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## Table of Contents:

2 - 3 Greek organizations at Baylor give back to multiple philanthropies

4 Other Baylor sports still thrive in spite of Title IX scandal, poor football season

5 University of Iowa football team gives new meaning to the "Wave"

6 - 7 Faith and Sport Institute guides young athletes in leadership, beliefs

8 - 10 Christian families in Waco follow calling to adopt children

11 Baylor freshman raises money for mission trips across globe

12 - 13 City of Waco creates mission to help homeless population

14 - 15 Family Abuse Center combats domestic violence

16 - 19 Legislators labor to save honeybees from extinction

20 Letter from the Editor: "We didn't start the fire, we just write the news."

Cover art by Rewon Shimray | Cartoonist

# Baylor Greek sororities give back

**BROOKE HILL**

Staff Writer

Five first ladies, 61 Emmy award winners and 41 former Miss Americas were sorority women. The leadership shown by these high achiever goes beyond just achieving milestones for themselves.

Dedication to fundraising for their philanthropies has led the eight Panhellenic sororities to collectively raise more than \$373,100 for their charities since January.

Zeta Tau Alpha's philanthropy is breast cancer education and awareness. By spreading the message of breast cancer education and awareness, Zeta sisters are determined to diminish this disease, according to their website.

Baylor Zeta raises money through its event Big Man on Campus, a male pageant show in which men compete in a lip sync battle, question and answer session and pink-out clothing.

"Our philanthropy has allowed our chapter to unite toward a common goal, and has also shown that we have all been impacted by this terrible disease in one way or another," said Olivia Borba, Zeta philanthropy chair.

Reading Is Fundamental, which fights for literacy nationwide, is Kappa Kappa Gamma's philanthropy. This year, it fundraised through a spaghetti dinner called Not so Formal and through its annual Kappa Karnival.

"I love serving with RIF because we get the opportunity to contribute monetarily by raising money and also personally where we read with and spend one-on-one time with Pre-K and kindergarten children," said Anna Claire Minter, Kappa philanthropy chair. "It has been so humbling to watch my chapter be so intentional with loving on kids and see how the kids' confidence grows when they feel truly heard and believed in."

Make-A-Wish grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich their final days. Baylor Chi Omega fundraises for this philanthropy in the fall through its annual Chili Cook Off. Before the event, they send letters out to friends and family to ask for donations for Make-A-Wish North Texas. At the event, all money raised from chili sales goes toward Make-A-Wish. It also has Wish Week in the spring, which consists of a week of profit shares, an on-campus walk-a-thon and a sand volleyball tournament. At both of



Courtesy Photo

**FOR THE CHILDREN** Some of the ladies of Tri Delta on their trip to St. Jude in Memphis in Fall 2017.

these events, the sorority invites various Wish families who have been granted wishes (or are in the process of being granted a wish) through the organization and live in the Waco area.

"Make-A-Wish North Texas is near to my heart," said Lauren Knapton, Chi Omega philanthropy chair. "One of my best friends from home was granted a wish to go to Italy with her family for a week while she was battling cancer. I saw the impact that this trip had on her and her family, and I am forever grateful for this organization. One of the many reasons I love Chi Omega is because our philanthropy is so important to us, and our members care a lot about it."

Alpha Chi Omega's philanthropy is domestic violence awareness. Baylor Alpha Chi fundraised for the Waco family abuse center through its block party event this fall, as well as taking donations internally so that it can provide dinners every week, as well as donate needed items on a regular basis.

"Being able to work in the local community is a great blessing for our sisterhood," said Katie Galgano, Alpha Chi philanthropy chair. "While

working on campus is great, stepping outside of your bubble creates an entirely new environment. It's amazing to see how new friendships form while volunteering. You have a chance to get to know women outside of your immediate friend group."

Delta Delta Delta's philanthropy is St. Jude Children's Research hospital. Baylor Tri Delta was the top Tri Delta chapter in the nation for fundraising this past year, raising \$246,000. During its annual letter writing campaign, "Sincerely Yours," the women sent out over 14,000 letters that resulted in over \$180,000 in donations. It also fundraises through Tri Delta gameday, where everyone is invited to watch an away football game on the field at McLane, and Delta Night Live, a concert it hosts in the spring.

"I think it's super important to highlight the heart behind greek life, and convey that it's not just about sisterhood, date events, and t-shirts, but it's so much more than that," said Chandler Oestereich, Tri Delta philanthropy chair.

Pi Beta Phi's philanthropy, Read Lead Achieve, is an organization that strives to spread awareness and importance of literacy. The Baylor

chapter participates in efforts to raise literacy rates in Waco by participating in a program called Champions Are Readers. In this program, one Pi Phi is paired with a third grade student at South Waco Elementary School and they meet once a week to listen to their buddies read and raise their literacy levels.

“This program has been so awesome to be apart of because, we get to see results and improvement right here in our community,” said Jordan Hickey, Pi Phi philanthropy chair. “Once a week, every single week, we show up and love on our buddies. We get to encourage them, ask them about their interests, and show them that we value them. It’s amazing to see how just 30 minutes a week can lift their spirits and motivate them to be the best they can be in school and as a person.”

Kappa Alpha Theta’s philanthropy is Court

Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), an organization that supports and promotes court-appointed advocates for abused or neglected children in order to provide children with a safe and healthy home environment.

Baylor Theta fundraises for CASA through their annual CASA 5K run in the fall, as well as an event in the spring called CASA couture where local vendors set up shops in Theta’s chapter room and donate a portion of their sales to CASA. Baylor Theta also made a personalized blanket for every CASA kid in McLennan county for Christmas this year.

“CASA is a blessing to serve,” said Sirina Thompson, Theta philanthropy director. “I’ve loved getting to know the local representatives and see Theta’s opportunities to serve and donate to CASA grow. It’s not just another cause, it’s a way to tangibly

change lives.”

Alpha Delta Pi’s philanthropy is Ronald McDonald House Charities, which provides a home for families to stay when a child is staying in a nearby hospital. Baylor ADPi serves by going down to the Temple Ronald McDonald house once a month to cook, clean, plant flowers and help with whatever may be needed that month. This past year it has raised money through a week of profit shares, a letter drive and PiHop, a pancake event with a photo booth and games.

“Regardless of what you are doing to help out, it is such a huge blessing for the families and the staff,” said Jamie Jennings, ADPi philanthropy chair. “It provides hope for them in a place that may not always have a positive atmosphere. People that stay there have kids that are very sick and RMHC allows them to stay close to their family during this time.”

## Sorority Philanthropies

### Zeta Tau Alpha:

Breast cancer education and awareness

### Kappa Kappa Gamma:

Reading is Fundamental

### Pi Beta Phi:

Read Lead Achieve

### Chi Omega:

Make-a-Wish

### Alpha Chi Omega:

Domestic Violence Awareness

### Delta Delta Delta:

St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital

### Kappa Alpha Theta:

Court Appointed Special Advocates

### Alpha Delta Pi:

Ronald McDonald House Charities



Jessica Hubble | Multimedia Journalist



Courtesy Photo



Liesje Powers | Multimedia Editor

**BELIEVING IN SOMETHING BETTER (Top Left)** Ladies from Chi Omega participate in Alpha Tau Omega’s bed races, which benefit the Make-A-Wish foundation. **(Bottom Left)** A Zeta Tau Alpha’s throws a sorority sign at a Think Pink breast cancer awareness rally. **(Right)** Temple sophomore Dannen Shatto and Fort Wayne, Ind., Maddy Davis show their support with face paint and smiles at the Theta CASA 5K this fall.

# Other Baylor SPORTS thrive despite poor football season record



Will Barksdale | Multimedia Journalist

**MAKING PROGRAM HISTORY** Redshirt senior outside hitter Katie Staiger spikes the ball against an Oklahoma defender in a September matchup at the Ferrell Center. The Bears defeated the Sooners in four sets.

**COLLIN BRYANT**  
Sports Writer

While Baylor's football program continues to struggle in a football-dominated region, Baylor sports such as men's golf, women's volleyball and soccer are having successful seasons.

In the south, Big 12 and Southeastern Conference (SEC) football control the region's culture interest and in recent years, the Bears had a seat at the table. Baylor played in bowl games the last four years and was conference champions back-to-back in 2013 and 2014.

However, through turmoil and coaching changes caused by Baylor's sexual assault scandal, the Bears have faltered this season. With a 1-9 record, head coach Matt Rhule's transition into the program has not gone smoothly.

After the team started 0-3, Rhule said during this time of transition, the most important element is ensuring his players are getting better.

"To me that's really the most important thing to building a great program is developing player accountability and player discipline, and they are holding each other accountable," Rhule said. "That was really nice to see for me."

Although football has struggled to find success on the field, the rest of Baylor's fall athletic programs have given Baylor Nation plenty to cheer about.

## Soccer

Baylor soccer hosted the first round of the NCAA Tournament on Nov. 10, beating Rice 3-2. The Bears are about to take on USC, the defending national champions on Friday in the second round.

Before beating Rice last weekend, Baylor won the Big 12 championship, clawing past teams such as Texas, Oklahoma State and TCU, all of which also made the NCAA Tournament. While soccer has not had a coaching change, it too has battled injuries. Baylor lost junior forward Jackie Crowther, who led the team in goals early in the season to a knee injury. The Bears also lost redshirt sophomore Hannah Parrish to injury for the 2017 season, giving freshman Jennifer Wandt the starting goal keeper position.

After winning the Big 12 Tournament, head coach Paul Jobson said the girls are



Courtesy of Baylor Athletics

**CONFERENCE CHAMPS** The soccer team poses for a picture after winning the Big 12 Championship. The Bears defeated TCU 2-1 in overtime on Nov. 5 in Kansas City, Mo., to get an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

entering the NCAA Tournament with a championship mindset.

"I think it's just the mentality they've had for most of the season. That can't be something that changes as we go into the postseason when we get to the NCAA Tournament," Jobson said. "We talked about it entering the Big 12's ... here's another game ... every game we've played is like a championship match because of what we play for. We play for God and we play for each other, and that doesn't change no matter what logos are on the field or if there's a trophy at the end of it."

## Golf

Baylor men's golf had a successful fall season, starting with two top five finishes, as well as a win in its last fall tournament of the semester the Royal Oaks Intercollegiate. Most of the men's golf tournaments are typically in the spring to prepare them for the conference and national championship in March and April. However, the men's team traditionally will compete in several fall events to start the team's preparation for when the season picks up.

Men's golf has steadily been on the rise since head coach Mike McGraw took over in the fall 2015. The team has been to the national championship the last two years, losing in the quarterfinals to Oklahoma in 2016.

After the team's first win of the 2017

season this past week at the Royal Oaks Intercollegiate, McGraw said his team completely met his expectations to start the season.

"I don't think you can't ask much more of a team other than to get into contention," McGraw said. "They did it every single tournament and they finally got the job done."

## Volleyball

Baylor volleyball is currently having one of its best seasons in team history. The Bears reached No. 17 in the country on Nov. 13, their highest ranking in program history.

The team is led by senior outside hitter Katie Staiger, who earlier this season became the Baylor all-time kills leader in the rally scoring era, shattering Katie Sanders' (2006-09) record of 1,547. Head coach Ryan McGuyre has seen freshman outside hitter Yossiana Pressley emerge as the next big hitter for the Bears. Pressley led the way in a sweep of then No. 11 Kansas Jayhawks on Nov. 11 with 19 kills on a .410 attack effort. The win over Kansas was Baylor's first since 2012 and its fourth win over a ranked opponent this season.

With a record of 22-5, the Bears are poised to be a real contender for the national championship as the regular season comes to an end Nov. 25 against the Texas Longhorns.

# Iowa college football gives new meaning to

**ADAM GIBSON**  
Copy Editor

In Iowa City, Iowa, college football has become so much more than just a game. This is because of one of the newest and most heartwarming traditions in all of sports. With just a simple wave, University of Iowa football fans show their support for young patients in a nearby hospital.

Kinnick Stadium, home of the Iowa Hawkeyes, is located right next to the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, which opened in February. 70,585 fans are able to turn and wave to the top floors of the hospital at the end of the first quarter during every home game.

The idea first came from a Facebook page called Hawkeye Heaven, which is run by Iowa fans. Krista Young, a follower of the page, suggested the idea on June 5.

"So I was thinking ... Wouldn't it be cool if we made it a tradition after the first quarter of every home game to have everyone in Kinnick wave to the kids and their families watching from The University of Iowa Stead Children's Hospital," Young said in the post. "Pass this on and let's make it happen!"

Just a few months later, the wave made its debut. On Sept. 2, when the Hawkeyes played Wyoming in the season-opener, a crowd of over 68,000 turned to wave to the children's hospital.

The hospital's communications director, Cheryl Hodgson, said "The Wave" is a special way for the community to show they are there for the kids and that they are rooting for them to get better.

"It's really the unique thing about Iowa," Hodgson told the Associated Press. "People care about kids and families everywhere, but we have noticed — first through the 'Kid Captain' program [where kids from the hospital are chosen to be the honorary captain for a football game] and now 'The Wave' — how much it means to people even if they don't have a family member directly affected. They really kind of adopt those kids, and it feels like they're their own and they want to go out of their way to support them."

At the University of Iowa Family Children's Hospital, the staff deals with anything from caring for general childhood illnesses, surgery, traumatic injuries, life-threatening and chronic illnesses, and developmental disabilities.

Dr. Paul M. Gordon, Baylor professor and chair of the department of health, human performance and recreation, has worked with children that have various disabilities at the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Michigan. Gordon

said through his work, children feel more welcome with such gestures since they tend to be left out.

"These kids, as you might guess, are often overlooked or even stigmatized by society. Their impairments often create challenges to engage in everyday activities and social acceptance is difficult," Gordon said. "Certainly in my limited experience the children felt a sense of acceptance and support that often helped their mental and emotional states. There is scientific data supporting the benefits of good social support and healing. Even a simple act of kindness can be the difference, providing hope to those in the midst of a crisis. As Christians, we are

## THE WAVE

the hands and feet of Jesus and I would guess that a simple act like 'The Wave' can only help remind these children and their families that they aren't forgotten or ignored."

Last year, UI Stead Family Children's Hospital cared for 71,754 patients from every county in Iowa,

nearly every state in the United States, and several other countries. The children that are in the hospital have many other problems to worry about, but "The Wave" has become a good distraction from what they are dealing with, even if it is just a temporary distraction.

For the parents of patients in the hospital, "The Wave" has brought life into a dark place.

Amy Clark, a mother whose child is being treated in the hospital, said it creates a feeling of normalcy for the patients in the hospital.

"I guess for me, it brings a sense of excitement to the kids that are here getting treatments or here for long term. And it makes them feel excited and normal for a minute to get out of their rooms and come up here and enjoy themselves," Clark told the Associated Press. "And I also think it brings a sense of community to everybody that's out there watching the football game just thinking of us. It's a neat thing."

Not only have the fans and Iowa players taken part in waving to the hospital, but opposing teams' players have also joined in on the trend.

On Nov. 4, Iowa played then ranked No. 6 Ohio State, eventually upsetting it 55-24. At the end of the first quarter, with the score tied at 10, even though the Buckeyes were not happy with how the game had gone so far, the team still turned to wave to the children's hospital. Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer also took part in the wave and told USA Today that his team was honored to take part in waving for the week.

The Ohio State Athletics Twitter account also tweeted a gif of Ohio State fans waving to represent the fans that did not travel to the game. The tweet was tweeted at the official account of the children's hospital and said, "Uchildrens from all of us Buckeyes who couldn't be in Iowa City."

For the citizens of Iowa, a wave has become more than just a simple gesture. College football now gives to those in the hospital not only entertainment from the game, but loving recognition from 70,000 people in Kinnick Stadium, as well as support from people across the country who have witnessed this selfless tradition.



Associated Press

**TRADITION** Iowa Hawkeyes fans wave to the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital at the end of the first quarter of a game on Sept. 16. At the end of the first quarter, everyone inside Kinnick Stadium is encouraged to turn and wave to the young patients watching the game in the nearby children's hospital.

## NEW INITIATIVE SEEKS TO BALANCE

## FAITH &amp; SPORTS

NATHAN KEIL

Sports Editor

Balancing both sport and faith commitments is no easy task. Balancing these commitments well and maintaining them as a high priority is even harder. However, there is hope for athletes as they seek this balance in faith and sport. Beginning in June, incoming high school sophomores and juniors from various schools in Central Texas will gather to participate in the first ever Faith and Sport Institute, a George W. Truett Theological Seminary initiative that will help guide high school athletes as they find this balance.

For FSI program director and campus sports chaplain Cindy White, the institute addresses the issues of leadership that athletes can carry with them throughout sports and in all aspects of life.

“The Faith and Sport Institute seeks to engage and form young men and women to become strong leaders in sports, church and beyond. The eight-day retreat, combined with a year of mentorship, will help you ask the big questions, deepen integrity and spiritual leadership, and develop convictions and character to equip you for the ‘race of life,’” White said.

For White and her husband Dr. John White, who directs the Master’s Sports Chaplaincy program at Truett Seminary and serves as faculty director for the FSI, the intersection of faith and sport has been undeniable. It has been the call God has inevitably placed in their lives, and the FSI will serve as an outlet for them to continue this call to ministry.

“I came to Baylor having previously played and

coached volleyball at the Division I level. I also have been doing sports ministry among college and professional athletes for over 30 years,” White said. “It has been my passion as a Christian leader and lover of sports, along with my husband, John, to help athletes and coaches on all levels to integrate the gospel in everything they think, say and do.”

Sports ministry may be embedded in the Whites’ DNA, but the inception of the FSI has been a process, and not one that was born overnight.

In August 2015, they applied for a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., based out of Indianapolis, Ind. which funds initiatives like FSI. In December, the Whites were awarded the grant worth \$600,000 under Lilly’s High School Youth Theology Institute. Grants given by the High School Youth Theology Institute are always given to seminaries, but this grant that went into effect in August 2016 is the first one to have sports people as the primary audience, in which student-athletes learn how to integrate faith and sport.

White said that she understands the opportunity the grant has given them and that she and the FSI team will not take it for granted.

“We are grateful to Lilly to entrust this project that benefits young people and promotes leadership education and financial self-sufficiency in the

nonprofit, charitable sector,” White said. “FSI is the first grant allocated to a seminary that seeks to theologically reflect on and engage in sports at this level. Lilly is anticipating very positive results from FSI.”

One of the major goals of the FSI is to reshape and reframe the way athletes think about the relationship between faith and sports. Historically, sports have not been critically examined from a theological perspective. However, with a proper understanding of sport’s place beneath the realm of God’s sovereignty, athletes can begin to understand how faith and sport work together.

“We believe that sports is an important slice of life, under the domain of God’s governance, where athletes and coaches and all who participate have the opportunity to practice what it means to ‘show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine,’” White said. “All human activities are subject to God and His will ‘on earth as it is in heaven.’ If we can understand and live out the love, truth and grace found in Christ in the fully-embodied sport experience, we believe we will then be better prepared to imagine God in all aspects of life.”

As athletes arrive at Baylor for the eight-day retreat and program, they will participate in a combination of teaching through lecture, small

groups, worship and competition. The athletes will be joined by top professors from Baylor, Canada and England throughout the week and will participate in an immersion experience with Mission Waco, focused on reconciling the world’s problems with the gospel peace throughout the sport experience.

Houston third-year sports ministry graduate student Aaron Everic, FSI mentor and donor coordinator, said the FSI will help address some of the major life issues that confront athletes.

“Topically, we will discuss and interact with worship, identity, training, suffering and vocation,” Everic said. “Then on the field of competition we will experience how those topics intersect with the desire to compete and how they interact with and against each other both on and off the field.”

One of the other areas that FSI seeks to address is the instability of faith after the “mountain-top” experiences of camps and retreats. Lives can change over the course of a retreat, but can look different once athletes get back into their daily routines.

FSI is addressing this problem by doing practical discipleship through mentoring of the athletes that will continue for a year after the retreat ends, an aspect that attracted Everic to the position.

“The purpose of the mentor is to be a friend or companion alongside the student athlete who can engage in dialogue as the intersection between their faith and sport is continually at play, especially as they experience it upon returning to school and a new season,” Everic said. “I was drawn to it because the model of mentoring that they want to use with retreat-goers. Discipleship/mentoring is the future of the church and what FSI wants to develop now will



Rewon Shimray | Cartoonist

have huge implications on the next generation of leaders who will be equipping and trying new mentors for people of faith.”

Everic has been the networking catalyst for the institute by reaching out to area coaches, administrators and pastors, getting them to gauge student athletes who would and could benefit from such a program as well as getting them to spread the word throughout the area.

White hopes that through networking and establishing positive, lasting relationships with athletes, families and the Waco community, everyone who wants to participate in the institute will be able to and that fulfilling partnerships can be established.

“FSI seeks to bless young people with the opportunity to learn and grow in a positive and challenging environment. We are especially committed to gender and racial diversity so nobody is left out due to financial reasons or family support,” White said. “It is our hope that a retreat such as this will continue the good work Baylor and Waco are already doing in the areas of community organizing and meeting the needs of young people.”

The Institute targets high school athletes because over the course of 30 years of sports ministry, White said she has learned that it is more difficult to gain traction among high-level college and professional sports programs. Some programs are focusing on character training, including moral, emotional and

financial stewardship. However, according to White, many of them don’t realize that good training is grounded in good theological concepts. This is where FSI separates itself from these other programs.

Faith Sport and Institute is still looking for mentors. Mentors can be seniors in college or other college students or spiritual leaders under the age of 30 who have a background or grasp of sports culture and a desire to walk alongside students as they mature in their faith.

If interested in being a mentor or participating in FSI, one can check out the official FSI website, <https://www.baylor.edu/truett/index.php?id=940766>, for an application and more details.

The Faith and Sport Institute Retreat runs from June 17-24, 2018.

Visit the Faith and Sport Institute website for more information:  
<https://www.baylor.edu/truett/index.php?id=940766>



Courtesy of the Faith and Sport Institute

**TEAMWORK** High school students work to integrate their faith with sport during a physical challenge at the Athletes in Action Headquarters in Xenia, Ohio. Athletes in Action is also attempting to help high school athletes integrate faith in sport, however, it is not the same as Faith and Sport Institute.

# Growing *faith* and *families*

## Christians follow calling to adopt children in Waco

**PHOEBE SUY**  
Staff Writer

Houses are not always homes, and family can be more than simply sharing a last name. Adoption challenges some of society's conceptions of love and family—perhaps family trees aren't as significant as the soil in which they're planted.

Two Baylor families, the Dickeys and the Youngers, recently opened up their hearts, lives and homes to infant and embryo adoption. While they said they look forward to the possibility of pursuing future adoptions, right now both are enjoying life with their chosen children, Zoe Dickey and Owen Younger.

### The Dickey Family

As a couple who married in their later in life, Waco senior Chris Dickey said he and his wife, Jennifer, a lecturer in the Diana R. Garland School of Social Work and director of Global Mission Leadership Initiative, knew the possibility of having children of their own was limited. Chris said as they began exploring options to grow their family, they found infant adoption to be the most fitting choice.

Chris said they learned about Generations Adoptions

from one of Jennifer's former students and soon came to appreciate the agency's faith perspective and advocacy for birth moms. They were prayerful about starting a family, Jennifer said, and the adoption process was marked by peace as a result.

Everything happened relatively quickly. Chris said it took about 10 months from the time he and Jennifer began meeting with birth moms to finally being selected by one. They were chosen last spring by an 18-year-old expectant mother from Dallas, Chris said. He noted the young mother liked the fact that he and Jennifer were older and had more established lives.

Zoe Hope, whose name means abundant life, according to Chris was born in May 2017. The adoption was finalized in early November. Although everything came together more quickly than expected, Jennifer said they were both thrilled and thankful.

"I think there's a vulnerability of opening your heart and your life and realizing that there's a potential that our daughter, Zoe, is possibly going to really struggle with what [adoption] means for her," Jennifer said. "I think for us, our commitment is just to journey that with her as she struggles to be



Photo Courtesy of Jennifer Dickey

**BELOVED DAUGHTER** Chris and Jennifer Dickey with their daughter, Zoe Hope, who they adopted this year.

in that space and to help her get the information she needs to create peace there."

While Jennifer said she believes adoption is a beautiful thing, she said that doesn't mean it isn't lacking in pain and sadness, as they remember Zoe's birth mother and her loss, as well as Zoe, who is going to miss her. Jennifer said their commitment as a family is to create a supportive environment for Zoe and for whatever degree of relationship Zoe and her birth mother choose to have in the future.

"We all, over and over, in that process and time of meeting with her, just [saw] how much courage it takes to see a pregnancy through and then give up your child," Chris said as he teared up thinking about Zoe's birth mother.

Jennifer echoed Chris' sentiments about Zoe's birth mom, saying that they both have the highest respect and appreciation for her.

"There are just no words for how we

feel toward her and how thankful we are for how she prepared Zoe for life in her body," Jennifer said.

Although not in the delivery room, Chris and Jennifer were present at the hospital when Zoe was born.

"I remember what it was like to hold Zoe in our arms together. We placed her between us and cried and held each other and held Zoe," Jennifer said.

Jennifer recalled one moment in particular when she was alone with Zoe in the hospital room. She said she remembers thinking to herself, "OK, this baby is mine to nurture and support and care." While she said she felt some sobriety and responsibility in that moment, Jennifer said there was also a deep sense of privilege and joy.

As for Chris, he said he quickly learned how easy it is "to love a child that's not of you." At first, Chris said he felt some kind of apprehension, but it was quickly corrected once he met Zoe.

"When I walk in the door, she grins ear to ear and is just happy to see me and I'm just like, 'I'm so happy to see you, too,'" Chris said. "So I guess the mornings and when I come home in the afternoons are probably those [moments] where it hits me each day that, 'Wow, this is my baby.'"

Zoe's adoption was finalized on Nov. 6, 2017. Jennifer said it was so meaningful to go to the courthouse to officially receive Zoe into their family. While Zoe was already a part of their hearts, Jennifer said it was a time to formally say, "Everything we have is yours."

For Jennifer, families are born not necessarily out of blood, but out of commitment and covenant.

"I've always just been drawn to the beautiful narrative that's true for me as a person of the Christian faith, that I've been included in the family of God and just thinking about what it means to make space for people and to cleave to one another as family, even if it's not blood related," Jennifer said.

## Did you know?

# 135,000

**children are adopted in the United States each year.**

# 428,000

**children are in foster care in the United States.**

Source: Adoption Network Law Center



# November is National Adoption Awareness Month

## FAST FACTS:

- **75.3 Million** Americans have considered adoption.
- If just **1 in 700** of these adults adopted, every waiting child in foster care would have a permanent family.

Source: Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption



Courtesy Photo

**MUCH LOVE** Chris and Jennifer Dickey hold their daughter Zoe Hope in their arms.

- Around **7 million** Americans are adopted
- Around **140,000** children are adopted by American families each year

Source: Adoption Network Law Center



Courtesy Photo

**OFFICIAL** Chris and Jennifer Dickey celebrate the adoption finalization of their daughter, Zoe Hope.

### The Younger Family

Rachael Younger, wife of Dr. Pete Younger, a full-time lecturer in Baylor's philosophy department, said she and Pete knew they wanted to grow their family after their first year of marriage. Rachael and Pete married in 2006 after meeting at Biola University in Southern California. The couple moved to Texas around 2008.

At the suggestion of her obstetrician, Rachael said she began using a low-level hormone treatment. In May 2011, only one month after starting the treatment, Rachael became pregnant with her firstborn son, Samuel. The couple chose the name Samuel from the Old Testament account of Hannah, as documented in 1 Samuel 2. According to Pete, Samuel means "asked of the Lord."

The Younger family's road to adoption had many ups and downs, Rachael said.

When her second pregnancy resulted in an early miscarriage, Pete and Rachael said they set everything aside for about a year.

When they returned to the subject of growing their family, Pete and Rachael explained that they had both been interested in adoption before their marriage and considered it strongly after-

ward because advanced fertility was costly. Not only can it be a financial burden, but Rachael said it also costs in terms of time and emotions.

Pete and Rachael were working toward a domestic adoption when they learned about Generations Adoptions' Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program. The program "allows couples who have frozen embryos in storage to donate their embryos for adoption to another couple of their choosing," the website states. The embryos are transferred into the womb of the adoptive mother, a process influenced by several factors, including the age

"We are called as Christians to care for widows and orphans: for everyone it looks different," Rachael said.

Rachael said she felt God had been working in their lives to open them to the possibility of embryo adoption. She said she believes many moms looking to adopt do so for a number of reasons, one of them being an inability to carry a baby to full term. After giving birth to Samuel, Rachael said she knew her body was physically capable of carrying a baby, a unique advantage of embryo adoption.

For Pete, embryo adoption became a conviction in his heart after learning there were thousands of embryos waiting to be adopted. He said that outside of adoption, these embryos will either be frozen indefinitely, discarded or used for research.

"We can't change that situation entirely, but we got to make a difference for five of them," Pete said.

Rachael and Pete adopted five embryos in October 2015. They transferred two embryos in December of that year. One survived and their second son, Owen, is now 15 months old. Owen is a Welsh name meaning noble heritage, Pete said. The couple also chose names for the remaining three embryos—Batel, Tabitha and Ebenezer.

While Pete said they mourn the loss of Reuben, the second embryo that did not survive the

transfer, he said they still celebrate the life he was able to live, however brief.

"His life is over now, but he got the chance to live out for everything that it was," Pete said. "We're sorrowful it's over, but at the same time, it's a natural closure we mourn that loss, but we're still thankful for [his] life. To move it out of that period of frozen waiting is by itself invaluable."

While there was no difference in pregnancy for Rachael, she said being a mother to Samuel and Owen comes with unique challenges. What Samuel needs from her is different than what Owen needs from her.

Rachael said for most domestic adoptions, there are two mother figures, the birth mother and "mommy." In embryo adoption, there is the genetic mother, the birth mother and mommy.

"Being mommy, that's the day in and day out, 24/7, caring for them, loving them, changing poopy diapers, telling them not to touch hot things, reading to them, singing with them, giving them enough time to choose their own play," Rachael said. "The crux of it is being there 24/7. You're the one they turn to when they need comfort ... It's dealing with little hurts and little triumphs."

Rachael said she believes Christian families in particular should ask themselves what their role is in caring for widows and orphans. She said she doesn't believe God calls everyone to adopt, but she mentioned that examining one's hesitations or concerns about adoption could reveal "selfish or wrongly-centered" reasons.

Sometimes it is easy to go into adoption with a self-centered view, Rachael said. Often, individuals or couples expound upon the belief that they are the ones offering children the opportunity for a good life. While Rachael said this is mostly true and that adoption offers orphans an opportunity to flourish and enhance their quality of life, she emphasized that embryo adoption is fundamentally different.

"In embryo adoption, very much I am giving them the opportunity to just live," Rachael said.

Rachael said members of her family are still coming to terms with her and Pete's decision to adopt embryos. Rachael particularly noted that embryo adoption can become a controversial issue. Are the embryos persons? Do they deserve protections? Rachael said she believes how individuals answer these questions will influence their perspective.

For example, Rachael said some people refer to embryo adoption as embryo donation and in turn, view the embryos as property and the process of adopting or donating as a contract. Rachael said one reason why she and Pete chose Generations' Snowflakes program was because the program treated the embryos as persons, not objects to be acquired.

"My wife and I, throughout our marriage, we've wanted our home to be the kind of place that we could be welcoming to others and that we could take what we've got and use that to bless other people," Pete said. "One of the things we've got is a home and a family and the ability to take people into our home and bring them into our family."

Pete said their family wants to bless children and, in particular, the embryos waiting in limbo to have a chance to live out their lives.

“We’re sorrowful it’s over, but at the same time, it’s a natural closure we mourn that loss, but we’re still thankful for his life.”

DR. PETE YOUNGER |  
LECTURER



Courtesy Photo

**BABY FEVER** Owen Younger celebrates his 13th month birthday. Owen was adopted via an embryo adoption program in 2016.

# More money, more missions

## Baylor freshman receives opportunity to go on three mission trips

**BRANSON HARDCASTLE**  
Reporter

Baylor freshman Michael Karr had always dreamed of going on mission trips to help others in need. During the summer of his junior year of high school, Michael got his chance.

Michael is a native of Waco and has been raised in the church. Traveling and missions have been passions of his from an early age. Michael began attending Highland Baptist Church in Waco during his sophomore year of high school. He connected with his youth pastor, Jordan McKinney, who discipled him by doing Bible studies with him. This connection between them led Michael to get more involved in the student ministry.

"I saw Michael as someone who was hungry. He was showing up to church alone. His family and his brother didn't go to church here at this time. He was just showing up because he wanted it," McKinney said. "He wanted the Lord. He wanted to be discipled. He wanted to go to a place where he felt like he belonged and get poured into."

In 2015, the youth ministry at Highland Baptist Church announced they would be going on a mission trip to Canada for the second consecutive year. The trip would cost \$900 and would cover food, transportation and various expenses that would take place

on the trip. Michael wanted to go the year before, but was not able to. When he heard there was going to be a second trip, he and his family decided to go out on a limb and apply for the trip.

After two months of waiting, Michael got the news that he was invited to go on the mission trip. The Karr family prayed about the situation and decided to do everything they could to raise the funds to send Michael on the trip.

Michael's friend, who had been on mission trips before, encouraged him to send out letters asking for prayer and, if they felt led, financial support. He sent out around 40 letters to family and friends.

The mission team held a luncheon at Highland Baptist to help raise support for

everyone going on the trip. For the luncheon, the students who were going on the trip sold tickets for people to attend. Once people were there, they could also buy desserts from the bake sale and buy shirts from the youth group. The luncheon helped raise money, but Michael still needed more to go on the trip.

"It took me extremely by surprise when I opened it up and it covered the whole cost of the trip. I thought the extra zero that was there on the check wasn't there, because with the zero it would cover the trip, but without it would just be a great donation that I was thankful for."

On June 23, 2016, Michael and the rest of the Highland youth ministry team headed to Cochran, Canada. The purpose of the trip was to help spread the Gospel to the Nakoda First Nations People by building relationships with the locals and telling them about Jesus Christ. The youth group worked on the reserve by volunteering at the Nakoda Elementary School, painted a local day care and helped at the Lyahrhe Nakoda Food Bank Society. One of the most impactful parts of the trip was learning about the First Nations People and their culture.

"We got to witness a ceremony that they have only three times a year. It is focused around praying and worshipping a tree that they set up a teepee around," Karr said. "The entire community parked around the prayer teepee while a member of the tribe had a vision and the chief would constantly pray to the tree for a week."

On June 30, 2016, the youth group touched back down in Texas. The trip was over, but it left Michael longing to go on another mission trip.

“It is such a blessing that God has given me such a clear direction toward missions by covering two mission trips already and helping one more soon to come.”

**MICAHEAL KARR |  
WACO FRESHMAN**

it covered the whole cost of his trip. Other letters continued to flow in with more prayer and financial support, something Karr said he did not expect.

"I didn't know what to expect when I opened them. I didn't know if it was going to be a big or small amount," Michael said.



Photo Courtesy of Michael Karr

**OUTREACH** Waco freshman Michael Karr went with his youth pastor Jordan McKinney and friend Caleb Durham to Cochran, Canada in June 2016 on a youth ministry trip with Highland Baptist Church.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

**Matthew 28:19**

# A mission focused

City of Waco takes initiative in



**JULIA VERGARA**  
Staff Writer

Homelessness is an issue all across the U.S. and the City of Waco is no exception. However, many Waco organizations and programs have been created to offer help to the local individuals and families who find themselves without a place to call their own.

“Having a home is just merely a basic need — basic needs have to be met before we can work to address any other issues,” said Melinda Bonds, chairman of the Heart of Texas Homeless Coalition.

The HOT Homeless Coalition is a nonprofit organization created in Waco to provide support for the local homeless community. Bonds said the organization’s purpose is to work toward ending homelessness and that they do this in a variety of ways.

HOT Homeless Coalition evaluates the gaps and needs in community resources and then works to expand those resources, Bonds said. For example, the organization submits a collaborative grant application annually to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to provide more housing for the homeless. Last year, they were able to receive \$988,312 from Housing and Urban Development and this year, they submitted a grant

application for over a million dollars.

Another way HOT Homeless Coalition strives toward ending homelessness is by linking homeless people to local services in the area such as Mission Waco and the Salvation Army for support.

“I think that because our community in Waco is so tight-knit, most of our agencies work so well together and we’re aware of who our homeless individuals and families are,” Bonds said.

Mission Waco is another local organization that offers help to the homeless community in a number of ways.

With the mission of providing Christian-based, holistic and relationship-based programs to empower the poor and marginalized, Mission Waco organizes a “Walk for the Homeless” every September. The event is followed by a Church Under the Bridge worship service under I-35.

While once a part of Mission Waco, where it served as a Bible study for several homeless individuals living under the I-35 bridge, Church Under the Bridge decided to separate as a fully-functioning church in 1999, according to Mission Waco’s website.

Today, one of Church Under the Bridge’s nine core values is to provide acceptance and easy access to individuals that are needs such as hot meals and used

“ I think that because our community in Waco is so tight-knit, most of our agencies work so well together and we’re aware of who our homeless individuals and families are.”

**MELINDA BONDS |  
CHAIRMAN OF THE HOT  
HOMELESS COALITION**

clothing.

In addition to organizing a Walk for the Homeless,

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