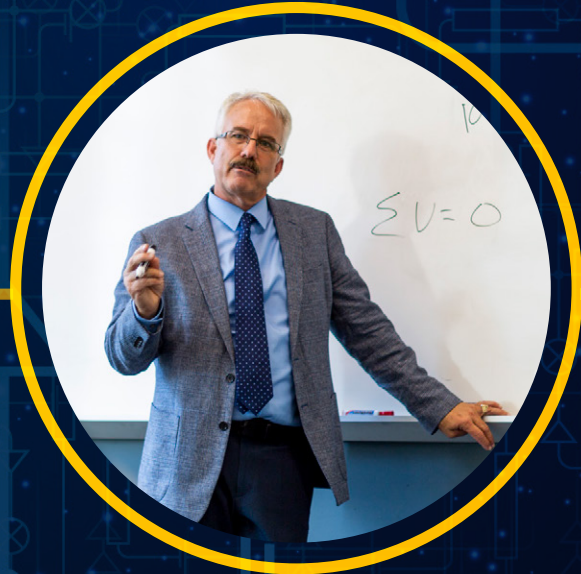


A SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION

# JOURNAL

FALL 2019 | VOLUME 43 ISSUE 1



**SPARKING  
EXCITEMENT**

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Introducing Electrical  
Engineering at SAU



## DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

It's a privilege to share with you the exciting achievements and triumphs our community has recently celebrated. These accomplishments highlight our hard work and commitment to excellence, but more importantly, they speak to our united focus to seek God first and foremost.

Our feature article discusses the introduction of our electrical engineering program, a truly fantastic step for SAU. The addition of this program is a testimony to the continued faithfulness of the SAU community to equip our students to be critical participants in the contemporary world.

In other pieces, we celebrate our men's basketball team winning the 2019 NAIA National Championship and two women's track and field athletes winning NAIA national titles. In addition to this, we highlight the dedication of the McDonald Athletic Center and SAU alumnus Jacob Atem receiving the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities Young Alumni Award.

I'm also excited for you to read the tributes that have been written to our retiring colleagues Ron Kopicko and Paul Patton. These two individuals have made a profound impact in the lives of our students, serving with great faithfulness and helping our community shine to its fullest potential.

As we celebrate milestones and achievements, I hope each of you sense the beauty of God's gift of living in vibrant community together. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer shares in his work "Life Together," being in Christian community calls us to love others with a spiritual love, one that is rooted in serving one another.

Each of these stories reminds me that as we serve one another we complete our greatest work.

Dr. Brent Ellis  
PRESIDENT

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### THE CONCEPT

Spring Arbor University is a community of learners distinguished by our lifelong involvement in the study and application of the liberal arts, total commitment to Jesus Christ as the perspective for learning, and critical participation in the contemporary world.



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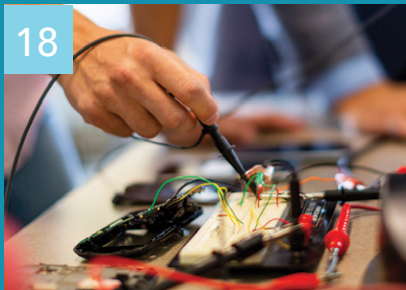
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## SPARKING EXCITEMENT: INTRODUCING ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AT SAU

The addition of electrical engineering goes beyond just responding to the industry demand for engineers; it speaks to The SAU Concept, which calls our community of learners to be critical participants in the contemporary world.

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## SAU DEDICATES THE McDONALD ATHLETIC CENTER

The \$1.9-million renovation of the McDonald Athletic Center (MAC) was completed and celebrated through a community dedication on May 16, 2019. The MAC, renamed to honor the late Spring Arbor High School and Junior College coach and teacher **Donald "Mac" McDonald**, has been the location for SAU athletics for 42 years.

The renovation includes updates to the gymnasium, including arena seating, a resurfaced gym floor, an upgraded sound system and new LED video board, improvements to exterior aesthetics, upgrades to the women's and men's locker rooms and a brand-new lobby entrance featuring former hall-of-fame athletes as well as accomplishments from current SAU athletic teams.

The complete transformation of the MAC would not be possible without significant support from several donors, including the lead gift from **Charlie and Beth (McDonald HS '61, JC '63, '65) Kuntzleman**, as well as the sponsorship from American 1 Credit Union, which allowed for the improvement of The Arena within the MAC.

Speaking at the dedication celebration, Martha Fuerstenau, CEO of American 1 Credit Union, remarked, "We are excited to partner with the university with this gift for the naming of The Arena because we think it's a good idea to support what you support. SAU graduates are perfect hires for American 1 Credit Union because we need big thinkers and lifelong learners.

We need people who are ethically minded and have a servant's heart; we have recruited and employed SAU graduates for decades, for this very reason."

"The newly renovated McDonald Athletic Center will offer the best possible experience for our athletes," said SAU President **Dr. Brent Ellis**. "We are extremely thankful for the generosity of Charlie and Beth Kuntzleman, who provided the lead gift for this project. The SAU community will benefit for years to come, thanks to the generosity of the many donors who contributed to this project."



## SAU ALUMNUS **DR. JACOB ATEM** RECEIVES CCCU YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

The Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) has announced that **Dr. Jacob Atem**, a 2008 graduate of Spring Arbor University and the co-founder, president and CEO of the Southern Sudan Healthcare Organization (SSHCO), has been named the 2019 CCCU Young Alumni Award winner.

Atem's passion for helping others and his love for South Sudan stems from his own experience as one of Sudan's Lost Boys during the Second Sudanese Civil War. As a student at SAU, he experienced the antithesis of his lost boy experience: a welcoming community of faith, full of mentors and friends ready to invest in his life.

In the midst of his studies, Atem co-founded the SSHCO which built a clinic in his hometown. Today, SSHCO sees over 3,000 patients monthly for less than \$5 a person, fulfilling Atem's dream of bringing hope to where it is lost.

"For me, I wouldn't be who I am today without God," says Atem. "One of my favorite verses says, 'To whom much is given, much is required.' This Scripture has truly impacted my life, and after realizing I could work hard to help others, now I am returning to give to my country and share my story."

## **FOUR SAU PROGRAMS** RECEIVE NATIONAL RANKINGS BY ONLINEMASTERS.COM

SAU's Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Master of Arts in Strategic Communication and Leadership (MSCL), Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MTESOL) have recently been ranked as top programs in the state and nation by OnlineMasters.com.

SAU's MSN was listed among "The Best Online MSN Programs" for 2018, making it only one of three top-ranked programs of its kind in Michigan.

SAU's MSCL was listed among "The Best Online Master's in Communications Programs" for 2019. The program was additionally awarded "Best Student Coaching" in the nation, due to its

Student Success Coach Program, which helps students to succeed in the classroom and in their personal lives.

SAU's MBA with a concentration in Human Resource Development was listed among "The Best Online MBA in Human Resources Programs" for 2019. The program was additionally named the "Most Accelerated" program in the nation, as students may earn their degree in as little as one year while taking one course at a time.

SAU's MTESOL was listed among "The Best Online Master's in English Language Learning Programs" for 2019. The program was additionally named the "Most Accessible" program in the nation, due to the program's streamlined application process.



*Dr. Jacob Atem speaks at SAU*

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## EVERY HEART MINISTRIES

*Bryce Bauman, Jonah Engle and Brandon Valentine*

Every Heart Ministries (EHM) started in the minds of SAU senior **Bryce Bauman** and junior **Jonah Engle** when they saw how powerfully God moved during a worship night they hosted in Estes Park, Colorado, last summer.

Together with fellow SAU junior **Brandon Valentine**, Bauman and Engle joined friends Brennan Joseph, Caleb Hurt and Josh Davis to spend the summer of 2019 traveling to 10 cities to serve and create space for people to encounter Jesus. Bauman explained that the goal was to “see people fall in love with Jesus. And help people form a deep reliance and deep trust in the Holy Spirit.”

EHM reaches out to the communities they visit through service, worship, testimony and the message of Jesus Christ. “The biggest thing with serving [in the communities] was being able to be one-on-one with people where they are,” says Engle. “We’ve been surprised not only by people coming to know Jesus, but also those empowered to go out and do the same thing we are doing.” As many as 500 people have attended worship nights, and Engle was excited to report that they have personally seen over 50 people give their hearts to Jesus at the halfway point in the summer tour.

As the group wraps up their summer travels, they’ve continued to focus on one phrase. “We always say, ‘We never know what’s on the other side of our obedience,’” says Engle. “Meaning that we don’t know what could happen from what we are doing now, but we know God orchestrates everything. We just obey.”

There are no firm plans for the future of EHM, though Engle says, “Wherever we are, we just want to be a voice for the Gospel.”

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### HALEY TAYLOR

*B.S. in communications studies  
and minor in music*



“I think Spring Arbor University gave me the space to create things in a way I wouldn’t have found if I had stayed home and went to a community college,” says **Haley Taylor**, a 2013 graduate. “I felt encouraged not only by my professors but by my closest friends, who were motivated to make something, either for school or for fun.”

Following a college career full of creating, producing and writing, Taylor started as an intern with WGTE Public Media out of Toledo, Ohio, before being hired as an on-air host and producer. She currently hosts three different classical music radio programs as well as hosts and produces an art and culture series that airs during Morning Edition called “The Rough Draft Diaries.”

The original idea for “The Rough Draft Diaries” came from an assignment Taylor was assigned in **Jen Letherer’s** script writing class Taylor’s senior year. When asked to create a short radio series during her internship, Taylor used the original assignment idea and expanded it to 13 episodes. While the format has changed, Taylor still does all of the interviews, and she edits, writes, records and produces the show on her own. The show has won two Touchstone Awards for Excellence in Journalism (2016, 2017) and was voted the 2016 Best Podcast in the city of Toledo by the Toledo City Paper.

“When I’m creating things, I feel like I’m doing what God created me to do,” says Taylor. “I feel like when I’m in the middle of editing, or writing, or creating, God is thinking, ‘Good, keep on going.’”





# COUGAR ZONE

## SMITH & BLACK WIN TRACK & FIELD NATIONAL TITLES

This spring, two Cougar athletes secured national titles during the 2019 NAIA Track & Field National Championships.

Senior **Katrina (Tovar) Smith** captured the NAIA national title in the pole vault during the indoor championships in March. Smith, a five-time NAIA All-American, became the second female in SAU history to win a national championship. Her win gave the program its 10th individual indoor championship, regardless of gender, and its 14th overall among indoor and outdoor championship meets.

Entering the competition seeded sixth overall, Smith advanced through her first four heights, including 12' 2.5" (3.72 m) – matching her career best. The Sandusky, Michigan, native missed her first two tries before a successful vault on her final attempt, setting up a showdown with Lewis-Clark State's Madison Carson for the title. On her first attempt at 12' 6.25" (3.82 m), Smith cleared the bar, putting the pressure on Carson, who would ultimately miss on her three attempts. Smith's mark was not only a career best – it smashed her own previous school record.

Freshman **Kyara Black** concluded a standout rookie campaign during the outdoor championships in May, making history by securing SAU's first-ever outdoor national title in the women's high jump and SAU's first-ever women's outdoor win in any event at the national meet. The national title was the second this year for the Cougars following Smith's victory in the pole vault during the indoor season, and it was the 15th overall, regardless of gender, among indoor and outdoor championship meets.



Black came up just short of claiming the indoor national title back in March, finishing as the national runner-up, but she turned in the performance of a lifetime at the outdoor championships to take home the gold. The Danville, Indiana, native cleared a personal-best and school record of 5' 9.25" (1.76 m) on her third attempt to outlast British Columbia's Trinity Hansma.

Smith and Black's standout performances made for an exciting track & field season at SAU. We're excited to see Black and other athletes continue to break records and claim titles in the seasons to come.

## THREE NEW COACHES HIRED BY SAU ATHLETICS

Within the last year, SAU Athletics has added three new coaches to their coaching staff: **Tietricha Thomas**, **Gerry Lobdell '17** and **Josh Oakley**.

Thomas, who was hired as the Director of Spirit Programs last November, will lead the Cougars' two newest sports, competitive cheer and dance. With more than 10 years of coaching experience, Thomas brings a wealth of knowledge with her to SAU. She spent two years as the head Spirit and Stunt Coach at Olivet College, where she led the Comets to a No. 3 national ranking. Prior to her arrival at Olivet, she spent four years as

the Head Cheer Coach at Albion College, helping guide the Britons to their first-ever bid to NCAA nationals.

In January, Lobdell became the second Head Men's and Women's Bowling Coach in program history. He had previously served as assistant coach. An SAU alumnus and Jackson, Michigan, native, Lobdell is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about bowling. He has been involved in the sport for over 30 years, 18 of which he spent as the head coach at Northwest High School in Jackson. Additionally, he holds a United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Bronze Certification.

Oakley was named Men's Soccer Head Coach in February, making him the 15th head coach in the history of the program. Before coming to SAU, Oakley spent eight years coaching soccer at Alma College. He led the Scots to many firsts, including the program's first Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) conference tournament appearance in 2014. Prior to his arrival at Alma, Oakley directed the men's soccer program at Asbury College for eight years. While at Asbury, he reconstructed a program that had endured thin years throughout the '80s and '90s.

The future of SAU Athletics is bright! We look forward to seeing where our new coaches will lead our Cougar teams in the coming years.

Tietricha Thomas



Gerry Lobdell



Josh Oakley



MEN'S BASKETBALL WINS FIRST-EVER NAIA

# CHAMP





# NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

# IONS



It was an exceptional season that didn't begin with exceptional prospects. Selected to finish eighth out of 10 teams in the Crossroads League preseason poll, the SAU Men's Basketball team appeared to have a climb ahead of them. Yet, as the regular season got underway, the Cougars continued to prove the poll wrong. One win after another led the Cougars to their first-ever Crossroads League title and secured their place in the national tournament.

The team travelled to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and were tasked with winning four games in six days to reach the championship game. After knocking off each of their opponents, including conference foe Marian University, the Cougars found themselves one win away.





“THESE GUYS WERE CHAMPIONS





As the final buzzer sounded, the Cougars had capped off their Cinderella-story season with an 82-76 victory over Oregon Tech.

Following the win, head coach **Ryan Cottingham '94** said, "You dream about this as a player and a coach and you never really think it's going to happen. I'm at a loss for words right now, because this is a special group of young men who love each other and play with great passion."

The Cougars came out of the gate strong and quickly led 8-0 in the opening three minutes. Oregon Tech would catch up in the beginning of the first half, but the game continued to go in SAU's favor as the Cougars hit three of four three-point opportunities in the first five minutes of the second half. The Owls rallied at the end, but the Cougars prevailed with a phenomenal showing in their first championship game.

Sophomore **Brandon Durnell** was a key player for the Cougars in the championship game. Durnell completed his evening with a career-high 32-point performance, along with eight rebounds, to lead SAU. Junior **Paul Marandet** had 16 points and five assists, and junior **Jeff Beckman** snagged 10 rebounds and added eight points.

"I keep thinking back to a quote by Dabo Swinney after Clemson won the national title this year," said Durnell after the game. "He said, 'No Hollywood producer could write a script like this, only God can.' That's really how we feel right now." Durnell continued, "We have so much support from our fans, both around the campus and in my hometown of Fort Wayne, Indiana. This is why I play basketball and why I worked so hard, and for us to end our season as national champions is just a dream come true."

Following the game, Durnell and Marandet were named to the All-Tournament Team. Marandet was also awarded the NAIA Division II Men's Basketball Championship Most Outstanding Player. Beckman was awarded the Hustle Award, and Coach Cottingham was named as the NAIA Division II National Coach of the Year. Most impressive, perhaps, was the final award given to the entire team, the Dr. James Naismith / Emil Liston Team Sportsmanship Award. The Cougars finished the year with 30 wins, the most in program history. Marandet was selected to the 2019 NAIA Division II Men's Basketball All-American First Team, becoming just the second player in SAU history to earn the honor (after **Jason Elder, '97, '98**).

"I knew these guys were champions before we even got here, but now we get to celebrate," said Cottingham. "Everything just clicked for us in Sioux Falls."



# BEFORE WE EVEN GOT HERE.

— COACH RYAN COTTINGHAM

# MISS MUFFITT

by Susan Panak

**M**uffitt Hall has been a longtime fixture on SAU's campus. Muffitt has been a welcoming home away from home for many students and has provided the space for countless lifelong friendships to be built. The bonds that have been formed through the shared experience of living in Muffitt Hall are still shared by many of our alumni today.

With a \$40,000 budget, Muffitt was constructed in order to provide improved housing for female students. Its predecessor, the century-old Women's Building, was built in 1846, but it was demolished due to many ailments. The Women's Building, also known as the Ladies' Hall, housed 28 female students and claimed to be the oldest dorm building still in existence in the state of Michigan.

Muffitt, the new mid-century residence hall, was put in use in October 1941 and officially dedicated on June 7, 1942. Originally built to house 50 women, as well as the President's Office, Registrar's Office and Assessment Center. Muffitt Hall was dedicated to honor Rev. and Mrs. W. C. Muffitt. The Muffitts were generous supporters of the school and assisted as many as 68 students over the years as Rev. Muffitt served as Pastor at the Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church in the 1930s.

Over SAU's history, demolition of buildings has been a sign of progress on its campus. This progress is aimed to better serve the university students. This summer, demolition of Muffitt Hall was scheduled due to irreparable damage to the foundation of the building.

In honor of all women who have lived in the hall and the memories that they have shared – their late-night conversations, hours of studying, missed alarm clocks and inside jokes and the lifelong friendships that were formed – we would like to offer any alumni, parents and friends the opportunity to purchase a commemorative engraved brick from Muffitt Hall. To order your brick or make a gift toward the Muffitt memorial, please visit [arbor.edu/muffitt](http://arbor.edu/muffitt).

As we continue to make way for progress, we are excited for the campus improvements that are currently underway. Thanks to several donors who have prioritized the beautification of our campus, significant improvements have already begun. To see the full campus master plan, visit [arbor.edu/masterplan](http://arbor.edu/masterplan).



# 1941-2019





WITH  
**PAUL  
 PATTON**

BY WALLY METTS, PH.D.



You never get the impression that **Paul Patton '74** is offstage. Even in casual conversation, he is intense and animated, speaking as though every line matters. As he retires next year after 17 years, there is a fierce urgency in his reflections about his contribution to drama at SAU.

Coming to teach acting and directing in 2002 was not Patton's first performance on our stage. He was playing baseball for Redford High School near Detroit when he was recruited by **Hank Burbridge** in 1971, but he was denied admission for academic reasons. He framed the rejection letter and later pointed to it as a way of encouraging students who were struggling.

After completing a couple of courses at a community college to prove he could do college work, he was admitted. But baseball was not to be the focus of his experience here, where he says he "caught fire," leaning into the Lord under the tutelage of men like **Bob Imhoff '71**, one of his Resident Assistants. And it was here he met his wife, **Beth (Dean '74) Patton**, in a speech class taught by **Esther Maddox**.

After graduating, he taught at a school in Lansing while pursuing a master's degree in education counseling. He then worked as a high school counselor for a few years before becoming the youth director at Trinity Church in Livonia. After he became the pastor, he founded Trinity House Theater, which is still active and for which he still serves on the board.

His vision was not rooted in evangelism, but in discipleship, bringing creative people into the orbit of the church, creating a safe place where Jesus is "Lord of the Arts." This is a lifelong passion that informed his later work, after he earned a Ph.D. at Regent University as a playwright and later taught at Hampton University before being encouraged to apply for an opening at Spring Arbor.



## ACT 2

Patton says that he has flourished at SAU, as both a teacher and a performer, creating relationships through Christians In Theater Arts (CITA) and hosting regional festivals. The Department of Communication itself was fertile ground for cultivating servanthood, he says. This fostered a “process that is not idolatrous,” where opening night and stardom are not the focus but rather a “sanctuary” where every member of the cast and crew feels safe and valued.

In this environment Patton also felt safe, experimenting, taking risks, talking with administrators and addressing larger questions. He opened “Dracula” on Halloween, staged “A Street Car Named Desire” (unusual for a Christian campus) and premiered new work, including English professor **Dr. Brent Cline’s** “Guts”. His own experimental work included the “Eddie and Elmyra Show”, a mixed-media collaboration with the video program in the department as well as new works in his series of historical reenactments, one of which, “Meeting at Newburgh”, will be featured at Homecoming this year.

This has not been possible without a supporting cast, which he says includes his departmental colleague **Dr. Robert Woods**, who “could see things I couldn’t” and pushed him as a writer and scholar, collaborating on their book “Prophetically Incorrect: A Christian Introduction to Media Criticism.” An upcoming project deals with Jesus as Lord of our bored moments, tentatively titled “Your Dance with Pop Culture.”

However, he says, “the best gift I found here” was his co-laborer in drama, **Jen Letherer**, whose sense of theater’s therapeutic role fit perfectly with his pastoral instincts. She is the “comprehensive package,” he says, a compliment she readily returns.

For Patton, Letherer says, acting was the essential aspect of drama, and “something sacred was at stake in every moment.” Because of this, “I don’t know anyone who has worked with him who was not impacted personally and professionally.”

Theirs was a fruitful collaboration, one where students grew and “the work was holy,” she says.

## ACT 3

Patton, who spends two hours a day memorizing and reviewing Scripture, encourages students and others to “memorize what moves them, stewarding the stirrings of the soul.” He hopes to do more of this in retirement, offering workshops in what he calls a “theatrical hermeneutic” that captures the emotional and cognitive contexts of Scripture. A new website is in the works. There are books and plays to come.

Patton also hopes to encourage a legacy at SAU where independent, original work still has a platform “that takes a chance on new voices.” It is difficult to help 20-somethings “navigate a culture of renown,” but this happens when we “pursue excellence, not known-ness,” he says. Patton has certainly paved the way to help the SAU community continue to tell the stories that need to be told.

*Metts was the chair of the Communication Department from 1997 to 2009.*



PUTTING YOUR FAITH  
TO THE TEST

TEST OF RIGHT BELIEF I JOHN 5:1  
TEST OF CONFESSION 2:23  
TEST OF RIGHTeous COND 2:29  
TEST OF LOVE 3:14  
TEST OF FRUIT MATT 5:1  
TEST OF \_\_\_\_\_ ROM 8:1  
TEST OF \_\_\_\_\_

# A LEGACY OF FAITH: RON KOPICKO

By Brian Kono, Ph.D.  
Chaplain





"God's method is people, and He meets them at the place of their purpose!" This statement is not only the refrain Reverend **Ron Kopicko '77** shared in many of his messages – it was the chorus of his life and legacy while he served for over 38 years at SAU.

After graduating from Spring Arbor College with a degree in elementary education, and while working at a local school, Kopicko heard a message by Hudson Taylor's grandson with the theme of being sent. In Ron's words, "I never recovered." In the summer of 1980, he came to **Uncle Dunk (Verdon Dunckel HS '10)**, Spring Arbor College Chaplain, and **Pastor John Hendricks**, and the school and Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church worked out a joint agreement to fund a position titled "Director of Student Discipleship Coordinator."

Through the years, Kopicko's position adapted with the changes in Christian education, the ebb and flow of the Jackson community and the college's leadership as it transitioned into a university. He added to his title "Ministries Director" and then transitioned to the role of Assistant Dean of Students and Residence Life before finally settling into the role of full-time Chaplain in 1993. From training and leading resident directors and creating the professor assistant position with **Dr. Kim (Austin '90) Hayworth** to leading spring break mission trips (he led over 22 of them), his influence shaped the programmatic life of staff and students throughout his tenure. His vision for Chapel is a distinguishing mark in his legacy of Spring Arbor's spiritual life. With student-led worship and messages delivered with Jesus as the perspective for life, Kopicko's goal was that every student would leave with the attitude, "I'm glad I didn't miss that Chapel."

There is no way to measure the impact Ron has had in shaping the community life of Spring Arbor. One of his favorite life axioms was shared by Howard Hendricks; "You can impress people from a distance, but you can only impact them up close." Ron took this to heart through a ministry of mentoring young men and women. For nearly four decades Ron has met with students individually and has seen the circle close as he was privileged to meet with children of his former mentees. In his half-hour sessions, he shared Godly wisdom from Scripture with keen insight that left students feeling like he could read their minds, and their hearts.

His own teaching ministry was spread across the whole of Spring Arbor's community as he trained student leaders, led devotions for board meetings and faculty and staff gatherings, preached messages on campus and in camps across the country, challenged students at the Montana Young Leaders Institute for Student Athletes, shared "Cookies, Questions and Kopicko" nights on residence hall floors and taught Sunday school at his church. But nothing captures the love Ron has for the Scripture like his creation of the Wednesday night gathering called DEEPER ("By the Book" in the '80s and '90s). With Bible in hand, and copious amounts of Scripture memorized, he challenged students toward deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and one another, helping them realize their worth and purpose in living life by the book.

In honor of this legacy, and to reinforce Jesus as the perspective for learning and life, SAU has created a "Freshmen Class Bible Project." This fund will be the resource for purchasing a study Bible for all future incoming traditional campus freshmen. Along with the affirmation of the university's Concept, this gift will contribute to the ongoing campus discipleship effort, paying forward the study of the Word modeled by Chaplain Ron.

During Homecoming this fall, SAU invites alumni and community members to join us for a thank you celebration. The event will be held on Saturday, Sept. 28 at 3 p.m. in the Cougar Den, located on the lower level of the Student Life Center. Please put this on your calendar and plan to come share Ron's impact on your life. If your life has been impacted by Ron, visit [arbor.givingfuel.com/freshmanbibles](http://arbor.givingfuel.com/freshmanbibles) to make a gift in honor of Ron's retirement.

**GOD'S METHOD  
IS PEOPLE, AND HE  
MEETS THEM AT THE  
PLACE OF THEIR  
PURPOSE.**

SPARKING EXCITEMENT: INTRODUCING

# ELECT- RICAL

ENGINEERING AT SAU

BY BETH LANDIS



After two exciting years of planning and preparation, Spring Arbor University launched the electrical engineering program in the fall of 2019. The addition of this major goes beyond just responding to the industry demand for engineers; it speaks to The Concept, SAU's mission statement, that calls its community of learners to be critical participants in the contemporary world. In order for SAU to continue to engage the world, it must equip its students to influence and shape all facets of the world, including new areas of work and study.

Strengthening and developing new academic programs like electrical engineering will help to fulfill SAU's four-year Strategic Plan to create Master Learners, Vibrant Christians and Global Participants. In the Strategic Plan, SAU President **Dr. Brent Ellis** and academic leadership have prioritized growth within the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Launching electrical engineering is one of the initial steps in a comprehensive plan to improve academic offerings that will have a long-lasting impact on SAU students and graduates.

The four-year electrical engineering program is distinguished by the unique academic environment provided by SAU as well as the leadership spearheading the program. Engineering students will be stretched academically in this technical program and equipped for employment as they learn within a strong, hands-on environment that will move them quickly from theory to designing and creating. In keeping with SAU's academic strengths, students in this program will benefit from smaller class sizes with high levels of engagement with faculty, a strong foundation in the liberal arts, classroom integration of faith and learning and an international Cross Cultural Studies requirement. Students will work on 3-D printers, state-of-the-art design programs and brand-new laboratory equipment that graduates will go on to use in their careers.

IN ORDER FOR  
SAU TO CONTINUE  
TO ENGAGE THE  
WORLD, IT MUST  
EQUIP ITS STUDENTS  
TO INFLUENCE AND  
SHAPE ALL FACETS  
OF THE WORLD.



## DR. RONALD DELAP



With the new engineering major comes the introduction of a new Department of Engineering, of which **Dr. Ronald DeLap** will serve as chair. DeLap also serves as the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. He comes to SAU with an extensive background as a practicing engineer and as a leader of highly successful university-level engineering programs.

DeLap exhibits energy and commitment in every interaction. With this energy driving him, DeLap will utilize his 40 years of combined practice to shape and mentor each student. DeLap's experience includes roles as a technical electrician, working in the Air Force designing satellite radio systems and control systems for fighter planes, serving in the mission field in the Dominican Republic and working in the automotive industry at Delphi. Prior to coming to SAU, DeLap served at LeTourneau University in Texas, as the Dean of the School of Engineering & Engineering Technology. During his time at LeTourneau, DeLap helped grow the undergraduate programs by 30 percent, increased their U.S. News and World Report ranking from 79 to 31 and significantly increased funded research.

DeLap has a profound confidence that leaves those around him excited for what the future holds. He is assured that engineering students at SAU will excel. Given the small class size, faculty members will have the opportunity to know their students well and become directly involved with the learning process. "Research shows that a better engineering program will come from a small program that is focused primarily on the undergraduate degree. We are a liberal arts university, and students will have a much broader education than

someone at a technical school," says DeLap. "Students will be successful in leadership roles as they are asked to lead and manage diverse teams."

DeLap is eager and excited to help jump-start engineering at SAU. However, what most excites him is equipping students to be critical participants in the contemporary world. "Engineers build things that affect people's lives in profound ways; they have the privilege and responsibility of developing and keeping God's creation," he says. "Our engineering students will have a unique, God-given calling to serve in ways that address the brokenness of a fallen world. We have designed our program from the ground up so that SAU students will acquire the technical skills needed to be outstanding engineers while developing a mindset focused on service to God and honoring his creation."

DeLap's commitment and passion for this program is evident as he engages with families and students interested in engineering at SAU. DeLap says he is looking for pioneers—students with the drive and passion to blaze a new trail with him at SAU. "I'm looking for strong candidates who will commit themselves to this endeavor. This program will be challenging, but it will also be rewarding—academically, spiritually and professionally," says DeLap.

The implementation of the electrical engineering program comes at the perfect time for students looking for jobs within engineering in Michigan and beyond: The demand for engineers in Michigan is increasing and the supply of engineers for current jobs is declining. According to General

Motors VP Mark Reuss, the U.S. suffers labor shortages in STEM fields. The U.S. Labor Bureau of Statistics states that 140,000 new engineering jobs will be added to the labor force over the 2016-2026 decade, with Michigan positioned as the fourth-highest employer for electrical engineers.

Discussions to add the electrical engineering program began in 2017. These discussions were spearheaded by **Dr. Carol Green**, Vice President for Academic Affairs. Green joined the university in 2017 and has sought to innovate how SAU offers programs and refine processes to support students and grow program offerings to meet the demands of employers.





# I WANT TO GRADUATE ENGINEERS WHO ANYONE IN THE INDUSTRY WOULD BE EXCITED TO HIRE, AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FOR HIS GLORY.

"We are excited to have engineering as an option for our students. The program has been developed to join engineering expertise with our excellence in the liberal arts, which should result in engineers with an incredibly strong mix of technical and interpersonal skills," says Green.

"We have seen interest in engineering increase over the past five years. To continue meeting the needs of college-bound students, we must continually evaluate our major offerings and ensure that we have broad and diverse curricular programming that appeals to students in many different areas. We are excited to feature engineering as the most recent addition and look forward to continued growth in the coming years," says **Jon Bahr**, Vice President of Enrollment and Marketing.

The addition of the electrical engineering program will benefit the SAU community as well as the surrounding community. Through his experience in teaching engineering, DeLap has noted that engineering students are often musically and artistically inclined. "The liberal arts focus at SAU will allow engineering students to participate in a wide variety of cocurricular and extracurricular activities within

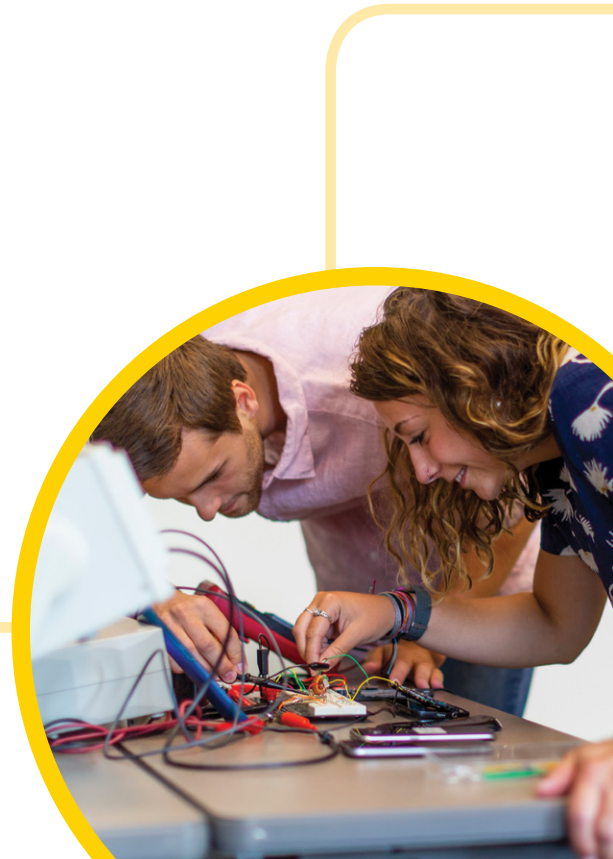
art and music," DeLap says. In addition to this, DeLap has hopes to connect engineering students with surrounding high school robotics teams for mentorship opportunities.

Upon graduation, electrical engineering students at SAU will be prepared to enter the workforce with the skills, knowledge and creativity they'll need to succeed in their high-demand profession. During their courses, they will learn to design, build, maintain and improve devices that meet industry needs and positively impact society and the broader creation.

DeLap has hired engineers in the past and has designed this program based on his own experiences with new graduates. "I want to graduate engineers who are ready to go to work on day one, because they already have deep technical knowledge coupled with strong hands-on design-build experience. The advantage of a great liberal arts backbone will mean our graduates will communicate well and will have a broad, faith-based worldview. I want to graduate engineers who anyone in the industry would be excited to hire, and that is exactly what we are going to do, by the grace of God and for his glory," says DeLap.

In the fall of 2018, SAU began the process of seeking accreditation for the new engineering program from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). On April 15, the HLC approved SAU's request to offer an electrical engineering major as an accredited institute of higher education, effectively adding the program to the broader 10-year accreditation SAU received from the HLC in 2018.

The SAU engineering program is constructed around a curriculum that will qualify for application for accreditation by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). SAU intends to apply for ABET accreditation for the Bachelor of Science in Engineering program at the first available opportunity, once the first class of SAU engineering students graduates in 2023. Given that DeLap has successfully led five ABET accreditation efforts throughout his career, electrical engineering at SAU is in good hands.









IN A WORLD TRANSFORMED BY THE LOVE OF A REDEEMING SAVIOR, there's no such thing as an ordinary life. Yet so many settle for one. At Spring Arbor University, we consider every life extraordinary in the light of eternity. And we bring those lives to light by uncovering the unique, God-given gifts each student brings to our college community. Gifts that may have gone undiscovered are honed and refined through an education focused not just on the mind, but on the whole person. Because a Spring Arbor University education is about more than a degree. It's about a mission. One that brings the light of Christ into our jobs, our communities, our families and every realm of life. Spring Arbor graduates navigate the world boldly, as intellectually confident lifelong learners, vibrant Christians and global participants. Living lives modeled on the extraordinary example of Christ, they aim not to get ahead, but to lift others up. Illuminating better possibilities for a world in need.

LET YOUR *light* SHINE

Discover more at  
*[arbor.edu](http://arbor.edu)*.





SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY  
**Homecoming** 2019  
SEPTEMBER 26-28

It's always great to have family back together! Whether you're a professional studies, online or Spring Arbor campus graduate, a parent of a student or a partner in the community, Homecoming is for you! We have another great lineup of events for all ages at Homecoming 2019. Join us Sept. 26-28!

## **ATHLETIC EVENTS** **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

### **BASEBALL ALUMNI GAME**

Burbridge Field • 10 a.m.

### **SOFTBALL FIELD RENOVATION DEDICATION**

Softball Field • 10:15 a.m.

### **SOFTBALL ALUMNI GAME**

Softball Field • 11 a.m.

### **MEN'S BASKETBALL ALUMNI GAME**

McDonald Athletic Center • 11 a.m.

### **VARSITY VOLLEYBALL VS. ST. FRANCIS**

McDonald Athletic Center • 3 p.m.

The dance team will perform before the game.

### **TENNIS PRO-AM**

Jones Tennis Complex • 3 p.m.

### **MEN'S VARSITY SOCCER VS. ST. FRANCIS**

Soccer Complex • 4 p.m.

The cheer team will perform before the game.

### **MEN'S BASKETBALL ALUMNI GAME**

McDonald Athletic Center • 5:30 p.m.

## **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

### **Class of 1969 Anniversary Dinner**

Student Life Center: Ralph Carey Forum | 6 p.m.

\$15 per person. Reservations required by Sept. 18.

## **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

### **SAU Campus Store**

Student Life Center: Main Level | 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Enjoy a 10% alumni discount on all retail items.

### **Homecoming Chapel**

Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church: Auditorium | 10:05 – 11 a.m.

**Ron Kopicko '77** will speak. Chapel Band will feature a mix of alumni and students.

### **E.P. Hart Luncheon**

Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church: Fellowship Hall | 11:30 a.m.

All classes 1969 and prior are invited to attend.

\$12 per person. Reservations required by Sept. 18.

### **Alumni Awards Banquet**

Commonwealth Commerce Center, Jackson, Michigan | 6 p.m.

\$18 per person. Reservations required by Sept. 18.

### **Theatrical Production**

White Auditorium | 8 p.m.

**Dr. Paul Patton '74** will present "Meeting in Newburgh."

### **Cougar Madness**

McDonald Athletic Center | 10 p.m.

Introductions of the men's and women's basketball teams, skills competition, three-point shootout, slam dunk competition, crowd games, prizes and free popcorn and cotton candy.



# SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

## Registration, Plaza Activities and Cougar Kids' Carnival

University Plaza | 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Come see us when you first arrive! Pick up a campus map and schedule of the day's events, and enter to win a free gift! Food trucks will be available for lunch. Kids' activities include inflatables, sidewalk chalk, balloon art and lawn games.

## Sacred Grounds Coffee Shop

White Library | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Enjoy a 10% discount on drinks.

## SAU Campus Store

Student Life Center: Main Level | 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Enjoy a 10% alumni discount on all retail items.

## 5K Run, 2-Mile Walk and Kids' Fun Run

McKenna Carillon Tower | 9 a.m.  
\$5 per person - includes a 5K T-shirt; Kids' Fun Run is free. Race registrations will be accepted on race day.

## Craft & Vendor Fair

University Plaza | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Take home something truly unique and support fellow alumni and community members in their small businesses.

## Ganton Art Gallery

10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Browse a M.F.A. Exhibition by art lecturer **Brianne Witt '12**.

## Class of 2009 10-Year Reunion

Student Life Center: Ralph Carey Forum  
10 - 11:30 a.m.  
\$10 per person - includes brunch.  
Reservations required by Sept. 18.

## Networking Fair Hosted by Gainey School of Business

Poling Center Lobby | 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Open to alumni, students and community members from all majors and fields. Connect with professionals from a variety of industries, hone your networking skills and have your professional headshot taken free of charge. Meet representatives from General Motors, the State of Michigan, Auto-Owners Insurance, American 1 Credit Union and many other organizations.

## Food Trucks

University Plaza | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Grab some lunch at the food trucks and enjoy the various festivities taking place on the plaza!

## Science Super Powers

Whiteman-Gibbs Science Center | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Hands-on science demonstrations for the whole family.

## Cross Cultural Reunion

Student Life Center: Aspen Room | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Anyone who has been part of SAU's Cross Cultural programs are invited to this come-and-go reception. Enjoy cuisine from Asia. **Diane (Harris '74) Kurtz**, Director of CCS, and other various staff and faculty will join the celebration.

## Beebe Plaza Dedication

Front lawn of Poling Center | 11 a.m.  
Join us as we honor SAU's 27th President **Gayle D. Beebe** whose innovative and entrepreneurial leadership coupled with a servants heart will be celebrated.

## Theatrical Production

White Auditorium | 12:30 p.m.  
**Dr. Paul Patton '74** will present "Meeting in Newburgh."

## Class of 1979 40-Year Reunion

Student Life Center: Ralph Carey Forum | 1-3 p.m.  
\$12 per person - includes lunch.  
Reservations required by Sept. 18.

## Memory, Place and Mom Jeans: The Right Place of Nostalgia

White Library: Lower Level | 1:15 - 2 p.m.  
It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. Come hear English professors talk about "the right use of nostalgia" at this discussion panel.



## Wellspring/Common Bond Reunion

Music Department Band Room | 1:30 p.m.

## Music Department Showcase

White Auditorium | 2 - 3 p.m.

## Ron Kopicko Celebration Event

Cougar Den | 3 - 4 p.m.  
We will be honoring the nearly 39-year ministry of Chaplain **Ron Kopicko '77**. His influence through By the Book, DEEPER, mission trips, Spiritual Life Retreat, CORE 100, Chapel and Chapel Band impacted countless students and members of our community. Join us in celebrating his life's work as we send him into the next phase of serving the Lord.

## Pack Out the Prop Shop

With **Paul Patton '74** and **Jen Letherer**  
Prop Shop | 8 p.m.  
Friends, fellow actors and theater folks, join in the celebration of the Drama Program! This event is a time to celebrate where we've been and where we are and look forward to where we are going! There will be pictures and posters from previous productions, guest speakers, songs and a chance to reconnect with theater friends and faculty.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS!

Thank you for the ways you've impacted the SAU community and the places where you serve. You model what it looks like to live out the SAU Concept, both locally and globally!

To view full bios on all of our recipients, visit [arbor.edu/awards](http://arbor.edu/awards).



## ALUMNA OF THE YEAR BETH HABECKER '87

Program: Chemistry, Biology  
Profession: Professor of Physiology and Pharmacology at Oregon Health and Science University

*"Beth is an incredible person who transparently lives out her faith and is honest, ethical and forthright with everyone she interacts with. She is brilliant, industrious, compassionate and faithfully lives out the SAU Concept every day."*

- Carol (Atkinson '81) Stephenson



## CONCEPT IN ACTION ERIN COUCH '19

Program: Drama  
Profession: Teacher's Aide, ABC Academy

*"Erin is wise well beyond her years. She can see the big picture but also cares about the details. She respects leadership but also knows when to lean in and ask the hard questions. She cares deeply for the marginalized and puts others before herself. She's both a leader and a listener, and that's what The Concept is all about."*

- Bekah (Barr '13) Zraik



## LEROY M. LOWELL AWARD CANDY ROBINSON '14

Program: Master of Arts in Counseling  
Profession: Academic Advisor at SAU

*"Candy lives out The Concept and her faith shines through with a brilliant light. She uplifts people and understands how to transfer the strength of her Christian faith to others in their time of need. She has provided outstanding contributions to the educational ministry of Spring Arbor University through her work with her students."*

- Marie May '00, '04



## FAITHFUL SERVANT GLORIA (GOOD) JOHNSON '74

Program: Psychology  
Profession: Eastern Michigan Church of the Nazarene Clergy

*"Gloria has been a faithful pastor's wife for over 20 years, graciously doing any job—many that no one else would do. She has served faithfully in four different churches, without regard to whether or not her efforts were ever recognized. Gloria has also voluntarily served as District Statistician for the Northwest Ohio District for 13 years, as well as on multiple boards. She is an amazing example of selfless service through being a loving wife and is very deserving of this award."*

- Timothy Johnson



## YOUNG LEADER JORDAN KENNEDY '12

Program: Advertising and Public Relations  
Profession: Manager of Communications and Community Outreach at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

*"Jordan has an incredible love for others and will do anything she can to help out those in her church, family and community – as evidenced by her many professional achievements. When she worked with Governor Snyder, Jordan partnered with Michigan's First Lady to host a summit on ending campus sexual assault, with over 500 people in attendance. Her passion and dedication to her faith and family is second to none."*

- Cassandra Oppen '13



## PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE TODD TIBBITS '91

Program: Exercise & Sport Science  
Profession: President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte, North Carolina

*"As a friend, I am so impressed, but not surprised, by the enormous success Todd is having with the YMCA. His ability to influence people has always been a part of his character, yet his professional excellence comes from his ability to lead leaders. Todd is a glowing example of what we can become when we allow God to truly influence and direct our futures. I am proud of my teammate, roommate and friend, not only for earning this recognition, but for being the influencer he is in today's world."*

- Larry DeSimpelare '91



## You are cordially invited to join us in celebrating our outstanding recipients!

Join us **Friday, Sept. 27**, for the Alumni Awards Banquet at the Commonwealth Commerce Center in Jackson, Michigan. RSVP by Sept. 18 at [arbor.edu/homecoming](http://arbor.edu/homecoming). Cost is \$18 per person. Submit your words of congratulations to be compiled and shared with each recipient by emailing [alumni@arbor.edu](mailto:alumni@arbor.edu) or by mail at Spring Arbor University, Office of Alumni Relations, 106 E. Main St, Spring Arbor, MI 49283.

The nomination process for our 2020 award candidates is now open. We need your help to identify and celebrate our exceptional alumni! Please take a moment to nominate someone for consideration as a future alumni award recipient. Visit [arbor.edu/nominate](http://arbor.edu/nominate) or email [alumni@arbor.edu](mailto:alumni@arbor.edu) to nominate your candidate(s).

## SAU GLOBAL LAUNCHES STUDENT COACHING SERVICE

Last fall, SAU Global piloted a new personalized coaching service for the working adults who were pursuing a degree at one of the institution's sites around Michigan or through the virtual classroom modality. Students were offered the chance to meet regularly with a success coach to set personal, professional and academic goals, and the coaches also helped students find valuable resources when they needed them.

Based on the strong initial response to the program, the coaching service was rolled out to all virtual classroom and site-based students this last spring, and students have already experienced the benefits:

"My coaching through SAU has been a great experience! My awareness of who I am and what my future holds has been positively awakened. This coaching offers SAU students like me spiritual guidance, friendly advice and recognition. As an older student, I had insecurities about entering the college arena and attaining my seemingly unreachable career goals. My coach offered me professional and enlightening guidance that inspired me to reflect on and strive for endless possibilities. Having someone believe in you can transform you to reach for the stars!"

Tara Bard, *Class of 2020*



"Everyone needs a person in their corner. My career coach, Tom, has been that person. He has challenged me to think about what my true passions are what my academic and career goals are, and how I can accomplish those goals. These short sessions provide a safe place to focus on my priorities so that I can think, process and deal with potential obstacles. Most of all, these sessions provide accountability. I know that there will be someone questioning me and challenging me to take steps in the right direction."

Cynthia Cortez, *Class of 2021*



If you know a student who is interested in learning more about receiving coaching through Spring Arbor University or enrolling in one of our accelerated degree programs (such as business, management, social work or counseling), contact [SAUadmissions@arbor.edu](mailto:SAUadmissions@arbor.edu) or visit [arbor.edu/coaching](http://arbor.edu/coaching).

# UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

## NEW YORK CITY THEATRE EXCURSION **SOLD OUT**

Thursday, Sept. 12 - Sunday, Sept. 15  
Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers

## HOMECOMING WEEKEND

Thursday, Sept. 26 - Saturday, Sept. 28  
Spring Arbor campus

## FALL COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, Nov. 16  
10 a.m.  
McDonald Athletic Center

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

Friday, Dec. 6  
Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church

## LAKELAND ALUMNI & FRIENDS REUNION

Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020  
Light & Life Park, Hood Hall  
Lakeland, Florida  
(RSVP required)

## 6TH ANNUAL "AN EVENING AT THE ARBOR" COMMUNITY GALA

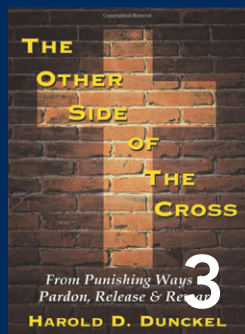
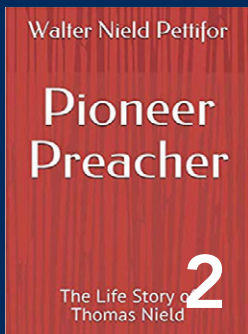
Friday, May 1  
McDonald Athletic Center

Visit [arbor.edu/alumni](http://arbor.edu/alumni) for more details and to RSVP for SAU alumni excursions and events.

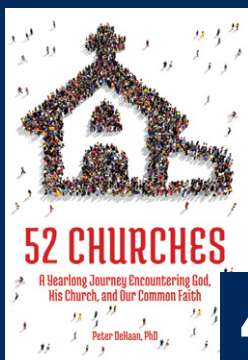
# ALUMNI TODAY



**1938** Ruth (Siefken HS '36, JC '38) Weiman celebrated her 100th birthday on Feb. 22. The following day her family held a celebration with many guests from her community and church in attendance. Ruth's daughter, **Marilyn Goodrich '97**, says that into her 90s her mother was still walking over a mile every day and doing pushups. Ruth loves reading the Scriptures and spending time with family and friends. She resides in Parma, Michigan. [1]



**1955** Walter Pettifor JC '55 published "Pioneer Preacher" in January. It is a creative telling of the history and legacy of Thomas Nield, designed to show the character, temperament and personality of the pioneer preacher. [2]



**1963** Harold Dunckel JC '63 recently published "The Other Side of the Cross," which examines the elementary things that hinder one's life with God so they may be removed and God's fullest life for us may be experienced. Harold resides in Jackson, Michigan. [3]

**1990** Peter DeHaan '90, Ph.D. published his fourth book, "52 Churches," in December 2018. Peter and his wife, Candy, spent a year visiting a different Christian church every Sunday—Protestant, evangelical, charismatic, Roman Catholic and more. "52 Churches" is their story of encouragement to embrace all branches of Jesus' church. Peter and Candy have two married children and four grandchildren. They reside in southwest Michigan. [4]



**1999** Mandi Bolton '99 was named Vice President for Finance and Administration of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities. She resides in Alexandria, Virginia. [5]

**2002** Matthew '02 and Mandalyn (Odenbaugh '03) Keeler are celebrating 14 years of marriage. They welcomed their third child, Benen Thome, on March 26. Benen joins his big sister, Marin (9) and big brother, Westry (6). The Keelers reside in Grand Haven, Michigan. [6]

**2003** Dana (Stephenson '03) Van Sumeren was named as a finalist in the annual National Heritage Academies Excellence in Teaching competition in March. She currently teaches at Paragon Charter Academy in Jackson and is making an incredible impact on the lives of students in the area. Dana resides in Jackson, Michigan. [7]

**2004** Dan Siefken '04 has recently been appointed as Director of the Latin American Studies Program in San Jose, Costa Rica. After completing the Latin American Studies Program in 2004, he spent 14 years in Christian higher education and study abroad administration. Dan and his wife, Maria, welcomed their son, Matias, in June of 2018. [8]





## IN MEMORIAM

**2006** Sarah (Hoffman '06) and Igor Kuzmenko '06 opened the franchise Christian Brothers Automotive-Lititz, an automotive repair shop in Lititz, Pennsylvania, in October 2017. Sarah also earned an additional degree in Early Childhood Education and mentors inner-city teachers in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. They have two children, Nikolas (10) and Oksana (8).

**2010** Tiffany (Coston '10) and Paul Adema '11 welcomed a son, Rudy William, on April 26. Tiffany is a high school English teacher at Northwest High School in Jackson, Michigan, and Paul is an Account Manager at Dart Container. They reside in Jackson, Michigan. [10]

**2012** Alyson (Harper '12) and Kreg Bawks '12, '17 welcomed a son, Malachi Edward, on Feb. 12. They both work at Auto-Owners Insurance, Kreg as a senior actuarial analyst and Alyson as a quality analyst. They reside in Bath, Michigan. [11]

Jacob Boone '12 started a new position as a coach and biology teacher at Mt. Abram Regional High School in Maine. He resides in Old Town, Maine.

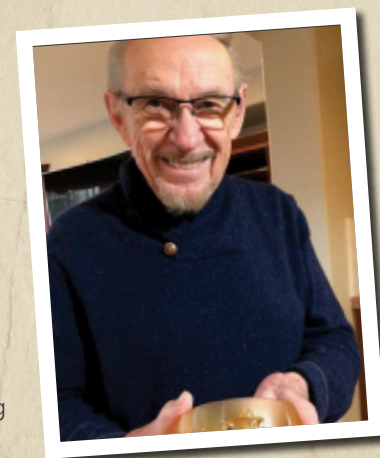
**2014** Canena (Hill '14, '18) Adams presented as the closing keynote speaker for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Grantee Conference in June. The conference provides onsite training, technical assistance and networking opportunities to 600 representatives from over 150 grantee organizations. Canena is the Founder and Executive Director of Women of Worth, Inc. She resides in Jackson, Michigan.

**2015** Garrett and Ariel (Moldenhauer '15) Leckliter welcomed a daughter, Winry Beth, on Oct. 17, 2018. They reside in Rochester Hills, Michigan.

**LOWELL NOBLE** of Riceville, Iowa, passed away on May 15 at the age of 92. Lowell served as an Associate Professor of Sociology for 25 years from 1969 to 1994. He is survived by his wife, Dorine (Dixie). Just before beginning his tenure at Spring Arbor around the time of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, Lowell decided to commit his career to biblical social justice, focusing on the release of the oppressed. For the next 50 years, he studied and applied biblical teaching on oppression and justice while living in interracial communities in Jackson, Michigan, and Jackson, Mississippi. He self-published three books: "Naked and Not Ashamed, Sociotheology", and "From Oppression to Jubilee Justice." Lowell served on the boards at Rural Haiti Development and Christian Community Development and was a member of the NAACP Executive Council. He held degrees from Seattle Pacific College, Wheaton College, and Hartford Theological Seminary.



**PAUL WOLBER** of Lansing, Michigan, passed away on June 13 at the age of 83. Paul served as Professor of Art from 1976 to 2003. Over the years his painting style evolved from abstract expressionism to vivid realist style, with the subject matter of landscape, nature and wildlife. His paintings have been included in well over 100 local, regional and national exhibitions, as well as within museums and private collections around the world. During his tenure at Spring Arbor, Paul helped to build a quality art program that was considered #1 among Christian colleges and one of the best among small colleges. He started one of the first private art departments in the state and began the graphic design program, which remains, to this day, under the leadership of his former students. Paul also taught internationally in China, Italy and several places in Western Europe. Paul will be remembered as a strong teacher who produced quality students who teach and work around the world.



Michindoh offers an excellent, Christ-centered environment for retreats, camps and reunions. Modern conference facilities, fully equipped with audio/visual systems, offer meeting areas for groups of 7 to 700. Full-service dining served buffet-style, heated and air-conditioned accommodations and multiple facilitated recreation options make planning a comfortable and exciting retreat a breeze.

Weekend packages this fall and spring are available for as low as an all-inclusive price of \$99/person (priced at two nights and four meals). Save 20% from regular rates for reservations between Thanksgiving and mid-January. Prime summer space available June 5-15, 2020.

## MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT RETREAT

March 6-8, 2020

The Enrichment Retreat focuses on encouraging married couples. Biblical teaching, worship, romantic moments and exciting recreation combine to make a fantastic weekend. Registration forms available at [www.michindoh.com](http://www.michindoh.com).

Need assistance planning your event? We have professional and knowledgeable event planners who are ready to assist. For more information, contact Michindoh Reservations at 517.523.3616 or [reservations@michindoh.com](mailto:reservations@michindoh.com).

**Chester Baker JC '40** of Spring Arbor passed away on Jan. 28. He was 100.

**Andrea Cummins (2017-19)** of Montpelier, Ohio, passed away on June 5 at the age of 46. She was working as a nurse at Henry County Hospital and was a master's student in Spring Arbor's nurse practitioner program. Having spent nearly 30 years in healthcare, she was passionate about caring for people. She enjoyed baking, especially creating specialty cakes, and making floral arrangements. Andrea is survived by her husband, Christopher, and her son, Kaden.

**Paul Davis '86** of St. Louis, Michigan, passed away on Jan. 16. He was 55. Paul served as a pastor within the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church. He is survived by his wife, **Cheryl (Jewell '86)**; daughter, **Joanna '12**; sons, **Michael '14 (Rebecka [Pardee '15])** and Stephen; and one grandson.

**David Gehrls '69** of Omaha, Nebraska, passed away on March 25. He was 71. Dave pastored several churches in both the Nazarene and Free Methodist denominations. His love of wilderness camping and ministry fused through over 40 years of taking kids on extended canoe trips. He was certified as an EMT-D and was among the first group of EMT responders in Iowa to be trained in cardiac defibrillation, working 18 years on the local ambulance service while he planted a church. Dave was preceded in death by his first daughter, Renee. He is survived by his wife of nearly 50 years, **Sheryl (Howison '70)**; son, Matthew; daughters Amy and Sandra; and nine grandchildren.

**Mary (Lowell HS '34, JC '36) Richardson** of Columbia, Missouri, passed away on May 20. She was 100. Mary was the daughter of **LeRoy Lowell**, who served as President of Spring Arbor University from 1935-44 and 1955-57. Lowell Hall bears his name as one of the ways to honor his memory and contribution to the university. During World War II, Mary worked as a statistical typist in Detroit, Michigan. Later, her life was dedicated to raising her family and serving alongside her husband, **Glenn HS '35, JC '38**, during his career as President of Greenville University

in Illinois. Both she and her husband were passionate about providing opportunity and encouragement for young people to obtain college and graduate degrees, and they impacted countless lives by doing so. After Glenn passed away in 1993, Mary moved closer to family and enjoyed her last 25 years with them. She is survived by her son, Donald; daughter, Anne; two granddaughters; two great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

**Darwin Robart HS '58, JC '60** of Plant City, Florida, passed away on March 20. He was 78. Darwin served as the Executive Vice President of First Federal Savings & Loan. He is survived by his son, Craig; one grandchild; and two great-granddaughters.

**Audrey (Tjepkema JC '47) Thorsen** of Zeeland, Michigan, passed away on March 29. She was 91. Audrey worked as a nurse at Emanuel Hospital until her daughters were born, then she left the workforce to devote her skills to church and volunteer activities. She held many leadership positions within the Free Methodist Church, focusing her efforts on creating activities and events that made all people feel welcomed and included. Audrey was preceded in death by her husband, Andy. She is survived by daughters Marilyn and Karen and three grandchildren.

**Gerry Wyma '66** of Grand Ledge, Michigan, passed away on May 16. He was 77. In addition to working as chaplain for Ionia Maximum Security Prison and serving as a former pastor of several churches, he worked 13 years in the Office of Advancement at Spring Arbor University. Throughout his life, Gerry was very active in his community, serving as a high school referee, avid landscaper and diehard football fan. Gerry is preceded in death by his granddaughter, Eliana. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, **Kathleen (Eldredge '68)**; daughters, **Carrie Dashner '88 (Howard '86)** and **Amity Zenz '97 (Aaron)**; son, **Torrey '94 (Sherry)**; 11 grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

**Marjorie Yarmer JC '52** of Parma, Michigan, passed away on Feb. 2. She was 87. Marjorie impacted many lives through her 31 years as a teacher for Jackson Public Schools and teaching English as a second language in China.



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