

Around the State: Saunders, Sellers and Skaggs

January 28, 2016

Sharon Saunders Sharon Saunders, vice president for university relations and chief of staff to the president at Houston Baptist University, has been named one of “Houston’s 50 Most Influential Women of 2015” by *Houston Woman Magazine*. Under her leadership as executive director of The Guild, a group of civic-minded Christian women, the organization has contributed more than \$1.7 million to HBU for graduate scholarships in education, special projects and The Guild Institute for Family Studies. Saunders also served on the board of directors of Fort Bend Christian Academy, and she was a member of the Education Foundation for Fort Bend Independent School District.



Robert Sellers Robert P. Sellers, professor of theology and Connally Chair of Missions at Hardin-Simmons University’s Logsdon Seminary, will deliver the annual Currie-Strickland Distinguished Lectures in Christian Ethics, Feb. 11 and 12 at Howard Payne University. The lectures at 7 p.m. on Feb. 11 and 10 a.m. on Feb. 12 will be presented in the Richard and Wanda Jackson Conference Room of HPU’s Paul and Jane Meyer Faith and Life Leadership Center. Topics are “Love your (Non-Christian) Neighbor as Yourself: Religious Pluralism and the Second Great Commandment” and “Do Not Oppress the Foreigner or the Poor: Religious

Pluralism and the Care for the Alien and Stranger.”

Admission is free, but reservations are requested. Contact HPU’s School of Christian Studies by e-mail at currie-strickland@hputx.edu or by phone at (325) 649-8403.



Brandon Skaggs has joined the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor staff as director of alumni relations. In addition to an undergraduate degree from UMHB, he earned a master of business administration degree in finance and management from Tarleton State University and a doctorate in higher education leadership from Dallas Baptist University. Previously, he was associate vice president for student development and dean of students at Oklahoma Baptist University. Earlier, he served in various roles at DBU, including director of admissions and recruitment, international recruiter, graduate adviser and assistant to the vice president and dean of the Gary Cook Graduate School of Leadership. From 2010 to 2013, Skaggs was the inaugural president of the Young Alumni Board at UMHB.

Valley Ranch Baptist Church in Coppell has been selected to join 62 faith-based organizations, including 20 congregations, as Certified Best Christian Workplaces in the United States, Canada and Australia. The honor indicates these Christian organizations reflect a “healthy-to-flourishing” culture and meet eight standards of excellence, according to the Best Christian Workplaces Institute. **Larry Parsley** is Valley Ranch’s pastor.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

approved Houston Baptist University to launch a doctor of education in executive educational leadership program. Graduates of the program will receive preparation to serve as human resource directors of private companies and nonprofit organizations; superintendents and principals of public, private and charter schools; university and community college faculty; and community college administrators.