



# *today*

SPRING 2022

# BEYOND BUILDING

**THE FRAMEWORK OF NEW BEGINNINGS**

# BLUEPRINTS

## Planning & Designing the Future

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As a full-time student at Southwestern Bible Institute (SBI), Lyndal Bullock spent mornings earning his religious studies degree, but then worked an 8-hour shift from 3p.m. – 11p.m. in Dallas helping build radios.

In the 1950s, SBI, which later became Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU), assigned students to an area church. That's how he deepened his friendship with Aileen, his Canadian classmate he'd met on a stairway.

Sundays they carpooled with fellow students to an AG church 100 miles from campus. That provided hours of conversation with the outgoing, vivacious yearbook editor. On their last such drive, days before her graduation and pending return to Canada, he proposed. She said yes.

Both earned SAGU religious studies degrees, furthered their education at other institutions, and enjoyed successful careers as educators. Ultimately he earned a doctorate in special education and became a University of North Texas Regents Professor Emeritus; she earned two bachelor's degrees and a master's. For decades she taught primary school.

After 67 years of marriage, Aileen Bullock passed away. Dr. Bullock has honored his beloved wife's legacy by bequeathing their \$4 million estate toward SAGU's Business and Education Building. In December he presented the first \$1 million to a standing ovation of students, faculty and staff.

"The most important thing that happened at Southwestern was that I found my wife," Dr. Bullock says. "She loved the Lord. We found each other. The Lord had a little bit to do with that. She was always optimistic and thankful for life."

**Dr. Bullock knows the power of like-minded students interacting with each other and professors. A building equipped with top technology will enhance in-person learning. "Nothing replaces that," he says.**

To impact coming generations of educators and business as mission, SAGU needs ample space, quality support systems "and classrooms supportive and modern enough for new technologies," Dr. Bullock says. The building will also train students for business as mission, enabling ministry in closed countries.

President Kermit Bridges stated, "We are excited and humbled by Lyndal Bullock's generosity. We join him in praying that God will move the hearts of others to support the development of this vitally important academic building that will prepare competent teachers and skilled business leaders."



*SAGU College of Business and Education  
Conceptual Rendering - debartoloarchitects*

Sue Taylor, Dean of SAGU's College of Business and Education, notes how Jesus is providing beyond expectations. "He has promised us in His Word, if we do what he calls us to do, he'll give back to us, pressed down and overflowing," she says.

"Dr. Bullock's generous gift will be used as the foundational resources to build state-of-the-art facilities for students to build relationships, gain skills, and learn to listen to the voice of God while immersed in outstanding faith-based programs, preparing them to serve as 'missionaries in the marketplace' for years to come," she says.

Dr. Bullock's legacy will equip coming generations of godly teachers, notes Dr. Khristy Strange, Director of Teacher Education and Department Chair. "They'll have the unique experience of SAGU, becoming amazing teachers while developing spiritual strengths necessary to be effective in future classrooms."

Dr. Shelly Zaldivar, Business Department Chair/Graduate Coordinator, underscores that Dr. Bullock's gift signifies that alumni and the larger community are on mission with SAGU. "They're engaged and excited about what we're doing," she says.

But his donation is only the beginning. Dr. Bullock is sounding a clarion call for others to likewise leave a legacy. He urges alumni, churches and anyone else seeking to build the Kingdom of God to join him.

**"If we can get enough people to contribute, it becomes a reality," he says. "We need to support the education and future of the children. The plan of God is to help your fellow man. We need to give more funding to future generations through Southwestern." ■**

# GROUND BREAKING

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW STADIUM

SAGU Athletics is set to begin construction of an on-campus venue that will benefit track and field, football, and men's and women's soccer. Included in phase one of the construction project is a turf field, 8-lane Olympic-sized track, and field lights.

The \$3 million project had a ground breaking ceremony on April 29th.

Phase two of the athletic complex project will include grandstands for 3,000 spectators, a press box, video scoreboard, and a multi-purpose building currently dubbed the South Pavilion. It's a fitting home for the Lions Football team that won the NCCAA Victory Bowl in 2021 and finished the season with a 9-3 record.

The university is continuing to raise funding for phase two, says SAGU Athletic Director Dr. Jesse Godding.

**“The growth in athletics on the SAGU campus creates a need for facilities that can provide a positive experience for student-athletes and coaches while also benefiting the entire SAGU community,”**

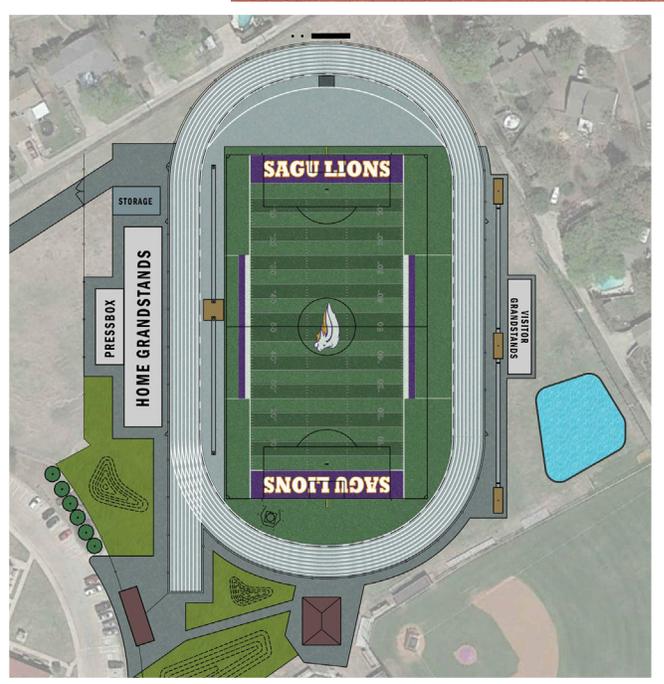
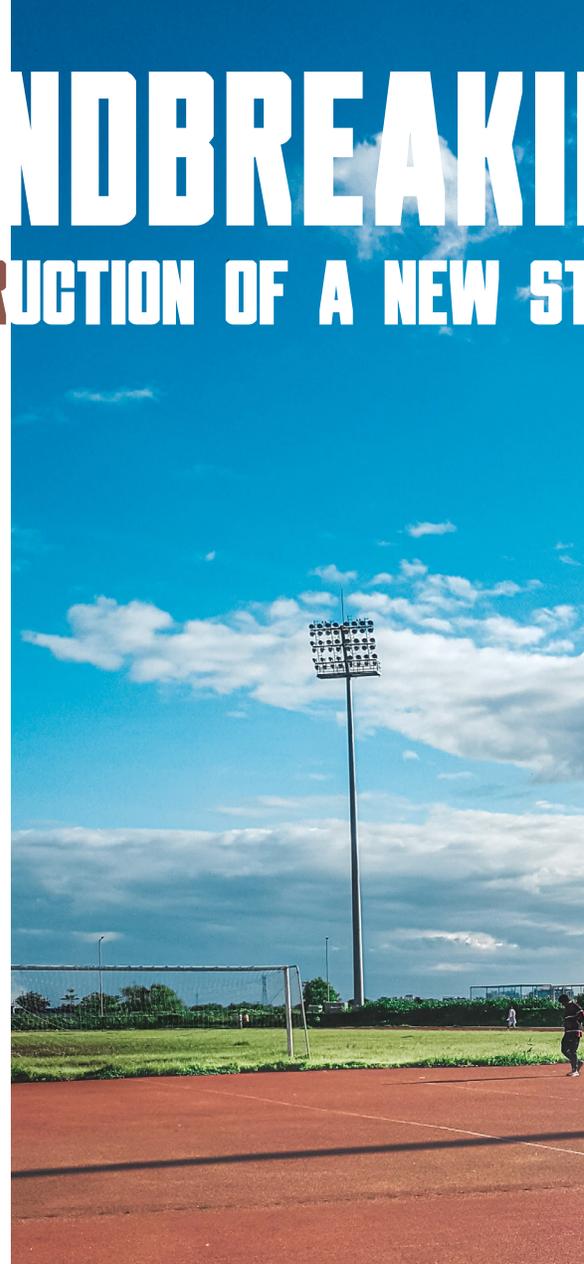
Dr. Godding says. “This facility can allow SAGU to further its reach into the community through youth camps and other outreaches, which does excite me personally.”

Construction of the new stadium is a win for all: SAGU student-athletes, the student body, university enrollment, and the university's ability to reach the community. These long overdue upgrades will improve experiences for everyone.

“The facility will provide faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to enjoy athletic events in a manner they are unable to do currently,” Dr. Godding says. “It's an opportunity to set the stage for further development of the area to eventually make football game-days an on-campus experience for the SAGU community.”

Students will be able to walk to the stadium. Home-game tailgating can become a Lion tradition. SAGU Homecoming will truly be a coming home to campus for alumni to reconnect with their alma mater.

As the lack of facilities have kept the university from hosting track meets, most students, faculty, staff and alumni have never seen SAGU track athletes perform. With the new track, students will get to experience track and field meets firsthand.



The new lights allow for morning and evening practice opportunities during the months of heat in Texas. Additionally, lights provide the ability to lessen classes missed by collegiate athletes through scheduling matches later in the day. All athletic teams will benefit from an all-weather surface for practice in poor weather, Dr. Godding notes.



The expansion of SAGU men's and women's track and field programs

**“This becomes ours,” Dr. Godding says. “SAGU can brand the stadium, people can be impacted by the mission of SAGU.”**

and the university's developmental football and soccer programs is projected to produce increased tuition, room and board revenue that will pay for the phase one project within three years.

A planned third phase includes an athletic support building with team locker rooms, coaching offices, and other elements important to a comprehensive sports program.

The athletic director stresses that among the most exciting aspects of this facility will be that SAGU can host events that fulfill the mission of the university in providing the whole gospel for the whole individual. The stadium will be a venue for community ministry through athletic camps, especially those that help underprivileged kids.

Additionally, the venue provides a new means to showcase SAGU programs that will help get the word out about the school and aid recruiting new students.

“Hosting athletic events provides opportunity for exposure to other institutions, high schools, recruits, and community, while enhancing the collegiate-athlete and spectator experience,” Dr. Godding says.

SAGU President Kermit Bridges and Terry Phipps, Vice President for Student Development, report that they've met with Waxahachie officials who share their enthusiasm for the project, which will be a boom for the city.

Dr. Godding points out that athletics fulfill SAGU's mission: “Our core values talk about pursuing athletic excellence and spiritual formation. To that end, SAGU coaches are called to pastor their teams and lead their student athletes spiritually,” Dr. Godding says.

President Bridges concurs, “SAGU's athletic programs are naturally committed to success on the field and court, but what distinguishes us is our commitment to the spiritual development of these student athletes. I am particularly excited that this new sports complex gives us the opportunity to recruit even more students desiring to pursue the sports they love in a faith-affirming atmosphere.”

“It's very exciting for us,” says VP Phipps, who notes this project has garnered energy and excitement from some alumni. “The Lord has provided generous donors to help us with funding the stadium.”

Phase one is set for completion in September. ■

# SETTING THE FOUNDATION

## PRAYER AND PROGRESS



The Momentum Prayer Initiative refocuses SAGU's local church family to intercede for the university—our students, faculty, staff, finances, and most importantly, for God's presence to imbue the campus.

Momentum hearkens back to the school's historic intercessory movement that flourished in decades past when SAGU gained dramatic growth in enrollment, expanded its academic programs, and enjoyed successful financial campaigns that yielded much-needed facilities to equip students called to build the Kingdom of God.

The defining characteristic of this remarkable season was spiritual fervor, which fanned flames of renewal and revival, keeping us connected to the Kingdom mission that defines who we are, President Kermit Bridges says.

**“We’re seeking to re-engage our local church family as the powerful prayer network we know it to be,” President Bridges says. “We’re seeking God to intercede for SAGU and the world as we faithfully execute the mission He has placed on the university, according to His will.”**

The roots of the program began when, called back in 1990 to lead Southwestern through likewise challenging times, President Delmer

Guynes knew a touch from the Lord would transform the campus. Dr. Guynes' preferred mode of intercession was walking an hour or two along the Emmaus Prayer Walk.

As he prayed for the school and interceded for the world beyond our campus, Joyce Bridges, wife of North Texas District then-Superintendent James K. Bridges, shared an idea: What if prayer teams regularly spent a day on campus, visited classes, worshiped in chapel, dined in the cafeteria, walked the grounds, and prayed, inviting the Spirit of God to move at SAGU?

At a 1991 chapel service, a flood of the Spirit swept the place. A weeks-long spiritual awakening broke out. Teams of visiting churches converged on SAGU to intercede. These prayer warriors gathered on the sidewalks of SAGU and in chapel services to pray for the university.

At times, Dr. Guynes pushed classes an hour later to accommodate the Spirit's move. He closed chapel services with a phrase that became his trademark to encourage all to keep pressing in: “Hold steady, friends.”

“When the Spirit is stirring, moving, you need to wait, to give God a little time,” Dr. Guynes says. “If you wait and let Him do His thing, He'll do something special.” And he did.

“We experienced the rich Spirit of the Lord. From the first year on campus, to the second year, the whole campus tenor changed,” says Michael Norman, then a SAGU youth ministry student.

His Spirit flourished throughout the campus. Enrollment doubled, then almost tripled. SAGU's finances rebounded. The university launched building campaigns to accommodate growth.

### God met every need.

Michael Norman, who today pastors Glad Tidings Church in Austin, connects the dots: “What happened that fall in that chapel was only the result of a prayer movement that preceded it.”

SAGU faces post-COVID challenges, which include raising enrollment and building facilities to enhance its ministry. We believe we'll see Jesus do it again.

“God faithfully met the needs of this university 25 years ago as we humbled ourselves and prayed,” President Bridges says. “Today we must cry out to God in prayer for the supernatural help needed to become the instrument of hope and healing that our nation and the world so desperately needs.”

### Will you answer the call to pray?

SAGU welcomes alumni, churches and the community beyond to visit the campus for a day of interceding for the university where Dr. Guynes, now 93, still walks and prays several times each week.

For further information how you, your church or ministry can join this prayer movement, contact the Advancement and Alumni Project Coordinator's office (972) 825-4700. ■



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All notes are published online at [sagu.edu/alumninotes](http://sagu.edu/alumninotes). Your submission may be featured in the printed Fall issue of SAGU Today.



## CELEBRATIONS

**1 Lynnsey Solorio (Richey) (2014-2017)** is currently working as the Educator Coordinator at Adult and Teen Challenge of Texas, San Antonio Woman's Center. There she has the opportunity to teach recovery strategies, and show the love of Christ through preaching and counseling type settings. She says it has been a joy to serve in ministry and use her background in social work, thanks to her time at SAGU.

**2 Troy Davis (1993-1997)** and wife Holly will celebrate 25 years of marriage and over 25 years in full-time ministry. Receiving a MOL degree from SAGU, he served as the North Carolina District Youth Director. Holly has also recently stepped in the National Role of Fine Arts Ministry and Program Director.

**3 James Davis (1985-1987)**, ordained by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, began his pastoral ministry in Ontario, Canada. In 1997 he and his wife Jody planted a church in Barrie, Ontario, with 12 people, and he has continued to pastor Mapleview Community Church for 25 years. James says being at Southwestern played a pivotal role in creating the vision and mission of serving Jesus throughout his years of ministry!

**4 Ross Fishburn (2004-2008)** and **Austin Kertesz (2007-2011)** recently founded Equipped Worship, an organization that equips worship leaders through relational investment and biblical encouragement. By providing 1:1 weekly mentoring, they hope to create a safe space for worship leaders to grow.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Linda (McComber) Rothganger (1962-1963)** passed away in February in Springfield, Missouri, at 77. Born in Pontiac, Michigan, Linda once said she never imagined doing anything other than serving in full-time ministry abroad. While she attended SAGU, she met Aaron Rothganger (1963), who shared her burden for world missions. The couple married in 1963 and arrived in Hong Kong in 1967 for their first term of missionary ministry. In 1972 they became the first resident missionaries to Vietnam, where they directed a Global University teaching site and served at a U.S. Servicemen's Center. The Rothgangers

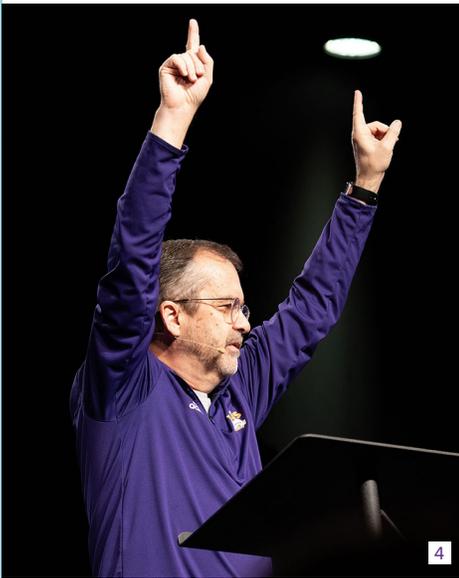
ministry includes pastoring United Bethel Church (UBC), a Chinese congregation in the Philippines, and spending 20 years preparing the Mandarin-language version of the Fire Bible in Taiwan. In 2018 the Rothgangers returned to the Philippines to serve as interim pastors at UBC. The couple retired in 2020, and Linda entered the AGWM Hall of Fame for her 55 years of service.

**Rebecca Jolene Smith (1968-1970, 2003)** passed away peacefully in her stateside home in Waxahachie, Texas, surrounded by her children, grandchildren, siblings, and extended family. Born to Delmer and Eleanor Guynes, Beckie entered SAGU, where she met David Smith and married in 1968. Beckie eagerly followed God's calling on her life to become a missionary, and in 1974 the couple left for Africa with their two sons. She jumped into full-time ministry with the Kenya Assemblies of God, where she used her gifts in singing, playing the accordion, and leading children's and women's ministries. Beckie diligently pursued her ordination and a master's degree from AGTS and a second master's degree in Counseling Psychology from SAGU to enable her to better love and care for people. She bravely faced breast cancer and chemo and constantly gave testimony to God's miraculous healing. This experience led her to begin a flourishing ministry in 2001 among Breast Cancer survivors in Mombasa, Kenya, where she has lived for the past 42 years. Beckie has given 50 years of missionary service to the Lord.

In January, **Karla Marie (Hughes) Aaron (1979-1981)** passed from her life here on earth in her home in Arlington, Texas. Born in Oklahoma City, OK, she was a valedictorian of her Senior Class of 1979. She graduated from SAGU and met Paul Aaron, later marrying in 1981. Karla served her family well as a loving mother and devoted wife. She also dedicated her life to the ministry of the church serving in teaching roles to children. Karla taught Missionettes for many years and later Ranger Kids. She eventually became the North Texas District Ranger Kids Coordinator, helping both of her sons to earn their Gold Medals of Achievement. Karla became the co-founder of two family businesses, Advantage Balloons, where she decorated events for the past 33 years, and Bannertime, where she served as the Store Manager for 16 years. ■

Update your  
contact information!

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



## chapel highlights

- 1 Student speaker **Autumn Stabeno-Stone**, reminds students that they have a purpose though they may feel broken. Jesus can restore us into a masterpiece.
- 2 **Dr. Travis Dickinson** encouraged students to ask the hard questions that cause them to doubt their faith. In doing so, they can defend their faith and grow spiritually.
- 3 Students engaged in worship during chapel service.
- 4 College of Bible and Church Ministries Dean **Dr. Mike Clarensau** challenged students to trust Jesus and keep on singing in the middle of their storm.
- 5 SAGU Head Football Coach, **Ryan Smith**, challenged students to take responsibility amidst their privilege and rights. God is calling us out of our comfort zones!
- 6 During Campus Days student speaker, **Abbi Escamilla**, used Ninevah's example of repentance to explain how genuine repentance leads to genuine change. Challenging students to seek repentance as an action of the heart. ■

## From Rick Bowles, Vice President of Advancement



Do you remember why 1927 is significant for SAGU? To jog your memory, 1927 is the year Rev. P.C. Nelson launched SAGU.

In just five years, we will reach a **centennial milestone**. The year will be 2027. Recently, I sensed a nudge of the Holy Spirit to start this 100-year celebration....**now**.

So over the next few months, SAGU will launch a 5-year centennial campaign that fosters affinity, pride, and generous giving for the university, increases student enrollment and builds a firm foundation for **SAGU's next 100 years**.

We call it **The 2027 Project** and will involve fundraising and service components. Over the next five years, everyone at all levels, in every stage of their SAGU journey, whether student, alumni, donor, staff, board, or faculty, will have an opportunity to contribute to SAGU's 100-year legacy and future.

I am excited to share more details about this massive campaign as we near our launch time frame. In the meantime, there is one financial project I am excited to share, **a goal of 100 new people giving \$100 monthly to SAGU or, if you are giving monthly, increasing to \$100 if not already**.

Want to help us kick this off? Go to **www.sagu.edu/recurring** and start the momentum! Your prayers are appreciated as we trust God to lead us in the endeavor.

Thank you in advance! ■

# CHURCH LEADERSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT



On April 4, 2022, SAGU hosted its inaugural **Sutton Family Church Leadership Golf Tournament** to raise awareness and scholarships for students majoring in Church Leadership degree programs.



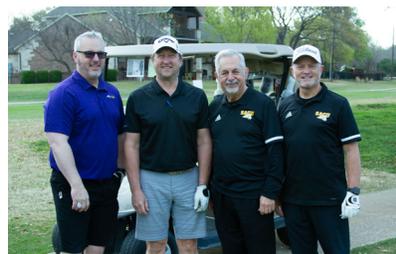
92 golfers made up of pastors and staff, and SAGU alumni of nearby churches participated in this inaugural tournament and competed for top golf prizes and a year of bragging rights. Each hole featured a different SAGU student majoring in Church Leadership. The luncheon highlighted how **SAGU is the perfect place for students to develop the ministry and leadership skills** needed to make an impact in the nation and world today.



**Gary Sutton**, the chairman for the commission on advancement, shared the vision behind the Church Leadership Degree Scholarship fund and why he and his family have **committed \$100,000 annually to the fund**. Afterward, President Kermit Bridges, challenged the pastors and churches present to give monthly to the fund, which is designed to **encourage more young men and women to answer the call to church leadership**.



Students in a ministry degree program or who are AG PK's are **guaranteed** to receive from \$5,418 to \$10,836 per semester in scholarships and grants. That means they will always receive **50% - 100% off tuition** including federal, state, and SAGU scholarships and grants. (Students must enroll full time, live on campus, and complete a FAFSA.)



The Sutton Family Church Leadership Golf Tournament was made possible through the partnership of our Title Sponsor- VCRNOW, Prize Sponsor- NTD Loan Fund, and Partner Sponsor- AGCU and is one of the first initiatives to be instituted as part of **The 2027 Project**. ■



**Girien Salazar**, Director of Advancement

## UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRIT WORLD

The Bible study your group has been waiting for!  
Written by Dr. Gary Royer, retired SAGU professor

**Divided into 13 lessons, each with a set of discussion questions**

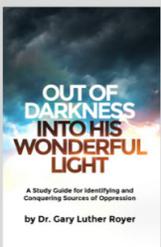
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