

APU LIFE

AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

LEADING WITH DISCERNMENT ■ APU HONORS CLIFF HAMLOW ■ MORE THAN A CARPENTER

Revival for a New Generation

God First Since 1899



Dear APU Family,

As I approach my one-year anniversary at APU, I look back in amazement at all that God has accomplished. Beginning on day one, I committed to the board that I would strengthen APU's resolve to live into our mission as a richly diverse, Christ-centered university. This means that we're clear about who we are and that we align around God's purpose and calling on us as an institution. As this issue of *APU Life* attests, God is using APU to accomplish great things for His Kingdom!

This year has also been marked by building and developing the executive leadership team in ways that foster trust, clear communication, clarity of vision and purpose, accountability, and a growing reliance on God and each other through intentional times of prayer and discernment. Spiritual discernment must be a hallmark of the team that leads APU forward—a topic I'll explore more in the pages that follow.

Another priority has been to bring greater financial stability to APU. Like most private universities, APU is tuition driven, meaning that as enrollment ebbs and flows, so does the annual budget. Many schools like APU are still recovering from the pandemic, so we're actively building a multiyear enrollment strategy, aligned with a multiyear financial roadmap, to help stabilize the enterprise.

We're also prioritizing a spring 2024 accreditation visit, with a particular focus on strengthening our business model, improving our data infrastructure, building a strategic diversity plan, implementing models for effective shared governance, and fostering a vibrant campus climate. This work is aligned with my yearlong listening tour, in which I've engaged hundreds of internal and external stakeholders, asking the question, "What would have to be true for APU to thrive?" I look forward to leveraging this qualitative feedback as we build a refreshed strategic plan.

The most exciting part of the last 12 months has been watching the Holy Spirit move on our campus in unexpected ways. Students are finding Jesus, with dozens getting baptized and hundreds being discipled; they are meeting regularly for extended times of prayer and worship, with many praying fervently for revival. The spiritual temperature on campus is palpable, with many saying they've never experienced anything like it.

As you read this issue of *APU Life*, I trust you'll get a sense for what God is doing in our midst. This is a remarkable institution and God is clearly on the move!

In Christ,

Adam J. Morris, PhD
President

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

- Adam J. Morris, PhD
President
- Stephen P. Johnson, DMA
Interim Provost
- Aaron A. Dahlke, CPA
Vice President for Finance and Administration,
Chief Financial Officer
- Andrew Barton, EdD
Vice President for
University Advancement
- James R. Buckley, JD
General Counsel, University Integrity Officer
- Keith E. Hall, EdD
Vice President for Student Belonging,
Chief Diversity Officer
- Maureen A. (Riegert) '90, MA '00 Taylor
Vice President for Strategic Communication and
Engagement
- Michael J. White, MA
Vice President for Enrollment Management

MAGAZINE STAFF

- Rachel (Nordby '97) White, MA '17
Executive Director of Strategic Communication
- Walter Cabal
Communications Editor
- Jason Cunningham
Communications Manager
- Jason Flicker
Art Director
- Nathan Foster '20
Public Relations Manager
- Tim Myers
Associate Director of Operations

APU Life (ISSN 0895-5433) is published biannually by Azusa Pacific University, 901 E. Alosta Ave., PO Box 7000, Azusa, CA 91702-7000, apu.edu, (626) 969-3434.
Azusa Pacific University, in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and university policies, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, medical status, or status as a veteran. The university also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscriminatory policy covers admissions, access, operation of university programs and activities, and employment. apulife@apu.edu.

apulife@apu.edu



APULIFE

SPRING/SUMMER 2023



FEATURES

- 12** Revival for a New Generation
by Abbie J. Reed
- 18** Leading with Discernment
by Adam J. Morris, PhD
- 20** Center Court: APU Honors Cliff Hamlow
by Nathan Foster
- 24** If the Lord Leaves a Door Open, Run Through It
by Nathan Foster
- 26** A Place to Share Stories and Dreams
by Abbie J. Reed
- 28** More than a Carpenter
by Nathan Foster
- 30** APU Students Get Top Billing at Warner Bros. Event
by Nathan Foster

Cover photo by Dana Attebery, MA '17

DEPARTMENTS

- 2** President's Letter
- 6** Campus Close Up
- 22** Cougars Sports Roundup
- 23** Alumni News and Notes
- 31** Around APU



APU's Pacific Islanders Organization (PIO) hosted its 34th annual Lū'au during Homecoming Weekend in March. APU alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends enjoyed a Hawaiian feast before the spectacular show in the Felix Event Center that featured traditional Hawaiian music and dance. This year's Lū'au theme, Journey Through Polynesia, followed the disciples through Polynesia as they learned many lessons from Jesus. PIO is a student-led ethnic club that strives to honor God and share the Polynesian culture at APU.

Renowned Apologist and Author Lee Strobel Visits APU



In celebration of Holy Week, APU welcomed renowned apologist and author Lee Strobel to campus. A former atheist, Strobel was legal editor of the *Chicago Tribune* and is a *New York Times* best-selling author of more than 40 books and curricula that have sold 14 million copies worldwide. Through his work, he builds a captivating case for Christ's divinity.

After probing the evidence for Jesus for nearly two years, Strobel became a Christian in 1981. He then served as a teaching pastor at three of America's largest churches, hosted the national network TV program *Faith Under Fire*, taught First Amendment law at Roosevelt University, and was professor of Christian thought at Houston Baptist University. He is also founding director of the Lee Strobel Center

for Evangelism and Applied Apologetics at Colorado Christian University.

In 2017, his spiritual journey was depicted in an award-winning motion picture, *The Case for Christ*, which showed in theaters around the world. Strobel has won national awards for his books *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith*, *The Case for a Creator*, *The Case for Grace*, *The Case for Miracles*, and *The Case for Heaven*. A documentary based on *The Case for Heaven* debuted in theaters nationwide in 2022.

"I used to live in Orange County and spoke at APU fairly frequently, so it's great to be back. ... Had a great time with some students last night; we watched the movie together and talked about that, and I really, really enjoyed that."

LEE STROBEL

On April 4, more than 400 students gathered in Upper Turner Campus Center to watch a screening of *The Case for Christ*, with a question-and-answer session following the film. The next day, Strobel addressed the APU student body, faculty, staff, local pastors, and friends of the university during chapel, sharing his story, followed by a luncheon with the APU community and special guests.

Dynamic Conference for Christianity and Literature Draws Scholars from Across U.S.

In March, APU's Department of English hosted the Western Regional Conference for Christianity and Literature (CCL). Themed "Literature as Vocation," the CCL brought together 120 students, faculty, and scholars from 36 universities representing more than 10 states and 2 countries. "We received excellent feedback from participants saying how hospitable and welcoming we were and how the conference went seamlessly," said Patricia Brown, PhD, professor in the Department of English and the representative for the Western Region of the CCL.

The CCL featured acclaimed author James K.A. Smith, PhD, as the keynote speaker, who spoke about choosing enchantments carefully. Smith is a professor of philosophy at Calvin University and serves as editor-in-chief of *Image* journal, a quarterly devoted to "art, mystery, and faith." Trained as a philosopher with a focus on contemporary French thought, Smith has expanded on that scholarly

"Bringing a conference of this caliber to APU speaks to the high quality of our faculty and students in the English department."

PATRICIA BROWN, PHD

platform to become an engaged public intellectual and cultural critic. "Dr. Smith's work fit our theme perfectly, seeing the intersectionality between literature and Christianity," Brown said. "Many students and scholars were excited to hear him speak and to meet and learn from him. He was a superstar on campus."

Undergraduate and graduate students presented their research through panels on a variety of texts, authors, and genres. "Bringing a conference of this caliber to APU speaks to the high quality of our faculty and students in the English department," Brown said. "We have a vibrant track record with our scholarship, research, and publications. This conference was a reflection of how well we explore literature through the lens of Christianity."

APU Brings Dual-Enrollment Classes to Whittier Christian High School

APU recently launched a dual-enrollment partnership with Whittier Christian High School (WCHS), offering four classes that will give WCHS students credit for high school and college courses simultaneously. Beginning in fall 2023, WCHS students will be able to take Personal Finance, Business Communications, Principles of Management, and Business and Entrepreneurship for dual credit.

While many high schools across the country offer Advanced Placement (AP) classes, which offer college credit through AP tests, many colleges do not accept AP courses for college credit. Even if they do, most colleges require a score of four or five (on a scale of 1-5) on AP tests, which is particularly challenging for students to achieve. "Are AP tests the best method for assessing student mastery of content and learning outcomes? Not always," said Michael White, MA, vice president for enrollment management. "Some are incredibly smart but just aren't good test takers. Dual-enrollment courses are a better method to test course material knowledge and are better at preparing students for collegiate courses."

MICHAEL WHITE, MA

A huge benefit of dual-enrollment classes is that students can save thousands of dollars compared to what they would spend on the same classes in college. While the course material is entirely the same and the instructors have been vetted and approved by APU faculty, the classes cost a small fraction of what they would in college. "Whittier students only pay \$75 per unit," said Roxanne Helm-Stevens, DBA, interim dean of APU's School of Business and Management. "If they take all four classes by the time they graduate from high school, they could enter college with almost a semester worth of credit saved several thousand dollars."

WCHS head of school Carl Martinez '95, MBA '03, and college advisement director Joel Nunnally '02, MAEd '05, are APU alumni who majored in business during their undergraduate years. "WCHS is thrilled at the opportunities APU is affording to our students; these are the same courses we completed at APU, and to think our students can enjoy these courses in high school is a huge advantage and blessing," Martinez said. "We expect to have full enrollment in all dual-enrollment offerings. WCHS is very grateful for APU and our partnership together helping students explore, discover, and pursue their life calling."

Dual-enrollment courses are open to WCHS sophomores, juniors, and seniors with a 3.0 or higher GPA. "We're excited for these students to become familiar with a college curriculum, syllabus, and assignments while giving them the tools and confidence they need to succeed in college," said Tina Sprague, APU's enrollment partnerships manager. APU plans to expand dual-enrollment offerings to two other schools by the end of 2023 and expects to continue adding school partners in the future.



School of Business and Management Launches APuX

APU's School of Business and Management (SBM) recently launched APuX, a program dedicated to filling the needs of working professionals through extended learning experiences. "Our goal is to provide a holistic model for nontraditional learners at work—and those who are looking to learn specific skills or get certifications to advance in their jobs," said Roxanne Helm-Stevens, DBA, interim dean.

APuX offers several workshops, certificates, certifications, licenses, and courses that can be taken by students regardless of age or degree status.

"Whether you want to upskill in your current position or reskill and shift careers, we've got something for you," said Wendi Dykes McGehee, PhD, CF-LSP, assistant dean and associate professor. Offerings include: How to Buy Your First Home, Investing 101, LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® for Next-Level Teams and Facilitator Certification, ICF Coaching Techniques and Level 1 Certification (ACC), Human Resources aPHR® Prep, The Generationally Diverse Workplace, leadership certificates, project management certificates, nonprofit and government financial management certificates, and more. Cost varies among workshops, certificates, and courses, with some being offered for free or very low prices.

These offerings are available for individuals or groups and are customizable for organizations. "Whether you want us to come to your office and teach employees at your worksite, or you want to come to APU for a conference or workshop, we're happy to meet your organization's needs," Helm-Stevens said. APuX has worked with prominent organizations including LinkedIn, Habitat for Humanity, Kaiser Permanente, Cigna Healthcare, and the U.S. Navy. "We're building bridges between higher education and the workplace," said Elizabeth King, online curriculum and assessment coordinator.

While APuX is housed in the SBM, other colleges and schools across APU plan to offer courses and certificates in the near future. Learn more about APuX and register for courses or events at <https://sites.google.com/apu.edu/apux>. Email apux@apu.edu with questions.

APU

Nursing Trailblazer Receives Mary Hill Award

On March 27, 150 students, faculty, and staff gathered in Upper Turner Campus Center for the Mary Hill Luncheon celebrating women in leadership. Since Azusa Pacific's founding as the Training School for Christian Workers in 1899, women have made a significant impact as leaders at APU. Mary Hill was APU's first president and, throughout the university's 124-year history, women have held significant roles—as presidents, vice presidents, deans, faculty, staff, board members, and student leaders.

The event was highlighted by President Adam J. Morris, PhD, presenting the Mary Hill Award to professor Aja Tulleners Lesh, PhD, RN. Lesh was the dean of the School of Nursing (SON) for 19 years until 2022. She has been active in nursing for 40 years as a clinician, educator, and researcher. During her tenure as dean, the SON expanded from the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing to also include the LVN to BSN and RN to BSN, as well as a broad spectrum of graduate programs including the Entry-Level Master's in Nursing, the MSN with advanced practice specializations (as well as specializations in administration and education), the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice.



Lesh has an extensive background in maternal/child health, community and mental health, and family dynamics. Over the years, Lesh has been principal investigator of more than \$25 million in state and federal funding to support her research in the areas of family health and functioning. For the past 30 years she has directed the Infant, Child, and Family Project, a program that has been instrumental in improving the health of infants and their families throughout the San Gabriel Valley and surrounding areas. Lesh has authored more than 30 research reports on intervention outcomes, and is also the author and principal investigator of a defining study on at-risk infants commissioned by the California Department of Health in 2000. Lesh is also passionate about international health. Since 1993 she has traveled extensively to support the professional expansion of nursing and study-away opportunities for nursing students and research collaboration for nursing faculty in Brazil, China, Norway, South Africa, and Vietnam.

As dean, Lesh strongly encouraged research and grants development, resulting in the establishment of the Institute of Health Research and more than \$11 million in grant funding in the past five years. Lesh is active in the profession and the community, lending her expertise to a number of professional organizations and community and hospital boards, as well as speaking nationally and internationally on nursing

education, strategic planning, program development, and evaluation. She continues to teach research, organizational systems, strategic planning, and evaluation research to APU graduate and doctoral nursing students, and has been recognized as a Woman Achiever of the Year by *Business Life* magazine.

APU Introduces Stellic to Increase Student Success

One of the biggest challenges for college students is mapping out their course schedule each semester so they can graduate on time. Students often choose the wrong courses, or don't realize that certain courses are offered only during specific semesters, impacting their graduation trajectory. To solve this problem, APU partnered with Stellic, a student success software that maps out class schedules based on degree requirements. "Stellic will help APU students succeed in their academic journey by selecting the right courses, planning appropriately, and making them the captain of their own academic ship," said Brian Mercer, director of academic business systems at APU. "Stellic is an incredibly powerful tool for helping students graduate on time."

Once a student selects an academic program, Stellic suggests which courses to take, and in what order. But while Stellic provides students with pathways, they are still able to pick their own courses. For example, when students are considering which electives to take, Stellic will present all the available options for a given semester, allowing students to choose the courses that appeal to them. "We're going to have better data on what our students want academically, and we're more likely to have the right course available when they need them," Mercer said. "Students have responded in awe at how much easier Stellic makes planning their courseload."

Stellic will be especially useful to first-generation students, a growing demographic in higher education. "First-gen students are in a brand-new world and we want to support them as best as we can," Mercer said. "We really want them to have the tools to be self-sustaining."

Though Stellic provides powerful solutions to help students succeed, it is intended only to enhance—not replace—connections between professors and students. "This is not intended to eliminate faculty advising at all," Mercer said. "Because of Stellic, faculty can spend more time talking with students about the things that matter most, like life after college and their faith."

"Stellic will help APU students succeed in their academic journey by selecting the right courses, planning appropriately, and making them the captain of their own academic ship."

BRIAN MERCER

Angeles Worship Summit Brings Ministry and Worship Leaders Together



On February 25, APU hosted the Angeles Worship Summit, an incredible day of learning and artistry spent in community with more than 150 ministry leaders, young worship artists, and the APU community. With more than 60 churches and 20 denominations represented from across Southern California, the day was filled with invaluable moments of worship, teaching, and creativity.

The plenary session featured Glenn Packiam as keynote speaker, with the APU Chapel Band leading worship. Youth and adults engaged in a variety of workshops and training opportunities on various topics including songwriting, racial reconciliation, Psalms in worship, visual arts, vocals, worship rhythm, and more. One participant said, "I was encouraged by several who attended the seminar focused on young adult spiritual formation. God is stirring a desire in them to impact their peers."

The roundtable luncheon featured a panel of ministry experts who shared stories of hope and transformation, centered around intergenerational worship. The day culminated in an intergenerational artist's showcase, highlighting young worship leaders, their artistry, and original songs.

These and other unique moments throughout the summit demonstrated the power of community, reconciliation, and creativity, which deeply resonated with participants, one of whom said, "We are

made in His image, and we also have His ability to create. The worship event was a reminder to me that we are all unique, special, and loved, and worshipping through art brings that out in ways nothing else can. I think of the parable of the talents in Matthew, and how we have been given amazing abilities and talents, and we should use them in the best way we can."

In continuing the work of equipping churches and leaders, the Angeles Worship Initiative will host the Worship Arts Lab, for teenage worship leaders and their adult mentors, from June 26-30. This weeklong immersive worship arts camp reimagines worship by developing musicianship, artistry, and spiritually formative practices. For more information, visit apu.edu/arts/angeles-worship-initiative/lab/.

By the Numbers

4,066: Number of points that junior Nicole Warwick scored to win the individual national title in the pentathlon in the NCAA Division II Indoor National Championships. Warwick is a 10-time All-American between different events in indoor and outdoor track. She is the 15th athlete in program history to be a 10-time All-American.

1,697: Total students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of Azusa Pacific University who donated to APU during Giving Day 2023. This generous support helps change the lives of APU students by providing scholarships and other funding to help them succeed at APU and beyond.

125: The anniversary number APU will celebrate when the university kicks off a yearlong celebration of a legacy of transformation beginning in the fall and running through the spring 2024 semester. To honor its *God First* legacy that began in 1899, APU will host several events for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends to mark this special occasion. APU's official 125th birthday is March 3, 2024.

48: Adjunct professor Jenica Morin-Pascual was named the 2023 Woman of the Year for the 48th Assembly District by Assemblywoman Blanca E. Rubio '99, MA '03. In addition to teaching in APU's Department of Social Work, Morin-Pascual is the manager of outreach and training for the YWCA-San Gabriel Valley and is a community resource officer for the Covina Police Department.

Grants Advance Significant Research and Scholarship



\$1,046,836

From the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) to Nicole Ringo, PhD, MSN/ED, RN, assistant professor in the School of Nursing, this grant will help develop an innovative, capacity-building, and sustainable solution to the nursing shortage and to address health disparities in Southern California in alignment with HRSA's priorities for transforming the nursing workforce. The purpose of this NEPQR-RNTP grant is to expand and strengthen a diverse and skilled nursing workforce and enhance nursing education and practice in acute-care settings by implementing a model training program that addresses the management of social determinants of health and improves health equity and health literacy in underserved areas. The NEPQR-RNTP grant will help to increase the distribution and diversity of the nursing workforce by recruiting, training, and preparing upper-division transfer program students to serve in underserved communities as integral members of interprofessional care teams.



\$999,979

From the Lilly Endowment Inc., to Stephen Martin, DCM, associate professor and director of worship studies and the Angeles Worship Initiative, this grant will sustain the work of the Angeles Worship Initiative for an additional three years. The Angeles Worship Initiative, housed in APU's College of the Arts, empowers vibrant worship in the local church, providing events, resources, and support for ministry leaders and congregations. The funding will provide continued support for annual on-campus events such as the Angeles Worship Summit and the Worship Arts Lab, and for the dissemination of research findings and key learnings from phase one of the initiative, as well as the development of new resources in support of worship, theology, and the arts.



\$149,910

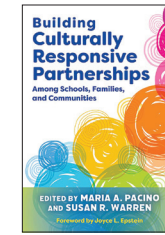
From the National Endowment for the Humanities to Nori Henk, PhD, professor and director of ethnic studies in the Department of Sociology, TESOL, and Modern Languages, this grant enhances APU's ethnic studies program by funding the planning and piloting of three new ethnic studies certificates in Africana studies, Asian American Pacific Islander studies, and Latinx studies. This grant will build on the historical legacy of "A More Perfect Union," with an expressed emphasis on ethnically diverse experiences and drawing from multiple disciplinary perspectives while fostering connections between local high schools, community partners, and college students. Each certificate will have at least one new elective course that will include academic service-learning focusing on community partnerships with local organizations that work with particular racial or ethnic groups.



\$69,589

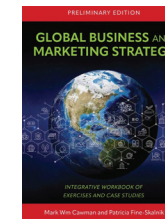
From the U.S. Department of State to Tasha Bleistein, PhD, faculty director of assessment, graduate studies, and research and director of online TESOL programs in the Department of Sociology, TESOL, and Modern Languages, this grant will be used to develop and deliver a 10-week virtual exchange course for 40 secondary English teachers from around the world. APU hosted another virtual exchange earlier this school year, "Civil Communication," with participants from 30 countries; the new exchange, "Thinking Globally," will have a similar group of teachers enrolled. There is a growing number of issues that are global in scope and must be addressed by the world at large; to address some of these issues in local classrooms around the world, participants explore the complexities of globalization. The exchange equips teachers to promote and protect universal human rights, highlighting food systems, social services, and educational equity.

Scholarship at Work



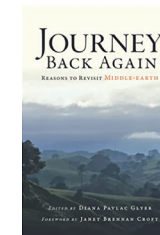
Building Culturally Responsive Partnerships Among Schools, Families, and Communities (Teachers College Press, 2022) edited by Maria A. Pacino, EdD, MLS, chair and professor, Department of Library and Information Studies, and Susan R. Warren

Learn how to create culturally responsive, socially just school/family partnerships that positively impact student learning outcomes. This book addresses the need for educators and schools to develop competency in working with diverse families and their communities. Chapters address misconceptions of school personnel that often impede fully including families in the education of their children. Exploring a wide range of sociocultural issues present in today's schools, readers will learn how to better work with military families during deployment, students with disabilities, families with various living arrangements, immigrant families, and religiously diverse students. The text features engaging, real-life scenarios and research-based practices designed to improve the academic success of all pre-K-12 learners.



Global Business and Marketing Strategy: Integrative Workbook of Exercises and Case Studies [Preliminary Edition] (Cognella Academic Publishing, 2023) by Mark Cawman, DBA, associate professor, management, and chair, international business, marketing, and entrepreneurship; and Patricia Fine-Skalnik, DBA, director of marketing and entrepreneurship and associate professor, School of Business and Management

The topics in this workbook support globalized business in the disciplines of international business, management, strategic management, and strategic marketing. This is not a single-discipline textbook, but rather a global business workbook/resource that includes cases, exercises, activities, and templates for learning and is required as a secondary text for courses in multiple disciplines. Intended as a supplemental workbook for international business, strategic management, and/or strategic marketing, this resource provides real-world application and orientation for dynamic group learning, suitable for hybrid and flipped classroom modalities.



Journey Back Again: Reasons to Revisit Middle-earth (Mythopoeic Press, 2022) by Diana Pavlac Glyer, PhD, professor, Honors College, Hana Paz Harbman '20, Joshua Harbman '20, Anna K. Dickinson '20, Jacob Bradley '20, Wyatt Zeimis '20, Jensen A. Kirkendall '20, Jordan F. Mar '20, Britta E. Bunnell '20, and Mark E. Jung '20
Journey Back Again is built on one central premise: Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* is worth reading and rereading, again and again. Each contributor delves into a core facet of Tolkien's master work, and each one illuminates something essential yet easily overlooked. In these pages, casual fans and accomplished scholars will find fresh insights and renewed inspiration. This new edition issues a heartfelt invitation for you to return to Middle-earth and discover what you have been missing.



Let's Talk! A Guide to Awkward Conversations and Unifying Dialogue in the Church (Credo House Publishers, 2023) by Todd Pfeifer, EdD, director of accreditation, assessment, and grants and associate professor, School of Business and Management

Conversation around complex topics can be difficult, particularly for the Church, and division is not a new problem for congregations across the world. Addressing certain taboo subjects can cause people to experience fear and avoidance, but for the Church, it does not have to be that way. Despite the many challenges to conversation, unity through dialogue is always possible. Unity as a church is not only an exciting prospect for effective ministry, it is a Biblical mandate. *Let's Talk!* is an upbeat call for people to gather, ask questions, actively listen, and talk through issues to reach greater understanding and a path forward. The book provides analysis of conversational hurdles and practical guidelines for fostering productive discussion. Written in an accessible, conversational tone, *Let's Talk!* is a helpful guide for individuals and a developmental resource for small groups who will be guided by the end-of-chapter discussion questions.

Revival for a New Generation

BY ABBIE J. REED

Students on their knees confessing faith in Christ, estranged friends embracing in forgiveness, strangers worshiping God and praying with one another—the Holy Spirit is changing lives on college campuses across the nation, including Azusa Pacific University. Whether described as a revival, an outpouring, or a spiritual renewal, one thing is certain: God is at work.

The emergence of these unplanned, student-led events trace back to Asbury University. On February 8, 2023, the college's regular chapel session—described afterwards as rather unremarkable—led to a spiritual movement that brought upwards of 50,000 visitors to the typically sleepy town of Wilmore, Kentucky. The chapel service lasted 18 full days in total: more than 400 hours of worship, confession, testifying, and transformation of lives.

Ta'Tyana Leonard, MDiv, associate director of chapel and pastoral care at APU, was sent by her church to experience, firsthand, the revival at Asbury. "Lines of people from all generations, cultures, and walks of life wrapped around the university block," Leonard said. "Though it began with college students, gatherings were full of people hungry for spiritual renewal, including young families traveling from El Salvador or elderly residents wheeled in by their grandchildren."

Continued on page 14

STUDENTS WORSHIP TOGETHER
DURING A CHAPEL SERVICE IN
THE FELIX EVENT CENTER.



THESE REVIVALS, TAKING PLACE AT AZUSA PACIFIC AND MANY OTHER COLLEGE CAMPUSES, ARE **INSPIRING THOUSANDS TO PURSUE GOD.**

Continued from page 13

The events at Asbury quickly captured the attention of millions across the country, as attendees shared videos, posts, and testimonies on social media. As described in an article by the *Christian Post*, revival is spreading as universities nationwide experience a “spirit of unity and confession.”

Shortly after the events at Asbury, students began gathering each night at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. From senior basketball players to freshman art majors, God prompted students who had never gathered together before to meet for Bible reading, worship, prayer, and testifying. Similar events took place at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee, spilling into local churches, ministries, and homes. Countless others followed suit, including secular universities such as Western Kentucky and Ohio State.

These revivals, taking place at Azusa Pacific and many other college campuses, are inspiring thousands to pursue God.

GOD’S TRANSFORMATIVE POWER AT WORK IN THE APU COMMUNITY

On Wednesday, March 1, 2023, students gathered together in the Felix Event Center for an APU chapel service. That day they would hear from guest speaker Alison Perfater, Asbury University student



PHOTOS BY DANA ATTEBERG, M.A. '17

body president, about the recent revival. The room held an air of expectancy as the morning exhibited a striking resemblance to a historic APU chapel service held more than 50 years ago.

Travel back to February 6, 1970, when news of a spiritual revival at Asbury University spread to what was then called Azusa Pacific College. In an effort to share the Good News of God’s work, the Asbury student body president was invited to speak at the morning chapel. He shared a simple message of the 1970 campus revival and gave his testimony. No response was planned.

Students began dropping to their knees in prayer. Many began to testify, others confessed their sins, and some asked forgiveness from a peer. No one rushed home; the service continued for seven hours, then moved into residence halls. Students left to eagerly share their story in their local churches and communities, and the Gospel message spread rapidly throughout the outermost reaches of the state. Thousands surrendered their lives to Christ.

Now, more than 50 years later, a new Asbury student body president took the stage to share her

testimony with the APU community, encouraging them to seek Christ. “When you seek revival, what you get is a performance,” said Perfater, “When you seek Christ and seek God’s face, you find freedom.”

The chapel service continued more than an hour past the appointed time with many students gathering around the stage praying and singing as the band kept playing. Eventually, some of the lingering students moved from Felix to gather in the Hartwig Prayer Chapel on East Campus to continue in worship. In that small, sacred space—lined with two benches and a simple stained glass display—the Holy Spirit began to move.

“People came in, but no one left. Before long it was standing room only,” said Nathanael Forrey ’25. “It became evident the Holy Spirit was working when people began sharing their struggles, praying for complete strangers, confessing to one another, and reading Scripture aloud.”

As dusk settled in, students overflowed into the outdoor space near the baptismal pond. The gathering ran through the night, eventually moving into Wilden Hall. It continued until the Thursday night chapel service in Upper Turner Campus

“When you seek revival, what you get is a performance. When you seek Christ and seek God’s face, you find freedom.”

—Alison Perfater,
Asbury University
student body president

Center, where students were given the space to continue in the work of the Spirit.

Regular gatherings continued during spring break and in the weeks that followed, indicating a lasting commitment to seek the Holy Spirit and deepen faith. Times of prayer, worship, and reading Scripture in the Hartwig Prayer Chapel brought new believers to Christ and strengthened those already following Him, such as Jacqueline Forrey ’25, Nathanael’s wife. “During one of these later meetings, after a period of searching, God gave me clarity as I considered my life calling,” said Jacqueline. “I felt so encouraged seeking my purpose with a God-following community—people who want to build you up and see you thrive.”

During the months leading up to this moment, students and faculty had been regularly meeting to pray on campus. “Even before the Asbury revival, we had assurance something was going to change,” said Nathanael. “It was never about a musical performance or a momentary experience, but about people who need God and are genuinely searching for Him.”

Evidence of a deeper hunger for God has been clear on APU’s campus: groups initiating prayer walks, a record 45 student baptisms during the school year, and individuals experiencing spiritual healing in the pastoral care and counseling office. “As I look back on the past academic year, there’s been a tangible, increased sense of openness to the Lord,” said Coba Canales, EdD, dean of spiritual life.

Whether it’s in a handful of students quietly praying or an auditorium crowd singing praises, whether it’s in the spur-of-the-moment or organized, the Holy Spirit has been moving in the APU community.

“I knew what I experienced at Asbury was authentic, because I had already experienced it at APU throughout my career,” said Leonard. “It caused me to consider how we step aside and allow God to work through our students—how we trust our students to lead us spiritually.”

Continued on page 16

Continued from page 15

GENERATION Z'S INCREASING DESIRE FOR CHRIST

Many in this upcoming generation are searching for Christ, and it isn't just a fleeting passion. Bruce French '82, pastor at Cornerstone Bible Church in Glendora, has observed a steady growth in college ministries over the past several years. His church is not alone—other local pastors also report a vibrant flourishing within their young adult groups.

“In my interactions with Generation Z, I have observed a sincere desire to know Truth,” said French. “The revival that we're seeing among young people is not rooted in emotions or a charismatic movement, but in a love for Christ and longing to know Him.”

Over the past several years, the college group at Cornerstone has grown. It now welcomes up to 75 students at one time, who gather together at church on Sundays and midweek in a local home to study Scripture together. For many, their faith has thrived post college, signaling a genuine, long-lasting transformation.

Data from the Open Generation Project shows that more than half of Generation Z feels motivated to learn more about Jesus. Unfortunately, data also shows that these same teens may be lacking a source of discipleship and trusted guidance in faith matters—making welcoming, Christ-centered communities such as APU and local churches crucial for those pursuing answers.

“Society often labels college students, specifically Generation Z, as people who are self-focused and self-driven,” said Canales. “Instead, we are witnessing young people living in wholehearted pursuit of Jesus.”

As society increases in secularism, why are many members of this new generation pulling against the current and turning back to faith? “Scripture shows us there is a connection between going through challenges and seeing the power and presence of God in the midst of it, reminding us He is still faithful,” said Canales, reflecting on the difficulties of recent years, including the global pandemic.

“Society often labels college students. . . as people who are self-focused and self-driven. Instead, we are witnessing young people living in wholehearted pursuit of Jesus.”

—Coba Canales, EdD



After hardship, the world's answers often seem shallow and elusive: money, popularity, fitting into a particular aesthetic, success, all presented in an endless barrage on social media platforms. This leaves many in a search for truth. “They have decided they want to know what truth is—not the opinions of church leaders or authoritative figures—but real, scriptural truth,” said French, reflecting on his weekly meetings with young adults. “Jesus promises them that if they seek, they will find.”

MOVING ONWARD

For some who have never experienced the Holy Spirit at work in this way, the spread of revival brings questions. How do we know a revival is authentic, and not simply a momentary spiritual fervor? What happens next?

Spiritual revivals are certainly not new, and historical events can provide insight—from Jonathan Edward's fiery sermons of the first Great Awakening, to the hundreds of individuals publicly repenting during the 1907 Pyongyang Revival in what is today North Korea.

“True revival is hallmarked by a long-lasting transformation of lives, not just an emotional moment,” said Tim Finlay, PhD, a biblical studies professor in Azusa Pacific Seminary. “As described by Evan Roberts, a leader of the 1904 Welsh Revival, four essential components are confession, repentance, obedience, and a public declaration.”

God's current movement among college students includes this tell-tale sign of true revival: lives are still being changed even after the viral events have quieted.

As the sun sank low the Saturday before Easter, APU students gathered around the bonfire pit to read Scripture and remember the reason behind revival—the reason behind all that they do—Jesus' death and resurrection. They remained throughout the night, watching the rising sun once again bathe the campus in light. “There has been a palpable shift in our campus community, and the sense of spiritual awakening continues to strengthen,” said Nathanael, more than a month after the initial happenings.

Wholehearted obedience, authentic desire for Christ, the transformed lives of college students across the nation—this revival is a testimony to all. May God work through the fervent faith of a young generation, like he has done in revivals of years past, to draw people from all walks of life closer to him.

Abbie J. Reed '20 is a freelance writer living in Manzanita, Oregon. abbiejreed@gmail.com



A SACRED AND INSPIRING MOMENT OF TRANSFORMATION UNFOLDS AS AN APU STUDENT IS BAPTIZED IN THE CAMPUS POND AFTER AN EVENING CHAPEL SERVICE THIS SPRING. A TOTAL OF 45 STUDENTS WERE BAPTIZED AT APU DURING THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR.

Leading with Discernment

BY ADAM J. MORRIS, PHD

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Top row from left to right:

Stephen P. Johnson, DMA, Interim Provost, **Aaron A. Dahlke, CPA**, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Chief Financial Officer, **Andrew Barton, EdD**, Vice President for University Advancement, **Maureen A. Taylor, MA**, Vice President for Strategic Communication and Engagement.

Bottom row from left to right:

James R. Buckley, JD, General Counsel, University Integrity Officer, **Michael J. White, MA**, Vice President for Enrollment Management, **Adam J. Morris, PhD**, President, **Keith E. Hall, EdD**, Vice President for Student Belonging, Chief Diversity Officer.



PHOTOS BY DANA ATTEBERY, MA '17

If you're like me, you've had countless moments throughout your lifetime when key decisions are before you and your waking hours are consumed with efforts to discern the will of God. I remember a time in 1988 when I was asking God if the girl I was dating would someday become my wife. Faith and I will celebrate 34 years of marriage this summer. I also recall the purchase of our first car and our first home, our decision to move from one church to another, and many other key decisions where we looked to God for wisdom and direction.

Of course, a major discernment moment for us arrived in February 2022, when God presented us with the opportunity to come to APU. The preceding months included much prayer; meaningful engagements in God's Word; focused conversations with family, key friends, and mentors; prayer walks on the APU campus; and extended time with APU's Board of Trustees. The posture of our hearts was one of complete openness to the will of God. I've often prayed 2 Timothy 2:21, the verse that talks about being a "willing vessel, suitable to the Master"—wanting to be used by God however, whenever, and wherever He so chooses. When good discernment has run its course and a decision is made, we know that a deep sense of peace soon follows. Such was the case when Faith and I said yes to our call to APU.

As I approach the one-year mark, one of the many highlights has been leading a newly formed President's Cabinet. Last fall, this executive team was blessed to spend a few days together at Hilltop Renewal Center—a wonderful getaway in nearby Idyllwild, California, where we shared our stories, received guided spiritual direction, enjoyed long meals together, laughed, prayed, worshiped, and connected at a deep personal level. It was exactly what our group needed as we embarked on our collective APU journey together.

In advance of our retreat, I asked the cabinet to read the first chapter of Ruth Haley Barton's book, *Pursuing God's Will Together* (InterVarsity Press, 2012). I believe that anchoring APU's leadership team in the Word of God is paramount, and building our collective "discernment muscle" is key to our effectiveness. Over the months that followed, we worked our way through the 12 chapters of Barton's book, each week having a member of the cabinet lead the rest of us in a time of deep reflection and prayer.

As Barton suggests, discernment in its fullness requires a "practiced heart, fine-tuned to hear the Word of God, and a single-mindedness to follow that word in love." Barton says that "discernment is a gift from God, not one dropped from the skies fully formed, but a gift cultivated by a prayerful life."

As a cabinet, we believe that corporate discernment begins with what God is doing in our own hearts. I love the image in Luke 6:45, which says, "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." We often talk as a cabinet about the importance of filling our hearts with so much of God's Truth that what we bring to the decision-making process, and therefore to the broader APU community, is from the "overflow." I want this team to be so rooted in their relationship with Jesus Christ that when we're facing the challenges and opportunities of leadership, we're personally, and therefore collectively, ready to discern God's will.

To do so, Barton provides some helpful guidance. As a cabinet, we value times of solitude and silence—setting time aside to give God our full and undivided attention, learning to distinguish God's voice

from all other voices. We also intentionally engage the Scriptures, believing this to be key to effective spiritual leadership. The cabinet also spends significant time each week in prayer, praying what Barton calls "prayers of quiet trust"—acknowledging our utter dependence on God and in God; "prayers of indifference"—asking God to work in our hearts to make us indifferent to anything but the will of God; and "prayers for wisdom"—marked by a readiness to receive much-needed direction from God.

The cabinet at APU is as much a spiritual community as it is a leadership team. We prayerfully set our weekly agendas, we listen to God's voice and each other's, we pause and discern more deeply when needed, we align our decisions with what we believe God is doing, we ask each other if we believe the Spirit of God rests on major decisions, we seek inner confirmation and peace, and we affirm our decisions as a team.

As we look to APU's future and lead from a posture of discernment, we believe wholeheartedly God's promise to be "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path" (Psalm 119:105).

Adam J. Morris, PhD, is the 18th president of Azusa Pacific University. amorris@apu.edu



"When good discernment has run its course and a decision is made, we know that a deep sense of peace soon follows. Such was the case when Faith and I said yes to our call to APU."

—Adam J. Morris, PhD

Center Court: APU Honors Cliff Hamlow

BY NATHAN FOSTER

More than 90 alumni ranging from the classes of 1955-89 filled Upper Turner Campus Center to honor their mentor, legendary Azusa Pacific University basketball coach and vice president emeritus Cliff Hamlow '56, PhD, on Saturday, February 4. The group of former basketball players shared memories of their time as Cougars and the impact Coach Hamlow had on their lives.

Kicking off the event, athletic director Gary Pine '84, MBA '05, talked about the connection that brought the players together and the man at center court. "We're celebrating four decades of Cougar basketball," Pine said. "Cliff is the common bond right alongside the one forged by a team. There's nothing like playing, battling, and winning together."

After an opening prayer by Steve Seavers '78, Pine passed the mic to the master of ceremonies, Ed Munson, who was APU's sports information director from 1969-72 while also serving as director of publicity for the then-California Angeles before becoming the official scorer for the Angels and later the Los Angeles Dodgers. Munson recounted many noteworthy moments throughout Hamlow's tenure, including seven consecutive 20-win seasons, scoring 155 points in a single game, scoring 92 points in a single half, scoring 100 or more points 15 times in one season, and winning the Christian College Tournament four years in a row from 1968-72. "I've seen no-hitters and perfect games, but the moment that sticks out in my mind above everything else was watching Cliff get his 300th win as Bob Dickinson made a shot with six seconds left on the clock," Munson said. "I don't think I've ever seen someone jump as high as Cliff did in that moment. I thank

God for Cliff being an excellent coach, a better friend, and a pivotal mentor."

Following Munson, Bill Young '57 talked about how he and Hamlow came to campus together, the year Azusa College and Los Angeles Pacific College merged to form Azusa Pacific College. "At the time, I don't think there was one person who came to be a part of the athletic program," he said. "Cliff became a student-coach instead of a student-athlete and developed the program into what it is today." In the first few years of Hamlow's coaching career, the team practiced at gyms off campus before a donor provided funds to build the Cougar Dome in 1958.

As the years went by, Hamlow began recruiting players and strengthening the program. By the end of the 1960s, the Cougars were a perennial powerhouse thanks to excellent coaching and talented players such as Chuck Boswell '69. Boswell's freshman season was the year Azusa College and Pacific Bible College merged to form Azusa Pacific. While the players had been rivals before, Hamlow coached them to work together to reach new heights. Boswell fondly recalled his favorite memories, from going on basketball road trips and running out of gas to singing in church choirs. He ended by describing all of Hamlow's accolades. "Cliff, your greatest award

isn't here. Your greatest reward is that some day you're going to Heaven and you will see players you brought to the Lord, and through faith they each became a different person," he said. "Coach, I appreciate that, because I was one of those people. You did that for me. I love you and can't thank you enough."

Following Boswell, Dennis Dickens '70 talked about how Hamlow gave him a chance to develop his skills when few other coaches would have done so. After graduation, Dickens had a brief NBA career before playing professionally in Europe. "My coach in the pros told me the only reason I made it this far is because Coach Hamlow taught me how to play right," Dickens said. "Every year as a coach, Cliff got better. That doesn't happen often. He's more than a great coach. He put APU's basketball program on the map. In the basketball world, everybody knows APU all because of Cliff."

Many players went on to coach after graduating, including Gordon Billingsley '73 and Gary Johnson '80. Billingsley said he treasured Hamlow's mentorship and patience. Johnson described watching the way Hamlow coached, not shouting or getting angry with his players. Johnson replicated this in his coaching, as he went on to win Coach of the Year many times at the high school level in the San Gabriel Valley. "My favorite part was getting to coach the all-star

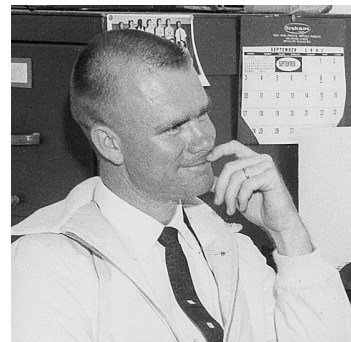
teams, because the all-star games were held at APU," Johnson said. "I was so proud because Coach could see me walking those sidelines just like he did."

The final two players to share, Dave Dangleis '87 and John Hoetker '89, spoke about Hamlow's impact off the court and in their lives after graduation. Dangleis spoke about a film session that turned into a prayer session as the team gathered around an old TV to watch the aftermath of the space shuttle Challenger explosion. "Cliff knew we could watch game film anytime; he made sure we stopped to grasp the significance of what had happened and prayed about it," Dangleis said. "Coach, you taught us a lot about basketball, but you taught us more about being men, and I will always appreciate that." Hoetker spoke about a moment more than 25 years after he finished playing basketball when he called Hamlow up and asked him to baptize his son and their family. "I know a lot of this is about basketball and that sport is a wonderful thing because it brought us all together. But more than that, you taught us how to be in the right spot to have the greatest impact, showing us your vision for something more," Hoetker said. "In my life, I never had a greater champion than you, Coach."

To close out the ceremony before the group went over to the Felix Event Center to watch the

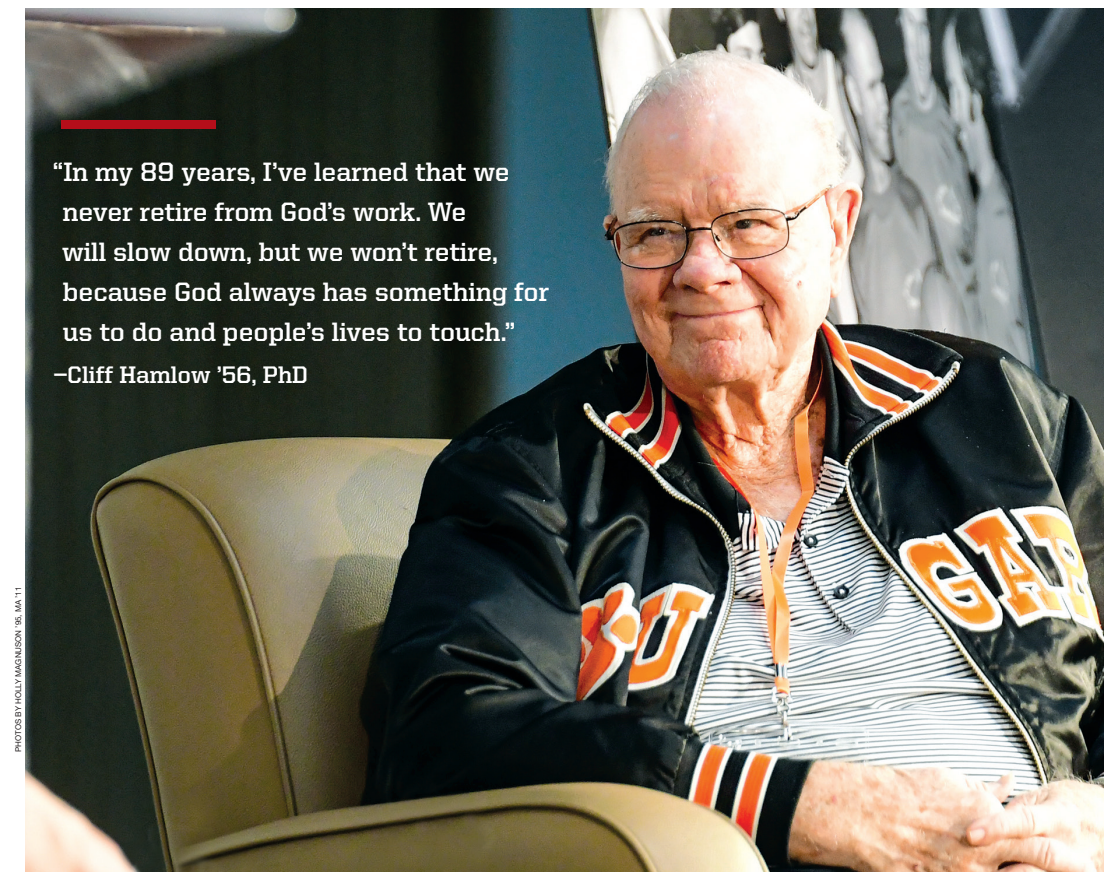
current men's basketball team beat Dominican University, Hamlow spoke about his legacy and his favorite memories from his 60 years of coaching (33 at APU and 27 at the high school level with his son, Gordon '95). "When I started college in 1954, I was at chapel and the Lord talked to me. I promised I would serve Him and go anywhere He wanted me to go," Hamlow said. "Little did I know He didn't want me to go very far. He put me here to develop an athletics program with the support of then-President Cornelius P. Haggard." Hamlow recounted games in the Cougar Dome with a thunderous home crowd, giving players a quarter to go buy their meals on road trips, beating Richard Felix's Bethel College basketball team at the National Christian College Tournament decades before Felix became APU's 15th president, and watching as his legacy was carried on by coaches Bill Odell, Justin Leslie, and Peter Bond. "It's been great to see how our coaches have ministered to their players," he said. "That's been true of all our coaches here at APU. That's why I believe in this place." Hamlow ended by commending his players for making an impact in the lives of so many young people. "In my 89 years, I've learned that we never retire from God's work. We will slow down, but we won't retire, because God always has something for us to do and people's lives to touch."

Nathan Foster '20 is public relations manager in the Division of Strategic Communication and Engagement. nfooster@apu.edu



CLIFF HAMLOW'S APU TEAMS ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

- Seven consecutive 20-win seasons
- Scoring 155 points in a single game
- Scoring more than 100 points in a single half
- Scoring 100 or more points 15 times in one season
- Winning the Christian College Tournament four years in a row from 1968-72



"In my 89 years, I've learned that we never retire from God's work. We will slow down, but we won't retire, because God always has something for us to do and people's lives to touch."

—Cliff Hamlow '56, PhD

Cougars Sports Roundup

Women's Track and Field Captures Second NCAA National Title



Azusa Pacific women's track and field are the 2023 NCAA DII Outdoor Women's Track and Field National Champions, earning the Cougars their second national title in the last three years. At the 2023 championships, the Cougars scored 66 points over three days of competition, led by individual national champions Molly Olson (javelin) and Jaylah Walker (400 hurdles). Walker is now a two-time national champion in the 400 hurdles. In total, the Cougars had 10 All-American performances, and both the 4x100 (Trinity Miller, Kiayra Holmes, Alayna Verner, Walker) and 4x400 (Holmes, Verner, Esther Condé-Turpin, Walker) relay teams broke school records during the championships. Congratulations to head coach Jack Hoyt and his staff of Andy Blackett, Sean Smith, James Jones, Mike Powell, Melissa Cerrillos, Arty Ledesma, and Karin Sasaki, along with their outstanding group of student-athletes, on winning the second NCAA national championship in program history!

Softball Makes History with Another Trip to Regionals



For the first time in its NCAA history, Azusa Pacific softball earned a spot at regionals in back-to-back seasons after going 30-22 in the 2023 regular season and finishing as the runner-up at the first-ever PacWest Softball Tournament. Azusa Pacific was the No. 7 seed in the West Region, and it was the Cougars' third NCAA regional appearance in program history.

Cougars Claim Third Straight Commissioner's Cup



Azusa Pacific clinched the PacWest Commissioner's Cup for the third consecutive time, becoming just the second school in conference history to three-peat. The Commissioner's Cup is awarded to the best all-around sports program in the conference, with teams earning points in each sport based on their finish in the

conference standings. Including the spring championships mentioned, Azusa Pacific captured a total of six conference championships in 2022-23, with women's basketball sweeping the regular season and conference tournament titles for the second consecutive time.

Baseball Wins First-Ever PacWest Tournament



Azusa Pacific will go down in the history books as the first-ever PacWest Baseball Tournament champion following the Cougars' perfect 3-0 weekend at the conference's inaugural postseason

baseball tournament. The Cougars opened the weekend with a victory over tournament host Fresno Pacific, then beat top seed Point Loma in back-to-back games to capture the tournament championship and clinch an automatic berth in the West Regional, which marked the sixth consecutive time that the program has made a regional appearance. Andrew White '25 was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Pitcher, and Will Stroud '23, who hit a pair of homers in the third and final game, was named the Most Outstanding Player.

Men's Tennis Wins PacWest, Both Tennis Squads Win at Regionals and Return to Nationals



The Azusa Pacific men's tennis team won the PacWest championship for the second year in a row, winning all three of their matches at the conference tournament in late April, including a 4-0 shutout

of top seed Hawai'i Pacific in the title match. Leyton Bohren '26 was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player for the second straight year, as he delivered the match-clinching win at No. 2 singles. In addition to the men's PacWest title, both Cougar tennis teams hosted regional matches and won and advanced to nationals in Orlando. For the men's team, it was their fifth trip to nationals in the School's NCAA era, while the women made their third appearance at nationals in that time.

For more news and updates on APU athletics, including team schedules, visit athletics.apu.edu.



- 1 A Night of Worship concert in Felix Event Center ignites a spirit of praise among concertgoers.
- 2 The longstanding tradition of The Table brings APU students, faculty, staff, and friends together for a meal and fellowship.
- 3 APU fans gather for an afternoon tailgate party before the softball game.
- 4/5 APU alumni, representing several decades, come together for class reunions and other fun activities during Homecoming Weekend.

APU Celebrates Homecoming Weekend 2023

Azusa Pacific University students, alumni, faculty, staff, family, friends, and the local community came together to enjoy the many campus-wide events that took place during APU's Homecoming 2023. Dinner on Cougar Walk, hosted by the Student Government Association, gathered the APU community together for the kick-off event known as "The Table." Chapel, baseball, and softball tailgates, department open houses, a food truck block party, s'mores under the stars, alumni class reunions, and local market vendors later provided a time for fellowship and connection.

A major highlight was a dynamic worship concert in the Felix Event Center, featuring Mosaic MSC from Los Angeles and ONE&ALL from San Dimas. Breakfast with President Morris gave the community an opportunity to hear about his first year leading the university and his plans for APU's future. The 34th annual Lū'au dinner and show provided the grand finale as the Pacific Islander Organization captured the story of the disciples learning from Jesus, using traditional Polynesian performances.

If the Lord Leaves a Door Open, Run Through It

BY NATHAN FOSTER



When Bailey Wilson '18 opened her food truck, Bondi Bowls, she had no idea that it would become so popular and grow so rapidly. The idea for the business came from her mother after noticing how bored Wilson was lying around her house in Oklahoma in the early days of the COVID pandemic. “She said, ‘Bailey, you need to get out of the house. You’ve been making these delicious acai bowls for Dad. He loves them. Your friends love them. You should share them with the community.’” Wilson found a used food truck on Facebook Marketplace, fixed it up and repainted it with her father, and launched Bondi Bowls on June 1, 2020. “I didn’t think many people would show up,” Wilson said. “But when my sister and I opened the window, there was a line of people so long it went through the entire parking lot. We literally hit the ground running.”

What began as a simple idea to help her make it through the pandemic quickly turned into much more. Just two-and-a-half years later, Bondi Bowls is a franchise with 17 food trucks in eight states, one brick-and-mortar location, and two kiosks in Oklahoma sporting venues. “In the beginning, I had no plans to hire employees, but we needed to,” she said. “Once we started franchising, we’ve continued to grow and now have more than 100 employees across the company.”

A big factor in this growth came about a month after Wilson opened her first truck. She was serving her bowls at a CycleBar event when a man approached her to talk about the business. “It turned out he served as a top executive at Disney for a long time; he also worked closely with Steve Jobs and helped start iTunes,” Wilson said. “He’s been my mentor ever since.”

Wilson also attributes her business growth to a vital lesson she attained while a student at APU. “I learned it’s so important to operate your business correctly, obey the rules and not take shortcuts for short-term gain, running it the right way and watching the Lord bless your business,” she said. “Everything we do is connected to the mission and mindset of growing the Kingdom. I’m so glad APU taught me the right way to do business.”

The food Wilson serves echoes this idea as well. Bondi’s acai bowls are made without any sugar or preservatives. The granola and nut butters are created in house and the acai base is blended fresh daily. “We spend a little more money, but we’re serving clean, healthy food, which is really important to me,” she said. “It’s literally part of our mission, to encourage God-honoring conversation while providing clean and healthy meals.” Wilson decided on Proverbs 16:3 (“Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and He will establish your plans,” NIV) as her company verse before Bondi Bowls even officially started. “We want to serve the Lord,” she said. “That’s our why. It’s what keeps us going.”

Although Wilson’s mother helped come up with the idea for Bondi Bowls, it never would have been possible without her father. After graduating from APU in 2018, Wilson decided to travel around the world. “Coming to APU from Oklahoma was a big test of my faith,” she said. “I wanted to test it again. It’s exhilarating once you enter an uncomfortable situation, but grow so comfortable in that decision because of the Lord.” Wilson moved to Australia, even though she didn’t know anyone there. “I never got a sure ‘yes’ from the Lord, but He also never shut the door. One thing that I’ve learned is that if the Lord leaves a door open, run through it.”

Wilson lived in Australia for two years. During this time, she worked at a cafe and a study-abroad company that took college students on adventures.



From leading tours of the Sydney Opera House to scuba diving and surfing trips, Wilson thrived in her job in Australia. “I loved the people and the culture there,” she said. “There was always something fun to do.”

It was while living at the world-famous Bondi Beach that Wilson got some bad news. “My dad called to tell me he had a 6-centimeter tumor in his bladder. The doctor was honest with him; it didn’t look good. He had emergency surgery the next day.” Wilson flew back home in March 2020 to be with her father, who ended up making a complete recovery. Unfortunately, Wilson was unable to return to Australia, due to lockdown restrictions. “Bondi was such a special place to me for my faith and growth. When I moved back to the U.S., there were still nine months left on my lease in Bondi, so I say my time there wasn’t finished, which is where the name for Bondi Bowls comes from.”

While Wilson has experienced rapid success with her business, she remembers she’s just a few years removed from being a humble college student who worked multiple jobs to get through. “I was an RA in Adams Hall. I was an Alpha leader. I worked as a social media intern for Communiversy (now Commuter Life). I was your typical APU student,” she said with a laugh. One of Wilson’s favorite memories from APU is taking a Senior Seminar class with late APU President Jon R. Wallace, DBA.

Perhaps her biggest takeaway from that class was the idea of servant leadership. She models this in her business by making sure to never spend more than two hours in her office at a time. She’ll pop out of the office and ask her employees if they need help. Sometimes she’ll serve bowls, other times she’ll deep clean, even scrubbing trash cans. “I never forget where I came from and that I’m not too big for the little day-to-day tasks,” she said. “I learned that from Jon Wallace. He was the epitome of servant leadership. I miss that man so much. I wish I could have shown him Bondi, but I know he’s looking down and smiling. He passed that knowledge from one generation to the next and I hope to do the same.”

Nathan Foster '20 is public relations manager in the Division of Strategic Communication and Engagement. nfoster@apu.edu

A Place to Share Stories and Dreams

BY ABBIE J. REED



In 2022, Nikki High '05 took a leap toward the unimaginable: she left her successful corporate job to pursue her lifelong dream of opening a bookstore. Not just any bookstore, but Octavia's Bookshelf—a place of gathering and community that prioritizes Black, Indigenous, and other authors of color.

Doors opened for the first time on Saturday, February 18, at 1361 North Hill Avenue in Pasadena, and there was a two-hour line all day long as hundreds of customers waited for their chance to show their

support, some having driven from as far as San Diego. The strong customer support continued on Sunday, and by Monday, High had to close the store because it had sold out of books.

High's journey started when she read her first book, at the young age of three. "I had a tumultuous childhood, and reading offered me the ability to daydream," said High. "I could make friends with characters I had never met and visit worlds beyond my wildest imagination."

This love for reading continued throughout her life, as her mom and grandmother made sure to provide her with a constant supply of literature. When she became a mother herself, earlier than her friends, books became her solace in times of loneliness.

"The name is a nod to the Pasadena legend, author Octavia Estelle Butler. I often felt discouraged as a teen reading science fiction novels. . . because they lacked people that looked like me. Butler changed that for the world, and for me, by featuring people of color in her novels."

—Nikki High '05

Throughout the years, High completed a handful of college courses through community college, but deeply desired to complete her learning through a university program. As a Pasadena resident, she quickly discovered that Azusa Pacific University was the place for her.

"APU had the best flexibility for full-time working adults like me," said High. "They recognized that someone going back to college in their thirties, with a family, would need support and connection."

With a small cohort of around 15 people, High began her studies in APU's Organizational Leadership program. She developed meaningful relationships with faculty-mentors who supported her through graduation.

"It was incredible to learn skills that I carried with me into work the next day," said High. "Attending APU as an adult learner was truly a wonderful experience for me."

After graduating in 2005, High began working as the customer communications director in the corporate Trader Joe's office. Her learning at APU served her well as she engaged with customers across the nation, coordinated with regional directors, and provided input on new products—leading with compassion and integrity for nearly 15 years.

Even during her professional career, however, books remained her passion: she could often be found perusing local independent bookstores for a new poetry collection or the latest sci-fi release.

"I started posing the idea of opening a bookstore to my family and friends, and received nothing but support, especially from my grandmother," said High. "When she unexpectedly passed in 2020, it pushed me to reprioritize my life around my dreams."

High started living boldly by taking a trip to Swaziland—a small country she had developed a love for through reading. There, she connected with a community of women artisans. As she watched them skillfully craft their wares, High knew she wanted to also make



a difference in her community by creating something beautiful.

When she arrived back home, she quickly set her plan into action, leaving behind the corporate world to open Octavia's Bookshelf.

"The name is a nod to the Pasadena legend, author Octavia Estelle Butler," said High. "I often felt discouraged as a teen reading science fiction novels—full of magical, advanced societies set far in the future—because they lacked people that looked like me. Butler changed that for the world, and for me, by featuring people of color in her novels."

High wanted to make that difference for others, and prioritize and highlight novels by authors from underrepresented groups. Her shelves feature writers from all countries and walks of life, whether poet Lucille Clifton, playwright August Wilson, or science fiction author Tomi Adeyemi, to name a few.

"Unfortunately, these writers often face difficulties when applying to get published or sold by big-brand companies," said High. "Their rich, vast, quality stories deserve to be read by everybody, of all backgrounds, and I can't wait to share them with my community."

Octavia's Bookshelf's opening was covered by several media outlets, including the *Los Angeles Times* and Spectrum News. High appreciated her story being shared, saying it confirmed for her that opening the bookstore was the right thing.

"It means everything to me," High said. "I've always wanted to build community. The community engagement I've had means what I'm attempting to do is touching the lives of others. I have such deep gratitude to be able to do this."

Abbie J. Reed '20 is a freelance writer living in Manzanita, Oregon. abbiejreed@gmail.com



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAYLOR MABUNI '21

More than a Carpenter

BY NATHAN FOSTER

On a chilly December morning, Taylor Mabuni '21 pulled up to a house surrounded by construction equipment and film crews. Mabuni leads a team of seasoned construction workers as they take on custom home builds. Many of these renovation projects are featured on HGTV shows such as *Celebrity IOU*, *Property Brothers*, *Help! I Wrecked My House*, and *First Home Fix*.

“Most of what we do is the actual building that happens behind the scenes. It’s fun to watch as the film industry collaborates with our construction,” he said. “I tell my friends and family that you might see me in the background on the shows, but the truly exciting part for me is not being on TV, it’s getting to see the end result of projects that I’ve worked on. It’s so rewarding to see how my skills are a part of giving someone a beautiful home.”

While Mabuni loves his work, it’s not what he pictured doing when he came to Azusa Pacific University as a Trustees’ Scholar. Mabuni entered college with plans to pursue a career in aerospace engineering, but after interning at a helicopter manufacturing company, he knew it wasn’t the right major for him. Mabuni then tried studying business before he decided

to switch majors to interdisciplinary studies, which allowed him to combine his experiences and create his own degree with emphases in applied mathematics, business, and leadership. “I never really fit the mold of any one of those areas; interdisciplinary studies was the perfect solution,” Mabuni said. “I highly recommend the program because it allows you to gain a broad range of skills from different fields while not being locked in to any one of them.”

While Mabuni worked on his degree at APU, he began working for Facilities Management, because he had always liked working with his hands and loved to create. After graduating in May 2021, he took a week off to go back home to Kona, Hawaii, then returned to APU to work full time on the maintenance team. Mabuni learned the skills of carpentry and welding, and got to work on many projects around campus, such as the Shalom Café sign. “I had told all of my friends and family that it was just a temporary job, just a way to save up money until I figured out what I was going to do postgraduation, but it actually ended up opening the doors for my career now,” he said. After eight months working for APU, Mabuni was approached by a contractor, Böhler Builders Group based in Glendora, where he was offered a job as a carpenter. Less than a year into the job, Mabuni was promoted to site manager.

Mabuni loves that he gets to apply what he learned in his classes at APU. He uses knowledge from his mathematics courses when he uses calculations and diagrams for house blueprints and plans. He draws upon his business and finance classes when he oversees budgets for clients during projects. He also takes what he learned from his leadership studies and applies it as a manager, communicating with others and bringing out their strengths to get the job done in the best way possible. “People have this perception that construction and college are mutually exclusive, that going into construction after college is a waste of a degree,” he said. “That’s just not true. More than the hard skills, college prepared me to be a critical thinker, problem solver, and communicator. These are skills that I use in my job every day.”

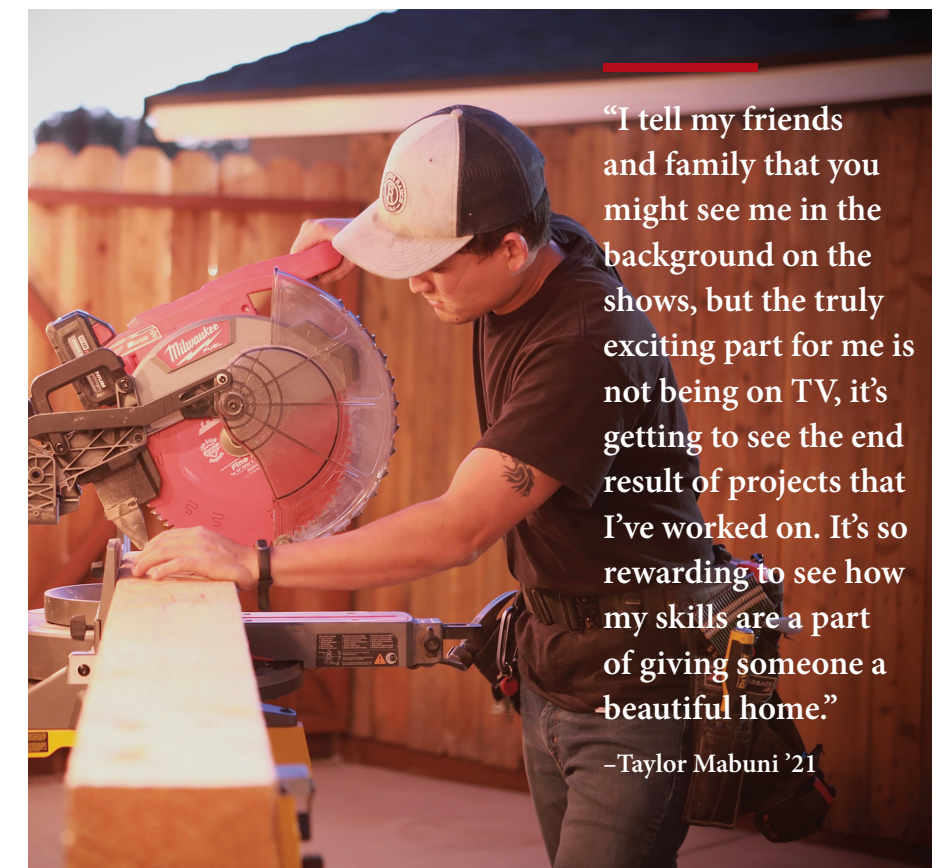
Being a manager provides Mabuni with a great opportunity to share his faith. “I get to reflect the heart of Christ in the way I treat and lead others,”

he said. Like many, he grew up in a Christian household but was challenged with making his faith his own when he moved out. “Living on my own was the first time I had to choose what I was going to let take up my time, what I value, if I wanted to continue going to church on Sundays or use it as just another day to do homework and hang out with friends,” he said. “I’m glad I chose to value my faith.” Mabuni began attending ONE&ALL church in Upland, joined a small group, and found mentors to pour into him. “These were all things that weren’t my faith in itself, but they were an essential part in growing and grooming my faith.”

Mabuni was never steered toward construction, always away from it, when it came to career advice. He was told that construction is for people who couldn’t make it into college. Yet at just 23, and less than two years removed from graduation, Mabuni recognizes an important life lesson that he hopes to pass on to others. “Construction has opened up incredible opportunities for my career of working alongside industry-leading designers and builders who are regulars on renovation TV shows. But

what’s so much more important than that is getting to use the gifts that God has given me in carpentry and the trades to bless others and honor Him,” he said. “I’m passionate about sharing that lesson. It’s not about building homes, it’s about pursuing the gifting and passion that God gave to me to work with my hands. There are unique skills and talents God has given to each of us and we get to choose how to respond with what we’ve been given. Using our God-given gifts is one of the most powerful ways we can bless others and give all glory to Him.”

Nathan Foster '20 is public relations manager in the Division of Strategic Communication and Engagement. nfoster@apu.edu



“I tell my friends and family that you might see me in the background on the shows, but the truly exciting part for me is not being on TV, it’s getting to see the end result of projects that I’ve worked on. It’s so rewarding to see how my skills are a part of giving someone a beautiful home.”

—Taylor Mabuni '21

APU Students Get Top Billing at Warner Bros. Event

BY NATHAN FOSTER



Many actors and filmmakers dream of premiering their films on the big screen, but may have to wait a lifetime to get the opportunity. For Azusa Pacific University students, they waited only until the end of their senior year. APU's College of the Arts hosted the 2023 Industry Spotlight on May 4 at the legendary Warner Bros. Studios, giving students a chance to showcase their work in front of industry talent representatives and casting directors.

CINEMATIC ARTS

A highlight of the night was cinematic arts students premiering films they have worked on all year, including *City Streets*, a civic engagement documentary directed by Jack Barrie '23. For Barrie, this project entailed far more than a chance to display his cinematography and directing skills. He was recruited by Ricky Staub '06 (director of Netflix's *Concrete Cowboy*) to help promote a nonprofit called The City Center, which offers transitional living for homeless families to get back on their feet. "We were able to make something important

and special for The City Center; it was truly unlike anything I've experienced before," Barrie said. "God was working through us."

ANIMATION

Animation students also premiered their films, ranging from minute-long 2D shorts to longer, more complex 3D stories, including *Hooked* by Victoria Ortiz '23 and Kaitlyn Ford '23. Each film shared a captivating story displaying different animation techniques. Ortiz was thrilled to share her film after spending hundreds of hours making it with classmates. "Seeing it in the theater at Warner Bros. was indescribable. There was this incredible sense of completion and achievement," she said.

ACTING

In a separate theater, APU theater students screened a showcase of the webseries *So That Happened* and performed in front of 20 talent representatives. Each senior delivered a monologue they had practiced and refined for months under the direction of Jill Brennan-Lincoln, MA, chair of the Department of Theater Arts. "Many talent reps shared with me that the APU Spotlight is their favorite university acting showcase to attend," Lincoln said. "This is high praise because they compared our BFA students to MFA programs from USC, Juilliard, and NYU, endorsing the training and talent our students have."

ARTIST ALLEY AND OCEANVIEW MALL

The Industry Spotlight also featured an Artist Alley where a group of students from games and interactive media, art, design, and journalism shared their creations. Students in APU's first-ever comic book class shared original comics they designed, while journalism students presented documentaries they created.

In the Artist Alley, the first graduating class of APU's games and interactive media program presented a demonstration of their video game *Oceanview Mall*, which features a character who gets lost in an abandoned mall and is forced to face his consumeristic habits while finding a way out. *Oceanview Mall* was created by six students who spent a full year writing the story, designing the graphics, adding sound effects, and playtesting.

HONORING PAT BOONE

The Industry Spotlight was made even more special by the presence of legendary singer Pat Boone, who was honored with a lifetime achievement award for his impact on the music industry. Boone sold more than 45 million records, had 38 Top-40 hits, and was the second-biggest-charting artist of the 1950s. After starting in rock and roll, Boone switched to Gospel music and is a member of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. A strong Christian and advocate for Christian artistry, Boone fell in love with APU's mission and decided to record his new single, "Jehoshua," with APU music students.

Nathan Foster '20 is public relations manager in the Division of Strategic Communication and Engagement. nfoster@apu.edu



Time to Celebrate!

Surrounded by their family and friends, approximately 1,300 students graduated from Azusa Pacific University on Saturday, May 6, 2023, during the university's three spring commencement ceremonies. When these inspiring disciples and scholars crossed the graduation stage, ready to make a difference in the world for Christ, they joined a 124-year legacy of transformation.



Scan the QR code to watch highlights of our spring 2023 commencement ceremonies.



Division of Strategic Communication and Engagement-78510
PO Box 7000
Azusa, CA 91702-7000

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Santa Ana, CA
Permit 4849



Advance Your Higher Calling

Choose from more than 80 graduate and professional programs.

7 campus locations throughout Southern California

Start as early as this fall!
apu.edu



AZUSA PACIFIC
UNIVERSITY

God First Since 1899