

Latest News from The Heart of Texas Foundation!

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Dear Friend,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. So much to tell you. Let me first of all say that we love and appreciate you for staying with us. We have never needed your support more than we do now! The Lord continues to open doors for the Texas Field Ministers program, which YOU make possible. Now we're in our 10th year, can you believe it?

WELCOME MACKENZIE MILLER! We have a new colleague in our office at The Heart of Texas Foundation. Her name is Mackenzie Miller. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Worldview and Apologetics from Boyce College, the undergraduate school of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. She grew up in Indiana and moved to Texas from Louisville in December 2020. Her work experience includes coordination of the teacher education program at Boyce College. Most importantly, Mackenzie loves the Lord, and she is going to love you all the more she knows you. She is very gifted and is a great help to Brenna and to me.

EXCITING UPDATES AS WE MOVE AHEAD IN OUR WORK! We have exciting updates to share with you regarding the educational component of the Texas Field Ministers Program. This update will come in three parts: 1.) Our Strategic Plan, 2.) Degree and Curriculum, 3.) Key Players.

- **STRATEGIC PLAN BRINGS NEW OPPORTUNITIES.** After an evaluation of the Texas Field Ministers Program at the ten-year mark and our subsequent strategic plan going forward, The Heart of Texas Foundation and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) have terminated our relationships with Southwestern Seminary, effective July 31, 2021. The Heart of Texas Foundation and TDCJ will continue to move forward together as partners and will continue to deliver and strengthen the Texas Field Ministers Program in new ways, as more teams of Field Ministers expand throughout the state. As of July 31, 2021, The Heart of Texas Foundation will no longer outsource the educational component of Field Minister training from Southwestern Seminary. Rather, The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry has been born. Beginning August 1, 2021, The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry will offer the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry at both the Darrington Unit for men and the Hobby Unit for women. We are actively pursuing accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). We have

never needed you more than we do now! Help us sustain the Field Ministers and their work. They are our trained inmate missionaries to the hopeless in our Texas prisons! [Help us stay the course!](#)

- **DEGREE AND CURRICULUM.** The Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry (BAAM) is our degree completely based on our ten years of training, sending, and supporting the teams of Texas Field Ministers. The BAAM will prepare men and women who become Field Ministers to be great readers of Scripture so that they can apply what they read in the Bible to their lives and ministry in the darkest of places within our state prison system. The eight components of our Christ-centered, historical-redemptive hermeneutic (our interpretative method) will be carefully delivered to our students over their four years of classroom study. This curriculum thereby provides the backbone of the educational training of our Texas Field Ministers. The result will be Field Ministers who are equipped to read scripture carefully and apply Biblical knowledge to life and ministry. The structure of the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry can be seen here for your review. Please click the link below.

[View the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry](#)

- **KEY PLAYERS CONTINUED SUPPORT.** We met personally with Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and Senator John Whitmire in the Lieutenant Governor's office in Austin at the state capital building to share with them this new direction. Their immediate and full support continues with great enthusiasm as we continue to strengthen the Texas Field Ministers program—both for the men and the women. Friends and supporters have been unanimous in their support as they see the wisdom of these steps to further strengthen our work and to continue on generationally until the Lord returns. [Help us stay the course!](#)

THE HEART OF TEXAS FOUNDATION | COLLEGE OF MINISTRY. We met with all the students in the Texas Field Ministers Training Program for Men at Darrington prison on May 20th. We reviewed with each class and offered each of the students their own personalized transition plan. The current seniors (Class of 2021) will graduate in latter July, and will be the last class to graduate under the existing Southwestern curriculum. Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen will transfer to The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry and begin the new degree August 1, 2021. Junior, Sophomores, and Freshmen, are not starting over; rather, the courses that they have taken which the College of Ministry can accept under the new degree will transfer. The Junior, Sophomore, and Freshmen classes were already delayed due to Covid by 7 courses from when the pandemic hit in March of 2020 to the present. This is a perfect time for everyone to transfer to the new curriculum. Only the Lord could have paved the way for this course of action to come at this most appropriate time. During this meeting at Darrington prison, each student in the school was given his own folder containing his personal transcript to date, the course structure, and his plan forward to graduation. The entire student body elected to continue with the College of Ministry and pursue the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry as their training for service as Texas Field Ministers. They accepted their new course with sincere gratitude and like a breath of fresh air. It's a time of excitement and fresh favor from the Lord for which, we too, are most grateful. [Help us stay the course!](#)

[Read our College of Ministry Academic Catalog](#)

APPLICATIONS FOR THE NEXT CLASSES, MEN AND WOMEN! A new class of men (who will become the new class of Freshmen) has now applied for the Texas Field Ministers Program. We have reviewed their applications and Admissions interviews will begin soon. And for the first time in history, a new class of women has applied for the Texas Field Ministers Program! We have reviewed their applications and their interviews will begin soon. Our target start for accepting the new freshmen classes for the men at Darrington Campus and and the women at the Hobby Campus is August 1. Praise the Lord. [Help us stay the course!](#)

THE TEXAS FIELD MINISTERS PROGRAM AT HOBBY UNIT FOR WOMEN. This is great news! With the full support of our partners at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ),

the women will begin their courses in 2,500 square feet of temporary classroom space that will serve as their library, computer lab (laptops), and classroom that is being painted this very week. We are thrilled to report that all of the funding has been pledged and/or given to build a new college building at Hobby for The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry. This is thrilling news to share. Before the women start their first class, the funding for their building has been committed! It will be impossible to measure the eternal impact of this generosity. [Help us stay the course!](#)

THE CLASS OF 2020 AT DARRINGTON, GRADUATED AND ARE IN THE FIELD! The class of 2020 was not able to have a graduation the way we typically have held graduation. However, the men of the class of 2020 graduated in a COVID environment (but we were allowed to take pictures!) and all the graduates were commissioned as Texas Field Ministers and sent to four new units in January of 2021. These four new units are: Briscoe (near the town of Dilley in south Texas), Polunsky (Livingston, which also houses Texas' Death Row), Montford (Lubbock), and Skyview-Hodge (east Texas). All of their Field Minister Team resource library kits which we and our donors provide, are prepared. We have met with the team at Polunsky, delivered their Field Minister library kit, and learned of specific resources they need. The Polunsky team has full support from Senior Warden Daniel Dickerson and the team has started with great strength because of that. It is historic that men on Death Row are now able to be visited and ministered to by the Field Ministers! Please pray for this team of Field Ministers and their unique calling. This assignment is not an easy one. They need our continued prayer. [Help us stay the course!](#)

THE CLASS OF 2021 TO GRADUATE SOON. The graduation of the class of 2021 is soon upon us. Due to Covid, this will be, like 2020, a closed graduation and will not be open to guests. Please continue to pray for the class of 2021 as they finish strong. The Field Ministers team assignments and locations will be decided as that process begins in the next few weeks with HOTF and TDCJ. After graduation, this class of men will be appointed as Texas Field Ministers and begin their service in prisons around the state. [Help us stay the course!](#)

DIRECTOR GEORGE DYSON BEING CALLED BACK TO THE AIRLINES. Director George Dyson, MDiv, took the helm at Darrington in December 2019. He capably led the school through a time of great transition throughout his tenure. He is also a pilot with Southwest Airlines. He was able to take a paid leave of absence with them due to the pandemic, a package that was offered to their pilots so that the airline did not lose them entirely. Now that the pandemic is ending, Southwest Airlines is calling back their pilots. George will go back into full-time with Southwest Airlines. Prior to that, he will see the senior class through their graduation and end his tenure as the Director at Darrington on July 31, 2021. No one could have done what George has done to bring the school through a time of transition and growth. He stepped in and stepped up for such a time. All of us have benefited from his superb leadership to keep the ship running smoothly at Darrington. We applaud him for that, and wish him well as he returns to flying! Thank you, Pastor G!

DR. MARK BAKER TAKES THE HELM AT DARRINGTON ON AUGUST 1, 2021. As of August 1, 2021, the Director of The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry at the Darrington Unit will be Dr. Mark Baker, Ph.D. in Biblical Theology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Baker has served as Deputy Director at Darrington since July 2020. Mark and his wife, Ashley, have five children. They moved to Cypress, Texas from their home and roots in east Tennessee. We are grateful for Mark and his family. His scholarship and heart as a shepherd will carry us well into the future. Ashley completed her Master of Arts in Theological Studies from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in December 2020. She has been asked to teach with The Heart of Texas Foundation | College of Ministry at the Hobby Unit.

Please know that we cannot move into this new era of our work without your continued help and support. We really need it now, more than ever. Here are our pressing needs going forward:

- Support the HOTF Texas Field Ministers Program and College of Ministry for Women in Texas
- Building the new Bible college building at Hobby for the women entering the Texas Field Ministers Program for Women
- Continuing to staff, provide faculty, and fund all expenses for the Darrington Field Ministers Program for men

- Support for the 37 teams of Texas Field Ministers in 37 Texas Men's Maximum Security Prisons
- Expenses to accomplish accreditation for The Heart of Texas Foundation
- [Help us stay the course!](#) Bring your friends, tell others about our work!

Donors, supporters, friends, prayer supporters, we long to see you face to face. 1 Thessalonians 3:6-4:1. Until that time, dear friends, until that time.

To the work!

In Christ alone



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