

HORIZONS

GRACELAND UNIVERSITY



BREAKING GROUND

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A brand new section dedicated to sharing what's going on at Graceland. Check each issue for new updates!

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There's No Place Like Home

So many of the Graceland family I've met with over the past two years still refer to this special place as home. For most, home evokes feelings of safety, comfort, joy and family in whatever form that might take.

Two years in, and Jeff and I are feeling settled and comfortable in our home here on the Lamoni campus. We have been fortunate to host students, alumni, trustees and more in the Carmichael House for meals and fellowship; and last Christmas, we were excited to invite my extended family (all 14 of us!) to spend a chilly Iowa holiday with us. Now that the weather is warmer, the walk to my office in the Higdon Administration Building is not quite as bitter cold and it gives me a chance to enjoy the beauty of our little slice of heaven.

During the summer when I am writing this, the campus would normally be slow-paced, but it is bustling with excitement as the MSC is renovated and transformed into Newcom Student Union. That building is so central to the Graceland experience and the home that we share together here in Lamoni. I liken it to the living room of the Graceland home. And as that living room is reimagined, I cannot help but be excited about the experiences that current and future students will be able to enjoy in this new facility.

This issue of *Horizons* contains many different stories of home and how Graceland continues to create a place of safety, comfort and joy for our extended Yellowjacket family. I invite you to visit during homecoming, which takes place Oct. 25-27. Connect with friends, reminisce on your time on "the Hill," and make new memories surrounded by the Graceland community.

Home is where the heart is and, for so many of us, that heart resides at Graceland.

Patricia H. Draves

Patricia H. Draves, PhD
President



@GracelandUPres

ON THE COVER In April, the official groundbreaking ceremony was held to commemorate the beginning of the MSC's transformation to Newcom Student Union. It is from the generous gifts of Graceland alumni and friends, most notably Cherry and Jay Newcom (pictured at center), that this project is moving forward at full steam this summer. **Left to right** Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Dave Schaal, Gould Evans Architecture Managing Principal Dennis Strait, 2019-20 Student Government President Randallynn Smith, Lead Donors Cherry and Jay Newcom, President Patricia Draves and Board of Trustees Chair Harry Ashenhurst



SNAPSHOT

Graceland Forever

During spring commencement festivities in Lamoni, President Draves gathered with two former university presidents just prior to the ceremony. David Clinefelter (*left*) and John Sellars (*right*) made significant contributions to the Graceland community during their time on “the Hill.”

The Buzz

A brand new section dedicated to sharing what's going on at Graceland – because so many cool things are happening, and we want you to know about them!

COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS

Saddle up

Graceland added a **COMPETITIVE INTERCOLLEGIATE RODEO PROGRAM** as part of the strategic initiative to recruit more students from central Iowa and northern Missouri. The team will compete as a member of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA), likely as a part of the Great Plains region, and is scheduled to begin competition in the 2020-21 year.



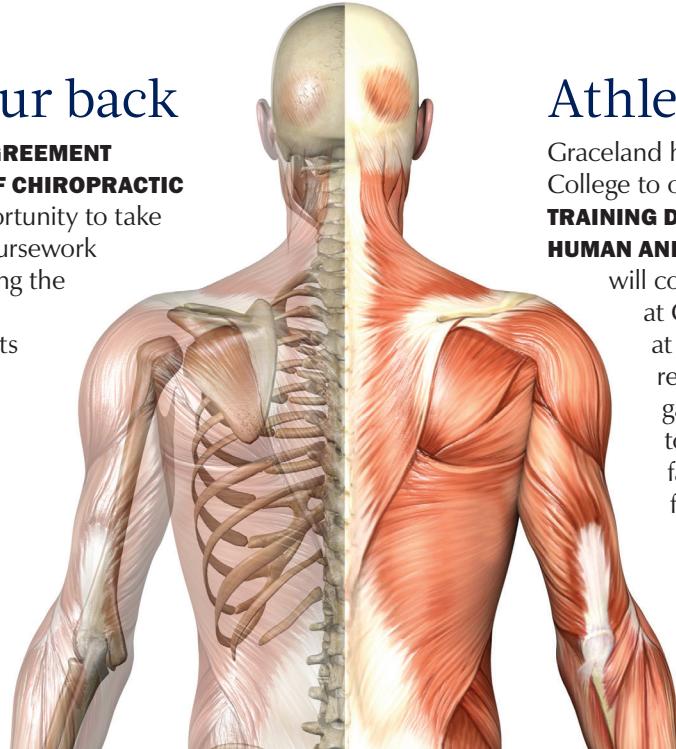
Game on

Graceland's **ESPORTS TEAM** took part in their first season of competition this spring. The new program finished second in their tier of a tournament that featured three teams ranked in the top 10 nationally. This team is an exciting innovative addition to Graceland, and we look forward to watching their continued growth in the coming years.

ACADEMICS

We've got your back

Graceland signed a **3+1 AGREEMENT WITH PALMER COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC** allowing students the opportunity to take their first three years of coursework at Graceland before entering the Doctorate of Chiropractic program at Palmer. Students can then transfer their first year of graduate school credit back to Graceland to complete their bachelor's degree.



Athletic training

Graceland has partnered with Culver-Stockton College to offer a **MASTER OF ATHLETIC TRAINING DEGREE WITH A CONCENTRATION IN HUMAN AND SPORT PERFORMANCE**. Students will complete three years of coursework at Graceland, then enroll as a senior at Culver-Stockton to complete the remaining two years, allowing them to gain the necessary education and skills to pass the licensure exam one year faster than other students competing for similar career positions.



CAMPUS LIFE

The power of together

Campus Ministries sponsored a **CAMPUS BLESSING SERVICE** on the Lamoni campus in March to acknowledge gratitude for the strong sense of community the Graceland family shares — past and present. Leading up to the service, campus members created a tapestry (pictured above) to represent the strong connections and friendships the university fosters. The service was a recognition of community, which is one of Graceland's three core values: learning, wholeness and community.



Data science

Graceland will launch a **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN DATA SCIENCE AND ANALYTICS PROGRAM** under the Division of Science and Mathematics on the Lamoni campus beginning Fall 2019. Study areas such as the sciences, social sciences and business will also incorporate data science and analytics tracks. Graceland plans to offer a Master of Science in Data Science and Analytics as a follow-up online program that will enable students to complete both a bachelor's and master's degree in as little as five years.



The little things

As part of their project work this year, **ONE GRACELAND ENACTUS GROUP STARTED A SOCIAL CAMPAIGN** to highlight the things that make living in Lamoni special — whether as a college student or lifelong resident. The group designed and painted a mural (the location of which is meant to be discovered not shown), had T-shirts printed, and sent out anonymous requests for influential people to get involved. What happened in return was a special display of love for the town and the experiences that come with it. You can find them on your favorite social media platforms by searching for #TheLittleThingsInLamoni.

*At the heart of the Newcom family
is a deep connection to Graceland.*

A Lifelong Impact

BY SHANE ADAMS



Yearbook photos
of Jay '64 and Cherry
Phelps '65 Newcom
from the 1963 *Acacia*

Scheduled to be completed in early 2020, the transformation of the MSC to Newcom Student Union will continue the impact of **JAY '64 AND CHERRY PHELPS '65 NEWCOM** on Graceland students for generations to come.

Together with their children, Shandra '90 and Derek '96, the Newcoms led the charge to renovate the central gathering place for students on campus, providing a lead gift that was joined by many other donors. For these alumni and friends, it is a way to impact Graceland students by giving them a sense of home. "It's where you get your mail, where you meet your friends, where you see a lot of people, even if you're just walking through," said Cherry. "It's the central location where people interact, kind of like the kitchen of a home."

But the Newcom legacy stretches far beyond a name on a building. The family's roots go back to the late 1940s, when Jay's parents, known affectionately to the Lamoni community as "Mom and Pop" Newcom, moved to Lamoni when Jay

was only three years old. They purchased the little hamburger cafe in town, The Pantry, and later, both came to work in different roles on campus. Jay grew up in Lamoni; one of his first jobs was working the grounds of the campus and painting dorm rooms.

When he came to campus as a student in 1960, Graceland's signature housing system was nonexistent. Students were asked to join social clubs very similar to fraternities and sororities. That all changed in 1963, when Jay became Graceland's student body president. Working with the administration, he worked to rewrite the student government constitution, which formed the structure very similar to the one that is in place to

this day. The newly formed Graceland Student Government (GSG) included the Campus Organization for Social Activities (COSA) and a student senate, as well as a restructuring of social clubs, which became the housing system that is foundational to the Graceland experience.

Even with all that, if you ask Jay what is the most important thing that happened to him at Graceland, he smiles and points to Cherry, his wife of over 50 years. Cherry attended Graceland for two years, during which time she was a crescent and active with the student newspaper. At the groundbreaking ceremony for Newcom Student Union, Jay pointed to a spot just outside the building where he and Cherry met for the first time. "Cherry and I met right by Patroness Hall. My life has never been the same. I thank Graceland for that."

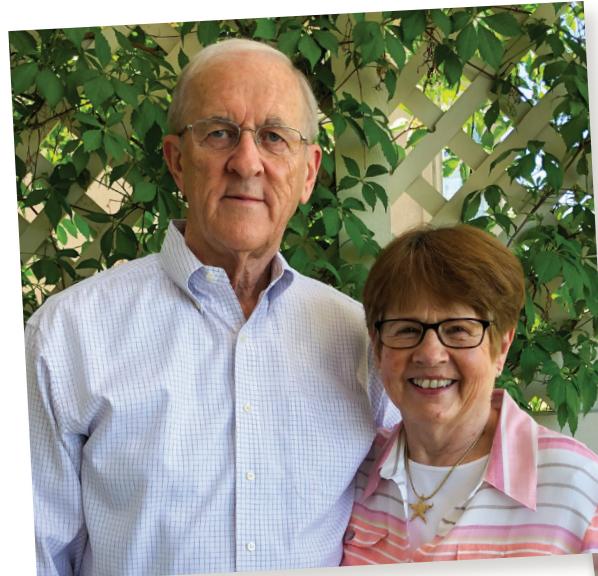
The Newcom legacy doesn't end there. Shandra '90 served as one of Graceland's campus ministers from 1999-2002, the first woman to serve in that role. She and Blake Smith presided over campus ministries during the events of Sept. 11, 2001, which was a unique challenge.

She remembers, "We tried hard to create a space and feeling of home, especially for international students, who were having issues feeling at home in the United States almost overnight." The MSC Main Room was transformed into a safe space during that time, where students could grieve, light candles, and express themselves and their concerns.

Derek '96 arrived on campus several years after his sister graduated and remembers his own time on "the Hill" fondly. "There was, and is, a sense of community at Graceland," he remembers. "I have never lost that deep sense of belonging."

At the beginning of this summer, Derek recalled being in the Kansas City airport next to a group of nursing students. "I was close enough to strike up a conversation with them and soon realized they were Graceland students on their way to Guatemala," he said. "It's funny how Graceland goes with you wherever you go."

Since graduating, the Newcom family's connection to Graceland has remained



Jay '64 and Cherry Phelps '65 Newcom



Shandra '90
and Derek '96
Newcom



"Graceland is a defining part of our lives... not because of who we are, it's because of who Graceland is."

JAY NEWCOM '64

strong. After Jay and Cherry were married, they headed to the East Coast, where Jay attended the University of Maryland and then Harvard Law School. They then moved west, living in Chicago and California before returning to the Kansas City area.

Over the years, they have continued to serve Graceland in various roles. Cherry served on the alumni board and sponsors a scholarship for students engaged in religious life. She also has attended almost every Spectacular as a delegation leader for 40 years. Jay's service includes 26 years on the Board of Trustees, where he oversaw the university's purchase of SkillPath.

"Our hearts called us back to Kansas City many years ago," Jay remembers, "which allowed us to live our lives close to Graceland."

The Newcom family's Graceland tradition continues in the fall, when a grandson will arrive on campus. As grandparents, Jay and Cherry have been

bringing their three grandchildren to homecoming at Graceland for years — another family tradition that centers around time spent on the campus, surrounded by friends. "We remain close to many of our friends from our time at Graceland," Cherry says. "They are still a part of our life — we are still Graceland family."

At the heart of the Newcom family is a deep connection to Graceland. "I can't describe the Newcom family history without featuring Graceland," Jay says. "It is a defining part of our lives — of Cherry's and mine, of Shandra's and Derek's. That's not because of who we are, it's because of who Graceland is."

The Newcom family wants to continue to see a vibrant and relevant Graceland, and the new student union will be an important part of that. Jay said at the groundbreaking of the building, "I see Graceland as being a central location for the development of attitudes in the young people who come here ... to have a humane impact on the development of society as it struggles through the technology revolution that is even now only just beginning."

This speaks directly to Graceland's mission to create learning communities where students develop their potential for meaningful and productive lives. Newcom Student Union will be a central location on campus where students can gather, interact, communicate and collaborate together, building lifelong relationships that, hopefully, reflect the spirit and love of the family whose name will adorn the building for generations to come. ■

A Look Back

BY BROOKE SUTHERLAND

As the *Horizons* team spent time looking through old Acacia yearbooks, we noticed a recurring theme that holds true after all these years: the **MEMORIAL STUDENT CENTER** has become the beating heart of the student life experience. Here are some gems from the past.

1 1948

Graceland broke ground on the Memorial Student Center, which was to serve as a **memorial** to all youth of the RLDS church who served during World War II.

2 1950

"England meets Missouri and Wisconsin at a table in the new Student Center bookstore." This photo from the 1950 Acacia may have been one of the first international gatherings in the MSC, but it was certainly not the last. Now, the building is host to many events that bring together **students from all over the world**.

3 1951

"The days just before the Christmas vacation are ones of merriment at Graceland. Music frosts the air as social clubs do traditional caroling and everyone hums along the paths. The **Christmas season** officially opens as the whole student body decorates an enormous tree in the Memorial Student Center."

-1952 Acacia

4 1960s

The MSC **snack shop** was created as part of the 1961-62 addition to the building's east side. It was built to seat around 100 people in a more restaurant-style setting than the previous snack shop, which had existed at the MSC's west side. In October 1962, COSA announced a contest to name the new snack shop. The Council on Student Life selected the name "Swarm Inn" in January 1963, based on the suggestion "The Swarm Room" by Edwards House freshman Les Hall.

5 1960

"Decorations of impressionistic art, soft candlelight, lovely music, and the company of that 'certain someone' combined to make the **Pops Concert** a lasting memory for many Gracelanders. A delightful program was presented by the Concert Choir and Graceland-Lamoni Orchestra."

-1960 Acacia

6 1961

Graceland has held many **church services** in the MSC over the years, including this communion service expressing commitment to the insights gained during Religious Emphasis Week in 1961. Today, people still gather in the MSC for faith-based events.

Source: imbd.com

A BIT OF HISTORY

We made quite an interesting discovery in the 1962 Acacia. One of the Concert Lecture Series performances that year was the Don Shirley Trio. Shirley's story inspired the 2018 film *Green Book*, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture this year! To see a list of other guests who performed in the MSC, visit: graceland.edu/horizons



7 1966

"Round and Round they go, it's another rousing **MSC skate!** One of the more firmly rooted Graceland traditions ... A skate was the place to spend a slow Tuesday night."

-1979 Acacia
(photo from the 1966 Acacia)

8 1967-68

The first approved, on-campus **dance** was held on Friday night, May 17, 1968, at the MSC. The Morticians, a popular band made up primarily of former Graceland students, performed.

9 1970s

In the center of campus, the MSC — both indoors and **outdoors** — has been a place to gather, lounge, celebrate and enjoy the Graceland experience from the time it was built. These students in the 1970s are seen enjoying a sunny day near the place where so many students have spent so much of their time.

10 1972

The MSC stage held many generations of **choral and other musical performers** for various events since its creation all the way up through Day of Giving celebrations in recent years.

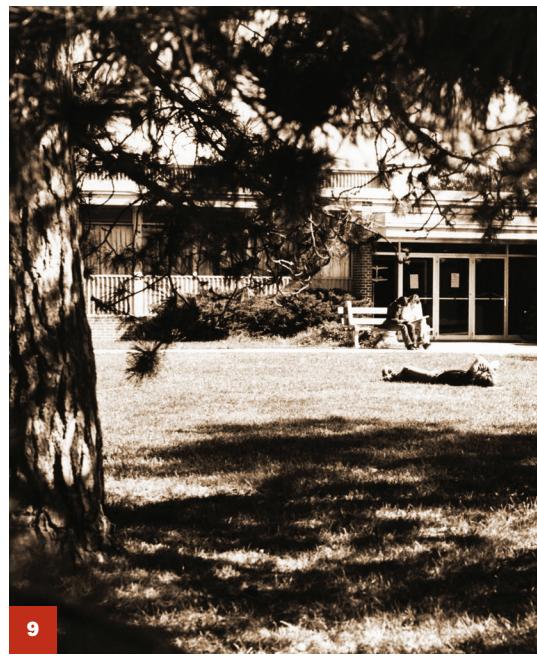
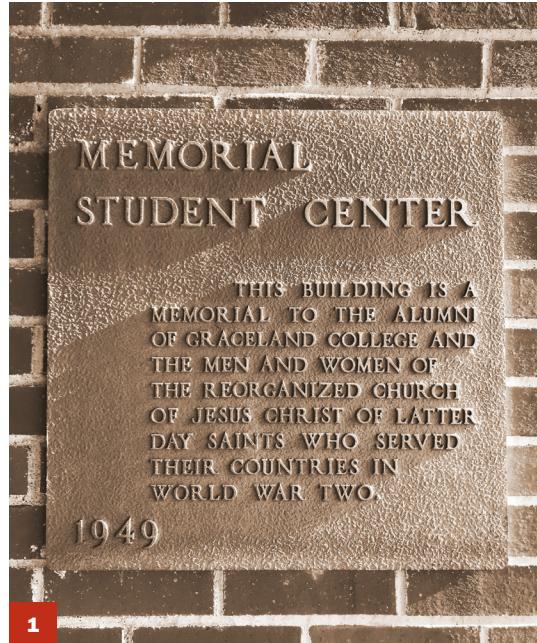
11 1975

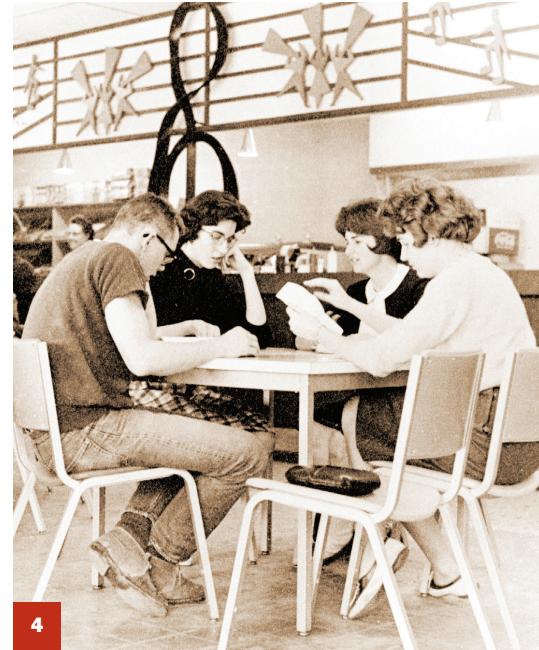
"**COSA**, Campus Organization for Social Activities, is responsible for coordinating all campus-wide, student-initiated social activities, such as movies, concerts, coffee houses, etc. Entertainment in general! Some of the years' highlights have been: *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Mash*, *Lady Sings the Blues*, *Howdy Doody*, *The Way We Were*, The Roger Wagner Chorale in concert, Pops Concert 1974, *Showboat*, and many more. This photo from the 1975 Acacia shows COSA workers for that year."

-1975 Acacia

12 1978

The MSC houses the campus post office, which has been a gathering and meeting place for students for generations. This image from the 1978 Acacia shows the student engagement that takes place on a daily basis as students walk through the building to check their **mailboxes**.







THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Place to Be

BY BROOKE SUTHERLAND

At the center of the Lamoni campus, and what could be described as the “LIVING ROOM” of Graceland, sits the Memorial Student Center.

Known to most as simply the MSC, the multi-functional building has been host to everything from celebrities and big events to unassuming first introductions of students, some of whom still recall the exact spot where they met the love of their life many decades ago.

In the very same space, thousands of students have had experiences — some big, some seemingly small — that helped them feel like a part of this community and shaped their Graceland experience.

The building’s impact on students has been so great that upcoming Graceland Student Government president Randallynn Smith referred to the shift from the Memorial Student Center to Newcom Student Union as a change of an era when she spoke at the dedication ceremony in April.

“This place is central to so many people here on this campus. We all filter through it all the time,” she said. “This reimagined building has so much in store for students — many moments to be shared and remembered, lots of meetings will be held, meals shared, games played, great conversations ... and a lot of those conversations lead to lasting relationships — and at the end of the day, that’s what Graceland’s all about.”

Students posing together at New Year's in November, the annual COSA event traditionally held in the MSC Main Room since 1990.

STUDENT GIFTS

1947

\$300

2019

\$25,000

The gift amount from the class of 1947 toward construction of a fireplace in the student center.

The donation made by the 2018-19 student senate toward the new student union game room.

STUDENT SUPPORT THROUGH THE YEARS

The importance of the MSC to students has a history that dates back to before the building was even built. The first major gift from a student group came from the class of 1947, offering approximately \$300 toward construction of a fireplace, demonstrating their desire for a space to come together. And that history of student support continues today. On March 5 of this year, the student senate voted unanimously to appropriate \$25,000 to the Newcom Student Union renovation.

The 2018-19 speaker of the senate, Tressa Cummings ‘20, said of the decision, “We recognize the importance of this space, and value the experiences students have here. When we looked at the needs of current and future students, it became clear that this was a good investment and the way we wanted to spend our money.”

While this donation from the 2018-19 senate will earn them the naming rights for the game room in the new student union, what they and all future students will really gain is an improved space where they can embrace the moments of their Graceland experience — everything from big events to those unassuming first introductions. ■

“The (Memorial Student) Center became our home away from home. Here we ate, talked, played, worked and worshipped. The snack shop, the assembly room, the offices, the entire building with its people became an important part of our Graceland life.”

ACACIA 1966

the belongingness net

BY SHANE ADAMS



Graceland, like many other institutions of higher education, faces many challenges in this current era. One way that success is measured is retention – the percentage of students who return from semester to semester. Studies show that one of the major factors that affects retention is a

STUDENT'S SENSE OF BELONGING — their sense of home. [READ MORE ▶](#)



In 2017, just as President Draves was in her first year, Graceland's leadership consciously identified five principles of retention, which were formally adopted in summer of 2018. Those principles — belonging, engagement, personal support, perceived value of curriculum, self-efficacy — helped to frame the approach to what came next. Graceland began a new initiative aimed at addressing the issue of retention head on: the Belongingness Net.

Borne out of an idea from a Student Life retreat and championed by members of the Student Success Task Force — a cross-departmental team of faculty and staff ranging from academics to athletics to residence life and more — the net puts a formal framework around many things that are already in place. Now, there are over 30 "strands" in the net — each one with a champion, an anchor in at least one of the five principles of retention and the support of colleagues.

THE STRANDS

One of the strands in the net is Graceland's robust collection of student clubs. There are over 40 different organizations that students can join covering an extremely wide variety of interests, from disc golf to history to robotics to Broadway dance!

"It is important for students to be able to find something they can belong to," said Dave Schaal, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students, who co-chairs the Student Success Task Force with Assistant Professor of English Catherine Clifford, PhD.

40+

clubs and
organizations

*Here are some
strands...*

Peer Mentors
Housing System
Student Success Studio
Clubs & Organizations
Broader Representation in Dining
Cultural & Ethnic Organizations
Interactive Game Room
Worship & Spiritual Development
Internships
Leadership Opportunities & Training
Enriched Disability Services
New Student Orientation Programming
Tutoring
Writing Center
Career Services



THE FRAMEWORK

Part of the Belongingness Net's initiative is to help assess which strands are effective and which need tweaking. This is especially important for the programs that were integrated into the Belongingness Net that already existed but no longer have to stand on their own. By putting a framework in place, it is easier to see patterns in places where efficiencies can be realized, as well as where there are gaps that need to be filled.

"Before, you just had 30 things that operated independently," Schaal said. "But when you give the leaders of these initiatives the opportunity to ask, 'how are we going to do this in a way that's retention-effective with specific objectives that are measurable?' — now all of a sudden you have a net that's hanging together because everything is doing all their individual things in a slightly different way."

MEASURING SUCCESS

Graceland's housing system is an important aspect of helping students to find their sense of belonging, and is always looking for ways to evolve and improve. Having a method for measurement will be helpful in analyzing any potential changes that may need to be made to ensure that the housing system works for as many students as it can.

The housing system is one of the great successes of Graceland's history (for more about its origins, check out the story on p6), but as with most progress, it is important to continue to assess how successful the housing system is in meeting the dynamically changing needs of an increasingly diverse student population. The Belongingness Net hopes to provide the ability for successful initiatives like the housing system to find ways to be nimbler so that Graceland can adapt quickly.

"It is important for students to be able to find something they can belong to."

DAVE SCHAAL, PhD, '80

5

*principles
of retention*

30+

*strands
in the net*

THE ULTIMATE GOAL

Schaal states often that the majority of the programs inside the Belongingness Net existed already. And, in truth, not a single student would know what you're talking about if you asked them, "What's the Belongingness Net?" That's by design. The net needs to be woven into the fabric of everyday life at Graceland in order to be most effective. The ultimate goal that connects the strands of the Belongingness Net really resides in a question that organizations and projects need to try and answer: "How would we do this if our primary objective was student success?"

Schaal smiles when we begin to talk about the impact of Newcom Student Union on the Belongingness Net. "One of the things we heard from students was that there wasn't enough small-group study space on campus," Schaal said. Newcom Student Union aims to address that and significantly increase seating throughout the building, creating new spaces for collaboration. Academic success and retention are highly related, so it is important to foster teamwork through physical space.

For many students, having a place to blow off steam and connect over a game of pool or foosball can be a welcome respite amidst the busyness of student life. The relocation of the game room outside of the main room means that it can be open even when there are events being held that would have previously prevented access to the games on the main room floor. These conveniences and more will make a big impact on student satisfaction.

The Student Success Task Force is constantly thinking about ways to put student success and satisfaction at the forefront. The Belongingness Net hopes to continue to catch students and find ways that Graceland can connect in this changing world. ■



Graceland's new head football coach, **NATE ROBINSON**, has already made his mark at Graceland — and not just on the football field.

ROLE CALL

BY BROOKE SUTHERLAND

Robinson has served in many roles for the Yellowjackets since he joined Graceland's staff in 2014. He has been the coach for the running backs, wide receivers and special teams, as well as the junior varsity head coach, and he has served as director of football operations and as academic coordinator. Robinson has also become a familiar face to those outside the football program through his extensive work with Graceland's Black Student Union (BSU).

Robinson first became involved with BSU through his own undergraduate studies, which inspired him to take on the role of co-sponsor with Cathie Hosie for Graceland's club in 2015. He believes it is important for Graceland to provide an environment that encourages diverse groups to come together, and he has been able to help make that happen at Graceland through the work of BSU.



"Graceland provides spaces that open us up to have conversations, which then leads to larger conversations," Robinson says. "We have these small communities within the larger community — and that brings us all together at Graceland."

As the football team's academic coordinator, Robinson has been able to incorporate his role in the football community into the academic side of Graceland as well. He has created relationships through his efforts to check in on players in the classroom and by dropping in during faculty office hours.

Robinson sees these relationships growing with his new role in football, and, even though his responsibilities will change, he plans to maintain his role as co-sponsor for BSU and intends to continue to check in with faculty and pop in to classes from time to time.

Associate Professor of English Isacc Pressnell says of his experience with Robinson, "Over the past few years, Coach Robinson has proven himself invaluable to our students because of his dedication to them as whole people — academically, athletically and as human beings. He's built relationships with faculty across disciplines, and these efforts have done a lot to improve communication between athletics and academics, ultimately leading to better support for our students. He is clearly invested in the academic engagement of his students, not as a means to eligibility but because he's invested in their futures beyond the field, and this shows."

These continue to be priorities because Robinson believes strongly that it's the relationships made through our experiences that really matter. As an offensive assistant coach, his relationships with defensive players have been primarily cultivated off the field. It was during the interview process for head coach that he realized just how important the relationships he had built with those student-athletes were to them.

A returning defensive player sat on the interview panel and asked if Robinson's relationship with defensive players would change if he got the job. He says it gave him chills because it made clear the fact that he had already made a personal impact on that student. As an institution that at its core values learning, wholeness and community, this was a win.

"This is ours. We talk about the power of together — this is ours together."

NATE ROBINSON

"My relationship with him outside of football meant a lot more to him than me being his head coach," expressed Robinson. "I want to build our program with players like that — who those relationships mean a lot more to them than just a football game." He trusts that what comes in return are student-athletes who will give their all — on the field, in the classroom and around campus with other students. So, when he sits down with recruits, he's looking for more than athletic talent. However, he also recognizes that a good fit goes two ways.

"To win in college football, you have to have juniors and seniors. So, right now, my goal is to turn the freshmen and sophomores into juniors and seniors," he states. "To win, you have to be able to retain students. To retain students, they have to be a good fit for Graceland, and they have to be great in the classrooms. So, yes, I can say my goal is to win games, but it's a lot more than winning games. And the reality is, when you're playing with juniors and seniors, you also get to see those students graduate."

When asked about his ability to recruit and retain students to a program that has struggled, Robinson says he's not worried. "There's a lot of people who want to be a part of something special. And Graceland's unique, so ..." he trails off, but with a confidence he has come to be known for.

Robinson is hopeful that the relationships he has built at Graceland will translate to a campus that will back the football program right away in the fall. "This is ours," he says of the program he now leads. "We talk about the power of together — this is ours together." And he believes that mindset creates a sense of pride throughout the entire community. ■

122nd Commencement

BY SHANE ADAMS



Commencement
photo albums
can be viewed
on Graceland's
Facebook page



Commencement celebrations highlight Graceland's amazing students, recognizing them and others for exceptional contributions to our community.

Saturday, Dec. 15, 2018, Graceland's fall commencement ceremony was held at the Community of Christ Auditorium in Independence, Missouri. Former Dean of the School of Nursing and Professor Emeritus Claudia Horton addressed the graduates on the importance of understanding their purpose in life.

Commencement weekend on the Lamoni campus unofficially kicked off Saturday, April 27, at the groundbreaking for Newcom Student Union. That evening, students gathered for the baccalaureate service, where director of the Community of Christ Seminary, Zac Harmon-McLaughlin '08, challenged students, "Don't just go and shine your light — set the world on fire."

When the baccalaureate service concluded, students exited to the Shaw lobby where President Patricia H. Draves and Dr. Jeff Draves hosted a reception in honor of the graduating seniors. Later, alumni board president Michele Black and alumni programs director Rick Isham welcomed students into the alumni ranks during the annual candlelighting ceremony.

The weather in Iowa is always unpredictable, and commencement Sunday was no different. President Draves welcomed graduates and their families and then was joined by several students who welcomed those present in their native languages. Awards of excellence were presented (more about the recipients in the sidebar) and the graduating seniors listened as Aleksandar Memca '00 gave the commencement address.

"Always remember Graceland's values and where you come from," Memca said, sharing stories of his time at Graceland and his work in the technology industry with companies like AT&T, Enron, Cricket Wireless and Apple. He talked about the importance of being challenged by leaders and mentors, like the professors he worked with at Graceland, and encouraged students, "Never stop growing, and be passionate."

THE NUMBERS

565

The total number of degrees awarded for the 2018-19 academic year.



Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching



Ginger Vaughn-Pullin, DNP, NE, FNP-BC, Assistant Professor of Nursing, provides a learning environment for her students that fosters a good relationship. She has been a part of the nursing faculty since 2014 and graduated from Graceland in the same ceremony with her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Her students appreciate many things about her teaching style. One said, "She always finds a way to motivate me and keep me engaged." Another offered, "I appreciate her optimism and positive approach to teaching those in the health care field."



Tim Robbins, PhD, Assistant Professor of English, joined the Graceland faculty in 2015 and immediately became a valuable member of the community. His students respect him and describe him as "a mentor who has proven time and time again to be an understanding, reliable and compassionate human being." He is engaged in the Graceland community on multiple fronts, especially as an advocate and ally for equality and opportunity. Perhaps most importantly, one of his students declared that Robbins "encouraged and fostered a classroom where students felt safe — safe to feel, safe to speak and safe to be."

Excellence in Scholarly Achievement



Julia Franklin-Jones, MFA, Professor of Art, had an extremely busy year (*read more about Julia on p18*). In September 2018, Julia received the Iowa Arts Fellowship, a grant that has allowed her to expand, exhibit and express her artwork in new and interesting ways. Earlier this year, her installation in The Helene Center for the Visual Arts, "Picking Up the Pieces," addressed mental health and identity in a personal and powerful way. Her achievements this past year in artistic expression set her apart for this award.

Exceptional Service Award



Jonathan Montalvo, PhD, Assistant Professor of Spanish, has quickly made a significant and lasting impact to the Graceland community. Just this year, he crafted the curriculum for and will launch a Hispanic studies program, an interdisciplinary major that incorporates a Spanish language program with history, political science, communications, philosophy, literature and other courses to develop well-rounded bilingual students who can make substantial contributions to bettering our community and our world. In the summer of 2018, he also initiated Graceland's first experiential learning opportunity in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Graceland is fortunate to have Montalvo as a part of the faculty.

The Power of Home



“How do we inspire students to take *the power of together* into a world that so desperately needs the healing power of community?”

Home is one of the most loaded words in our vocabulary. Homemade pies? Home sweet home? Home for the holidays? Hometown? For most of us, home conjures up feelings of refuge, comfort, safety, and yes, even, where everybody knows your name.

When I think of my first year at Graceland and my assigned house (go Cheville), I still have images of home. As a first-year student, almost everyone wonders: will anyone like me? Will I have friends? Can I be myself? Almost immediately I was surrounded by welcoming friends-to-be who transformed the four walls of concrete blocks into something that quickly became a home that has nurtured me for 50 years.

Home is more than a place. Graceland's housing system automatically embeds new students into a network of engagements. It instills in you a sense of belonging. You belong simply because you are here. You are also supported in all the challenges and struggles that new (and old) students confront. No university can or should protect students from facing difficult problems that come with intellectual or spiritual growth, social relationships or any other challenges that life presents. What Graceland offers, however, is support while students wrestle with those issues. Friends saw me at my best and at my worst, and yet remained friends. Teachers looked beyond my current work to see potential I never knew was there. My Graceland home supported me in so many ways.

And with that support, I could struggle with bigger questions: Who am I? Where am I going? Am I OK? I was free to think beyond the expectations of my childhood. I could explore who I wanted to be. It was the caring community — the caring home — where I was free to explore new and often scary possibilities I had never imagined.

But we cannot stop there. How do we take what we learn from Graceland as home to make the power of together a reality in all aspects of student life — the classroom, the playing field, the theatre, the Commons? How do we inspire students to take the power of together into a world that so desperately needs the healing power of community? Our commitment is to send students into the world with big ideas and big plans, planting new homes of supporting communities wherever they go. May it always be so.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry J. Ashenhurst".

HARRY J. ASHENHURST, PhD, '70
Chair, Graceland University Board of Trustees

Art as a Lifeline

BY BROOKE SUTHERLAND

Professor of Art **JULIA FRANKLIN, MFA**, has had a big year. Last July, she received one of five Iowa Artist Fellowships through the Iowa Arts Council, beating out 325 applicants.

This once-in-a-lifetime award came with \$10,000 and the opportunity to prioritize her art and to participate in exclusive professional development opportunities. It also brought many chances for the Graceland community to experience her work.

Franklin's exhibit, “Picking Up the Pieces,” was on display from Jan. 14 through March 8 in The Helene Center for the Visual Arts on Graceland’s Lamoni campus. Centered around her father's suicide when she was a teenager and the recent discoveries and mysteries about him and his death, the exhibit addressed mental health and identity by creating works from discarded objects.

While “Picking Up the Pieces” was on display at Graceland, Franklin also gave a talk about the inspiration for the show and even shared a theatrical expression she wrote that offered a behind-the-scenes look at the exhibition. The play, “Keeping Up Appearances,” was read by friends and faculty, who took on the roles that told the story of secrets and forgiveness.

OFF THE WALL Franklin notes that Graceland's Facility Services crew has always given her a thumbs up to experiment in the galleries. “They've willingly let me roll out turf and grow grass inside, mop the floor with salt water, and build walls and hang wallpaper. They've said yes to wild ideas that other galleries wouldn't support, and it allowed me and my work to move forward.”



"Because of the strength of the Graceland network, I had the courage to be vulnerable and share something that I had kept hidden for too long, and by sharing my secret, art became a bridge that connected me to others who have experienced loss or struggle with mental illness and identity," she shared of the personal experiences and expression at the center of her artwork over the past year. "I'm grateful for these relationships, and I couldn't have done it without the support of those at Graceland and in the community."

Franklin also experienced success and recognition outside of Graceland and Iowa. Two of her artworks were placed on view at the Des Moines Public Library Central Campus, she was featured in a cover story on the state of art in Iowa in the November/December 2018 edition of *The Iowan Magazine*, her work was featured in the January/February issue of *dsm Magazine*, and her work was selected to be included in the 2019 DuMA Biennial at the Dubuque Museum of Art in Dubuque, Iowa.

In her home state of Texas, one of Franklin's pieces was included in an alumni exhibition at the Fain Fine Arts Center at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, and she was featured in an article in the Wichita Falls *Times Record News* on the same piece, a mixed media work that focuses on her adoption.

Back in Iowa, Franklin was interviewed on a January episode of Iowa Public Radio's *Talk of Iowa*, where she discussed her experience as an Iowa Art Fellow and the very personal work in "Picking Up the Pieces." Additionally, Franklin gave several artist talks at various venues and events, including at the Let's Center for Healing and Creativity in Washington, Iowa, and on National Coming Out Day at the Des Moines Social Club. Most recently, as a testament to her work and success, Franklin was elected to the board of the Print Club at the Des Moines Art Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

With widespread recognition of all she has accomplished, President Patricia H. Draves expressed her pride in Franklin's achievements in artistic expression over the last year when she presented her with the Excellence in Scholarly Achievement Award at the Spring 2019 Commencement. But this appreciation has been felt by Franklin's students all throughout her years teaching at Graceland.

"Julia was the first to introduce me to the possibilities for the art community at Graceland," shared Alison Lancelotti '19. "She encouraged me to see something else in the works I created — to take it a step further to encourage progress. Her own passion created an intensity in her teachings that made me excited to go to class every day."

Franklin's feature in the November/December 2018 edition of *The Iowan Magazine* (left). The exhibit, "Picking Up the Pieces" (above) was intended to be highly interactive. Franklin's desire was for people to touch things and connect with the story.



"Graceland has been the place where I've felt comfortable to take risks and do weird things to test the boundaries of art. That has happened because of support from people all over campus."

Franklin graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking and Sculpture from Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls and completed a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture and Ceramics from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. After working in community outreach and education at the Dallas Museum of Art, she joined the Graceland University faculty in 2001, where she teaches drawing, 3D design, sculpture, experimental media and process, innovation and creativity, ancient to Medieval art history, and modern to contemporary art history. ■



THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Have Tunes, Will Travel

BY SHANE ADAMS

GRACELAND CHOIR hit the road for its third tour under Director Sara Blessing – this time, to the southwestern region of the U.S.

The day after commencement, Director of Choral/Vocal Activities Sara Blessing, MM, and 24 members of three different Graceland choirs met for their first rehearsal together. The following day, they set off on a whirlwind bus tour that took them from Lamoni to perform in five states while traveling through an additional three states just for good measure.

The annual tour is supported by alumni and friends in honor of Graceland alumna Ardyce Koonce '54, a lifelong music educator and musician. The Koonce family has generously donated to choir activities, including the commission of an original piece for Graceland from composer Michael John Trotta.

THE NUMBERS

EIGHT

U.S. STATES

3,986

MILES TRAVELED

ALL FOUR

SEASONS OF WEATHER

6

TATTOOS

Traveling away from Lamoni on a bus creates a unique sense of community. "Choir tours are such a great opportunity for students to create memories that will last a lifetime," Blessing said. "Not only that, relationships can grow between students that might not otherwise."

The tour included students from Graceland's chamber and concert choirs as well as the newly formed Harmonium group. Some students had worked together and some hadn't, but they bonded quickly after that first rehearsal in Lamoni. Blessing said, "Sometimes the first few performances on a tour can be a challenge, but this group came together extremely well."

Their first performance was at the Colonial Hills Community of Christ in Blue Springs, Missouri. From there, they traveled to Carthage, Missouri, to perform at the Precious Moments Chapel, then through Oklahoma to perform twice in Texas: at Community of Christ congregations in Dallas and Austin. They had a day off in San Antonio, which was a highlight for several of the students. The bus took them across Texas and New Mexico until they reached their performance at the Phoenix Central Community of Christ.

“I got to experience so many things and travel to states that I’ve never been to before.”

MAURICE SILAS ’22

For many of them, a big highlight was getting to see the Grand Canyon after their Phoenix performance. “We traveled along the south rim, and we were so worried we weren’t going to be able to see the canyon because it was filled with fog,” remembers Blessing. “But when we got to the east watch tower, the fog had lifted, and we got to see the canyon in all its glory.”

“It was incredible!” exclaimed Allie Weston ’19. “I felt like my eyes would never be able to take it all in.”

After the Grand Canyon, the tour headed through Monument Valley in Utah to the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. While there, they took a train through the mountains. The train’s conductor knew that he had a choir group on board and asked them to perform. They broke into “Yonder Come Day,” an a cappella anthem they sang to open all their performances. For Nicole Snyder ’19, this was her favorite memory. “The train provided a new and fun atmosphere,” she remembered.

For several of the members of the tour like Nicole, this was their last opportunity to perform as official members of the Graceland choir. She said, “This tour was far more emotional for me. In a way, this tour was a final curtain call for me as a singer. I’ve always been so grateful for the opportunity to travel, seeing parts of the U.S. that I’ve never been to and sharing music with people I’ve enjoyed getting to know. As a senior, I’ve also seen how these tours help us grow together as a family, and we learn to trust and take care of each other.”

The concept of “home” takes many forms at Graceland. Under Blessing, the tour has become a regular experience during which lifelong bonds form. “It wouldn’t be possible without the amazing generosity of our alumni and donors,” she said.

And for students like Humberto Tinsman ’20, the tour is an opportunity to deepen bonds already formed. He said, “I loved being able to perform with my friends [who had just graduated] one more time.” ■

CLASS NOTES

Send Us Your News

Completed a degree program? Published a written work? Received that awesome promotion? Earned a prestigious honor? If so, we want to hear about it. Share your memories and milestones by emailing us at alumni@graceland.edu.

48 **Betty Thomas Welch**, Sun City, Arizona — celebrated her 90th birthday with 18 of her previous students.

75 **Ruth Siegfried**, Sewickley, Pennsylvania — was named CEO of the Year by the Pittsburgh Business Times. Siegfried is founder and President/CEO of InVision Human Services, a nonprofit that provides customized treatments and assistance to people with autism and intellectual disability. Launched in 1992, InVision is renowned for its ability to support people with highly complex and often multiple diagnoses.

97 **Nikki Lewen**, Watsonville, California — released her first novel on Amazon, entitled *Three Sisters: A Tale of Survival*, from her fictional trilogy series, *Three Sisters Trilogy*.

03 **Mark Wagenaar**, Valparaiso, Indiana — received the James Wright Poetry Award from *Mid-American Review*, a longstanding international literary journal at Bowling Green University, for his piece “Psalm XXXI.” Wagenaar is an assistant professor of English at Valparaiso University.

11 **Tara Shupe** and **Collin Isham**, The Hague, Netherlands — together with a group of friends, completed an expedition to Everest Base Camp in Nepal for the Trek for Girls campaign. Reaching a summit of 18,514 feet, the team of trekkers were met in solidarity with simultaneous treks taking place in other parts of the world to raise funds and awareness for Covenant Children’s Homes, a nonprofit ministry that provides love, education and support to orphaned children in India.



ALUMNI PROFILE

Jam Master Extraordinaire

Graceland legend **GREG SUTHERLAND '73** was inducted into the Iowa Blues Hall of Fame April 7, 2019.

Sutherland came to Graceland from Riverview, Michigan, in 1969. Once here, he played bass with the local band Zini for eight years, then in several bands based in Des Moines, Iowa. In 1994, Sutherland participated in the first Iowa Blues Challenge as a member of the Heaters. He then joined Fat Tuesday and the Greasefire Horns in 1999, and the band won the 2000 Iowa Blues Challenge and traveled to Memphis to compete in the National Blues Challenge.

Since then, Sutherland has continued to perform with Fat Tuesday, opening shows for many of the biggest names in blues. He also works as a sound and lighting engineer for Fat Tuesday Productions and hosts the Fat Tuesday Jam at Carl's Place in Des Moines every Tuesday night.

Sutherland began working for Graceland College in 1977 and held several positions. He returned to "the Hill" last year after retiring in 2016 to serve as Interim Director of Facility Services, however, earlier this summer, he passed on his role in Facility Services one final time to serve as Owner's Representative for the Newcom Student Union renovation project.

Weddings

- 10** **Nate Myer** and Sidney Johnson, Plano, Texas, June 1, 2019.
15 **Brooke Beytin** and **Ryan Schлом '17**, Atlanta, Georgia, May 26, 2019.

Anniversaries

- 69** **David** and **Ginny Reece Condit** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 4, 2019.

Births

- 03** **Aaron** and **Precia Rackley Beebe**, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Raelynn, born April 23, 2008; and Everleigh, born Feb. 18, 2016. **Carl** and **Katie McLaughlin Hoyt**, Eldridge, Iowa, Ruby, adopted Feb. 8, 2019.
09 **Tyler** and **Autumn Wellington '10 Jones**, Edmond, Oklahoma, Sutton, born April 23, 2019.
11 **Tyler Worlund** and Amanda Prasuhn, St. Louis, Missouri, Avery, born April 14, 2019.
13 **Tyler** and **Kinsey Wellington Horringa**, Independence, Missouri, Quentin, born March 19, 2018.

In Memoriam

- 38** **Donna Gayle Lewis Campbell**, Lamoni, Iowa, May 14, 2019.
41 **Audrey Leutzingar Barker**, Boise, Idaho, Feb. 16, 2019.
43 **Ruth Patton Mousseau**, Auburn Hills, Michigan, 2016.
45 **Eunice Condit Helterbran**, Bend, Oregon, Jan. 22, 2019.
48 **Virginia Chandler Savage**, Independence, Missouri, March 29, 2019.
49 **Perce Judd**, Tucson, Arizona, Jan. 5, 2019. **Nelda Bridges Von Horton**, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 12, 2018. **Barbara Lund Roberson**, Independence, Missouri, March 20, 2019. **Demma Ingram Sammons**, Hays, Kansas, April 4, 2019. **Patricia Heide Taylor**, Independence, Missouri, May 1, 2019.
50 **Charles Adams**, Perry, Florida, Sept. 12, 2016. **Paul Barritt**, Alexandria, Virginia, April 17, 2018. **Ross Bennett**, Indianapolis, Indiana, April 4, 2008. **Mafra Bergman Redfield Blake**, Ankeny, Iowa, April 29, 2019. **Orlene Redfield Blake**, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Sept. 28, 2012. **William Brollier**, Richardson, Texas, March 5, 2018. **Jonda Reed Conkel**, West Burlington, Iowa, March 17, 2019. **Ray Eastin**, Woodstock, Georgia, Dec. 22, 2018.

Remembering the time of your life HOME COMING

graceland.edu/homecoming

OCT. 25-27, 2019

Friday, October 25

- Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament
- Choir Concert
- 20th Annual Emeriti & Alumni Awards Banquet
- Homecoming Musical: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Student Air Band Show

Saturday, October 26

- Alumni Art Show
- Early Risers Guided Campus Walking Tour
- Women's Varsity Volleyball vs. Alumni
- Choir Concert
- Men's Varsity Volleyball vs. Alumni
- Pep Rally with Gadets and Cheer Squad
- Yellowjacket Tailgate Party
- Annual Alumni Association Forum

- Homecoming Court Crowning
- Graceland Players Improv Troupe
- Homecoming Football Game
- Ergo and Friends Recital
- Honor Class Dinners
- Homecoming Musical: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Homecoming Alumni/Student Talent Show

Sunday, October 27

- Communion Service
- Homecoming Worship Service
- Crescent Breakfast
- President's Brunch
- Homecoming Musical: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Honor Classes

1959-1969-1979-1984-1989-1994-1999-2009

Ralph Farrand, Bridgeport, Michigan, Feb. 19, 2007. **Wil Graybill**, Lake Charles, Louisiana, Sept. 17, 2013. **Robert Holland**, Canton, Ohio, Jan. 20, 2006. **Beverly Payne Patrick**, Whittier, California, Feb. 26, 2019. **Lei Foo Peppers**, Independence, Missouri, Feb. 25, 2014. **Delmar Ray**, Kansas City, Missouri, Oct. 8, 2016. **Geral Sartwell**, Sacramento, California, March 27, 2014. **Rod Schall**, Blue Springs Missouri, April 22, 2019. **Richard Schlafer**, Janesville Wisconsin, July 19, 2015. **Richard Smith**, Independence, Missouri, March 12, 2019. **Janet Dockstader Smoger**, Pleasant Hill, Iowa, May 23, 2014. **William Spencer**, Muskegon, Michigan, March 10, 2017.

51 Robert Baker, Holden, Missouri, Feb. 8, 2019. **Eleanor Sutton Flowers**, Independence, Missouri, June 2, 2009. **John Rooney**, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, March 24, 2018.

53 Marylou Smith Grotfend, Austin, Texas, Dec. 8, 2018. **Jim Henson**, Marietta, South Carolina, April 25, 2019. **Fred Larsen**, Independence, Missouri, April 26, 2019. **Harley Martens**, Adrian, Missouri, April 22, 2014. **54 Marlene Morgan Pierce**, Pentwater, Michigan, Dec. 17, 2017. **Luella Smith Stoll**, Branson, Missouri, July 2018. **55 Gloria Allen Hurt**, Moss Point, Mississippi, April 22, 2019. **Thomas Peterson**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, May 25, 2019. **Carolyn Fisher Pratt**, Independence, Missouri, March 13, 2019. **56 Russell Eastin**, Flora, Illinois, Nov. 3, 2018. **Wayne Wendell**, Loveland, Colorado, April 24, 2019. **58 Marlan Heide**, Independence, Missouri, March 21, 2019. **59 David Ackley**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 17, 2018. **David Draper**, Shelter Island, New York, May 8, 2013. **Gary Heaviland**, Jefferson City, Missouri, March 14, 2019.

Donna Booker McCauley, Mobile, Alabama, Dec. 28, 2018.

60 Sandra Noland Allen, Chillicothe, Missouri, Feb. 16, 2019. **Judy Leland Roberts**, Denver, Colorado, May 19, 2016. **Claude Walter**, Willits, California, May 4, 2019.

61 William Phillips, Collierville, Tennessee, Jan. 13, 2019. **Patti Page Warnock**, Blue Springs, Missouri, March 1, 2019.

62 Rod Tillman, McKinney, Texas, April 11, 2019. **Dale Vincent**, Olympia, Washington, Nov. 27, 2017. **67 Anthony Gencarelli**, Willoughby, Ohio, April 2, 2019.

69 Ginny Reece Condit, Warrenton, Virginia, March 18, 2019.

71 Linda (Lu) Lowman Mountenay, Independence, Missouri, April 21, 2019.

72 Randy Hazelrigg, Independence, Missouri, Feb. 27, 2019.

77 Thomas Hentz, Maitland, Florida, July 10, 2017.

Roger Tuttle, Independence, Missouri, March 12, 2019.

79 Debra Cross, South Burlington, Vermont, June 13, 2015. **Sheila MacFarlane**, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Nov. 16, 2010.

83 Beth Nelson-DeLong, Lamoni, Iowa, April 4, 2019.

89 Elaine Wills, Independence, Missouri, July 8, 2017.

91 Kevin Ballew, Buckeye, Arizona, Sept. 7, 2018.

94 Tim Minkley, Waukesha, Wisconsin, Sept. 14, 2015.

96 Jon Larsen, Armstrong, Iowa, Jan. 19, 2016.

00 Rae Venghaus, North Liberty, Iowa, Aug. 5, 2017.

08 Matthew Calcagni, Brampton, Ontario, Canada, April 9, 2019.

FRIENDS **Elde Archibald Amick**, St. Charles, Missouri, March 29, 2018.



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HOMECOMING
DETAILS P23