

BUA reports good news to BGCT Executive Board

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DALLAS—Less than five years after Texas Baptists' Executive Board committed \$1.5 million to keep [Baptist University of the Americas](#) afloat, BUA President Abe Jaquez reported the school entered its 75th year of operation debt-free.

At the same meeting, the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board learned Texas Baptists surpassed their \$3.5 million giving goal to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions, and the board approved up to \$400,000 to purchase property for a Baptist Student Ministry building adjacent to a historically Black university.

In September 2017, the [BGCT Executive Board approved](#) a \$1 million loan, a \$250,000 gift and a \$250,000 challenge grant for BUA. At the time, BUA had \$260,000 in outstanding letters of credit, \$268,000 outstanding for building maintenance contracts and \$180,000 in past-due accounts payable and payroll taxes.



BUA President Abe Jaquez looks at plans for the repurposed campus buildings. (Photo by Ken Camp)

On Dec. 15, BUA in San Antonio closed on the sale of property it had occupied the past six years. Bexar County paid the full \$6.5 million asking price for the building on Burlite Boulevard, allowing BUA to move debt-free into facilities it already owned on 60 acres across the freeway.

“God is faithful,” Jaquez told the board, his voice choked with emotion.

BUA has moved all its academic facilities and administrative offices into two repurposed buildings formerly used for student housing. The new academic space includes upgraded technology, including 85-inch interactive smart boards in each classroom.

Currently, BUA leaders are in the early stages of developing a new strategic plan for the school and developing a master plan for the campus.

Jaquez pledged to the Executive Board as long as he is president of BUA,

the school will not go back into debt.

As a “token” of appreciation and an expression of the school’s desire “not just to be a taker, but to be a giver,” Jaquez presented BGCT Executive Director David Hardage a check for \$3,000.

Jaquez emphasized the school’s mission to develop “cross-cultural Christian leaders”—particularly for Hispanic churches. Seven out of 10 pastors of Hispanic Texas Baptist churches received their education at BUA, he reported.

Meeting MHD goal, investing in BSM

At the same meeting, Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas Executive Director Tamiko Jones reported contributions to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas surpassed the giving goal for the first time since 1999.

In recent years, many of the ministries supported by the missions offering could not be fully funded, since the goal was not met. This year, 78 ministries received their full allocations, she noted.

John-Travis Smith, associate executive director of Texas Baptist Men, reported TBM disaster relief volunteers served 61,379 hours last year. They provided more than 107,000 meals, distributed close to 70,000 bottles of water and gave away 685 Bibles.

At the recommendation of the collegiate ministries committee, the BGCT Executive Board authorized up to \$400,000 to purchase property adjacent to Texas Southern University as the location for a BSM building.

The BSM at Texas Southern University, a historically Black university in Houston, has operated in leased space, but the lease is slated to expire soon.

Other business

In other business, the board voted to allocate \$375,000 in earnings from the J.K. Wadley Endowment Fund, providing \$150,000 for BSM campus missionary interns, \$150,000 for BSM building maintenance, \$50,000 for western heritage church ministries and \$25,000 for the [MinistrySafe](#) child protection program.

The board also filled vacancies on board and councils by electing:

- Seth Pitman from First Baptist Church in Throckmorton to the Committee to Nominate Executive Board Directors.
- Susan Rogers from First Baptist Church in Garland to the Committee to Nominate Boards of Affiliated Ministries.
- Larry Post from First Baptist Church in Sugar Land and Stacy Leonard from First Baptist Church in Garland to the Institutions Audit Council.