

UPDATES FROM THE HILL
TIGER PRIDE
EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



ETBU Launches Campaign to Move School of Nursing to Downtown Marshall

The ETBU School of Nursing is relocating to the Marshall Grand in downtown Marshall. The School of Nursing attracts many students every year as our graduates are highly sought after for their outstanding knowledge and compassionate care for patients. ETBU has been equipping Bachelor of Science Nurses with a high level of efficiency resulting in cohorts which consistently perform with 100% pass rates on the National Council Licensure Examination. The relocation of the School of Nursing is needed as the current location is inadequate for the expansion and growth of the program.

School of Nursing Dean Rebekah Grigsby is enthusiastic about the move downtown. "Providing our students with the latest innovative techniques, modern simulation equipment, and enhanced clinical facilities will better prepare ETBU nurses with the skills, experience, and confidence to effectively address patient health care needs. The relocation to our new downtown campus in the historic Marshall Grand will enable our program to grow and help meet the profession's acute nursing shortage."

The cost for renovation of dedicated space at the Marshall Grand and for new equipment is

\$2.2 million. ETBU recently received a \$400,000 challenge grant from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma, that will be awarded upon successfully completing the campaign project balance of \$770,000. ETBU has already received \$1.43 million in gifts and pledges to support the academic program expansion. To learn more go to www.etbu.edu/schoolofnursing.



ETBU Alumni & Friends Dinners Across Texas

East Texas Baptist University is hosting Alumni & Friends dinners in various cities this Summer. Guests will have the opportunity to meet ETBU President Blair Blackburn, Vice President Scott Bryant, and other ETBU leaders. Dr. Blackburn will provide an update on the latest happenings on campus and will share the vision for the future of the institution. Make reservations to join us for a free fajita buffet dinner with other members of the ETBU Family.

Monday, June 26 in San Antonio @ Pappasito's, I-10 & Wurzbach Rd.

Tuesday, June 27 in Austin @ Pappasito's, I-35 & Hwy 290

Monday, July 10 in Arlington @ Pappasito's, I-30 & Cooper St.

Tuesday, July 11 in Dallas @ Pappasito's, 10433 Lombardy Ln.

Monday, July 17 in Houston (North) @ Pappasito's, I-45 & Airtex Dr.

Tuesday, July 18 in Houston (South) @ Pappasito's, I-610 & Kirby Dr.

Each dinner starts at 6:00 p.m. For reservations email Minda Purdie at mpurdie@etbu.edu or call Minda at 903.923.2071. We look forward to connecting with Tiger Alumni and friends of ETBU!



The Traveling Tigers will take two trips in 2017. ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn & First Lady Michelle Blackburn will host a trip to Colonial Williamsburg and The Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Virginia, October 4-8. The trip includes visits to Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the home of James and Dolly Madison, and the University of Virginia. To learn more about Colonial Williamsburg go to www.colonialwilliamsburg.com.

November 29-December 3, ETBU First Lady Michelle Blackburn will lead a trip to New York City. This trip includes lodging at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square, tickets to *Waitress* the musical on Broadway, and the Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes. It is a fabulous opportunity to see New York City during the Christmas season.



For more information about the Traveling Tigers trips, contact the Office of Advancement at 903.923.2071 or travelingtigers@etbu.edu. Space is limited, so don't delay!

Alumni Spotlight

Monica Dudley Weldon (91') taught science courses in higher education and public schools for 23 years before founding *Bridge the Gap-SYNGAP-Education and Research Foundation* in 2014. Monica currently serves as the President and CEO where she works to raise awareness, fund research, and support families who are affected by the SYNGAP1 genetic mutation. The SYNGAP1 gene is often referred to as the "learning and memory gene" as it plays a crucial role in brain development.



Monica's work is very personal as her son was the first to be diagnosed with the SYNGAP1 gene mutation at Texas Children's Genetics Clinic in 2012. At the time her son was one of six known people with the condition in North America. As she learned more about her son's condition she began to chronicle her journey on a blog to help her process the information. Her blog helped her connect with other families who are affected by the SYNGAP1 mutation. They formed a support network, but more work was needed. Monica then took a leap of faith to stop teaching and start *Bridge the Gap*.

Monica is working every day to bring hope to people who have family members affected by the SYNGAP1 mutation. She is making an impact in the lives of others as she fights for research dollars, convinces doctors to initiate research, and provides resources and knowledge to family members. To learn more about *Bridge the Gap* and the SYNGAP1 mutation go to <http://bridgesyngap.org/>. Keep up the great work Monica!

Stay in touch and share your news with your ETBU Family. Send your career accomplishments and family updates to alumni@etbu.edu or click [here](#) to update your information.

For more information please call:

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