



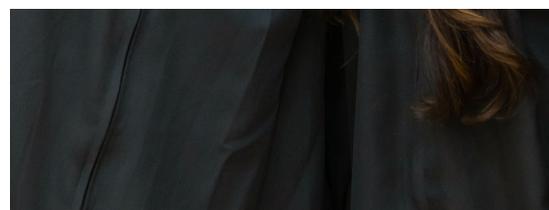
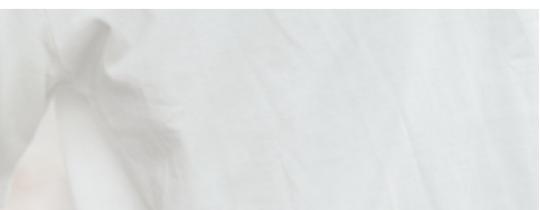
EMPOWERING

THE ENDURING LION LEGACY

TOMORROW



PRESIDENTS REPORT 2023



Homecoming

NOVEMBER 9-11, 2023

2023

SCHEDULE

Thursday, Nov 9

6 PM Women's Basketball Game
7:45 PM Men's Basketball Game
 Halftime Alumni Recognitions
 Post-Game Pep Rally

Friday, Nov 10

8:00 AM Memories Breakfast
10:15 AM Homecoming Chapel
*Young Alumnus Award Winners,
 Recognize Alumni Veterans*
11:30 AM Alumni Lunch Party
11:30 AM SWA Luncheon
2:00 PM Shop Waxahachie (SWA)
6:00 PM Celebration Banquet
*Keynote Speaker: Josh McDowell
 First 40 to register to receive a free
 copy of Josh McDowell's latest book
 "How To Know God Exists"*

8:30 PM Decades Reunion

Saturday, Nov 11

11 AM Tailgate Party
 Entrepreneur Fair
2 PM Homecoming Football Game

PRICING

Early Bird pricing through September 11, 2023. To Register go to, www.sagu.edu/homecoming



HOMECOMING CHAPEL
 Guest Speaker,
 Dave Roeber



CELEBRATION BANQUET
 Guest Speaker,
 Josh McDowell



LION SPIRIT
 Basketball Game - Football Tailgate Party

Summer 2023

SAGU Today and the President's Report are publications of Southwestern Assemblies of God University, a Christian, non-profit institution of higher learning.

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Southwestern Assemblies of God University is to prepare undergraduate and graduate students spiritually, academically, professionally and cross-culturally so as to successfully fill evangelistic, missionary and church ministry roles and to provide quality educational and professional Christian service wherever needed throughout the world.

Southwestern Assemblies of God University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. Contact the SACSCOC at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Southwestern Assemblies of God University.

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Video visits now 24/7.

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For Tickets, Hotel Reservations, and Schedule go to: www.sagu.edu/homecoming

For more Info CONTACT: Alumni@sagu.edu / 972-825-4639

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits. As the President of Southwestern Assemblies of God University, I am honored to share through this President's Report the incredible impact that SAGU has had over the generations.

Since its founding in 1927, SAGU has been dedicated to empowering students to discover and develop their God-given callings. Countless individuals have walked through our doors and gone out with a renewed sense of purpose, equipped to make a difference in their communities and beyond.

In the spirit of celebrating our rich history and the transformative power of education, I invite you to delve into the pages of our latest President's Report. Within its contents, you will find inspiring stories of students, alumni, and faculty members who have been impacted by SAGU and, in return, have left an indelible mark on the world. From testimonies of overcoming challenges to achievements that have shaped industries, each story exemplifies the spirit and dedication that define SAGU.



As you read these stories, I encourage you to reflect on your own journey and the impact that SAGU has had on your life. Whether you are an alumnus, a friend of the university, or someone considering joining our community, I believe you will be inspired by those whose lives have been transformed through SAGU.

In addition to stories, you will find updates on the exciting initiatives and achievements happening on campus. From groundbreaking projects to innovative programs, SAGU continues to strive for excellence in all aspects of education.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your continued

support of SAGU. Your commitment to our mission plays a vital role in shaping the next generation of leaders and change-makers.

I invite you to enjoy this edition of the President's Report and join us as we celebrate the legacy of SAGU and the profound impact it has had on countless lives. Together, let us continue to build for the generations to come a place where students can be equipped spiritually, academically, professionally, and cross-culturally for their God-given careers and callings.

*President Kermit S. Bridges
Southwestern Assemblies of God University*



CARRYING THE TORCH: A Generation of AG Leaders

As president of Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU), Kermit S. Bridges is the longest serving president in the institution's 96-year history. With over two decades of leadership experience, Bridges is also the longest current tenured leader among AG institutions of higher education in the United States.

Since his appointment in 2000, Bridges has guided SAGU with unwavering commitment and passion.

Nestled on a sprawling 70-acre campus just south of Dallas-Fort Worth, SAGU is a testament to Bridges' vision and perseverance. Over the years, the campus has witnessed remarkable growth, with over half of the buildings constructed under Bridges' watchful eye. These state-of-the-art facilities are complemented by beautifully refurbished older structures, including the administration building, which is proudly listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Additionally, Niche, a leading college-ranking company, recognizes SAGU's commitment to the safety and well-being of its students. In fact, SAGU has been designated as the 14th safest campus in America, providing a secure and nurturing environment for students to learn, grow, and excel.

Last year, the University received the highest possible review from the regional accrediting agency Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The SACSCOC reaffirmed SAGU's decennial accreditation - with

no recommendations, which is a significant accomplishment in the academic world.

SAGU's academic excellence is grounded in the unshakable foundation of Biblical principles. The University's commitment to faith-based education sets it apart from other higher ed institutions. Students must take 18 hours of Bible and theology instruction regardless of major. The modern chapel in the Sheaffer Center seats 1,800, where students gather three mornings a week. Plus, there are weekly devotionals at all six dorms. Faith is an integral part of campus life.

For Bridges, his deep roots in the Assemblies of God faith have played a pivotal role in shaping his



journey. As the son of James K. Bridges, a respected pastor at University Assembly in Waxahachie, Bridges witnessed firsthand the transformative power of faith and prayer. When SAGU faced financial challenges, Bridges' mother, Joyce, rallied church prayer groups to intercede on behalf of the University. In response, Bridges spearheaded a capital campaign in the 1990s that allowed SAGU to overcome its financial hurdles and flourish.

Bridges' commitment and influence are reflected in SAGU's faculty, where an impressive 94% of full-time professors are also members of the Assemblies of God. These dedicated educators possess academic expertise, are personally filled with the Spirit, and are actively involved in AG churches. Their unwavering support for the fellowship's positions on key issues, as outlined in the position papers, ensures that SAGU remains grounded in its Biblical and denominational roots.

As Bridges reflects on his journey, he recognizes his role in carrying the

torch for a generation of AG leaders. His dedication to SAGU's mission and his unwavering commitment to faith have positioned him as a guiding light for the University and the larger AG community. With each passing year, Bridges continues to inspire and empower the next generation of leaders who will shape the future of AG institutions.

Bridges' remarkable tenure as president of SAGU exemplifies the dedication passed down from his father and the commitment Bridges has to raise up generations of AG leaders through higher education.

Through his visionary leadership, unwavering faith, and steadfast commitment to SAGU's mission, Bridges continues to leave an indelible mark on the University and its students. As SAGU looks toward its centennial, the legacy of Bridges' leadership will continue to inspire and guide future generations of AG leaders as they carry the torch of faith, knowledge, and service.

Original article published on March 1, 2023 by John Kennedy, AG News

“Our faculty are personally Spirit-filled, active members of an AG church, and supportive of our Fellowship’s positions on key issues”

-President, Dr. Kermit Bridges-

SAGU ACROSS THE

Generations

Nicole Miles, a third-grade teacher from Paradise, Texas, holds a deep connection to SAGU that spans multiple generations. Her family's legacy at SAGU stretches back to the 1950s when her grandfather, the Rev. E.R. Lewis, graduated from SAGC (Southwestern Assemblies of God College). He and his wife, Ruby Lewis, were ordained ministers with the Assemblies of God.

circumstances. Nevertheless, the impact of SAGU on Nicole's family was evident even through her father's brief enrollment.

In the early '90s, Nicole's cousin, Jason Paranell, also became part of the SAGU legacy. While there, he studied at the University and met his wife, Tracey. Jason and Tracey were part of the original Harvesters, a singing group affiliated

his future wife, Mariah Taylor. Today, they serve in ministry together in Colorado.

Inspired by the stories and traditions passed down from her family members, Nicole felt an undeniable pull toward SAGU. Growing up, she listened to captivating narratives about Davis and Collins, the residences at SAGU where her family members lived. The tales were filled

classrooms and individuals filled with the Holy Spirit during lectures.

When the time came to choose a college, Nicole knew without a doubt that SAGU was the only option for her. She longed to experience and continue the legacy her family had established. Becoming a SAGU Lion was her ultimate aspiration.

institution would fill numerous pages. From her rich family history to her personal experiences as a student, Nicole's generational legacy at SAGU is a thread woven intricately into the fabric of her life. SAGU's transformative power and unwavering commitment to spiritual growth have left an indelible mark on Nicole and her loved ones.



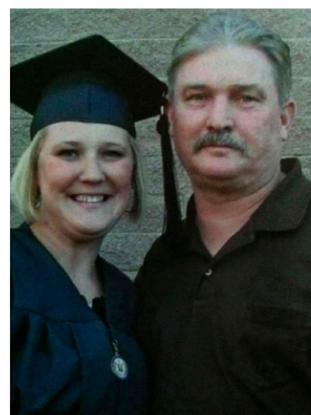
**NICOLE GRADUATED
IN 2010 WITH A
BA IN EDUCATION**



REV. E.R. LEWIS (1950s SAGC)



PAUL & CINDY BRADFORD (1970s SAGC)



NICOLE (2010s SAGU) AND HER
FATHER, ROGER LEWIS (1980s SAGC)



JASON & TRACEY PARANELL (1990s SAGU)



BRANDON & MARIAH BRADFORD (2000s SAGU)

In the 1970s, Miles' aunt and uncle, Cindy and Paul Bradford, attended SAGC. Cindy lived in Collins, while Paul lived in Davis' 4th wing. Their paths crossed at SAGC, and their union was a match made in heaven.

Nicole's father, Roger Lewis, attended SAGC in the late '70s and early '80s. Unfortunately, he could only complete a semester at the University due to various

with SAGU. The pair graduated together, married, and have since dedicated their lives to missionary work in Bosnia. The couple now has three children who are also part of the ever-growing generational legacy at SAGU.

The new millennium brought another milestone for Nicole's family as her cousin, Brandon Bradford, began attending SAGU. While on campus, Brandon met

with daily pranks and cherished traditions, creating an enchanting atmosphere within the University. Visiting her cousins while they attended SAGU only fueled her desire to be a part of this legacy.

The stories were not solely centered around pranks and traditions but also encompassed the powerful chapel services that could last for hours. Nicole was intrigued by accounts of prayer-filled

Nicole's time at SAGU surpassed her expectations. She encountered chapel services that extended for hours and witnessed the cancellation of classes due to powerful encounters with the Holy Spirit. Nicole particularly remembers her Bible class with Dr. Adonna Otwell, a professor whose teachings prompted students to seek God in profound ways.

Elaborating on everything she loves about SAGU and her legacy within the

Their legacy and the memories they have created are a testament to the enduring educational excellence and spiritual foundation that SAGU has provided through the generations.

Have a similar story? We want to hear it! Contact alumni@sagu.edu to share your story of SAGU in your family generations!

NEW PROFESSORS



TOM CAUDLE, J.D.

Is a business law and accounting assistant professor at SAGU. He completed his BBA in Finance from the University of Oklahoma, and entered the Master's program at UTD. He completed a MS with a concentration in accounting before passing the CPA exam. While attending UTD, he was an accountant and accounting supervisor with a major oil and gas company. He then attended SMU's Dedman School of Law, where he earned his JD. Mr. Caudle has practiced law in Dallas for many years. He is a member of the business, insurance, international, Native American, and tax law sections of the State Bar of Texas. He started teaching part-time as an adjunct at SAGU in 2019. In 2022, he became a full-time professor. When not teaching or practicing law, Mr. Caudle manages a profitable cow-calf operation he has owned for over 25 years.



DR. CLANCY HAYES

Was recently appointed as Dean of the largest of SAGU's three colleges: the College of Bible and Church Ministries. Dr. Hayes has over 16 years of teaching experience at SAGU and previously served as the national training coordinator in the Sunday School department of the Assemblies of God. His primary task is representing his college's faculty and students to the university administration while overseeing the development of new academic programs. Additionally, he identifies qualified full-time and adjunct instructors when positions within his college become available. Whenever possible, Dr. Hayes also enjoys teaching in district schools of ministries. He has authored numerous articles and books, including his latest: Taking Steps Toward God. Dr. Hayes holds a B.A. in Psychology and Bible, M.A. in English Bible, Master of Divinity with an emphasis in Christian education, and a Doctor of Ministry degree.

NEW FOOD SERVICE PROVIDER

Recently, SAGU partnered with Provider Contract Food Service to be the exclusive campus food service provider for students, faculty, staff, and guests.



Known for its exceptional culinary quality, Provider has introduced concepts such as its 'Small Plates' offerings to The Caf in an all-you-care-to-eat format. Inspired by Spanish Tapas, Provider's small, high-quality dishes encourage guests to explore and savor a variety of foods in healthier portions. Residential students, commuters, faculty, and staff will have access to a range of meal plan options.

Additionally, Provider expanded meal plans through meal swipe options at all three dining locations: The Caf, Lion's Den, and Einsteins Bros Bagels.

Provider, recognized as the number five "Best College Food in the Nation" by Niche, is a highly decorated and acclaimed food service provider, and SAGU is proud to have them on campus!



NEW DEGREE B.S. KINESIOLOGY



Introducing our brand new Kinesiology program launching this fall! The Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology with a specialization in exercise science is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the role of movement and physical activity in human health and performance. New course offerings that will be part of the curriculum include exercise physiology, biomechanics, sports psychology, and medical terminology.

The program combines biomechanical, physiological, and sociological perspectives to equip our students with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue careers in areas such as health and fitness, exercise science, and physical therapy.

Students can turn theory into practice in the Garrison Wellness Center which holds a recreational gym, weightlifting room with treadmills and elliptical machines, indoor walking track, racquetball rooms, and an aquatic center with sauna and hot tubs.

We are excited to invite prospective students to join us on this journey of discovery and growth. Our program features hands-on learning experiences, state-of-the-art facilities, and dedicated faculty members who are passionate about helping students succeed.



DR. JOSEPH REED

Currently SAGU's associate professor of Science, will be the new program coordinator of the Kinesiology Program, launching this fall. For over a decade, Dr. Reed has held an exemplary record in education and education management. Dr. Reed holds bachelors degrees in anatomy, biology and chemistry and a doctorate degree in chiropractic. His expertise across various disciplines has enabled him to deliver profound improvements in student satisfaction and retention rates. Reed takes pride in his fine-tuned ability to efficiently communicate with students and staff alike - all with the aim of motivating everyone towards a productive end goal. He knows how to constructively build bridges in order to create a positive atmosphere which fosters growth opportunities for everyone involved.



For more information, contact Dr. Joseph Reed at jreed@sagu.edu.

SAGU ATHLETICS: A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

Since the inception of the athletic department in 1969, Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) Athletics has promoted and developed opportunities for physical effort, self-discipline, and Christian testimony in sports. SAGU's rich tradition provides an unyielding commitment to playing well on and off the field and providing a place where athletes can grow and develop their relationship with Christ.

This vision is cemented by Athletic Director Dr. Jesse Godding, who views athletics as more than just a game, but a tool for spiritual growth and character development.

Coach Godding has seen much growth over his 21-year span as head football coach and now athletic director at SAGU. The football program at SAGU began in 1996, and after several leadership changes, Godding was hired as head coach.

Godding's previous experience as a football coach at Crown College in Minnesota and the AG's Trinity Bible College in North Dakota meant he had a wealth of knowledge and experience when he was hired at SAGU in 2002. In 2011, he took on the additional responsibility of athletic director and functioned in the dual role for four years.

In his current role as athletic director (and now with 12 years under his belt), the number of athletes at SAGU has grown to 465 from 185, and the number of sports has more than doubled to 15, with the addition of programs such as softball, women's cross country and Esports. With his guidance, the program flourished, winning a championship and earning him the title of Coach of the Year in 2013.

Godding has received top conference athletic director honors thrice, including in 2021



THEN & NOW

185 VS. 465 TOTAL ATHLETES

7 VS. 15 SPORT TEAMS

MORE THAN 5 CHAMPIONSHIPS
IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

ADDITIONAL SPORTS:
TRACK & FIELD, ESPORTS, CROSS COUNTRY

ALL SPORTS

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Baseball | Indoor Track & Field* |
| Basketball * | Outdoor Track & Field* |
| Cross Country * | Soccer * |
| Esports (co-ed) | Softball |
| Football | Volleyball |

* Men's & Women's Offered

and 2022. He was recently awarded the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) Cushman & Wakefield AD of the Year Award (ADOY). Under his watch, he's also seen the victories of various SAGU sports teams, such as a football championship in 2013 and the softball team becoming national champions in the National Christian College Athletic Association.

Even with all of the growth and accomplishments, Godding maintains true to his convictions: ▶

“Athletics is a medium, a tool for spiritual formation, an opportunity to reveal character, to become more Christlike and grow in grace.”

-Dr. Jesse Godding-



2022-23 CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD
**ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR**

Connecting
YOUR FAMILY
to **OUR FAMILY**



SERVICES

- HIGH YIELD CHECKING
- SAVINGS & CDS
- HOME & AUTO LOANS
- YOUTH ACCOUNTS
- MINISTRY ACCOUNTS
- INSURANCE
- BUSINESS LOANS & SERVICES

Our Purpose is to improve our members' quality of life, while helping support church planting and ministry, educational scholarships and programs, and humanitarian efforts.



NCUA

AGCU.ORG

A NEW ERA: EXCITING CHANGES ON THE HORIZON



In addition to his strong faith and love of his family, he dedicates himself to studying film and honing his craft alongside his playing career.

Early in life, Ellis made the conscious decision to prioritize faith. It has been a driving force for him since his days in the 11th grade, when many believed he was destined to be a preacher. “I hope to see our football program grow, not only in terms of wins and losses but also in the development of our players as strong, godly men,” says Ellis.

This vision perfectly aligns with SAGU President Dr. Kermit S. Bridges, who takes a personal interest in selecting all head coaches. Bridges emphasizes their dedication to the school’s mission and values rather than their sports knowledge or past successes. “Recruiting and maintaining athletes who live up to the standards set by the university is crucial,” asserts Bridges.

SAGU athletics is entering an era of exciting changes, exceptional leadership, and a steadfast commitment to faith and values. As SAGU Athletics looks towards the future, the sky is the limit for their achievements both on and off the field.

Original article published on March 8, 2023 by John Kennedy, AG News

Ministry Through the Generations: A Legacy of Faith, Service, and Empowerment

The story of Silvin and Grace Galiza and their multigenerational impact

In a world where generational legacies are often overlooked, the Galiza family stands as a testament to the power of faith, service, and empowerment. Silvin Galiza, originally from Kauai, Hawaii, and his wife Grace, from El Paso, Texas, have dedicated their lives to ministry, leaving an indelible mark on the communities they’ve served.

The journey of the Galiza family began at Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU), where Silvin earned his Bachelor’s degree in Church Ministry and later completed his Master’s in Theological Studies. Grace, on the other hand, pursued her passion for education and obtained her Master’s in Elementary Education from SAGU.

Their time at SAGU played a pivotal role in shaping their commitment to ministry and prepared them to embrace the call of God on their lives. Silvin’s theological studies equipped him to effectively communicate God’s Word, while Grace’s education degree laid a strong foundation for her future endeavors as a teacher.

Silvin and Grace’s paths crossed in the chapel worship department at SAGU, where their shared love for worship and ministry brought them together. Grace had just returned from her missionary work in South Africa, while Silvin had recently concluded his youth pastoring and worship leading experiences in Hawaii. Their connection was both divine and serendipitous, marking the beginning of a lifelong partnership in faith and service.

After their time at SAGU, the Galizas embarked on a remarkable journey as the lead pastors of Aloha Church in Lihue, located on the picturesque island of Kauai. Serving their home church was a profound

experience, allowing them to bring a fresh wind of revival and witness the transformation of lives within their community. They also had the privilege of ministering alongside Silvin’s parents, who faithfully shepherded the congregation for 38 years.

The memories of their time in Hawaii are filled with moments that will forever be etched in their hearts. From hosting island-wide and state-wide events, Bible studies, and worship nights to officiating beach weddings on surfboards and exchanging vows near breathtaking waterfalls, Silvin and Grace left an enduring impact on both individuals and the broader church community.

Silvin served as the worship pastor at Dallas First Assembly of God for one year, a position he stepped into after leading worship as an evangelist. The couple’s journey to Dallas was marked by divine connections and open doors, with a friend of Silvin’s informing them about the worship leader position at the church. They fell in love with the congregation, and the hunger for worship and the Word that permeated the church. It became clear that this was where they were meant to be for that season.

Meanwhile, Grace found herself teaching at Ovilla Christian School by a fortuitous turn of events. During a school tour, the principal mentioned a job opening to Silvin, unaware that Grace was looking for employment. Recognizing the hand of God at work, Grace applied for the position and joined the remarkable staff at Ovilla Christian School, where she taught fourth and fifth-grade English Language Arts and History for the 2022-2023 school year.

As the Galiza family continues to embrace their calling to ministry, they also cherish

their role as parents to four young adventurers. Every moment in their home is an opportunity for learning, growth, and family bonding. Together, they continue to embark on new adventures that strengthen their love for God and one another. Their next adventure is taking them back to El Paso, Texas, where they can be closer to family and pursue God’s calling for this next season of life.

The Galiza family’s story is one of dedication, perseverance, and the pursuit of God’s call. Their journey from SAGU to their current roles is a testament to the transformative power of education, embracing one’s heritage, and faithfully serving the communities they love. The Galiza family exemplifies the impact that can be made when successive generations commit to empowering others through ministry, education, and a heart of worship.

May their story inspire each one of us to embrace our own multigenerational legacies, leaving a lasting impact for the glory of God.

► *Silvin and Grace Galiza in Hawaii.*



PAVE THE WAY

Are you looking for a unique opportunity to leave your mark as a supporter of SAGU? Through our Legacy Brick campaign, you can do that and literally pave the way for current and future generations to continue enjoying the benefits of a Spirit-empowered, Christian education while building social bonds in an atmosphere of teamwork and community.

A limited number of Legacy Bricks are now available for alumni, local businesses, or individuals to purchase. These bricks will be set in a Star of David pattern emanating from the foundation of the captivating "Lion of Judah" statue, which will be the focal point in the plaza entrance of SAGU's NEW Sports Venue. This bronze statue is one of only two produced by artist Max Greiner, Jr., with the other one on display in Jerusalem. He has shared that Waxahachie, TX is very closely aligned to the same latitude as Jerusalem so there is special significance to having the statue located here in its permanent post.

Your Legacy Brick purchase will be a lasting reminder of your dedication to the mission of SAGU and will contribute to the construction of the Sports Venue Plaza, which is projected to be completed by November 9, 2023 - just in time for Homecoming!

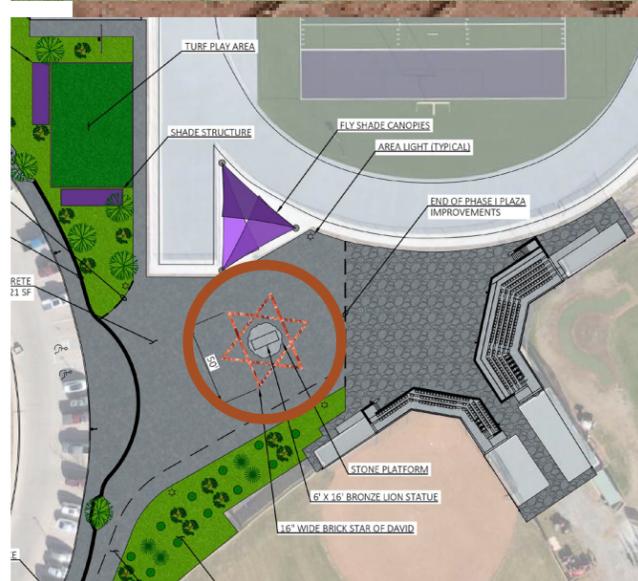
You will be able to personalize your brick to perhaps commemorate the date of your graduation, honor a loved one, or create a special message to cheer on your SAGU Lions.

To order your brick and pave the way for future generations at SAGU, visit www.sagu.edu/pavetheway

For more information or assistance, contact our Advancement Office at 972-825-4639 or advancementoffice@sagu.edu. You can also visit www.sagu.edu/advancement.



*Final design subject to change



YEAR 1 GIVING BY PROJECT

ONE 9/27: SAGU GIVING DAY



TOTAL RAISED: \$64,844 # OF GIFTS: 52

FIRST GIFTS



TOTAL RAISED: \$9,261 # OF GIFTS: 36

FEEDBACK FOR GOOD



TOTAL RAISED: \$20,342

LIONS HELPING LIONS



TOTAL RAISED: \$16,806 # OF GIFTS: 11

CENTURY SOCIETY



TOTAL RAISED: \$31,262 # OF GIFTS: 53

REGENTS SOCIETY



TOTAL RAISED: \$6,276 # OF GIFTS: 26

SIGLO SOCIETY



TOTAL RAISED: \$1,986 # OF GIFTS: 40

CHURCH PILLARS



TOTAL RAISED: \$8,775 # OF GIFTS: 62

SHARED LEGACIES



TOTAL COMMITTED: \$6,540,00 (6 COMMITMENTS)

CHARITABLE GIFT ARRANGEMENTS



TOTAL RAISED: \$100,000 # OF GIFTS: 1



Church Leadership Scholarships

TOTAL RAISED: \$239,007 # OF GIFTS: 118

One project launched to raise awareness and encourage church contributions to Church Leadership Scholarships is the Sutton Family Church Leadership Golf Tournament. The Advancement Office has successfully hosted two tournaments (2022 & 2023) with over 40 churches participating and giving \$81,175.39!



Echo Society

TOTAL RAISED: \$859,750

With 98 current endowments in the Southwestern Foundation; SAGU is 2 away from reaching 100, our 2027 Project goal!

- 11 new endowments donated*
- Jerry Wayne Shepperd and Bruce Laron Shepperd Memorial Scholarship Fund*
 - Donald and Deana Calvin Scholarship*
 - Pastor Rennie J. Baker Scholarship*
 - Rose Family Scholarship*
 - Joan G. Butler Legacy Scholarship*
 - Dr. Mary Jackson Doctoral Degree Scholarship*
 - The Embretson Track & Field and Cross Country Endowed Scholarship*
 - Barry L. Gordon Business Scholarship Endowment*
 - Karla Aaron Scholarship*
 - SAGU Ministers Retirement Assistance Endowment*
 - Summer Student Worker Fund*

GRAND TOTAL OF FUNDS RAISED: \$1,258,510

OUR GOAL FOR THE COMING YEAR: \$1 MILLION

Will you join us? www.sagu.edu/2027

THREADS OF

THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS

Worship



Worship has been a unifying thread throughout the history of SAGU. From the first days on campus to now, worshiping together has always marked meaningful moments of Holy Spirit encounters and growth for the individual and collective body. The worship lifestyle passed down through the generations is highlighted in many places throughout the University, where many have gathered for renewal, revival, and fellowship.

Nathan and Meredith Jones are examples of a lifestyle of worship-passed down from previous generations. Meredith Jones heads up SAGU's worship department, and her husband, Nathan P. Jones, is also on staff. Soon after marrying in 2004, the couple spent seven years as

AGWM "musicianaries" in England. Using music to build bridges to predominantly non-Christian audiences, they performed at fairs, concerts, outdoor festivals, and even pubs. Nathan also managed a coffee shop during that time.

Nathan and Meredith met in a worship class when they attended SAGU. Both had strong ties to the university before they attended for college. Nathan's parents, Doyle and Cherie Jones, served as AG World Missions church planters in Central America and Doyle previously directed the SAGU missions department. While Meredith's mom, Donna Townsend, led SAGU's English department.

Meredith, revamped and broadened the worship arts degree program,

which now is specialized in worship leadership, media and sound, and creative art direction. Just under 50 students are currently enrolled in worship-related degrees.

The Joneses have assembled five worship teams for chapel services. Meredith and Nathan hold weekly mentoring meetings with these students and one-on-one feedback consultations. "Our passion is to help students fall in love with Jesus," says Nathan. "We want to equip a new generation of worship leaders who aren't just great musicians."

Of course, not just worship arts majors experience God on campus. For the past couple of years, twice a month, as many as 200 SAGU attendees have gathered for student-led prayer and worship

gatherings known as The Well. "It's a space where people come together and pursue God," Meredith says. Sometimes students sit in silence for long periods in an attempt to hear from God, or they might speak into the lives of others at the event. Healings and freedom from addictions have been hallmarks of the gatherings.

The Joneses are uniquely qualified to lead SAGU's worship arts program, which has earned a reputation for producing Spirit-led worship leaders. Worship team students have opportunities for practical hands-on ministry at district councils, youth retreats, church conferences, and national events. Teams travel to camps in locales such as Croatia, South Africa, and Mexico during the summer.

Meanwhile, SAGU remains committed to teaching future ministers and missionaries. District scholarships are available to church ministry majors to receive at least half off of tuition. The number of Bible and church ministry majors has remained at 45% for the past 30 years. SAGU has been a leading institution in producing AG-credentialed ministers and appointed world missionaries throughout that span.

"We are intentional about going after God in worship, welcoming the operation of spiritual gifts, and prioritizing altar ministry in response to the preaching of the Word," says SAGU President, Kermit Bridges. Bridges says thrice-weekly chapel services and weekly dormitory devotions play a central role in cultivating a spiritual atmosphere on campus. Full-time residential hall directors in the five-campus dormitories are referred to as dorm pastors, given their role as spiritual leaders. Bridges also notes that classes begin with purposeful prayer for the nations.

Regardless of what discipline they are studying, all SAGU students must take six three-hour Bible/practical theology courses. "An underlying core value is that every believer is a minister," says Bridges. Along with that, every student is expected to be a worshiper. Chapels are held on campus Wednesday (missions), Thursday (student-led), and Friday (president-led) mornings. Tuesday night devotionals are conducted in dorms by three dozen resident assistants who guide students in learning from specific Bible verses.

Worship certainly is a thread woven throughout the lives of the generations of families that have attended SAGU. This spirit of worship and communion lies at the heart of SAGU – an unyielding commitment to love God, serve others, pursue truth, and ultimately uphold the kind of learning that leads to transformed lives.

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▼ *The Jones' with SAGU Worship team in Durban, South Africa.*



"We are intentional about going after God in worship, welcoming the operation of spiritual gifts, and prioritizing altar ministry in response to the preaching of the Word."

-President, Dr. Kermit Bridges-

TWELVE: YOUNG HEARTS GUIDED BY SHARED PURPOSE

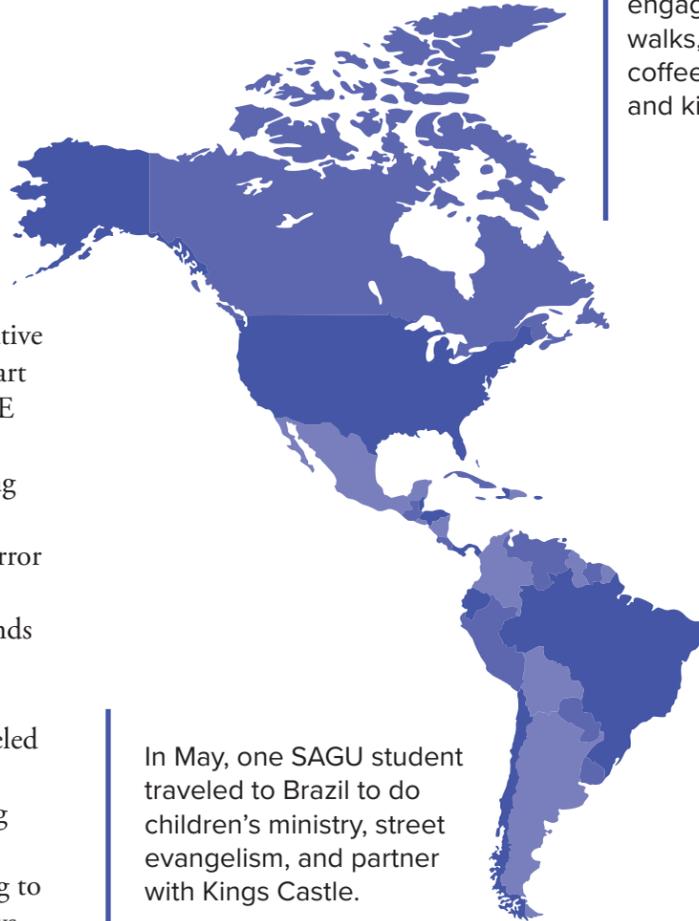
Embarking on a mission of compassion, faith, and service, SAGU students have spent their summers igniting their zeal for global impact since 2010. Through the transformative experiences of TWELVE, these young hearts are guided by a shared purpose: to extend love, hope, and support to communities near and far.

TWELVE is SAGU's mission initiative and its vision is to represent the heart of Jesus and His ministry. TWELVE emphasizes deep relationships that create life-changing and far-reaching impacts. As students live life in close discipleship together, they mirror the first-century church in our modern-day Judea, Samaria, and ends of the Earth.

This summer, SAGU students traveled to thirteen locations across the globe to bring the hope and healing of Christ to those in need. From building homes to teaching, healing to empowering, their dedication knows no bounds, leaving an indelible mark on both the lives they touch and the legacy they forge. Join us as we delve into the vibrant tapestry of TWELVE mission trips, where the seeds of compassion are sown, and generations are empowered to create a lasting difference in the world. Here are several highlights from this summer's trips through TWELVE.



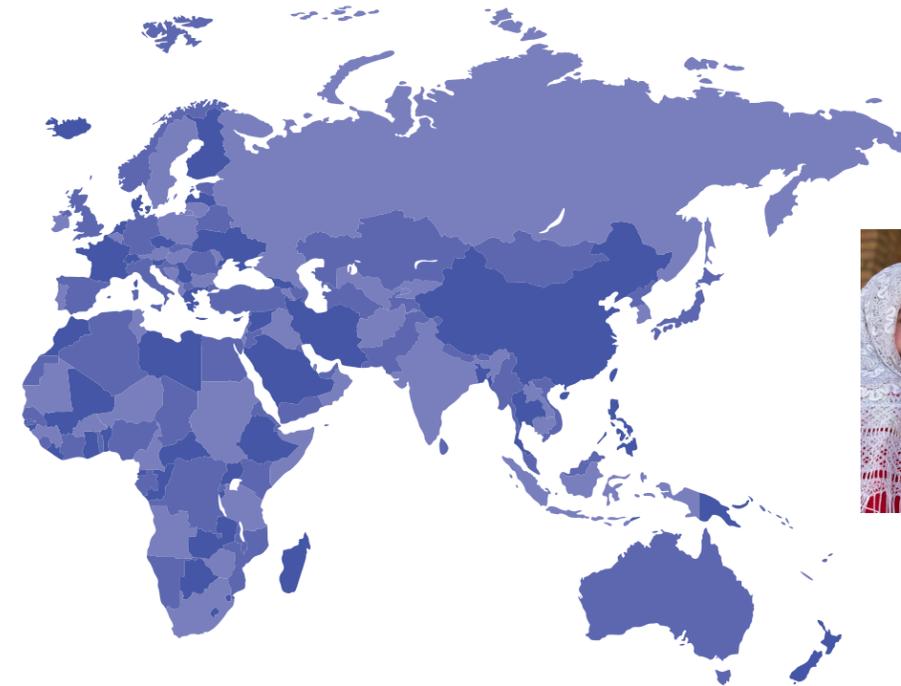
During June and July, one student traveled to Michigan to minister to the largest Muslim community in the U.S. alongside missionaries there. Together, they engaged in prayer walks, evangelizing, coffee shop ministry, and kids outreach..



In May, one SAGU student traveled to Brazil to do children's ministry, street evangelism, and partner with Kings Castle.



A team of seven students traveled to France and were involved in secular outreach, building intentional friendships with the locals, prayer walks, prayer and fasting, and prayer chains, coffee handouts, and small groups.



During May and June, four students traveled to an undisclosed country in central asia to do TESOL, evangelism, village work, and teen challenge.



During May and June, five students traveled to the Ivory Coast to do a kids camp, street evangelism, and build tabernacle kits.

During the months of May and June, nine different students took two different trips to Southeast Asia to help with orphanage work, teaching English classes and life skills at a consultancy, in addition to church assistance and university ministry.



EMPOWERING GENERATIONS:

SAGU GRADS LEAVING A LOCAL LEGACY THROUGH EDUCATION



While many SAGU Alumni go on to work and minister around the world, many SAGU alumni choose to carry on their own legacies here in our own backyard. In fact, we have a number of teachers and school principals right here in Ellis County. At SAGU, we have a unique opportunity to give back to the local community through education.

Through support of SAGU's educational programs, scholarships and other initiatives, we can help empower generations by paving their future paths to successful academic experiences. Our combined efforts as graduates can be the driving force behind making meaningful change in our own backyard—harnessing potential future leaders and creating an enduring impact for years to come.

When Laura B. Thompson started teaching 17 years ago, she felt confident and well-prepared thanks to her education at SAGU. She credits her SAGU professors for partnering with local schools and providing comprehensively detailed instruction and practical experience.

Thompson's success in the classroom has been remarkable; she received Elementary Teacher of the Year honors for her campus in 2012 and Elementary Teacher of the Year for her entire district in 2016. She served as assistant principal at Wedgeworth Elementary in

Waxahachie for two years. While at Wedgeworth, her daily duties included student discipline and lifting up the morale of the school's teachers. For the 2023 school year, Thompson elected to join one of the neighboring Ellis County school districts who are observing the four-day school week so that she can spend more time with her own family.

Thompson notes that prayer is a key component of her work. In addition to helping her connect with students facing difficult home lives, her faith is what helped her navigate difficult conversations with teachers and parents alike.

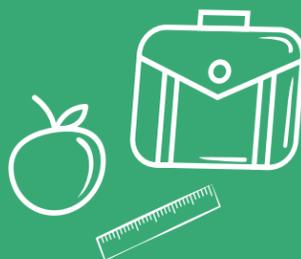
Khristy Strange, SAGU's Director of Teacher Education and Department Chair believes that, "If you want to change culture, start with the children."

SAGU's approach to education is paying off. Local public school districts are seeking out SAGU education graduates because of the quality of education they've



SAGU has graduates all over the United States and even overseas.

In fact, between **5% and 8%** of education graduates annually end up **TEACHING ABROAD.**



received. SAGU has graduates all over the United States and even overseas. In fact, between 5% and 8% of education graduates annually end up teaching abroad.

SAGU professor Paula Manley believes that a faith-based perspective can make all the difference for current students. According to Manley, SAGU instructors view teaching as a way to have a meaningful impact on students' futures and the world.

With more than two decades of teaching experience between them, Manley and Strange are excited about the future and hopeful about the impact that their graduates will have on the world. A new education-business building is on the horizon for SAGU, giving students access to cutting-edge technology in instruction.

For Laura B. Thompson and her husband Chris (also a SAGU graduate), Ellis County isn't just a place to work—it is home. And they're not alone. Ryan Cavazos, Tonya Harris, Dallas Horne, and Karin Polk—all SAGU graduates—are among the public-school administrators who have worked or are working in Ellis County today, leaving a lasting legacy locally.

As Thompson says, "So many SAGU professors know they are investing in the future, not just teaching a class." For SAGU graduates like Thompson and her colleagues, leaving that legacy is not just a job, it's a calling.

Original article published on March 15, 2023 by John Kennedy, AG News



▲ Dr. Paula Manley, longtime educator at SAGU, in one of her Education program courses.

▼ Laura with her husband, Chris (also a school administrator in Ellis County), and their two children, Darcy and Asher.



▼ Laura Thompson (right), previous assistant principal at Wedgeworth Elementary in Waxahachie. She served with principal Tim Day (center) and fellow assistant principal Yulia Cedeno (left).





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