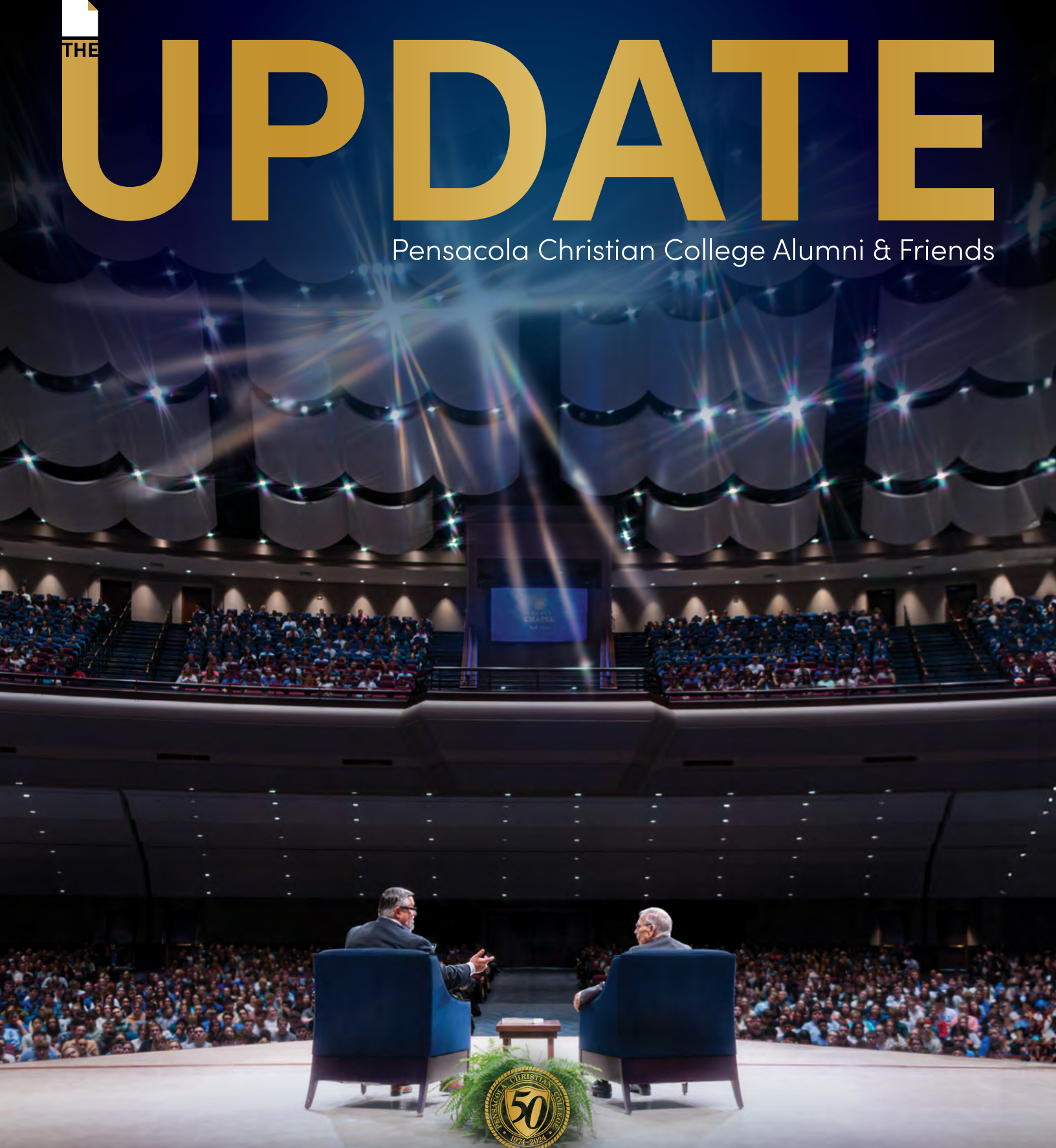


# THE UPDATE

Pensacola Christian College Alumni & Friends



## *Looking to the Future*

SPRING 2024

Commemorative Edition  
—The Past 25 Years—

VOL. 2 ISSUE 2

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



DR. TROY A. SHOEMAKER

What a year it has been! As we've celebrated these last five decades of Pensacola Christian College, campus has been filled with exciting ways to commemorate what the Lord has done. Legacy chapels, an unforgettable Gala, beloved speakers coming for Legacy Bible Conference, record-setting attendance at Alumni Homecoming, and a time capsule for the next generation—we're grateful to every single person who joined us to reminisce and rejoice.

Looking back on the blessings of the past fills our hearts with thankfulness, and we're excited to see what the Lord has for us in the years to come. (See page 10 for a sneak peek at some of our campus expansion ideas!)

But as we look to the future, we must keep our focus on the fact that God has us here, right now, for a purpose. We don't know what tomorrow holds, but we do know that every day is an opportunity to continue the unwavering mission PCC has maintained from the beginning. Generations of students have been empowered to influence the world for Christ no matter what they study or where the Lord directs their lives, and we pray that this mission will always be a hallmark of PCC.

Many faithful individuals have left a legacy here, paving the way for the growth and blessings we enjoy today. Now it's our turn—as students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni—to leave a legacy for the next generation. We are all part of the history of Pensacola Christian College. Let's strive together to follow the example set before us, consciously deciding to serve the Lord both now and into the future.

Sincerely,

Troy A. Shoemaker, Ed.D.  
President



Learn more about our  
**50th-Year  
Celebration**  
[50years.pcci.edu](http://50years.pcci.edu)



## MAGAZINE CREDITS

**CONTENT MANAGER**  
Tiffany Rott ('06, M.S. '21)

**PROJECT MANAGERS**  
Laina Duffee ('01)  
Haley Luko ('17)

**EDITORIAL STRATEGIST**  
Samantha Allen ('18)

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**  
Dustin Hubbard ('01, M.A. '03)

**EDITOR**  
Jessica Hall ('20)

**PROOFREADERS**  
Megan Kessel ('20, M.S. '23)  
Linda Tutton

**WRITERS**  
Samantha Allen ('18)  
Jessica Jainchill ('17, M.S. '19)  
Kimberly Kuntz ('19, M.S. '21)  
Courtney Thompson ('19, M.S. '21)  
Jennifer Twigg ('04, M.S. '06, M.S. '10)  
Bonnie Webb ('12)

**GUEST WRITER**  
Dr. Dave Young ('92, M.A. '09)

**LEAD DESIGNER**  
Mikayla Stewart ('19)

**PRINT DESIGNERS**  
Rachel Perrigo ('19, M.A. '21)  
Mikayla Stewart ('19)  
Annabeth Vidal ('21)

**MARKETING STRATEGISTS**  
Meagan Riedel ('22)  
Louie Stewart ('19)

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Casie Bento ('10)  
Victoria Bowman  
Chris Caldwell ('22)  
Jenna Carey  
Benjamin Finley ('16)  
Esther Hallman ('13, M.F.A. '16)  
Rachael Johns ('22)  
Amelia Lefevers ('27)  
Hannah Luttrell ('23)  
Bella Martin ('20)  
Michael Newton ('24)  
Rick Rivera ('22, M.A. '24)  
Cole Sears ('26)  
Deena-Leigh Stapleton ('19)  
Angelina-Marie Teegarden  
Nathan Van Ethen ('10)  
Madison Weldy ('23)  
Stones Studio  
Historical/unmarked

**DIGITAL MEDIA DESIGNERS**  
Kyle Rivera ('20)  
Megan Zacharias ('17)

**SPECIAL THANKS**  
Casie Bento ('10)  
Abigail Cannon ('17, M.A. '19)  
Aaron Ebert ('93)  
Monica Koepfer ('06)  
Dr. Jon Lands ('91)  
Lauren McCollim ('11, M.B.A. '13)  
Dwight Reid  
Dr. Troy Shoemaker ('89, M.S. '94, Ed.D. '07)  
Daniel Simpson ('12, M.B.A. '19)

Connect with us



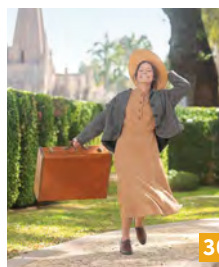
# IN THIS ISSUE



26



19



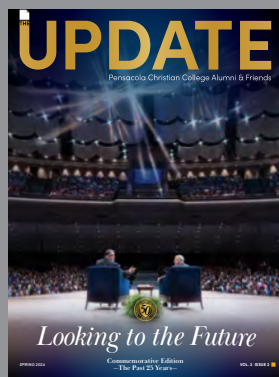
30

## CONTENTS

- 04**  
**PCC TIMELINE**  
The Past 25 Years
- 06**  
**FEATURE TOPIC**  
Dr. Troy Shoemaker
- 10**  
**SNEAK PEEK**
- 14**  
**ALUMNI FEATURE**  
Heather Sorenson
- 18**  
**A GOOD WORD**  
Be Still and Know
- 19**  
**ALUMNI FEATURE**  
John Libka
- 22**  
**SEASONAL**  
Legacy Bible Conference
- 24**  
**STUDENT Q&As**  
Today's PCC Student
- 26**  
**TOPICAL**  
Student-Led Ministries
- 30**  
**CAMPUS EVENT COVERAGE**  
PCC's Spring Celebration
- 35**  
**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

### WHAT'S ON THE COVER?

Dr. Troy Shoemaker, current PCC president, and Dr. Arlin Horton, president emeritus, participated in the '00s Decade Legacy Chapel.



# 2000-2024

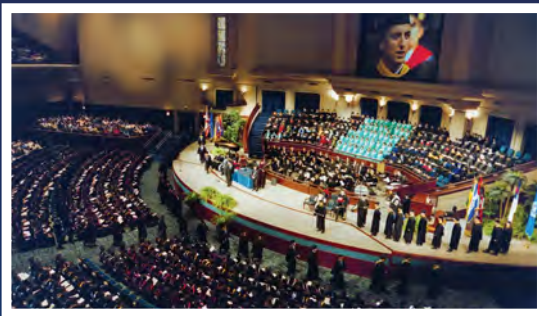
In the past 25 years, PCC has seen campus updates, steady growth, and celebrations. As the 50th school year comes to a close, the College continues to reflect on the Lord's blessings and provision for the ministry.



**Four Winds:**  
New dining facility offered expanded menu and seating options.



**Missions Run:**  
Student Body held the first 5K to support missions.



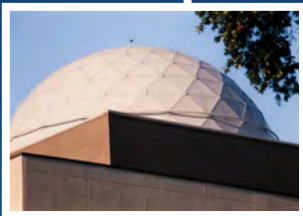
**First graduating class to walk in the newly opened Crowne Centre**



**Lady Eagles:**  
Women's basketball team joined intercollegiate sports roster.

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11

**Planetarium:**  
*The Heavens Declare* debuted as the first PCC-produced presentation.



**Varsity Remodeled:**  
Original dining facility got a completely new look.



**Sports Center Addition:**  
New features included rock climbing wall, water park, inline skating track, and more.





**Varsity and Palms Renovations**



**The Gala: Celebrating 50 Years**



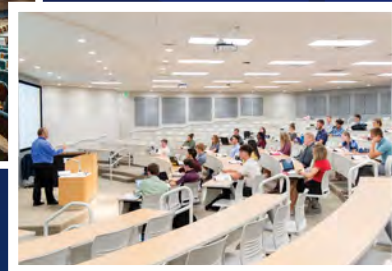
**Rice Tower:** PCC's newest residence hall, and Pensacola's highest building, offers a bird's-eye view of campus and beyond.



**Commons Renovation:** The old favorite student hangout was given a new look and new offerings, including Common Grounds Café.



**Dale Horton Auditorium and Lyceum Renovations**



12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

**Diamond Jubilee:**

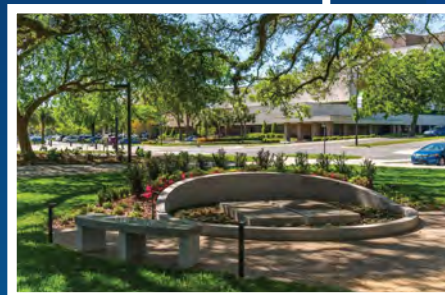
Celebration honored founders for 60 years of ministry before retirement.



**Presidential Inauguration:** Dr. Troy Shoemaker installed as second president of PCC.

**Founder Memorial Gardens:**

Mrs. Beka Horton, cofounder of PCC, went home to be with the Lord on June 27.



**Time Capsule Ceremony:**

Encased in the Campanile on May 3, the time capsule will be reopened for PCC's 75th year.



# DR. TROY SHOEMAKER

# COMMITTED TO SERVE

**Second college president Troy Shoemaker has used his experience to honor PCC's past while navigating its future.**

Dr. Troy Shoemaker, second president of Pensacola Christian College, began his PCC journey just as thousands of others had—as a student. Never did he expect to one day lead the college that he had graduated from. Now, he and his wife, Denise, are celebrating 12 years of leadership alongside PCC's 50th-Year Celebration.

## PREPARING TO LEAD

When the future college president first came to PCC in 1984, he had only stories from former students and a PCC catalog to go by. Yet he knew he wanted to get involved in education. Having attended a Christian school, Dr. Shoemaker realized how much teachers had invested in him. “As a high school student, I would think how much I'd love to have the kind of influence that my teachers had in shaping my life,” he said. “The Lord impressed on me to just commit to whatever He wanted me to do.” Naturally interested in science, he studied science education and later earned three advanced degrees in curriculum and instruction and educational administration.

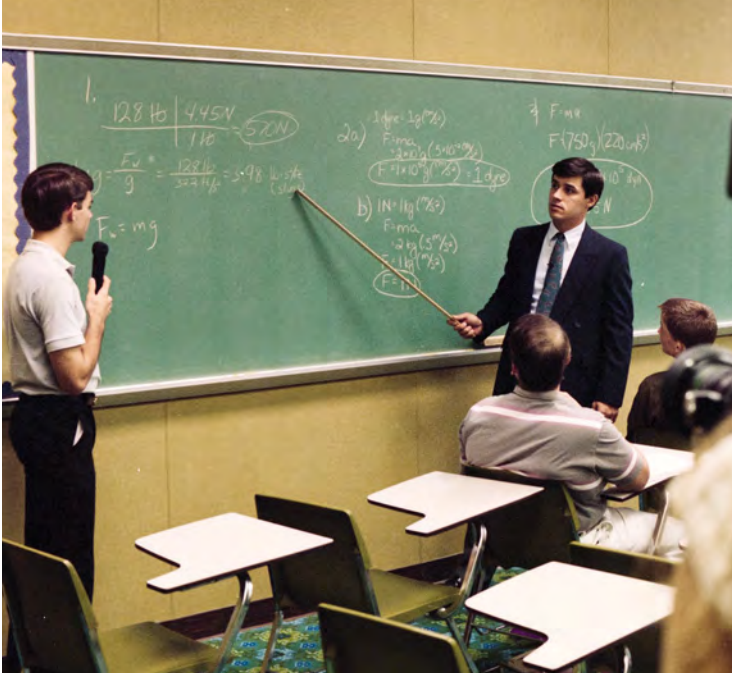
Following that impression on his life, Dr. Shoemaker found himself committing to a variety of leadership positions: first in high school and youth groups;

later as a college student in his residence hall, collegian, and Sunday school classes; then as a graduate at Pensacola Christian Academy, Abeka, and eventually PCC. Whether holding an appointed or elected position, Dr. Shoemaker was motivated to be an active leader. “I really enjoy and thrive in those environments. I don't want to sit in the background and just observe. Leading is a natural tendency that God's given to me,” he explained. With each new position after graduation, he thought God placed him where he would serve the rest of his life. “I had no aspiration to do anything more, and I never, ever saw myself doing what I'm doing now.”

Before PCC founders Arlin and Beka Horton publicly disclosed their retirement, Dr. Horton met privately with Dr. Shoemaker to share how he intended to recommend him to the Board of Directors. “I was sad to hear that the Hortons were going to retire, and absolutely shocked when Dr. Horton told me that he wanted me to be his replacement,” Dr. Shoemaker shared. The Hortons recognized his capabilities, character, and conviction when weighing tough decisions. For the next year, Dr. Shoemaker followed Dr. Horton to meetings, becoming familiar with operational processes and working with the Board of Directors.

ED





# “USE YOUR PLACE AS AN INFLUENCE TO POINT PEOPLE TO CHRIST.”

## EMBRACING NEW ROLES

The Board members voted unanimously for Dr. Shoemaker to be the second president of PCC, and he assumed the role after Commencement in May 2012. The Hortons’ leadership influenced both Troy and Denise. “I was always impressed with Dr. Horton’s willingness to do whatever was necessary,” said Dr. Shoemaker. “It showed a level of humility in his leadership.”

Throughout that first summer before the next college year started, Dr. Shoemaker often worried about about what the future held. “I would get up early in the morning and take walks while my family was all still in bed,” he shared. “I’d say, ‘Lord, I can’t do this. It’s just too big for me. I can’t handle it.’ And God said, ‘You’re right, you can’t. But I can . . . and I will.’”

He wasn’t alone in his new role: Denise was by his side, serving as his assistant. As many recent students know, Troy and Denise met as college students by the downstairs Commons ATM and married

within the year. While Denise has held positions at PCC since 1989, she and Troy only began working together professionally when he became college president. “She never seems to have pulled back as things got more and more intense,” he said. “The whole idea of moving into the president and assistant to the president roles is daunting, and she didn’t shy from it. She stepped up to the challenge, and that has been a huge help and encouragement because she was jumping in with me.” Together, they learned how to navigate their new positions while also separating their work and time spent together as a family.

As the Shoemakers settled into their new roles, one of their goals was to help PCC grow into the future without compromising its biblical foundation, mission, or purpose. As alumni themselves, the Shoemakers personally appreciate how much they have benefited from those values. “Since its beginning, the College has held high expectations for students academically and socially, and we’ve

appreciated that because they elevated us [as students],” Dr. Shoemaker shared. “Those expectations brought our level of thinking and well-being up to a higher standard. They made us rise to a new level of excellence. But our first goal in leadership would be to invest in people.”

Even when making updates or expanding campus, Dr. Shoemaker prioritizes retaining the heart and mission of the College. “What we won’t do is change who we are,” he determined. “And we won’t deviate from the mission that God’s given us. We won’t leave the biblical worldview; we won’t leave our doctrinal position. I still see room for improvement, but those things must never change. For us, as former students and parents of PCC students, to have the ability to speak into the student experience and the faculty and staff experience and to make it something that is rewarding, fulfilling, enjoyable—that stands out for us.”

## 50 YEARS AND BEYOND

Throughout the 50th-Year Celebration, the Shoemakers want the true legacy of PCC—the people who serve and support it—to be known and appreciated. “At Pensacola Christian College, 50 years is not just the story of two people, new buildings, or campus development,” he explained. “It’s about thousands of people who have served in this place, given of themselves, invested in the next generation—each with a call to equip and build that





generation with what they need for what God has called them to do in the future.”

At the end of one milestone year, it’s easy to anticipate the next one. *What is in store for PCC in the next half-century?* “Part of my job is to look to the future,” shared Dr. Shoemaker, “and if God continues to bless the ministry, what new directions will He take us? If God gives growth and opportunities, good stewardship de-

“**The Lord impressed on me to just commit to whatever He wanted me to do.**”

mands that we be ready with strategic, academic, cultural, and site development plans. We’re still looking to God for the future of possibilities.”

Those at PCC believe that all Christians are called to tell others of God’s gift of salvation, and Dr. Shoemaker encourages alumni, current students, and prospective students to consider their reach to others in any vocation. “Wherever God has you, whether you’re serving alongside thousands or by yourself, in business or ministry,” he advised, “use your place as an influence to point people to Christ.”



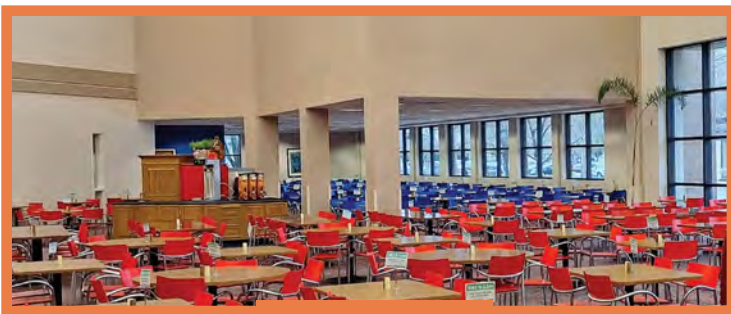
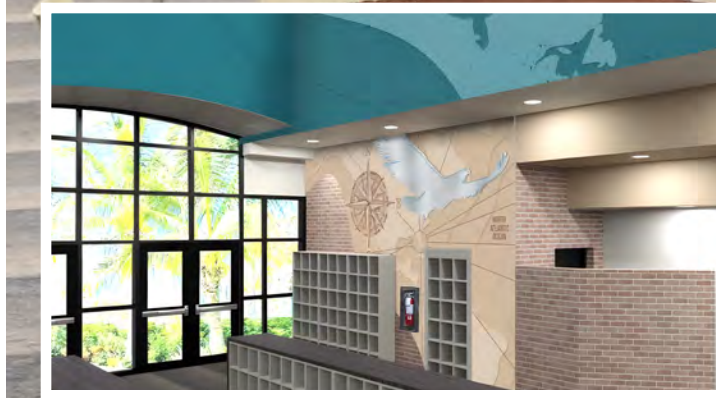
# Four Winds Remodel

## Coming Summer 2024

In January 2000, the Four Winds dining hall opened, named after the global influence of the College and its diverse student body. Now, after 24 years, a beautiful, modern look will further represent the international concepts that name has always suggested.

Students, staff, and guests will enjoy each meal while admiring world maps adorning the walls. Designs in alcoves will represent different parts of the globe including the Americas, Asia, Africa, Australia, and Antarctica. The eagle emblem has been added to the design, providing a pictorial representation of PCC's mission to raise up leaders who influence the world for Christ.

The updated space will feature contemporary, muted accent colors in green, blue, yellow, and orange, complemented by mature textures such as painted brick and wood slats for an elevated dining experience. This renovated space will embody the heart of the "Four Winds": a sophisticated yet inviting atmosphere that celebrates the College's worldwide influence like never before. ▾



BEFORE





AFTER



\*Images are a concept of the final design.

# THE FUTURE of Possibilities

Looking to the future, the leadership team at PCC are considering innovations and enhancements to academic offerings, campus growth, and quality experiences for new generations of college students.

Soon after PCC first opened, Arlin and Beka Horton sat down with architect Jim Bruce, who designed campus buildings from 1974 to 1992, to imagine what the small college campus could become. Having only 30 acres at the time, plans for growth capitalized on their small size. Sketches show a mall-type arrangement where additional buildings could be added as needed, offering a variety of educational services under one roof. As years passed, God provided the growing college with opportunities and additional land. Bruce's building designs had a purposefully timeless look, retaining a unified appearance with each new building, and PCC's beautiful campus gradually became as we see it today.

As PCC closes its 50th-Year Celebration, Troy Shoemaker is following the Hortons' example, look-

ing ahead at what campus could look like decades from now as needs are gradually met. On the scale model below, sidewalks connect students to academic buildings and a loop road surrounds the campus. This concept would separate vehicle and pedestrian traffic and create a beautiful and safe walking space. Although no plans are currently in place, this model also suggests ideas to accommodate potential student body growth. The darker buildings represent artistic placeholders for potential additions to campus, such as fields, residence halls, or academic buildings. And just as Dr. Horton's original plans for the College changed over the years, so could this one. PCC is excited to plan for a future of possibilities that God's direction could further influence—fulfilling the charge to “occupy till I come” (Luke 19:13). ▾

This scale model visualizes some of the possibilities for the future of the PCC campus.





This 1970s architectural sketch captures the Hortons' projection of what future campus development may have looked like.



A close-up portrait of Heather Sorenson, a woman with long, wavy blonde hair and blue eyes, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a dark, lace-trimmed top. The background is dark and out of focus.

# HEATHER SORENSEN

Greatly Rejoicing through Music



For over twenty years, Heather Sorenson has been using music to worship the Lord and point others to Christ.

In the Bible, the Israelites use music as a way of recounting God's blessings and praising Him. Heather Sorenson (*Music: Sacred Piano '97*), a full-time composer who is self-employed, has based her career on using music the same way. She's widely known for her choral and instrumental works, and has appeared multiple times in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Constitution Hall as a pianist, composer, and conductor. Over the years, her songs and music have resonated with others in ways she never imagined. "Seeing God take something you've created, and then change a life from that, is a bit surreal, and humbling," she said.

## MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

When she first arrived at Pensacola Christian College, Sorenson was torn between what to study. "I struggled whether to declare an English major or a music major," she recalled. It wasn't difficult to quickly determine where God wanted her to be. "Music was one of the very few outlets I had growing up, and my high school piano teacher strongly encouraged me to continue with music. I felt called

into the music industry, even before I really knew anything about the industry."

Sorenson's first publication as a college graduate was a solo piano book in 2002. Over the last two decades, her career has snowballed, publishing sheet music and writing commissioned works for groups such as Texas A&M University and the John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation. She has held contracts with several publishing houses, but her main contract is with Hal Leonard, the world's largest sheet music publisher. "Being a full-time composer is a little bit of lightning in a bottle," she explained. "Unless God goes before you and creates your path, it's not a sustainable career path. I've been greatly blessed to make a living doing what I love."

"My ministry and career are one and the same," Sorenson continued. "Writing music is when God speaks to me the most, and I see that as sacred time where He peels back layers, and we look at the hard things in life together."

Over the years, Sorenson has seen God pull her out of her comfort zones and use her work to reach others

## “IT’S GOOD TO HAVE A GOD WHO DOESN’T FIT INTO MY BOUNDARIES!”

in a variety of settings. “He is big, His Church is big, and He moves in ways we often don’t expect,” she noted. “It’s good to have a God who doesn’t fit into my boundaries! As part of my career, I’m in all types of churches and denominations on a regular basis. I’ve learned to be focused in my purpose: to use my music to point to God. I let Him take it from there!”

### SHARING THE STAGE

Heather Sorenson’s time at PCC provided training and direction for how to use her talents for God, including teaching music to elementary students for four years

in Dallas, Texas. It also brought her a support group to share how the Lord has worked through her music. “I still stay in touch with college friends who encourage me,” she said. “They show up at big career milestones, pray for me, and cheer me on.”

For many PCC graduates, it’s not always clear how time spent in college will be used to influence the world for Christ, yet Sorenson has seen how her music has been a help to others near and far. “There are times when I write because something is on my heart, not knowing whether the song will have any impact beyond the four walls of my studio,” she shared. “Something that will never get old is opening YouTube and seeing musicians from the other side of the world singing my music in a language I don’t understand. To know that my little creations are being used as instruments for global worship is humbling.”





In November 2023, PCC's Chamber Ensemble joined other universities and choral groups to premiere Sorenson's newest work at New York City's Carnegie Hall. "For this Carnegie Hall performance, I wanted to include people and organizations who have been part of my musical journey," she explained. "There have been a lot of songs and a lot of performances over the years, but this [one] is particularly meaningful to me. I'm looking forward to sharing the stage with friends and colleagues."

The work encourages listeners to embrace moments of contemplation, joy, and reflection that worship the Lord. "[It's] an 8-movement work, commissioned in honor and memory of all who passed during Covid," Sorenson expressed. The piece aims to console others, especially believers who have experienced death's temporary separation from loved ones. "Scripture invites

us to pour out our hearts before God and offers many examples of our faith heroes who struggled through their grief. I think the Church is starting to realize this, and hopefully, the work will be a tool that helps them through this grief process."

This year, Sorenson joins PCC in celebrating a golden milestone. "Fifty years is a big accomplishment! And a testament to God's grace," she said. "Grace is learned and understood by example. It's been encouraging to see the leadership focusing more on modeling God's grace to their students."

With support from PCC and her enduring trust in God, Heather Sorenson will continue to use her talents for the Lord, praising God and uplifting spirits through music. ▴



*On March 16, Sorenson conducted the PCC Choral Concert, showcasing her original compositions and newest work.*

# Be Still and Know

By Dr. Dave Young

A few months ago, my sweetheart and I spent two weeks in Alaska, celebrating our 30th anniversary. We ate wonderful food, hiked, enjoyed really great restaurants, shopped, visited some very cool coffee shops, did a ton of sightseeing, and *really* enjoyed the food. Obviously, Bethlie and I enjoy eating!

If you have been to Alaska, you know it is awesome. One of my favorite parts—besides the food, of course—was the quiet that we routinely enjoyed during our visit. It was rather overwhelming just to pause and, well, hear absolutely nothing. Those times of quietness reminded me of Psalm 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God.”

**Be still!** It takes stillness to know God, to reflect, to hear His voice, to think, to wonder, and to worship. In the busyness of our lives (or perhaps just in the distractedness), we have so little time to be still and quiet, to slow down and allow our hearts to experience rest, refreshment, and awe.

**What does it mean to be still?** To be still is to be quiet. It is to “slow down” and add “breathing room” to our lives—to rest and to recharge our heart. It provides us time to think and to listen, both to our God and to our spirit. It enables us to pray and to sense God’s tenderness, gentleness, and forgiveness. **To be still is to slow down long enough to seek God and His strength, power, and care.**

**What difference does it make?** Stillness brings peace in our tension and stress. It brings quietness to our troubled hearts. It draws us closer to God and produces gratitude in our lives. It allows His Spirit to minister to us through His Word. It brings us into sweet fellowship with Him and helps us to respond to life’s issues with wisdom and discernment.

**What hinders it?** Our busyness. Our schedules. Even our downtime. Relaxation is often just more busyness as we run from one event to the next and swipe from one entertaining screen to dozens more.

Our distractions hinder our stillness as well. Our meals are filled with chirps and dings and background news reports. Our eyes are frequently focused downward, and we rarely hear the voices of those around us. We are numb with information overload and with information nobody cares about. Our emotions are stretched thin as we swipe from sorrow to shock to hilarity and back to sorrow in a matter of seconds. Our desire to be right hinders stillness. We *have* to comment and make our voice heard. We *have* to correct all the perceived errors in the world. We are driven to share our view and to trump everyone else’s. Psalm 46:10 is the answer.

So do it! Be still. Take time to read and pray. Take time to be quiet. Take time to walk and think.

I say it again: **It takes stillness to know God, to reflect, to hear His voice, to think, to wonder, to worship, to gain wisdom.**

My goal? To be still more than I have been.

I invite you to do the same! ▾



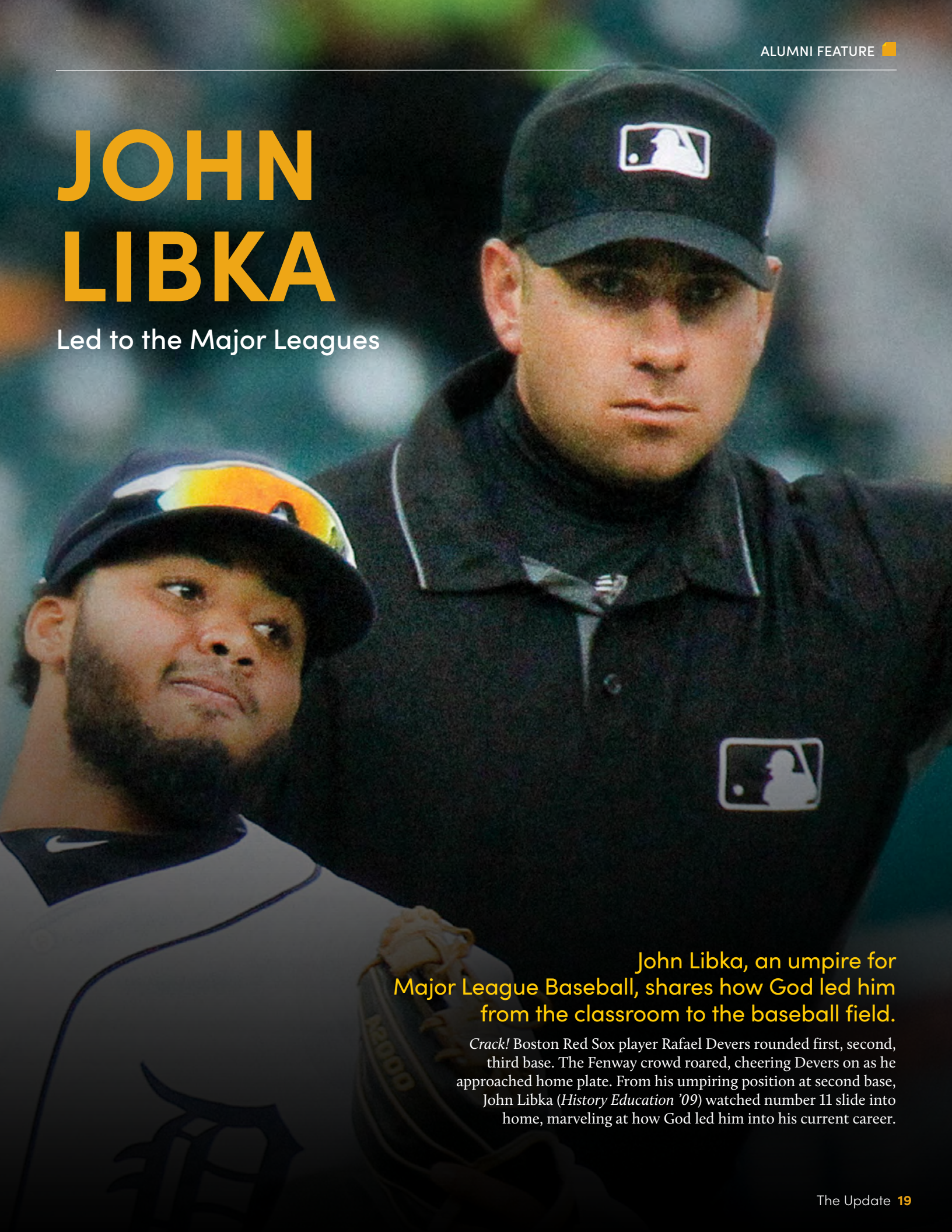
**Dr. Dave Young**

(Evangelism '92, M.A. Bible Exposition '09) founded the Dave Young Evangelistic Association in 1994, which promotes the gospel in schools, camps, colleges, and churches in the U.S. and abroad. He has been an enthusiastic and insightful speaker for PCC’s chapel services and Opening Convocation, delivering powerful messages and encouragement to his listeners.



# JOHN LIBKA

Led to the Major Leagues



**John Libka, an umpire for Major League Baseball, shares how God led him from the classroom to the baseball field.**

*Crack!* Boston Red Sox player Rafael Devers rounded first, second, third base. The Fenway crowd roared, cheering Devers on as he approached home plate. From his umpiring position at second base, John Libka (*History Education '09*) watched number 11 slide into home, marveling at how God led him into his current career.



## A UNIQUE PATH

Libka gained an interest in sports at a young age. As a teenager, he loved to help his father officiate games for local youth sports teams. (The little extra spending money he earned was nice too!) Umpiring from the sidelines ignited a love for sports—especially baseball—in Libka that was hard to ignore.

After high school, he decided to venture into higher education. Libka's father, a teacher and major role model in his life, influenced him to look into Christian education. In 2005, John Libka enrolled in history education at Pensacola Christian College. "I enjoyed history," Libka explained. "I always thought I'd end up being a teacher like my father was."

During his years at PCC, Libka immersed himself in his education classes. General Teaching Methods, Educational Psychology, Teaching History, and other classes kept him busy with projects, papers, and peer teachings. Libka earned a reputation among the teachers as being kind, studious, and respectful.

As a college athlete, his influence followed him onto the basketball court. Libka attended Eagles basketball tryouts as a freshman and played for the team all four years of college. "Mark Goetsch and Craig Lewis were great role models for my teammates and me," Libka said, reminiscing about his time as an Eagle.

He quickly gained a reputation for his lighthearted and conversational manner toward his teammates, visiting teams, and even the referees.

Goetsch, the Eagles head coach at the time, appreciated having Libka on his team. "John was a steady, consistent performer who you could rely on [during] games," he said. "[He also] always had great respect for officials." The academic and athletic skills Libka learned at PCC helped him grow as a student and athlete; these skills continued to help him throughout his professional career.

After graduating from PCC, Libka enrolled in South Florida's Wendelstedt Umpire School, the leading umpire school recognized by both Major League Baseball (MLB) and Minor League Baseball. Knowing he wanted to follow in his father's footsteps and officiate games, Libka desired to improve his skills before beginning his teaching career. Out of 300 students who attended Wendelstedt that year and ten years working in the minor leagues, Libka was one of three hired to umpire for the MLB. Now, he travels across the country to officiate games. "I thought baseball would be a good filler until I got a 'real' job, but God had different intentions," he shared.

## PEACE ON THE BALL FIELD

During the off-season when he's not traveling, Libka teaches at Wendelstedt Umpire School using what



he learned from his PCC education classes. During baseball season, his responsibilities include pitch clock administration, foreign substance checks, and calling balls, strikes, safes, and outs through game administration.

As a traveling umpire, Libka's job sometimes presents unique challenges; traveling requires him to be away from home for several months out of the year. Another difficulty is the controversy that comes with officiating games. Despite Libka's high accuracy in making calls, not everyone agrees with them. "There is intense scrutiny that comes with the job, not only on the field but on social media," he explained. While his job may present several obstacles, he and his wife, Alison, face each one readily, trusting God in everything.

Libka relies heavily on his faith to get him through the difficult times. Before a game, he will often quote passages from Psalms for the reassurance and peace that God is in control. "I couldn't do this job without the Lord," he shared. "He has shown me my need for Him in every area of my life. I am here because the Shepherd brought me here, and I know I can trust Him." Libka is very open about his faith and quick to give God the glory in his life.

Despite the challenges, Libka loves the opportunities his job gives him. Traveling allows Libka to see much

of the U.S., from busy, bustling cities on the east coast to less densely populated towns on the west coast. "I enjoy the travel, being able to see different places and have different experiences," he shared. While on the road, he likes to catch up with PCC friends as well. Often, he will visit them and their families and share a meal. "Many of the friendships I had made have continued, and it's really encouraging for me," Libka said. "[Being able to] sit down with an old friend and see their families grow [is] a blessing when you spend so much time on the road."

John Libka is grateful for God's help in his current career and credits his alma mater, his coaches, and his father for helping him stay on that path. He also expressed gratitude for the legacy Pensacola Christian College has on the present generation. "It's remarkable to see how the Lord has so richly blessed PCC," he shared. "I am thankful they continue to provide a very affordable and distinctly Christian option for higher education." ▾

# LEGACY

# BIBLE CONFERENCE

*Celebrating 50 Years of Bible Preaching*

PCC honors half a century dedicated to putting the Word of God first in the lives of future leaders.



Host, Dr. Troy Shoemaker, with speakers (from left to right, front row: Dr. Jeff Redlin, Mr. Joshua Hershberger, Dr. Johnny Pope, Pastor David Goforth, Dr. Raymond Barber; back row: Dr. Jon Lands, Pastor Ernie Merritt, Dr. Bradley Edmondson, Pastor Matt Teis, Dr. Richard Wallace, Dr. Jim Schettler)

**For the 50th time, PCC paused classes and activities to focus fully on God's Word during Legacy Bible Conference. This historical year, daily themes centered on Christ crucified, risen, and coming again, with respective sermons and special music.**

## THREE DAYS TO FOCUS

Wednesday dawned with a Student Praise and Prayer service to prepare hearts for the messages, followed by a baseball-themed picnic on Eagle Field complete with live ensemble music, a box lunch, free snacks, and activities like batting cages, speed pitch, and more. Over the three days, students, faculty, staff, and friends heard powerful messages during main and breakout sessions.

Of any story to share during this anniversary year, why not the greatest story of all? The gospel: Christ's sacrifice on the cross, victory over death, and soon return. Dr. Johnny Pope's sermon about the crucifixion encouraged Sierra Graham's (*Jr., IL*) heart. "Even though

Barabbas deserved to die on the cross, Jesus took his place, and [Barabbas] was set free," she shared. "Christ suffered and died in our place. There was never a greater sacrifice than this."

For students who have had parents or older siblings attend PCC before them, attending Bible Conference was a special experience. Kenan Bryant (*Sr., FL*) appreciated the refreshing spiritual break. "I have been able to apply the messages I heard to my daily devotion time and work on growing in my walk with God," he said. "It [was] also neat to hear speakers that may have spoken [at] or went to PCC when my parents were here. I am thankful for Bible Conference and the speakers who have taken time to preach God's Word."

## A TIMELY AND TIMELESS MESSAGE

The guest speakers, several of whom are PCC graduates, see the value of pausing for Bible Conference while preparing for career or ministry. “I believe there is a great mixture of experience, age, insight, and backgrounds coming together with the same goal of encouraging the students not only in their walk with Christ but also in their goals in how they will serve Him,” said Dr. Bradley Edmondson (*Pastoral Ministries '01*), executive director of Medical Missions Outreach. “Some of these speakers came when I was a student over 20 years ago!” Having been an undergrad at past Bible Conferences, Pastor David Goforth (*Youth Ministries '93*) recalls being poured into by individuals and the ministry at PCC. “It was during my college years that God stopped being a concept or theory and became personal and real; and it was a combination of the gospel that I heard from the pulpit and the gospel that I saw in my classmates and teachers,” he said. “It is an absolute privilege to participate on the ‘giving’ side now.”

Each prepared message came from the applicable Word of God. “The Word of God is timeless, just as God is timeless,” declared Dr. Jeff Redlin, Campus Church pastor. “So when we’re talking about a message that is relevant for today’s students and faculty at PCC, there is no more ‘relevant’ message than the timeless Word of God.”

## A LEGACY THAT LASTS

As Micah Pittman (*Jr., VA*) balances a busy schedule at PCC, Bible Conference allows him to focus on what God has specifically for him. “It is very easy to be caught up in the distractions of a day with classes, but when there is a sole focus on hearing only preaching, it allows your heart to absorb the truth and let the truth change you without distraction,” Micah shared. “It is spiritually

refreshing for me because I can focus wholly on what God has for me. Bible Conference is such a blessing, and every time, I come away realizing that there is nothing better [than] to be a whole-hearted follower of Christ!”

The gospel influence lives on through the student body long after being delivered from the pulpit. Japhlet Williams (*Jr., WA*) has been encouraged to witness how much the speakers love the Bible. “They live and breathe the Word of God, and that’s the way we ought to be [too],” she said. After hearing Dr. Raymond Barber of Worth Baptist Church (*TX*) speak, Japhlet was “moved by how he quoted verse after verse and even some songs. He clearly has a passion for the Bible, and he’s not ashamed.”

Dr. Barber was delighted to be present this year, having been a guest at PCC conferences for over 40 years. “I have learned to appreciate the contribution PCC has made, not only to the local community of Pensacola but to the world of Christian education,” he said. “It gives me the opportunity to witness the in-depth spiritual growth and academic development of the students.”

Legacy Bible Conference marks 50 years of preaching God’s Word to a student body preparing to influence their world through ministries and careers. And the speakers that come, like Dr. Edmondson, love investing in the next generation of Christian leaders. “The incredible personalities, skills, and gifts God has given them completely fills my heart with joy,” he declared. “To know that future politicians, healthcare professionals, educators, researchers, performers, ministry leaders, and more—are all together, creating bonds of friendship (and even romance) that will propel the gospel to further generations, is exciting!”

*After preaching the gospel for 50 years, we’re trusting God for 50 more. ▾*



The *Word of God* is timeless,  
just as God is *timeless*.

# STEPHEN ALTOMARI



**CLASSIFICATION**  
SOPHOMORE

**STUDYING**  
PRE-MEDICINE

**COLLEGIAN**  
IOTA CHI STINGRAYS

**HOMETOWN**  
DRESHER,  
PENNSYLVANIA



Stephen is a second-generation PCC student! His dad, Steve Altomari, graduated with a pre-medicine degree in 1999.

**Why did you choose to study the pre-medicine program at PCC?**

I chose to study pre-medicine because one of the goals I've had ever since I was little was to be some kind of medical professional. As I've gotten older, I've been able to narrow down more specifically what field of medicine I want to pursue, and being a pre-med natural sciences major is the most direct path. Choosing a school to attend was honestly easy because my father, who's now a doctor of medicine in dentistry, graduated as a PCC pre-med student in the 1990s. He has spoken highly of the school for as long as I can remember, creating no doubt in my mind about the education I knew I could receive at PCC.

**How has the PCC community made an impact on you during your time here?**

Honestly, being in this community of students, faculty, and friends has most influenced my spiritual walk with the Lord. I can think of many occasions where I was in need of spiritual enrichment, and the people here were able to provide that encouragement, correction, or guidance. This is one of the greatest blessings I've experienced as a part of the PCC community, and it has had a greater impact on me than anything else. **What would you say to encourage other students when they face difficulties in college?** Life is not defined by minor setbacks but rather controlled by your trust in God. It's easy to allow a poor grade or an unsuccessful relationship [to]

completely dominate your thoughts, but recognizing these moments as a chance to learn and rely on God will help with your feelings of anxiety. I'll admit, sometimes it's hard for me to live by this truth; but anytime you cast your cares upon the Lord, you'll realize that He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). **You are part of your family's second generation attending PCC. What has it been like to share college memories from the same campus as your dad?** It has been so much fun to tease my dad about how much the rules have changed since his time. I take every opportunity to joke about how much better we have it now. Another remarkable thing that my dad and I have in common is joint tutelage under one of the pre-med instructors,

Dr. Carlos Alvarez. My dad was a student the first year that he was a professor here, and I had the honor to have Dr. Alvarez my very first semester at PCC. I remember hearing stories of Dr. Alvarez from my father [for] as long as I can remember, so it's a great privilege to learn from him as my father did. **How has PCC helped you feel prepared for the next chapter in your life?** PCC has helped prepare me through the practical way its teachers guide their students. While excellence is the primary objective, a strong emphasis is also placed on the reality of making mistakes and learning from them. I believe that every class I've taken so far has been tailored to enable students to be a respectable representation of ourselves, the school, and Jesus Christ.



# CHRISTINA WOOTEN



Christina will be a second-generation alumna—her dad, James Wooten, earned his undergraduate, master's, and M.Div. degrees at PCC.

**CLASSIFICATION**  
SENIOR

**STUDYING**  
PROFESSIONAL WRITING &  
PERFORMANCE STUDIES

**COLLEGIAN**  
BETA EPSILON BENGALS

**HOMETOWN**  
SPARTANBURG,  
SOUTH CAROLINA

## Why did you choose to study the professional writing and performance studies programs at PCC?

I made my choice because PCC takes a strong doctrinal stand to follow the Word of God. I also knew that whatever I chose to major in would correlate closely with my interest in public speaking and acting. Although several other schools have wonderful theater programs, PCC drew me because of the tremendous opportunity for me to get involved. I decided to double major after agonizing over which major I preferred. If I started falling behind in my grades or health, I planned to drop one. So far, that hasn't happened. These two majors coincide really well and will hopefully give me even more job options when I graduate.

## Where do you feel the Lord leading you after graduation?

I'm not sure yet where God will lead me. I plan to apply to several theaters, including Sight and Sound and the Academy of Arts. I'm also considering the possibility of attending law school or getting a master's degree. I plan to continue praying and see where the Lord leads and what opportunities arise. **What are your favorite PCC events and why?** My favorite PCC events include Opening Convocation, Fine Arts, and class parties. PCC always invites phenomenal speakers for Opening Convocation—preachers who delve into the Word of God and encourage our hearts before the semester begins. Beginning the semester with an inundation of the Bible reminds us what the focus of

our school year (and our whole lives) should be. Fine Arts is another great event. With performances ranging from Shakespeare to violin concerts, these shows provide an added level of sophistication and sharpen students' appreciation for art. **What about your student experience do you appreciate the most so far?** During my time as a student at PCC, I've gotten closer in my walk with God. A large part of that is because this college encourages students to spend time with the Lord. One of my biggest blessings here was the chance to go on a Youth Outreach Ministry missions trip to Australia last summer. I learned a lot about interpersonal relationships and grew in maturity and my walk with the Lord.

## You are part of your family's second generation attending PCC. What has it been like to share college memories from the same campus as your dad?

I love sharing college memories with my father, including his memory of living in the same residence hall I do now when he was a student, because Bradley [Tower] used to be a men's residence hall. A lot of the staff know my parents, so it's very interesting to speak with them and get their insight into what my dad was like when he was younger. My dad was able to give me a tour of the campus when I first arrived, sharing some of his treasured memories with me, pointing out his collegian and his old classrooms.



# Student-Led Ministries

## 50 Years of Serving the Local Community

Applying their training to serve the Lord right away, students prepare for a lifetime of influencing the world for Christ.

Pensacola Christian College was founded with the vision of “training young men and women in higher education for a life of service to Jesus Christ.” But does that life of service begin when those men and women receive their diplomas and step into the future?

Absolutely not! There are plenty of ways for students to get involved while they are still in college.

Starting the very first year of PCC, students made it a priority to share the gospel with the community—establishing a spirit of ministry that has been a part of many students’ growth over five decades.

### GROWING BY SERVING

Student-led Christian Service groups have been an especially cherished part of the PCC experience. Organized by their peers, volunteers head out into the community each week to reach the Pensacola area for Christ through nursing homes, children’s Bible clubs, door-to-door visitation, the Juvenile Justice Center, and more. As they give their time to bless others, the Lord strengthens their passion for making personal ministry an integral part of their lives. “Some of my favorite memories are visiting nursing homes with friends,” said

Michelle Anderson (*Elementary Education '93*). “Serving in ministries outside of college helped us see needs other than ourselves. It gave me a burden to see the needs around me that is still with me today.”

As a church intern, Pensacola Theological Seminary student Malachi Kauffman (*Youth Ministries '22*) often relies on outreach ideas and ministry skills that developed while he was an undergrad Christian Service leader. Participating in a soul-winning group also inspired him to make personal evangelism a consistent part of his routine. “Through all the practice of handing out tracts at Seville Square, I now carry tracts in my vehicle to be able to hand out when I come across different people throughout my days,” he shared.

The experience she gained sharing the gospel in a Bible club has helped Taylor Bates (*Nursing '22*) feel more prepared to share the gospel in her nursing career. “The opportunities to be an encouragement or to bring up the Lord are endless,” she said. “I can see how the Lord has opened many opportunities in my role as an ER nurse to be a light. Praying He continues to do so and continues to work on my heart to be obedient when those moments arise!”

## EXPANDING THE WORK

As the College has grown, student-led ministry opportunities have also increased. “New programs have been developed over the past several years that include deaf outreach, homeless ministry through Waterfront Thrift Store, and involvement with Miracle League, a local baseball league for children and adults with special needs,” noted Mr. Matt Smith, Student Ministries coordinator.

Along with the individual Christian Service groups, Student Body officers have initiated several campus-wide endeavors. In 2013, they launched the first Mission Project to support local and global missions work. Every year since then, students have raised funds by buying themed T-shirts for an on-campus 5K, sending friends flowers anonymously, rounding to the next dollar on Campus Store purchases, and finding other innovative ways to participate.

At Serve Pensacola, a yearly one-day event introduced in 2018, hundreds of students have been willing to get their hands dirty and do manual labor projects throughout the Pensacola area. “This event provides an additional opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ in a tangible way,” explained Mr. Smith. “Our students have had such a testimony in our community of caring for the needs of others, and we pray that these projects soften the hearts of our community members to the gospel.”





## CONTINUING THE LEGACY

Following in the steps of the alumni who went before them, students continue to be a light for Christ in the community. Muriel Hyatt (*So., KS*), who co-leads Mallory Heights Bible Club, loves watching God develop people's abilities as they use those abilities for Him. "I have seen the Lord use each person to fill needs that others could not meet: consolation, wisdom from past experience, and relatability to the kids," she shared. "It has been wonderful to see the gifts of several students come out. These gifts must be nurtured, and Bible club is a great opportunity to begin developing one's gift."

**Our students have had such a testimony in our community of caring for the needs of others.**

Alyson Linn (*Fr., AL*) echoes the heart of thousands of PCC students throughout the past five decades: although it can be hard to set aside time in a busy college schedule, serving the Lord is always worth it. "Knowing that I have a few hours I can spend planting seeds of faith in young lives gets me through the stressful weeks," she said. "Attending and co-leading a Christian Service group has never been an extra thing to write in my planner. It has become a necessity, and I look forward to it every weekend."

Over **1,000 students** participate in student-led Christian Service ministries each semester.





You're invited to attend  
**2024  
 COMMENCEMENT**  
 by joining the celebration virtually!



After years of hard work, the class of 2024 is graduating. You can be part of the excitement from wherever you are!



Join us for this milestone event—livestream or watch on demand at [go.pcci.edu/Commencement24](https://go.pcci.edu/Commencement24)

**Nursing**

Thursday, May 9, at 7 p.m.

**Professional Studies  
 Visual and Performing Arts**

Friday, May 10, at 9:30 a.m.

**Arts and Sciences  
 Biblical Studies  
 Liberal Arts**

Friday, May 10, at 2 p.m.

**NEXT**  
 SUMMER CAMPS

- › Sports
- › Academics
- › Visual and Performing Arts
- › Spiritual Growth

**On the campus of Pensacola Christian College**

Explore the options at  
[NextSummerCamps.com/Update24](https://NextSummerCamps.com/Update24)

*Ages 14 to 18 years old who have just completed or are entering into grades 9–12*





# PCC'S SPRING CELEBRATION

This year, several distinctive events took place in the spring semester as Pensacola Christian College celebrates its 50th year of God's goodness and anticipates how God will bless in the years to come.

## *Spring Legacy Chapels*



During this semester, three Legacy Chapels highlighted God's goodness to the College. These chapels continued the decades theme from the fall semester, covering the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. Noteworthy alumni spoke during their decade's chapel, proclaiming God's goodness to the student body and encouraging them of His work in their own lives.

Dr. Greg Mutsch, vice president of institutional advancement, looked forward to the continuation of these chapels. "I hope students walk away with the realization that God can use them, just like He did Dr. Arlin Horton and President Troy Shoemaker," he said.

## *Legacy Bible Conference*



At the end of February, beloved alumni and friends preached during Legacy Bible Conference, an annual series of revival-style meetings hosted by the College. Each of the eight speakers has contributed to PCC's legacy through years of support and ministry. Attendees were blessed to hear heart-stirring messages and enjoyed a baseball-themed picnic the first day of the conference. Read more about Legacy Bible Conference on page 18!

## *The Sound of Music*



In May, students, staff, faculty, and guests gathered in the Dale Horton Auditorium for the Fine Arts Series premiere of *The Sound of Music*. Set during World War II, a free-spirited Maria Rainer helps Austrian naval officer Captain Georg von Trapp reconnect with his children. Audiences enjoyed wonderful music, memorable moments, and a sense of nostalgia as they watched this beloved musical.

Since 2012, Dr. Troy and Denise Shoemaker have faithfully led the College, continuing the legacy of Dr. Arlin and Beka Horton. Administration, staff, faculty, and students eagerly look toward the future, excited to see how God will continue to bless the ministry of PCC. Visit [50years.pcc.edu](https://50years.pcc.edu) to learn more about these spring events!

## Time Capsule Ceremony



On May 3, the PCC family gathered to fill a time capsule commemorating this 50th year. The capsule contains several items, including a 2023–2024 PCC Viewbook, a collection of stories from former and current students and faculty, and a challenge from Dr. Shoemaker and Dr. Arlin Horton. The time capsule will be reopened in 2049 when PCC celebrates its 75th year.

For Dr. Mutsch, the capsule is a demonstration and reminder of God's provision to future generations. "It's a blessing to walk down memory lane during this 50th-Year Celebration, but we are also looking forward," he said. "When this time capsule is opened in 2049, [students] will look back [on this 50th year] and be encouraged, instructed, and inspired."

## Commencement Ceremonies



As PCC concluded the 50th-Year Celebration, the class of 2024 was honored during the Commencement Ceremonies. Each ceremony included special music, award presentations, and notable speakers. This Commencement, a highlight for graduates and proud parents alike, celebrated God's goodness toward both PCC and this year's graduating class.

These ceremonies mark the moment when a student transitions from preparation to readiness. "Commencement is my favorite part of the year," said Dr. Raylene Cochran, academic vice president. "It is very rewarding to celebrate the [graduates'] accomplishments and see them prepared to serve the Lord wherever He has called them to go."

Since 1974, PCC's goal has been to make God preeminent in all things—whether academic or extracurricular. And this 50th-Year Celebration was no different. Throughout each event, PCC students, staff, faculty, and friends reflected on God's blessings that have surrounded and supported the College. "This year, we've reminded ourselves of God's goodness many times," shared Dr. Mutsch. "Only the Lord knows how future students and alumni will look back on this celebration, but we hope to inspire current and future students to serve the Lord faithfully. This was a special season, and one we will want to revisit."



DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE ♦ COMMITTED TO SERVICE

# HAVE YOU CONSIDERED

how the Lord could use  
*YOUR SKILLS* at PCC?

**JOIN OUR TEAM!**  
Apply today.



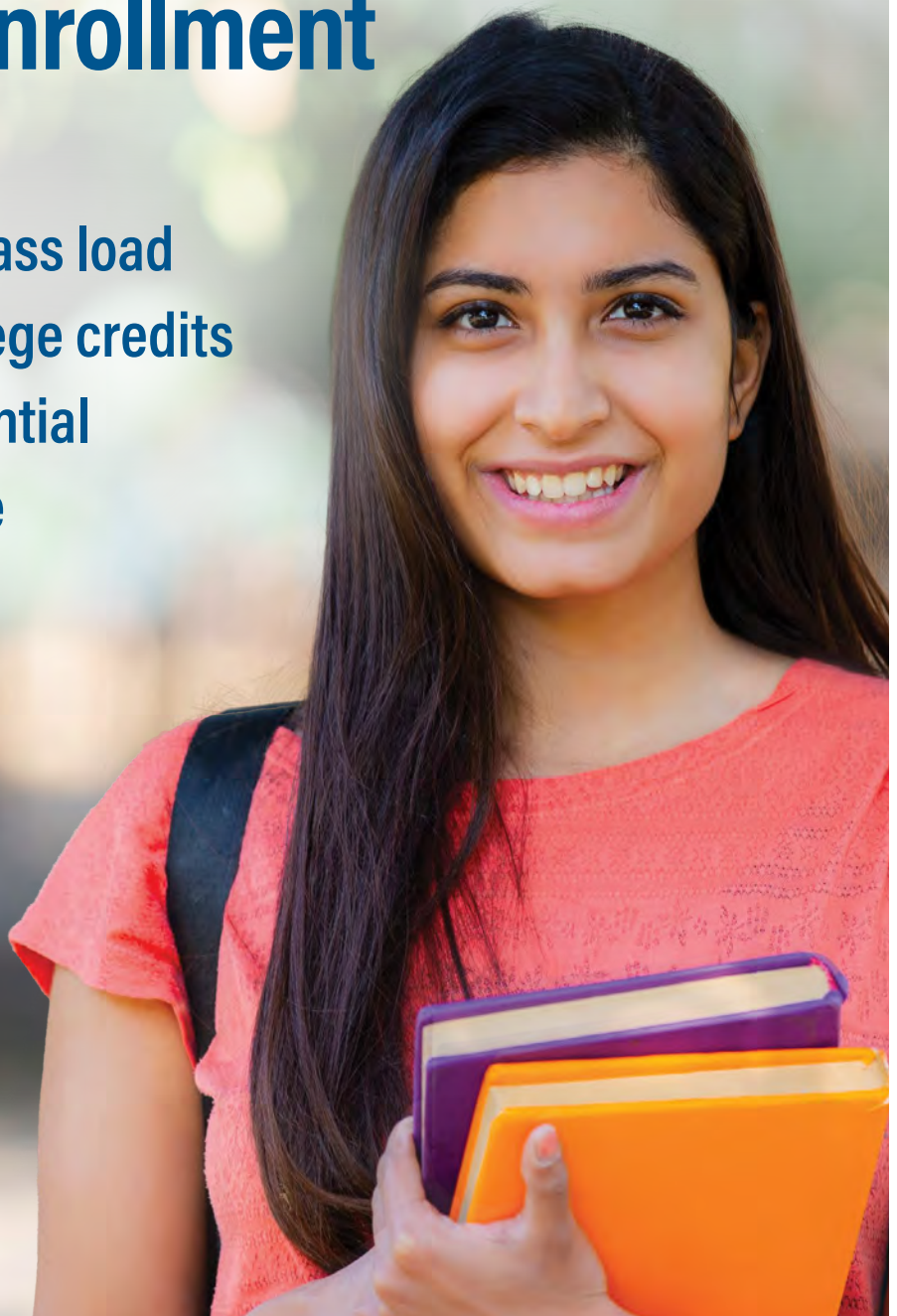
Explore  
job opportunities  
at [pcci.edu/JoinUs](http://pcci.edu/JoinUs)





# Give Students a Head Start with Dual Enrollment

- Reduce college class load
- Get ahead on college credits
- Boost career potential
- Save for the future



Online  
Dual Enrollment



See admission requirements & find out more today at  
[go.pcci.edu/DualUpdate24](https://go.pcci.edu/DualUpdate24)

PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

# EXPERIENCE PCC THIS FALL



## COLLEGE GETAWAY October 23–26

A four-day college visit that gives you the complete PCC experience (plus a little more!).

## COLLEGE DAYS November 6–8

A three-day, fully customizable college visit where you can explore at your own pace and be fully immersed in college life.



## EXPLORE PCC November 22

A one-day snapshot of college life where you'll take guided tours visiting classes and our beautiful campus.

Whichever option works best for you,  
**you won't blend in—you'll belong.**



Choose your perfect visit at  
[go.pcci.edu/SeeCampus](https://go.pcci.edu/SeeCampus)



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MAY

**9–10** Commencement Ceremonies 2024

## SUMMER 2024

Teen Extreme Youth Camps

Check [teenextremecamp.com](http://teenextremecamp.com) for dates!

NEXT Summer Camps

Check [nextsummercamps.com](http://nextsummercamps.com) for dates!

## AUGUST

**25–28** Opening Convocation

This fall, join us as Dr. Kurt Skelly sets the tone for the new semester by sharing encouraging and challenging messages from God’s Word.

## OCTOBER

**5** Fine Arts Series

**23–26** College Getaway

**31** Career Fair

### OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

**31–2** Ladies Celebration

Come to beautiful Pensacola, Florida, to relax and spiritually recharge. You’ll enjoy inspiring speakers, encouraging messages, and refreshing fellowship with likeminded women.

## NOVEMBER

**6–8** College Days

**14–16** Fine Arts Series: *The Scarlet Pimpernel*

**19** Christmas Lights Celebration

**22** Explore PCC



### FUN FACT!

Troy and Denise Shoemaker have eight grandchildren! The Shoemakers’ three grown children, along with their spouses, are all graduates of PCC.

**PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE.**

P.O. BOX 18000

PENSACOLA, FL 32523-9160

U.S.A.

NONPROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PENSACOLA, FL

PERMIT NO. 34

If you haven't subscribed yet,  
visit [go.pcci.edu/Update24](http://go.pcci.edu/Update24)



# SERVING IN MINISTRY?

Get **50% off tuition** for an online graduate education or seminary degree.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS  
BRAND-NEW DISCOUNT AT  
[go.pcci.edu/MinistryDiscount](http://go.pcci.edu/MinistryDiscount)



**PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN  
Graduate Studies**

**Pensacola Theological  
Seminary®**