

# Around the State: ETBU supports TBM disaster relief

September 15, 2021



East Texas Baptist University students load a pickup and trailer with items donated for Texas Baptist Men disaster relief ministries to help individuals affected by Hurricane Ida in Louisiana. (ETBU Photo)

East Texas Baptist University collected donated items for Texas Baptist Men disaster relief ministries to help individuals affected by Hurricane Ida in Louisiana. Items collected during the donation drive include bottled water and bottled Gatorade, infant and adult diapers, baby wipes, cleaning supplies, laundry supplies and paper goods. The donated items were transported to the TBM warehouse in Dallas. TBM will deliver the donated items to the impacted areas in Louisiana, where TBM volunteers are serving as they meet needs in the aftermath of the storm. “Service has always been at the heart of East Texas Baptist University and its student body,” TBM Executive Director and CEO **Mickey Lenamon** said. “This tremendous outpouring of donations reflects that spirit once again. These basic necessities will help families across Southern Louisiana take their first steps in recovering from Hurricane Ida. Thank you, ETBU, for partnering with TBM to deliver help, hope and healing to people in their most difficult days.” TBM has more than 120 volunteers deployed in St. Amant, Gonzales and LaPlace, La. Through Sept. 13, they had prepared more than 71,000 meals, purified about 17,500 gallons of water and

completed more than 100 chainsaw jobs.

Baylor University has created the Vance Masteller Endowed Research Chair in Communication Sciences and Disorders within the Robbins College of Health and Human Sciences' Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The endowed chair was funded through an anonymous \$1.5 million gift from university alumni, which will be matched through the Baylor Academic Challenge initiative and provide research and teaching support in autistic spectrum disorders. The Vance Masteller Chair will provide leadership as Robbins College begins a \$2.5 million expansion of the Speech-Language and Hearing Clinic to create an autism clinic, with facilities and research space dedicated to the study of autism spectrum disorders. The expansion, announced in March, will create nearly 12,500 square feet of new and remodeled space, doubling the capacity for providing services to individuals with ASD. "Endowment support for Baylor's faculty provides transformational, long-term impact within our academic programs and departments, and I am grateful for the generous gift these Baylor alumni have made to position the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders for future success and growth," said Baylor President **Linda A. Livingstone**. "At the heart of this gift is a genuine desire to advance Baylor's mission and ensure that this nationally recognized program has the resources and endowment needed to conduct research and educate future practitioners at the highest levels of excellence." The chair recognizes two individuals who were inspirational to the donors establishing the endowed position. **Lawrence Vance** was an ordained Baptist minister, an insurance lawyer, and a charter member and deacon at Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. **Rod Masteller** began his ministry as pastor of Westwood Baptist Church in Waco, and he went on to serve Baptist churches in Oklahoma, Louisiana and elsewhere for more than five decades.



Susan Sharp

**Susan Sharp**, teacher certification officer at Howard Payne University, was elected president of the Texas Association of Certification Officers for this academic year. In this role, Sharp will conduct monthly Zoom sessions with certification officers across the state and preside over sessions at the annual Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education Conference in San Marcos and at the association's annual conference in Austin. Additionally, she will represent the association on the Educator Preparation Advisory Committee and the consortium board. Sharp served in Texas public schools for 35 years as an English teacher, coach and principal. She has been a staff member at HPU almost a decade.



Albert Reyes, president and CEO of Buckner International, shakes hands with Pam Parish, founder and CEO of Connections Homes. (Buckner Photo)

Buckner Children and Family Services signed a joint agreement with Georgia-based Connections Homes to provide a more extensive support network to youth aging out of the Texas foster care system. Connections Homes matches young adults about to age out of foster care, or who already have aged out, with mentoring families. The signing of the memorandum of understanding marks Connections Homes' first work outside of Georgia since announcing its planned expansion to Texas in June 2021. Each year, 1,200 young men and women age out of the Texas foster care system, joining tens of thousands of young homeless on the streets. Since 2014, Buckner has served more than 1,000 youth aging out of foster care with transitional programming throughout Texas. "We are so honored to join Buckner in this very important challenge to meet the needs of

thousands of foster youth in Texas who have challenging futures ahead of them without a safe, stable adult in their life,” said **Pam Parish**, founder and CEO of Connections Homes. “Buckner knows the needs of children and youth in this area, and we believe they will guide us where to target the most vulnerable youth aging out of foster care who need support.”

## **Anniversary**

150th for Ash Creek Baptist Church in Azle. A reception is scheduled on Saturday, Sept. 18 at 5 p.m. On Sunday, Sept. 18, a time of fellowship is slated for 9:30 a.m., prior to the 10:45 a.m. worship service. After a lunch at the church, an anniversary celebration service is planned for 2 p.m. **Wesley Shotwell** is pastor.

## **Retirement**

**Phil Christopher** after 26 years as pastor at First Baptist Church in Abilene, 40 years as a pastor of Baptist churches and 46 years in congregational ministry.