Perseverance in a Pandemic
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Dear Friends of JBU,

By June 1919, the Spanish flu had claimed an estimated 675,000 lives in the U.S. and perhaps up to 50 million around the world. Many of the people who died were young, ages 20-40. People wore masks; newspaper advertisements encouraged hand washing; and people were encouraged to quarantine if they were sick or vulnerable. From April to November of 1919, over three dozen U.S. cities experienced violent racial conflict that led to the widespread killing and lynching of Blacks in what came to be known as the Red Summer. One of the worst incidents happened in Elaine, Arkansas, on September 30 when a white mob attacked and killed an estimated 240 Black people.

JBU was founded on September 29, 1919, a day before the Elaine massacre and toward the end of the Spanish Flu pandemic. Over the last several months, I have pondered the convergence of those historical events. I have thought about the faith that it must have taken for John Brown Sr. to imagine starting a college when the flu had just killed so many young people across the nation. I have wondered about how life at JBU and in our nation might have been different, and so much better, if we had done more to recognize, repent and recover from the sin of racism after that Red Summer.

I have contemplated that history in the midst of planning for how JBU should respond to the pandemic and to the renewed and righteous calls for repentance, restoration and justice in our nation. We have and will continue to take steps to respond to both challenges.

In response to the pandemic, we are reorganizing our classrooms and dining hall to provide for physical distancing; we will be wearing masks; we are rethinking chapel to limit large groups meeting inside; we are putting new sanitizing procedures into place; and we are purchasing technology to enable quarantined students to keep up with their classes.

In response to the call for justice, we have made progress through the good work of the JBU Diversity Committee led by Dr. Marquita Smith. We have sought to educate the JBU community by hosting faculty development workshops, diversity symposiums, regional training initiatives and reading groups for faculty, staff and students. We have grown our endowed scholarship fund for underrepresented students to over $3 million. Last fall, we had students in a public relations class work with the Elaine Legacy Project to conceive of a memorial on campus to remember and lament those who lost their lives in Elaine. The class brought the project to Student Government which endorsed it, and we will put it into place in the fall. Yet, we know more needs to be done so that every one of God’s children flourishes at JBU.

We engage in this work because it is central to our Christian mission. As part of his kingdom work, Christ healed the sick, sought justice for the oppressed and welcomed all people into his church. He calls us to follow him in that work. We are also humble enough to know that we can’t stop disease or overturn racism without Christ, and we pray for his power to work in and through us to see clearly and respond wisely to these challenges. We invite you to join us in that prayer.

Godspeed,

Dr. Charles W. Pollard
President, John Brown University
Matthew 22:39
Epiphany

Friday the 13th in the year 2020 will forever live up to its ill-fated reputation in our country’s history and the JBU community. As we all began to take notice of the spread of COVID-19 in the U.S., our devices were inundated with steady streams of information. National and local news outlets communicated nonstop with changes related to the coronavirus pandemic — professional sports leagues, collegiate and high school sports seasons were canceled, colleges and K-12 schools sent students home to finish the semester online and companies prepared employees to work remotely.

My first reaction was to process how this sudden change would affect families’ lives. My son’s high school baseball team had only played a handful of games. Running into the grocery store was now discouraged and even churches moved to online worship services. The way Americans do life was disrupted.

We were suddenly encouraged to love our neighbors at a greater level than ever before. We were challenged to live differently to save the lives of those who may be at higher risk of severe COVID-19 complications — not a very convenient ask for a country that has become more self-focused. But JBU fulfilled this Matthew 22:39 commandment as it sent students home, transitioned most faculty and staff to work remotely and required those on campus to wear a mask. I cannot be more proud to work with and for a university president, board of trustees and COVID-19 task force that has worked tirelessly the last few months to place the health and safety of all — students, faculty, staff and the Siloam Springs community — as the top priority.

If these measures help save even one life, the commandment to love thy neighbor will be even more fulfilled.

Jay Nickel
Managing Editor, Brown Bulletin

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Give Online: jbu.edu/giveonline
Campus News

JBU At Home Program Enrolls Over 475 Students in Summer Courses
JBU At Home, a schedule of more than 60 classes students can take during the summer at a steeply reduced tuition rate, was launched to provide opportunity for current and incoming students to make progress toward their degree. Over 475 students enrolled in classes during the two eight-week sessions.

English Professor Releases First Collection of Poems
Dr. Jacob Stratman, JBU professor of English, released his first book, a collection of poems, “What I Have I Offer with Two Hands.” Stratman began writing the poems, a collection that illustrates the divine in everyday moments — the hills and creeks of the Ozarks, the Eucharist, his son’s Batman toys in the tub or the author’s own childhood — in 2015.

Track & Field Renovation Completed
On Dec. 12, JBU’s track and field team had their first practice on the newly renovated track at nearby Siloam Springs Middle School. JBU and the Siloam Springs School District partnered to renovate and share use of the facility as JBU relaunched a track and field program that was last active in the 1980s. The track subsurface was rebuilt and a higher-quality running surface was installed. The interior ends were made more functional and a steeple chase pit area was installed.

Communication Students, Faculty, Alumna Receive Awards
Senior Clancie Sorrell and junior Catherine Nolte received first-place honors in the Arkansas College Media Awards competition. Sorrell received first place for in-depth news for an article titled, “A town remembers Arkansas’ Red Summer massacre.” Nolte received first place in the category of art/illustration for a feature page displaying each of the windows in the Cathedral of the Ozarks, including the new Centennial Window.

Seven JBU students, a faculty member and an alumna were honored by the National Federation of Press Women in the 2020 National Communications Contest. Nolte received three first-place awards for her work in design, writing and opinion. A team of six communication students — Rachel Ball, Claire Brownlee, Hannah Lawrence, Jessica Oldenettel, Natalie Rogers and Andrea Sosso — received second place in the collegiate/education division for public relations campaign. Debbie Miller, a faculty member and faculty adviser for the Threefold, received first place in the collegiate/education category for faculty adviser of a student publication, station or site. Jamie (Brunk) Smith ’00 placed first in web and social media — blogs, corporate or for-profit.

Cybersecurity and Criminal Justice Programs Added Starting Fall 2020
JBU announced two new degree programs for fall 2020 in partnership with Bluefield College, a fellow member of the CCCU in Bluefield, Virginia. The cybersecurity program allows students to pursue either a Bachelor of Science degree or a Bachelor of Arts degree while pursuing an interdisciplinary approach with other academic areas such as entrepreneurship and innovation. The Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice program provides students with an academic and experiential program in the various fields that comprise the discipline of criminal justice. JBU students will take 26 of the required 47 credit hours of cybersecurity courses and 12 of the required 42 credit hours of criminal justice courses through Bluefield’s online classes.

Construction Management Students Win Awards
For the fourth year in a row, JBU construction management students took first place at the
American Institute of Contractors (AIC) Ethics Competition. Team members Leo Castillo, Joshua Barnett, Noah Hubert, Brett Heidelberg and Cameron Crawford qualified for the event by submitting an initial response paper on ethical issues tied to a case study based on actual events. JBU was one of three teams selected to make their final presentation at the national competition.

CM seniors also took second place in both the Commercial and Heavy Civil Divisions of the regional TEXO/ASC student competition. Cameron Crawford received a Best Presenter award, while Brock Ringel received a Best Presenter award and took first in the Impromptu Speech competition.

Diversity Symposium Focuses on Justice and the Church
Ken Wytsma, lead pastor of Village Church in Beaverton, Oregon, and founder of The Justice Conference, which has reached over 30,000 people across seven countries with a message on a theology of justice, was the featured speaker at JBU’s annual Diversity Symposium. Wytsma spoke in chapel, held a Lunch & Learn with faculty and staff and led sessions on justice and the church. Wytsma is also the author of “The Myth of Equality: Uncovering the Roots of Injustice and Privilege,” which was named one of the top five religion books of 2017 by Publishers Weekly.

Music Students Take Top Honors
Five JBU students took top honors at the Arkansas Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing conference, competing against 175 students from across the state. Kendra Jolly and Olivia Myers placed first in their divisions. Rachel Ball, Connor Klaassen and Nolan Colby also placed in the top three of their respective divisions.

Business Students Win Competition
Monarch, one of JBU’s Innovation Launch Lab teams, won the International Business Model Regional Competition hosted by the University of Mississippi. Monarch is a company that focuses on women’s health education.

Chief Judge Lavenski Smith Presents Barnett Civic Leadership Lecture
Chief Judge Lavenski Smith presented a lecture “Without Respect of Persons” on Feb. 4 at the fourth annual Barnett Civic Leadership Series lecture. Smith, who is the Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, was nominated to the federal bench by President George W. Bush and began serving in 2002. He became Chief Judge in 2017. Before joining the federal bench, Smith practiced law in both private practice and public service. He was also a JBU professor and on the board of trustees.

Toilet Paper Game Featured in ESPN Commercial
In March, ESPN launched the latest commercial in its “There’s No Place Like Sports” series and it features JBU’s world-famous toilet paper game. To view, visit https://on.jbu.edu/3eKViBQ

Prayer of Lament Service, Prayer Walk Held
In the wake of the killing of George Floyd, JBU held a Prayer of Lament service, led by Dr. Marquita Smith. The service featured worship, prayer and reflection. Attendance was limited due to social distancing but the service was livestreamed and can still be viewed at jbu.edu/prayerservice. Shortly after the service a Prayer Walk was held, co-sponsored by several local churches and JBU. More than 150 people gathered to walk while praying for racial justice and reconciliation, our nation’s leaders and law enforcement.
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<tr>
<th>JANUARY 31</th>
<th>MARCH 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Crisis Response Team begins to actively monitor the coronavirus pandemic. Two international trips are canceled.</td>
<td>Crisis Response Team starts meeting daily to determine JBU response and make preparations for possible move to remote education.</td>
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<th>MARCH 12</th>
<th>MARCH 12-13</th>
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<td>A Community Service is held to announce decision to suspend face-to-face classes on March 13, close residential housing on March 21 and resume classes online on March 30.</td>
<td>President Pollard takes graduation photos with seniors.</td>
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<th>MARCH 13</th>
<th>MARCH 16</th>
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<td>In light of increasing travel restrictions and the declaration of a national emergency, JBU moves up the close of residence halls to March 16. Last day of face-to-face classes.</td>
<td>The majority of employees transition to working remotely from home. Screening guidelines are established for those working on campus. The Walton Lifetime Health Complex is closed. Campus buildings are closed to the public. Faculty and staff work to transition academic instruction to remote classes.</td>
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<th>MARCH 26</th>
<th>MARCH 30</th>
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<td>President Pollard holds the first of many regular Town Hall meetings for faculty and staff via Zoom. The meetings cover a range of topics and allow participants to ask questions.</td>
<td>Classes resume via remote education.</td>
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<th>APRIL 6</th>
<th>MAY 4</th>
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<td>Announcement of JBU at Home summer program offering more than 60 online classes, taught by full-time faculty at a discounted rate of $249/credit hour. Spring commencement is postponed, and credits for program disruptions are announced.</td>
<td>President Pollard announces JBU’s intention to resume classes on campus in the fall in compliance with all government requirements to protect the health of our students, faculty and staff as well as the community of Siloam Springs.</td>
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<th>MAY 9</th>
<th>JUNE 10</th>
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<td>Online Celebration of Graduates via YouTube. (Not intended to replace commencement but serves as a celebratory marker until further plans can be made.)</td>
<td>Fall semester details are announced including changes to the academic calendar and health and safety guidelines. Gifts to the Fill the Gap Scholarship Fund, created to help students facing economic challenges in need of additional financial aid, totals more than $470,000.</td>
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For details related to the coronavirus, visit jbu.edu/coronavirus
For information on the fall semester, visit jbu.edu/backtoschool
Connections Change with COVID-19

A Student Reflection

By Catherine Nolte ’21

The night before President Pollard announced the closing of campus, I was in the Threefold Advocate newspaper office, watching the news headlines change with frightening speed. President Trump announces that all flights to Europe are banned. The NBA suspends its season. Arkansas has its first confirmed case of COVID-19. Although I enjoy the fast-paced nature of journalism, this was the first time I truly felt like my head was spinning.

This surreal feeling continued as the date for moving off campus changed from having a week left to only a few days to say goodbyes. I remember walking around campus in a fog. Everyone seemed to rush around aimlessly or sit staring into space. Through tears, I worked to balance short meetings, long hugs and conversations over meals as I said goodbye to my friends, especially those soon to graduate.

After packing up my dorm room and returning home, I found myself staring at a computer screen in a daze. Spring break had passed by so quickly, and now little digital squares holding my classmates and professors greeted me daily. I had never realized how often I interacted with people face to face on campus. I missed hanging out with my friends, swinging by a professor’s office to ask a question and even having access to the library.

As the newness of quarantine wore off, I felt truly grateful for the privilege of having a safe home to return to and the opportunity to go to a school that cares for its students. Despite the difficulties of online classwork, faculty exhibited flexibility, kindness and grace. Whether figuring out how to work on a presentation with a classmate in South Korea, finding ways to continue the Threefold online or delighting in the joy of snail mail, I was thankful for the creativity and resilience of my friends and classmates as we sought to stay connected.

As JBU enters into yet another new season in the fall, I pray that the connections we’ve built continue to be strong. It will certainly present new challenges, but God will also give us new opportunities to lean on and support one another.
Since President Pollard’s announcement on May 4 that JBU would reopen campus to face-to-face instruction in the fall, the priority has been preparing for the health and safety of our JBU community in compliance with all government requirements. A multi-department COVID-19 Task Force is meeting weekly to review and discuss reopening plans submitted from each university department to ensure adherence to policies and best practices.

First, JBU is asking students, faculty and staff to adjust their behaviors based on three principles: love your neighbor, love yourself and love JBU. By adhering to physical distancing and mask wearing policies, students can protect the larger JBU community and decrease their chances of having to be quarantined during the semester. The university is doing everything possible to prevent COVID-19 from spreading to a point that the state forces us to send students home and transition to remote instruction again.

Campus life in the fall will likely cause some inconvenience and frustration, but we believe that those minor interruptions in “normal” life will be well worth it to return students to JBU for relational, face-to-face, Christ-centered education.

For more information, and to keep current on back to campus plans, visit jbu.edu/backtocampus

Here are some of our plans for the fall:

- The academic year will start a week earlier, on August 17, and end class instruction for the semester by Tuesday, Nov. 24, the evening before Thanksgiving break. Final exam week will happen remotely from Dec. 1-4. In order to provide the same number of class days as a normal semester, we will hold classes on Labor Day and will not have a fall break.
- Plans for housing, food service and care of quarantined and isolated students are in place.
- Technology has been purchased so students who are quarantined or isolated can participate in live class sessions via Zoom and remain connected to classmates.
- Classrooms and meeting spaces are being reconfigured to adhere to physical distancing guidelines. Several large outdoor tents will provide expanded space for dining and both scheduled and informal gatherings.
- As a crucial component of our mission, chapel will still be a central part of campus life and the Office of Christian Formation is developing plans to meet in smaller groups led by faculty and student leaders.
- Student activities and intramurals will be reimagined to still provide community-building activities in a safe environment. Intramural kickball anyone?
- Our athletic seasons will follow NAIA guidelines, requirements and recommendations which were developed in good faith based on what the NAIA knows at this time. Flexibility will need to be allowed as unforeseen changes arise since the guidelines are a work in progress. For current NAIA guidelines, visit www.naia.org/membership/2019-20/releases/Fall_2020_Guidelines
- JBU recognizes there will be even more challenges this year for our students in regard to their mental health. Student Counseling and the administration are working on plans to support and connect students during this time.
Fill the Gap Funds

Meeting the Economic Challenges of COVID-19

For many students, the college search and selection process can be a roller coaster. There are a variety of factors to consider – available majors, school location, academic rigor and experiences, extracurricular and athletic opportunities, scholarships and financial aid. Ultimately, students have to take all of the available information and decide whether it feels like “a good fit.” This is a big decision to make, even in the most normal circumstances. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has made the decision process, or even the possibility of attending college, more difficult for too many students.

Gabe Rodriguez spent several months looking at JBU as a place where he could learn, grow in his faith and hopefully play soccer. Early in the spring, it looked doubtful that it would all work out. Then in May, the men’s soccer coach offered Gabe a spot on the team. At that point, Gabe and his family faced a new challenge – his mom’s employment, and their ability to afford JBU, had been impacted by the pandemic. Thankfully, after working with his admissions counselor, Claire Johnson, and the financial aid office, Gabe was able to receive additional aid from the Fill the Gap Scholarship to attend JBU.

Several years ago trustee emerita Bill Berry and his wife Donna established the Fill the Gap Scholarship Fund, which was designed to help students with extenuating financial circumstances. Since March, JBU has experienced a surge in requests for additional financial aid due to COVID-19. We know our students’ lives are changing every day and we know the need is real. To meet this need, we created the Fill the Gap Scholarship Challenge to help students attend, or return to, JBU this fall.

Thanks to a challenge gift from Mark and Diane Simmons and a matching gift challenge from JBU board members, over 200 generous donors have participated, giving over $470,000 to support students above and beyond their current financial aid packages for the coming year. I am so grateful for everyone who has given to help students pursue a JBU education. This scholarship is providing a way forward for our students and their families.

We expect to receive aid requests throughout the summer and anticipate helping over 150 students through the Fill the Gap Scholarship. We are grateful for the many donors who continue to prioritize helping students afford JBU.

*Jim Krall is the vice president for university advancement.*
Men’s & Women’s Soccer
The Golden Eagles men’s soccer team participated in the NAIA National Championships for the second time in four seasons, led by the dynamic duo of freshmen Jacob Zamarron and Oscar Carballo. Finishing second in the nation in points per game (3.05), Zamarron clinched a second team All-America selection while Carballo was named SAC Player of the Year. The squad captured the program’s first-ever SAC regular season title and the second-ever SAC tournament crown. JBU defeated Southeastern (Fla.) in the National Championships Opening Round semifinals before concluding the season at the hand of an eventual national semifinalist, Lindsey Wilson (Ky.).

For the second-straight season, the women’s soccer team fought its way into hosting an NAIA National Championships Opening Round contest. However, JBU fell in a shootout to upstart Eastern Oregon in the Opening Round finals, finishing the season 12-3-4. Senior Anne Metz was named an NAIA All-America honorable mention, while junior Caitlyn Logan and sophomore Megan Hutto were named Sooner Athletic Goalkeeper and Newcomer of the Year, respectively.

Women’s Volleyball
Posting 26 wins for the second time in three seasons, the volleyball squad was on the verge of the program’s first-ever trip to the NAIA National Championships, when the Golden Eagles fell in the SAC tournament semifinals to Texas Wesleyan. Led by SAC first team honoree Jessica Schultz, JBU finished 10-1 at home and featured a 10-match winning streak.

Men’s Basketball
Junior Densier Carnes and the men’s basketball squad posted the first-ever undefeated record at home in program history (17-0). Winners in nine of its last 10 games, the team made a second-consecutive Sooner Athletic Conference (SAC) tournament championship appearance and was ready to make its ninth trip to Kansas City before the NAIA National Championships were canceled. Also, for the first time in program history, JBU featured a pair of All-SAC first teamers in the same season, Carnes and sophomore Luke Harper. Harper was picked for the All-America third team, the program’s fifth-ever All-America selection.

Cross Country & Track & Field
Sophomores Ben Martin and Allika Pearson again led the Golden Eagle Cross Country harriers, as the duo each earned a trip to the NAIA National Championships. Pearson broke her own program record set last season, notching an 18:25 finish in the 5,000-meter race at the Missouri Southern State Stampede and earning the program’s first-ever individual champion at the meet. JBU secured a third-place finish on the men’s side at the SAC championships, while the women came in second, the squad’s highest finish ever at the conference meet.

Pearson’s season didn’t end in late November as the Golden Eagles debuted a track and field team for the first time in decades. It didn’t take long to start making waves, when Pearson secured a spot at the NAIA Indoor National Championships with a 17:58 in the 5,000 – hitting an automatic NAIA A standard.
“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

In a tired yet apt analogy, a sports season is often compared to the Pauline metaphor of pursuing a Godly life: perseverance, hard work, determination and keeping focus on the ultimate goal. In the case of the 2019-20 Golden Eagles men’s basketball squad – that goal was a national title.

And the team was on the cusp of a deep run in Kansas City, just one year removed from its first big dance experience since 2013. Last season, JBU fell to Bethel University (Tenn.) in the Round of 32, but the taste of bigger aspirations fueled a 28-5 record heading toward another trip to the Paris of the Plains. That is, until Rudy Gobert of the NBA’s Utah Jazz tested positive for COVID-19, sending the world of sports into a tailspin.

The dominos then began to fall. The NBA halted its season on March 11, just before tipoff between the Jazz and the Oklahoma City Thunder. Like the virus, the shutdowns spread quickly. The NCAA's prized March Madness was thrown into doubt, and before anyone could blink, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II basketball tournament in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, already underway, began day two of the Round of 32 with only immediate family in the stands. The compromises and mitigation efforts didn’t even last three games.

Midway through the day, the rest of the tournament was canceled. Soon after, the Golden Eagles received word from the NAIA national office that its season, which held tremendous promise, was over as well. It was just one of many affected by the global pandemic.

Sixth-year head coach Jason Beschta admitted that heavy emotions were shared by the team.


Rounding the Final Turn

While JBU wasn’t able to capture its second Sooner Athletic Conference tournament title, falling to Southwestern Assemblies of God University in the championship game, the Golden Eagles were ready to travel to Kansas City. Huge road victories at Oklahoma City University and Southwestern Assemblies of God, both slugfests that finished in overtime, added a little distance to the race but provided the squad worthwhile hurdles that were successfully cleared.

A team that doesn’t face adversity can’t be expected to succeed in Kansas City. However, a team that time and time again rises to meet challenges, like JBU in 2019-20, boasted a resume rife with championship-caliber bona fides.

“Our guys had so much confidence and excitement heading into the national tournament,” Beschta said, explaining the team’s response to a grueling SAC schedule and tournament finish. “We were consistently playing some of our best basketball of the season, which was shown by our run to the SAC tournament finals. Together, we had such a strong belief that we were going to make a run in Kansas City.”

The Golden Eagles were easily one of the country’s most balanced teams. The lineup, featuring four of its five starters averaging double-digit scoring efforts each night, was led by NAIA All-America third team selection sophomore Luke Harper, juniors Densier Carnes and Rokas Grabliauskas, and senior Quintin Bailey. These assets provided enough firepower on any given night to outscore the opposition. That’s not to say that defense wasn’t a mainstay as
well – sophomore Ira Perrier, regarded a top defender in the SAC, helped lead the squad to a mere 66.5 points per game allowed – easily the best in the conference. Add into the mix a one-man hype machine in transfer senior Kiree Hutchings, a crowd favorite known for his timely triples and exuberant celebrations, JBU seemed to have all the pieces needed to vie for another red banner to hang from the Bill George Arena rafters.

**Calling Off the Race**

Less than a day before sporting competition nationwide evaporated, the Golden Eagles gathered in the Bynum Theater to watch the NAIA’s selection show, virtually guaranteed a high-level seeding in the tournament after finishing second, both in the SAC regular season and tournament – not to mention JBU’s 81-74 win over second-ranked Mid-America Christian University at the end of January.

Such strong finishes in the SAC historically lead not only to a national tournament berth, if an automatic entry isn’t clinched, but usually a strong seeding as well. This is often based on the conference’s year-over-year showings in Kansas City and highlighted by 12 men’s basketball national titles.

With the sporting world quickly shuttering, and the rest of the country soon to follow, Beschta and the student-athletes figured it was only a matter of time.

“After the excitement of the selection show the night before, to watch it all unfold and unravel so quickly that day was surreal. Most of the guys were aware that things were changing as they followed the news on social media as [NCAA Division I] conferences began canceling their tournaments,” he said. “We quickly grew to expect that it wouldn’t be much longer before the NAIA national tournament was canceled.”

Beschta said it would be a few hours before everyone could get together as a team to talk about things, and by then all of the players knew it was over.

“The guys were all saddened of course, but under it all was a deeper feeling of loss knowing that the team, our family was finished,” he said.

If you spend any time around the student-athletes donning the Golden Eagle jersey on game day, it wouldn’t take long to understand the core values of the program that Beschta has been building since he arrived on campus in 2013. It’s always about the team, the collective. The mantra finally manifested a year ago when JBU made a leap forward after four rebuilding seasons, combining for a 51-16 record since the start of the 2018-19 campaign.

Beschta said this group of young men were so incredibly close to one another and truly loved their brothers, so it was hard to accept that this team had played its last game together.

While the coaches and players grappled with the abrupt conclusion of a season that saw incredible improvements from the already outstanding year prior, including the program’s first-ever undefeated season at home, the chaos continued.

“We then found out that everyone needed to leave campus in a matter of days, so we wouldn’t even get to have the postseason time together before graduation. Throughout it all, there was just a feeling of acceptance of what happened, while being disappointed at the conclusion,” Beschta said. “I never heard the guys complaining about things. Instead of focusing energy on what was lost, the guys seemed to focus on each other and the incredible bonds that had been built over the course of the season.”

But in that moment, the JBU bench boss saw a manifestation of the team’s foundational aspirations.
“It didn’t take long for the guys returning to start talking about what we are going to do next season and the high expectations we all share going forward,” Beschta said.

**The Next Race to Come**

Moving forward in a COVID-19 world will take caution and wisdom. Many things, including what a 2020-21 season looks like, are still up in the air. Regardless of how it materializes, Beschta has the tools returning to duplicate the effort again in the wake of the unknown. The caveat – being at the ready for when the time comes.

“Going into an offseason where everyone is on their own, they may or may not have access to a gym, a hoop or a weight room. This summer won’t be like any other we have encountered. I challenged the guys to find a way to get better every day,” he said. “Around the country, every player is dealing with similar situations and limitations, but it is what you choose to do today that will make the difference going into next season. You can always find excuses to keep you from working hard, and those excuses are even easier to find now. But, you have to be committed to doing something, however small, each day.”

The team has been doing weekly Zoom calls to stay connected, to challenge each other and to continue growing as a unit. Despite being apart more than normal, Beschta believes they are going to come out of this situation even closer as a family.

As questions regarding the novel coronavirus continue to circulate even faster than the disease, taking a moment to reflect on this season, the accomplishments and the adversities alike, needs to happen. Too many extraordinary advancements for the program were realized, making the unceremonious close of the year even more disappointing. But even then, there is room for joy.

“Even without the opportunity to play in Kansas City, nothing that this team accomplished can be diminished,” Beschta said, having crossed the 100-win threshold in 2019 at the helm of the Golden Eagles. “Our guys came into the season with such a strong belief and high expectations, that it didn’t matter what others thought we were capable of. It is amazing how far that belief can take a team that is committed to each other, to playing extremely hard, never giving up, doing something together that none could accomplish on their own.”

While the next iteration of the Golden Eagles will look a little different, there is no doubt that Beschta and the team, using those core principles, will be ready for a new season and another opportunity to pursue that red championship banner.

*Nicholas Robinson is the director of sports information.*
Rhonda Hostler, director of health services, was a 15-year-old volunteer candy striper at a military hospital when she realized she had found her calling in the health care field. She became a registered nurse in 1996 and went immediately to work at Driscoll Children’s Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas, as an emergency room trauma nurse. In 2003, Hostler and her husband moved to Northwest Arkansas where she worked in pediatrics, then at the University of Arkansas before joining JBU in 2011.
WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING ABOUT BEING A NURSE AND HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR MISSION AT JBU?

1. Caring for our students is the most rewarding part! I'm able to teach them how to navigate their health needs as well as making smart choices. I give hugs when they need it too.
2. I see my mission as a helper between parents caring for our students and the real world. When a student comes to college they don't have mom here to tell them when it's appropriate to see a doctor or how to make an appointment.
3. When a student comes to see me with an injury or illness, most of the time it doesn't require seeing a physician. When they do, most have never had to make an appointment with a doctor's office. So when our students need to see a doctor, I walk them through that process.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO JBU AND WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE?

1. I loved my job at the U of A, but the daily drive was becoming a grind. I became a “mom” again and needed to spend more time at home and less time on the road. One of our RDs told me about a need for an RN at JBU. I thought I would be perfect for the job since I had worked with college students.
2. I am still here because it's the best nursing job in the world!
3. I get to work with college students who I get to watch grow into adults and I get to be a part of their world. I have gone to weddings, gone into delivery rooms, rafted the Nile River with some...I have laughed and cried and prayed with others.

WHAT DID YOU EXPERIENCE AND LEARN FROM THE COVID-19 SITUATION LAST SEMESTER WHEN CAMPUS SUDDENLY CLOSED?

1. I learned just how connected this world is. In December, I heard about a virus in China that had WHO and the CDC concerned. Less than six weeks later, it had spread to other Asian countries and Europe. Then weeks later it was here.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN PREPARING FOR THE FALL SEMESTER AND HOW WILL IT LOOK DIFFERENT?

1. I am part of the JBU COVID-19 Task Force and we are meeting twice a week trying to think of every detail to keep our students, faculty and staff healthy and safe.
2. We want to do so (keeping our students and faculty and staff healthy and safe), but we also want to make sure our students have a good college experience while feeling a part of the JBU community. So, finding that balance is a challenge.
3. Is it going to be the same as years past? No, it can’t at this time. But it can be a good experience, it’s just going to be different.

HOW DO YOU KEEP UP WITH THE APPLICATION OF NEW COVID-19 DISCOVERIES AND GUIDELINES AS THEY ARE DISCLOSED?

1. I follow the CDC recommendations as well as the Arkansas Department of Health.
2. I also follow a forum from American College Health Association, an organization of health services from colleges from all across the U.S. We share ideas and help solve problems each of us are having, including how to navigate COVID-19 in colleges and universities. The challenge is that what is recommended now may not be so next week or next month.

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS CAN YOU GIVE JBU FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS FOR HOW TO LIVE THIS ‘NEW NORMAL’?

1. Wash your hands, wear a mask and do social distancing. And take care of yourself.
2. You can still see friends, but instead of going to lunch at a restaurant, everyone can take their lunch to a park, sit in chairs placed six feet apart and visit.
3. Things look different, but with a little imagination we can still connect with each other.
Perseverance in a Pandemic

Nurses Extend Empathy, Establish Connection with Patients in Crisis

By G.M. ’17

JBU started its nursing program in 2014, knowing it was a critical field facing staffing shortages. With the university’s “head, heart, hand” education, students graduate not only well-versed in the necessary medical knowledge of their field but also with the heart to holistically care for their patients during difficult times.

Kim Peterson, adjunct nursing professor at JBU, juggles teaching and taking JBU nursing students to their clinicals with her part-time job at Northwest Health System. With the recent outbreak, Peterson volunteered to work in the COVID-19 isolation unit and continues to find ways to provide hospitality and empathize with her patients despite new challenges.
If you asked Kim Peterson to describe the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), she’d use an unconventional word — home. Peterson’s ease within the hospital context started when she was just seven years old and her family moved to Borneo, Indonesia, for two years. Her dad worked as a certified registered nurse anesthetist at a medical mission base in the jungle, training a local doctor to administer anesthesia for surgeries. Peterson often accompanied her dad on rounds. Even at a young age, she was heartbroken by the patients’ limited access to health care.

This interest in the medical field continued through Peterson’s teenage years. During high school, she thrived in classes such as physiology and anatomy. When Peterson received a Wyckoff flyer in the mail, calling for nurses, it was only natural that she said, “Maybe that’s what I’m supposed to do. I love language, and I love nursing.”

With her new career path in mind, Peterson started in the nursing program at Biola University in Los Angeles, California, where she also met her husband, Tim. He shared an interest in international missions but felt his primary calling was to be a pastor. Once Peterson graduated from college, she and her husband moved to Chicago so Tim could attend seminary.

Peterson soon started working at an inner-city hospital where local community members spoke over 30 languages, and approximately 60 percent of the physicians had been born outside of the U.S. “If I had six patients in a day, I was often surprised if even one person spoke English,” Peterson shared. “I loved the diversity represented in the hospital.”

When Tim completed seminary, the couple moved to rural Kansas. Although this new community lacked Chicago’s cultural diversity, Peterson remarked, “I learned a lot from working in an underserved, rural region of the country.” Looking back at her past teenage aspirations, Peterson had this to say:
“You might hear God say, ‘Go one direction,’ and then he says, ‘Let me redirect your path in a different direction.’ It often aligns with the things he put in your heart but looks different from what you imagined.”

Peterson’s understanding of God’s calling continued to expand as her family moved to Colorado, then Uganda and most recently Northwest Arkansas. In each location, God has taught her valuable lessons and provided new opportunities to serve others in the midst of health crises.

Today, Peterson works part time at JBU as an adjunct professor and part time at Northwest Health System’s Springdale campus. Peterson feels grateful that her time overseas taught her empathy for others living in a new place.

“There’s a strong aspect of hospitality in my work. In some sense, this is my home. I’m comfortable here because I’ve been in the hospital my whole life. I want to welcome patients in.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated, Peterson’s hospital manager asked for volunteers from the ICU to work in the COVID-19 isolation unit. “We were expecting a lot of patients to need ventilators, and the ICU nurses have the most experience using them,” Peterson explained. To prevent the whole staff from being exposed, her team organized a core group of volunteers for the day shift.

As Peterson was trying to decide whether or not to volunteer, she kept remembering her parents’ decision to work in Borneo and bring their seven-year-old child. “Their legacy is not one of fear. They’re an example of trusting God.”

Conscious of the health risks COVID-19 holds, Peterson follows health regulations and wears personal protective equipment when she goes into patients’ rooms. At the same time, she tries to push back against her human tendency toward fear. Each morning, Peterson spends time with God, including reading scriptures like Psalm 91, which remind her that God is ultimately in control of the virus. “This pandemic doesn’t catch God by surprise,” Peterson pointed out.

“When I made the decision to volunteer in the isolation unit, I kept thinking about Christians throughout history who ministered to sick people,” Peterson shared. “Even Jesus touched the lepers and healed them. In the second and third centuries, plagues impacted Rome. While many Romans fled the cities, Christians stayed and cared for the sick at the expense of their lives.”

Reading an article about the Bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, deeply impacted Peterson. He had encouraged Christians to help their neighbors, even those who had been persecuting them.

“We’re not supposed to live in fear or self-interest but prioritize others. Spending time with God helps me fight against fear; he is with us in life or in death,” Peterson said.

With these examples of Christians throughout history in mind, Peterson tries to focus on encouraging her COVID-19 patients and decreasing their anxiety. Her hospital has been mildly affected by COVID-19; most patients have recovered while only a few have died. Still, she remembers the palpable fear in her unit when the pandemic intensified. Testing results for the virus often took over a week, and her team wondered how bad things would get.

“When I saw my patients and how afraid they were, I was able to focus on them instead of what the exposure to the virus might mean for me,” Peterson said.

The majority of Peterson’s COVID-19 patients are individuals from ethnic minority groups for whom English is not their first language. Whenever language barriers are present, Peterson tries to communicate information clearly and make sure that her patients have access to the resources they need.

“It can be really scary for patients because the workers have to dress up in personal protection equipment,” Peterson said. “You can barely see our faces. My patients can only see my eyes.”

Because of this, Peterson tries to go the extra mile and provide conversation and human touch. “Even when it increases my exposure, I try to spend a little more time talking to each of my patients.”

Although the longevity and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic remains unclear, Peterson looks forward to resuming classes with her JBU students. Using the lessons she has gained from living across the globe and working in the isolation unit, Peterson wants to inspire each student to be faithful to what God has called them to do, work with excellence and glorify him.

As Peterson takes students to clinicals and facilitates labs, she hopes they’ll pay careful attention to the environments they’re entering and address patients’ needs with empathy. Peterson asks students questions like, “What do you notice about a hospital room when you walk in? More importantly, what do you notice about your patients? What do you see in their eyes?”

Then, Peterson challenges students to take it a step further and notice what resources they need from God. “Use one ear to listen to your patients and one ear to listen to the Holy Spirit. God promises to be with us, and the Spirit gives us wisdom, discernment, compassion and love,” she advises.

The gifts of nursing, hospitality and empathy are evident in Peterson’s life journey, and wherever she encounters God’s presence – across the globe or in an Arkansas ICU – she will always call that place home.
Shane Carlson ’18
is a registered nurse on the medical/surgical unit at Siloam Springs Regional Hospital.

BB: What path led you toward nursing?
Carlson: Nursing is a perfect blend of two things that I love – science and people. I get to study the human body, which truly is God’s masterwork. I also get to interact with new people every day. God has created each of them uniquely and purposefully.

BB: What made your experience at JBU distinctive?
Carlson: At JBU, the professors are incredibly knowledgeable, there is a high standard for excellence and Jesus is welcomed into the practice of health care.

BB: How did your education at JBU equip you to serve in the midst of the pandemic?
Carlson: We learned that nurses should be the number one advocates for their patients, and I think our advocacy has never been more important than it is now.

BB: What difficulties have you and your team faced during the COVID-19 pandemic?
Carlson: The hospital visitor restrictions have been the most challenging part. Many of our patients are elderly and feel confusion about what is happening. I’ve noticed the patients have increased anxiety without family. Likewise, their family members feel heightened stress because they cannot be present to support loved ones.

Amy Chin ’19
is a float pool nurse at Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas.

BB: How can our JBU community support nurses during this time?
Chin: Pray for strength. This time can wear nurses down. Whether we’re caring
for patients with COVID-19 or other health challenges, each day has different challenges. We’re tired.

**BB: What lesson have you learned since you began working as a nurse?**
Chin: No matter what I’ve seen or dealt with, I remind myself to just look at the day I’m in. I say, “This is the minute I’m dealing with. This is the patient I’m serving, and this person is a gift.”

*This is the minute I’m dealing with. This is the patient I’m serving, and this person is a gift.*

**BB: What’s the most rewarding aspect of your career?**
Chin: It changes all the time. Sometimes, it’s the people. Other times, it’s the ongoing learning opportunities. Lastly, it’s the moments when I get to see the miracle of healing – body, mind and spirit.

**Alyssa Arnold ’18**

*is a labor and delivery registered nurse at Willow Creek Women’s Hospital.*

**BB: How has the COVID-19 spread impacted your work?**
Arnold: At Willow Creek, we serve a population that is high risk. We receive new information and guidelines every day that prepare us to provide the best care for pregnant women and newborns who may be infected with the virus.

**BB: How have you seen God work recently in the midst of this pandemic?**
Arnold: Our new visitation policy has allowed nurses to form closer bonds with our patients during their hospital stays, and our patients have continued to show us grace as we navigate this season of the unknown.

**BB: What do your patients teach you?**
Arnold: My patients have taught me that even on the darkest days, we can find ways to give God praise. I have learned that it is okay if I do not have the answers to difficult questions; sometimes patients just need an ear to listen, a hand to hold and someone to cry with.

**BB: What sets the nursing program at JBU apart from other nursing programs?**
Arnold: Anyone can learn to be a nurse, but education is different when you have faith incorporated into your learning experience. At JBU, I learned to care for individuals in a deeper, more holistic way.

The Preceptorship Program is another unique aspect of the JBU nursing program. It allows students to spend 240 clinical hours with one RN at a nearby hospital or clinic. This provides great experience. My current co-workers and director rave about the Preceptorship Program and wish they could have had that same opportunity in nursing school.

**Jacqueline Craddock ’18**

*is a registered nurse with Community Clinic, working in the family practice unit.*

**BB: What was your journey into nursing?**
Craddock: I came into nursing as an adult learner in my 40s after working as a flight attendant, homeschooling and running a business from home for 10 years. The timing was perfect to return to school, and my heart strings were being pulled toward JBU.

**BB: What’s one of the most challenging aspects of being a nurse?**
Craddock: Walking patients through deep, gut-wrenching pain during some of the hardest moments of their lives and remaining strong is hands down the hardest aspect. We must allow ourselves to grieve with our patients, but then we must also be
able to process the emotions quickly and be cheerful for our next patient who might be experiencing a major highlight of their lives. One of my hardest moments was processing a death while walking across the hall to a birth. Nurses go from room to room on a shift carrying very different emotions. I’ve seen nurses cry in the med room for less than a minute and then keep working. We have to learn to carry emotions internally throughout the entire shift and cry in the parking lot or at home when the shift is over.

BB: How have you seen God work recently?
Craddock: I’ve seen patients trust and gain strength knowing God is truly with them. He is Father to the fatherless and Healer to the broken. Always.

BB: What lessons have your patients taught you?
Craddock: Live life to the fullest and be with the ones you love. I’ve known patients with chronic disease in the last year or two of their lives who savor every moment possible and stay active doing the things they loved to the best of their ability. Reaching the end of life brings perspective. I’ve watched people die and I will never forget the look of love between spouses as one takes their last breath. Life is a gift, and patients will show you this over and over again. Time is not to be squandered. Truly live and truly love.

BB: What are some of the unique ways in which JBU equipped you to be a nurse and serve others?
Craddock: Immersion — clinically, educationally and spiritually. JBU strives to produce the very best nurses through their very rigorous program. We are immersed into hours of clinical situations and have vast knowledge upon graduation. We learn to view each patient from a Godly perspective while having the knowledge to appropriately serve their needs. JBU instructors instill in their students a heart of love and servitude. We are taught that every single person we encounter is someone’s special person. Prayer and discussion is a large part of our time together.

We are taught that every single person we encounter is someone’s special person.

Deana Reinhardt
is a registered nurse at Mercy Emergency Departments in Rogers and Bella Vista. She’s also an assistant professor of nursing at JBU.

BB: What brought you to JBU?
Reinhardt: I love education! When I worked at WRMC (Washington Regional Medical Center), I applied for and was offered the clinical educator position, so I worked 20 hours a week at the bedside and 20 hours a week as the educator. I enjoyed having nursing students assigned to me when I was working because I love to see how others process and learn. Helping them grow in knowledge is exciting for me.

God brought me to JBU. My heart has always been for nursing education, as well as still being able to work at the bedside. I began working as an adjunct clinical instructor in the spring of 2017 while completing my master’s degree in nursing education. As soon as I had my first group of students, I knew this is where God has intentionally placed me.

BB: What have been some of the most meaningful moments for you as a professor?
Reinhardt: The moment my students are able to take their classroom knowledge and apply it in the clinical setting while caring for their patient excites me. It lets me know that the theory-practice-gap is being bridged. Praying with and for my students is always meaningful. It makes my heart happy that students are willing to talk to me not just about their schoolwork but about their personal lives and journeys.
BB: What has been one of the most challenging aspects of being a nurse during the COVID-19 pandemic?
Reinhardt: One of the biggest challenges is providing correct education in a timely manner. Collaboration, not only on a local, state and national level but also on a global level, and effective communication may have allowed us time to respond appropriately to COVID-19 instead of reacting to it.

BB: How have you seen God at work recently?
Reinhardt: Even though our nursing classes were remote this spring and will be online for our summer session, I feel like a tight bond has been built within faculty and students. It was heartbreaking to know that our seniors were not going to participate in a much-earned traditional graduation ceremony, so faculty improvised and created a drive-by graduation experience that would be meaningful to each student and faculty member.

At Mercy, God is essential to the work we do. All the emergency department staff are banding together as a department and taking on tasks that we normally would not do (still within our scope of practice, of course) and learning each day how valuable each person and their role is. I see people filled with love and generosity. Several community members (Christian and non-Christian) have provided meals, snacks, masks and other goodies for our staff. They are supporting our staff in any way they are able but most importantly through prayer.

BB: What are some of the lessons your patients have taught you?
Reinhardt: My patients have taught me to really listen to what they are telling me, as well as what they are showing me. Speaking is a great way to communicate, but when people come to the emergency department, it is usually due to a traumatic, unexpected cause. Their body language can sometimes tell me more than what they are verbally explaining. Patients, families and loved ones have shown me how vulnerable they are and that each person needs to be treated with dignity and respect in a manner that is pleasing to God.

Alyssa Bowerman ’18
is an emergency room registered nurse at Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas.

BB: What drew you toward a career in nursing?
Bowerman: I’ve always had a desire to help people, and I spent a lot of time with my dad in the hospital because he was sick with liver failure. He got his transplant when I was in high school. At that time, I had begun looking at a medical professional career. Although I started out in JBU’s pre-med program, I transitioned to the nursing program after praying a lot about the decision. God told me, “You may not understand why right now, but it will be clear one day.” After two years of being a nurse, I can say that the nursing program was the most rigorous thing I’ve gone through, but being a nurse is the most rewarding job.

BB: What are some ways you’ve seen God at work in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic?
Bowerman: The community is really rallying together and meeting not only the needs of the community but also supporting those of us on the front lines through prayers, meals and letters of encouragement. It’s very reflective of how the body of Christ works.
Robert Neely Jr. is the founder and CEO of InspireMore who graduated with his master’s degree in ministry with an emphasis in leadership and ethics in 2013 in partnership with the Kanakuk Institute. Soon after, he found himself with a vision from God for a company called InspireMore – a collection of news and stories that are uplifting and inspiring. He had noticed that the news was generally negative in nature and, in many capacities, causing depression. He set out on a mission to combat that reality. At InspireMore, stories of hope and good are brought to light.

InspireMore was launched in March of 2014 and has reached over 500 million people since. It is often called “solution news” where the company shares the problem, but it always includes the solution. From a COVID-19 perspective, basic facts and news are reported, but InspireMore also introduces the heroes and stories of generosity among other light-hearted and helpful information.

Neely says JBU is often a part of his elevator pitch as during his experience with Kanakuk Institute and JBU, he realized a golden thread – we are all human and desire to be loved and to be inspired.

Personally, for Neely and his family, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought them to prayer, desiring solely to please him and do what God desires. Since it is difficult to make future plans during the pandemic, both the Neely family and the InspireMore team are learning to live in the moment. They have been especially inspired by the quote from C.S. Lewis that says “Never, in peace or war, commit your virtue or your happiness to the future. Happy work is best done by the man who takes his long-term plans somewhat lightly and works from moment to moment “as to the Lord.” It is only our daily bread that we are encouraged to ask for. The present is the only time in which any duty can be done or any grace received. Do you allow the enemies of excitement and frustrations to interfere with the work God has called you to do? Let us leave futurity in God’s hands and work from moment to moment ‘as to the Lord.’”

This pandemic, and the focus on living in the moment, has impacted the way InspireMore does business. This work is both its mission and its battle. During this time, InspireMore is charged with the task of bringing positive news to people all across the world.

Master of Arts in ministry with an emphasis in leadership and ethics

Cheryl Wilkins has been working odd hours and taking extra precautions during her shifts as a labor and delivery nurse at Willis Knighton Hospital in Bossier City, Louisiana. Her job may look a little different right now, but her mission is the same – to ensure that new mothers, new fathers and infants under her care will have no doubt that there is a God who loves them and has a purpose for them.

Through all of this, Wilkins is still dedicated to her education.
and believes it is a bridge that connects her faith to the secular world that she is in every day. One class in particular, Intercultural Communications, helped her learn to recognize different cultures and how to be sensitive to those who may not have the same background as her.

Her workplace is her mission field, and now she is equipped with the skills and resources to communicate with people of all backgrounds in an effective way, even when life seems so uncertain. During these times, being a nurse looks different than ever before, but the faithfulness and many blessings from God have only become more evident as Wilkins continues to love and serve her patients.

*JBU Online - Bachelor of Science in Nursing*  
Graduating: December 2020

**Keith James** serves as the director of student life as well as on the Emergency Management Team at Dickinson State University. His primary role is to ensure that students’ needs are being met during the transition to online courses. In addition to his normal responsibilities, he has also assisted with setting up blood drives on campus to serve the needs of the local community.

During this pandemic, James has been encouraged to rely on his faith and allow God to guide the decisions he makes.

“I have a responsibility to my campus to be an avenue of support for them, but I also have a greater calling in my life to serve my community and be a representative of the hands and feet of Christ,” he said. “Knowing that JBU prays for me on a daily basis makes the work I do so much greater.”

James’s position looks much different than he ever would have imagined, but he is using this time as an opportunity to serve his community and spread God’s love where he is.

*Master of Arts in higher education*  
Graduating: May 2021

**Caden Peterson** is usually a residence director at the College of the Ozarks, but when all of the students left campus earlier this spring, Peterson remained flexible, ready and willing to serve in whatever capacity was needed. So instead of managing the daily lives of college students, he’s serving as a dairyman on campus where seven days a week he feeds all of the calves and dairy cows.

“Showing up shows that you love and care for people in need,” Peterson said.

He is also a part of the Bobcat Care Team, where university staff reach out personally to each student to touch base and ensure their needs are being met. Peterson has been encouraged and equipped by the staff and faculty to love and care for students no matter what the circumstances may be.

*Master of Arts in higher education*  
Graduating: May 2022

**Kimberly Cheshier** heard that Antioch Youth and Family, a nonprofit that serves those experiencing food insecurity in Fort Smith, Arkansas, needed help, so she showed up with a willingness to serve. She has sorted and bagged groceries, made deliveries to the elderly and single-parent families without transportation, run the pickup line for those who drive through to pick up food, taken out the trash and cleaned. This work has helped her recognize the integration between work and faith and free her from the walls she had unknowingly built between the two.

Cheshier recently earned her undergraduate degree from JBU Online. As she continues her education in the graduate counseling program, she hopes to learn more about the Lord’s leading. She also hopes to show God’s love to the world that exists outside of the “bubble that we sometimes place ourselves in.”

*JBU Online: Bachelor of Science in psychology*  
Graduated: May 2020 | Graduated: May 2013
TALENT SHOW: Students celebrate at the conclusion of the Talent Show held annually during Family Weekend.
Emily Moberly ’08 authored a bilingual children’s book “Watch Out for Mr. B.” The book is based on her experience teaching in Honduras, which eventually led to her starting the nonprofit Traveling Stories. The book tells the story of a group of students who form a “top secret book club” to continue reading their favorite books. But they must watch out for the school principal Mr. Belmonte (aka Mr. B), because if they get caught, they may never get to read for fun again. “Watch Out for Mr. B” has been published in Spanish and English and can be purchased on Kickstarter.

Rebecca Lozano Ramirez ’17 created a digital illustration gallery titled “Who is my Neighbor?” that was selected to exhibit in the Lillian Bradshaw Gallery at the Dallas Public Library. Her gallery features verses from the parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10 alongside illustrations of diverse people groups. Ramirez’s work prompts the church to extend more compassion toward those we have been taught to view as “the other.”

Ron Maines ’67 was awarded the 2019 FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award which recognizes 50 years of exemplary aviation flight experience, distinguished professionalism and a steadfast commitment to aviation safety. He was decorated for bravery as a Marine aviator in the Vietnam era in addition to being a pilot and senior executive for Mission Aviation Fellowship. Maines has owned five aircraft of his own and commuted to work as a strategic leadership consultant across the U.S. during the past 25 years, working with over 250 organization CEOs and boards of directors.

Richard Diddams ’86 is the new executive director for Liberty University’s Center for Engineering Research & Education. Diddams is also the CEO for Commander’s Concepts Commissioning LLC, a MEP engineering firm working with Veteran Affairs projects across the U.S. and in Europe.

Dianna Ladd ’96 was elected Circuit Judge of the Twelfth Judicial District of Arkansas, Division VII. After graduating from JBU, Ladd received her Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 2000 and has law offices in Fort Smith and Charleston. She will take the bench on January 1, 2021 and will serve in Sebastian County, where she resides with her family.

Be featured in the Brown Bulletin! Submit your professional and family news to jbu.edu/alumni/magazine/news/.
While serving in Vietnam, Captain Doug Chamberlain ’64 was given a direct order to ‘bury’ the remains of a fallen Marine he and his men discovered despite the corps motto of “no man left behind.” They obeyed the order of the superior officer despite the conflict with their values, beliefs and training. Chamberlain and a couple of men later returned and ensured the fallen soldier was sent home for a proper burial, but the feeling of failure plagued Chamberlain for decades.

“Bury Him: A Memoir of the Vietnam War,” released in 2019, was part of the process of reconciling the truth for Chamberlain.

Chamberlain grew up in a small community in Wyoming and first visited JBU in 1960 when dropping off a friend on his way to Indiana. There was something profound about the experience and right after that trip, he came back and enrolled as a student. Chamberlain joined JBU on an athletic scholarship, which he says was a life-changing opportunity.

“I grew up poor, and I couldn’t have gone to college if it hadn’t been for that athletic scholarship and I’ve been forever grateful for that,” Chamberlain said.

Chamberlain was an active student who played on the basketball team and sang in the choir, which was unusual for an athlete back then. He was also elected as the president of the student government.

“The whole philosophy about head, heart and hand at John Brown has always been a profound influence on my life,” he said. “Because I ended up in a combat situation, I’m sure that this helped me in my decision-making in ways I may never have had if it hadn’t been for that sort of spiritual leadership exhibited to me and dedication of the staff and all the people at John Brown.”

During Chamberlain’s time at JBU, he got to know John Brown III, and the two have been friends since. When Chamberlain was at a crossroads with his book, Brown offered a helping hand.

“I got to a point where I couldn’t go further, couldn’t find answers, didn’t know how to do the research,” Chamberlain said. “John Brown III, who I had been in contact with on numerous occasions, knew I was writing a book. He suggested that I contact a man named Paul Semones. Paul is a forensic investigator and a genius when it comes to research on the internet – and that revolutionized my effort.”

With the help of Semones, a 1999 JBU graduate, Chamberlain was able to obtain copies of the documents he needed to compile the book in chronological order. Chamberlain also wanted to verify the accuracy of the information he had already written. The research performed by Semones proved Chamberlain’s memories to be precise and exact.

Chamberlain’s values of excellence, loyalty, faith, patriotism and a sanctified belief in the value of life were not only instilled in him as a child, but were also emphasized during his time at JBU.

“All these reinforcements at JBU led me to a decision of leadership and it gave me a will to live, it gave me a desire to do the best for America and it gave me a love and respect for other people,” Chamberlain said. “I’ll be eternally grateful for my experience at John Brown.”

Learn more about Chamberlain and his book at marinedougchamberlain.com
Retirements

JIM CALDWELL – 35 YEARS
Jim Caldwell began his time at JBU as a student in 1976. After a stint working in industrial construction and graduate school, he returned as a construction management faculty member in 1985. Career highlights include leading the department through two American Council for Construction Education accreditation cycles in 2009 and 2016 and being mentored by Dr. Kent Davis and Charles Willis.

“Being a former student of Mr. Willis and Dr. Davis, and then working side by side with each of them, was a huge gift in shaping my philosophy of teaching,” Caldwell said. “Both of them were excellent teachers and practitioners, skilled in the profession of construction, design and management.”

Caldwell said the greatest blessing of the past 35 years has been serving alongside his wife, Barb, in over a dozen countries, many times with JBU students. After retirement, they hope to continue to engage in ministry in the local community and overseas.

BECKIE PEDEN – 31 YEARS
Beckie Peden began her career in the library at an age when many are thinking about retirement. Thirty one years later, she is retiring as the circulation coordinator and supervisor of the library’s undergraduate work-study students. Affectionately known as “Grandma Beckie” to many of her student employees, Peden viewed her role as helping to prepare them for work and life after JBU. To her colleagues, Peden was known as a prayer warrior.

“Beckie has modeled an admirable combination of deep faith and hard work to generations of students and been a wonderful, caring colleague,” Brent Swearingen, director of library services, said. “She will be deeply missed in the library.”

Peden is looking forward to spending more time with her sisters, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

GISELE NANCE – 16 YEARS
Gisele Nance (not pictured) started working in custodial services two decades ago. The campus has changed significantly, but she worked steadily to keep JBU clean and looking like new. She worked across campus but primarily served in the Bell Science Hall, navigating a commitment to keep things clean with the department’s efforts to retain the integrity of ongoing research.

“Gisele was always quick to smile, worked collaboratively and will be missed in a time where the real value of good custodial staff is at the forefront of our communities,” said Steve Beers, vice president for student development.

SANDY TUSH – 16 YEARS
When Sandy Tush joined the Soderquist Center for Leadership and Ethics (SCLE), its offices were in two rental houses on Holly Street and their conference room was actually a garage with fabric hung to cover the garage door and space heaters in the corners. A year later, the team moved into much nicer accommodations in the Soderquist Business Center.

Tush has been at the heart of delivering the services of the organization, now Milestone Leadership, for over 15 years. Her role has included facilitation of a variety of programming for groups as well as executive coaching for individual leaders.

“I love the work we do. ‘Building Leaders Worth Following’ is a mission I believe in passionately,” Tush said. “And I have had the honor of coming alongside so many fabulous people and organizations as they strive to learn, grow and be positive influences in the world.”
JANET CURRY – 13 YEARS

Janet Curry retired as supervisor of the mailroom after more than 13 years of service. She made a lasting impact on many students and has maintained friendships with students over the years, attending many weddings and baby showers.

“Janet has taken the time to develop personal relationships with so many students over the years,” said Amy Fisher, director of human resources. “She has been a wonderful example of how JBU staff can make a positive impact on students that can last a lifetime. I love how she has loved our students so well over the years.”

CHUCK ROMIG – 12 YEARS

Chuck Romig has taught in the Graduate Counseling program since 2008, teaching in the area of marriage and family counseling and play therapy. One of his favorite roles was providing supervision to counseling interns. Some of his major accomplishments while at JBU were the creation of the play therapy training program and developing the initial program evaluation system for the counseling program.

“I have loved working with students committed to serving the mental health and family needs of our communities, particularly when it comes to the needs of children,” he said. “Being at JBU allowed me to focus on my areas of greatest professional passion, that is, family therapy and play therapy.”

Chuck and his wife Kim look forward to relocating to McKinney, Texas, to be closer to grandchildren. They also hope to be more involved in ministry opportunities.

RETA LEAVITT – 10 YEARS

Reta Leavitt retired from the JBU mailroom after 10 years of service. She loved serving JBU students and making deep connections. Leavitt helped see JBU through the transition to the new Tree of Life bookstore and mailroom and is now enjoying her family and dogs.

“Reta has served JBU and our students well. She always has a smile and a kind word for faculty, staff and students,” Amy Fisher, director of human resources, said.

KEITH KRETZER – 5 YEARS

Kretzer worked in student accounts for five years, helping students and parents navigate the many different financial situations they find themselves in every day. Through this, Kretzer learned to become a better listener so he could become a better servant.

“I always try to put myself in the shoes of those I come in contact with and ask what would I expect from me,” he said. “Then, I strive to always exceed that expectation for the student or parent. It is my prayer that I have been able to meet that challenge at JBU.”

His retirement plans include traveling the country with his wife, Kim, to visit as many national parks as possible and spending time working in his yard and gardens. But best of all, he plans on seeing his grandchildren as often as possible.

CONNIE MATCHELL – 5 YEARS

After a 32-year career in education, Connie Matchell came to JBU in 2015 to serve as the head of the department of teacher education and director of graduate teacher education. It had always been a goal to end her career at her alma mater, JBU. Matchell has been influential in helping develop a strong relationship with the Siloam Springs Public School District and led the department through its first Council for the Accreditation of Educator Professionals accreditation review.

Her motto has always been “what’s best for kids is not always what’s easiest for us,” and doing what’s best for students has been a driving force throughout her career. She is thankful that the Lord has allowed her to be influential in training tomorrow’s education leaders to be the hands and feet of Jesus in schools around the world.

She looks forward to spending more time with family during her retirement, as well as traveling and training her retirement present — a new puppy.
PRESIDENT POLLARD UPDATE, VIRTUAL REUNIONS & MORE

HOMECOMING
2020 GOES VIRTUAL

To protect the health and safety of the JBU community and our alumni, Homecoming 2020 events will be held online.

October 2-3, 2020

Watch jbu.edu/homecoming for updates or visit jbu.edu/subscribe to get the alumni email newsletter with more information.
In Memoriam

Donald Anderson ’51, age 90, died Nov. 28, 2019. He studied agriculture at JBU, where he met his first wife, Marietta (Susan) Pikley. Don served as a Boys’ Brigade Captain.

Rogers Beasley ’50, age 95, died Dec. 6, 2019. He graduated with a degree in Bible and religious education following three years of serving in the Army’s 516th Field Artillery unit.

Larry Blazer, age 76, died April 18. He served as the director of the library at JBU from 1999-2001.

Brenda Brown ’84, age 57, died Nov. 11, 2019. She studied business education. She enjoyed coaching volleyball, teaching at Pioneer Club and working in the family business, CH Brown Company.

Donald Brown ’50, age 96, died Oct. 21, 2019. He studied natural science at JBU. Brown spent his life caring for family and friends, working in his local church and community and serving through his vocations and mission work abroad.

Clara Ann Bunnel-Hornstra ’69, age 72, died April 16. She graduated with a degree in English education.

Thomas Crittenden ’85, age 59, died Aug. 5, 2019. He studied construction management and business administration.

Linda (Clausen) Drachenberg ’90, age 51, died Nov. 4, 2019. Linda studied business administration at JBU. Linda had a passion for reading, travel and baking and was a member of StoneBridge church.

Margaret “Peggy” (Spivey) Duff ’41, age 98, died March 18. She studied Biblical studies at JBU and dedicated over 30 years of service as a volunteer for Huntington Hospital in Pasadena.

Betty (Murphy) Eaton ’48, age 92, died Dec. 8, 2019. She graduated from JBU with a degree in social studies. She served at the United Methodist Church Missouri East Conference until retirement.

Richard Feigel ’73, age 68, died Dec. 29, 2019. He graduated from JBU with a degree in business administration.

Howard Goode ’72, age 71, died Oct. 7, 2019. He graduated from JBU with a degree in social studies and received his law degree from University of Arkansas.

Callie Esther (Sweeton) Hamm ’56, age 86, died April 5. She studied music at JBU where she met her husband, John. She taught music and co-founded the Choral Arts of Chattanooga with John.

Marianne (Pyeatte) Hathcoat ’48, age 92, died Dec. 18, 2019. She graduated from JBU with a degree in business administration. She enjoyed working for The Security Bank until she retired.

Matthias Herman ’19, age 23, died Jan. 5. He graduated with a degree in management and marketing. He worked as a marketing specialist in Northwest Arkansas and had a God-given desire to serve and help others.

Melvin Holmgren ’53, age 89, died Dec. 2, 2019. He studied electrical engineering while at JBU. He was active in his Sitka Electronics lab, but considered being a father to be his most important role.

Michael Kenney ’83, age 59, died Dec. 30, 2019. He graduated from JBU with a degree in broadcasting. He announced JBU basketball games and Siloam Springs High
School football games. He served the Siloam Springs community in many capacities and was known for his strong relationship with the Lord.

Allene Riley Kussin ’70, age 75, died April 25. She earned a degree in English.

Amy Langenbach ’89, age 52, died March 18. She studied elementary education and played volleyball. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from University of Oklahoma and taught for 29 years.

Juan Francisco Laugerud ’00, age 42, died March 12. He graduated from JBU with a degree in business and went on to study culinary arts at Le Cordon Bleu. He traveled the world cooking as a private chef for all sorts of events.

Richard Luebben ’51, age 96, died Dec. 4, 2019. He attended the John Brown Military Academy, served in the U.S. Navy and earned a degree in radio engineering. He was always a positive thinker, eager to talk about philosophy or mathematics, and to discuss life experiences and the Bible.

Carole (Wagner) Maines ’68, age 73, died Nov. 19, 2019. She earned a degree in secondary education. She served as faculty at JBU for 18 years, was named Counselor of the Year by the American Counseling Association and was appointed to the Arkansas State Board of Counselor Examiners.

Nancy (Ferguson) Marsh ’58, age 83, died March 2. She studied home economics during her time at JBU. She met her husband while roller-skating in college. She enjoyed teaching, crossword puzzles, playing the piano and attending church.

Sterling LeRoy Mueller ’51, age 92, died July 19, 2019. After serving in the U.S. Navy, he studied engineering at JBU. He was a member of the Carpenter’s Union, was a strong believer in Christ and was heavily involved in church missions.

Bonnie Osmon, age 72, died April 8. She obtained a bachelor’s in educational psychology and a master’s in marriage and family therapy. Bonnie received the National Council on Family Relations’ Certified Family Life Educator designation and taught at JBU toward the end of her career.

Carlton Palm ’78, age 64, died Jan. 8. He studied business administration during his time at JBU. He was an avid reader who loved to tease.

Alan Pogue, age 62, died Nov. 22, 2019. He served as an adjunct faculty in the graduate counseling department.

Isaloy (Byler) Potter ’38, age 103, died Nov. 6. She studied elementary education while at JBU.

Johnnye (Farley) Riggs ’61, age 88, died March 28. She graduated with a B.S.E. in social studies education and taught sixth grade for 20 years. She played four seasons of professional basketball for the All American Red Heads from 1948-1952.

Marie (Golike) Ringhausen’59, age 83, died April 6. She graduated with a degree in home economics.

Kent Schmitt ’51, age 90, died July 22, 2019. He studied agriculture at JBU and was devoted to Christ, his family and his farming and ranching.
Joshua Schroetlin ’01, age 41, died March 17. He studied English at JBU and later obtained both his bachelor’s and masters in English. He loved teaching and making a difference in the lives of students.  

Charles Shaffer ’49, age 91, died Jan. 28. He was a Navy veteran who graduated from JBU with a degree in printing and journalism. He and his wife often opened their home to adults and youth of their church family.

James Sheets ’53, age 88, died March 1. He graduated from JBU with a degree in Bible and religious education. He served in administration at JBU for 17 years and served in the Arkansas House of Representatives. He was a devoted Christian and actively served Youth for Christ clubs in Siloam Springs.

William Ussery ’52, age 92, died Feb. 24. He served in the Navy before graduating from JBU with a degree in electrical engineering. He was actively involved in his church, and his life was characterized by a passion for Christ.

Carl Walter ’76, age 65, died March 6. He graduated from JBU with a degree in business administration. While at JBU, he played bass trombone and toured with Sound Generation. He was actively involved in church leadership through the years.
One of my roles is to serve on JBU’s Crisis Response Team. The CRT is made up of 12 members from various departments — residence life, campus safety, HR, ITS, academics, health services, facilities and communications — and meets as needed for a variety of circumstances. The pandemic has certainly been an unexpected challenge. From our first meeting in January that led to the cancellation of international Spring Break trips, to the first weeks of March when we were meeting multiple times a week, the preparation and planning for how the pandemic might affect JBU evolved rapidly and changed dramatically from moment to moment.

At 8 a.m. on March 12, President Pollard met with the CRT and laid out the decision to send our students home and transition to remote education. It was an emotional decision for all of us. The rest of the day was a flurry of preparations — writing a statement of our plans, planning that evening’s Community Service to tell students, dealing with media inquiries and preparing information for the website and emails.

As President Pollard met with students that evening, I was back in my office hitting send on emails to students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni and the media. By the time I made my way to the cathedral, students were exiting out onto the quad.

As I got closer, I wasn’t prepared for the tears and the full range of emotions on display — shock, disbelief, sadness, anxiety. A couple hundred students remained inside the cathedral, gathered in small groups, talking and hugging.

I had been so focused on the physical health of our students that I had not even begun to process the emotional and mental toll this virus was going to take on our students, our faculty and staff, our families and our communities.

We have all suffered losses. The postponement of JBU’s commencement meant I missed walking across the stage and getting hooded in celebration of completing my master’s degree. My trip to Singapore with my best friend was postponed, a family reunion never materialized and my daughters lost prom, indoor percussion season and a high school graduation ceremony.

Amidst the significant death toll and illness wreaked by this virus, it feels selfish to complain about those losses — they can’t possibly compare. When people have been laid off or furloughed from jobs and are struggling to make ends meet, it feels frivolous to worry about missing trips, family events and other milestones.

But grief is not always logical. While it is important to maintain perspective, I wasn’t loving my daughters well by downplaying their disappointment. Instead, I realized it was more important to empathize and say “I’m sorry, I know you’re disappointed.”

In “A Grief Observed,” C.S. Lewis wrote, “I thought I could describe a state; make a map of sorrow. Sorrow, however, turns out to be not a state but a process.” Grief is a process we must work through. Bypassing the processing only prolongs the effects. In this season of loss and disappointment (big or small), it’s important that we acknowledge those losses, feel all the feelings, seek solace in Christ and our community and allow ourselves the time and space to work through our grief.

Perspective on Losses
Grieving Disappointments a Healthy Endeavor

I had been so focused on the physical health of our students that I had not even begun to process the emotional and mental toll this virus was going to take ....

Julie Gumm ’95 is director of university marketing & communications and editor of the Brown Bulletin.
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