



Highlands College

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2020

“As an institution of higher education built in a moment in time where the sector is demanding innovation, we are rethinking everything about how our students learn.”

—Mark Pettus, Highlands College President

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A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

MISSION & VISION



While the world experienced challenges in 2020 at a scale never before seen in our lifetimes, I'm personally encouraged and inspired by how the Church and our College responded to the needs surrounding us. Inside those obstacles, or perhaps despite them, God chose 2020 to turn some of our biggest dreams into reality. All of it was made possible by your faithful generosity, and we've never been more grateful.



For several years, we've been planning and designing a world-class training ground for students with a ministry calling, and this past year, we broke ground on our future home at the Grandview Campus. The cutting-edge facilities that are materializing around us will produce some of the finest leaders in vocational ministry. The construction process continues to progress with favor, and as a result, we are only months away from its anticipated completion.

The future we've envisioned feels like it is approaching more rapidly than ever, but we know we'll need unprecedented clarity to accomplish all that God has put on our hearts. That's why we completed a six-month, consultant-led process in 2020 to develop a Strategic Plan that will guide the next five years of our growth and development. We can say with more confidence than ever that the best is yet to come.

While we are passionately committed to building the future, what God is doing through Highlands College right now continues to awe us. In 2020 alone, we were able to safely continue the training of all of our students in the face of COVID-19.

The world has never needed the hope of the Gospel more, and Highlands College students and graduates are the boots-on-the-field response.

All that has come to fruition this past year has been made possible by the generous gifts made to the Highlands College Eternal Impact Campaign, which raised more than \$28.5 million in Fiscal Year 2020 alone.

Thank you for your partnership in this vision. We believe, as I know you do, that we are just getting started. With your continued support, the impact we will make together this year will surpass anything we've ever seen.

Together we win,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark Pettus".

Mark Pettus

MISSION

Highlands College is a biblical higher education institution that exists to supply the Church with leaders of competence, character, and spiritual maturity, holistically trained to lead lives of eternal impact by fulfilling the Great Commission.

VISION

To create a ministry Academy model, applying leading-edge methods in world-class facilities, where students graduate debt-free—educated, equipped, and empowered to expand the Kingdom of God in a complex and changing world.



“THE HARVEST IS
PLENTIFUL, BUT THE
WORKERS ARE FEW.”
—LUKE 10:2

GRANDVIEW RENOVATION

A BOLD DREAM FOR A BOLD MISSION.

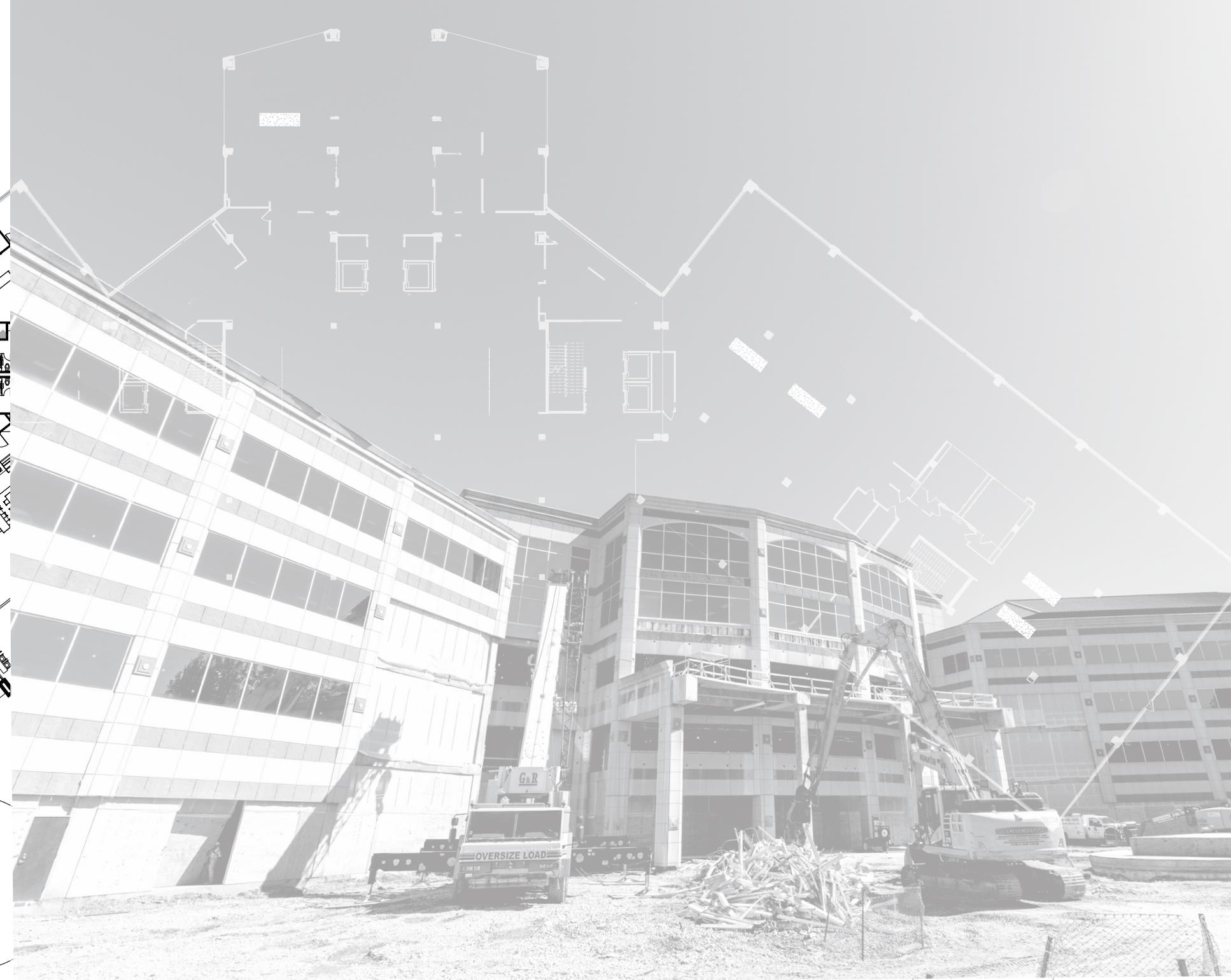
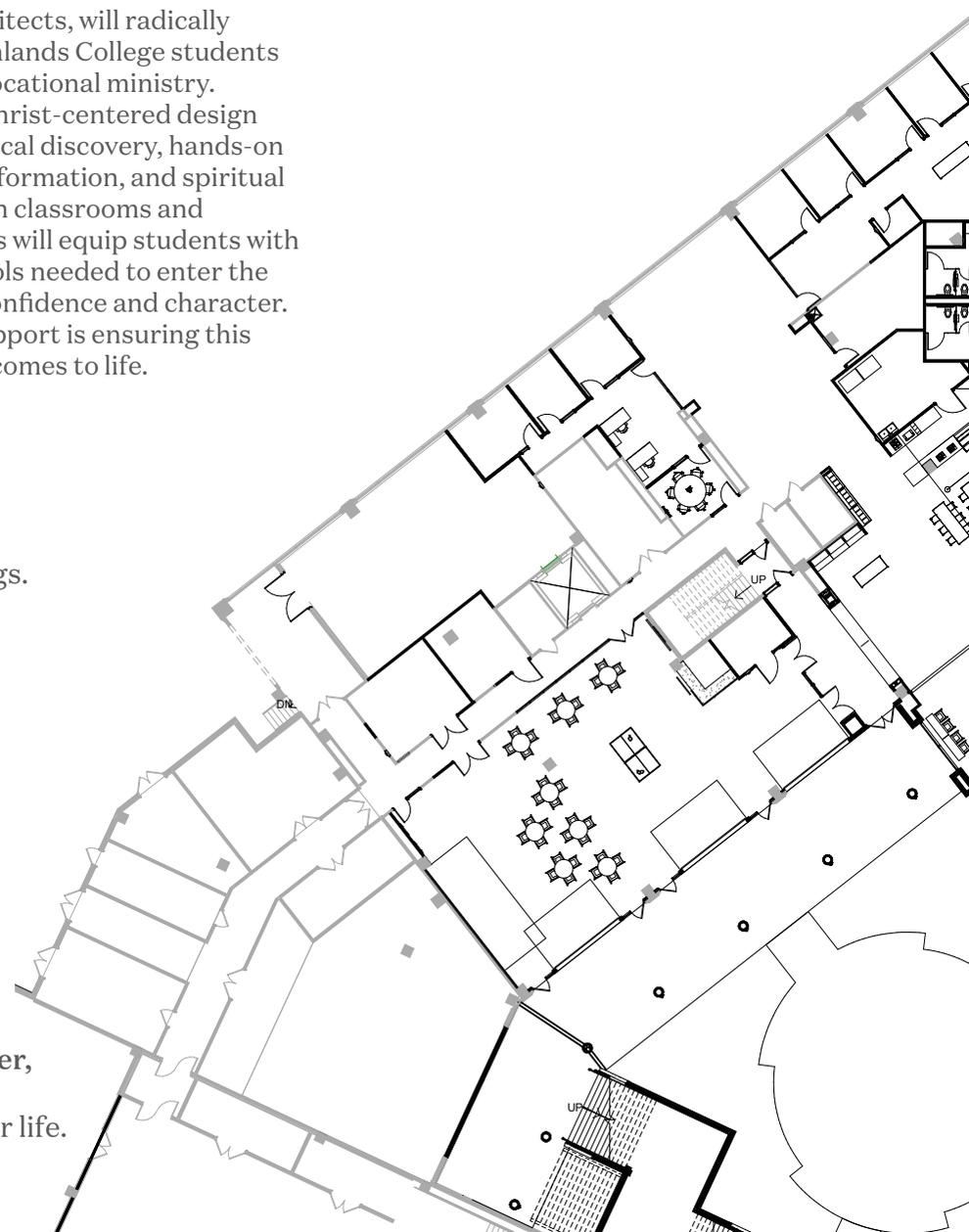
Since Highlands College began, we have envisioned a state-of-the-art campus imbued with God's love and energy. A series of events that could only have been steered by His hand has been underway since, culminating most recently in the 2020 groundbreaking of the new Grandview Campus in Birmingham, a project five years in the making.

The Grandview Campus, a five-story, 258,000 square foot facility designed by

TurnerBatson Architects, will radically transform how Highlands College students prepare for life in vocational ministry. Within its walls, a Christ-centered design fosters intense biblical discovery, hands-on learning, character formation, and spiritual exploration. Modern classrooms and collaborative spaces will equip students with the 21st Century tools needed to enter the harvest field with confidence and character. Generous donor support is ensuring this pioneering project comes to life.

DESIGN FEATURES

- 1** The new design will feature light-filled, open spaces at every turn, including community staircases, where students can connect, discuss, and study biblical teachings.
- 2** Learning studios and practicum labs will be equipped with high-tech capabilities that foster flexible, fast-paced learning.
- 3** Bold interior graphics, including biblical passages and vibrant colors, will reinforce the Highlands College vision, and establish a warm and inviting atmosphere.
- 4** Terraced porches join the main building to outdoor green space, where students can catch up on reading, toss the football, or enjoy quiet reflection.
- 5** New residence and dining halls, a library, student center, and recreation center will provide an immersive college experience that will strengthen and inspire graduates for life.



RESIDENCE HALL

A residential campus where students learn, study, work, socialize, live, and worship together is part of the College's mission to provide holistic, academy-style education and training that sets Highlands College apart.

In June 2021, the family of Hobby Lobby founder and CEO, David Green, donated \$20 million to Highlands College. This gift will allow HC to build its first residence hall completely debt-free.

Construction on the five-story, 68,000+ square foot Residence Hall has officially begun and will accommodate 252 students with multiple community spaces.

Completion of this project is scheduled for the end of 2022, and the first students will move in January 2023.

The Greens are an incredibly generous family who devote sizable amounts of the wealth entrusted to them by God to evangelical causes. Their generosity to Highlands College is an investment in eternity, affirmation in its mission, and expression of confidence in its vision.

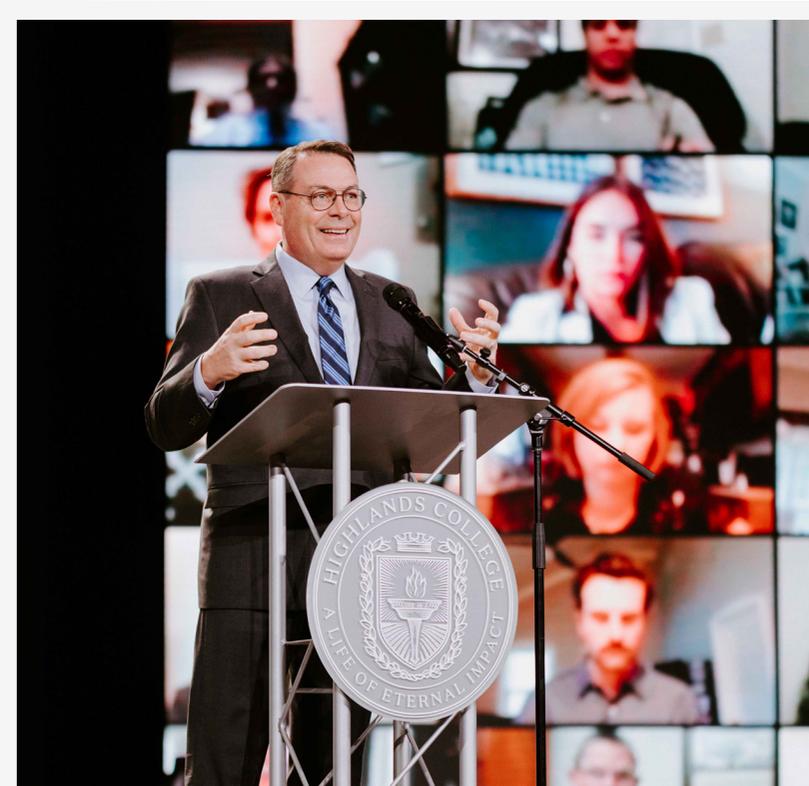


ACCREDITATION

THIS YEAR BROUGHT A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IN HIGHLANDS COLLEGE'S PURSUIT OF ACCREDITATION FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR BIBLICAL HIGHER EDUCATION (ABHE). Highlands College advanced from Applicant status to Candidate status and could receive a decision on initial accreditation as early as 2023. Moreover, Highlands College earned approval from the ABHE and the State of Alabama to offer an Associate of Arts in Ministry Leadership as we continue the accreditation process.

ABHE accreditation is a key component in fulfilling Highlands College's mission to provide exceptional training to students as they answer God's call on their hearts. Accredited ABHE institutions offer an extensive and rigorous study of the Bible, a transformational education, opportunities for hands-on training, and a clear understanding of each student's role in fulfilling the Great Commission. These distinctions have always been bedrock components of Highlands College. Combined with hands-on ministry training and character formation, Highlands College offers a unique approach to biblical higher education.

Accreditation is an essential milestone that will shape Highlands College's ability to grant a Bachelor's Degree in Christian Ministry in the future, a goal that has been worked towards since the beginning. Accreditation is a detailed, multi-year process. Fulfilling it reflects the College's commitment to providing a second-to-none biblical education in a setting with the highest standards of excellence.



STRATEGIC PLAN

FOLLOWING GOD'S COMMAND IN HABAKKUK 2:2 to clarify our vision by writing it down, we embarked on a rigorous, consultant-led process to develop a five-year strategic plan. Completed in fall 2020, this detailed document guides our growth and places us in the best possible position to meet our mission and vision.

Despite the challenges of 2020, our team worked over a six-month period to bring the plan to life. Through prayerful discussion and thoughtful debate, we pinpointed our seven most important goals for the next five years. These goals articulate exactly how we will improve and expand our operations.

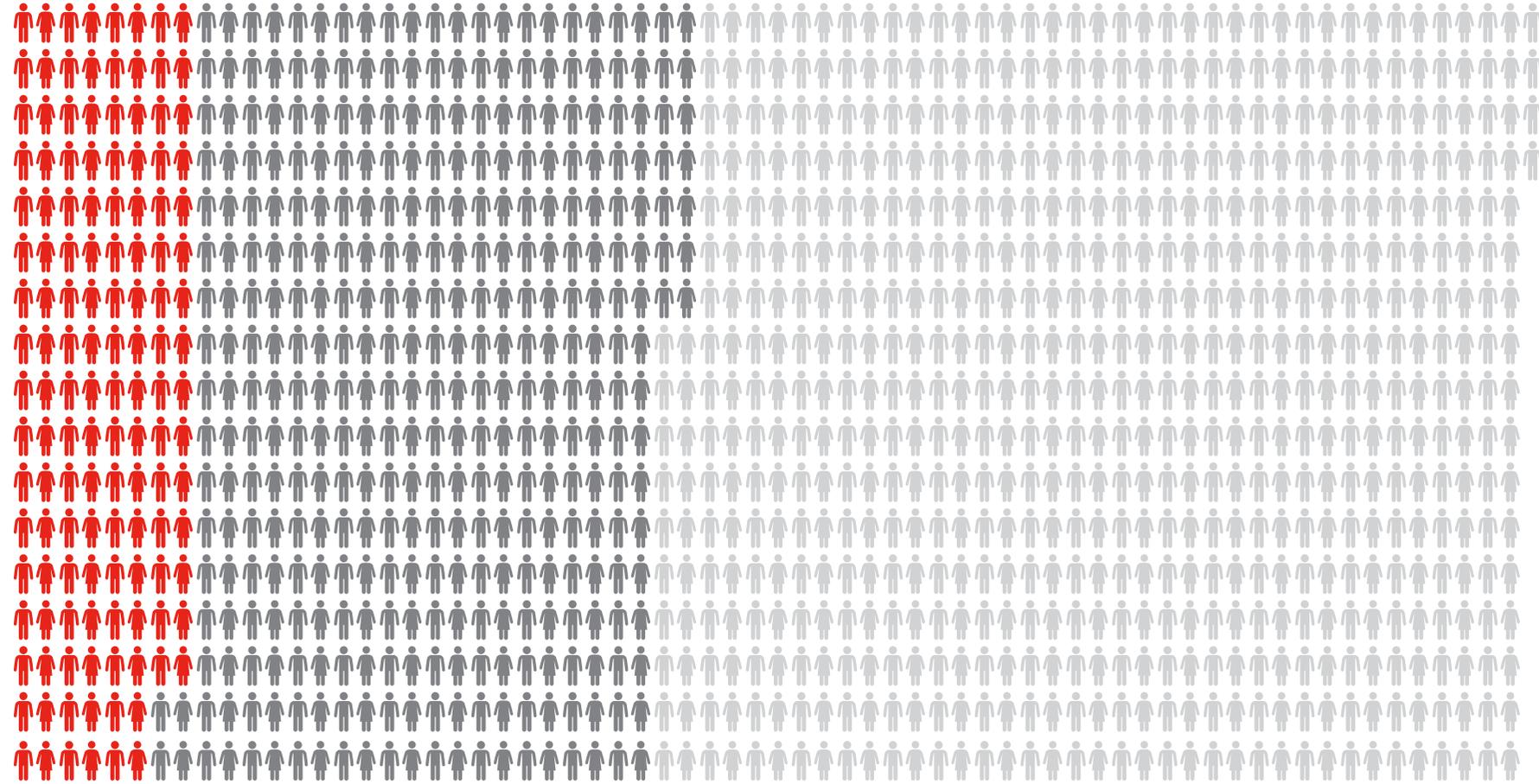
We also identified eight themes that define who we are. These include acknowledging our dependence on the Holy Spirit, preserving the relational, family-like culture of Highlands College, and continuing to commit to operational excellence. These themes are the spiritual scaffolding that surrounds and supports our goals.

Our Strategic Plan is a living document that makes plain our call from God. We pray that everyone who reads it will help amplify our mission to supply leaders of competence, character, and spiritual maturity to fulfill the Great Commission.



STUDENT LIFE

In Fiscal Year 2020, 132 Highlands College students and graduates went on to serve the local church, while 358 new students enrolled in the traditional program. Another 636 students enrolled in HC's expanding evening program, which allows adults to learn biblically-based leadership principles while balancing other commitments.



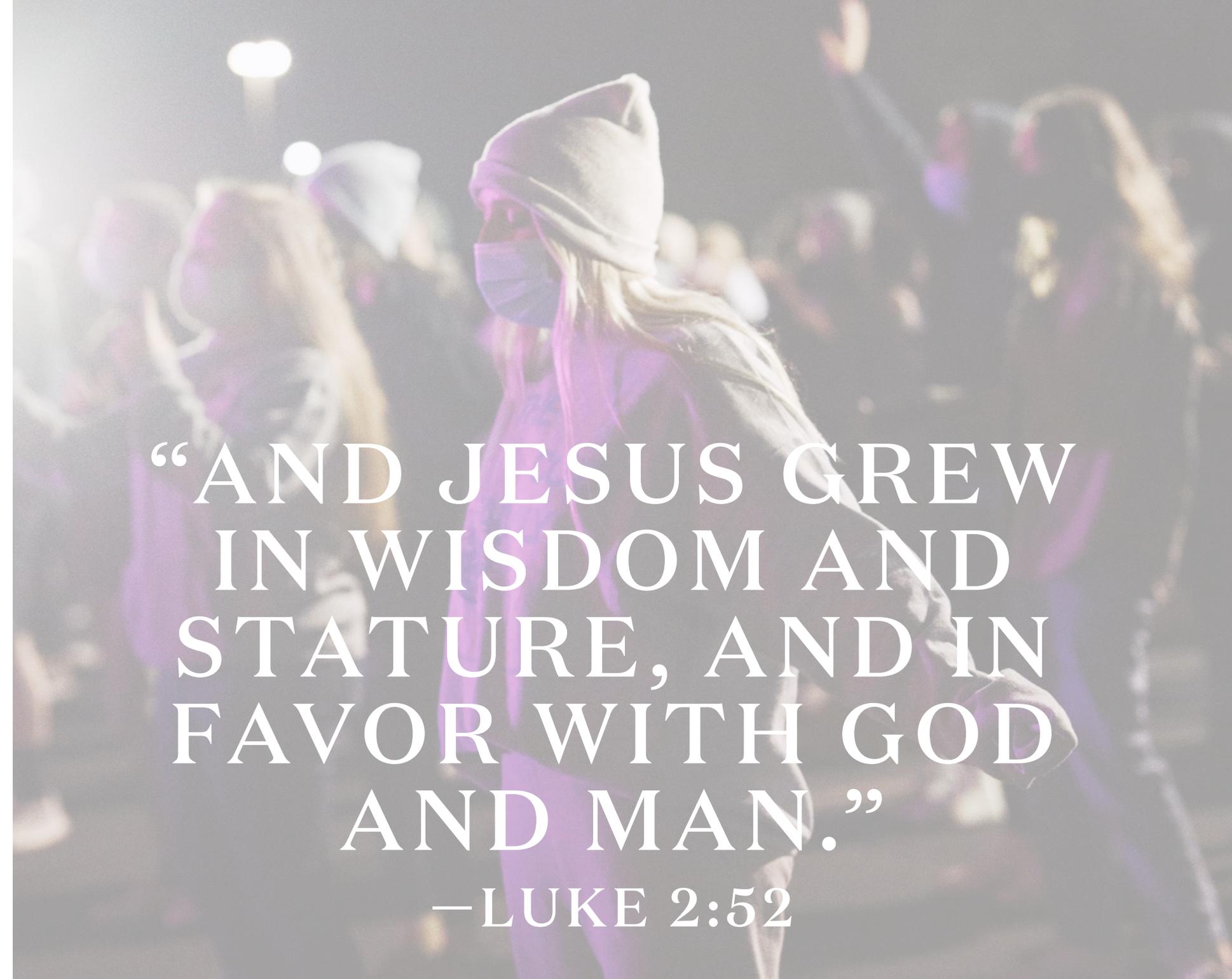
132 STUDENTS & GRADUATES WERE PLACED IN VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

358 NEW TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

636 NEW EVENING STUDENTS

“AND JESUS GREW IN WISDOM AND STATURE, AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND MAN.”

—LUKE 2:52



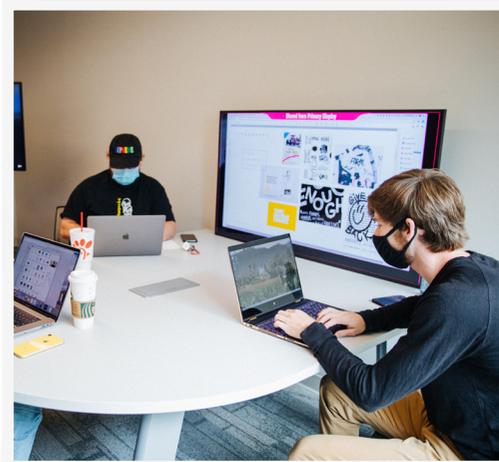
TRAINING

HIGHLANDS COLLEGE'S EXCEPTIONAL CURRICULUM RESTS ON FOUR PILLARS: ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION, MINISTRY TRAINING, SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT, AND CHARACTER FORMATION.



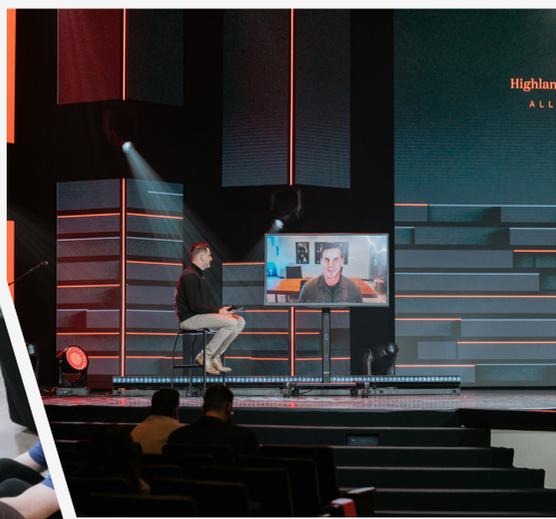
ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

HC faculty provide a consistent approach to biblical interpretation and teach students how to take scripture and apply it confidently to a contemporary setting.



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Along with Church of the Highlands pastors and staff, HC faculty and staff help HC students develop their relationship with Christ. Students also learn to support each other and grow in their faith through an annual fasting retreat, weekly chapel services, and small groups.



MINISTRY TRAINING

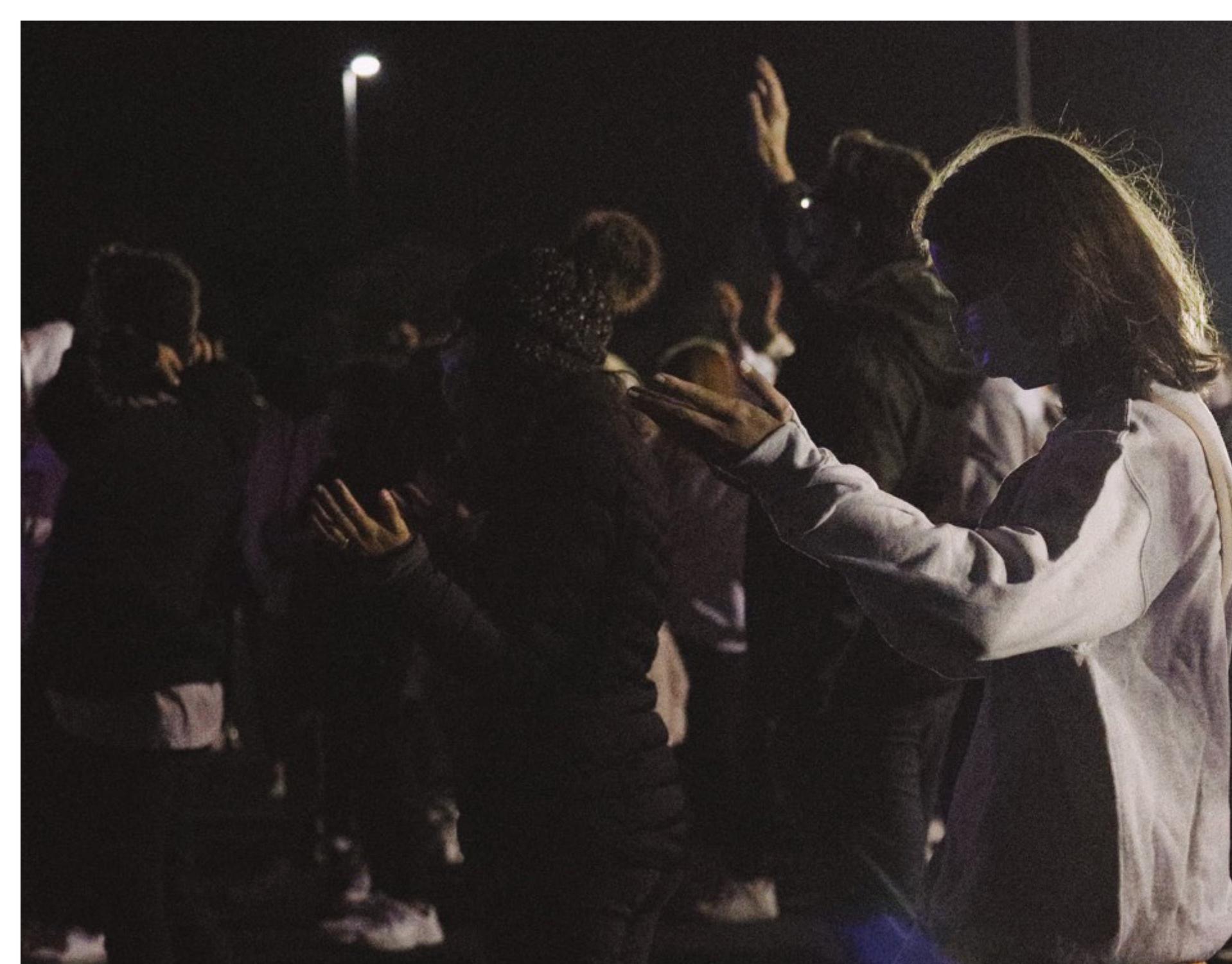
Enabling students to learn by doing is one of HC's biggest differentiators. Each week, they engage in numerous opportunities to hone their skills, utilizing Church of the Highlands as a living laboratory.

Eight different practicums give HC students a chance to specialize in a particular ministry area, ensuring they are awakened to God's call and live out their purpose to the fullest potential.



CHARACTER FORMATION

HC provides students intentional opportunities to dig deep, fight through adversity, and grow closer to the Lord. Intramural sports, the annual HC Half-Marathon, and the Expedition obstacle race are a few ways students develop the mindset that, "if we don't quit, we win."



“THERE IS NO
GREATER INVESTMENT
IN THE WORLD THAN
INTO A LEADER THAT
WILL IMPACT TENS
OF THOUSANDS OF
PEOPLE THE REST OF
THEIR LIVES.”

- CHRIS HODGES
HIGHLANDS COLLEGE CHANCELLOR

PHILANTHROPISTS SPOTLIGHT



DARRYL & DIANE ROSSER PHILANTHROPISTS AND DONORS

For Darryl and Diane Rosser, supporting Highlands College was the perfect expression of their desire to share God's blessings. "The more we learned about it, the more we wanted to help Highlands College meet its mission," Darryl Rosser said. "The passion we've seen in the faces of current students, and the work being accomplished by graduates around the world is just unbelievable."

Longtime members of Church of the Highlands, Darryl and Diane have watched the evolution of Highlands College and were among the first to financially support the Eternal Impact Campaign. In addition to funding scholarships for students, their generosity has funded numerous priorities in support of the mission, vision, and goals of Highlands College.



"When you meet the students and hear their desire to spread God's Word, you can't help but want to get behind them," Diane said. "They're the hands and feet of Jesus in the local Church, and it is very gratifying to be part of that."

The Rossers say one of their favorite annual events is Highlands College graduation. Full of excitement and expectation, it's an opportunity for prayerful reflection.

"As we watch the students walk across the stage, we think about all the experiences the College has given them to deepen and grow their faith," Darryl said. "We look at them as they receive their diplomas and think about what an important difference they are about to make. It's very powerful."

HC IMPACT



DAVID COBURN ALUMNUS, 2016

Every day, David Coburn feels a powerful connection to his Highlands College experience.

As the Guest Experience Pastor at Elevation Church's Greensboro, NC, location, David has his hands in many church activities. He oversees the serve teams, leads the adult ministry, and handles their building operations and finances.

"I am 27 years old, and still somewhat new to the ministry experience," said David. "But I truly feel there isn't a scenario for which I am not prepared. I credit that solely to my time at Highlands College."

David recognized that 2020 was going to be tough for many in his community, but he saw only opportunities to welcome God where people needed Him most. David reached out to a local alcohol treatment facility called Sober Living America, and invited the men living there to visit Elevation. Now, 90 residents regularly attend worship each week. "Countless men have given their lives to Christ," said David. "And they've taken their faith public with us through water baptisms."



David also started a Young Adult Small Group last year to give young adults a chance to grow closer to God during a time of social separation. The group grew from 6 to almost 40 regular participants each week. "These young adults are more energized than ever," said David. "They believe the local Church is the hope of the world."

What David learned at Highlands College is not just amplified in his work with groups, but with each individual who craves God's love. A local man who hit rock bottom this year, struggling with a divorce and alcoholism, found Elevation Church one evening in a desperate Google search. "I met him his second Sunday at our church and convinced him to join my group," David said. "He hasn't touched alcohol in months and is about to take his faith public through water baptism - and start his own group!"

Each day brings new challenges, but David remains grounded by his Highlands College training. "To those who I will never meet, who faithfully give to expand what God is doing around the globe with Highlands College, thank you," David said. "Your contribution doesn't just stop at Highlands College, it starts at Highlands College."



WAYS TO STRATEGICALLY SUPPORT

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES.

Advance the mission of Highlands College through this rare opportunity to name a physical space within the Highlands College Grandview Campus. This pioneering facility will change the trajectory for training vocational ministry students to fulfill the Great Commission.

ENDOWED SEATS AND CHAIRS.

By supporting Endowed Student Scholarships and Chairs, you enable Highlands College to provide tuition scholarships that allow students to graduate and begin full time ministry without the burden of debt. You also provide an opportunity for the best and brightest to play an integral role in the extensive hands-on training we provide.

UNRESTRICTED SUPPORT.

Help Highlands College grow the ability to fund scholarships, special programs, and other forms of financial support that help remove uncertainty for HC students and allow them to focus exclusively on their training and development.



AMPLIFY OUR REACH

RECRUIT.

Do you know a young person who feels called to vocational ministry? Please help us grow God's workers for the harvest field by sharing the Highlands College vision.

CONNECT.

You are among those who recognize that every investment into Highlands College produces eternal ROI, and that's invaluable. We hope you will share with countless others why you support Highlands College. Help us amplify God's heart call by encouraging your circle of influence to be part of making an Eternal Impact.

WAYS TO GIVE:

Online gift:
highlandscollege.com/online-contribution

Check - mail to:
Highlands College
Eternal Impact Campaign
1701 Lee Branch Lane
Birmingham, AL 35242

Email the HC Office of Institutional
Advancement to learn more about strategic
giving opportunities (stock donation, wire
transfer, complex asset gifts):
campaign@highlandscollege.com



CAMPAIGN NUMBERS

2020
FISCAL YEAR

\$28.8 MILLION+
cash received

81 SCHOLARSHIPS
were awarded

4,704
total gifts

1,293
total donors

413
new donors



\$32.5 MILLION+ COMMITTED IN FISCAL YEAR 2020
cash received and pledge balance remaining

\$65.2 MILLION+ TOTAL COMMITTED
since inception

PROGRESS TOWARDS PHASE 1 GOAL

When you give to Highlands College, you support today's students and everyone they will touch in the future. That's what we mean by Eternal Impact. Our goal is bold, but our mission is clear: to create leaders of competence and character to fulfill the Great Commission. Your support has brought us this far. Thank you for your investment in the future of Highlands College.

