



Spring Meeting Recap

BY MR. BEN HUMPHRIES -
2026 FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN

Thank you for contributing to a meaningful and productive Foundation weekend. Your engagement and participation made the meetings both successful and encouraging.

Several key outcomes emerged. First, the Board approved the project proposal for a new faculty home. With this approval and previously raised funds, all essential components are now in place to move forward with construction—an important milestone for the Seminary.

Second, an ad hoc committee has been formed to explore ways to strengthen and grow the Foundation Board. This group will evaluate potential improvements to better support the Seminary's future needs, with any recommendations returning to the full Board for discussion and approval.



Dr. Jamie Dew addressing Foundation Board

RECAP - CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Foundation - est. 1965

Spring Meeting Recap

CONTINUED from pg. 1

The weekend also included the first-ever new member orientation, Foundation Essentials. We welcomed the largest group of new members in many years—signaling positive momentum for the Board’s future.

During the orientation, Dr. Chris Shaffer provided a helpful overview of the Seminary’s history, connecting current efforts with its longstanding legacy. Mr. Mark Hagelman highlighted key aspects of the Foundation’s incorporation, emphasizing the vision of past leaders that continues to guide its mission: raising funds and awareness for NOBTS and Leavell College to equip servants to follow Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Overall, the weekend reflected strong progress and renewed energy. As the Foundation Board moves forward, its partnership and faithful involvement remain essential to advancing the Seminary’s mission and impact.



Dr. Matt James
VP of Business Administration



Brian & Dixie Patrick with Chris Townson at Foundation Board Banquet

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Ben Humphries

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Faithful Leadership Continues

Matt James now serves as Vice President of Business Administration here at NOBTS and Leavell College, following Larry Lyon. In addition to his administrative responsibilities, he enjoys teaching courses in Church History and Baptist Heritage and is passionate about helping students recognize and faithfully follow God’s call on their lives.

Matt earned a PhD from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (2018), an MDiv from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (2012), and a BS from Louisiana State University (2008).

Before joining the seminary in his current role, Matt served in pastoral ministry for more than fifteen years. He most recently pastored outside Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he also taught adjunctively for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Before that, he led Poplar Spring Baptist Church in Zebulon, North Carolina for six years and served as a student pastor at Jefferson Baptist Church in Baton Rouge for eight years.

Dr. James is deeply committed to seeing the next generation grow in love for Jesus and His Word. He and his wife Jessica have three children—Desmond, Ryland, and Kalani. He enjoys hunting, rebuilding classic vehicles and motorcycles, and cheering on LSU.

Reflections from Honorees

Dr. Nancy Victory

Michael E. Moskau Award for Outstanding Kingdom Leadership

I was born in New Orleans in the Baptist Hospital on Napoleon Avenue. Our family lived on Canal Boulevard, and my childhood was spent riding my bike down the white-shell alley behind our house and playing ball on the neutral ground. My first memory of NOBTS was representing my church, First Baptist, at the Junior Bible Memory Drill competition on campus. Walking the grounds, we felt very grown up to be there but didn't understand at all how influential this school was on Baptist life and the spread of the Gospel.

It would be years before I would return to campus, this time as a trustee. I quickly found myself very grateful to be yoked together with other Christians who want nothing more than to seek God and prepare others to follow Him. The opportunities to serve alongside faculty, staff, and students, and more importantly, to watch God work have enriched my life and the life of my family more than we could ever deserve.



Dr. Victory Receiving Award

In every life, God choreographs our steps so that we encounter those with whom we can form purposeful relationships. My prayer for the Foundation Board is that God will use each of us to introduce others unapologetically to NOBTS, a place to invest time, finances, and influence in what Jesus called "treasures in heaven," eternally safe, eternally powerful. I believe that is a prayer that God longs to hear and loves to answer.

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NOBTS, a place to invest time, finances, and influence in what Jesus called "treasures in heaven," eternally safe, eternally powerful.

Dr. Nancy Victory

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Dr. Timothy Yin

Nelson L. Price Award for Outstanding Church Leadership

I am grateful to our LORD Jesus, NOBTS administration, and the Foundation Board for this special award. Personally speaking, I am the least qualified person to receive this and was caught by surprise when Dr. Mike Wetzel notified me that I was nominated to receive this award.

Our intention to join the Foundation Board around the year 2020 is very simple—because we would like to offer some financial help to future seminary students to meet their financial needs as well as the future growth of the seminary.



Dr. Yin at Spring Banquet

NOBTS was very helpful to our seminary training by offering low tuition and fees when compared with other qualified seminaries, like William Carey School of Mission of Fuller Seminary or Dallas Theological Seminary.

In addition, during our study at NOBTS, we actually met some classmates who were eager to serve our God and willing to submit themselves to seminary (or professional) training. However, some of them were in a such poor financial shape that they could not afford the tuition fees as well as money to buy textbooks. Their need and a big heart to serve our God motivates us to consider helping our future seminary students more.

In short, we give our Heavenly Father the glory, praise, and special grace to receive the 2026 Nelson L. Price award.

In addition, we are grateful to NOBTS administration and the officers of Foundation Board for their high view of us.



New Project Approved:

We are deeply grateful to the Foundation Board for recently approving the construction of a new faculty home. Your generosity and willingness to invest in the future of our campus come at an important time of growth. While this project may seem simple at first, it represents something much greater—an investment in the people who shape our students' lives and ministries every day.

The Lord continues to bless us with steady enrollment growth. Each year, more students arrive eager to be equipped for faithful ministry, and we are thankful for the opportunity to serve them. As we serve them, the need for qualified and committed faculty continues to increase.

With the rising cost of living in New Orleans, providing safe, affordable on-campus housing has become an essential tool for attracting and retaining excellent faculty. Through your direct action, you are helping to make this mission possible.

Thank you for your continued support and for the lasting impact your generosity will have on our students.

NOBTS and Friends: Host an event!

We invite YOU to consider hosting an “NOBTS and Friends” gathering! These events provide a meaningful opportunity to introduce others to the mission and impact of the seminary in a personal and engaging setting.

A friend of the seminary is already planning to host one this fall in Houston, and we would love to partner with you to host an event as well.

By opening your space and inviting your network, you can help expand awareness, strengthen relationships, and encourage support for the work God is doing through NOBTS and Leavell College.

Call our office today to learn more and plan an event!

Impact Opportunity

Spring Giving Days



Because of you, students thrive!
Your scholarship support transform lives at
NOBTS & Leavell College. With growing
enrollment, more students need financial aid.
Your generosity during Spring Giving Days, April
9 & 10 means the world to student preparing here
to serve anywhere God calls.

[Click Here to Give Today!](#)

Travel Highlight

Travel to Greece with the Dews!

September 10-19, 2026

There are advanced spots open for you to join
Drs. Jamie and Tara Dew as they lead a trip in
Greece.

We invite you be a part of this tour of Athens,
Corinth, Ephesus, Patmos, plus Classical Greek
History, which includes a 4-Day Greek Islands
Cruise—Mykonos, Santorini, Rhodes, Crete!

Scan the QR Code for more information!



A Joyful Welcome

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the 7 individuals who have committed to joining us in this worthy endeavor. Their dedication and contributions will undoubtedly enrich our collective efforts and propel us closer to realizing our goals.

New Members:

Johnette Jernigan
Michael and Kristy Hatsfelt
Kelly Futrell
Michele Farris

Honorary Members:

Tony Lambert
Joshua Powell

Welcome to each of you, and thank you for joining us!

Membership Benefits

- Quarterly Newsletter
- Digital Directory
- Annual Banquet
- Business Meeting
- Member Gift
- President's Christmas Dinner
- Virtual Member Meetings w/ Members and Administration



mission

The New Orleans Baptist Seminary Foundation is to raise funds for and awareness of NOBTS and Leavell College, empowering the institution to prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

TOOLKIT



How will they know about the Seminary unless they're told? How will you explain to them what the Seminary is pursuing if we don't tell you? Please use these digital Foundation Essentials booklets to share the work in which you're involved.

Access them by scanning the QR code with your phone or mobile device camera.



Physical copies are available upon request.

A Lasting Legacy

We have witnessed God's faithfulness at NOBTS in remarkable ways through the generosity of faithful Foundation members, many of whom have made the intentional decision to include the Seminary in their estate plans. Through thoughtful planning, their stewardship continues beyond their lifetime, equipping future generations to proclaim the Gospel.

One powerful example is Hamp and Melionee Echols. Through their estate, they established the Dr. Hamp W. Echols and Melionee Allen Echols Chair of Christian Ministry—an enduring investment that will strengthen theological education for years to come. Their legacy reflects both a deep love for NOBTS and a prayerful commitment to see future servants of Christ prepared for ministry.

Stories like the Echols' remind us that legacy giving is not simply about what we leave behind, it is about the Kingdom impact we choose to extend. When members give through estate plans, donor-advised funds, or IRA gifts, they participate in a mission that will impact eternity.

If you have ever considered making this kind of intentional, lasting investment or would like to learn how, you are warmly invited to begin that conversation with us.

In Loving Memory

Melionee Echols (wife of Dr. Hamp Echols) November 9, 2025

Mona Stewart (wife of Don Stewart) November 30, 2025

Melionee and Mona were known for the love they showed to their families, their churches, and the communities around them. We are truly thankful for the privilege of knowing them as valued members of the NOBTS & Leavell College family. May the legacy they leave behind live on through us—pointing others to God and reflecting His righteousness.

Board Officers

Ben Humphries - Chairman

Scott Ramsey - Vice-Chair

Nancy Victory - Recording Secretary

Matt James - Treasurer

Mike Wetzel - Executive Secretary

Ad Hoc Committee

Ben Humphries

Nancy Victory

Chuck Simmons

Chris Townson

Bob Donaldson

Mike Wetzel

Institutional Advancement

Mike Wetzel

VP for Institutional Advancement

Mark Hagelman

Director of Development

Lindsay Holder

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