

PACIFIC

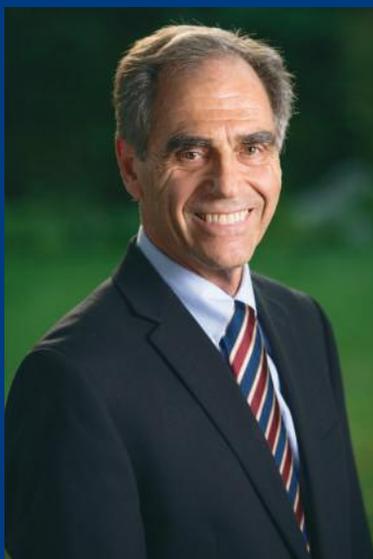
FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY | VOL. 29, NO. 2



CONNECTING
CULTURES

president's message

IT'S POSSIBLE



Richard Kriegbaum, Ph.D.

“*Read with eyes of faith. Pray with confidence. Support with a heart of thanksgiving. The challenges are enormous—legal, social, moral, financial and very personal for thousands of students, faculty, staff, trustees, financial supporters and those who pray constantly. When you wonder or doubt, remember: With God, all things are possible.*”

A very rich young man came to Jesus and asked what good work he needed to do in order to be sure of having eternal life with God.* With the advantage of our perspective we can see that the question may have been completely sincere, but it was based on an assumption that we know is false. The young man truly believed that if a person did certain good deeds in obedience to God's commandments, then God would welcome him into eternal life. In that worldview, the fact that he was wealthy indicated that God was already blessing him in this life for his efforts. But just to be sure, he asks Jesus if there is anything else that he might have missed in trying to ensure that he would have eternal life.

The life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus were soon going to change that way of thinking, but as Jesus often does, he turns things upside down in his kingdom. He tells the man to give to poor people the wealth that the man assumed was proof that he was satisfying God. That would have made the poor people look like God was blessing them instead of blessing him. When he goes away very sad, the disciples marvel and ask, “Then who in the world can be saved?”

Jesus agreed with their realization that humanly it is impossible for anyone to be saved,

even a rich man who seems to have God's approval. Then Jesus says, “But with God, all things are possible.” If the greatest miracle of all is being saved unto eternal life with God, then all the less likely miracles in life are also obviously possible with God.

Fresno Pacific is a successful impossibility that defies normal logic. It is an ongoing miracle. More times than any single person is aware of, FPU should have ceased to exist as an institution of Christian higher education. But in this magazine you will again read stories of the ongoing evidence that God continues to honor and prosper the dedication, humble hard work and sacrificial generosity of time, talent and treasure that advances the vision God has entrusted to this amazing university.

Read with eyes of faith. Pray with confidence. Support with a heart of thanksgiving. The challenges are enormous—legal, social, moral, financial and very personal for thousands of students, faculty, staff, trustees, financial supporters and those who pray constantly. When you wonder or doubt, remember: With God, all things are possible.

*Matthew 19, Mark 10 and Luke 18



Fresno Pacific University
develops students for
leadership and service
through excellence in
Christian higher education.

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KEEP UP WITH FPU!

Check fresno.edu/news for:

- A tribute to Elmer and Phyllis Martens
- Fall 2016 enrollment
- Monthly alumni updates

See what's happening at fresno.edu/events

Read *Pacific* online at fpu.edu/pacific-291

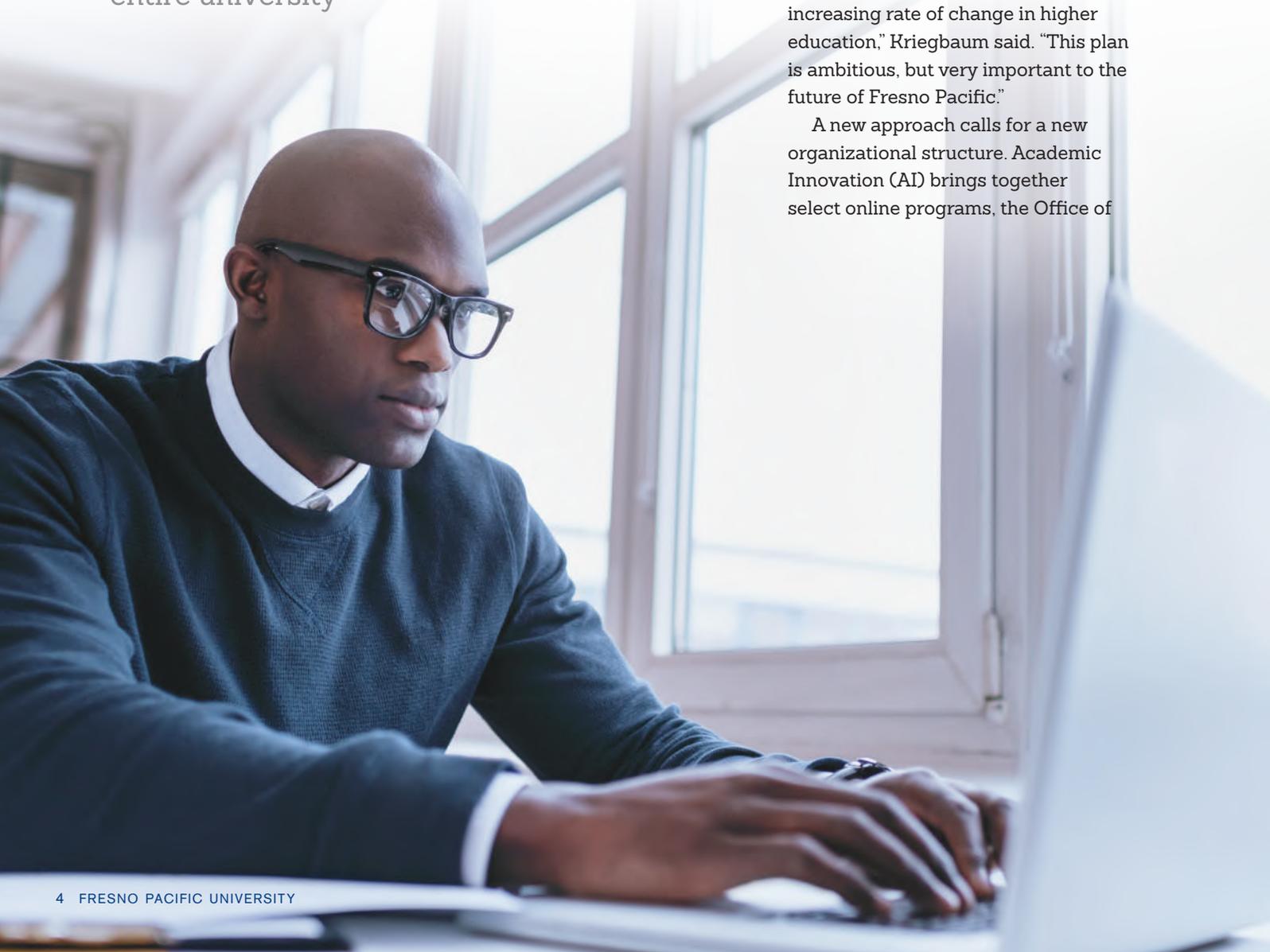
CLASS IS IN SESSION **EVERYWHERE!**

Taking online education to a new level will raise the profile and effectiveness of the entire university

This action is part of the university strategic plan, which calls for an increase in online students from 250 in spring 2016 to 2,500 in three to five years. “If this succeeds, we’ll be 10 times as big as we are now,” said President Richard Kriegbaum, Ph.D.

The FPU Board of Trustees, which oversees the implementation of the strategic plan, charged administrators with taking aggressive action to create the needed new approach. “The board is committed to the expansion of online education as a way to reach new students and embrace the ever-increasing rate of change in higher education,” Kriegbaum said. “This plan is ambitious, but very important to the future of Fresno Pacific.”

A new approach calls for a new organizational structure. Academic Innovation (AI) brings together select online programs, the Office of



Continuing Education (CE) and the Center for Online Learning (COL) under FPU Online. CE offers more than 400 classes and 75 instructors that serve 10,000 educators and other professionals through online and distance learning. COL helps faculty develop online courses and incorporate technology into their classes, as well as supporting Moodle, FPU's learning management system, which faculty use to communicate assignments and resources to students in traditional, hybrid and online courses.

"The online initiative provides an opportunity to ensure high-quality learning for FPU's online students, both in the way they experience their online courses and how they interact with their instructors," said COL Director Henrietta Siemens, Ph.D.

Several companies have been created in the last few years to help colleges and universities with online education. "It's gone through waves and a lot of best practices have been developed," said Peggi Kriegbaum, executive director of CE.

FPU selected Keypath Education, Lenexa KS, as online management provider. The company is well-known, experienced and many staff members have worked in higher education. "They've been exactly where we are," she added.

Students and prospective students will still deal with FPU, while Keypath works behind the scenes, managing systems and being involved in marketing. The university will maintain control over the direction

and academic rigor of its online offerings. "We will continue to add new programs as the schools are ready," Peggi Kriegbaum said. "We're the drivers."

A common concern is that online degree programs draw students away from an institution's other academic areas, especially bachelor's degree completion. This is unfounded, according to John Kilroy, Ph.D., who stepped down as the dean of the School of Business to become the first director of AI in the summer of 2016. "What we have heard and seen from other universities is that as the online environment grew it enhanced overall university recognition and led to increased enrollment in other university programs," he said.

There is potential for FPU Online in Northern California, Oregon, Washington, parts of Nevada and most other states, similar to the market currently serviced by continuing education. "We have opportunities to take our mission and vision far beyond our immediate region," Kilroy said.

"Through AI, the Fresno Pacific Idea can become a reality for thousands of new students. Class really will be in session everywhere," Rich Kriegbaum said. 

In January, FPU will unveil five new **entirely online** degree programs:

Bachelor of Arts in **Business Management**

Bachelor of Arts in **Organizational Leadership**

Bachelor of Arts in **Health Care Administration**

Bachelor of Science in **Computer Information Systems**

Master of Arts in **Leadership and Organizational Studies**

Online MBA and computer science programs are slated to begin in fall 2017. These programs join existing online offerings in education, ministry and other areas



LEARN MORE

For more information about our new online programs visit fresno.edu/programs-majors/online-programs

Nuriddin

Ziyadinov

Sharing Faith, Creating Understanding

By Doug Hoagland

Nuriddin Ziyadinov narrowed his eyes and took a deep breath as he stood at the start of the pole vault runway. He took a half step back before launching himself in a sprint toward the elevated cross bar 135 feet away.

At the end of the runway, Ziyadinov soared upward in a blue and orange Sunbird track uniform.





“The hardest thing was trying to explain that what they saw on TV is not what Islam is.” —Nuriddin Ziyadinov

He was a Muslim student competing for a Christian university—one of many activities he took part in during four years at Fresno Pacific. In every setting, Ziyadinov wanted people to see him as an individual, to see his religion as peaceful and to see that terrorists do not represent Islam.

It was not easy. He says his experience at Fresno Pacific was mostly positive. But across the nation, tension about Islam was rising. Shooters claiming allegiance to ISIS killed people in Paris, Brussels and San Bernardino. Politicians debated the wisdom—or folly—of banning Muslims from entering this country. Americans were frightened or critical or confused—sometimes all three—about a religion they knew little about.

Ziyadinov (BA '16) faced the challenges optimistically, embracing the opportunity to attend a Christian university. “One way to make friends and break stereotypes was for me to say, ‘Yes. This is me. I am Muslim, but I want to be friends with you. I want to get to know you. Don’t hold my religion against me, but get to know me and get to know my religion,’” he says.

RISING TENSION

Ziyadinov’s journey to FPU began in his native Kyrgyzstan, a former Soviet republic and now an independent nation in central Asia. In 2009, he came to the United States for one year as a high school exchange student, sponsored by the U.S. State Department and living with a family in Tulare. It was there that he began pole vaulting.

In 2012, Ziyadinov returned to the U.S. to attend FPU. He wanted to be close to his exchange family in Tulare, and he saw advantages in attending Fresno Pacific. “It has a small enough

number of students so professors actually pay attention to you. They care about you, and they know you not just as a number but by your name,” he says.

FPU does not require students to be Christians or to have a professed faith, but only a handful of Muslims attend the university. Ziyadinov says the number is about 30. Some are enrolled in the Intensive English Language Program. Others—like Ziyadinov—are fluent in English and enrolled in general courses.

Ziyadinov was attracted to student life at Fresno Pacific. “There were leadership positions I could take on,” he says. He got involved in student government, served as president of the International Club, was a member of the Model United Nations, lived on the campus and attended retreats and student get-togethers.

Attending a Christian university interested him for another reason. “I wanted to experience what it’s like to be a Muslim in America and see how we can achieve a better world,” Ziyadinov says. “I wanted to help people and bring people together.”

Majoring in international relations with an emphasis in human rights, he graduated last May and now lives in Sacramento, where he hopes to find a public policy job.

TRYING TO CONNECT

Ziyadinov’s desire to be seen as an individual is not surprising. Non-Christian students at FPU want others to recognize a “basic humanity” shared by all people, says Quentin P. Kinnison, Ph.D., associate professor of Christian Ministry and chair of the Biblical & Religious Studies Division. Those students “tend to feel misunderstood and caricatured” by the media and

Knowledge Over Terror Islam vs. ISIS

Nuriddin Ziyadinov worked for several months organizing a forum at FPU to explain that ISIS does not represent his Muslim faith.

Then, two days before the March 2016 event, terrorists struck in Brussels, Belgium, killing 32 civilians and injuring more than 300. ISIS claimed responsibility.

The attack underscored Ziyadinov's view that it's crucial to educate Americans about Islam. "I wanted to spread the voice of the majority of Muslims who are not heard and are being misunderstood," says Ziyadinov (BA '16).

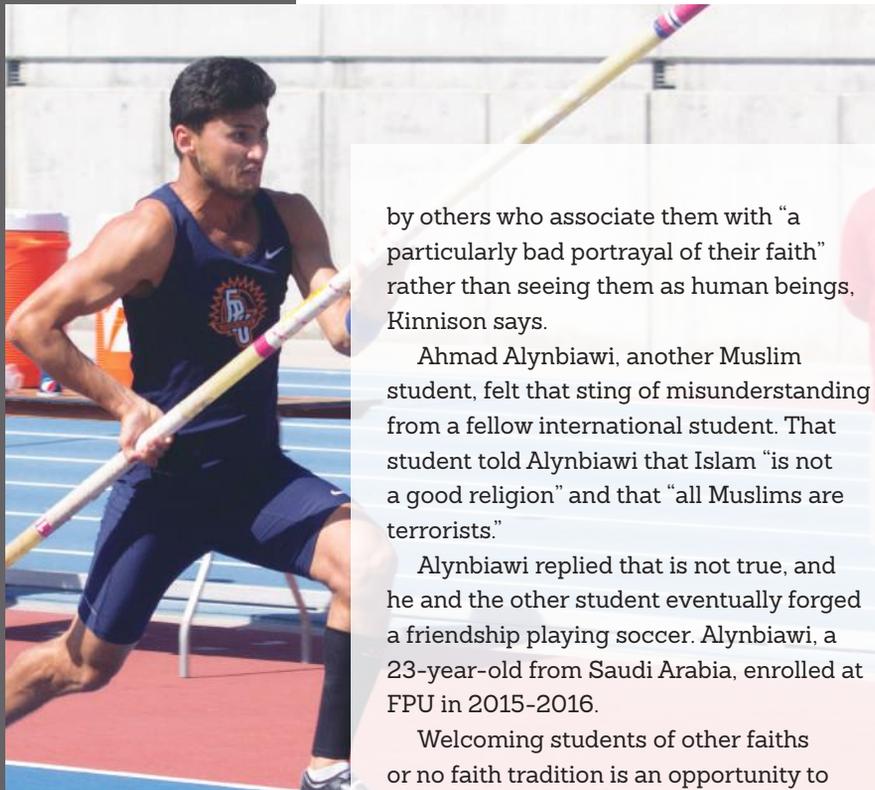
Questions from other students—questions that associated Islam with ISIS—prompted the forum. Both Islam and Christianity are religions of peace that teach it's better to love your enemies, he says: "We are not different when it comes to the humanity of each religion."

College officials welcomed his idea. "We really just supported him in any way we could," says Cindy Jurado, director of College Hour and chapel programs.

To provide a variety of perspectives, Ziyadinov asked FPU professors to speak. Ken Martens Friesen, Ph.D., associate professor of history and international studies, and Bret Kincaid, Ph.D., associate professor of political science, were on the panel. Angulus Wilson, Ph.D., university pastor and dean of Spiritual Formation, also participated. Darren Duerksen, Ph.D., director and assistant professor of intercultural studies, moderated. Arnie Prieb, director of the International Programs & Services Office, helped with arrangements. Reza Nekumanesh, director of the Islamic Cultural Center in Fresno, was another panelist. He spoke about the difference between Islam the religion and ISIS the geo-political organization. More than 150 people, including some community members and the news media, attended.

People at the forum seemed to have "a genuine interest in getting beyond the headlines and the quick soundbites," Friesen says. "It showed Fresno Pacific engaging in larger questions of importance to our country and the world, and hearing from perspectives that are often not heard."

Ziyadinov was pleased with the outcome. He viewed the forum as part of his effort at FPU to change perceptions of Islam by reaching out and speaking up. "I wish I could have done more," he says. "I wish I had more time to give to people, to explain more, to explore more. But in my four years, I think I did really well."



by others who associate them with "a particularly bad portrayal of their faith" rather than seeing them as human beings, Kinnison says.

Ahmad Alynbiawi, another Muslim student, felt that sting of misunderstanding from a fellow international student. That student told Alynbiawi that Islam "is not a good religion" and that "all Muslims are terrorists."

Alynbiawi replied that is not true, and he and the other student eventually forged a friendship playing soccer. Alynbiawi, a 23-year-old from Saudi Arabia, enrolled at FPU in 2015-2016.

Welcoming students of other faiths or no faith tradition is an opportunity to introduce them to Christianity as long as they respect the virtues and values of FPU, says Terry Brensinger, Ph.D., president of Fresno Pacific Biblical Seminary and a vice president of the university. "It's another way for the university, as a representative of the church, to let its light shine," he says. (Because of its mission to produce Christian leaders, the seminary admits only students who are committed to the faith.)

Brensinger adds that the Gospel invites Christians to "thoughtfully share our faith with people in virtually every context." The Bible provides examples: Jesus talked with all types of people, and the prophet Isaiah had a vision of people of all faiths coming to a holy mountain for instruction. In an increasingly diverse world, Christian students at FPU "richly benefit" from learning to communicate with students of other faiths, he says. "So much of the violence in the world is historically related to religion. So why wouldn't we want our Christian students to be able to engage people of other faiths in some other way than that?" Brensinger says.

For Ziyadinov, bridges of understanding were built, not on soccer fields, but in the kind of intense discussions about big ideas that college students should have.

Ziyadinov experienced that in the fall of 2015 during a semester-long study trip to Southeast Asia. He was one of 10 FPU students traveling with Ken Martens Friesen, Ph.D., associate professor of history and international studies, and Fran Martens Friesen, M.A., assistant professor of English.

Ken Martens Friesen says Ziyadinov was “extremely warm and caring” on the trip. “He tried to connect with all the students, not just a select few,” Friesen says. “He engaged in controversial discussions on politics, economics and religion with a very open attitude, clearly trying to hear what the other person was saying without prejudging them.”

Showing esteem for others is what Islam teaches, says Fahad Alenezi, a 22-year-old Muslim student from Saudi Arabia who studied English at FPU in the summer of 2016. “The prophet Muhammad told us that we have to respect all religions,” Alenezi says. “I respect Christians even if they say Muslims are terrorists. My religion teaches me to respect everyone.”

But despite Ziyadinov’s best efforts, some students—even friends—had a difficult time differentiating between terrorists and Islam. They would send him messages after terrorist attacks and ask: “Why is your religion doing this? Why are Muslims doing this?”

Ziyadinov would explain that less than half a percent of the world’s 1.6 billion Muslims are involved in terrorism. “Yes, those attacks are terrible and inhumane, but the quiet majority of Muslims are peaceful, loving and caring,” he says. “The hardest thing was trying to explain that what they saw on TV is not what Islam is.”

In a show of leadership, Ziyadinov decided one way to answer questions about Islam was to organize a forum at

FPU. Held in March 2016, it was meant to lay out the differences between Islam and ISIS. “I believe I was a pioneer in something that could become an annual convention at Fresno Pacific—not specifically about Islam versus ISIS, but for religious cooperation and understanding,” he says.

FEELING OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Clearly, such understanding is needed. Ziyadinov was in the locker room at Fresno Pacific soon after speaking at the Islam versus ISIS forum. A student approached, looked at him and said: “Oh, that’s the Muslim guy.” The student turned and walked out, leaving a discouraged Ziyadinov in his wake. “I had tried so hard all those years, and I got that,” he says.

But Ziyadinov was also philosophical: “He knew my religion, but not me. I did receive some negativity, obviously, but generally my years at FPU were relatively positive. A couple of incidents taught me that there is lot more that can be done and a lot more that can be explored and taught,” he says.

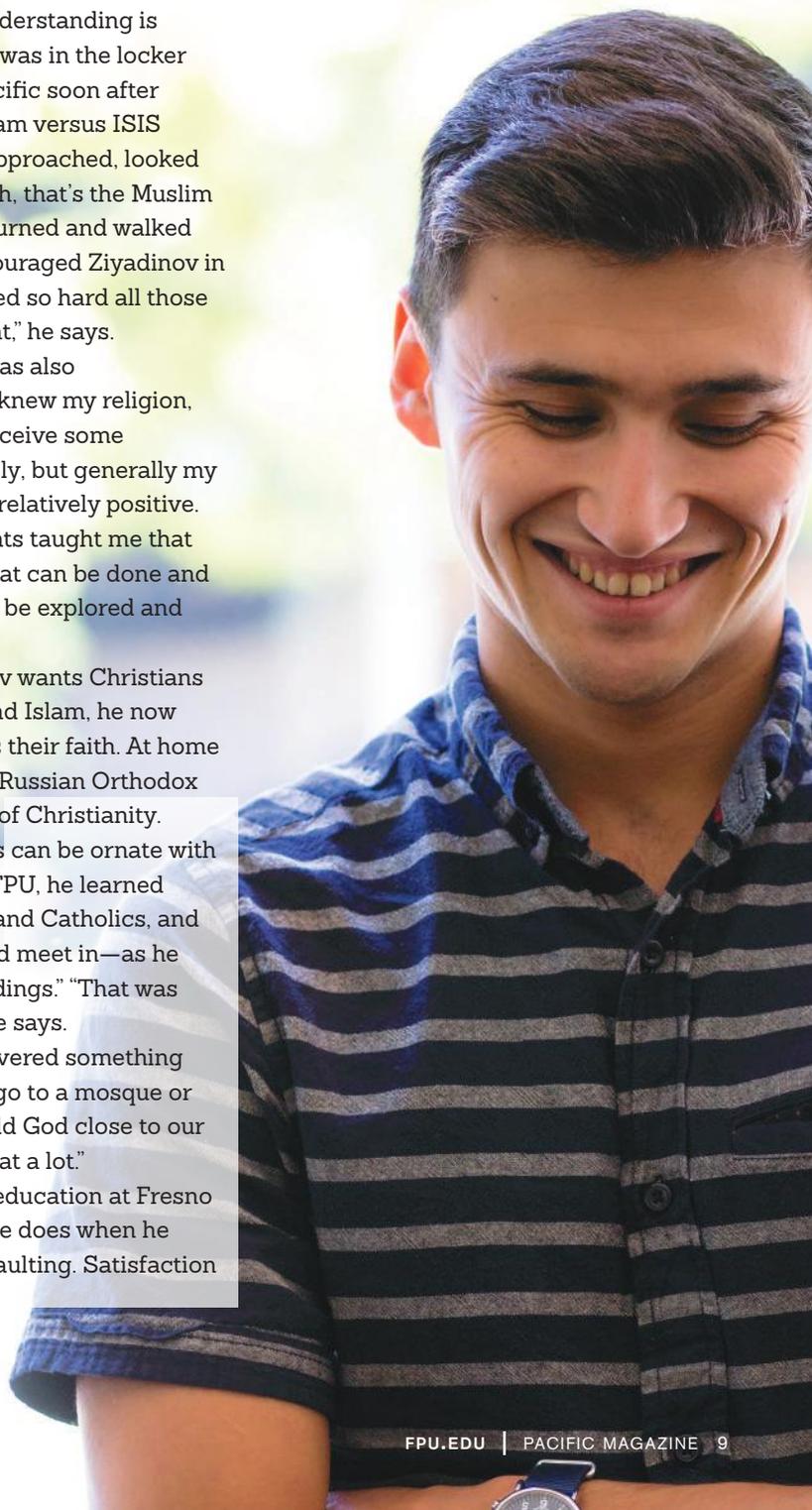
Just as Ziyadinov wants Christians to better understand Islam, he now better understands their faith. At home in Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Orthodox Church is the face of Christianity. Orthodox churches can be ornate with golden domes. At FPU, he learned about Protestants and Catholics, and that churches could meet in—as he says—“simple buildings.” “That was different for me,” he says.

Ziyadinov discovered something else: “Whether we go to a mosque or a church, we all hold God close to our hearts. I learned that a lot.”

He finished his education at Fresno Pacific feeling as he does when he succeeds at pole vaulting. Satisfaction

comes over him as he clears the crossbar and falls backward into the padded pit.

“It’s the feeling of accomplishment and knowing you did something good,” Ziyadinov says. “But clearing a bar or an obstacle doesn’t mean winning the competition. There’s always a next obstacle.” 🏠



Education



Across Borders

By Doug Hoagland

The earthy smell of the lush, green rainforest filled the dense canopy of trees where twittering birds nested along the Mekong River in Laos.

Benita Torres, a student at FPU, took in the scene atop a swaying elephant. She had surprised herself by going to Southeast Asia to study for a semester with other students.

Now she faced another surprise as the massive mammal, its gray skin wrinkled and dry, lumbered along a dirt path carved through the underbrush. A few yards ahead, the strong current of the Mekong flowed, silent and dark.

Torres had resided happily in her comfort zone while growing up in Fresno, but as she matured she developed an interest in places beyond the horizon. "I didn't want to just read about that world in books. I wanted to immerse myself in it," she says.

Fresno Pacific's study abroad program provided what she was looking for. The program offers three options:

Semester-long trips to Southeast Asia, India or Costa Rica.

Summer trips of two-and-a-half to four weeks to locations such as Greece, Turkey, Guatemala, Israel and Palestine. A 16-day trip to Switzerland and Germany is scheduled for next summer to visit important sites in the Protestant Reformation.

A new option allows

students to travel for up to eight weeks in the summer and complete academic work the following fall semester. This option could make it easier for athletes and other students with campus commitments to travel abroad for more than a few weeks but not be gone for a semester.

Studying abroad is invaluable as globalization brings the world closer together, says Ken Martens Friesen, Ph.D., associate professor of history and international studies. "As Christians,

“You can't come back and pick up where you left off. You've grown and learned new things.” —Ellie Carlson



“It was a very maturing experience emotionally and mentally. I did things I never would have dreamed of trying.”

—Benita Torres



as Americans and as humans, it's important to understand other people's perspectives and see the world and America through those perspectives," he says. "I'm concerned with being faithful to the Gospel and a worldview that says it's better to be interdependent with than independent of each other."

THIS IS CRAZY

On that day in Laos—with heat pressing against Torres and the moisture in the air clinging to her skin—she took a deep breath as her elephant approached the Mekong. “This is crazy,” she said, gripping her wood chair.

Fellow rider Lan Martens Friesen asked Torres to celebrate the moment they were sharing. “How many people in Fresno have ridden an elephant?” then-16-year-old Lan said to Torres.

Lan is the daughter of Ken and Fran Martens Friesen, M.A., assistant professor of English.

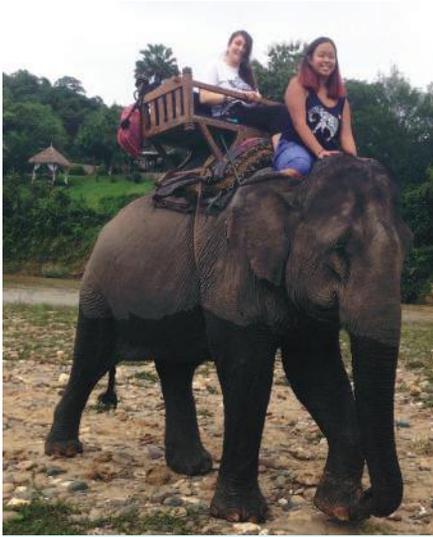
The Friesens led the study trip to Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand in the fall of 2015. The elephant excursion was a break from academic work.

Six elephants carrying the group from FPU waded into the muddy Mekong heavy with silt. The ever-deepening river rose up the elephants' legs and didn't stop until it reached the bottom of their necks. As the animals strained against the current, Torres strained against her fears and discovered that she was stronger than she imagined. The scene before her opened up.

“I stared at the mountainous jungle and realized how grand God is to have created the fine detail that existed in that jungle. It was surreal and breathtaking,” she says.

SERVING OTHERS

Darren Duerksen, Ph.D., director and assistant professor of intercultural studies, led a seven-week trip to India last summer.



Three international options:

◆ Semester-long trips

Traveling to Southeast Asia, India or Costa Rica.

◆ Summer trips

Two-and-a-half to four weeks to locations such as Greece, Turkey, Guatemala, Israel and Palestine. A 16-day trip to Switzerland and Germany is scheduled for next summer to visit important sites in the Protestant Reformation.

◆ Summer trips with fall semester work

A new option that allows students to travel for up to eight weeks in the summer and complete academic work the following fall semester. This option could make it easier for athletes and other students with campus commitments to travel abroad for more than a few weeks but not be gone for a semester.

It was the first trip that combined summer travel and fall academic work.

Duerksen and his students visited sites sacred to Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs to gain greater understanding of the beliefs and practices of those faiths. They also visited with Indian pastors to see how they present the Gospel in a non-Western context and how church leaders challenge the discrimination faced by the Christian minority in India. Students saw firsthand how Mennonite Central Committee, a Christian international relief agency with ties to FPU, and other groups work with local organizations in education, agriculture and other areas to strengthen communities.

But FPU students in India, Costa Rica and Vietnam don't just study. They also serve.

Duerksen's students worked in Calcutta with various ministries, including Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. "They spent time most days helping serve the poor in practical ways," Duerksen says. In one instance, students helped a local ministry gather homeless children living in a train station so the youngsters could receive basic education, Christian teaching and recreation.

Studying a foreign country allows students to stretch their thinking about the United States and its place in the world. "It is always great to see students better understand that though there is much to love about our own American culture, we have much to learn from others," Duerksen says.

In the fall of 2014, Jesica Uriostegui (BA '16) spent 16 weeks in India with other FPU students. Duerksen and Ken Martens Friesen led the trip. "I

saw India filled with complexities of culture, people, entertainment, religions, nature, history and government systems, and I wanted to be part of the complexities," she says.

India offered Uriostegui memorable scenes. One occurred at the Charminar, a Muslim monument of minarets and arches built in 1591. From a vantage point at the top, the group saw city streets filled with people, rickshaws and bicycles. A chorus of honking car horns sang out, and the smells of food floated through a marketplace awash in colorful linens, fruits and vegetables.

Uriostegui graduated with a double major in social work and intercultural studies. Her goal is to work as a medical social worker in a cross-cultural setting.

FOREVER CHANGED

Ellie Carlson (BA '14), spent a semester in Costa Rica in the spring of 2012. "I was super passionate about immersing myself in a culture, beyond the honeymoon phase, to learn what is a new normal in a different place," she says.

FPU students in Costa Rica stay with host families (In India and Southeast Asia, students stay mostly in guest houses and hotels.), giving Carlson a close-up view of this truth: "There is more than one way to do life," she says. Costa Ricans, for example, would rather miss a bus than leave a conversation with a friend, an example of valuing relationships more than the tyranny of time.

Students International organizes the trips to Costa Rica, and Jeff (former seminary student) and Tracey (MA '04) Dixon of the Visalia-based Christian

organization oversee students during their stay. The Dixons are adjunct faculty at FPU.

Carlson spent one day each week befriending and mentoring pregnant teenagers and other at-risk girls. One day, a girl asked Carlson for help in picking a name for her child. The girl also had Carlson feel the baby kick. “A tangible expression of God’s love was being there in that moment,” she says.

A business administration management and intercultural studies major, Carlson also helped Costa Rican women with small businesses to navigate a complex banking system and develop marketing strategies.

When she returned to Fresno, Carlson was determined not to resume life as it had been. “I decided it was not OK to continue with what had been normal for me, knowing there were needs here at home that aligned with my passions and talents,” she says. “You can’t come back and pick up where you left off. You’ve grown and learned new things.”

So, Carlson started to volunteer in an after-school program in the Lowell neighborhood near downtown Fresno. She works at FPU as a recruiter and admissions specialist in the International Programs & Services Office.



The FPU plan enables students to apply financial aid from the university, as well as state and federal financial aid, to the cost of trips. This is not possible when students travel overseas through other organizations, as some students continue to do.

The new program has allowed the university to send more students—up to 2½ times more. “It’s a great deal for our students,” Prieb says.

A GREAT DEAL

Arnie Prieb, director of that office, plays a key role in study abroad. Since 1996, about 800 FPU students have participated in international study programs.

Until 2012, the university arranged for students to study abroad through agencies such as the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities and Brethren Colleges Abroad. Fresno Pacific paid those programs. But increasing costs limited the number of students who could participate. So the FPU Global Education Committee, chaired by Ken Martens Friesen, decided the university needed to begin its own international study program. Prieb is a member of the committee.

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The new program has allowed the university to send more students—up to 2½ times more. “It’s a great deal for our students,” Prieb says.

He gets no argument from Torres, the elephant-riding student. She and nine other students earned 15 units, taking courses on the language, history/politics and religion/culture of Vietnam plus a class on the Vietnam War.

The students also earned units for completing an internship in Vietnam. Torres, a psychology major, worked in a cafe in Hanoi helping teach Vietnamese students how to relieve

stress. It was an important service because psychological problems are not openly discussed in Vietnam.

Torres found her time in Southeast Asia exhilarating. “It was a very maturing experience, emotionally and mentally. I did things I never would have dreamed of trying,” she says.

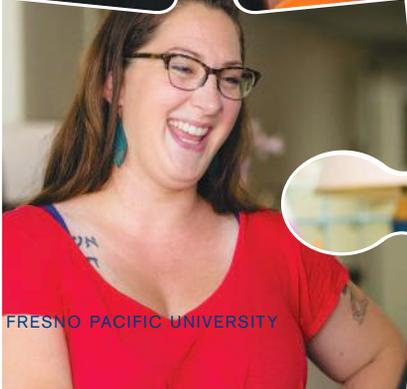
The experience gave her newfound confidence. “I now know that I’ll like some new things, and not other things, and that’s OK,” she says. Torres is encouraging her two younger sisters, who attend FPU, to take advantage of study abroad. She already is planning her next foreign trip and how she can serve others.

After graduating in 2017, Torres plans to move to Korea to teach English. “I know now that there’s so much more out there that needs to be explored,” she says. 🏠





Teach a Neighbor



A budding local school is getting a historic new home in downtown Fresno, while breathing new life into its neighborhood, its students and local education.

Kepler Neighborhood School's upcoming move into the century-old brick structure provides a fitting snapshot of the school's DNA: improving its neighborhood today and preparing students for a better future.

The charter K-8's motto is "Serving to Learn, Learning to Serve." The vision comes from local educators and FPU alumni Valerie Blackburn, curriculum and teaching coordinator, and Shiela Skibbie, office manager/testing coordinator, and



neighborhood, BUILD A CITY

By Jaime Strmiska

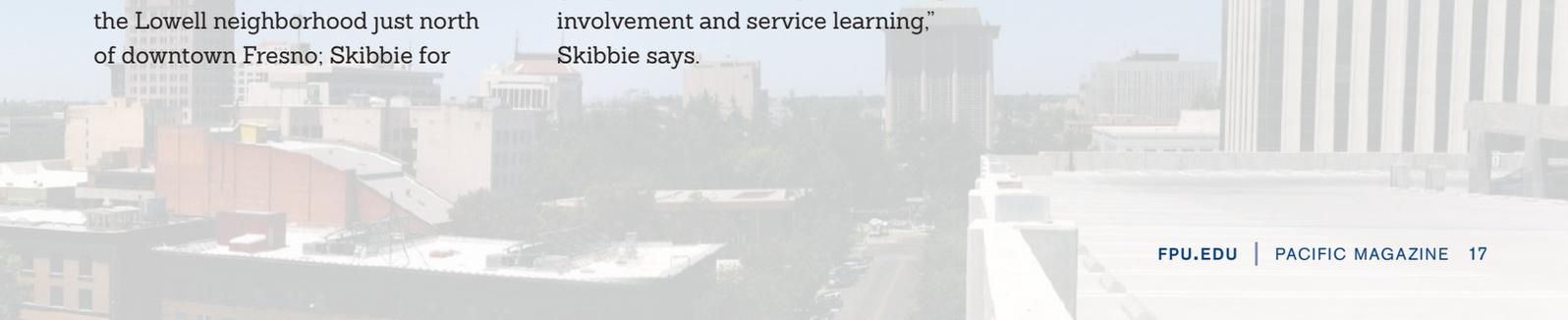
was strengthened by their time at the university. “I don’t know if Kepler would exist if I hadn’t gone through FPU,” Skibbie says.

Blackburn remembers returning to the public school classroom after years away and homeschooling her own children. “Education had become so standardized,” she says. “I had seen the freedom of letting children explore their own passions and interests. You can design very hands-on learning experiences. That’s what I saw was missing.”

Skibbie and Blackburn both live in the Lowell neighborhood just north of downtown Fresno; Skibbie for

nearly 20 years. They dreamed of bringing new educational options to the community, which has some of the highest poverty levels in Fresno and, when Kepler opened, a middle school suspension/expulsion rate of nearly 68 percent. Skibbie’s dining room table became the drawing board as she and Blackburn spent more than two years researching, planning, writing a 360-page charter, building a team and board and gauging community support. The end result? “We came up with Kepler, and a focus on small-group instruction, neighborhood involvement and service learning,” Skibbie says.

Fresno Unified School District unanimously approved the Kepler charter, and in 2013 classes opened at 1537 Fulton Street, on the Cornerstone Church campus, with 140 students. The location was intentional. “Downtown Fresno is an amazing place: its rich culture; access to art, history, government and medicine—things that make a city function,” Skibbie says. Students regularly walk the 2.5-mile-radius surrounding the school, visiting the Fresno County Public Library Central Branch, City Hall, businesses and other local landmarks.





going to be amazed at what the kids can do on their own with a gentle prod,” Stephens says. “The word ‘yes’ is powerful. It’s good to be in an educational setting where teachers can listen to a kid say, ‘I don’t like the way of doing this or I don’t understand. Can we do it this way?’ It’s a wonderful thing.”

Second-grade teacher Wendi Norvell also sees benefits in Kepler’s model. “We’re not big on homework or worksheets. We’re big on experiences,” she says. “They’re able to have an experience that gives meaning to their learning. When you’ve researched it yourself, created something with your own hands and made something meaningful with that, it stays with you a long time.”

CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

There are challenges, of course. Teachers create and teach their own curriculum every day, rather than work from prescribed programs. The

SERVING TO LEARN, LEARNING TO SERVE

The service-learning philosophy links community and classroom. Students are given real-world experience with downtown, and are inspired to make a difference in their city—a way of thinking encouraged at Fresno Pacific. “The difference between FPU and other prep programs out there is that value of people, that value of who God has created you to be. That’s what we really try to get across to our kids: you were created for a purpose—to bring health to your city, to bring peace to your city. Let’s figure out how you’re gifted and bring you into a place of well-being in our city,” Skibbie says.

This past school year, for example,

Doug Stephens’ 22 sixth graders were assigned to identify a problem and create a solution. Students formed groups, researched ideas, then presented proposals to classmates, who voted for their favorite. The winner was a plan to bring dogs from Animal Rescue of Fresno (ARF) to visit residents at Healthcare Centre of Fresno, a skilled nursing facility just three blocks from Kepler. Students spent an early June afternoon with center residents and ARF pets, making crafts together, singing and dancing. Students did all the work, except for making two phone calls and proofreading emails, according to Stephens.

Having students chart their own path is rewarding. “You’re always



LEARN MORE

Visit kepler.org. Kepler was featured in March 2015 in *The Atlantic* Fpu.edu/kepler



“The difference between FPU and other prep programs out there is that value of people, that value of who God has created you to be. That’s what we really try to get across to our kids.” –Shiela Skibbie

tradeoff to that extra work is seeing students come alive in a new way. Another challenge is the current space, with its tight, windowless classrooms and lack of a playground.

Here’s where the new building comes in. The retrofit, around the corner from the present location, will double the space of the current location on the Cornerstone Church campus. At the same time, local developer Tutelian & Co. is meticulously making the most of this Fresno landmark, preserving its brick façade while bracing the exterior.

Whatever Kepler has faced has not kept it from growing. Enrollment for 2016–2017 is at nearly 400 students, with more than 250 on a wait list representing 37 local ZIP codes. Among students who finish the school year at Kepler, 95–100 percent return in the fall. And when it comes to parent-teacher conferences, 99 percent of parents attend.

“Families come and bring their kids to this crazy looking school with every reason to go ‘Hmmm, I’ll go somewhere else.’” Blackburn says. “It’s actually quite humbling to watch the people come on board and say ‘yes, I value what you’re doing and it’s working for my child.’” 



Alumni at Kepler School:

Rebecca Allen
(Credential '14) sixth grade

Valerie Blackburn
(Current student, M.A. in Curriculum and Teaching)

Melissa (Krause) Ens
(BA '94, Credential '95) fourth grade

Nicole Gray
(BA '01, Credential '02, MA '15) eighth grade

Jessica Mast-Foss
(BA '10, Credential '13, Seminary '11) middle school teacher 2013–2016, also helped with planning the school, current board member

Wendi Norvell
(Credential '16, current student Master's in Teaching) second grade

Katie Shorey
(Clear Credential '00, former M.A. student), fifth grade

Shiela Skibbie
(Credential '00)

Krista Tsutsui
(BA '14, current Master's in Teaching student) third grade

DIGITAL DETECTIVE

By Wayne Steffen

The single-story, brick-and-masonry structure has no sign. Visible information is limited to two 8.5 by 11 pieces of paper taped to the glass door. One reads “Evidence Room Hours” and the other “Please Wait For Click Before Pulling Door Open.”

Most visitors are Fresno State students, who don’t know where they are, and law enforcement officers, who do. The Bureau of Forensic Services Regional Laboratory in Fresno doesn’t look like a place that led the state in one area of forensic science any more than it does a Valley version of the CSI TV franchise—but it is, and an FPU alumna is one of the pioneers.

Lubia Amezcuita-Ramirez (BA ’08) has been a criminalist at the lab, part of the California Department of Justice, since early 2012. Hired into the controlled substances and blood alcohol area, she was quickly cross-trained into digital evidence, a section then open only a few months, and today trains others as well as handling her own cases.

The Fresno lab was the first of California’s nine facilities to have a digital unit, and is still the only one doing a full range of work in the discipline. “I was lucky enough to be

in from the beginning,” she says.

Seeing Amezcuita-Ramirez work requires being met at the door by a staff member, signing in, getting a badge and being accompanied at all times. Lost students, the lab is located at the edge of California State University, Fresno campus, never get inside. Even law enforcement and legal personnel only get as far as the first set of locked doors, and do not know who will analyze their evidence. Samples are collected and given to the proper unit manager, who assigns a scientist.

Cameras keep an unobtrusive but omniscient eye on the institutional hallways. To enter or leave a division, Amezcuita-Ramirez and each of the 40 staff members use individual keycards that not only unlock and lock doors, but track their movements through the building. Inside each workspace is a vault accessible only to those who work in that area. Within that vault, each scientist has a private storage area.

LINKS IN THE CHAIN

Success in forensics rises and falls by the chain of evidence, whether the sample is as small as a hair or as large as a truck.

“If there is a break in the chain of evidence, when the case goes to court the evidence can be deemed inadmissible and the case thrown out,” she says.

Amezcuita-Ramirez projects the quiet, careful professionalism of her surroundings. Testifying in court as an expert witness is a crucial part of the job, and a substantial part of the 12-month training forensic scientists receive before they start work. Scientists will also practice with one to prepare for a specific case.

On the stand, her focus is on impartially presenting information, whether called by the prosecution or the defense. “We are a man or woman of science,” Amezcuita-Ramirez says. “We have no one in the courtroom to save or make guilty.”

Also important is making the science understandable to the jury. “If we confuse them it just doesn’t help,” she says.

As people commit more and more of their lives to digital devices—phones, tablets, computers—those devices become witnesses. Amezcuita-Ramirez examines photos, videos, call logs, Web browsing histories, account numbers, social media messages, information from global positioning

ALUMNI
PROFILE

**LUBIA
AMEZQUITA-RAMIREZ**
BA '08

satellites and more. “When a crime occurs it never fails there is communication,” she says.

Deleting a digital file doesn’t make it go away. The device merely opens the space the file takes up to be overwritten. Even after files are overwritten it is possible to get at least fragments of information. Cell phones typically take one or two days, sometimes a week, to unlock and process. Computers take two-four weeks, maybe longer. Amezquita-Ramirez can work one case at a time at each of her two workstations.

Cases range from identity theft and illegal drug transactions to murder and child exploitation. Those last two can make for emotional days, even in a laboratory. “We have seen people take their last breath. We’ve heard people speak their last words,” Amezquita-Ramirez says. She remembers a shooting where a child died: “Her last words were, ‘Mom, I love you,’ while she held her mom’s hand.”

When cases get stressful, talking to co-workers helps. “We don’t go home and share about these things with family over



“I do see very few women in digital evidence. Every time I’m in a training or class I’m one of one or two women, or the only one.”

–Lubia Amezquita-Ramirez

dinner. We do that sharing here," she says. Counseling and mental wellness programs are also available.

But the scientist also calls on her faith. Raised in the Roman Catholic Church since her childhood in Corcoran, Amezquita-Ramirez says FPU developed her background in Scripture and personal spirituality. "When I came to Fresno Pacific it really helped my relationship with God."

That relationship helps Amezquita-Ramirez over the bumps and gives purpose to what she does. "You have to stick by God," she says. "Sometimes when I get home I just have to pray I can help bring closure to a family."

GETTING STARTED

Amezquita-Ramirez's interest in science goes back to Richard Bearfield's (MA '92) eighth grade chemistry class at John Muir Middle School. "Ever since then I knew I wanted to major in chemistry," she says.

FPU mentors included Jonathan Dick, Ph.D., associate professor of physical sciences; Alan Thompson, Ph.D., associate professor of biology; and Chris Brownell, Ph.D., assistant professor of mathematics. What Amezquita-Ramirez learned helped with her state examination as well as using lab techniques and equipment. "The courses prepared me a great deal," she says. "Professors are so amazing and they really do make this a good learning experience."

The nudge to do more than watch criminal scientists on TV came from her husband, Manuel, who studied criminology at Fresno State. Before joining the DOJ she was in the fluid analysis lab at Quinn Caterpillar. Luvia and Manuel, a banking center manager for the Bank of America, live in Fresno and are expecting their first child.

Through her career, Amezquita-Ramirez has not been made to feel odd as a woman in science, but

wouldn't mind more female faces in her field. "I do see very few women in digital evidence. Every time I'm in a training or class I'm one of one or two women, or the only one," she says.

Meanwhile, Amezquita-Ramirez shares her knowledge with law enforcement by training officers in basic ways to get information from cell phones. She set up the program and the work is done in a room in her lab. "It really helps the agencies and it really helps our backlog," she says.

Such opportunities help Amezquita-Ramirez build the chain of her career, link by link. "My next step would be becoming a senior criminalist and then a supervisor," she says. 🏠



LEARN MORE

More about the State of California Attorney General Bureau of Forensic Services oag.ca.gov/bfs/services



MEMORIUM Elmer and Phyllis Martens

A couple who contributed much to their church, their community and

Fresno Pacific University and Biblical Seminary passed away within days of one another after 60 years together.

Elmer Martens, 86, died September 21, 2016. Phyllis Martens, 88, died October 1, 2016. The couple lived in Fresno, CA, and attended North Fresno MB Church.

Phyllis was born July 15, 1928, in India to missionaries J.N.C. Hiebert and Anna Jungas Hiebert. Elmer was born August 12, 1930, in Main Centre, Saskatchewan, to Jacob H. Martens and Susanna Nickel Martens. They met while Elmer was a student at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

(now FPBS) and Phyllis was a teacher at Pacific Bible Institute (now FPU), and married August 24, 1956.

Phyllis taught English at PBI from 1950 until after the school became a university. Elmer became a full-time member of the seminary Old Testament faculty in 1969, after teaching part time from 1959-61 and again for many years after his 1995 retirement. He was president from 1977-86.

Books by Elmer include *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology*, now in its fourth edition, as well as *Old Testament Theology* and *Jeremiah*. He was co-editor of *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology*. He served on the translation team of the *New American Standard Bible* and assisted with the

New King James Version.

Among Phyllis' publications are *A Heart for the World: God's Mission Series*; *Family Night at Home: Activities for Family, Fun, Sharing, Learning*; *God's Guardians: The Christian Parent and Her Children*; *Manners for Kids: A Book by Children, for Children*; *Stories from an Old Town: Grace, Grief, and Gossip in a Rural Minnesota Town*; and *The Mustard Tree: The Story of Mennonite Brethren Missions*.

Survivors include four children—Lauren Martens (Helen), Frances Martens Friesen (Kenneth), Vernon Martens (Sally) and Karen Bartlett (Rick)—and nine grandchildren.

More at Fpu.edu/martens 🏠

IN TOUCH WITH ALUMNI

We want you to stay informed, interested and active in university life by attending athletic, music, drama and other events; praying for current students, faculty and staff; and providing financial support for FPU's mission.

SUNBIRDS  LIFE

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GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adam Crowder (BA '16) is employed at Focus Forward, Fresno, as a family support specialist.

Christopher Scott (BA '13) graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary in May 2016 and is serving as small groups pastor at Rocky Hill Community Church in Exeter, CA.

Stephen Veldhuizen (BA '13) has been selected as a fellow for the 2016-2017 Assembly Fellow Program at the California Legislature. The program begins in October and runs through September 2017.

Michael Beaudoin (BA '12) was appointed as executive director for the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council.

Damien Capalare (MA '11) joined Paso Robles Joint Unified School District as principal. After receiving his administrative services credential at FPU, he began his administrative career in Central Unified School District at Steinbeck Elementary School where he served as guidance instructional advisor. Damien says he considers himself a family man above all else. He and wife Stormy have two sons, the older of which attends transitional kindergarten in the district. He said he looks forward to the many challenges and celebrations ahead and hopes to be a fixture as an administrator in the district for years to come.

Michael Duarte (MA '11, MA '08, BA '05) was named vice president of marketing at Duarte & Associates, Fresno. Duarte & Associates is a strategy insight, change movement, marketing agriculture firm.

Ivan Paz (BA '09, MA '15) has accepted a position with Fresno Metro Ministries as the Better Blackstone Project co-manager. He completed seven years with InterVarsity as the Pink House co-director.

Diana Cantu (MA '06), academic program coordinator for the Doctor's Academy at UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research, received the 2016 Educator of the Year Award from the Association of Mexican American Educators (AMAE) at its El Dia del Maestro banquet. She was recognized as an exemplary educator for promoting services to Latino students, above and beyond the call of duty.

Brittney (Conner BA '07) Sanchez and husband Branden are worship leaders at Bread of Life Church in Fresno and have just released their first EP album. The name of their group is called "Wellspring" and their website is wellspringband.com. They are partnering with Whitney Bunker (BA '08) and her non-profit organization called City Without Orphans, donating \$1 toward their organization for every album sale from their website.



Melanie Cordova (BA '10) is communications coordinator at Cornell University.

At West Coast Mennonite Central Committee Board meetings on February 27-28, 2016, **Melissa Bergen (BA '04)**, was nominated to the West Coast Mennonite Central Committee Board of Directors. The March/April issue of *Christian Leader*, the United States Mennonite Brethren magazine, cover story, "Little Free Libraries Open Doors in Shafter," highlights Bergen's work as pastor at Iglesia Compañerismo Cristiano and Local Missions Director at Shafter Mennonite Brethren Church. usmb.org/departments/Christian-Leader/article/Free-little-libraries-open-doors-in-Shafter.html

Kimberly D'Souza (BA '03) is now teaching for Kerman Unified School District.

Jared Christenson (BA '02) is now an enrollment consultant at Ruffalo Noel Levitz, Cedar Rapids, IA.

Dave "Chewy" Trouten (BA '86) is chairman of the General Education Division at Kingswood University in Canada.

David Avery (BA '84) won a Grammy Award for his part in promoting the Best Reggae Album of 2015 by Morgan Heritage, a family band from Jamaica.

Walter Bergen (BA '81) was appointed as the national team leader for Canadian LifeLight Ministries of Winnipeg, Manitoba. In this role, Bergen will be responsible for leadership and oversight of Canadian LifeLight Ministries' work of Scripture and Christian literature distribution. A Canadian non-profit ministry, CLLM provides Bibles and Christian literature to congregations for ministry to help them maximize their outreach and care for new believers.

James Friesen (BA '70) recently released his new book, *Jesus, Clear and Simple: In Times of Struggle* through Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Jesse Coulson (BA '71) wrote a children's book called *The Little Green Worm*, published by Tall Tails Publishers, Ada, OK. Jesse retired in June 2014 after 38 years as a psychologist and counselor in Texas. He lives in Bowie, TX, where he spends time writing and has another book scheduled to be published, *Reflections on Love and Life*, essays and poetry regarding Christian living. He has read his children's book to over 1,000 children in schools, churches and libraries.



Efrain Tovar (MA '06, BA '95, former staff) is now the coordinator of information & technology services for Selma Unified School District.

MARRIAGES



Delbert Warkentin (BA '15) married Bianca Kaethler in February 2016.

Isaac Comelli (BS '10) married Leticia Covarrubias on March 26, 2016.





BIRTHS

Ryan Miller (MA '15) and wife Brittney announce the birth of son Landon Mark on February 1, 2016.



Michael Conner (MA '14) and wife Jennifer announce the birth of Zander Conner on May 14, 2016.



Josh (MA '09) and **Faythe (TC '13) Blaire (both former staff)** announce the birth of son Corban Grey on June 5, 2016. He was 7 lbs., 8 oz. and 21 inches long.



Dulce Romero-Urbina (BA '07) and husband Ulises announce the birth of son Emmanuel B. Romero-Urbina on December 4, 2015.

Megan (Steinert BA '02) Cardenas and husband Mark announce the birth of daughter Adayla Rylynn Calliope on November 15, 2015. She is named after great-grandma Adala Nadene Steinert, late wife of former Fresno Pacific College Board President Marvin Steinert, and joins Troy, 2; and Logan, 12.



Daniel Neufeld (SEM '99) and wife Sarai Macias Martinez announce the birth of son Daniel George Neufeld born on March 31, 2016.

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who risked their lives for faith; enjoy cities, country sides and mountain valleys; and visit the Berlin Wall, Holocaust sites, places where Bach conducted and performed, the Dietrich Bonhoeffer museum and the tulip fields of Holland. Best of all—Steve promises no tests! Arrangements through Reformation Tours, reformationtours.com

- Israel/Palestine—Bret Kincaid, Ph.D., associate professor of political science
- Reformation Europe—Darin Lenz, associate professor history
- Colombia—Dina Gonzalez-Pina, assistant dean of multicultural ministries

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LIVES TRANSFORMED
DINA VILLANUEVA

Learning Not to Hate

By Alison Rosa

Despite deep Christian roots, Dina Villanueva needed help to learn to forgive.

A native of Oaxaca, Mexico, Dina was raised by her paternal grandparents until coming to the U.S. as a child to be with her parents. Wherever she was, she was surrounded by family and faith. "I spent a large amount of my childhood inside of a church and with the church community," she says. "Because I am fifth-generation Christian from my father's side of the family and third-generation from my

mother's side, my faith and spirituality have always been core elements in my life."

So when she came to FPU, Dina thought she was in a good place spiritually. Before her freshman year was out, however, tragedy changed everything when a car accident nearly took her parents lives. "My method of dealing with all of it was to bottle it up, close the lid and pretend everything was fine," she says.

But her anger and hate only grew. "I could not help but view everything in a very pessimistic

1950

FROM VIKINGS TO SUNBIRDS

By Kevin Enns-Rempel,
Director, Hiebert Library



way. I always asked God why he would allow this to happen to my family, to me?" Dina says.

Faith and community—so like her family and church home—were major reasons why Dina chose FPU. The university core was her core, and in her need its people lived it out for her. "Friends, mentors and professors at FPU have taught me the importance of forgiving, something I lost sense of along the way, because at the end of the day feeding such negative feelings doesn't hurt anyone but yourself," says Dina, now a senior majoring in criminal justice. "At FPU my faith has been stretched and has grown in many ways I never would have imagined." 🏠

During the early years of Pacific Bible Institute, athletics and team mascots played little role in the student experience. While some form of competitive sports existed from the early 1950s, it does not appear that PBI had a clearly-defined mascot.

That changed in about 1960, roughly at the same time that the school was making its move to the new Chestnut Avenue campus. In September 1960 the student council announced a \$10 prize for the person who submitted an entry "that could be used as the Pacific College emblem." The minutes do not actually describe the emblem or mascot chosen, but do imply that the decision had been made by early December. The Pacific College student newspaper was renamed *The Pacific Viking* in December 1960, and the student yearbook for 1960-1961 first described Pacific's athletic teams as "Vikings."

For the next 21 years, the school mascot remained the Viking. Not everyone, however, appreciated the connotations of this image. A mascot depicting people best known for invading and pillaging hardly seemed appropriate for a Mennonite school. Nor did the Scandinavian connection have anything to do with the cultural background of the school or the region in which it was located.

In the spring of 1981 a committee was created to select a new mascot, and solicited suggestions for what that might be. While there were many suggestions, the two most common themes were names relating to the sun and to birds.



For various reasons, however, none of the specific suggestions seemed appropriate. Finally, one of the student members of the committee suggested combining these two concepts into what the committee thought was an imaginary thing called a "Sunbird." The proposal was approved, and beginning in the fall of 1981, Fresno Pacific's athletic teams became the Sunbirds—apparently the only such college mascot in the world.

Only later was it discovered that there actually was such a thing as a Sunbird: a group of small, nectar-feeding birds found in the eastern hemisphere. Apparently no one thought to check an encyclopedia—and Google hadn't been invented yet. Depictions of the Sunbird mascot have always leaned toward the imaginary quality first envisioned by the committee, and

no attempt has ever been made to depict Fresno Pacific's Sunbird like any of the many real species of that bird. 🏠



EDITOR'S NOTE

Do you know a student who has been transformed at FPU? Contact Wayne Steffen at wsteffen@fresno.edu

From the Archives...



CONNECTING MIND & BODY

By Wayne Steffen

FPU Faculty Reps lead in here and here and here



Quentin Kinnison,
faculty rep for
Men's water polo



“Athletics, like all co-curricular programs, are part of the education process at FPU. Students learn some of the same things in courses that they do in sports. I'm grateful for the professors who take the time to participate”

—Steve Varvis, Ph. D.

When the Sunbirds play in Hawaii, they don't expect a big cheering section. So the men's basketball squad got a surprise when a familiar joyful bellow rolled like a wave from the stands January 18, 2016, at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

There, trademark smile all over his face, was University Pastor Angulus Wilson. “All of a sudden we heard him shouting for us,” said point guard Suhail Mohammadi.

Wilson loves his hoops, but that wasn't enough reason to spend more than 10 hours on an airplane back and forth to Fresno to see a game. He was taking his duties as Faculty Team Representative (FTR) seriously. “I'm very proud of these guys,” he says.

And the players appreciate Wilson, who also hangs out at practice and in the weight room to talk and pray about everything from grades to girlfriends. “He kind of brings life and joy to us through the way he speaks,” Mohammadi says.

Preseason Schedule

Don Diboll, kinesiology program director, caught the inspiration for the FTR program at the 2015 NCAA National Convention, where several universities presented on their activities. “I was thinking, This has FPU written all over it,” Diboll says.

The next step was a talk with the Student Athletics Advisory Committee, made up of student-athletes from all 14 sports. “Basically, I wanted to see if we



had buy-in,” Diboll says. The response was another enthusiastic “Yes.”

So, to work...

First, student-athletes nominated faculty. After head coaches weighed in, Diboll hit the telephone to entreat the until-now-unsuspecting professors to volunteer. Fortune smiled as faculty stepped up: to the plate, the free-throw line, the center circle and the starting blocks. Adding to the pre-season speculation was Diboll’s practice of telling potential reps they had been nominated by a team—but not by which team.

Making the Draft

Each fall, the all-sports meeting gives student-athletes an opportunity to meet the newbies, catch up with friends and

hear from coaches and department staff in the Special Event Center gymnasium. The fall 2015 edition offered a twist. “They had the equivalent of a major league draft,” Diboll says.

Diboll called faculty reps to the stage to meet and receive gifts from their teams, and results were a surprise to nearly all. Pamela Johnston put on the swim cap she got from the women’s water polo team. Quentin Kinnison just held up his Speedo bathing suit from the men’s squad.

But where would any sporting event be without a cliff-hanger? A come-from-behind victory? Members of volleyball and baseball teams didn’t think they were going to have FTRs by the time of the draft, and were working on being good



Top: Ken Cheung, Women’s soccer

Bottom: Jap Pope, Women’s basketball



Top: Cheung
Middle: Pope
Bottom: Kinnison

sports at the event. Unbeknownst to the athletes, Diboll's last-minute calls had paid off and Greg Camp signed on with volleyball. Diboll himself worked with the baseball team, beginning the inaugural season with a full roster of team representatives.

Playing a Role

FTRs were to get to know individual student-athletes by attending games, practices and other team events. They could also show support by wearing Sunbird memorabilia.

Nathan Carson and Wilson shared a special perspective on student-athletes, having been there themselves: Carson running track and field and Angulus playing basketball. "I sensed I had a voice to provide that other faculty members might not have had," Carson says.

In addition to being a source of guidance for his team, Carson humorously added that he hoped to recruit for the philosophy program. "Some of my best students are also athletes," he says.

Student-athletes face the same

adjustments as all traditional undergraduate students. "They may have a few others when it comes to injuries, balancing a load when you're here on a scholarship to play sports," Wilson says. "They don't get any shortcuts."

There can also be a cultural challenge for transfers from some secular schools to this Christian university, "where rules matter," Wilson says. FPU is not all about winning. "We want to win and work hard to do so, but academics are the main thing—we really mean that," he says.

When problems turn serious, Wilson is open that his FPU playing career ended because of his discipline issues. "That's been very effective," he adds.

The Results

By linking athletics and academics, FTRs make an important contribution to FPU's mission to "develop students for leadership and service through excellence in Christian higher education," says Steve Varvis, Ph.D., then provost/



senior vice president. “Athletics, like all co-curricular programs, are part of the education process at FPU. Students learn some of the same things in courses that they do in sports. I’m grateful for the professors who take the time to participate,” he says.

Distance runner Jennifer Arellano also appreciates this integration. “It’s awesome to have them come out and see the work we put in. There are often misconceptions with athletes that we don’t do anything, but we really do,” she explains.

Kinnison attended all the men’s water polo home meets and hosted team members in their home, along with wife Cynthia (D.Min., adjunct faculty) and daughter Carissa. He sees an opportunity to practice Christian peacemaking by crossing boundaries. “We seem incredibly fragmented at times. This is one small way I can participate in God’s reconciling work on our campus,” Kinnison says.

Brian Suhovy, men’s and women’s water polo coach, agrees. “We are

an institution that prides itself on relationships and community and the FTR program goes hand-in-hand with that philosophy,” he says.

Post-Game Analysis

“Overall, I think it’s been successful,” Diboll says. The basic design is sound and allows for a lot of flexibility for busy faculty, coaches and student-athletes, and Diboll is working with participants to strengthen the details. Some colleges and universities have waiting lists of faculty wanting to be FTRs, a problem Diboll would love to have.

In addition to growing deeper into sports, the idea of faculty representatives could spread broadly across campus to students in music, drama and other groups that function as a team. “What do we say all the time? We’re a community,” Diboll says. 🏠

Makenzie Dunckel (BA '16) and student Kristian House contributed to this article.

2016-2017 Faculty Team Representatives

Amy Brogan, Ed.D.,
assistant professor of
kinesiology, men’s soccer

Angulus Wilson, Ph.D.,
university pastor,
men’s basketball

Jay Pope, Ph.D.,
associate professor of
psychology, women’s basketball

Ken Cheug, Ph.D.,
associate professor of chemistry,
women’s soccer

Breck Harris, Ed.D.,
associate professor of
business, swimming & diving

Pam Johnston, Ph.D.,
associate professor of history,
women’s water polo

Quentin Kinnison, Ph.D.,
associate professor of Christian
ministry, men’s water polo

Nathan Carson, Ph.D.,
assistant professor of
philosophy, track &
cross country

Greg Camp, Ph.D.,
professor of biblical and
religious studies/Greek,
volleyball

Don Diboll, Ph.D.,
associate professor of
kinesiology, baseball

FPU Scores Service Three-peat

By Wayne Steffen

The Pacific West Conference honored FPU's community service contributions for the third straight year in June as the Sunbirds received the annual Make-A-Wish Award. The \$3,223.44 raised for the foundation in 2015-2016 brought FPU's three-year total to over \$11,500.

"We're extremely proud that the hard work of our Student-Athlete Advisory Committee has been recognized," said Director of Athletics Aaron Henderson. "The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a world-class organization that truly makes a difference in the lives of children and families. We're proud to be a small part of that."

The efforts had a direct impact on the life of one member of the FPU family: Emilio Gomez, a local junior high student and member of the baseball team through TeamImpact, had his wish granted by Make-A-Wish of Central California. In April the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) invited 31 children and their families to attend WrestleMania and be inducted into the WWE's Circle of Champions in Dallas.

This marks FPU's first PacWest Make-A-Wish Award. FPU was previously awarded the PacWest Community Engagement Award, given to the program that best serves its community during the year, in each of the past two seasons. 🏠

Among the year's fundraising events were:

A combined effort between the baseball program and minor league team Visalia Rawhide as part of an April scrimmage.

Halftime contests at soccer, basketball, volleyball and water polo games.

Main campus "Penny Wars" with different areas competing against one another. Funds were also collected at numerous home events.



IN STEP WITH THE SUNBIRDS
fpuathletics.com

Read all about it
Fpu.edu/make-a-wish



McDaniel Leads Academic Sprint

The PacWest honored 64 FPU student-athletes with Academic All-Conference honors in May, with junior Donte McDaniel named conference Men's Track & Field Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

McDaniel, a 2016 team captain, led FPU to its first NCAA Division II national championship appearance and was included on the All-American Second Team after finishing 11th in the nation in the triple jump. He also won the PacWest title in the triple jump, finished second in the 100m dash and placed third in the long jump. At FPU he ranks third all-time in the triple jump, fifth in the long jump and sixth in the 100m dash. The Selma native was also named to the CoSIDA Academic All-District First Team this season.

FPU's 10 PacWest-sponsored sports were all represented on the Academic All-PacWest Team, including a team-high 12 student-athletes from baseball, 10 from men's and women's track & field, nine from women's soccer, seven from men's soccer, six from men's cross country, three from volleyball, women's basketball and women's cross country and one from men's basketball.

These 64 honorees bring the total number of the 2015-2016 FPU academic awardees to 101. The women's track & field and cross country teams achieved the highest team GPA with a 3.06.

More about Donte McDaniel at vimeopro.com/fpu/stories/video/119281501 



Pros Pick Preston

The Texas Rangers selected senior outfielder Preston Scott in the 34th round of the Major League Baseball first-year draft.

"I'm very proud of Preston and am extremely happy for him," said head coach Oscar Hirschhorn. "He's been a great example to our younger players with the discipline that he's shown in the classroom and the weight room, as well as his faith."

Scott, whose 26-game hitting streak is a school record, ranked among the West Region leaders in multiple offensive categories. Overall he hit .339 with a .418 on-base percentage and .579 slugging percentage to go with 18 doubles, four homers, 42 runs and 32 RBI. He also led the PacWest with seven triples.

The Hanford native graduated first in career triples (13), fifth in career doubles (34) and fourth in slugging percentage (.585) in program history. His awards include All-Region honors from the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association and spots on the All-PacWest First Team and Academic All-District Team.

Coaches and fellow players have been great influences, Scott said. "FPU has not only helped me become a better ballplayer, but a better man, teammate and friend. I will forever be proud to be called a Sunbird."

Scott is the seventh Sunbird MLB draftee since baseball began in 2006. 

See other Sunbird academic accolades:

Fpu.edu/water-polo-gcc

Fpu.edu/water-polo-acwpc

Fpu.edu/swim-cscaa

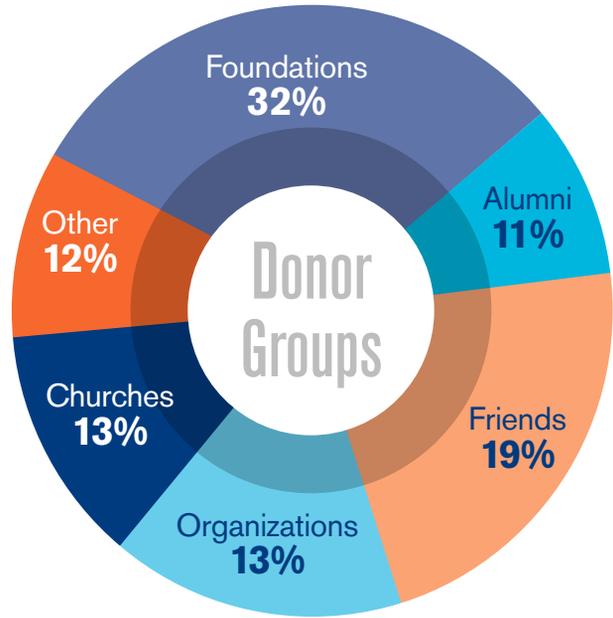
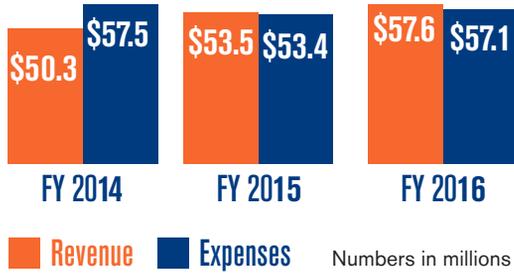
Fpu.edu/donte

Full story and more at Fpu.edu/preston

2015-16

FPU ANNUAL REPORT

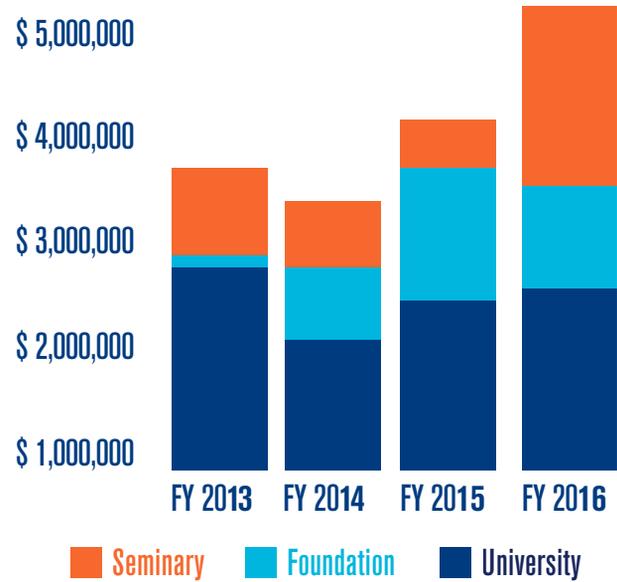
Revenue and Expenses



Enrollment



Giving



Possible. Begins here.

The FPU Fund gives the university the freedom to chase down big ideas, unburdened by financial uncertainty and prepared for a world that doesn't yet know what possibilities we have in store.

Annual gifts from alumni, parents, and friends support exceptional teaching and technology and a thriving student life experience. Every year these dollars open doors of possibilities for our students. From scholarships to buildings, books to lab equipment, annual giving through the FPU Fund is enhancing the Fresno Pacific experience.

What does the FPU Fund support?

- Student scholarships
- Student services
- Faculty and programs
- Technology upgrades

How do I give?

Each year, make a one-time gift, or monthly/quarterly gifts in support of the FPU Fund. Celebrate milestones with an honor gift. Remember loved ones with a memorial gift.

- Online at giving.fresno.edu (one-time, monthly or quarterly)
- Check (in the mail)
- Directly from your checking account (monthly)

What's the impact?

How can one person change our community, region and world? Your gifts, large and small, provide access to a top Christian education resulting in graduates who are recognized for consistently demonstrating wise and effective ethical leadership through generous and compassionate service and professional excellence. Your gifts make this possible.



Questions and Information

Joan Hensleit-Minasian,
Director of Annual Giving
559-453-2028 or
Joan.Minasian@fresno.edu



2016 More Than a Year: a Gift

In May new graduates were given the opportunity to make their first gift to the FPU Annual Fund in honor of their graduation year—\$20.16.

Some 100 students, about 20 percent of the class, stepped up. "We are so proud of these new alums and their support and commitment to give back to FPU so others can follow in their footsteps," said Ali Sena, director of alumni development.

In recognition, each contributing grad was given a medallion, which they wore at the commencement ceremony. 



“My experience at Fresno Pacific led to incredible personal transformation and growth. The process changed me as a leader and follower of Christ in ways I had not expected. My gift of \$20.16 was a way I could leave something behind that reflected my feelings of gratitude. Giving back to the university created a personal impression that I was more than a graduate. I was investing in the continued success of a learning experience that had come to mean so much. The investment the Class of 2016 made will benefit all graduates, past and future, that have the privilege to wear the title of Sunbirds4Life.”



Jason Orton, MBA '16
Vice President,
Orton's Equipment Company



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Ensuring the Dream



What's possible when a family deeply connected to Fresno Pacific endows the future of music and theater? **The dream of a performing arts center moves forward!**

Bob and Carol Friesen have given much—both attended Pacific Bible Institute. Daughter Tiffany and son Todd and his wife Sarah earned degrees at FPU.

Now they will ensure a long-cherished project benefits generations to come. A musician, Carol sang in choir and traveled with a drama group. A former trustee, Bob knows the hardest money to raise for any building is the endowment.

The university is grateful that, through the sale of rental property, Bob and Carol are funding a charitable remainder unitrust with the foundation. Proceeds will go to the Fresno Pacific University Performing Arts Center Maintenance Endowment.



Tax savings

Retirement income

Benefits of planned giving

Support for causes you care about

To learn how you can participate, contact:

Mark Deffenbacher, CFRE

Executive Director

Fresno Pacific University Foundation

559-453-2239 | mdeffen@fresno.edu

fresno.edu/foundation