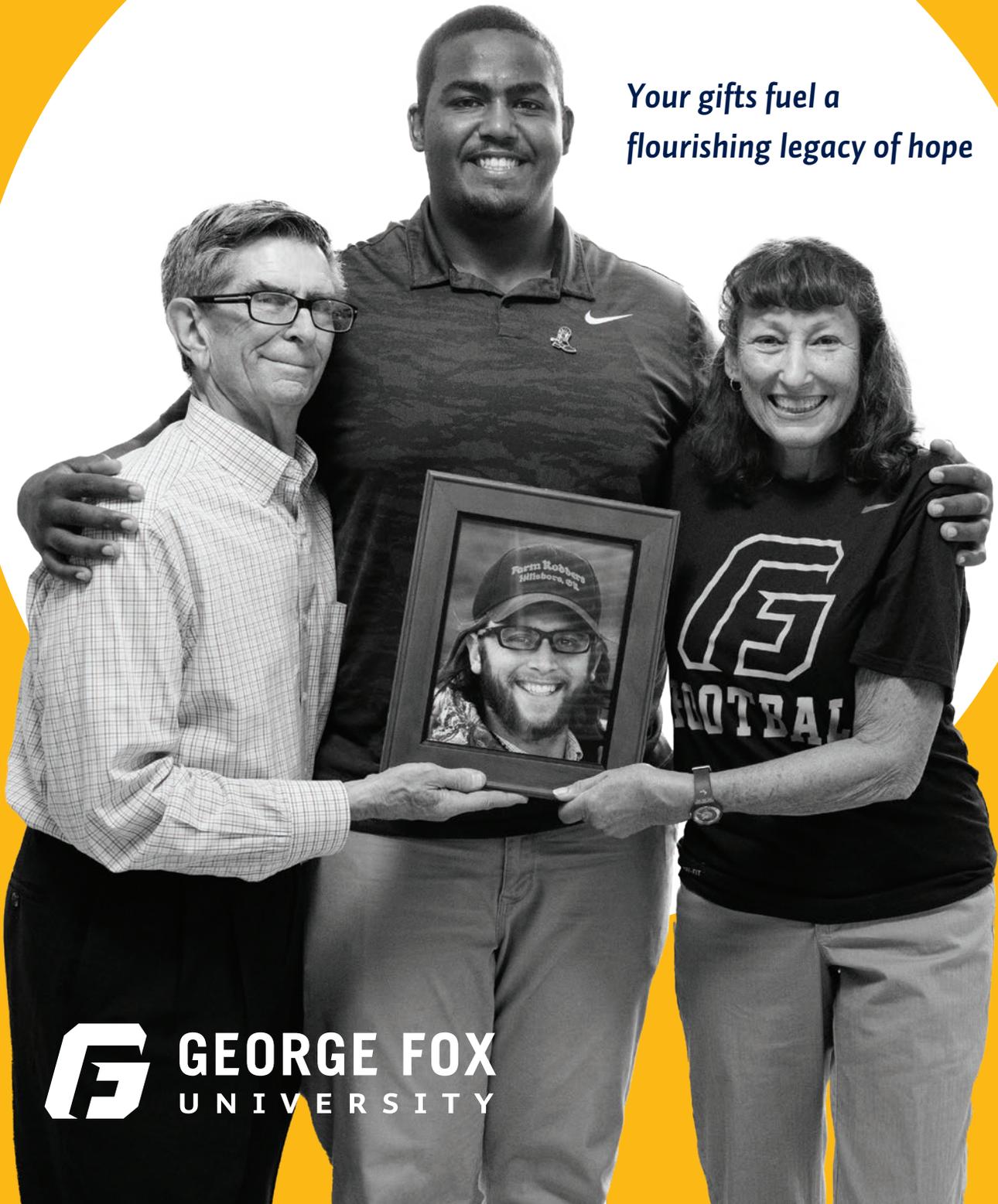


# 'If you can be anything, be grateful'

*Your gifts fuel a  
flourishing legacy of hope*



# 2024 President's Report

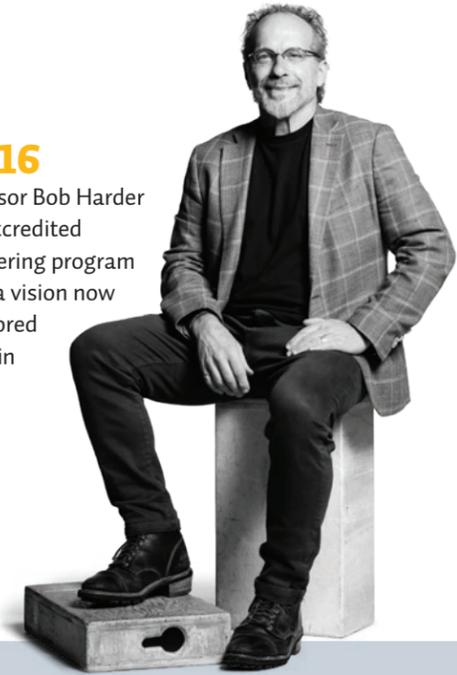


**Robin Baker 4**  
President Robin Baker reports on our record enrollment and strong rankings – and reminds us that our stats are only as good as our success stories

**Pam Fifer 14**  
The dean of the College of Nursing explains how the new Doctor of Nursing Practice program will impact the lives of rural Oregonians



**Bob Harder 16**  
For years, Professor Bob Harder dreamed of an accredited four-year engineering program at George Fox – a vision now fulfilled and honored by a scholarship in his name



**Alison Takamiya 6**  
2024 Northwest Conference Woman Athlete of the Year, Alison Takamiya, reflects on a college career seasoned with gratitude



**Jesse Cetz & Julissa Rocha Ibarra 8**  
The director of first generation success, Jesse Cetz, lights the way for first-gen students like Mosaic Scholar Julissa Rocha Ibarra



**Debrianna DeBolt 18**  
University Pastor for Chapel Programs Debrianna DeBolt reflects on how late-night weekly worship services in the new chapel are resonating with students



**Joseph Clair & Travis Pickell 20**  
Professors Joseph Clair and Travis Pickell share how a \$500K grant toward holistic character formation will benefit George Fox students and why it means so much to them personally



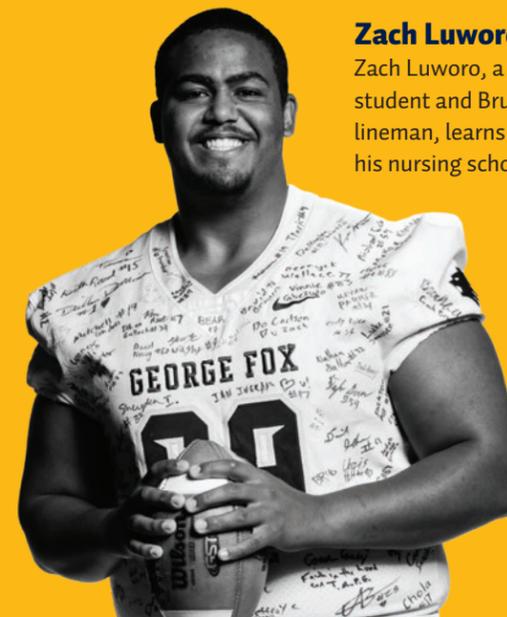
**Sabrina Bailey 10**  
Trailblazing alumna and donor Sabrina Bailey defines what it means to give back



**Alex Chung 12**  
Alex Chung, director of the School of Cinema, Art & Design, uplevels cinematography training for students as he shepherds the program into a new era



**Zach Luworo 22**  
Zach Luworo, a senior nursing student and Bruins' offensive lineman, learns the story behind his nursing scholarship



**Financial  
Report  
25**

4,324

students

80+

undergraduate, graduate, and adult degree programs

16:1

student-to-faculty ratio

85%

of students complete an internship before graduation

88%

of George Fox graduates finish in four years

92%

of graduates have a job, are in graduate school or are doing volunteer work within 12 months

# Dear friends,

Most strong organizations mind their numbers. They monitor them as indicators of overall health and success in achieving their mission. George Fox is no exception. Each year, we track key measures in student enrollment, institutional ranking, financial support, and our budget balance sheet. Through regular analysis, we ensure we are operating optimally and stewarding our resources well.

I am pleased to report that, in our numbers, George Fox has much to be proud of. This year marked our largest student enrollment in the university's history, reaching 4,324 undergraduate and graduate students. Our national rankings remain strong, particularly in engineering and nursing, both of which were recognized as top programs by *U.S. News & World Report*. We were also recognized once again as one of two leading private universities in Oregon by *The Wall Street Journal*. As a former athlete and forever competitor, I can verify that our "stats" are strong.

However, as the following pages illustrate, George Fox's most important number is the sum of the individuals in our community, each contributing their heart and talent to create a beautiful mosaic of Christ's body. Each person is essential to our community, adding depth and purpose to our Be Known promise. The promise is not something that is easily measured, yet its impact is undeniable, and the stories of faith, education and vocation herein are proof.

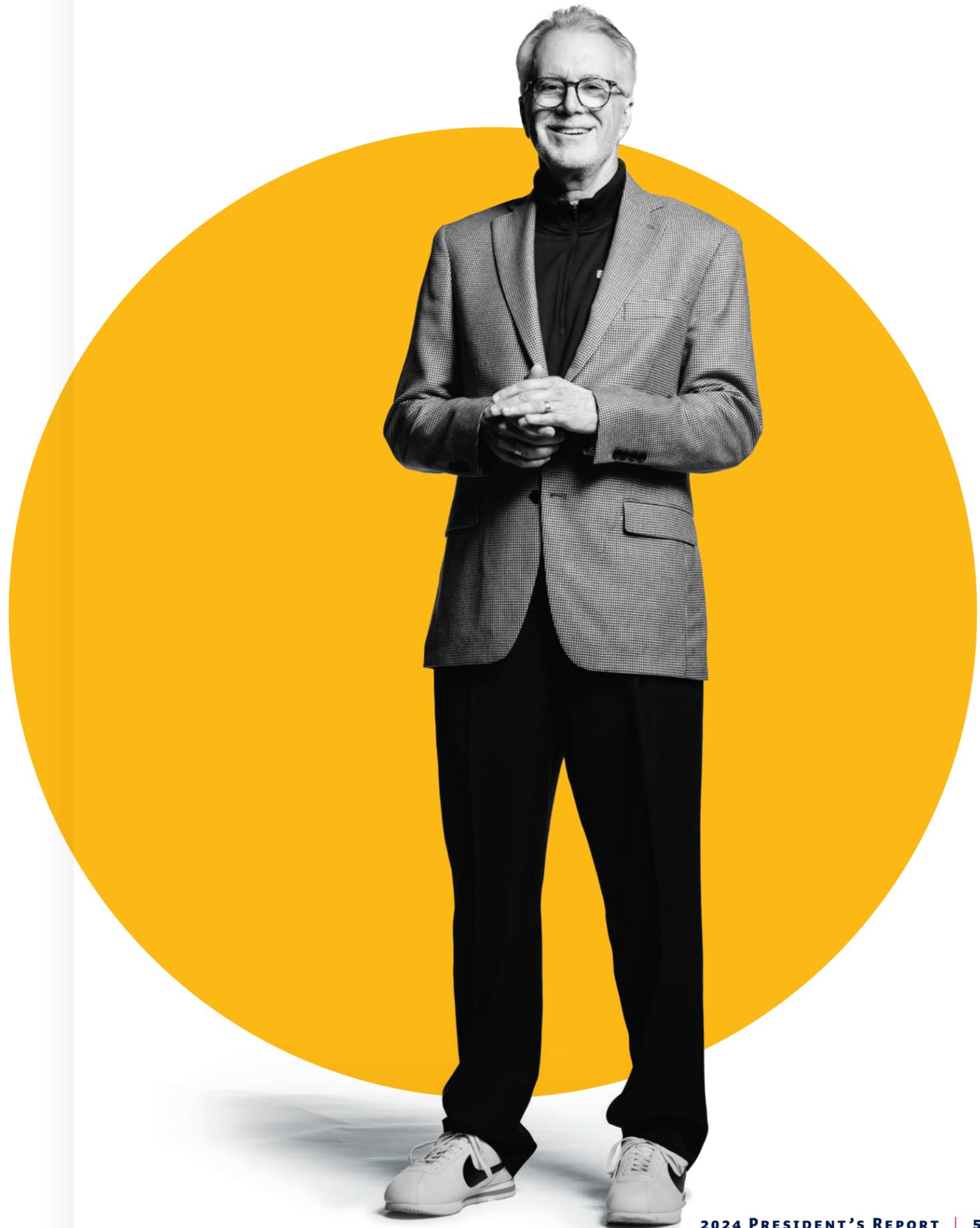
In the parable of the lost sheep, Christ demonstrates that impact cannot always be measured in numbers. As he leaves the 99 in search of the lost one, Jesus reminds us of the great lengths he will go to for each one of us. In this spirit of honoring each individual story that enriches our community, I present this year's *President's Report*.

Thank you for being a part of George Fox's story and for the unique contributions of your time, talent and treasure. As a George Fox donor, you are part of a community of faithful servants doing big things for Christ and his kingdom.

Yours In Christ,



Robin Baker



2024 Northwest Conference Woman Athlete of the Year, Alison Takamiya, reflects on a college career seasoned with gratitude

# Gratitude for the Win

By Sean Patterson



Reflecting on her four-year experience at George Fox, Alison Takamiya doesn't dwell on her golf accomplishments, as impressive as they are. Rather, she chooses to talk about the impact the university – and her beloved coach, MaryJo (“MJ”) McCloskey – made on her life.

“MJ is always telling us, ‘If you can be anything in the world, be grateful,’” Takamiya says. “Looking back, I don’t think I could have had a better coach than MJ, because she’s done so much for me personally, my teammates, and just our program in general.”

## A Champion’s Resume

Takamiya graduated with a degree in business administration last spring after winning an individual title at the 2024 NCAA Division III National Tournament, earning her PING WGCA Player of the Year honors. Previously, she was the 2024 Northwest Conference Woman Athlete of the Year, a D-III Inkster Award recipient – given to the highest-ranked women’s collegiate golfer in her final year of NCAA eligibility – and a key member of the Bruins’ 2023 NCAA national-title-winning team.

Perhaps most impressively, Takamiya was an Academic All-American all four years of her career, finishing with a cumulative GPA just shy of 4.0.

As she sees it, her successes can be directly attributed to the coaching she received, the quality facilities that allowed her to hone her game, and what she describes as the “positive small-college atmosphere” that allowed her to thrive thousands of miles away from her native Hawaii.

“I wish I could just be a freshman and do it all over again,” she laughs. “It’s just really nice that we have such a tight-knit community. That’s one of Fox’s biggest selling points – the Be Known promise. It’s a good place to be when it’s your first time living away from home. You get to know so many people around you, even if it’s just saying hi. So many familiar faces.”

Takamiya was adopted from China as a 1-year-old. Raised as an only child in a supportive family, she developed a love of golf by playing with her father, who introduced her to the sport when she was 4. She enjoyed other activities, including volleyball, violin and piano, but the golf course is where she felt most at home.

## Mentor of Champions

When seeking out a college to play the sport she loved, she discovered George Fox through friends who had played in the program. She was sold when McCloskey enthusiastically recruited her.

“MJ was just so eager and excited to have me on the team,” she says of McCloskey, a seven-time NCAA Division III West Region Coach of the Year and a 10-time Northwest Conference Coach of the Year in her 18 seasons at George Fox. “I was talking to maybe three or four other coaches at the time, but no one was as excited about me as MJ was.”

Once she arrived, she thrived, thanks in part to a coach who was as dedicated to the development of her character as much as her game. And a top-notch facility – the Bob and Peggy Fowler Training Center in the Wheeler Sports Center – allowed her to work on her swing during Oregon’s wet falls and springs.

Although she graduated, Takamiya continues to suit up for the Bruins – she has an extra year of eligibility as a result of the pandemic – while taking online classes and doing graphic design work for the athletics department. Ultimately, her goal is to play golf professionally after college.

“If you get a chance to play your sport at a higher level, you might as well, if you have the opportunity to do so,” she says when posed with the question of advice she would give a younger player. “You might as well try new things, because life is too short, so just enjoy the opportunities you get.” ●

## The Peggy and Bob Fowler Golf Training Center, located in the Wheeler Sports Center, provides a state-of-the-art indoor facility for our golf teams to train year-round. The facility includes a putting surface, chipping areas, a launch monitor, and a simulator for playing top courses and analyzing performance metrics.



**J**ulissa Rocha Ibarra first became interested in the body as a young child. “Whenever my Dad came in for dinner,” she recalls, “the first thing I did was check his hands, then get my first aid kit.” Nearly two decades later, Rocha Ibarra, a senior kinesiology major, is preparing to apply for physician assistant programs and plotting a course for her future.

Growing up on a Christmas tree farm in rural Oregon, Rocha Ibarra is part of a large, close-knit family. Her parents moved to the U.S. from Mexico and instilled in her the value of a great education. Like many first-generation college students, Rocha Ibarra’s parents supported her dreams to attend college but struggled to provide advice on navigating university life because they had not experienced it themselves.

Her volleyball coach and teammates eased some of her anxiety, but Rocha Ibarra still felt uneasy about relying on people she’d just met. College was supposed to be exciting, but she felt overwhelmed and alone. “I couldn’t call home and ask my parents for advice like I’d always done. I felt so lonely.”

### **An Open Invitation**

When Rocha Ibarra received an email inviting her to a gathering for Mosaic Scholars at the Intercultural Resource Center (IRC), she said her first thought was “cool, free coffee.” But that coffee conversation became much more for Rocha Ibarra. The IRC became what she calls her “safe space” and introduced her to mentor Jesse Cetz, the director of first generation success.

As a first-generation alumnus, Cetz understood Rocha Ibarra’s experience on a personal level. “Jesse is so good at empowering students,” Rocha Ibarra explains. “He asks questions that guide you, but in the end you discover your own solutions.”

At George Fox, Rocha Ibarra has discovered a lot of solutions. Here, she’s found a career path that feels right, started the university’s first Pre-Physician Assistant Club, worked as a medical assistant, worked in the PA school, and interned in the first-generation mentorship program.

She credits Cetz’s guidance with more than her academic success. “Freshman year, I didn’t really have a relationship with Christ, and I was stuck with a lot of questions. Jesse supported me and listened,” she remembers. “After fresh-

man year, I was able to read the Bible by myself and develop a relationship with Christ.”

### **Love God, Love People**

Cetz’s passion for helping others is an intrinsic part of his nature. After attending George Fox on a full scholarship, where he majored in entrepreneurship, management and marketing, he became a campus leader as the director of first generation success. He is also in his third year of graduate school for marriage and family therapy. “I wanted to become a therapist because of my love of people, systems, and generational change,” he explains, “but also because my own journey in finding a Latino therapist was very difficult.”

Cetz is passionate about the legacy he inherited and the one he is creating through his faith and actions. His dad immigrated to the U.S. from Quintana Roo, Mexico, and he settled in a Southeast Portland neighborhood rich with cultural diversity. His dad, a loving single father, worked the night shift at Franz Bakery for 24 years. “As a kid, I wanted to be a baker like him,” Cetz says. “When my dad was growing up, he wanted to be a veterinarian.” After Cetz’s father came to the U.S., working full time and raising two boys took priority, and he passed down the value of a good education to his sons.

His father’s sacrifice, along with the financial support he received from George Fox, has motivated Cetz to inspire others in his community to pursue a college education. It’s one of the reasons that he and his wife decided to buy a home and raise their son in his old neighborhood. “Sometimes it seems like a scholarship just impacts one individual,” Cetz points out. “But it has a huge ripple effect. It’s created a generational change in my family system and in my community.”

### **‘It Transcends Me’**

When it comes to inspiring others, Cetz is practical. He has become the family go-to for college admissions questions and guides his younger family members through the rush of application deadlines. “People in my community are smart and capable,” Cetz clarifies. “But often they do not have the access or the resources. I may have been the one to receive the scholarship, but it transcends me.”

Like Cetz, Rocha Ibarra believes a legacy should include honoring the people who came before you as much as the ones who come after. “I knew I needed to go to college because my mom was never able to. I wanted it for my family, to demonstrate to my siblings and myself what’s possible.”

Rocha Ibarra has surpassed her goals of a four-year degree and has begun the next step in her educational journey. The process is already vastly different – and not simply because graduate school applications offer a brand new challenge. This time, Rocha Ibarra has a community of faculty, staff, and one very excited mentor to guide her. Not surprisingly, George Fox’s physician assistant program is at the top of her list. ●

# **Generational Change Starts Here**

By Victoria Payne

*The director of first generation success, Jesse Cetz, lights the way for first-gen students like Julissa Rocha Ibarra*



### **The George Fox**

**Scholarship Fund** helps provide financial assistance to 100% of undergraduates, keep tuition costs down, and attract students from diverse backgrounds, including first-generation students, those with a deep faith who can’t afford a private education, and students from underserved communities.

# Full Circle Impact

By Victoria Payne



Trailblazing alumna and donor Sabrina Bailey defines what it means to give back

**“Y**ou can’t always control what happens to you. But every morning you can choose your attitude,” says Sabrina Bailey, a George Fox alumna and CEO of Fiducient, a financial services company based in Chicago.

As a trailblazer for women in financial leadership, a space historically dominated by male advisors, Bailey’s advice surpasses navigating a bad day. “I’ve been told to answer phones because clients prefer a woman’s voice,” she remembers. “Once, a client fired me because he wanted to work with a man, but later I won him back.”

## A University Love Story

Bailey, a self-described changemaker, grew up in Springfield, Oregon, and earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration (2000) and later an MBA (2008) at George Fox. Her commitment to the university may have begun as an undergrad, but her dedication to George Fox and its students has since grown into nothing short of a love story.

In addition to mentoring students in the business school, Bailey serves on the President’s Advisory Council and the College of Business Advisory Board, and recently established the S&J Bailey Scholarship for Women in Finance. She and her husband, Jeff Bailey (1999), are faithful members of the George Fox Cornerstone Club and the proud parents of two George Fox students. “I have witnessed firsthand – through my own experience, my family, and the students I mentor – the transformative impact the university has had in shaping the next generation of leaders, both intellectually and spiritually.”

When her daughters applied to college, Bailey didn’t push George Fox, wanting the girls to decide for themselves. “It’s hard to tell your child they’ll be known. They have to almost see it to believe it,” she says. Her oldest, Jessie, developed a long college list but ultimately chose George Fox because of the connection she made with the cross country coach. Her youngest, Elsie, never questioned her college choice. After the pandemic, her priorities were clear: be near her sister and continue the family legacy.

## Making It Possible

Despite earning an advanced degree in business administration and building a resume as a turnaround specialist, not everyone believed in Bailey’s future in finance. Even some well-meaning mentors felt she wasn’t cut out for it, saying she was too young and lacked the right family connections and university pedigree.

But their doubts only emboldened her. “The thing about me is when somebody says it’s impossible, I tend to make sure that it is possible for all those who come behind me,” she says.

Young women hoping to follow in Bailey’s footsteps should be advised that her approach is unorthodox. While some financial advisors specialize in one area, Bailey knew

her ambition required a comprehensive background, “If I wanted to be in a senior leadership role someday, I knew I needed a range of experience across investments, technology, operations, and data and analytics.” But building a career that way wasn’t easy. “There’s a lot of risk in that because when you have a family your salary goes forwards, backwards and sideways,” she says.

To the students she mentors, Bailey hopes to pass down the wisdom she’s gained by focusing on people rather than money. “You can seek after income or you can seek after positive impact,” Bailey tells them. “I wanted to have a positive impact on the people around me. I just ended up with an income tied to that.”

## Paying it Forward

Her investment in uplifting women reaches far beyond her life in Chicago and Oregon. In 2018, Bailey founded Grow for Hope, a nonprofit that focuses on empowering and educating women and girls in Sierra Leone. Inspired by a local woman’s vision, Hawa, the organization aims to enable women to live with dignity and courage by providing sustainable farming opportunities that create employment. These jobs fund education for young girls, and the program currently supports 255 students. In January, Jessie, a senior biology and biochemistry major and Richter Scholar, will graduate and move to Sierra Leone with her husband to serve in the nonprofit before attending grad school.

Bailey has good reason to be passionate about creating generational change through girls’ education. She says she owes her own education to a long line of helpers. “I think about my great-grandmothers who were both single mothers who raised their families,” she recalls. “I saw how they led and how my grandparents and parents supported me, and the people who supported my family during hard times.”

When asked why she supports George Fox students professionally and financially, her answer highlighted her belief in giving back and the opportunity to inspire young women to push boundaries, despite their perceived limitations. “I believe we owe something to the communities that helped us,” she says. “And it’s really important to me that I show students that anything is possible.” ●

### The **Cornerstone Club**

*provides an opportunity for donors to engage up close with students and programs across the university throughout the school year. Club members serve as key stakeholders in the university’s mission and as a source of strength for our institution and community.*

**W**hat can you do with a robot arm? It's not a question you encounter every day. But if you ask Alex Chung, the director of the School of Cinema, Art & Design, he'll explain that mastering the operation of what is technically called a "cinema robot" is a game changer for students, particularly those interested in commercial filmmaking.

So when adjunct professor Daniel Hurst called Chung in late 2023 to discuss helping George Fox acquire a robot arm, Chung immediately understood the opportunity before him. Hurst, cofounder of Motorized Precision and owner of Oregon-based Via Films, saw the acquisition as one more way to help students improve their skills and future employment options. But Chung was looking even further ahead, recognizing the amazing potential the camera would bring to the university.

### Meet Mia

Mia, a compact cinema robot with a 3-foot-7 reach, allows for complex and precise camera work. "One of the challenges of filmmaking is repeating certain movements," Hurst says. "The robot arm allows us to program that movement, so it's repeatable with a great deal of precision." The model, valued at \$125,000, was generously donated by a Utah-based company called Mystery Box, when they decided to upgrade to a new model.

"I believe we are the only program in the country that now has possession of one of these robot arms," Chung says. "It's a signal to students that we're continuing to invest in the program, not just in our teaching practices. I want them to know, 'Hey, this is what's out there. We want to introduce you to it.'"

Innovation in the arts is a theme that Chung understands well. As a filmmaker with over 20 years of industry experience, he will be the one leading the art programs as the university ushers in a new era, with the construction of an art and cinematic arts building scheduled to open in the fall of 2025. While other schools are cutting departments, George Fox is expanding to meet the growing demand for careers in the arts. Chung is enthusiastic about the future of art and filmmaking, recognizing that this is a crucial moment for emerging creators to evolve and flourish.

### Bringers of Light

Creating a space for artists to collaborate and innovate has been a fundamental goal since the art program's inception. Professor Emeritus Mark Terry, a former high school teacher and print shop owner, joined George Fox in 1997 to develop the art major. At the time, the university had limited art facilities, but president Edward Stevens

assured Terry that a new building would come with the program's growth. Sadly, Stevens passed away two years later, and despite increasing enrollment, plans for new facilities were delayed for decades.

Since the first seven students declared art as a major nearly 30 years ago, the program has expanded significantly, becoming one of the university's top programs. The new facility will foster collaboration, provide artists with new tools and resources, and draw talented faculty, guest lecturers and visitors from around the world.

Although retired, Terry has been following the development of the art building with anticipation, knowing something special happens when artists gather to create. "Art is incarnate prayer," Terry says. "The prayer of creation is to bring nothing into something, separating light from darkness. And it's what we do in this space. When you limit that ability, you limit the ability to push back against the darkness. And we're living in a time when the world really needs more bringers of light."

### Back to the Future

A year after Mia traveled from Utah to Newberg, a group of students, faculty and staff seemingly light-beamed into the future. The group went through an exhaustive training process to become certified Motion Control Robot Operators. The certification, provided by Motorized Precision, is a highly sought-after speciality, elevating the employability of students who received the training, opening new opportunities for faculty teaching, and endless possibilities for video creation by the university's marketing team.

When asked what hopes he has for students who learn to operate Mia, Chung says, "I want my students to feel comfortable around an enormous and expensive piece of equipment, to think about new ways of seeing and discovering, and to ask themselves if a relationship with a machine can help actualize that."

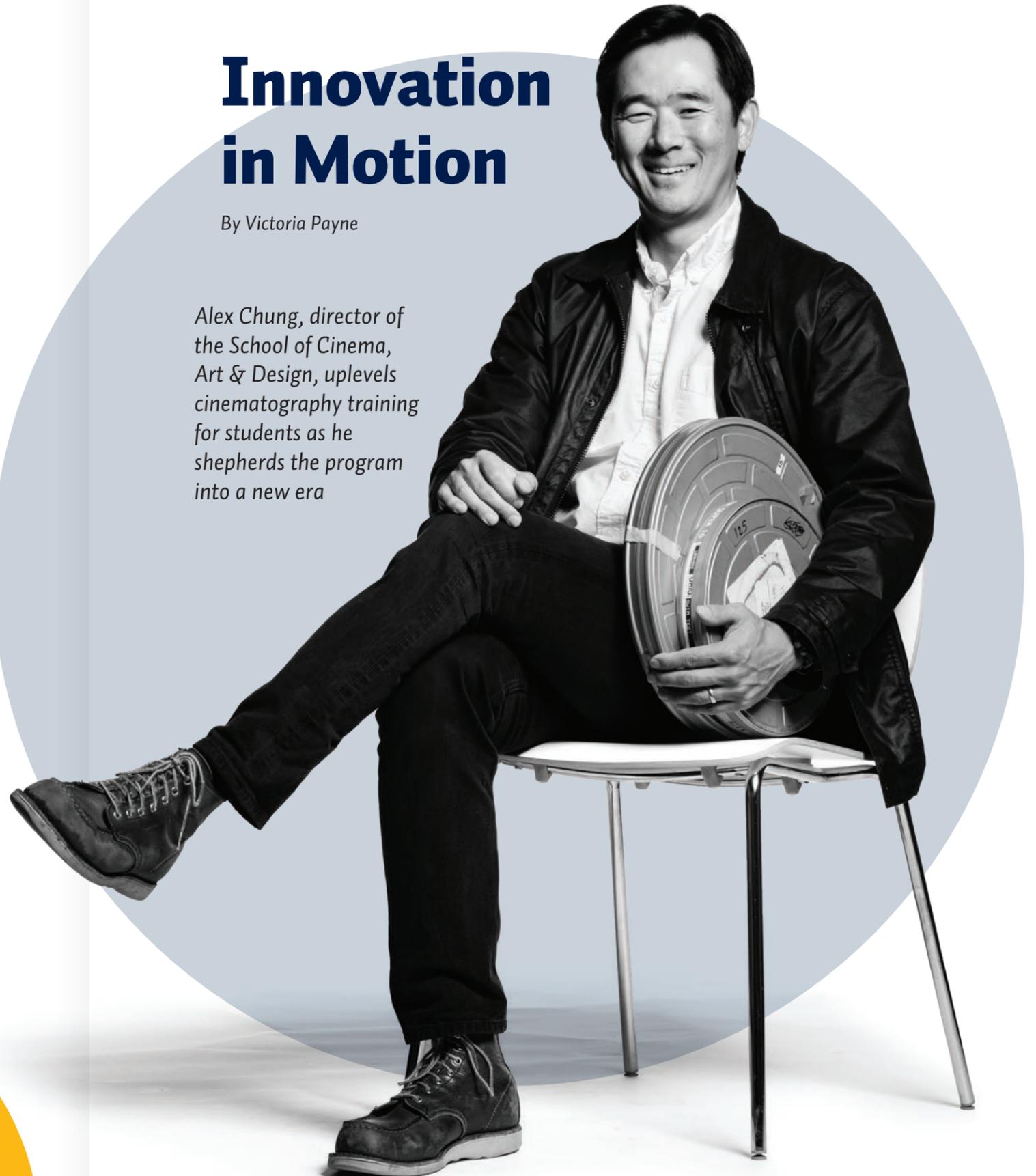
Advancements in filmmaking and artificial intelligence will play a significant role in shaping the creative landscape ahead for artists. Tools like the robot arm and a new building with intentional spaces will ensure George Fox students are equipped and ready. ●

**The New Art & Cinematic Arts Building** will give George Fox students access to state-of-the-art equipment and resources, while upholding our commitment to fostering the holistic transformation of each individual. Donors with a passion for the arts are coming together to fund the project and get classrooms ready for fall 2025.

# Innovation in Motion

By Victoria Payne

*Alex Chung, director of the School of Cinema, Art & Design, uplevels cinematography training for students as he shepherds the program into a new era*



# ‘How can I help?’

By Victoria Payne



*Pam Fifer, dean of the College of Nursing, explains how the new Doctor of Nursing Practice program will impact the lives of rural Oregonians*

**P**am Fifer is one of the lucky ones. As a young child, she knew exactly what she wanted to do when she grew up – to take care of people. “We had a large extended family, so I was around a lot of great aunts and uncles, grandparents and great-grandparents,” she says. “I saw people at different stages in life dealing with sickness and disease, and I wanted to do something to help them.”

Sometimes Fifer thought about becoming a teacher, other times a nurse. She would ultimately become both. After college, she worked as an oncology nurse before moving into acute care leadership for several years. She eventually returned to school and caught what she calls the “teaching bug.” A decade later, when the opportunity to teach at George Fox arose, she did not hesitate.

“I knew I wanted to be at a university where I could integrate faith throughout the entire program. It was the ultimate.” Today, Fifer continues to shape the nursing students at George Fox while adding a new title to her vocational resume: servant leader.

## Helping Rural Oregonians Thrive

As dean of the College of Nursing, Fifer has been leading the university’s effort to alleviate the rural healthcare crisis in Oregon with the expansion of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program, which will develop critical healthcare tracks with an emphasis on placing advanced practice nurses in rural residencies. The first of those specialty tracks, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), will launch in August of 2025.

In helping develop the program, Fifer has been on the front lines talking with the university’s clinical partners about the state’s greatest needs. With 30% of Oregonians utilizing rural healthcare systems, she knew that improvements must address the growing number of hospital closures, canceled surgeries, and shortage of mental health services. She and the university’s leadership team selected the new healthcare tracks – anesthesia care, obstetrics, and psychiatric mental health – with purpose and intention.

The DNP program will support rural healthcare systems specifically because of its emphasis on training advanced practice nurses (APNs), who can deliver excellent care affordably – vital for hospitals struggling financially. They provide the same treatments as their physician counterparts with similar patient outcomes, and their educational path is generally shorter and more flexible than that of a physician’s.

Equally important, the philosophy of nursing emphasizes care for the whole person. “The nursing model looks at care holistically, treating the biological, psychosocial,

behavioral and spiritual well-being of the individual patient,” Fifer says. “Advanced practice nurses ask, ‘How can I help?’ even when the pain is not physical.”

## A Leader in Healthcare Education

The DNP program further extends George Fox’s legacy as a leader in healthcare education. The first cohort of CRNA students will begin in less than a year, and the program has already received over 200 applications. The specialty is in high demand as one of the top-earning careers in the nursing profession. Oregon is one of 29 states that recognizes the vast training and testing required of CRNAs, which allows them to work independently. “As nurses, we often run in and help support in the areas where there’s the greatest need, and CRNAs are answering the call by providing 80% of the anesthesia care in rural parts of Oregon,” Fifer says.

Fifer and her team found a highly experienced leader to build the CRNA program in director Bill Prosser. Prosser will be training students in the latest medical advancements, including the shift in anesthesia care to curb the rise in opiate addiction. Additionally, George Fox’s partnership with Providence will allow students to work in any one of the eight Providence hospitals in Oregon as part of their residency experience.

## An Unlimited Upside

Leading the College of Nursing at George Fox is more than a job to Fifer – it’s also her way of helping the next generation be the hands and feet of Christ. “It’s a privilege to be able to walk alongside students and be a mentor. I’m helping facilitate their growth as a person and as a nurse, and I get to enjoy those ‘light bulb moments,’” she says. “It’s fantastic to know they’re going into the profession and they’re able to connect their faith with the work they’re doing.” ●

**The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program** underscores the university’s commitment to addressing critical healthcare shortages and serving as a leading provider of healthcare education in the Northwest. Donors and healthcare partners will help bridge the \$5.5 million funding gap, a crucial step toward alleviating healthcare disparities and enhancing access for everyone.

**T**he year was 1988. George H.W. Bush won the presidential election in November, *Big* was big at the box office, and Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry, Be Happy* dominated the airwaves.

At George Fox, something "big" was also happening, although not many back then could have foreseen how impactful this new development would be. Even Bob Harder, the man tasked with launching this new initiative – an engineering program – admits the magnitude of the endeavor was lost on him at the time.

"Back in the fall of 1988, Fox had 600 students and 40 faculty – and I was one of just three faculty members in that year's new faculty class," recalls Harder, dean of the College of Engineering and associate provost of the Division of Engineering, Science, Art & Business/Industry Engagement. In those early days, Harder felt like an "academic anomaly," more than 2,500 miles from his closest relatives. "It was a very different time and place," he remembers. "That first summer, when people learned I was the 'new engineering professor,' they would exclaim, 'What are you doing here? Don't you know George Fox is a liberal arts college?'"

### A University Milestone

Harder persevered through the awkwardness of starting the program, and in doing so, launched a new academic offering at a time relatively few Christian colleges in the nation offered engineering. George Fox became the first such college in Oregon to do so. It began as a 3:2 model, guiding students through three years of foundational and engineering coursework at George Fox, followed by two years of specialized study at an Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology-accredited university to fulfill degree requirements.

The initial graduating class was four students. Since then, more than 730 more have followed in their footsteps, thanks to the program's introduction of a four-year comprehensive curriculum in 2000, the securing of ABET accreditation in 2004, and its eventual expansion to include five concentrations – in mechanical, computer, civil, electrical, and biomedical engineering.

Beyond academics, the major has had a profound impact on the greater community through the Servant Engineering program – in which students team up with industry professionals to research, design and deliver engineering solutions to address humanitarian needs – and on the students themselves, through mentorship opportunities with the Ignite program and the self-reflective *Engineering Your Soul* book reading component of each course.

### To the Ends of the Earth

The engineering program's impact has even reverberated worldwide.

"When I was in Athens two years ago, I met with two different missionaries in two different parts of the city," Harder says. "I had never met either of them before. In each conversation, after a few minutes of getting to know their stories, I learned that they each had worked with one of our engineering alumni – one in Kabul, Afghanistan, and another in Cairo, Egypt. Hearing these independent accounts of how our students had gone out literally 'to the ends of the earth' and were advancing Christ's mission using their engineering skills gave me a deep satisfaction which is hard to put into words.

"In that moment, I had a clear sense that through the narratives of these two strangers, God was encouraging me, saying, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

### Honoring a Good & Faithful Servant

In recognition of his 37 years of dedication to George Fox, a group of faculty members have teamed up to honor Harder in 2024 by establishing the Bob Harder Endowed Scholarship, to be given to engineering students annually who have a passion for Christian service, a heart for justice, and the same desire to pursue a lifestyle of ministry that Harder himself exemplifies.

The scholarship will be funded in two phases. Phase one invites major donors and significant connections to Harder and the department to be "founding donors" in creating the seed fund of at least \$75,000. This initial funding will be used for matching potential to encourage phase-two donors to have a more significant impact. The second phase invites all engineering alumni to participate through a broad appeal in the spring of 2025. Ultimately, an endowment of at least \$150,000 will award students with \$7,500 annually.

The announcement serves as a fitting tribute to a man who has dedicated the bulk of his career to the university. In all, he has taught 31 distinct engineering courses while resolutely committing to run an engineering program that is, in his words, "decidedly Christ-centered."

"When I started, at times I'd walk past Wood-Mar Hall and gaze up at President [Ed] Stevens's corner office. My mind would drift off and envision what it might be like to one day have the George Fox Institute of Technology, with a four-year ABET-accredited engineering program. As I sit in that very office now, I'm reminded of God's faithfulness – how the Lord sustained my efforts and honored the vision I was called to pursue." ●

*In 2024, the engineering faculty and staff at George Fox University created the **Bob Harder Endowed Scholarship** to honor the School of Engineering's founding director, Dr. Bob Harder, who has made an impact in the lives of hundreds of students in his 36 years at George Fox.*

# Engineering a Dream

By Sean Patterson

*For years, Professor Bob Harder dreamed of an accredited four-year engineering program at George Fox – a vision now fulfilled and honored by a scholarship in his name*



# A Sacred, Loving Pause

By Sarah Kawamoto-Reid (2008)

University Pastor for Chapel Programs  
Debrianna DeBolt reflects on how late-night weekly worship services in the new chapel are resonating with students



To be still. With their worlds filled with notifications, to-do lists, reminders and deadlines, George Fox students file into the newly constructed campus chapel. The busyness of college gives students an unsettling glimpse of a future when full-time careers and other responsibilities take hold after graduation.

And then, the chapel doors close. Quiet fills the space. Amid the silence, pages rustle. A prayer is spoken together – read from the liturgy books students hold in their hands. The moment is peaceful, awe-inspiring, and captivating.

Debrianna DeBolt, a university pastor now in her second year at George Fox, faced a unique puzzle soon after she arrived. The chapel was being constructed to serve as a sacred space, intentionally free of screens that would normally display song lyrics, Scripture or service guides. Her creative solution: the Liturgy Book series. This beautifully artistic resource helps students engage in services, echoing the days of analog church hymnals.

“I had this idea to create a modern hymnal,” DeBolt recalls. “Each liturgy book has art, lyrics to the songs that we sing, devotionals, prayers, and words from each of the pastors. The hope is to produce a new one every semester to align with our chapel themes.”

At the end of each semester, students can choose to keep a liturgy book, creating a meaningful collection over their four years at George Fox.

With her background in songwriting and worship, DeBolt approaches chapel programming and the first edition of the liturgy books with an artist’s heart. “I’m interested in engaging our students through different ways,” she notes. “Even if that’s a beautiful photograph or a poem or a creative prayer, I wanted to think of ways to host a similar feeling that the chapel gives you.”

A childhood immersed in faith and compassion nurtured DeBolt’s heart for creative worship. She grew up in Los Angeles in a family oriented around ministry and service – her dad is a hospital chaplain and local pastor and her mom a teacher. Watching her parents’ deep love of Christ and their care for the hurting stirred a calling in her own heart for ministry. She discovered her passion for higher education and has found her sweet spot at George Fox as the university pastor for chapel programs.

## The Worship Line

With the addition of the new chapel, DeBolt saw another opportunity to innovate. Since the pandemic, students had been longing to see a return of a weekly night of worship. DeBolt and the pastoral team knew the chapel, with its vaulted ceilings and rich sound, provided a meaningful way to bring this vision to life. But an hour before the first

scheduled 9 p.m. Wednesday service, there was a line out the door. “We saw this massive line forming,” DeBolt remembers. “We’d never seen that before, and it kept growing. Before we knew it, all the seats were filled and we were at fire capacity.”

They were heartbroken to turn students away. They introduced a ticket system, but reservations filled quickly, leaving over 100 students without a spot. The pastoral team soon added a second service, ensuring that no one was turned away again. At a point in the term when they usually see a decline in chapel attendance, students continue to show up for these special late-night services.

“When the chapel is filled with 250 students, and there is a moment of silence and stillness, it is so beautiful,” DeBolt says, knowing that outside everything clamors for their attention. “Being able to experience wonder and peace in a holy, sacred space is a huge gift for them.”

## The Real Work

DeBolt feels the tension between productivity and stillness in her own life. With a weekly calendar full of programming and meetings, she recalls times she’s been running out the door of her office to the next thing, only to come upon a student who needs support in that moment. “That is the real work,” she affirms. “The real work is helping students encounter Christ and being an incarnation, unhurried presence around them and with them.”

With empathy and a deep understanding of life’s complexities, DeBolt tenderly listens, prays, sits quietly, and guides students toward their Good Shepherd. In doing so, she reminds them their value is not earned by their success, achievements, or capacity to accomplish – not today and not after graduation. No matter what the world tells them, their value will always be rooted in the unrelenting love of Christ.

DeBolt hopes the time spent in quiet stillness and collective worship reminds students, now and always, of the holy invitation to set aside our hurry and accept the invitation of a sacred, loving pause. ●

232 donors helped raise \$8.4 million to complete the **chapel project**. The chapel serves as both a space for spiritual growth and contemplation, as well as a visual representation of George Fox’s unwavering commitment to a Christ-centered education.

# Developing the Next Generation of Christian Leaders

By Victoria Payne

Professors Joseph Clair and Travis Pickell share how a \$500K grant toward holistic character formation will benefit George Fox students and why it means so much to them personally

**W**hat's your ultimate purpose in life? It's a big question, of course, but one Joseph Clair, associate provost of the Division of Humanities, Honors, and Education, believes everyone asks at some point in their lives. And college is one of those times.

Students seeking a Christian education want more than clarity on a vocational calling – they're also asking *who is God calling me to be?*

"As a college student, you want to be given the tools to have a livelihood after college, but you also want to be given the resources to have a meaningful life and the resources to be a mature Christian believer in the world," Clair says.

## The George Fox Program for Leadership and Formation

Integrating faith into academics, vocational calling, and professional training is a passion for Clair, who helped the university develop the honors program. Now, he and Travis Pickell, a theology and ethics professor and director of the Cornerstone Core – a series of undergraduate courses focused on character formation – are collaborating to shepherd the newly established George Fox Program for Leadership and Formation.

George Fox is one of 29 colleges and universities awarded a grant as part of the Educating Character Initiative, supported by Lilly Endowment Inc. and Wake Forest University. The Educating Character Initiative calls for new approaches to holistic student formation. The \$500,000 grant, distributed over three years, will allow the university to build a program that further integrates the university's mission to help students grow spiritually, academically and professionally.

Since receiving the grant, a group of university leaders have been meeting to chart a course for the program.

Clair and Pickell are excited about the momentum, especially around the development of a unique first-year experience. The vision also includes establishing living-learning communities and a speaker series with interdisciplinary and cross-curricular discussions around leadership and character.

## Connecting Sunday to Monday

As a theologian, Clair is trained professionally to see the seeds of faith in all things. But his personal experience has also been a driver behind his leadership of the new program. Clair started his undergraduate studies at a public university, where the religious skepticism he experienced in his religion classes felt corrosive to his faith. "I was exposed to

questions of the reliability of Scripture and the resurrection of Christ, and I was overwhelmed by the skepticism and antagonism of my professors," he recalls.

After transferring to a Christian university, he experienced what he calls the "riches of the Christian intellectual tradition," discussing thinkers who had been wrestling with these questions for 2,000 years. The difference in how the questions were presented was life-changing. "When you leave home and enter adulthood, you're in the process of making your faith your own," Clair says. "The strength of mentorships and a rich learning atmosphere can transform your life."

Pickell, who graduated from a public university, had a different experience, noting that his undergraduate years were positive in many ways. Still, his robust spiritual life felt separate from his studies and career plans. Putting it all together felt like a solo lift.

"When I graduated I had no idea how to connect Sunday to Monday, faith to work, other than to be honest and kind and look for opportunities to share the gospel," he remembers. He soon discovered a Fellows Program in Washington, D.C. that focused specifically on helping young adults bring together faith, learning and vocation under a coherent vision of what Pickell describes as "Christ's renewal of all things."

The experience was transformative. "I became convinced that God cares about our work in the world. Now, I am dedicated to helping students discover where God may be calling them and to developing a Christian theological imagination for how their vocations can become ways for them to love their neighbors, work for the common good, and bring about shalom in every sphere of life," Pickell says.

## The Gift of a Christian Education

As the director of the Cornerstone Core, Pickell oversees a general education package that integrates faith formation across 10 academic disciplines. When asked how the new program will expand this vision, he celebrates the university's ongoing success while acknowledging there's work left to do. "Many Christian universities struggle to achieve their faith-based missions because of a historic divide between academics and co-curriculars," he explains. "At George Fox, questions about faith and the Christian worldview are explicitly addressed in each Cornerstone course. And this is a great achievement, but we want to do more."



As they look to the future, Clair and Pickell believe the Program for Leadership and Formation offers a well-timed opportunity for the university to build a bridge over that historic divide. "The invaluable gift of a Christian higher education is that it invites these deep questions into the classroom, the dorm room, and the chapel, with faculty and staff demonstrating faithfulness and encouraging students to trust God," Pickell says. ●

George Fox University is one of 29 institutions awarded a grant through the Educating Character Initiative, supported by Lilly Endowment Inc. and Wake Forest University. The **\$500,000 grant** is enabling the creation of the Program for Leadership and Formation, designed to help students integrate their faith into their professional and vocational calling.



# ‘A Simple Man’ and His Growing Legacy

By Victoria Payne

*Zach Luworo, a senior nursing student and football player, learns the story behind his nursing scholarship*

**O**n Oct. 9, 2024, Joe and Nadine Kincaid prepared to meet a very special guest at their home in Charbonneau, Oregon. Zach Luworo, a senior nursing student and offensive lineman for the Bruins’ football team, would be joining them for lunch.

The Kincaids are the proud parents of twins Kyle Kincaid and Kaisa Butcher, both graduates of George Fox University (2009). Nadine dedicated 16 years to the university’s security services department, overlapping with her children, affectionately dubbed the “Twincaids,” as they completed their undergraduate studies.

After graduation, Kaisa launched a career in human resource operations and cofounded Lionheart Coffee in Beaverton. Meanwhile, Kyle began his nursing career in Texas, adopting a habit of wearing cowboy boots while caring for patients. Eventually he returned to Portland, where he worked the night shift in the trauma unit at Legacy Emanuel.

With their children nearby and their family expanding, the Kincaids felt they had everything they had ever wanted. Kyle had returned to Oregon to marry Kristin (2009), his college sweetheart. A few years later, they welcomed their first child, Colton, marking a joyful milestone for Joe and Nadine as they became grandparents. The arrival of Kyle’s second child, Drake, on June 8, 2021, added even more joy and love to their lives.

## **A Family Tragedy**

And then, heartbreak struck. Eleven days after Drake’s birth, the family’s story took a devastating turn, when Kyle died suddenly in a motorcycle accident.

There is no guidebook for dealing with the sudden loss of a loved one. But with the help of their community and their deep faith in Christ, the Kincaids found ways to celebrate Kyle’s life and to remember the enormous impact he left on the world.

“He was bigger than life,” Nadine says. At his memorial, held in Canyon Commons, over 250 people attended and shared stories about Kyle and his bottomless well of support and encouragement. Ashley Kelso, a Kincaid family friend, described him this way: “He made everyone feel like you were his best friend. If you needed help, he’d drop everything he was doing and come dig you out of a ditch with a smile on his face.”

The Kincaids knew they wanted to do something to honor Kyle’s legacy of faith, service, and his unwavering commitment to the care of others. “I think his love of nursing came from his ability to figuratively wrap people in his arms and to brighten an otherwise traumatic situation,” Joe says.

A year after Kyle’s passing, the Kincaids met with the George Fox advancement team to learn more about

opportunities to support nursing students who exemplify Kyle’s character. In 2022, they started the “Cowboy Kyle Kincaid Scholarship,” which provides a \$2,500 annual scholarship to two George Fox nursing students. The Kincaids knew the nursing department would select exceptional recipients, but what they didn’t know was how much one young man would remind them of their son’s big heart and passion for life.

## **A Big Man with a Big Heart**

Luworo grew up in Eugene, Oregon, as the youngest of four in a close family. He and his siblings were raised by their single mom, whom he considers his biggest role model. Although the family struggled financially, Luworo was deeply inspired by his mother’s passion for teaching children with special needs and her relentless work ethic. Her dedication, exemplified by her pursuit of a PhD at the University of Oregon while raising him, has significantly influenced Luworo’s own journey in college and football. “My mom represents what you’re really able to do. You might not have a lot of money, but it doesn’t mean you have to miss out on anything else,” Luworo says.

At 6-foot-4 and 330 pounds, it may come as a surprise that Luworo almost missed out on playing college football. “Going to camps and recruiting events can be expensive. We couldn’t afford it, so I never sent my tape out,” Luworo remembers. When a coach from George Fox visited Eugene to scout a player on another team, he discovered Luworo instead. When the coach informed him that he could pursue both football and nursing at George Fox, a door swung open that he thought had already closed.

Luworo earned All-Northwest Conference First-Team honors in both 2022 and 2023. With an additional year of eligibility granted due to the pandemic, he faced challenges after an MCL tear sidelined him for six weeks. But that didn’t slow him down too much or quiet the buzz around a possible NFL recruitment.

In addition to practices, classes and homework, Luworo also works as a devoted caregiver at Friendsview. This fall he began a clinical rotation in medical surgery at Providence Newberg, a specialty he feels drawn toward. “Football is funny because it’s influenced what I’m wanting to do. It’s high octane and a little intense, which

(continued)

**Endowed scholarships** provide a lasting source of financial aid for generations of George Fox students. These opportunities reflect the donor’s values and the university’s mission, creating a legacy of support that ensures their passion for education and giving back continues to make a difference long after they’re gone.

I like,” he says. Understanding the challenges of acute medicine, he’s considering a future as a flight nurse. He knows it will take years of hard work, but it won’t be the first time he’s needed to dig deep.

“Football is one of those things that at the moment can feel terrible. You’re hurting, you’re sweating, you’re bleeding, but you look back and it’s nothing. It prepares you for hard times. They shape who you are. They help you become a man, a father, and a participating community member,” Luworo says.

### The Meeting

First meetings don’t usually feel like a reunion, but that special day in October was different. Hugs were exchanged, and soon everyone gathered around the table to swap stories.

Joe shared the story of Kyle, a young nurse in Texas, developing a hobby of cutting up fallen trees with his chainsaw. He donated the firewood to people in need, calling it the “Simple Man Project.”

Luworo told the story of his grandfather who lived at the coast and had his property logged last summer. “I went down for the weekend and we made piles of firewood for different family members to pick up later,” he remembers. After hearing about the “Simple Man Project,” he got an idea: “I definitely have to start picking up Kyle’s hobby in my free time, just cutting stuff up and giving it to people.”

Nadine shared that Kyle loved many things, in addition to his wife, their two boys and their farm. Baseball, fishing, motorcycles, rodeos – he loved it all. And he especially loved George Fox football. Nadine, a season ticket holder, attended every home game with him. “We were so loud,” Nadine laughs. “An older couple down in front had to move their seats.”

When asked how Kyle might feel knowing that Luworo received a scholarship in his honor, Nadine didn’t hesitate: “There’s cowboy boots stomping in heaven,” she says. “Start listening, Zach. You’re gonna hear it.”

As the afternoon came to a close, everyone wanted to stay in touch. The Kincaids and Luworo exchanged phone numbers and pitched ideas for a next time. “If you ever need any help with Christmas lights,” Luworo offers, acknowledging his handy height and strength, “just call me.” The

Kincaids answered with an invitation of their own. “And if you ever want to meet Kristin and the boys,” says Joe, “we’ll take you to the farm.”

### ‘We Would Have Been Good Friends’

When asked what it meant to meet each other, they collectively imagined an alternate timeline where Kyle and Zach worked together: “I know they would have been best friends,” Joe says. “They have similar interests for helping others and get excitement from that.”

Luworo shared a similar thought and added another layer: “I know we would have been good friends and laughed a lot. Everything they said about him are values I want to implement in my life, and I want to show them that their investment will benefit not just me but all the people I hope to help someday.”

The Kincaids are also planning to help many more people in the future. This fall the annual Cowboy Kyle Scholarship became an endowed scholarship, extending the Kincaids’ investment, and Kyle’s memory, beyond their lifetime. “The scholarship will leave a legacy of doing for others and show that we’re supposed to take our faith outside,” Nadine says. “We’re all supposed to be serving others, and we think Kyle was a good example of that.” ●



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*“I’ve been a monthly donor to the university since my graduation in 1980, and including George Fox University in my estate was an easy decision. We can’t take it with us when we pass, so we have a choice: leave it to family and friends, to causes we hold dear, or let the government decide. For me, ensuring continued support for the university, even when I’m no longer able to write that monthly check, is part of my legacy. It’s a way to sustain the university’s mission and develop the next generation of Christian leaders.”*

### Dave Adrian (1980)

Henry Mills Society Member



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# 2023-24 By the Numbers

125

Cornerstone Club Members

280

President's Council Members

240

Henry Mills Society Members

797

New Donors

490

Students Awarded Donor-Funded Scholarships

## Scholarships

Institutional aid	\$46,540,809
Students receiving aid	2,212
Pell-eligible students	758
Donor-funded scholarships awarded	221
Active donor-funded scholarships	242
Total awarded in scholarships in 2023-24	\$1,392,254
Number of endowed scholarships	225

## Grants

George Fox University received **21** new grants = **\$3,100,608** in new grant funding.

### Notable Grants:

- **\$1.3 million** awarded to Leah Payne's Compelling Preaching Initiative from Lilly Endowment
- **\$500,000** awarded through the Educating Character Initiative, supported by Wake Forest University & Lilly Endowment for the promotion of holistic student development
- **\$235,120** to Jeongah Kim's Science and Religion in context proposal from Templeton Religious Trust
- **\$200,000** to Dana Robinson for the continuation of the Liberation Scholars program from Teagle Foundation

## Endowment Overview

Beginning market value 7/1/23	\$30,903,613
Distributed income for FY24	\$930,055
Contributions and additions	\$574,547
Investment return	\$3,763,454
Ending market value on 6/30/24	\$34,311,558

## Endowment Distribution Summary

Scholarships	\$757,264
Other restricted funds	\$141,234
Other unrestricted funds	\$31,557
Total yearly distribution	\$930,055

**Gifts and Commitments – \$6,956,118**

**Total donors – 1,666**



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