

# Around the State: ETBU joins in Operation Christmas Child

November 29, 2023



During National Collection Week for Operation Christmas Child, all 23 ETBU athletic teams gathered to put gift boxes together. The student-athletes prayed over the boxes and for the children who will receive them.

East Texas Baptist University participated in its eighth annual Operation Christmas Child, an outreach program organized by Samaritan's Purse. The ministry involves filling shoeboxes with small toys, school supplies and other items that are sent to children all over the world as a Christmas gift and a tangible reminder of God's love for them. Prior to boxing the gifts, ETBU faculty, staff and students shopped for kids ages 2 to 14, picking out toys, clothes and various necessities for the children. ETBU collected a record number of more than 350 boxes. During National Collection Week, all 23 ETBU athletic teams gathered to put the boxes together. The student-athletes prayed over the boxes and for the children who will receive them.

The [Baylor Center for Developmental Disabilities](#) within the Baylor University School of Education will join [With Ministries](#) in a new program, “Worship as One: Learning with Children with Disabilities about Worship and Prayer.” The Lilly Endowment is supporting the program with a \$300,000 grant to With Ministries through its Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative. The aim of the national initiative is to support faith-based organizations as they help children grow in faith and deepen their relationships with God. “We want every church to be faithful in welcoming and embracing children with disabilities and their families in worship and life together,” said **Erik Carter**, executive director of the Baylor Center for Developmental Disabilities. “This much-needed project will invite, equip and support churches and families to re-envision the ways in which children with developmental disabilities participate in worship and prayer—both on and between Sundays.”



At the Houston Christian University Missions Fair, students had the opportunity to connect with more than a dozen local and global missions organizations. (HCU Photo)

Houston Christian University held its annual Missions Convocation and

Missions Fair on Nov. 15. At Convocation, students, faculty and staff heard from **Anne Alaniz**, a Houston gynecological oncologist. Alaniz founded Pothawira (Safe Haven) Christian to bring transformation to her home community in Malawi through expanding access to quality medical care, building schools and meeting basic human needs in Jesus' name. She told how a Baptist family unexpectedly sponsored her after meeting her on a mission trip to Malawi. The family provided the way for her to come to Texas during high school, to attend university and then begin her medical career. "When I look at my life, it's been a series of people who have used what is in their hands to fulfill a higher purpose and to obey God's calling for them," she said. "Life takes us through different seasons even when we think we have nothing to give. Don't worry about what you don't have, but be courageous, be hopeful, be obedient, and be willing to stretch beyond your imagination because God will take care of the rest." At the missions fair, students had the opportunity to connect with more than a dozen local and global missions organizations.



Tiffany Davis

**Tiffany Davis**, a Howard Payne University student from San Francisco, Calif., has been selected as a recipient of a Council of Independent Colleges/UPS Scholarship. The scholarship is provided by Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas and its national partner, the Council of Independent Colleges, through its CIC/UPS Educational Endowment. Davis is majoring in nursing because she sees it as a career in which she can work closely with people and serve them. "I love people. Nursing is God's call on my life," she said. "Knowing that the nursing program [at HPU] is

faith-based and being in that type of environment have been great and inspiring for me. Being here has brought me closer to God.”