

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



## **ETBU Celebrates Record Enrollment**

East Texas Baptist University sets a new record enrollment this Spring 2019 with 1,398 students, an almost two percent increase from Spring 2018. Graduate enrollment has grown more than four percent from Fall 2018.

“It is exciting to be a part of the enrollment growth at ETBU and see the record numbers of students returning and new students joining the Tiger family,” ETBU Vice President of Enrollment and Administrative Affairs Kevin Caffey said. “I am grateful to work with an incredible team of Admissions and Financial Aid staff members, who care about students and serve relentlessly each day to ensure students are guided through the admissions, scholarship, and financial aid processes. I am thankful for generations of donors, who have given to ETBU, allowing the institution to provide generous scholarship packages to students, making private Christ-centered education a reality.”

Quality academic programs and student life activities contribute to a positive and dynamic student experience. While East Texas Baptist continues to see increased enrollment, the mission of providing a transformational, Christ-centered education through biblical faith and scholarship integration remains constant.

“We rejoice in the news of another record-breaking spring semester enrollment. What an opportunity we have through our Christ-centered community to share the Gospel of Jesus with students and to encourage believers in their spiritual development and discipleship with the Lord,” ETBU President J. Blair Blackburn shared. “How grateful we are to the Lord for leading each of these students to study and be equipped for their vocational callings. With our dedicated Christian, servant-hearted faculty and staff, our students are receiving a biblical, faith-integrated, transformational educational experience. We look ahead to a monumental semester for our University and unite in our efforts to follow the course of God’s vision for ETBU and our Tiger students and future graduates.”

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## ETBU Symphonic Band and Concert Choir to Serve in Austria

The ETBU Symphonic Band and Concert Choir will travel to Austria March 6-15, 2019 as part of the *American Celebration of Music in Austria Concert Series*. As they travel to the historic cities and iconic sites of Austria, the ensemble will perform in culturally significant venues, such as the *Innsbruck Dom*, *Salzburg Dom*, and *St. Stephan’s Church* and *Minoritenkirche* in Vienna. Many of the concerts will be charitable events for ministries, enabling the students to serve as representatives of Christ through their performance. The group will also participate in a school-based exchange at the *SOS Kinderhof* school in Graz. Please pray for the students and faculty as they use their talents to share the love of Jesus in Austria. If you would like to support the ETBU Symphonic Band and Concert Choir Global Study and Serve Mission Trip, click to give below.

[Give Now](#)

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## Four New Tigers Inducted into the ETBU Athletics Hall of Fame

ETBU added four members to the Tiger Athletics Hall of Fame on Saturday, February 2, including Allison Ratcliff ('06, Softball), Jose Alonzo (Men's Soccer Head Coach), Justin Cooley, ('00, Soccer), and Scott Verhalen, ('03, Football).

Ratcliff was a four-year letterman for Tiger Softball from 2003-2006 and led the team in home runs all four years. At the time of her graduation, she was the program leader in career home runs, single-season home runs, career batting average, single-season batting average, and career walks. During Allison's time as a Tiger, ETBU won two American Southwest Conference championships, appeared at two NCAA Tournaments at ETBU, and won program-best 41 games in 2004.

"My experience with Tiger Softball was about growing in Christ, that one day I might help others grow in Christ," Ratcliff said. "Softball was the medium through which He taught me all of the traits I needed to become His hands and feet. I am blessed to do what I am called to do, because everyone in this room played a part in my success being a Christian example and showing me the love of Christ. I thank ETBU from the bottom of my heart."

Coach Alonzo started the Tiger Soccer program in 1994 and led ETBU to 187 wins and two National Champions in his 19-year tenure as head coach. He produced five NAIA All-Americans, nine NCCAA All-Americans, and was named Coach of the Year on two separate occasions during his time as Head Coach.

"As Head Coach of the Tiger Men's Soccer Team, there were two aspects I would always emphasize," Alonzo said. "First, I would encourage my players to embrace an attitude of never giving up. Second, the family aspect of being a team. Throughout my 19 years at ETBU, the University always supported me and the soccer program no matter what."

Cooley played for the ETBU Men's Soccer Team from 1997-2000 and was a key member of both the ETBU NCCAA National Championship teams in 1998 and 1999. Cooley ended his four-year playing career at ETBU, scoring 86 goals and 24 game-winning goals, both program records while adding 28 assists.

I am grateful to God for placing me at ETBU and for the gifts He gave me to pursue my passion," Cooley said. "I would not be standing here if it were not for the talented players around me. This honor goes to them as well. We challenged each other and were better players for it. Playing soccer for ETBU is among the best years of my life. I made lifelong friendships and grew personally and spiritually here."

Verhalen was a member of Tiger Football from 2000-2003, where he earned five different All-American awards and led ETBU to an American Southwest Conference championship in 2003. He was also named to the 2000s All-Decade Team by [D3football.com](http://D3football.com) in 2011, one of only 10 players from the American Southwest Conference to be recognized.

The resurrection of the program provided me the opportunity to showcase and develop my talents," Verhalen said. "It is an honor to be inducted among these talented athletes. Growing up, football was always a part of my passion. ETBU helped cultivate that passion into a successful Christian in my career. I am thankful to be a part of the history of ETBU Football."

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## CARE for Craig Hall

East Texas Baptist University intends to renovate Craig Hall for use by ETBU's largest academic school, the Frank S. Groner School of Professional Studies, through the CARE (Commitment to Academic Resources for Excellence) for Craig Hall campaign. The facility is named in honor of Dr. Robert E. "Jack" Craig ('50), who led ETBU from 1986-1992 as the University's tenth President. His commitment to providing students and faculty with quality academic facilities and the resources necessary to serve Christ with excellence was evident in his leadership as President.

"ETBU invites alumni and friends of the University to join us as we extend Dr. Craig's legacy by showing CARE for Craig Hall," ETBU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Thomas Sanders said. "Your support will provide our current and future students with the modern educational space needed to develop skills for their callings. Fundraising for this contemporary learning environment recently surpassed \$100,000 towards a campaign goal of \$500,000. I invite you to partner with us to pay tribute to Dr. Craig's presidential leadership and provide our students with 21st century educational space."

Dr. Craig holds the honor of being the first and only ETBU graduate to serve the institution as President. After his death in 1992, the Sanderson Hall of Science was renamed "Craig Hall" in honor of the esteemed president and First Lady Mary Jean Light Craig, who also graduated from East Texas Baptist in 1948. Originally built in 1953, the University now has the opportunity to restore the historic building as the ETBU School of Nursing transitions to the newly refurbished Marshall Grand in downtown Marshall in Spring 2019. The project will ensure that Craig Hall continues to provide quality, Christ-centered educational training to both students and faculty.

"The renovation of Craig Hall will allow all of the academic departments of the School of Professional Studies to collaborate and teach under one roof," Dean of the Frank S.

Groner School of Professional Studies Joseph D. Brown commented. "State-of-the-art labs and modern classrooms will allow students to receive the hands-on learning required in Athletic Training and Kinesiology. These much-needed modernized facilities will enhance our already successful and popular programs."

This facility will house all undergraduate and graduate programs in kinesiology, clinical lab science, rehabilitative science, and adult studies. Graduate assistants who provide coaching, leadership, and discipleship to students will receive their training from the Christian faculty, who work and teach in Craig Hall. Enhancements to this time-honored facility will include new labs and instructional space to provide for theoretical instruction, practical training experiences, and research into the science and application of kinesiology.

"When I first started college and thought about majoring in rehabilitative science, I was really intimidated," ETBU senior Megan Friend shared. "The faculty encouraged and empowered me to learn and grow into my vocational calling. The professors at ETBU have prepared me for the next level of physical therapy school. As the School of Professional Studies moves to Craig Hall, I know that students will be even more prepared for their careers, and they will have a space of their own to call home."

During his tenure, Dr. Craig led fundraising efforts for the construction of the Fred Hale School of Business, Jenna Guest Music Building, Mabee Performance Hall, Murphy Science Building, and the Ornelas Spiritual Life Center. Dr. Craig also initiated two programs through which students could personally meet with him for counsel and guidance. Dr. Craig was a beloved member of the ETBU community, and his legacy continues to influence generations of ETBU students, faculty, and staff for the glory of God.

"Our campus is a very fine Christian institution, with a friendly, outstanding faculty and student body," Dr. Craig said during his presidency at ETBU. "It is the kind of institution our world needs if we are going to make a difference."

A contribution of any size will help provide current and future ETBU students with the modern educational and professional training space needed to develop skills for their calling.

## **CARE for Craig Hall**

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## Tiger Athletes Serving Around the Globe

Tiger Athletics completed the eighth trip Tiger Athletic Mission Experience (TAME) in January as the Tiger Ice Hockey team served in Slovakia. The TAME trips provide Tiger student-athletes the opportunity to use their God-given talents as a platform to connect with people and share the Gospel of Jesus. There are three additional TAME trips in 2019.

The ETBU Women's Soccer team will partner with Youth With a Mission (YWAM) for a week-long Spring Break trip to Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica. Head Women's Soccer Coach Kristin Cox will lead the team as they conduct soccer clinics, participate in door-to-door Bible distribution, and compete in three games against local teams. Tiger Tennis will minister in Paris, France in conjunction with the French Open this June. In August, the ETBU Spirit Program will serve in Japan.

Both upcoming summer trips for Tiger Tennis and ETBU Spirit Teams will be in partnership with the International Sports Federation (ISF). ISF is a faith-based nonprofit organization that seeks to change the world through sports. Please pray for our ETBU Tiger student-athletes as they represent Christ and ETBU on these mission trips. If you would like to support the Tiger Athletics TAME program click the button below.

**Support TAME**

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Tabby is experiencing a real Alaskan winter with our Alums Jeff Hull ('15) and Dr. Ashley May ('01) in Fairbanks.

## **Miles to Marshall**

Toby and Tabby have headed out on an adventure to visit as many Tiger Alumni as they can before Homecoming 2019! See how many miles Toby and Tabby travel this year by following the ETBU Alumni social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). You can also follow their journey by searching the hashtag #MilesToMarshall.

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## WORSHIP AND MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT FEATURING



The Foto Sisters



Legacy Five



Dr. Jimmy Draper

## Registration for Hilltop University is Now Open

Hilltop University, a spiritual retreat for Boomers and Senior Adults, will be held Wednesday, May 29 through Friday, May 31, at East Texas Baptist University. Conference events include corporate worship, preaching, Bible studies, concerts, breakout sessions, and dessert fellowships. During your stay, enjoy our on-campus housing in a residence facility and meals in ETBU's Dining Hall.

This year's worship and musical entertainment will include:

- Dr. Jimmy Draper, Lifeway President Emeritus
- Legacy Five
- Foto Sisters
- Shellie O'Neal

Register before Friday, April 1 to receive reduced pricing! Click [here](#) to view event details.

**Register Now**

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## ETBU Cub and Tiger Cub Club

The Alumni Office is excited to offer the ETBU Cub and Tiger Club programs to the children and grandchildren of 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 seven-year-old children. 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 Cub Club**



## **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 120 remaining available spaces, don't hesitate to "mark your milestone" on the Hill 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 for generations to come. Click below to order your brick today.

**Mark Your Milestone**

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## Help Us Connect with ETBU or ETBC Tigers

We are looking for our East Texas Baptist 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 Tiger 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

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

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**For more information please call:**

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