

PIONEER

SUMMER 2014 EDITION



2014 Graduation Report *The Multiplying Effect*

On May 16, Luther Rice University and Seminary celebrated the hard work of our graduates at Commencement 2014. There were 299 students in this year's graduating class — representing 37 different states and 10 foreign countries, including the UK, Austria, Belgium, Ghana, and China.

It was a wonderful celebration and a joy to see many of them in attendance — especially because our graduates are often already working in full-time and part-time ministry. They juggle family responsibilities, work, ministry duties,

and their studies — whether they're in Atlanta, Alaska, or the Aleutian Islands.

2014 alumni now join more 7,000 graduates of Luther Rice, spreading the good news of God's love and plan of salvation through Jesus Christ for all mankind.

Your generosity and support for LRU is sending graduates into all the world with the message of salvation and restoration. Thank you for your partnership.

And congratulations, graduates!



52nd annual
commencement



299
graduates



From **37**
states



And **11** different
countries

Congratulations to our faculty!

Dr. Sharon Atkins

Assistant Professor of Biblical Counseling *Received her Doctor of Ministry in Marriage and Family Therapy (Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary)*

Dr. Joshua Stewart

Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew *Received his Doctor of Philosophy in Hebrew and Old Testament (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary)*

Dr. Gerald Harris, Luther Rice Alumnus of the Year for 1977 and Editor and President of the Georgia Baptist Convention's state paper, *The Christian Index*, served as this year's commencement speaker. He encouraged the graduates to follow God's call on their lives and reach out to others with God's message of salvation.

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A Tribute to Dr. James W. Bryant:

A Christian Statesman Goes Home to Glory

The well-respected Christian statesman Dr. James W. Bryant went home to be with his heavenly Father on June 11, 2014.

Dr. Bryant served as the third president of Luther Rice Seminary, guiding the institution from 1991-1993. He oversaw the first two years of transition as Luther Rice moved from Jacksonville, Florida, to its present location in Atlanta, Georgia.

Our beloved friend served as:

- a pastor for several churches
- a board member for two Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) seminaries
- a member and trustee of the Executive Committee of the SBC
- a professional member of the Evangelical Theological Society

Dr. Bryant played a key role in the organization of Criswell Bible Institute, now Criswell College. He was also an accomplished author. One of his books, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament*, was translated into Swahili for use in Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board seminaries in Africa.

He is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Ruby; son Scott Bryant and wife, Kendra; son Kurt Bryant and wife, Hollie; granddaughter Nicole Fender and husband, Shea; grandson Luke Bryant and wife, Suzanne; one sister, Jackie Marvin, and other numerous family members.

Luther Rice Seminary joins in the celebration of a life well lived by a man who served God and his fellow man with fervor and conviction.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness: Increasing the Value of an LRU Degree

By Jeff McCann



Dr. Jeff McCann and Sally Shirley manage the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

The name is impressive, even if most people (on or off campus) haven't heard of it:

“The Office of Institutional Effectiveness” (OIE).

It's my pleasure to direct this office and its many important missions.

One of those is making sure LRU is accredited by the best associations and accrediting bodies to increase the value of an LRU degree for our students.

How do we do it? By collecting and disseminating data to key stakeholders for decision-making.

Just last year we were instrumental in the awarding of initial accreditation by the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). The ABHE accredits undergraduate and graduate programs. This new accreditation is in addition to our current accreditation with TRACS.

A second major initiative has been to attain approval from all U.S. states to offer online courses — Luther Rice has now

met all the requirements for 49 states, as well as the District of Columbia.

And we recently submitted a substantive change request for a new Master of Arts in Ministry degree to the states of Georgia

and Florida, our licensing organizations, as well as two accrediting agencies. We are happy to report that the new degree is now available for enrollment.

Other annual activities include the preparation and submission of approximately 40 annual assessments of various facets of the school. Failure to complete these projects could affect our ability to offer financial aid, so they're quite important!

All of these efforts are designed to demonstrate that Luther Rice, as an institution of higher learning, is fulfilling its mission and purpose, as well as delivering a quality product.



The Association for
Biblical Higher Education

Biblical • Transformational • Experiential • Missional

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness helped oversee the granting of initial accreditation by the Association of Biblical Higher Education.

Alumni Reaching the World

Graduates working together for IMPACT

CrossBridge Church in Marshfield, Missouri, is powerfully touching lives in the community — and around the world — with the leadership and service of several LRU alumni and students ...

1. Senior Pastor Randy Swarengin and his wife Melissa (the church's Director of Christian Education) are both LRU graduates.

2. Associate Pastor Tristan Crotinger graduated from LRU in 2013. His wife, Jaime, also a 2013 graduate, helps with the church's mission team and counseling.

3. Josh James is the Youth and Music Minister and a graduate of Luther Rice. He earned his Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling in 2012.

4. Newly married couple, John and Pashia Rasmussen, are current LRU students who are helping area churches and teaching a class this summer at CrossBridge.

5. Rex Childress, who is currently completing his Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling is the director of CrossBridge's lay counseling center — which was created with the help and oversight of Dr. Ron Cobb, LRU Counseling Degree Program Coordinator.



(Front row) Pashia Rasmussen, Melissa Swarengin, (back row) Josh James, John Rasmussen, Randy Swarengin, Jaime Crotinger, Tristan Crotinger



It's exciting to see LRU graduates, students and staff making such a tremendous impact through CrossBridge. Their leadership and partnership has resulted in dynamic local and international ministries, including:

- a women's ministry that focuses on missions and assists a homeless shelter;
- a men's ministry heavily involved in mentoring other men;
- an active children's ministry;
- a thriving youth ministry that takes mission trips to help refurbish houses for needy families;
- an international missions emphasis that sends short-term mission teams to Honduras and financially supports career missionaries overseas;
- the lay counseling center which provides complimentary Christian counseling for individuals and families.

“We give God all the glory for what has been accomplished at CrossBridge,” says Senior Pastor Randy Swearingin, “because it is only possible through God and the power of the Holy Spirit.”

CrossBridge's powerful ministry is a testament to the impact you're making when you support LRU. Thank you for your partnership!



Impact!

By Russell Sorrow, Director of Marketing

I recently experienced the impact our graduates are making, quite by accident — I ran into a couple of them at lunch.

How exciting to learn one was on his way to Kosovo (a majority Muslim nation) to be part of a ministry that included baseball training camps for young people! Already 350 students had signed up for the program.

This is a prime example of how God's work in the world continues — lives are being touched and souls are being saved. Thank you for supporting LRU and helping make great ministries like this possible.



PROVIDING REAL HOPE FOR HURTING PEOPLE

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling Degree

The need for qualified, compassionate Christian counselors has never been greater.

Mental illness, emotional traumas, family struggles — they're all stalking Christian individuals and families. Magazines cite the decline of mental health in the United States, television commercials tout the efficacy of the newest antidepressant drugs, and Internet ads promote sure-fire therapeutic cures for a variety of disorders.

The one thing that is consistently missing is an emphasis on the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit and the application of the Word of God to human needs.

LRU is helping prepare pastors and counselors alike to deal with these issues through biblical and practical means, with the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling degree (MABC).

It was established on a two-fold trustworthy foundation: the authority of the Word of God and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

The MABC degree does not equip a graduate with the required coursework to become a state-licensed professional counselor, but the curriculum does prepare students for a Christian counseling ministry.

If you want to learn to provide practical spiritual help to hurting people in a Christian setting whether in the church, community, or on the mission field, please consider the MABC.

Contact Dr. Ron Cobb, the Program Coordinator at rcobb@LRU.edu or 770-484-1204 for information about enrollment in the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling degree program.



Reverend Tom Powell named 2014 Alumnus of the Year



Congratulations to Rev. Tom Powell, Senior Pastor, Living Grace Ministries, Tacoma, Washington

Before a packed house of well over 550 alumni, friends and well-wishers at the Annual Graduation Banquet on May 16, Rev. Tom Powell received the 2014 Luther Rice Alumnus of the Year award.

Rev. Powell is the pioneer pastor of Living Grace Ministries in Tacoma, Washington. The church serves the spiritual and physical needs of Tacoma and the surrounding area with many community and multicultural outreaches and partnerships.

Powell received his Master of Divinity degree from Luther Rice Seminary. He is currently pursuing his Doctor of Ministry degree at Luther Rice.

He exemplifies the Christian outreach Luther Rice graduates and students are carrying out, all around the world.

STUDY ABROAD IN THE **HOLY LAND!**

- Coming Fall 2015
- Visit Israel and receive course credit
- Contact Dr. Scott Henderson for more information

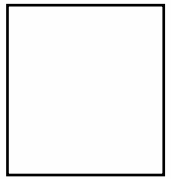


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Return Service Requested



Providing biblical education for Christian ministers and leaders around the world.

LRU is accredited by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE).

LRU admits students of any race, religion, sex, age, color, national or ethnic origin, or disability, except where required by specific religious tenets held by the institution.

Introducing the NEW

Master of Arts in Ministry Degree

*A Degree Designed Specifically for Ministers
and Church Leaders*

- Flexible 100% Online Studies
- Truly Affordable Tuition with Financial Aid Available
- Biblically-based Degree Program

Acquire practical skills on how to lead in a local church or support ministry



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