

FALL 2025

COLUMNS

ALUMNI MAGAZINE



*LCU Graduating Class Achieves 100%
Acceptance to Professional Programs*

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*LCU Welcomes 10th President
& Family to Campus*

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VIEW from the Hill

As Louisiana Christian University looks toward the future, I am energized by the progress and partnerships underway. It's been a rich and rewarding season. The Lord is opening doors for LCU, and we're stepping through them with boldness, vision and gratitude.

I have already been most blessed by the Cenla community, being invited to speak to the Central Louisiana Rotary Club, meeting with prospective students, and collaborating with business leaders on shared initiatives.

This is a season of favor and opportunity, and we're moving forward--together.

From the church pulpit to the governor's visit, softball fields to ribbon cuttings, I spent the spring months fully immersed in advancing the mission of LCU across Louisiana and beyond. I have been meeting with donors, visiting churches, attending alumni events, and championing the cause of Christian higher education throughout the region.

Celebrating students remains a top priority. Highlights of the spring semester include the LCU Ring Ceremony, spirited support for the university's softball and baseball teams, and special graduation recognitions for student-athletes. Café Du Monde celebrations and engaging theatrical productions added joy and creativity to campus life.

We're not just educating students. We're shaping Christian leaders who will make a difference in every sphere, and I'm so very blessed with a group of leaders who bring wisdom, energy and Christ-centered commitment to every table at which they sit.

From academics to admissions, security to technology, and advancement to finance, each team member has helped guide LCU through this vital season of transition with excellence and care.

My first 100 days officially began on June 1, and we just completed the 100-day challenge I set for this time. The P356 TOUR was a dynamic 100-day initiative designed to enhance the presence and impact of LCU across Pineville and surrounding communities, while fostering deeper engagement with alumni, donors, faculty, staff, students and the local population.

Through a series of 100 strategically planned events, this tour underscored the university's mission of trust, leadership and

community building and strengthened relationships with the goal of raising both the university's visibility and funds for LCU's future development.

Inspired by Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your path."

Rooted in Proverbs 3:5-6, the P356 TOUR emphasized four key pillars:

Worship – Trusting in the Lord through communal worship and spiritual engagement, as we lean on His understanding to guide the path of the university and its community.

Scholarship – Fostering academic excellence and intellectual growth while promoting the pursuit of knowledge and the impact of Christian education at LCU.

Stewardship – Being faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us by God, including the careful management of funds, programs, and relationships to ensure LCU's long-term sustainability.

Leadership – Encouraging servant leadership across all sectors of LCU, empowering students, faculty, staff, and alumni to lead with integrity, vision, and faith.

Academic, political, community and public events were on the agenda, and we documented them with a YouTube vlog you can check out to catch up on all we have been doing at lcuniversity.edu/p356.

I want to connect people back to our institution and our institution back to the people. We want to be fully involved in this community. We don't want to just be a university in Pineville; we want to be Pineville's university.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for LCU. May God bless you and your families.

Dr. Mark Johnson
President, Louisiana Christian University

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highlights



Louisiana Christian University (LCU) has earned the distinction of being both the Safest College Campus and the Best Value college in the state of Louisiana, according to the latest rankings released by Niche.com.

Niche.com, a well-respected platform that provides in-depth reviews and rankings of schools and colleges across the country, released its 2025 list of Best Colleges. Its comprehensive methodology combines rigorous analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education with millions of reviews from students and alumni. The rankings evaluate critical aspects of campus life such as safety, academic quality, affordability, and student outcomes.

The safety of its students, faculty, staff, and visitors has long been a top priority for Louisiana Christian University. Over the past several years, the university has made significant strides in enhancing campus security. These efforts have now been nationally recognized with the top safety ranking in the state.

"Over the last five years, LCU has invested over \$450,000 in safety and security upgrades thanks to grants from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness through our FEMA partners," said Dr. Henry O. Robertson, Vice President of Academic Affairs. "Additional funding through the Union Pacific Railroad Foundation has provided key components for enhancing our abilities to deter, detect, and defend the campus community."

These security enhancements have included increased surveillance systems, better campus lighting, emergency communication upgrades, and the implementation of preventive training programs. One of the most impactful additions has been the integration of a certified K9 officer into the university's security team.

Chief of Safety and Security John Dausat emphasized the importance of this proactive measure.

"Not only have the students become more aware of the deterrent effect of narcotics detection, but they also feel a heightened sense of security simply due to the visible presence of the K9 officer," Dausat

said. "Providing the safest campus possible is our primary focus. We have made great strides in the last several years to prevent some of the issues that other campuses have faced, and we will continue to be proactive."

The K9 unit, certified in narcotics detection and tracking, represents LCU's forward-thinking approach to campus safety. Dausat added that their presence has fostered a culture of awareness and accountability among the student body.

According to Niche.com, the safety rating takes into account both on-campus and local crime rates, as well as student survey responses related to campus security and health services.

In addition to being recognized for safety, LCU was also ranked as the Best Value College in Louisiana — a reflection of its dedication to making high-quality, faith-based education accessible and affordable.

The Best Value Colleges ranking is calculated based on a combination of net tuition cost, graduation rates, student loan default rates, average student debt, and alumni earnings. This recognition affirms the university's commitment to preparing students not only for academic success but for long-term financial and career stability as well.

These accolades add to a growing list of achievements for Louisiana Christian University, which has seen increasing enrollment, expanding academic offerings, and a strengthening of its spiritual mission in recent years.

As the university continues to invest in its campus infrastructure, academic excellence, and student support services, LCU remains committed to providing an environment where students can thrive—intellectually, spiritually, and personally.

For prospective students and their families, the latest Niche.com rankings offer a compelling reason to consider Louisiana Christian University not just as a college, but as a community devoted to safety, value, and personal development.

LCU Students Earn Multiple Awards at Annual NRB Convention

by Alan Quartemont

Students from the Convergence Media and Theatre departments brought home two first-place finishes and one fourth-place finish at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention this year.

Competing against other member schools in the on-site contests, LCU finished first in the 12-hour news and 12-hour audio challenges. The school's 24-hour film challenge team finished fourth.

"We continue to be amazed by the level our students reach in these challenge competitions," said Jeff Young, associate professor of media production at LCU. "It gives them the chance to experience deadline pressures and see how they stack up against students from other schools."

The news challenge team was made of junior Cayden Walls, senior Joseph Johnson and freshman Kayley McCarty. They were required to produce a same-day news story focused on the potential impact of the new Trump Administration on the Christian media industry.

The audio challenge team, which consisted of sophomores Adán Wright and Danny Cobb along with contributions from voice actors, seniors Cheyenne Carbaugh and Caleb Cole and freshman Logan Carver, brought home the first-place award for their production of "Second Chance," a war-themed presentation where the main character returns home to his family after being injured in battle.

Finally, the film challenge team made up of Cole, Carver, sophomore Kayla Condrey and freshman Nick Morrow brought home fourth place for their production of "Forget Me Not." Contributing to the project as actors were Walls, Carbaugh and freshman Sophie Geraci.

LCU's faculty advisers for the team challenges were Jeff Young, Al Quartemont and Tabitha Huffman. LCU has competed at the annual NRB Convention since 2009.

NRB is an international association of Christian communicators with more than 1,100 member organizations reaching millions of viewers, listeners and readers. The annual convention brings together professionals from Christian and other religious media from around the world.



Police Department's K9 Willy has been awarded a "Healthcare for K9 Heroes" Grant

By Elizabeth Clarke



LCU's Police Department K9, Willy, in Vested Interest in K9s vest

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a 501c (3) nationwide charity located in East Taunton, Massachusetts, whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. The non-profit is pleased to continue its "Healthcare for K9 Heroes" medical insurance program for 2024 which covers annual policy premiums. Since 2016, the charity has donated over \$429,435 towards medical reimbursement programs for self-funded K9 units.

The "Healthcare for K9 Heroes" grant is awarded to departments that have the financial burden of raising funds to support their K9 unit, have no more than three K9s, and have previously been awarded a vest through Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. Law enforcement dogs ages two through seven are eligible. The annual medical reimbursement insurance policy, administered by Trupanion, will cover illnesses, injuries - including those sustained in the line of duty - diagnostic testing, and therapies. The plan allows the freedom to use any licensed veterinarian, specialty center, or emergency hospital in the United States.

Trupanion, a leader in medical insurance for cats and dogs, offers injury and illness coverage for working and service dogs - both on and off duty. For nearly two decades, Trupanion has given pet owners and working dog owners peace of mind so they can focus on their dog's recovery, not financial stress. Trupanion is honored to support these brave K9 heroes and is committed to providing the highest value in medical insurance to help them receive the best veterinary care.

In addition to the healthcare reimbursement program, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided over 5,707 law enforcement dogs with U.S.-made, custom-fitted, NIJ-certified bullet and stab-protective vests in 50 states, at a value of over \$6.9 million. For more information, please call 508-824-6978. Tax-deductible donations accepted via mail to: Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. P.O. Box 9 East Taunton, MA 02718, or via the website: www.vik9s.org.

Alumna Attorney Doing *Lord's Work* in Grant Parish

By Elizabeth Clarke

The adage “The Lord works in mysterious ways” is definitely true for Louisiana Christian University alumna Bonita Preuett Armour.

What started as a desire to remain young and healthy has become a growing ministry in Grant Parish.

“It’s not about me; this is the Lord’s place,” Armour said. “This campus is a ministry for the Lord. I’m just His hands and His feet. He does it all.”

Armour, a native of Grant Parish, is a 1989 pre-law and history LC graduate, attended LSU Law School, and has been a successful practicing attorney in Central Louisiana for decades.

She has recently turned the former Dry Prong Junior High School into a thriving location for fitness, a community garden, her law office, and a pizza restaurant—and more is in the planning.

The school had been in operation until 2011 before it was auctioned off. The owner, James Crooks, listed the gymnasium for sale on Facebook in 2018.

So when Armour saw the gym at the old school campus, where she had attended as a child in 1978, up for sale, she felt like the Lord was telling her something.

“I had started B22 in my garage in 2012, and we had outgrown my garage and backyard,” she said. “I called and texted my friends and thought this would be perfect.”

B22 is the name she gave her gym because she always wanted to stay 22.

Armour’s selflessness and love for her community can’t be overstated, according to those who know her.

Knowing the history of the gym, that it was built and then moved from Camp Claiborne south of Woodworth to Dry Prong in 1948 where it was rebuilt piece by piece in its current location, Armour was determined to see what she could do to preserve the beautiful architecture and community memories.

Armour lives her life by Joshua 1:9. “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. It was the heartbeat of the whole parish,” she said. “I thought we’ve got to preserve this.”

She just wasn’t sure how she would do it, but she said the Lord knew how long before she did. Crooks self-financed the property for her—first the gymnasium and then the main school buildings, cafeteria and auditorium.

Armour relocated her law offices from Alexandria and Natchitoches to Grant Parish in order to purchase the property.

So many roadblocks occurred during the rehab, including two hurricanes and a tornado that first damaged and then flooded the buildings, but Armour said that God sent people and resources to

handle every single one.

Mattison Brevelle, a paralegal for Armour Law firm, also serves as the property manager for B22 Sports Complex.

“When she [Armour] purchased the current B22 campus, I was here helping in any way I could,” Brevelle said. “I think I added many jobs to the resume. We painted, pulled up flooring, laid flooring, cleaned walls, hung signs and stickers, painted more, and planted flower beds. Just about anything you can think of, I have probably helped with on campus. I love Grant Parish and the community it brings to B22. They make this place feel like home.”

Today, Armour’s law office is in the old Band Hall. She has added a yoga studio, Rock Steady Boxing program, an indoor walking track, an indoor soccer arena, a gaming area, Rue22 restaurant, and is in the process of adding softball fields and an outdoor fitness trail.

“B22’s mission to me is to see a need and fill it,” Brevelle said. “Bonita has instilled in me that when you see a need, we should try to do everything we can to help that need. My grandparents attend the coffee club here, and it has been such a blessing to see both improve not only physically but also mentally. It was a need in our community for the older generation to have a safe place for them to get physical activities, and it turned out they got so much more.

“B22 offers a space on campus for ladies who have recovered from addiction-filled life. They get a new start here with a source of income and a home to live in. I see B22 as a melting pot. It has something for everyone.”

One of the programs housed on campus that Armour is most proud of is the nonprofit Chesed House ministry, which offers transitional housing for recovering women. Armour was inspired while serving on the board of the Louisiana Adult Teen Challenge program to try to address a need for housing once young women complete that program, and Chesed House was born. It is housed in two of the old faculty rooms on the former school campus and provides living space, while Rue22 provides employment.

Dr. Sheri Duffy, a professor of social work at LCU and Chesed House board member, went to school with Armour at the campus that B22 inhabits today.

“I went to school there and began playing basketball there,” Duffy said. “My parents, my sibling and my oldest daughter also attended school there. Additionally, my dad and oldest daughter both played basketball for the school in that gym on campus. So you can see, it has always been there and a part of our lives. Bonita and I went to Grant High School and Louisiana College (LCU) together. I have known her for many years, and in all that time she has always been one who dreamed big and encouraged everyone around her.”

Duffy said what Armour has done with the former school campus is nothing short of amazing.

"I am so proud of what she has accomplished and continues to do for our community," Duffy said. "First and foremost, she has a love for the Lord and seeks to follow His will in all she does including the development of B22. She has a heart for people that you can see and hear as soon as you begin talking with her. It has been great seeing what used to be such a thriving place in Dry Prong return to being a place that our community and beyond can come to for food, fun, fellowship, and health/wellness."

Like Duffy, Dr. Sonia Tinsley, LCU associate professor of health and exercise science, grew up in Dry Prong and started her basketball career at Dry Prong Junior High School.

"My mom and dad both played basketball in the original gym, too," Tinsley said. "My dad had Parkinson's Disease for over 25 years. Bonita started a Rock Steady boxing program for people with Parkinson's. That program was what helped my dad live independently until he passed away."

Rock Steady Boxing is a program that help

of Parkinson's Disease. The closest program to CenLa prior to B22's addition of it to its offerings was in Ruston.

Ken Price, a B22 Sports Complex and Rock Steady board member, has volunteered much time to the facilities for the past four years.

"I felt that to join the B22 team was to join up with positive change for our parish and CenLa as a whole, and now we're reaching out even farther than that," Price said. "I see B22's mission as helping others succeed, grow, make it through the hardest times, and then have tools to not only succeed but to go and help others do the same."

Price said B22 seems to work best when the task seems impossible.

"It leaves no person, group or community behind," Price said. "It is to always have open doors to create space for each and every one while putting God first and loving and molding others to be like Him."

And who knows where this ministry will take B22 next.



LCU holds 2025 *Commencement Exercises*

by Elizabeth Clarke





*Dr. David Jeffreys
addressing crowd at the 169th Commencement*

Louisiana Christian University held its 170th commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 10, in Guinn Auditorium in two ceremonies at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The university conferred 154 undergraduate degrees and 65 graduate degrees, representing students from eight states and eight foreign countries.

Graduating music majors William Dunham and Cheyenne Carbaugh presented special music. Dunham performed “It is Well with My Soul” on the marimba, and Carbaugh sang “I’ll Walk with God.”

Graduates offered their reflections before the conferring of degrees.

“LCU has taught me to depend on God, deeply and honestly, and in every season to give God glory for it all,” KamrynWest said.

She thanked her family, friends and professors for the support offered during her time in school.

Logan Brimmer, criminal justice major and student athlete, said football and Jesus Christ got him through.

“As we leave here today, may we all have the grit of an athlete and the grace of a believer,” he offered his fellow graduates.

Dunham said he would fondly remember his “late-night shenanigans and Whataburger runs” with his friends at LCU.

“Responsibility comes to those who step up and take those opportunities,” he said. “Every change in our lives is an opportunity to trust the Lord in a deeper way. I can look back and I can see the hand of the Lord on every aspect of my life.”

Karen Carter, LCU’s executive director of marketing, graduated with her Master of Strategic Leadership.

“For years, I’ve had the opportunity to capture the candid moments that tell the story of our time here,” Carter said. She encouraged her fellow students to “remember the beauty of what lies in between the shots.”

Jamel Owosu, Master of Business Administration, like Carter, earned his undergraduate and master’s degrees at LCU. He also played basketball for the Wildcats.

“Faculty and coaches showed me how important it is to have Christ as the center of my life, and I’ll forever be grateful for that.”

Elisabeth McGrath, B.S. in business administration

economics/finance concentration, transferred to LCU.

“When I first walked on this campus, I felt peace, purpose and the unmistakable presence of God,” she said. “The time here has been a personal spiritual journey with the Lord. Today marks the beginning of a new chapter, but also stands as a testimony of how far we’ve all come.”

Following the conferring of degrees, LCU President-Elect Mark Johnson offered a charge to the 2025 graduating class.

He encouraged graduates to live by Ephesians 6:10.

“You’re at a finish line, and you’re heading to a new starting line,” Johnson said. “Celebrate today, but know you will have tribulations ahead. There will be hurdles, new things to overcome, so ‘Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.’”





Photo by Susan Steverson

Harmon Sibling Trio *Graduate* from LCU

by Elizabeth Clarke

For the Harmon family from Lafayette, it was three times the celebration on May 10, 2025 when all three siblings graduated.

Jonn, 22; Jess, 21; and Jade, 22, all earned their bachelor's degrees in the commencement ceremonies in Guinn Auditorium.

Jonn earned his B.A. in accounting and plans to work on his master's in accounting. Jade completed a double major in biology and chemistry, plus a minor in accounting, and entered optometry school in the fall.

Jess received his B.S. in biology with a chemistry minor. He, too, continued his studies, going to Physician's Assistant school and specializing in forensics.

The three—who definitely argue like siblings—said going to college together actually brought them a lot closer together.

Because of their closeness in age, people who don't know them may not know just how unique and special the formation of their sibling bond came about.

Jess is the only biological son of Jason and Jena Harmon, but the Harmons knew their family wasn't complete. Jade was nine months old when her parents adopted her from China. Jonn was adopted at 13, also from China. He attended first through sixth grades in a Chinese orphanage. He also has a condition known as albinism, which affects his eyesight.

"I can do basically the same things as everyone else but with limited eyesight," Jonn said. "I can't drive and have to get very close to read. I am sensitive to light and sunburn easily and can't stay outside for long."

Dad Jason said Jonn has never let his condition limit his aspirations.

"His resilience has been a source of inspiration for Jade, who has chosen to pursue a career in optometry."

The three siblings joke and tease each other, but it's clear they are supportive of each other. Jade said it's been nice having her brothers around for college.

"When our parents visited, it was nice to have the whole

family together," she said.

All three said their parents have been strict but supportive toward their goals.

"They are very hands-on parents. They come to all our events, and I call mom two to three times a day," Jess said. "I like annoying her."

Much of their academic drive stems from their mother Jena, who is a teacher, and always emphasized learning.

"She instilled in them a belief that hard work and education open doors to endless possibilities," dad Jason said.

Jason, a retired firefighter who now works in the luxury door and window industry, is a role model of resilience and entrepreneurship.

Together, they have built a home filled with love, faith and the expectation that their children strive for the best.

The trio's experience outside of the classroom at LCU has been busy, too. Jonn was a member of the psychology and gaming club. Jess was a member of Alpha Epsilon Delta, senior president of the Student Government Association, Student Success Center student manager, and served as an RA for Residence Life. Jade was a member of Alpha Epsilon Delta, ODK, a C.S. Lewis Honors Scholar, and was a member of the band.

All three say the faculty and staff have been a huge blessing to them during their time at LCU, including JoLynn McConley, James Major, Dr. David Elliott, Dr. Sarah Payne and Dr. Justin Langford.

"The Harmon trio has been a vital part of the Student Success Center during their time at LCU," said McConley, director of the SSC. "Jess has been my most treasured student office manager in the SSC, while Jade and Jonn have been valuable tutors to the student population."

She said all three have left a lasting mark at LCU, and she is extremely blessed to be a part of their lives and is proud of them but sad to see them go.



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Fuel the future. Give \$25 today. Visit LCUniversity.edu/GIVE



\$25 *in* 2025



LCU Alum Admitted to *U.S. Supreme Court Bar*

by Elizabeth Clarke

Louisiana Christian University alumna Brittany Jones has been admitted to the esteemed U.S. Supreme Court Bar.

She graduated from Louisiana Christian University in 2014 with a degree in history before attending Regent University School of Law.

"I have already submitted briefs to the Supreme Court protecting women's spaces and opportunities, promoting life, advancing age verification for pornography, and against government overreach," Jones said. "I will continue to advocate for these issues and other First and Fourteenth Amendment cases."

Jones serves as the director of Policy and Engagement of Kansas Family Voice and the general counsel for Kansas Family Foundation. She has worked to protect women's opportunities in sports and other spheres.

"I have advanced laws to promote a culture of life to support moms and protect babies in the womb," she said. "I have also worked to protect children from radical ideologies and from online pornography."

She also works to promote parental rights and educational freedom for all families.

Brittany got her start in politics when she was in elementary school and has been actively involved in campaigns, state government and grassroots efforts ever since.

"I was first called to the sphere of government at the age of 7, even though I didn't know fully what that meant," Jones said. "I would encourage college students to explore the things God has laid on their hearts and trust that the Lord will open the right doors in His timing. Reach out to every person you know who works in that profession. Ask for their recommendations. But also trust the process. If God isn't opening doors immediately in that area, continue to work with excellence and stay faithful where you are. And remember you are called to faithfulness in every area of your life – you aren't necessarily called to always get what you want immediately."

Jones said the best thing about her education at LCU was the access she had to her professors.

"I spent hours in their offices discussing ideas, refining my work, and generally learning from their experiences," she said. "This prepared me to engage well in law school and the real world."

One of Jones' major history professors at LCU was Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Henry Robertson.

"When I taught her she was curious, hardworking, and

determined to make her mark on this world," Robertson said. "Brittany Jones is definitely one of our best ambassadors who is now out in that world unafraid, unapologetic and ready for that awesome responsibility."

Jones has returned to speak at events at LCU several times since graduating.

"Brittany possesses strong, conservative values and believes in all our freedoms enshrined in the Bill of Rights," Robertson said. "I cannot think of a better person to advocate for the Christian faith, families and our freedoms before the U.S. Supreme Court. For her to be able to write for and argue at our nation's highest court is an honor and one that comes with great responsibility. I know she will carry forward her deeply held convictions and those of the place where she did her undergraduate work with each case she takes before that court."

Jones' media appearances include CNN, Good Morning America, ABC Australia, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, World Magazine, and many others.



Faculty & Student Art Accepted into 5x5x5 National Show

By Elizabeth Clarke



The 9th 5x5x5 opened at River Oaks Art Center in Alexandria with three outstanding pieces from two Louisiana Christian University faculty members and one student.

Michael Williams, assistant professor of art, had two pieces accepted: "Hare in Violet" and "A Ball?" Assistant Professor of Art Hannan Fulton's piece is titled "Utensils." And Pineville sophomore Olivia Huffman's piece is titled "Floral Mug."

The 5x5x5 Show has attracted a remarkable array of entries, with 90 pieces accepted from over 200 applications from 20 states across the country, according to River Oaks Facebook page.

"The diversity and quality of submissions this year have been truly impressive, showcasing a wide range of artistic expressions that highlight the unique challenge of working within such limited dimensions," Rachael Dauzat, executive director at River Oaks posted on Facebook. "As always, we have ultra-local entries from right here in Alexandria - then there are entries that come from the far corners of the U.S. The furthest traveled accolade goes to an entry from Mountain View, Hawaii this year."

Michael Williams noted, "We entered for many reasons. Submitting to shows is a great way for artists to share their work with the public," He continued, "It is also a great way to be involved with our community. We are blessed to have such a great local art gallery like River Oaks, so I try to get involved with any event they put on."

The exhibit includes 2D and 3D works in a variety of media. All works must be within the 25 square inch parameters. Arkansas artist and educator Ted Barnes serves as guest juror for the show.

Williams was recognized at the show's opening reception with the Beck Crowell Creative Award for his piece "A Ball?" and received a \$100 cash prize.

Mann Presents LCU with a Copy of Jimmie Davis Book

By Elizabeth Clarke

Retired LSU Prof. Emeritus Robert Mann visited Louisiana Christian University to present one of the first copies of his latest book, *You Are My Sunshine: Jimmie Davis and the Biography of a Song* (LSU Press February 2025) to the LCU Norton Memorial Library.

Mann is the author of 10 books on U.S. and Louisiana political history. He was a senior aide to U.S. senators Russell Long and John Breaux and Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco.

He served on the faculty of LSU's Manship School of Mass Communication for 18 years before retiring in 2024.

At the center of this story is Jimmie Davis, a 1924 graduate of Louisiana College which went on to become Louisiana Christian University. Davis sang on campus and played his guitar in the streets of Pineville and Alexandria for funds to pay for his education.

He went on to become a country music superstar with the hit song "You Are My Sunshine," a song covered by an impressive array of artists to date. Mann found that in 1940, Davis became the third artist to record "Sunshine," after he bought it.

As "You Are My Sunshine" grew in popularity, so did its link to Davis, who entered politics and became the 'singing governor' for two non-consecutive terms as governor, 1944-1948 and 1960-1964. In 1977, the Louisiana Legislature made "You Are My Sunshine" the state song.

Davis spent four years at Louisiana College, graduated, and remains one of the most famous of its graduates now 101 years after he took classes in Alexandria Hall, which still stands as the main building on the now suburban campus in Pineville.

LSU Press praised Mann's new book, "this is more than the story of a simple song; it's a biography of a cultural icon, enduring and ubiquitous as sunshine itself."



LCU Receives Grant for *Anatomage Table*

By Elizabeth Clarke

Louisiana Christian University has received an Anatomage table, a piece of equipment that is a game changer for students studying biological sciences.

The Anatomage Table is the most advanced real-human-based medical education system, according to its website. This state-of-the-art platform offers digitized human cadavers and superior medical learning tools, transforming medical education and training. By incorporating the Anatomage Table, institutions can enhance learning outcomes, lower laboratory costs, and establish technological leadership.

The \$105,000 table was part of a grant award from the Delta Workforce Grant Program for 2024

"The Anatomage Table includes high-resolution digitized images of actual bodies," Warren said. "They took cadavers, cryotreated them and made microlevel sections from head to toe."

LCU's Table includes five human cadavers.

"Once sectioned, scanned and digitized, the sections are reconstructed digitally," Dr. Wade Warren, Professor of Biology said. "The stylus becomes the dissecting tool."

Every piece of the body has been identified as part of the software.

"I can literally search for anything," Warren said. "The power is nearly unlimited."

Whatever you touch, it identifies, and you can isolate individual systems within the body.

Warren said he was trained on the use of the Table at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences in Dallas.

Dr. Fernando Castillo, assistant professor at USAHS and who teaches gross anatomy, introduced Warren to working with the Anatomage table and collaborated with Warren on a research project. "Comparative Evaluation of Anatomage Table and Complete Anatomy."

Anatomage offers unparalleled 3D visualization, real time dissection, and customization of a variety of anatomical, neuroanatomical, physiological, biomechanical, and, to a certain extent, pathological presentations," Castillo said.

"Unlike other wonderful applications like Complete Anatomy, which, to clarify, is fantastic in its own right, Anatomage features fully rendered cadavers who were at one point actual people,"

Castillo said. "This means that their rendered cadavers offer as much realism as is, to my knowledge, currently available as far as virtual dissection technology is concerned. The benefit of this reality, as it pertains specifically to pathology, is that students are able to understand the realistic presentation of conditions such as cancer, hernias, osteoporosis, etc. In addition, one of my favorite features in Anatomage is the ability to color code every single anatomical structure visible on these cadavers."

He added, while this sounds like a simple feature, being able to recreate 'grounded' resources like textbook figures is invaluable in offering consistency between what students learn and how they apply that knowledge on the Tables.

Castillo said having the anatomage table at USAHS has significantly widened the scope of visualization for a variety of classes, including gross anatomy, neuroscience, biomechanics, and pathophysiology.

"This has resulted in students being able to engage more directly with lecture content by seeing the content presented using the exact same technology as they will use in the lab," Castillo said. "This is something that is significantly more difficult to do with cadavers. Wade will certainly tell you that this is also possible using technology like Complete Anatomy; however, my 'promotion' of Anatomage is the presenter can integrate real-life characteristics of Anatomage's cadavers."

Ethan Lanford, senior biology and chemistry major from Pineville, said he can't say enough about how helpful the addition of the Anatomage Table will be to the LCU Biology Department and for future students.

"Now, students will be able to observe virtual dissections and see anatomical structures in the context of actual human bodies that have been digitized. The interest level in the lab should skyrocket, and this intrigue should provide a much more interactive learning experience. Personally, the Anatomage table has given me the opportunity to learn the human body in a much more intricate manner before going to medical school."

For more information about the LCU Department of Biology or biological or medical laboratory sciences, please visit the website or contact Dr. Wade Warren at (318)487.7306 or at wade.warren@lcuniversity.edu.

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Social Work Department Hosts First Continuing Education Series *By Elizabeth Clarke*

LCU's Social Work Department hosted a successful first Continuing Education Series, with more than 100 social work alumni, field supervisors and community social workers in attendance. CEUs (continuing education units) are required for all licensed social workers.

It was important to LCU to make the series affordable and accessible to all levels of social workers, including our current graduate students, who attended for free, Vanessa Graves, LCSW-BACS, Assistant Professor of Social Work & MSW Field Director said.

"We wanted to say thank you to all of the social workers in the local and surrounding areas of the state who have supported our BSW and MSW programs whether as former students and now alumni, serving as field supervisors, and/or networking with us as fellow social work professionals," Graves said.

Anxiety Disorders and Self-Care was the topic of the afternoon session.

"These [anxiety] disorders are rapidly increasing and currently the most diagnosed mental disorder in the United States," Graves said. It is important as social workers who serve and treat individuals with these disorders to stay updated with the current diagnostic criteria, societal factors and treatment interventions."

Self-care is also an important function for both social workers and those they serve, said Sheri Duffy, DSW, LCSW, professor of social work and MSW program director.

"The objectives for the self-care portion of the presentation were for participants to recognize the personal and professional impact of anxiety and stress, and identify specific self-care tools," Duffy said. "Participants were able to interact with each other sharing different ways to teach/model self-care for clients who are struggling with anxiety, but they were also encouraged as professionals to identify their own self-care strategies."

"Ethics for Everyday Practice" was the morning session, presented by Bobbye Roberts, LCSW-BACS, associate professor and BSW program director, and Maggie Bridges, LCSW-BACS, associate professor of social work and BSW field education director.

"Due to the explosion of technology and use of telehealth in our field, navigating ethical issues has become much more complex with the potential for boundary confusion with our clients, as well as unintentional ethical violations," Roberts said. "We pointed out that just because you are a savvy social media user in your personal life, that does not make you digitally literate in a professional sense. Our goal was to challenge our audience to think through some of these tough questions, collaborate with colleagues, and use a sound decision-making process to navigate these types of ethical issues and dilemmas."

Bridges said they covered changes and updates to our social work Code of Ethics, which is important because ethics is one of those mandated areas of continuing education that social workers must continue to get for our license, and some clinicians may be unaware of them and how that impacts their practices in the field.



Graduating Class Achieves 100% *Acceptance to Professional Programs*

by Elizabeth Clarke

The Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics graduating class of 2025 achieved 100% acceptance rate into graduate and professional programs, according to Department Chair Dr. David Elliott, professor of chemistry.

"This is one of the top two or three classes we've ever had," Elliott said. "We have a lot of good students, but this is a group we hate to see go." Graduating seniors by programs were:

LSU-Shreveport Medical School

Leanna Lanford, of Pineville, honors biology/chemistry double major
Ethan Lanford, of Pineville, biology/chemistry double major
Ethan Barnes, of Ball, biology major
Cy Fontenot, of Alexandria, biology major

Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Louisiana VCOM Monroe

Kamryn West, of Pine Prairie, honors biology/chemistry double major
Madelyn Duncan, of Alexandria, biology major

LSU Health Physical Therapy School, New Orleans

Brianne Rotolo, of Bridge City, honors biology major

Rosenberg School of Optometry at University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas

Jade Harmon, of Lafayette, honors biology/chemistry double major

"Our current graduating class is one that only comes around every so often," said Dr. Sarah Payne, chemistry professor and director of the C.S. Lewis Honors Program. "I am grateful to have been a small piece of this astonishing group's time here at LCU. I know that these students will carry LCU in their hearts and lives as they go on to lead successful careers in various health fields, serving their patients with dignity, compassion, and character."

Individual medical and professional schools differ in their acceptance rates, but it is extremely competitive to get in. For

every member of the graduating class who applied to be accepted to the programs, it is incredible.

While LCU has a well-established track record of medical school acceptance, this class was extra successful, Elliott said. In addition to being hard-working and fast-learning students, they were also fun to be around.

Elliott said the two things that set LCU apart in its high acceptance rates are the small class size and faith-based aspect.

"Our professors teach the classes," he said, "not graduate students or teaching assistants. And because we are faith-based, we have no limitations on what we can talk about in the classroom."

Secular schools, Elliott said, are limited. LCU professors can expose students to all three theories-- evolution, creationism and intelligent design, and point students to the truth of God's Word.

"Our students are better prepared for medical school because of the stronger critical thinking skills and foundations in reading, science and math," he said.

He said he has no doubt this class will succeed and join the ranks of former LCU students who are now doctors and physical therapists all across the country.

"Once again, we find ourselves congratulating a great group of students," said Dr. Wade Warren, professor of biology. "Our applicant pool this year is an unusually large group of exceptionally talented students. They have distinguished themselves in ways that will be remembered for years to come. LCU has provided an environment of support and challenge for them, but they have done the hard work and deserve the credit for their success. The faculty are grateful for the opportunity to teach them, to lead them in research projects, to become their mentors, and to develop friendships with them. We know they have learned much in the sciences, and it is also our prayer that their love for Jesus has deepened during their time at LCU. We have no doubt that they are going to heal and care for many."

Lanford twins to Take on Med School *Together*

by Elizabeth Clarke



Louisiana Christian University's Ethan and Leanna Lanford, of Pineville, have been doing everything together even before their birth—and that didn't change once they graduated from college.

Both have been accepted into the LSU Shreveport School of Medicine in the fall. Only 150 applicants were selected from a pool of more than 5,000.

The twins have been together from grade school through high school, then opted to both attend LCU, after a visit their long-time neighbor-turned-mentor Dr. Wade Warren, professor of biology.

"Dr. Warren sat us down as juniors in high school and told us exactly what to take and when," Leanna said. "We came here [LCU] because he gave us a plan, four years all down on paper. I'm OCD and needed that. I wanted to go where I had the best shot of getting into medical school."

Their parents, Clay and Pam Lanford, were excited about them staying home for college, but also because they are both LCU alumni themselves.

"Neither had LC at the top of their undergrad college choices until we shared how important the small class size and personal relationships with the professors mattered to us as alumni," Pam said. "They agreed to meet with Dr. Warren. Both of them are Type A personalities and need know every detail and fact available. Dr. Warren graciously summarized their entire pre-

med life down to when and which classes to take within 30 minutes. They were relieved and excited! It helps tremendously that LCU's pre-med program has a fantastic reputation in the

local medical community with many of our local doctors as alumni. They were sold That, plus some strong financial incentives because of their high school academics, convinced the local honors students



to stay close to home to pursue their college degrees.

Leanna was a Smith Scholar and honors student, and Ethan a STEM to STEAM Scholar. They both graduated from LCU debt free.

“Ethan and Leanna Lanford were part of an exceptional group of graduating seniors,” Warren said. “They are academically talented students with drive and determination mixed well with compassion and maturity. They do more than they are asked to do in every setting. They are both going to be exceptional doctors and will be healing and caring for people for many years. The faculty at LCU are so thankful they selected this school to do their undergraduate work.”

Interestingly, while Leanna said she has known since she was a baby that she wanted to be a doctor, it took a lot longer for Ethan to come to that conclusion.

Originally, Ethan wanted to pursue a military career, but a congenital back disorder ended that dream. He also considered becoming a lawyer.

But after taking debate his freshmen year in high school, he said law wasn't for him.

“Our sophomore year in high school, our grandpa had a stroke,” Ethan said. “From that point on, that sent me to medicine. Watching him be uncomfortable and in pain made me want to help relieve others' discomfort.”

While they are both going to LSU Shreveport, their paths to get there were not the same.

Leanna, who was married in May, applied for early acceptance so that her fiancé Cameron Page could get settled in his career in Shreveport. She has known since October 2024 that she was accepted. Ethan applied to multiple schools before deciding on LSU Shreveport because of its diverse patient population.

“Pray for our parents,” Leanna said. “They have two kids going to medical school and two daughters getting married this year.”

Older sister Ashlynn Lanford also attended LSU Shreveport, earning her doctorate of physical therapy there. Leanna's wedding will be on Ashlynn's birthday, and Ashlynn will be saying her vows on the twins' birthday in December.

While the twins say they both wanted to separate for medical school, ultimately the culture of cooperation and homey feel of LSU Shreveport won them over. And Leanna said she knows her brother is also looking forward to coming over to homecooked meals at her place.

Where they will diverge, they said, will be in the specialties they will pursue.

Ethan is interested in areas like anesthesia and interventional pain management-areas that require a physician to know every single surgical operation-in order to minimize a patient's discomfort.

Ethan shadowed anesthesia for a month and interventional pain for a week.

“During my shadowing experience, the anesthesiologists were able to multi-task between several different responsibilities in the hospital and do so efficiently, which was very appealing to

me,” Ethan said.

Leanna said she did a weeklong rotation shadowing an anesthesiologist, and that is not for her.

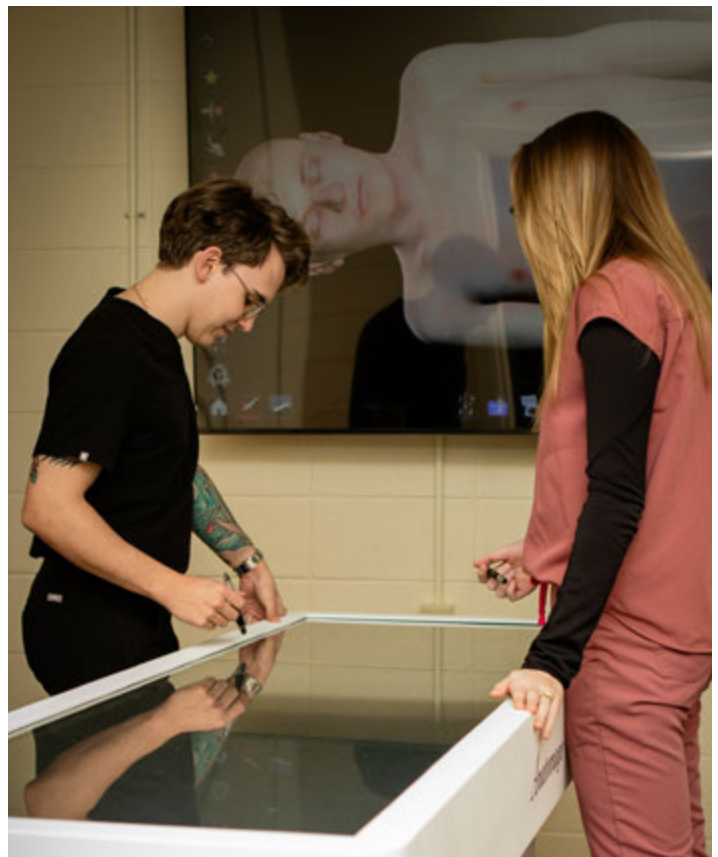
“I don't want to spend every day in the OR,” she said. “I want more patient interaction with them awake.”

She did two weeks shadowing an OB-GYN and said she was drawn to a specialty like pediatric gynecology, working with an underserved population.

“For peds patients, going to the gynecologist is scary for them already, and sometimes it is really uncomfortable to come into a waiting room of pregnant women especially if there are men in the room. Pediatric gynecology is not currently served as a specialty in this area.”

Leanna wants to work in a specialty where she has long-term relationships with patients.

“Both Ethan and Leanna have been a pleasure to have as students here at LCU,” said Dr. Sarah Payne, chemistry professor and director of the C.S. Lewis Honors Program. “Not only are they both academically gifted, but they have also been actively involved in Cavanaugh Hall life as lab assistants and tutors. Both have worked hard to successfully matriculate into medical school. The bittersweetness of college is that students are only here for four years. It has been a fun and unique experience teaching a set of twins while raising my own set of toddler twins at home.”





LCU Welcomes *10th President & Family* to Campus by Elizabeth Clarke

Louisiana Christian University began the fall semester with a new president and family on campus.

Johnson and his family, wife Heather, and four children, Mark Jr., Jonathan, Victoria and Benjamin, moved into the Robert Lynn Alumni House this summer. The house had not been used as the presidential home since the Lynn family lived there in the 1990s. Lynn was the sixth president of LC.

Johnson officially took office June 1, coming to Pineville from seven years in New Orleans at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The family lived on the campus there, and Heather said they wanted to continue that here at LCU to create a culture of community.

“We want everyone to know we’re here,” Mark said. “We’re all in.”

Two of their children will also be students at LCU, so the Johnsons won’t just be the first family—they will also be parents. Mark Jr. is a junior and Jonathan is a freshman, who

will be living in the dorms.

College campuses remain an enduring thread in the Johnsons’ story. The two met in 1992 at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania, in Russian class. Heather was a sophomore, and Mark was a junior.

“He was getting A’s, and I was not,” Heather said. “I was smart enough to study with the person getting A’s. My grades went up.”

They both remember their professor, Dr. John Mark Scott, watching the budding classroom romance between the basketball player and the cheerleader.

Mark said, smiling, “I thought she was cute.”

When Scott retired, the Johnsons took their children to meet him and show them the classroom where it all started.

A third-generation Baptist minister, Mark earned his B.A. in 1994, becoming the first African American commencement speaker in the college’s history. A year later, Heather became the first female African American commencement speaker.

The pair married in 1995, and Mark went on to a professional basketball career in Germany.

Soon, the academic life called again, and the Johnsons moved to Princeton, New Jersey, in 2001, where Mark earned his Master of Divinity in 2004 and Master of Theology in 2005 from Princeton Theological Seminary.

Heather, who had initially pursued a career in corporate America, was called to the education field while her husband was in seminary. She went on to become a National Board-Certified Teacher.

While at Princeton, Mark was named the executive director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at the 7,000+ member Metropolitan Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey. In addition, he was recognized as one of the “100 Positive Men of New Jersey” for his work with at-risk youth.

From New Jersey, the Johnsons moved to Washington, D.C., where Mark spent time in the nonprofit sector working for the Best Friends Youth Foundation as a program director. During this time, he presented character-based curricula on Capitol Hill for U.S. school districts.

In 2009, the Lord called the family to Cleveland, Ohio.

Mark was elected the eighth pastor of Liberty Hill Baptist Church. During his nine years there, the church grew significantly and established strong partnerships with other churches, businesses and organizations, annually mobilizing more than 1,000 missionaries to revitalize Cleveland. His work attracted the attention of the Baseball Chapel, leading to his appointment as chaplain for the then-Cleveland Indians (now Guardians), from 2016-2018, where he and Heather provided spiritual and family support for the organization.

Following their time in Cleveland, the Johnsons moved to New Orleans in 2018, where Mark began his doctoral studies in evangelism, pastoral ministries, and Christian leadership in 2019. After guiding Edgewater Baptist Church of New Orleans through the COVID-19 pandemic, he joined the faculty at NOBTS as assistant professor of evangelism and pastoral ministries and director of the Doctor of Ministry Division.

And in 2024, the opportunity to be considered for LCU’s 10th president presented itself.

“The search firm called and said someone had submitted my name, and they requested information,” Mark said.

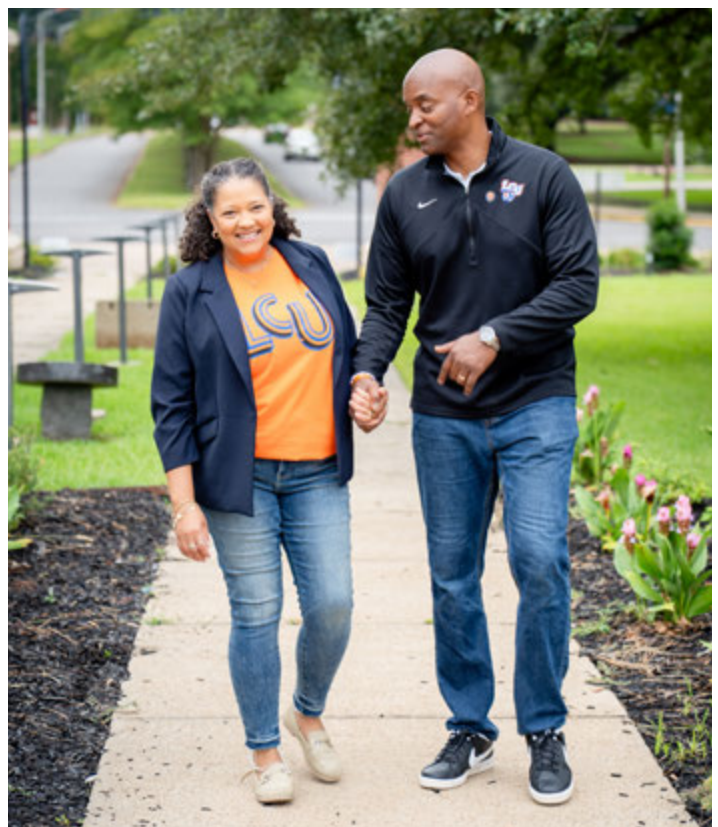
Mark said he had to ask himself three questions.

“Can I do this?” He knew he was capable because of past and current experiences professionally and spiritually.

“Should I do this?” He asked himself if he was being called to submit his information.

“Will I do this?” He and Heather talked and prayed about this and what it would mean for their family.

Heather said she could see all the qualities that God had placed in her husband that would make him a good fit for LCU’s presidency, as well as the role models he had placed in



his path along his journey here, including at NOBTS.

“He loves and he listens well,” Heather said. “He trusts...he will always follow the Lord.”

Johnson was officially elected the 10th president of the university in February. His official start date was June 1.

“Our journey has taken us on lots of moves,” Heather said. “We’ve seen His hand in them all. As you follow the Lord’s lead, it gets easier to follow the Lord. God has guided our lives everywhere. He has been faithful.”

In addition, though native Midwesterners, the Johnsons had fallen in love with Louisiana during their years in New Orleans and traveling the state to different churches. Mark said he has especially grown fond of Central Louisiana.

“The people are great, and there’s an energy,” he said. “When you go where God calls you, there’s a presence. Everyone here pulls together.”

The Johnsons said they will be present and active everywhere on campus, and students may even find them walking on campus in the evenings.

“We are so grateful for the Louisiana Baptists praying for us,” Heather said. “We feel so supported by them.”

The Johnsons pray that the community spirit they already feel at LCU continues to grow.

“We want young people across the state to come visit LCU,” Heather said. “You may not wind up choosing to attend here but come visit us.”



LCU Students Learning to live *off the land, homesteading* in Winn Parish by Elizabeth Clarke

When Elijah and Kaleigh Jones aren't on campus, you will probably find them—if you try hard enough and have a GPS—at home about a mile-down a heavily forested long, red dirt road in Grant Parish.

The area is so remote, in fact, Kaleigh said they can choose between three “nearby” towns for the place they live. The nearest grocery store is Walmart, 40 minutes away. And the couple makes a daily hour-long trek to campus for classes.

Keeping up with these Joneses wouldn't be the choice for many in our culture, but this couple has chosen to live a modern homesteading lifestyle.

Contemporary homesteading is marked by growing your own food and making other essentials, raising livestock, making homemade products for use and resell, and living a simpler lifestyle close to nature.

Their lifestyle isn't for the faint of heart.

But the couple said the struggle has only brought them closer together and closer to the Lord.

Elijah, a senior business administration—marketing and management major from Winn Parish, and Kaleigh, a junior public relations major from Shreveport, met in the fall semester of 2023 in Dr. Scott Pickard's history class.

“He sat next to me and asked for a pencil every single day until he asked me out,” Kaleigh said.

They were married in August 2024 and moved to the Winn Parish property in January.

“I never even considered this lifestyle,” Kaleigh said. “I was going to move to the East Coast and live in a city, and then I met him. It's been a big adjustment. I've lived in the city most of my life.”

The home they live in was built by Elijah's great-grandparents after the first house on the property burned to the ground. The couple inherited it and the 10 acres on which it sits. Elijah grew up in and around Winn Parish and still has a lot of family in the area, which the pair said has come in handy as they have started the numerous renovations on the old home and property.

“Growing up, we always had lots of animals. I grew up with all of it, big gardens every year,” Elijah said. “Most of the produce and food came from the gardens and what you raised. We'd butcher one to two cows a year and froze it and ate from it all year.”

The Joneses said they plan to start their garden in the next year and have started procuring seeds. They are also building their animal inventory and currently own 21 chickens, five ducks and one obnoxious turkey.

“Once the coop is completed, our goal is to have 50-100 chickens,” Kaleigh said.

Their plan is to sell the chicken eggs. They use the duck eggs in their own cooking and baking because of their rich creaminess.

“The turkey is just for fun,” Kaleigh said. “She is sweet and won't peck anything, and she is spoiled rotten.”

Inside the home have been many more challenges, which are far from over, the pair said.

They lived without electricity until April and just got indoor plumbing in July.

Most of the work around the property they have done themselves or with the help of family.

No one had lived in the house for more than 25 years, so there were lots of clogged rusty pipes and bad wiring throughout.

Much of the house has had to be gutted, walls knocked down, a leaky roof replaced and flooring ripped up.

The attic of their home was riddled with the mummified remains of dead squirrels, rats and other rodents that had gotten trapped and died over the decades. The pair had to clean all that out to make the home liveable.

“We knew it would be hard, but not this hard,” Kaleigh said. “The marriage part isn't hard. It's a choice we made to be content where we are, and Elijah is a pro at it.”

Still, neither of them is complaining about any of the struggles, which include no hot water and having to purify all water they do use, as the area they live in is always under a boil water notice.

“I don't always have a good attitude,” Kaleigh said. “But then he reminds me of how blessed we are.”

Elijah is a firm believer that with hard work comes many rewards. They have a house that is paid for and have little to no debt. They both have loving families who support them.

Kaleigh said the key is not to let outside problems affect their relationship. The pair do daily morning devotionals together.

“We have each other to hold to in hard times,” she said. “And we've both had really great role models and wise mentors.”

Both attribute strong, loving parents and the church as the source of much of their strength of character.

“We both grew up in church our entire lives, and having those principles to ground your life on is key,” Kaleigh said.

One of their recent adventures has been starting up their own small business, Louisiana Wild (louisiana-wild.com), which features many of the homemade products they make and use themselves.



Outstanding Students Recognized at *Honors Convocation*

By Elizabeth Clarke

Louisiana Christian University held its 64th Annual Honors Convocation, recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of students in all areas of academics as well as in athletics.

"The students honored today are high achievers with very bright futures," said Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Henry O. Robertson. "Our faculty have worked with them to bring out their many God-given talents. I am pleased we could come together at Honors Convocation and celebrate their achievements."

"Today the value of a Christian higher education was on display with students present who exceeded expectations and reached higher than they may have even thought possible," Robertson said. "Our faculty facilitated and God ordained that these talented men and women will be among the next leaders of this state and nation."



Convergence Media Students Attend, Win at Southeast Journalism Conference

By Elizabeth Clarke



Louisiana Christian University convergence media and public relations students participated in the Southeast Journalism Conference (SEJC) at Mississippi State University in Starkville over the weekend and brought home several awards.

Nine students attended and participated in on-site competitions against students from other universities across the Southeast.

Danny Cobb and Adán Wright placed third in TV Sports.

In addition, Best of the South awards were given to the best student submissions representing published and broadcast works of journalism for 2024.

The following students were recognized:

Kai Stone – TV Hard News Reporter, 4th place; TV Feature Reporter, 4th place

Cayden Walls – TV Feature Reporter, 5th place

Wildcats Media Sports Podcast - Best Audio Program, 3rd place

SEJC includes 25 colleges and universities in the Southeast and is open to all schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky.

LCU Softball So Much More Than a Game

By Elizabeth Clarke

Sportsmanship happens on and off the field and builds character in athletes in all aspects of their lives, and it's one of the key components of the softball team at LCU.

Giving back to the community and just being grateful is central to this team's winning formula.

On Veterans Day, the 46 women and four coaches spent the day calling veterans and their families around the country to express their thankfulness for all they have sacrificed for their country and its citizens.

Head Coach Barry Roberts said the team has been doing this since 2018, when he came to LCU, and the team looks forward to it each year. Roberts said they called about 200 veterans this year.

Roberts previously did this service project at Robertsdale High School and said some of the veterans have been getting calls for nearly 20 years.

Seniors Karlie Stine, of Hackberry, and Jordan Dauthier, of Jarreaux, said they look forward to the projects.

"It's a great thing to do because they made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and freedom," Dauthier said.

Stine said the veterans called always appreciate getting a call from someone acknowledging their service.

The softball team also participates in Operation Christmas Child every year. This is a ministry that provides shoeboxes filled with Christmas gifts for children around the world who may not otherwise receive anything, along with a message of Christ's love.

Currently, the team is also collecting pairs of new socks for boys and girls of all ages as part of a project for the foster community. They also visit with elementary students in Rapides Parish, eating with them and reading to them.

"I'm always looking for community service projects that mean something, not just to say we did something," Roberts said. "We try to be a positive part of the community."





From *Pakistan to Pineville* Professor Counts His Blessings

By Elizabeth Clarke

While Louisiana Christian University welcomed many international students who traveled thousands of miles to attend college, few traveled as far as new mathematics faculty member Dr. Ashar Ghulam.

Ghulam moved from Lahore, Pakistan, his hometown of more than 13 million residents, of whom are more than 96% Muslim, to live in Pineville, a town of 15,000, and work at a Christian university.

To say his life has changed seems to be more than just a bit of an understatement. However, Louisiana itself was not new to him or his family.

Ghulam, who was raised in a Christian family, studied at Forman Christian College University in Lahore. Previously this university was run by Presbyterian missionaries. He earned his master's from the University of the Punjab, also in Pakistan.

He spent a few years teaching mathematics in high schools. Then in 2003, martial law was declared, and the Army took over. The government had previously taken over control of the Forman Christian College University, Lahore and eliminated the role of the Christian missionaries.

"The head of the Army, he was a former student, and he helped the missionaries regain control of the Institute, and it was returned to the Presbyterian missionaries," Ghulam said. "At that time, they were looking for faculty, and I joined there."

He worked there from 2003-2010, when he applied for and was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study at LSU. He earned his Master of Science and Ph.D. in mathematics while he was there.

Ghulam, along with his wife and three children spent several years in Baton Rouge while he was studying. It was his first time in America, he said.

His oldest child, Isaac Ashar, was 5 then. He is now a freshman studying computer science at LCU.

Ghulam said finding a church with a good fellowship was central to his happiness in his new home. It was there he met U.S. Sen. Bill Cassidy, who was a U.S. representative at the time.

Cassidy was his oldest son's Sunday School teacher.

However, he returned to Pakistan in 2016. A condition of the Fulbright Scholarship program is that recipients must return to their home country for at least as long as their scholarship lasted.

In 2024, a position opened at LCU, and with the reference of Sen. Cassidy, and his exceptional credentials, his family made the move back to Central Louisiana.

"Dr. Ghulam was for over 20 years a professor at Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan near the border with India," said Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Henry O. Robertson. "As a Christian committed to Jesus Christ, he worked there faithfully and was a blessing to his students. His students are working and getting higher education in different parts of the world. He has worked for the Higher Commission of Pakistan(HEC), also. He is widely published, cited dozens of times, and has been a presenter at international conferences. We welcome Dr. Ghulam and his family to the LCU family and value the stature he brings to the mathematical field here on this campus."

Ghulam said the biggest challenge is the increased use of technology in the classroom. Student behavior is also different, but having taught in graduate school at LSU, he was accustomed to American students.

The software that American universities use is considered quite costly in Pakistan, he said. But he is learning and willing to learn even more new things.

On the personal side, he said he finds the food in Louisiana to be milder than he is used to eating. Even though Cajuns are known for their heat, Pakistani and Indian food has much more kick. So he said they are learning to like 'mild' flavors.

"I'm comfortable here," Ghulam said. "And my son is happy here. It is God's plan that we are here, and it was not easy to come here from our country to be here for work. We are starting a new life here, with more opportunities for our children."

LCU Awards Two Endowed Professorships

By Elizabeth Clarke



Two faculty members were honored with endowed professorships during the Founders Day Chapel service.

Dr. George Alecusan, assistant professor of political science, was awarded the Hogan Family Professor of Political Science. Aluscan is a constitutional scholar with a deep understanding of the American federal system of government. He majored in both political science and history at Ashland University in Ohio. He went on to earn an M.A. and Ph.D at the University of Dallas. He is a contributor of a chapter on John C. Calhoun to a textbook on American political thought.

Dr. John Wang, associate professor of mathematics, was awarded the Carolyn Adams Dawson Professorship in Mathematics. Wang is a native of China and brings a wealth of mathematical knowledge to LCU. He holds Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in mathematics from the University of Mississippi and an M.S. in operations research and cybernetics from Central China Normal University. He has published more than 25 refereed journal articles and has presented his work at over 30 national and international conferences.

Acting President Dr. David Jeffreys and Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Henry O. Robertson presented the awards.

"The two professorships given today are in recognition of the exceptional teaching and scholarship of these two professors. Dr. Alecusan and Dr. Wang are mission-minded, productive academics, and dedicated to the university," Robertson said. "These awards are an investment in what they will offer our students for years and hopefully decades to come."

The Hogan Family and Dawson families gave tremendous gifts that combined with the innovative public-private partnership with the Louisiana Board of Regents allow LCU to attract and retain the best faculty for exceptional higher education in the state of Louisiana.

"The holders of these endowed professorships receive a salary supplement and enrichment funds that will further their scholarly pursuits," Robertson said. "In turn, their teaching, service and contributions to our community and state over the years will add value to our graduates, who will one day be the lifeblood of our economy, politics, and churches and in all they do."

From Pulpits to Politics: LCU's President Leads Bold Season of Growth & Outreach Across Louisiana

By Elizabeth Clarke

From the church pulpit to the governor's visit, softball fields to ribbon cuttings, Dr. Mark L. Johnson spent the spring months fully immersed in advancing the mission of LCU across Louisiana and beyond.

Since early spring, Johnson has logged over 10,000 miles, meeting with donors, visiting churches, attending alumni events, and championing the cause of Christian higher education throughout the region.

Johnson was unanimously voted in as LCU's 10th president in February by the Board of Trustees.

"It's been a rich and rewarding season," Johnson said. "The Lord is opening doors for LCU, and we're stepping through them with boldness, vision and gratitude."

Celebrating students remained a top priority. Highlights included the LCU Ring Ceremony, spirited support for the university's softball and baseball teams, and special graduation recognitions for student-athletes. Café Du Monde celebrations and engaging theatrical productions added joy and creativity to campus life.

Off campus, Johnson preached at churches across Louisiana, spoke at the Director of Missions Conference, and opened a session of the Louisiana State Legislature alongside the Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce and hosted Gov. Jeff Landry for a special campus visit.

LCU also celebrated a generous and meaningful gift: \$50,000 was received from First Baptist Church of Lafayette in honor of Luther A. Burney's retirement and decades of faithful service. The gift will benefit the university and stand as a testament to Burney's enduring impact on Christian leadership and education.

In the civic arena, Johnson addressed the Central Louisiana Rotary Club, participated in local ribbon-cutting events, met with prospective students, and collaborated with business leaders on shared initiatives.

"We're not just educating students," he said. "We're shaping Christian leaders who will make a difference in every sphere."

Crucial to the university's momentum, Johnson credited the exceptional executive team surrounding him.

"I'm blessed with a group of leaders who bring wisdom, energy and Christ-centered commitment to every table they sit at," he shared.

From academics to admissions, security to technology, and advancement to finance, each team member has helped guide this vital season of transition with excellence and care.



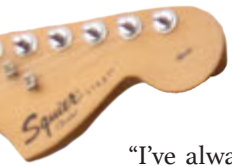
Palmettos Offers a Taste of Paradise in Pineville

By Elizabeth Clarke

When the Louisiana heat index reaches triple digits, many of us long for an island oasis—ice-cold drinks and palm trees. Louisiana Christian University student Morgan Tradewell and her family decided to bring a little bit of that dream to Pineville.

Palmetto's Shave Ice opened in the summer of 2024, bringing a little bit of Hawaii to Central Louisiana.

Morgan, a senior Smith Scholar majoring in biology, and her family took a trip to Oahu, Hawaii, in 2022, and the idea for Palmettos was born.



"I've always loved Icees," she said. "Someone told us to try shaved ice, and I fell in love. Shave ice started in the Hawaiian sugar cane fields. Sitting in Waikiki, I wished I could bring it back home with me because it's just so good. I joked about opening our own shop."

Morgan drew her idea out on a napkin—and her family turned the joke into a reality.

Parents Tony and Darla Tradewell, along with her younger brother Marshall, a student at Pineville High School, all bought into the idea and now all help run Palmettos.

"We wanted a place to sit and enjoy and slow down," Darla said. "We had no idea of the response of the community. We just pinch ourselves."

Tony is a landscape architect and designed the space.

"The palmetto is similar to a Hawaiian palm tree, but is a tropical native plant to Louisiana. And it is very hospitable to Louisiana's climate, Tony said. Hence the name and the beautiful landscaping of the establishment.

Darla runs the business side and handles the graphics, and Marshall is the numbers guy. Morgan handles the marketing and social media side of the business.

"We all have our little parts to play," Morgan said. "I'm not a coffee shop girl; this is my vibe."

Palmetto's just celebrated its first anniversary, and Morgan said it's been a huge but fun learning experience.

"We're helping to build community over here," she said.

Several high school and college students work at the shop, and even more patronize the establishment, hang out with friends, and share part of their lives with each other.

LCU students have come over and played music, and Palmettos hosted the February March for Life. In addition, this summer Palmettos hosted a flavor surfer competition and a cornhole tournament, which raised funds for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

Palmettos currently offers 64 flavors, including a line of Hawaiian flavors. But there is literally no end to the flavor and ice cream combinations that customers come up with.

"It's just a place to relax," Darla said. "Shoes off, lying on the lawn, it gives that illusion you are somewhere else."

People have just welcomed the Tradewells and Palmettos into their families, Darla said.

You come here and people aren't on their phones, they are visiting, talking and praying together, she said.

"People come by on their best and worst days," Darla said. "And we take the time to visit with them and share Jesus."

Regular customer Gayle Murrell, who is a librarian at LCU, said grape is her favorite flavor.

"I love Palmettos because it has the perfect shaved ice that melts in your mouth," she said. "I've known Darla and Tony Tradewell for over 20 years, as we are members of Philadelphia Baptist Church together. When I bring my granddaughters, Ellie and Hannah, to dance on Mondays, we stop at Palmettos."

Ellie prefers Darla's special mix of clear tiger's blood with cream, while Hannah loves wedding cake with cream.

Morgan, who graduates in December, plans to head off to pursue her Occupational Therapy doctorate.

"I feel like I've earned a business degree, I've learned so much," she jokes.

She said she will still be running the social media for Palmettos and won't ever be too far to drive back and fill her shave ice fix.



2025

FOOTBALL

2026

AWAY
HOME



AUG
30



SEP
6



SEP
13



SEP
20



SEP
27



OCT
4



OCT
11



OCT
18



OCT
25



NOV
8



NOV
15



WOMEN'S SOCCER²⁵



WILEY COLLEGE
AUGUST 17



SOUTHWEST
OCTOBER 4



ANGELNA CC (EXHIBITION)
AUGUST 19



TEXAS A&M-SAN ANTONIO
OCTOBER 9



UNIV. OF MOBILE
AUGUST 21



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE
OCTOBER 11 (SENIOR DAY)



SPRING HILL COLLEGE
AUGUST 30



TEXAS A&M-TEXARKANA
OCTOBER 16



BLUE MNTN. CHRISTIAN
SEPTEMBER 12



JARVIS CHRISTIAN
OCTOBER 18



NORTH AMERICAN
SEPTEMBER 25



XAVIER (LA)
OCTOBER 23



TEXAS A&M-VICTORIA
SEPTEMBER 27



LSU-ALEXANDRIA
OCTOBER 25



TEXAS COLLEGE
OCTOBER 2

MEN'S SOCCER²⁵



 **LSU EUNICE (SCRIMMAGE)**
AUGUST 15, 2025

 **CENTENARY (SCRIMMAGE)**
AUGUST 17, 2025

 **WILLIAMS BAPTIST**
AUGUST 23, 2025 AT 7 P.M.

 **SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN**
AUGUST 30, 2025 AT 7 P.M.

 **BETHEL (TENNESSEE)**
SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

 **BLUE MOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN**
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 AT 3:30 P.M.

 **DELTA STATE (EXHIBITION)**
SEPTEMBER 12, 2025 AT 6 P.M.

 **PAUL QUINN**
SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

 **HUSTON-TILLOTSON**
SEPTEMBER 20, 2025

 **NORTH AMERICAN**
SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 AT 7 P.M.

 **TEXAS A&M-VICTORIA**
SEPTEMBER 27, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **TEXAS COLLEGE**
OCTOBER 2, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **SOUTHWEST (NEW MEXICO)**
OCTOBER 4, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **TEXAS A&M-SAN ANTONIO**
OCTOBER 9, 2025 AT 7 P.M.

 **OUR LADY OF THE LAKE**
OCTOBER 11, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **TEXAS A&M-TEXARKANA**
OCTOBER 16, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **JARVIS CHRISTIAN**
OCTOBER 18, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **XAVIER**
OCTOBER 23, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **LSU ALEXANDRIA (SENIOR DAY)**
OCTOBER 25, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

 **LSU SHREVEPORT**
NOVEMBER 1, 2025 AT 3 P.M.

LOUISIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

2025 VOLLEYBALL



WILDCATS

HOME AWAY

AUGUST

Friday	29	Rochester Christian	Fort Worth, TX	9 am
Friday	29	Lindsey Wilson	Waxahachie, TX	5 pm
Saturday	30	Huston Tillotson	Waxahachie, TX	12 pm
Saturday	30	Evangel	Waxahachie, TX	2 pm

SEPTEMBER

Friday	5	Dallas Christian	Conway, AR	3 pm
Friday	5	Tougaloo	Conway, AR	8 pm
Saturday	6	Sterling	Conway, AR	3 pm
Saturday	13	Wiley	New Orleans, LA	1 pm
Saturday	13	Dillard	New Orleans, LA	3 pm
Friday	26	SUNO	New Orleans, LA	6 pm
Saturday	27	Loyola	Hattiesburg, MS	TBD
Saturday	27	William Carey	Hattiesburg, MS	TBD

OCTOBER

Friday	3	OLLU	Pineville, LA	7 pm
Saturday	4	OLLU	Pineville, LA	12 pm
Friday	10	TAMUT	Texarkana, TX	6 pm
Saturday	11	TAMUT	Texarkana, TX	12 pm
Friday	17	Jarvis	Hawkins, TX	7 pm
Saturday	18	Jarvis	Hawkins, TX	12 pm
Friday	24	XULA	Pineville, LA	7 pm
Saturday	25	XULA	Pineville, LA	12 pm
Saturday	25	USSA	Pineville, LA	2 pm
Friday	31	Texas College	Tyler, TX	7 pm

NOVEMBER

Saturday	1	Texas College	Tyler, TX	12 pm
Friday	14	RRAC Tournament	TBD	TBD
Saturday	15	RRAC Tournament	TBD	TBD

5th Annual C. S. Lewis Honors Forum

By Elizabeth Clarke

Ten Louisiana Christian University honors students presented research at the 5th Annual C.S. Lewis Honors Forum.

"It is always such an honor and privilege to witness the culmination of the years of hard work each of these students has put forth," said Honors Program Director Dr. Sarah Payne. "This year's presentations clearly demonstrated each of these student's commitment to academic scholarship. These students truly embody our motto from Lewis himself – 'Thirst was made for water; inquiry for truth.' I look with joy to their future impacts as Christian scholars and professionals."

Riley Armstrong, a graduating senior biology and chemistry major, of Eunice, presented "Recycled Ground Glass as a Sand Substitute in Potting Soil."

Her study investigated the potential of using recycled glass as a substitute for sand in potting soils to promote environmentally sustainable practices. Glass recycling offers significant environmental benefits, such as reducing air pollution, saving

energy and minimizing landfill waste. The research examined whether recycled ground glass can effectively replace sand in soil mixtures without compromising plant growth.

Armstrong plans to continue her education in the medical field with the goal of pursuing a career as a physician's assistant.

Henry "Nic" Chappell III, a graduating senior accounting major, of Mount Pleasant, Texas, presented "Biblical Applications in a Modern Professional Setting."

Chappell's project included an exegetical analysis of selected passages throughout the book of Nehemiah. The insights provided in the readings reveal how God's word, even the Old Testament, is relevant to the modern world and demonstrates how it can be applied in an everyday business setting.

He plans to enroll in an MBA program while working at an accounting firm in Mount Pleasant, Texas, and pursue a CPA license.

Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Henry Robertson said the honors students presented research and effort that displayed tremendous scholarship.

"The time each student spent and effort that each one poured into the different topics is truly remarkable," he said. "These highly gifted honors students showed that a true love of learning can result in amazing work worthy of the highest praise."

Tarah Elliott, of Alexandria, is a graduating senior in secondary education with an English concentration. She is the fifth in her family to graduate from Louisiana Christian University.

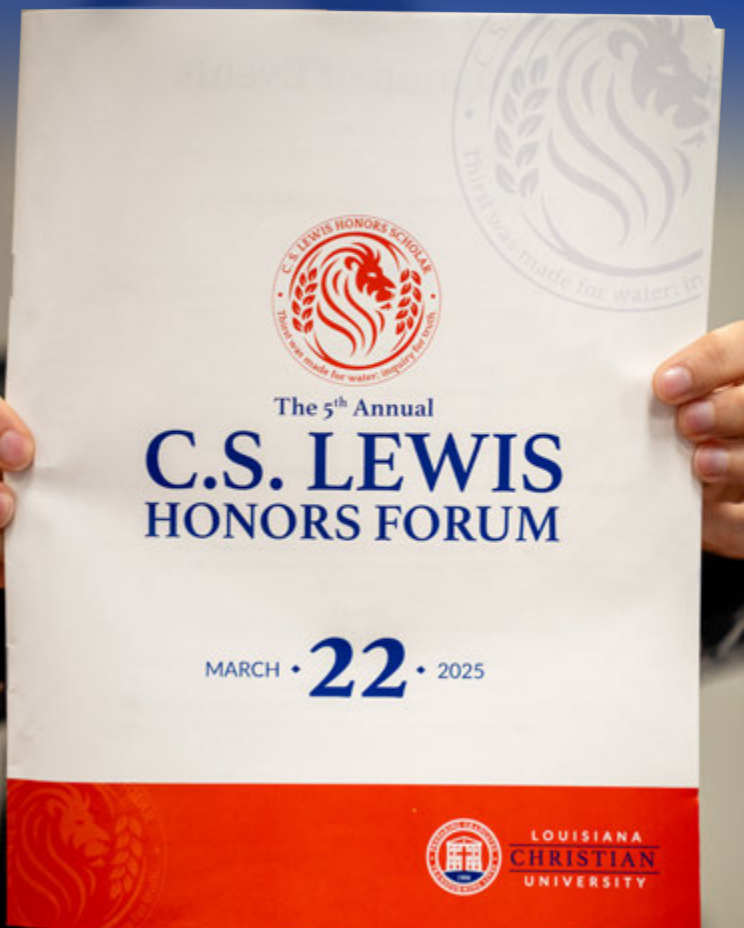
Elliott's research presentation was titled "Motivation and Autonomy in Student Achievement."

Her research presentation addressed the effectiveness of motivational strategies, both in place of and alongside content-focused strategies. Her research project showed a greater increase in student achievement after motivational strategies than after content-focused strategies.

She plans to continue her education in graduate school, to teach English and literature at the collegiate level.

Jade Harmon, a graduating senior in biology and chemistry, of Lafayette, presented "The Effectiveness of Using Microwave Oven Extraction to Examine Antibacterial Effects of Oolong Tea Against E. Coli."

Originally found in China, the value of oolong tea is found in its historical and medicinal benefits. Catechins are antimicrobial agents that are part of the polyphenol compounds in this tea.



Tea extraction using a microwave oven was coupled with a disk diffusion assay and precipitation reaction to examine if using a microwave oven would improve the extraction of catechins.

After graduation, Harmon will attend the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry.

Anna Hooker, a senior secondary education major with a concentration in English, presented “The Effectiveness of Peer Feedback/Reinforcement as a Remediator.”

Peer-assisted learning strategies can be an invaluable tool in the classroom. Receiving feedback from one’s teacher is an essential component of learning; this feedback, however, when coupled with peer partnership, has the potential to strengthen students’ overall motivation in the classroom. When students are encouraged to work together instead of apart, learning becomes less of a competition, and errors can become opportunities.

Her post-graduation plans are to teach high school English while working to become a published author.

Leanna Lanford is a graduating senior biology and chemistry major, of Pineville. Brianne Rotolo is a biology major and chemistry minor, of Bridge City. They presented a joint research project on “Implications of Heart Rate Variability on Personality and Personality Characteristics.”

Their study explored the potential relationships that heart rate variability (HRV) has with personality type and characteristics. Although a direct correlation has not yet been found, previous research suggests that HRV may be related to personality types and characteristics through a phenomenon known as vagal tone. Vagal tone is the link between heart rate and breathing, which plays into its influence on the regulation of cardiac activity. By looking at stress vulnerability and temperance, vagal tone can also be connected to aspects of personality. These relationships illustrate how HRV can potentially link to an individual’s personality.

Lanford will be attending LSU Shreveport School of Medicine in the fall, and Rotolo will be pursuing a doctorate of physical therapy degree at LSU Health Science Center in New Orleans.

Julia Thompson, a graduating senior public relations major, of Lafayette, presented “Smack Down Strategies: the Role of Public Relations in Shaping the Professional Wrestling World.”

Professional wrestling, also known as performative wrestling, is not a typical sport. Instead, it is a business, and what it is selling is a story. Thompson’s study argued that public relations strategies have shaped the growth of professional wrestling from its early days to its modern iteration. The project examined the role of key figures, wrestling personas, and marketing tactics that have influenced audience engagement.

Thompson plans to pursue a career in public relations in Louisiana.

Kayleigh Tomasich, a graduating senior in biology, of Denham Springs, presented “Discovering Saponification Properties of Peanuts.”

Tomasich studied the saponification properties of peanuts in an effort to combine disciplines in chemistry, food science, biology, and the history of saponification.

She plans to attend medical school after graduation.

Kamryn West, a graduating senior biology and chemistry major, of Pine Prairie, presented research on “The Anticoagulation and Antimicrobial Properties of Essential Oils.”

This study explored the anticoagulation and antimicrobial properties of three essential oils-- Frankincense, Myrrh, and Cassia-- through three separate experiments. The Blood Clotting Experiment sought to determine if these oils could prevent coagulation within the context of the participant’s blood type. The Oral Surface Experiment observed the antimicrobial effects of these oils against common oral pathogens. Similarly, the Hard Surface experiment assessed the efficacy of these oils against pathogens on a hard surface.

“What an incredible showcase of projects as these students completed their C.S. Lewis Honors program,” said Acting President Dr. David Jeffreys. “When I think of LCU, I think of students who have been prepared academically and spiritually, as we can watch and see how they serve God in their future careers. This Saturday was the culmination of many years of work that prepared these students to succeed wherever God directed them. Special thanks to all our professors who participate in this program, our students who go above and beyond as honors students, and the families as they pray and support their loved ones.”



Christy Wright Says *'God is in the details'* at 3rd Annual Maggie Martin Marketplace *Leadership* Summit By Elizabeth Clarke

Best-selling author and former Ramsey Solutions personality Christy Wright spoke to this year's attendees at the 3rd Annual Dr. Maggie Martin Marketplace Leadership Summit on how biblical principles connect to business practices in powerful and practical ways.

Wright, the author of the No. 1 best-selling *Business Boutique*, *Take Back Your Time*, and *Living True*, is a certified business coach, dynamic speaker, and personal development expert. She was a Ramsey Solutions personality for 12 years before God led her on a new path. Her message emphasized that living out one's faith is not confined to church or personal time—it can and should infuse every aspect of professional life.

She said it doesn't matter the kind of business you work in. If you are a believer, God is already there "because He is in you. He gave you your first idea, your first client, your first dollar. You are the light of the world. You bring it everywhere you go. Just let Him shine through you."

With clarity and conviction, Wright offered three foundational principles for living biblically in the business world—principles rooted in Scripture but deeply applicable to everyday leadership challenges.

Value people over policy.

Referencing Matthew 7:12—the Golden Rule—Wright reminded attendees that every decision, interaction, and business deal should be guided by compassion and fairness. "Treat others as you want to be treated," she said, even when it's inconvenient or costly.

"Value the person over the policy, the transaction, and the bottom line," Wright said. "You are to run your business very literally by the Golden Rule." She encouraged leaders to create cultures where people matter more than metrics, and where ethical decisions are not compromised by pressure or profit.

Value prayer over productivity.

Wright challenged the common mindset that productivity is the highest value in business. "God is a very specific God," she said. "Nothing is random. The same God who details temple measurements in the Old Testament and counts the hairs on your head also cares about your day-to-day business decisions."

She emphasized that prayer is not a passive fallback but a proactive strategy. "It is a lie of the enemy that the little things don't matter," she said. "Bring everything to Him in prayer. There's no detail too small." Wright advised business owners and leaders to start meetings in prayer, ask for wisdom in decision-making, and pause often to seek God's presence—even amid deadlines and demands.

Value obedience over everything.

"God will ask you to do things that don't make sense," Wright said. "He may ask you to leave everything. He may ask you to give it all away. Even when you don't understand, obey anyway."

She shared her personal journey of stepping away from her prominent role at Ramsey Solutions at the peak of her career. Though it was unexpected and initially confusing, Wright said it became a defining moment of faith. "God knows what you need," she said. "His plans for you are good. Obedience is not loss—it's trust. That's the economy of God. It's upside down. The first will be last."

Wright lives in Nashville with her husband and their three children. She now continues her work through speaking, coaching, and writing, helping others live lives of purpose, faith, and intentionality.

Dr. Maggie Martin closed the event by expressing deep gratitude to Wright for her boldness in sharing not only biblical truths but also her personal faith journey.

"What a joy it was to hear Christy," Dr. Martin said. "Our Christianity isn't just philosophical; it isn't just personal; it's practical. It shapes how we lead, how we work, and how we treat others."

The Dr. Maggie Martin Marketplace Leadership Summit was established through a generous donation by Natalie and Darryl Monroe as an annual spring event for business and industry leaders in Central Louisiana who live out faith in their workplaces. It was named in honor of Natalie's mother, an outstanding community volunteer and philanthropist whose legacy of faith, service, and leadership continues to inspire.





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