



ALUMNI NEWS

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Education for Time and Eternity

A newsletter for alumni of Oneida Baptist Institute

March 2011

The makings of a leader

Leadership qualities exercised at Oneida propel OBI alumnus to success



Roy Lowdenback ('01) currently serves as the Associate Vice President & Chief Development Officer at Georgetown College. He leads a staff of seven who are responsible for raising \$2.4 million unrestricted funds and \$2 million restricted funds annually. Their fund-raising efforts include major gifts, planned giving, grants, foundations, annual giving, events, research, data, and gift receiving. Roy travels with the president of Georgetown College, **Dr. Bill Crouch**, and former Governor, **Martha Layne Collins**, for development efforts and projects.

Roy came to Oneida as a fifth grader when his parents, **Dr. Edward** and **Sharon Lowdenback**, joined the OBI staff as middle school principal and middle school office coordinator, respectively. Even in the eighth grade Roy had the makings of a leader and was elected vice-president of the OBI

Student Council. Before the year's end the president resigned and Roy became the first and only middle school student ever to serve as Student Council president. In high school Roy was elected president each year. In addition to Student Council, Roy was active in BETA, drama, yearbook staff, basketball, soccer and track. His senior year he was president of his class and yearbook editor. Roy was voted Most Outstanding, Most Studious, Most Dramatic, Most Versatile and Most School Spirit his senior year. In addition to all of the above, he ranked first in his class with a perfect 4.0 GPA. Roy will always be remembered by his classmates as the leader of "Blue and White Mania," a group of students who painted their faces blue and white and dressed like Mountaineers to promote school spirit at basketball games.

The amazing thing about Roy's success is that he almost didn't make it to high school. On July 4, 1997, the summer before Roy entered the ninth grade, he was severely injured in a three-wheeler accident. He was taken unconscious to the nearest hospital, then air-lifted to Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Roy was in a coma for five days with a severe head injury and swelling of the brain. His doctors anticipated that surgery would be necessary to relieve his brain's swelling. Miraculously, Roy woke up and after remaining stable for several days was transferred to Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital in Lexington.

At Cardinal Hill Roy's mental recovery was a bigger concern than his

physical injuries. After many weeks of treatment, testing, and observation, the doctors were satisfied with his recovery. Roy returned home six weeks after he was hospitalized, just in time for his freshmen year to begin.

After graduating from OBI Roy went on to Georgetown College. During his freshman year Roy ran for president of his class. At Dr. Underwood's suggestion, Roy took a car load of honey buns that had been donated to OBI back to Georgetown. (We had an abundant supply.) He put labels on them that said, "Vote Lowdenback for President" and passed them out all over campus. The students loved them and Roy won the election.

Roy's achievements at Georgetown include the following: freshmen class president, president of Georgetown College's student body, president of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, teacher assistant for one semester in Political Science, student representative on the Board of Trustees, and student assistant to the president. Roy graduated from Georgetown College in May 2005 Summa Cum Laude, with a major in Political Science and a minor in Business Administration.

Roy met his wife, **Rachel Stone Lowdenback**, at Georgetown. They were married July 12, 2008. Rachel, a Shelby County native, graduated from medical school in May 2010. The Lowdenbacks are currently living in Lexington, Kentucky, and Rachel is completing her residency in pediatrics at the University of Kentucky in the Kentucky Children's Hospital.

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After receiving his BA degree from Georgetown, Roy went to Bowling Green State University in Ohio and earned his Master's Degree in College Student Personnel. He did an internship in BGSU's Development Office for one year. That led to a full-time job for six months as a Major Gift Associate before he moved back to Kentucky to work at the University of Kentucky as an Advancement Officer for three years. In 2010 Roy returned to Georgetown College and worked one year as Assistant to the President/Director of Development just prior to his promotion to his present position.

When asked to comment on how Oneida had prepared him for college, Roy answered, "My exposure to advanced classes and leadership opportunities at Oneida allowed for a smooth college transition. I was comfortable and confident in my course work and student activity involvement, which I attribute to a well-rounded Oneida education."

Prior to graduation each year seniors are asked by Dr. Underwood to write an essay entitled, "My Oneida Experience." In the concluding paragraph of Roy's senior essay he wrote, "Oneida is a diverse school in what it offers and who attends. I would not have had the opportunity to participate in all I did anywhere else. Not only that—I would not have been able to meet so many people from different countries and cultures. I feel that this exposure will pay off later in life. If not, it will serve for good memories. But I hope it becomes useful."

Looking at all the evidence thus far, Roy's Oneida experience has certainly served him well. Roy is looking forward to returning home this summer to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his OBI graduation. □

A heart of compassion, a drive to serve

Written by Shaina Finney, Berea College class of 2013



"Serving others gives meaning to my life," says **Hannah Worcester**, Berea College class of 2013. For Hannah, a heart for helping others is fundamental. Though she spent the first years of her life in Pennsylvania, she claims that her "heart grew up in the mountains," where she watched small town life reflect the splendor of southern Appalachia. "The mountains are beautiful, and there are hidden treasures everywhere," she says.

Home to Hannah is Oneida, a small...town in Clay County, Kentucky, one of the poorest counties in the United States. "Oneida is so small I can walk down a street and tell you who lives in each house. It's where a group of men in blue-jeans sit on the street corner around a fire and whittle each night," she says. Living there gave her the chance to see beyond poverty and to respect and admire those less fortunate.

Having done mission work in Mexico and community relief work in New Orleans and New York after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and 9/11, Hannah has seen firsthand the struggles and suffering of those in need. She took from these experiences a stronger concern for others and a new perspective on life. "My time

spent in Mexico taught me to live with dangerous compassion, and to view poverty as a real issue. Serving after Hurricane Katrina revealed how fragile life is and how deeply the human soul can grieve. Service has taught me to confront desperation with compassion," she says.

Hannah was inspired both by parents who taught her the gift of service and by her high school years at Oneida Baptist Institute with English teachers who fostered consciousness and individualism. However, she credits one person in particular as having a distinctively strong impact on her outlook today. **Becca Walcot**, a leader with the mission work in Mexico, taught her to "pray with brutal honesty" and to hold new fervor for life. Hannah hopes to remain impressionable, "flexible" and willing to learn.

At Berea College, Hannah has become more energized about community work and the idea of making an impact on the world one individual at a time. "There is only so much I can do in my community, but I must be diligent to do what I can," she says of the lessons gained in her first year at Berea. She is planning to major in English and is considering becoming an English teacher. "More than anything else, I want to do work that positively impacts the lives of others," she says. "I can't tell you exactly where I want to be in 20 years, but I know that I want to help people." □

Hannah Worcester graduated from Oneida Baptist Institute in 2009. Permission to reprint this article was given by Berea College Magazine.

In Memoriam 2010 additional names

Bessie Inyart Burns '40
Arzella Hale Littrell '51
Don Coleman '55
Michael England 1992-94



Do you know a teenager in grade 6-12 who could benefit from our ministry? Tell the family about OBI. Admissions information and forms are on our school's web site. Check out:
www.oneidaschool.org



Sarah Perrine, Peace Corps volunteer



Sarah Perrine, daughter of former OBI teachers **Dr. Byron** and **Cheryl Perrine**, graduated from Oneida in 1994, first in her class with a perfect 4.0 GPA. After graduating from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts Sarah joined the Peace Corps and served in Bulgaria from 1999-2001.

Sarah recalled, "One of my most important influences was **Dr. Barkley Moore**, who had served in the Peace Corps in Iran. When I started thinking about what to do after college, the Peace Corps sprang to mind. It seemed like a great opportunity to live abroad, learn a language and serve others."

Sarah spent the first summer in Samokov, Bulgaria, where the Peace Corps conducted a three-month intensive language course for the 50 volunteers assigned to Bulgaria. Sarah was assigned to a Roma (Gypsy) host family. Her host father, a construc-

tion worker, and his sister, a teacher, lived in the house they inherited from their father, who had been a successful man. This set them apart from the large number of Roma who live in segregated ghetto/shanty towns.

After Sarah completed her language course, she moved to an apartment in Shumen where she taught English classes at a local high school. She also volunteered to teach a conversation English class at the university once a week in the evening. Sarah enjoyed teaching, but she quickly saw a need to reach out to the impoverished Roma children. She found herself spending all of her free time helping to create a motivational camp for Roma youth. The camp was very successful and has continued to be operational for the past 11 years.

After serving in the Peace Corps, Sarah returned to the U.S. where she applied for a Fulbright Fellowship. She returned to Bulgaria in 2002-2003 as a Fulbright Fellow. Sarah spent the year conducting research of Roma communities and leadership trends among the Roma.

Sarah came back to the U.S., completed two Master's degrees at the University of Michigan and worked at the U.S. Agency for International Development and then at the Department of State in Washington, D.C. She became acquainted with a newly created, private grant-making foundation--The America for Bulgaria Foundation--which gives grants in a number of areas, including Programs for the Economically Disadvantaged. Sarah left the State Department in 2009 and returned to Bulgaria as the Director of Programs for the Economically Disadvantaged.

Helping other people have a better quality of life has been the driving force of Sarah's mission. About her new job which took her back to Bulgaria, Sarah says, "This job has allowed me to draw upon the experience I gained as a Peace Corps Volunteer--particularly my work with the Roma, as they make up a large portion of Bulgaria's most economically disadvantaged people."

Sarah continues to learn more about the Roma as she works to have a positive impact on their lives. □

Corrections to the January 2011 Alumni News,

Martha Hogg story, page 1:

Another great-granddaughter of Martha Hogg is Carol Walker Essary. The great-great grandson of Martha Hogg is Vance Garrison, not Vince.

Dear Friends,

Each year since I have been the Alumni Director, we have published three issues (January, March, September) of the *Alumni News*. One other mail out, a letter from Dr. Underwood that includes the schedule for Homecoming, goes out in May.

I'm sure our younger alumni have noticed that many of my articles have been about our "older" alumni. This time the stories feature the under-thirty group, but I hope all of you enjoy reading about Roy, Hannah and Sarah. Our annual Alumni and Friends Dinner is April 2. The play this year is "The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood." Many of our local churches bring groups every year. It's not too late to make reservations; call me.

At Homecoming this year we will be unveiling the portrait of Martha Coldiron Hogg, who donated the land for our school. The class of 1961 will be celebrating their 50th anniversary. The Sparks Gym will be open for those who want to shoot hoops, but we won't play an organized alumni game. The anniversary classes will have more time to spend with their classmates in the Gritton Gym. The date is June 25. We're looking forward to seeing you.



Sincerely,

Myrtle Webb Cooke '60

OBI Alumni Director

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Did we see YOU at Homecoming 2010?



Mark your calendar now! Save the date for
Homecoming 2011:
June 25

Two blue balloons with streamers of confetti are positioned on either side of the text.