

Western

RENEWAL

2013 Portland Campus Commencement | Mali: Care in the Midst of Chaos | Bert Downs: Transformational Connection



Spring 2013 Western Seminary E-Newsletter

Hello from Dr. Roberts

Welcome to the latest edition of Western Seminary's electronic newsletter. This is graduation season at Western's three campuses, which means a time of special celebration as students complete their programs and move on to begin their ministries (though many Western students are already involved in full-time ministry roles while earning their degrees). Below you will find a sample of student testimony highlights from the recent Portland banquet. Each year the testimonies from graduates at all three campuses illustrate in a singular way the high caliber of men and women who comprise Western alumni. In that same vein, you will also read about alumnus Dr. William Petty's amazing ministry in Mali which combines in a powerful way God's care for both body and soul.

Speaking of alumni, Chancellor Bert Downs has taken the initiative to begin forging a supportive network of, and for, our graduates. Bert brings a great deal of both creativity and ministry savvy to this task, and I'm excited to see what will develop.

Some key personnel comings-and-goings, along with a calendar of upcoming events, fill out the rest of this issue. Special thanks to Kate Schleusner, whose artistic skill has brought a fresh and even more attractive look to our publications. And finally, thanks to those of you who faithfully support our students and alumni through prayer and financial gifts. Your investment in them makes a difference, and enables them to make a difference as well!



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2013 COMMENCEMENT

PORTLAND CAMPUS

This year, a combined total of 105 students will graduate with a Masters level degree or higher from Western Seminary: 76 from Portland, 17 from Sacramento and 12 from San Jose. The Portland campus celebrated the class of 2013 graduates over the weekend of April 26th. The graduates were honored during the 86th Annual Celebration Banquet, which featured testimonies from six students: Aaron Truong, Melissa McDonald, Branden Brooks, Kyle Schwahn, David Bertolini, and Julius Twongyeirwe. The following morning their degrees were conferred during the commencement ceremony at Village Church in Beaverton, Oregon. The commencement address was given by Dr. David Bennett, Chief Collaboration Officer and Teaching Pastor at the Lausanne Movement.

The San Jose Commencement will take place on July 20th and the Sacramento Commencement will take place on August 17th.

“Each year the testimonies from graduates at all three campuses illustrate in a singular way the high caliber of men and women who comprise Western alumni.” —Dr. Roberts



Aaron Truong

MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING MASTER OF DIVINITY

Aaron intends to preach the gospel in East Asia.

"I AM SO INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL TO HAVE BEEN IN A PLACE WHERE FACULTY MEMBERS CARED ENOUGH FOR ME TO HELP ME PROCESS THROUGH MY THEOLOGICAL HANG UPS, MINISTRY QUESTIONS, AND EVEN MY PERSONAL ISSUES. IT WAS SO EXCITING FOR ME TO HAVE ACCESS TO THESE AMAZING, GODLY PEOPLE WHO POSSESS A WEALTH OF WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE. "



Branden Brooks

MASTER OF ARTS (BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES)

Branden hopes to pastor an inner-city church that reaches a variety of economic and ethnic backgrounds.

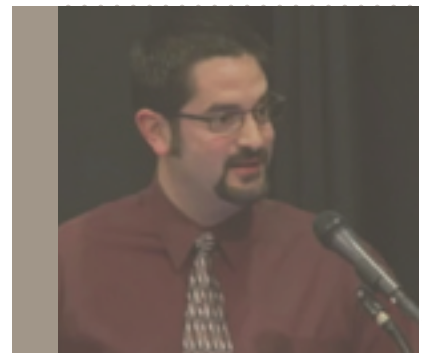
"ONE OF THE THINGS THAT REALLY STRUCK ME AND IMPRESSED ME WAS THE QUALITY OF PROFESSORS...THEIR INTEREST IN THE STUDENTS, THAT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT REALLY IMPACTED ME."

David Bertolini

MASTER OF DIVINITY

David is the Associate Pastor at Grace Community Church in Dallas, OR.

"WESTERN SEMINARY GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS ...I ALWAYS FELT CARED FOR, ENCOURAGED, AND VALUED."





Kyle Schwahn

MASTER OF ARTS (BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES)

Kyle is the Preaching Pastor at Indian Trail Church in Spokane, Washington.

"IT IS BY HIS GRACE THAT THE STORY OF MY OWN LIFE AND MINISTRY CAN BE SUMMED UP WITH SOMETHING THAT WILL EVER BE MORE THAN A CATCH PHRASE FOR ME... 'GOSPEL-CENTERED TRANSFORMATION.'"

Melissa McDonald

MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING

Melissa is called to global work through counseling.

"WHILE AT WESTERN I'VE BEEN SHAPED INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE HELPER...I'VE LEARNED TO BE MORE PRESENT, DISCERNING IN NEEDS, AND BETTER ABLE TO AMPLIFY STRENGTHS."



Julius Twongyeirwe

DOCTOR OF MISSIOLOGY

Julius is the National Director of the Proclamation Task in Uganda and will continue his ministry of improving training for ministry leaders in his country.

"MY LIFE AND MINISTRY GROWTH HAVE BEEN MARKED BY A DESIRE FOR A BETTER GRIP ON THE GOSPEL MESSAGE, AN EMPHATIC UNDERSTANDING OF MY MINISTRY CONTEXT, AND A HEAVENWARD ADJUSTMENT FOR MYSELF IN KNOWLEDGE, CHARACTER, AND SKILLS FOR MINISTRY. WESTERN SEMINARY HAS GIVEN ME THIS. "

Personnel Changes

To fulfill a long-standing desire to work with Ph.D. students, **Dr. Marc Cortez** will be leaving Western this summer to assume a faculty position at Wheaton College. Marc has done an excellent job leading our academic programs since 2008, and we are delighted that he will still be able to do some adjunct teaching for us in the future.

Dr. Robert Wiggins, our current Dean of Student Development and Registrar, will succeed Dr. Cortez as Academic Dean on July 1. Rob brings to this task a rich background of formal training (M.Div. and Th.M. from Western, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Oregon State University) and academic experience (26 years of service in his current role).

To fill Dr. Wiggins' role, we are excited to have **Dr. Reid Kisling** join Western's team. Reid is a graduate of Dallas Seminary (Th.M.) and Regent University (Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership). He has earlier served as Registrar and Director of Enrollment Management at Dallas Seminary and as Registrar at George Fox University.

Finally, this month **Dr. Jim Hislop** will become the first director of our Center for Leadership Development. In this part-time role, he will also oversee the implementation of a recent grant received by the Kern Family Foundation. Married to Western faculty member Bev Hislop, Jim is also a Western grad (D.Min. 2009) who brings decades of pastoral experience and a heart for leadership development in the church to this position.

Registrar Honored

Dr. Robert Wiggins is the 2013 winner of the Herb Chereck Award for Excellence. The award is given annually by OrACRAO (the Oregon Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions officers) and is named in honor of one of that organization's co-founders. To be eligible for the award, nominees must be OrACRAO members who have been in the profession for more than five years and who have made an especially significant contribution during their service. Nomination letters for Dr. Wiggins commended in particular the conscientiousness, student-centeredness, relational skill and team-building savvy that he manifested in his 26 years as Western's registrar and dean of student development. Congratulations, Rob!

Transformational Connection



Dr. Bert Downs

Bert Downs is well known to the Western community. As former president and current chancellor, he requires little introduction. Currently in his role as chancellor, he is spending time on what he calls a "special project": building significant relationships and developing meaningful connections with alumni. Having spent the past seven years as Regional Director for the Southwest Church Connection, Dr. Downs is experienced in developing systems of connection and relational interaction.

His vision for the Western alumni body is to see it flourish into "a network of ministry colleagues, professional or otherwise, that are committed to excellence in their ministry craft and grace in the exercise of it, and who will generously make investments in one another for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom...."

Recognizing that individuals involved in ministry are at high risk to burn out or become unhealthy, Bert sees the opportunity and need to create a safe place, where help and support can be found from a trusted source. "We've invested too much in them, and they in us," he says, "to let the alumni connection be forgotten." With this end in mind, he will be working towards establishing and enhancing existing systems (such as placement services) that support the respective journeys of alumni and the health required for them to stay on course.



Dr. Robert Wiggins

Care in the Midst of Chaos

ALUMNUS SERVES THROUGH MEDICAL MISSIONS IN MALI



"When do we enter the Kingdom of God? Is it in the future or right now? If we are killed, does that mean we have been abandoned by God?" For many of us, these questions are challenging, but often in a more removed, abstract way. For others, however, these questions are confronting them on a daily basis.

Western alumnus Dr. Bill Petty, an obstetrician/gynecologist, came face to face with this reality last summer when returning to Koutiala, Mali for his eighth mission trip to the Women and Children's Hospital. Two months before Petty's arrival in May 2012, northern Mali was torn by violent upheaval resulting from the Al Qaeda takeover of the northern part of the country. This civil war was characterized by mass murders of civilians and people working for non-governmental organizations.

When the French military sent troops in January 2013 to restore order, they were met with rejoicing from the Malian nationals.

Throughout this time of upheaval, the hospital remained open and fully functioning, in spite of uncertainty and stories of terror. Dr. Yohanna, a Malian physician who had trained in Koutiala and had been living in the north, fled with his family back to Koutiala, returning with reports of the atrocities being committed. On their way south, the car behind them was stopped and all the occupants killed. This was the political climate that Petty entered when he returned to Mali.

The imminent fear of attack and mayhem spreading from the north presented Petty with many opportunities to engage the all Christian staff in

The Women and Children's Hospital complex in Koutiala, Mali.



Physician assists patient, Ne Kone, recovering from Typhoid.



The hospital staff gathers for daily morning devotions.



Twins carried home by their mother and big sister.



Dr. Petty with Ne Kone and her brother a month later, released from the hospital.



Sign for the hospital in French.



Mrs. Dao on her scooter, surrounded by her husband, baby son, daughter and mother.

conversations regarding personal faith, death, resurrection and heaven. He encouraged them with such scriptures as I Corinthians 15 which remind us that "...Our bodies will be sown perishable, raised imperishable; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body." Dr. Petty adds, "And when we arrive in heaven, what happens? When we arrive, God will wipe every tear from our eyes and we will live in the house of the Lord forever. So we do not need to fear evil. God loves us. He is with us now and will be with us forever."

While we take the easy availability of health care for granted, the Women and Children's Hospital remaining open during this turmoil was a remarkable blessing. One of the world's poorest nations, health care in Mali is extremely limited, especially for women and children. Petty shares one such story from his most recent visit:

"Mrs. Dao had one child and was 20 weeks pregnant. She was climbing high in a Mango tree to get fruit for the family when she fell and landed on her bottom. She crushed some vertebrae, her spinal cord, and was paralyzed and numb from the waist down. Her husband put her on the back of his motor bike and brought her to the hospital. On the way, her right foot dug all the way on the asphalt and dirt roads. Her toes were torn and a mess. Her left calf rested against the hot exhaust pipe so it received a bad burn. She then developed some ulcers of her back and hips. All these things required prolonged care. Her total hospitalization was 292 days. In spite of all this, she delivered a baby boy by Caesarean Section at term."

Dr. Petty was moved to pay the Dao family's hospital bill, and the Director of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dr. Dan Nesselroade, bought her a scooter which she can pedal and steer with

her hands so that, though paraplegic, she can get around where she lives. In spite of the trials and difficulties that come, be they through political upheaval or tragic accidents, "God works through us each to positively care for so many," says Petty.

Dr. Petty is an Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, NC. He also both serves on the Board of Directors and gives medical care to the women at Solus Christus, a Christian half way house.

Dr. Petty is a Western Alumnus (MCL, '79, D.Min '85).

UPCOMING EVENTS

PORTLAND | **SAN JOSE** | **SACRAMENTO**

To view a complete schedule of events, click on the campus above.

June

San Jose Campus Connection

San Jose Campus

June 1, 2013: 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM

More information and registration.

Western Seminary Golf Classic

Persimmon Country Club in Gresham, OR

June 3, 2013: 12:30 PM Shotgun Start

Cost is \$150/player

More information and registration.

Western Seminary Discover Coaching

San Jose Campus

June 12, 2013: 6:30 PM

An introduction to the benefits and basics of coaching.

Coffee and dessert are provided.

More information and registration.

July

San Jose Commencement Celebration Banquet

Santa Clara University, Adobe Lodge

July 19th, 2013 5:30 PM

Join us for a special evening celebrating this years graduates!

San Jose Commencement

Hillside Church, San Jose

July 20th, 2013 11 AM

August

Sacramento Commencement Celebration Banquet

Arden Hills Resort Club and Spa

August 16, 2013, 6:00 PM.

Join us for a special evening complete with jazz music
and food to celebrate this year's graduates!

Sacramento Commencement

August 17, 2013, 10:30 AM

Arcade Church