

# today



SUMMER 2019

## ONLINE EDUCATION *OUR VISION FOR TOMORROW*

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# ONLINE EDUCATION

## OUR VISION FOR TOMORROW

### New, Low Online Tuition

SAGU is making a bold move for Fall 2019. In the face of rising college costs around the nation, SAGU is lowering its undergraduate hourly rate for SAGU Online to make online associate and bachelor's degrees accessible to a wider audience.

SAGU is lowering the online tuition rate for undergraduate degrees from \$575 per credit hour to \$499 per credit hour. Additional discounts are available to credentialed ministers.

Vice President for Enrollment and Retention, Eddie Davis, says, "We have a great online program that continues to receive awards

**THE ONLINE TUITION RATE FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES IS DECREASING FROM \$575 TO \$499 PER CREDIT HOUR.**

for quality and affordability. We had strong enrollment for SAGU Online this Spring. But, we want to serve an even wider adult audience nationwide."

Assistant Dean for Admissions, Joshua Martin added, "If you're an adult student who has put off completing your degree or earning a degree for personal satisfaction, this is a great time to jump in!"

The reduced rate drops the price of a 4-year degree by nearly \$10,000.

"One of its most attractive features is the small class size, even online," says Davis.

Dean of Distance Education and Extension Sites, Joseph Hartman says, "We believe that small class sizes allow our faculty to develop deeper connections with students online. Our professors provide a level of care for students academically, personally, and spiritually that is difficult to replicate at other colleges."

### Looking toward the future, redesigning online education

Hartman explains that even bigger plans are on the horizon for 2020. "We are taking a deep look at how to provide varied term lengths for adult students who can commit more readily to a 7-8-week course rather than a 12-14-week course."

Beyond the reduced tuition, the university already offers scholarships, grants, and experiential learning credit. Experiential Learning Credit, also often called Credit for Life Experience or Prior Learning Assessment, permits students to earn up to 45 hours of college credit for personal and professional experience. Under the new \$499 hourly rate, that could save up to \$22,455 beyond the reduced price.

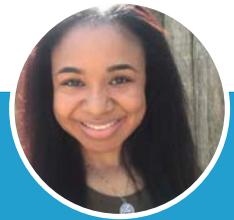
### Refer an online student

Students interested in SAGU Online can explore the menu of more than 50 majors at [www.sagu.edu/degrees](http://www.sagu.edu/degrees). The university has dedicated SAGU Online admissions counselors available to advise students through the process. ■



**HANNAH LIPPERT**

*"My favorite part of earning my degree through SAGU Online was the flexibility. I was able to have a job and make my own schedule without the requirement of going to classes at specific times. It allowed me to keep up with the busyness of life and complete my school work on my own time."*



**CHAI GIBERT**

*"I've had about 7 job titles since 2017... Through all this, I was still able to accomplish my goal of getting my degree. My favorite aspect of SAGU Online is the flexibility and the transparency of the professors in praying for us via web videos as if we are in the classroom."*



**NATALIA MELTABARGER**

*"I always wanted to attend SAGU... I really enjoyed my professors and the encouraging, Christian environment. It filters through even in the distance education courses. I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity be a part of such a great university."*



## From Rick Bowles Vice President of Advancement

### Introducing Tony Garza, Director of Development and Alumni

I am excited to introduce SAGU Director of Development and Alumni, Tony Garza. He and his family began June 3. Tony and his wife Esmeralda will celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary this July. They have a 6-year-old daughter Melody and 4-year-old son Ian. *(picture on page 5)*

They have served as assistant pastors and in worship ministry in El Paso, TX, for the last 8 years. They are certified educators and have taught in public, private, and charter schools. They also both earned master's degrees from SAGU in 2011.

Tony's master's degree was in school counseling. He then completed a Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership at Grand Canyon University. His dissertation title was "The Relationship Between Leadership Style and Conflict Management Style of Christian Pastors." Tony has a passion for leadership and leadership development.

Expect expanded alumni community opportunities ahead! ■



## Alumnus's Ministry Chosen for Trump's Faith and Opportunity Initiative

What started as a kind gesture to people in a North Texas city has grown into eight locations around the state. Alumnus Tim Wiseman founded Wiseman Ministries in his town of Longview, Texas, after seeing a need to help the homeless.

In 2003, Wiseman established House of Disciples, a life recovery center dedicated to helping the homeless and those struggling with addiction. His ministry follows Matthew 25, helping people in five important areas; feeding the hungry, ministering to prisoners and the sick, giving to the needy, and sheltering the homeless.

"We're currently housing several hundred people...and serve a few hundred thousand meals every year through our programs," he says.

In 2018, Wiseman's ministry was one of 20 organizations selected by President Trump for the Faith and Opportunity Initiative.

"The idea behind it is to select organizations and communities using 'best practices' and mixing their faith with social services," Wiseman says.

Wiseman travels to Washington D.C. frequently to discuss his ministry and train and support other organizations in the same business of social services. ■



## HELP SEND A STUDENT. LEAVE AN ONLINE REVIEW.

There are many ways that you can help be a bridge between SAGU and future SAGU students. Will you leave a comment or review about your SAGU experience on **Google**, **Yelp** or the SAGU **Facebook** page? Your recommendation may make a difference for a student who is deciding. ■

## SAGU Texas Alternative Certification

SAGU now offers an alternative certification program to prepare more Texas teachers. Alternative certification allows individuals who already hold a bachelor's degree to change careers and become certified to teach.

SAGU's program is available for a simple, low package price that covers coursework, field supervision and the program application. The school's accreditation also gives students the option for federal financial aid, making it simple to afford.

The most notable distinction of SAGU's alternative certification program is that it simultaneously provides education toward a master's degree. When students complete the program, they are already halfway to a master's degree. Students who continue into an M.Ed. also receive a tuition discount through the remainder of the program. ■

## Teresa Blakney Becomes First SAGU D.Min. Graduate

Teresa Blakney, M. Div., became SAGU's first Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Creative Communication on May 3. The doctoral program launched in Fall 2014.

Blakney began the program during the first semester of the launch with 15 individuals in her cohort. "I remember when I looked around that room and saw everyone in my cohort, I felt so insignificant," she says. "I thought all of these people will do it and I don't know if I can. I was insecure, but now I know we all felt that way!"

Blakney's doctoral project consisted of research over incoming students' biblical knowledge and how that affects their behavior and overall worldview. ■



## SAGU Cinema Releases "Forgiven Felons"

SAGU Cinema released "Forgiven Felons: A Documentary Series" on Friday, April 26, at Trinity Church in Cedar Hill, Texas.

According to Dr. Del Guynes, Dean of SAGU's College of Music and Communication Arts, the film is the most meaningful and worthwhile undertaking of SAGU Cinema since student films became a part of the program.

The documentary features an organization called Forgiven Felons, where formerly incarcerated men ease back into society and become productive citizens. It highlights the lives of six residents through dramatic re-enactments and their current day stories, hosted by Hall of Fame Wrestler Sting. ■



## Phillips Named NCCAA Regional Coach of the Year, Best Season Since 2009

Women's basketball coach Tiffany Phillips was named NCCAA Regional Coach of the Year for the 2018-2019 season. Coach Phillips led the Lady Lions to a 21-12 overall record and 14-8 in the Sooner Athletic Conference. This was SAGU's best season since 2009.

The Lady Lions ranked in the top 20 nationally in ten different categories: 5th in total 3-pointers made (284), 6th in 3-pointers made per game (8.6), 7th in free-throw percentage (77.2), 12th in 3-point field goal percentage (34.4%), 13th in total scoring with 2459 points, 14th in defensive rebounds per game (28.79), 16th in scoring offense per game (74.52), 18th in total blocks (114), 18th in field goal percentage defense (36.5%), and 19th in total rebounds with 1332).

Coach Phillips has had a steady increase in wins since the 2016 season and will look to continue to make a jump from this historic season to next. ■

## Master of Education (M.Ed.) Reformulated to Increase Benefits

SAGU redesigned its Master of Education programs for 2019. Harrison Graduate School now offers three M.Ed. programs; Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Leadership and School Counseling.

“The updated programs reflect current research, trends and best practices in 21st-century educational environments,” Education professor Dr. LaShera McElhany says.

The Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Curriculum and Instruction allows students to choose from three specialization areas: Early Childhood Education (ECE), Curriculum Studies, and History.

ECE courses have been added specifically for early literacy, math, science, and the spiritual and moral development of young children. Curriculum Studies was updated with classes that “will have educators exploring various assessment tools and analyzing classroom data so they can design instruction to meet student needs.”

In addition, there will be a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) course for future educators to integrate these skills into content areas. The specialization in History will have biblical and history of religion courses as well as a focus on American and European history.

Graduate students pursuing Educational Leadership can choose to specialize in Public School Administration (PSA) or Christian School Administration (CSA).

The CSA program is for graduate students who plan to work in the private school sector. There is no certification with this degree, but students will be prepared with leadership skills uniquely tailored to the Christian school setting.

Whether a graduate student is interested in improving their craft as an educator, moving into an administrative role, or seeking certification for their teaching career, the new M.Ed. line-up meets each need. ■



## QB Collins Signs with Green Bay Packers

Green Bay Packers agreed to terms with the most prolific passer in SAGU following the final day of the NFL draft. CJ Collins signed with the Packers as an undrafted free agent. He was listed as the 32nd-best undrafted quarterback by NFL.com senior analyst Gil Brandt.

Collins (6-foot-4, 225 pounds) appeared in 44 games and set many passing records. He finished his senior season second in the NAIA with 320.9 passing yards per game, third in total offense per game (314.2) and fourth in total passing (3,209). He completed 259-of-440 passes with 31 touchdowns to just six interceptions to help the Lions to a 5-4 record in 2018.

The passing yardage total was a single-season program record, as were his 31 passing touchdowns, 186 total points and 140.6 passer efficiency rating. Collins also set a single-game program record with 561 yards and six touchdowns on 41-of-65 passing in a win against Texas Wesleyan on Oct. 20, 2018. He threw for 300 or more yards five times during this senior campaign. ■

## Join us for the SAGU Alumni Reception at General Council

If you are attending General Council in Orlando, Florida, join us on **August 1** in the **Rosen Centre room Grand A** for food and fellowship.

## 2019 SAGU Online Accolades



- Most Affordable Online Colleges
- Best Online Criminal Justice Programs
- Best Online Master's in Human Services
- Best Online English Degrees
- Best Online Master's in History



## DON'T SEE YOUR NOTE?

Notes are published in the print edition in order of the date they are received. All notes are published online at [sagu.edu/alumninotes](http://sagu.edu/alumninotes).

Your submission may be featured in the printed September issue of SAGU Today.



## CELEBRATIONS

**Norene (Sewell) Anderson ('69)** and her husband DeWayne Anderson pastor in Las Cruces, NM. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary April 4th, 2019.

**1 Gary Piercy (1980-84)** and Sharla serve as pastors of New Life Church in Kingwood, TX (Houston suburb), which they founded in January 2005. They have four children, two of which are married, and five grandchildren.

**Jamie Ellison (1992-1994)** works as a mental health professional.

**2 Kevin Culpepper (1996-98)** completed his Doctor of Education degree from the University of the Cumberland ('16) and will be inducted into his former high school's Hall of Fame in Montgomery, Alabama. He has accepted a new role at the Alabama State Department of Education as Project Manager for Child Nutrition Programs.

**3 Daymond Sewell (1998-2006)** graduated in 2006 with a bachelor's in church ministries and has ministered with Youth for Christ, as a youth pastor, and as an associate pastor. He married Lyonie Sewell. They are adopting a little girl, SarahGrace ElisabethGene Sewell.

**4 Karen Norton (2001-06)**, Christian author and speaker, recently published her third book, *Marginalysis, Building Margin into our Busy Lives*. She wrote it for overly busy people—the student, busy mom, those in the ministry, in the workplace, single or married with kids, and the over-scheduled family. The book is available from Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

**Brady James (2007-10)** and **Juliana** had their 2nd child, Sawyer Craig, in March.

**5 Tony Garza (2009-11)** and his wife graduated from SAGU in 2013. They have two children, Melody (6) and Ian (4). They served in church ministry as assistant pastors for the last 8 years in El Paso, TX. Tony recently completed his Doctor of Education

in Organizational Leadership at GCU.

**Benjamin Daniel (2012-13)** serves with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. He participated in Operation Inherent Resolve in 2017, during which time he witnessed the fall of ISIS in Mosul. He was awarded a Bronze Star Medal with Valor for his actions saving the lives of more than 20 American soldiers who had been ambushed by ISIS militants. The Lord was faithful in protecting them and keeping their wits sharp during a very dangerous event.

**Emily (Fiscus) Bailey (2012-15)** married June 23, 2018. She works at North Star Behavioral Hospital as a Mental Health Specialist level III, recently promoted to a manager.

**Abigail Davis (2014-16)** is working on a Master of Divinity in Theological Ethics at the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Scotland. She graduates August 2019.

**Dominic Richardson (2015-18)** teaches 3rd Grade public school in Red Oak, TX.

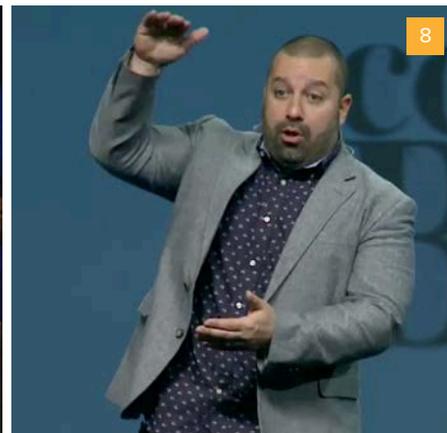
## IN MEMORIAM

**Paul Nicely** passed quietly on December 18, 2018, after being ill with Lewy Body Dementia. Paul had returned to Waxahachie to spend his final days in Pleasant Manor Health and Rehabilitation. **Vickie Nicely Patterson (1972-1975)** and Paul spent time together singing while Paul continued praying for other residents. Vickie continues living in Waxahachie and ministering to hurting people through Freedom Fellowship International.

**Oneida (Barton) Elmore** graduated in 1950. She married **Ralph Elmore (1945-1949)** August 8, 1951. They served as evangelists for two years then as missionaries in Sri Lanka (aka Ceylon) 1952-1957; Fiji Islands 1962-1965; and Philippine Islands 1975-1980. Oneida died on March 5, 2012, at age 83. **Ralph** lives in Boise, Idaho, near his two children, eight grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

# SHARE *your* NOTE

[www.sagu.edu/mynote](http://www.sagu.edu/mynote)



## Chapel Highlights

- 1 NFL Hall of Fame inductee and Heisman winner Tim Brown** encouraged students to use their testimonies and lives as a platform to make God's name known.
- 2 Pastor Kendall Bridges of Freedom Life Church in Carrollton, Texas** spoke about fighting off anything that is contrary to God's Word because we are new creations in Christ. Any attitude, habit, tendency, or relationship that does not line up with God and the Bible must be cast out if believers want to pursue a relationship with the Lord.
- 3 Bryan Jarrett, the lead pastor of Northplace Church in Sachse, Texas,** gave a powerful message about living life in the same way that Jesus did. By caring and loving others like Him, believers can embody the very Truth that they're trying to tell the world about.
- 4 Senior Katheryn Horn** shared her experience of seeking God's help when she hit rock bottom. She encouraged her peers to understand that God is always around when we're at our worst, and He is constantly working behind the scenes to ensure that we follow His plan for our lives.
- 5 Holocaust survivor Irving Roth** explained some of the psychological tactics used to manipulate the German soldiers and people into believing they were superior to Jews during WWII and the Holocaust. Roth was also able to share his story and experience of being a Jew in Europe during this time and working in the death camps.
- 6 Head football Coach Ryan Smith** gave an impactful sermon about cultivating our mission through time spent with God through prayer. While it is important for believers to practice their talents and methods for our platform, a steady prayer life and spending time with God is the most vital aspect.
- 7 Students, staff and faculty prayed and commissioned students for annual summer Mission TEN trips.**
- 8 Truston Baba, the Lead Pastor of Living Church in Mansfield, Texas,** spoke to students about using their individual talents, whether big or small, to further God's Kingdom. Christians need to have confidence and use their abilities to serve others both in the church and in everyday life.
- 9 AG Executive Presbyterian and Co-Director of Project Rescue Beth Grant** spoke during the Women in Leadership series.



WATCH CHAPEL BROADCASTS SPRING AND FALL.  
[WWW.SAGU.EDU/SAGUTV](http://WWW.SAGU.EDU/SAGUTV)



# SAGU Golf Classic

SAGU hosted their 22nd Annual Golf Classic on Monday, April 8, at Thorntree Golf Club in DeSoto, Texas. The yearly event is a time of golf and fellowship benefiting Athletics and the student-athletes that attend the university.

With approximately \$40,000 raised for SAGU Athletics, Rick Bowles, Vice President of Advancement, expressed his gratitude towards sponsors who played a vital role to ensure the success of this year's Golf Classic.

A total of 85 golfers attended the event along with 25 additional coaches, athletes, Advancement staff, and student workers who served during the tournament.

**1 Former Major League Baseball pitcher Brian Holman** was the keynote speaker for the event.

“His message was incredibly inspiring,” said Bowles.

Holman shared his testimony of how he accepted Christ as his Savior while starting his baseball career and right around the time he felt his marriage was in trouble. Holman and his wife lost two children to early deaths which took a toll on their marriage. Through Christ, their relationship took a turn for the better.

Hosting a speaker during the lunch period before going out to golf was a new approach for this year's Golf Classic. It was a big hit to sponsors and golfers alike, and Bowles says that he is “excited to continue that new approach to the golf classic for years to come.” ■



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