

**Connecting** is a publication of Richmond Graduate University, which was originally founded as the Chattanooga Bible Institute (CBI) in 1933. Richmond's mission is to provide graduate education, integrating professional counseling, applied psychology and practical theology for Christ-centered transformation. Richmond is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award master's degrees in professional counseling and marriage and family therapy. Our campuses are located in Atlanta, GA and Chattanooga, TN.

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## Why do you serve...?

This section of *Connecting* is an ongoing column that highlights various individuals that serve Richmont. Consider what capacity the Lord might be calling you to serve.



**Stuart Coleman, SGA Chaplain,**  
Chattanooga Campus

From the time I was 17, I have had a deep desire to integrate my faith with the social sciences. At times, it seemed as though these two worlds were mutually exclusive. At other times, these disciplines seemed to flirt with each other, only to have "the parents" try to separate the two, as if they were not meant for each other. At Richmont, I have witnessed theology and psychology kissing in ways that celebrate the complimentary dance steps of both partners. Here, I have been reminded that: by definition, psychology is the study of the soul; that to do psychology well is to do soul care well; to do soul care well, there must be a sound basis of Biblical faith and practice. I wish everyone engaged in ministry could have the opportunity to study in such a context, where theology and psychology are "talking to each other" in ways that are sure to benefit those seeking skilled care of their souls.

**Roxanne Shellabarger '08,**  
Director of Records

Serving God by serving others (whether they are students or faculty) is what gets me out of bed every morning. I love working with students and helping them find their way through the program. I am so thankful to find a place where I can serve in this amazing ministry and use my administrative talents for God's purposes.



**Ashley Harris, SGA Social Officer,**  
Atlanta Campus

From the moment I knew that there was a school which offered an integration degree of counseling and Christian principles, I knew it would become the perfect place for me. My overall experience has been amazing. Not only do I receive a first class education with clinical experience, but I am also part of a loving community which seeks to empower me as a Christian woman. I believe Richmont has been a catalyst for transformation in my life. I have been blessed to be a part of the RGU family and look forward to uplifting the people of God's kingdom upon completing my matriculation at Richmont.



**WHY  
DO YOU  
SERVE?**



# CONNECTING

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FALL 2011

## Disappointed?

We recently had to make the decision to postpone the launch of our School of Ministry. I'll admit, it was a little hard. Someone asked me if I was disappointed. My initial reaction was "Of course I am." I had (and honestly *still* have) a strong belief that a new model of training is critically important in order to prepare leaders in the contemporary church.

However, the more I've had time to reflect on our decision and the timing of this launch, the more I see God's hand providentially guiding us. (Isn't that the way it always is? Proverbs 3:5-6 never tells us that God will show us in advance where we're going...just that he will direct our paths.) In this case, we did need more time to reflect on more flexible models of pedagogy, to reach out to those serving in ministry who have never considered higher education, to connect more broadly with local churches around us, and finally to raise funds to support the programs. (By the way, our current planning does involve a launch of the School of Ministry for next fall.)

The culture around us is changing. We have some difficulty now considering ourselves a "Christian

nation," and this is particularly true when you consider the Millennials—or the "unchristian generation" as some have alleged. In addition, market forces in higher education are changing as well. Tuition outpaces inflation, accreditors demand ever more specificity in data collected, and government wants our institutional assessment tied to salaries earned and loans received.

For us, the question is *not* one of quality. I just received the results from our most recent students' National Counselor Examinations. Once again, our average score in every area is higher than the national average *and* higher than schools that are CACREP accredited. We know how to train counselors. I am *so* intensely proud of our graduates. Not only their performance on standardized testing, but in the thousands of ways they are serving the world and the Kingdom.

No, the question I'm convinced we must answer is about the future. I'm concerned about the debt graduate students accumulate. I'm concerned about the availability of good jobs for graduates (in all fields, not just counseling). I'm concerned about universities finding ways to meet student needs, instead of

doing things the same old way and expecting (demanding?) that student change.

What kind of university is Richmont going to be? We're working hard to examine who we are and where we're going. We've engaged Dr. Donald Crump (formerly VP at the University of Alabama and later with SACS) to lead us through a strategic planning process. I would ask that you keep us in your prayers as we focus on preparing for the future. I know that our path will always involve simplicity, quality and service. But how those values are implemented will be fun to watch.

So, disappointed? Occasionally. But my job is really the most fun, exciting and meaningful thing that I can imagine doing. Watching the Kingdom develop through you, our students, alumni, staff and faculty...it really is a blessing.

Glory be to God



C. Jeffrey Terrell, Ph.D.  
President



**"WHEN PATIENTS DO NOT GET WELL: IMPROVING DIAGNOSTIC SKILLS IN PATIENTS WHO PRESENT WITH DEPRESSION"**

PRESENTED BY MICHAEL R. LYLES, M.D.

## Save the Date ALUMNI REUNION

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2011

Mt Paran Church of God Great Hall • 2055 Mt. Paran Road NW, Atlanta, GA 30327

Heavy hors d'oeuvres reception beginning at 4:30 PM.

Three-hour continuing education seminar from 6:00 PM-9:00 PM

**Continuing Education:** Three (3) NBCC-approved clock hours awarded. 2.83 Core GAMFT- approved contact hours awarded. CE approval for Psychologists has been applied for.

- Fees:**
- Richmont Graduate University Alumni Association Members, Clinical Supervisors, Faculty, Staff, and Students receive FREE admission.
  - Nonmembers/Friends of Alumni: \$25.00

**To reserve your space:** Please contact Autumn Stephenson at [astephenson@richmont.edu](mailto:astephenson@richmont.edu) or 423-648-2679 and include your name, year of graduation, and preferred method of contact. Payments may be made the evening of the event or mailed to: Richmont Graduate University, Attn: Autumn Stephenson, 1815 McCallie Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37404. Online registration on our website, [www.richmont.edu/upcoming-events](http://www.richmont.edu/upcoming-events), is also available.

# Difference-Making 101



**Mary Keeley, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Counseling

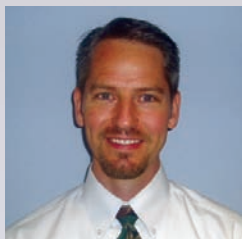
Mary earned her B.A. in Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, followed by her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Clinical Psychology at the University of Florida. She is a huge fan of

the UNC Tarheels, and during basketball season, you can find her glued to the television set watching her favorite team play. She completed her internship and postdoctoral training at Emory University's School of Medicine. She is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist in the state of Georgia. When she's not teaching or providing therapy, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, cooking, and running. Originally from Atlanta, she is happy to be back "home" and excited to join the Richmond Family!

**Dan Sartor, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Counseling

With passions for learning, teaching, and various expressions of soul care, Dan has joined the instructional faculty at the Atlanta campus of Richmond. Dan received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Rosemead School of Psychology, and he holds an M.A. in Counseling from Reformed Theological Seminary. His undergraduate work was completed at Moody Bible Institute in the field of church music. As a licensed psychologist and Nationally Certified Counselor, Dan has had the privilege of serving as a private practitioner, Presbyterian minister, clinical director, and faculty member in academic, ecclesiastic, and private clinical settings. Dan is married, has four wonderful children, and enjoys music, reading, camping with his family, and home improvement projects.



**Erica Skidmore, Psy.D.**

Assistant Clinical Professor of Counseling

Erica received her doctorate in Psychology in 2007 from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. She is thankful for the experience of training and studying in such a diverse environment but is also excited to be getting back to her Tennessee roots in Chattanooga. Erica grew up in middle Tennessee and lived in Virginia Beach prior to moving to Chattanooga two years ago. She was working with a local organization providing services for children with cancer but missed the private practice setting and was looking for an opportunity to teach. "I truly feel called to Richmond and am so thankful for the opportunity to work with so many wonderful students and colleagues," she says. Erica's clinical interests include working with children, assessing children and adults, and leading Dialectical Behavior Therapy groups for adults with chronic mental illness. Her other full-time job is being a wife to Ben, a minister at Northside Presbyterian Church PC(USA), and mom to Jack, age 2, and Dylan, age 4 months.

## New Trustee

**Jane Steward**

Trustee



Jane Hamilton Steward was born in Savannah, Georgia and is the daughter of the deceased Pawling Schryver Steward of Chattanooga, TN and Helen Reid Steward of Savannah, GA. Jane makes her home in Atlanta. She earned degrees from St. Mary's College, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Georgia State University. She worked on the bid and organizing committees for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta for 6 years and has been doing national marketing for Verizon Wireless for the past 14 years. She is involved with the Atlanta History Center Member's Guild, Noah's Ark, the Atlanta Botanical Garden, Colonial Dames of America and the High Museum. She enjoys traveling, movies, cooking, needlepoint, tennis, skiing and spending time with her family.

### Richmont Statement of Purpose:

Richmont Graduate University provides graduate education, integrating professional counseling, applied psychology and practical theology for Christ-centered transformation.

### Richmont Locations:

1815 McCallie Ave  
Chattanooga, TN 37404-3026  
888-267-4073 (toll free)

McCarty Building  
2055 Mt. Paran Road N.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30327-2921  
888-267-4073 (toll free)





## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRANT RECIPIENTS

**Ani Hernandez Johnson** is a 2011 alumna of Richmond. Throughout the course of her internship at Richmond's Community Counseling Center, Ani worked to provide bilingual services to Chattanooga's Latino community. Recognizing a need, Ani desired to continue working with this population even after graduation, and through the combined efforts of Ani, Donna Austin Morris (2007 Richmond alumna), and Jana Pressley (Founding Director of the Community Counseling Center), Ani was able to see her dream become a reality. In spring of 2011, the Richmond Community Counseling Center was awarded a grant through the *Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga*. This grant provided an opportunity for Ani to become a full-time staff member of the Community Counseling Center. In addition, the Community Counseling Center received additional funding through *Partnership for Families, Children and Adults*. This funding has allowed the Community Counseling Center to expand its Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

program by providing Ani with the necessary training at the Cincinnati Children's

Hospital. Ani's new position will allow her to continue working with individuals, couples, and families through PCIT with a special emphasis on outreach to meet the needs of Chattanooga's Latino population.

Richmont Graduate University student, **Shana Campbell**, is the recipient of the 2011 Christus Powell Fellowship. Each year, the Christus Powell Fellowship is awarded to one or two minority students pursuing licensure and showing *commitment* to the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. The Multicultural Committee of GAMFT reviews all applicants, and Shana Campbell was this year's only recipient, receiving a fellowship of \$1,500. As the recipient, Shana had the opportunity to attend the GAMFT spring conference on St. Simons Island held April 30- May 1. At the conference, Shana was presented with this award and was able to meet many seasoned therapists in the MFT profession. Shana had a wonderful time and was truly grateful for the experience. Shana knows that it will lead to many more opportunities as she pursues her career in MFT. Shana is in her final year of education at Richmont and is currently serving as an intern at the Good Samaritan Health Center. After graduation, Shana hopes to work with military families and establish a non-profit organization.



## Congratulations to the 2011-2012 SGA representatives!

### Atlanta SGA

**From the top of the pyramid:** Ashley Harris (Social Officer), Jenna Riemersma (Orientation Officer), Amy Brooten (Chaplain), Ann Keller (President), Rabeshia Byrd (Orientation Officer), Andrea Farnham (Secretary)



### Chattanooga SGA



**From left to right:** Amanda Blackburn (Assistant Dean of Students), Rachel Smith (Secretary), Lauren Vaughn (Social Officer), Megan Hobby (Social Officer), Jody Buttram (Orientation Officer), Kelly Johnson (President), Crystal Hammer (Orientation Officer), Stuart Coleman (Chaplain)

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to our 2011-2012 scholarship recipients! The following students have been selected for the 2011-2012 school year based on academic eligibility, financial need, application essays, and interviews with the scholarship committee:

### Baird McClure Memorial Scholarship

Jon Parker	Ruth Valencia
Melissa Howd	Myriame Beauge
Caitlin Dodd	

### Harrison Griffith DeKay Scholarship

Haley Owens	Stephen Adams
Mallory Hansen	Melanie Barefield
Daniel Peeks	Christina Paul
Justin Friel	Dana Lindsey
Junia Baker	Scott Cozart
Michele Yaquinto	Maya Butler

### Paul L. Walker Merit Scholarship

Kellie Kent

We are so grateful for the individuals and families that have established scholarships for Richmont students. If you would like to learn more about how to set up an endowed scholarship, please contact Jeff Terrell, President, at 404-835-6117.

Applications, scholarship criteria, and additional information for the 2012-2013 academic year can be found on our website, [richmont.edu/prospective-students](http://richmont.edu/prospective-students). Scholarship applications must be received by May 1, 2012. Please contact Novell Blain, Director of Admissions, for more information, 404-835-6111.



# FACULTY RECOGNITION



## Celebrating 25 years at Richmond

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Evalin Hanshew for 25 years at Richmond. Dr. Hanshew, who serves as Dean of Clinical Affairs and Professor of Counseling, has been greatly instrumental in preparing generations of counselors for service. We are grateful for her ongoing contribution to the University and her investment in so many lives through the years. We are honored to have her as a member of the Richmond family.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN, SCHOOL OF COUNSELING

The past few months have been a remarkable period of transition and yet stability at Richmond Graduate University. We have shared goodbyes with friends and colleagues, taken on new roles, and experienced additions to the Richmond family, all the while celebrating key milestones as Dr. Evalin Hanshew's 25th year of service at the University.

As we congratulate Dr. Hanshew, I am pleased and excited to welcome Dr. Mary Keeley, Dr. Dan Sartor and Dr. Erica Skidmore to the faculty at Richmond. I am equally delighted to have Dr. Amanda Blackburn, Dr. Emily Harbold, Mrs. Alison Mead, Mrs. Roxanne Shellabarger, and Dr. Tim Sisemore serve in new capacities.

To think I was beginning my freshman year of high school when Dr. Hanshew began her tenure at Richmond—then the Psychological Studies Institute—is remarkable. Her tenure is certainly reflective of her devotion to God's work in the lives of so many through the years.

Dr. Keeley, who previously served as a licensed clinical psychologist at Northside Psychological Services in Atlanta, brings a wealth of experience working with children, adolescents and young adults. She is serving Richmond as Assistant Professor of Counseling and currently sits on Richmond's Institutional Review Board, which approves and monitors research utilizing human subjects.

Dr. Sartor previously served as a counselor at Ebenezer Counseling Services in Knoxville and as Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology at Geneva College in Pennsylvania. He will be a valuable asset to Richmond as he draws from his clinical and ministerial experience in serving as Associate Professor of Counseling. He will teach courses from both the core and integration curriculum at Richmond.

Dr. Skidmore first joined Richmond this year as an adjunct faculty member. She is now serving as

Clinical Assistant Professor of Counseling, providing counseling services as a member of the CBI Counseling Center staff and serving our students in the classroom. Students will continue to benefit from her experience and knowledge in working with children and adolescents, as well as her background in Dialectical Behavior Therapy.

Dr. Blackburn's passion for students makes her the perfect faculty member to serve as Assistant Dean of Students for the Chattanooga Campus and as Assistant Professor of Counseling. She joined the faculty as Assistant Clinical Professor of Counseling in January 2010 after serving as a clinical psychologist with the CBI Counseling Center during fall 2009. A graduate of Wheaton, Dr. Blackburn replaces Dr. Jana Pressley, who is now at Wheaton. We are grateful to have Dr. Blackburn serve our students in this new capacity.

Dr. Harbold has enjoyed a career in higher education administration in both student services and academic affairs, including academic advising, the first-year experience, and academic support services. A graduate of East Tennessee State University, she earned an M.A. in English from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her Ph.D. in educational policy and leadership is from The Ohio State University. A member of the Academic Services team since summer 2008, Dr. Harbold now serves as Associate Dean of the School of Counseling.

Mrs. Mead, who has been part of our wonderful library team since 2007, is now the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Librarian, as well as a newly appointed Assistant Professor. In addition to her M.S. in Higher Education from Southern Illinois University and M.S. in Library and Information Science from Valdosta State, she is a Richmond alumna with an M.S. in Christian Psychological Studies.

Mrs. Shellabarger has been a great resource to the University. She is an alumna of Richmond and has

### KENY FELIX, PH.D.

worked in the Records Office since 2008, starting as the Assistant Registrar. She now is leading the office as Registrar and Director of Records. Her work with CAMS, our online student and faculty portal, over the past year has made a significant impact across the University.

In addition to his role as the Director of the CBI Counseling Center, Dr. Sisemore is now Director of Research. He has been at Richmond/CBI since 1995 and was Academic Dean during the initial SACS accreditation. He has published numerous articles and five books. He is currently under contract for two books and doing a guest editorship of a special issue of the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*. His knowledge and experience have been and will continue to be a tremendous asset for the University.

As the Dean of the School of Counseling, I'm grateful in having the opportunity to work with all of our dynamic staff across the University and our talented clinical, adjunct, and full-time faculty. While the significant transitions experienced over the past months have brought natural challenges, they have also presented new opportunities for continued growth as we enter a new era and phase of ministry.

As we strive to build on our rich heritage, I believe we are poised to continue to considerably impact the kingdom by preparing the next generations of counselors. God's imprint on CBI, PSI and now Richmond has not only been evident through the years but will be the very factor that will ultimately propel us forward in the year and years to come. What a privilege to be part of this work!



## FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN, THE SCHOOL OF MINISTRY



LELAND ELIASON, TH.D.

I often say, “In life, we’re far better off trying something, even if we don’t succeed, than not to try at all.” By the time we had received permission by the states of

Georgia and Tennessee to publicize the program, it was already February. While several wonderful candidates were ready to enroll immediately, the time line was not sufficient for people to rearrange their schedules in order to enroll for this fall.

So we moved the start-up date of the degree to fall of 2012. Part of the challenge is to get the word out to those who feel called to equip themselves for ministry. Whenever we describe the degree to committed leaders who want to be more prepared, the feedback is

encouraging. They say that we have developed a program that appeals to them because it is a high quality, accredited degree that is both substantive and practical. There’s flexibility in the schedule. Tuition is much lower than many other programs. Professors are outstanding. Internships ensure hands on learning. Integration of heart and mind, theory and practice, and mission within culture permeate the program.

Here’s how you can help us:

1. Give us the names of prospective students. A baccalaureate degree is required for admission.
2. Identify for us pastors and ministry agencies that you think would like to hear about this program.
3. Introduce us to key leaders so that we can tell the story of the vision and passion we have to meet leadership needs of those who are serving God in the marketplace, in churches, or in faith based ministries.

4. Host prospective students and their influencers to a dessert reception, or to lunches, breakfasts or dinners (which Richmond will cover in terms of costs) so that we can tell the story of how God has led Richmond Graduate University to create a School of Ministry and create this degree.

There is no more important work on earth than ministry in the name of Jesus. Whether this be done by lay women and men in the marketplace or people on staff at churches and ministry agencies, the goal is the same, to be “stand-ins” for Jesus so that His name and His reputation is enhanced. Then lost people will believe in Him and found people will be built up in the faith.

Thank you for your partnership in this compelling work!



## THE REAL PRESENCE: INTEGRATING THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR

WILLIAM F. DOVERSPIKE, PH.D.

On December 10, 1941, about 40 miles southeast of Louisville, Kentucky, a 26 year old young man entered the gates of the Abbey of Gethsemani, the oldest monastery in the United States. The

Guest Master at that time was a young priest named Father Joachim<sup>1</sup>, who recalled that the new novitiate spent much of his free time writing poetry. Father Joachim would leave Gethsemani in three years to become one of the founders of a new monastery. Thomas Merton<sup>2</sup> would remain there to become the author of over 2,000 poems, a countless number of essays, and more than 50 published books.

Fifty years later, in 1991, on the first night of my first retreat to the monastery that was founded by Gethsemani, I was reading one of Merton’s poems<sup>3</sup> that had been placed on the desk before I had arrived.

Lost in the words of the poem, I found myself drifting into the wordless silence of contemplative prayer. Suddenly, an old priest in his 80s burst unexpectedly into my room. No longer a young Guest Master, Father Joachim was one of 20 monks who had left Gethsemani in 1944 to found a new monastery in Georgia - about 40 miles east of Atlanta.

Calling me by name, which he had apparently learned from my father, the old priest asked, “Aren’t you the preacher’s son?” I confessed that I was guilty. Almost bursting with a sense of urgency, he boldly exclaimed, “You need to experience the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.” Taken back, I replied somewhat defensively, “I’m not even Catholic. I don’t even *believe* in transubstantiation.” “Oh, no,” said the priest, “I’m not talking about that book stuff.”

Ten years later, in 2001, while having dinner with the Abbot of the monastery, I shared with him my story. “Oh, no, Billy,” said the Abbot, “Father Joachim wasn’t talking about transubstantiation. He was inviting you to share communion with us. He

wasn’t telling you to *understand* the Real Presence; he was inviting you to *experience it*.”

Ten years later, in 2011, I can tell you that I have experienced the Real Presence of Christ—*among you*. It’s not only what I think of you; it’s what I’ve experienced with you. Sometimes, I feel as if the only thing I knew about the Christian faith was what I have learned from you, then I would know all I really need to know. If the only image I ever saw of the Body of Christ was what I have seen in you, then I would have experienced the Real Presence of Christ among you. I’m not talking about that book stuff. I’m talking about the communion that I—and others—have experienced with you.

Some of you may be called to die for your faith, but all of you are called to live your faith—each day, day by day, as your days turn into months, and your months turn into years—just like Thomas Merton, Father Joachim, and all the saints who have gone before you.

1. Father John “Joachim” Tierney (d. May 20, 1999) mentioned on page 373 in Merton, T. (1951). *The seven story mountain*. Garden City: NY: Garden City Books, by special arrangement with Harcourt, Brace & Company.

2. Thomas Merton (1915-1968) died 27 years to the day after his entrance to the Monastery at Gethsemani.

3. “My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.”





# CONVERSATIONS

A FORUM FOR *Authentic* TRANSFORMATION



*Conversations*, “The Problem of Pain” (vol 9.2, Fall 2011).  
To subscribe, please visit [conversationsjournal.com](http://conversationsjournal.com).

## In a World of Pain...What Good is God?

by Philip Yancey in conversation with Gary Moon

on theodicy—mercifully titled, “The Problem of Pain”—we could think of no one we had rather hear from than Philip Yancey.

**GWM:** Philip, you’ve written a lot about issues of theodicy (*Where is God When it Hurts, Disappointment with God, Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants, Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference, and What Good is God?*). On a personal level, what has motivated you to write so much in this area?

**PY:** I’ve mentioned in some of my writing that my father died of polio just after my first birthday. Five thousand people in a prayer chain were praying for him, and those closest to him believed he could be healed. With his own consent he was removed from an iron lung and, a few weeks later, died. My entire childhood was lived under that cloud of unanswered prayer and the apparently meaningless death of a 24-year-old missionary candidate.

Later, as a young journalist, I began writing “Drama in Real Life” articles for *Reader’s Digest* and I heard from my interview subjects again and again that, after a life-threatening tragedy, “the church made it worse” with confusing and contradictory counsel: God is punishing you; No, it’s Satan; No, it’s God but out of love not punishment, for you’ve been specially selected to demonstrate faith.

I didn’t know how to respond to those people, and when I don’t know something I write a book about it. That affords the opportunity to go to experts and libraries and the Bible in search of answers. I wrote *Where Is God When It Hurts*—my first book, really—at the age of twenty-seven, a rather audacious age to be investigating theodicy, but I needed answers for myself.

**GWM:** Philip, how did the pain of your near death experience change the way you live on any random Tuesday?

**PY:** For the first few weeks I walked around in what I call a “daze of grace,” staring with wonder and gratitude at simple things like trees and clouds and common birds; I had experienced a second chance at life and I embraced it with the enthusiasm of a child. It’s impossible to sustain that kind of spirit—or, I should say, impossible for me. The gutters leak, the computer acts up, the car has a flat tire... life grinds me down.

As I say in the book, while lying strapped to a back board uncertain whether I would live through the day, I came up with only three questions worthy of my attention at such a time: 1) Whom do I love? 2) What have I done with my life? and 3) Am I ready for whatever is next?

Since then, I have indeed tried to keep those questions at the forefront. I’ve been married some 41 years, and the four years we’ve shared together since the accident have been more intentional and more rewarding than most of the others. I no longer write whatever comes to mind; I choose what I must get down on paper before my life does end. I learned the obvious lesson, yet one we often neglect, that we can’t count on anything more than the breath we just inhaled.

The remainder of this article is in the fall issue of *Conversations*, available at [conversationsjournal.com](http://conversationsjournal.com). Members of the Richmond alumni association receive a complimentary subscription with their annual membership.

Curious about this and other topics related to spiritual formation? “Converse” with us via these social media outlets: facebook [@conversationsjournal](https://www.facebook.com/conversationsjournal) and our blog, The Daily Conversation.

*October is Clergy Appreciation Month! Show your appreciation for someone who has had a spiritual impact on your life by giving the gift of Conversations! Receive 20% off on gift subscriptions during the month of October! [conversationsjournal.com/clergy](http://conversationsjournal.com/clergy)*

Philip Yancey is a popular author and speaker known for careful research, keen insight and raw honesty. Not long ago he was driving on a deserted road in New Mexico one Sunday morning when his Ford Explorer hit a patch of black ice. Yancey wrestled with the steering wheel, but his SUV went over an embankment, shattering glass, plastic, metal and bones.

He was rushed to a hospital where, after being strapped to a gurney for seven hours, a doctor broke the bad news. “Your neck is broken and a bone fragment may have nicked a major artery.” Then the doctor said, “...this is a life-threatening situation. Here’s a phone. You may want to contact your loved ones and tell them goodbye...”

Yancey is still with us, still asking and answering the tough questions. But it was the questions he asked himself as he lay in pain, strapped to a board, speaking what could have been final words to loved ones that gave life to his latest book, “What Good is God?”

Yancey traveled to some of the pain-ridden locations on the planet and asked people who had been broken in body, or spirit or both: *Does belief in God really matter when life gets tough?*

Their answers form the heart of his new book. The people Yancey profiles include former prostitutes trying to escape the sex trade in Thailand, leaders in the underground church in China, and members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

When the editors of *Conversations: A Forum for Authentic Transformation*, decided to do an issue



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## New Alumni Association Members

Emily Aikins '11  
 Simone Alexander '11  
 Margaret Ast '11  
 Brent Collins '11  
 Melissa Curtis '11  
 Bethany Davis '11  
 Kimberly DeRamus '11  
 Cheryl Elkins '11  
 Amanda Eskridge '11  
 Louise Finley '11  
 Joyce Geddie '11  
 Robert Gillette '11  
 Hope Hailey '11  
 Shari Hickom '11  
 Keisha Hood '10  
 Ushirika Johnson '11  
 Kami Legg '11  
 Roxanna Litow '11  
 Cathy Lord '11  
 Matthew Martz '11  
 Elizabeth Moore '11  
 Stacey Newsome '11  
 Lorna Osaigbovo '11  
 Victoria Ramsey '11  
 Hannah Simms '11  
 Melissa Sparks '11  
 Drury Thompson '75  
 Elisa Torell '11  
 Esther Turner '11  
 Christine Weisgerber '11  
 Marlayne Whitlock '11  
 Philip Zimmerman '11



2011 Graduating class of Richmond

## RICHMONT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Richmond Alumni Association helps graduates stay connected to the Richmond family. Its aim is to help each alumnus foster a network of both professional and spiritual support; one way we do this is to offer alumni affordable ways to obtain continuing education hours throughout the year. To establish or renew your membership to the Richmond Alumni Association or to read about membership benefits, please visit our website at: <http://richmont.edu/alumni-association>. You can now renew your membership online! If you have any questions, please contact the Coordinator of Alumni Relations, Autumn Stephenson at [astephenso@richmont.edu](mailto:astephenso@richmont.edu).

### Alumni Update e-Newsletter

The Office of Alumni Relations sends out a monthly *Alumni Update* e-newsletter to all Richmond alumni with up to date email addresses. The Alumni Update features CE opportunities, updates from our alumni, and other important Richmond updates. If you would like to receive this and you do not think we have your current email address, please contact Autumn Stephenson, [astephenso@richmont.edu](mailto:astephenso@richmont.edu)

## ALUMNI NEWS

This summer, the Richmond Alumni Association sponsored its first alumni activity at our local ballparks, the Atlanta Braves and the Chattanooga Lookouts. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make Richmond Night at the Ballpark a success. The Alumni Association looks forward to sponsoring additional family friendly events that provide our alumni opportunities to fellowship and reconnect. We hope to see you there!

L-R: Kelly Johnson, Emily Aikins '11, Autumn Stephenson, Amanda Blackburn, Assistant Dean of Students.



L-R: Mary Ann Woodward Green '07, Autumn Stephenson, Lamanda Rhodes '08



## GENESISCE.ORG

Continuing Education Group

### CE Clock Hours in Your Pajamas: GenesisCE.org

Dr. Mike Atwater, 1979 Richmond Alumnus, is the director of GenesisCE.org Continuing Education Group, a service that provides Christian-based, online CE clock hours at discounted rates. Choose from 50 courses to obtain your CE clock hours from the comfort of your own home without the

high fees and travel costs. It is as easy as reading a book and taking an online test, and as alumni, it is likely that you already have some of the required books. Visit the website, [www.GenesisCE.org](http://www.GenesisCE.org), for details and board approvals.

\*Use the code, RGUPSI, to receive a 25% discount and a matching 25% contribution will be made in your name to Richmond.\*



# MISSION UPDATE

This past summer Richmond students, alumni, faculty, and staff responded to the call to missions in many different ways. Below is an opportunity to read about how several members of the Richmond community used their summer to serve God's kingdom:

**Adam Dark, Recruiter**

**Mission Trip: Madrid, Spain, July 2011**

"I was blessed with the opportunity to minister to youth at a summer camp in Spain this past summer. The primary focus of the US team was to plan games/activities for the high school aged Spanish and Latin American teenagers in addition to encouraging them and allowing them to practice their English! Since I have a heart for Europe and that age group, this mission trip was right up my alley; I am thankful that the Lord allowed me to go."

**Glenda Thompson, Receptionist**

**Mission Trip: Nairobi, Kenya, May/June 2011**

"While part of a mission team from New City Fellowship Church to Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya, we served at Overcomers By Grace, New Life Home Orphanage, and Ark School, created the South C Children's Club and visited a pediatric rehabilitation hospital. Sometimes it is easier to hear a message from a stranger than someone you know. I was that stranger. It confirmed to me that God can use anyone."

**Autumn Stephenson, Coordinator of Alumni Relations**

**Mission Trip: Tegucigalpa, Honduras, July 2011**

"This summer I was able to join my husband on a youth mission trip to Honduras. In Honduras, we partnered with Forgotten Children Ministries. This ministry works to provide a safe home for the children of Honduras who are on the streets or unable to be cared for by their parents. We spent most of our time loving on these children and serving the community through food ministry. I am grateful to have shared in this humbling experience with my husband and the youth of our church."



**Sally Ensley, 2011 Richmond Alumna**  
**Mission Trips: West Virginia, June 2011; Kentucky, July 2011; Alabama, July 2011**

"I was blessed to lead over 44 people from our church to go on mission trips this year. One of my favorite parts of leading trips is taking people on their first ever mission trip and seeing the impact it has on each one as he or she experiences God working through him or her in such meaningful ways. I have seen lives changed forever because of the experiences people have on mission trips and have been immeasurably blessed to have led over 50 during my years in the ministry."

**Jody Buttram, SGA, Chattanooga Campus**  
**Mission Trip: Jamaica, May 2011**

"Our family went with a group from our church to Jamaica to witness to their schools. Our mission was called Cruise with a Cause because it was an all-Christian cruise with the purpose of missions. It was our first mission trip as a family and our first time out of the country; and since Jamaica is a welcoming, Christian-friendly country, we decided that this would be a great first mission trip for our family because we had been praying for awhile for an opportunity to serve as a family. We really wanted to expose our children to real hardships, as most of Jamaica is very poverty-stricken, and our kids really had a great time of fellowship with the Jamaican children."

**Jenn Hand, Richmond Student**

**Mission Trip: Port Au Prince, Haiti, July 2011**

"I went on a return trip to Port Au Prince Haiti July 7-14 to lead a women's conference for the Haitian ladies I had previously met while on mission to Haiti December 29-January 7th of 2011. God burdened my heart to offer God's encouragement to the Haitian ladies. It was a joy to serve the 50 women that came, sharing in God's word and worship. It was also a huge blessing to love on the 70 children of the orphanage where we stayed, playing games and sharing hugs and comfort."

**DeAnne Terrell, Dean of Students**

**Mission Trip: Thailand, Summer 2011**

"I went to Thailand for my third trip to that beautiful country. We had four large platforms of ministry. We taught ESL in a secular school using Biblical themes to teach English. We also held a women's conference for the women missionaries in Southeast Asia. We also ministered to the night market vendors giving them materials to improve family life. Lastly, we ministered in a women's prison. God is so faithful regardless of where we are. I am so grateful for the opportunities to see Him at work in different cultures and people groups."

## HONORS & MEMORIALS

The following are individuals in whose honor and memory gifts have been received from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

### IN HONOR

Ken Calwell  
Lane Carpenter  
Dr. & Mrs. Louis Carter, Jr.  
CBI Counseling Center  
Sam Clyatt  
Tom Decosimo  
Holly Edwards  
Ed & Pat Frazelle  
Starr Hoover  
Peggy Jones  
Mr. & Mrs. Gerard C. Lewis  
Pauline McLemore  
Janie Willingham McNabb  
Ben Merrill  
Nancy Mills  
Margaret Poindexter  
Dr. John S. Poindexter, III  
Mr. Doug Powell  
Dr. Mike Reid  
Bob Rodgers  
Mrs. Philip Rollinson  
DeAnne Terrell

### IN MEMORIAL

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Katherine Rawlings Poindexter  
Eleanor Powell  
Ann Layman Riggs  
Mary Terry  
Robert Venable, Sr.  
Victor & Judy Wilkinson  
Winborn Willingham

*We are grateful for those that pay tribute to special people in their lives through gifts to Richmond.*



*A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.*

Richmont Graduate University is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), which is committed to helping Christ-centered organizations earn the public's trust through developing and maintaining standards of accountability that convey God-honoring ethical practices.

## CBI UPDATE: YOUNG AT HEART

*From Angie Conroy, the volunteer director of Chattanooga Bible Institute.*

Greetings from CBI! I hope this article finds all of you doing well and hopefully cooling off a bit after one of the hottest summers I remember in a LONG time. We are getting geared up for our fall semester, which begins on September 8. We have two new classes on the docket for this year: The Beloved Disciple (a study on John) offered in the fall and Jonah (a life interrupted) offered in the winter/spring and summer. We are also continuing to offer a class on Tuesdays in the fall and winter/spring semesters as it was such a tremendous hit with our participants. I hope all of you who are interested received the 2011/2012 CBI class schedule. If you did not receive one and wish to do so in the future, please e-mail me at [aconroy@richmont.edu](mailto:aconroy@richmont.edu) or call me at (423)266-4574. I'd be delighted to add you to our mailing list. As always, I am deeply grateful to all of our dedicated facilitators/teachers who give so generously and passionately. We couldn't do it without you!

*Seated around table from left are Ellen Yates, Helen Cummings, Barbara Armstrong, Betty Franklin, Jane Wyeth, Margaret Finley and Mary Ferguson. Not pictured are Basbie Evans and Mary Black*



I have started teaching a Women's Bible study at St. Barnabas, one of our retirement homes, and I LOVE IT!! These women are so precious and have such a wealth of knowledge. It is truly a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to spend time with them. They are super sharp, have great insight, and are really funny! We laugh a lot. I hope they will continue to let me come and discuss the Bible with them. (I learn a whole lot more from them than they do from me!)

I will be producing and mailing the fall Legacy Newsletter in early October. We had cut out the spring edition to stay in budget, but I hope to continue with the fall version to keep all our participants and patrons up-to-speed on what we're doing here at CBI. Until next time, peace be with you.

### *CBI Basics:*

Located on the Chattanooga campus, Chattanooga Bible Institute is an interdenominational ministry of Richmond Graduate University, providing the community with Christian classes, Christian counseling services and The Poindexter Library- a Christian resource library open to the public. Please visit [www.richmont.edu](http://www.richmont.edu) to find out more about CBI's counseling services and to view the CBI group and class schedule.

# COUNSELING CENTER UPDATES

## HOPE COUNSELING CENTER

Interns in the Hope Counseling Centers continue to provide excellent care for clients who might not otherwise be able to afford therapy. For the fiscal year July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, students rendered a record 4,081 hours of counseling in the centers.

In May, a center was opened at the invitation of Word of Faith Cathedral, which is located on Riverside Drive near Six Flags. The need was readily evident when the schedules for the two interns placed there were full within a month, and a wait-list was instated. A third intern was assigned to assist, and she began seeing clients there in August. The center is under the very capable guidance of Richmond alumna, Ushirika Johnson. Many thanks to Bishop Dale Bronner and Dr. Nina Bronner and to pastors Chris Boyd and Charles Houston for their initiative and on-going support.

With the closing of the North Peachtree location, Richmond alumna, Debbie Emerson, has assumed the coordinator position at the campus Hope Center on Monday evenings. We are grateful for her able leadership there. Debbie, a licensed professional counselor who works with children, is also providing supervision for students who are pursuing the child/adolescent certificate.

## RICHMONT COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER

Over the last several months, the Richmond Community Counseling Center (RCCC) has experienced many transitions which have been both bittersweet and exciting. In May, our 2010-2011 interns graduated and we welcomed five new and exceptional interns to the RCCC. During the transition, we were adjusting to the news that the RCCC founding Director, Dr. Jana Pressley, would be leaving Richmond to return to her alma mater, Wheaton College, as their new Director of Clinical Training. I, Michelle Shelley, have had the honor of stepping into Dr. Pressley's position as Director of the RCCC. While I learned the intricate details of directing the center, we received exciting news that we had been awarded a grant from the *Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga*. This grant allowed us to hire a bilingual counselor, Ani Hernandez Johnson (2011 RGU graduate) to address the needs of the Latino population in Chattanooga and surrounding areas. We are continuing to maneuver and adjust to the changes around us, and God has been faithful to provide resources to continue serving the underserved in Chattanooga. In the upcoming months we will begin the planning stages of another benefit concert for the RCCC. This concert not only promotes awareness of the services that we offer to the community, but it also helps to provide another means of offsetting our expenses at the center. We are excited and grateful to award winning artists, Andrew Peterson and Eric Peters, as they have agreed to perform again this year to promote the RCCC. Be looking for more information regarding the concert in 2012.



# Class Notes

## Class of 1977

**Patricia (Patty) McCarty Fultz, M.Ed.CPM, LMH/MR Admin., CMHT**

- Campus attended** Atlanta
- Where do you live?** Clinton, MS
- Employed by** Mississippi Department of Mental Health
- Title/Position** Assistant Director of the Division of Planning
- Who do you help?** I serve children with mental health challenges, adults with serious mental illness, and their family members.
- Accomplishments** Certified Public Manager, Licensed Mental Health/Mental Retardation Administrator, Certified Mental Health Therapist, Completed Stennis State Executive Development Institute
- Transitions** I am married to Danny Fultz who was a tool & die maker at Delphi until the facility closed in February 2010. He is currently "retooling" himself in college in computer design technology.

## Class of 1995

**Michael Todd Wilson, MS, LPC**

- Campus attended** Atlanta
- Where do you live?** NE Atlanta (Gwinnett)
- Employed by** Intentional Hearts, Inc.
- Title/Position** Licensed Professional Counselor
- Who do you help?** I serve adolescents and adults struggling with sexuality issues (including pornography, unwanted same-sex attractions, compulsive sexual behaviors, single adult life).
- Accomplishments** Masters from PSI/Richmont (1995); LMHC in Florida (1998); LPC in Georgia (2004); Book #1: **Soul Virgins** (with Doug Rosenau) helps single adults construct a practical theology to live out their God-given sexuality in a way pleasing to Him; Book #2: **Preventing Ministry Failure** (InterVarsity Press) is a book that is currently being used in dozens of seminars to help pastors/ministers pursue healthy self-care as a means for avoiding burnout and moral failure in ministry.
- Transitions** I married my wife, Tanya, in 2006. We have a son, Micah, who is almost two, and our newest addition, Hannah Grace, arrived in mid-July!

## Class of 2005

**Nancy M. Higgins, LPC**

- Campus attended** Atlanta
- Where do you live?** Stone Mountain, GA
- Employed by** Worldwide Discipleship Association (WDA)
- Title/Position** Member of the Restorative Team

- Who do you help?** I do individual counseling with adults (mostly women) and adolescents for no charge as a service to the church and the community. As a team member on the WDA Restorative Team, I help teach and train lay people in churches so that they may help people begin to heal emotionally.

- Accomplishments** MA in Counseling from Richmond Graduate University (PSI) with a specialty in children and adolescents, LPC.

- Transitions** I was a CPA for 25 years before I changed careers at the age of 52 and began my masters work at PSI. I have been married for 40 years. I have two children and five grandchildren, the oldest of whom is a junior at Georgia Tech and the youngest of whom is a second grader. I did not become a follower of Christ until I was 45. He turned my complacent, calm world upside down and it has been an incredible adventure ever since.

## Class of 2010

**Edward Moore, MA**

- Campus attended** Chattanooga
- Where do you live?** Knoxville, TN
- Employed by** Ebenezer Counseling Services
- Title/Position** Pre-Licensed Therapist
- Who do you help?** Because of my own demographic of being a 40+ year old male therapist, I am sought out by men and/or couples who are having relational difficulties and want to work with an older man.
- Accomplishments** I have not achieved any new degrees since graduation from Richmont. Currently, no licenses or certificates have been achieved. I didn't write any books but here's my post-graduation reading list (in no particular order): How We Love by Milan & Kay Yerkovich; The Stranger by Albert Camus; Love & War by John & Stasi Eldredge; Wings of Illusion by John Schumaker; The Age of Insanity: Modernity & Mental Health by John Schumaker; Spent: Sex, Evolution & Consumer Behavior by Geoffrey Miller; The Missing Link by Richard & Phyllis Arno; A Million Miles in a Thousand Years by Don Miller; Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet and Spy by Eric Mataxas; and The Sinner's Guide to the Religious Right by Robert Lanham. And I did stay at Holiday Inn Express last night (hope you remember those commercials).
- Transitions** I have remained in Knoxville. Most of my transitions are related to my step-daughters. The oldest got married in late May last year and the youngest is in school at ETSU. I guess that makes my wife and me "empty-nesters."

# Donors

We appreciate the generosity of these individuals who contributed to Richmond from July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011.



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A higher purpose.

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