

BAPTIST HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY *Alumni* NEWS

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A FAMILY TRADITION
WORTH CONTINUING
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**BAPTIST HEALTH
SCIENCES UNIVERSITY**

Alumni NEWS

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President's CORNER



Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning.

- Benjamin Franklin

Two years ago, I was blessed to be named the third president of Baptist Health Sciences University following the legacy of two great leaders. Leaders who had the vision to build a solid foundation of academic excellence and student-centered service that defined health sciences higher education for generations of learners. All of this built within a thriving health care system among the best in the mid-south and the nation. We continue to build on this solid foundation.

Much has changed at Baptist University in my two years as president, but much remains the same. Fall 2025 will be the second year in a row that we have increased enrollment and have more new students than the previous year, both at the graduate and undergraduate level. This growth is important as we strive to achieve our single overarching purpose to be the talent pipeline for Baptist Memorial Health Care and beyond. Even as we grow, our student-centered service remains strong as reported on a recent satisfaction survey.

Progress at the university can be seen in more ways than enrollment numbers. We are undergoing some organizational and aesthetic changes to better position the university for the future. First, we are creating three colleges to join the College of Osteopathic Medicine: the College of Health Professions, the College of Nursing, and the College of Sciences and General Studies. Next, we are reorganizing several leadership positions for better alignment and adding a new Vice President of Information Technology. Finally, we are updating and enhancing our signage to more clearly define our campus and distinguish our presence in the Medical District.

We have decades of success and achievement from our days as hospital-based programs and as a college, but it is through the vision of continual growth and progress that we have evolved to become Baptist University. It has taken patience, hard work and commitment to get here, and it will take much more as we strive forward, but the journey is worth the effort.

Together, we will continue this journey.

T. Hampton Hopkins, EdD

Alumni Board Chair MESSAGE

Dear Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni,

I am honored to introduce myself as the newly appointed Chair of the Alumni Board of Directors. My name is Dominique Crutchfield, and I graduated from Baptist College of Health Sciences in 2015 with a degree in Health Administration.

The degree I received at Baptist served as a springboard for my career. Shortly after graduation, I had the privilege of beginning my professional journey at the Baptist Medical Group Outpatient Care Center-Diabetes Education Center. I later returned to my alma mater as an Admissions Officer, where I was able to help prospective students discover the many opportunities that Baptist offers. That experience, rooted in the values and education I received as a student, laid the foundation for my continued growth in health care and education. Today, I serve as a Clinical Medical Education Coordinator at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where I support programs that contribute to the growth and development of medical professionals. The strong academic preparation I gained at Baptist also gave me the confidence and knowledge to pursue a master's degree in health informatics and information management from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center.

I am deeply grateful for the ways Baptist shaped both my professional journey and personal growth. As I step into this new role as Chair, my hope is to foster stronger connections among our alumni community. Whether through volunteering, mentoring, attending events, or sharing your own success stories, your involvement is invaluable to the continued growth of our association and to the legacy of our alma mater.

To our newest graduates, I want to encourage you to embrace every opportunity that comes your way. Your Baptist education has prepared you with the skills, values, and resilience to succeed. Just as my degree opened doors to meaningful work and further education, I believe yours will serve as the launchpad for your own unique journey.

I encourage each of you to stay connected, get involved, and help us build a vibrant network of Baptist Health Sciences University alumni. Together, we can celebrate our shared experiences, support current students, and strengthen the impact of our community in healthcare and beyond.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I look forward to working with you and continuing the tradition of excellence that defines the Baptist Health Sciences University family.

Let's stay connected, give back, and grow stronger together as alumni—because our shared commitment makes a lasting difference.

With gratitude and excitement,



Dominique Crutchfield, MS-HIIM
Health Administration, 2015
Chair, Alumni Board of Directors
Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni Association



Baptist Health Sciences University: A family tradition worth continuing



Matching with a medical school can be daunting. For Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine 2028 class president Jonathan Hawkins, however, enrolling at the school was a matter of tradition. A tradition started by his grandparents Dr. Charles Ray Swift and Wilma Fowler Swift (1956, Nursing) and his mom, Sylvia Hawkins (1982, Nursing). Sylvia wasn't at all surprised by her son's decision to attend Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine. "With his grandparents in medicine and me as a nurse, it seems to run in the family," said Sylvia. "He's always been determined and curious, so while I didn't know exactly what path he'd choose, it didn't surprise me that he felt drawn to medicine." Baptist Memorial Health Care has always been a major part of the Swift family history. Charles completed his internship and residency at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Memphis. Meanwhile, Wilma became a nurse after attending the Baptist School of Nursing [now part of Baptist Health Sciences University]. "I had a pastor who encouraged me to become a nurse," said Wilma. "He had a sister who was a nurse, and I think I reminded him of her." Nursing was a fit for Wilma who had always looked for ways to help other people. "I like people, and I like to help people and listen to people," said Wilma. "I picked Baptist because it was not too far from us and my pastor was Baptist, so that encouraged me to attend." Decades later, Wilma's decision became a pivotal motivator for her daughter. From an early age, watching both her father and her mother care for others inspired her to follow in their footsteps. "Nursing felt like the right way for me to do that," said Sylvia. "My mom's journey inspired me every step of the way."

"Sylvia was always a helper, a go-getter," said Wilma. "And when she couldn't quite figure out what she wanted to do, I suggested it." Wilma's nursing career also gave Sylvia a preview of the excellent education and values Baptist Health Sciences University instilled in its students. Combined with her father's training at Baptist Memorial Hospital, schooling at Baptist felt like a natural choice for Sylvia. "Baptist had such a strong reputation, and I wanted that same solid foundation," said Sylvia. "For me, it wasn't just about nursing — it was about carrying forward a family tradition." Attending the same medical school as her mother gave Sylvia a deep sense of connection to her mother's legacy. It also helped shape how she viewed nursing — not just as a job, but as a calling.

Now, Jonathan's experience as a medical student in the first class of Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine serves as both a major source of pride and nostalgia for Sylvia. Getting to follow in her own mother's footsteps at Baptist was already incredibly meaningful for her. Seeing her son take a similar journey along the same path makes the connection even more special.

"It's amazing to see how much it feels the same," Sylvia said. "The rigorous academics, supportive professors and close-knit community are still there. Just like when I was a student, my son is surrounded by people who truly want to see him succeed — both personally and professionally." Sylvia also did her best to be a steady support system for Jonathan — encouraging him to keep going when things felt tough and sharing perspectives from her own health care experience. "Ultimately, he put in the hard work, but I was grateful to walk alongside him and cheer him on," said Sylvia. Getting to see three generations of her family connected through Baptist and medicine has been a blessing for both Sylvia and her mother.

"From my father's training at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Memphis to my mother and me attending Baptist School of Nursing and now to my son — each of us has our own unique path, but the shared values of compassion, service and excellence tie us together in a very special way."

And the family legacy makes Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine the perfect match for Jonathan.



Baptist Medical Group Celebrates First Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Clinic



Dianne's Story

Dianne Titus thought severe pain was going to be part of her life forever. At 62, she'd gotten used to constant pain from sciatic nerve issues, bulging discs and bilateral rotator cuff tears.

A manager at Baptist Medical Group, Titus received an invitation from BMG for an open house at the Baptist Medical Group-Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Clinic.

The OMM Clinic is the only clinic of its kind in the metro-Memphis area. Physicians at the clinic practice osteopathic neuromusculoskeletal medicine, incorporating osteopathic manipulative treatment to help patients with pain management and other conditions.

"I was skeptical, but I wanted to find an alternative to medicine or surgery," Titus said, "so I went with some coworkers to see what it was all about."

She met Dr. John C. Biery Jr. at the open house and liked how he listened to her and thoughtfully answered her questions, so she made an appointment.

"Dr. Biery did a thorough review of my records and complaints. Then he had me lie on the table and gently touched my body from my head to toes. It didn't hurt at all, and I felt like there was no way it was doing anything," laughed Titus. "I left there still doubtful, but then I slept all night on my right side. I haven't been able to sleep on that side for a year!"

Her second visit with Biery focused on her shoulders, ending years of stabbing pain. She estimates her shoulders are 85% to 95% better since seeing Biery.

What is osteopathic manipulative treatment?

OMT is a hands-on approach that helps correct structural imbalances in the body, relieve pain and improve circulation. OMT focuses on the nervous system, muscles and joints to improve body movement and organ function for overall health and well-being. It is practiced by doctors of osteopathic medicine, or DOs, who are trained in comprehensive health care for the body, mind and spirit.

Using several OMT techniques, DOs apply gentle pressure to move the muscles, soft tissues and joints. The treatment encourages the body to heal itself by ensuring bones and muscles are aligned and balanced properly.

About the Baptist Medical Group-Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Clinic

Located in Southaven, Mississippi, the BMG-OMM Clinic is the first OMM clinic in northern Mississippi and western Tennessee. The clinic is a collaboration among Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Baptist Medical Group and Baptist Health Sciences University.

In July 2025, the OMM Clinic launched an Osteopathic Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine Residency Program and hosted third- and fourth-year osteopathic medical students from BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Four board-certified osteopathic neuromusculoskeletal medicine physicians see patients at the OMM clinic, with a fifth scheduled to begin in the spring. Because they all teach at BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine, their days in the clinic are staggered, but at least one DO is practicing in the clinic Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Contact the clinic

Baptist Medical Group-Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Clinic is located at 391 Southcrest Circle, Suite 101 in Southaven, Mississippi.

For more information, contact the clinic at 662-772-3460.

Meet Rusty Woods, Director of Faith Integration and Service



The name of the game in Faith Integration & Service over the last year is “new.” I am just shy of six months into the role of director for faith integration and service and learning what has been done and what can be in a new era at Baptist Health Sciences University. One of the biggest blessings for me is benefiting from my predecessor in the role, Karen Smith, who has almost 20 years of experience and provides the perfect balance of independence and guidance! It is an honor to inherit the position from her and a greater one to have her trust as I begin my own work in the role.

The verse for the university this year is Galatians 5:22-23 where Paul writes “But the Spirit produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. There is no law that says these things are wrong.” When challenged by Dr. Hopkins to consider verses that can help guide our university grow into greater university as it navigates new phases and incorporates more voices, I was also asked by a coworker to begin a community garden with students at the university. I noticed all the diverse plants and the fruit they would bear we placed in the same raised garden. All of them provide beauty or health benefits, or both. All of them are rooted in the same soil. So, this tiny garden on campus became for me a metaphor for the programs and people in our university. And Paul’s words about the fruit of the Spirit, a diversity of qualities all humans crave to see more of in the world, became an anchor for the work we hope to

do this year. And they all come from being rooted in the same Spirit who desires to bring healing and health into our world, and the work of our university is a part of that!

I envision that each month we will focus on a different fruit of the Spirit. I hope to provide ‘shout out’ boards around campus where students, staff, and faculty can shout out their friends or colleagues they see displaying the fruit of the Spirit we will focus on for that month. I am hopeful this will help us really lean into the transformation available through being rooted in the same God and same purposes.

These verses will also provide the theme “Bear Fruit” for our student retreat in September. I want our new and returning students to be immersed in these nine qualities and the Spirit that can produce them in their lives. I’m certain we will have a mix of students from many faith traditions and also no faith tradition. What I love about these verses is they are qualities all humans desire in their relationships, so we can all see value in them regardless of where we come from.

I also hope these qualities will be transformative for our future healthcare students in every program at Baptist. These students will be doctors, nurses, med techs, and a variety of other health care workforce members in our region as well as across the country. I hope they can bring love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control with them wherever they plant their feet to bear fruit in service.





BHSU Medical Mission Trip Provides Care to Villagers in Peru

Baptist Health Sciences University (BHSU) students and faculty traveled to Pucallpa, Peru in April for a medical mission trip. They offered four days of clinics at local churches, delivering care to 1,321 patients and providing 505 pairs of reading glasses.

Of the 21 volunteers, most were undergraduate nursing, nuclear medicine, biomedical sciences and radiography students. Three assistant professors, including faculty lead for the trip, Allyson Smith, were also part of the care team, along with Jordan Bedford, an academic tutor at BHSU and ICU nurse at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Memphis.

BHSU volunteers joined with local pastors and missionaries to help improve the quality of life of indigenous people, including the Shipibo tribe. They met with Tom Hough, a South American missionary who was born in and has worked in the jungles of Peru for many years. His parents, along with others, founded a theological school called The Indian Center, which trains pastors and their families, enabling them to start their own jungle churches.

The volunteers offered more than medical care. They also provided spiritual and emotional support, often praying with the patients.

"We empowered our students to pray with the patients, and meet them where they were," said Professor Smith. "Sometimes there's a physical need, but a lot of times there's a spiritual need as well that has to be met in order for us to provide care to a patient that may be emotionally vulnerable."

The night before the first clinic, BHSU volunteers held a blessing and anointing of the hands for everyone who

would be providing healing. "The volunteers are the healing hands of Christ and are called to go into the world and bring healing both physically and spiritually," said BHSU Dean of Student Services Karen Smith, who has attended previous mission trips in Peru, but didn't join this year.

The Liquid Legacy, a ministry with a rich history in Peru, provided support for the trip. Students raised funds to pay for half of their cost to participate, and Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation provided scholarships to cover the remaining cost.

"As with previous mission trips to this area, the patients were very gracious and appreciative of the care. The mission was a small part of a huge ministry that will continue through the local churches. The people are very faithful," said Dean Smith, who noted that the villagers prayed for the volunteers daily.

Planning has already started for next year's mission trips. Due to the different academic calendars of undergraduate students and medical students at the BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine, it's not possible to do a combined mission trip, but medical students will participate in a separate trip in a different location.



It's a Great Homecoming!

The fall season arrived in Memphis and Baptist Health Sciences University celebrated it with their third Alumni Homecoming event on Saturday, October 26th. Drawing together 65 current students, alumni, faculty, staff, and their families for an evening filled with festivities, food, and Blue Healer pride!

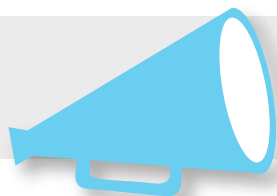
The event took place in the Campus Hub gymnasium, where participants had the chance to reconnect with faculty and explore creatively themed booths in our Best in Show competition. Each academic program at BHSU crafted displays celebrating fall, homecoming, and BHSU's spirit in the most creative way. After participants cast their votes in an anonymous survey, the Respiratory Care program earned the title of Most Spooktacular Booth for their impressive display!



Alongside the competition, there were activities for the entire family to enjoy. Children and adults lined up for face painting, joined in Trunk-or-Treat around the program booths, while many wearing their favorite Halloween costumes. The night featured a delicious slider bar, popcorn, and other movie snacks while everyone gathered to watch Inside Out 2, the movie selected by popular vote.



This Homecoming was a great way to celebrate our Blue Healer community and kick off the fall season. Here's to many more years of memories—Let's Go Blue Healers!



STAY TUNED
for our next issue:

Homecoming Tour is planned for October 2025.

A Night of Memphis Hartley and Soul: 2025 Spring Alumni Reunion

On Saturday, April 12, 2025, Baptist Health Sciences University welcomed back 54 alumni, faculty, staff, and friends to the original site where Baptist Memorial Hospital stood from 1912 to 2000, which is now home to the UT-Baptist Research Park. The Spring Alumni Reunion, themed “A Night of Memphis Hartley and Soul,” was an evening of remembrance, reconnection, and rhythm.

The highlight of the evening was a soulful performance by Memphis Soul Remedy, which is a band made up of doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals, that brought music, memories, and a whole lot of heart to the gathering.

“It was a huge honor to bring our alumni back to the sacred grounds of where the original Baptist Hospital once stood,” said Zac Cox (2011, Nuclear Medicine), Relationship Marketing Coordinator. “The icing on the cake? Watching a nursing alumna shout out song requests to her former colleague—now a band member. It doesn’t get more Baptist than BHSU’s Spring 2025 Alumni Reunion, A Night of Memphis Hartley and Soul!”



“It was wonderful to be there for the Alumni event. Beautiful evening, good friends and great food. So many memories!! Thanks to all who made it happen.”

Pamela Gibson (1978, Nursing)



The evening also featured the presentation of three prestigious alumni awards, celebrating outstanding individuals for their dedication, service, and impact in health care and the community:



Young Alumni Service Award

Amber Toles

(2018, Medical Laboratory Sciences)

This award honors a recent graduate (within the last 10 years) who has shown exceptional volunteer service and professional promise. Amber has remained actively involved with the university while excelling in her field as a Medical Laboratory Scientist and Medical Education Specialist, inspiring fellow young alumni to stay connected and serve.



Alumni Service Award

Lauren Brown

(2017, Radiation Therapy)

This recognition celebrates Lauren’s long-standing commitment to BHSU, going above and beyond through volunteerism, university service, and community outreach. Her integrity and leadership embody the values of Baptist Health Sciences University.



Distinguished Alumni Award

Val Kelley

(1983, Nursing)

The highest honor given by BHSU, this award celebrates Val’s distinguished career in health care, community service, and innovation. Val’s legacy reflects the highest standards of professional excellence and personal integrity, bringing honor to the university on a regional and national level.

Alumni lunches held at Baptist Memorial Desoto, October 3, 2024, and Baptist Memorial Memphis, October 31, 2024



Baptist University Visits Union City for Lunch and Learn Event

On July 1, 2025, Baptist University traveled to Baptist Memorial Hospital-Union City for a special Lunch and Learn event. The gathering offered Baptist employees and alumni the chance to learn more about Baptist Health Sciences University (BHSU) and connect with university leadership, including President Dr. Hampton Hopkins.

Skipper Bondurant, chief executive officer and administrator of Baptist Union City, joined the event and proudly showed his BHSU spirit by wearing a Hartley pin on his blazer. Hartley, the university mascot, also made a lively appearance, bringing extra energy and fun to the occasion.



During the session, Bondurant shared exciting news about clinical education opportunities, announcing that OMS-III students will soon have the option to complete clinical residency program rotations at Baptist Union City.

"It was a pleasure to bring some BHSU school spirit to our Baptist family at Union City," stated Zac Cox (2011, Nuclear Medicine), Relationship Marketing Coordinator.

Dr. Hopkins and Allison Flynn, Director of Admissions, led a Q&A with attendees, addressing questions about the university's foundation endowment, HOSA involvement, campus safety, the new College of Osteopathic Medicine, and employee benefits. They also highlighted tuition discounts and other perks available to Baptist team members and their dependents pursuing degrees at BHSU.

"It felt like home," shared Megan Munoz, a 2022 Nuclear Medicine graduate, reflecting on her time at BHSU. "And it still feels like home. I loved having the opportunity to stay within the Baptist family."



Alumni Lunch & Learn held at Baptist Memorial North Mississippi



On July 24, Baptist Health Sciences University (BHSU) hosted a Lunch and Learn at Baptist Memorial Hospital–North Mississippi, offering Baptist employees and alumni the opportunity to connect with BHSU leadership and learn more about the university's programs, benefits, and future plans.

Brian Welton, CEO of Baptist North Mississippi, welcomed the group and introduced Dr. Hampton Hopkins, President of BHSU, to his team. Dr. Hopkins was joined by key university leaders, including Allison Flynn, Director of Admissions, and Ann-Salina Tucker, Director of Admissions and Student Affairs for the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), as well as several academic program chairs.

The session featured exciting updates on clinical education and academic program developments. Program chairs shared insights into rotation opportunities, curriculum enhancements, and how their areas contribute to building the future of health care.

Following the introductions, the leadership team led a Q&A session, where attendees inquired about topics such as tuition discounts, campus life, the COM, and admissions



processes. Leaders emphasized the university's commitment to supporting the professional growth of Baptist team members and their families.

The event welcomed 29 attendees, including three proud BHSU alumni:

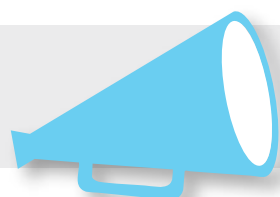
Stephanie Hobson (2017, Nuclear Medicine)

Lakeysta Ford (2012, Nuclear Medicine)

April Johnson (2018, Medical Laboratory Science)

Following the lunch, Welton, personally led a tour of the hospital for BHSU faculty and staff, showcasing the hospital's facilities and commitment to patient-centered care. The tour provided insight for our current faculty to better prepare our future healers.

We are grateful to our Baptist family in Oxford for their warm hospitality and enthusiasm. Events like these reaffirm our shared mission to educate and empower the next generation of compassionate, skilled health care professionals.



STAY TUNED
for our next issue:

Alumni luncheons are scheduled for Baptist Memorial Women's, DeSoto and Memphis

Embracing Compassionate Care: BHSU Hosts Third Nursing White Coat Ceremony

On October 28, 2024, in the Campus Hub Gymnasium, the Baptist University Nursing Division hosted its third White Coat Ceremony for the class of Summer 2026, a rite of passage that not only emphasizes the importance of compassionate patient care early in nursing training but also plays a pivotal role in shaping the professional identity of our future nurses. Dr. Cathy Stepter (1992, Nursing), Dean of Nursing, opened the ceremony and welcomed guests. Dr. Ivy Anderson, nursing faculty, followed with an opening prayer.

Dr. Cheryl Johnson-Joy, associate dean of nursing, presented Keisha Herron, Capstone senior nursing student, as the student speaker for the event. Herron ended the speech using a quote inspired by Chris Butler, "Mirror Mirror on the wall, I will get back up each and every time I fall, I will set my goals, no matter how small and by Faith, I believe, I will achieve them all."

Dr. Seraphine Lambert then introduced Dr. Sheila Bouie, the Dean of Health and Natural Sciences at Southwest Tennessee Community College and Chair of the Tennessee State Board of Nursing, as the guest speaker for the evening. Dr. Bouie stressed, "that you will be cloaked in the coat white this afternoon, the coat is an outward symbol to the public of your professionalism, and your dedication. It sets the expectation of how the public, peers and others will engage with you. But remember, this is on the outside, it does not fix what's on the inside – that is all you. When I began my remarks, I said that we must treat each other well. Be kind, forgiving, generous with time and in spirit – that is what is on the inside. Please, wear your coat with pride and humility on the outside, and allow the attributes akin to nursing care to radiate from within."

Thirty-six students came forward during the ceremony to be cloaked in white coats by Dr. Cheryl Johnson-Joy, Dr. Ivy Anderson, Dr. Demetric Osborn, Professor William Wood (1996, Nursing), and Professor Allyson Smith. While holding nursing lamps and led by Boling, the group recited the University's Nursing Clinical Pledge, a pledge that symbolizes the commitment to compassionate and ethical patient care. This pledge underscores the significance of the commitment each student is making. Stepter provided closing remarks and Anderson prayed for the group. A reception followed the event.



In 2014, recognizing nurses' vital role in the health care team, the Gold Foundation partnered with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to adopt a similar ceremony for nursing. The Gold Foundation provides support and resources to nursing schools to conduct the White Coat Ceremony, ensuring its successful implementation and continuation.

While it may take different forms at each nursing school, at its core, the ceremony emphasizes the importance of humanistic patient care, which is defined as compassionate, collaborative, and scientifically excellent health care, early in nursing training and professional identity formation.

The Gold Foundation champions the human connection in health care. The foundation engages schools and their students, health systems, companies, and individual clinicians in the joy and meaning of humanistic health care so that patients and their families can be partners in collaborative, compassionate, and scientifically excellent care.

For more information about the ceremony and the Gold Foundation, visit www.gold-foundation.org. The BHSU ceremony was sponsored by the Baptist University Student Nurses Association, Dr. Seraphine Lambert, Dr. Cheryl Johnson-Joy, and Professor Allyson Smith, Advisors. Thanks to Jeremy Wilkes for helping during the event.



Allied Health White Coat Ceremony

On September 30, 2024, the Division of Allied Health at Baptist Health Sciences University (BHSU) held its twelfth annual White Coat Ceremony, honoring students entering the clinical phase of their programs. The Allied Health professions represented at the ceremony included students from diagnostic medical sonography, medical laboratory science, medical radiography, nuclear medicine technology, neurodiagnostic technology, radiation therapy, respiratory care, and surgical technology.

The White Coat Ceremony symbolically marks a student's transition from pre-clinical preparation to professional-level coursework and focuses on the professional standards expected of those in patient care careers.

Dr. Anuja Ghorpade, Vice President and Provost of Academic Affairs at BHSU, delivered the keynote address, underscoring the profound significance of the white coat. "The white coat represents a promise," Ghorpade said, addressing the students. "A promise to your future patients that you will listen, show respect, and provide care to the best of your

abilities. It's about meeting them where they are, honoring their choices, and always upholding the trust they place in you."



Sixty students were then cloaked in white coats by their respective faculty members, representing the eight Allied Health programs at the College. Specifically, there were 8 students in diagnostic medical sonography, 4 in medical laboratory science, 17 in medical radiography, 6 in nuclear medicine technology, 5 in neurodiagnostic technology, 5 in radiation therapy, 5 in respiratory care, and 10 in surgical technology.

Class of 2029 Medical Students Attend White Coat Ceremony



Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine held a White Coat Ceremony for its second class of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine students on Saturday, Aug. 2 at First Baptist Church-Memphis. This class of students will be the largest to date.

During the ceremony, the class of 114 medical students received their white coats — a significant milestone that symbolizes professionalism and marks students' entry into the medical field. Family, friends, faculty and staff gathered with students at the event to celebrate the beginning of their journeys to becoming osteopathic physicians.

Dr. Robert Piccinini, president of the American Osteopathic Association, offered greetings. He is the first psychiatrist to lead the American Osteopathic Association.

Dr. William Anderson delivered the keynote address by video. A trailblazer in both medicine and civil rights, he is a distinguished surgeon, educator and leader whose influence has shaped the landscape of osteopathic medicine and American history. Dr. Anderson's remarkable career began in Albany, Georgia, where he practiced as a family physician and surgeon for six years while leading the historic Albany Civil Rights Movement.

Following the presentation of white coats, students recited the osteopathic oath, led by Dr. Piccinini. Each coat was adorned with the college patch, which symbolizes commitment to a new role.

The ceremony also featured an invocation from Michelle McDonald, doctor of public health, senior associate dean for administration, operations and services; welcome and closing remarks from Dr. Peter Bell, Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine dean and vice provost; an introduction from Dr. David Klink, senior associate dean for clinical affairs; and presentation of the class led by Sophie La Salle, Ph.D., senior associate dean for academic affairs.

Winter 2024 Commencement Ceremony



Baptist Health Sciences University held a winter commencement ceremony on Thursday, December 12 at First Baptist Church in Millington. President Hampton Hopkins, Ed.D., conferred associate, bachelor's, and doctoral degrees to 66 graduates in biomedical sciences, health administration, medical laboratory science, neurodiagnostic technology, pre-health studies and nursing.

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Anuja Ghorpade recognized graduates receiving special honors, including magna cum laude, summa cum laude, and cum laude distinctions.

Chair of the Board of Directors Beverly Jordan (1977, Nursing) presented the Board of Directors Award to Bri Jones. This prestigious award recognizes a graduate who has demonstrated outstanding academic performance, leadership skills, commitment to community service, dedication to Christian principles and potential for leadership in the health care professions.

Director of Development for the Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation Sherita Martin presided over the following awards:

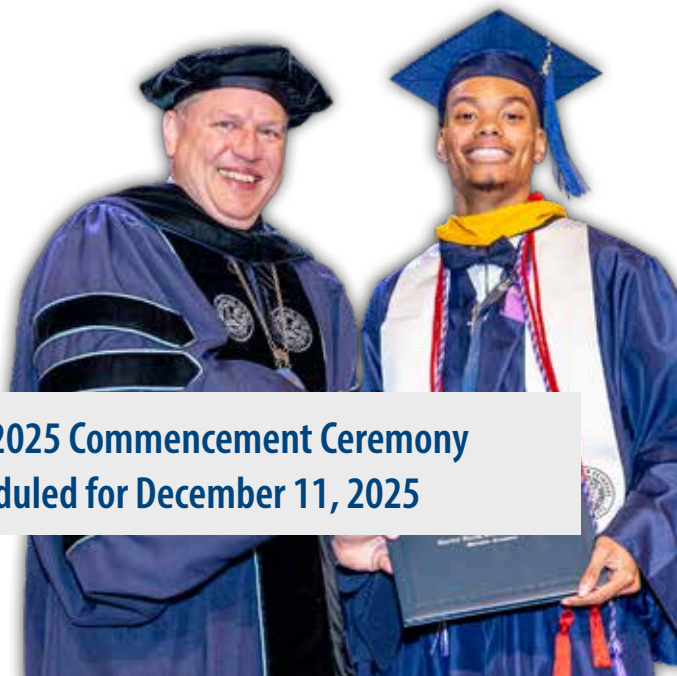
Elizabeth Farnell Achievement Award – Shannon Malenky, Nursing

Joseph Powell Award – Maria Rodriguez, Biomedical Sciences

Dr. Thomas McColl Chesney Award – Kelsey Downs, Medical Laboratory Science

Sarah Ainsworth Award – Maria Rodriguez, Biomedical Sciences

Advanced Practice Leadership Award – Alana Altomare, Doctor of Nursing Practice



STAY TUNED
for our next issue:

Winter 2025 Commencement Ceremony
scheduled for December 11, 2025

Spring 2025 Commencement Ceremony

On Thursday, April 10, Baptist Health Sciences University held a spring commencement ceremony at Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee. President of the university, Hampton Hopkins, Ed.D., conferred associate and bachelor's degrees to 99 graduates in the programs of biomedical sciences, diagnostic medical sonography, health administration, medical radiography, neurodiagnostic technology, nuclear medicine technology, pre-health studies, radiation therapy, respiratory care, nursing, and surgical technology.

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Anuja Ghorpade recognized graduates receiving special honors, including magna cum laude, summa cum laude, and cum laude distinctions.



The following graduation awards were announced during the ceremony:

Board of Directors Award | John Hunter, Medical Radiography

Elizabeth Farnell Achievement Award | Presley Williams, Nursing

Dr. Emmel Golden Award | Angel Hutton, Respiratory Care

Sarah Ainsworth Award | Kenyon Page, Nursing

Dr. Ling H. Lee Achievement Award | John Hunter, Medical Radiography

Dr. John F. Rockett Award | Jasmine Johnson, Nuclear Medicine

Sigma Theta Tau Award | Kenyon Page, Nursing

Summer 2025 Commencement Ceremony



On Thursday, August 14, 2025, Baptist Health Sciences University held a summer commencement ceremony at Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tennessee. President, Dr. Hampton Hopkins, conferred associate and bachelor degrees to 37 graduates in the programs of health administration, medical imaging sciences, public health, neurodiagnostic technology, nursing and radiation therapy.

The following graduation awards were announced during the ceremony:

Board of Directors Award | Tyeisha Kones, Nursing

Elizabeth Farnell Achievement Award | Mae Marshall, Nursing

Joseph Powell Award | Mae Marshall, Nursing

Sarah Ainsworth Award | Miriam Guerrero, Neurodiagnostic Technology

Sigma Theta Tau Award | Treveka Terry, Nursing



Honors Program

The BHSU Honors Program is a purposeful community of scholars committed to academic excellence and service. In keeping with the University's mission to teach, preach, and heal, the Honors Program seeks to share "the light of Truth for mind, soul, and body" through four areas: scholarly research & advancement, professional & spiritual enrichment, cultural & social engagement, and service & leadership development. The Honors Program exists to develop scholarly servant leaders.

This Fall, we will welcome forty (40) new members for a total of one hundred and fifteen (115) Honors students comprising 14% of the current student population. The Honors Program is a member of the National Collegiate Honors Council. The average programmatic grade point average is 3.55, and 93% of the participants are very satisfied with the Honors experience at BHSU.

The program has several initiatives to support these efforts. The Led to Lead initiative helps students learn advanced leadership and professional principles, offers leadership opportunities through the Honors Student Leadership Council, and encourages students to engage in leadership opportunities on campus and in the community.

The Gifted to Give initiative revolves around three annual fundraisers: in the fall, Share the Thankfulness; in the spring, Share the Love; and in the summer, Share the Sunshine. Students invite those in their spheres of influence to support the Honors Program and the establishment of an Honors scholarship program.

The Created to Commune initiative sponsors several social events such as movie nights and Christmas and Spring gatherings and provides regular opportunities for connecting with our students through monthly Honors Colloquia.

Through the Honored to Serve initiative students have volunteered to serve at the Honors-led Chapel services, Student Preview Days, New Student Orientations, SHE Leads the Way in October, Black Men in White Coats in April, Tennessee Health Care Summit & Expo in November, Baptist HealthCORE STEM Summer Camp in June, and our annual Toy Drive for the Baptist Children's Hospital in November.

The Scholarship to Share initiative allows students to present their Honors Capstone Experience research each trimester through the Honors Forum. The Spring Honors Forum merged with the second annual *Elevate: Student Research Symposium* on March 8, 2024, sponsored by the Honors Program with Baptist University's honors societies and professional organizations.

The following lists the research that has been presented by our six 2023 – 2024 Honors Program graduates through these events:

Term	Student	Program	HCE Project Title	Faculty Advisor
FA24	Maria Rodriguez	Biomedical Sciences	<i>Learning Through Service: A Reflection on Cultural Immersion</i>	Dr. Michelle Alexander
SP25	Hailey Goff	Medical Radiography	<i>Contraindications for CT and MRI with John Hunter</i>	Professor Laura Baker
SP25	John Hunter	Medical Radiography	<i>Contraindications for CT and MRI with Hailey Goff</i>	Professor Laura Baker
SU25	Bayleigh Cooper	Nursing	<i>The Role of Continuous Labor Support in Improving Maternal and Newborn Outcomes</i>	Dr. Christina Hillhouse
SU25	Ayaat Ibrahim	Nursing	<i>Preventing Preeclampsia through the Mediterranean Diet: An Evidence-Based Research Project with Yara Quran</i>	Dr. Cheryl Johnson-Joy
SU25	Yara Quran	Nursing	<i>Preventing Preeclampsia through the Mediterranean Diet: An Evidence-Based Research Project with Yara Quran</i>	Dr. Cheryl Johnson-Joy

If you or someone you know might be interested in the program, would be able to donate to the ongoing efforts, or if you would like to come share your "Honors Professional Journey" with our current students, please contact Dr. Paul Criss at (901-) 572-2525 or email paul.criss@BaptistU.edu.

Baptist Alumna Honored in TICUA Hall of Fame

Debby Fleming (1978, Nursing)

- Baptist Memorial Hospital School of Nursing | 1978
- Austin Peay State University - B.S. Nursing | 1982
- Vanderbilt University - MSN | 1988
- Distinguished Alumni | 2018

With a comprehensive clinical and financial background in healthcare management, Debby McMillin Fleming is a distinguished leader in healthcare and the community.

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Fleming attended McGavock High School and went on to begin her long-standing relationship with Baptist Health Sciences University (BHSU), where she received a diploma from the Baptist Memorial Hospital School of Nursing. Her commitment and dedication to academic success led her to Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. Fleming returned to Nashville to pursue her Master of Science in Nursing at Vanderbilt University. After her time at Vanderbilt, she put down permanent roots in the Music City.



Fleming's extensive educational background gave her the platform to excel in her career. In 2003, she assumed the position of Administrator of Baptist Ambulatory Surgery Center in Nashville, where she was accountable for the overall performance of multiple operating and procedure rooms, including Ambulatory Surgery Centers, centers that provide same-day surgical care.

After four years, Fleming transferred to AmSurg, where she served as Regional Vice President for three years, before getting promoted to Division President in 2007. Fleming managed fifty-eight sites across ten states, including two hospital joint ventures for thirteen years. Fleming's talents and experience also offered her opportunities to serve in various roles around the country. She assumed the role of Center Administrator and Director of Recovery Care for Medical Care International in Dallas. Following her time in Texas, she worked in Mystic, Connecticut as the Vice President of Development for Mariner Health before spending time in Boston, Massachusetts as Practice Manager for Spence Centers for Women's Health. In 2020, Fleming took on a locally based position as a Registered Nurse for both Williamson County Health Department and Maxwell Aesthetics, PLLC.

Although Fleming's career was demanding, she always found the time to give back to BHSU, the school that paved her path. She served on the BHSU Board of Directors and became the President of the Alumni Board and in 2018 received the prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award, based on long-term outstanding achievements and service or contributions to the university.

In addition to her contributions to the healthcare field, she values giving back to her community and has a long-standing commitment to volunteering with Proverbs 12:10 Animal Rescue and Old Friends Senior Dog Sanctuary. Fleming lives in Nashville with her husband, Michael.

2024 Alumni Award winners

The 2024 Alumni Award winners are listed below. If you know a deserving alumnus, please submit a nomination online at <https://www.baptistu.edu/basic-page/alumni-award-nomination> and/or mail nomination to Baptist Health Sciences University, Attn: Zac Cox, 1003 Monroe Ave, Memphis, TN 38104.

Distinguished Alumni Award – Val Kelley (1983, Nursing)

Service Alumni Award – Lauren Brown (2017, Radiation Therapy)

Young Alumni Award – Amber Toles (2018, Medical Laboratory Science)

Scan the QR code to
submit a nomination



2025 Call for Alumni Award Nominations

Distinguished Alumni Award

Baptist Health Sciences University is pleased to announce that nominations are now being accepted for the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award. The award recognizes and honors alumni for distinguished personal and career achievements and for exemplary contributions to society that bring credit to Baptist Health Sciences University. One award is presented each year.

Criteria

1. Recipients must be of such integrity, stature and demonstrated ability that the award reflects positively on Baptist Health Sciences University.
2. Personal achievement through outstanding service to their community.
3. Achievements, patent on a new discovery or an innovation in a new technology.
4. Outstanding contribution to health care.
5. Regional, national or international reputation in the alumnus' field.

If you would like to submit a nomination, please scan the QR Code above or complete this form and email to alumni@baptistu.edu, mail to Baptist Health Sciences University, Attn: Zac Cox, 1003 Monroe Ave., Memphis, TN 38104. This is an excellent opportunity to recognize our graduates who have had a very positive impact on their profession and their community.

Alumni Service Award

The Alumni Service Award acknowledges significant contributions of time and energy on behalf of the University and the Alumni Board/Association. Award selections will be made by a sub-committee of the Alumni Board of Directors.

Criteria

1. Significant contributions - Recipients have shown dedication to their alma mater over time by volunteering their time to assist in whatever way they feel they can best serve. We acknowledge "significant" as meaning above and beyond the normal commitments. Finally, their dedication has been an inspiration to others.
2. The recipient may be a graduate of the Baptist School of Nursing, any of the Baptist schools and/or Baptist Health Sciences University.
3. Candidates must perform community service in addition to service at the University.
4. Candidates must possess the highest standards of integrity and character that reflects the University's values.

Selection Process

1. The Alumni office gathers recommendations made by the alumni, faculty, staff or other students and passes the recommendations to the awards committee for review.
2. A letter must be submitted indicating the significance of the service rendered to the University by the nominee, along with a detailed list of accomplishments.

Young Alumni Award

The Young Alumni Service Award recognizes a recent graduate (fewer than 10 years) whose early volunteer service for Baptist University sets an example for their peers, helps to keep other young alumni involved and shows promise for continued service and leadership in future. Qualified candidates will also have made significant strides in their chosen profession.

Nominations can be made by alumni, faculty and staff. The nomination is in the form of a written letter to the Baptist University Alumni Office. Nomination forms for both the Alumni Service and Young Alumni awards are given to the alumni office and forwarded to the awards committee. Awards are granted on an annual basis.

Distinguished Alumni Award 2025

Please address nominations to: Zac Cox, Baptist Health Sciences University, 1003 Monroe Ave, Memphis, TN 38104.

Nominated by: _____

Address: _____

Phone number(s): _____

I nominate: _____ Field: _____ Class of: _____

Nominee's Address: _____

Nominee's Phone number(s): _____

Reason for nominating the alumnus _____

Information regarding professional career _____

Information on other honors/awards _____

Note: Attach a current resume of biography to the form. You may need to contact the nominee for this information.

BHSU Unveils Newly Renovated Health Sciences Library



On Monday, February 3, Baptist Health Sciences University proudly reopened its Health Sciences Library, showcasing renovations that are designed to enhance student learning and engagement. This transformation was made possible through a Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI) grant from the Department of Education. The grant has refreshed the library into a modern, student-centered hub.

Dr. Kim Cunningham, Dean of the Blue Healer Success Center, expressed the significance of the renovation, stating, "The library renovation transforms how Baptist University will inspire the minds of future health care professionals. The new space will improve campus engagement along with student success and retention."

Library Supervisor Vivi Britton echoed these sentiments, highlighting the team effort that made the renovations possible: "The Blue Healer Student Success Center is proud to unveil the newly renovated Health Sciences Library funded by a PBI grant through the Department of Education. Through the hard work of Dr. Kim Cunningham, Leanne Smith, and the library team, we've transformed a dated space into a library with flexible study spaces, new technology, and a welcoming atmosphere."

Exciting New Features

The renovations include upgrades in furniture, technology, and aesthetics to create a more functional and comfortable environment for students.

New Furniture

- Mobile whiteboard tables
- Computer stations with ample space for studying
- Comfortable desk chairs
- Secluded seating and tables for quiet study sessions
- Additional lobby seating for casual collaboration

New Technology

- 12 student computers for enhanced access to digital resources
- State-of-the-art projection and virtual meeting equipment in L3
- Convenient charging station for phones
- Portable chargers that support USB, USB-C, laptop plugs, and wireless fast charging
- New printers are in development and will be available soon

New Look

- Freshly painted walls creating a modern and inviting atmosphere
- Carpet for a polished and comfortable setting
- Upgraded lighting for better visibility and ambiance
- Artwork to inspire and enhance the study environment
- With these enhancements, the Health Sciences Library is set to be a central resource for student success, offering an updated and dynamic space for study, collaboration, and innovation.

*Stop by and explore the new and improved library today!
Email alumni@baptistu.edu to setup a tour.*

Baptist Health Sciences University hosts seventh Black Men in White Coats youth summit

Memphis, Tenn., Feb. 22, 2025 – Baptist Health Sciences University welcomed more than 700 students, parents and professionals to the annual Black Men in White Coats: Building Diverse Health Care Professionals Summit, an event designed to inspire students from elementary school through college to pursue careers in medicine and science.

“We are excited to welcome students and parents back for our annual Black Men in White Coats Summit,” said Lilian Nyindodo, professor of biomedical sciences at Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine and co-chair of the Baptist Health Sciences University HealthCORE initiative. “Black Men in White Coats aligns with our mission to support students pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math. This event is part of our HealthCORE program, which aims to promote equal access to opportunities for all students interested in working in the medical field.”

During this free event, students learned about health care career opportunities, financing for higher education and other resources and support; participated in hands-on demonstrations; attended two panel discussions led by physicians and students about preparing for medical school and how to succeed as a white coat professional; and connected with local health care professionals through speed networking. Featured speakers included Dr. Ted Lyons, clinical pharmacist and chief executive officer with Shot Rx 901; Tony Beard, laboratory director for Baptist Memorial Hospital-North Mississippi; Dr. Fred Pete, a chiropractor with R.E.D Chiropractic; and Dr. Winfred B. Abrams Jr., an orthopedic surgeon with OrthoSouth, for the White Coats Professionals panel. Medical students from Baptist Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine and the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center led the second panel. A Q&A session followed to give attendees the chance to engage with speakers and ask questions regarding their experiences in the medical field.



Baptist Health Sciences University HealthCORE exposes students to health care careers while providing resources, mentorship and support to help them succeed. Baptist Health Sciences University launched this initiative after hosting its first Black Men in White Coats summit in 2018.

Baptist became a sponsor of the Memphis chapter of the National Black Men in White Coats initiative in October 2023. The initiative was founded in response to a 2015 Association of American Medical Colleges report that revealed fewer African American males applied to and graduated from medical school in 2014 than in 1978, despite an overall increase in Black male college graduates.

Baptist Health Sciences University (formerly known as Baptist College of Health Sciences) was started in 1912. BHSU offers 15 programs of study, including the College of Osteopathic Medicine, which accepted its first class of students in fall 2024. In 2017, the Memphis Business Journal ranked the school first among Memphis-area colleges and universities for the best return on investment. Based on a comparison of postgraduate earnings with cost of attendance, BHSU alumni earn more than graduates of any other college or university in the area. Visit www.baptistu.edu for more information.

This article was originally published on Baptist Online.





Building the Clinical Education Pipeline

When the first class of students graduates from BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine in 2028, the Mid-South will gain greater access to health care with 60% of students anticipated to remain in the area to practice family medicine, general internal medicine, general pediatrics or such specialties as emergency medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, or general surgery. Before that can happen, BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine students must complete clinical rotations in hospitals and clinics to gain hands-on experience starting during their third year of study.

"In the third year, students should be able to sit down with a patient, ask the right questions, do a physical exam and partner with the patient on forming a plan that will, hopefully, result in a positive outcome for restoring health or maintaining wellness," said Dr. Peter Bell, vice provost and dean of BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Core Clinical Sites

Leaders at Baptist and BHSU have been working diligently to build the clinical education pipeline students need to start clinical rotations in 2026.

"Rather than placing students in the immediate Memphis area, we are going to use the entire Baptist footprint. We divided the Baptist system into eight core clinical sites, and we're working with leaders from those areas to build infrastructure and identify champion physicians who can spend time ensuring a good working relationship between clinicians and students," said Dr. Bell.

The core clinical sites are composed of groupings of Baptist entities located in metro Memphis, Northwest Tennessee,

Northeast Arkansas and Mississippi. Students completing rotations will live near their core clinical site. For example, a student assigned to the core clinical site in North Mississippi would live near Oxford, New Albany, Booneville or Calhoun City.

"This is a broad educational opportunity across our system, not just for Baptist and our College of Osteopathic Medicine, but for all the other educational partners that exist currently across our system," said Hampton Hopkins, Ed.D., president of Baptist Health Sciences University. "We also have an opportunity to look at gaps that exist across our system and where Baptist Health Sciences University can potentially help fill in some of those gaps in areas where there is an educational need."

When it comes to finding high-demand health care professionals, those hospitals and clinics that join the effort to build this clinical education pipeline can benefit from the relationships formed with students.

"We're asking physicians to pay it forward and remember the help they received when they were students. Giving time to a student now can benefit the entire Mid-South long-term," said Dr. Bell.

Justin Rhodes, CEO of Baptist Medical Group and vice president of Baptist Connected Care, is supporting the effort to build the clinical education pipeline. He said, "We are leveraging our large Baptist Medical Group enterprise to partner physicians with medical students during their clinical rotations. We look forward to supporting this important effort to train more physicians and, ultimately, grow our ability to provide greater access to health care across the Mid-South."

A Closer Look at the First Class

BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine welcomed its first class of students in 2024. In the class, 28% of students are from underserved populations, 58% are women and 40% are from the Mid-South. It is likely that many students from this area will remain here for their residencies.

"This is our opportunity to engage with students that are not from the Mid-South and help them to see how great it is to live in this area. We're hoping to recruit the majority of our graduates back into the Baptist system. We set a goal of 60% retention for the class," noted Dr. Bell.

All 81 students from the first class are still enrolled. The next class will have 121 students. In 2026, BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine will accept a full class of 162 students for the first time.

BHSU College of Osteopathic Medicine aims to keep students successful with multiple areas of support — mentoring, tutoring, individual and group academic coaching; focusing on mental wellness with a wellness committee and a clinical psychologist; providing spiritual guidance for the student's belief system; and emphasizing physical health, diet and healthy lifestyle, including yoga classes and donated YMCA memberships.



Inaugural BUCOM Memorial Service Pays Tribute to Whole-Body Donors

On August 22, 2025, BUCOM medical students, faculty, and staff gathered in Groner Auditorium for the Donor Memorial Service, honoring the individuals who generously donated their bodies to science during the 2024–2025 academic year.

A Ceremony of Gratitude

The service opened with an invocation from Director of Faith and Service, Rusty Woods, who shared scripture from Romans 12:1: *“Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship.”*

Woods reminded those gathered that each donor’s act was truly a living sacrifice — one that profoundly shapes the training and growth of the next generation of physicians.

Following the invocation, Student Government Association President Catie Lockhart, OMS-II, welcomed attendees with reflections on generosity, drawing on Shel Silverstein’s *The Giving Tree* to illustrate the donors’ selfless gift.



These reflections captured both the intellectual lessons of anatomy and the personal transformation students experience through the donors’ gift.

Closing Tribute

The ceremony concluded with remarks from Assistant Professor of Anatomy, Dr. Sarah Stevens, and a moment of remembrance. In a final symbolic gesture, OMS-II students each carried a white flower across the stage, presenting it in honor of their donor. The simple but powerful act represented gratitude, respect, and the enduring connection between donors and students.

Afterward, attendees gathered in fellowship at a reception, with refreshments provided by the Blue Healer Café and floral arrangements by Holliday Flowers.



Student Reflections Through Art and Words

The service included meaningful contributions from the Class of 2028:

- A poem titled “Our First Patient” written and read by Hazel Jeyaprakash, James Huang, and Joshua McCoy
- A painting, “The Knowledge Tree,” shared by Britney-Thuy Le
- A reflection by Katelyn Cartwright on how the donors’ sacrifice lives on through the work of students and future patients
- A heartfelt speech by Caleb Luk, who spoke about realizing that “we are fearfully and wonderfully made by design,” while also recalling with humor how overwhelming the first week of anatomy lab felt.

Lasting Lessons

Whole-body donors provide medical students with a unique opportunity to learn in a way no simulation or textbook can replicate. From understanding human anatomy to developing empathy for patient care, these experiences shape students into compassionate physicians.

The Donor Memorial Service reflects BUCOM’s commitment to honoring the humanity behind medical education. While students may never know their donors’ stories, they carry forward the lessons learned with dignity and compassion, lessons that will live on in the lives of every patient they serve.

Your Name, Their Future: Opportunities to Give

Naming opportunities at Baptist University provide alumni with a unique and lasting way to give back and leave a legacy that honors the experiences that shaped their lives. Whether supporting a named scholarship, dedicating a classroom, or contributing to facility renovations, these gifts empower you, as an alum, to directly impact future generations of students. In addition to honoring personal or family values, naming gifts often reflect a deep gratitude for the education, mentorship, and lifelong connections gained through the university experience. For many alumni, it's a powerful way to ensure that others can benefit from the same opportunities you once received.

Beyond the financial support, naming opportunities strengthen the bond between alumni and their alma mater. A named space or program becomes a visible, permanent symbol of alumni generosity and leadership, inspiring pride and engagement across the university community. These gifts don't just fund buildings or initiatives—they tell stories of dedication, vision, and the desire to give forward. By lending their names to meaningful parts of campus life, you will help preserve the university's legacy while playing a vital role in its continued growth and success.

Below are a few exclusive naming opportunities available:

Student & Community Spaces

- **Annex Lounge – \$55,000**
A dedicated space for students to relax, connect, study, and recharge between demanding clinicals and coursework. Your gift supports student well-being and resilience.
- **Nursing Lobby – \$12,000**
Help create a warm and welcoming entrance for students, faculty, and visitors. A central space that sets the tone for care and community.

Recognition Opportunities

- **Scripture Plaque – Up to \$400 (depending on size)**
Honor a loved one, mentor, or family legacy with a personalized scripture plaque displayed in a classroom. A beautiful way to share inspiration and faith.
- **Named Scholarship – \$250 and above**
Make a lasting impact by supporting a named scholarship for students. Scholarships may be designated in honor or memory of someone special and can be awarded annually based on your gift level.

Academic Spaces

- **Classrooms and Labs – Amount varies (based on size, visibility, and gift level)**
Classrooms and labs are where knowledge takes root and future professionals are shaped. Naming these spaces across our various majors provides vital support for education while offering recognition for your generosity.

Your generosity has the power to shape the future of Baptist University and the lives of students who will walk the same halls you once did. We invite you to leave a lasting legacy through one of our meaningful naming opportunities.

For a full list or to discuss a custom opportunity, please contact Sherita Martin at 901-572-2773 or at Sherita.Martin@baptistu.edu.

Donate

We hope you will consider using the enclosed donation envelope to make a tax-deductible gift to Baptist University to support our mission of healing, preaching and teaching. Or to charge a gift, please call Sherita Martin at 901-572-2773. Remember, even a small amount can make a big difference.

Baptist Foundation Thanks You

The Baptist Health Sciences University and the Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation wish to thank the following alumni and friends for their generous support from September 2024 through August 2025. These gifts allow us to offer student scholarships and awards in addition to enhancing our instructional activities. With your gifts, our students can fulfill their callings.

Bill Abney	Kathryn Brown*	Shannon Davenport*	Susan Grant	Quinton Jones
Allie Acheson	Elizabeth Browning	Christina Davis	James Grantham	Tom & Beverly Jordan
Maryimelda Aduaka	MaKenna Bryant	Luke Davis	Allison Green	Bryan Jordan
Saha Ahmadian	Maggie Buchanan	Kayla Deaton*	LeShander Green	Caroline Karschner
Kerrye Allen*	Toni Bueltemann*	Andrea Delony*	Airiel Greer*	Kevin Kay
Janet Allinder	Denise Burnett Stewart	Petra Dodd	Kerry Griggs*	Lisa Kee*
Sidney Alton*	Megan Bursi	David Drummond	Makinnah Grigsby	Richard Keenan
William Alton	Julia Bushold	Gregory Duckett	Sydney Gully*	Valerie Kelley*
Brooklyn Anders	Edwin Cade	Siobhan Dunn*	Billie Gurke*	Talha Khan
Sue Anderson*	Adonna Caldwell	Cheryl Durrell	Michael Hafen	Soo Min Kim
Kira Anderson*	Paula Camillo	Tyler Earley	Kelly Halma	Vivian King*
Gary Anderson	Katelyn Cartwright	Cineste Earls	Mark & Diane Halperin	James Kirkland
Asmihan Annamer	Brandon Cash	Ann Eason	Hasan Hamada	Jesse Klenk
Jill Arquette	Alexis Castner	Tony Emison	Clara Harbour	Tia Kofahl
Brandon & Ebony Arrindell	Rhonda Cavitt	Jessica Evans	Pamela Harlan-McSwain	Alan & Susan Kosten
Amaar Asif	Zachary Chandler	Dalton Farris	Karen Harper	Grace LaFleur
Beatrice Asomaning	Terri Chapman	Katelyn Fenter	Danielle Harrell	Chanel Lake-Doxy
Clay Aureli	Nakia Chappelle	Susan Ferguson	Remiah Harris*	Karoline Lamb*
Nancy Averwater	Allison Chase	Bethany Ferrall	Parker Harris	Brandi Lambert*
Katherine Azlin	Pamela Cherry*	Marlyn Figueroa*	Charlene Harris-Smith	William Lancaster
Kathryn Bagwell	Natassah Chipman*	Deborah Fleming*	Edith Heller	Gabriella Larson
Peter Bahouth	Dale Chisolm*	Regina Fleming	Armin Hemati	George Lausten
Kapil Bajaj	Kim Christmon	Mccaffettry Flynt	Faith Herring*	Britney-Thuy Le
Laura Baker	Laura Chu*	Hal Fogelman	Abrina Hill	Heidi Leamons
Carol Barber*	Christopher Church	Jessy Fowler	Daenecia Hines	Grace Lee
Denes Bardos	Kaitlyn Clagett	Jennifer Fox	Amy Hocza	Paul & Andrea Levy
Emily Barker	William Cloud	Julianna French	Brian Hogan*	Shaunda Lewis*
Thomas Barnett	Felicia Cobbs*	Hannah Fulbright	Jamison Hollister	Catherine Lockhart
Calisha Beauregard*	William Cochran	Megan Fuller	T. Hampton Hopkins	Amy Lofties*
Stephen Behrman	Katherine Cody*	Andreece Gandy	Heidi Hordyk*	Vicki Long*
Abbye Bell	Amber Cofer	Christen Ganley*	Mikia Housley	Kathy Lovett
Peter Bell	Victoria Colbeck	Maria Garcia	Regina Howard*	Robbie Lowery*
Brooke Bemowski	Mary Cole*	Ricardo Garcia	James Huang	Lindsay Lowry
John Biery	Robert Coleman	Treveylan Gardner	Andrew Hulbert	Caleb Luk
Jo Ann Bishop*	Larissa Collier	Byron Garner	Keianna Hunter	Terry Macalady
Jaime Bissa	Cameron Conn	David Garrison	Grant Hutchens	Ana Magliolo
Jack Blair	Patrick Conn	Nina Gartenhaus	Madalyn Ivy	Sharon Markham*
Rebecca Blanchard*	Becca Cook	Dalton Gates*	Zaneta Ivy-Bailey	Donna Mars*
Kirkpatrick Bobo	Zaneta Cotton*	Phyllis Gates*	Kobe Jackson	Paige Martin
Wight Boggs	Zachary Cox*	Patsy Gaw*	Janet Jasmann*	Sherita Martin
Angel Boling	Donnita Craft*	Anuja Ghorpade	Jamie Jasper*	Luis Martinez
Barry Bondurant	Pamela Crislip	Richard Gilbert	Meykael Jenkins	LaShaunda Massey
Lisa Borden	Paul Criss	Lauren Glassco	Sondra Jepson	Xavier May
Kayla Bouknight	Bill & Marilyn Crosby	Maggie Glosson	Hazel Jeyaprakash	Larry McClendon
Jonathan Bowens	Jo Crouthers*	Kristin Goelitz	Robbie Johnson	Joshua McCoy
Cynthia Bradford	Angie Crow*	Emmel Golden, Jr.	Rhonda Johnson	Michelle McDonald
Rezshon Briggs*	Dominique Crutchfield*	Keanna Goodwin*	Tronnia Johnson	Caitlin McFadden
Michael Bronstein	Clifton Cummings	Paola Granados*	Cheryl Johnson-Joy	Betty McGarvey*
Pierce Brower	Kimberly Cunningham-Yancey	Sherita Granderson*	David Jones	Mahogani McLeod

Maria Mejia*
 Tiya Miller
 Mary Million
 Ashley Mills*
 Milini Mingo
 Anita Mobrak
 Olivia Moffitt
 Shekher Mohan
 Ethan Moore
 Kori Moore
 Sarah Morehead
 Marilissa Morgan
 Tyler Morin
 Jordan Morris
 Mischa Morris
 Chaka Morton*
 Joshua Mowry
 Katie Murray
 Luke Nanna
 Rita Neely*
 Jessica Nelson*
 Linda Neufeld*
 Christina Nguyen
 Neeqa Noor
 Keith Norman
 Lilian Nyindodo
 Asma Obad
 Nonso Obi-Gwacham
 Betty Olds*
 Allison Ortega
 Macia Outlaw
 Deborah Overton
 Donna Park*
 Mindy Parnell
 Shivam Patel
 Christi Patrick*
 Ashley Payne
 Kayla Persaud
 Senovia Petty
 Brett Pickens
 Samuel Pieh
 Cyndi Pittman
 Darnelle Podgorski
 Ayoka Pond
 Ashley Porter
 Kathryn Porter
 Ledillon Powers*
 Helen Prinz*
 Kenneth Pruett*
 Natasha Raja
 Ruth Reyes*
 Stephen Reynolds
 Danielle Reysen
 Justin Rhodes
 Keya Rhodes
 Jamecia Richardson*
 Jacob Richardson

Rachel Richardson
 Elly Riley
 Melanie Rivera-Chu
 Veronica Roberson*
 Michelle Roberson
 Mitzi Roberts*
 Amanda Robinson
 Tyler Roche
 Marilyn Rose
 Eric Rudie
 Carla Sanderson*
 Mariah Salim*
 Lauren Santoro
 Caryn Schmitz
 Linda Schultz
 Ben Schwartz
 Angela Scott
 Susan Scott
 Tom Shapaker
 Nicholas Sharp
 Jasmine Shotwell
 Denese Shumaker*
 Mariah Sieben
 Pamela Siggers
 Lavada Simpson*
 Aditi Singh
 Nancy Sissman
 Lynsey Smith*
 BreAnna Smith*
 Nicole Smith*
 Debra Smith*
 Allyson Smith
 Diamond Smith
 Frederick & Diane Smith
 Karen C. Smith
 Karen J. Smith
 Leanne Smith
 Angelina Spizzieri
 Zayne Stanford
 Shawna Stanton*
 Elizabeth Stephens*
 Catherine Stepter*
 Michael Stevens
 Sarah Stevens
 Skipper Stewart
 Kennedy Stewart
 Sharon Stubblefield*
 Callie Summers
 Mary Ellen Sumrall
 Garrett & Melissa Surles
 Alexis Surtel
 Lauren Sutton
 Tyler Swanson
 Carolyn Sweeney-Fisher
 Laritha Sweet*
 Kenneth Tate*
 M.E. Thoma

Sonia Thomas*
 Kaylee Thompson
 Tammy Thorn*
 Alicia Thurman
 Lakesha Tillmann
 Tamela Tirone
 Amber Toles*
 Richard Trout
 Tim Tucker
 Donovan Turner
 William Tuttle
 Miriam Upton
 Veronica Vargo
 Audrey Vasauskas
 Edith Vaughn*
 Anita Vaughn*
 John Voelpel
 Ronald Wachsmen
 Patricia Waggener
 Megan Walker
 Ann Marie Wallace
 Bobbie Ware
 Bettie Washington*
 Kayla Washington
 Sandra Watson*
 Cory Webb*
 Jennifer Webb*
 Carol Webster
 Troy Wells
 Rita West
 Angela White
 Charity White
 Jeremy Wilkes
 Margo Williams*
 Cheyenne Williams*
 Thomas Williams*
 Brendan Williams
 Kristen Williams
 Judith Williamson*
 Ann Willis*
 Darius Wilson
 Kemmons Wilson, Jr.
 Skylar Windsor
 Dorothy Wiscomb
 Carrie Wolf
 Carol Wolsey
 Rinnie Wood
 Crislyn Woods
 Cindy Wooten*
 Treasure Wortham
 Kimberly Young
 Brian Zachariah
 Derick Ziegler

Assisi Foundation of Memphis, Inc.
 Baptist Memorial College of Health Sciences Benevolent Fund
 Belmont University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
 BMHCC Community Relations
 Breast Cancer Eradication Initiative, Inc
 FedEx
 First Horizon Foundation
 Follett Higher Education Group
 Grace Celebration Lutheran Church
 Harris Shelton Hanover Walsh, PLLC
 HealthNet Federal Credit Union
 Itawanba Community College
 Kroger (Community Reward Program)
 Leota Fennell Weber Estate*
 Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, Inc.
 Lipscomb University
 Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health Center
 Medical Education Research Institute
 Memphis Medical District Collaborative
 Paragon Bank
 Pellissippi State Community College
 Southern College of Optometry
 State of Tennessee - Department of Health
 Tennessee Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
 Tennessee Center for Health Workforce Development
 Tennessee Podiatric Medical Association
 The University of Memphis
 Truist Foundation
 UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation
 Urban League of Middle TN
 WKU CHHS-Department of Public Health

** Alumni Donors*



BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Charles Brown III (2019)

- Participated in Spring 2025 Peru Medical Mission Trip

Kira Chism (2025)

- Participated in Spring 2025 Peru Medical Mission Trip

Firas Quran (2018)

- Published, "Thrombosis and Hemostasis Management PGY-2 research, "Anticoagulation Stewardship: Appropriate Use of Apixaban and Rivaroxaban Factor Xa Levels in the Emergency Department", in the *Journal of Pharmacology and Clinical Toxicology*
- Appointed as committee member for Anticoagulation Centers of Excellence (ACE) through the Anticoagulation Forum

DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY

Courtney Caccamisi Cargile (2010)

- The Cargile family welcomed Dawson Reid Cargile, 9lbs 5oz 21 inches, on July 8, 2025

Bailey Boring Elliott (2013)

- Bailey and her husband, Dustin, welcomed their baby girl, Raynlee Blair Elliott, on July 10, 2025

Katie Cutnaw Hightower (2021)

- Katie and her husband, William, welcomed their baby boy, Stetson Lee Hightower, on May 9, 2025

Kelsi Weakley McConnell (2015)

- The McConnell family welcomed Madelyn Claire McConnell on April 29, 2025.

Emily Welch Peterson (2021)

- Obtained a new certification: Registered Diagnostic Cardiac Sonographer – Fetal Echocardiography from ARDMS

Mayleigh McDivitt Wilson (2022)(1,2)

- "Married to my best friend in November of 2023 and I could not have asked for a better person to share my life with. We welcomed our son, JB, in June 2024. He is the light of our lives and we couldn't be more happy!"



1



2

MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE

Bri Jones (2024)

- Joined the Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni Board of Directors as a Member-at-Large

MEDICAL RADIOGRAPHY

Hunter Lantrip (2018)

- Daughter, Lenora Jane Lantrip, was born February 17, 2025

NUCLEAR MEDICINE TECHNOLOGY

Lakeysta Ford (2012)(3)

- Earned Doctorate in Health Care Administration from Oklahoma State University, in December 2024. She received her Master of Health Administration, Health/Healthcare Administration/Management from the University of Scranton (2021) and a Master of Business Administration, human resources management and services from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Graduate School (2022). While at Baptist University, she minored in Health Care Management. Currently employed as a nuclear medicine technologist at Baptist Memorial Hospital North Mississippi



3

Jena-Lee McKee (2016)

- Received a Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) Publication Award, recognizing outstanding scholarly contributions that advance the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Jena-Lee's article, "Gastric Emptying Solid-Meal Content and Misinformation on Social Media Platforms," received the 2nd place for Outstanding Article Award in 2024. The article was published in the December 1, 2024 edition of the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology*.



Amber Sinquefield (2016)(4)

- Earned a Doctor of Health Administration, Quality and Analytics, from Capella University, in August 2024. She received a Master of Health Science from St. Francis University (2018) and a Masters of Business Administration in healthcare management from Western Governor's University (2019).
- Adjunct instructor for the Nuclear Medicine Technology program and is currently a clinical trial specialist at global CRO George Clinical.
- Amber began her career as a nuclear medicine technologist at Baptist Memorial Hospital North Mississippi before going into research. Her research interest has led her to Baptist Cancer Center, starting as a Clinical Trial Community Outreach Specialist before becoming the NCORP Program Administrator for Baptist Cancer Center Clinical Research. Prior to George Clinical, her current position, she served as the Clinical Research Coordinator at The Neurology Clinic, PC.

NURSING

Samantha Baddley (2022)

- Presented DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses at Baptist Collierville



Michael Callonas (2009)

- Completed Doctor of Nursing Practice - nurse anesthesia from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center

Hannah Cook (2025)

- Participated in Spring 2025 Peru Medical Mission Trip



Marlyn Figueroa (2022)

- Currently working on the SCI Unit at the VA Hospital, Memphis
- Awarded 2023 – 2024 Nurse of the Year from the VA Hospital

Misty Hart-Wilson (1995)(5)

- Celebrated 30 years of nursing with approximately 100 colleagues, family, fellow alumni, and friends at Maris's Cantina in Southaven, MS on June 3
- Joined the Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni Board of Directors as a Member-at-Large

Renee Hatcher (1988)

- Joined the Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni Board of Directors as a Member-at-Large

Barbara Helms (1957)(6)

- Received a nurses cap to replace her cap that was lost in her home fire. She was presented the cap while working at Baptist Women's.



Dr. Kristal Hillie (2007)(7)

- Earned Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Delta State University in Cleveland, MS in the Fall of 2024. Kristal's doctoral project, Educating Primary Care Advanced Practice Registered Nurses on the 10-gram Semmes Weinstein Monofilament Foot Exam for Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy, has been accepted for presentation at The American Association of Colleges of Nursing's 2025 Doctoral Nursing Education Conference in California. Kristal has been a Family Nurse Practitioner since 2014 (Arkansas State) and is the owner of Inspire Health and Wellness Clinic in Southaven, MS.

CLASS NOTES

NURSING *continued*

Cheri Lewis (2003)

- A Baptist DeSoto patient's family member nominated Cheri Lewis, registered nurse in the Pre-Post Cath department, for the DAISY Award for her clinical expertise, compassion and professionalism. "Her radiant smile and nurturing presence created an atmosphere of comfort and trust, while her gentle words of encouragement and wealth of knowledge guided both my husband and me through a challenging time," said the nominator, who also praised Lewis for explaining medical concepts in a way that could be easily understood.

Crystal Poole (2008)

- Received Baptist Tipton DAISY Award for going above and beyond when providing encouragement and helping a young diabetic patient and her mother with education on proper diet and lifestyle changes. Crystal even purchased plates that showed proper food portions and took them to the patient's primary care office so they could be given to the family after discharge. She also provided additional portion plates for the physician to give to other patients.

Jul Rusaidy (2018)

- Earned Doctor of Nursing Practice in anesthesiology from Arkansas State University; Dr. E. J. Rusaidy, DNP

Christina Cantrell Smith (2018)

- Christina and her husband, Jon, welcomed their baby girl, Callie Jo Smith, on August 28, 2025

Dense Shumaker (1960)

- Received the Spring 2025 Distinguished Achievement in Health Care award from Union University

Joseph Strahan (2011)

- Graduated from the U.S. Naval War College with a Master of Arts in Defense and Strategic Studies March 7th, 2024
- Published "Just Do Something: One Nurse's Combat Journey to Define & Heal from Moral Injury," in the October 2025 *Marine Corps Gazette*.

POPULATION/PUBLIC HEALTH

Jamecia Richardson (2020)

- Received the 2025 Staff Leadership Award from the University of Memphis School of Public Health. This award is presented to a staff member who has demonstrated a high level of initiative, responsiveness, resourcefulness, and decision-making, made significant improvement and impact in the school/unit, and have positively influenced others to build and cultivate a culture of collegiality, equity, and inclusion.
- Elected as Chair-Elect of the Baptist Health Sciences University Alumni Board of Directors

RADIATION THERAPY

Christen Ganley (2007)

- Featured in *ARRT Stories* 2024, "From Patient to Leader in Her Field"

Jonathan Williams (2010)

- Earned Master of Business Administration with a 4.0 from Louisiana State University Shreveport on December 13, 2024
- Currently working as a radiation therapist at North Mississippi Medical Center Cancer Care in Starkville, MS.

RESPIRATORY CARE

Tairetha Bailey (2010)

- Promoted to manager at Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare

Jacquelyn Watson Lewis (2019)

- Teaching at Concorde Career College

Cassie Nielsen (2023)

- Serving as a respiratory therapist adjunct instructor with Missouri State University

Samantha Jones Richards (2015)

- Serving in a lead therapist role at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Toni Woods (2010, 2018 Nursing)

- Graduated from Arkansas State University on June 27, 2025 with a Master of Science in nursing
- Obtained board certification as an Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AGACNP-BC)

In Memoriam



Mary Ann Allen (1977, Nursing)

Ken Anderson (1976, Radiology)

Lisa Brown (1993, Nursing)

Mary B. Brown (1972, Nursing)

Sara Brumley (1960, Nursing)

Robin Templeton Ghosh (1982, Nursing) passed away on January 19, 2018

Brenda Kay Kerr (1969, Nursing) passed away on August 4, 2025

Winona Metzger Miles (1957, Nursing) passed away on November 10, 2020

Mollie McGuire Moody (1972, Nursing)

Sue Walker Meyer (1958, Nursing)

Pam Sere (1986, Nursing)

Betty Brent Steiner-Kershaw (1958, Nursing)

Kathryn "Kay" Finch Swicord (1955, Nursing)

Jeanette Baker Webb (1964, Nursing)

Leota Weber (1945, Nursing)

Know a future Blue Healer?

Do you know a potential Baptist student? Send their name, contact information, and interested major to alumni@baptistu.edu. One of our excellent admissions team members will reach out to them to answer any questions and help start their calling to Baptist.

Want to be in the next issue of Alumni News?

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Scan the QR code or email Alumni@BaptistU.edu to send your updates and photos.

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APRIL

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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

*Alumni
Spring Reunion*

APRIL 11, 2026

More information forthcoming via email.
Scan the QR code or email alumni@BaptistU.edu
to update your contact information.



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