

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



ETBU Responds to Hurricane Harvey

When ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn asked for the Tiger Family to collect supplies to assist those affected by Hurricane Harvey, the campus and community responded with sacrificial generosity. ETBU students, faculty, and staff shared the request on social media and the University quickly became a prominent drop-off location for donations in Marshall.

Dr. Blackburn and a team of administrators traveled to Beaumont and Southeast Texas to deliver the supplies. Unfortunately, the flooding blocked the roadways on every southern route attempted at Kountze and Kirbyville. The team prayed to God for guidance and called First Baptist Church Woodville. The evacuation center in Lumberton flooded and

FBC Woodville had just been notified by the Red Cross that all the evacuees from the Lumberton site were being transferred to their church. Members of FBC Woodville shared that the ETBU phone call was an answer to prayer. The Lord knew where the greatest need was and planned for the donations to be delivered to the new evacuation site. Upon arrival, the ETBU team was welcomed by ETBU alumni Beverly Johnson ('74) and her daughter, Ashley Spurlock ('07), who serves as Children's Minister at FBC Woodville.

ETBU and the surrounding community responded to the call and will continue to determine ways to serve the Houston area and southeast Texas region. ETBU Director of the Great Commission Center Lisa Seeley is coordinating a mission trip during Fall Break to partner in the cleanup efforts. Already, over 80 ETBU students have volunteered to serve during their Fall Break. In addition, the Tiger Bass Fishing Team helped ETBU alumni Bryan and Christie Thomas, whose home flooded in Lumberton. East Texas Baptist has committed to praying for and serving the needs of those affected by Hurricane Harvey.

ETBU Enjoys Record Enrollment

East Texas Baptist University achieved a historic milestone with record enrollment standing at 1,533 total students. This number represents a five percent growth from Fall 2016. In addition, the University's freshmen enrollment of 419 new Tigers is the largest freshmen class in the history of the institution. The collaborative effort of Admissions and Athletics increased the new freshmen cohort 21 percent over Fall 2016.

"ETBU faculty and staff are committed to helping our students succeed in the classroom, co-curricular activities, community service, and ministry. Our desire is for both their intellectual development and spiritual formation through a transformative ETBU educational experience," ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn said. "Our campus community unites together in the call to effectively serve these students as they pursue their Christ-centered education."

In addition to the changes made in the last two academic years, such as developing a Bachelor of Science in Sports Management, a bachelor's degree completion program for adults, the RN to BSN program, an Online MBA, and increased online course offerings, ETBU has continued to expand programs to broaden its reach. The University's addition of new graduate programs, including Master of Science in Kinesiology, Master of Education in College and University Leadership, Master of Education in School Counseling, and Master of Arts in Christian Ministry, provides the opportunity for more students to continue their education.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, ETBU added developmental men's basketball, pom, and hockey. In 2017-2018, the University added developmental women's basketball. Tiger Athletics will offer men's and women's golf, as well as acrobatics and tumbling in 2017-2018, for an increase of over 100 new student-athletes since 2015. These athletic programs help with growth and retention as teams engage in training, study halls, fellowship, and discipleship.



ETBU Makes Progress on School of Nursing Campaign

East Texas Baptist University has made significant strides in its campaign to move the School of Nursing to the Marshall Grand in downtown Marshall, Texas. The renovation of the facility will allow ETBU to educate additional nurses to help meet the growing need for health care professionals throughout the region. The project will also include a high-fidelity, state-of-the-art nursing simulation lab, in which students will gain hands-on experience by learning with patient simulators.

"We see the move to the Marshall Grand as a wonderful opportunity to grow our program, while providing needed resources for our students. Ultimately, this impacts health care practice in our community, the East Texas region, or wherever our students go as they serve Christ as nurse professionals," ETBU Dean of the School of Nursing Rebekah Grigsby said. "This new space will provide an innovative environment to accomplish the mission of our school. We are grateful to all who have already contributed to our campaign and have faith that we will reach our funding goal."

In January 2017, East Texas Baptist received a \$400,000 challenge grant from the J. E. and L. E. Mabee Foundation of Oklahoma. With a total project budget of \$2.2 million, ETBU must raise the \$1.8 million by January of 2018 to receive the challenge grant from the Mabee Foundation.

Currently, the University has raised \$1,339,443 in gifts and pledges from individuals, foundations, and businesses. ETBU representatives are visiting with friends and alumni in

order to successfully complete this project by raising the remaining \$471,936.

"We are thrilled with the response that we have received from alumni, friends, foundations, and community members to our School of Nursing campaign," ETBU Vice President for Advancement Scott Bryant said. "Relocating the School of Nursing to the Marshall Grand will provide us the additional space needed, so we can train more nurses to help meet the growing need for trained medical professionals in our state and region."

To contribute to the expansion of the ETBU School of Nursing, visit www.etbu.edu/schoolofnursing. To learn more about the campaign, please contact the Office of Advancement at 903.923.2071.



Join us for Homecoming 2017!
October 13-15, 2017
Learn more at www.etbu.edu/hc2017

Don't miss the Tailgating and FREE lunch at The Grove on Saturday at 11:00 a.m.
and the Tiger football game at 2:00 p.m.!

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