Three ways you can help JBU grow

Word of mouth is a powerful tool to reach and enroll more students. Here’s how you can help:

1. **Follow JBU on Facebook**
   Share posts that resonate with you.

2. **Follow JBU on Instagram**
   Occasionally comment and tag students or parents who would be interested in a particular post.

3. **Review JBU on Niche.com**
   Niche.com reaches millions of students. Your candid review will help them know if JBU could be a good fit.
Dear Friends of JBU,

We have three weeks left in the fall semester of this very unusual year. Davidson College conducted a survey of U.S. higher education's response to the pandemic, and they found that about 50% of the schools were fully or primarily online, 20% were offering a hybrid of online and in-person, and only 30% were offering fully or primarily in-person education. I am so grateful to report that JBU is part of that 30%.

It has taken a lot of creative work and sacrifice by faculty, staff and students to stay on campus this semester. We organized our classrooms so that 97% of them have six-feet distancing; we wear masks inside all the time; we purchased 58 OWL-PRO 360º cameras that enable our quarantined students to join the classroom in a more immersive way; we bought 93 personal amplifiers so faculty could clearly communicate even while wearing a mask; we reorganized our cafeteria to offer “grab-and go” meals and six-feet distancing; we purchased six tents to facilitate outdoor eating, teaching and hanging out; we have held outdoor chapel services, concerts and plays; and we have organized intramural tournaments of softball, kickball, pickleball and disc golf. It has not been easy, but through it all, professors have taught and students have learned together; we have played and prayed together; we have renewed old friendships and made new ones together; and we have worshipped God together and thanked him for the gift of the JBU community.

We set three main goals in establishing our pandemic response: first, to “Love Your Neighbor” by caring for and protecting the most vulnerable people in our community; second, to “Love Ourselves” by limiting the number of students or employees in isolation and quarantine; and third, to “Love JBU” by making sure we could remain in person for the full semester. And, while the semester has not finished yet, we are very grateful for our results to date. During these first 12 weeks, we have only had 28 students and 4 employees test positive, 98 students and 27 employees quarantined, and only one hospitalization. We recognize the protocols have helped, but we also know we have experienced God’s gracious favor and protection.

I also recognize that I am writing to you on election day in one of the most polarized times in our country’s history. It has caused me to wonder how the Christian principles that animate our response to the pandemic might also inform our response to the election results (which, I assume, you will know by the time you read this letter). In Matthew 5:43-44, Jesus says to his disciples: “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be children of your Father in heaven.” JBU faculty, staff and students have done a remarkable job in loving their neighbor in the pandemic, but I trust that we will also be known for “loving and praying for our enemies” in the aftermath of the election, known for our gracious kindness, care and love to other people who are made in the image of God but with whom we may disagree. If we can live out our calling both to love our neighbor in a pandemic and to love our enemies in an election, then I think that our witness will be clear as children of our Heavenly father. May it always be true of us at JBU.

Godspeed,

Dr. Charles W. Pollard
President, John Brown University
Focus on Others First

We are experiencing unprecedented times in our country as COVID-19, civil unrest and political divisiveness have taken center stage. If we let social media dictate how we should feel each morning, we would predominately be filled with worry, sadness and hopelessness.

However, if instead we focus on what we see in our local communities, the examples of people loving their neighbors is prevalent as people think about others before themselves right now in an often me-first society.

We see people wearing masks and physically distancing in stores, in schools, at local businesses and at churches. Local nonprofits and civic groups are holding food drives to stock pantries, and friends and family members are shopping for those that can’t shop for themselves. And even though these measures can make life more difficult, most people comply because, as a popular country song says, most people are good. Most people want to help others. People want to help save lives from being lost to COVID-19.

When my church reopened for in-person services, they decided only outdoor services would be held to increase safety. Members volunteered to install several outdoor pavilion tents on the property, so the church body could come together again safely. Is this new location inconvenient at times? It can be. But I am being called right now to think about you instead of me.

Let’s continue to use this time in our communities to better understand the needs of our neighbors, our co-workers and our fellow Americans. Focusing on our common needs – physical safety and health, emotional well-being and spiritual growth – provides ample opportunities for us to love one another.

Jay Nickel
Managing Editor, Brown Bulletin

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Campus News

U.S. News Ranks JBU Top Regional University in Arkansas
For the fifth consecutive year, JBU is the top-ranked regional university in Arkansas, according to U.S. News and World Report. JBU ranked 12th out of 133 southern universities in the 2021 U.S. News & World Report Best Regional Universities list. Other Arkansas schools in the cohort include Harding University, Arkansas State University, University of Central Arkansas, Henderson State University, Arkansas Tech University and Southern Arkansas University.

$8M Walton Charitable Support Foundation Grant Given to JBU
In July, JBU received an $8 million grant from the Walton Charitable Support Foundation in support of the university’s data analytics and computer science programs. Two million dollars will be used to endow an academic chair for data analytics. The remaining $6 million will create an endowed scholarship to support students majoring in computer science or data analytics. Both programs are new for fall 2020.

Kim Hadley, JBU CFO, named CFO of the Year 2020 Finalist
Kim Hadley, vice president for finance & administration at JBU, has been named a finalist for the Arkansas Business CFO of the Year Awards.
This is the 11th annual awards program created by Arkansas Business to honor outstanding CFOs around the state of Arkansas. Nomination forms were submitted to an independent panel of judges that met in September to determine finalists and winners.
“Dr. Hadley is richly deserving of this recognition,” said JBU president Chip Pollard. “She is a chief financial officer who not only supervises the university’s finances with technical excellence and careful stewardship but also knows how to deploy JBU’s financial and human resources to encourage others and to fulfill JBU’s mission. She does her work with intellectual curiosity, compassionate kindness and deep faithfulness. We are grateful to have her at JBU.”
The finalists and winners will be revealed at a virtual celebration Dec. 15.

Office of Diversity Established
Committed to strengthening diversity on campus, JBU announced the formation of the Office of Diversity (OD), directed by Dr. Ted Song, coordinator of diversity.
The OD will continue and deepen the work JBU has already been doing to reflect and honor the truth that God calls and redeems people from every nation, tribe, people, and language into his church (Revelation 7:9). The OD will focus on the areas of diversity that are consistent with JBU’s Christian commitments.
Some of the projects already in the works include revising the institution’s diversity statement, offering a colloquium course for students to ask and learn about racial diversity, and providing formal and informal events to discuss how diversity is related to Christian faith.

JBU Online Expands to Four-Year Bachelor’s Degree Program
The JBU Online program is now a full, four-year online bachelor’s degree program with no minimum requirement for prior college credit at a new lower tuition rate.
Beginning fall 2020, tuition was reduced to $300 per credit hour with the same high-quality, personalized online educational experience that is expected from JBU.
JBU Online offers Bachelor of Science
degrees in business administration, liberal arts, organizational leadership and psychology. Minors are available in business, communication, leadership, managerial accounting, politics and ethics, and psychology.

JBU Students Establish Elaine Massacre Memorial on Campus
On September 30, the Elaine Memorial, a magnolia tree planted in front of Walker Student Center, was dedicated with a service led by the students who organized the memorial after a trip to Elaine, Arkansas, with Dr. Marquita Smith last spring. The tree commemorates the Elaine Massacre which took place in Elaine, just 330 miles from JBU.

The plaque at the foot of the tree reads, “A day after the founding of JBU in 1919, more than 200 African Americans and five white men were killed in Elaine, Arkansas, in what was the deadliest racial massacre in Arkansas and a part of the ‘Red Summer’ in the United States. We remember and deeply lament the death of these individuals made in the image of God and the racism and hatred that led to this event. While we may not be directly culpable for this event, we are responsible to remember and lament it, to repair the legacy of racism, and to work toward racial reconciliation and justice in our own time as a part of our calling to follow Jesus Christ.”

JBU Receives ‘Great Colleges to Work For’ Distinction
JBU is one of the best colleges to work for in the nation for the sixth consecutive year, according to the Great Colleges to Work For survey administered by The Chronicle of Higher Education. This workplace recognition program, now in its 13th year, identifies colleges and universities that receive top ratings from their employees regarding workplace practices and policies.

Nationally, JBU is one of only 79 institutions to receive recognition, among the 42 institutions on the Honor Roll for elite performance in four or more categories, and placed within the top 10 for the small enrollment size category.

Daugherty Named Sooner Athletic Conference AD of the Year
In July, Robyn Daugherty, JBU director of athletics, was selected as the recipient of the Sooner Athletic Conference AD of the Year Award for 2019-20.

Under Daugherty’s direction, JBU added track and field in 2019-20, and her efforts helped the university successfully forge a $1 million partnership with the Siloam Springs School District to share expenses in the major upgrading of Glenn W. Black Stadium, a practice and competition facility just a few blocks from JBU. Daugherty, who has now won the conference’s AD of the Year honors twice (2011), has also served as the SAC’s Treasurer for the past four years, overseeing both payable and receivable accounts.

78th Annual Candlelight Service To Be Streamed Online
Due to COVID-19 protocols, JBU is unable to hold the much-beloved Candlelight Service live and in person. Instead, the music and theatre department, along with JBU’s AVL team, is busy preparing a special service that will be streamed on YouTube on Dec. 10-12 at 7 p.m. Links for the service will be posted at jbu.edu/candlelight.
Athletics News

While the Golden Eagles prepare for a spring semester return to action, JBU looks to build on an extremely successful 2019-20 athletics season.

The men’s basketball program will return to the hardwood with the momentum of back-to-back, 20-win seasons, including back-to-back runner-up Sooner Athletic regular season and tournament finishes.

The cross country programs return a pair of NAIA National Championships qualifiers as the programs posted record finishes at the Sooner Athletic Championships last fall.

The men’s soccer squad is coming off a 2019 campaign that saw the Golden Eagles punch a ticket to the NAIA National Championships for the sixth time in program history after capturing the Sooner Athletic’s regular season and tournament crowns—just the second time for each title in program history.

Women’s soccer hosted a NAIA National Championships match for the first time ever, guided by Dr. Kathleen Paulsen to the program’s fourth trip to the national tournament in seven seasons.

The volleyball program posted 26 victories last fall and made an appearance in the Sooner Athletic tournament semifinals for the fourth time in five seasons.

THE FALL APPROACH

On Aug. 20, the NAIA announced new dates for its fall championships, postponing the postseason tournament to new dates—and in some cases—new locations, for the spring of 2021.

This move allowed NAIA institutions the autonomy to schedule games as they saw fit, playing entire schedules in the fall, spring or a hybrid of both seasons. Soccer, cross country and volleyball were all affected by this decision.

Citing the trend of other universities postponing play until January and knowing that fall games would not count toward conference standings, Robyn Daugherty, director of athletics, and President Chip Pollard announced that JBU would postpone all intercollegiate athletic competition until at least January 2021.

“We recognize that this decision is disappointing for our student-athletes (and their fans),” said Pollard, “but we believe that it is in their best interest and the best interest of maintaining on-campus instruction this fall.”

The Golden Eagles did their part to adhere to JBU’s COVID-19 policies to minimize the spread of the disease on campus. The programs utilized the fall semester to welcome new faces into the various programs and took advantage of the extra time to build foundations for success on the pitch, court and track in the spring. The Golden Eagles began the semester with a graduated approach in mind, kicking off the first few months practicing in small groups. That led to groups of eight practicing together in the middle of the semester before entering the final phase of full-team practices in late October.

THE SPRING OUTLOOK

The basketball teams are slated to return to Bill George Arena after the new year, with the fall sports returning to play in February. Track and field and tennis will remain in their respective playing seasons. Below are updates on NAIA National Championships schedules:

The women’s soccer national championships has been relocated from Orange Beach, Alabama, just seven miles away to Foley, Alabama, at the Ralph Schumacher Soccer Complex. The rescheduled tournament will take place from April 27 to May 3, hosted by Foley Sports Tourism.

The men’s soccer national championships will also make a move and switch coasts to the east. NAIA officials are in final discussions with Columbia County, Georgia, to host the tournament at Blanchard Woods Park, May 4-10.

Volleyball will remain in Sioux City, Iowa, for the 13th consecutive year. The Tyson Events Center will again play host as teams will battle from April 27 to May 1.

The cross country championships will take place on April 9 and remain in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, hosted by Cedar Rapids Tourism at Seminole Valley Park.

NAIA officials are still determining the track and field national championships and how that will coincide with cross country.

The tennis national championships remains unchanged, but the Golden Eagles have been approved by the NAIA to move into a new postseason grouping with teams from the Heart of America Athletic Conference and the American Midwest Conference. While the dates are still to be determined, the postseason tournament, with a bid to the national championships on the line, will take place in Kansas City.
Bobby Martin, professor of visual arts and Windgate Art Gallery director, is a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma. He grew up in Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation, so he’s been around Native culture, language and values his entire life. His great-grandfather was a Baptist preacher who spoke no English, only Mvskoke (his tribal language), so his family history is deeply connected to Indian churches and the practice of Christianity. He joined JBU in 2008 and teaches printmaking and other studio art courses.
WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR INSPIRATION TO PRODUCE NATIVE AMERICAN ART?
Well, I guess mainly the fact that I’m Native American! When I first started getting serious about my art as an undergraduate student at Northeastern State University, I didn’t set out to create something that was specifically ‘Native’ or Indigenous, and I still don’t define my art as ‘Native American art.’ I think of my work as ‘art made by a Native American,’ and my inspiration flows naturally from ideas and issues that are important to my identity as a Native person.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR ART COMES FROM YOUR FAMILY INSPIRATION? WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SUBJECTS AND THEMES YOU REPRESENT IN YOUR ARTWORK?
I think almost all of my art is inspired by family and our personal history, which actually is a shared history with many people of Native descent, especially in Oklahoma.

I’ve been blessed to have a rich supply of old family photographs taken by my aunts and my parents, which I have used as my visual inspiration for the last 25 years of artmaking. These images provide a connection with my past, a way to remember and honor the generations that have come before—a way to commemorate our family heritage.

I’ve been even more blessed to have grown up surrounded by strong, loving and protective Native women—grandparents, aunts, mother—who were continually looking out for my physical and especially spiritual well-being, whether I knew it or not. The consistent and continuing theme in almost all of my artwork is “identity,” which can get pretty complicated for Indigenous people. Personal, political, spiritual—all these varied identities are layered into the work to try and relate a complex history of being Native.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC WORKS YOU HAVE CREATED THAT CARRY MORE PERSONAL MEANING TO YOU?
I lost my mother earlier this year, and she was a major force and source of inspiration in my life. I have done several works featuring her, and those have become special and more meaningful to me since her passing.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR 7 SPRINGS STUDIO IN WEST SILOAM SPRINGS, OKLAHOMA.
I have operated 7 Springs Studio since 2010. It is primarily a working studio, but [before the COVID-19 pandemic] I often host studio visitors and collectors at my little hilltop retreat.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMUNICATE OR BRING AWARENESS TO THROUGH YOUR ART?
One of my main goals has always been communicating the importance of family and community. I have been blessed to have been able to visit with many viewers of my work about how it reminds them of their own granny or favorite aunt and brings back good memories of their family.

Even though my art is based on specific images of my family members, it often strikes a universal chord of recognition and remembrance of everyone’s family history.

That appreciation of personal history and grounding in those who came before us is an awareness I hope my artwork inspires.

ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR NATIVE AMERICAN NARRATIVES AND STEREOTYPES YOUR ARTWORK ADDRESSES?
There are numerous stereotypes of Indigenous people, mostly perpetuated over the years by Hollywood depictions. While I’m not trying to specifically dispel any stereotypes in my work, I do try to show that Native people are not some monolithic group with the same language or culture.

There are 39 separate tribes in Oklahoma alone, each with its own history, culture and language. I’d like to be able to help viewers of my work to see the humanity and common ground that all peoples have as God’s handiwork.
Protocols Require Pivoting

Creative thinking, persistence keep students in face-to-face instruction

BY JULIE GUMM ’95

Over 380 new students arrived Aug. 10-12 to participate in the traditional new student orientation that helps acclimate students to campus life, familiarize them with policies and procedures and create friendships. But as expected, everything was just a little different this year. Most work was done in smaller groups which often met outside. The highly anticipated Big Games was revamped to include games which could be done with physical distancing. Serve Siloam, which traditionally sends nearly 400 students out all over the city to do service projects, transitioned to a letter writing campaign with notes of gratitude and encouragement sent to first responders, JBU facilities staff, nursing home residents and more.

Classroom Experience

After a staggered move-in for returning students, 1,249 undergraduate students started classes on Aug. 17 in familiar but different settings. Classes that once held 30 desks now only hold 15 students, with desks spread six feet apart and taped lines on the floor designating a “safe distance box” for faculty members to walk in as they teach. Over 50 OWL 360º cameras were deployed to classrooms to provide a more interactive experience for students who needed to participate via Zoom, and many faculty use personal amplifiers to ensure students can still hear the lecture. Nontraditional spaces like Simmons Great Hall, Bill George Arena and the Soderquist Board Room are set up and being used as classroom space.

Spiritual Growth

Perhaps one of the most-missed experiences is gathering multiple times each week in the Cathedral for chapel and worship. The experience of singing with more than 1,000 voices within those walls is irreplaceable, but the Office of Christian Formation has worked to provide for the spiritual needs of JBU students. Each Sunday night, instead of the Gathering, the chapel band takes to an outdoor stage constructed this summer for Worship on the Quad, an optional service. Several hundred students gather on the lawn, physically distanced, for worship and a message from JBU faculty, staff or a fellow student. During the week, students participate in Chapel Groups, small groups of 12-15 students led by a faculty or staff member along with a student chaplain. The group watches a prerecorded chapel message and has a time of discussion.

“Over the years, we have always wished for ways to help students process the content they receive in chapel. In normal times, students rush off to class or lunch right after chapel, and the good content they’ve received in the chapel service doesn’t have time to ‘land,’” said Tracy Balzer, interim university chaplain and director of Christian formation. “This format gives
Campus Life

With one main dining hall on campus and the need to physically distance students while eating, JBU provided expanded seating by erecting two large tents in the quad, purchasing 30 picnic tables and using part of Simmons Great Hall as overflow seating. In addition, Creative Dining Services, JBU’s dining vendor, debuted a mobile order app that allows students to preorder their meal, pick it up and eat anywhere on campus.

While physical distancing has required some creative thinking when it comes to the normal campus life activities, the Student Events & Activities (SEA) team and Intramurals team pivoted quickly to create fun and engaging events for students.

This fall’s intramural sports have included pickleball, disc golf, kickball and softball. SEA coordinated a scavenger hunt, chalk art festival, laser tag and movie nights. Annual events like Spy v. Spy and Flannel Fest carried on with minor tweaks.

“The SEA student directors knew that engaging students on campus and creating spaces for community and connection was essential,” said Caitlyn Bennett, director of student engagement. “On the forefront of learning to host events safely during a global pandemic, they planned, adapted and adapted some more. I am exceptionally proud of their commitment to their fellow students and to JBU. They’re already deep into planning for spring semester.”

The weather at the start of the semester was unseasonably mild, which was appreciated as students spent more time outdoors where they could be mask-free as long as they maintained a distance of at least six feet. Fire pits were added in multiple places around campus, and the residence halls have lawn games available for students to check out.

COVID-19 Care

JBU students have worked diligently this semester to follow the university’s COVID-19 protocols that are part of the “Love your neighbor. Love Yourself. Love JBU” campaign. As of press time, there have been only 28 cumulative active student COVID-19 cases. Students who go into isolation or have to quarantine due to exposure are well taken care of by a team of JBU staff, including Rhonda Hostler, director of health services; Rob Rostoni, coordinator for student success/COVID-19 student care coordinator; and Rosa Christians ’03, interim director of student care.

Students who have had to isolate or quarantine on campus have expressed appreciation for the attentiveness of the staff, including daily devotions, phone calls, cards and check-ins.

Spring Semester

In setting the academic calendar for spring 2021, JBU’s primary goal was to best fulfill the university’s mission while keeping faculty, staff and students as safe as possible during the pandemic. Based on the assumption that we will still be under COVID-19 protocols next semester, and in order to maximize the opportunity for in-person instruction, JBU will delay the start of classes until Feb. 1. The new calendar seeks to minimize the time students are on campus during the coldest weather, and much of peak flu season, without extending the end of the spring semester too far into May. A four-week winter term will allow students to take an extra course online from home if they desire. With changes to breaks and holidays, the new calendar will end classes on May 20.

With each passing week this semester, faculty, staff and students have been grateful for God’s provision and blessing that has allowed JBU to provide in-person instruction.
Community & Personal Growth During Pandemic

A Student Reflection

As COVID-19 spread this spring and summer, I was in the process of planning for my college career to pursue a degree in worship. Starting school this fall, I honestly had no idea what was in store. Even though it scared me, I left myself open to the idea of something “new” and the idea of learning. From what I had heard, college is hard by itself, without a pandemic setting limits and boundaries on the different aspects of a college life, with trying to find the balance of planning out homework, creating and maintaining a social life, and keeping track of extracurricular schedules.

In this season of social distancing, mask wearing and so on, it has been a struggle to meet a lot of new people and truly solidify relationships. There are multiple factors that play into the current trials of socializing with one another. Also, though, there are some positives about this time. Take a look at the community of students and faculty here at JBU. The professors are so gracious and understanding of the difficulty of this semester, not only because they have sympathy for us as students, but because they are also working through the trials of this season. They are intentional about educating us through face-to-face interaction rather than remote learning, because they know the importance of in-person learning. The returning students show so much kindness and understanding to us newcomers — I believe it is because they know firsthand how important community is in our darkest moments and in times such as this. The beautiful thing about this whole situation is that everyone — faculty, staff, students and volunteers — is learning and growing together in this process in order for the Lord’s glory to be demonstrated. It is a process of adjusting to “new” environments and routines for everyone.

Even though I am struggling this semester in my social life and adjusting to this new environment, the Lord is constant and good. He is intentional and relational; he knows what I need when I have no idea myself. God has been teaching me about having complete faith in him and trust in his will for all creation and about the importance of community through the struggles of this semester. The people at JBU are warm and welcoming, and they are generous when it comes to helping one another. Thus, in this time of a global pandemic, we are all growing together as a family and building each other up in Christ’s name. This season is only strengthening us together and strengthening our faith in the Lord.
When we started classes this fall, no one knew if we’d be able to remain face-to-face for the entire semester. We made every adjustment on campus that we could and put safety protocols in place to give us the best chance at success. But ultimately, we knew that a lot of our success was in the hands of our students. Would they be diligent about wearing masks, maintaining physical distance and self-monitoring their health?

Overwhelmingly, the answer has been yes. Our students desperately desired to experience in-person instruction and be back on campus with their friends. Yes, the semester has been different, but we are still on campus with just two weeks of classes left. We are so thankful for the diligence of students, faculty and staff as well as God’s protection and provision.

We’re also grateful for our alumni, parents and friends who have helped make it possible for students to attend JBU by graciously supporting scholarships. Many have experienced their own financial challenges because of COVID-19 but continue to faithfully give. Financial aid is almost always an important part of a student’s decision to attend JBU. Families sacrifice to help provide for their child or grandchild, and many students work part time, full time or even multiple jobs to help pay for college. But gaps often remain between federal aid, academic scholarships and what families can pay. Scholarships are a key piece of student financial aid packages, this year even more than most.

This summer, over 200 donors gave to the Fill the Gap Scholarship, which helped over 130 students impacted by the pandemic return to JBU. The JBU Scholarship Fund (JBUSF) helps more than 700 students each year through need-based scholarships and work-study employment. Hundreds of Founder’s Circle members pray for JBU, promote the university and provide annual support for students through the JBUSF. Over 300 alumni and friends have created endowed scholarships that benefit generations of students. Many have included JBU in their wills and trusts to provide for the university in the future.

During this time when so much is changing all around us, I deeply appreciate the alumni, parents and friends that help JBU remain a place of stability and faithfulness as we continue to do what we have been called to do for over 100 years — educate students and train them to honor God and serve others.

I can’t begin to tell you how grateful the students are for the opportunity to be here this fall. But they can. Watch some of their stories at www.jbu.edu/scholarship-celebration. For additional information on supporting JBU, go to https://www.jbu.edu/giving/.

Thank you for your prayers and gifts to JBU.

*Dr. Jim Krall is the vice president for university advancement.*
NEW OUTDOOR SPACES: The addition of several outdoor tents and picnic tables to provide extra dining space also gives students new places to study and hang out with friends.
Love Your Neighbor
STUDENTS ENGAGE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY THROUGH ACADEMICS, SERVICE

BY CALLIE OWENSBY ’20

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KELLY SAUNDERS ’12, G.M. ’17, GARRET RIGGS ’20 AND MIKAYLA BROWN ’20
Outreach and Community Involvement

Outreach and community involvement have always been core values of John Brown University. At its founding, the university had ties to a variety of ministries: Mission Points, Campus Crusade and Child Evangelism Fellowship, to name a few. Today, the head, heart and hand training philosophy of JBU encourages students to serve the local community during their time in Siloam Springs and elsewhere following graduation. Through courses, volunteer opportunities and campus ministries, students are equipped to live out what they are learning by meeting specific needs in the community.

As part of new student orientation each fall, freshman and transfer students have the opportunity to put their hands to use serving the community. Serve Siloam sends out 300-400 new students, along with faculty and staff, to nonprofit organizations, churches and community members in need to do practical, hands-on work such as weeding flower beds, raking leaves, painting, sorting donations at the food bank or cleaning up parks.

Sarah Erdman, coordinator of orientation, notes, "It’s a fantastic project and we have community members and nonprofits that look forward to it every year. It’s the new students’ favorite event during orientation.”

COVID-19 protocols made it necessary to adjust several things about orientation this year, including Serve Siloam. Instead of carrying out service projects, students were provided materials to write notes of encouragement or gratitude to people in the community – teachers, first responders and the hard-working facilities staff at JBU.

Academic Involvement

More than an essential part of intellectual growth, many classes have a community-centered element that bridges the gap between learning from books and lectures and getting the hands-on piece of student education that is part of JBU’s mission.

Construction management students work on a variety of projects throughout the community for individual homeowners, businesses and nonprofit organizations. The projects might include everything from building a backyard storage unit to building an entire home. Some projects, like the bird watching habitat built in 2019 at City Lake in partnership with Siloam Springs and Ozark Ecological Restoration, are enjoyed by thousands of people.

East Kentwood Baptist Church and Genesis House, an organization dedicated to helping individuals break the cycle of homelessness, partnered together to develop what the church is calling “Project Launch Pad,” a community of four tiny homes located on the church property. The tiny homes aid homeless families by providing 90 days of transitional housing to help them reestablish themselves in the community. JBU construction management students, as a part of their class, worked on different house designs. Parameters of the design included an area under 500 square feet, the ability to house up to six people, a modern look that would blend in with the church and surrounding community and basic appliances. JBU students designed a 460-square-foot home with two bedrooms and one bathroom that can house a family.
of six. Rick Faust, associate professor of the construction management department, said the project is a great example of JBU’s community impact as the homes enable persons coming out of homelessness to transition to a more stable lifestyle.

“The tiny homes aid homeless families by providing 90 days of transitional housing to help them reestablish themselves in the community.”

Sometimes, it’s a class research project that provides a student with the opportunity to examine what it means to love one’s neighbor. Senior Seth Billingsley’s research project on the effects of the pandemic and the USDA’s food security program resulted in such an opportunity. Billingsley, a political science major, noted, “The spirit of this project is this: how did communities of faith respond to the needs of their neighbors, and did race play a role? I hope to find that people all worked together!”

In the nursing department, there is a community outreach component where JBU partners with the Siloam Springs School District (SSSD) for the fall Panther Health Fair that provides health education to the community; the Boys and Girls Club to provide after-school health education; and Oaks Indian Mission to plan events for children living at the mission.

Nursing students are required to log 20 volunteer hours per semester and can choose from a variety of community ministries including Ability Tree, New Life Ranch, Oaks Indian Mission, Kind at Heart Ministries, and 7Hills Homeless Center. While these volunteer hours are part of the curriculum, many students use it as a springboard for additional volunteering outside of the required hours. Nursing alumna Alexis Barnes ’20 chose Kind at Heart Ministries, an outreach to home-bound elderly people, as her volunteer placement. Even after completing her required hours, Alexis continued to volunteer with the woman with whom she was originally paired.

“You just go to their house and sit there and talk. For my friend, I’m the only one she talks to all week,” Barnes said. “It’s the littlest thing, but it makes the biggest impact.”

In addition to volunteering with Kind at Heart, Barnes organized a winter drive with the 7Hills Homeless Center to provide basic supplies to the Northwest Arkansas homeless population. She was able to raise support to purchase beanies, flashlights, granola bars, hot hand warmers, gloves, coupons and emergency blankets to hand out to those in need. She also recruited other nursing students to help hand out the supplies and serve meals to people at Seven Hills. “I was like ‘what do I do?’” Barnes said. “Little things.”

As one would expect, JBU’s education students certainly get a chance to go out into the community during their semester of student teaching. But the truth is that working in the community is woven throughout the program through internship opportunities, volunteer work and classroom observations.

Dr. Connie Matchell, former department head and professor of teacher education who retired this spring, explained, “There is just one course in the whole education program that doesn’t have some sort of field experience piece.”

These field experiences include volunteer hours with Ability Tree, a nonprofit organization that comes alongside individuals and families impacted by disability, acting as aides to teachers in local schools which allows them to observe classrooms, seven-week internships and several outreaches.

“Their disposition as they walk into that school in being helpful, in being kind, in showing Christ’s love, just through using their abilities to help is huge,” said Matchell.

Each year, education students host “Day of Discovery” that brings every fourth-grade student in the SSSD to JBU’s campus for the day. The students picnic, look through microscopes, see the earthquake machine and get a glimpse of college life. Additionally, the department has started Sunrise Science, a program in which elementary students who arrive at school early are able to receive extra science education.

Kappa Delta Pi, the education department’s honors program, partners with the school district for fundraisers and events. This past year, KDP partnered with the schools to raise funds to pay off the balance of school lunch accounts. Nena Houston, professional development schools site director, describes
the education department’s involvement with the schools as “a walking sermon.” Sometimes even after the required internship ends, students return to the schools to continue to build relationships with their supervising teachers.

“I’m going back to my internship placements and being an extra set of hands,” said Audrey Mathe ’20. “Even if it’s not in a teaching role, we can help out with the little things that take up a lot of their time that they’ve been using to teach.”

Those adding an emphasis in TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) also have a field-hour requirement that encourages helping both adults and children in Siloam who are learning English as a second language. The program partners with the school district, the Dogwood Literacy Council (DLC), and First Baptist Church of Siloam Springs ESL classes to tutor English language-learners.

“Besides supporting the course content, this goes right along with the JBU motto of head, heart, hand,” says Marlene Schwerin, adjunct teacher education professor. “We’re reinforcing to the students, here’s another opportunity to live out the mission of JBU in the community.”

Since the DLC relies on volunteers, JBU’s partnership has been beneficial in providing tutors while the DLC has provided field experience for the students.

Within the music & theatre department, students in the worship arts program students are encouraged to use the gifts they are developing in the classroom in a local church. Junior Ben Bishop, who attended and served as an interim worship co-leader at Community Christian Fellowship (CCF) in Siloam Springs in the spring of 2020, says the classroom has prepared him for church involvement.

“I’ve been equipped with theological and intellectual tools to aid me in my ministry, as well as practical skills that I have been able to use to further the kingdom,” he said.

Similarly, senior Chloe Bishop, who co-led at CCF with Ben, says she has been strongly encouraged to get plugged in locally and use her talents. “In many of my classes in general, I have felt encouraged to live in a servant-hearted manner — in church and in the community.”

“T’ve been equipped with theological and intellectual tools to aid me in my ministry, as well as practical skills that I have been able to use to further the kingdom.”

MINISTRY-BASED INVOLVEMENT

Outside of opportunities given through class assignments and academic areas, JBU Christian Ambassadors United for Service and Evangelism (CAUSE) Student Ministries mobilizes students for ministry on campus, in the community and around the world.

Although the structure of the organization has changed over the years, the mission remains the same: to provide students with outlets to grow through their gifts and to join in the ways in which God is working in the world. The ministry provides a place for students to engage their heads, hearts and hands.
in worship through service and evangelism. CAUSE Ministries are student-initiated and student-led. They are meant to motivate, train and support students as they learn to apply their knowledge and passions to share Christ in word and deed through practical service. Because of its structure as small groups that are part of a larger organization, CAUSE provides students with a tight-knit faith community to help them grow in their gifts and callings.

“As students engage in tangible and relational service in the community, people’s lives are impacted: children are tutored and mentored, physical needs are met in the community, the marginalized are remembered and the good news of Jesus is shared,” said Frank Hubert, director of service and outreach ministries. “These students are gaining experience and

“People’s lives are impacted: children are tutored and mentored, physical needs are met in the community, the marginalized are remembered and the good news of Jesus is shared.”
leadership skills that they can bring into their Christian communities and churches after they’ve left JBU.”

Underneath the umbrella of CAUSE Ministries are various ministry teams led by students. The students work with faculty and staff to develop the ministries.

“CAUSE leaders have a tremendous amount of autonomy to develop, implement and engage the community through their ministries,” said Hubert. “We encourage all of our CAUSE Ministries to have a co-leader model in which they go out in pairs to lead their ministries together. I remind them that they are the primary vision-keepers, administrators, recruiters and shepherds for their ministry teams: a big task but much more manageable when done together.”

Currently, CAUSE has around a dozen ministries that serve the community. These ministries seek to reach a diverse range of people in the Siloam Springs community and beyond and include serving children, the elderly, prisoners, refugees, people with disabilities and other members of the community. JBU students desiring to connect with or serve the community can get involved with a ministry that fits their gifts, talents and passions.

While CAUSE ministries have been impacted by the pandemic, students and faculty are still finding creative ways to reach the community safely.

The oldest CAUSE ministry is the Nursing Home Ministry. Before the spread of the coronavirus, students in the ministry developed relationships with residents of the local nursing home through weekly visits. During the pandemic, however, the ministry has shifted to letter-writing so that residents can still feel loved and cared for even during a time in which they are not allowed visitors.

Most CAUSE ministries are developed by students; however, some are outgrowths of existing community organizations. CAUSE strongly encourages students to reach out to ministries that are already meeting needs in the community, partnering with them for a common purpose.

One such CAUSE ministry partners with New Life Ranch (NLR), a Christian camp and retreat center in nearby Colcord, Oklahoma. Senior Olivia Fletcher, who directs the JBU side of the partnership, says that the goal of NLR’s Right Quest program is to mentor kids who don’t normally have that opportunity through outdoor education activities two hours a week.

“The vision is to connect students with someone willing to walk through life with them and guide them through what life with Christ looks like,” Fletcher said.

ATHLETIC INVOLVEMENT

The JBU Golden Eagle athletes also get involved in the community, not just because it’s part of JBU’s mission, but because of their participation in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) “Champions of Character” program.

Champions of Character seeks to teach student-athletes five core values: integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship and servant leadership. Each institution is tracked, ranked and recognized annually for its achievements. Each year since the program’s inception in 2000, JBU has ranked as a 5-Star Champions of Character institution.

The women’s basketball team works with Ability Tree. Since an emphasis of Ability Tree’s program is on recreation, education, support and training, the women’s basketball team has helped Ability Tree run an MVP League for the past four years. During the months of September and April, the team goes to Ability Tree one night each week and invites participants to JBU to work on basketball skills. Each child is partnered with a player. Sophomore Sierra Bailey, who was involved as a player, continued partnering with Ability Tree throughout the year.

“Ability Tree is meeting a significant need in our community and provides great services for children and their families,” she said. “As soon as you walk into the building, you are greeted with smiles and a hand leading you to go play.”

Senior Ally Teague, who also volunteers at Ability Tree, added, “I felt like I have been able to meet a
need with just playing basketball with my partnered child. They really opened up with being able to run around and have someone play catch with them or chase them. It was really fun to see them run in every Thursday, ready to tell us about their day and play basketball.”

As Ability Tree works to meet a need in the community, the JBU student body is doing what it can to meet the needs of the organization.

Through classroom assignments, volunteer opportunities and outreach ministries, John Brown University is seeking to engage with the community that surrounds it. While outreach looks different under the restrictions of a pandemic, students and faculty are seeking new ways to reach the community in a safe way. If anything, these times have emphasized even more the importance of loving our neighbors. Though these times are unprecedented, raising new questions and challenges, students are still engaging in the local community during their time at the university so they are better prepared to engage with the community that will surround them in the future.

“If anything, these times have emphasized even more the importance of loving our neighbors.”
Johanna (Merwin) Musgrave has spent much of the last year sitting in her closet. She’s been songwriting — working on an album of Scripture verses set to music. As a mother of two young children, the closet at nap time was the only quiet place she could find. “It was small and cramped,” she said, “but I had myself and a keyboard and a computer, and every day I would go in there and rough it out.”

Though Musgrave had participated in music and music ministry her whole life, she never considered herself a musician who would realistically write or distribute her own songs. She majored in English, but declared a worship ministry minor her sophomore year, the same year Jen Edwards, now assistant professor of worship arts, started as a faculty member. Musgrave remembers “sitting in class with Jen and being so challenged, so humbled. We learned about different worship styles and ways that people engaged with the Lord,” she recalled, “things that were wholly unlike what I was used to. Those classes shattered my narrow perspectives.”

As a student, Musgrave served as a chapel band leader, a member of Red Steps, JBU’s traveling worship band, and a member of Cathedral Choir, all experiences she says were instrumental in growing her musical skill and shaping her perspective on musical leadership.

Johanna graduated in 2012 and married Matt Musgrave ’11, a business administration graduate. They have two daughters, Edith, 4, and Eleanor, 2, plus another girl who was born mid-November, and Musgrave says it was motherhood that called her to deep and dramatic personal change. Though she didn’t know it yet, it would also lead her into songwriting.

“I realized,” she says, “that if I wanted to show my girls what it meant to be strong and gracious, kind and fierce — what it looks like to stand in Biblical womanhood — then I needed to dig into my own issues. It felt like the Lord, in giving me my first daughter, was inviting me to step into serious growth.”

Musgrave spent those first years of motherhood being stripped of a lot of what she pulled validation from and spending more time in the Scriptures. As she did so, she began to find a desire growing in her heart to possess and embody and internalize the Word.

“I started wanting to hide the Word in my heart,” she explained. “I want to be a woman who, in my 60s and 70s and 80s, is filled with Scripture, and the only way to do that is to be
"I had to work out a lot of things with the Lord about creativity and my fears and intimidations around creativity."

As part of her Bible study at the time, she was memorizing passages of Scripture, verse by verse, so that at the end of a 12-week study, she had long passages etched in her mind and heart.

“As I would go through the rhythm of my days,” Musgrave recalled, “those passages of Scripture would come to my mind constantly — in frustrating moments or in conversations or in small silences. Watching that happen, I saw so clearly how the Word of God is powerful and instructive: the more you hide it in your heart, the more it guides and instructs and shapes your life. And if I want to know the Lord, I have to know what he says and how to recognize his voice.”

These revelations overflowed into the things she was doing at home, and the ways she was raising her daughters. So as she started teaching her daughters the alphabet, Musgrave paired a memory verse to each letter they were learning that week: a verse that started with A one week, a verse that started with B the next. From her time personally memorizing scripture, Musgrave knew the memorization would be simpler for herself and her daughters if she set the verses to music.

She remembers musicians she grew up with: “Steve Green and Psalty the Singing Songbook and the Donut Man — these artists who were writing Scripture to music for kids’ entertainment. And their songs are still in my brain. I’ll hear something that reminds me, and the songs and the verses come immediately into my mind.”

But this was the first time Musgrave ever endeavored to write melodies to scriptures she wanted to memorize.

“I would have been more intimidated if I knew what this project would become,” she said. “But as far as I knew, it was for me and my girls, it was simple and fun.”

So that’s where her album, called “Lamplight: ABC Scripture Songs,” began: Musgrave sitting at her kitchen table, teaching the alphabet to her kids. In the half-hour before an alphabet lesson, she’d pull up her voice memos and record a melody to their memory verse for the week, then they’d sing the song over breakfast. And something lovely happened: Musgrave started hearing her daughters — even the two-year-old — singing the melodies in the hours and days following the lesson.

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It would be really cool to record these so that my kids can hear them away of breakfast table, she thought, and when her husband gave her some recording equipment for Christmas, she started retreating to the closet, slowly translating her voice memos into music files.

Not only was this a painstaking task, it was also personally challenging. “So much of my recent growth took place while sitting in my closet with the keyboard,” she explained. “I had to work out a lot of things with the Lord about creativity and my fears and intimidations around creativity. For a long time, I would go in there and feel like such an impostor — who am I to be doing this, trying to compose this music?”

Musgrave ended up going to counseling to talk through this struggle. Beautifully, she says, she “found a lot of healing through the process, feeling the Lord’s sweet delight in the small obedience of showing up, every day, to that closet.” Praying over the situation with her counselor, Johanna got a picture of her daughters on a playground, a vision that brought her new perspective on her creative work and in the Lord’s plan for her work: “It helped me understand that I wasn’t going about this the ‘wrong way’ — there’s no ‘right’ way to go about it. If you bring your kids to the playground and they spend the entire...
time on the swings, they haven’t missed out. They haven’t done something wrong — they’re just playing! Creativity is this: going to the playground and exploring, and every time you go back to the playground, you get to start again with no expectations for what needs to happen. Through my kids and this vision of them, the Lord explained the mentality he wanted from me.”

From that moment, Musgrave’s creativity exploded. Resting in that new perspective, she approached each track like a new and exciting apparatus to explore. Every song is unique and different: some are jazzy and some are bright and fun and some sound like backyard jam sessions. She took those recordings to a friend of a friend, a local musician who helped her build out the tracks into full-fledged songs — songs with piano, drums, bass and a myriad of other instruments.

In September, having finalized the instrumental tracks, she went to Haxton Road Studios in Bentonville, Arkansas, which is owned by fellow JBU alumnus Neil Greenhaw ’04, and recorded the vocals. Recently, Musgrave has been submitting her music for distribution to all the streaming music platforms — Spotify, Apple Music, Google Play, etc. She laughs, saying how every step of this process has been an invitation into being brave in the face of intimidation and feeling like an imposter. The truth she has been returning to, though, is the idea that bravery always feels uncomfortable, that she’s allowed to be here, allowed to play.

“This started out as a legacy thing,” Musgrave said. “I didn’t set out to write an album; I wanted to have ‘mom’s songs,’ those things we sang around the kitchen table, canonized for my daughters. But what’s been cool about the process is that I’m not stopping. I have a lot more scripture I want to memorize!”

Musgrave is writing melodies for a series of Psalms now, and while she says she’d never have called herself “a creative,” she’s becoming ever more comfortable with the idea that, if we’re made in the image of God, we’re all co-creators with Him. She wants to continue to steward that gift and to let the Lord guide her creativity.

Musgrave was intentional in writing “Lamplight” in a style that would appeal to both adults and children. “As a mom, I listen to a lot of kids’ music,” she explained, “and I didn’t want this music to be irritating to an adult listener. I wanted these songs to be musically interesting, so it’s a project that is pleasant and memorable for both kids and adults!”

Musgrave’s debut album is available on iTunes for purchase, for download on all streaming music platforms and on physical CD via her website — johannamusgrave.com — where you can also listen to a sample of the music.
Alumni Updates


Gary D. Logan ’67 has published two books. “Burial Plot” and “Chauncey” are available from Amazon.

Chris and Jessica (Brown) Mills ’04 announce the birth of their baby Judah Carsten Mills, born on Aug. 31 at 8 lbs, 4 oz and 21 inches. Judah is the 13th grandchild of John Brown III and his wife Stephania.

James J. Naramore, MD ’72 was named 2020 Wyoming Physician of the Year by Wyoming Medical Society. This award is presented each year to Wyoming’s top physician in recognition of his/her contributions to Wyoming communities. Naramore has been practicing in Gillette, Wyoming, since 1978 and has traveled to El Salvador, Ukraine and Ecuador to participate in medical mission trips.

Lauren Raikes Ostendorff ’06 has been promoted from alumni relations officer to director of alumni engagement at LeTourneau University, located in East Texas. She is also an associate professor of history at the university.

Kirby Romines ’17 was sworn in as the new City of Bentonville city clerk in August. She is director of sales for REW Marketing. She previously served as client executive for Bentonville-based NWA Brand and as director of Member Engagement and Experience at the Greater Bentonville Area Chamber of Commerce.

Johanna Slaysman ’00 became the new Head Age Group Coach for Swim Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She has been coaching swim since 2000 and this new opportunity has been her dream job.

Steve Tuzeneu ’84 has been named general manager/chief engineer of WJHS 104.9 FM Christian radio by Connecticut Radio Fellowship. He has more than 45 years of radio station experience, from announcing to engineering to management.

Romello Williams ’15 started his own production in the Caribbean, where he has already completed projects in the Turks & Caicos, Bahamas, St. Lucia and Puerto Rico. Building upon what he learned as a digital cinema major, Williams managed the marketing for the entire Turks & Caicos division of Caribbean Telecoms giant Digicel for three years.

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In Memoriam

Joshua Allen ’98, aged 43, died Aug. 3. He received an associate’s degree in construction management from JBU. He later earned his bachelor’s degree in youth ministry from Mt. Vernon Nazarene University and worked as a youth pastor at Missanabie Woods Academy. Allen was also the owner/operator of Allen Home Inspections. 01

Eileen Anthony ’64, age 77, died Sept. 18. She graduated from JBU and West Virginia University School of Social Work. Anthony worked in the field of social work for over 50 years and established a counseling practiced called Brighter Pathways. 02

Ruth Beal, age 94, died July 19. She was a member of the JBU Master Builders Society. 03

Donna Berry ’53, age 85, died Sept. 7. She attended JBU for two semesters and later met her husband in Siloam Springs. Donna loved to cook, read, travel and visit with her friends. 04

Doris Burns ’51, age 96, died Aug. 6. She earned a degree in Bible and religious studies at JBU. Doris loved reading, sewing and gardening. 05

Charles Butler ’49, age 90, died Aug. 29. He earned a degree in mechanical engineering from JBU. After serving in the U.S. Army, Butler worked as a mechanical engineer for Corning Glass Works for over 30 years. 06

Virginia (Kulvicki) Castleman ’64, age 77, died May 12. She obtained a degree in education from JBU and worked as a school teacher for 30 years. She later earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas and worked as an attorney ad litem. 07

Lela Combs ’89, age 77, died Aug. 24. She earned her associate’s degree in office administration and worked as a secretary in the Office of Admissions at JBU for several years. Lela later worked as a warden’s secretary for the State Department of Corrections. 08

Richard “Dick” Connell ’52, age 89, died June 22. He studied physical education and health at JBU. Connell taught science, health and PE, and he coached several sports teams before serving as a superintendent. 09

Betty (Anderson) Cook ’53, age 89, died July 5. She majored in elementary education at JBU and met her husband through her job as a telephone operator at JBU. 10

Louise “Lou” Fager-Standford ’51, age 93, died April 29. She earned a degree in biology from JBU and served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years. After retiring, she continued to work as an R.N. for hospitals in Kansas. 11

Mary (Ebersold) Fisher ’77, age 85, died July 12. At JBU she earned a degree in elementary education and enjoyed her work as a substitute teacher for Nixa schools. 12

Kenneth “Ken” Flory ’72, age 70, died Sept. 5. He earned a degree in broadcasting from JBU. Ken worked for over 30 years at KUOA and started an online newspaper after retirement. 13

Terry Franklin ’96, age 73, died Aug. 15. He earned a degree in organizational management from JBU. He was the financial director for the city of Bentonville for 15 years and the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport for 20 years. Franklin also served in the Army National Guard for 20 years. 14
Wayne Harper ’59, age 83, died July 29. He earned a degree in electrical engineering and worked for Collins Radio, Texas Instruments, Goodyear Aerospace and Loral Aerospace Corporation. 14

Shirley Hastings ’53, age 88, died March 11.

Mary (Linam) Highfill ’76, age 81, died Sept. 26. She earned a degree in social studies from JBU. Mary taught history at Siloam Springs High School, and later she was hired as the assistant principal in charge of discipline after earning her master’s degree in administration. 15

Clarence Hill ’58, age 90, died May 5. He earned a degree in printing from JBU and worked his entire career at Good News Publishing. 16

Larry Hummel ’70, age 73, died Sept. 11. He received a degree in radio production at JBU and worked for the Indiana Commission of Public Records for more than 30 years. 17

Walter Knights ’51, age 92, died Aug. 13. At JBU he earned a bachelor’s degree in science and mathematics and taught for many years. 18

Zoa Layton, age 99, died Aug. 23. She was a member of the JBU Master Builders Society. 19

Donald Martin ’57, age 97, died May 15. He studied Bible and English at JBU.

Jesse Miller ’57, age 84 died July 21, 2019. He graduated from JBU with a degree in radio engineering. Miller worked on many highly classified programs for the military and government agencies.

Robert Mitchell Jr. ’59, age 82, died Aug. 10. He earned a degree in construction management and worked as a construction project manager and as a cost estimating engineer. Robert also served in the U.S. Army National Guard in the 1960s. 20

Maurice “Lee” Moore Jr. ’57, age 85, died Oct. 26. After earning his radio production degree from JBU, Maurice received a certificate of elementary education from the University of Arkansas and taught fifth and sixth grades for 25 years.


Merry Ann Peoples ’78, age 54, died June 27. She studied office administration at JBU. Besides her animals, pastimes included Bible study, playing hymns on the piano and daily phone calls with her mother. 21
Sue (Smith) Porritt ’65, age 77, died Sept. 18. She studied education at JBU.

Thomas Raymond ’53, age 89, died Aug. 31. He studied electrical engineering.

Wanda Reynolds ’54, age 88, died Oct. 13. She attended JBU and later owned and operated a dairy farm in Siloam Springs with her husband.

Gwen (McClure) Spaugh ’56, age 85, died July 5. At JBU she earned a degree in secretarial science. Gwen served in several ministries through her church.

John Terry ’49, age 99, died Sept. 9. John earned a degree in Bible and religious education from JBU. He later served as JBU’s director of development and as an instructor. Terry was the mayor of Siloam Springs from 1978-1979.

Carrie (Neal) Thompson ’85, age 77, died July 10. She studied biology at JBU.

Kathrine (Sandusky) White ’08, age 59, died May 20. She earned a degree in organizational management from JBU. She worked for Blue Cross Blue Shield for 35 years.

Kenneth “Ken” Winebrenner ’69, age 73, died Aug. 5. He graduated with a degree in business administration. Ken was the regional marketing director for Lincoln Financial in Dallas, Texas.

Virginia (Bridges) Kugel-Zank ’64, age 78, died Aug. 1. She earned her degree in social studies at JBU. She later received her master’s degree in English and taught English both in primary and secondary education until 2017.

Family Weekend 2021

Parents: Watch your email for details on Family Weekend.

Dates still to be determined.
As I was editing this issue and reading the alumni profile on Johanna Musgrave, I found myself nodding along. Struggling with creativity? Yes. Wondering if I was doing things “right?” Yes. Feeling like an imposter? Yes.

When I started to write my first book, I wondered why in the world anyone would want to read what I had to say. Surely someone else had already written a similar book. Why did my voice need to be added?

But it’s not just writers and composers who struggle with these feelings. Every individual is made in the image of God — the ultimate “creative” — therefore I know I am not alone in the feelings of inadequacy and doubt that creep in as we use that creativity to create art, teach a classroom full of children or find creative approaches to solving problems within our workplace, family and society.

One of my favorite authors, Jon Acuff, has written several books that, in one way or another, address the common roadblocks of people who dream of a different career or have a large goal that seems unattainable. One of the biggest themes is fear.

“Regardless of what you want to do or who you are, fear will always see you as wholly unqualified for anything you ever dream or attempt.”

-From “Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average and Do Work that Matters”

As Christians, we know that fear comes out of our brokenness and while we should have no reason to be fearful, Satan loves to feed our fears, especially if it will keep us from creative work that glorifies God. In fighting that battle, remembering the following has been helpful for me:

Fear fears community: We often believe we’re the only one battling a particular fear, and Satan can use that isolation to magnify our thoughts. But if you voice your fear to someone, or a group of people, you’ll most often be met with “You too? I thought I was the only one.” Most fears are fairly universal and when we realize that there is a whole community of people with the same doubts, it takes a lot of power away from the fear.

Fear fears the truth: By speaking our fears out loud, or writing them out, it becomes much easier to confront each statement with the truth. For example, while many books have been written on the topic of adoption, I had a unique experience and a unique voice and it had value and was worth sharing.

Fear fears faith: As long as we continue to breathe, we’ll fight our tendency toward fear. The Bible is replete with verses that remind us to trust God and to not be anxious. While God can and does answer prayers for relief from our fears, we may also be called to walk boldly in spite of our fears as part of the process of learning to trust God.

In “Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear,” author Elizabeth Gilbert argues that sometimes in trying to kill off our fears, we actually just end up suppressing our creativity. Instead, Gilbert uses the analogy of a road trip in which she invites fear to “ride along” with her creativity with the understanding that fear doesn’t get to ever drive or make decisions. It’s merely a passenger.

Whether fear lingers or not, be courageous in using the creativity you have been endowed with by our creator.

Julie Gumm ’95 is director of University Marketing & Communications and editor of the Brown Bulletin.
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Nursing Major

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