

TOWER

OKWU®

OKLAHOMA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Beyond

Preparing & Sending
Servant Leaders

2023 ALUMNI & FRIENDS MAGAZINE



BUILDING THE NEXT OKWU

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Beyond OKWU: Sending Servant Leaders

I give thanks every day for the foundations poured to start OKWU in 1905. It is exciting to build the next chapter in the life of Oklahoma Wesleyan University. As I reflect on the history of our school and the fact that Wendy and I are giving ourselves to this cause in our fifth year as President and First Lady, the verse that comes to mind is 1 Timothy 6:19 which says: *In this way they will lay up treasures for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.* Many have created a firm foundation over the past 118 years that we still enjoy today. We thank the Lord for their sacrificial servanthood.

Our dependence on the Lord's help and the leadership of the Holy Spirit saturates everything we are about as a university. From our weekly prayer calls, to our Chapel services, to our devotions in classes, at athletic practices, and in our dorm lobbies, we fully acknowledge our complete dependence on following the will of the Lord. **Join me in praying that God will continue to do His supernatural work in and through OKWU.**

The focus of OKWU is simple—**prepare and send students into the world to advance the Kingdom of God.** OKWU is ultimately about developing and sending servant leaders to have a direct influence on culture by living out the good news of Jesus.

That makes our mission different from thousands of colleges. We believe if we all have our eyes on Christ, remaining biblically-centered, and obeying the Holy Spirit – together we can fix this world for the Kingdom of Jesus.

We continue to innovate and develop new programs. I am proud of our academic, athletic, and fine arts programs as we head into the future. OKWU is an outstanding university that does things the right way. We seek excellence for Christ in all we do. Our methods may change, but the biblical messages of salvation, sanctification, and living a life of obedience for Christ's Kingdom will never change.

Many have given their time, talents, and treasures to build the university we enjoy today. Will you join us as we build the next OKWU? Will you pray that Oklahoma Wesleyan University can thrive into the future grounded on the Primacy of Jesus Christ, the Priority of Scripture, the Pursuit of Truth, and the Practice of Wisdom?

Thank you for partnering with us through generous, recurring donations. Our daily operational needs are overwhelming at times. What we are striving to raise over the next decade through our *NOW Campaign* is way beyond what we can possibly do on our own, but already we see God helping us with every step.

People are catching the vision of the next OKWU in tremendous ways. Donations and commitments of over \$6 Million have been raised in the first six months of our campaign. Our goal is to raise \$68 Million by December 31, 2030. It will take an average of \$7 Million per year to reach this goal. We need you. Every gift counts.

Ask the Lord, our firm foundation, what you can do to partner with us as we *Build the Next OKWU*. Our world needs Christ-like servant leaders *for the coming age* who are sent from OKWU to change this world for Him! 🌍



Dr. Jim Dunn, President
Oklahoma Wesleyan University





VISION

Immediate Focus

For 2023 and 2024, the following goals will make an immediate impact on current OKWU students:

- **\$250,000** by December 2023 for added parking, safety lighting, and security cameras
- **\$500,000** by December 2023 to renovate and modernize one of the older dorms on campus
- **\$1 million** by July 2024 to increase multi-use housing capacity for students
- **\$3 million** by December 2024 to install the first outdoor track in school history and improve the outdoor athletic space

NOW CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Year One

Between now and 2030, the **NOW Campaign** will raise **\$68 million** to invest in the future of OKWU. During the first year of the campaign, over **\$6 million** has been pledged.

Campaign Overview

The three major priorities are the endowment for student scholarships (\$30 million), the expansion of the athletic/fitness space on campus (\$20 million), and the campus renaissance (\$18 million). Also included is a plan to increase the annual fund from \$600,000 to \$1 million.

Ways to Make a Difference



If you are ready to make an investment in the future of Oklahoma Wesleyan University and help us secure the future of OKWU for the next 100 years, you can partner with us in several ways:

- Make a one-time gift, either online, over the phone, or by using the envelope in this issue of the *Tower*
- Set up a recurring gift through our secure, easy-to-use website
- Make a campaign pledge to let us know you are joining the team
- Make OKWU part of your estate planning by talking to your lawyer or speaking with our development team

SEE THE NOW
CAMPAIGN VISION AT
OKWU.EDU/NOW

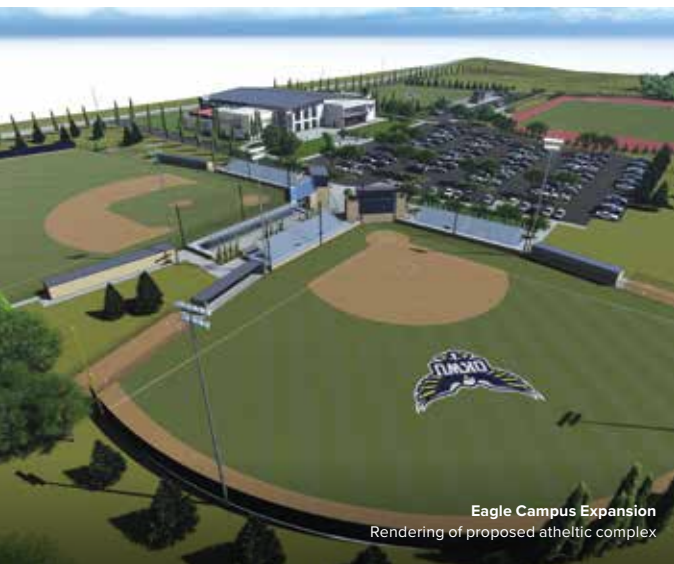


SCAN ME





July 2023
Campus parking and safety upgrades



Eagle Campus Expansion
Rendering of proposed athletic complex

OKWU's dedication to equip and empower the next generation is clear and unshakeable. 🏛️



Rendering of Fieldhouse
This multipurpose facility will revolutionize the way OKWU trains, competes, and educates future students



**OKLAHOMA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY**

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**ADVANCING
THE KINGDOM**

"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." - Matthew 6:33 NLT

Oklahoma Wesleyan University's mission is to develop and send servant leaders to advance the Kingdom of God by engaging a biblically-centered way of thought, life, and faith. Through deliberate study, honest questions, and critical engagement, we foster a vibrant liberal arts community that upholds the Primacy of Jesus Christ, the Priority of Scripture, the Pursuit of Truth, and the Practice of Wisdom.

2023

Subscribe and update contact information at
www.okwu.edu/tower

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FIRES OF COMMUNITY

Nurturing Faith & Asking Questions

Dr. Jonathan Ensor ('05) connects with students after May commencement.

FACULTY STORY

A Heart for Questions

Dr. Jonathan Ensor ('05) returned to OKWU in 2019 after more than a decade of teaching at the high school level. Since his return, he has become a foundational part of the OKWU experience for nearly every student, teaching courses from Old and New Testament Literature to Biblical Hebrew. In 2023, he received Faculty of the Year honors from the OKWU student government and served as the commencement speaker.

Ensor's OKWU story goes back to the early 2000s, when he was a student at another college but was looking for a change. As he drove around his hometown of Tulsa, he heard a radio ad for OKWU. Before long, he showed up on campus and started asking questions. He qualified for an academic scholarship and also earned a spot on the men's soccer team, and Ensor transferred the next year.

Ensor, who had grown up in the Christian faith, had recommitted his life to Christ as a young adult. While he loved the Bible classes he was enrolled in, he declared a business major at first. Eventually, through prayer and reflection, he decided to invest his time in the study of the Scriptures and switched his major to Biblical Studies.



Dr. Jon Ensor in the classroom

"What I found when I was here was that it was permissible to ask questions," Ensor said. "I found a place where I could really ask questions and be in a supportive environment where scholars and adults would gather around and be able to listen, engage, and equip me with the resources needed to go looking for answers."

Called to Teach

After graduating in 2005, Ensor's ministry path began. He was working as a youth minister in a local church when the private Christian high school he had attended approached him, asking him to help evaluate and refine their Bible curriculum. Ensor agreed and soon found himself in the classroom, teaching students with some of those same questions he had asked in recent years.

"The classroom became the place of rich ministry, and I continued to find my heart drawn to that," he said.

Ensor grew to love the classroom environment and the plentiful opportunities he had to invest in the lives of his students. For 15 years, he served as a Bible teacher and campus minister, planning chapels in addition to his classroom responsibilities. Along the way, he made the choice to further his own education, earning a master's from Asbury and his doctorate from the London School of Theology.

"It's in the fires of community, campus life, academics, and chapel where I found a faith that was able to go the distance."

From Student to Scholar

In 2018, a friend from OKWU called him and told him about a position opening up the School of Ministry and Christian Thought. Ensor applied, though he didn't really expect that his alma mater would be interested in him. But he received the job offer and joined the faculty officially in the fall of 2019.

Over his four years at the college level, Ensor has found the same joy in the classroom that he had when he was teaching high schoolers.

"People who come to university generally come with a posture of openness and a readiness to explore things that they don't know," Ensor said.

As Ensor looks to the future, he sees great days ahead for OKWU.

"This is a community that is committed, not just to getting students to walk across the stage but committed to equipping them with the skills they need to live out their faith and earn a meaningful income while living out their calling," he said. "In some ways, that's autobiographical for me. It's in the fires of community, campus life, academics, and chapel where I found a faith that was able to go the distance." 🙏

LEGACY



Robert and Joyce Campbell outside their home in Frisco, Texas with granddaughter, Cori Campbell ('23).

Legacy of Generosity

THE CAMPBELL STORY

Bob ('62) and Joyce Campbell's relationship with Oklahoma Wesleyan University goes back over 60 years.

They can trace their roots to the Miltonvale Wesleyan College (MWC) days, where Bob attended for three years, starting during his junior year of high school and continuing through his first year of undergrad. Joyce came to MWC as a senior in high school. For Bob, MWC was always the place – his sisters had attended before him, and he had looked forward to it since he was young. Joyce chose it after years of attending public schools, eager for the Christian atmosphere. They were engaged following their freshman year, and they've been a team ever since.

Though their time at the university was relatively short, it was foundational for the rest of their lives. They maintained close ties to their alma mater in the decades since. For Bob, his time at the college sparked in him a love of science that would define his career.

"Science and faith have been so important in my life. The science came because of what happened at the university," he said. "The faith was there first, beginning with godly parents, and it was reinforced by a wonderful home church. What happened in college was like how steel reinforces concrete. It provided a foundation for the rest of my life."

"The spiritual atmosphere was always present," Joyce said. "Every class began with prayer. Always."

Bob earned his degrees from Kansas State and Purdue, but his interest was kindled on the campus at Miltonvale.

"My first science class at the university was chemistry," he said. "Professor Ted Suffridge made the subject come alive to me. It totally changed my life." Campbell earned his PhD in organic chemistry, and he worked in the research and development of materials like plastics, fibers, and adhesives.

While he earned his doctorate, Joyce became the family's breadwinner, taking secretarial and bookkeeping work to provide for their young family. Following Bob's graduation, his first job took them to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, in 1966.

They arrived before the opening of the Bartlesville campus, but their close proximity gave them a chance to be involved. Their three children were on campus often since it was within walking distance of their home. In the 1980s, Bob was recruited by the science faculty to teach an adjunct course. He taught organic chemistry at the college until a new job took the family to Ohio in 1988.

Shortly after they settled into a new home in Ohio, Bob received a phone call asking if he would consider joining OKWU's board of trustees. He agreed and has been a supporter of the university ever since.

Lifetime of Giving

The Campbells have been pillars of generosity for years. "Our first gift to the university was when we were graduate students," Bob remembers. "Throughout time, we've had an awareness that a school like OKWU relies on gifts for viability."

When presented with the vision for the *NOW Campaign*, the Campbells agreed to partner with the university once again, providing a generous lead gift to the campaign that included the establishment of the Dr. Ted Suffridge Professorship, part of OKWU's endowment plan for the future.

"The *NOW Campaign* is about making sure that OKWU will be ministering to as many students as possible for life-changing opportunities," Bob said. "It's our hope that those students will encounter the

same Biblically-based worldview that we did as students."

There is a personal element for the Campbells as well. Over a decade ago, they established a scholarship fund to incentivize their own grandchildren to spend time as OKWU students. Their granddaughter, Cori Campbell, graduated from OKWU in May 2023, a living embodiment of what the Campbells believe OKWU can do.

"Giving to the university changes lives," Joyce said. "We want to impact people and change their lives so they will go out and be a witness to the world."

And naming the professorship after Dr. Suffridge is a way of completing the full circle that began when Bob was a teenager sitting in Suffridge's classroom.

"We named it after him because of the impact he had on my life. It's a way of honoring him." 🙏



TED SUFFRIDGE
B.S., M.A., Chemistry,
Physics, Math.

1958 MWC yearbook photos:
Joyce (Engel) Campbell and
Robert Campbell



Bob and Joyce Campbell established the Dr. Ted Suffridge Professorship with a \$500,000 lead gift — with the hopes of inspiring others to invest in OKWU's future.



WATCH VIDEO
AT OKWU.EDU





The Homecoming 2022 crowd gathered to witness student baptisms on Oct. 7. The moment Peyton Luna emerged from the water to the embrace of fellow student, Abby Hutchinson, and University Pastor, Rev. Torrey Martin ('21).

A photograph of a baptism ceremony. A woman with long dark hair is being baptized in a large wooden tub. She is smiling and looking up at a woman with long brown hair and glasses who is leaning over the tub, pouring water over her head. The background is a blurred crowd of people outdoors.

GOOD NEWS

Jesus still changes lives! This year, we witnessed the miracle of life change as 25 students took the next step in their faith journey through baptism. We continue to celebrate the declaration these students made, proclaiming to the entire world that they belong to Jesus—Hallelujah! *To God be the Glory!*

ALUMNI AWARDS

2023 Outstanding Alumni Awards

In recognition for their courage, achievement, and commitment to OKWU's vision and mission, we proudly present this year's Alumni Awards.



**MAX
COLAW**

Alumnus of the Year

Alumnus of the Year: This award recognizes an alumnus who advances the Kingdom of God through noteworthy, long-term accomplishment in professional endeavors, significant service to the church, and a positive impact in the lives of others.

Max Colaw's first pastoral appointment came when he was 19 and a student at Central Pilgrim College. He had been asked by the district superintendent, his father C.B. Colaw, to pastor a church in Newkirk, Oklahoma, that had been closed. On his first Sunday in 1964, only one family attended.

Colaw was obedient to the ministry, and eventually the average attendance at that church reached the 30s every Sunday. Later, while he was finishing his degree in Oklahoma City, Colaw was appointed to another church that was without a pastor in Enid. For two and a half years, he made the 180-mile round trip each week to pastor that church.

In 1970, Colaw accepted the full-time pastor position at the Wesleyan Church in Enid. He and his wife, Ruth Ann, moved to Enid, where they lived

for the next 21 years. During that time, Colaw and his family dug deep roots in the community and witnessed the growth of the church.

Then, in 1990, Colaw was nominated for the position of district superintendent that was opening up. Over the course of a few days, Colaw felt the Lord speaking to him through his devotional time. He accepted the nomination, which sent him and his family to Bartlesville. He would serve as the superintendent of the Tri-State District for the next 29 years before his retirement in 2019.

Colaw's ties to OKWU have remained strong over the years. He is a former alumni president and has served on the Board of Trustees since 1988. He met his wife at the college, and their four children and their spouses all graduated from OKWU. Ruth Ann completed her degree at OKWU after they moved back to Bartlesville.

"We have a great respect for the university," he said. "I believe that not only do you get a good education here, but the relationships you build with other students that become lifelong relationships are very valuable."

Being named the Alumnus of the Year was a surprise to Colaw, who has never sought recognition throughout his career.

"It's interesting that, as the doors opened along the way, I never pursued any of them. I never put out a resume." Still, the opportunities kept coming.

"I wanted to be obedient to the Lord."



JOSHUA KLUMB

Young Alumnus Award

Young Alumnus Award: This award is given to an individual under 40 who displays distinguished leadership and in his or her field and shows promise of future growth professionally and personally.

Joshua Klumb ('07) has learned how to stay busy. He serves his South Dakota community in many ways, working as a farmer, a church staff member, and as a state senator. His passion for local politics, which was rooted in his high school experiences, was nurtured during his time at OKWU.

Klumb arrived to campus in the fall of 2003 to pursue a business administration degree. He helped to found a chapter of the College Republicans and served in multiple positions of the student government. He was class president during his freshman and sophomore years, and served as the student body president as a junior and senior.

After graduating in 2007, Klumb was a summer intern for Senator John Thune in Washington, D.C. He made connections in the South Dakota State Legislature and worked there after his internship ended. Eventually, he was invited to serve as a Legislative committee secretary, a part-time job where he ran the committee, called the votes, and kept minutes.

By 2014, Klumb had 6 years of experience in the Legislature. When a position in the State House of Representatives became available, Klumb

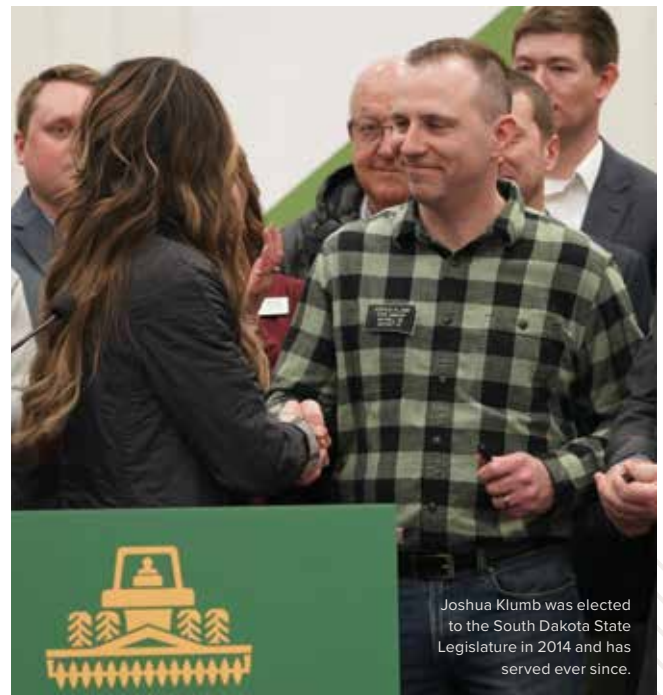
decided to run. He won the seat. In 2016, he ran and won a seat in the State Senate. He has served in that position ever since, though he is nearing his term limit.

In addition to his political work, Klumb and his father and brother work the farm that Klumb grew up on. Klumb is also the Director of Technology for RiverTree Church in Mitchell. He was hired in 2022 after volunteering in the sound booth for years. Klumb and his wife are expecting their first child, and he is not entirely sure what he will do after his term expires.

"I don't know what my future plans are," he said. "My time in the legislature is definitely coming to its sunset years. For right now, I feel like God is calling me to focus on preparing for fatherhood."

Despite a lengthy resume, Klumb maintains humility when discussing being named OKWU's Young Alumnus of the Year.

"I am not a special person. It doesn't take anyone with great, deep pockets or special talents to do what I've done."



Joshua Klumb was elected to the South Dakota State Legislature in 2014 and has served ever since.

NOMINATE AN ALUMNUS AT [OKWU.EDU/ALUMNI/AWARDS](https://okwu.edu/alumni/awards)

ALUMNI AWARDS



KEN & MARILYN BLAKE

Hall of Faith

Hall of Faith Award: This honor is awarded to an alumnus who is currently or has been in full-time, long-term Christian ministry and has demonstrated faithful, consistent service throughout that time.

Ken and Marilyn Blake have more than 50 years in ministry, including over 30 years serving as missionaries overseas.

Ken came to Central Pilgrim College from Fresno, California. At 14 years old, while attending a Billy Graham Crusade, he felt the call of God on his life. A Wesleyan evangelist would later speak at Ken's home church and recommended to him that he attend a denominational school. He chose Central Pilgrim College (later renamed Bartlesville Wesleyan), where he studied religion.

Marilyn grew up on a farm in Kansas, knowing since she was young that she wanted to be a missionary. She came to CPC to study nursing, believing that would be valuable for the mission field. She attended her final year of high school at Central Pilgrim and then took her pre-nursing courses before finishing the degree in Texas.

In June of 1969, Ken and Marilyn were married while Ken still had one final year of school. During that time, Marilyn served as the school nurse. The next year, they moved to Oregon, where they lived for the next 16 years. Ken earned his seminary degrees and pastored several churches, and all three of their children were born there.

The couple answered the call to the mission field in 1988. They moved to Munich, Germany, and became the first Wesleyan missionaries in continental Europe. During those early years, they planted a church. In 1993, they moved to Russia to help missionary teams that were training schoolteachers. They founded a Bible school and planted multiple churches. After 12 years, they left Russia and returned briefly to the States before returning to Germany. They still live there today.

They retired from Global Partners in 2014, but a small international church called Munich Christian Fellowship asked them to consider staying on as pastors. The couple had been involved with the church previously, and they accepted the position, where they continue to serve today.

"We joke that when we were young, God called us to take the Gospel to the nations. Now that we're old, God brings the nations to us," they say with a smile.

Their faithfulness has taken them all over the globe – from Bartlesville to Oregon to Germany and Russia, and the impact of their faithfulness will echo on.





**KRISTIN
HECK**

One Another Award

One Another Award: This honor recognizes an alumnus who has actively served others in some capacity for at least five years, advancing Christ's Kingdom through compassion and exemplary commitment of time, talent, and treasure.

“At BWC, the spiritual message is a foundation, and it certainly has been the foundation of my whole life.”

Kristin Heck's distinguished life of service has included stints in two branches of the military and a successful civilian law career.

Heck grew up in Salina, Kansas, raised by her parents to give back to the community. She knew from a young age that she wanted to attend Bartlesville Wesleyan College. Three of her siblings had attended Miltonvale, and after its merger with BWC, Heck never considered another school.

Heck had dreams of attending law school after college, and at the suggestion of a professor, she studied business administration. She graduated in 1981.

However, Heck put off law school after she and her sister, Judi, decided to join the Air Force. Judi, a Miltonvale grad, had met her husband, Brad Scott, at college. Scott was an Air Force pilot, and the couple was living in Spain in 1981 when Scott was killed in a mid-air collision. Judi moved back to Salina, near her family, and she and Kristin started talking. Eventually, they decided to pursue commissions in the Air Force.

The sisters attended officer training school and graduated three weeks apart. Judi would go on to a



Kristin Heck completed two tours in the Middle East as a member of the US Army, one in Iraq and one in Kuwait.

decorated Air Force career, retiring in 2006 as a full Colonel. Kristin spent 9 years in the Air Force before leaving in 1991 to enroll in law school. She earned her JD in 1994.

Heck once again answered the call to service, joining the Army Reserve in 1997. In 2002, she joined the Army full-time as a judge-advocate.

Heck served two tours, one in Iraq in 2006 and another in Kuwait in 2010, before retiring from the Army in 2012. In Iraq, the base she was stationed at was mortared daily. She remained active in military law as a civilian attorney until she retired completely from practicing law in 2018.

Heck went back to school after retirement, and received a degree in history from Kansas Wesleyan in 2020. She works at KWU as a researcher for the marketing and advancement offices at the university. You'd be hard-pressed to find a more accomplished individual than LTC Kristin Heck. However, her four degrees and two military branches served in are just bullet points to the larger theme of her life – service. But Heck is not someone who is out to broadcast herself or her accomplishments. ☸

ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

2023 INDUCTEES

The Athletic Hall of Fame honors OKWU Eagles who have achieved excellence athletically, academically, and through high personal character. Inductees are graduates of OKWU, five or more years removed, who have participated on an OKWU varsity athletic team for at least two years.



Wendell Thompson / Champion of OKWU Athletics

Wendell Thompson created the **OKWU Croquet** program in 2009 with the goal of imparting his love of the game to a new generation. He led the team for 11 seasons before retiring in 2022. In that time, the team won **5 national championships**, routinely defeating schools like Penn State, the U.S. Naval Academy, and the University of Florida.

What's the secret of OKWU's success? According to Coach Thompson, it's simple. "I've taught the students to do jump shots," he said. "That was our big secret. The other teams hadn't even heard of jump shots. And they were totally befuddled." Prior to starting the croquet program, Thompson served OKWU as the school librarian for 34 years.



Dr. Brian Lee / Outstanding Athlete

Brian Lee ('94) came to BWC to play for **Coach Dan Wood** and would go on to become one of the most decorated players in **OKWU Soccer** history to that point. During his four-year career, he started every game, tallying 22 goals and 7 assists while playing as a central defender. He was named team captain for his final three seasons, chosen by his teammates and coaches to serve in that leadership position.

As a junior and senior, Lee received national attention as **NAIA and NCCAA All-American**, and in 1993 he was selected as the **NCCAA Men's Soccer Player of the Year**, now known as the Kyle Rote Jr. Award. In 1993, he led the team to a 3rd place finish at the NCCAA National Tournament.



Will Price / Outstanding Athlete

Will Price ('16, '18 MBA) finished his **OKWU Baseball** career as one of the most accomplished players in NAIA history. In four seasons, he set OKWU records for hits, doubles, home runs, and RBIs, and he finished in 2nd place on the NAIA's all-time RBI list, coming up just one RBI shy of the record. He helped the Eagles make the NAIA World Series twice over his career, and in 2017 Price was the **Rawlings NAIA Player of the Year** and a **First-Team All-American**.

As a senior, Price had a .460 batting average to go along with 28 home runs and 101 RBIs. In his final college at-bat, at the NAIA World Series, Price smashed a home run. 🏏



LEGACY STORY

CHARISSA DUNN

35 Years of Service

A LIFETIME AT OKWU

"It's all about the people."

That's the refrain of Charissa Dunn ('82) as she reminisces about her experience at Oklahoma Wesleyan University. And after more than 45 years since she first set foot on campus, Dunn has seen many people cycle through the college.

Dunn grew up knowing she would attend Bartlesville Wesleyan College. Her father was a district superintendent in Arizona and served on BWC's Board of Trustees, and the family frequently hosted visitors from BWC. When the time came for Dunn to make her college decision, the choice was clear to her.

After her parents moved from Arizona to Indiana, Dunn accepted a position as the secretary for the Dean of Students at BWC. While she worked full-time, she was able to attend several night classes. As she accumulated credits and worked, she first earned her business administration degree and then decided to add an education degree.

"I took the eight-year plan," she joked, working full-time on campus and earning academic credits on the side.

She graduated in 1982 and immediately moved to the classroom, working as a high school teacher in Copan, Oklahoma, where she taught for 12 years.

A PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

In 1994, Dunn returned to run BWC's Learning Resource Center and work as a professor in what was called the Education Division at the time.

"Our school was the first in the state of Oklahoma to have so many required hours in classrooms before you graduate," she said. Dunn spent two decades in the classroom as the department's Student Teaching Supervisor and Practicum Placement Coordinator. In 2020, she transitioned to a new role at OKWU – alumni director.

"One of the things I really tried to do is figure out how we can get people back on campus and reconnected," Dunn said.

She notes the success of the alumni benefits cards that give alumni discounts on campus and free admission into games. She also spearheaded the digitizing of old yearbooks, all of which are now available on OKWU's website.

A CONTINUED LEGACY

Dunn will remain involved with the alumni planning team on a volunteer basis for the foreseeable future. She will continue to be a key part of planning OKWU Homecoming, as well.

As she looks back on her OKWU experience going back to her time as a student, Dunn is emotional. She thinks back to choir trips with the Lewis family, which she remembers fondly, as well as her classes that prepared her for working in public schools.

"You just don't realize going through the day-to-day how it all builds and all the things and experiences you've had," she said. "The professors were very helpful. They cared about you. They have high standards and expected you to meet them."

Even though she will be transitioning into a new era of her affiliation with OKWU, Dunn is likely to remain a fixture at events in the years to come. Since 1974, this place has been home. Though she may not have an office on campus anymore, her legacy of service to the university will endure in the years to come. 🙏

OKLAHOMA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
2003, 2013, 2018

CENTRAL PILGRIM COLLEGE
1959-1968

BARTLESVILLE WESLEYAN COLLEGE
1973, 1983, 1993, 1998

Oklahoma Wesleyan University

HOMECOMING

October 20-21, 2023

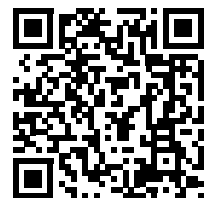
Events

FRIDAY, OCT 20

- Chapel and Student Baptisms
- Golf Scramble Tournament
- Reunions & Activities
- Alumni Banquet
- Pond Party

SATURDAY, OCT 21

- Reunions & Activities
- Athletic Games & Coronation



REGISTER NOW
OKWU.EDU/HOMECOMING

ACADEMICS



THERE IS A PARADIGM SHIFT IN HIGHER EDUCATION,

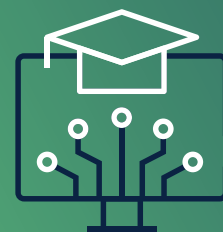
with affordability and flexibility reshaping the landscape. OKWU is positioned to pioneer change in Christian liberal arts, leading innovative endeavors that embrace these shifts and remain committed to preparing and sending servant leaders for enduring success beyond graduation.

Tech-Focused Majors Take Center Stage

The Chesapeake Energy School of Business launched four new, technology-based majors in the Fall of 2023. The new offerings include **Computer Science, Cybersecurity, Game Development,** and **Business Analytics.** Available through a partnership with the Lower Cost Models Consortium and Rize Education, students can earn degrees in these fast-growing fields while at OKWU. "At OKWU, we're about empowering students to take charge of their future," said **Dr. Wendel Weaver**, Dean of the CESB.

OKWU Pro Empowers Lifelong Learning

A new partnership with MindEdge Learning allows students of any age to enroll in over 350 courses to earn certifications and badges, or to fulfill an employer's training requirements. These courses are available for as little as \$39 and are 100% online, giving students the flexibility they need to continue their educational journey while working full-time. Programs include Agile Management, Creativity and Innovation, Nonprofit Management, and more. A full course catalog is at okwu.edu/pro.



REDEFINING EDUCATION

A Bold Approach to Academic Innovation

OKWU Prep Paves the Way for College Success

High school students can earn one full year of college credit by enrolling in OKWU Prep. This affordable program allows students to take courses at \$95 per credit hour, and students who take OKWU Prep courses are eligible for an OKWU scholarship when they enroll full-time as an undergraduate student! Students can take general education requirements like Old and New Testament, English Composition, US History, and more. Visit okwu.edu/prep to bridge the gap between high school and college. 🌐



Searching for the next step?

Discover a Christ-centered education at OKWU.

LEARN MORE AT [OKWU.EDU/ACADEMICS](https://okwu.edu/academics)

STUDENT STORY

REDEEMING LOVE

BY ETHAN LEWALLEN

One of the biggest lies ever told is that you are not good enough.

The enemy will use lies to beat you down, tear things down around you, and push you to the breaking point. The truth of the matter is that Jesus will leave the 99 to save the one who is lost, and there is nothing He cannot redeem.

I used to believe the lies that Satan whispered in my ears constantly. The weight of those lies felt like chains wrapped around me. Even after accepting Jesus, those chains still weighed me down, and I was left wondering where God was and if He cared about my hurt and the pain that I felt. What I didn't know was that the renovation of my life was only beginning.

As God removed things from my life, I became caught up in the selfish, worldly view of "Why me?" I should have been asking, "Why not me?"

In the blink of an eye, everything I had previously hoped for and dreamed of was gone.

God removed certain people from my life, and the career of my dreams that I had been working towards was gone too. I couldn't understand why, and through this I felt further from God than I had ever felt before. I turned to worldly things to fill the void that I felt inside.

The lies that I was alone, unloved, and abandoned made me ask what the point of life was. Was I just supposed to be full of pain and hurt? I was at my breaking point. I wanted nothing more than to feel God's presence and to feel loved by the Creator of the universe. But I thought that my sins made me too far gone for Him to save – until I read Luke 9:24:

"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it."

Scripture showed me the truth of Jesus and that following Him costs us our earthly lives and desire. It wasn't until I started looking at Jesus instead of focusing on the things that I thought were missing from my life that I realized the bigger picture of what God was doing. My wants and desires changed that instant, and I knew I wanted to live for Christ.

Coming to OKWU was never a plan of mine, but it was a part of God's plan for my life. I knew instantly when I heard about this school that it was

where God wanted me to be. After declaring my major, pastoral ministry, and getting into the swing of college life, I knew something was missing. Something was missing from my walk with Christ, something that God needed me to do before I could continue on my path.

Baptism was the missing piece that I needed to go forth in my walk with Christ. After God prompted me to be baptized, I had the opportunity to be baptized in front of everyone on campus. Stepping into that water with Rev. Torrey Martin was nerve-racking, but it was also one of the most joyful moments of my life.

After coming up from death to my old self, I knew that I would not have been there in that moment if Jesus had not come into my life and made me new.

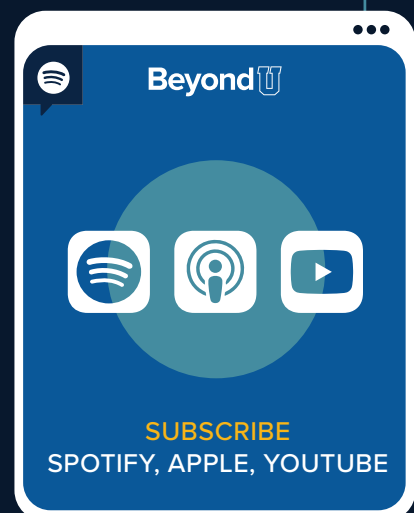
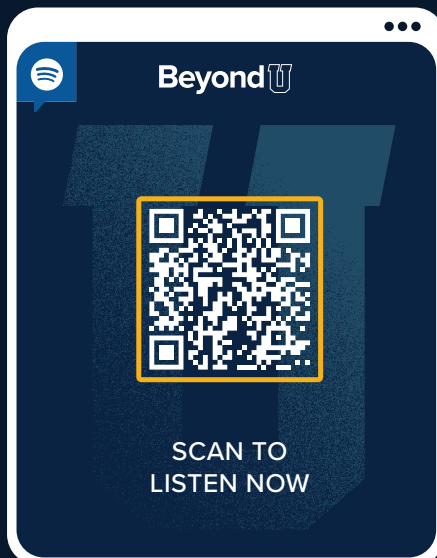
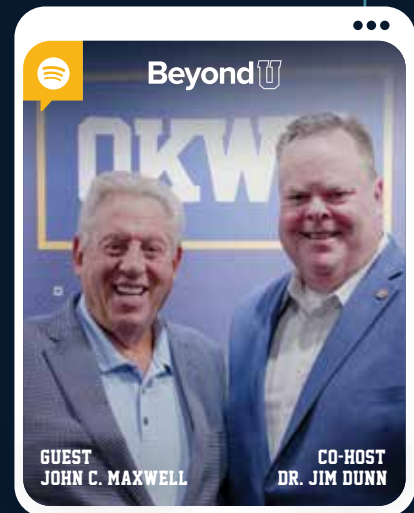
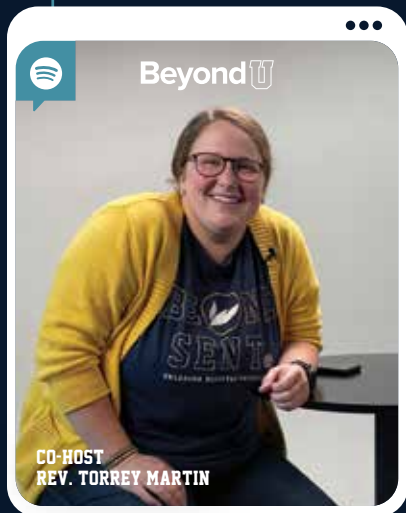
OKWU has been my home, and I have fallen in love with the community I have built. Here I am able to live in God's truth instead of the enemy's lies. Jesus turned me, a sinner, into a follower of Christ and made me new again through his redeeming love. 🙏



Ethan Lewallen after his baptism with Rev. Torrey Martin.

BeyondU

Exploring faith, culture, and higher education



SEASON 1 NOW STREAMING

STUDENT LIFE



Led by Ben Rotz, PATH Leaders and Student Coaches gather together.

Building Tomorrow's Leaders

BY BEN ROTZ

Natalie and Johnny both stepped on to the campus of Oklahoma Wesleyan University as new students in the fall of 2022. As first-generation college students, both knew they wanted to grow and make the most of their time in college; they just were unsure of how to make it happen.

To help answer that question for our students, **OKWU has launched a new venture called PATH Coaching.** Built around Matthew 7:12-14, the goal of PATH is to provide life coaching

designed to help move students from the broad path of “success” as culture defines it, to the narrow path of Christ-centered growth and discipleship.

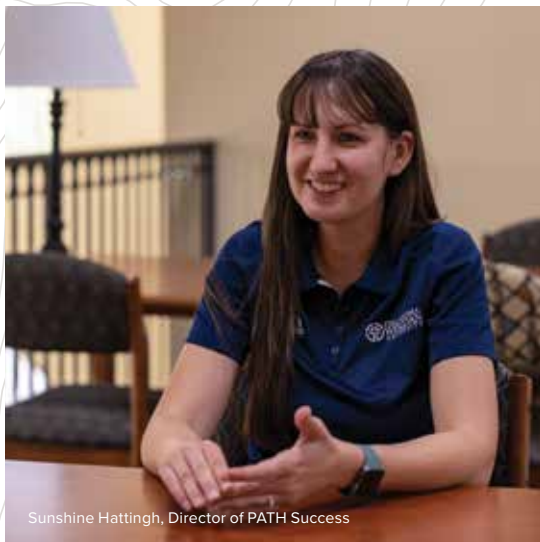
Both Natalie and Johnny decided to engage in PATH Coaching to help navigate the questions and decisions they were faced with: How will my degree help prepare for me a career? How can I learn more about my God-given gifts and strengths and what those mean for my life and leadership? How can I grow in my faith?

Built upon the acronym of PATH, the coaching is designed to help students answer some of the questions Natalie, Johnny, and so many students have.

Tomorrow needs leaders who are prepared, not just for a career, but for the many demands of life and leadership. PATH is the way OKWU will intentionally invest in this next generation of professionals, spouses, parents, and followers of Christ so they can flourish for a lifetime.



Ben Rotz, AVP for Student Development, leads PATH Coaching with OKWU students



Sunshine Hattingh, Director of PATH Success

“So, in everything, do to others what you would have them do for you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” – Matthew 7:12-14 NIV

P Preparedness

PATH coaching helps students be prepared for life by harnessing their academic experiences and leveraging them to build a foundation for career preparation in the bigger mission of being sent for Christ. As Natalie engaged in PATH Coaching this year, she gained an appreciation for how some of her classes like calculus and chemistry were preparing her for pharmacy school after she graduates.

A Attitude

OKWU desires to help students to become more aware of their gifts and strengths and how they can be stewarded to thrive, serve others, and advance the mission of Christ. Part of Natalie’s coaching involved understanding her Clifton Strengths profile and how her Strengths could be leveraged towards a goal she wanted to achieve as a student athlete. For Johnny, PATH Coaching offered the opportunity to explore how his Strengths could help him become more aware of how to be a better friend and family member.

T Transformation

The spiritual lives of OKWU students will be intentionally developed by helping students to engage in opportunities and experiences designed to help them mature and flourish as followers of Christ. Johnny’s experience of transformation this year was punctuated by his decision to be baptized in front of the entire student body in April of 2023. It was a public acknowledgement that, more than anything else, his life was defined by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

H Hands-On

PATH Coaching helps students understand and apply the experiences they’ve had outside the classroom as a member of the OKWU community to their life resume. From student leadership to university athletics, these hands-on experiences are vital for building a life resume. For Natalie and Johnny, PATH Coaching helped them understand how their experiences as student athletes are giving them tools and experiences they can draw on in other areas of life and leadership. ☸

~~I can't afford college.~~

Thanks to scholarships
I'm thriving at OKWU!

Their story is far from over.

Help OKWU students write their next chapter. Your recurring gift empowers OKWU's mission – Advancing the Kingdom. By investing in Biblical education, scholarships, and learning spaces, you provide transformative experiences. Every gift tangibly supports student scholarships, faculty resources, athletics, and campus progress.

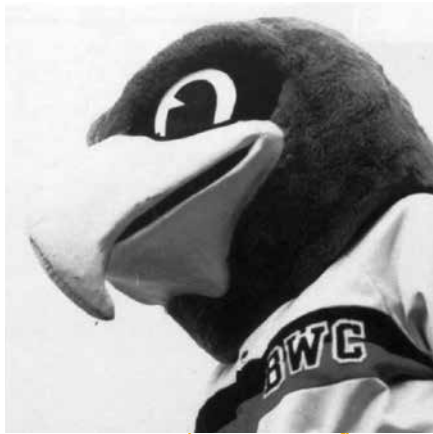
Make a gift at OKWU.edu/give



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@OKWUEAGLES



OKWU Headlines

FALL 2022

NOW Campaign Launched

During Homecoming 2022, **President Dunn** shared the \$68M vision for the largest capital campaign in the history of OKWU. The 2030 goal includes new athletic facilities, campus improvements, scholarships, and endowments. During the first year of the campaign, over \$6 million has been given and pledged.

Over 200 MWC Alumni Celebrate at Homecoming

It was as a joyous celebration welcoming more than 200 **Miltonvale Wesleyan College** alumni. Highlights included celebrating the 90th birthday of **La Quinta Mansion**, honoring Alumni Award winners, and the baptism of eight students.

The Daniels Honored at Foster Bonaza

The President's Award was presented to **Charlie and Julie Daniels** in October for their strong support of the university for more than 20 years, including an instrumental role in raising funds for the OKWU Soccer Complex.

SPRING 2023

Four Tech-Focused Majors Take Center Stage

A new partnership with Rize Education introduced 4 new technology degrees: **Cybersecurity, Business Analytics, Computer Science, and Game Development.**



THE DANIELS RECEIVE
PRESIDENT'S AWARD



JOHN C. MAXWELL
KEYNOTE SPEAKER



DRADUN LUCAS
1 OF 25 STUDENTS BAPTIZED

Generous Give Day Donors Move OKWU Forward

The OKWU community came together to raise \$85,000 for the Annual Fund as part of Give Day 2023. Funds boost university provided scholarships and financial aid to students.

Maxwell Shares Insights on Failure and Leadership

Renowned leadership expert and best-selling author **John C. Maxwell** was the keynote speaker at OKWU's annual, two-day **Dunn Institute**. Over 500 community leaders, students, and employees participated, with a sold-out *Tomorrow Needs Leaders Dinner*. "The Dunn Institute has never failed to add value to the pastors I bring. It was phenomenal," said regular attendee **Billy Wilson**, the Superintendent of the Mountain Plains District of The Wesleyan Church.

New Life Celebrated with 25 Student Baptisms

At a chapel in April, 25 students made public confessions of their faith and were baptized here on campus. Throughout the year in chapels, devotions, and classroom discussions, OKWU's campus community studied the Good News of the Gospel, spearheaded by campus pastor **Rev. Torrey Martin ('22).**



Yearly Honors Earned at Celebration Service

During May's graduation ceremonies, OKWU members were recognized by both student-focused awards and honors from their peers. (L-R) **Dr. Rosa Ketchum** received the Excellence in Teaching Award. **Alex Young ('19)** was named Staff Member of the Year. **Nathan "Freddy" Bompuku ('22)** received the Eagle Scholar Award. **Dr. Jonathan Ensor ('05)** was named Faculty of the Year, and the Promising Teacher Award was received by **Prof. Sandy Lynn ('18)**.

Professors Publish Works

Dr. Jerome Van Kuiken published *The Judas We Never Knew: A Study on the Life and Letter of Jude* (Seedbed) in the summer of 2023. **Dr. Joshua McNall** published his latest book, *How Jesus Saves: Atonement for Ordinary People* (Zondervan Reflective and Seedbed, 2023). He was also a contributing writer for *Sanctifying Theology: Explorations in Wesleyan Theology and Dogmatics* (Pickwick, 2023) and wrote a chapter for *Unlimited Atonement: Amyraldism and Reformed Theology* (Kregel Academic, 2023).

Energetic Commencement Sends Out New Graduates

More than 200 graduates crossed the stage at our December and May graduations, completing their degrees and joining a legacy of OKWU Alumni sent into the world.



JANELL WESTVEER
ALUMNI PRESIDENT



GRADUATE
TOMMY LINDSLY

New Alumni President Serving OKWU

The Alumni Association welcomed new Alumni President **Janell Westveer**. She previously served on the alumni board, along with her predecessor **Sandra Kent**. In related alumni news, OKWU honored the retirement of **Charissa Dunn** as Director of Alumni Relations. Stay connected on the alumni Facebook page and okwu.edu/alumni.

New Online Bookstore Improves Student Services

OKWU announced a partnership with eCampus.com for the official online bookstore beginning in the Fall of 2023. This partnership focuses on providing students with affordable and accessible course materials and an easy and efficient online shopping experience. Students can even enjoy free shipping directly to the campus post office. 📦



APRIL 2023

National Teacher of the Year Awarded to Rebecka Peterson

After winning Oklahoma Teacher of the Year honors in 2022, **Rebecka Peterson** was named the **2023 National Teacher of the Year** in April.

The 2009 Oklahoma Wesleyan University graduate is a math teacher at **Union High School** in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and was chosen for the award from a pool of five finalists by the **Council of Chief State School Officers** (CCSSO), a nonprofit organization.

Peterson was announced in an appearance on **CBS Mornings**. **Dr. Jill Biden** congratulated Peterson on the prestigious honor.

Since winning **Oklahoma Teacher of the Year**, Peterson has been on hiatus as an ambassador for teachers in the state public school system. She was also named a finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Peterson has also earned praise for her “One Good Thing” blog, where she posts

positive updates from her classroom. To date, she has posted over 1,400 updates. Since becoming the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, she has started sharing other teachers’ good things on social media.

For the next year, Peterson will serve as a national ambassador and advocate for educators and students across the nation. She was honored at the **White House** this spring.

CCSSO’s National Teacher of the Year Program recognizes exceptional teachers nationwide, providing professional development opportunities and empowering them to engage in policy discussions. The 2023 National Teacher of the Year was selected from a group of five finalists, who were selected from among a group of 55 State Teachers of the Year.

Join us in congratulating Rebecka Peterson for living out the mission to Be One Sent! 🙏

Photo credit: CBSNews.com

ATHLETICS

FOLLOW ATHLETICS AT [OKWUEAGLES.COM](https://www.okwueagles.com)



2022-2023 HIGHLIGHTS

NEW ALTITUDE FOR OKWU EAGLES

Shawn Woods, head coach of OKWU softball, earned his 100th career win last spring. Woods, who completed his third season with the program, led the Lady Eagles to a 39-18 record.

Kirk Kelley, OKWU baseball coach and athletic director, earned his 850th career NAIA victory last season. Kelley and the Eagles went 38-16 in the spring 2023 season.

Natalia Quiroz qualified for the NAIA Indoor Track and Field Championships after completing the 3000M in 10.20.8, which set an OKWU record by 34 seconds.

Men's basketball standout **Kaleb Stokes** surpassed the 1500 point mark for his career. The forward was an All-KCAC Second Team selection and an NAIA All-American Honorable Mention.

OKWU wrestlers **Kolby Encinas** and **Donte Lopez** qualified for the NAIA Men's Wrestling National Championships, held in Wichita, Kansas in March.



Banner Year for OKWU Volleyball

Tracie Gillette ('98), head coach of OKWU volleyball, recorded her 250th win as coach of the program during the historic 2022 campaign. The Lady Eagles posted a 34-3 record, the best in program history.



6th National Championship

OKWU Croquet, led by first-year coach **Steve Fisher**, won the 6th national championship in school history. The duo of **Stanley Fisher** and **Leina Casimir** outscored their opponents 59-20 during their first-place finish. 🏆

NAIA PLAYER OF THE YEAR

LAURA MARIA

It's been a whirlwind for Laura Maria ('22) over the course of the last twelve months.

The OKWU women's soccer standout returned to Bartlesville in August 2022 for her final season and final semester of her collegiate experience. She was already one of the most accomplished athletes in OKWU's history, a nationally recognized player. One accomplishment, however, had proven elusive – the Lady Eagles had qualified for the NAIA Tournament but had not advanced past the Second Round to earn a spot at the Championships in Alabama.

With Maria leading the way in her final season, the Lady Eagles checked that box, and Maria etched her name in the history books, earning **NAIA Player of the Year**. During her final season, she scored 56 goals, one shy of the NAIA single-season record, and added 25 assists as the Lady Eagles posted a 22-1-1 record, winning the KCAC regular-season and tournament championships, and advancing to the NAIA Championship Final Site for the first time.

Maria ended her OKWU career with 119 goals and 60 assists over 88 games, an indelible mark on the program's record books. She looks back on her experience on campus with appreciation, noting her favorite memories are the times spent with teammates as they traveled and prepared to play.

"Once you leave, you really think about how those moments were very important," she said.



Originally from Brazil, Maria always wanted to attend college in the United States. After a year at a junior college in Kansas, she was recruited to OKWU and continued her playing career in Bartlesville.

Shortly after graduating, Maria signed a contract in Liga BPI, the first division in Portugal. She joined her team midway through their season.

It was a quick transition from college to the professional environment, but she was ready, crediting Coach Ivan Ristic with preparing her to play at this level. "He was one of the best coaches I've had. When I got here, I didn't feel like I was behind anybody. I felt like I was at the same level."

For Maria, playing in Portugal was her first choice since she already speaks the language. "It was easy to say yes and come here." She had other offers in Europe.

Maria joined her new team, CS Maritimo, in late January. She appeared in 10 games, scoring 2 goals and adding 1 assist in her first professional season.

Whatever her future holds, her legacy as an OKWU athlete is secure. Maria's accomplishments include four appearances on the **All-KCAC First Team**, two **KCAC MVPs**, and three **NAIA All-American** nods.

And as she plays overseas, Maria is a living embodiment of the #BeOneSent mantra, fulfilling the mission and purpose of OKWU as she lives out her dream of being a professional athlete. 🙏

EVENTS

Save the Dates

College Preview Days



2023: SEP 15 OCT 27 NOV 17
2024: MAR 15 APR 19

Experience the people and spirit of OKWU.

OCT 20-21 Homecoming Weekend

Generations of Eagles. One OKWU Family.



DEC 15-16 / MAY 3-4 Graduation

*Celebration Service and
Commencement ceremonies.*



MAR 5-6

Dunn Institute

Invite-only and special event registration required.

APRIL 8-12

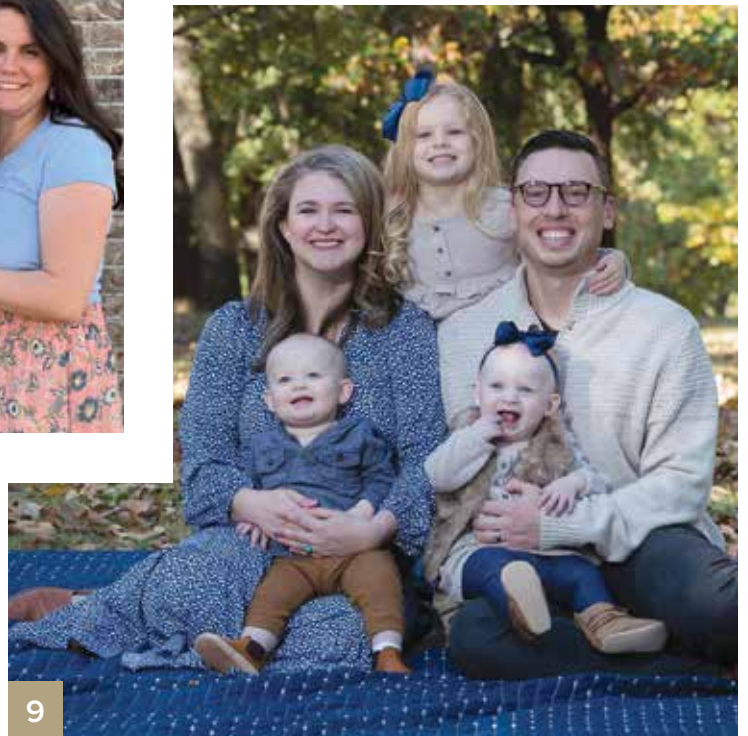
Give Week

*Extend your impact by supporting
the university's Annual Fund.*



okwu.edu/giveweek

FIND NEWS, EVENTS, AND MORE AT **OKWU.EDU**



OKWU on the Move

1. Ashlyen (Fisher, '21) and Jonathan St. Clair were married on May 12, 2023. They live in Phoenix, Arizona. Ashlyen recently started a job as a Graphic Designer at Alliance Defending Freedom, the world's largest legal organization committed to protecting religious freedom, free speech, the sanctity of life, parental rights, and God's design for marriage and family.

2. Ryan ('22) and Zoe (Granville, '23) Rodgers were married on August 6, 2022. They currently live in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, where Ryan is a financial advisor for Arvest, and Zoe is a labor and delivery nurse at Ascension St. John in Owasso.

3 Benjamin ('21) and Kjirsten (Brown, '20) Bender married on June 10, 2022. Kjirsten teaches English and coaches varsity soccer at Wright Christian Academy in Tulsa, where Ben serves as the Director of Spiritual Formation and teaches Bible courses. They are expecting their first child, Lydia Bea Bender, in September.

4. Matthew ('19) and Brooklynn (Berido, '18) Greenwood live in Columbus, Georgia. Matthew is a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and continues his training at Ft. Moore. He earned a Master of Arts in Statecraft and National Security Affairs from The Institute of World Politics. Brooklynn works remotely as the marketing manager at Museum of the Bible, in Washington, D.C.

5 Perica ('17) and Mariana (Guerrero, '15) Obradovic live in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Mariana works at ConocoPhillips, and Perica is a Manager of Mortgage Services at Truity Credit Union.

6. Kody ('18) and Blythe (Freshwater, '20) Moseman welcomed their second child, David, on April 15, 2023.

7. Jabin ('20) and Alyssa (Powell, '20) Umfleet welcomed their first child, Hazel, on August 11, 2022. They recently moved to Reading, Michigan, where Jabin works at Crossroads Farm, specializing in interdenominational youth ministry.

8. Dr. Jim Lo ('78) has completed over 2000 prayer walks on IWU's campus – over 27 years of daily prayer walks! Lo has served at IWU for 25 years as a professor, dean of the chapel, division chair, and campus intercessor. Jim was honored at the 2022 graduation service with the Professor of the Year Award, the fifth time he received that honor.

9. Chris ('10) and Whitney (White, '10) Breiland live in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Chris serves as the Director of Family Ministry at Asbury Church. Whitney is a stay-at-home mom with their 3 children, Charlotte (age 5) and twins Caroline Grace and Shepherd Christopher, born October 25, 2021.

Annie Heck ('19), D.O., completed medical school at Kansas City University of Medicine College of Osteopathic Medicine and has entered residency at University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Family Medicine Residency Program at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, Kansas.

Matt Shea ('12) republished his book, *Reflections of a Life Worth Living*, in 2022. The book tells the story of Shea's life with disability challenges and how God helped him do the impossible.

Beverly Kimball (Conner) ('91) recently published *Cultivate Your Personality: Listening to the Holy Spirit Through the Enneagram* through Wesleyan Publishing House.

Kelly Carter (Hunt) ('12) began working as an Early Childhood Education Specialist at the Oklahoma State Department of Education in September 2022. Before this new role, Carter taught elementary students for 6 years while completing her National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist.

Doug Forsberg ('79) received the Excellence in Accommodations Award at Southern Nazarene University. Forsberg taught at SNU's School of Theology and Ministry since 2003. 🙏

SHARE YOUR NEWS AT [OKWU.EDU/SHARE](https://okwu.edu/share)

BENEDICTION

An excerpt for students from Dr. Jonathan Ensor's
May Commencement Address 2023

**"DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD,
BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWAL
OF YOUR MIND, THAT BY TESTING YOU MAY
DISCERN WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD, WHAT
IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT."**

ROMANS 12:2 (ESV)

*While we pray you are safe in the next
season of life, we sure don't pray that you
play it safe.*

*We need people who will build safe, stable,
and trusting communities, rather than ones
driven by fear and paranoia.*

*We need folks who will sit at more tables
than they overturn.*

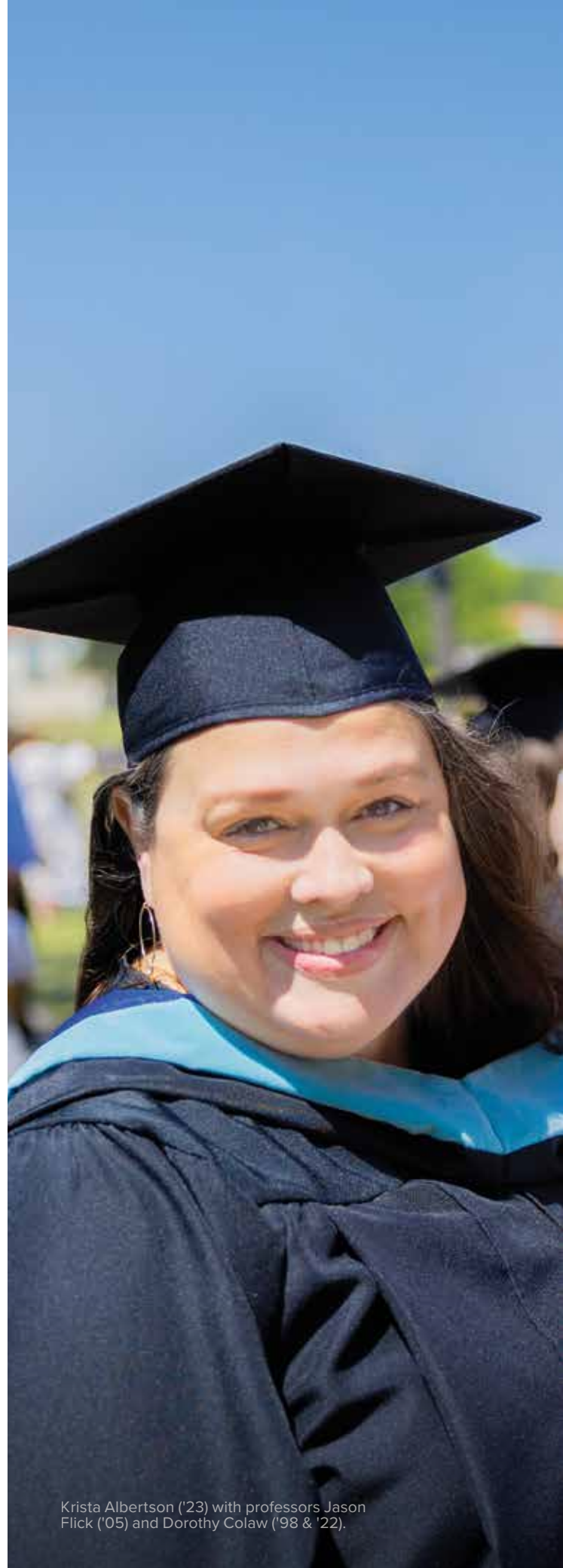
*We need adults who can reclaim play, and
song, and fun and not spend their time on
things that do not last.*

*We need people who will work with integrity
and substance, rather than get ahead by
scoring cheap style or rhetorical points.*

*We need people who are more eager to
stand behind others helping them on their
way, than longing to stand in the spotlight.*

*We need people who know their neighbors'
names rather than label them by their
bumper sticker beliefs.*

*We need churches who will embody the
gospel as salvation for the world, rather than
simply an escape from it. ☸*



Krista Albertson ('23) with professors Jason Flick ('05) and Dorothy Colaw ('98 & '22).





**OKLAHOMA
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COLLEGE PREVIEW DAYS

Sept. 15, 2023
Oct. 27, 2023
Nov. 17, 2023
March 15, 2024
April 19, 2024

**TOMORROW
NEEDS YOU.**

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