

Weather for Ridgeland



Sunny
Time: 9:30 am
Temp: 49
RealFeel Temp: 51
Humidity: 60
Winds: WWSW at 5 mph

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THE WEEKLY

Northside



38 years Covering Northeast Jackson, Madison and Ridgeland, Mississippi

Wednesday, December 5,
2007

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News

Symbol Lookup

NSDQ NYSE S&P 500



NSDQ	2654.10
+34.27	(+1.31%)
NYSE	9853.16
+104.78	(+1.07%)
S&P 500	1477.77
+14.98	(+1.02%)
AMEX	2352.38
+15.37	(+0.66%)
RUS 2K	761.41
+9.35	(+1.24%)
Crude Oil	89.44
+1.12	(+1.27%)
30YR Yield	4.38
+0.04	(+0.82%)

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Parrott discusses Belhaven College

Posted: 02/01/07 - 08:07:31 am CST

Dr. Roger Parrott has begun his 12th year as Dr. Roger Parrott president of Belhaven College. He has also served as president of Sterling College in Kansas.

He earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Maryland.

Sun Staff Writer Elizabeth Ortega recently spoke to Parrott about what is in store for Belhaven College.

What are your future goals for Belhaven? “I will be happy if we can continue to be a school that reflects the love of Jesus, prepares students well to be competitive in the marketplace, and holds solid to our unwavering commitment to serve however we are called. I’m not sure where that will lead Belhaven, but I know it will be good.

“I told our board recently I would have been run out of town on the next Value Jet had I come in 11 years ago with an agenda to add \$63 million in capital improvements to the campus to double our total usable square footage; increase the enrollment 160

percent to 2,600 students; double the number of full-time faculty members; launch at least 10 new academic majors along with several new graduate programs; start a football team, and have an artificial turf field of the same type the NFL uses; develop a worldview general core curriculum that is one-of-a-kind in Christian education; take over some key properties on Riverside Drive; reach population centers of eight million people with our adult programs in Jackson, Memphis, Houston and Orlando; and become the world's leading Christian college in the performance arts.

“We didn't have a master plan, but all that happened because we were faithful to use well our resources in following God's direction.”

What has been your greatest accomplishment since becoming president of Belhaven?

“I'm proudest that we are the only college in Mississippi that has given raises every year for the past 11 years. To me, it is the people who make Belhaven all it is, and so getting our salaries to competitive levels and then holding them there has been a top priority.

“There were many years, I didn't know where the money would come from, but knew that taking care of our people was the right thing to do. The new buildings are wonderful, and the new programs are exciting, but it is the relationships of students with faculty, coaches and others that makes possible the transformation in students' lives. “Other accomplishments are much more showy, but nothing matters more than hiring and retaining the kinds of faculty and staff who can more richly live out our mission beyond what any statement could ever articulate, and exceed in practice, all the bragging of our student recruitment brochures.”

What sets Belhaven apart from other educational institutions in the area?

“We are the only Christian school in America that has earned national accreditation in all four of the primary arts: dance, music, theatre and visual art. And we are one of only 24 schools in the entire country which is nationally accredited in all four - so we are in that select group with USM, Florida State, Cal State, Wisconsin and Ohio State. Belhaven College has been selected

seven consecutive years as one of ‘America’s Best Christian Colleges’ and ‘100 Best Buys in American Colleges and Universities.’

What have been some of the biggest changes you’ve seen at Belhaven in your time there?

“When the executive search firm invited me to visit the campus in the spring of 1995, they warned me ‘the campus sags’ - and it did. But to God’s glory, our campus today is one of the jewel campuses of the South.

“Of course, having three other campuses is a big change, but we love providing adult education in Orlando, Memphis and Houston. We joke that we go where Southwest flies, so if they open another direct route in the South, we may go there too.

“Another big change was the bold step we took to replace our general core with our ‘World View Curriculum.’ We teach the history of the world through a two-year cycle, with accompanying literature, philosophy, fine arts, Bible and theology courses being coordinated so that students can understand how worldviews develop, and how our Christ-centered worldview is distinctive.

“Further, we have built a scriptural foundation into every course in our entire curriculum.”

What are some of the challenges facing the school?

“Our applications for next fall are double what they were last year at this same time, so we need more space if we are to meet the needs of students who want a Belhaven style education.

“We’ve added lots of parking, are doing some additional building renovations to get the most out of every space, and are also now starting to add online courses.

“Money is another obstacle to accomplishing what God would like to do with Belhaven because we have a very small endowment - but the Lord has taken care of us to this point. Also our friends understand how Belhaven is bucking the trends of higher education in America, and so they are giving - and that makes a huge difference.”

What expansion or other construction projects are going on or are being planned?

“We would love to build a 600-seat theatre onto our Center for the Arts on Riverside Drive. We have another property up there where we could build a major classroom building.

“We need another residence hall, but there is space on the campus for that facility, as well as a long overdue science building. Other than that, we are in great shape. We’ve done seven major buildings in the past decade, so we feel fortunate to have wonderful facilities.”

Is there anything else you would like people to know?

“I love my wife, I love my kids, I love Belhaven College, and I love Jesus. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

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