe, the athletic department overhauled the daily processes for teams. During each team's preseason, every student-athlete was tested for COVID-19. Once practices began, student-athletes and coaches had their temperatures taken daily.

Additionally, each team member had to complete a self-screening to check for symptoms. The self-screening occurred every day before practice or competition could begin.

Finally, Grace limited exposure at games. As a result, spectators were limited to comply with state regulations and masks were required for non-participants.

Grace's teams have enjoyed a successful (and memorable) fall season. "We hope to see many of you back at games in the near future," says Assistant Athletic Director Josh Neuhart (BS 11), "but until then you can watch for free online at [www.gclancers.com/LIVE](http://www.gclancers.com/LIVE)."

## GRACE NAMED FIVE-STAR GOLD INSTITUTION

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) recently announced Grace as a Five-Star Champions of Character institution.

Grace was granted gold level status, the highest level on the NAIA's internal point system. Institutions are measured on a demonstrated commitment to the NAIA's Champions of Character program. Each school can earn points in character training, conduct in competition, academic focus, character recognition and character promotion. Exceptional student-athlete GPAs and minimal athlete ejections across all sports are also taken into account.

"This honor is a direct reflection of our coaches and student-athletes; our programs strive for excellence on and off the field of competition. All of life's lessons can be taught in the arena of athletics, and the pursuit of high character is an important part of our mission at Grace," said Director of Athletics Chad Briscoe. "At Grace we are dedicated to the pursuit of Christian excellence, and we are proud to partner with the NAIA to build champions of character."

Grace is one of five Crossroads League schools to reach gold status from the NAIA. The Crossroads League was also named a Five-Star Conference by the NAIA.







# ESPORTS UNVEILS NEW TRAINING FACILITY

Grace's new esports team is already taking advantage of its new facility on campus at the Gordon Health and Wellness Center. Through its sponsorship with MSI, a leading developer of computer hardware for the esports industry, Grace's training space has been outfitted with 11 gaming computers with RTX 2060 Super graphics cards and the brand-new Intel i7 10700F processors. The gaming stations include a keyboard, mouse, mousepad, gaming chair and headsets. A large TV screen is also incorporated to review gameplay and discuss strategies among the team.

"We are incredibly blessed and excited to partner with MSI. This sponsorship will be pivotal to help grow our program and establish Grace esports," said head coach Andrew Palladino. "Starting our program with an amazing facility on campus will make a huge difference. Players will have convenient access to top-of-the-line systems and a game review room to work on effective communication and learn the important aspects of teamwork. A special thanks to Robert Chen and Jae Chung from MSI for making this possible." Interested in Grace esports? Email Coach Palladino at [esports@grace.edu](mailto:esports@grace.edu).

## GRACE HIRES NEW BOWLING COACH



Ashley Petitt (BS 16, MSHE 16), bowling coach

This fall, Grace launched its first bowling team and welcomed Ashley Petitt (BS 16, MSHE 16) as the head coach for men's and women's bowling. Petitt has been involved with bowling throughout her life. She bowled at Shelbyville High School and has been heavily involved in a bowling league since her college years at Grace.

"We are thrilled to have Ashley lead our bowling program at Grace," said Director of Athletics Chad Briscoe. "Ashley's enthusiasm and attention to detail will serve her well in this new role, and we look forward to seeing the program develop under her leadership."

Petitt is a familiar face to Grace, having graduated in 2016, with a bachelor's in communication and a master's in higher education. After graduation, Petitt served in a variety of roles, including two years at Fairleigh Dickinson University as an instructor and fiscal manager/adviser. She returned to the Winona Lake area in June where she currently works at Super Seal Incorporated.

"I am very excited to lead this program, helping develop students and seeing them grow on and off the lane," Petitt said. "My goal is to build a program that allows students to not only strengthen their skills but also connect deeper to the Lord and their teammates. It's a dream come true to return to Grace coaching the bowling teams, and I am very humbled that God's plan brought me back to Grace."

The Lancers will remain at a club sport level for the 2020-21 academic year before looking to transition to varsity status in the future. For more information on the bowling team, contact Coach Petitt [petittan@grace.edu](mailto:petittan@grace.edu).



Dr. Paulette (Macon BA 64, CERT 77) Sauders retires after 55 years at Grace.

# SAUDERS RETIRES AFTER RECORD-BREAKING 55-YEAR TENURE

BY DR. LAUREN RICH, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES



Technically, Grace College was founded in 1948, but it didn't become the institution most of us know and love today until about 12 years later, when a bright, hard-working student named Paulette Macon stepped onto campus. She never really left, and now, 60 years later, we celebrate her 55-year career, and the impact she has had on our school, our community and the hundreds of lives she has touched throughout her lifetime of service to Grace. Sauders' tenure sets the record for the longest-standing full-time employee at Grace. In fact, only three others have even come close — Ron Henry (BA 58, MDiv 62), Wayne Snider (BD 53, ThM 55) and Dr. Homer A. Kent Jr. (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56) — and none served more than 50 years.

Dr. Paulette (Macon BA 64, CERT 77) Sauders earned her bachelor's in English education from Grace in 1964, at a time when only about a third of all college degrees in the nation were conferred on women. After teaching at the Akron Bible Institute, she returned to Grace, where she was appointed professor of English and journalism in 1965. She went on to earn her master's at St. Francis University and her doctorate from Ball State, all while teaching full time and raising a family with her husband, Chuck, with whom she also ran a nursery and landscaping business.

Students remember Sauders for many things — her high expectations, her "ready red pen," her encouragement, her open-door policy, her sense of humor and those incredible moments when her teaching made things "click" for them, and they suddenly saw the world in a new way. The ultimate measure of a teacher's success is the impact their students make on the world. Dr. Terry White (BME 64), who graduated with Sauders and has worked alongside her, observes, "Paulette's students are daily making this world a better place both in their professional expertise and in living the Christ-life as they saw it modeled in her."

Indeed, Sauders' former students include award-winning journalists, educators and writers — not to mention pastors, missionaries and lawyers. Many former students have become her colleagues here at Grace — including Mike Yocum (BS 79), Calla Andrews (BA 88) and Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). Karen Birt (BA 95), a former student who is now an educator and coordinator for the Winona History Center, sums up Sauders' enduring influence: "She hasn't changed: her high expectations of the use of the English language and her caring spirit show forth today as much as 30 years ago. Dr. Sauders has presented to me a stellar example of a Christian educator that I have used as a model in my own 25 years of teaching." My office is beside Sauders', which means I see the steady stream of alumni, students, colleagues and friends who stop by to seek her advice or — increasingly — to thank her for something she taught them or a kindness she showed them years ago.

In recognizing Sauders' 55 years of service to Grace, we thank her for countless classes taught, for late nights spent grading papers and proofreading The Sounding Board, for trips to England and Canada, for sharing her home with students, for meetings she's led and committees she's worked on, for lunches she's missed between classes and meetings, for evenings she's stayed late to finish a project or listen patiently to a student — we thank her for giving so much of herself to this place and its people, and we recognize that we would not be who we are without her. Most of all, we thank Sauders for embodying "the good and faithful servant" — the servant who is faithful with all that is given to her, and who will "surely enter into the joy of [her] master."

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In August, the Grace Board of Trustees conferred upon Dr. Paulette (Macon BA 64, CERT 77) Sauders the status of faculty emeritus for her service, scholarship and teaching. Additionally, the board awarded Sauders with an honorary doctorate degree, Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.), in recognition of her significant and outstanding service and achievement to Grace. An honorary degree is conferred only to those whose life and service advance the stated purpose of Grace College & Seminary. The Doctor of Letters recognizes the honoree's contribution to society and academic distinction specifically in the areas of literature, journalism and creative writing. "With sincere thanks for your contributions to nearly three generations of students," wrote the board, "we are pleased to award this degree to such a deserving honoree."

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# LILLIS RETIRES AFTER SIX YEARS OF SERVICE

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK

In April 2014, when Dr. John Lillis arrived at Grace as its new provost, he had an established and noteworthy leadership and administrative background. But it was his unique experience and dynamic leadership that made him distinct.

After earning his bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Kentucky, Lillis earned a master's in nuclear engineering from the U.S. Air Force Institute of Technology, a Master of Divinity and Master of Religious Education from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary as well as a Doctor of Philosophy from Michigan State University. Before coming to Grace, Lillis worked as a dean and executive officer at Bethel Seminary (San Diego, California) and as the provost/executive vice

president at Cornerstone University (Grand Rapids, Michigan).

Not only had Lillis been involved with teaching and educational administration for most of his life, but he'd also served as a major in the Michigan Air National Guard and as a captain in the United States Air Force as a nuclear research officer. He's a writer, scientist, pastor, missionary and scholar.

Although Lillis had worked at several other

Christian colleges, he took the job at Grace because he believed it was leading the pack of Christian colleges. "I've worked literally all over the world in Christian education," Lillis said when he was first hired, "and I have not seen such organizational momentum as they have here. It's going to carry this institution into the future."

Under Lillis' leadership, Grace added several new and innovative educational programs such as the seminary's competency-based theological education program, Deploy, as well as agricultural business, engineering, exercise science, and worship arts.

Additionally, Lillis provided numerous, effective professional development experiences for faculty and deans alike focusing on pedagogy as well as the integration of faith and learning. He continued to increase the faculty's overall level of academic excellence through the addition of highly qualified new faculty during his tenure. "Lillis lives out the essential role of love and kindness in Christian higher education," says Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74). "We are so thankful for his six years of godly and competent leadership at Grace College & Seminary."







This year's alumni award winners represent the remarkable minds and generous hearts of so many of our alumni. They are CEOs, they work multiple jobs, they're parents and grandparents, they're entrepreneurs, they're mentors and teachers, they hold doctorates, they've preached to thousands, they're authors. No matter what they put their minds to, their hands to, their voices to, it is never in service of themselves, but only ever to exalt Jesus Christ. We are deeply honored to count these winners among the body of Grace College & Seminary.

Even though we weren't able to recognize and celebrate our alumni award winners in person over Homecoming Weekend this year, you can find the video we recorded to honor them at [www.facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity).

If you'd like to drop a line of congratulations to any of the winners, email us at [gracestory@grace.edu](mailto:gracestory@grace.edu), and we'll get it to them.

#### **College Alumni of the Year Award Seminary Alumni of the Year Award**

*This award recognizes college alumni who have enhanced Grace's mission, reputation or campus morale, and who represent the school with professionalism, enthusiasm and dedication, and seminary alumni whose significant contributions in ministry have enhanced the seminary's mission, reputation and legacy.*

#### **College Young Alumni of the Year Award Seminary Young Alumni of the Year Award**

*This award recognizes college alumni who have made significant contributions to society and/or have made significant professional advancements in their career less than 10 years since their graduation and seminary alumni who have made significant contributions in ministry and/or have made significant professional advancements in their career and are under 40 years of age.*

#### **College Alumni Distinguished Service Award Seminary Alumni Distinguished Service Award**

*This award recognizes college and seminary alumni who have exhibited leadership displayed through extraordinary service to the increased welfare of Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary.*

#### **College Honorary Alumni of the Year Award Seminary Honorary Alumni of the Year Award**

*This award recognizes non-alumni who have demonstrated a genuine interest in the cause of Christian higher education as represented by and through Grace College and who have exhibited Christian leadership and have displayed extraordinary service to the increased welfare of Grace Theological Seminary.*

#### **College Parent Distinguished Service Award**

*This award recognizes parents of a Grace student who have exhibited extraordinary service to the increased welfare of Grace.*

We invite you to submit nominees for the 2021 Alumni Awards at [www.grace.edu/alumni/awards](https://www.grace.edu/alumni/awards).



## College Alumni of the Year

**RANDY LAKE** | ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA

*President, CRH Americas Material*



If you run into Randy Lake (BS 88), there's a 100% chance you'll find him carrying one common, simple item: a pack of note cards. It's as constant as his keys and wallet, but it discloses something quite rare about how this Fortune 500 CEO values and leads his people.

Lake is the president of Americas Materials at CRH, the largest vertically integrated construction materials company in North America. He leads a family of companies in 45 U.S. states and six Canadian provinces with over

27,300 employees at 1,450 locations.

Because of his role, Lake travels about 80% of the time. Everywhere he goes, whether he's on the road or in the office, he's on the lookout for any opportunity to reach for a card and deliver a note of thanks or encouragement. "It's the small things. They have the biggest impact in showing that you care," says Lake.

His card-writing habit is indicative of the culture that Lake seeks to nurture and sustain at CRH. He runs the company like a family business, coaching people and developing their skills and talents. "Unlocking people's full potential, that's my greatest satisfaction," says Lake.

Lake was first introduced to Grace through a high school basketball clinic held in his hometown. There, he met Rich Haddad (BS 87, MSNM 16), a Grace graduate and volunteer at the clinic, who had a profound influence on Lake's life as a "normal guy who conducted himself like few others," remembers Lake. Haddad introduced Lake to the tennis coach at Grace, the late Dr. Mike Grill (BA 67), and "that was all it took," says Lake.

When President Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74) asked Lake to serve on the board at Grace four years ago, the timing finally aligned. Lake and his wife, Kelly (Murray BS 88), had the majority of their six children out of the house, and Lake wanted to support the mission of Grace which had profoundly impacted his life and leadership.

"I see a huge need in business for Christ-centered leaders who can live out their faith in every circumstance," Lake says. "I see how critical it is to have a worldview that is filtered through the Gospel, and Grace provides that opportunity."

**Best piece of advice received:** Demonstrate humility. You will not come up with all the solutions to the challenges you face. Surround yourself with talent.

**Best piece of advice given:** We underestimate the value of listening to people from a variety of viewpoints. Value the diverse backgrounds people have. You'll make much better decisions.

## College Honorary Alumni of the Year

**KEVAN AND CAROLYN JOHNSTON** | ROCHESTER, MICHIGAN

*Former Owners, Aerospace Manufacturing Business*



Kevan and Carolyn Johnston became Lancers the moment their daughters, Dana (BS 14), and later Darcy (BS 16), were recruited to play volleyball and soccer respectively at Grace. The Johnstons attended every home and away game, no matter the distance, spending nearly 100 nights during the school year on the road to support their daughters' teams. Their whole-hearted dedication didn't stop with Grace Athletics, but extended to the entire mission of Grace.

When former president Dr. Ron Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82), discovered that Kevan was the founder and CEO of an aerospace manufacturing business, he hoped he could persuade Kevan to join his task force. He knew Kevan's mechanical engineering mind, problem-solving skills and leadership expertise would prove invaluable to the growth and sustainability of the college and seminary.

Kevan readily agreed and later accepted Dr. Bill Katip's (BA 74) invitation to join the board of trustees. Even as Kevan was running his multimillion-dollar business, he would willingly drive from Michigan to Winona Lake, Indiana, to consult on complicated decisions so he could meet with people face-to-face. "He was tenacious, and in the most difficult situations, he never hesitated to come to Grace to be a part of negotiations or offer his resources," says Katip.

When the Johnstons see a need, they're quick to jump right in and help. Carolyn likes to "get her hands dirty"—literally. When Grace was installing the green roof at the new Dr. Dane A. Miller Science Complex, Grace consulted Carolyn because she had previous experience working on a similar project. Not only did she offer her input, but she drove down, donned work gloves and participated in the plantings herself.

The Johnstons are the rare couple who walk with profound humility, immense generosity and deep faith. "Their fingerprints are all over campus in subtle ways most will never know about," says Vice President of Advancement & Marketing Dr. Drew Flamm, "because they want all the glory to go to God all of the time." In fact, the family has a foundation named after that vision: "To God Be the Glory," with which they seek to resource Kingdom work all over the world. "Our entire family believes to whom much is given, much is expected (Luke 12:48)," says Kevan.

**Best piece of advice received:** From Kevan's dad, "Always be prepared."

**Best piece of advice given:** Courtesy of Bob Goff, "Don't be afraid to ask; they might say yes."

## College Young Alumni of the Year

**CALEB ROTH** | WARSAW, INDIANA

*Founder, Empty Shelves; Founder, ScoutIQ; Founder, eFLIP*



Caleb Roth (BS 10) is the founder of three thriving businesses that support thousands of entrepreneurs, small businesses and nonprofits — and he did it all before turning 30.

After graduating from Grace, Roth took a job with DePuy Synthes where he worked for six years as a product director, manager and sales consultant. In 2014, while working at DePuy full time, Roth founded Empty Shelves, a company that sells books online and partners with libraries and thrift stores all over the country to help them

monetize their donated and discarded book inventory.

After a year of running the business on the side, Roth knew it could become his full-time gig. Roth resigned from DePuy in 2015, and while Empty Shelves continued to grow, he launched eFLIP, a software company that helps computer savvy booksellers take advantage of the price inefficiencies over time on Amazon. Two years later, in 2017, Roth launched ScoutIQ, a software company built for booksellers to give them the data they need to run a more profitable book flipping business.

Roth's businesses are designed to succeed the more they help other businesses grow. Many of Roth's clients have been able to step away from their 9-to-5 jobs, build six- or seven-figure book businesses and invest in their communities by hiring employees. "Nothing gives me more joy than watching other entrepreneurs step out on their own and be successful in their ventures," says Roth.

His passion for entrepreneurship inspired him to team up with several other business leaders — including Matthew Osborn, Justin Farrell (BS 12) and AJ Schemmer (AA 11) — to launch Lemon Labs, a 48-hour small business challenge for Grace students. "By showing students a wide variety of ways to make money locally or online, we aim to kick-start the next generation of entrepreneurs," says Roth.

Roth also serves on Grace's Business Advisory Council. It was accounting professor Dr. Roger Stichter's lectures on the "Principle of Maximums" that Roth credits with giving him a fiscally responsible foundation. "Dr. Stichter always encouraged us to spend far less than we make. By creating a healthy margin between my income and my lifestyle after college, it allowed me to save up money to invest in my business and get started on my entrepreneurial journey," he says.

"I benefited from the personal attention and mentorship of Grace's faculty and staff during my college years," adds Roth. "Their care inspired me to give back to others through my book business."

**Best piece of advice received:** David Slusher, my high school golf coach, reminds me constantly to, "Stay in the fairway," in life and in business.

**Best piece of advice given:** Just get started. People can easily get caught up in paralysis by analysis and quit before they even begin.

## College Distinguished Service Award

**BILL BURKE** | LEWIS CENTER, OHIO, AND NAPLES, FLORIDA

*Former Executive; Nationwide Insurance, Scotts Miracle-Gro, Battelle, Fitch, and Borden*



Bill Burke's (MAM 07) leadership experience rivals the length of a CVS receipt. He has served as the chief marketing officer of Nationwide Insurance and Nationwide Financial; the senior vice president of global R&D and innovation at Scotts Miracle-Gro; the business unit general manager at Battelle; the chief operating officer at Fitch; and the director of marketing at Borden. Throughout his career, Burke's resume, achievements and positions have grown, but he credits his success to his unwavering

commitment to Christ.

Burke never sacrificed his service to God or his family for his business career. He is most proud of being married to his wife, Marianne, for 46 years, and their three married children and 12 grandchildren. The evidence of his life mission can be easily found on his family car vanity license plate, which reads "4 OTHERS." "It's a reminder that we are not on earth to please ourselves or serve ourselves," explains Burke, "but we are to live For Others."

Rather than expound on his business accomplishments, Burke esteems his opportunities to have served as an elder for 22 years at his previous church, to volunteer at his local food bank twice a week, to serve The Salvation Army (immediate past-chair of the National Advisory Board), to mentor younger fathers and professionals through church and to serve as a member of the Grace Board of Trustees for 14 years — the last eight as chair of the board.

Burke says he fell in love with Grace when he began teaching one evening per week as an adjunct marketing professor in 2007. He had just graduated with a master's degree in ministry from Grace, and although he lived and worked in Columbus, Ohio, he commuted back and forth for two years to teach. "It gave me firsthand experience with Grace students and the culture," Burke says. And ever since, he says he's been "all in."

Burke has had a front row seat to the challenges and opportunities facing Grace since joining the board in 2006, and his love for the school has only grown as he's served. "Its mission, administration, professors and staff — I am in awe of them and at the quality and commitment of our trustees."

But perhaps what most encapsulates the Grace experience for Burke is commencement. "The honor of sitting on the platform watching students receive their degrees and honors and seeing how proud their families are. It makes the Grace journey and purpose come alive."

**Best piece of advice received — and now given:** From an uncle who told me as a struggling college student to, "Create options for yourself." It helped me form my life path going forward.

## College Parent Distinguished Service Award ▼

**ROSE GALVAN** | HAMMOND, INDIANA

*Cook, El Norteño; Family Caretaker*



Rose Galvan didn't know anything about Grace before her daughter, Aowyn, informed her she needed to sign her financial aid papers. Aowyn had just returned from a summer mission trip in Uganda, and Galvan was just glad to see the college she selected wasn't on another continent.

Nearly five years later, Aowyn will graduate in May 2022 with a bachelor's and master's degree in intercultural studies. And Galvan is embarking on her own journey at Grace, enrolling next spring in the online bachelor's degree in ministry

leadership program.

Galvan's life has been defined by her love for her family and service to God. She is a parent to four children; works with her mother at El Norteño, the restaurant her grandmother began in the mid-80s; and helps care for her grandmother who now suffers from dementia. Galvan also makes time to serve as president of the PTO for her youngest daughter's school, Highland Christian School, and was also recently commissioned by her church to be a Stephen Minister, which is a layperson trained to provide pastoral care support to those who need it.

On top of that, the reputation Aowyn built on campus as a conscientious and talented student and worker earned Galvan an invitation to Grace's Parent Council in 2018. When Galvan first joined the council, she was intimidated. "I'm the only single parent on it, and when I walked into my first meeting, I thought, 'I'm just a cook at a hole-in-the-wall restaurant in Gary, Indiana, and here is the president of the college and all these other parents with doctorates and people who run businesses.'" But what Galvan found was a second home.

"Being on the council has created a whole new family for us," says Galvan. The members support one another's endeavors within the council and outside of it. Galvan's family even spent last Thanksgiving with one of the council member's family.

Ever since Aowyn began attending Grace, Galvan witnessed the kind of community she wanted everyone she knew to be a part of. Galvan is quick to tell the young adults she works with at her church about Grace and looks for any way to support the Parent Council in recruiting high school students to attend. "Everybody at Grace really wants to help you. No matter what, you're treated with grace and kindness," says Galvan. "They want to see you succeed and get to where God is leading you."

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**Best piece of advice received — and now given:** Sometimes you have to let the people you love most fall. We want to save and protect them, but letting others learn the hard way is often the best way.

## Seminary Alumni of the Year ▼

**DR. LES LOFQUIST** | ANGIER, NORTH CAROLINA

*Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Church Relations, Shepherds Theological Seminary; Pastoral Staff, Colonial Baptist Church*



It was in a classroom seat at Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music (GRSBM) that student Dr. Les Lofquist (BA 79, MDiv 82) discovered his favorite professor, the new and young Dr. Ron Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82). "I admired him so much that I wanted to go to the seminary where he was trained," remembers Lofquist.

By the time Lofquist graduated from Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary, he had taken an impressive 14 semesters of Greek and six semesters of Hebrew.

God used all of Lofquist's skills through the power of His Spirit to give Lofquist a far-reaching platform. Lofquist spent 10 years planting a church in Ogden, Utah, in the suburb of the Mormon town, Roy. The respect he garnered from the community earned him the 1991 "Roy Citizen of the Year," and the church continues to thrive today.

Lofquist also spent two years teaching at GRSBM and six years as the senior pastor of Pleasant View Bible Church (Warsaw, Indiana) before spending 20 years as the executive director of IFCA International (Grandville, MI). At IFCA, he oversaw the fellowship of 1,500 churches and pastors, eight member colleges and seminaries, nine church-planting agencies, 12 foreign mission agencies and 75 military chaplains and members in 27 countries. On top of that, he was the editor of the VOICE magazine, which has been published every other month since 1929.

Lofquist retired from the IFCA last year and was quickly invited to join the faculty at Shepherds Theological Seminary (Cary, North Carolina) where he teaches seminary classes and oversees the Shepherds Network of 120 regional pastors. He's incredibly grateful to extend his ministry in new ways, and even more than that, he's thrilled that all five of his children and their families still love to come "home" and visit him and his wife, Miriam, including Chris (BS 04) and Emily (Rummel BS 04) Lofquist; Anna (Lofquist) and Pete Zobrist; Paul (BS 07) and Summer Lofquist; Amy (Lofquist MBA 15) and Brent (MDiv 13) Mencarelli; and Emily Lofquist.

With all that Lofquist has witnessed over his ministry career, he has been most blessed to see the work God is doing in so many venues through so many faithful people. It's no surprise that his life's mission is to "stay faithful, stand strong and finish well."

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**Best piece of advice received:** Always remember the supernatural element in ministry. Ours is the Almighty God, and we teach truth from His supernatural Book empowered by the supernatural Holy Spirit.

**Best piece of advice given:** Obey Him, trust Him, proclaim His Word and patiently wait for Him to work His will.



## Seminary Honorary Alumni of the Year ▼

**KEN SEYFERT** | WARSAW, INDIANA

*Former President, Grace Brethren Investment Foundation*



Photo courtesy of Jer Nelson

Before Ken Seyfert began his 23-year tenure at Grace Brethren Investment Foundation (GBIF) in 1997, he had a successful career as an investment banker in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. At the time, he didn't know that God was equipping him for full-time ministry work. But when the director of the GBIF foundation retired in 1997, Seyfert believed God was opening a door for him.

His investment and lending experience were a perfect fit for the needs of GBIF, which is a church-extension fund that serves

as a savings and loan for churches and organizations within the Charis Fellowship, formally the Grace Brethren Fellowship. Seyfert moved his family to Indiana and took the job as managing director, eventually becoming the president in 2013.

Under Seyfert's leadership, the foundation funded much of the Charis Fellowship growth: expanding its network of churches, increasing multi-campus sites and supporting organizations like Grace College & Seminary. Over the past decade, GBIF's support has been directed to help Grace Theological Seminary's revitalization efforts and to defray the tuition costs through a scholarship program that focuses on training future ministry leaders for the Charis Fellowship. Since Deploy launched in 2018, GBIF has included the new program in its giving. "We're committed to seeing the next generation of church leaders equipped for their calling," says Seyfert.

Over the past 23 years, Seyfert has managed the foundation wisely: GBIF's total assets increased from \$42.8 million to \$112.1 million and nearly 200 loans have been made to Charis Fellowship churches and ministries, totaling approximately \$150 million.

"It's all the Lord's work," stresses Seyfert, "He gets the glory for it all." In May 2020, Seyfert retired, and since then has continued to oversee the Retirement Investment Plan, which serves the pastors and staff of Charis Fellowship churches and organizations with retirement savings options. He's also been volunteering at Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church where he and his wife, Donna, have been active members.

What gives him the most gratification over the last 23 years with GBIF is its legacy of generous giving. "It has promoted God's work in church planting and leadership development," he says. "My prayer is that Grace students always recognize the great heritage of relying on the Bible as the basis of what we should all believe."

**Best piece received (which doubles as his life verse):** "Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honor and life." Proverbs 22:4

**Best piece of advice given:** Be the person God wishes you to be. Be real, and follow the Lord. He always has your best interests in mind.

## Seminary Young Alumni of the Year ▼

**DR. KIMBERLEY KROLL** | EAST PATCHOGUE, NEW YORK

*Literature Teacher, The Stony Brook School (New York)*



Dr. Kimberley Kroll (MDiv 14) successfully defended her dissertation in September, earning her Ph.D. in Divinity (Analytic and Exegetical Theology) from the University of St. Andrews (Fife, Scotland), one of the most prestigious universities in the world.

When Kroll came to Grace in 2010, she was a new believer. She hoped Grace would help her better understand the God of her faith, so she enrolled in the Master of Divinity program. Looking back, Kroll says there are too many

transformative, meaningful moments from her Grace education to list, but she recounts sitting in Professor of New Testament Studies Dr. Matt Harmon's class, holding back tears, as she realized that she was able to glimpse the Kingdom of God here on earth.

After graduating from Grace with her M.Div., Kroll earned a second master's degree in philosophy (Biola University) before becoming a Ph.D. candidate at the University of St. Andrews, during which she also spent a semester at the University of Notre Dame (Indiana) as a graduate fellow.

Since completing her studies at the University of St. Andrews, Kroll moved back to her home state, New York, where she works as a literature teacher at The Stony Brook School, a private Christian boarding school. She also oversees one of the girl's dorms, and since beginning the job this fall, she's already begun a Bible study with students on the book of Hosea. Additionally, Kroll still finds time to work for Grace Theological Seminary as a faculty mentor for the Deploy program.

In the midst of all of her scholastic achievements, Kroll stands out as one who is uniquely able to move in and out of different social and academic circles with ease. No matter her obstacles or circumstances, Kroll perseveres and is deeply committed to remaining faithful to Christ and the work He calls her to. "I try to live my life as one who is willing to be poured out as a drink offering for the faith and salvation of others," says Kroll. "I need Jesus and His Spirit for this because even just the desire to live as such is not of me but God's grace and love being made manifest in my life."

**Best piece received:** You are called to a person — Christ, and not a work. Do not seek great things for yourself because He has given you your life as a reward (Jeremiah 45).

**Best piece of advice given:** God is able, willing and desirous to heal and redeem all that has happened to you or been caused by you.

## Seminary Distinguished Service Award ▼

**JESSE AND GLADYS DELOE** | WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

*Retired, Active Ministry and Community Volunteers*



In 1945, Jesse Deloe's (MDiv 60) family moved to Winona Lake, Indiana, from their hometown in Washington, D.C. Jesse was 11 years old, Grace Theological Seminary was 7 years old and Grace College would be born three years later, in 1948. If you said that Jesse and Grace Schools grew up together, you'd be right, and they would become like family.

For the next seven years, before he went off to college, Jesse's home was frequented by seminary students. He and his family attended the Winona Lake Grace Brethren

Church, as did most Grace students. Since Winona Lake was the headquarters of every arm of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (now Charis Fellowship), Jesse became intimately acquainted with each of its ministries.

Jesse met Gladys (Mighells BS 85) at Bryan College (Tennessee) and they married in 1956, settling in Winona Lake, where Jesse enrolled in Grace Theological Seminary. After graduating with a Master of Divinity, Jesse went on to pastor for 13 years, lead numerous Adult Bible Fellowship classes and serve as senior editor at BMH Books. He also spent 20 years serving in administration with Grace Brethren ministries — including four years as assistant to Dr. Homer A. Kent Jr. (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56), then president of Grace.

When Jesse took the job at Grace, Gladys returned to finish her college degree, proudly graduating in 1985 at the age of 50. (Perhaps almost as impressive, Gladys was nominated for Homecoming queen at the age of 48.) Gladys taught piano and elementary music for 20 years. Her creative gifts have been the source of resources for children's and women's ministries, including a K-12 Life Skills curriculum for children in poverty. Presently, she enjoys collaborating with Jesse in his writing endeavors, as he continues to freelance as a writer and editor.

Jesse and Gladys continue to support Grace with their time, talents and resources. Perhaps their most effective ministry for Grace is as part of the Prayer Warriors group. It began with four godly women, all now with the Lord, to intercede specifically for Grace's leadership team. "The Lord burdened my heart to follow in their footsteps," says Gladys, who recruited three more couples to commit to continuing the Prayer Warriors group.

The Deloes are parents of Christopher, who lives with his wife Mary, in Sylvania, Ohio, and Jonathan (BA 87), who lives with his wife Holli (Durham BS 91), in Warsaw, Indiana. They are very proud grandparents of four grandchildren.

.....  
**Best piece of advice received:** Teach and live by the principles of God's Word. Seek and follow the Holy Spirit's leading. (Jesse)

**Best piece of advice given:** Trust God. In every circumstance, think of God saying to you, "Will you trust Me in this or not?" (Gladys)

# Thank You.

.....  
*As you read these short alumni winner profiles, we hope you were encouraged by how fruitful it is to live a life deeply devoted to Jesus. This has been a difficult season, and we are so thankful for the witness of obedience and faith so many of you are offering. It is an honor to be a small part of your story.*

# Two at and *One* Who



Quentin Blackford (BS 99)



Matt Abernethy (BS 03)

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL  
**CFO** OF THE YEAR  
2020 AWARDS



# the Top Gets the Credit

BY KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK



Quentin Blackford (BS '99) and Matt Abernethy (BS '03) have a lot in common. Blackford is the CFO and COO of Dexcom (San Diego, California), a maker of glucose monitors for people with diabetes. Since joining the company in 2017, he's led the company to a 40% year-over-year growth and an increase in the business' revenue from \$402 million to \$1.47 billion. Currently, Dexcom is on track to grow its revenue by another 25% this year.

At the same time Blackford was joining Dexcom, Abernethy also made a move to San Diego. Relocating from Warsaw, Indiana, where he worked for Zimmer Biomet, Abernethy took a post as the CFO at Neurocrine Biosciences, which specializes in treating neurological diseases. After Abernethy joined the company in 2017, the company went from zero revenue to earning over \$250 million in sales during the second quarter of this year. With a healthy profit now flowing, Neurocrine has been able to fund over \$300 million in licensing arrangements to expand its efforts in discovering more medicines to help patients with neurological and psychiatric disorders.

San Diego Business Journal took notice of Quentin and Matt awarding them the prestigious 2020 CFO of the Year award in August where Blackford won the award for large sized public companies and Matt won the award for medium sized public companies. Neither of them is new to accolades. Their resumes are overflowing with honors and awards they would never boast about.

They are quick to share that running companies with hundreds and thousands of employees was never in their plans. In fact, with all they have in common — they both were raised in Indiana, played basketball for Jim "Coach K" Kessler (BS '70), dated their future wives (Brittney (Raber BA '04) Abernethy and Melissa (Whitley BA '00) Blackford) at Grace and grew their careers at orthopaedic giant Zimmer Biomet — they met only three years ago.

Blackford was a few years ahead of Abernethy at college, so they never sat together under their favorite professor, Dr. Roger Stichter, or played basketball at the same time for Coach K. It wasn't until Abernethy was considering making a move out to California in 2017 to take the job with Neurocrine that he called Blackford. "Quentin had a great reputation. I'd heard of him; how well liked and successful he was," says Abernethy.

Blackford had just transitioned into his new CFO role at Dexcom and was only too eager to talk with Abernethy. “I had started to hear about this talent coming up through the ranks, who had an impeccable reputation,” says Blackford. “Since we were in similar industries, his name kept coming up, and then I learned he was also a Grace grad.”

Although Blackford and Abernethy both found their way to Grace, how they got there is perhaps one of their few differences.

Blackford knew he wanted a Christian college education. “I needed that discipline and structure that would nurture me and keep me focused,” remembers Blackford. Grace gave him the

Christian community he needed as well as personalized attention from faculty. Blackford wanted to go into accounting, and he’d seen Grace’s CPA success rates. Playing basketball for Coach K and learning from professors like Stichter changed his life. “I wouldn’t be prepared today for this experience had it not been for the spiritual foundation I received at Grace. Seeing how Coach K and my professors lived their faith out each day gave me the foundation to be successful at what I do today,” Blackford describes his experience at Grace as nothing short of “transformative.”

So does Abernethy: “It was life changing for me,” he says. But Abernethy had different plans after graduating from high school. “My goal in life was to play Division I basketball and chase fame, fortune and enjoy what the world had to offer,” he says, and when he earned a scholarship to play basketball at a Division I school in

California, where his dad had played for the Lakers and also the Golden State Warriors, he thought his dreams were coming true. “I thought I had made it,” remembers Abernethy. But after making a series of poor decisions, he ended up taking his sophomore year off and wondered whether he’d ever go back to school, let alone play basketball. “My life was a complete wreck,” says Abernethy, “but through it, God took hold of my life.” During his year off from school, Abernethy was folding shirts at Old Navy when Coach K reached out to him and suggested he come to Grace. Abernethy felt like it was his second chance.

“Never in a million years did I think this would be my life or career trajectory,” he says. “I know I don’t deserve the opportunities I have been given. My goal through any recognition I receive is to make much of Him.”

Blackford echoes Abernethy’s gratitude. “I’ve been blessed beyond anything; it’s nothing but God giving me opportunities and stepping into them by faith.”

*“Never in a million years did I think this would be my life or career trajectory. I know I don’t deserve the opportunities I have been given. My goal through any recognition I receive is to make much of Him.”* —Matt Abernethy

## *A lesson you learned from Coach K:*

**Abernethy:** “Anything worth doing is worth doing well.” And, “Be quick, but don’t hurry.” He also taught us “KISS,” which means “Keep it simple, stupid.” That’s helped me so much when there are a million variables to a decision. That principle keeps me moving forward.

**Blackford:** I witnessed Coach K work with so many players from so many different backgrounds and circumstances. He found a way to relate to everyone individually, to learn their unique circumstances and to draw a connection. I use that approach every day to build strong teams.

## *One piece of professional advice you give:*

**Abernethy:** I’ve never had a career plan. The way to move forward in your career is to go to work trying to be helpful to others and make a difference. If you do that, things will work out. If you focus only on your future and what’s next for you, you’ll miss the opportunity to help your business and impact others.

**Blackford:** From pastor and author Craig Groeschel: “People would rather follow a leader who is always real rather than a leader who is always right.”

## *One of your guiding life principles:*

**Abernethy:** For me, it comes down to loving God and loving others. The rest takes care of itself.

**Blackford:** At the end of the day, all you have is your credibility and your integrity. Don’t ever sacrifice that or you’ll give away everything. Be beyond reproach.





# YOU DID IT



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# ALUM

CONNECTING WITH OUR FAMILY OF FRIENDS

# NOTES

## CLASS NOTES

### 1970

**Dr. Glenn Firebaugh** (BA 70, S 72) received the Paul F. Lazarsfeld Award from the American Sociological Association "for a career of distinguished contributions to the field of sociological methodology." Over a career spanning 40 years, Glenn taught at the universities of Vanderbilt, Michigan and Penn State, was a visiting professor at Harvard and at Oxford and gave invited lectures or seminars at more than 50 universities. The Lazarsfeld Award is based on his books and journal articles, which have been cited more than 9,500 times by other researchers (Wikipedia). He retired from Penn State as the Roy C. Buck Professor of Sociology (emeritus) in 2017. He and his wife **Judy Rae (Thompson BA 70) Firebaugh** have three children and nine grandchildren. [firebaugh@psu.edu](mailto:firebaugh@psu.edu)

### 1973

**01 Noell (Roller BS 73) Hammer** is the founder and CEO of The Art Without Boundaries Association (AWBA). Established in September 2005, it is a nonprofit organization that recruits artists to learn a unique, painting-based therapy that initiates cognitive improvement for individuals with Alzheimer's, autistic children and others with brain dysfunction. AWBA is virtual and self-supported with 100% of the donations returned to the community of origin to

provide services. View the documentary about AWBA at: [artwithoutboundaries.org](http://artwithoutboundaries.org) [noellhammer@bellsouth.net](mailto:noellhammer@bellsouth.net)

### 1979

**02 Dr. Mike Taylor** (BS 79, MAIM 11) was honored by Kosciusko Community Hospital (KCH) with the Allied Health Provider award in February 2020. Megan Martin at KCH shared that they wanted to honor him with this award in recognition of Mike's high quality of care, customer service and the compassion he shows for his patients. Mike is pictured left.

### 1980

**Dr. Keith D. Pisani** (MDiv 80, DMin 00) has seven published books including four discipleship books ("Spiritual Lessons for New Believers," "Spiritual Lessons for Growing Believers," "Spiritual Lessons for Growing Believers: Workbook" and "Jesus Loves Me: A Follow-Up Guide for Children"); two books for young professionals ("Breaking Out of Life's Spiritual Prisons" and "Breaking Out of Life's Spiritual Prisons: Study Guide"); and a book on parenting ("How to Raise an Abel When the World is Raising Cain"). All seven are published by Westbow Press. Keith serves as senior pastor at North Kannapolis Baptist Church (NC), and he and wife Beth reside in Salisbury NC. [keithpisani78@gmail.com](mailto:keithpisani78@gmail.com)

### 1989

**Dr. Tim L. Anderson** (ThM 89) completed his Ph.D. in Theological Studies from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 2002. Since



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02



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1989, Tim has served as professor of theology at Corban University (Salem OR). Tim recently published "Into His Presence: A Theology of Intimacy with God" (Kregel, 2019).

## 1990

**Dr. Tammy (Hawkes BS 90) Bosley** just completed her Ph.D. at Kent State University (OH) in interpersonal and health communication. She is a professor at Lorain County Community College (Elyria OH) where she serves as chair for communication studies.

## 1991

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. has announced that highly experienced intellectual property attorney, **Dan Miller (BA 91)**, has joined the firm as partner with their New York office. Dan has nearly two decades of intellectual property litigation expertise and has represented Fortune 500 public companies as well as private companies and solo inventors in patent, trade secret and commercial technology disputes. He has handled both offensive and defensive litigation matters in the United States. Earlier in his career, Dan was in-house legal counsel at Google. Prior to that, Dan worked as a software development consultant and as a programmer and analyst for several companies. After earning his bachelor's degree in mathematics at Grace, Dan earned a master's degree in computer science from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and then his Juris Doctorate from University of Texas at Austin School of Law.

## 1998

**Vaughn Lewis (MDiv 98)** accepted a new ministry placement as chaplain for Hospice Care of Middletown (OH). After earning his bachelor's degree in marketing from Central State University in 1983, Vaughn worked at Duracell for 11 years. Vaughn's motto is, "Serving God by serving others." Vaughn and wife Lori live in Hamilton OH.

## 1999

**Lindsay Cool (BS 99)** earned her master's degree in sports injury management from Life University and has served in administration at TotalBC since June 2016. Lindsay and children Morgan (19), Rylee (15), Lance (14) and Logan (12) live in Inman SC. morylalo4@yahoo.com

## 2003

**Lee (BS 03, MDiv 07) and Stephanie (Moore BS 05, MACMHC 14) Compson:** Elijah "EJ" Harlow, Dec. 31, 2019. EJ joins brother Tate (2) at their home in Winona Lake IN. Stephanie serves at Bowen Center while Lee continues to serve as senior pastor at Milford First Brethren Church. Lee also accepted the role of chaplain for the Grace Lancers men's basketball team last year. lee.compson32@gmail.com

## 2008

**Casey Richey (BS 08)** was promoted to director of finance at Encompass World Partners (Atlanta GA) in April 2020. Casey began serving as controller at Encompass in

2008 immediately upon graduating from Grace with a degree in statistics. Casey and wife **Sara (Barzler BA 07)** reside in Duluth GA with children Kaylie (9) and William (7).

## 2010

**Dustin and Erin (Hensley BA 10) Smith:** Married on March 28, 2020. Erin has worked for ZOLL Medical since February 2014 and serves as sales manager over Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma. She also deploys automated external defibrillators into her community and is a practicing emergency medical technician. erinlea.hensley@gmail.com

## 2011

**David and Laura (Pasche BS 11) Rodatz:** Married on May 16, 2020. The newlyweds reside in Simpsonville SC. laura.pasche@gmail.com

## 2012

**Ben and Connie (Okupski BS 12) Marshall:** Sophia Hope, Jan. 30, 2020. Sophia joins sister Aliya Joy (4) at their home in Beaver Falls PA.

## 2015

**Josh (BS 15) and Julia (Marsh BA 15) Peterson:** Tera Marie, May 20, 2020. The couple welcomed their first child to their home in Rio Rancho NM. juliaerinpeterson@gmail.com.

# IN MEMORIAM

**Roy Melvin Dice Jr. (BA 56, BDiv 59)** went to be with Jesus on May 19, 2020. His first wife of 61 years, Faye Geraldine (Summers), died on May 30, 2009. He is survived by wife Marilyn Rebecca (Gluck) Myers Dice. After graduating from Grace, Roy earned a master's degree from Temple University in 1971. He was ordained as a minister by the National Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches in 1962 and began pastoring churches in Winona MN and Cedar Rapids IA. He was the first pastor of Telford, Lititz and Myerstown (all in PA) Grace Brethren churches. Roy taught elementary school at Pine Street and Lawn elementary schools in PA before he became head sixth-grade science teacher at Milton Hershey School for 24 years. Roy worked with Bob Neff Tours as a tour leader in the 1990s and was able to lead groups over the years to Russia, Germany, France and the Holy Land. He was a humble servant with an infectious smile and a sense of humor that would light up a room and bring so much joy to those around him. His love for Jesus Christ directed his time, his many talents and his unconditional love for all. He is survived by his loving daughter, Lynne L. (Thomas) Swider (Harrisburg); two grandsons: Lt. Colonel Robert T. (Kelli) Hines Jr. and Michael John Dice Hines (all of Houston TX); three granddaughters: Catherine "Cat", Sarah and Julia Hines; and two step-children: Melissa Burrous (Wellsboro) and William Judy (Millersburg).



04



05



06



07



**Reverend Marvin E. Lowery** (BA 57, S 59) entered the gates of heaven on Aug. 4, 2020. He is survived by daughters Tamyra (Richard) Dawson III and Tara Lowery; grandson Zachery Lowery; great-granddaughter Payton Chapman and his four grand-pups all of Melbourne FL. While at Grace, Marvin was a member of the Grace College choir. After graduation, he went to be a missionary at the Navajo Mission (Counselor NM), where he was nicknamed "The Man Who Laughs." He then moved to pastor a mission church in Dryhill KY where he also built a sister church in Shoal KY. He moved to Johnstown PA where he was the pastor of Singer Hill Grace Brethren Church for many years. He then went on to be the founding pastor of Ebensburg Evangelical Bible Church for 30 years, retiring on July 7, 2019. In his 62 years of faithful service spreading the gospel, he impacted many lives. His work with the youth and senior citizen groups will be remembered by many. He enjoyed reading his Bible, men's Bible study, writing words of encouragement to his friends, gardening, camping and spending time with family.

**DB Charlotte Irene Austin** (C 59, S 59) slipped into the presence of Jesus on Aug. 25, 2020. Charlotte graduated from Brethren High School (Paramount CA), along with **Gordon Austin** (BDiv 61), whom she married. They enjoyed 67 years together. After their marriage, they moved to Siloam Springs AR to attend John Brown University. Later they relocated to Winona Lake IN where Gordon attended Grace Theological Seminary. They returned to California to prepare for service in Argentina with the Foreign Missionary Society of the Brethren Church. After a year of Spanish language study in Costa Rica and five years of mission work in Argentina, they returned to Winona Lake, where Gordon spent the next 30 years working in the headquarters of the Foreign Missionary Society. Charlotte worked in the radio station at John Brown University and later in the kitchen of the Winona Hotel. She also worked at BMH Printing, and after it closed, she worked at Hardesty Printing in Warsaw until she retired. A member of the Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church, Charlotte served in the primary Sunday school department for a number of years, encouraging many people to serve as teachers and workers. Charlotte was a faithful wife, hard-working mother and caring individual who loved the Lord

and served Him faithfully. She will be dearly missed and is survived by husband Gordon (Winona Lake IN); two daughters: **Colleen Austin-Belles** (BA 78) (Selah WA) and **Marilyn (Austin BS 83) (Carl) Strohschein** (Reno NV); five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Terry Lee Auker** (BS 64) passed way after an extended illness on May 7, 2020. After Terry graduated from Grace College, he earned a master's degree from St. Francis College. He received his Principalship Certification from Purdue. Terry served as principal at Fall Creek, East Elementary and Pendleton Middle School and retired in 1999. He was a member of the National Association of Middle School and Elementary Principals, Indiana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Veterans Post 26, and the Masonic Lodge of Markleville. He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Fran (Monroe) Auker; children: Lee (Monica) Auker (Evansville), Kirsten Lowe (Pendleton) and Heidi Calamito (Oklahoma City OK); grandchildren: Nathan (Melissa) Nyboer, Brandon Auker, Kelsi Auker and Mason Auker; five great-grandchildren; siblings: Bill (Deloris) Auker, Darlene (Dave) Ramsey, Ruth McDonald, Linda (George) Geissler and Susan Lape; and several nieces and nephews.

**Reverend Richard Jensen** (BA 64, MDiv 66, MACSA 78) passed away on May 19, 2020. Richard was a Christian school principal and led many young souls to Christ. He loved singing at church and in his barber shop group. Richard served as missionary and was called as superintendent at the Brethren Navajo Mission (Counselor NM) in 1977; he later traveled on mission trips to serve the Navajo people. Richard served in numerous school administration roles in California and Florida. In 2001, he founded the Florida Christian Institute (Fort Myers) serving students with special needs such as autism, ADD, ADHD, Tourette syndrome and other needs. Richard was a devoted husband, taking care of his wife, **Pamela (Maurer BA 67)**, who was bedridden due to multiple sclerosis for over 20 years. After her passing, Richard married Eleonore, who survives. He will also be dearly remembered by daughters Kelli Jensen and Karen (Jensen) (Nicolas) Ortiz and four grandchildren.

**Roderick "Rick" Smith** (MDiv 74, DMin 95) went to be with the Lord on May 18, 2019. Rick received his bachelor's degree in philosophy-religion from Spring Arbor College

(now University) (Spring Arbor MI) in 1970. While a student there, Rick met and married Judy White, his wife of nearly 50 years. Rick began his career as a pastor at Skiff Lake Bible Church (Clarklake MI) and served there from 1973 through 1979. He then served as pastor at Christian Fellowship Bible Church (Huntsville AL) from 1980 through 1984. He concluded his pastoral career at Calvary Baptist Church (Leesburg IN) serving from 1984 until retirement in 2010. During his years as a pastor, he and Judy served in short-term ministry in several countries, which was furthered when they joined Biblical Ministries Worldwide (Lawrenceville GA) in 2012 and continued until the time of his death. Rick is survived by wife Judy; children: Jill (Chad) Smith Knutson and Matthew (Lupita) Smith; five grandchildren; and many other family members.

**Richard Lindsey Roberts** (S 76) passed away on June 10, 2020. Richard was a 1967 graduate of Reidsville Sr. High School (NC) and a 1971 graduate of Columbia International University (Columbia SC) with a bachelor's degree in biblical education. He served as pastor at Hoover United Methodist (Hoover IN) while attending seminary. He worked 43 years for Zimmer Inc. (Warsaw IN) as an NDT inspector of orthopaedic medical devices. After retiring, he returned to reside in his hometown, Reidsville NC. He loved playing baseball on the church team, singing George Beverly Shea songs, reading and dressing up as Santa Claus for his grandchildren, whom he loved. He is survived by his daughters: Cynthia (Bruce) Higham (Warsaw IN) and Eunice (Stephen) Nickolson (Wake Forest NC); son Stephen Roberts (Indianapolis IN); grandchildren: Emily, Johanna and Kate Nickolson and Noah and Nathan Higham; two great-grandchildren; and his sister.

**Howard L. Bechtel** (BME 80) passed away on July 27, 2020. Howard was a member of the Canton Baptist Temple (OH). He was formerly employed by North Hampton Baptist Church (OH) and the Infocision Management Corporation (Akron OH). Howard was a member of the Greater Canton Men's Chorus, Town Sound Barber Shop Chorus and the Music Makers Community Band. He is preceded in death by two brothers, **Robert** (BME 72), **Fred** (BME 79) **Bechtel** and brother-in-law Joseph Toth. Howard is survived by three children: Josiah, Daniel and Shiloh Bechtel; two sisters: **Sally (Bechtel BME 74) (William)**

**Hoy and Peggy (Bechtel BA 80) Toth;** brother **Donald** (BME 71) (**Donna (Botteicher BME 74) Bechtel;** and two sisters-in-law **Judy (Jarnagin BS 70) and Candy (Kain BME 79) Bechtel.**

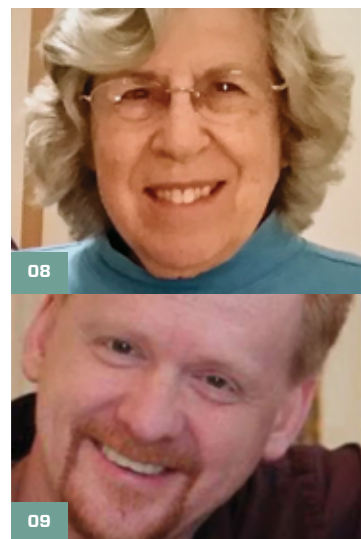
**Ken Kitchen** (MACSA 85) met his Savior on May 27, 2020. On Aug. 11, 1996, he married Laura (Smith) Kitchen. Surviving are his wife Laura (South Bend IN); children: Anthony (Lauren) Kitchen, Rachael (Kitchen) Coates, Kathryn (Matthew) Miller, Bryce Kitchen, Caroline Kitchen, Kari Wagner, Travis Wagner (all of South Bend IN), and Amy (Bryan) Schuler (Plymouth IN); Evelyn Thompson (mother of Anthony Kitchen and Rachael (Kitchen) Coates); 12 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and his siblings. Ken had a natural love for learning; he earned his bachelor's degree from Bethel University (IN) in education and his master's degree from Grace College. Ken spent most of his career in education as a principal, teacher and/or coach. Before his career, he spent his days helping on the farm where his love for the outdoors began. One of 10 siblings, Ken's heart for his family and his children was always bountiful as he instilled a firm foundation of love, faith and strong work ethic. Ken attended Sugar Grove Church (IN) regularly with his family and filled his home with his favorite music. His hobbies included fishing, camping, strawberry malts and watching the Yankees and the Bears with his family.

**Reverend Wayne LeRoy Peterson Sr.** (MACSA 89) entered into eternal rest on Jan. 5, 2020. He served as a drill instructor in the Army and then married Gwendolyn Faith Anderson in 1956 in El Paso TX. He was educated at Olivet Nazarene College (Kankakee IL), Millikin University (Decatur IL) and received his master's degree in Christian school administration from Grace Theological Seminary. Wayne accepted the call to follow Jesus in church ministry in 1970. Licensed and ordained with the Assemblies of God in Illinois, Minnesota and Texas, Wayne served for over 40 years as a pastor. Wayne served as high school teacher, administrator and principal of Sweetwater Christian School (Houston TX) and after retiring from the North Texas Water District, he co-operated a daycare in Farmersville TX. Wayne's hobbies included a joy for fishing, reading, woodworking and being handy around the house. Wayne continued to be an example and share the good news of Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection until his final breath. Wayne is survived by daughters:



Deborah (Gerald) Huber (Fairfield CA), Sandra (Peter) Mozdzanowski (Westlake FL), Sheryl (Thomas) Herold (Houston TX) and Rebecca (Gary) Sidoti (Haslet TX); son Wayne (Jean) Peterson Jr. (Forest Lake MN); 10 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

**09 Paul Edwin Heimbach** (MAIR 97) passed away after a lengthy illness on his 53rd birthday, July 7, 2020. On Aug. 21, 1993, he married **Barbara Elaine (Stork S 94) Heimbach**, who survives. After high school, Paul attended Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, graduating in 1990. He had been a resident of Kosciusko County for the past 29 years where from 1991 to 1997 he attended Grace Theological Seminary and earned his Master of Arts in Interpersonal Relations. In August 1996, he took a position as a web developer for KC-Online. He worked for The Whitman Group (Warsaw IN) until June 2013 and then became the electronic medical records administrator at the Bowen Center (Warsaw IN) until 2017. In May 2019, he was employed with OMCO Midwest Roll Forming (Pierceton IN). Paul had been working as a press operator at Parker-Hannifin Corporation (Syracuse IN) before his passing. He was the curator for the Warsaw Biblical Gardens for many years, a member of MENSA International since 2004 and was actively involved in politics. Paul loved reading science fiction, collecting music and antiques and was an environmentalist. He will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 26 years, Barbara (Warsaw IN); daughter Victoria Heimbach (Warsaw IN); mother Janet Marie Heimbach (Sinking Spring PA); and sister Christine (John) Stapf (Marietta PA). He was preceded in death by his father, Stanley, on April 1, 2018.



# IN MEMORIAM

## Dr. Homer A. Kent Jr., Steward of Grace

On Sept. 30, 2020, **Dr. Homer A. Kent Jr.** (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56) met his Lord face to face. He was 94. Kent spent more than half of his life serving Grace College & Seminary. A brilliant scholar, prolific writer, esteemed professor, respected dean and Grace's third president, Kent's 50 years of service were infused with unforgettable grace and humility.

At the age of 14, Kent moved from Washington, D.C. to Winona Lake, Indiana, where his father, **Dr. Homer A. Kent Sr.** (ThD 48), was joining the faculty of the newly formed Grace Theological Seminary. It was in those same teen years that Kent Jr. determined to read through the Bible every year of his life. He kept that commitment all of his days, and his life and work were transformed by it.

After graduating from Bob Jones University in 1947, Kent returned to Grace Theological Seminary to earn his Master of Divinity. While working on it, Kent began teaching at the college and found his call to ministry fulfilled through teaching. "I discovered that not all the best Christian leaders were pastors or missionaries," said Kent. "In fact, there was one man named Martin Luther who was a college professor, and that was pretty respectable I thought, since he made quite a mark on the world."



Kent would go on to serve 14 years as the dean of the seminary before being appointed as president in 1975. Over the course of those years, Kent also earned his Master of Theology and Doctor of Theology degrees from Grace. During his tenure at Grace, Kent wrote extensively and was a respected New Testament theologian and scholar. From 1967 to 1973, Kent served as a translator for the New International Version, and he has authored 15 books, many of them in-depth, exhaustive commentaries on New Testament books. Over the course of many years, Kent translated the New Testament from Greek into his own translation. It was part of his discipline to translate one or two verses a day.

In 1976, the Grace Board of Trustees approached Kent about accepting the role of president. They cited his qualities of "spirituality, high moral convictions, doctrinal soundness, academic excellence, good judgment and a sweet reasonableness necessary for a leader." Kent eventually accepted their invitation and served as Grace's president for the next 10 years.

The combination of Kent's scholarship, fastidiousness and graciousness made him a remarkable steward of Grace College & Seminary. He wanted the school to continue to grow, to maintain its sound financial footing and to provide the kind of education for young people that would equip them to answer God's call wherever it would lead. Under his leadership, Kent achieved that

and more: new graduate programs in missions began; the nursing program was launched; the Biblical Counseling Department was established; seminary reached record enrollment; six tennis courts were installed; and accreditation was achieved for the college and seminary.

Kent announced his resignation in 1986 but continued to teach at Grace until he retired in 1999 as president emeritus and professor emeritus of New Testament and Greek. That same year, Grace named its newly built residence hall, Kent Hall, in his honor. Down to his final days, Kent would recount the honor it was for him to teach thousands of students to cherish and exegete the Word of God.

"When I think of Dr. Kent, I think of so much more than his presidential tenure," said President **Dr. Bill Katip** (BA 74). "I think of his unwavering commitment to the Word of God and his undying love for his Lord and Savior. I'm certain that he has now heard the long-awaited words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

Kent will be lovingly remembered by his two daughters: **Rebecca (Kent BA 77) (Gary BS 77) Woolman** (Fort Wayne IN) and **Katherine (Kent BA 81, MABC 86) (Mark MABC 86) McCarthy** (Columbus OH); and son: **Daniel (BS 86) (Lisa) Kent** (Big Canoe GA). Also surviving are six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren; brother: **Reverend Wendell** (MDiv 57) (Pat) **Kent** (Buena Vista CO); nephew **Tim** (BA 80) (Laurie) **Kent** and niece **Brenda (Kent BS 83) (Brent BS 83) Byers**; and sister-in-law: **Virginia Rose (Norman MDiv 56) Rohrer** (Franklin TN). He was preceded in death by parents **Dr. Homer A.** (senior) (ThD 48) and Alice **Kent** and his beloved wife Beverly Jane Kent.

# IN MEMORIAM



## Remembering Grace Student Bethany Nesbitt

On June 1, 2000, **Bethany Nesbitt** was born to Steve and Brenda Nesbitt in Lapeer, Michigan. She was the youngest of nine children. Bethany passed away on Oct. 30, 2020, on the Grace College & Seminary campus from a pulmonary embolism, which is well known to be one of the common effects of COVID-19 from which she was suffering. She was 20 years old when she went to meet her Savior.

Bethany was an excellent student and graduated from Grand Ledge High School (Michigan) in 2018. She planned to graduate from Grace this spring with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and pursue a career as a child life specialist. Her ambition was to work with ill and disabled children in a hospital setting. "Bethany was an extremely bright and quick-witted young woman who demonstrated a laser focus in her career aspirations to serve hurting children," said **Dr. Kevin Roberts** (BS 93, MAIR 96), Bethany's academic adviser and dean of the School of Behavioral Sciences.

While at Grace, Bethany was employed at the Student Services Hub, assisting with many special projects as well as covering the front office from time to time. She often talked about her family, her dog and music. She loved Disney and showtunes. "The Greatest Showman" was one of her favorite movies.

Bethany was the leader of OldsCOOL Cafe, a ministry to local nursing homes to connect with and provide entertainment for their residents. She coordinated a group of students to minister in this way two or three times a year for the past two years.

Additionally, Bethany served with SMM, Sisters Mentoring with a Mission, a local after-school program for girls focusing on Bible lessons and mentoring. At SMM, she led a group of first- and second-grade girls and was known for her bright spirit.

Bethany loved Jesus. She was a selfless and loving friend — a source of constant encouragement to all those around her. "Bethany encouraged me so much during this year," said Grace student Layni (Miller) Frick, Bethany's best friend. "She helped me realize that it's OK to be struggling mentally or emotionally. Anyone who knew Bethany knew she was always willing to listen. She was so compassionate. It was difficult for someone not to want to confide in her."

Bethany had a passion for helping others, especially children, and her lively sense of humor and wonderful laugh put them at ease. "You gave me the space to open up," said Katie Lade, a Grace student and close friend of Bethany. "We were able to talk about anything and everything. One particular night, I was nervous about opening up, but you put my mind at ease with your humor, your grace and your encouraging words. You were always there to listen, sit with me through everything and offer sound advice. You didn't expect anything in return; that's just who you were."

Bethany will be deeply missed by her family and friends, her favorite cat, Baby, and the family dog, Amy. Bethany is survived by her parents as well as her doting siblings and their spouses: Stephanie (David) Laczak, Daniel (Laurelin), David (Jennifer), Peter, Stephen (Colby), **Rachel** (BA 14), Elizabeth and **Carol** (C 17). She was a devoted aunt to Rose, Avery, and baby Luke (born Nov. 5).

Bethany's family has chosen to begin a scholarship in her memory to help students with similar dreams and financial needs.

If you would like to contribute to this effort, you can do so by going to [www.GoFundMe.com](http://www.GoFundMe.com) and searching for the "Bethany Nesbitt Memorial Scholarship."



Dear friends,

We've made plans and remade plans many times over the last nine months. Thank you for supporting us as we've been figuring out how to best connect with and serve the Grace community. Your empathetic, compassionate phone calls and emails have meant so much to us.

As I write this, we just finished hosting our first virtual Homecoming week, "Homestaying 2020." From Sept. 28 through Oct. 3, we featured interactive interviews and videos via Zoom, YouTube and Facebook.

We heard from alumni, faculty and staff on what's happening on campus and in our community, including Dr. Bill Katip (BA 74), president; Dr. Laurie Owen, vice president of academic affairs; John Sloat (BS 09, MDiv 12), director of the School of Ministry blended program; Dr. Paulette (Macon BA 64, CERT 77) Saunders, professor emeritus; and Scott Moore (BS 08), men's basketball coach, with Marcus Moore (BS 08), women's tennis coach, and former coach Jim Kessler (BS 70). Viewers were able to tour Grace's campus right from home and reconnect with classmates during virtual class reunions. We even held a virtual 5K run.

We had 6,600 views of our videos throughout the week, with alumni tuning in from 26 states and 4 countries.

If you still want to catch some of the fun, you can find all of the videos on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity](https://facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity)) or our YouTube Channel ([youtube.com/gracecollege/videos](https://youtube.com/gracecollege/videos)).

Thank you for connecting with us, even at a distance.

If we can offer you support or connection in any way during this difficult season, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'd love to talk with you.

Grace and peace,



*Denny*

**Dennis Duncan (BS 80)**  
Director of Alumni & Community Engagement

## WHAT'S NEW?

**Submit an Alum Note.** Tell us the latest news in your life at [www.grace.edu/alumnotes](http://www.grace.edu/alumnotes) and choose to publish it as an Alum Note in an upcoming issue of *Grace Story*.

## FACEBOOK

Join us on Facebook to stay connected with former classmates and friends, share your news, find out what's happening at Grace and get the latest on upcoming alumni events. [www.facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/GraceAlumniCommunity)

## TELL US YOUR STORY

If you're a Grace graduate, completed a certification or attended classes, we want to hear from you. Tell us about your career history, accomplishments, how Grace influenced you, what you are doing with your college or seminary education today and/or how God is using you for His purposes. If you have a former classmate or alum you know who has a story you think *Grace Story* should feature, go ahead and share his/her story! Visit [www.grace.edu/gracestory](http://www.grace.edu/gracestory).



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Hear the voices of Grace alumni, faculty, staff, students and special guests who are coaching, exhorting and equipping the Grace community.

## Episodes:

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- E36:** Rich Haddad (BS 87, MSNM 16), CEO of K21 Health Foundation
- E37:** Cokiesha Bailey Robinson, associate dean of diversity and inclusion at Grace
- E38:** Timothy Clothier (BS 06, MAM 08), senior pastor at Grace Church  
(Waynesboro, Pennsylvania)
- E39:** Ben Navarro, Spanish instructor and admissions liaison for Latino recruitment at Grace
- E40:** Dr. Kelly (Manahan BA 90) Geisler, gynecologic oncologist and CEO of MG Wellness (Columbus, Georgia)
- E41:** Dr. Don DeYoung (MDiv 83), professor emeritus of physics at Grace
- E42:** Dr. Wally Brath, assistant professor of worship arts at Grace

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