

MY STORY



THE STORIES OF WILLIAM JESSUP UNIVERSITY

INTEGRATION OF FAITH

Mark Moore

POLE VAULTING TO AN MBA

Rachel Travis

A SEARCH FOR HEALING REVEALS OPPORTUNITY

Siena Hansen

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Blake Cox

STANDING STRONG FOR EDUCATION

Pam Castleman

MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Calvin Huckabee

WILLIAM
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ISSUE 6 | UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT



INTEGRATION OF FAITH

Mark Moore

Mark Moore is an associate professor of theology in Jessup's School of Theology and Leadership. Moore has been teaching at Jessup since the fall of 2010 and joined the full time faculty in 2019. His classes range from New Testament survey to Contemporary and Practical Theology. He has also had the privilege of teaching Jessup's freshman intro course for the last 12 years and loves being able to walk with students throughout their entire time at Jessup.

Being a pastor as well, Moore has always valued the pastoral elements of teaching at a place like Jessup. Along with teaching, Moore is also the chair of our Integration of Faith and Learning committee. He has a passion for helping faculty integrate the Christian faith into their classes and disciplines.

Moore knows that integration of faith and learning is a vital part of fulfilling the mission of Jessup, and he desires that our graduates are not only prepared for their career choice but also that they will be shaped by faith and carry that faith into their professional lives. For Moore and the committee, faith integration is the natural and intentional assimilation of Christian beliefs and practices into all dimensions of the learning process. This integration relies heavily on the personal faith of the professor and uses a Gospel worldview to frame all of life within the story

of God's redemptive work in Jesus. This integration does not just occur in the required Bible and theology courses but also in core general education classes and key classes in each major.

In order to assist the faculty, the committee offers several different support resources from continual training sessions at the beginning of each semester, faith integration lunches where faculty can brainstorm and share their techniques, to personalized coaching from trained faculty mentors. To learn more about the work of the committee, check out jessup.edu.ifl.

Moore also hosts our very own podcast, "Jessup Think," along with long-tenured history professor Rex Gurney. The podcast covers several topics within the Christian life and includes engaging interviews with some of today's top scholars and authors. Spanning three seasons, the show will reach the 100th episode milestone early this fall. The pair have interviewed authors such as Jemar Tisby, Esau McCaulley, Kelly Kapic, and Os Guinness. Be sure to check out the podcast on your favorite podcast platform.

POLE VAULTING TO AN MBA

Rachel Travis

Not many people have the guts to try pole vaulting just because it “looks” fun but that was the inspiration for Jessup’s first female pole vaulter, two-time All American, Rachel Travis. “One day, I was watching my brother at his pole vault practice and thought, ‘I’d like to try that, it looks fun.’”

The fear factor didn’t stop her from pursuing and developing her passion, even though she participated in dance in high school, not athletics. “I wasn’t scared at first because I didn’t know what to be scared of,” Travis reminisced. “As I progressed in the challenge of the sport, I had to learn to trust myself, my coaches and the Lord. I recognized that He equipped me for this and it was up to me to do the hard work.”

Travis came to Jessup as a transfer student from Folsom Lake College. She received a track and music scholarship, participated in the University Choir and Orchestra and got a job working in the Crossroads Café to help pay her way through college. “The Lord opened the door for me,” she said. “So, I committed to doing my best.”

Coached by Kent Rhodes who brings over 20 years of coaching experience to Jessup, Rhodes has served as the pole vault coach for Placer and Del Oro High Schools. In addition, he runs his own year-round pole vault training club and facility, working with vaulters of all age groups throughout Northern California. Rhodes happened to be coaching Travis’ brother the day she decided to give the high adrenaline sport a try. He agreed to coach her for the summer and that proved to be a good thing. “I really hit the jackpot when I started training with Coach Rhodes. He taught me to be a student of the sport and how to understand the physics of pole vaulting.”

Taking on the sport at 21, Travis considers being an “older” athlete an advantage and credits her dance background coupled with her strength training to have aided her to meld the grace of a gymnast with the strength of a bodybuilder, two essential qualities of pole vaulting. “It’s such a mental game and one of the only events that ends in failure every single time because you jump until you don’t make it,” Travis said. “Even on your best day, you still fail at the end. Being able to mentally handle that and trust yourself is key.”

Upon earning her degree in Theology, she enrolled in Jessup’s MBA program allowing her to continue her eligibility status for Jessup’s Track and Field team. There, she experienced several milestones, one of which was winning the conference championships. “I learned so much, but the main thing was that everybody matters. We all were pushing past what we thought we could do and learning to rely on the Lord because of it.” Travis was also one of seven athletes representing Jessup at the 2022 NAIA Outdoor Track and Field National Championships in Gulf Shores, Alabama. It was there she earned her second All American title.

“My Jessup education helped me to understand how to trust the Lord. I’ve learned to discern God’s voice which has helped me to push away fear. For me, pole vaulting is both a spiritual and physical sport.” It is also one she hopes to continue giving back to and later sees herself coaching in some capacity.

Travis is currently utilizing her MBA and works with a national company’s ecommerce and sales division to help transition more customers to online platforms.



A SEARCH FOR HEALING REVEALS OPPORTUNITY

Siena Hansen



When Siena Hansen enrolled at Jessup, she was in search of healing. “I started college when I was just 16 years old. Coming from a broken home, I was facing emotional and physical challenges that led me to seek out a university environment that offered a safe space where I knew God was at the center,” she said.

Hansen was introduced to Jessup by a University Choir and Orchestra performance at her church. She later attended Preview Day where she met English Department Chair, Cameron Wilson. “Even though I wasn’t his student, he sat and talked with me for nearly an hour and gave me some amazing advice. That conversation made me feel known and showed me the opportunity for mentorship and connection at Jessup.” In 2019, she applied for Jessup’s Scholar Award and was later presented with the full-ride academic merit scholarship.

It was during her sophomore year that she experienced the benefits of the progress she made and started focusing on goals and ambition. “God equipped me with just what I needed and I started to work hard toward my goals. I found a community of people who genuinely cared about me and poured into me both academically and spiritually.”

Hansen is a gifted writer who enjoys the craft and considers it a powerful tool for communicating. “I noticed early on that people listen when you write and communicate well,” the senior said. Based on the opportunities she has secured while at Jessup, she is definitely a talented communicator.

Last year Hansen had an internship writing for the City of Rocklin, where she ran social media accounts, oversaw web analytics, prepared for council meetings, and kept busy reporting community and governmental news.

This year, she interned as a technical writer at Intel working 20 to 25 hours per week while taking 20 units. During the summer, she logged 40 hours per week. At Intel, the world’s largest semiconductor chip manufacturer by revenue, Hansen is part of the Technology Collateral Enablement Group bridging the communication gap between engineers and users. “Intel has given me the opportunity to take things into my own hands. I’ve been given freedom and responsibility, and am treated as an equal and part of a team that could incur millions of dollars of loss should there be a mistake. I’m learning things I can’t learn in school which has greatly increased my skills and confidence.”

She also happens to be a double major in English with a professional writing concentration. She added a Digital Communication and Design major last year after taking “New Media Technology and Society,” a course in the major that sparked her interest.

This fall, Hansen begins her senior year studying abroad at Oxford. There she will have the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of legendary literary figures such as Jane Austen and C.S. Lewis. The program will hone her research skills, writing ability, and prose. When she returns to Jessup in the spring, she will complete two capstone projects for each of her majors. Upon graduation, Hansen hopes to obtain full time employment with Intel with plans to attend law school in the near future.

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Blake Cox



It's all about relationships. We hear that sentiment time and again throughout the legacy of William Jessup University. "We adhere closely with our mission statement that reminds us we operate, 'In partnership with the Church,'" said Jessup's Director of Church Relations, Jim Jessup. Over the years, he continues to build relationships with over 800 churches, particularly those who may need help from Jessup students to fill the gaps when in need of guest preachers or worship teams.

Alumnus Blake Cox was one of those student preachers who came alongside partner church Greenville Southern Baptist Church. The church needed a guest preacher and as a Christian Leadership major and Monday night chapel coordinator, Cox rose to the occasion. In fact, he continued to build relationships with the church and came back to preach four or five times while he was a student. He remains closely tied to Greenville church today. "The church has a special place in my heart," Cox said.

Cox came to Jessup as a transfer student from Sierra College back in 2017. "Honestly, I was scared off by the words "private university" because I thought that represented an education I couldn't afford," the current high school pastor at Christ Community Church in Carmichael said. "The interesting thing is that with all of the scholarship aid I received, I don't carry any college tuition debt whatsoever."

He credits his Jessup education with providing him a solid biblical foundation. "Jessup gave me a good

understanding of theology," he said. "That helped set me up for success."

Last summer as the Dixie Fire ravaged much of Northeast California, Cox attended a staff meeting at his church to discuss financially assisting churches impacted by the devastating fire. Because he still kept in contact with Greenville Southern Baptist Church, Cox knew the fire destroyed a large portion of the town of Greenville, including the church's fellowship hall and youth building. Although most of the congregation experienced tremendous loss, remarkably, the church itself remained standing.

"After the meeting, I explained to our executive pastor that I have a personal relationship with a church that was severely impacted by these fires and suggested Christ Community Church support Greenville. Last summer we were able to give \$25K to Greenville which they distributed to their members to help pay bills and make ends meet during a challenging time," Cox said. "Praise God, this year we were able to raise another \$25K allocated to rebuilding the facilities. Last spring, I presented the check in person to their senior pastor who was in awe of the gift."

It is incredible to see how God works. Cox put it this way, "Relationships you built years ago are often intended for something that is coming. Because of Jessup giving me the opportunity to preach at Greenville, it allowed Christ Community Church to partner with them. God connected those dots. This is a perfect example of the Church serving one another and I am honored to be a part of that!"

STANDING STRONG FOR EDUCATION

Pam Castleman

If there's one way to describe the Jessup School of Education's new Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Pam Castleman, it's that she stands up for her convictions. That translates to doing what is best for families and the education children receive.

Originally from Southwest Arkansas, Castleman made her way to Texas where she taught social sciences and coached cheerleaders. Attracted to the latest innovations in education, Castleman relocated to California where she initially served as assistant principal and summer school principal for 12 years until she was promoted to Coordinator of Curriculum and Assessment for the Simi Valley Unified School District.

Later, she accepted the position of Director of Continuing Education for the Ventura County Office of Education and eventually wrote bill analysis for the Governor while a Program Consultant for the State Board of Education, California's K-12 policy-making body for academic standards, curriculum, instructional materials, assessments and accountability. "I've worked at a variety of levels in education. From the district, county, state and now post-secondary," Castleman said. "Jessup is my happy place, it truly makes my heart happy to support those in the education arena who are doing great things for kids."

Initially led to Jessup over two years ago in an adjunct teaching role, Castleman's vision and purpose aligned with the mission of the growing university. "One of the things I like best is that Jessup equips servant leaders in all facets. Our academics prepare students from the classroom to the boardroom and we are able to support students spiritually. It's a win-win," she said.

In her new role, she oversees the rebuilding of online graduate course development to align with the forthcoming Ed.D. doctoral program slated for fall 2023. "We continue to deliver robust online programs that allow working professionals to advance. We have a teacher and administrative shortage in our state, so education is key," she said. "Most importantly, we need Christian leaders in our public as well as private systems. It is crucial."

The teaching profession has changed greatly over the years. Today, teachers are dealing with issues such as student mental health in addition to teaching in restrictive environments resulting from legislation that limits teacher options for best assisting students. Jessup's SOE has the Fruits of the Spirit embedded in its curriculum. "Our students graduate with a firm foundation in their faith and implement servant leadership in their teaching," Castleman said. "They are a beacon of light in a dark world."



MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Calvin Huckabee

Sometimes the path God leads us can take a variety of unexpected turns. Calvin Huckabee came to Jessup after a neurological injury he sustained as a diver in the U.S. Navy led him to change the trajectory of his life. "When I left the Navy and knew that diving would no longer be part of my life, I decided it was time to go to college and complete my degree," the Adult Degree Completion counseling psychology major said.

That was a tough order when you consider Huckabee is originally from Kentucky, taught himself to swim and acquired strong diving skills despite the landlocked geography of his home state.

He doesn't fall short when it comes to tenacity and grit, a quality he clearly passed along to his two young boys Liam and Westin. Liam was born with cerebral palsy and works tirelessly to overcome the daily challenges he faces.

Huckabee is also a talented artist who created "A World of Difference" coloring books celebrating medical diversity for kids with special needs. "When Liam had limited mobility and I was processing leaving the Navy, one of the things we would do was draw," Huckabee said. "Drawing allowed us to laugh together."

The characters he creates in the coloring books depict animals who represent different scenarios special needs children experience with their different abilities and limitations. A goat with a prosthetic leg, a kiwi bird spinning about in her wheelchair, a mouse

receiving breathing treatments and a shark playing ping pong while wearing head phones to combat sensory processing disorder are just a few of the lovable characters he creates.

The coloring books are available on Amazon and during developmental disability month last March, Huckabee donated a coloring book to various children's hospitals for every two books purchased. The effort resulted in 153 books delivered to local hospitals in addition to another 200 books donated to Texas Children's Hospital. "It may seem like a small thing right now but if we can help to improve someone's quality of life or hospital visit, we are making a difference," he said.

As a counseling psychology major, Huckabee understands the impact the helping professions can make. "I've been so inspired by the child life specialists my wife and I have met along Liam's journey. Our differences shape who we are. They are meant to be discussed," Huckabee said. "Without variety, humanity will simply be more shades of gray."

"So much of the Jessup community has come alongside me in this journey," Huckabee said. "From professors, to marketing, advertising, social media and career counseling staff, Jessup is supporting me in this journey as I learn and grow."

To learn more about Huckabee's efforts, visit facebook.com/HuckabeeHouseBooks.



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