

UPDATES FROM THE HILL **TIGER** PRIDE EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY





2019 Homecoming Brings Tiger Family to the Hill

Despite rainy weather, the cooler temperatures could not put a damper on the warmth of the Tiger Spirit during East Texas Baptist University's 2019 Homecoming festivities. ETBU hosted alumni from the College of Marshall (COM), East Texas Baptist College (ETBC), and East Texas Baptist University (ETBU) on the Hill for a celebration of past and present traditions during Homecoming weekend on Friday, October 25 through Saturday, October 26.

Since the program's inception in 2010, a total of 89 members have been presented with ETBU's traditional Golden Blazers as a symbol of leadership, spiritual authority, and God's blessing. These ambassadors have provided at least \$10,000 of financial support and countless volunteer hours to their alma mater. The 2019 Golden Blazers are Dorothy Keasler ('58), Denie Kendrick ('58), and Charles and Ora Nell Peden ('55, '54).

"For more than 100 years, the ETBU community has celebrated the tradition of Homecoming as a time of reunion, the celebration of memories, a festival of heritage, and a joyous occasion where friends and family reunite on the Hill," ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn said during the 2019 Homecoming chapel service. "The Golden Blazers, Alumni Award recipients, and Golden Lightkeepers exemplify the mission of ETBU by investing their lives and resources to enrich the experience at the University for our students. As students walk across the stage at graduation and become alumni of this institution, we pray you go from the Hill and follow the paths of those who are receiving awards here today."

During the Homecoming chapel service, the winners of the 2019 Alumni Awards were also announced. Dr. David Riddle ('68) received the J. Wesley Smith Achievement Award, Dale Perkins, Sr. was honored with the W.T. Tardy Service Award, Judge Brad Morin ('84) was awarded the Alumni Achievement Award, Ken Chinn ('81) was honored with the Unsung Hero Award, Dr. Nia Madison ('00) accepted the Young Alumnus Award, and Dr. Robert Spencer was chosen for the Blue and Gold Award.

Alumnus Paul Tapp ('69) received the Golden Lightkeeper Award. The award is bestowed upon alumni who graduated 50 years ago or more and demonstrate continuing achievement in their vocation, church, and community. Mr. Tapp was presented with a commemorative award to honor his support and exemplification of the mission of ETBU. In addition, 14 members of the Class of 1969 were recognized at the Golden Lightkeeper Luncheon following chapel.

"Teachers and professors, teach all of your students as lightkeepers. For they all are, already a city set on a Hill that cannot and will not be hidden," Tapp said. "For over 14

years, it was my privilege to cast a spotlight on many other alumni who have distinguished this school with uncommon service to mankind. The ETBU galaxy is bright with the warmth and light of our alumni.”

Tigers enjoyed activities such as the Perkins Family and Friends Reunion Concert, Tiger Pep Rally and Fireworks, Tiger Family Carnival and Tailgating, Decade Reunions, and the Tiger Football game. The 2019 Homecoming Court was announced during the halftime of the football game against Howard Payne University. The court included Freshman Duke and Duchess, Brendan Smith and Baylie Bradley; Sophomore Duke and Duchess, Jake Miller and Abigail Bath; Junior Duke and Duchess, Richard Clair and Emilee McCoy; and Senior Duke and Duchess, Lucas Pritchett and Joy Tama. ETBU seniors Lane Craig and Morgan Arst were named 2019 ETBU Homecoming King and Queen.

The Tiger Football team finished a successful Homecoming weekend with a 41-35 win over Howard Payne University and will host Hardin Simmons on November 9 at 2:00 p.m.

[See more photos from Homecoming Weekend](#)



Danger Rangers Supports Student Scholarships

The Danger Rangers, a former student group that was active on campus throughout the 1980s, celebrated the fortieth anniversary of their founding during Homecoming. In addition to reminiscing about their time on campus, the group raised nearly \$5,000 in support of the Danger Ranger Endowed Scholarship while they were on campus.

Each year, the Rangers Endowed Scholarship is given to students to assist in the development of individuals to their highest potential through respect, responsibility,

discipline, education, and knowledge.

Endowments are the gifts that keep on giving, and they can be designated by the donor to impact a specific program, building, student scholarships, or remain unrestricted to meet the most critical needs of the University. When starting an endowment, you can choose to honor a loved one, recognize a favorite professor, or create the endowment in your own name.

If you are interested in following in the Danger Rangers' footsteps, please contact [Scott Bryant](#) for more information.



Ring Blessing Honors December Graduates

East Texas Baptist University honored 103 graduating seniors with the presentation of their official ETBU Class Ring. The Ring Blessing was held Monday, November 4 for the December graduates of 2019. Inspired by Deuteronomy 6, the Class Ring allows ETBU Alumni to carry and display the love of Christ.

“Deuteronomy chapter 6 represents the heart of what we believe God was telling us to do as we developed the ring program. That we would tie these rings on our hands as a symbol for life,” ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn said. “Let these rings serve as a reminder of your memories made on the Hill, the truths that faculty members taught you in the classroom, and the meaningful conversations through fellowship with your campus community. We challenge you as you walk off this Hill to take these rings and use them to share what God has done in your life and what He is doing at East Texas Baptist University.”

The ceremony is designed to celebrate the accomplishments of students during their time at ETBU and connect generations of alumni. As a token of appreciation to graduating seniors, this graduation ring symbolizes the University’s blessing over students as they commence from ETBU to pursue their vocational callings. During the Ring Blessing chapel, Dr. Gevan Spinney, ETBU graduate (’98) and pastor of First Baptist Church Haughton, Louisiana challenged students to go all-in for Christ.

“Everyone matters to Jesus, God has placed you here for a reason,” Spinney said. “Here’s my challenge to you, don’t spend your years here at ETBU just giving a little bit. Go all in. Sell out to Jesus Christ. All of our lives are broken by sin, but every person in this room matters to Jesus and every one of us can share Jesus with somebody.”

Each ring features the seal of East Texas Baptist, surrounded by the cornerstones of the University – *Veritas*, *Mores*, and *Scientia*, which translate from Latin to Truth, Character, and Knowledge. Inscribed in the ring are significant icons of ETBU and the Christian faith, such as historic Marshall Hall, the Light on the Hill, Max Greiner’s Divine Servant Statue, and the Bible. These symbols are meant to remind Alumni of God’s work in their lives and their transformational experience at East Texas Baptist University.

“When I look at my ETBU ring I will reflect back on times where I cheered on the sidelines of the Ornelas Football stadium, found myself humbled by God in the Rogers Spiritual Life Center, and served across the globe in Japan,” ETBU graduating senior Ronni Ward said. “Once a Tiger, always a Tiger, and that’s exactly what my ring will display to the world in which I will encounter my next big adventure.”



ETBU Honors University Donors During Legacy 1912 Luncheon

East Texas Baptist University welcomed ETBC and ETBU retirees, Legacy of 1912 Society Members, and Endowed Scholarship Donors to campus Monday, November 4 for the annual Legacy of 1912 Society Luncheon. During the luncheon, the University celebrated those who choose to give, so ETBU students can continue to pursue the God-given calling on their lives.

“God calls all of us, no matter your age. It’s not about an individual, it’s about the people of God coming together and serving Him on this Hill,” ETBU President Dr. J. Blair Blackburn said during the luncheon. “Every student in this room is a student that you have enabled, through your investment, to come to ETBU and pursue Christian education.” Dr. Blackburn continued, “Students, as God blesses you to move from the Hill, remember the institution and what God is doing here. We have a responsibility to the Lord, to each other, and to the future generation of students, to carry forth what God has put in our hands to ensure that this institution remains faithful to Him and never moves from its foundation as a Christ-centered university.”

The Legacy of 1912 Society is comprised of alumni and friends who, through thoughtful estate planning and other forms of planned giving, ensure that resources will be available to support ETBU far into the future. In honor of the service and gifts he has given to the University, Dr. Donald Alford was presented with the 2019 Legacy Award.

“All you have to do is speak to one of our students to find out that the investment you are making will not only transform their lives today, but will transform other lives for eternity,” Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Thomas Sanders added. “Each one of you are making a way for students to encounter Christ and to give an education that will equip them for the calling God has placed upon their lives.”

For many Legacy of 1912 members, generations of ETBU Alumni and students have fondly called the University their Home on the Hill. The impact of their giving, which includes wills, annuities, trusts, and insurance policies, can be seen across campus.

"There have been many changes to the campus since I attended here, but the camaraderie and the Christ-centered education remain the same," ETBU attendee (65'-68') Peggy Futch said. "I have always been taught to take care of my home, so that's why I give to ETBU. When I come to campus, it feels like I'm home."

The Legacy of 1912 Society is named in honor of the year the charter was signed establishing a Christian college in Marshall, Texas.

"Legacy is the word of the day," Vice President for Advancement Dr. Scott Bryant said. "All of us want to leave a legacy, a mark on those we have met and those with whom we have shared our lives. Each guest here today should be proud of the legacy you have left through your beneficial service and gifts to this institution."



Get to Know Alumnus Aaron Dickinson ('95)

Like many kids that grow up in a college town, Aaron Dickinson ('95) had no interest in attending ETBU when he graduated high school. A Marshall native, Aaron headed to LSU as a freshman on full music scholarship; however, God had other plans and Aaron eventually found himself transferring to study music at ETBU.

"When I left a full scholarship at LSU to go back home to ETBU I thought I was crazy," Aaron said. "Yet, there were professors, students, and staff at ETBU I needed to rub shoulders with that made a difference in my life."

Currently, Aaron is the Lead Pastor at Swartz First Baptist Church outside of Monroe, Louisiana and serves as the Northeast Louisiana Area Director of Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA).

"My journey after college took me to student ministry and becoming a team chaplain for a middle school football team," Aaron said. "It seemed every time I moved, God opened a

wider door for sports ministry. Now, I have the incredible opportunity to serve coaches and athletes from all over the nation and speak to different college teams that come to the area to play ULM and Louisiana Tech."

According to Aaron, his time at ETBU helped him learn how to integrate his faith into his everyday life because of the influence of his professors on the Hill.

"When I transferred to ETBU, the people I grew up around became my professors and my biggest encouragers," Aaron said. "I had so many professors speak into my life and made the transition back home so valuable. I began to pursue my career through an understanding of calling instead of just a vocation."

Today, Aaron and his wife, Sharron, have five children and reside in Monroe.

ETBU in the News

ETBU Inspires Students Through the Calling Conference

East Texas Baptist University hosted its fifth annual Calling Conference on Wednesday, October 30 for ETBU students who are drawn to vocational ministry. The conference hosted and provided students with a deeper understanding of specific callings with opportunities to learn from experienced ministry professionals. [Read more.](#)



Kinesiology Students host Field Day for Community Children

Over 350 three and four-year old students from Marshall ISD enjoyed the East Texas Baptist University Kinesiology Department's 12th annual Washington Early Childhood Center (WECC) Field Day on Wednesday, Oct. 30. [Read more.](#)



Pray for ETBU

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