SPIRITED JUSTICE:
Risking all for Christ
Surrendering the control of our lives to the Holy Spirit forms the foundation of full obedience to God’s will and lies at the heart of the Azusa Pacific University community.

I confess—I hold on to things. The overstuffed closets, bookshelves, and computer storage devices of my life expose my penchant for this. Fortunately, God paired me with Gail Vaughn Wallace, my partner in life who battles courageously—a near-daily war—fighting my clutter and constantly transforming the crowded space to make room for the new and rediscovered.

During the Christmas break, I tackled the clutter, overgrown piles, and diminished workspace in my office. The 39 years of lessons from Gail fully expressed themselves as I slashed and burned my way through mountains of stacked papers, books to be read, and other piles of distraction.

A redeemed and reclamed workspace now allows me to sit behind a usable desk with adequate space to work, live, and breathe. I discovered though that my habit of collecting and impede to acquire has not gone away. This newly created space, allowing efficiency, effectiveness, and even room for new learning requires the courage to let go of old habits to make room for the new and transformational.

The Apostle Paul writes about this process in Romans 12. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he describes how letting go of the old allows for a life of obedience and devotion in full obedience and availability to God: “And do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2 NASB).

The intentional resistance to the encroachment of life’s unhealthy habits takes the same kind of courageous pushback—the courage to allow the work of the Holy Spirit to declutter our hearts and remove areas where we have conformed to the world at the expense of full obedience to God. This is the beginning of authentic and lasting renewal.

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Famed Los Angeles artist David Flores produced a mural at the entrance of the Warehouse Theater that speaks to the vision of the College of Music and the Arts’ School of Visual and Performing Arts to bring creativity, innovation, and excellence to culture.
Honors College Hosts Renowned Political Theorist

Students and faculty explored the immaterial and organic nature of America’s core text, the Declaration of Independence, when the Honors College hosted Daniel S. Allen, Ph.D., during a Koch Lecture Series event on February 18, 2015. With doctorates from Cambridge University and Harvard University, Allen held an endowed chair and teaches at Princeton University. Her AP University Press lecture focused on her recent book, One Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality (Livingston Publishing Corporation, 2014), delving into the meaning of democracy and its implications for Americans, and facilitating rigorous dialogue among attendees.

Robert H. Roller, Ph.D., has been named as the post as dean of the School of Business and Management (SBM), effective June 15, 2015. The announcement follows a 16-month, nationwide search. “Dr. Roller understands the business of transforming people to meet real needs and serve each other,” said Mark Staton, Ph.D., provost. “His record of strategic leadership, relevancy, scholarship, and demonstrated commitment to faith integration well suited with AP’s academic trajectory.”

APU Professor Elected to National Board

The Lilly Fellows Program in Religion and Culture has announced the election of APU Professor Eleanore Ewbank to the National Board for 2015-2017. APU’s Center for the Study of Religion has continued to grow under the leadership of Ewbank, and the center’s most recent initiative, the NAACP Religion and Racial Justice Scholar’s Review, features APU students,...
Azusa Pacific University
drew students and faculty from across professor, University Libraries, the event M.A., MTS, MLS, MFA, associate professor and research historian for his daughters. Rotunda, the exhibit featured 10 Displayed in the Darling Library from October to December 2014. celebrating the beloved American University Libraries’ Special Collections Exhibit Honors John Muir to found the Sierra Club and advocate for the American Naturalists. Muir is considered the father of the nature conservation movement in the United States. His ideas and writings have had a profound influence on the development of the modern environmental movement.

Muir believed in the importance of protecting nature and the need to understand the natural world through observation and study. He wrote extensively about the glories of the natural world and the need to preserve it for future generations. Muir’s writings and activism helped to establish the concept of a national park system in the United States, which led to the establishment of the National Park Service.

Muir’s work as a writer, photographer, and conservationist was groundbreaking. He was one of the first people to write about the natural world in a way that was accessible to the general public. His writings inspired a new generation of conservationists and helped to create a sense of wonder and awe about the natural world.

Muir’s legacy continues to be celebrated today. The John Muir Trail, a 2,650-mile hiking trail that runs through the Sierra Nevada Mountains, is named in his honor. The John Muir Wilderness, a 2,419,600-acre wilderness area in California, is also named in his honor.

Communication Ethics Conference Honors Muir’s Idealism

The annual David C. Bickel Communication Ethics Conference was held on campus in February 7, 2015. The conference focused on the theme of “Ethics and the Real World: Communicating in the Marketplace of Ideas.” The conference featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities for students and faculty to engage in discussions about ethical communication and the responsibilities of communicators in today’s society.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Department of Communication Studies and the Office of Public Relations. It included sessions on topics such as ethical decision-making, media literacy, and the role of communication in social justice.

School of Education Hosts Art Exhibit

The School of Education hosted an exhibit featuring the work of Los Angeles-based artist David Flores “Fonzie” Ortiz. The exhibit was part of a larger project called “Parables: The Gospel in Nutshells and Other Contemporary Comedic Forms,” which was funded by a generous grant from Cameron + Company.

The exhibit featured a variety of art pieces, including paintings, sculptures, and installations. The pieces were created in response to the theme of “blessing those who are in need.” The exhibit was a collaboration between the School of Education and the Department of Communication Studies.

The exhibit was open to the public and featured a reception on February 7, 2015. The reception included a keynote address by Dr. Judi Hutchinson, chair of the Department of Communication Studies, and a panel discussion on the role of arts in education.

Selfie with Rocky

The number of career points Cougar point guard Andrew Wright ‘15 scored in the San Diego Regionals on Monday, March 23, was 49. This was enough to claim the number one spot on the team’s all-time career points list, which currently stands at 1,001 points. Wright’s 49-point effort helped lead the Cougars to a 79-70 victory over Holy Name on January 3, 2015.

The number of career points Crispus Couglas point guard Robert Sandvold ’14 scored in the San Diego Regionals on Monday, March 23, was 97. This was enough to claim the number one spot on the team’s all-time career points list, which currently stands at 1,001 points. Sandvold’s 97-point effort helped lead the Cougars to a 79-70 victory over Holy Name on January 3, 2015.

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I have embarked on a lifelong journey to prove that women can succeed in male-dominated fields. My experiences have taught me that perseverance and resilience are key to achieving success. Throughout my academic career, I have faced numerous obstacles, but I have always been determined to overcome them. My research has focused on the experiences of women in academia, and I have collaborated with colleagues from various disciplines to ensure that our findings are disseminated widely. I am proud of the impact that my work has had on the field, and I look forward to continuing my research and contributing to the advancement of women in science.
Countless literature professors before me have introduced their classes to Dante’s wilderness wanderings in the selva oscura, but how many have actually been lost in the woods with their students? I have. I teach in Azusa Pacific’s High Sierra Semester. Situated on 20 acres 12 miles from Yosemite National Park, this off-campus program integrates outdoor experience and leadership training into a humanities curriculum and employs a traditional “great books” approach to the liberal arts. The natural environment fosters a communal vitality not typically associated with dusty academics. The director is certified to treat frostbite. The philosophy professor, a specialist in Aristotle’s mathematics, builds outsized treehouses and hunts game with a compound bow. We are less an ivory tower than a boot camp with books.

From my forest perch, I read the articles and books published each year by Christopher Noble, Ph.D., is professor of English and the High Sierra Semester. Christian students, by contrast, need something from the humanities that only the humanities can provide: rigorous, literary, textual sophistication.
“You will not find the warrior, the poet, the philosopher, or the Christian by staring in his eyes as if he were your mistress: better fight beside him, read with him, argue with him, pray with him...” —C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves

“You can trust us to stick to you, through thick and thin—to the bitter end. And you can trust us to keep any secret of yours—closer than you keep it yourself. But you cannot trust us to let you face trouble alone, and go off without a word. We are your friends, Frodo.” —J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring


World’s foremost Christian writers

“At the time, few outside academia could place them, but today the world knows these men as two of the foremost Christian writers. C.S. Lewis, author of The Chronicles of Narnia and many theological works, and J.R.R. Tolkien, creator of The Lord of the Rings. What brought these very different men together? Lewis, a native of Northern Ireland, taught English literature, while Tolkien, born in South Africa and raised in England, studied languages. Unschooled and outgoing, Lewis stood in sharp contrast to the more introverted Tolkien. Yet they formed one of the most successful creative partnerships in history. “Despite their differences, Lewis and Tolkien bonded over a common love for Norse mythology and old poetry,” said Diana Glyer, Ph.D., professor in the Department of English and a leading scholar of the Inklings, Lewis and Tolkien’s writing group. “They shared a love for the same things and came from nearly opposite angles, jointly reaching ideas they could never have come up with on their own.” Lewis and Tolkien forged a friendship that sparked incredible success, paving the way to four children’s adventures in Narnia and a hobbit’s daring journey to save Middle-earth. Eventually, they founded the Inklings, the famous critique group that met weekly for 17 years and included Charles Williams, Owen Barfield, and Lewis’ brother, Warren. Glyer explores the working relationship of Lewis and Tolkien in The Company They Keep: (Kent State, 2014), in which he explores the unique creativity of two-person collaboration by researching the lives of creative duos, from John Lennon and Paul McCartney to Marie and Pierre Curie to Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. “This research has immense implications for how we perceive the creative process and innovation,” said Glyer. “A closer look at the lives of dynamic leaders reveals that many of them worked with less outspoken, but no less important, partners. Lewis and Tolkien offer just one example. There are myriad others.”

Some such pairs work together on APUs campus. Although meeting in Heritage Court instead of Oxford’s Eastgate, Don Thorsen, Ph.D., professor of graduate theology, and Steve Wilkens, Ph.D., professor of undergraduate philosophy, have worked together as colleagues for more than 25 years and jointly published two books. Pouring over drafts in the food court, the two combine strengths as Wilkens looks at structure and global issues, while the more detail-oriented Thorsen checks form and content.

Even when not collaborating on major projects, Thorsen and Wilkens meet weekly in local coffee shops to share ideas, bouncing intellectual thoughts back and forth. “Our fields consider the same questions and topics, but through different lenses,” said Wilkens. “As I look with philosophical eyes and he with theological eyes, we come up with combined solutions impossible to reach alone.”

Another pair gathers routinely to tackle a different kind of project. Frequently, Christopher Flannery, Ph.D., professor of history and political science, and David Wozniak, Ph.D., dean of the Honors College, generate ideas for the Honors College over their usual pulled pork sandwiches and iced tea. Weeks brings course curricula to the table for Flannery’s feedback, as well as specific questions like “What do you think about this course assignment?” and “Which translation of the Iliad should we use?” Together they share perspectives and brainstorm fresh, often out-of-the-box answers before making final decisions.

“We play different roles at the university and in our collaboration, but unite over a love for teaching and classic works,” said Flannery. “David is a gifted natural leader. But you can’t have leaders without followers, and I help them reach decisions from my position as a scholar and professor.”

Even beyond the realm of academia, the creative pairs model has merit. This December, Glyer will release her newest book, Bandersnatch: The Creative Genius of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and the Inklings (Black Square Books, 2015), an adaptation of The Company They Keep reimagined to encourage everyday readers to follow Lewis and Tolkien’s example in their own endeavors, whether starting a business, planting a church, writing a book, or developing new technologies. “Partners like Lewis and Tolkien represent the best pattern for success,” said Glyer. “Ideas flow like electricity between two such people. Then, as in the case of the Inklings, more people take part as the creative influence grows.”

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One cold autumn afternoon in England, two Oxford professors met at the Eastgate Hotel, their customary haunt for Monday lunch. The first, a large man with an eater, flushed face, barreled into the hotel dressed in casual tweed, his gregarious presence immediately noticed. The second, a short, slim man dressed in a formal suit, followed quietly. They sat at their usual table, ordered their usual fare, and began their usual discussion, debating literary topics and critiquing one another’s papers and stories.

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As an APU faculty member, faith integration and transformational scholarship fuel my work and infuse my classroom, providing a means for spiritual renewal and personal growth for all involved. Last fall, a deeply meaningful class discussion occurred during my Diversity and Equity course. During the opening devotional, I shared my testimony of a prayerful life determined to allow faith to triumph over the fears I experience as a parent of a black male teenager. A white female student disclosed her fear of her two black sons differently engaging from her two white children. She explained that she was discovering, too late for curfew and didn’t want to get in trouble with her mother. Her affirmation of the deepest anxiety of my heart encouraged me. When others outside my ethnic group acknowledge the unique challenges facing black males (and other males of color), relief floods my soul. When someone intentionally makes a difference on behalf of another, my hope for an end to horrific violence against those at risk in America burns a little brighter.

The truth is society needs our alumni, women and men who are prepared to make a difference within their various communities—at home, work, church, and beyond. Thus, our campus initiatives matter. In this context, our students engage the complex realities of differing cultural groups and determine the Lord’s call on their lives to improve the human condition. Not everyone is called to respond as my student did, but we are all called to bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).

A number of academic and extracurricular initiatives at APU accomplish this important work by reaching out to young men of color. Established in 1991, the Center for Academic Service-Learning and Research’s College Headed and Mighty Proud (C.H.A.M.P.) program pairs prospective teachers studying at APU with fourth grade students from the Azusa Unified School District. The program promotes college attendance among boys, the demographic most at risk for dropping out of high school, and changes their lives. Since its inception, the program has reached more than 6,000 Latino males.

Our campus efforts also extend to local high schools through the School of Business and Management’s Options Program. Initiated in 2009 by Roxanne Helm-Swint, DBA, the program empowers innovative and engaging curricula to facilitate membership and equip at-risk high school students with life skills and business knowledge. The program serves seven San Gabriel Valley-based alternative high schools.

In 2013, the Black Male Success Initiative (BMSI) Advisory Board formed on campus. The group applies a two-pronged approach to addressing the needs of APU’s most endangered student groups. First, BMSI promotes the success of African American and Latino males by being seen and involved on campus—a need often voiced by students of color. Second, BMSI addresses student efficacy through mentor relationships with men from the same ethnic background. An anonymous donor affirmed the significance of these efforts with an unexpected $35,000 gift. “This investment fuels a thorough assessment of the needs of blacks and Latinos and underscores program developments,” said Edgar Barron, executive director for the Student Center for Reconciliation and Diversity. Plans include the introduction of a specific program for Latinos.

Student organizations also address the persistence and success of African American and Latino men in society and academia. The Black Student Association hosted a three-week series of seminars, workshops, and networking events to address the unique challenges facing black and Latino students on campus.

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Christians who risk their lives for the Gospel always challenge me. Encountering heroic expressions of faith provokes me to question my own faith journey. Am I taking up my cross? If I were more courageous, would I take a different path? Should I be doing more “extreme” acts of faith? I had the opportunity to confront some of these questions as I studied Christians who risked their lives for the sake of making peace and bringing justice.
I asked a man named Carlos some of those questions as we drove down a narrow dirt road in a remote part of the Guatemalan mountains. As we approached a sharp bend in the road, he slowly turned the corner and stopped the car at the spot where he nearly lost his life during the Guatemalan civil war.

An evangelical missionary called to struggle alongside these caught between two warring factions, Carlos believed his work involved bringing salvation to individuals and transforming the community in which they lived, a conviction that nearly got him killed by a paramilitary group that considered Carlos a political dissident trying to agitate the poor to rebellion.

Carlos, 1 of 85 exemplar Christians I studied, risked his life to bring God’s love and justice to communities in high conflict. Working with Paul Alexander, Ph.D., professor at Palmer Theological Seminary at Eastern University, I examined a group of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians who felt called by God to work for social change in high-conflict settings. Our research was part of a series of studies exploring the experiences and expressions of God’s love by Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians, sponsored by the Flame of Love Project, a collaborative grant funded by the John Templeton Foundation to the University of Akron. The grant allowed us to study the personal characteristics, theological commitments, and life experiences of Christians who believe the Holy Spirit guides them to work for social change through peacemaking and social action in dangerous environments.

Most Christians are not confronted with such extreme examples of ministry, but all believers can strive for the kind of sensitivity to the Spirit that Pablo developed over many years of listening to God and responding courageously.

Many of our participants did not start out with a strong social conscience, but developed it along their faith journey. While commitment to social justice fades as a core Christian doctrine in the evangelical expression of Christianity, often viewed with significant suspicion and characterized as liberal, socialist, or postmodern, the examples we studied were convinced that God cares about just cultural practices, and that love and justice must exist together if we are to be Christ-like in how we love.

Sensitivity and Bold Response to the Spirit’s Leading

Most compelling to us was that these individuals had become extraordinary by habitually responding to the Spirit’s leading and developed an incredible sensitivity to the guidance of the Spirit, responding even when it made no earthly sense. Pablo, a man from our study, is a good example of this. He believed that the Spirit prompted him to directly challenge a violent paramilitary group, and he responded with boldness.

“One night, the Paras [paramilitaries] shot a 25-year-old mother in front of her children because they wrongly believed she had killed her Para friend,” he said. “The community was afraid to claim the body for fear of what the Paras might do. So they called me. I went that very night, recovering the body and giving her a proper funeral in our church as a way of saying that the Church would not be intimidated by such threats."

Then, led by the Spirit, the church members carried the coffin to where the Paras lived and burned the body there. This made them face their awful mistake every time they passed the grave. As a result, many quit; others fought among themselves. This action became the beginning of the end of the Paras’ control of the region. Three years ago, we could not drive this road for fear of the guerrillas or Paras. They are still around, but their control of the people is greatly diminished.”

Most Christians are not confronted with such extreme examples of ministry, but all believers can strive for the kind of sensitivity to the Spirit that Pablo developed over many years of listening to God and responding courageously.

Conversion to Social Justice

Many participants experienced a conversion to social action or peacemaking. As they discerned to listen to the voice of the Spirit, they developed an awareness that evangelism was not enough in their pursuit to become more like Christ. Most came from a conservative, mainstream Christian background focused on individual salvation and personal disciplines. However, they each described key transitions in their lives that expanded their view of the Gospel to include the need for acts of justice to accompany love and evangelism. These words go beyond meeting the needs of the poor to directly challenging the forces that perpetuate violence, poverty, oppression, and destitution. Many of our participants did not start out with a strong social conscience, but developed it along their faith journey.

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Crossing Social Boundaries

These participants taught us that many social boundaries exist as a way for the powerful to disfellowship the powerless, and in order to fully express God’s love we must cross these boundaries. Our participants modeled themselves after Jesus and the Gospel account as a call to expose hidden power structures, challenge social and economic privilege, and dismantle the notion of identity exclusively based on lineage, race, religion, or social position. As one Palestinian evangelical Christian peace activist reflected: “Jesus commands me to love the enemy. So it is not about resistance. It’s not even about healing. It’s about completely loving those who do this to me. It is to break all these forms of identity and create a new identity within Him and through Him. In trying to figure out how to deal with Palestinians and Israelis, I am compelled to be fully united with them.”

Jesus dismantled our notion of identity as solely tied to a group, social status, or role. When He commanded us to love our enemy, He invited us into serious self-reflection about how we perceive our meaning and purpose in this world. The Incarnation represents the ultimate example of crossing and collapsing boundaries. Jesus crossed over into the natural world to form a bridge between Creator and created. He calls us to do the same with those we might consider strangers or enemies, because we were once strangers ourselves. This is not just a call to those who identify themselves as Christian activists—it is a call to all who call themselves Christ-followers.

Redefining Danger

Humans typically turn away from danger, yet the peacemakers we studied relinquished their impulse for self-preservation to the hands of God. For some, death is a realistic consequence of their vocation, and perhaps even a mark of success. One urban pastor who worked for 25 years at the crossroads of two warring gangs said, “Christians are not worried about death. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. There must be a price if you want change. If we are going to be concerned about social change, we cannot be overly concerned about preserving our lives.”

While this pastor’s response to death may seem reckless, many in our study believe that ignoring a call to action is riskier than that. If we take seriously the call to be change makers in a world that resists social change and sometimes reacts violently to it, there will likely be personal costs associated with activism. Individuals, groups, and institutions that possess power have a vested interest in retaining and preserving it. Directly challenging power structures is likely to result in some type of loss—loss of status, employment, or comfort. However, not responding has far greater consequences. In the words of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., “Society’s punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.”

The Gospel is offensive. Not just because it calls people to a higher moral standard or challenges a social worldview. The Gospel offends because it confronts fortified structures of power and privilege. It threatens those who receive societal benefit for belonging to a particular group and tries the cultural hedges of a domesticated suburban life. The Gospel contests national, religious, and social identity. It demands that we cross over the driving wall of hostility to reconcile with those who might threaten our way of life and to call the stranger a “native among us.”

Carlos dared to cross that wall. While lying on the ground with a gun to his head, he prayed for his enemy. Miraculously, his captors spared his life. Not every Christian is confronted with the possibility of death by following Christ. However, all Christians are called to develop sensitivity to the Spirit’s leading, respond with boldness, confront injustice, cross social boundaries, and redefine danger.

Robert Walsh, Ph.D., ABPP, is dean of the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences at the University of Akron. The grant allowed us to study the personal characteristics, theological commitments, and life experiences of Christians who believe the Holy Spirit guides them to work for social change through peacemaking and social action in dangerous environments.
For John Verhoeven, the uncertainty of impending retirement lasted all of nine days. After 16 successful years as the head baseball coach at Biola University, Verhoeven announced his retirement at the beginning of his final season. The reality of that decision left him wondering what he would do next—for less than two weeks.

“We had a four-game series right after that with Azusa Pacific, and as we exchanged lineup cards, APU’s head coach Paul Svagdis said, ‘Why don’t you come work for me?’” Several text messages and a few days later, Verhoeven, a former professional relief pitcher who played four seasons in the majors in the late ’70s and early ’80s, committed to joining the APU staff as the pitching coach the following season.

“Now we have two of us who could be head coaches on the team, which some might see as a problem, ” said Svagdis. “But you can’t be afraid to bring in someone who might be better than you at some aspects of the game. I’m learning a ton from John about a side of the game I need more experience in.”

Verhoeven joins a group of coaches with the requisite experience and qualifications to lead their own programs who sign on in assistant roles with APU. That group includes NFL Hall of Famer and Cougars offensive line coach Jackie Slater, M.A. ’14, and Olympic champion Bryan Clay ’02. The draw lies in the way coaching at APU allows them to merge their sports expertise and experience with their faith and use both to speak into the lives of their athletes. “These individuals have competed in athletics at the highest levels. At APU, they can really embrace being a mentor-coach in a Christ-centered environment,” said Svagdis.

Being an assistant also offers Verhoeven the chance to relax a little, freeing him up to focus on a smaller set of players while offering Svagdis the benefit of his experience. “As a head coach, you have a million things going on in your head. As a pitching coach, I can relax and just do what I do best.”

And what he does best is work with pitchers individually, meeting them where they are developmentally. Such attention allows players to grow physically and emotionally. “He bases his plan for each of them on their individual needs, ” said Svagdis. “As a result, they build confidence as young men because their role has been defined in ways that allow them to be successful.”

Verhoeven credits his time in the majors, which included stints with the Angels, White Sox, and Twins, with setting the foundation for how he coaches in an era when the health and durability of players plays a more primary role. “I think the guys see me as pretty old school, but I protect my players more than I was protected as a player,” said Verhoeven. “Pitchers were treated differently. Their manhood was judged on their pitching, whether they were ready or not.” Things have changed. While teams today monitor pitch counts closely for highly specialized relief pitchers, relievers in Verhoeven’s era typically threw multiple innings five or six games in a row and did so without complaint. For Verhoeven, that resulted in a shortened career due to back and elbow issues. “By the end of a season, my body was a wreck. In my mid-20s, I had the body of a 40-year-old.”

That experience drives him to help players learn to push themselves further than they think they can while also learning to rely on themselves to make their own decisions. And his players respond to that approach. “He gives you free rein and doesn’t micromanage you,” said Elliot Thompson ’17. “He’s more of a resource for you. There’s never a question he doesn’t have an answer for, that he doesn’t have a story for.”

Like any coach, Verhoeven strives to win games and eventually a national championship. But at the end of the day, developing character in his players takes top priority. “I love the connection that happens with the type of players we have, even those who don’t have a faith background. It’s cool to see kids who come in without that foundation, and by the time they leave, they’re working with church groups talking about how they came to faith. I really love seeing them grow into men while they’re with me.”

John Verhoeven
Pitching Coach / Azusa Pacific Baseball

Coaching Character

by Michael Clark

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Michael Clark ’97, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of English. mclark@apu.edu
Watson Wins MVP of NFPLA Collegiate Bowl

Terrill Watson ’15 finished his university football career in November, but Azusa Pacific’s all-time leader rather continued a busy offseason with an appearance in the NFPLA Collegiate Bowl on January 17. The NFL Draft hopeful earned MVP of the college all-star game, rushing nine times for 53 yards and scoring the game’s first touchdown, going for 214 yards and finding his first eight games of Pacific West Conference play. Conference scoring leader Troy Leaf ’15 ranked among the top scorers nationally in Division II as he led Azusa Pacific toward its first Division II postseason appearance.

Women’s Basketball: After starting the season 7-5, Azusa Pacific won six of its first eight games in 2015, including a 78-67 upset of PacWest-leading Hawaii Pacific.

Men’s Basketball: The Cougars opened the year with a 15-1 record, putting together a 24-game overall winning streak and winning their first eight games of Pacific West Conference play. Conference scoring leader Troy Leaf ’15 ranked among the top scorers nationally in Division II as he led Azusa Pacific toward its first Division II postseason appearance.

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Men’s and Women’s Tennis: Men’s tennis won back-to-back National Christian College Athletic Association championships during its transition to NCAA Division II play in the fall, and men’s tennis ranked 19th in the final poll of the regular season. Men’s tennis placed 19th in the final Division II rankings, and men’s tennis rose to 13th in its first season of NCAA postseason eligibility. In preseason polls, men’s tennis ranked 12th and women’s tennis 13th.

Staci Foster ’15 earned cross country All-American status by placing 26th at the NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships in Louisville, Kentucky. Foster finished with a time of 21:52.8 on a muddy 5.78-kilometer course to become the Cougars’ first-ever Division II All-American in cross country. Other All-Americans included Chris Brusebæk ’16, a third-team men’s soccer All-American, and Watson in football.

In-season Sports Updates

Softball: Sophomore third baseman Nicki Sprague ’17, last year’s PacWest Conference all-conference honoree, finished the season as national runner-up in 2014, APU finished with a record of 21-12-1. APU ranked 19th in the final poll of the regular season. Men’s soccer placed 19th in the final Division II rankings, and men’s basketball rose to 13th in its first season of NCAA postseason eligibility. In preseason polls, men’s tennis ranked 12th and women’s tennis 13th.

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t.were a number of reasons that caused Mark to feel that his life was falling apart. One of them was the realization that he was not happy with his current career. He had been working in his current job for 10 years, but he felt that he was not making any progress in his career. He was also feeling overworked and stressed, which was affecting his personal life as well. Mark knew that he needed to make a change, but he was not sure what that change should be.

To help him make this decision, Mark decided to seek advice from a career counselor. The counselor helped him identify his strengths and weaknesses, as well as his interests and values. The counselor also helped him explore different career options and helped him set realistic goals for his career.

After talking to the career counselor, Mark decided to pursue a master's degree in psychology. He felt that this would be a good fit for him because he was interested in helping others and he believed that he had the necessary skills to be successful in this career.

Mark began his studies at a local university and he found that he really enjoyed the classes. He also started volunteering at a local mental health clinic, which gave him the opportunity to apply what he was learning in a real-world setting.

Mark soon realized that he was in the right place and he felt much more fulfilled in his life. He was able to balance his studies and his work and he found that he was much happier and more productive.

In conclusion, Mark's story illustrates that sometimes you need to take a step back and reassess your life in order to find a better path. By seeking advice from a career counselor and pursuing a new degree, Mark was able to make a positive change in his life and feel much more fulfilled as a result.
For His great purposes." 

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Over much coffee, conversation, and chocolate, we discussed what it meant to be faithful to God.

by Jennifer E. Walsh

Margaret Boggos lived on her family’s citrus farm in Claremont for 63 years before macerical degeneration threatened to take it away. As the progressive disease gradually narrowed her vision, day-to-day tasks became more difficult, and she began to worry that she would need to leave her home. “Staying in my home was important to me, so my friends and family urged me to consider getting some help,” she said. Enter Lindsey Rheld ‘96 and Visiting Angels. Rheld, who runs two locations of the franchise-based, in-home care agency, arranged for a professional caregiver to enter Margaret every day and help with activities of daily living. Little did either of them know that this relationship would span more than eight years and provide a backdrop of friendship and support for both Margaret and Gracie, her caregiver. “The home care relationship plays a transformational role in the lives of both the caregiver and the client,” said Rheld. Creating a career of facilitating these connections, Rheld intentionally placed herself at the intersection of entrepreneurial business and Powerful ministry.

Rheld’s journey with Visiting Angels began in 2002 during her tenure as a business professor at Azusa Pacific University. “When I taught Strategic Management, we talked a lot about emerging industries and how entrepreneurs should make sure they act themselves up for success by choosing an industry that will support growth.” As she considered which industry she should enter, a conversation with the dean at Claremont Graduate University kept coming back to her. “He told me that he was looking for a caregiver for his mother and couldn’t find one,” Rheld’s own research into the offerings in the San Gabriel Valley confirmed a dearth of home care agencies in the area. “I discovered that the competition was almost nonexistent,” she said. “The industry has grown a lot since then, but at the time it was in its infancy, and there was a lot of opportunity to break new ground.”

Opportunity aligned neatly with Rheld’s passion and experiences. “I’ve had a heart for seniors ever since I helped care for my grandmother as she battled Alzheimer’s disease,” she said. “Then later, as my brother and I cared for our aging parents, I experienced the difficulty faced by adult children as they struggle to respect their parent’s independence while meeting their changing needs.” These experiences played a foundational role in her decision to enter the home care industry. “I have firsthand experience with what our Visiting Angels families are going through. Caring for an elderly relative can be overwhelming and emotionally draining.”

yper the niche determined and marketed, she considered her entry point options. “So I was reluctant to start a home care agency by myself. I had a solid 30 years of franchise experience, and I knew if I could take what I learned and apply it to this industry, I could be successful.” As Rheld gained recognition as one of FiveBullivan Magazine’s “50 Fabulous Women of Influence” in 2011, however, she recognized the need for a founding edge. “Long-term vision, casting, strategy, marketing—all of the skills foundational to good leadership come naturally to her,” she said. Over the last 15 years, that formula for success resulted in significant growth. Rheld now runs two locations, where 225 employees serve more than 150 elderly clients. The Glendora franchise won the Chamber of Commerce’s Business of the Year in 2010, and Rheld garnered recognition as one of FiveBullivan Magazine’s “50 Fabulous Women of Influence” in 2011. But for Rheld, recognition and success pale in comparison to her work’s life-changing results. “God calls us to care for widows and marginalized people. I’ve discovered that in this role, I got to do both.” She helped make sure that the elderly are cared for, offer relief for their adult caretaking children, and provide professional caregivers a safe, appropriate, and supportive environment in which to work. Rheld’s success with Visiting Angels demonstrates that personal conviction, Christ-centered mission, and business savvy meet, everybody wins.

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By Caitlin Gipson

For example, Rheld’s Glendora and Visiting Angels branches lead the way in the home care industry as one of the first to use an employee and client Web portal for communications and scheduling. “My undergraduate work was in IT, so I love finding ways to use technology to streamline our operations,” Rheld said.

But for Rheld, success as a home care agency must be measured in the life-changing results. “God calls us to care for widows and marginalized people. I’ve discovered that in this role, I got to do both.” She helped make sure that the elderly are cared for, offer relief for their adult caretaking children, and provide professional caregivers a safe, appropriate, and supportive environment in which to work. Rheld’s success with Visiting Angels demonstrates that personal conviction, Christ-centered mission, and business savvy meet, everybody wins.

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Margaret Boggos lived on her family’s citrus farm in Claremont for 63 years before macerical degeneration threatened to take it away. As the progressive disease gradually narrowed her vision, day-to-day tasks became more difficult, and she began to worry that she would need to leave her home. “Staying in my home was important to me, so my friends and family urged me to consider getting some help,” she said. Enter Lindsey Rheld ‘96 and Visiting Angels. Rheld, who runs two locations of the franchise-based, in-home care agency, arranged for a professional caregiver to enter Margaret every day and help with activities of daily living. Little did either of them know that this relationship would span more than eight years and provide a backdrop of friendship and support for both Margaret and Gracie, her caregiver. “The home care relationship plays a transformational role in the lives of both the caregiver and the client,” said Rheld. Creating a career of facilitating these connections, Rheld intentionally placed herself at the intersection of entrepreneurial business and powerful ministry.

Rheld’s journey with Visiting Angels began in 2002 during her tenure as a business professor at Azusa Pacific University. “When I taught Strategic Management, we talked a lot about emerging industries and how entrepreneurs should make sure they act themselves up for success by choosing an industry that will support growth.” As she considered which industry she should enter, a conversation with the dean at Claremont Graduate University kept coming back to her. “He told me that he was looking for a caregiver for his mother and couldn’t find one,” Rheld’s own research into the offerings in the San Gabriel Valley confirmed a dearth of home care agencies in the area. “I discovered that the competition was almost nonexistent,” she said. “The industry has grown a lot since then, but at the time it was in its infancy, and there was a lot of opportunity to break new ground.”

Opportunity aligned neatly with Rheld’s passion and experiences. “I’ve had a heart for seniors ever since I helped care for my grandmother as she battled Alzheimer’s disease,” she said. “Then later, as my brother and I cared for our aging parents, I experienced the difficulty faced by adult children as they struggle to respect their parent’s independence while meeting their changing needs.” These experiences played a foundational role in her decision to enter the home care industry. “I have firsthand experience with what our Visiting Angels families are going through. Caring for an elderly relative can be overwhelming and emotionally draining.”

By Caitlin Gipson

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Every effort is made to publish all photos submitted to Azusa Pacific University. We apologize if your photo was not published.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED READING THE CLASS NOTES. If you have a photo or a story you’d like to share, please submit it to alumni@apu.edu.

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most valuable player. In 1956, he was class salutatorian and earned a bachelor’s degree in religion and psychology.

A month later, he became an ordained minister of the Free Methodist Church and received his first church assignment. Don earned a second bachelor’s degree at Azusa Pacific University in educational psychology and began his teaching and coaching career at Western Christian High School and later in Illnois Valley. He retired from teaching in 1989 and from the active ministry in 1994 after 26 years as an educator and 40 years as an active pastor. Don’s wife; his sons, Larry and Gary; his daughter, Connie; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren survive him.

MERLIN FRANCIS ARCHER ’58

passed away on February 1, 2015, at the age of 99. During World War II, he worked as a radio technician at Fort Lewis, Washington. Merlin served as a minister with the Free Methodist Church in Arizona, California, and Kansas. His sons, Steven and Raymond, brother, Charles; three children, Aaron (Susan), Adam (Laurie), and Aimee Tracy; and six grandchildren survive him.

WILLIAM “BILL” CORNELL JR. ’65

passed away on July 5, 2014. He took great joy in his profession as a CPA and enjoyed finding solutions to various problems. He always strove for the highest integrity, and helped others to do the same. Bill relaxed by gardening, playing the harmonica, and solving puzzles. He was much loved and delighted in simple beauty. His wife, Donna; two children, Pamela-Joy and Christopher Bradley (Sinnamon); two grandchildren, Paula Jane, Torino Lee, and a grandson due in October; and two brothers, Jack (Carolee) and James (Laurie) survive him.

HAL DENNIS EURICH ’70, M.A. ’72

passed away December 9, 2014, in Jackson, Georgia, after college, Hal served as pastor of the Assembly of God Church in Idaho, then moved to Glendora, California, where he worked at Forcht Mental Health Center. He also taught at the Advocate School in Hemet and loved working with the youth there. Hal established the Euroch Counseling offices in Hemet and Calimesa in 2002 and maintained his practice until his dementia diagnosis required an early retirement.

EDITH DAVIS JAMIN, M.S. ’74

passed away peacefully on November 11, 2014, surrounded by her loving family. Ed received her undergraduate degree from New York University and her master’s degree from Azusa Pacific University. She and her husband, Gene, traveled across country in 1961 with three daughters to make their homes in Palm Springs, California. Ed taught for more than 25 years. Her husband, her three daughters (Shelly, Debbie, and Ameda) and their spouses; and her five grandchildren survive her.

JOYCE HOFENZERSEN, M.A. ’78

passed away on December 8, 2014, in Prescott at the age of 62. After completing her bachelor’s degree at Westmont College, Joyce went on to earn her master’s degree at Azusa Pacific. Joyce loved traveling with her family, hiking Prescott Lakes with her grandchildren, hiking Pinecrest Lake with her family, hiking Pinecrest Lake with her family.

RICHARD HOLST, M.S. ’73, passed away on January 28, 2015, in Claremont, California, after a brief illness at the age of 63. A high school math teacher, Fred also coached multiple youth football, track, and basketball teams, serving his longest tenure at El Roble Junior High School in Claremont. His wife of 40 years, Dorothy, brother, Charles; three children, Aaron (Susan), Adam (Laurie), and Aimee Tracy; and six grandchildren survive him.

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WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE YOU WEARING YOUR APU CLOTHING?

Attention alumni: send in your photographs of the places you have been with your Cougar wear. If we print your submission, you will receive an APU T-shirt to wear while your adventures, including paragliding, white water rafting, and caving. The highlight of her journey except one. In October 1928, Hill wrote:
Adequate deliverance came after a few minutes of sickness when we were a day or two out from shore. Never have I had an experience like it. After the single instance I have not missed a meal all the way across the ocean, and have been free from sickness. Never have I had an experience like it.

Mary Hill

Mary Hill arrived in Whittier, California, on February 24, 1906—a 41-year-old, single woman who had traveled alone from Ohio to become the first president of the Training School for Christian Workers (predecessor to Azusa Pacific University). On October 15, 1901, she sailed across the Pacific Ocean to South China, and in the aftermath of the murderous, anti-Christian Boxer Rebellion to begin a long missionary career. Over the course of many years, she sailed back and forth between the two nations numerous times, experiencing debilitating seasickness on each journey except one. In October 1928, Hill wrote:

How I would love to meet with all of you Prayer Bands this morning to tell of answered prayer, of prayers lifted to God! Deliverance came after a few minutes of sickness when we were a day or two out from shore.

After the single instance I have not missed a meal all the way across the ocean, and have been free from sickness. Never have I had an experience like it.

Mary Hill was an avid reader and writer. Her husband, Donn; their children, Betty and Jeremy (Erin); her sisters, Bonnie Sabott and Doris Lowe; and her mother, Mary Louise, survive him.

PAUL WESTMAN ’94 passed away on June 4, 2014, after a short illness. He was born in Brooks, Maine, and grew up in Pasadena, California. He served as a salesman in the electrical wholesale business for more than 60 years. Paul was a fun-loving guy who enjoyed tennis, snow skiing, water skiing, hiking, playing cards, listening to his favorite jazz records, and traveling. His wife, Patty; daughter, Linda Westman; stepdaughters, Cheryl Larkin (Kyle); Lon Koester, and Christy Althy; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild survive him.

ADAM ’06 AND LISA NERSTOR ’10 BoTT QUEENSLAND, NEW ZEALAND

In February, Adam ’06 and Lisa ’10 traveled to* 118 Bott traveled to the north and south islands of New Zealand enjoying many adventures, including paragliding, white water rafting, and caving. The highlight was hiking through the forests of Milford Sound.

ISABELLA SILVA ’14 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, THAILAND

Isabella Silva ’14 served with a missionary organization in Chiang Rai, Thailand. She helped in a paramedical outreach, where she can grow, spread the Gospel through high quality media, and share stories as a means to help your faith grow. She is passionate about working with teenagers and children experienced around the world.

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