

Around the State: ETBU Great Commission Center opens

May 3, 2023



The Great Commission Center at East Texas Baptist University

East Texas Baptist University celebrated the opening of its newly constructed Great Commission Center on April 28. The Great Commission Center is designed to equip students to live out their vocational calling as Christians and to serve as a gathering place for the campus community. In addition to housing the university's Great Commission Center program of missions and discipleship, the new building is home to the Fred Hale School of Business and the career development office. The 23,000-square-foot facility features large and medium-sized classrooms, conference meeting rooms and dedicated student study spaces. The Great Hall—a multipurpose event space located on the third floor of the building—provides business and leadership programming, fellowship, performing arts, worship activities and community life enrichment. “We rejoice in the culmination of God’s plans for this facility,” ETBU President **Blair Blackburn** said. “He engraved on our hearts this vision some five years ago. After much prayer and planning with the board of trustees, we pursued this strategic vision to construct a new center for academic

learning, spiritual discipleship, ministry and missions service, business leadership and career development. The Great Commission Center is the fulfillment of that vision.”

Texas Baptist Men is seeking to help benevolence ministries and crisis pregnancy centers around the state provide diapers. Across Texas, 1 mother in 3 is struggling to purchase diapers for her children. TBM wants to provide 50,000 diapers sizes 0 to 4 to help children and their mothers as a Mother’s Day gift to families in need. Drop off diapers between 9 a.m. and noon on May 6 at the TBM headquarters, 5351 Catron Dr., Dallas 75227. Donate financially online to the Mother’s Day Diaper Drive [here](#), or buy diapers through TBM’s [Amazon wish list here](#) and have them shipped directly to the TBM building.



The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor presented the Gary and Diane Heavin Servant Leadership Award to students (left to right) Catherine Burke, Joshua Bailey and Bailey Plummer. (UMHB Photo)

The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor presented the Gary and Diane Heavin Servant Leadership Award to students **Joshua Bailey**, son of Reginald and Versika Bailey of Mansfield; **Catherine Burke**, daughter of William and Keri Burke of Sunnyvale; and **Bailey Plummer**, daughter of

Greg and Tracy Plummer of League City. The award recognizes students' time and energy devoted to ministry and community service. It includes a \$1,000 cash award for each student, a portion of which can be donated to an organization of their choice. Bailey is a junior majoring in small business and entrepreneurship who attends Vintage Church in Temple. He has been involved with the First Year Collective, the Baptist Student Ministry leadership team, the Student Government Association executive cabinet and the McLane College of Business advisory board. He is giving a portion of his cash award to the Chiketa Cares Foundation, a nonprofit organization in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Burke is a senior business management major and Christian studies minor who attends Temple Bible Church, where she has served as a college small-group leader and college ministry intern. At UMHB, Burke has been involved in First Year Collective, Tri-Dub, the Easter pageant, Welcome Week, Young Life and served as the director for missions emphasis week. Burke plans to donate a portion of her cash award to Feed My Sheep, a nonprofit organization serving the homeless and needy people of Bell County. Plummer is a senior health science major who attends Vista Community Church, where she volunteers in the children's ministry, the college ministry, a small group, service projects and as a Discipleship Now leader. At UMHB, she has been involved in Welcome Week, the Easter pageant, campus revival, First Year Collective, intramural soccer and sand volleyball. Plummer also volunteers at the McLane Children's Hospital occupational therapy/physical therapy outpatient gym. She is a member of the Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society and the Alpha Chi Honor Society. Plummer will donate a portion of her cash award to Vista Community Church.



Ben and Bertha Mieth

Wayland Baptist University recognized **Ben and Bertha Mieth** for their \$2.5 million gift and longtime support by naming the university's nursing school in San Antonio in their honor. The gift, announced during an April 27 board of trustees meeting in Plainview, includes \$25,000 set aside to establish the Irene Wilson George Endowed Scholarship in Nursing. The scholarship honors Bertha Mieth's mother, who was a nurse. It will be awarded annually to a student selected by the faculty of the Ben and Bertha Mieth School of Nursing. "In every aspect of their lives, Ben and Bertha Mieth are servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are humbled by their love for Wayland Baptist University," President **Bobby Hall** said. "Even before Ben became a Wayland trustee, he and Bertha supported our mission center, provided scholarships and a professorship, and quietly met the needs of many individual students and many other WBU initiatives."



The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty on the Houston Christian

University campus

The *Houston Business Journal* named the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty on the Houston Christian University campus as the winner of its 2023 Landmark Award. The annual awards program recognizes the top commercial real estate projects in the Houston area completed in the previous year that help sculpt the look, feel and image of the city. Projects also were evaluated on excellence in land planning, design, construction, economics, marketing and management. The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, comprised of a main building modeled after Independence Hall, was chosen over five other finalists in the education category.



Students from schools throughout the Big Country region participated in activities at the 41st annual Western Heritage Day on the Hardin-Simmons University campus. (HSU Photo)

More than 3,600 students from schools throughout the Big Country region participated in activities at the 41st annual Western Heritage Day on the Hardin-Simmons University campus, April 27. Schoolchildren took turns scrubbing clothes on a washboard, learning trick roping, tasting food from

a chuckwagon, watching a farrier shoe a horse and seeing sheep sheared. They also enjoyed performances by the HSU Cowboy Band, the Six White Horses and Ballet Folklorico. “It’s special because the teachers who bring their classes and our student volunteers can say, ‘I was here when I was your age,’” said **Cassie Mattern**, director of university events.

Dallas Baptist University and Houston Christian University—formerly Houston Baptist University—each earned gold status as a [Military Friendly School](#) in the category of private schools offering a doctorate. The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor earned silver status in the same category. Howard Payne University earned silver status in the category of private schools not offering a doctorate. Institutions that appear on the list of Military Friendly Schools are evaluated in areas such as student retention, graduation, job placement and loan repayment for all students and student veterans, using public data sources and surveys.

Retirement

Frank Teat as senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Holland after 35 years in vocational ministry and another 10 years as a coach and teacher. He plans to continue to serve on the board of Highland Lakes Camp, lead camps, write Bible study curriculum, preach and volunteer.