

Around the State: HPU opens new site at New Braunfels

November 8, 2023



Howard Payne University's New Braunfels Center recently relocated to 2164 Oak Run Parkway. (HPU Photo)

Howard Payne University at New Braunfels held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the official opening of its new location in the Veramendi community. The event hosted donors, New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce representatives, HPU students and officials, and other friends of the university. The new location offers “a unique opportunity to broaden our program offerings, encompassing student and community engagement activities,” said **Cynthia Ferguson**, assistant vice president for HPU's New Braunfels Center. “In addition to our graduate and undergraduate degrees, dual credit courses and tuition reimbursement collaborations through local businesses, we are eager to host community wellness classes and special interest group gatherings, designed to cater to the educational and social interests of the Central Texas community.”



Debbie Chou, who graduated from Baylor University in May, become the fifth Baylor student teacher in the last seven years to receive the statewide Clinical Teacher of the Year award from the Texas Directors of Field Experience. (Photo / BAYLOR UNIVERSITY)

Debbie Chou, who graduated from Baylor University in May, become the fifth Baylor student teacher in the last seven years to receive the statewide Clinical Teacher of the Year award from the Texas Directors of Field Experience, an organization of faculty members within university teacher-education programs who supervise field experiences. The award honors senior-level, teacher-education students for classroom teaching excellence during the student-teaching experience. Chou was a student teacher for first graders at Hillcrest Professional Development School in the Waco Independent School District. “Teaching became my passion and professional aspiration when I discovered that it combined two of my driving factors—to love others and to impact the next generation,” Chou said. **Darlene Bolfing**, Chou’s intern supervisor in the Baylor School of Education, described her as “an excellent young educator who brings warmth and enthusiasm into the classroom, creating a very productive environment for her first-grade students.”



The John M. O’Quinn Foundation committed to give \$2.5 million to Houston Christian University to endow a chair in counseling. Pictured (left to right) are Jeffrey Paine, a trustee of the John M. O’Quinn Foundation; Bess Wilson and Rob C. Wilson, III, president of John M. O’Quinn Foundation; Mick Pritchett, director of foundation services; Michael Cook, HCU associate professor of counseling; and HCU President Robert B. Sloan. (HCU Photo by Michael Tims)

The John M. O’Quinn Foundation committed to give \$2.5 million to Houston Christian University to endow a chair in counseling. “We believe that our counseling area is highly capable and truly prepared to tap into the deep roots of the broken and restless hearts all around us, and it’s the O’Quinn Foundation’s generous gift that is enabling us not only to speak to these needs individually but to provide opportunities for healing and restoration—the restoration of persons, families and ultimately culture,” HCU President **Robert Sloan** said.



Mia Hanks, a junior at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, was named Miss Mary Hardin-Baylor 2024 at the annual pageant. (UMHB Photo)

Mia Hanks, a junior studio art major at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, was named Miss Mary Hardin-Baylor 2024 at the annual pageant Nov. 4. She is the daughter of Shawn and Heather Hanks of Nashville, Tenn., both graduates of UMHB. She is involved in the Baptist Student Ministry, Student Foundation, Welcome Week and Crusader Knights. She is a student worker in the UMHB alumni office and museum. The Miss MHB Pageant recognizes young women who demonstrate self-confidence, personality and inner beauty. Each of the 19 pageant competitors represented a campus organization or residence hall. All contestants participated in individual interviews, a group dance number, talent presentations and an evening gown stroll. In addition, the women were called on to talk about their individual platforms, highlighting issues of particular concern to them. Hanks' personal platform is creating supportive community for siblings of those with special needs. "It is a very personal issue to me, being an older sister to a brother with special needs," she said.

“I would love to foster a community or even a physical space for the siblings of special needs kids to gather together. That would be so meaningful to me.”



East Texas Baptist University students planted trees and contributed to the beautification of campus on the official Texas State Arbor Day. (ETBU Photo)

East Texas Baptist University faculty, staff and students gathered on the university grounds to plant trees and contribute to the beautification of campus on the official Texas State Arbor Day. While National Arbor Day occurs in late April, Texas Arbor Day takes place on the first Friday in November. ETBU observes Texas Arbor Day to provide students the opportunity to be involved with the tree-planting process. Students planted two live oak trees on the front lawn of campus across the street from ETBU’s historic Marshall Hall. “It is my prayer that each student’s experience at ETBU is like a young tree purposefully placed in a manicured landscape,” said **Derek Royer**, assistant professor of biology. “I pray our students experience a firm sense of belonging and grow deep roots socially, spiritually and vocationally. May the fertile soil of a Christ-centered education and the transformational power of the Holy Spirit cultivate

growth and faithfulness in their lives so that they bear fruit wherever God calls them to serve.”



Baylor University’s Louise Herrington School of Nursing in Dallas

Enrollment in the undergraduate program at Baylor University’s Louise Herrington School of Nursing in Dallas is the highest of any undergraduate major at the university, which has 126 undergraduate degree programs. “We are excited to educate nurses from all over the country to impact healthcare from the perspective of the nurse. The undergraduate program is part of the solution to meet the significant nursing shortage,” said **Brandy L. Brown**, associate dean of prelicensure programs and clinical assistant professor of nursing at Baylor’s Louise Herrington School of Nursing. Total nursing enrollment at Baylor is 1,950, with undergraduate enrollment of 948. Dean **Linda Plank** said the nursing school’s mission is “to educate and prepare both baccalaureate and graduate-level nurses within a Christian community for professional practice, healthcare leadership and worldwide service.”

Derek Schurrman, professor of computer science at Calvin University, delivered the Brabenec Lecture Nov. 2 at Houston Christian University,

sponsored by the Association of Christians in the Mathematical Sciences. His lecture, "Artificial Intelligence and the Biblical Story," reflected on cutting-edge developments in AI in light of Scripture and identified their ethical implications.

Anniversary

125th for Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas. **Gannon Sims** is pastor.