Friends of Truett challenged to 'close the gap'

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GALVESTON—With 368 students and 322 endowed student scholarships, Dean Todd Still wants to see Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary "close the gap" by endowing 12 scholarships per year for the next four years.

Still issued the challenge—to provide an endowed scholarship for every student—during the Friends of Truett Dinner in Houston on Nov. 14, held in conjunction with the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting.

If Truett supporters fulfill the challenge, it won't be the first time they have met an ambitious goal.

When Baylor launched its Give Light campaign to support its Illuminate academic strategic plan, the seminary was given a $50 million fund-raising target.

"Last May, Truett eclipsed that goal," Still announced, noting it was "the first academic unit at Baylor" to surpass its assigned goal.

About 1,700 contributors gave almost $50.8 million to fund 43 endowed scholarships and five faculty chairs.

"In the last five years, Truett's endowment grew from $51.8 million to $111.8 million," Still said.

In spite of "the COVID-19 cloud that cast a pall over all our lives," Truett continued to launch new initiatives in the past two years, Still noted. He pointed to programs in Houston and San Antonio, as well as the Wesley

House of Studies.

At its most recent meeting, he added, Baylor's board of regents also approved three new master's degree offerings at Truett Seminary—the Master of Arts in Theology and Sports Studies; the Master of Arts in Contextual Witness and Innovation; and the Master of Arts in Theology, Ecology and Food Justice.

At the same meeting, regents approved [cutting tuition costs](#) for students at Truett Seminary by more than one-third, reducing the "sticker price" per credit hour from $1,071 to $690.

By reducing tuition costs and increasing endowed scholarships, Truett students are more likely to graduate and serve in ministry "without the albatross of debt around their necks," Still said