

Around the State: Dearborn addresses students at ETBU convocation

September 6, 2023

Philip E. Dearborn, president of the Association for Biblical Higher Education, delivered the official charge to students at the East Texas Baptist University convocation chapel service, focusing on Ephesians 2:10. “You are God’s masterpiece. He created each and every one of you for this moment in time,” Dearborn said. “Step into your calling with all your strengths, gifts, abilities, talents, words and weaknesses, and experience all the good things that he has planned for you.” Before assuming his post at the Association for Biblical Higher Education, Dearborn was provost of Lancaster Bible College, Capital Seminary and Graduate School. He has more than 26 years of higher education leadership experience.



Linda Adkins, granddaughter of James Henry Wayland, founder of Wayland Baptist University, stands

between a statue of his grandfather and Estelle Owens, emeritus professor of history and university historian. Adkins and Owens were featured speakers at Wayland's Founders Day celebration. (WBU Photo)

Linda Adkins, granddaughter of James Henry Wayland, spoke of her childhood with "Mamaw and Papaw" during Founders Day at Wayland Baptist University. Adkins was joined by **Estelle Owens**, emeritus professor of history and university historian, at the celebration of Wayland's 115th anniversary. James Henry and Sarah Frances Tucker Wayland gave the modern equivalent of \$2.5 million in their lifetime to establish the university, Owens said. "That's an enormous amount of money from a pioneer doctor who was often paid in chickens or a side of beef, because that was all his patients had," Owens said. "The Waylands showed us what it looks like when we do all we can do and then do more; when we pray as hard as we can and then pray more; when we care all we can and then care more; when we give all we can and then give more; when we're being all we can be and then becoming even more."

Prior to the start of fall semester classes, Dallas Baptist University professors participated in workshops on "Igniting Engagement: Empowering Faculty and Students for Academic Success." DBU Provost **Norma Hedin** and **Justin Gandy**, associate dean of the College of Business, led plenary sessions that addressed the lagging engagement of students across the country following the pandemic. Other faculty led breakout sessions on topics such as enhancing faith integration and teaching methodology. In one session, a panel of professors shared from their own strategies for success in the classroom while engaging Robert Marzano's book *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. Several sessions

focused on the effective and ethical classroom use of digital technology, including a breakout titled “ChatGPT and AI for the Curious and Cautious.”



Martha and Dick Brooks

Hardin-Simmons University dedicated Abilene Hall as the retrofitted home for the university’s engineering program. One new addition is the Dick and Martha Brooks Conference Room. **Dick Brooks** is retired CEO of Central and South West, parent company of West Texas Utilities, and served as an HSU trustee. **Martha Garrett Brooks** is former assistant principal of Abilene High School and also served as an HSU trustee. Another addition is the Brian Cargile Data Center, named for the late **Brian Cargile**, who served 35 years with HSU technology services. Abilene Hall also includes the George and Carolyn Newman Dean’s Suite. **George Newman** was former president of the HSU faculty, professor emeritus of biology and former chair of the board of trustees. **Carolyn Calvert Newman** retired from Dyess Elementary School after 29 years with the Abilene Independent School District.



Madison Brown

Madison Brown, a Dallas Baptist University graduate student from Round Rock who competed in both women's cross country and track and field, will represent the Lone Star Conference on the ballot for the 2023 NCAA Woman of the Year award. The conference award nominees will be reviewed by the NCAA Woman of the Year selection committee with the Top 30 list—10 women from each of the three Divisions—announced in October. Nine finalists will be introduced in November and celebrated at the Woman of the Year Award presentation during the NCAA Convention in Phoenix in January. The NCAA Woman of the Year award recognizes graduating female student-athletes for excellence in academics, athletics, community service and leadership throughout their college careers. **Jacob Phillips**, DBU head coach of cross country and track and field, praised Brown as "an extremely hard worker and an even better teammate." Brown received her Bachelor of Science degree in biology with a minor in psychology from DBU in May 2023. She received both the DBU Distinguished Biology Scholar and Scholar Athlete of the Year awards for 2022-23. While an undergraduate, Brown volunteered at the food pantry and the Grand Prairie ISD. She was named to Lone Star Conference Academic All-Conference lists and earned LSC Commissioner's Honor Roll

citations in each undergraduate semester. In addition, she was twice recognized for her academic achievements by the Division II Athletic Directors Association, and she was a 2022 Division II All-American in cross country.



Austin Seekins

The faculty of Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon School of Theology selected **Austin Seekins**, a senior from Abilene, as recipient of the 2023 Hancock-Potter Award for Vocational Ministry. The award recognizes a Baptist student who has a commitment to vocational ministry, excellence in academics and an understanding of historic Baptist principles. Seekins, the son of Travis and Jennifer Seekins, served two and a half years as a youth intern at Pioneer Drive Baptist Church in Abilene and now works with the church's college leadership team. He also serves on the service team for "The Gathering" contemporary worship service at Pioneer Drive. "The Logsdon School of Theology faculty sees Austin Seekins as a good example of an undergraduate student who combines academic excellence and church-related ministry," Associate Dean **Larry McGraw** said. "His consistency in the classroom and service to others as a practical way of sharing the gospel reflect a student who is deserving of receiving the

Hancock-Potter Award.”