

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



ETBU's Fall 2018 Commencement ceremony was held on Saturday, December 8 in Baker Chapel of the Ornelas Spiritual Life Center. ETBU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Thomas Sanders, assisted by the academic deans, presented all 134 graduates. ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn presided over the ceremony as 106 students received undergraduate degrees and 28 received graduate degrees. During the ceremony, graduate Mpanga Chanda received the President's Award for her exceptional example as a Christian leader, scholar, and servant.

"This is the largest Fall Commencement in the history of East Texas Baptist University," Dr. Sanders said. "ETBU first awarded associate degrees in 1919 and bachelor's degrees in 1945. Commencement has always been a special time in the life of the University. It is an event that celebrates the relationship between students, staff, and faculty. It is also a time for the University and the family of the graduates to join together in pride and celebration.

The light of knowledge displayed on the stage is a replica of the light that stands in front of Marshall Hall. The light stands as a symbol of the University's commitment to the integration of academic discipline and faith in Jesus Christ."

To read more about Commencement, click [here](#).



The Tiger Family Enjoys Christmas on the Hill

There is nothing better than Christmas on the Hill! Students enjoyed a break from studying as they came together in the Quad for the lighting of the ETBU Christmas tree and the reading of the Christmas story. The ETBU Family officially rang in the Christmas season on campus by decorating Christmas cookies, drinking hot chocolate, taking pictures with Santa, and enjoying carriage rides around campus. This year a reindeer made a special appearance as well! Students, faculty, staff, and children gathered around the ETBU Christmas Tree as President Blackburn read Luke's account of Jesus' birth. Christmas on the Hill is a wonderful tradition that reminds the ETBU Family that the birth of Christ is the reason for the season.



ETBU Theatre Performs *A Christmas Carol*

The ETBU Theatre Arts Department performed *A Christmas Carol*, a musical adaptation for the stage of the story by Charles Dickens. The production was held at the Marshall Convention Center on November 29 - December 2. Directed by ETBU Associate Professor John Dement, the 31-person ensemble worked diligently to prepare for the performances.

"In both acting and music, we had experienced performers and some who had never walked on stage before. It was challenging, but they all worked very hard. From a collaborative standpoint, the preparation was fantastic," Dement shared. "Everyone is familiar with some version of the story. My vision was to show the audience what is in their memory. It is a Victorian fairytale. The overall flavor of the play is what the audience would expect to experience, making them feel comfortable and at ease."

From costumes to stage design, Dement's vision informed the production to create a traditional holiday experience for the crowd to enjoy. Each production element had a part in telling the story and emphasizing the musical's themes.

"*A Christmas Carol* is a unique musical," ETBU senior Payton Weinzapfel explained. "As my different roles called for various accents and demeanors, I spent a lot of time in dialect training learning how to be heard and understood in the songs. I have many memories of going to see holiday shows with my friends and family. It is a very sweet time, where you can rest in the merriment and joy."

To read the full story and see more photos from the production, click [here](#).



ETBU Participates in Operation Christmas Child

East Texas Baptist University Tiger Athletics recently held their third annual Operation Christmas Child (OCC) Wrapping Party as a part of the Samaritan's Purse National Collection Week. Tiger Athletics collected 230 boxes for boys and girls through donations from over 500 student-athletes. Following the event, the boxes were delivered to Summit United Methodist Church in Marshall for delivery to Samaritan's Purse.

"The third annual Operation Christmas Child Wrapping Party was once again a great success. The ETBU student-athletes contributed over 230 shoeboxes that are full of gifts and will enable children all over the world to hear the story of Christ and the true meaning of Christmas," Vice President for Athletics Ryan Erwin said. "I truly appreciate the hearts of our student-athletes as they continually go out of their way to spend their personal time and resources to serve others."

All of ETBU's 16 NCAA Division III and five club sports participated by contributing toys and wrapping each box. The event was an opportunity for the teams to serve and fellowship with one another. As a part of the tradition, they listened to Christmas music and enjoyed hot chocolate and Christmas cookies.

"I loved the fellowship that came with the Operation Christmas Child Wrapping Party," ETBU senior Men's Basketball player Jordan Gray shared. "Anytime our team gets together outside of basketball to serve the community, it strengthens our relationships and shows us what life is all about. Knowing that a little kid somewhere that usually wouldn't get much, if anything, is going to be opening up this gift at Christmas brings such joy to our team."



CARE for Craig Hall

As a testament to Dr. Robert E. Craig's legacy of leadership, the University plans to renovate Craig Hall for use by ETBU's largest academic school, the Frank S. Groner School of Professional Studies. This facility will house all undergraduate and graduate programs in kinesiology, clinical lab sciences, and adult studies. Programs like athletic training not only provide curricular experiences for our students, but they also train students through clinicals that support the nearly 40% of the student body, who are student-athletes involved in ETBU's 16 NCAA Division III and five club sports. In addition, graduate assistants, who serve students by coaching, leadership, and discipleship to students, will receive their training from the Christian faculty, working and teaching in Craig Hall. Enhancements to this time-honored facility will include new labs and instructional space to give theoretical instruction, practical real-world experience, as well as research into the science and application of kinesiology.

Your support will provide our current and future students with the modern educational space needed to develop skills for their callings. Please partner with us to honor Dr. Craig and provide ETBU students with a 21st Century learning environment.

CARE for Craig Hall



Give Differently this Christmas Season

We invite you to partner with East Texas Baptist University to help us fulfill our Christ-centered mission. Whether you decide to give to student scholarships, the Blue & Gold Fund, CARE for Craig Hall or Tiger Athletic Mission Experiences, every dollar helps ETBU advance the Kingdom of God.

[Give Now](#)



ETBU Cub and Tiger Club

The Alumni Office is excited to offer the ETBU Cub and Tiger Club programs to the children and grandchildren in the ETBU Family. The programs nurture and develop participants' connection to the University in hope that one day, they will enroll as an ETBU Tiger.

The **ETBU Cub Club** is for infants to children seven years old. The **ETBU Tiger Club** is for those between the ages of eight and 18. Every year the participants receive a birthday card from the University and will receive age-appropriate ETBU gifts on select birthdays. The cost for the program is a one-time fee of \$25 per participant. Enroll your children or grandchildren today!

ETBU Cub and Tiger Club



Give to ETBU when you shop at Kroger

Kroger provides financial support to nonprofit organizations through their Community Rewards Program. You can register your Kroger Shopper's Card in the program and link your card to ETBU so that Kroger will give back a portion of your purchases to the University. To register, log into your account [here](#). Then, click on the link on the right side of the screen that says "Welcome" followed by your name and choose "My Account". Next, scroll to the bottom of the screen to the "Community Rewards" section and click on "Enroll", and choose East Texas Baptist University.



Mark Your Milestone Brick Campaign

The Office of Advancement invites former students to commemorate their time at ETBC or ETBU with a personalized brick for \$100 each. Every personalized brick will be placed outside the Ornelas Student Center in the Quad. As there are only 145 remaining available spaces, don't hesitate to mark your milestone with an engraved brick.

Engraved bricks can also be purchased as a gift to honor graduates, fellow classmates, professors, coaches, or family members.

Your \$100 donation will serve as a lasting reminder of your contribution to support the continued growth of the University. The Mark Your Milestone brick campaign provides an affordable and concrete way for all alumni to extend their ETBU legacy. Click below to order your brick today.

Mark Your Milestone

Purchase Your ETBU Alumni T-shirt



New ETBU Alumni t-shirts are now available online! Shirts are available for \$20. The cost of the shirt is \$10, and the balance will be a tax-deductible gift to support the ETBU Blue and Gold Fund. Blue and Gold funds are used to provide support throughout the University, such as financial assistance for students, lab and classroom equipment, and campus improvements. Click the link below to purchase your Tiger Alumni t-shirt.

Buy Now



Help Us Connect with ETBU or ETBC Tigers

We are looking for our Tiger Alumni and need your help. Please look at the link below to see who we are trying to locate. We want to keep all of our Alumni informed about the exciting things happening on the Hill! If you see a college friend or former Tiger classmate on the list, encourage them to submit their current contact information. Please help spread the word on social media as well.

ETBU Alumni: Project Locate.

Support Christ-Centered Higher Education at ETBU

The Fall edition of the Hilltop will be hitting
your mailboxes next week!

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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