

Around the State: DBU women's soccer and volleyball serve in Costa Rica

May 8, 2024

The Dallas Baptist University [women's soccer](#) and [volleyball](#) teams traveled to Costa Rica during spring break. They served local schools in Guanacaste and Portegolpe and ran sports clinics for the students. The principal of one of the schools said no Americans had visited their school in more than 21 years. Assistant athletic trainer of Sports Medicine **Courtney Pinson** said, "Seeing the kids cry after we had only spent a few hours with them was eye-opening for everyone. ... I personally witnessed some girls get spiritually 'unstuck.' I saw them give God away, and I saw many seeds planted and watered." DBU women's soccer student-athlete **Sophia Schrock** said, "The Lord's faithfulness followed us. ... Our relationships with the kids at Escuela Antonio Jose de Sucre will forever be cherished. We were blessed to share God's love with them through murals, soccer, volleyball and community as our group returned with refreshed spirits and postures of gratitude. I'm still in awe of the many ways the Lord moved, and he alone deserves all the glory."



ETBU's 77th Senior Girl Call-Out, Erin Berry. (Photo/ETBU)

Erin Berry of Bullard was recognized April 26 during East Texas Baptist University's 77th annual Senior Girl Call-Out. Selected by a faculty and staff vote, the senior student "called out" each year is distinguished for her exemplary Christian character, social consciousness, personal poise, academic achievement and spiritual vision. Berry, a psychology major, is an Honors Program student who completed an award-winning honors research project. She also played on the ETBU women's basketball team and served as a Fellowship of Christian Athletes leader, Tiger Camp leader, Psi Chi secretary, Phi Gamma Mu president and Thrive peer mentor. As a member of St. Timothy's Anglican Church in Marshall, she actively engages in fellowship and service, contributing to the growth of the church plant. Twenty-seven young women participated in the Senior Girl Call-Out event alongside their "little sisters," underclassmen chosen by the seniors. During the ceremony, each senior girl passed onto her little sister the

symbols of the ideals and traditions of the university—the grace of the myrtle, the strength of the oak and the ever-verdant life of the pine. Berry also won the undergraduate research competition at the Southwestern Psychological Association conference in San Antonio. *Will Funny Chickens Cross the Road?: Humor Styles and First Impressions* was her winning project.



HPU students Jack Shackelford (left) and Daniel Archer (right), recipients of the 2024 Dr. Nat Tracy Servant Leadership Award, are pictured with Dr. Gary Gramling, dean of the School of Christian Studies, director of the Christian studies graduate programs and professor of Christian studies. (Photo/HPU)

Howard Payne University recently honored five students at the annual Servant Leadership Awards Chapel for their servant leadership on campus and in the community. Students honored were **Daniel Archer** of Houston, **Emily Hughitt** of Energy, **Hannah Parnell** of Idalou, **Jack Shackelford** of Midlothian and **Georgia Simmons** of Clarksville. “We are tremendously blessed to have such high-quality students here at Howard Payne University,” said **Gary Gramling**, dean of the School of Christian Studies,

director of Christian studies graduate programs and professor of Christian studies. “If you had been in our selection committee meeting, you would know that it is a very difficult task to narrow the selections down to just a few who will be honored. One of my favorite times of the year is when we have the opportunity to recognize students who seek to serve the Lord Jesus by serving others.” Hughitt, Parnell and Simmons each was awarded the Howard Payne University Servant Leadership Award—recognizing exemplary junior-level students in the areas of leadership and service, and including a \$1,000 scholarship. Hughitt was a recent intern with the *Baptist Standard*. Archer and Shackelford each were presented the Dr. Nat Tracy Servant Leadership Award—designated for senior-level students and established to honor the life of the late Nat Tracy, a faculty member in HPU’s School of Christian Studies. Recipients of both awards are selected from nominations made by HPU personnel and students.

Howard Payne University students **Brenna Douthit** and **Samantha Molina** were named the 2024 Yellow Rose Scholarship recipients by the HPU Women’s Club. Both were honored at the annual Yellow Rose Scholarship Luncheon alongside **Barbara Grooms**, this year’s Yellow Rose Award winner. Douthit is a sophomore from Waxahachie majoring in nursing.



The HPU Women’s Club recently hosted the 2024 Yellow Rose

Scholarship Luncheon. Barbara Grooms (center) was honored as the Yellow Rose Award recipient and Samantha Molina (left) and Brenna Douthit (right) were named Yellow Rose Scholarship recipients. (Photo/HPU)

Molina is a sophomore from El Paso majoring in business administration and music education. She is the first student from HPU's El Paso Center to be named a Yellow Rose Scholarship recipient. Grooms has been connected to HPU her entire life. She earned her bachelor's degree from HPU in 1959. Grooms served 25 years as secretary for First Baptist Church, Brownwood, where she had many opportunities to get to know HPU students. She and her husband, Dwayne, continue to be faithful members of the church. This year's keynote speaker was **Lesley Wyse**.

The Yellow Rose Endowed Scholarship currently provides scholarships for two students, thanks to generous support from the HPU family and the community. The luncheon, a tradition that began 19 years ago by the HPU Women's Club, is the primary fundraiser for the scholarship.



Hardin-Simmons' Western Heritage Day.
(Photo/HSU)

Hardin-Simmons University observed its 42nd annual Western Heritage Day on April 25. More than 4,000 attendees visited campus to travel back in time to experience a fun and educational day. Western Heritage Day aims to educate and celebrate the culture of the Big Country's past through interactive demonstrations and hands-on learning. This [free event](#), geared toward elementary and pre-k-aged children, is offered to the community each year.

[Steve Coleman](#) has announced his retirement from the Hardin-Simmons baseball program, effective at the end of the season, after a 27-year run leading the program. "I came to Hardin-Simmons when I was 33 years old and this university has been so good to me," Coleman said. "I have grown as a coach, as a leader, as a husband, parent, grandparent and strengthened my walk with the Lord. The coach in me always wished we would have won a title or more games, but the most important thing to me is the lasting relationships I have with my players and coaches. Those are the things I cherish the most." Coleman has a record of 568-537 and has led the Cowboys to the postseason in 19 of the 27 years, including this

year. He is the school's all-time wins leader and is the longest-tenured coach at Hardin-Simmons. His teams have produced a cumulative GPA of over 3.0 for the last 32 semesters. "I am beyond grateful for all that the Coleman family has done for Hardin-Simmons University," said **John Neese**, associate vice president for athletics. "It has been a great professional honor to work side by side with Steve for 27 years. ... We will make plans to honor Steve during the fall 2024 semester. This will allow for many of his former players who are coaches to come back during their offseason to thank him."

Hannah Brown was awarded the Parish Pulpit Preaching Fellowship and the Biblical Preaching award from [Preaching Today.com](https://www.preachingtoday.com) at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary's spring awards chapel. The fellowship, sponsored by Church of the Pioneers, is awarded among a small number of seminaries, including Princeton, Fuller, Gordon-Conwell and Luther Northwestern. The recipient—a master's degree student who has shown promise in preaching—is chosen by the faculty of participating seminaries to receive \$45,000, plus \$5,000 debt reduction, to spend a year overseas studying preaching. Truett recipients of the award complete their fellowship at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. A sermon by Brown has been featured in [Baptists Preaching](https://www.baptistspreaching.com).



Darin Wood (Courtesy photo)

Darin Wood has been selected as one of three 2024 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary distinguished alumni award recipients. Wood has

served as pastor of First Baptist Church of Midland since 2016. The Joshua native holds a Master of Divinity degree and a Ph.D. from Southwestern and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dallas Baptist University. He previously was pastor of Central Baptist Church in Jacksonville, First Baptist Church of Frankston and Memorial Baptist Church in Corsicana. He also served as youth evangelism intern with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.



Jalyx Hunt (Photo/Juan DeLeon Creative)

The Philadelphia Eagles selected Houston Christian University Huskies linebacker **Jalyx Hunt** in round three with pick 94 in the NFL draft. Hunt is the Huskies' all-American and the first-ever player drafted out of Houston Christian University. In the 2023 season, Hunt recorded 46 tackles, nine tackles for loss, 6.5 sacks, two forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries, one interception with a return for a touchdown, three quarterback hurries, two pass breakups and a blocked kick in 10 games. In just two seasons, Hunt has racked up 13.5 sacks, ranking second all-time at HCU, while his five forced fumbles are tied for most by an HCU player in their career. His three sacks this season versus Lamar University is the second-most in a single game in program history.