



Founded in 1899

ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

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Education for Time and Eternity

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

September/October 2020

One of our most unique years

The Oneida ministry benefits from the generosity of so many. Cooperative Program giving, WMU gifts made possible through The Eliza Broadus Offering, gifts from individuals, churches, foundations, special offerings, and so many more enable us to minister in new ways to kids in our care during what will be one of the most unique years in our school's history.

We will operate as both a day school and online school for the 2020-21 school year and will plan to re-open the boarding portion of our ministry for the 2021-22 school year. In the midst of great uncertainty, I do know for certain that whether it is a local student on our campus, a local student in our online program, or a student from Kentucky, across the country, or across the world in our online program, we will provide each student with a distinctly Christian education.

I am excited to see most of our resources, largely provided by the generosity of Kentucky Baptists, go toward our local students and families. Ministering to primarily local students will constitute a return to our earliest days and mission. The Lord's direction to reach back into our local community several years ago has driven lots of decisions and now gives us even greater cause to operate for the sake of the mountain children for the 2020-21 school year. Six years ago we only had 9 local, commuting students. We now have 100+ and when you add our staff children that number pushes up to 125. The mission field of Oneida/Clay County is ripe for a harvest and we will do all we can to minister here in our own back yard. We will have a great year with those the Lord has placed in our own Jerusalem (Acts 1:8).

We have many fixed costs, regardless of the number of students or type of format being utilized, and we are grateful for you and your generosity toward us. We simply could not minister to these in such great need without you. I am grateful that Eliza Broadus understood sacrificial giving and service, and I am also extremely grateful that Kentucky Baptists not only understand this biblical principle, but take action on it. We praise the Lord for His provision and also for His direction during this time. Thank you for your love and generosity, and may the Lord bless you with health and peace. ☐

~ Larry A. Gritton, Jr. (OBI '93) OBI President

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2019-20 yearbook dedicated to Martha Harmon

The 2019-2020 Oneidian Yearbook staff dedicated this year's edition to **Ms. Martha Harmon**, who said, "I was really surprised and honored to be chosen." The yearbook dedication is a long-standing Oneida tradition in which the yearbook staff (all students) carefully considers who among the OBI faculty and staff is deserving of the recognition.

Ms. Harmon came to OBI in July 1986 and has served for 33 years in our tutoring program. She shared that for her the greatest highlights of working here include being in a Christian environment and working with students from all over the world. She said she has many good memories of the students who have appreciated her help, and the best thing about tutoring is when a student suddenly understands what she has been explaining. The light goes on and they "get it!"

Mrs. Sharon Grant, who has worked with

Ms. Harmon for 24 years, said, "Martha Harmon is truly a blessing from God!...I have never known a more dedicated, honest, and loyal co-worker...Her passion is to help others."

Congratulations, Ms. Harmon! ☐

(Text by the 2020 yearbook staff)



Also in this issue:

How we are doing schoolp. 2
 Goodbye John & Erma Smith .p. 2
 New "Campus Church"p. 3
 HOMECOMING CANCELLED p.3

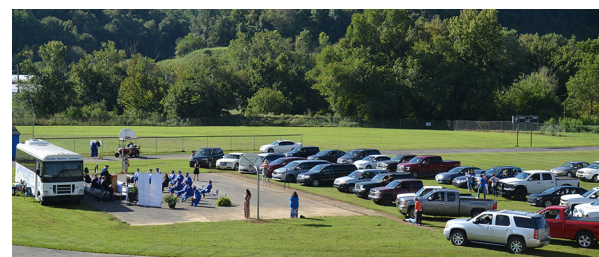


A drive-in kind of day

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the U.S. while our students were home for spring break. The solution? We told them not to return to campus for everyone's safety. Our teachers had to re-work lesson plans and adapt to new methods as we switched to remote learning for both local and dormitory students. Our seniors had to give up their senior trip, the Junior/Senior Banquet, and other typical spring semester highlights. Of course, we couldn't have graduation, either. Finally on September 5, OBI hosted a delayed graduation for the Class of 2020. Though more initially planned to attend, we had 11 graduates who were able to come. Most were local day students, but some returned from other places, including one young lady from Michigan. We opted for a drive-in ceremony -- another first for OBI. As you can see, it was a success!



(clockwise) Our 11 graduates. Social distanced seating. Vehicles of family and friends. Caps, gowns -- and masks. Safely taking pictures.



New ways of doing school

Starting kindergarten used to mean going to a colorful classroom, meeting new friends, and bringing your brand new box of crayons. This, however, is the year of the pandemic, and everything is different (except maybe the new box of crayons).

We had planned to begin classes for our local day students on August 24. Those who formerly would have lived in the dormitories could start at the same time, but with distance learning. Then, following Governor **Andy Beshear's** recommendation, we extended the in-person start date to September 28, leaving the local students to begin online along with their peers in other places. At the time of this writing, 169 young people were doing online school through OBI.

One of our new kindergarten children this year is **Madi Garrett**, daughter of **Brad** and **Shannon Garrett** of Manchester. She has a certain number of lessons to do each weekday, and can work at her own pace. The instruction comes from computer software, and is supplemented by Madi's teacher, **Mrs. Sarah Hawley**. Mrs. Garrett noted that Mrs. Hawley's worksheets are "very well organized." So far the family has not needed assistance with assignments, but Mrs. Hawley is available via e-mail.

Madi's brother, **Bradyn**, is an OBI senior. "He loves doing his work at home and says he is learning a lot this way," Mrs. Garrett said. "Plus, Bradyn has a college class that he has time to attend in person due to his high school classes being online."

At first, Mrs. Garrett was intimidated at the thought of being the facilitator for Madi's first weeks of kindergarten. Now, "It is going great!" she reported. "Mrs. Hawley has made the packets easy to follow and fun. This has been so much better than I expected, and Madi is really learning a lot."

Though she has done well online, Mrs. Garrett said that Madi can't wait to be able to go to the classroom. Bradyn, however, is considering continuing the distance learning.

Jacinta Oliveira is one of our high school English teachers. She recalled how difficult it was when we first began distance learning in March. Now, though, teachers and students are used to it. "Most of my students are doing fairly well," she reported. One thing Mrs. Oliveira appreciates is the software's Biblical integration. "Our students are still getting an education for time and eternity," she said.

Students are encouraged to spend from 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. on their lessons each day and to work approximately 45 minutes per lesson, but they may move forward at their own pace. "They have to do a lot of reading," Mrs. Oliveira explained, "but there are sometimes games and videos, too."

Mrs. Oliveira enjoys the fact that the software does 85% of the grading. She continues to grade things like open-ended questions and writing assignments.

"I think all teachers and students would rather be in the classroom," Mrs. Oliveira asserted. "But this curriculum is the next best thing." She particularly likes assignment alerts, which let teachers keep up with the



Madi working on kindergarten lessons at home.

work their students are doing; the fact that students and parents can see the grades in real time; and the way teachers can track the amount of time each child spends on his/her lessons.

OBI is adapting to this out-of-the-ordinary time by taking on new ways of doing school, and the Garretts are just one family that is grateful. Mrs. Garrett concluded, "We appreciate OBI. We feel so blessed to be a part of this school." □

We will miss John and Erma Smith

This summer we said "goodbye" to **John** and **Erma Smith**, long-time staff members and dear friends. John passed away on June 18 and Erma followed him on July 17.

John had suffered from dementia for some time, and Erma had been his caregiver until an aneurism left her unable to even care for herself. They resided in separate facilities before John contracted COVID-19 and Erma had another stroke.

The day after Erma died was their sixty-first wedding anniversary. They had been able to celebrate their sixtieth anniversary last year before these devastating illnesses claimed their lives. Their daughter, **Lori Underwood** (OBI '88), called them "quintessential lovebirds," and co-workers often saw them walking around campus holding hands.

The couple retired in 2006 after completing 32 years of service at Oneida. They came on staff as houseparents. Erma later became Dean of Students. John started a vocational drafting program. He drew blueprints for the daycare, the print shop, an athletic building, and an apartment complex/work program shop. In 1998 the Friendship House/print shop building was dedicated to the Smiths. We thank God for their ministry. □



The Smiths at Homecoming 2018

Welcome to "Campus Church"

The new school year has brought a new worship opportunity to our community. August 30 was the first Sunday of "Campus Church," a worship service at 10:00 A.M. weekly sponsored by OBI in the school chapel.

Dr. David Price, OBI Campus Minister, is the pastor. "In spending time with **Mr. Gritton**, I realized he has a great burden for our local community," he explained. "We've prayed for several years about a way to reach our locals, beginning with our day students and their parents. Upon discovering that many of them do not attend church, we began seeking a way to meet that need...The LORD laid it on our hearts to begin a Sunday morning ministry on Campus. Our goal is not to take people away from other local churches, but to reach out to those who don't attend anywhere. Our service style is very laid back,



Dr. Price preaching at an OBI chapel service.

with congregational singing and a message from the Bible."

The first week we had 39 in attendance, and the next week 44. Dr. Price said, "When our boarding students come back to us, we want them to plug into a Sunday morning worship experience that's not just another chapel, but a vibrant local church setting. Campus Church is designed to be more than just a Sunday morning event, and we've already been able to reach out to a local family who had a need as the result of an accident. We are excited to see what God is doing through the ministry of Campus Church." □

Homecoming cancelled



Dear OBI Alumni and Friends,

I am sorry to inform you that the OBI Homecoming, scheduled for October 17, 2020, has been cancelled. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we simply cannot hold a large gathering of people.

Please make plans to attend Homecoming on October 23, 2021. Hopefully by that time the pandemic will be behind us, and campus renovations, including Underwood Hall, our new dining hall, will be complete.

Until we can meet again, may God bless and keep all Oneidians.

Larry A. Gritton, Jr. (OBI '93)
President
Oneida Baptist Institute

Bits and tidbits

Our mission statement

The mission of Oneida Baptist Institute is to provide a Christian living, learning and working environment in which each of its students, Christian or non-Christian, is diligently challenged to grow mentally, physically, socially and spiritually in order to acquire an *Education for Time and Eternity*.

Where we are

Web: www.oneidaschool.org

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/OBI.KY>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/Oneida_Baptist

Phone: 606-847-4111 **Fax:** 606-847-4496

Mr. Gritton: <https://twitter.com/@lgritton>

Want an easy way to give?

Go to our web site and click the "Give/Volunteer" tab, then the "Donate now" button to give via credit card, debit card or PayPal: <http://www.oneidaschool.org/support.shtml>

Want to receive the Mountaineer or Alumni News by e-mail?

Send your name, mailing address, e-mail address and the 5-digit number above your name on this issue's mailing label to: diane.dimsey@oneidaschool.org. Let her know if you'd like the e-Mountaineer or e-Alumni News or both. **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to add mountaineer@oneidaschool.org to your contact list in your e-mail program, or it may reject our publications as spam.

OBI continues these programs:

Tyson's "Project A+"™

Send entire labels from specially marked Tyson products, worth 24 cents each. <http://projectaplus.tyson.com/>

General Mills "Box Tops for Education"™

Box Tops are digital! Each is still worth 10 cents with points-to-cash. Check it out: <http://www.bboxtops4education.com/>

Amazon Smile donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to OBI.

<http://smile.amazon.com/about>

Kroger "Community Rewards"

Shoppers with Plus cards can register at www.Kroger.com. Add OBI (PJ703) as the non-profit you want to support.

Office Depot "Back to Schools"

Give our school name or ID# 70040770 & we earn 5% of your purchase.