

Bobby Hall announces June 2024 retirement from Wayland

September 2, 2023

PLAINVIEW—After more than 40 years of service at Wayland Baptist University, including the past eight years as president, Bobby Hall has announced plans to retire effective June 30, 2024.

Hall's decision was made earlier this year, and in accordance with Wayland's presidential succession plan, he informed Wayland's board of trustees of his plans privately in January. In April, he announced his plan to retire in a video message to the university's faculty and staff. His public announcement comes as Wayland embarks upon an extensive search for the university's next president.



Bobby Hall

“An early influence in my life advised me to ‘find a great cause and lose your life in it.’ I was blessed to find that calling and do just that at Wayland for more than four decades,” Hall said. “Wayland’s greatest asset has

always been its people. No matter their campus location, they are just outstanding, genuine, hardworking, Christian people, and it has been a privilege to serve alongside them.

“Wayland has been my life, and I will continue to pray for its people, its new leadership and its mission. I have no doubt that God will continue to use our university in mighty ways.”

Board Chair Mark Jones thanked Hall for more than 40 years of continuous service to the university.

“He has brought tenacity, innovation and leadership to the many roles he’s held across the organization, including his eight years as president of the university,” Jones said. “With his guidance, Wayland has successfully navigated the dynamically changing world of higher education, helping the university to prosper well into its second century.

“As president, Dr. Hall has made a tangible difference in the professional and spiritual lives of students across five different decades. We are grateful for his lifelong service to Wayland and wish he and his family the best in his retirement.”

Upgraded infrastructure, increased endowment

During his presidency, Hall implemented improved business practices, made development a primary focus and gave priority to infrastructure upgrades. Hall was instrumental in the redesign of Wayland’s approach to marketing, recruitment and admissions across all campuses.



Wayland Baptist University marked the dedication and grand opening of the Ben and Bertha Mieth School of Nursing. (WBU Photo)

In securing a new location for the San Antonio campus, Hall led the university to secure the best return on the investment made in the original campus and secure a fair purchase price for the new property. That paved the way for a recent \$2.5 million gift that made it possible for the Ben and Bertha Mieth School of Nursing to return to the San Antonio campus.

Infrastructure projects have included the restoration of the exterior of historic Gates Hall, the renovation of Harral Auditorium, construction of the Mabee Laboratory Science Building, completion of the Jimmy Dean Museum and creation of the Flying Queens Museum.

Under Hall's leadership, Wayland's endowment has grown by almost \$28 million, from \$84.3 million in 2016 to \$112.2 million in 2023, and the university has embarked upon a comprehensive fundraising campaign with \$11 million already raised. He has been involved directly in fundraising for this campaign.

Six of the university's top seven fundraising years in the past 20 years have come during Hall's presidency.

Hall led Wayland into a negotiated partnership with McAllister & Quinn to launch the university into securing federal grants. That effort has resulted

in five grants totaling approximately \$5 million.

Hall has encouraged the creation of new programs, including majors, minors and degrees. He has sought improved delivery methodologies with more online and hybrid opportunities.

He served as a peer evaluator for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. He has also chaired the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities and the Consortium for Global Education and is on the executive board of Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas.

Wayland has added new athletic programs during Hall's administration and increased the number of student-athletes attending the university, while placing an emphasis on scholar athletes. He has served as a member of the NAIA Council of Presidents and chaired the Sooner Athletic Conference Council of Presidents.

Served Wayland since 1981 in varied roles

Hall served as Wayland's executive vice president and provost prior to being named president. Since 1981, he has served in numerous capacities at Wayland, including assistant executive vice president, director of institutional research and effectiveness, director of graduate services, executive director of university relations, assistant to the president for institutional advancement, director of public relations, director of sports information, and director of career planning and placement.

Hall has served as a professor of business, receiving the Distinguished Faculty Service Award and Faculty University Service Award. He has written, spoken and served as a consultant on topics including higher

education administration, institutional effectiveness, economic development and marketing.

Having founded Wayland's office of institutional research and effectiveness, Hall designed, piloted and implemented a comprehensive strategic planning model for institutional effectiveness at the institutional, divisional and unit levels.

He has designed and conducted research dealing with teaching effectiveness; student outcome competencies, achievement, aptitude and satisfaction; alumni satisfaction and accomplishment; employee satisfaction; employee evaluation; academic and administrative effectiveness; relationships with external institutional constituencies; financial analysis; admissions criteria and prediction; and enrollment/retention.

Saying they have all been "exceptional partners in this journey," Hall expressed his thanks to Wayland's board of trustees, cabinet and staff members in the president's office.

Hall also applauded his wife, Laurie, for her service to the university through the years, especially during his presidency.

"She has been a great asset in creating and growing Wayland's relationships as First Lady, playing a large role in the development success we have had," Hall said. "She continues to serve as president of the Sally Society, an organization that has raised more than \$500,000 during the past 12 years."

The chairman of Wayland's board of trustees echoed the president's praise for the Hall family.

"We thank his wife, Laurie Hall, for her tenure as Wayland's First Lady, and their children, Alexis and Lucas," Jones said.

The Halls opened their home to Wayland students and employees, as well as alumni and the community as they hosted more than 350 events there during his presidency. They were recognized last year with the Keeper of the Flame Award, one of Wayland's most prestigious honors.

"Laurie and I have been blessed by our years of service to Wayland," Hall said. "We will continue to work hard, and we will all pray hard for our trustees and search committee as they find the person God has prepared to come here."