

Around the State: ETBU inaugurates president; Ag Department honors Texas Hunger Initiative

February 25, 2016

East Texas Baptist University inaugurated **Blair Blackburn** as the school's 13th president Feb. 19. **Ben Raimer**, chair of the ETBU board of trustees, and President Emeritus **Bob E. Riley** led Blackburn's investiture, and **Sam Dennis**, pastor of Parkway Hills Baptist Church in Plano, delivered the inaugural charge.

The Texas Department of Agriculture honored the **Texas Hunger Initiative** with its Fresh Perspectives' Award for its innovative approach to improving outcomes of the summer meals program. The Texas Hunger Initiative is a project within **Baylor University's Diana Garland School of Social Work**, launched with support from the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

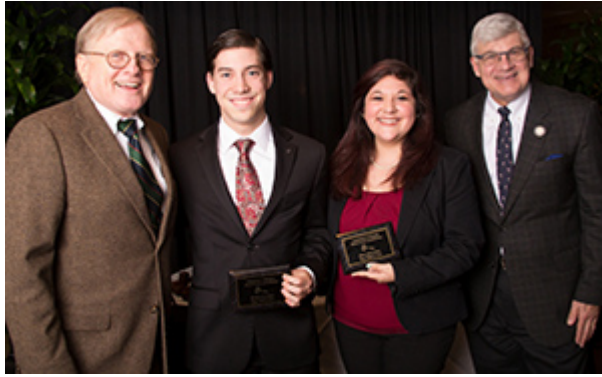


Mavo, the Marshall High School mascot, and East Texas Baptist University's Toby the Tiger mascot join high school and ETBU students as they learn about "Maverick University," a

plan for ETBU to offer nine dual-enrollment courses on the Marshall High School campus. (PHOTO / ETBU / Mike Midkiff)**East Texas Baptist University** and the Marshall Independent School District, in partnership with the Marshall Educational Foundation, will launch “Maverick University” at Marshall High School beginning in the fall semester. ETBU will offer nine dual-credit college courses on the high school campus, in addition to regular dual-credit courses offered on the university campus. Students can earn up to 27 hours of college credit in the classes offered at the high school campus.

Nick Ewen, assistant professor of theater at **Howard Payne University**, presented two workshops, “Lord Nick’s Armor Tricks” and “Roles, Souls and Holy Goals: How to Act as a Christian,” at the annual Texas Educational Theatre Association TheatreFest convention in Dallas. The “armor tricks” workshop teaches how to create homemade armor inexpensively. The purpose of the “holy goals” workshop was to acknowledge Ewen’s relationship with God among a large group of his Texas theater co-educators, to present his revelations about the nature of Christianity as it relates to the theater profession and to participate in a discussion about the challenges and blessings of being a Christ-follower in the role of a “servant artist.”

U.S. News & World Report ranked the **Baylor University Louise Herrington School of Nursing** masters degree in nursing leadership and innovation online program in its Top 100 Best Online Graduate Programs for 2016. It ranked No. 79, tied with Lamar University and the University of Utah.



Howard Payne University's Isaac Sommers (second from left) and Rebeca Puente (third from left) placed third in the brief writing component of the ACMCA National Tournament. They are pictured with competition judges. Howard Payne University students **Isaac Sommers**, a junior from Boerne, and **Rebeca Puente**, a senior from Waskom, placed in the top 32 out of 400 teams in the 2015-16 American Collegiate Moot Court Association national tournament. The duo placed third in the brief writing component of the tournament, held at California State University in Long Beach. Sommers—along with fellow debater **Braxton Clark**, a junior from Southlake—also won the open parliamentary debate division at the Texas Intercollegiate Forensics Association Spring Championship tournament. HPU hosted and competed against 22 teams from 16 colleges and universities. Clark was named to the Texas All-State Forensics Squad, a prestigious group of students who are nominated by coaches and meet stringent criteria, including win/loss records in speech and debate, grade-point average, community service and leadership.

Christy Wilson Beam of Burleson will headline the **Hardin-Simmons University** Round Table Scholarship Luncheon March 3. Beam's memoir, "Miracles From Heaven," has been made into a movie due to be released March 18 starring Jennifer Garner, Queen Latifah and Martin Henderson. Also speaking at the event is DeVon Franklin, producer of "Miracles from Heaven" and president and CEO of Franklin Entertainment. The event already is sold out, but anyone interested in attending can contact Andrea Cross at across@hsutx.edu to be added to a waiting list.

David Bowman, executive director of Tarrant Baptist Association, will lead the fifth annual **West Texas Pastor/Staff Conference**, March 28-29 at Plains Baptist Camp. Advance registration for the event, sponsored by **Caprock Plains Baptist Area**, is required. Call (806) 296-2751 or email caprockplains@nts-online.net.