

YELLOWJACKETS UPDATE: A CONVERSATION WITH THE ATHLETICS LEADERSHIP TEAM ► P20

HORIZONS

GRACELAND UNIVERSITY



Bold New Vision

*Graceland's exciting Tuition Transformation
& Carry It Forward Brand Campaign*

Horizons (USPS 0884-8939) is published by Graceland University, Lamoni, Iowa. The magazine is distributed without charge to select alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University. Free copies are available upon request.

CONTACT US

Your feedback is always welcome!
Direct correspondence and address changes to:

Graceland University
Alumni Programs Office
1 University Place
Lamoni, IA 50140
866.GU4.EVER
alumni@graceland.edu

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael R. Wiley, PhD, '83, *Chair*
Joseph Booz, JD, '86, *Vice Chair*
Samuel G. "Sam" Smalldon, MBA, '78, *Treasurer*
Ryan Watson '77, *Secretary*
Holly Phillips '81 Caskey
Stassi D. Cramm, PhD, '03
Steven E. Graffeo, MA, '80
Gwendolyn Hawks-Blue '68
Emily Hughes, JD
Vincent E. Lewis, EdD
Jim Lysinger, MBA, '86
Aleksandar "Aleks" Memca '00
LouAnn Muir-Hutchinson, MPH, '77
Randall E. Pratt, JD, '87
Mike Seagraves, PhD, '94
Julia Snethen, PhD, '82
Toya K. Younger, PhD

ADMINISTRATION

Patricia H. Draves, PhD
President
Shane Adams '99
Chief Marketing Officer
Talia Kinder '05 Brown, MEd
Chief Information and Data Officer
Kristi Hettrick '96
Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Beth Higdon, MA, '73
Executive Director for Planning and Effectiveness
Rob Lundeen, MBA, CPA, '74
Interim Vice President for Business and Finance
David Schaal, EdD, '80
Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students
Jodi Seymour
Executive Assistant to the President and Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Joel Shrock, PhD
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty
Deb Knotts '85 Skinner, MEd
Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Growth

ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Holly Phillips '81 Caskey, *President*
Peter Wilkinson '93, *Vice President*
Cathy Wolfe '88 Lysinger, *Secretary*
Kevin Brunner, PhD, '86, *Faculty Rep*
Wilai Rojjanasrirat, PhD, RN, IBCLC, *Faculty Rep*
Jenny Hendrickson '12 Bogda, MEd
Caleb Brian, PhD, '08
Jeremy Deemer '18
Dylan Fox '21
John Godfrey, MA, '06
Ric Hettrick '74
Beth Higdon, MA, '73
Jen Ingram '96 Imhoff
Collin Isham '11
Allie Krabbenhoft '16 Kaminski
Jeff Martin '85
Chelsea McClain '05 Pierce, JD
Doug Roberts, MA, '01
Jonathan Schrale '11
Melissa Sherer '18
Natalie Landers-Sherer '16
Blake Smith '16
Lisa Sheehy '80 Stobbe, MEd
Holly Inglehart '12 Weaver, BSN, RN
Cal Closson '82, *Alumni Board of Directors Emeritus*

EDITOR

Shane Adams '99

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN

Tiffany Rider '06 Smith, MEd

PHOTOGRAPHY

Shane Adams '99
Allison Arnold '00
Steve Edwards, MS, '96
Tiffany Rider '06 Smith, MEd

CONNECT WITH US



Follow me:

@GracelandUPres

Carry It Forward

As always, it is my great pleasure to share with you the exciting things happening on our campuses. As we welcomed our largest incoming class in eight years to the Lamoni campus – *341 new Gracelanders!* – we saw the impacts of the pandemic beginning to fade somewhat as our students have been highly engaged throughout the semester.

One of the most exciting things to happen during my tenure as president was the transformation of Graceland's tuition from \$32,500 to \$19,950 (read more on page 10). We announced this change in September, and it goes into effect in the fall of 2024. As students and families have become increasingly price-conscious when it comes to their academic experience, many believed (incorrectly) that Graceland just wasn't affordable for them. By transforming our tuition, we are declaring what some people already knew: Graceland is an affordable and valuable choice for students, especially as you consider our generous financial aid packages and that every four-year undergraduate student earns *two* majors upon their graduation – one in their area of expertise (like Finance, Digital Content Creation, Allied Health, or Elementary Education) and one in our exciting Transformational Leadership major, which provides students with the durable skills employers are seeking.

The response to our tuition transformation from prospective students has been fantastic and we hope to welcome even more students to Lamoni next fall.

We followed that exciting announcement with a wonderful Homecoming, complete with a fireworks show on Saturday night. I always love spending time with alumni and friends that weekend – for many of you it was your first time back in years. What I hope you know is that the Graceland Experience is alive and well on our campuses. I know you carry it forward through your life, your family, and your career. It is truly unique and I see it in each one of you I meet.

In Blue and Gold,

Patricia H. Draves, PhD
President



☺ There was a special display on the campus quad for Homecoming 2023: large foam letters spelling GRACELAND! Chad Godfrey '97 captured this super cool view of the Higdon Administration Building through the 'G' and we felt it was the perfect shot to reflect this issue's feature story, "Bold New Vision."

The Buzz

BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES, MS, '21

CONTENTS



HOMECOMING 2023

Our biggest alumni event of the year sparkled under the Iowa sky

6



BOLD NEW VISION

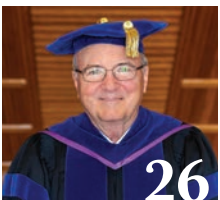
Read about Graceland's Tuition Transformation and the Blue, Gold & Bold Strategic Framework



20

A TEAM OF YELLOWJACKETS

The *Horizons* team talked with the Athletics administration about recent successes



26

FACULTY EMERITUS STEVE ANDERS

Celebrating a distinguished career and a passion for the classroom

- 3 The Buzz
- 16 Academics
- 20 Athletics
- 24 University News
- 29 Class Notes & Alumni Profile

Alumni Edition

Aloha, Graceland 'Ohana

On May 18, President Pat Draves, Dr. Jeff Draves, and Director of Development Ginelle Sakima Roberts '01 embarked on a memorable journey to connect with friends at the Graceland University **HAWAII SWARM**. Their first stop was the Hilo Community of Christ congregation, where they enjoyed local bentos from an alumni's family restaurant, and after dinner, they shared their favorite Graceland memories, and President Draves gave updates on the University. [Read more on next page](#) ➞



Hawaii Swarm

Their adventure continued as they ventured to the Island of Hawaii, where they explored Hawaii's Volcanoes National Park, and under the guidance of Gertrude "Trudi" Mahi '69 and Robert "Bob" '60 Gunderson, President Draves and Dr. Draves made Ho'okupu and listened to her present the gift protocol at the Hawaiian national park.

Two days later, they joined the Graceland Alumni Swarm at Ala Moana Beach Park in downtown Honolulu. Alumni gathered for a beach picnic, to catch up with friends, and meet President Draves and Dr. Draves. Yellowjackets from all over Honolulu brought tables, desserts, and even enjoyed delicious food made by Steve Reyes '01.

President Draves ended the trip by attending Sunday worship at the Kalihi Community of Christ congregation, where Sakima Roberts gave the sermon.



© The Draves and Gundersons enjoying the scenery with the traditional Ho'okupu offerings they made.

GFAA & Ring of Honor

This year, Graceland University Athletics and Graceland Football Alumni Association (GFAA) announced **THE CREATION OF THE RING OF HONOR AND THE FIRST ANNUAL INDUCTION CEREMONY**. The GFAA planned a special Ring of Honor weekend at Graceland's Lamoni campus and on September 16, football alumni and their families gathered to celebrate this year's honorees and their outstanding contributions to Graceland's football legacy: former head coach William "Duke" Dudek '65, quarterback Russell Bruch '82, linebacker Charlie "Chaz" Seefeldt '84, and offensive tackle Jeff Criswell '86.

The Ring of Honor is an exceptional group of individuals who played football at Graceland University and members of the Graceland football community who made significant contributions to their team and the University both on and off the field. This honor is especially meaningful as the recipients are chosen by their peers and former teammates who recognize their hard work, leadership, and dedication to Graceland's football team.

"It is undeniable the impact these gentlemen have had on the Graceland community," said Graceland Athletic Director Brady McKillip. "The Ring of Honor award and ceremony weekend will be a valuable tradition to honor these exceptional players and members of the football community for years to come."

Do you want to reconnect with your former teammates and be part of a network that supports the next generation of Yellowjackets? Consider joining the Graceland Football Alumni Association!

Q Find out more: graceland.edu/GFAA

© 2023 Inductees (left to right) Jeff Criswell, Charlie "Chaz" Seefeldt, Russell Bruch, and William "Duke" Dudek





Team Yellowjacket's RAGBRAI Tradition

This year **A GROUP OF TWELVE GRACELAND ALUMNI AND FRIENDS** sporting new Graceland University jerseys participated in Iowa's 50th annual Des Moines Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI). RAGBRAI is more than just a bike ride, it is an epic eight-day rolling festival of bicycles, music, food, camaraderie, and community. It is the oldest, largest, and longest multi-day bicycle touring event in the world.

Team Yellowjacket was created in 2011 by Michael Morain '01, who was working at the Register and had participated in RAGBRAI as a reporter. While reporting on the event he saw lots of other universities sponsor teams and as a member of the Graceland Alumni Board of Directors he thought that Graceland alumni would enjoy participating in this team event as well. Now alumni gather from across the United States and Canada to compete on Team Yellowjacket.

When asked about his favorite part of the journey Morain said, "It's a great way to see Iowa. People are in a good mood and happy to be there, and it's a great way to catch up with people and meet others outside of their regular routines."

Since then, Betsy Shelton '96 has taken the reins and is now the captain of the team, and coordinates where the riders will stay and how their personal gear will be transported. Thanks to the generosity of Graceland alumni and Community of Christ churches, no matter the route, the riders always have some place to stay the night.

If traveling to the State Historical Museum of Iowa in Des Moines, you can see Team Yellowjacket showcased in the RAGBRAI and the history of biking in Iowa exhibit where Morain's jersey is on display.

© **GRACELAND FOREVER** Team Yellowjacket documented their trek across the state, making stops at a pastry stand and sunflower field along the way. **Above center:** Team Yellowjacket and supporters at West Des Moines Community of Christ Church — Jim Shaffer, Anne Phillips '01 Shaffer, Lisa Bahn, Michael Morain '01, Robert "Bob" Cadman, Karli Conrad-Davis '15, Wendell Stainsby, Betsy Shelton '96, Doris Kuhnert '67 Cadman, Sam Smalldon '78, Josh Hoover, and Josh Schuster.



HOMECOM



☺ Pictured, top to bottom:
 Alumni reconnected on the quad. The
 21 Steele Strings performed in Carol
 Hall. The “Evening with the Arts” theatre
 and music showcase was a hit. Alumni
 and friends enjoyed dinners and dessert
 receptions throughout the weekend. Chad
 Elliott put on an amazing show after the
 sun went down Saturday evening.

A Love Letter to Gracelanders

BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES, MS, '21

As the warm autumn breeze rustled through the towering trees lining the campus, a familiar sense of excitement and anticipation filled the air. When **HOMECOMING WEEKEND** descends upon Lamoni, we are all reminded it's not just an event; it's a journey back in time, a celebration of friendships forged in the academic proving ground, and a heartfelt thank you from Graceland University to generations of Gracelanders, friends, and family.

On Friday, the competitive spirit was alive and well at the Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament. Participants teed off with old friends and new acquaintances, sharing stories and laughter on the green. Back on the Lamoni campus, there was a special performance from 21 Steele Strings with alumni Dean Landsberg '68, Larry Wheeler '68, Ray Adams '69, and Joe Racine '66. These Graceland superstars are members of the legendary “New Folk Singers” and “North Door Singers.” Later that evening, at the Alumni and Friends Awards Dinner, several well-deserving alumni received recognition for their diverse achievements and service to the University, and individuals being honored in the Yellowjacket Hall and Wall of Fame (see page 8). Alumni ended the night cheering on Graceland students and their favorite Airband dances.

Saturday was filled with thrilling activities; from a mouthwatering array of food trucks to special performances from the music and theatre departments, there was plenty of excitement to go around. Alumni and their families could be seen all across campus, supporting their favorite sports teams and academic departments. Saturday night was reserved for honor class desserts and the 50-year honor class dinner, where alumni reconnected with old friends and had the opportunity to skim through yearbooks, sharing memories from their time at Graceland. The evening continued with an outdoor performance by Chad Elliott '96, a talented Midwest singer-songwriter. His music resonated throughout the campus quad, creating an enchanting atmosphere under the starry sky. As the performance came to a close, the night sky lit up with a breathtaking fireworks display, marking the perfect end to an unforgettable day.

The weekend finished with a beautiful worship service featuring a moving message from Community of Christ Apostle Janné Grover '15, and the Presidential Society Brunch recognizing new Heritage Club members who include Graceland in their estate plans. As alumni and friends returned home and the campus became just a little bit quieter, one thing remained clear: Graceland University is profoundly grateful to its alumni for their unwavering support, which lights the path for future generations of Gracelanders. ■



flickr • View all Homecoming photo albums here:
[flickr.com/gracelanduniversity](https://www.flickr.com/gracelanduniversity)

2023 Alumni Awards

Read about the awards: graceland.edu/Homecoming

Distinguished Service Award



Jay '64 and Cherry Phelps '65 Newcom embody the principles of good citizenship, humanitarian service, and dedication to society. Their commitment to recognizing the worth of every individual perfectly aligns with the ideals of the Distinguished Service Award, inspiring and uplifting generations of Graceland students.

Jay's lifelong connection to Graceland began in Lamoni, where he immersed himself in the community from a young age. He attended Graceland University from 1960-1964, serving as the Tower's editor, Student Body President, and earning the prestigious Gold Seal for Leadership. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1968, Jay established himself as a globally recognized business and finance lawyer for over five decades.

Throughout his remarkable 26-year tenure on the Graceland Board of Trustees, including a term as Chairman, Jay played a crucial role in facilitating Graceland's acquisition of SkillPath Seminars Inc. in 1995, providing vital economic support.

Cherry, from Sweet Home, Oregon, demonstrated early leadership through church and school youth involvement. She attended Graceland from 1961 to 1963 and continued her education at MidAmerica Nazarene College. Cherry's dedication to humanitarian causes endures through her board membership with HealthEd Connect, a nonprofit empowering women and children in developing countries through evidence-based health, education, and advocacy programs.

Graceland Award of Recognition



In the early 2000s, a group of over a dozen alumni from the **Class of 1965** had returned to Graceland to serve their alma mater and the next generation of Graceland graduates. Their presence was evident in all corners of the University – faculty members, athletic coaches, and administrators alike found themselves called back to “the Hill” to offer their expertise and passion to a new generation of students. They helped those students build a bridge from the Graceland they knew as students to an era marked by a world that was changing rapidly. These generous Graceland University alumni, united by their unwavering commitment to their university, stand as shining examples of dedication and service. They embody the Graceland mission, both in their vocations and in the way they have lived their lives.

© Pictured, from left: Nancy Tanner Edwards, Jerry Mogg, Daniel Brush '03 (representing his father, the late Glenn Brush), Lorrie Long, Sherry Mesle-Morain, Sherri Kirkpatrick, Dan Hanton, Stephen Murdock '69 (representing the family of Mary Jean Murdock Jeanae), Phyllis O'Daniels, Stew McDole, Molly Brush '02 Schlenker (representing her father, Glenn Brush), William "Duke" Dudek, and Rich Harrop.

Yellowjackets Hall of Fame



Clayton Braddock '06 had a profound impact on the Yellowjackets football program during his three seasons as the quarterback from 2003 to 2006. Hailing from

Grand Prairie, Texas, he completely turned around the fortunes of Graceland football. In his very first season, he took a team that had previously experienced a winless campaign and transformed them into a nationally-ranked powerhouse by the fifth week of his sophomore year in 2004. The Yellowjackets ended that season with an impressive 8-2 record, securing the 18th spot in the final NAIA Top 25 rankings and earning a trip to the 2005 preseason Wheat Bowl, which they emerged victorious in.

With Braddock behind center in 2005, Graceland soared to remarkable heights, reaching as high as No. 8 in the NAIA Top 25 rankings and concluding the season with an outstanding 9-3 overall record. Their impressive performance earned them the Heart of America Athletic Conference Championship. Clayton Braddock's individual achievements were equally impressive, as he was recognized as an NAIA All-American (Honorable Mention), named the HAAC Player of the Year, and Co-Offensive Player of the Year in 2005. Additionally, he earned All-Region Scholar-Athlete honors. Braddock's exceptional skills also garnered him the distinction of being a two-time NAIA Player of the Week, a six-time HAAC Player of the Week, and a three-time all-conference selection.



Dante Johnson '04 came to Graceland from Orlando, Florida, and was a standout athlete in both football and track from 2001 to 2004. He achieved the honor of

Team Captain and also earned recognition as an NAIA All-American Honorable Mention in 2004. In 2001, he made the Heart All-Conference Third Team as a Wide Receiver, and from 2003 to 2004, he was on the Heart All-Conference First Team as both a wide receiver and kick returner. Dante's talent didn't go unnoticed, as he received accolades from the Don Hansen's Football Gazette All-America Team in 2003 and was named to the Don Hansen's Football Gazette All-America Second Team as a wide receiver in 2004.

Post-Graceland, Dante Johnson ventured into the realm of social impact by founding the nonprofit organization, Wake Up Mentoring, in his hometown of Orlando, Florida. Embracing a holistic approach, he has dedicated himself to making the world a better place, particularly by guiding and inspiring the youth of Orange County, Florida, toward brighter and more promising futures. Dante's time at Graceland changed him for the better, and he used what he learned to make a positive difference in the lives of today's young people. Today, he continues to support and promote Graceland, an institution that transformed his life and opened doors to opportunities he might not have had otherwise.



Cris Welch '92 propelled the Yellowjackets onto the national stage as Graceland's head football coach from 2003 to 2009. He led the 2004 and 2005 teams to rankings

in the NAIA Top 25 polls and guided them to their first-ever appearance in the 2005 NAIA Football Championship series postseason playoff game. Following a remarkable 9-3 season, he earned the prestigious 2005 Heart of America Athletic Conference Coach of the Year award.

In that extraordinary year, GU reached as high as eighth in the national rankings and maintained a spot in the NAIA Top 20 throughout the regular season. In 2004, the team had already begun to gain momentum, ending the season ranked 18th in the country and securing a victory in the 2005 preseason Wheat Bowl.

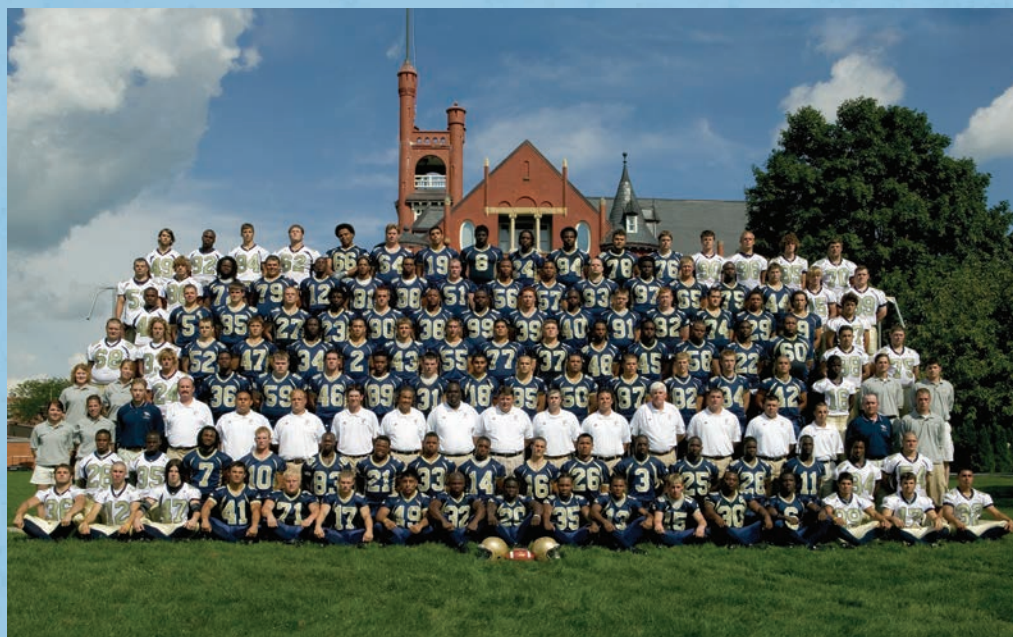
During Welch's tenure as head coach of Graceland's football program, his student-athletes achieved remarkable success, including six NAIA All-American selections, 18 NAIA Academic All-American honors, and 86 HAAC All-Conference recognitions.

Originally from Yukon, Oklahoma, Welch graduated from Graceland in 1992. He had a notable collegiate career as a four-year starter on the offensive line for the Yellowjackets from 1988 to 1991, earning all-district honors and serving as a team captain for two seasons.

Yellowjackets Wall of Fame

With high aspirations for the season, Graceland's **2005 Football Team** opened with a preseason appearance in the 11th Annual Wheat Bowl held in Great Bend, Kansas, its first bowl appearance since 1975. The Yellowjackets faced off against #28 Southern Nazarene (Bethany, Oklahoma) and defeated the Crimson Storm 24-20. Graceland entered Wheat Bowl participation as the first team to be selected from the state of Iowa.

Graceland spent the entire 2005 season ranked among the top 25 in the country with a final ranking of 11th. On November 12, 2005, the Yellowjackets beat Mid-America Nazarene 37-16 to claim a share of their first Heart of America Conference title since 1975. The win also propelled them into the NAIA Championships for the first time ever. The Yellowjackets finished the remarkable season with a 9-3 record.



CARRY IT FORWARD

Bold



Because the world needs more Graceland graduates.

New Vision


BY SHANE ADAMS '99



As Graceland entered the 2023-24 academic year, the faculty and staff gathered for the annual State of the University address from President Patricia H. Draves, PhD. In the previous academic year, the school launched its Blue, Gold & Bold plan for the future, which included a set of strategic pillars that guided its efforts. ☺

Blue, Gold & Bold Strategic Pillars

Enrollment & Revenue Growth
Revolutionize the Classroom
Student Success
Community & Culture




In 2023, Graceland doubled down on its efforts, leaning into the Blue, Gold & Bold plan further and celebrating the successes of the first year, like the launch of an exciting new academic approach aimed at revolutionizing and redefining the classroom.

One of the most obvious developments to come from Blue, Gold & Bold was a reimagining of Graceland's general education program into a modern, first-of-its-kind second major called Transformational Leadership. This program, launched in the fall of 2022, is intentionally designed to equip students with a foundational liberal arts education alongside strategic, durable skills that employers are seeking.



For Graceland, this was not as groundbreaking of a development as it seemed to the many industry insiders who have admired it from its launch. While other college presidents and other parts of academia admire Graceland's innovation in its general education, those familiar with "the Hill" know well that this is something the University has been living out for years.



"I've said for years that the world needs more Graceland graduates," said President Patricia Draves. "That's because I've met so many amazing leaders among the alumni. Graceland has been developing transformational leaders for over a century. This program is a new way of making the experience students have on our campus even more tangible by not just awarding them a second major, but by giving them the skills they need to succeed in their careers and in their lives."

Why Transformational Leadership Matters

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) developed eight measures of career readiness, which demonstrate core competencies that broadly prepare college students for success in the workplace and lifelong career management. Graceland's Transformational Leadership program can map its curriculum directly to NACE's Career Readiness Competencies:

CAREER & SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Students develop career and practical skills for the workforce through study and practice and are given opportunities throughout their four years for internships, both on and off campus.

COMMUNICATION

Students learn communication skills through their general education requirements and in their Life & Leadership sections (a requirement of Transformational Leadership).

CRITICAL THINKING

This skill has always been a central part of a Graceland education. Understanding how to think critically is found in every aspect of University life.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Students study in a diverse community and are educated to be socially responsible citizens of the world as part of the transformational leadership curriculum.

LEADERSHIP

The Transformational Leadership curriculum includes courses on self-leadership, group leadership, and organizational leadership. And Graceland also offers over 140 leadership opportunities to students every single year.

PROFESSIONALISM

Students receive important training on professionalism, both through their student work assignments and in upper-division coursework that regularly prioritizes collaboration and presentations.

TEAMWORK

Whether it is in Air Band or in the classroom, teamwork is central to the Graceland Experience. Students access education on teamwork throughout their Life & Leadership courses.

USING DATA & TECHNOLOGY

Digital Citizenship and Fluency is one of three strategic skills courses that are a part of the Transformational Leadership curriculum. This course ensures students understand the technology tools they will encounter in the workforce.

A Record Class

The hard work of Graceland's faculty and staff is beginning to pay off, as the University announced the Lamoni campus would welcome its largest class in eight years, 341 students including both first-year students and transfers. Driven heavily by the recruiting efforts of athletic coaches and the leadership of Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Twong Wells '97, the class brought energy to Lamoni, which was felt through campus activities, house events, and more.

"To be able to bring in a class of that size is a phenomenal accomplishment, but we are just getting started," said Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Growth Deb Knotts '93 Skinner, MS. "I'm proud of our team for accomplishing this fantastic milestone, and we have more growth goals for the future, not just in Lamoni, but in Independence and for our online programs as well."

It is clear that prospective students and their families are resonating with what Graceland has to offer. Parents particularly are thrilled to see the University's intentionality in pairing Transformational Leadership with every discipline, providing key career-readiness skills to students looking to make their mark in a competitive and ever-changing job market (see sidebar).

Kacie Crowley '99 Sires, whose daughter Cadence is a freshman at Graceland, said, "I am the director of the leadership development program at a Fortune 250 company. Students from Graceland are going to be attractive to companies like mine because they have the applicable leadership skills as soon as they get out of college. I know Cadence will be well-skilled in working as a team member."

As President Draves looks to the future, she is excited. "We have a lot of momentum right now, and I hope that translates throughout the University. It is a great time to be at Graceland, and I am thrilled that students and families are responding so positively to our Blue, Gold & Bold strategic framework," she said.

"By adding a second major in Transformational Leadership for all students, graduates now will be able to go into the job market equipped with expertise in a discipline and in transformational leadership, a unique combination that allows them to thrive throughout their career."

JOE BOOZ, JD, '86

Graceland Trustee & Executive Director/

Assistant General Counsel, JP Morgan Chase, N.A.



© **Left:** President Draves shared an official announcement of the tuition transformation for the 2024-25 academic year. **Right:** We are sending engaged thought leaders out into the world who are empowered to innovate and help shape their career success.

Transforming Tuition

One major change to attracting students to Graceland's Lamoni campus for next year's class and beyond was launched on September 18, when Graceland unveiled a new initiative changing its published undergraduate tuition price from \$32,500 in 2023-24 to \$19,950.

Research shows that over 75% of prospective students and families are considering sticker price when looking at colleges. While Graceland has always been an affordable option thanks in part to generous scholarships, the University wanted to make it crystal clear that all kinds of students have a place as a Yellowjacket. It was important to align the published tuition price to be closer to what students actually pay for a Graceland education.

But this transformed approach to tuition is not just about price; it is about increasing access to Graceland and offering more students the opportunity to become compassionate, critical-thinking, curious leaders who want to make a difference in their community.

Higher education is still one of the best investments a student can make in their future: higher income potential, greater career advancement, a strong, lifelong network, and the self-confidence to pursue their passion are all part of the Graceland Experience. Since 1895, Graceland has been committed to ensuring that there is a place for everyone in its community. Belonging is central to how students live and learn together – from caring faculty to the unique house system for residential life. Graceland focuses on belonging because it believes that it gives our students the courage to discover and embrace who they truly are so they can go out and be the best version of themselves they can be. Every student should know they have access to the opportunity that Graceland provides.

Graceland also hopes that the transformed tuition will build more transformational leaders. Graduates know that leadership development is something that has been central to the experience on "the Hill."

"By adding a second major in Transformational Leadership for all students, graduates now will be able to go into the job market equipped with expertise in a discipline *and* in transformational leadership, a unique combination that allows them to thrive throughout their career," remarked Joe Booz, JD, '86, Graceland Trustee and Executive Director/Assistant General Counsel at JP Morgan Chase, N.A.

One of the most pivotal reasons for the decision to change tuition? Simplifying the cost of college. Not only is the University changing its tuition price, but it is streamlining the financial aid packaging process so students will now receive a single award that considers all aspects of what they bring to their college experience – from athletic performance to academic excellence – all are considered as part of the simplified financial aid model.

"Students and parents told us they want the financial aid process to be simpler and easier to understand," said Skinner. "At the same time they want to feel valued for their athletic, academic, and performance accomplishments. Our innovative one award model gives students one holistic scholarship and brings clarity to the process."

\$19,950

UNDERGRADUATE BASE TUITION PRICE
2024-25 Academic Year



Scan the code to watch the tuition announcement and learn more.

“Our graduates know that the Graceland Experience isn’t just one thing, it’s *all* the things. That’s what makes it so unique. I wasn’t sure we would be able to find the right words to tell that story to the world...”

SHANE ADAMS '99
Chief Marketing Officer

Telling the Graceland Story

The Graceland Marketing team partnered with higher education-focused agency VisionPoint Marketing to help craft and clarify the University’s bold approach, which was detailed in a previous article in Horizons. In the fall of 2023, that brand story began to come to life in the world – in billboards, radio ads, digital media, and more.

Skinner remembers an enrollment summit she planned back in the winter of 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the world. “One of the key takeaways from that summit,” she remembers, “was that we needed to do a better job telling our story to the world. We needed to make sure that everyone involved in the recruiting process knows who we are and what we offer our students.”

The brand campaign, entitled Carry It Forward, focuses on Graceland as a provider of an education that endures long beyond four years on “the Hill.”

Chief Marketing Officer Shane Adams '99 said, “As an alumnus of the University, I see myself in the Carry It Forward story, but more importantly, I can see all of our current students as well. Our graduates know well that the Graceland Experience isn’t just one thing, it’s *all* the things. That’s what makes it so unique. I wasn’t sure we would be able to find the right words to tell that story to the world, but our partners at VisionPoint really understood us from the start.”

The brand campaign includes elements of all aspects of the Graceland Experience, incorporating top-notch academic experiences alongside life-long connections and a focus on belonging.

Adams’ favorite pillar of the campaign is *strongly rooted and still growing*. “What I love about this concept is that it acknowledges that sustainable, long-term growth doesn’t abandon tradition or anything about the past, but rather honors it and builds upon it,” he said. “Transformational Leadership is such a great example of this concept. The University has been building these types of leaders for as long as I’ve known, but adding a second major for our students that really is about developing the whole person – that’s an innovation that has its roots in the past but is intently focused on the future.”



A commitment to changing the world is in the University's DNA; it's what Graceland has done for more than 125 years – help to change the world for the better wherever students are planted.





Transformational leaders know how to inspire their peers, motivate people, and encourage their equals to foster and support meaningful change. By transforming tuition, we are increasing access to Graceland and offering more people the opportunity to carry it forward through their lives.

Where Now?

As President Draves and the Graceland faculty, staff, and administration look to Graceland's future, the strategic pillars of Blue, Gold & Bold are the guideposts for the work. The University remains laser-focused on its mission while navigating a higher education industry that has seen more disruption in the past decade than most predicted.

"Our ability to stay nimble during this time has been key," Draves said. "We have been so fortunate to have the support of the Board of Trustees through these changes. Their care for the institution is evident – it comes through in every interaction that I have with them and especially when I see them interact with students."

At Graceland's meeting of the Board of Trustees in November 2023, trustees spent focused hours interviewing students about what they love about Graceland and how Graceland can be better. Most of the students talked immediately about the importance of the connections they have made, both with their classmates and with faculty and staff members.

The students' feedback was cataloged for future discussions and planning, both for the Board of Trustees as well as for Draves and Graceland's Executive Council. Vice President for Institutional Advancement Kristi Hettrick '96 said, "The session with the students provided all of us with insights about the student experience that will help inform the future. In my seat, I now can tell our generous supporters exactly the challenges our students are facing and how they can make a direct impact on these amazing young people's lives."

For over 125 years, Graceland has been a diverse learning community committed to preparing students for meaningful and productive lives. A commitment to changing the world is in the University's DNA; it's what Graceland has done for more than 125 years – help to change the world for the better wherever students are planted. Graceland's tuition transformation is one more way to prepare students for meaningful and productive lives by actively inviting more students into the community with a streamlined and simplified financial aid process. The University has and will continue producing leaders who change the world, win Nobel Peace Prizes, create new medical treatments, and make their local communities better.

Draves continued, "The students – their experiences and their success – will always be what drives us forward. Graceland has an important role to play in the world. The world needs more Graceland graduates. It's as simple as that." ■





Welcome Aboard!

BY JENNIFER SMITH



Developing Meaningful Relationships with Faculty

According to the National Survey for Student Engagement, **Graceland is in the top 2% of the nation** in terms of faculty interaction with students outside the classroom.



Watch our video and learn more:
experience.graceland.edu

Having set sail for the 2023-24 academic year, we are thrilled to introduce Graceland's **NEWEST FACULTY MEMBERS AND NON-FACULTY APPOINTMENTS.**

With their academic credentials, professional accomplishments, and demonstrated leadership in their fields of work and interest, they bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the University. We are excited about the success stories they will write with our students inside and outside Graceland's classrooms, studios, and labs!

📺 **MAKING IT OFFICIAL** The group of faculty joined their colleagues, all decked out in their regalia, and students for the matriculation ceremony — the formal process of entering a university — held at the start of the academic year. Following the event, the faculty lined the sidewalk outside Shaw Center and cheered the students on as they made their way across the campus quad.

“This new class of faculty bring a wealth of academic experience. I’m so thrilled to see how they have quickly embraced Graceland and are pushing the students in their programs toward new ways of thinking.”

JOEL SHROCK, PhD
Vice President for Academic Affairs
and Dean of Faculty

Lamoni Campus Below, top left to bottom right:

Arup Ghosh, Assistant Professor of Computer Science
BT, West Bengal University of Technology; MS, University of Trento;
PhD, Ajou University

Austin Harrington, Assistant Professor of Humanities
BA, Grand View University; MFA, Lesley University; PhD, Iowa State University

Aryn Kruse, Assistant Professor of Education
BS, MEd, PhD, Iowa State University

Jake McGinnis, Assistant Professor of Humanities
BA, Northland College; MA, University of Idaho; PhD, University of Notre Dame

Layne Nowlin, Instructor of Health & Movement Science
BA, Graceland University; MS, University of Wisconsin La Crosse

Cara Phipps, Assistant Professor of Theatre
BA, University of Portland; MFA, The University of Texas at Austin

Shaen Polasky, Assistant Professor of Education
BA, Simpson College; MS, Walden University; EdD-ABD, Drake University

Iqra Shagufta Cheema, Assistant Professor of Humanities
BA, University of Central Punjab; MA, MPhil, Government College University;
PhD, University of North Texas

Non-Faculty

James Redmond, Director of Academic Support Labs & Tutoring
BA, Western Michigan University; MFA, University of Michigan;
PhD, University of North Texas

Parker Worden, Director of University Bands
BSEd, BA, BS, Northwest Missouri State University

NOT PICTURED

Felipe de Paula Nogueira Cruz, Assistant Professor of Biology
(January 2024)
BA, Mogi das Cruzes University; MS, Federal University of ABC;
PhD, Federal University of Sao Carlos





Honors students and faculty Brian White and Karen Gergely loving their trip to Chicago for the "Revolutionary Honors" 2023 NCHC Annual Conference this November.

A Vision of Growth

BY ANGELA SLOSARSKI

Imagine a space where the sharpest minds meet, not just to learn, but to challenge and inspire one another. That's the essence of Graceland's **HONORS PROGRAM**, a community that's less about setting boundaries and more about erasing them.

Initiated in the fall of 1985 under President Barbara McFarlane '49 Higdon and shaped by Graceland Professor Emeriti C. Robert Mesle, PhD, '72, this program began as a vision to do more than just educate; it aimed to transform. President Higdon and Professor Mesle wanted a transformational program that would nurture individuals to think beyond their chosen discipline or major.

Today, that program hasn't just stuck to its roots; it's grown stronger, evolving as the academic and world landscapes evolve. The Honors Program cultivates students who are passionate about contributing to society and preparing for a rapidly changing world. By fostering enriched educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, the Honors Program offers an engaging, stimulating, and rewarding experience. This program offers intellectual, financial, and emotional resources and support while encouraging service and leadership for the public good. Being involved with Honors

means pursuing a student-driven interactive learning experience where students build creative, interdisciplinary, and comprehensive skill sets while exploring complex issues in a diverse academic community. Honors students and faculty share a commitment and civic responsibility that extends beyond the classroom to local, national, and international communities.

It's not all talk, either. Since the beginning, the Honors Program's belief has been that learning extends far beyond the classroom walls. From adventures through Chicago's vibrant cultural landscape to performances at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, these experiences are as much a part of education as any textbook. The awe-inspiring architectural river cruises

Perks of the Program

Honors students enjoy these extra benefits like the freedom to register for up to 21 credits each semester, funded travel experiences, individualized mentorship, and all Honors Program members receive a \$1,000 scholarship that is renewable for up to four years (or qualified students can compete for a full-tuition Prestigious Honors Scholarship).

Learn more: graceland.edu/honors



Since the beginning, the Honors Program's belief has been that learning extends far beyond the classroom walls ... These shared experiences are more than just perks of the program; they are opportunities that bring the Honors community together, creating memories that every Graceland Honors student will carry forward throughout their lives.

and immersive neighborhood tours, like the one through bustling Chinatown, are not merely excursions but chapters in a living textbook. These shared experiences are more than just perks of the program; they are opportunities that bring the Honors community together, creating memories that every Graceland Honors student will carry forward throughout their lives.

Thanks to the visionary leadership of Honors Program Director Brian White, PhD, '92 and his connection with the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), and the collaborative efforts of Graceland Associate Professor of Art Karen Gergely, MFA, students enjoy access to a spectrum of rare national learning opportunities. They not only engage in high-caliber scholarly endeavors, such as student-editor positions at a nationally recognized peer-reviewed journal, but also have the opportunity to travel and experience hands-on education in America's National Parks, led by White and Gergely, as part of the NCHC's Partners In The Parks Program.

Whether it's deepening their academic footprint at regional and national honors conferences or expanding their cultural palette through trips to metropolitan hubs like Minneapolis or Chicago, our students are reaping the benefits of an enriched education. These experiences aren't just memorable – they're transformative, fostering a sense of discovery that propels our Honors community to new heights, infusing every learning opportunity with significance, adventure and an intent on building a "purposeful community."

"We know the future has greater uncertainties for this generation of students than for students in the past," White states. "Being purposeful in exposing our Honors students to these experiential education opportunities and asking them to adopt an interdisciplinary mindset in their Honors work will prepare them for that uncertain future in a way that no individual major ever can."

The Graceland Honors Program not only pays homage to the rich legacy of interdisciplinary and experiential learning but also actively pursues a vision of growth. With the goal of expanding the program to 100 students, we are dedicated to creating an even more dynamic and diverse community. This ambition to grow is matched by its commitment to broadening its influence, thereby equipping a larger cohort of students with the skills needed to become the innovators and changemakers our world needs. ■

The Gift of Transformative Experiences

Tom Hiles '82 has fortified the Graceland Honors Program with a \$125,000 estate gift commitment, celebrating his family's deep ties to Graceland and enriching the Mesle/Hiles Honors Program Endowment.



Initially started as a scholarship fund in memory of his brother Jeff '74, the endowment later expanded to support Honors in commemoration of the dedication to the university and program made by his sister Barbara Hiles Mesle '72 and brother-in-law Robert "Bob" Mesle '72. With his donation, Hiles highlights the importance of providing an enriched educational experience for talented students, particularly those from rural communities where educational opportunities may be scarce.

With a career in higher education advancement spanning over three decades across several universities, he understands the transformative potential of comprehensive Honors experiences. His philanthropic gesture is a call to action for alumni to invest in the places that shape lives. "I want to be a role model for giving back," said Hiles. "It's important to give to institutions like Graceland – who have made such a profound impact on our lives."

Hiles' planned gift secures the Honors Program's continued success, fostering a culture of interdisciplinary inquiry and real-world learning, essential for nurturing the next generation of thinkers and leaders. This strengthens the program, enriching its tradition of academic excellence and cultural growth for students.

– BY ANGELA SLOSARSKI



Our student-athletes and teams are doing amazing things.
The Stingdom is loud and proud!



Soleece Anabwani '24
Dance
Brownsville, TX

Amitai Afenjar '24
Men's Basketball
Culver City, CA

Sidney Gilliland '25
Women's Track & Field
Lee's Summit, MO

Juan Lopez III '24
Wrestling
Fontana, CA

A team of

BY SHANE ADAMS '99

YELLOWJACKETS

Yellowjacket athletic competition has always been a team endeavor. For the past several years, the athletics administration has mirrored that supportive mentality. Athletic Director Brady McKillip '00 helps **BUILD A WINNING CULTURE** alongside Associate Athletic Directors Zack Mullins and Stew McDole '65, and Senior Women's Administrator Erin Lundy '04. *Horizons* editor Shane Adams '99 sat down with the group for a conversation about the current state of athletics at Graceland.

What are the biggest successes of the last 12 months in the athletics department?

BRADY MCKILLIP: For me, it was that we helped bring in the largest recruiting class in eight years to the University. We had numerous sports meet and achieve goals – more than in the last two to three years. I don't want to say we caught lightning in a bottle, but we finally found a way to recruit student-athletes to Graceland. The last three years of recruiting have been tough; it was great to find something that really worked and we can hopefully carry that forward into next year.

STEW MCDOLE: I think the second part of that is that Graceland is bucking the trend on the demographic side because we have so many men. Across the country, colleges and universities are majority women, so I suppose there's a challenge there to us coaching women's sports to catch up, but it is a success.

ZACK MULLINS: This probably goes back past 12 months, but I'm really proud of the staff that we have been able to put together. I think we've been able to hire some really high quality coaches – whether it is football or track or dance – we're really high on how we're doing regarding those programs and we're working with the coaches now to fill those rosters.

ERIN LUNDY: I'm excited just about my position – Senior Women's Administrator – I'm really excited to be here as a resource and to represent our women's teams who might feel like they are less represented.

At this point, what are you doing to try and balance the coaching staff from a gender standpoint to help support that mission?

MCKILLIP: At the end of the day, we definitely want to hire the right person for the position, but we also are always trying to ensure that we are interviewing women, interviewing minorities, because we want our staff to support our student body, which is very diverse.

MULLINS: Another success is we had a national champion high jumper (Michael Millslagle '24), who has now represented the United States at two international competitions. And Sydney Gilliland '25, who also represented the United States this summer.

MCKILLIP: I also think that I would be remiss if I didn't mention our turnaround in the football program. We went from going 36 games without a win to winning four games in 2022 and six in 2023. The success we've seen with the Graceland Football Alumni Association is prompting other sports alumni to reach out, whether in Men's Basketball or Volleyball or others.

MCDOLE: I think that another big success is that we've finished Morden Center.

I'm glad you brought that up because that gives a nice segue into asking this question: How has the renovation of Morden Center impacted your teams?

MCDOLE: I think the biggest thing is that you don't have to be careful where they look anymore. And they can look anywhere and you go out of your way to explain to mom and dad. There are so many things – you can hear the PA, you can see past your hand – just so many basic things that the facility now has. It's easily 10 times better than it was when it was brand new in 1968.



© **THE FAB FOUR** Athletic administrators Erin Lundy, Zack Mullins, Stew McDole, and Brady McKillip have a team huddle out in the hallway of the Hampton Center office suites, which has become somewhat of a ritual and has forged a collaborative synergy.

MULLINS: I think it also sends an underlying message to every recruit that walks in that the University supports athletics. I think every recruit that walks in there thinks, 'Wow, this University really cares about its athletes.'

MCKILLIP: I think the game day atmosphere it provides now – the lighting, the way that we can introduce starting lineups, the PA, the scoreboard...

LUNDY: The climate and the environment. It used to be freezing in the wintertime and the hottest hot in the summer.

If you were dreaming big, what would you love to see in the future when it comes to facilities and potential growth opportunities?

MCKILLIP: One thing for me is – and I know we have a lead donor for it (see sidebar, page 23) – but a strength and conditioning center. I think athletic training needs to be integrated into it, but we also need to look at strength and conditioning coaches for the department. We have 22 sports and every sport, every coach is doing their own strength and conditioning. You know, my athletes get tired of seeing my face at practice and then you add that they have to see me for another hour and a half for lifting and conditioning. If we just had three strength coaches – one for women's sports, one for men's sports, one for football because of its size, *and* we could tie that into the health and movement science department. Classes in the strength and conditioning center, a place to do concussion training – this would really set us apart.

“Graceland talks a lot about learning in the classroom and learning outside of the classroom. So the bottom line is everything we do on the court, the pitch, the field, the diamond is part of our academic enterprise.”

STEW McDOLLE, ReD

Associate Athletic Director, Head Women's Volleyball Coach,
Professor of Physical Education

McDOLLE: I think Brady led with that because it's well on its way, but you couldn't talk him out of moving softball or baseball onto campus. And then I think a wrestling facility for women so we could add that as a sport.

LUNDY: I'm really proud of our athletic training room since we remodeled it about six years ago, but it's not big enough to

accommodate the current student body that we have let alone if we continue to grow and add more. We simply don't have enough hours in the day, enough space, or enough trainers to fit all that. Student-athletes even say that they get tired of waiting on us and they leave, which makes it more likely that they might get injured.

So let's talk about the team here — how do you all work together and collaborate?

McKILLIP: We have a Monday 9 a.m. meeting every week that includes the four of us and for the first half hour, our facilities coordinator (Brad Payne), our sports information director (Caitlyn Stupak), and the office manager (Mari Chandler). Then, if the four of us need to work on something, we have the next half hour for that as well. One thing, with being in the Hampton Center, my office is 10 feet from Stew's, it's 30 feet from Zack's, it's 15 feet from Erin's. We're all really good about just going to each other and we walk into one another's office and just bounce ideas, which is way more important to us than shooting an email. We do that too, but because we're in there, it takes 10 minutes. We've all been there for many, many years, and I think the friendship helps all of us so much in our communication and our goals for the university.

Women's Flag Football Kicks Off

BY SHANE ADAMS '99

It is the **FASTEST GROWING SPORT** in the United States. The International Olympic Committee just announced it will be a sport during the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Across the country, states are adopting it as an official high school sport. And now, Graceland will field a team, becoming the first college in Iowa to offer scholarships. It's not pickleball. It's women's flag football.

In development for over a year at Graceland, Women's Flag Football is having a moment on the national scene. Graceland Women's Flag Football Head Coach Greg Criswell '86 isn't surprised. "It's a pretty straightforward game," he said. "The mechanics of playing offense and defense are pretty easy to understand – on offense, it's throw, catch, and run; on defense, you have to be able to grab a flag. Sure, there are systems, but if you are a good athlete, you can pick up the game."

Criswell hosted an open tryout for flag football during the fall semester and has signed a few players to come and join the inaugural season for the Yellowjackets.

"We're going to play in the KCAC since the Heart doesn't have enough teams yet, but it's a tough conference," Criswell said. "You've got the three-time national champions (Ottawa University), and Kansas Wesleyan is tough. And now Baker hired a coach who is extremely connected to the national women's flag football scene so they'll be tough too."

The recruiting road for Criswell has been uphill so far. Most women's flag football takes place outside of the Midwest, in coastal states like Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and California. But he is optimistic and working hard to build the roster. "Almost as important as skill is the type of athlete and student we recruit," he said. "I'm looking for athletic students with high character who bring a great attitude and are willing to put in the effort."

With Women's Flag Football, Graceland is innovating and trying to create more opportunities for female athletes on its Lamoni campus. "We are bucking the trend nationally and have lots of men enrolled thanks to strong recruiting classes for both football and soccer," said Athletic Director Brady McKillip. "We always aim to have as much gender balance as we can and women's flag is a great step toward that goal."



Greg Criswell spoke about the program at the pep rally during Homecoming.

When it comes to recruiting, what are your major selling points in getting student-athletes to Graceland?

McKILLIP: For me, it's the type of person you recruit. You've got to be up front and honest with them from the get-go. Many times I have said to recruits, if you're looking for a social life four nights out of the week, going to a club, or downtown to dinner, this isn't your place. But if you're looking to become the best baseball player you can become and get your education *and* have the opportunity with minimal distractions, this is where you want to be.

So let's talk about transformational leadership. What are the students and their families that you currently have and the ones you're working with in the recruiting process, how are they viewing transformational leadership?

McKILLIP: I think parents love it. The parents I talk to buy into it immediately. The kids don't really look at it that way, maybe in year two, they start to understand it. As coaches, this was not new to us. We knew what was going on in athletics were the life lessons these kids could take after they graduated. For the University to see that and actually put it into a curriculum model is very innovative. In the recruiting space, we're selling it to the families because they understand the job market, they know what their kids are going to have to do in four years, the hoops they will have to jump through.

McDOLE: Graceland talks a lot about learning in the classroom and learning outside of the classroom. So the bottom line is everything we do on the court, the pitch, the field, the diamond is part of our academic enterprise. What Brady is talking about – it's always been true. We've always made a difference in lives. Transformational Leadership is giving students the ability to find out how to take advantage of the skills Graceland has provided them for years. At the end of the day, you have to be able to exercise strong leadership skills, and if you can do that, you'll have a leg up on almost everyone else in the marketplace.

Last question – what are you all most excited about?

McKILLIP: I think I see a path forward. The second major is a huge opportunity for our athletes and our students. The renovation of Morden – 15 years ago, I would have never thought we had it. Having a lead donor for a strength and conditioning center, it's showing new recruits and current student-athletes that there is a big interest in athletics. I see what the president and the development team do on the daily.

LUNDY: What excites me is just continuing to grow within this growth of Graceland, growth of our students, growth of all those relationships and how it will affect the future generation. I mean, you can tell there's a vibe on campus now that everyone is important. There was a longtime perception that athletics was not as important, but people are starting to show that they care, that it's important.

MULLINS: I think we have a lot of coaches who have a lot of talent. We have some young ones and it's our job to guide and help mold them and help them grow. The staff we have now, they're good coaches, they're good recruiters, and they're good mentors. I'm hopeful that we can position ourselves to retain those coaches and help them build and grow their programs to be successful athletic teams, because every coach wants that.

McDOLE: I think one last thing – you know, all four of us have our own responsibilities. You have the head athletic trainer and three head coaches here. It would be really easy for us to focus solely on our own programs, but I think you heard that you have four people here who have a big picture view, and I think that's pretty amazing. ■



BRING THE STING This early mockup reflects Athletic Director Brady McKillip's vision for what the indoor multipurpose training space might become – a synthetic turf football-style field in the center and weight training equipment on either side.

Future Strength and Conditioning Center Receives Lead Gift

BY SHANE ADAMS '99

As Graceland evaluated its facilities over the past several years, one thing was clear: it was too costly to renovate and maintain the swimming pool and it was an insurance risk, so during the Morden renovation, the contractors filled in the pool with the hopes that the structure could be turned into a state-of-the-art training facility.

That dream took its first step toward coming to life with a lead gift of \$800,000 by Greg '75 and Holly Lennon '78 Henson. The vision for the facility (located on the south side of Hampton Center) is one that will incorporate strength and conditioning and also serve as a classroom for the health and movement science department.

Do you want to be part of this exciting new renovation project? For more information about how to participate, reach out to the Advancement team at development@graceland.edu.

“We chose to make this gift because we see this as a valuable recruitment tool for Graceland. This facility should boost student enrollment and improve Graceland's athletic programs. Student-athletes deserve to have a top-notch training facility on campus. This addition will be a gamechanger for Graceland athletics.”

GREG HENSON '75

New Faces on the Board

BY SIERRA MARSHALL '21

Graceland's Board of Trustees welcomed **SIX NEW MEMBERS** at its August 2023 meeting.

These new trustees were recommended by the corporate body of Community of Christ in collaboration with Graceland's administration and bring a wealth of experience and knowledge from different industries, with one specific thing in common: a passion for Graceland and its students. The *Horizons* team asked the new trustees about their decision to join the board and what they are most excited for in the upcoming years for the University.



STEVEN E. GRAFFEO, MA, '80

Graffeo was born in Independence, Missouri, and at a young age was assigned by Community of Christ to French

Polynesia where he had the privilege to learn (and achieve fluency in) French and Tahitian.

"I feel gratitude that Graceland was there for me, my wife, my son, my siblings, and my parents and the hope for a future that will include our youngest son. A world without Graceland would be so great a loss. I feel a need to do my part in its continued life and vitality. I'm most excited about being a part of a community committed to addressing the needs of young adults who will create a world that is more caring, more compassionate and a better place for all."



LOUANN MUIR-HUTCHINSON, MPH, '77

Muir-Hutchinson is an HR management consultant and human resources executive with experience creating

succession plans and high potential development management tracks for leading private for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

"I accepted the nomination to be on the Board of Trustees because it came at the request of some spiritual leaders whom I respect, and it is always an honor to serve. I am very excited to see the focus on the Graceland Experience of radical belonging for students; these students will be positioned to interpret 'belonging' for the next generations as they take their place as leaders – not just now but for their whole lives! It's an honor to help them find their voice as they contribute to good in the world."



VINCENT E. LEWIS, EdD

Dr. Lewis knew from an early age that he was destined to help others. The satisfaction he found as a middle-schooler doing community

improvement and enrichment projects laid the groundwork for his adult life. "I always found it very rewarding and gratifying. That is why I did it then and continue to serve," he says.

"For me, joining the Graceland Board of Trustees allows me to give back to the university that gave me so much. I also believe that the current students at the university deserve the same experiences I did, and I want to ensure that we are

holding true to Graceland's core values for that to be achieved. What I am looking forward to most is seeing Graceland change and grow with the world around them. With the new pillars that the institution is following, I think gaining more "radical belonging" on Graceland's campus and seeing what that looks like for the students will really transcend the experience for all students."



MIKE SEAGRAVES, PhD, '94

Dr. Seagraves is a third-generation Graceland graduate and a lifelong member of Community of Christ.

After completing a bachelor's degree in Pre-Medical Biology from Graceland, Mike earned a master's degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Puget Sound in 1997, and a PhD in Global Leadership and Organizational Change from Pepperdine University in 2019.

"For me, serving on the Graceland Board of Trustees is a natural extension of my love for the University and all that it represents. I believe deeply in the power of community that resides at the core of Graceland's identity, and I am happy to serve in any capacity that will help to strengthen Graceland's mission in the world. These are challenging times for higher education, and I am excited to see the ways in which Graceland will rise in the face of adversity. The coming years represent a critical opportunity for Graceland to discern and evangelize its unique purpose in the world while simultaneously aligning our strategy and operations in ways that best embody and live that purpose every day. Pressure builds diamonds – and now is the time for Graceland to shine."

Enduring Times of Great Change & Challenge



GWENDOLYN HAWKS-BLUE, '68

Hawks-Blue graduated from Graceland College with a two-year degree, earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Kansas and a Master of Arts in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Missouri in Kansas City.

“As a female person of color with extensive social services experience, I hope to bring a particular perspective to strategic planning which will coalesce Graceland’s mission with the unique needs of its diverse student population – in a way that increasingly supports and inspires a sense of community while preparing for lifelong vocational, relational, and personal success. Transformational Leadership is unique and offers tremendous opportunity for building a sense of personal empowerment for each Graceland student. I am most excited about increased embracing of the Transformational Leadership program by the student population as it is continuously evaluated and revised.”



JIM LYSINGER, MBA, '86

Lysinger is a third generation Graceland graduate. Not only is it the place he met his wife, Cathy, he considers Graceland his family

university, church university, a place where young people of any faith (or not) are welcomed and encouraged to passionately pursue their ambitions.

“There are plenty of places to get an education, but Graceland *forms* people. It built in me a professional and interpersonal confidence that has served me well in a 30+ year business career. It did the same for my wife, Cathy, as a teacher, and our three children, Ty, Jay, and Haley, as they form their adult lives. Graceland has had such an impact on my extended family that in a way it is family. And when family calls, you lend a hand. Today’s leadership team recognizes a need for Graceland to adjust strategically as the world around it changes (at a pace faster than ever). We can start to see the results of what a very deliberate effort has been to modernize Graceland, while continuing to embrace the core of what has made it such a special place for so long. I’m excited to see that play out, to help guide that strategic plan, and for Graceland to emerge as an example of how to thrive by effectively embracing change.” ■



“Graceland's ability to evolve and tackle challenges in innovative and collaborative ways reach every corner of the University.”

I trust this message finds you in good spirits. In my role as the Chair of the Board of Trustees, I wanted to share my thoughts on some of the latest developments at Graceland.

First and foremost, the Board of Trustees is so excited about the gains we have seen on the Lamoni campus – our largest incoming class in eight years! Graceland’s ability to evolve and tackle challenges in innovative and collaborative ways reach every corner of the University. The energy we feel from new faculty and the impact they are having in the classroom and the community is felt by the trustees. Speaking of trustees, I am so thrilled by the diversity of thought and capabilities offered by our six newest trustees (see opposite page) and the three we added last year.

Our University’s success is made possible by the hard work of the faculty, staff, and administration at Graceland, but also by the generosity and support of all of you. Thank you for your unwavering help in the pursuit of our mission. As a board, we have challenged the organization to be innovative and take thoughtful risks that challenge our status quo, and we see the institution responding.

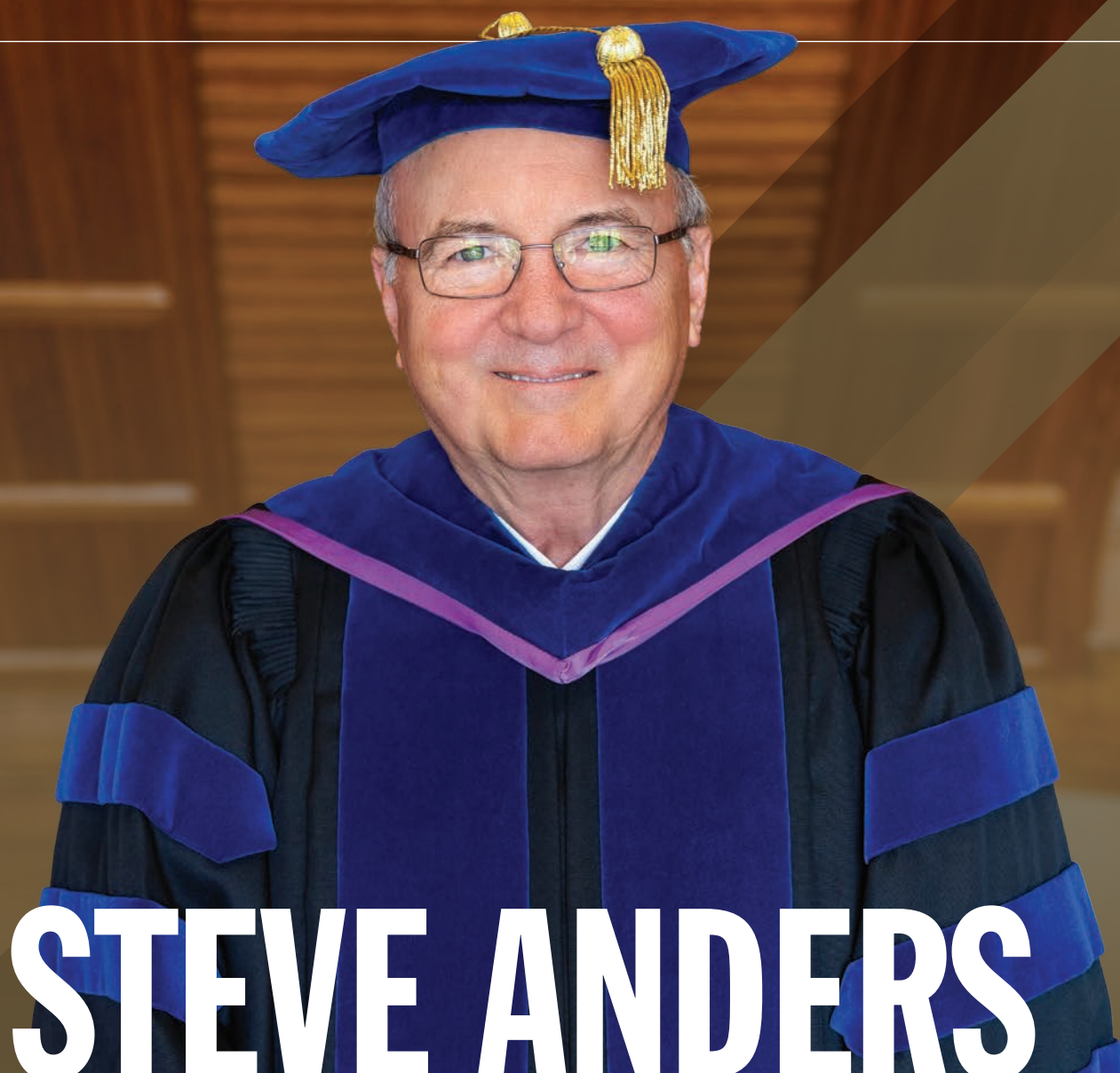
When the Board approved Graceland’s tuition transformation earlier this year, one trustee remarked that it was probably the most significant decision we would make during our tenure. Time will tell whether that is true or not, but it certainly is the right decision for this moment in time. It provides greater access to the Graceland Experience that we all hold dear and will build more transformational leaders for the future.

The last several years have seen our beloved University endure times of great change and challenge. But the collaborative work that has been done and continues to happen on behalf of Graceland by faculty, staff, administrators, and those who love Graceland is strengthening our institution for the future. We are becoming more nimble, growth-oriented, data-driven, less siloed, and ready to respond to the urgent challenges of the future.

Your input, as valued alumni and friends, is of great importance to us. Your experiences and perspectives have played a pivotal role in shaping Graceland’s past, and we hold them in the highest regard as we look to the future. We invite you to share your thoughts and ideas on the tuition transformation and any other aspects of Graceland that matter to you at feedback@graceland.edu. Your feedback will guide our efforts to create an even more vibrant and innovative educational community.

Thank you for being an essential part of the Graceland community. We appreciate your continued support, and we eagerly anticipate hearing your thoughts on the exciting changes ahead.

MICHAEL R. WILEY, PhD, '83
Chair, Graceland University Board of Trustees



STEVE ANDERS

A Distinguished Graceland Institution

BY SHANE ADAMS '99

“May you be filled with the courage to take on the challenges and to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead on the road you travel. May you never forget the lessons you learned during your time at this University, on this Hill, and may you always carry the memories and experiences with you as you move forward.”

STEVEN L. ANDERS, PhD, '73
Benediction from Graceland University's
127th Commencement, April 30, 2023

As Distinguished Professor of Economics Emeritus Steve Anders, PhD, stepped to the stage to offer the benediction on Graceland's commencement ceremony, those present likely felt the emotions of 45 years in the classroom flow through his words. For Anders, his prayer for the graduates to “find joy and fulfillment in their chosen paths” spoke to his own personal journey of joy and fulfillment through seven decades on “the Hill.”

Five years after graduating from Graceland in 1973, Anders returned to the institution to begin his teaching career. That storied career came to a close this year, 50 years after he graduated from “the Hill” and 45 after he joined the faculty.

Chair of the C.H. Sandage School of Business Jeff McElroy, EdD, took several of Anders' economics classes when he was a student early in the 1980s. He said, “Personally, I had Steve for several economics classes in the early 80s when I was at Graceland as a business and economics double major. Even back then, early in his career, he taught all of the really tough economics classes, including the senior seminar. He's always just been that good.”

Another of his colleagues, Professor of Economics Rob Poulton, PhD, said, “Steve has been an amazing mentor to me and countless others. His passion for teaching and for his students is contagious. He holds his students and his colleagues to high

standards, and they respect and appreciate him for this. We are forever indebted to Steve for the positive impact he has had on Graceland and on those who have had the pleasure of working with him over this time." Anders' time at Graceland spanned six (seven, if you reach back to his time as a student) decades and stretched into nearly every area of the institution. When he joined the faculty in 1978 to teach economics, he was influenced and mentored by legendary Graceland economics professors like Jerry Runkle '34 and Frank Hough '59. He also brought the influence of one of his graduate professors during his time at K-State.

"I was really influenced by Jerry Runkle and another professor of mine from K-State, John Nordin, that had a major impact on my teaching style," Anders said. During his time as a student, he took seven courses from Runkle, who repaid the favor by recruiting him to be a professor at Graceland.

As Anders reflected on his time as a faculty member, he holds many dear memories, but most significantly, "The level and intensity of respect I felt from so many of the students in my major – the sense of love and respect that I felt from so many of those students."

His favorite course to teach over the years was his senior seminar, a rigorous capstone course involving an oral presentation and a final paper of 20-30 pages. Anders has kept diligent records of this course over the years, including all of the final research projects that students completed from "Unemployment in Grand Cayman" to "The Determinants of Prices Within the Secondary Lego Market."

"During that course, I tell my students that I am your greatest advocate," Anders states emphatically.

Students shared their enthusiasm for Anders' style, and in 1985, he received the Graceland Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching just near the beginning of his career.

In 1989, Anders became chair of the Social Science Division, helping to expand business internships at Graceland and leading the effort toward creating the Accounting major.

From 1996 through 2009, Anders represented the faculty in the administration, first as Associate Dean of Faculty, then as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, making him Graceland's longest serving Dean of Faculty, though that streak was disrupted in 2006, when he was appointed Interim President following the resignation of late Ambassador John Menzies.

During his year as Interim President, Anders helped steady the University through a tumultuous period, and celebrated with students as they won the national men's soccer championship and national and world championships in the SIFE (then Students in Free Enterprise, now Enactus) competition in Paris, France.

Then-men's soccer head coach Ivan Joseph, PhD, '96 said, "Steve was a fan of excellence in all things that championed the student experience. I remember Steve and a contingent of fans waiting for us in the Kansas City airport when we arrived with the

[national championship] trophy. It was a nice, thoughtful touch as president that made our students and staff feel special."

"My experience as president was great because the job was totally different," Anders said. "I went wherever Institutional Advancement wanted me to go, and that year was the #1 fundraising year that Graceland had to date."

"But what was neat to me was being in different settings, whether it be a home or a church – interacting with people who had a love for Graceland and wanted to tell their story, and I was willing to listen. That really was a 'Wow' moment for me – working here on campus, you don't always hear those stories," he said.

Amidst all those accomplishments, another worth mentioning is the key role he played in the endowment of the C.H. Sandage School of Business and the Endowed Chair of Economics, which he has occupied since 1997. Even during his presidency, he stayed in the classroom because he wanted to teach his favorite senior seminar class.

"Barbara Higdon [President Emerita Barbara McFarlane '49 Higdon] thought I was crazy at the time, but it was so important for me," Anders said.

Final Papers Through the Years

Anders kept rigorous records of his senior seminar projects and papers, which are included as part of the syllabus. Browsing the papers offers a view into the history of not just his time at Graceland, but of the current events over the decades. Some samples:

The Economics of Pollution,
Ed Colyer, 1979

U.S. Dependence on OPEC Oil, Scott
Manuel, 1981

**The Less Developed Countries: Growth
Problems in Nations in Poverty,** David
Seda, 1983

The Effect of Women in the Labor Force,
Sonia Wheatley, 1985

**AIDS and its Effect on the Labor Force
and the Economy,** Jennifer Stone, 1987

**The Economics Effects of September 11,
2001 on the Insurance Industry,** Julie
Thomann, 2003

**The Effect of Hosting the Olympics on
the Greek Economy,** Andrew Neill, 2010

**The Economics of Marijuana and
Legalization,** Olivia Finger, 2015

The Sharing Economy, Ross Robino,
2017

**The Economics of March Madness,
NCAA Revenue Generation and
Redistribution, and the Effect of
COVID-19 on the March Madness
Tournament,** Kade Jensen, 2022

“
10/10
would recommend!”

WILL SIMMERS '23
Economics major

In 2010, Anders became only the third person in Graceland's history to be granted the rank of Distinguished Professor by the Board of Trustees, joining the elite company of Bruce Graybill '52 and Velma Ruch '41.

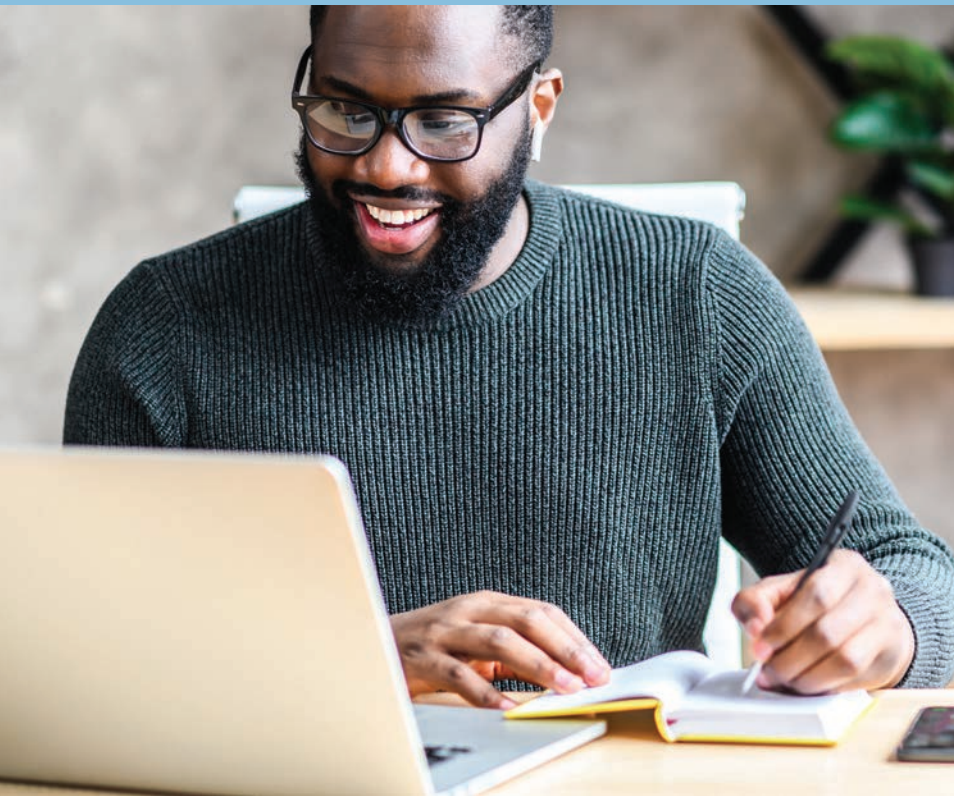
As he reflects on his career, he hopes that he is remembered for the quality of his instruction, his fairness, and his respect for students.

His current students have the utmost respect for him. Will Simmers, who graduated in 2023, said this about Anders: "One of the best professors I've had. He has made me feel more confident in my works in economics than I ever thought possible. He's always there when I have a question, and with his vast knowledge, he is able to explain things in a way that is easy to understand, which allowed me to further my understanding of the topics we studied. 10/10 would recommend."

Anders helped shape Graceland's faculty, its classrooms, and the administration for generations past and those still to come. Thank you, Dr. Anders, for the blue and gold blood, sweat, and tears you have given over the years in service to our beloved alma mater. ■

Lifelong Learning, Accelerated

A New Pathway for Professional Growth



It wasn't a Graceland University scientist who discovered the secret element to lifelong success. But Graceland has always been a bit of **A TRAILBLAZER IN ADDING THE POWERFUL COMPONENT OF LIFELONG LEARNING** to the educational mix. It continues to be a driving force behind the daily work of everyone at Graceland.

Now, Graceland has teamed with its partner in professional development, SkillPath, to offer an accelerated pathway for empowerment and growth: **Graceland Forward** was officially launched this summer.

Graceland has a 125-year history of keeping an eye on continuously evolving workplace needs to position students just where they need to be on their initial and continuing professional journeys. In 1995, Graceland acquired SkillPath to provide learning opportunities from the classroom to the boardroom.

To President Patricia Draves, Graceland Forward is just a natural progression of this shared commitment to foster lifelong learning and keep innovating how it is delivered. Draves is excited about the potential of this new platform to shape business leadership far beyond Iowa and the Kansas City metropolitan area, where SkillPath is based: "Graceland Forward will educate transformational leaders in businesses and organizations across the world."

"These accelerated certificate programs are affordable, accessible, and provide the skills individuals need to make career transitions, get promoted, make personal improvements, and stay marketable."

JEFF McELROY

*Faculty Advisor, Graceland Forward
Chair, C.H. Sandage School of Business*

Graceland Forward definitely does not hesitate to accelerate professional development: the online programs are delivered over the course of three days up to one week. In the live setting of the classes, learners interact directly with their business expert instructors and classmates. The personal investment of daily three-hour sessions provides them with career-focused skills they can immediately put into practice at work.

Once they complete a comprehensive exam, they receive a professional certificate from Graceland University along with an eBadge that they can proudly display in a digital format. As new cohorts kick off monthly, scheduling is very flexible, and the accelerated certificates may be eligible for employers' tuition reimbursement programs.

Currently, the program catalogue covers a wide range of essential leadership aspects and highly valuable competencies in strategic and HR management, administration, data processing/analysis, and communication.

With this offering, Graceland Forward is all set for success, finds Jeff McElroy, faculty advisor for Graceland Forward and Chair of the C.H. Sandage School of Business. "These accelerated certificate programs are affordable, accessible, and provide the skills individuals need to make career transitions, get promoted, make personal improvements, and stay marketable." Michele Markey, CEO of SkillPath, agrees: "They're a perfect fit for today's busy, on-the-move professionals." – BY JENNIFER SMITH

Interested in what Graceland Forward has to offer?

Q Learn more: graceland.edu/GracelandForward

CLASS NOTES

SEND US YOUR NEWS

Completed a degree program? Published a written work? Received that awesome promotion? Earned a prestigious honor? If so, we want to hear about it.

Submissions are included as space permits and may be edited for length or clarity. Send high quality digital photos — 300 dpi and/or minimum of 1,200 pixels on the image's shortest side.

Share your memories and milestones with us here: graceland.edu/classnotes

Class notes submitted between April 20, 2023, and Oct. 13, 2023, are included in this issue.

73 Linda Mai Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, published her debut children's picture book, *Deidra's Dolly*, as part of a four-book contract. Her next book is due to be published in 2024. 📧 **1**

79 Lucinda Sage-Midgorden, Hereford, Arizona, has produced the podcast "Story Power" (available on Apple, Google, and Spotify) for the past three years with guests including creators, authors, film makers, theatre, visual and musical artists. She received a "Positive Change Podcast Award" in June 2023.

87 Diana Jones, Lamoni, Iowa, was named the 2023 Lamoni Area Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. 📧 **2**

97 Christian Skoorsmith, Seattle, Washington, was inducted as a Fellow



into the National Guild of Hypnotists, the highest level of association in the organization. Fewer than .25% of hypnotists achieve this accomplishment. 📧 **3**

15 Alex Carr, Coralville, Iowa, is the new owner of Thrivent Mississippi Valley Associates financial planning practice, and also assumed command of the United States Army Reserves 389th Engineer Battalion's HHC unit as Company Commander. 📧 **4**

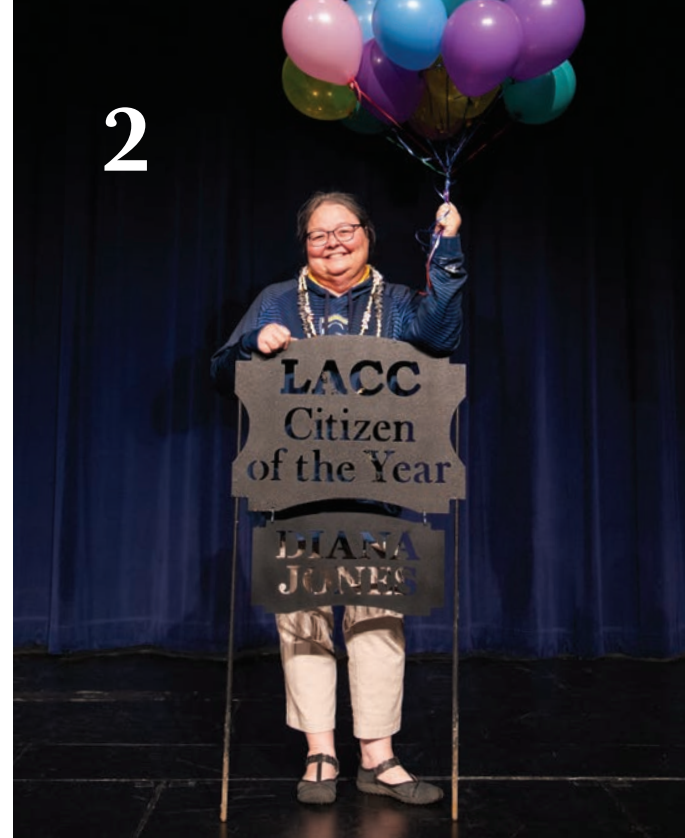
19 Ryan C. Tittle, Sumiton, Alabama, won second prize in Blue Institute's 5th annual Words on Water Writing Contest with the poem "The Rain Dance."

BIRTHS

06 Shane and Marilyn Everett, Grand Prairie, Texas, son Evan Blake, born April 21, 2021.

07 Chad and Brittany Everett, Lexington, North Carolina, son Kline Cole, born April 8, 2019, and son Drake Reed, born Dec. 21, 2022.

2



4

WEDDINGS

16 Benjamin Landers and Natalie Sherer, Portland, Oregon, June 22, 2019.

ANNIVERSARIES

51 Lloyd and Joan Fenn '49 Slight, Blue Springs, Missouri, 70 years, June 14, 2023.

60 Howard and Bonita Booth, Lamoni, Iowa, 60 years, June 29, 2023.

66 Robert and Gayle Boren '88, Corvallis, Oregon, 55 years, June 2, 2023.

68 L.D. and Marilyn Witte '72 Harsin, Independence, Missouri, 50 years, Sept. 15, 2023.

72 Darell and Valerie Gusse '74 Wegert, Minturn, Colorado, 51 years, July 8, 2023. **Rollin "Jim" and Jennifer King '74 Wolfe**, Sierra Vista, Arizona, 50 years, Dec. 23, 2022.



ALUMNI PROFILE

The Ukraine Mission

Installing a missile alert app on the phone, hotel staff introducing the bomb shelter, vehicles lining the country border highway in one direction: out, complex emergency surgeries in wartime conditions, no single quiet moment under air raid sirens to even think about the surrounding destruction and devastation, and a traumatized boy who stopped speaking – it has been a year of defining impressions for **VICTOR CZERKASIJ '22**.

A December 2022 graduate of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in Organizational Leadership program, Czerkasij did not hesitate to put his Graceland degree into action. He recognized how he could carry it forward in his communication with a developing network of medical professionals in Ukraine. Czerkasij describes the situation, “They are at the forefront of the greatest national healthcare crisis since the nation’s independence [in 1991],” he said. “They are very much in need of new ways to develop and channel their medical resources: it is a nation in triage.”

Since then, Czerkasij has traveled to Ukraine twice as a member of high-profile medical delegations upon invitation by the Christian Medical Association, LEAP Global Missions, and the Ukrainian/American humanitarian support group *Razom* (“Together”).

With most of Ukraine’s medical personnel serving at the front lines, Czerkasij and his colleagues provided desperately needed medical assistance to the civilian population behind the lines. Their assignment was to perform technically challenging surgeries at three children’s

Along with other medical professionals with various specialties, Czerkasij served at several hospitals and was able to conduct multiple consults and lectures for Ukrainian doctors and nurses, speaking fluently in their language. He notes his favorite part was the children’s hospitals, working with surgeons in a translation services role during very technical surgeries.

hospitals and a military hospital in the greater Lviv and Kyiv areas. He worked alongside top U.S. surgeons, physicians, and pediatric specialists, with a remarkable combined bandwidth of expertise in general plastic and craniofacial reconstructive surgery, otolaryngology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, and neurology.

The working conditions were demanding and humbling – the days were long and the queues of patients in front of the hospitals even longer, space was cramped and the infrastructure compromised. Czerkasij was struck by the altruism of his little patients – with donated funds, he purchased books, toys, and games for the kids. Many initially refused to accept a gift, pointing out that a child next door was worse off and needed it more than themselves.

Czerkasij’s organizational leadership insight, dermatology specialization, and fluency in Ukrainian were highly sought after. He translated during the surgical procedures, and outside the operating rooms he conducted consults and lectures. His DNP degree from Graceland sparked the interest of politicians and policy makers exploring international healthcare systems and public health frameworks as possible models for Ukraine.

In conclusion of their first Ukraine trip, the group’s work received recognition from the highest level – on behalf of President Zelenskyy, the Ministry of Health invited them to one of his residences, Potocki Palace, for a banquet in their honor. A most memorable evening, Czerkasij says, that was surpassed shortly after this second trip by a message from Kyiv – the boy who fell silent for a month in trauma response to a missile attack on his home, came out of his initial shock and asked for Victor, “the American doctor.”

– BY JENNIFER SMITH

DEATHS

- 42 Virginia Thompson Hummel**, Silverdale, Washington, June 27, 2023. **Lois White Madden**, Grandview, Missouri, July 13, 2023.
- 46 Rosanne Kuenzi Abreo**, Lee's Summit, Missouri. **Jean Self Brandt**, Sebastapol, California, July 26, 2022. **Betty Buckley Russell**, Blue Springs, Missouri, Aug. 6, 2023. **Maurice Russell**, Independence, Missouri, May 17, 2023.
- 47 Jean Hartschen Copley**, Glendale, California. **Doris Harris Mark**, Independence, Missouri, July 11, 2023. **John Parrish**, Overland Park, Kansas, April 14, 2023.
- 48 Lena Johnsen Dennis**, Boise, Idaho, Feb. 2, 2023. **Glen Henson**, Blue Springs, Missouri, April 28, 2023. **Max Matthews**, McAllen, Texas, Aug. 23, 2023. **Wallace "Wally" B. Smith**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, Sept. 22, 2023.
- 49 Kenneth Green**, Waukee, Iowa, Sept. 5, 2023.
- 50 Charles Gress**, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 8, 2023. **Ralph Pratt**, Independence, Missouri, April 28, 2023. **William Young**, Gulf Breeze, Florida, Oct. 8, 2022.
- 51 David Kaleikau**, Independence, Missouri, April 27, 2023. **Murray Smith**, Gresham, Oregon, April 18, 2023. **Carolyn Cunningham Weeks**, Independence, Missouri, June 30, 2023.
- 52 Harry "Wayne" Dobbs**, Louisville, Kentucky, Aug. 29, 2023.
- 53 John Carlyle Badder**, Thamesville, Ontario, Canada, Sept. 9, 2023. **Mary Loske Fox**, Chandler, Arizona, Aug. 31, 2023. **John "Ron" Gamble**, Rich Hill, Missouri, Oct. 29, 2022. **Verlyn Clark Hursh**, Warrensburg, Missouri, Aug. 2, 2023. **Gearl Koonce**, Georgetown, Texas, July 20, 2023. **Carlee Wilson**, Topeka, Kansas, Aug. 19, 2023.
- 54 James Corrington**, University Place, Washington, June 7, 2023. **Ruthanne Phillips**, Kansas City, Missouri, April 24, 2023.
- 55 Nancy Hunter DuRose**, Hendersonville, North

Graceland Ramblers

REUNION WEEKEND

March 23-24, 2024

East 39th & Impact Community of Christ
 15006 E 39th St S, Independence, Missouri 64055

Calling all Graceland Ramblers! Join us for a weekend of fellowship and music.
 Saturday will include rehearsals, meals, and lots of reminiscing and conversation, followed by a Coffee House style performance that evening and Sunday morning worship. The Saturday performance and Sunday service are open to the public (times TBA).

For more details and the full schedule, contact Bill Sherer wildeashe@gmail.com

*"We are the Ramblers. The Graceland Ramblers.
 We made our living on the road."*

- Carolina, July 14, 2023. **Dolores Green Krull**, Sun City, Arizona, July 2, 2023. **David "John" Noble**, Punta Gorda, Florida, May 14, 2023. **Metta Postlewaite Pickard**, Roseville, California, May 22, 2021. **Terry Smith**, Naples, Florida, July 16, 2023. **Helen "Shirley" Ellis Toth**, Flint, Michigan, July 7, 2021.
- 56 David Canning**, Independence, Missouri, Dec. 1, 2020. **Wanda DeSelms Eastin**, Blue Springs, Missouri, April 11, 2023. **Dixie Ashenhurst Garrett**, McKinleyville, California, July 11, 2023. **James Griffin**, Council Bluffs, Iowa, June 25, 2023. **Patricia Cottrell Jensen**, Yorktown, Virginia, Dec. 4, 2016. **Carolyn Merz Traver**, Gloucester, Massachusetts, Sept. 10, 2023.
- 57 Tom Bennett**, Independence, Missouri, Aug. 4, 2023. **Gary Hannaman**, Kansas City, Kansas. **Judith White Conkey**, Austin, Texas, May 21, 2023.
- 58 Carol Grover**, Indianola, Iowa, May 14, 2023. **Joseph "Joe" Pearson**, Kennesaw, Georgia, June 3, 2023.
- 59 Joyce Weaver MacNeil**, Lake Orion, Michigan, March 15, 2023. **Sharon Jones Winter**, Blue Springs, Missouri, May 24, 2023.
- 60 Gary Methner**, Mount Vernon, Washington, March 14, 2023.
- 61 James Heverling**, Bellingham, Washington, Sept. 4, 2023.
- 62 Gerd Buttgen**, Independence, Missouri, Sept. 13, 2023.
- 63 Lorange Dodds**, Green Valley, Arizona, April 15, 2020. **Donald Mitchell**, North Bay, Ontario, Canada, Sept. 23, 2023.
- 64 James Gargano**, Saint George, Utah, Sept. 10, 2023. **Sharon Kay Hutton**, Foristell, Missouri, Feb. 5, 2021.
- 65 Dianne Travis Davis**, Delta, Colorado, June 23, 2023.
- 66 Diane Elam Barnett**, Fremont, California, July 1, 2021. **David Jensen**, West Des Moines, Iowa, June 1, 2023.
- 67 Jerry Runkle**, Emporia, Kansas, Sept. 10, 2023.
- 68 Evangeline Pang**, Fountain Valley, California, March 1, 2023.
- 69 Patricia Bowman**, Salem, Oregon, June 21, 2023.
- 72 Howard "Alan" Smith**, Independence, Missouri, June 27, 2023.
- 73 Patricia Bacon**, Somerset, New Jersey. **Dale Jones**, Independence, Missouri, Nov. 12, 2018. **Lawrence "Larry" Moffet**, Kansas City, Missouri, April 26, 2023. **Marta Poore, Ketchikan**, Alaska. **Nancy Boyd Shaw**, Independence, Missouri.
- 74 Terry Buckalew**, Browning, Illinois, June 27, 2023. **Randal Fielder**, San Antonio, Texas, Dec. 22, 2020. **Lillian Constant Frizzell**, Corydon, Iowa, June 19, 2023. **Marie Barlow Geis**, Wheatland, Wyoming, Sept. 24, 2023. **Julie Varvaro Johnson**, Clearwater, Florida, June 13, 2023. **Betty Hutchins Leutzinger**, Independence, Missouri, Aug. 23, 2023. **Cyd Slayton**, Shawnee Mission, Kansas.
- 76 Sharon Millar Webb**, Red Oak, Iowa, Oct. 19, 2016.
- 77 Laura Ehlers Dickmeyer**, Bacliff, Texas, May 22, 2023.
- 80 Janet Gillette**, Amity, Pennsylvania, Sept. 22, 2023.
- 82 Sharrie Williams**, Bucaramanga, Colombia, Feb. 23, 2023.
- 87 Christopher Lloyd**, Austin Texas. **Dolores Wichmann Olig**, Red Oak, Iowa, Aug. 21, 2023.
- 95 Michelle Wiley MacDonald**, Folsom, California, Oct. 5, 2023.
- 99 Ricky Oandasan**, Pearl City, Hawaii, July 31, 2023.
- 00 Dianne Barnett**, Englewood, Florida, March 18, 2021. **Barbara Stark David**, Marshfield, Wisconsin, Feb. 21, 2013.
- 01 Ellen Coe**, Aurora, Colorado, Nov. 8, 2022.
- 10 Michelle Hamann**, Saint Joseph, Missouri, Sept. 27, 2023.
- 15 Patricia Smith Ballman**, Erie, Pennsylvania, July 16, 2023.
- 19 Riley Nilsen**, Portland, Oregon, Aug. 8, 2023.
- 20 Kimberly Farris**, Barnett, Missouri, June 21, 2023. ■

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Q View the online version of *Horizons* at: **graceland.edu/Horizons**

A LEGACY OF SCHOLARS

Alumni Endowed Scholarship

This scholarship fund provides financial assistance to direct descendants of Graceland University alumni.*

The Alumni Board Fundraising & Awards Committee works with Graceland Admissions to determine each year's recipients. Deciding criteria includes academic, community and church work, extracurricular activities, and a strong desire to attend the University.

Each year, Graceland accepts applications for this scholarship, starting on January 1 with a final **submission deadline of March 1.**

Know someone who would be a great candidate? Don't hesitate to share the application with them!

SIMPLE APPLICATION PROCESS

graceland.edu/AlumniEndowedScholarship
or call Alumni Programs at **866.GU4.EVER**

* Anyone who completes 12 semester hours of coursework at Graceland is considered alumni.



"I'm a third-generation Graceland student and Community of Christ member. I've always listened to my family's wonderful memories of their time at Graceland, but never imagined myself coming here. My grandma passed away in 2014, and knowing how dear she held Graceland to her heart made my once hard decision for college an easy one, and helped me feel closer to her. I never imagined moving 14 hours away from home for college, but here I am loving it!"

ALIYAH FARRELL '27

San Antonio, Texas / Biology Major
Sariah House, Softball, Campus Chaplain,
Co-host of Coffee in The Swarm podcast