



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024



MISSION

Highlands College is a biblical higher education institution that exists to supply the Church with leaders of competence, character, and spiritual maturity, holistically trained to lead lives of eternal impact by fulfilling the Great Commission.



HC Family,

Every day at Highlands College, we see the evidence of God's faithfulness - and we recognize the vital role your generosity plays in that story. Because of your support, the 2024-2025 academic year was filled with powerful moments of transformation as students were equipped and sent out to lead. I pray this Impact Report encourages you with just a glimpse of the remarkable ways God is using your investment to shape the next generation of ministry leaders.

All for Him,



Kay Hargrave

Chief Advancement Officer

The Office of Institutional Advancement



YEAR IN REVIEW

Fall 2024



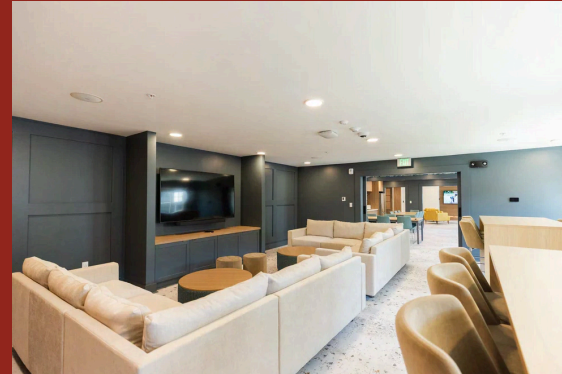
WELCOME WEEK

We welcomed our freshmen and returning students back on campus with a week filled with community, spiritual momentum, and a ton of fun! Welcome Week is designed to help our incoming freshmen **engage with their peers, professors, and the local Birmingham area**. From Move-In to attending a Birmingham Barons game to the Luau Night, every aspect of the week helps our new students feel more like HC Family!

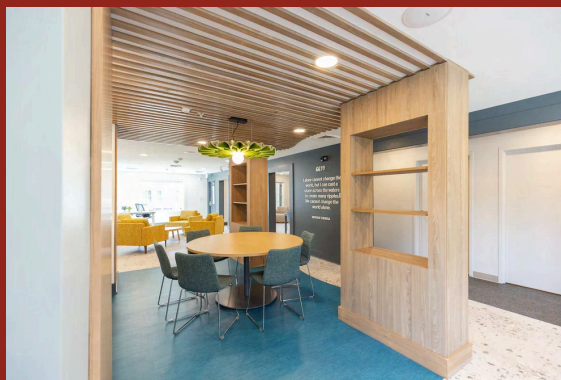


THE VILLAGE

We debuted our brand new Residence Hall, The Village, to kick off the 2024 fall semester. As our student body continues to grow year over year, the need for on-campus housing increases. This project would not have been possible without the generosity of **David and Barbara Green** and their family.



Student housing falls under the **Character Formation** pillar and is designed to cultivate growth, friendship, and unforgettable memories. Living on campus extends your college experience beyond the classroom and into a vibrant, purpose-filled environment where life-long connections are built and students are equipped to grow in character, leadership, and spiritual maturity. The Village is equipped with intentional, communal space in each student room as well as a main common floor where students can spend time with friends, have quiet time, or even host a small group.

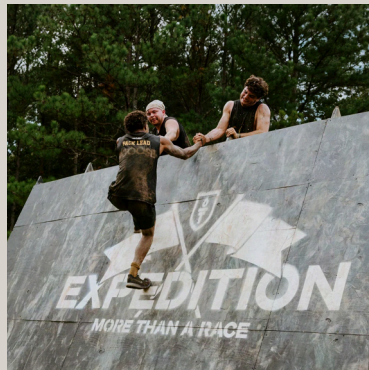


EXPEDITION

This year's Expedition—our annual full-day endurance challenge—offered students a powerful opportunity to **strengthen godly character** and **grow as collaborative leaders**. Designed to reflect the demands of real ministry, the experience challenged them to persevere through difficulty while keeping their focus on others.



Working in teams, students navigated a series of physically and mentally demanding obstacles, learning to rely on God and one another every step of the way. The day was a vivid reminder that servant leadership isn't developed in comfort—it's forged through **challenges, humility, and teamwork**.



VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

In November, Highlands College hosted our 2024 Veterans Day Celebration—an annual event that honored the **courage**, **sacrifice**, and **service** of the men and women who have defended our nation. With heartfelt appreciation, our community came together to recognize both local veterans and those within our Church of the Highlands and Highlands College families.



The event featured moving tributes, student-led moments of reflection, and a shared commitment to living lives of purpose in honor of those who have served. It was a powerful reminder to our students that leadership rooted in sacrifice is at the heart of both ministry and military service.



2024 IMPACT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Impact Leadership Conference is designed to equip leaders across industries with practical tools for influence, resilience, and purpose-driven impact. Hosted in partnership with **Founders Advisors**, this conference brings together world-class speakers to share insights that empower attendees to lead with excellence in every sphere of life.



In December 2024, the conference celebrated its 10th anniversary, drawing thousands of participants from across the globe. Attendees heard from Dr. John C. Maxwell, Highlands College Chancellor Chris Hodges and nationally-recognized performance coach, Ed Mylett. The event was hosted by ESPN & SEC Network broadcaster Lauren Sisler, alongside Highlands College Founding President Mark Pettus, and featured contributions from our students, alumni, and **2024 HC Community Partners**.



The Impact Leadership Conference reflects Highlands College's commitment to developing leaders of eternal impact and extending that mission beyond our campus to a global audience. Impact Leadership Conference is made possible by our HC Community Partners.

CHRISTMAS AT HC

Our students gathered on campus for the annual tree lighting ceremony. It was a time filled with worship, laughter, and great holiday food before our students left for Christmas break. This is just one of many **Student Life** events we host throughout the academic year, which aim to create a sense of community for our students as they journey through Highlands College together.





HIGHLANDS COLLEGE STUDENTS BRING THE GOSPEL TO JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL MINISTRIES

For the past year, Highlands College students have chosen to serve vulnerable, overlooked, and forgotten children through the Juvenile Correctional Ministry (JVC) in six locations across Alabama—four juvenile correctional facilities and two facilities for youth trauma and mental health services. Some of these places function more like hospitals than prisons, acting as safe houses for kids who've tried to hurt themselves, who've been abused, or who've seen more violence than most adults could bear. Through weekly services, small groups, and special events, Highlands College students are helping young people in correctional facilities encounter the transformational love of Jesus in tangible, life-changing ways.

Since the partnership began in Fall 2024, JVC has experienced remarkable growth in both reach and spiritual impact, made possible through the faithful leadership of the JVC Team and the invaluable partnership with Highlands College students, whose consistent presence, servanthood, and Christ-centered leadership continue to shape the lives of incarcerated youth.

"There's a child whose parents said he's not valuable enough for them to come visit him, so he hasn't had anybody visit him for six months," Landry Tullo, JVC Program Leader, shares. "The Highlands College students are the only people this child is excited to see who aren't family and aren't paid to be there."

In the past year, Highlands College students have brought worship, the Word, and compassion to each facility, sharing their testimonies and letting the kids know they aren't alone in their pain. Every week brings moments that leave the team speechless. The eternal impact of this partnership speaks for itself.

"A child that was suicidal four weeks ago, that had to be put on 23-hour lockdown, now they can't stop smiling," Landry said. "Now, they're praying with the HC girls that come in. You can't make this stuff up!"



"I tried to take my life 22 times at age 15. This ministry has helped me so much, because I did not know if there was a God, but now I know there is a God that gave His life for me."

[Adjacent Photograph]: Highlands College student Jjohn Prado preached and led an altar call for over one hundred young boys in prison while student Vic Wightman led the room in worship.

JVC Program Leader Luke Snowzell shared Samson's redemption story from the Book of Judges. "I said the strongest thing Samson ever did wasn't killing men—it was surrender," Luke told the group. "I said if they wanted to accept Jesus, not just to raise their hand, but to be bold and courageous by standing up." Thirty-five boys stood.

One boy, who had been shot and was confined to a wheelchair, stood up out of his wheelchair to accept Christ. Then, ten more students spontaneously walked to the altar and knelt in prayer while Jjohn and Vic led the room in worship. "The staff didn't even freak out," Luke recalled. "Normally, they'd shut that down to see a large group moving forward—but not this time—they saw God moving."

The Chaplain at one of the prisons shared this: "This night was very productive—probably the most fruitful. We heard so much from the Highlands College students tonight. We must process this together to continue where God wants this group to go."

[Adjacent Photograph]: Highlands College students Delaney Wickstrum, Devyn Welch, and Grayson Short gave their testimonies.

Landry shares the irony of this work-of-God: "These HC students have similar backgrounds to what a lot of these kids in prison have, so when HC students get up and share their stories, the room responds." Just like a Sunday church service, the Highlands College students led a prayer response time at the end, and these girls in the facilities were all weeping. Landry continues, "Then, we get these prayer cards that say, **'I felt Jesus today. I didn't think I knew him. It's the first time I've ever attended church.'** These girls lean on the HC students because this isn't the same old church that comes and reads off a screen and says, 'Jesus loves you.' No, this is the real deal. Our HC students know the kids' pain, and they can testify to what Jesus has done to heal and redeem it. We've built great rapport with these kids—they trust us and can tell we care."

After this girls' service, a therapist sent a message to the team: *"Great session yesterday. I want you to know that three kids talked to me specifically about the session. God touched their hearts. This is what they told me: 'There's purpose in my pain. Maybe I can help a kid in my pain someday. I don't feel crushed. I know I'm hurt and can talk to God, not just you. I hated myself. Now I know it's my heart. Is it really true that Jesus can use me to help someone else?' The walls are coming down!"*

"Thank y'all for coming out here and spreading the word of God and all that y'all do."

The reality is that misconceptions and fear often keep people from serving behind bars, but Highlands College students are changing that narrative. "The kids in these facilities aren't criminals," Landry said plainly. "They're kids. Babies. Victims of their environment." Luke shared a story of a boy (age 9) who a family member had forced to commit a shooting that he didn't want to do. "This boy told us he feels safer in prison than at home," he said. "That's the kind of trauma we're dealing with."





Other children are recovering from sexual abuse, suicide attempts, and years of abandonment and trauma. The facilities treat kids from states beyond just Alabama, placing the victims far from their abusers so that they can heal. "A real issue that leads to this cycle is fatherless homes," Luke shared. "These kids are often victims—victims of their environment and the way they've grown up, and that's why they're there. They are forgotten about, and they're desperate for help. Juvenile Correctional Ministry is an opportunity to help them meet the Lord and the King—a presence and a Person they've never felt before."

Luke shares: "We are discipling these kids. Each child is given their own Bible, and we walk them through verse by verse. We're teaching them in ways they've never been taught. They've been forced to be adults, and we want to help them go back to being kids again. We want to teach them how to walk as children of the Kingdom."

"So why? Why do we do this? Why go and speak to the broken and forgotten?" Landry exclaims. "Because it's a seed. We often plant the seed but forget what the seed can turn into. It turns into a mustard tree that even gives birds shade. If these children become that mustard seed, they can be the ones to break the generational curses over their families."

Through Highlands College students' presence and pastoral leadership, young lives are encountering the love of Jesus, many for the first time. Highlands College students are also getting ministry reps that prepare them for the real pain and struggles that humanity faces, making them better shepherds of people.

"The Highlands College students are legit," Luke said. "They're so valuable and so hungry to help lead. There's no entitlement. They say, 'What do you need? How can I help?'" Luke shared. "They spot the one on the fringe that needs encouraging, there's no need to tell them. HC students come full of faith and the Spirit, and then you've got this kid who's desperate and empty, and it collides. Their closeness in age is a strength that makes the experience more relatable."

“Thank y'all for coming out here and spreading the word of God and all that y'all do.”

“Can you pray that God can guide me on the right path when I'm out?”

“Pray for my family and that I stay out of trouble also that my fire for God grows stronger and stronger.”

“Pray for better days, for family, for freedom, health, needs, and for people around me.”

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Isaiah 6:8

"Isaiah 6:8 is our theme verse for Juvenile Correctional Ministry," Landry said. "That's what these Highlands College students say when they walk through those doors: 'Here I am, Lord, send me.'"

To date, Highlands College students have played a role in:

- **Over 250 salvations and 26 baptisms**
- **Small group discipleship and relationship-building**
- **Planning and hosting special events to build community and open doors to faith**
- **Providing consistent mentorship and Gospel-centered leadership**

The Juvenile Correctional Ministry is growing and is expected to reach ten campuses by the end of the year, with two new locations beginning ministry programming in August and hopes for aftercare programming to be administered. As the ministry grows, so does the need. Luke 10:2 says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

"These kids are a ripe harvest—desperate for hope,"

Landry shares. "Highlands College students are fulfilling the Great Commission by serving with JCV."

Luke echoed it with urgency: "This is the Great Commission. The more Highlands College students we have, the more kids we can reach—and the better we can reach them. We wouldn't have been able to do what we did this past year, nor to the level of excellence in which it was carried out, without the students of Highlands College. Their passion, availability, and maturity have been essential to moving the mission forward."

Highlands College students are ushering in a holy redemption cycle through the Juvenile Correctional Ministry. We invite you to join us in prayer over our students and their ministry through the prayer requests collected below. Thank you for your commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission. Together, we can reach every juvenile facility in Alabama with the hope of Christ.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Spring 2025

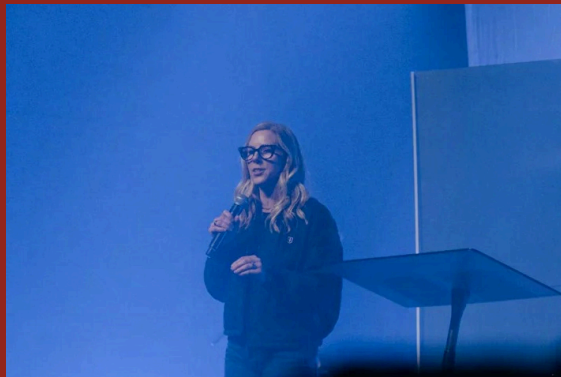


HC SATURATE

In January, our students stepped away from the noise of daily life to encounter God more deeply during Saturate—a dedicated **prayer** and **fasting** retreat held at Shocco Springs in Talledega, Alabama.



Over the course of several days, students leaned into spiritual disciplines, worship, and intentional time in God's presence, creating space for renewal and clarity at the start of a new year. Saturate is a cornerstone moment for our **Spiritual Development** pillar—an invitation for students to re-center their lives and purpose around God's voice and calling.



IN-RESIDENCE DAY WITH CHRIS TOMLIN

Highlands College had the extraordinary honor of hosting a live worship recording with **Chris Tomlin** on our campus—an unforgettable night of worship that also served as a powerful reminder of the influence of our **In-Residence Program**.



The next day, Tomlin led an In-Residence Day, pouring into our students with wisdom, encouragement, and firsthand ministry insight. Our relationship with leaders like Chris Tomlin is vital to our mission—these practitioners don't just visit, **they invest**. They walk alongside our students, bridging the gap between the classroom and the calling with real-world experience, spiritual depth, and personal mentorship that leaves a lasting mark.



MONTH OF MADNESS

March marked our first annual **Month of Madness**—an exciting intramural tradition that brings our Highlands College community together through the power of sports, teamwork, and healthy competition.



Throughout the month, students engaged in league play across multiple sports, **built relationships** and **grew in character** through shared challenges. The highlight came during our student-versus-HC team games, which included softball, basketball, and pickleball. The week culminated in a crowd-filled flag football matchup, where our HC women faced off against Samford University's club team—demonstrating unity and a competitive spirit that reflected the heart of our student body. Events like these reinforce what we know to be true: life-giving community is a vital part of developing the leaders the world needs.



HIGHLANDS COLLEGE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Highlands College Leadership Institute (HCLI) is a biblically grounded leadership program designed for adults to join a community of individuals making an eternal impact within and beyond their spheres of influence. With learning cohorts in local churches across dozens of states and Church of the Highlands campuses, participants pursue one of three certificates—**Christian Leadership, Ministry Leadership, or Biblical & Theological Studies**. These leaders grow in competence, character, and spiritual maturity to make an eternal impact. By equipping marketplace and ministry leaders to live with clarity of calling and impact, HCLI extends the Highlands mission beyond traditional degree programs and into workplaces, churches, and communities across the nation.



FAMILY WEEKEND & ACCEPTED STUDENT DAY

Highlands College welcomed future students and their families to two signature events designed to foster connection and cast vision of the journey ahead for our future students.

Family Weekend invited families into the heart of our community. The weekend featured worship experiences, messages from our leadership, and shared meals, allowing families to witness firsthand the transformative work occurring in their students' lives. This time together reinforced the vital partnership between Highlands College and the families who support our students' callings.

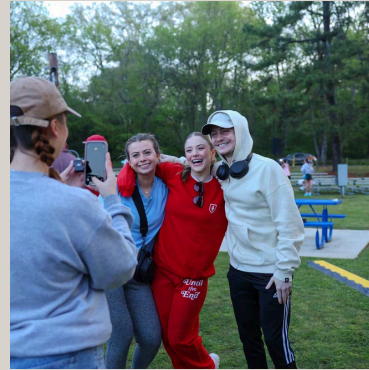


Accepted Student Day provided newly admitted students with an immersive introduction to the Highlands College experience. Through campus tours, interactive sessions, and opportunities to engage with faculty and current students, attendees began building relationships and gaining insight into the holistic training that defines our mission. Two incoming 2025 students, including **Macaiah Lynch** who is pictured below with his parents, received an **Endowed Student Scholarship** while they were visiting for Accepted Student Day.

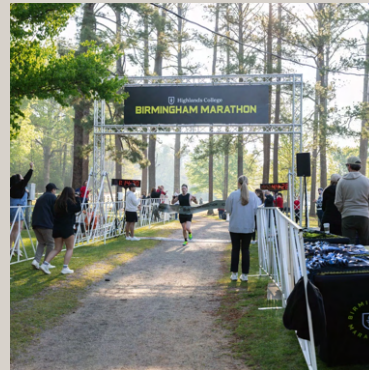
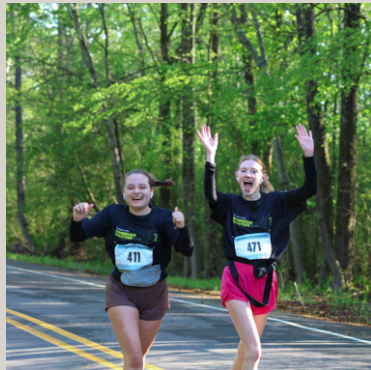


THE BIRMINGHAM MARATHON

Highlands College proudly **relaunched** the Birmingham Marathon, reviving a beloved tradition that concluded in 2023 after a 21-year run as the Mercedes-Benz Marathon. This inaugural event, hosted at Black Creek Park in Fultondale, featured a full marathon, half marathon, 10K, and a family fun run, drawing participants from across the region.



By reviving this marathon, Highlands College not only honored a significant part of Birmingham's history but also provided our students with a practical opportunity to **lead, serve, and embody** the values of **endurance** and **character** that are central to our mission.



Commencement

CLASS OF 2025

"Our dream is not only that you would **come** but that you would be **sent**"
- Chris Hodges, Chancellor of Highlands College



Parker Stanfill

2025 Highlands College Presidential
Award Winner



Highlands College Pillar Award Winners

Congratulations to our 2025 Highlands College Pillar Award winners. These graduates each embodied their respective pillar award in and out of the classroom. These individuals are just a few of the amazing members of this 2025 class. Our students continue to embody what it means to pursue a calling of ministry leadership.



LILLIAN NEMETH
Academic Instruction Award



KAYLA HUDSON
Ministry Training Award



MARKO GONZALEZ
Character Formation Award



LEXIE PEGUES
Spiritual Development Award

GRADUATE STORY:

Zane McWhorter

Zane graduated with his Associate of Arts in Ministry Leadership (Worship Ministry). He has accepted a position as a worship leader with Strength to Stand, a collection of student events to provide the next generation with an atmosphere where they can worship, grow deeper in their faith, and take their next step whether it be salvation or growing in sanctification.

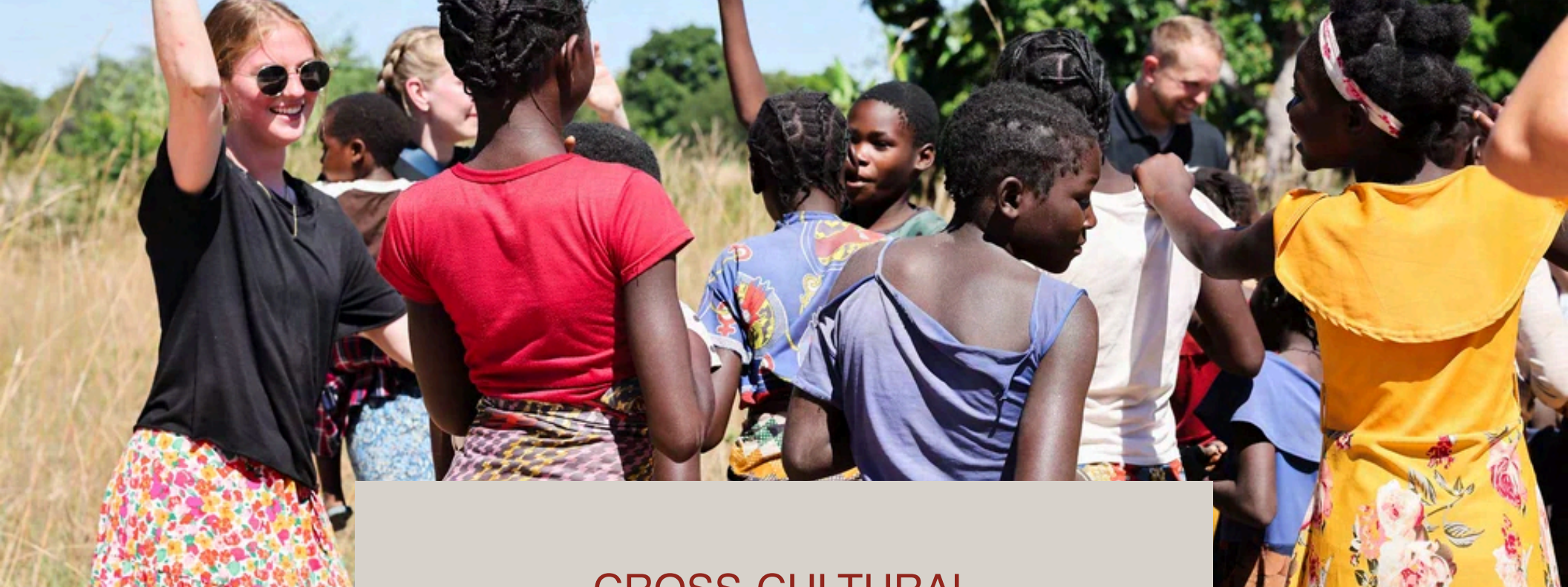
"I think the most valuable part of my time at Highlands College has been the connections I've made along the journey. I've learned a lot of practical skills and have been stretched in every area, but what's impacted me most is having people, like my peers, professors, and ministry practitioners, around me who've been in ministry just a little longer than I have. Their guidance and example have been incredibly valuable during my time at HC!"



YEAR IN REVIEW

Summer 2025





CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY TRIPS

This summer, nearly **one hundred Highlands College students** carried the Gospel to the nations. Mobilized and sent into **10 countries**, these students partnered with local churches and ministries to share the love of Jesus in both word and action. From leading community outreach to organizing children's programs and ministering to families in their homes, each trip was a hands-on extension of our mission to send workers into the harvest field to fulfill the Great Commission.

Every cross-cultural ministry trip is a reflection of your investment. **Through your support, students are equipped spiritually, financially, and practically to step into unfamiliar places, with courage, to preach the Gospel.** These experiences are necessary to shape student's cultural contexts, challenging them to live out their calling in real-world ministry settings and return home with a greater understanding of the global Church. You're not only helping shape their future ministries—you're extending your reach to communities around the world.



*And two additional countries in restricted nations.



*But you will receive power
when the Holy Spirit has come
on you, and you will be my
witnesses in Jerusalem, in all
Judea and Samaria, and to the
ends of the earth.*

Acts 1:8



CAMPUS ENHANCEMENTS

Highlands College completed several campus enhancements to enrich the student experience and support our mission of developing leaders of eternal impact.

A **new entrance** and **parking lot** on the north side of campus has been constructed to accommodate our growing student body, improving accessibility and convenience. To ensure a secure environment, we upgraded the **rear entrance** with **enhanced security measures**, reflecting our commitment to student safety.

These developments are part of our ongoing efforts to create a campus that fosters spiritual growth, community, and the holistic development of our students.



North entrance and parking lot



New rear campus entrance

THE LARSON KNOLL

The Larson Knoll is a thoughtfully designed patio area overlooking the campus green.

Named in honor of the late **Gary Larson**, a man whose faith, leadership, and generosity helped shape the very DNA of Highlands College. Gary was not only a gifted architect and integral voice in the design of our campus, but a spiritual leader, intercessor, and mentor who modeled what it looks like to live a life fully surrendered to God.

This space will provide students with a place for quiet reflection and meaningful prayer time.





FUTURE VISION





CAMPUS SECURITY

Beginning this fall, Highlands College will implement key security and perimeter enhancements to further protect our students and campus community. Upgrades include a **secure front and rear entrance** as well as **gating the entire campus**.

THE REC

In support of the **Character Formation** pillar, The Rec will provide additional recreational spaces for fitness programming. Outfitted with top-of-the-line workout equipment and fitness spaces, the building will also house a full-length basketball court and expanded locker rooms for our students.





RESIDENCE HALL III

As we move closer to our vision of housing **1,000 students** on campus, the addition of a third residence hall is essential to supporting that growth. Rooted in our **Character Formation** pillar, this new facility will be intentionally designed to foster community, with shared spaces and a thoughtful layout that cultivates meaningful relationships and vibrant student life.

FISCAL YEAR PROGRESS

2024



The background of the slide features a large, faint watermark of the Highlands College seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "HIGHLANDS COLLEGE" at the top and "OF ETERNAL IMPACT" at the bottom. In the center of the seal is a crest with a crown on top, flanked by two laurel branches. Below the crest is a shield with a book and a lamp of knowledge.

457

Total New Donors

1585

Total Donors

6183+

Total Gifts

\$46.7M+

Cash Received (July 2024-June 2025)

\$52.6M+

Total Committed in FY24 | Cash
Received + Pledge Balance Remaining

\$191M+

Total Committed Since Inception

"The harvest is plentiful,
but the workers are few."

- Luke 10:2



JOIN THE 2025-2026 COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAM

The Highlands College Community Partner Program is an annualized sponsorship established to develop and continue relationships with business leaders and foster neighborly partnerships between Highlands College and its surrounding community.

This initiative invites business leaders from across the country to advance the mission of Highlands College through supporting student scholarships, campus growth, and strategic advancement initiatives.

Community Partners receive exclusive access to several leadership teachings, have opportunities to connect with peers who share their values, and attend on-campus events such as our annual Impact Leadership Conference with Dr. John C. Maxwell, Chancellor Chris Hodges, and other incredible leaders.





“There’s no greater reward than knowing we are helping build a future generation of leaders for Christ.”

— Josh and Carlin Everts, *Community Oral Facial Surgery*,
Community Partners, 2022-2024

Thank You to Our

2024-2025 Community Partners

for championing our mission and being such an integral part of God's work through Highlands College.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The Highlands College Board of Directors provides visionary oversight, spiritual covering, and strategic counsel as we pursue our mission to develop the next generation of leaders for the Church.

With unwavering faith and a commitment to the Great Commission, this extraordinary group of leaders ensures that every decision made at Highlands College reflects our values, advances our calling, and honors God. Their wisdom, generosity, and Kingdom-minded leadership are vital to the growth and impact of our college—and we are deeply grateful for their faithful leadership.



Ronnie Bennett

Former Executive Administrator
Church of the Highlands



Duane P. Donner III

Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Founders Advisors



Dr. John C. Maxwell

Founder
Maxwell Leadership



Patricia H. Oh

Partner
Horton, Lee, Burnett,
ET AL, PC



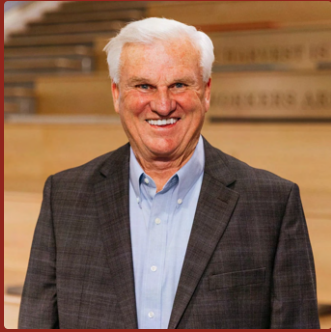
Scott Olson

Owner
Peridot Holdings



Kenneth H. Polk

Chief Executive Officer
Arlington Family Offices



Darryl Rosser
Chairman of the Board
Global IFS



Glenn Siddle
Chief Executive Officer
Newcastle Homes, Inc.



Dr. Courtney J. Winston
Staff Pastor
Church of the Highlands

THE OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT



Kay Hargrave

Chief Advancement Officer



Hannah King

Executive Director of Advancement



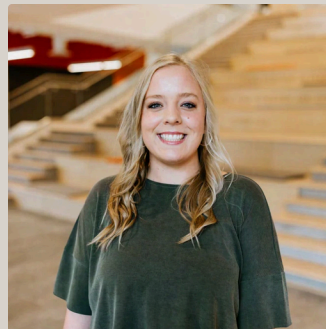
Paul Markert

Assistant Director of Advancement



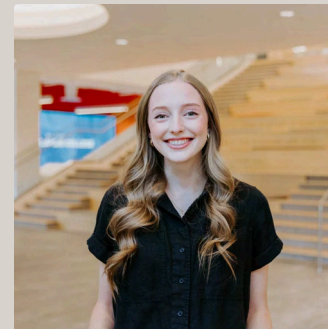
Hannon Sanderson

Assistant Director of Advancement



Sarah Theus

Assistant Director of Advancement Operations



Madeline Lombardo

Advancement Coordinator



Alyssa Jimenez

2025 Graduating Class, Student Ministry

"I am deeply grateful for your incredible generosity and commitment to our mission at Highlands College. Your financial support has gone above and beyond, and it's because of faithful partners like you that we're able to make a lasting impact. Your giving is not just a donation—it's a powerful investment in lives, communities, and a greater vision. I don't take it for granted, and I want you to know how much I value your sacrifice and trust. Thank you for believing in me, for sowing into this work with such faith and passion, and for making a real difference. I'm honored to walk this journey because of you."



Madelyn Sims

2025 Graduating Class, Student Ministry

"Thank you so much for your investment into Highlands College. Your support has impacted far more than just my education—it has planted seeds that will shape the rest of my life and influence my family's future. I'm truly grateful for your 'yes.' Because of it, the students I reach will have an opportunity to encounter Jesus and experience real life change. More people will spend eternity in Heaven because of your generosity."



Wyatt Miller

Senior, Pastoral Ministry

"To every donor who believes in the mission of Highlands College—thank you. Because of your generosity, I've been given the opportunity to pursue the call God has placed on my life. Your support is a door opener to deeper faith, lifelong relationships, and a future filled with purpose. I am becoming who God created me to be because you chose to invest. Your impact will echo far beyond the classroom into eternity."

Thank You,

...for believing in the mission of Highlands College. Your generosity is helping to shape the lives of students to make an eternal impact around the world. We hope you see yourself in every story we share, because none of it would be possible without you.

Highlands College

Highlands College is initially accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education Commission on Accreditation (5850 T. G. Lee Blvd., Ste. 130, Orlando, FL 32822, 407-207-0808) to grant degrees at the Baccalaureate levels.

3660 Grandview Parkway, Birmingham, AL 35243 | highlandscollge.edu

