

CCU'S NEXT PRESIDENT | FINALLY FINISH | MARCH FOR LIFE | THE DIRT ON MISSIONS | SPRING 2023

BEYOND

COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



The
Hands
and Feet
of Jesus

THE SOUND OF HOPE P. 34



COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Grace and Truth

Dear friends,

Spring in Colorado is a time of change. A sense of the rebirth and renewal can be felt coursing through the valleys and meadows and up to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. As the days slowly stretch longer and warmer, I am reminded of the incredible impact that even a small change can have on the world. Just two to three minutes of additional sunlight each day awakens and transforms a world that was asleep, bursting forth shades of green, lavender, and gold. At Colorado Christian University, we are not the largest, oldest, or most well-known university, but our impact continues to increase just like the sunlight in spring. This edition of *BEYOND* celebrates that impact as we highlight students, alumni, staff, faculty, and friends of the University that are actively engaged in the kingdom-building work of spreading Christ's love into the world.



In these pages, you will read about the 25-year-old psychology student in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies who works at a preschool during the day and as a firefighter at night (p. 22). You will be inspired by alumnus Vernon Jones, who works double-duty for God in his roles as both the lead pastor of Kinship Missionary Baptist Church in Denver and as the executive partner at FaithBridge, an Adams County-based organization which works with kids, parents, and community leaders to ensure that marginalized students can succeed in school and pursue college (p. 12). You will meet Nathanael Avery who is working to empower the Church to restore communities devastated in East Africa (p. 46). You will hear from current students about the impact the March for Life has had on the fight to protect the most vulnerable (p. 16), and the impact on lives from overseas mission trips.

When I agreed last summer to serve as the interim president of the University, I did so knowing that the following months would be both challenging and rewarding. This season of my life has been one of joy as I have seen men and women transform into leaders that will impact the world with grace and truth. As many of you have likely heard, Colorado Christian University has selected Eric Hogue to serve as the 22nd president of the University after a thorough nationwide search and much prayer (p. 6). I am excited for this new chapter as Eric brings a passion for Christ-centered education and CCU that will positively impact the University for generations to come.

With Grace and Truth,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim A. Mctavish". The signature is fluid and cursive.

TIM MCTAVISH, MBA '13
Interim President
Colorado Christian University

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BEYOND

A publication of Colorado Christian University

Our Magazine

In *BEYOND*, our goal is to share the story of CCU, as well as God's faithful provision for more than 100 years. We aim to share the stories of the people who go beyond and make CCU the great University it is today. Whether you're an alum or a friend, this magazine is designed for you, because your story, our story, His story, is meant to be told.

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Mission

**Christ-centered higher education transforming students
to impact the world with grace and truth.**

Colorado Christian University cultivates knowledge and love of God in a Christ-centered community of learners and scholars, with an enduring commitment to the integration of exemplary academics, spiritual formation, and engagement with the world. We envision graduates who think critically and creatively, lead with high ethical and professional standards, embody the character and compassion of Jesus Christ, treasure the gospel, and who thereby are prepared to impact the world in their callings.

COVER PHOTO: AUBRI PORTER

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Eric Hogue named CCU's 22nd President

The president-elect will
assume the office June 1

The Board of Trustees of Colorado Christian University is pleased to announce that Eric Hogue has been named the 22nd president of the University. Hogue, who currently serves as vice president of University Advancement for CCU, will assume the presidency on June 1.

“Eric Hogue is uniquely qualified to lead the University during a tumultuous time for Christ-centered higher education,” said Wil Armstrong, chairman of the University's Board of Trustees. “The search committee was impressed at every step of the process by Eric and his vision for the University. As a natural leader and gifted orator, he brings an infectious passion for Colorado Christian University. He is a true champion for Christ-centered higher education.”

Hogue steps into the presidency at the culmination of a nine-month nationwide search conducted by the University's Board of Trustees. Trustee Susan Rutherford, an experienced corporate human resources executive, drove the process as chair of the search committee. More than 60 qualified



academic, business, and government leaders were vetted for the position.

“I am personally humbled and honored by the significance of the opportunity to serve as the next president of Colorado Christian University,” said Hogue. “The University is at a liminal moment with one foot firmly planted in our stellar history and the other stepping into what I believe is a limitless future. Our future embraces and celebrates a sincere Christ-centered higher education — with a passion to be the nation’s best performing and most respected Christ-centered, biblically sound, evangelical university.”

Hogue replaces Dr. Donald W. Sweeting, who served as president of CCU for six years before transitioning to the role of University chancellor in August 2022. CCU Trustee Tim McTavish, MBA '13, has been the University’s interim president since Sweeting assumed the chancellor role.

Hogue brings a deep knowledge of CCU to his new role. Since 2018, he has served as vice president of University Advancement, directing a comprehensive fundraising program totaling more than \$45 million, including \$33.5 million for the Armstrong Center Campaign. He launched a \$44 million Science Center Campaign, established the CCU Endowment Foundation to prioritize the rapid and sustained growth of future resources for the University, and birthed the CCU Fund and Hope Fund, which will raise \$1.5 million annually for student scholarships.

Hogue is known for his roles as a former political candidate; practicing theologian and pastor; and long-tenured radio, television, and media professional. He is the author of *The Winning Side of the Ask: The Heart and Skills of the Donor-Centric Professional Fundraiser*, a book dedicated



As a natural leader and gifted orator, he brings an infectious passion for Colorado Christian University. He is a true champion for Christ-centered higher education.

to helping nonprofits design a thriving philanthropic culture.

The president-elect brings a strong affinity for Christian higher education, having earned a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from Liberty University and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from William Jessup University.

His wife, Tammy, is an award-winning

educator who has been deeply shaped by her experience in Christ-centered higher education. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Master of Arts in Teaching from William Jessup University. She also holds a multiple-subject teaching credential with a supplemental credential in business. Eric and Tammy have two adult daughters, two sons-in-law, and three grandchildren.

Finally Finish

by Cory Butzin

It was time.

After nearly half a century of marriage, raising children, and building a career, Robert Michael Wallace knew things were getting ready to change.

“(Connie) and I were married in 1977,” he said. “And in 1979, she was diagnosed with (multiple sclerosis). We stuck it out together for 46 years, but in November of 2017, I knew she was going to die soon. And she did at home, comfortably and quietly with me.”

At 75 years old, Wallace’s world changed and not for the first time.

A native of Tennessee, Wallace emigrated from a town — Possum Trot, Tennessee — that at the time didn’t have running water or electricity, let alone phone lines — to California during the Kennedy era. However, setting up shop in tiny Bishop, California, a few years later as a banker kept him connected to his small-town roots.

For more than four decades, Wallace forged a career in banking and finance while building a family that today includes two sons, three daughters, eight grandchildren, and so many great-grandchildren that Wallace jokes he lost count after 10.

But the loss of his wife, his friend,
his partner in life left him reeling.

“I didn’t know what I was going to do with my life,” he said. “I’m very healthy, particularly for my age. I’m not the type to sit on the front porch and watch my dogs scratch their fleas. I’ve always been big on learning and curious about a lot of things. Most of my life, I’ve been taking care of other people: my wife, my children, my employees, and my parents. I’ve never really

had a chance to do something just for me, and that’s what I’ve set out to do these past five years. Finish what I set out to do when I was 18. Finish my education and use it for good and the enlightenment of the gospel.”

Wallace had tried to earn a bachelor’s in agriculture from California Polytechnic University before state budget cuts shuttered the program. Life had always seemed to get in the way of going back.

Not anymore.

He moved to Florissant, Colorado, in order to be closer to two of his grandsons who attend the Air Force Academy, and at a youthful 75 years old, Wallace enrolled at Colorado Christian University to earn his Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies 100% online through the College of Adult and Graduate Studies.

“I don’t want my life to be wasted,” he said. “The hole I have that I want to fill is to live a full life for the sake of Jesus Christ. There’s never enough time or enough ability to learn all you could learn about the gospel.”

Wallace has studied Old Testament history, narrative and the law, the Synoptic Gospels, John’s writings and the epistles, systematic theology, Christian doctrine, and more.

“Mike is a walking, talking example of a servant leader who is not ready to sit down and relax in retirement,” said Dr. John C. Mrazek, lead affiliate faculty for CCU’s Executive Leadership in Christian Ministry program. “He is more excited now than ever about the chance to mentor the next generation of Christian leaders. Mike is both gracious and humble, and his desire to learn is only surpassed by his obsession with serving Jesus’ church. Young leaders are blessed by their time with him.”

It took a little longer than expected, but Wallace achieved his goal of graduating with a bachelor’s degree in 2020. Then he

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL. MIKE WALLACE WAS 75 WHEN HE WENT BACK, AND IT SET HIM ON A PATH TOWARD HEALING AND DISCOVERY.



PHOTO CREDIT HUNTER KIRBY '22



set his sights on a master's, graduating with a Master of Arts in Executive Leadership in Christian Ministry in 2022, and he just kept going. Today, at 80 years old, he is right back to graduate school and is in the midst of completing a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies with no signs of stopping.

"Then I plan on getting a doctoral degree if the creek doesn't rise and the good Lord willing," Wallace said. "I've been a full-time student for five years. I cannot tell you how much information I have learned from these programs about the Old and New Testaments — and I've gone to church all my life — about how things were canonized and their inerrancy. It makes sense, and I want to teach it.

"Bear in mind, both of my parents were 99 years old when they died. I'm so healthy, it's sinful.

"The probability that I'm going to live a few more years is high, and I don't want to waste it. I love CCU. It has given me more interest in my life than anything else since my wife died. My greatest dream is to teach at CCU, and I figure if I get enough education, maybe they won't look at my age. I want to have an

impact on people through the gospel of Jesus Christ, and education is probably the best vehicle."

In addition to being a "full-time student," Wallace has also published a children's book, *Saunter*, and he aspires to write two more. The first he'd like to write is about the people who made the cross upon which Jesus was crucified, and he'd like to write another book about his life growing up in a rural town he compared to "the frontier days" and his introduction to a modern life in California.



"I stay pretty busy as a student, but I have a lot to share with people," Wallace said. "I've been blessed. My house is full of things about CCU: coffee cups, banners, and books. They have given me so much to be proud of and grateful for."

It has been a long road for Wallace with plenty of highs and lows, but it certainly remains wide open with plenty of hope, opportunity, and optimism in the years to come.

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A photograph of a person sitting at a wooden desk, looking at a laptop. The laptop screen displays the CCU online logo, which includes a shield with a cross and the text "CCU | online. Colorado Christian University". The person is wearing a light blue shirt and has their hand near their chin. The desk also has a smartphone, a small potted plant, and some papers.

ccu.edu/alumnischolarship



PHOTO CREDIT AUBRI PORTER

Lifting Up Marginalized Students

by Kimberly Nicoletti

ALUMNUS VERNON JONES RELIES ON A FAITH-BASED APPROACH TO ACADEMIC AND SOCIETAL CHANGE

Alumnus Vernon Jones works double-duty for God, but he wouldn't have it any other way. In addition to his role as lead pastor of Kinship Missionary Baptist Church in Denver, he's the executive partner at FaithBridge, an Adams County-based organization which works with kids, parents, and community leaders to ensure that marginalized students can succeed in school and pursue college.

Jones comes from a lineage of educators and ministers. His grandfather was a pastor and one of the first black students to attend Colorado Christian University's heritage school, Rockmont College; his mother was a teacher. So, recognizing his own call to serve God's people at age 12, Jones eventually realized he could take a lead from his family and work in both academics and church ministry.

"For me, the call of God was like an ache in my heart. I felt like God said to me, 'Vernon, you care about these people, and I care about these people very much.

Can you help me?' I was surrounded by elders — my grandparents and others — who helped me make sense of this calling," Jones said.

Now, as a pastor and through FaithBridge, he helps young people make sense of the world and shares guidance and wisdom on their own callings and aspirations.

"I credit CCU for helping to form me into the leader that I am today," Jones said. "CCU helped me to understand that I didn't have to shrink because of my faith, but that I am stronger because of it and should always lead with love."

If it were not for his education at CCU, Jones may have narrowed his view to a singular focus in vocational ministry, while God was providing a wider lens for his unique giftings. The caring guidance of professors Jones encountered at CCU helped broaden his reach, helping him discover how he can impact young people through work in the academic world, as well as in the church.

It was the advice of former English instructor Dr. Phyllis Klein that helped Jones clarify and expand his ministry explaining, "Your calling is always global."

CCU helped me to understand that I didn't have to shrink because of my faith, but that I am stronger because of it and should always lead with love.

"Dr. Klein made me realize that I wasn't going to be tied to an address at a local church; I never had that kind of calling. She helped me understand that whatever God is calling me to do, he's calling me to do on a global level.

"Now, I always teach people that it's not about the platform ... It's about the purpose. The platforms and the provisions change, but the purpose of God prevails, and if you lean into that, it's a wonderful journey — and it never looks like you've imagined."

Though he originally began on campus, Jones later finished his bachelor's degree in organizational management online through the College of Adult and Graduate Studies, which he shares, "gave me professional support and opportunities that better prepared me to serve and make the greatest impact in and for my community."

Jones has served three local churches, carrying out all of the "traditional and not-so-traditional roles" of a pastor. Through it all, one of the essential roles of Jones' journey has been as a family man. He takes care to place family, which includes his wife and five children



(three in higher education at the graduate and doctoral levels) first.

“When people ask, ‘What is the most important title you have?’ I say it’s ‘husband and dad’ — Doing those things well allows me to do everything else well,” he said. And Jones definitely has a lot of “everything else.”

Jones’ faith-based approach to all areas of life informs everything he does, from leading congregations to guiding FaithBridge. In fact, the foundational principle of FaithBridge affirms that “faith is an essential component to move us forward, to ensure a high-quality education for every child,” according to its website. Though a community-based organization, each program and every action and intention aligns with faith in God.

FaithBridge’s team connects parents, students, and community leaders to elevate education and empower parents to choose quality schools and help increase literacy scores. Jones explains how it often takes a two-generational approach because, “most times, when kids struggle, parents struggle. So, we help with parents’ (academic learning

and comprehension) while also teaching students.”

The team works closely with families, clearly explaining data results to parents and suggesting interventions that can be done at home.

“If we get parents what they need, then we can change academic outcomes,” Jones said.

Of course, positive academic outcomes also involve mental health, nutrition, and legislation — all of which Jones advances as well.

“Engaging with the community and turning that into action is the true value Vernon brings,” said Pat Donovan, managing partner of RootEd, a funding partner of FaithBridge. “He helps move ideas ... and he is constantly in the community, showing up with people and for people. He’s a masterful facilitator who brings people together from all perspectives and then synthesizes it down to actionable steps. He’s the epitome of a tireless and resilient leader.”

“He’s a visionary ... but he also has the expertise to execute the vision,” said Debra Rankin, part of FaithBridge’s

education team. “He’s an agent of change, and his passion is infectious.”

And, though FaithBridge has directly improved the skills and outcomes of more than a thousand students and families and works with over 45 nonprofits, Jones sets his sights on creating a path for 100% of students to attend high-quality schools, connect with supportive resources, and prepare for college.

“We’re very far from that in Colorado,” he said. “I dream big because it’s only in dreaming big that I find myself completely dependent on God. Small dreams, I can do myself. But to reach 1.3 million kids in Colorado scares me because I don’t know how to do that. I just dream until I’m so scared that I have to trust God. I trust God 100%, and God has never let me down. God has always blessed me.”

In turn, Jones has blessed a vast community. He was led to CCU, where he learned just how wide God’s net reaches — and how he could extend his service beyond the church and into the homes and hearts of youth and families.



Now, I always teach people that it's not about the platform ... It's about the purpose. The platforms and the provisions change, but the purpose of God prevails, and if you lean into that, it's a wonderful journey – and it never looks like you've imagined.

purpose

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Why March for Life Still Matters

by Annika Hamman '23

"EVERY LIFE HAS A PURPOSE" — KEYWORD BEING "EVERY." THAT WAS THE MESSAGE EXPRESSED IN COUNTLESS WAYS THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR'S MARCH FOR LIFE RALLY, HELD ON JAN. 20 AT OUR NATION'S CAPITAL — THE FIRST SINCE THE OVERTURN OF ROE V. WADE. AS AN ACTIVE PRO-LIFE UNIVERSITY, CCU EMBRACES THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND HAS BEEN MARCHING IN WASHINGTON D.C., TO BOLDLY PROCLAIM THAT VALUE SINCE 2017.

The mission of March for Life is to promote the beauty and dignity of every human life by working to end abortion, recognizing that life begins at conception — uniting, educating, and mobilizing pro-life supporters in the public square. The weekend of the march entails many components such as rallies, educational opportunities, exhibit areas, conferences with incredible testimonies and speakers, fundraisers, and the march itself. Since March for Life was founded in 1974, the year after Roe v. Wade legalized abortion in all 50 states, many wondered how this year's march would look different after the right of states to determine their own abortion policy outside of the viability restrictions in Roe v. Wade was granted in 2022.

"The atmosphere at the march was different this year," said Daria Nichols '23, president of CCU for Life. "In previous years, people were shouting like they wanted their voices to be heard, but this year the shouts were more joyful, showing that they had won this monumental decision, but they are still not going to stop fighting for moms, dads, and babies."





In his hand is the life of every living thing ... Job 12:10



Jasmine Obrecht '25

CCU FOR LIFE CLUB LEADERSHIP

“I march because I think everyone deserves the right to life. Not only that, but a life God intends. Life should never be in question, especially at the most vulnerable time in a person’s life: in the womb.”

Even the route of this year’s march had a symbolic shift, ending between the Supreme Court and the U.S. Capitol instead of the previous landing spot at the Supreme Court, representing the work still to be done in Congress and in the courts, in every state for every life. This year’s march expressed the beginning stages of hope in a battle far from over.

Though the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* was a huge victory for protecting life, the importance of meeting and marching has not diminished. According to senior Cami Chisholm '23, who attended the march with the campus organization CCU for Life this year, there is still a profound impact in being a unified “Voice for the Voiceless” (as another student sign proclaimed) and creating a physical statement, marching together past the Capitol as a representation that there is still work to be done until abortion becomes unthinkable.

Originating in 2016, CCU for Life is an on-campus club that empowers college students to serve, love, and advocate for human life and dignity in every life stage and circumstance. The organization is supported by the Centennial Institute, the University’s public policy think tank focused on positively impacting culture for Christ and the conservative worldview through mobilizing ideas on faith, family, and freedom.

The club impacts CCU’s community by teaching students how to engage in effective but loving conversations regarding abortion. Its outside involvement includes events, like Celebrate Life, testifying in front of Colorado’s state house and senate, and attending March for Life in Washington, D.C., for the past several years. Since that first Washington trip, CCU has been able to take hundreds of students to March for Life, the largest group being in 2020 when CCU had the honor of co-

leading the march, just three years after the University’s first March for Life trip.

Though the effort to ban abortion has been divided from one large fight into 50 smaller ones on the state level, it is still a life-or-death issue, and protecting each heartbeat is at the forefront of CCU’s Strategic Priorities. The University will continue to bring groups of students to the nation’s capital in years to come where they will join with the positive atmosphere as countless organizations, schools, and churches continue fighting for life during this critical time in history.

Students at CCU not only have the opportunity to have an impact on the nation’s history, but March for Life and CCU for Life have also had a tremendous impact on students who have chosen to participate in the movement. “The reason I am here is because my mom chose life,” said Cami Chisholm, who was adopted from Guatemala at age four. “I do not know



Life should never be in question.

a lot about my birth parents, but what I do know is that they had to make a decision about my life, and I am so grateful my mom chose the best options she was able to, which was choosing life and giving me up for adoption.”

Chisholm became involved with CCU for Life and decided to attend the march because she had a desire to tell her own story and to educate herself on the realities of abortion. Through her involvement, the Lord has moved in her heart and values by choosing love over being right. Chisholm gets excited about asking the Lord, “How are you going to use my story?” which is a question that she did not ask until attending the march.

Immersing herself in the pro-life world has also helped CCU for Life president Nichols discover one of God’s purposes for her own life. Her involvement with the campus organization has provided opportunities for connections and

experiences that have consequently kindled her future aspiration of becoming an obstetrician-gynecologist. After reflecting on her participation with CCU for Life and March for Life since her freshman year, Nichols claims that she “would not have given up [her] experiences for the world, and they have made [her] CCU experience so much better.” She is very grateful for the impact the march has had on her life after attending for three years and feels that she is now “armed with the truth and a passion to keep opening up the conversation with people.”

The conversation that Nichols is eager to have with others is one of the ways that CCU is impacting the world beyond the campus community. It is a conversation that both Nichols and Chisholm have learned to boil down into simpler terms through their own pro-life experiences. They have learned the importance of keeping Christ’s love at the center of

their motives within a culture that has become hyper-focused on being right above all other motivations. According to Chisholm, it is less about being right and more about providing space to have a conversation that challenges people to look at why they believe what they believe. Now that the right to abortion has become a matter that is decided on the state level, creating space to have these conversations is more important than ever.

The overturn of Roe v. Wade was a tremendous move in the right direction, but there are still obstacles in the road up ahead. There are still values to uphold. There are still conversations to be had and rallies to attend. There are still leaders to be trained and people to be inspired. There are still lives to be changed and lives to be saved. Right now is the most crucial time to be active in the fight for life, living on purpose.



The reason I'm
here is because my
mom chose life.



Hannah Harrison '26

FIRST TIME ATTENDING THE MARCH

“This march has forever changed me! I have never been surrounded with so many beautiful, wise, broken, joyful, and God-fearing people at once. I went in with head knowledge and came out with more heart-filling experiences than I could have even imagined!”



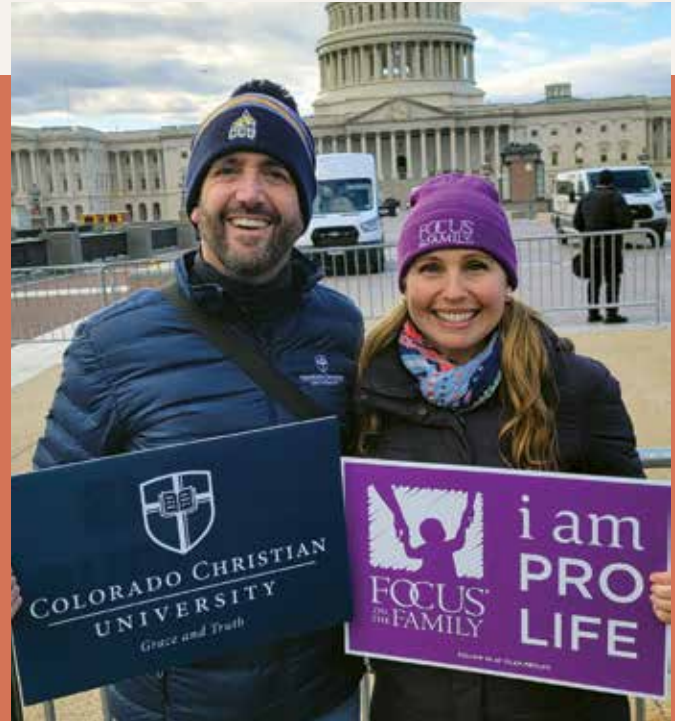
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Empowering college students to serve, love, and advocate for human life & dignity in every life stage and circumstance.

Jeff Hunt

CO-CHAIRMAN, WESTERN CONSERVATIVE SUMMIT
DIRECTOR, CENTENNIAL INSTITUTE AT COLORADO
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

“Colorado Christian University stands unique among all the universities in the world as ‘Pro-Life U.’ We are not only training students to embrace the sanctity of life, but seeking to impact culture to embrace life as well.”



Cami Chisholm '23

FIRST TIME ATTENDING THE MARCH

“I went to the March because it was something that I always was curious about and admired all four years at CCU. My personal story of adoption has always made me super thankful that the pro-life movement is spreading. Going to D.C. just ignited my passion for the unborn. I’m so proud to go to a university that prioritizes being pro-life. I would love to see bigger teams from CCU go to the march in the future!”





But every setback turned out to be a bump in the road and fueled Arnoux's desire to finish what she started.

IT'S NOT IN LANELL ARNOUX TO BACK DOWN. IT DOESN'T MATTER IF SHE'S COMFORTING A TODDLER OR TAKING A TEST, SOOTHING SOMEONE IN NEED OR TAMING A WILDFIRE, SHE'S GOING TO SEE IT THROUGH TO THE END.

N-95 masks. Face shields. Scrubs. Head-to-toe personal protective equipment for days on end.

The COVID-19 pandemic was not easy on anyone, but for healthcare workers on the frontlines, it was a daily battle. As a certified nursing assistant, Colorado Christian University student Lanell Arnoux '25 faced that heat head-on; but as she started to face burnout, she decided to step out of the fire.

And she stepped into the firehouse.

"I wanted a more 'relaxing' job, so this past summer I went to our local fire department and joined them," Arnoux said.

Fight of Her Life

by Cory Butzin

That's right.

Arnoux, a 25-year-old studying psychology through CCU's College of Adult and Graduate Studies (CAGS), who works at a preschool during the day, joined the Blackfeet Fire Rescue Department in her hometown of 1,007 people in Browning, Montana, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation as "a way to relax."

Her first week on the job, Arnoux was called to a two-story structure fire that took six hours and 500 feet of firehose to combat.

"They threw me right on the hose, and I had just joined four days before," said Arnoux, who wouldn't have had it any other way.

A couple of days after that, Arnoux was called to a search and rescue in a nearly 2,800-foot-deep canyon by Mittens Lake near Hamilton, Montana.

"There are plenty of times where I've thought this new schedule isn't as relaxing as it was meant to be," Arnoux said. "It's pretty hard juggling (work, school, and firefighting), and sometimes I need to take a break. But if I'm not in healthcare, in the community helping, or working with kids, I'm not happy."

Happiness wasn't always in the cards for Arnoux.

After dropping out of high school, she left the reservation five times only to find herself right back in her hometown a short time later. But every setback — school, work, leaving home — turned out to be a bump in the road and fueled Arnoux's desire to finish what she started.

"I'm honestly proud of myself," she said. "It took a few years, but I got my GED. Then I was surfing the web one night, researching colleges, and I was drawn to CCU because of the

diversity. It interested me that it was Christ-centered. Then I saw the mission statement:"

Christ-centered higher education transforming students to impact the world with grace and truth.

"I knew I needed to go here," she said.

Arnoux said she was drawn to psychology because of the knowledge it shared and the way the subject pertains to human interaction. As a preschool teacher, she has taken advantage of information about human development to make a positive impact on infants and toddlers in her care; however, it has also helped her make an impact on the fire department where she sees stress and trauma impact both the people which the department is called to aid and the firefighters themselves who experience harrowing events.

"When I [studied] cognitive behaviors, it

really helped me with techniques in the classroom setting, specifically nature and nurture,” she said.

In a community lacking in mental health resources, Arnoux has found opportunity to impact an entire community for the better.

“On the reservation, there isn’t anyone who really specializes in trauma, PTSD, or mental health for first responders,” she said. “We’ll have doctors or psychiatrists talk to us about different topics like suicide, drugs, or alcohol; but they don’t talk to us about things that pertain to us as first responders. We shut out what the therapists were saying because it didn’t relate to what we do.

“When I finish my degree, I can make an impact because of the way I will be able to relate to first responders. That’s what I’m really passionate about now. If I could picture myself five years from now, I’d have my own practice working with adults who are dealing with PTSD, grief, and trauma.”

Arnoux is currently working toward completing her bachelor’s degree through CCU Online, which for the foreseeable future includes balancing two others jobs, in addition to her coursework. So, for Arnoux, time management is key and the secret to her success.

“One challenge is being consistent,” she said. “When you’re online, you have more flexibility and freedom, but you have to be consistent and disciplined in dedicating time to studying.”

Her week typically starts out Sundays with a goal of getting 60% of the weekly required reading complete before clocking in at the preschool Monday morning. A typical day there runs from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., pouring her energy

into children, immediately followed by being on call for the rest of the evening and on weekends at the fire department. Arnoux can continue working on reading assignments or homework, unless she is called to an incident.

“We’re a small department, but we’ve been keeping busy,” she said. “Typically, we’ll get called to bigger cities around us to help out, and our calls seem to run in groups of three or four. In my town, most of our calls seem to come in the summer when it’s hottest or in winter when it’s coldest. We had a call to a structure fire that we ended up having to let go to the flames because it was minus-20 degrees out and our hoses were freezing.”

Despite Arnoux’s busy lifestyle, she still makes time to enjoy and explore, with plans to take time this spring and summer to travel, hike, and build in some truly relaxing adventures. Fortunately, she is able to keep her degree goals on track, and CCU will be going with her.

“I want to get away from the little country and bad winters for a bit, but where I go has to have Wi-Fi so I can keep up with my classes,” she said. “At first I was scared I wouldn’t get the help I needed, but CCU gives you everything you need to succeed.”

And succeed she will, with the same strength and determination that saw her take on and defeat fires. Next up? Finals.



One challenge is being consistent.
When you’re online, you have more flexibility and freedom, but you have to be consistent and disciplined in dedicating time to studying.

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The Dirt on Missions

And the treasures unearthed through CCU2theWorld ventures

by Heather A. Eades



ON A CCU ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG AT TELL ES-SAFI (ANCIENT GATH, HOMETOWN OF GOLIATH) IN 2017, HANNAH TURRILL '18 DISCOVERED AN INSCRIBED PIECE OF POTTERY FROM THE IRON AGE. JUST THIS PAST FALL, AN ARTICLE OFFICIALLY PUBLISHING THIS FIND WAS RELEASED IN THE *BULLETIN*

OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF OVERSEAS RESEARCH. TURRILL AND DR. DAVID KOTTER, DEAN OF CCU'S SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, SHARE ABOUT THIS HISTORY-MAKING MOMENT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MISSION TRIPS THAT HAVE LASTING IMPRESSIONS BEYOND THE DIG.



Revisiting the original purpose of the dig looking for evidence to affirm a city gate, Kotter shared how this dig brought the Bible to life for the students, explaining, “When we’re digging, we’re digging in 830 B.C.”



Everyone who embarks on a Colorado Christian University archaeological dig secretly has hopes tucked away of unearthing a significant piece of history. And while rare, it does happen. Just ask CCU’s Hannah Turrill ’18.

Turrill, a Colorado native, was in her junior year, double majoring in music and history. Dr. David Kotter was preparing for a group of 17 students to take part in a CCU2theWorld archaeological trip to Israel. He asked Turrill to be one of his student leaders. Excited for the experience to visit Israel, especially as a history major, Turrill embraced the leadership opportunity and ran with it.

Although CCU2theWorld trips are typically student-led, because of the unique setting and more challenging (and sometimes dangerous) dynamics of the trip, Kotter, who established the archeology program in the School of Theology, kept contact with the archaeologists at the site and helped prepare the students from November to June on the home front.

“At the site where our team would be digging, archaeologists had discovered a tower fortification next to an ancient wall,” said Kotter. “And our team was going there looking for evidence to confirm that it was indeed a gate to the city.

“We met every week leading up to the trip, helping students

understand the topography of the site (Tell es-Safi — ancient Gath, hometown of Goliath) and the history of seventeen ancient cities built on this site. This study helped contextualize the upcoming three weeks of hands-in-the-dirt archaeology,” Kotter said.

And while equipped in many ways, nothing could have properly prepared Turrill for the day of discovering the inscribed piece of pottery which now joins a rare collection of alphabetic inscriptions from Tell es-Sâfi, one of which is on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

Turrill recounted the day:

“Every day we got up very early, like 4:30 a.m., went to the dig site, and we would start work at dawn as the sun was rising until around 2 p.m. (the heat of the day, as Gath is far to the south near the desert).

“Each day in the morning, we would take all the pottery ‘sherds’ (a term describing fragmented pottery, similar to glass ‘shards’) that we had found and set them in a labeled bucket,” Turrill continued. “However, before you can really look at each piece or see if it’s significant or not, it has to be washed. So, they fill the pottery sherd bucket with water, and it soaks overnight.

“Each afternoon, we would take that pottery that had soaked overnight, and spend time with a nailbrush scrubbing it off ...



and you do that with buckets and buckets of pottery for several hours” said Turrill. “While scrubbing, you’re looking for anything significant, like paintings or characteristic scratch marks (inscriptions). You don’t want to scrub too hard — you don’t want to scrub anything off.”

This careful washing is the first step in a process called “reading the pottery,” Kotter said, explaining the attention to details and analytical skills involved:

“When pottery breaks, you might find the rim of a vessel; you may have part of a handle; you might have a little bit of the painting that gives it a characteristic look. A lot of the pottery you find are body sherds and pieces of little value. You collect and sort out body sherds from the rims, handles, bases, and painted pieces — the fragments that are of the highest readable value. Once you get used to it, you notice different shapes and can identify types of pottery that are significant to specific places, periods, and cultures if you know what you’re looking for.”

It was while Turrill was washing pottery that she found an inscribed piece ... and was just as surprised as anyone by her discovery.

“When we started, they told us, ‘Look and see if there’s an inscription (on each piece) ... but we’ve only ever found one on this dig in 20 years of digging ... if we found another one, that would be great ... but chances are you probably won’t,’” Turrill recalled. “I was sitting there washing pottery, and I was looking at this one piece, and I was like, ‘Wait a minute! This has ... scratches in it!’”

Confirming she had found something noteworthy, however, proved to be a challenge. Due to the practical jokes that often occur on archaeological digs such as these, it took time convincing the dig supervisors that this was not a prank. Kotter and Turrill both laughed at the memory, with Kotter explaining, “Of course on archeological sites, there are always practical jokes — and that inscribed pottery sherd that Turrill had found was so rare, it definitely took everyone a moment!”

Once the reality of the situation settled in, other archeologists were called over and the momentum grew.

“I don’t remember much after that moment except they whisked the piece away and were calling other people over, looking at it,” Turrill said. “Eventually they took a picture of me

with it and a couple of the archeologists — it was exciting! And the more excited other people got, the more excited I got.”

Kotter confirmed, “After we established that this find was in fact true, it was documented to Square 96C in Area D West and the inscribed pottery was carefully documented and taken to the labs of Bar-Ilan University — where they analyzed the characters of the inscription.”

Turrill’s discovery was determined to be a vessel that was used for storing wine, based on the words from the inscription. This was the best inscription excavated from this site in many years, adding further evidence to the significance of the site in the early Iron Age. It also proved to be a pivotal piece in establishing connections for the CCU students involved with the trip.

Revisiting the original purpose of the dig looking for evidence to affirm a city gate, Kotter shared how this dig brought the Bible to life for the students, explaining, “When we’re digging, we’re working through soil undisturbed since 830 BC.” Kotter continued, “In your Bible, Hazael is mentioned in 1 Kings 19:15 when God tells Elijah to anoint him; in 2 Kings 12:17, Hazael King of Assyria went to Gath (where our team was digging) and conquered it. This verse — that was the destruction layer that the CCU students were investigating, linking it right to their Bibles! Elisha anoints Hazael, and he laid siege to and destroyed the city of Gath in about 830 BC. We were there investigating the breach in the wall. And it appears our excavation site was the place where the wall was breached.”

Aside from the thrill of unearthing artifacts, Turrill attests to the countless other ways CCU’s archaeological trips are significant in and of themselves toward student growth. One of the take-





One of the things that the trip did from a spiritual perspective was it gave me a chance to stretch my ministry wings in a way that I hadn't before," said Turrill. "It gave me a love for bringing communities of people together and it really gave me a piece of what life in the early church might have looked like.

aways for Turrill was the support archaeology gives to the Bible and how a trip like this one brings the Bible to life in new ways for those who take part.

"This trip allowed all of us to get a glimpse of what the Bible looked like," said Turrill. "And that is so helpful. You can read the Bible well without going to Israel, but it does add color to your understanding of the text."

She continued, "Understanding just how much archeology does support the Bible and to be able to read critically when we are seeing archeologists make claims that maybe wouldn't support a biblical perspective... I now know how to assess those claims and say, 'Is this a claim that's really justified from the kind of materials that we find on these sorts of digs?' That's not something I think most people are equipped to do who haven't been on the ground to see that."

Not only is the head knowledge attained from CCU's archaeological-based mission trips important (or the findings and research that can come from them, obviously), but the unplanned and organic conversations and fruit resulting from the trips are life-altering as well.



“These trips model a really unique type of ministry,” said Turrill. “We were really there to just be Christians while we were doing archeology. I think that’s a good and healthy model for how evangelism needs to work. I think it is most effective when we do that — when we are Christians and simply do what Christians do, while we do the work or specific tasks God has called us to do.”

But what was most formative for Turrill in the model of CCU’s trips were the leadership opportunities in ministry, the relationships made in the process, and community that developed — a reflection for Turrill on what life may have looked like in the early church.

“One of the things that the trip did from a spiritual perspective was it gave me a chance to stretch my ministry wings in a way that I hadn’t before,” said Turrill. “It gave me a love for bringing communities of people together and it really gave me a piece of what life in the early church might have looked like. Leading up to the trip, and then during the trip especially, getting to have that community where we were living together and working together, and worshipping the Lord together — it really showed me how powerful that can be.”

These archaeology trips have continued from CCU and are now led by Dr. Seth Rodriguez, associate Professor of Old Testament and Archaeology. Over the years CCU students have worked not only at Tell es-Safi, but also at Tell Shiloh where the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle remained after the conquest of Joshua (Joshua 19:51). The summer 2023 archaeology trip will be to Tell Burna, which is where the ancient battle at Libnah took place (2 Kings 19:18).

Turrill considers her archaeological trip to Israel one of the greatest highlights of her life — and for good reason! Not only did she play a role in adding a piece to the puzzle in the realm of archaeology, now officially published, she also came home with relationships that will last her lifetime — the most prominent one being her now husband, CCU alum, Schuyler Turrill (’18), a music production and engineering major.

Today, Hannah and Schuyler live in Louisville, KY, where Hannah is working on her Ph.D. in church history and historical theology through The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She also teaches ancient history courses, Latin, and apologetics to high school students at a private Christian classical school.

When asked about her long-term plans upon completion of her doctoral degree, Turrill jokes that when she grows up, she wants to be Dr. Megan DeVore (professor of church history and early Christian studies in CCU’s School of Theology).

“I would love to teach at the undergraduate level, maybe at CCU; I want to teach and write and research,” said Turrill, “however, I also have really loved teaching high school students, especially apologetics. It wasn’t something I expected to like, but it has been incredibly rewarding.”

Turrill continued, “The thing that I took away from that one trip to Israel and through the ways that the Lord has used my journey through CCU: The Lord is faithful even in ways that we couldn’t have expected. I’m married to my husband because of that trip! My life looks very, very different than I ever thought it would before I went to CCU.”

And the rest is history.



But what was most formative for Turrill in the model of CCU’s trips were the leadership opportunities in ministry, the relationships made in the process, and community that developed — a reflection for Turrill on what life may have looked like in the early church.



The Stones Still Speak

— CCU on a Mission

by Heather A. Eades

There are countless ways CCU lives out its mission of transforming students to impact the world with grace and truth. One of those ways of furthering Christ-centered community, exemplary academics, spiritual formation, and engagement with the world can be found in CCU's wide range of mission trips.

Christ-centered Community

According to Dr. David Kotter, dean of the School of Theology, there are three specific types of trips that happen at CCU. Each of them establishes fellowship and community with Jesus at the heart of them all.

» CCU2THEWORLD TRIPS

Student-led trips with the primary goals of evangelism and doing cross-cultural work. As CCU alumna Hannah Turrill attests, "These trips provide a glimpse of what a life on mission could look like."

Visit: ccu.edu/ccu2theworld

» COURSE-SPECIFIC TRIPS

Educational in purpose, as extensions of CCU courses, yet open to students who simply want the learning experience. Community is furthered through learning and growing together.

» CHANCELLOR'S TOURS OF THE BIBLE LANDS TRIPS

Typically 10-day journeys open to all friends and family of Colorado Christian University, where participants bond on a "spiritual journey with a purpose."

To learn more about the "Walk in the Footsteps of Paul" trip scheduled for May 2024, visit: ccu.edu/events/footsteps-of-paul/

Exemplary academics

CCU2theWorld archaeology digs bring learning to life in unimaginable ways. As Kotter explains, "In the School of Theology, we believe the stones still speak. For example, we read in Matthew 24: 1-2, as Jesus left the temple and was going away — that sidewalk is still there. It's been excavated and the steps to the temple have been excavated; you can walk on them. The very stones he's referring to, these stones are still in place, and it's my privilege to teach there. I have taken students to touch first century stones from the Second Temple in Jerusalem — these stones have heard the voice of Jesus Christ."

Spiritual Formation

"Once students have the experience of a CCU mission trip, it gives them a greater understanding of the reality of their faith," said Kotter. "We find they never read their Bibles in black and white again. CCU mission trips give people confidence in their faith, changing the way they read the Bible."

Engagement with the World

Ask nearly anyone who has spent time in other cultures, and they will tell you what a gift it is to broaden one's global perspective, to exchange ideas and dialogue. And as Kotter expressed, "Another reason we do these trips is to expose our students cross-culturally and to expose other cultures to Christians."

As an example, Kotter explained how on cross-cultural trips student teams lead worship at night, and locals will come just to listen to the music, opening hearts and avenues for conversations. "They love to hear the songs, and they're not just used to the piety of students who will worship with the guitar and djembe. We always make sure we have songbooks to hand out the lyrics in English so others can read what's being sung. Because it's about the name of Jesus. We have prayer time and always stay around and talk just as long as people want to stay. It's precious time."

Call to Prayer

We invite you to join the CCU community in covering our upcoming summer mission trips in prayer. Thank you for your faithful requests for safety, blessing, financial provision, and the opportunities to impact and change lives with truth and grace within every expedition.

Belize Summer	Nicaragua	Zimbabwe
Japan 2	Dominican Republic	Tex-Mex Border
Netherlands	Israel	Japan 1
South Asia	Peru	Austria Worship
Uganda	Israel Archeology	Germany
Cambodia	Italy	Volleyball team
Guatemala		

The Sound of Hope

by Heather A. Eades

POP QUIZ, CLASS: MUSIC CAN A.) LIFT ONE'S SPIRITS B.) CHANGE LIVES C.) BUILD A SCHOOL OR D.) ALL OF THE ABOVE? FOR CCU PARENT, GRANDPARENT, AND LONG-TIME SUPPORTER, DR. CLAUDIA PORTER, AND THE CCU STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN A PART OF HER MISSIONS-FOCUSED MUSIC MINISTRY, THE ANSWER IS A RESOUNDING 'D'... AND SO MUCH MORE.

Using the arts in ministry is certainly not new — in fact, in 1 Samuel 16, David lifts King Saul's spirits with music. But music may be one of the most powerful tools for connecting with people, as demonstrated by the impact and relationships Porter has made over 40 years of ministry with her husband, Bruce, their entire family, and her local choral ministry.

"Being in music ministry for many years, I noticed that the impact of children worshipping and singing was more powerful as a tool of evangelism than anything else I saw," said Porter. "When kids got up singing the gospel, you saw the responses of non-believing family members and people who would otherwise not have heard or had an open heart.

"Based on that, I put together a ministry that combined my heart for missions,

heart for worship, and heart for evangelism into one," said Porter.

Porter is the founder and director of Choirfire, a non-profit music and arts-based outreach ministry for children, teens, and young adults, equipping them to use the gift of song and often dance to point people to Jesus in a language all can understand — the arts. Based in Littleton, Colorado, since its launch in 2009, Porter trains up "musicianaries" to perform locally, nationally, and on international mission trips.

While elementary through high school students are taught vocal/choral/performance skills each week, college students spread their wings in leadership. Assistant director for Choirfire, CCU music education major, Carli Hatch '25 is currently gaining experience teaching the younger students, while helping in various ways with the older ensemble as well.

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evangelism
into one.



CLAUDIA AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS, CCU ALUMS, NAOMI (PORTER) WOO AND HANNAH (PORTER) MENGIS

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*I will sing praises
even with my soul ...
Psalm 108:1*





Lifting Hearts and Voices in Uganda: Liza Fox '18 Reflections

CCU alum Liza Fox '18 recounts her time using dance to minister to the children on one of those trips to Uganda:

"I have never danced for a better audience. The stage of cold concrete stretched before Hannah (Porter), Naomi (Woo), and me — the dirt that covered it turning our shoes from pink to dusty red. The lyrics of Meredith Andrews' "Strong God" filled the air as we danced for the precious orphans seated wide-eyed before us.

"Father to the fatherless, defender of the weak, freedom for the prisoner ... There is no one stronger than our God." As the music built, unstoppable joy poured through us, allowing dance unlike anything I had ever felt. "You're our healer, our defender, our deliverer. There is no one like our God."

"Part way through the song is a choreographed time of worship. Reaching this part of the dance, I realized that I was shaking from both exertion and joy. I dropped to my knees on the hard floor, unable to stand in the presence of our Strong God and his beautiful children.

"At this point, those watching us were on their feet, joining in our worship. The room was soon filled with voices, and expressions of love were seen on each face. Sweaty and short of breath, we walked down from the stage back to our seats among the children.

"Soon I had two little ones on my lap. Others leaned against me and held my hands as we continued to watch the morning's chapel program unfold.

"I used to wonder what purpose my dance had. Now I know."



CCU ALUM LIZA FOX INTRODUCING THE VIOLIN TO STUDENTS IN UGANDA

“In the two years I have been working with Choirfire, I have honed my skills not only as a musician and director, but as a Christian as well,” said Hatch. “The intense focus on missions work and focusing on Christ first is so prevalent in every class. I love the way Choirfire uses my passion of music to further the kingdom with that of so many others!”

Joining Hatch among Choirfire’s musicianary hall of fame are many CCU alumni, including music major Rebekah Brown ’19 and her now husband, XyuZong Michael Her ’20, and Liza Hein Fox ’18, to name just a few. Porter’s own CCU grads, daughters Naomi (Porter) Woo ’03 and Hannah (Porter) Mengis ’17, also served on many of the mission trips, with Hannah in the choir from the beginning.

Aside from furthering their own artistic giftings, many of the CCU alumni/students have been given leadership opportunities through the ministry, including assistant directing, teaching violin and worship dance, mentoring younger students, along with missions-focused servant leadership.

Despite the students’ varying backgrounds, the unifying outcomes of employing the arts in missions, from bringing joy to orphans in Uganda to offering hope to refugees in the subways of Vienna, have left indelible imprints on each of their hearts.

Blessing with songs that bring joy, offer hope, and above all help people look up, Porter uses music to bring light into the dark spaces of the world with Choirfire

in a wide variety of experiences.

“Our first year, we began with two trips to local nursing homes to give kids experience of singing the gospel in public, and built from there, singing at the Denver Rescue Mission to offer hope, as well as in the square in Georgetown at Christmastime, letting Jesus’ name ring throughout town,” said Porter.

On the national level, Choirfire has lifted its voices throughout the national park at Mount Rushmore several times, and it has also joined choirs from around the nation as part of Disney’s Candlelight Processional at Epcot.

Every other year, Porter chooses an international audience for older students and families, including trips to Italy,

Austria, Ireland, and beyond, with travel plans to Czech Republic in 2024. The difference in Porter's music and dance-focused adventures with Choirfire is found in the way the Holy Spirit serves as travel guide.

Another international and critical piece to Choirfire is a component that is most near and dear to Porter's heart: caring for orphans and vulnerable children in Africa. With the goal of living out James 1:27, to care for the widows and orphans, Porter also founded Torchgrab Africa, which supports children through ministry and education.

The organization first founded Aggie's Baby Home, rescuing 70 abandoned babies in Uganda. Porter led many trips with her musicianaries to the baby home, offering physical support to the workers along with built-in opportunities to share the gift of song with the children and lead worship dance workshops for children in the secondary school next door.

Today, Porter continues to lead the charge, helping vulnerable children in Africa through the fundraising, prayers, and physical help of Choirfire and Torchgrab Africa supporters to build Petra School on the Rock in Kenya. Entire families from Choirfire have helped with this endeavor from its infancy.

"In spending time there in Kenya, we fell in love with the teachers, the kids, and learned about the incredible need for a school to hold the 500 children packed into a space meant for 150 — We had to help," said Porter.

Arts to the rescue once again! Porter began hosting benefit concerts each year at Front Range Christian School, featuring Choirfire ensemble and junior ensemble and enlisting the help of local



Petra School is a place to get educated and hear the gospel and get out of extreme poverty — it is their only window.

dance ministries and even CCU's strings department to accompany in the past. These concerts have brought awareness and financial support to Petra School, providing a new building and starting a "Porridge Partners" program to offer a weekly meal to Petra's students.

"Petra School is a place to get educated and hear the gospel and get out of extreme poverty — it is their only window; it is their only escape from that lifestyle. We purchased land five minutes away from the original site and began constructing close to the slums for easy access for the children. We are now almost finished with a school that serves up to ninth grade, and we are still going!"

Porter herself is still going as well, and as she says, "Just getting started!" At a young 70 years old, her joyful drive to share the hope of Jesus using everything she's made of invites all to "pick up the torch" of the gospel and run with her. Her two daughters, Naomi and Hannah are now keeping pace, using their own

unique giftings in missions, as well as son, Jesse, who is part of Torchgrab Africa's ambassador team.

Porter's latest endeavor is providing encouragement as an author. Her new book, *How to Live UP: by the Power of Encouragement* shares in-depth examples from Choirfire mission trips that included many CCU students, and as she describes, "show up and be Jesus with skin on; it's a vital lifeline for how to take courage and finish what God has called you to, overcoming the obstacles of the world."

And Porter teaches her students and student-leaders to do the same. Whether they are found lifting spirits through the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah," changing lives with "You Will Be Found" from Broadway's "Dear Evan Hansen," or teaching songs to the students of Petra School, Choirfire teaches students the power of music and inviting others to sing along.



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OR VISIT [TORCHGRABAFRICA.ORG](https://torchgrabafrica.org).



LEADING A DANCE WORKSHOP (NAOMI WOO IN FRONT, HANNAH MENGIS IN BACK)

How Beautiful on the Mountains

by Heather A. Eades

HOW ALUMNAE, SISTERS NAOMI WOO AND HANNAH MENGIS, HAVE USED THE POWER OF DANCE TO UPLIFT HEARTS ALL OVER THE WORLD

“Dance is music made visible,” was once quoted by the late George Balanchine, co-founder of the New York City Ballet. This statement might be edited slightly by CCU alumnae, Naomi (Porter) Woo '03 and her sister Hannah (Porter) Mengis '17 to express that “Dance can also be an expression of worship made visible.”

Together, this sister act has ministered all over the world using the arts to bring healing and hope through the power of dance while effectively pointing people to the One who guides their steps.

Both grew up in a missions-focused family with deep-rooted faith they continue to share. For both Woo and Mengis, it was never a question of if or when to do missions, but only how. It has always been a lifestyle.

“Growing up, my parents (Bruce and Claudia Porter) were always doing short-term missions — I think I had been to 18 countries by the time I was six,” said Woo. “So, it was just kind of established early on that missions is just something our family does.”

Woo began dancing at age five with an

emphasis on ballet. However, years of growing her skills through Celebration Ministry of Arts (CMA) in Littleton, Colorado, helped her discover that worship dance (a lyrical style of dance used to draw people into worship or express the gospel through performance arts) was her passion. It also provided the perfect ministry tool for crossing language barriers, as missions to China was set on her heart at an early age.

“My first time going to China was when I was 16, to adopt my little sister, Hannah. I had always known at this point that Asia, and China specifically, had this pull



How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

Isaiah 52:7

ministry

on my heart and that it was going to be a piece of my story.”

Over the years, Woo returned to China with her family for several mission trips, making connections with people there who would play major roles in her life over time.

While at home in Colorado, Woo became the co-director of CMA (alongside current director Tiffany Case) during her first few years of college, but the opportunities to incorporate dance into missions took off upon graduating from CCU in 2003.

Upon receiving her bachelor’s degree in elementary education, Woo began teaching fourth grade at Front Range Christian School, and she committed her summers to missions in Japan using dance as a means to share the gospel.

“It was just so neat because people who would never come to a church event, they would come to see Americans perform. They loved the dance. It was a way to get people in and then have people in the local churches follow up with them. We did songs in Japanese — in their heart language. The ministry opportunities were really amazing.”

One year, Woo decided to take a leave from teaching stateside to spend an entire year in China teaching dance, English classes, and working in orphanages.

“After I had been teaching for a few years, I ended up going back to this same part of Southwest China where I had made contacts originally with my family, and I was offered a place to stay and work for that 2009-10 school year,” said Woo. “During that year, I was able to teach dance to AIDS-affected orphans — children who had lost one or both parents to AIDS. A good friend had



We walked into this shelter, and right away there was this little girl maybe 10 or 11 years old, and she had this patch over her eye; you could tell that she had been crying and was so downcast. I just felt the Lord saying, ‘That’s her. That’s the one you are here for.’

three homes for them, and we would teach dance once a week.”

During those years, Woo’s sister was developing her own passion for worship dance through CMA, and traveled and performed with missions through Choirfire. Once Mengis enrolled at CCU, the sisters put their gifts together using dance in missions. Together the duo led teams in their summers doing ministry with Joy International to Cambodia and one year in the Philippines.

One powerful way Woo observed the

healing power of dance as ministry was on one of those trips to Cambodia.

“In Cambodia, Hannah and I were working with girls who were rescued from sex trafficking. We were in the restoration home with these girls ... and their horrific stories and tragic backgrounds ... and yet (through dance) using their bodies to glorify God. It was incredibly healing and being a part of that restoration was really beautiful. That has been one of my favorite ways that the Lord has worked with our dance missions.”

Another time that impacted Woo was offering hope through dance in Iwaki, Japan — one of the areas that was devastated by a tsunami and earthquake in 2011.

“Our dance company team (CMA) went to serve — we weren’t planning on dancing — we just went to work/service-project type stuff,” Woo explained. “But then they asked us if we could minister at a shelter where people who had lost everything were living.

“Before I had left on that trip, I had asked the Lord, what do I look for — what do



NAOMI WOO AND HANNAH MENGIS MINISTERING TO CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN THE DUMPS OF THE PHILIPPINES (CEBU)

I prepare for? I just heard the phrase, ‘one little girl.’ And so, I thought, OK,” continued Woo.

“We walked into this shelter, and right away there was this little girl maybe 10 or 11 years old, and she had this patch over her eye; you could tell that she had been crying and was so downcast. I just felt the Lord saying, ‘That’s her. That’s the one you are here for.’

“And so, we did our dance, and the lyrics to the song were in Japanese, saying: ‘When the waters rise and the oceans roar, I will follow you above the storm.’”

Woo continued, “As I talked with the young girl afterwards, I learned she had lost several family members. The Lord put on my heart to give her this ring I had with me, and I told her to remember every time she looks at it that ‘Jesus loves you.’ And it was like her whole countenance — everything about her — just changed; she was filled with joy.”

Those ministry moments that arise from worship dance performances and sharing the gift with young people resonate with Mengis as well. Mengis grew up studying worship dance with CMA, as well as intense technical

training in the artform at other local dance companies.

From teaching dance workshops in Uganda, Cambodia, the Philippines, and other missions opportunities for sharing her gifts, Mengis continues using the arts in global missions. *BEYOND* was not able to connect 1:1 with Mengis because she is currently on the mission field in Latvia.

Her mom, Claudia Porter recalls, “One summer Hannah was invited to join Josiah Venture — an Eastern European youth ministry, working with local



PHOTO CREDIT AUBRI PORTER

NAOMI WOO AND HER LARGE FAMILY

Naomi Woo had always dreamed of having a large family. But as the years went by, and the busyness of life, work, and missions increased, now in her late 30s she began to wonder. However, as Woo had always known in her heart, China would play a large piece of her story.

“My husband and his late wife, Caroline, were in China for 13 years, missionaries to an unreached people group. When I was in China during 2009-10, that’s when I met them and we became good friends. I served at their English school, and we did ministry and life together.”

When Naomi returned to the states and continued her teaching career, she stayed connected with the missionaries overseas, having the occasional reunions.

Sadly, Caroline developed brain cancer and went home to be with the Lord. Michael was left a widower with five children to raise on his own.

“When Caroline passed away and went to be with the Lord, that’s when Michael and I reconnected at a missionary reunion,” said Naomi. “God brought us together, I married him, and got five kids all at once! I’ve adopted them all, and we’ve had one more since we married — all the kids are my kids.”

churches in all of eastern Europe to reach the youth in wonderful ways.

“One summer the organization had all the countries get together in Prague, so Hannah went over to do dance seminars. She became involved with the ministry and returned as an intern.”

It was there during her time as an intern that Mengis met her now husband, Guntis Mengis, who was involved with Josiah Venture teaching drums. The married couple now uses their creative talents together working with Josiah Venture full-time in Latvia.

Life in missions continues as a family affair for Woo, also, now married to husband Michael Woo; both work together as candidate directors for Overseas Ministries Fellowship (OMF) International — an organization, reaching all of Southeast Asia.

But Woo’s favorite job right now is that of being mom to six amazing children (“five adopted and one biological — but all mine,” Naomi beams), with missions and dance still very much a part of her family.

For both Woo and Mengis, missions and dance continue in their family, shared with the next generation.

The Woos’ son, current CCU sophomore, Samuel ’25, can now be found serving on campus as a missions coordinator, while daughter, Salem, follows in Naomi’s footsteps, growing in worship dance skills through CMA. More opportunities are on the horizon to give each of the Woos’ children opportunities for overseas missions.

The Mengis family are ministering in missions through Josiah Venture’s Fusion ministry to youth as well, passing on the torch in Latvia.

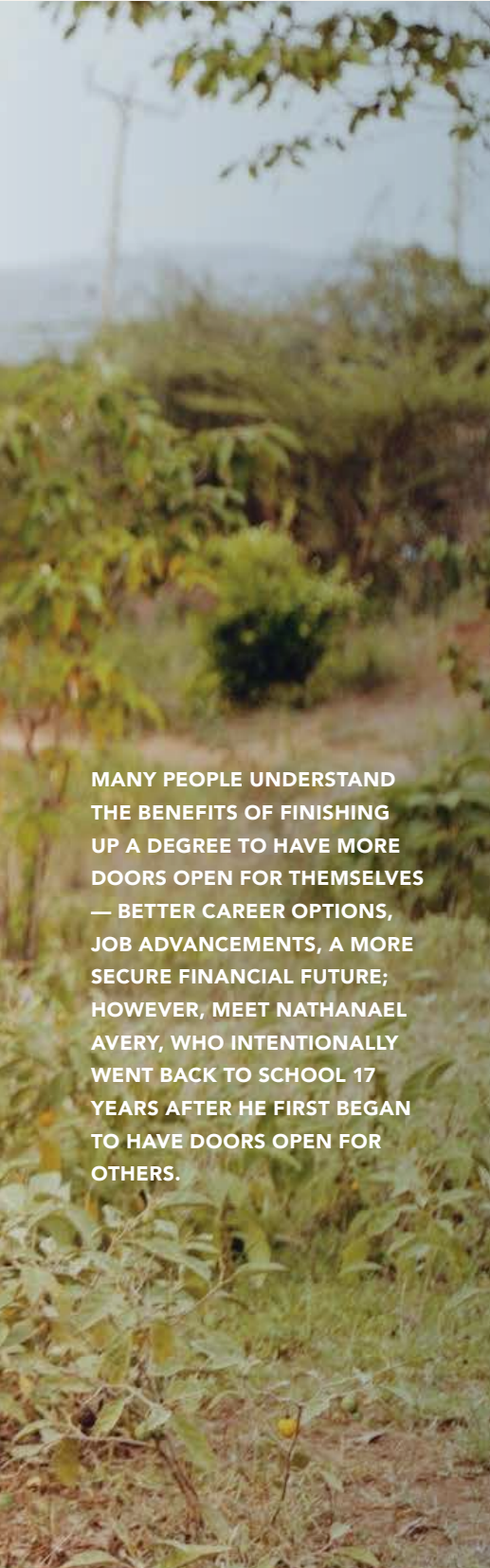
“As we grow closer to God and grow closer to His heart, you just realize: it’s missions,” said Woo. “And whether it’s through dance or music, whatever your vocation, it’s getting the gospel to these least-reached parts of the world — God can use all of our giftings!”





NAOMI WOO AND HANNAH MENGIS MINISTERING THROUGH DANCE AT A SLUM IN THE PHILIPPINES





MANY PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF FINISHING UP A DEGREE TO HAVE MORE DOORS OPEN FOR THEMSELVES — BETTER CAREER OPTIONS, JOB ADVANCEMENTS, A MORE SECURE FINANCIAL FUTURE; HOWEVER, MEET NATHANAEL AVERY, WHO INTENTIONALLY WENT BACK TO SCHOOL 17 YEARS AFTER HE FIRST BEGAN TO HAVE DOORS OPEN FOR OTHERS.

“After You ...”

by Heather A. Eades

If you ever have the opportunity to travel south of the Mason-Dixon Line, you are sure to experience someone holding the door for you. Blame it on long-time Georgia resident Nathanael Avery’s southern hospitality, but even the very act of finishing his degree later in life was to embrace a lifetime calling of opening doors for others.

Avery ’23, who graduated this May from CCU’s College of Adult and Graduate Studies program with a degree in applied psychology with an emphasis in Clinical Counseling, is the executive director of a non-profit he and his wife founded in 2008. And on top of being a devoted husband and father of seven, he is also leading the missions and community outreach program at their local church in a part-time capacity while finishing up his bachelor’s, with plans to continue into CCU’s Clinical Counseling master’s program on deck. (Whew!)

To many, the thought of going back to school on top of life, family, work, missions responsibilities, and travels overseas might appear overwhelming — but for Avery, finishing his degree was a way to better serve in those many different capacities of his life.

One of those capacities is Avery’s work with his organization, Choose to Invest, which partners primarily with local churches in rural parts of East Africa. Their mission is “empowering the Church to restore communities.”

In fact, the desire to better equip and serve the pastors and communities of East Africa was the driving force for Avery to go back to school to complete his bachelor’s degree, and the online flexibility of CCU Online made it possible to keep up with classes, even while on the mission field.

Both Avery and his wife had clear callings in missions to Africa even in their early teenage years. But the



journey took some time. While his wife grew up traveling overseas with her family, developing a heart for other cultures and the hurting, Avery jumped aboard any mission trip he could go on, local, national, and overseas. Together, they make for a dynamic duo who have both furthered their education for the sake of extending their kingdom reach.

Avery explained, “The more that we’re equipped, the more that we can equip the leaders and the people that God allows us to do ministry with.”

In 2007, Avery and his wife went on their first trip to East Africa with their church in Georgia, doing community development. Avery recalls, “That first trip, we both came home and said ‘This

is the place; this is where we’re supposed to be.’ That church and that organization actually helped us launch our ministry that is thriving today.”

The Averys have now spent every year since that first trip leading teams who invest in the pastors and churches of East Africa. They work to open doors for the Church to function as it was designed to care for one another, encouraging the pastors physically and spiritually to help them keep serving and building up their local body.

“What God really did for us is to open our eyes to the pastors’ hunger and desire to be equipped. That’s why we spend time over there with them,” Avery said. “They just want to be developed.

They want to know how to study the Word and how to teach the Word and to understand the Church’s intended design.”

And so “Choose to Invest” was a fitting name for their organization, as that is exactly what the Averys did, inviting others to join in the ministry’s efforts. While there are countless opportunities for going overseas to physically build up church buildings, a unique feature of the Averys’ ministry is the focus on building up churches from the inside out in East Africa — positioning the Church-with-a-capital-“C” to care for the local people and community needs themselves, all led by the local pastors. From community development and clean water initiatives



It doesn't matter what your program of study is. We all have the ability to impact people around the globe with the gifts that God has given us and the equipping that we receive from our education.

to developing leadership teams in the schools and discipling young people who have aged-out of orphanages, Avery has led the charge in providing pastoral training and raising up leadership teams in the East African churches.

While there are many facets to Choose to Invest's goals and outcomes, equipping the Church to help provide clean water and mentor young people ranks high on the list. The organization provides water filters while also training up local "Water ambassador teams" from within the community churches.

Avery explains, "The water ambassador teams are the ones who are actually facilitating the water training and going back into the homes several weeks later

especially of the elderly, the disabled, the extremely impoverished, following up. That's just one example of how we're working through the church."

Pouring into young people happens through the part of the ministry called the Rejoice Program. "We work with the pastors to identify trustworthy, solid Christian leaders who will go into the schools every week to teach a virtue a month," said Avery. "Whether it's love, forgiveness, or wisdom, with the guidance of my wife who is a former principal and teacher, we do it with an experiential approach, playing games and tying it back to each message."

He continued, "It's gone so well that even with Covid, when schools finally

opened back up, visitors were still not allowed inside; however, they ended up making an exception for our team to come into the schools, saying, 'The kids need the encouragement that your team brings.' That's been encouraging to us as well."

The schools weren't the only things shut down in East Africa during Covid; it largely shut down opportunities for the ministry, which ironically opened another door for Avery – a window of time to launch back to school after a 17-year hiatus.

"Like many people, I never finished my undergrad," said Avery. "My wife and I married fairly young, and I was working full time, trying to work my way

through school.”

Avery had put the pause on his schooling with the birth of their first child (who is now graduating from high school). He explained, “My wife and I launched our ministry, living in Kenya for several of those beginning years with our family. Between the pace of life with young kids and living overseas, traveling back and forth ... it never felt like there was a chance to go back to school.”

Enter Covid.

“Like a lot of other people, when Covid hit, it shut us down; we couldn’t travel,” said Avery. In East Africa, they were tightly restricted to their communities. They couldn’t travel, they couldn’t work, so that stopped a lot for us. My wife and I talked and prayed, and we said if there’s ever a time to go back to school, this would be it.

“As we talked and prayed about what we’re doing in East Africa — the opportunity that I have to work with close to 150 pastors in these three regions that we work in — I felt like I needed more equipping. They are dealing with trauma on levels that we don’t experience here in the U.S. (severe draught where people are dying from lack of food and water, extreme poverty, and the abuse that often comes with it, etc.). I felt like this was the time to become more equipped for that.”

Though the prompting was there and the timing felt right, the nudge for Avery to complete his degree did not come without some hesitation. Avery confessed, “Truthfully, I was a little bit worried as I had not been in school for almost 17 years. However, CCU was incredibly helpful and I’ve been blessed by the experience. The five- or seven-week online formats provided the flexibility to literally be making an



impact across the globe while I’m still in school, that to me has been surprising. The professors were really encouraging and helpful in that process as well. And most importantly, it allowed me to both continue to function as a dad and a husband while leading this ministry and doing school.”

Avery’s success in completing his bachelor’s degree has established new goals for him: CCU’s Clinical Counseling master’s degree.

“I came home from one of my trips and I told my wife, ‘I can literally see the trauma on their faces.’ And I’m not equipped yet to help with that, but I feel like I should be. So, that’s why I wanted to go back with this clinical counseling degree from CCU — to go back, if God were to allow me to minister to the pastors in such a way of using

that information to help them to help others.”

Avery’s experiences both personally and from a cross-cultural vantage point have helped him have a renewed appreciation for the ways a quality Christian education can multiply your gifts, opening new doors for yourself in the process of opening doors for others.

“Having lived in a country where even having access to an education is so difficult, I want to encourage people to recognize the gift of education and training — especially at a school like CCU,” said Avery. “I recognize the value and importance of that, and also the fact that it doesn’t matter what your program of study is. We all have the ability to impact people around the globe with the gifts that God has given us and the equipping that we receive from our education.”

CCU Academy

Championing a New Era of Students

"Having the opportunity to graduate high school with my associate degree has allowed me to begin my undergraduate experience with the skills and work ethic to excel in upper-level classes for my major."



AMY DEVER AND PARENTS, CARL & JULIE DEVER
TRINITY CLASSICAL ACADEMY '22, SANTA CLARITA, CA

For more than a decade, Colorado Christian University's CCU Academy has served over 60,000 high school students and several hundred high schools through its dual credit, online dual enrollment, and A.A. degree programs. As the third academic division at the university, CCU Academy provides high school and homeschool students with the opportunity to jump-start their college degrees before graduating. Perhaps one of the most noteworthy accomplishments over the past few years has been the record class of students who have earned their associate of arts degree in Liberal Arts from CCU Academy. Over 50 high schoolers will earn their A.A. degree this spring, and a group of these graduates will walk in CCU's commencement ceremony at Cherry Hills Community Church in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, on May 12, 2023.

In addition to their high school coursework, CCU Academy A.A. degree students embark on their academic journeys as early as their freshmen year of high school on a rigorous track to complete 60 credits comprised of general education classes and elective requirements. Amy Dever, Class of 2022, shares how her experience with CCU Academy jump-started her college career:

"Thanks to CCU Academy, I was able to enter college as a junior. Having the opportunity to graduate high school with my associate degree has allowed me to begin my undergraduate experience with the skills and work ethic to excel in upper-level classes for my major. I will always be grateful for CCU Academy's partnership with my high school as it taught me to approach all of my studies with a strong foundation of faith."

LEARN MORE
ABOUT CCU ACADEMY BY VISITING

ccu.edu/academy



College of Adult and Graduate Studies

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

CCU offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs for those ready to advance their career options, expertise, and earnings potential.

SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

- Applied Psychology (B.S.)
 - Emphasis in Biblical Studies
 - Emphasis in Clinical Counseling
 - Emphasis in Criminal Justice
- Communication Studies (A.S., B.S., Certificate)
- Creative Writing (B.A.)
- Criminal Justice (A.S., B.S., Certificate)
- Criminal Justice (M.S.)
 - Emphasis in Campus, Event, and Organizational Safety
- General Studies (A.A.)
- Psychology (A.S., M.S.)

SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

- Applied Apologetics (B.A., M.A.)
 - Emphasis in Cultural Engagement
 - Emphasis in Global Apologetics
 - Emphasis in Innovative Evangelism
 - Emphasis in Practical Apologetics
- Biblical Studies (A.A., B.A., M.A., Certificate)
- Christian Ministry (B.A.)
- Executive Leadership in Christian Ministry (M.A.)
- Theological Studies (M.A.)

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Accounting/Accountancy (B.S., M.S., Certificate)
- Business (B.S.)
 - Emphasis in Entrepreneurship
 - Emphasis in International Business
- Business Administration (A.S.)
- Business Administration (MBA)
 - Emphasis in Advanced Accounting
 - Emphasis in Cyber Security
 - Emphasis in Enterprise Agility
 - Emphasis in Healthcare Administration
 - Emphasis in Leadership
 - Emphasis in Project Management
- Computer Information Technology (A.S.)
- Computer Information Technology (B.S.)
 - Emphasis in Cyber Security
 - Emphasis in Data Engineering
 - Emphasis in Database Management
 - Emphasis in Networking
 - Emphasis in System Analyst
- Computer Science (A.S., B.S.)
- Cyber Security (A.S., B.S., M.S.)
- Data Analytics (A.S., B.S.)
- Economics (B.S., M.S.)
- Entrepreneurship (Certificate)
- Ethics (Certificate)
- Healthcare Administration (A.S., B.S.)
- Human Resource Management (A.S., B.S., M.S., Certificate)



- Information Systems Management (B.S.)
 - Emphasis in Cyber Security
 - Emphasis in System Analyst
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management (A.S., B.S., Certificate)
- Marketing and Sales (A.S., B.S., Certificate)
- Nonprofit Management (A.S., B.S., Certificate)
- Organizational Leadership (MOL)
- Organizational Management in Christian Leadership (B.S.)

A.S. = Associate of Science | B.A. = Bachelor of Arts | B.S. = Bachelor of Science * BSN is offered in-seat only

College of Adult and Graduate Studies

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Organizational Management in Enterprise Agility (B.S.)
Organizational Management in Project Management (B.S.)
Project Management (Certificate)
Public Administration (MPA)

SCHOOL OF COUNSELING

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.A.)
Emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy
Emphasis in Substance Use Disorders
School Counseling (M.A.)



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONS

Alternative Licensure
Alternative Licensure – Special Education
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (M.Ed.)
Endorsement in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
Curriculum and Instruction (M.A.)
Emphasis in Alternative Licensing
Emphasis in Biblical Studies
Emphasis in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
Early Childhood Education (B.A.)
Educational Leadership (M.Ed.)
Elementary Education (B.A.)
Special Education (B.A.)
Special Education (M.Ed.)
Licensure or Non-Licensure
Emphasis in Alternative Licensing
Endorsement in Special Education Generalist
TESOL Certificate

SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Nursing (BSN*, RN-BSN)
Nursing (MSN)
Emphasis in Clinical Care Management in Adult and Geriatric
Emphasis in Nursing Education
Nursing Practice in Visionary Leadership (DNP)



"CCU made it possible for me to keep my full-time job with its odd hours and earn my degree on my own time. I don't know if I could've done it any other way. Now I'm equipped with the knowledge I need to be the best I can be." –Betty R.

[CCU.EDU/PROGRAMS](https://www.ccu.edu/programs)

M.A. = Master of Arts | M.Ed. = Master of Educational Leadership | M.S. = Master of Science | MBA = Master of Business Administration
MOL = Master of Organizational Leadership | MPA = Master of Public Administration | MSN = Master of Science in Nursing

College of Undergraduate Studies

Undergraduate Programs

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

Accounting (major, minor, dual degree)
Business Administration (major, minor, dual degree)
Business Data Analytics (minor)
Camp Management (minor)
Computer Information Systems (major, minor)
Economics (minor)
Entrepreneurship (major, minor, dual degree)
Finance (major, minor)
International Business (minor)
Leadership (minor, emphasis)
Management (major, minor, emphasis, dual degree)
Marketing (major, minor, dual degree)
Military Science – Army (minor)
Outdoor Leadership (major, minor)
Pre-Law (minor, emphasis)
Public Accountant Preparation (minor)

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Classical Elementary Education (Elementary Education track)
Coaching (minor)
Education (minor, emphasis)
Elementary Education Licensure (Liberal Arts major)
English (emphasis)
K-12 Music Education Licensure (Music major)
K-12 Physical Education Licensure (Physical Education major)

K-12 Special Education Generalist Licensure (Liberal Arts major)
Reading Education (minor)
Reading Literacy (emphasis)
Secondary English/Language Arts Licensure (English major)
Secondary Science Licensure (General Science major)
Secondary Social Studies Licensure (History major)
Secondary Mathematics Licensure (Mathematics major)
Social Studies (emphasis)
Special Education (minor)
Teaching and Learning (major)

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Augustine Honors (minor, emphasis)
Communication (major, minor)
Creative Writing (minor)
Criminal Justice Law and Practice (major)
Digital Media (minor)
English (major, minor, emphasis)
Global Studies (major, minor)
History (major, minor)
Liberal Arts (major)
Politics (major, minor)
Psychology (major, minor, dual degree)
Public Relations (minor)
Social Science (major)
Strategic Communication (major)



College of Undergraduate Studies

Undergraduate Programs

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

- Contemporary Music (minor)
- Dance (minor)
- Music (major, minor)
- Music Composition (major)
- Music Conducting (certificate)
- Music Education K-12 Licensure (major)
- Music Media and Marketing (major)
- Music Performance (major)
- Music Production and Engineering
- Music Theatre (minor)
- Sacred Music and Literature (minor)
- Theatre (minor)
- Worship Arts (major)

SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

- Nursing (major)

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

- Biology (major, minor)
- Chemistry (minor)
- Computer Science (major)
- Engineering Design (minor)
- Engineering Project Management (major)
- Health Sciences (major)
- Industrial and Systems Engineering (major)
- Kinesiology and Exercise Science (major, minor)
- Mathematics (minor)
- Pre-Engineering (associate)
- Pre-Medical Profession (major)
- Pre-Physical Therapy (major)

- Pre-Physician Assistant (major)
- Science (major)
- Sports Management (major)

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

- Apologetics and Evangelism (major, minor)
- Biblical Archaeology (minor)
- Biblical Exegesis and Linguistics (major)
- Biblical Studies (minor)
- Biblical Studies with Languages (major, dual degree)
- Church History (minor)
- Intercultural Ministry (minor)
- Ministry Management (major)
- Philosophy (major, minor)
- Theology (major, minor, dual degree)
- Young Life Leadership (minor)
- Youth Ministry (major, minor)



CCU Academy

Affordable College Courses for High School Students

Through CCU Academy, Colorado Christian University provides opportunities for students to earn transferable college credit and even an associate degree prior to their high school graduation. Dual credit and dual enrollment courses provide affordable general education courses for high school students in order to help reduce college costs and prepare for the rigor of college coursework.

CCU Academy courses are taught with a Christian worldview — in keeping with CCU's mission to provide Christ-centered higher education transforming students to impact the world with grace and truth.

Vist ccu.edu/academy.



CCU Academy

Colorado Christian University
Grace and Truth

CCU Fund Fuels the Student Experience

The CCU Fund helps to fuel the student experience for over 1,500 undergraduate students on the Lakewood campus. Things like Chapel, D-groups, missions, intramurals, clubs and organizations would not be possible without you! 100% of your donation goes to support extracurricular and academic experiences for students enrolled in the College of Undergraduate Studies.



Make an impact today!
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3 Ways to Connect

with your CCU Alumni association



1 CCUSyncedIn 2 Social Media 3 Contact Us

CCU SyncedIn will help you achieve new career potential and success through a state-of-the-art virtual networking experience with a personalized feed, a directory to connect with your peers, and virtual events! And it's exclusive to members of the CCU community.

This powerful digital network will help you enrich your:

- Alumni Engagement
- Professional Development
- Business and Job Promotions
- University News
- Connectivity - Classmates, Industry Professionals, and Geographic Contacts
- Find and/or be a mentor to a fellow CCU community member

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www.ccu.edu/alumni

Have an **UPDATE** or looking to **RECONNECT** with the CCU community?

Contact **Kara Johnston Mott**, director of alumni and parent relations or

Aaron Burnett
Director of Strategic Communication



 **303.963.3320**

 **kjohnston@ccu.edu**



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Colorado Christian University

Softball | The Cougars are in the midst of an historic streak, as they now hold the school record for most wins in a row at 34 and counting. Newcomer Kali Crandall has shone all year, winning four out of the eight RMAC Pitcher of the Week honors given, while time and time again the offense comes through when they need to, on their way to a 24-0 RMAC record.

Baseball | CCU took on #13 MSU Denver earlier this year, and they did not flinch. Colorado Christian used a rally from down 7-2 as they came back to beat the Roadrunners 12-8. Gabe Ramos tied the game at 8-8 with a three-run homer, and Major Maydon gave his team the lead for good with a solo shot the same inning.

Indoor Track and Field | Matthew Storer and Hudson Majeski qualified for the Indoor Track & Field National Championships in the 5k and 1 mile respectively. Storer earned All-America honors as he placed fifth in the 5k, while Majeski also became an All-American in the mile with an eighth place finish.

Outdoor Track and Field | The Cougars got off to a hot start to begin the outdoor track season as they competed at the Dr. Dan Caprioglio Early Bird Invite. Zanzie Demco set an NCAA Provisional Qualifying Time in the 1500m to win the event. Matt Storer and Josh Pierantoni then set the second- and third-fastest 10k time ever ran on Colorado soil as they took first and second place in the distance run.

Women's Golf | CCU had a strong showing at the Pack Classic in Pueblo, as they took a narrow victory by a stroke to claim the title. Courtney Andersson led the team by finishing fourth at the event that was filled with RMAC opponents.

Men's Golf | The Cougars are having one of the best seasons in program history, as they are currently riding back-to-back tournament victories, the first time that has happened in program history. Adam Duncan has led the way, earning three RMAC Golfer of the Week honors this season as the team heads to Arizona looking for a third win in a row.



To learn more, visit ccucougars.com





CCU Benediction

Sovereign Lord, in light of these inspirational CCU stories of missions and outreach, as well as everyday kingdom impact, we are first reminded that you are missionary God. In a vast universe, you drew near and favored this planet. You appeared to and made promises to Abraham that through him all nations would be blessed. You entered into a special covenant with Israel to be your servant. Then you sent your prophets. In the fullness of time, you sent your one and only Son to live righteously, die sacrificially to atone for the sins of the world, rose victoriously, ascended triumphantly, and now, this very day, he lives and reigns with you, one God, now and forever. Lord, we recognize that all authority on heaven and earth has been given to Jesus. We

now reembrace his command to us to “go and make disciples”— a command that involves baptizing (which is the job of the Church) and teaching (which we share with the Church as the academic arm of the Church).

Lord, at this time our world, our nation, our state, and our city desperately need you. Use us in a new evangelization to our land. Thank you for inviting us into your mission. Help us to share the love of Christ on campus and around the world — especially as we graduate and send out a new class of students at Commencement, and as we send out many mission teams this summer.

Help us as we teach and form students in physical classrooms or online, in Chapels, and in student-life events.

Help us as we teach students to trust the Bible, live holy lives, and be evangelists. Help us to be a servant of the Church, through our Thriving Church Initiative, and through The Lee Strobel Center for Evangelism and Applied Apologetics.

Finally, Lord, help us in our day-to-day lives not to make missions and evangelism overly complex, but to be faithful witnesses, like the blind man, who gave a simple testimony saying, “I only know that once I was blind but now I see.” We pray for a simple boldness to be ours.

Grant these things we pray, in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.

Donald W. Sweeting, Ph.D.
Chancellor



COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Grace and Truth

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