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News Briefs

Liberty University

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News briefs

June 01, 2009

Students support rescue of child soldiers in Uganda

Four Liberty students had a chance to be on The Oprah Winfrey Show on May 1 with Invisible Children, an international group that advocates on behalf of the 3,000 Ugandan children who have been kidnapped and turned into child soldiers.

Kailey Spivey, Chris Neill, Randy Carroll and Olivia Reyes travelled to Chicago as part of “The Rescue,” a 100-city global rally organized by Invisible Children. The rallies were meant to increase awareness of the atrocities occurring in northern Uganda and the surrounding countries by garnering the attention of the media and a local public figure. At each city, participants symbolically “abducted” themselves to represent the child soldiers, and then camped out in a public place, waiting to be “rescued” by media and a public figure.

The Liberty students demonstrated with hundreds of other “rescue riders” outside Oprah’s Harpo Studios in Chicago, the last city to be “rescued.” After a two-hour stand, Oprah arrived and agreed to modify her show that day to include an interview with the organization’s leaders in front of the crowd of demonstrators.

Spivey was one of the students who formed a new campus group this semester to support Invisible Children. She spoke in convocation, urging Liberty students to attend a rally on April 25 in Washington, D.C.

LU officials sent a chartered plane to bring students home because the bus would not return in

time for final exams.

Liberty University students have been involved in other missions in Uganda this year. Through World Help, students collected \$25,000 to pay for the expansion of a home for orphans there. Recent LU grad Sarah Pisney will be travelling to Uganda as a full-time missionary with World Venture and several other students are doing short-term mission trips and internships there this summer.

Debate team sweeps national championships

For the third time in four years, the Liberty Debate Team has accomplished a feat that no other school has been able to match — winning the sweepstakes championship in debate’s three governing organizations in a single season.

In the NDT rankings, Liberty amassed 594 points, the second highest point total in school history. In CEDA, the Flames earned 196 points, setting a new school and CEDA record. 2009 marks the sixth consecutive year Liberty has claimed the American Debate Association (ADA) championship. In its history, the Liberty Debate Team has now earned 25 National Rankings Championships, including 10 in the last four years. The team only loses two seniors to graduation this year, making it the preseason favorite in next year’s sweepstakes race.

Landscaping projects make campus ‘spring’ to life



Liberty University has focused some major beautification efforts on Campus North, starting with landscaping.

Stretching from the intersection of University Boulevard and Candler’s Mountain Road, to Ericsson Drive in front of the Football Operations Center and LaHaye Ice Center, and toward the LU Police Department entrance on Campus North, the university has spent \$30,000 on landscaping improvements. Crews started planting nearly 500 trees, including maples, oaks, red cedar and holly in those areas while students were on spring break, and bushes prior to that near the LaHaye Ice Center.

At the Tilley Student Center entrance, beautification efforts included some blacktop removal,

brick porch installation, handicapped ramps, railings, planter boxes, canopy awnings and a new sign. Plans are also being made for new entrances for the Seminary, the doorway near the chancellor's office and Campus North's main foyer area. Long-range planning calls for an addition to the face of the LaHaye Student Union — and when the new theater in the tower of Campus North is complete, the entire area by the Tilley Student Center will be given a facelift.

Gardens along the Jerry Falwell Parkway are enhancing the views of campus from U.S. 29/460. More than 20 gardens were designed and available for sponsorship by area businesses starting last year. This spring, crews planted Garden A between the entrance ramp to U.S. 460 West off Candler's Mountain Road, sponsored by Englander Transport, Inc. and England's Stove Works, Inc. Garden K, along the parkway in front of Doc's Diner, was also completed, and is being sponsored by Sodexo, which operates LU's dining services and the diner. Potential sponsors can contact the LU Development Office at (866) 602-7983.

Enrollment exceeds 49,000 resident and online students

Liberty University's enrollment numbers have surpassed 49,000 in the resident and online programs for the academic year.

Total enrollment stands at more than 49,000 students, compared with 38,100 students last year. This is an increase of 28 percent over last year, according to Lawrence Shackleton, Liberty's vice president for administrative information management/registrar.

Online students make up the bulk of the enrollment at more than 38,000 for the academic year, an increase of about 38 percent over last year.

"The entire enrollment management division is very pleased with the growth LU continues to experience," said Chris Johnson, vice president for enrollment manager.

Liberty community honors Jeffrey Taylor



Jeffrey O. Taylor, Assistant Professor of Health Sciences and Kinesiology since 2000, died in a tragic accident at a Lynchburg College athletic field on Tuesday, April 28.

He was honored at Liberty's Commencement, where he was posthumously awarded his Doctor of Education, and a chair was draped with his doctoral robe.

"I heard from many students what a caring and committed professor he was and how he positively impacted the lives of so many students," Falwell said in his Commencement speech.

He asked for continued prayers for Taylor's wife, Mary Clare, and son, Jeffrey Taylor, Jr.

Seniors enjoy picnic at Falwell family farm

Liberty University's second annual Senior picnic kicked off Saturday, May 2 at the Bedford County farm of Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. and his wife, Becki.

About 1,000 seniors attended. They enjoyed a variety of activities on the lake, including swimming, wave running and fishing. In addition to a catered dinner, there were free hot-air balloon rides and sporting events, including volleyball, badminton and frisbee.

Liberty's Student Activities office hosted several games, including hula and balloon tossing competitions with gift-card prizes. Students were also entered into an iPod raffle, and free senior T-shirts were given to the first 500 guests.

"The music, food and activities were awesome, and I hope the Falwells continue to host the Senior Picnic for years to come," said senior Tim Talley.

On-campus gun range opens in early March

Liberty University's on-campus gun range opened March 5, allowing students to take aim at targets using various firearms. Part of the Ultimate LU recreational initiative on campus, the range is supervised by the Liberty University Police Department, which requires shooters to pass a two-day safety course prior to accessing the facility. The range is also open to faculty and staff.

Annual awards presented at last convocation

Three special awards were presented to outstanding Liberty University students at the last convocation of the year. Amanda Jo Forth and Nathaniel Saxon received the Volunteer of the Year Christian Service Award. Forth is the founder and president of Students Behind Our Soldiers, which works to send packages to American soldiers overseas; Saxon spent the past year working at Liberty's Graduate Writing Center.

Don Fanning, director of Liberty's Center for Global Ministries, presented the David Arthur DeMoss Award to Liberty student Cameron Price for his strong commitment to and enthusiasm for cross-cultural ministries.

Liberty students participate in Red Cross Blood Drives

For over 20 years Liberty University has participated in the American Red Cross Blood Drive, sponsored by the Circle K Club. In the past school year, more than 1,800 students, faculty and staff donated over 1,300 units of blood, according to Lew Weider, Liberty's Christian/Community Service director and its blood drive coordinator.

Melanie Campbell, account manager for Red Cross Appalachian Blood Services and a Liberty alumna, said: "LU is one of the best colleges in our region for giving back to the community through blood donations. The students, faculty and staff put forth an amazing effort to make this happen for the Red Cross."

Liberty alumni invited to free campus event

The Alumni Relations Office has launched a program to reach out and reconnect with alumni living in the zip codes starting with 245 — the largest group of Liberty alumni.

The first official event of the "245 Initiative" will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 1 on campus. The LaHaye Student Union, LaHaye Ice Center, Tilley Student Center, the new Thomas Indoor Soccer Center, and the East Campus clubhouse and outdoor pool will be open and available to all 245 alumni and their families for free. Food and drinks will be provided.

Liberty adds men's and women's crew club teams

As the list of recreational activities at Liberty continues to grow, members of the university's newest club sport are testing the waters in preparation for competitions this fall. Since forming in March, LU's men's and women's crew teams have been training four days each week in hopes of rowing against established clubs such as James Madison University, Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia and North Carolina.

Exodus ministry team prepares for summer camps



Last summer Liberty University's musical ministry team, Exodus, lived up to its name by journeying to the West Coast. They spent their summer ministering to young people as the in-house worship band at Hume Lake Christian Camp in California, and along the way, they encouraged campers to come to LU. Their efforts yielded approximately 2,000 applications to LU and more than 6,000 inquiry cards about attending the university – a huge success.

Now the band is hoping to have a similar recruitment harvest closer to home.

Focusing on LU's southern "feeder states" where most students typically come from — the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Virginia — the band will travel to summer camps and churches for 10 weeks to encourage young people and spread the word about Liberty.

"I think it's going to be really lucrative and excellent in terms of recruitment because we're going to be hitting a lot of different places," said Travis Doucette, summer tour coordinator and band director for LU's Department of Ministry Teams.

Considering the current economic picture nationwide, Doucette said the team wanted to go where they could bring in high numbers with ease.

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