

Taylor University

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Winter 2014

### The Fort Wayne Vine

Fort Wayne Alumni Center Heritage Association

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*In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*

**D**uring our recent Homecoming, **Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98**, former vice president, shared devotions from Romans 16. Of these words from Paul, Dr. Bob

said, "people are important to God." He also said "the group is stronger than the individual" and mentioned the importance of showing affection and love for each other.

As he concluded, he challenged the group not to lament about what we do not have any longer, but to focus on the group we still have. His WORDS from the WORD greatly encouraged me.



*Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98*

In this issue of the *FW Vine*, we will *CELEBRATE* words, and specifically the Professional Writing major, where students learned to write words for publication.

Many of these alumni are continuing the success they enjoyed here in various forms. Some are writing books and articles, while others are writing for church presentations, newspapers, and businesses.

Let's *CELEBRATE* the Word and the words of our alumni. Thank you for submitting your words of what the campus has meant to you over the years (please see the front cover).

The Ministry Continues,



Michael D. Mortensen g91  
 Director of Fort Wayne Alumni & Friend Relations  
[mcmortensen@taylor.edu](mailto:mcmortensen@taylor.edu)

*P.S. Special thanks is given to **Andrea (Matetic) Osmun g05**, a Professional Writing major alumna, who wrote the majority of this issue. Her assistance gave me extra time to **care, connect, and celebrate** with more alumni.*

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Opinions expressed by individuals in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Taylor University.

The Fort Wayne campus was founded in 1904 as the Fort Wayne Bible Training School. It was renamed Fort Wayne Bible Institute, Fort Wayne Bible College, Summit Christian College, and later became Taylor University Fort Wayne. Founded in 1846, Taylor University is one of America's oldest Christian liberal arts colleges. Over 2,000 graduate and undergraduate students from 41 states and 37 foreign countries attend Taylor, where majors in 50 fields of study are available.

# CARE

Editor's Note: One of this year's highlights was hosting the Senior Saints for their program on Sunday, Aug. 3 at First Missionary Church.

## Wright Finds Ministry Through Storytelling

By Andrea Osmun g05

**M**arsha (Ringenberg) Wright g70 looks back on how God penned the story of her writing ministry.

Marsha always loved to read mystery, suspense and international thrillers. When Christian fiction first became popular, she was really excited... until she realized that much of it wasn't written as well as the secular fiction she enjoyed reading.

One year on vacation, she decided to seek the Lord about writing books, but He reminded her that she had five small children and a career. Years later, when her fifth child went off to college, she decided to learn to write.

"I learned that one of the best teachers in the whole country was right here at Taylor University Fort Wayne: **Dr. Dennis Hensley h08**," Marsha said. "I decided to talk to him to see if he thought starting to write was feasible for me at age 55."

"We talked about many things, and he assured me I could learn to write."

When Marsha signed up for Dr. Hensley's Fiction Writing class, she was

nervous about being "too old," but then found other non-traditional students, who eventually became her lifelong friends and professional critique partners. She also took David Pierce's Crime and Mystery Writing class and Dr. Hensley's Freelance Writing and Screenwriting classes.

"I am very thankful for the writing classes at Taylor Fort Wayne. I didn't just learn to write, but to think and organize and accept criticism and to rewrite and to rewrite."

In 2007, Marsha wrote *Maggie Ray, WWII Air Force Pilot*, which is about her mother.

In 2011, she wrote a biography about a young Muslim woman who came to Christ. That book has not yet been published, out of respect for the woman's safety. Marsha also writes scripts for her singing group, *The Senior Saints*, and has written and taught her own Bible study, *God's Story: My Story*.

"God has led me in a different direction, at least for the time being: helping other people tell their stories," Marsha said. "While I'm itching to finish those mysteries, I am waiting to see where God might lead next."





# CONNECT

## Personal Challenge Leads to Professional Writing Major Hundreds Continue Making Impact for Christ

By Andrea Osmun g05

What started as a personal challenge in the professional writing career of **Dr. Dennis Hensley h08** has resulted in the realization of hundreds of students' and alumni's publishing dreams.

When Dr. Hensley turned 48, he had accomplished all the career goals he had set for himself. He'd published best-selling books, both fiction and nonfiction. He'd sold articles to dozens upon dozens of Christian and secular publications. He'd earned his doctorate in English, and he'd been a keynote speaker and workshop leader at numerous writers' conferences.

But when then-Taylor University president **Dr. Jay Kesler g58** approached him in the fall of 1996 about starting a professional writing program on the Fort Wayne campus, "Doc," as his students and friends call him, decided to accept a new challenge.

"For the first three years, I taught World Literature, American Literature, Expository

Writing, Business and Technical Writing, and Specialty Writing seminars while I designed and test-marketed the new writing courses," he said. "By 2000 we had more than 35 students designated as Professional Writing majors within the TUFW English department, and by then I had instituted courses in Fiction Writing, Freelance Magazine Writing, Basic Reporting, Corporate Communications, and other new writing courses."



*Dr. Dennis Hensley h08*

In the beginning years of the program, the Professional Writing major was under the TUFW English department. Doc taught most of the writing courses. **Dr. Pam Jordan g78** taught English Literature classes, and Kathryn Chevraux-Ludwig worked as a part-time professor in the English department.

Doc began hiring professional authors to teach J-term writing seminars. The first author to teach over J-term was Bob Hostetler (*They Call Me AWOL*) in 2002. Other guest teachers included Cecil Murphey (*90 Minutes in Heaven*), Bill Myers (*McGee and Me*), Lin Johnson (editor of *Christian Communicator* and *Church Libraries*),



**Brag Board**

Holly G. Miller (senior editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*) and the late David Pierce (short story crime writer for numerous mystery magazines).

The Professional Writing program grew exponentially over the years. In the first year, just three girls had signed up for the major. In 2009 Professional Writing had 89 full-time enrolled majors — as well as 41 students taking professional writing courses online.

When Doc was teaching on the Fort Wayne campus, he and his wife, Rose, enjoyed getting to know each of his students personally. Every year they would invite students to their home for dinner and board games — his favorite being “Humm...ble,” a game in which the students would have to guess what song each person was humming.

“Also, Rose and I were able to house a lot of the visiting parents of prospective students, which allowed us to get close to their families,” Doc said.

He misses having non-traditional students in his classes. When he taught on the Fort Wayne campus, many older students who already had established careers took professional writing classes. That mix of traditional students (ages 18 to 22) and non-traditional students (ages 28 to 70) offered a

wide range of life experiences from which to write and learn.

Since the Professional Writing major has moved to Taylor, it has continued to grow.

As the professional writing department continues to succeed, Dr. Hensley looks toward the future. “I am now 66 years old, so I will probably teach only three more years,” he said. “In that time, I want to put in place solid professors who know my philosophy of teaching writing skills and who have the experience to keep my department thriving. I want to see the Department of Professional Writing continue to produce outstanding Christian writers who are making an impact for the cause of Christ in all areas of communication.”

Doc said his goal is for his students to find areas in professional writing where they can make a good living and enjoy their work.

“Some go into magazine writing and editing, some go into newspaper reporting, some become radio or TV or movie scriptwriters, some become editors at publishing houses, some become literary agents, and some become public relations writers,” he said. “As they enjoy their work and succeed at it, I feel I have done my job.”



# CARE

## Cecil Goes Back to School to Write

By Andrea Osmun g05

**C**heryl (Roth) Cecil g68 is embarking upon a new ministry in her retirement years: writing. For 33 years, she assisted her husband **Earl g68** in church work. She never imagined that her experience as a pastor's wife would lead her to publish a book that helps people in grief.

Cheryl graduated from FWBC with a bachelor's degree in Christian education with a minor in missions.

While leading and serving their church, Cheryl and Earl often went together to visit sick people in the hospital, minister to them at their bedside, and attend funerals.

"You don't have to be in the church for very long to realize that people die and leave their families behind," Cheryl said. "For 33 years, my husband would hear when people passed away. We counted it a real privilege to sit with those who grieved."

She discovered in their ministry that most people were reluctant to grieve, perhaps because they felt their hope of heaven didn't allow them to be sad or because society views grief as weakness.

"After many, many funeral experiences,

I started collecting this in my heart. Somehow I found a desire to say, 'It's okay. You can be sad,'" Cheryl said. "I've had numerous people tell me, 'I think it's wrong to grieve. I don't want to lose my faith if I grieve. I want to trust Christ.'"

In their church ministry, Cheryl and Earl complemented one another's gifts and personalities. Earl was gregarious, and Cheryl was quiet. But as she grew in the ministry, Cheryl discovered she had leadership potential.

"When I went into women's ministries, I began walking through some doors God opened to lead Bible studies, and that led into more of a teaching role," Cheryl said. "During that 10 years, I mostly wrote my own Bible studies, and I wrote study guides for many Bible studies. I believe that was a way God was preparing me to go into the writing program at Taylor Fort Wayne, because I wrote a lot. I wanted to learn to write."

The Cecils lived in Fort Wayne from 2001 to 2011. Around the time their son graduated from Taylor in Upland, he heard about the professional writing program on the Fort Wayne campus and told Cheryl about it.

"He said, 'Mom, did you know that TUFW offers a professional writing degree?' I looked into it and was enamored with it,"



Cheryl (Roth) Cecil g68

Editor's Note: Each time our staff hears of the passing on one of our alumni, we send a *Songs & Words of Solace CD*, read, played and produced by Dr. Ken Mays 60. We Care!

Cheryl said. "It became a dream of mine to do something like this."

That summer, Cheryl's older sister was dying of a degenerative disease. While Cheryl was mulling over whether to sign up for professional writing classes, her sister encouraged her to follow her dream. Cheryl's sister died in July 2005.

"I thought, 'My sister's gone. Life is so short. What should I do?'" she said. "I realized that her death didn't have to take away this desire. It fueled it. I found out I could take classes in the program without taking a bachelor's degree, since I already had a bachelor's. This was a door God was opening."

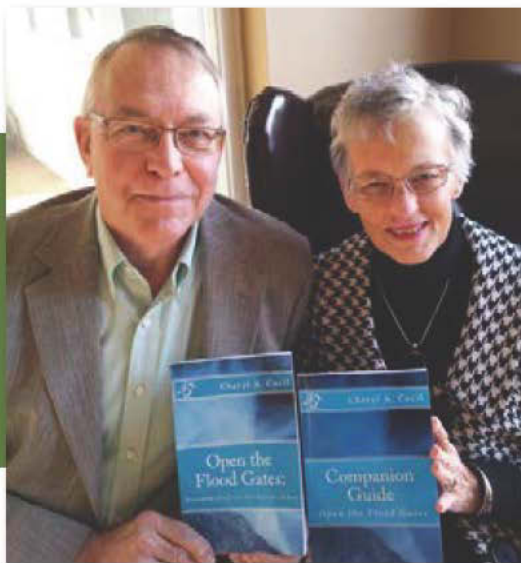
So, Cheryl signed up to take professional writing classes at TUFW in 2005. During her time in the program, she took Dr. Hensley's fiction and nonfiction

writing classes, business and technical writing, and writing for children with Michelle Medlock-Adams.

"I learned so much from Dr. Hensley and Michelle Medlock-Adams," she said. "I often came home and told my husband how much I was learning. He said, in his work as an administrator, 'These things you're telling me are starting to affect my writing.' It was a neat thing to come back around. It was like two of us got the education."

Her book, *Open the Floodgates: Welcoming Grief into our Seasons of Loss*, along with a *Companion Guide*, is now available on Amazon.com.

"My prayer is that God would get it into the hands of someone who really needs it," Cheryl said. "The Lord knows where He wants to take it and use it."





# CELEBRATE

## FW Alumni Reconnect, Reminisce, and Rejoice at Homecoming 2014

By Andrea Osmun g05 and Michael Mortensen g91

More than 300 alumni gathered together Sept. 19-20 for Homecoming 2014 to *reconnect* with friends, *reminisce* about life on campus, and *rejoice* over what God is doing in their lives.

The weekend included the fourth Fort Wayne campus *Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction*, a *70s Night*, *Taylor 10 Tailgate*, and the *50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> Class Reunions* for the Classes of 1964 and 1954. **Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98**, former vice president, gave an inspirational devotional on Saturday, followed by **Janet Nickel g74**, who had just returned from Sierra Leone, West Africa, where she serves.

After lunch with faculty and staff, alumni continued talking and laughing—some even walked down to Foster Park or over to the Friendly Fox, a neighborhood café.

The weekend concluded with a *Sunday Sing...on Saturday*, and a meet-and-greet with **Dr. Jay Kesler g58** and **Dr. Bill Pannell**

**g51**, who later discussed college, church, and culture in an interview-style *Conversation with Jay and Bill*.

With the overwhelming response of alumni from all

generations, plans are already underway for **Homecoming 2015** to be held **Sept. 18-19** back on campus.





# CONNECT



More pictures are available online at <http://fw.taylor.edu/homecoming>





# CELEBRATE

## Dr. Jordan-Long Retires to Teach High School

By Keith g06 and Andrea Osmun g05

**D**r. Pam Jordan-Long g78 transitioned with about 100 students and a handful of faculty and staff to Taylor University in 2009.

“It was difficult for Taylor Fort Wayne to close,” she said. “For the sake of the program and its students, I felt that I should say yes to the opportunity.”

Dr. Jordan-Long said she had a hard time adjusting to work on the Upland campus at first. “It got easier when my teaching assignment was based mostly in the Professional Writing department and when I became the director of C.S. Lewis and Friends.”

But she still missed teaching English classes. So, she decided to retire last spring. She now teaches English to high school seniors at Blackford High School in Hartford City, Ind. The school needed

someone to teach college-level English classes, and Dr. Jordan-Long found her place.

Dr. Jordan-Long said she misses her colleagues and the college atmosphere, but she’s being challenged in new ways.



Dr. Pam Jordan-Long g78 and student

“Going to a public school is a huge adjustment instead of being in a Christian environment. I started my career in public schools, so it’s not an unfamiliar territory, and the schedule is a lot less flexible. You go to work and stay there all day, but it keeps me young. The pace is different in the high school.”

Amidst all the changes in her life, Dr. Jordan-Long finds hope in the only One who remains constant.

“From the closing, to being in Upland, to being here, I’ve learned that God doesn’t let you down, despite your circumstances,” she said. “I’ve learned even more how crucial it is to make sense of things by relying on Him. His plans and ways are bigger than ours, but He can be trusted.”

*“I owe Dr. Pam a huge thank you. I always did well in writing until I had her class. I’ve never seen so much red! To this day I don’t remember what the paper was about, or her comments. What I do remember is that she took the time to sit down with me and go over my writing skills in great detail. She pushed me hard, and I ended up with a good grade. More than that, I’ve been able to apply those critical thinking skills as I write my doctoral dissertation. Further still, I was able to help my students with their writing pieces. Thank you, Dr. Pam Jordan-Long!”*

– Melissa (Daniels) Holtzhouse g98







#### Class of 1962

The **Rev. Judi Wiegman g62** and her husband, Rev. Chalmer Wiegman, have moved from the Dallas, TX, area to Bethel Park, PA. They are both on staff at the So. Hills Church of the Nazarene, where they serve as pastors of visitation. Judi is also involved in the ministry of intercessory prayer.

#### Class of 1968

**Larry g61 & Marge fs68 Eicher** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house at Grace Church in Camby, IN. They took a Mediterranean cruise and train tour of Italy in September.

**Barbara Kilmer g68** continues to work part-time at the headquarters of One Mission Society in Greenwood, IN. She is also active in her church, singing in the worship choir and playing in the handbell choir.

#### Class of 1969

**Nancy (Richardson) Head g69** continues to enjoy substitute teaching for K-2 for 2-3 days a week. Her husband, Bruce, works in pastoral care.

#### Class of 1972

**Steve Zurcher g72** and his wife, Lynn, completed their 21st year working at Nanaikapono Protestant Church in Waianae, HI. Steve continues to serve as Pacific Rim Regional Director for the Missionary Church.

#### Class of 1973

**Cheri Armstrong g73** received her 30-year service award at Youth for Christ at the midwinter conference in Chicago, IL. Cheri serves as Youth for Christ Director of Donation Management at the national service center located near Denver, CO.

Submit *News Notes* items to [alumnifw@taylor.edu](mailto:alumnifw@taylor.edu), call the Alumni & Friends Resource Center at (260) 744-8790, or mail to *FW Vine*, 915 W. Rudisill Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46807.

Do you receive our monthly e-newsletter, the *FW Falcon*? Contact the Resource Center to add your email address to our list.



Use your smartphone to submit the latest News Note.



#### Class of 1974

**Pastor Ron Eade g74** is completing his 23rd year as Senior Pastor of the Church of Genesis in New Castle, PA. He also has volunteered as a police chaplain with the City of New Castle Police Department and the Pennsylvania State Police, has served as the International Director of Central America Outreach mission in Guatemala and Nicaragua, and has been Director of Credentials for the Eastern Region Missionary Church. This past February, he and his wife, **Pam fs73**, and their children and spouses ministered at the National Pastors' Conference in Guatemala.

**Dennis g74 and Marsha (Hainline) g75 Barta** recently celebrated their 15th year at Grace Church in Cleveland, OH, the church where they met. Dennis serves as the Pastor of Congregational Care and Marsha is the Director of Food Services. Dennis has written a number of discipleship resources for upper elementary children that are available at several online Christian stores and from his own website, [www.dzresources.org](http://www.dzresources.org).

### Class of 1976

**Mervin Charles g76** is pastor at Mt. Vernon Christian Church. He and his wife **Laurel (Gerig) g77** reside in Millersville, PA.

### Memorials

**Evelyn (Neuenschwander) McIntosh, g41, 92**, went to be with the Lord in October 2013. She and her husband, Rev. Donald T. McIntosh, were some of the founding members of China Outreach Ministries (COM), Mechanicsburg, PA. She served as a Board Member Emeritus of COM until her passing. They also traveled extensively in India, China, and other countries as part of their ministry activities. Evelyn was an accomplished pianist and played regularly for vesper services.

**Mildred Wanner g43** passed away on July 5, 2014, at Swiss Village in Berne, IN. Mildred was a missionary in Ecuador and Haiti for 22 years.

She was also the Director of Nursing at Swiss Village and a faithful member of West Missionary Church.

**Jeanne M. Dockery g44** passed away April 5, 2014, at Hubbard Hill Retirement Community in Elkhart, IN, at the age of 90. Jeanne received Bible and Music certificates from Fort Wayne Bible Institute. She was a longtime member of Gospel Center Missionary Church in South Bend, IN, where she served as organist, pianist, and secretary for 20 years.

**Edna Dyck g45** passed away on May 3, 2014. Edna and her husband, Dan, who preceded her in death in 2005, were missionaries to the Dominican Republic from 1945-65. The Dycks were founders of the first Missionary church in Dajabon, Dominican Republic, and the Dajabon School. They also started a Block Factory, which provided local employment and all the concrete blocks that were used in the construction of the first Iglesia Evangelica Misionera Church in the country.

**Rev. Keith D. Davis g56**, of Warren, IN, passed away on May 12, 2014, at 82 years of age. In addition to pastoring numerous churches, Keith was a chaplain and served on many district and conference boards and agencies.

**James Roussos g60**, long-time missionary with World Partners in Cypress, passed away on August 19.



**Kae Linnet (Turay) Sprunger g63** passed away on April 11, 2014, in Berne, IN. She was a World Partners missionary nurse in Sierra Leone, West Africa, for 27 years.

**Eileen (Clark) Steiner g64** passed away on May 22, 2013. She fought a long and valiant battle against breast cancer for almost seven years. She graduated in 1964 with a degree in Christian Education but was a partner to her husband **Duane g64** in all their endeavors, and ended up with a successful commercial and residential appraisal company in Phoenix, AZ, where she lived with Duane who survives.

**Dorcas (Ringenberg) McDeavitt g76** went to her eternal home on August 19, 2014, after having complications from heart surgery. She and her husband, **David g87**, served together with World Partners in the Middle East, where he continues to work.





# FWBC Alum is a Master Pianist... But Can't Fully Hear

By Andrea Osmun g05

**"Dee" Sholl g64** is a master pianist and organist and uses her musical talent to minister to others — despite not being able to fully hear.

Dee played the piano and partnered with her husband, **Keith g67**, who led a portion of the Sunday Sing during Homecoming. She shared her story of losing her hearing as a child and then finding a large brain tumor that almost rendered her paralyzed and unable to play the piano as an adult. There was not a dry eye in the room.



*"Dee" Sholl g64*

## Losing Her Hearing

When Dee was a baby, she contracted a severe case of the measles from her brother, who brought the illness home from school.

"I got it the worst out of the three of us kids," she said. "I was put in a darkened bedroom, I refused to eat, and I didn't know my parents. I was very sick. The doctor came to see me. That was back when they still made house calls. I don't know what he did, whether he gave me a shot, I don't know. But my family and church family began to pray because they didn't know if I would pull through. I did pull through."

## Tinkering with the Piano

When Dee was three, she was drawn to

the large piano her dad bought for her.

"The amazing thing is, my father was not a musician in any way, shape, or form," she said. "When he had a little red-haired girl, he said, 'I'm going to buy her a piano.' It was strange because he was not a musician. It was a God-ordained thing."

Dee and her family lived on a farm. They had no neighbors and no TV to entertain them. So the piano gave her something to do.

"I'd come home from church when I was three, and my mother would catch me going to the piano and picking out the last hymn I'd heard. I would work on it all week. Then, the next week, I'd pick out the last hymn again. I was playing by ear."

By the time Dee was four, she became bored with the melody and began to watch the church pianist, who was using both hands. She would come home, find a note and a chord that would match, and taught herself to play with both hands through trial and error.

"My mother said I did it quite quickly," she said. "I had a knack for matching tones."

## Discovering the Art of Lip Reading

Throughout grade school, Dee's teachers sent home notes to her parents, saying they didn't think she could hear very well. Her doctor said her tonsillitis was connected to the Eustachian tubes in her ears and promised her parents that when her tonsils were...

For the full story, visit the website at <http://fw.taylor.edu/deesholl>.







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## Former Volunteers Join Alumni Team

**Marlene (Sholl) Embry g69** and **Andrea (Matetic) Osmun g05** have joined our Fort Wayne Alumni Center team. Marlene is our new quarter-time program assistant, and Andrea will primarily write articles for the *FW Vine*, our mini-magazine, the *FW Falcon*, our e-newsletter, and the FW alumni website, <http://fw.taylor.edu>.



Marlene (Sholl) Embry g69



Andrea Osmun g05

“Our team of primarily volunteers is thrilled to have these two alumni working with us serving our alumni,” **Michael Mortensen**

**g91**, director of the Alumni Center, said.

Marlene began volunteering in January. She brings years of experience in organization and serving as an administrative assistant. Andrea brings to the team more than a decade of journalism skills, which she has honed through professional experience as a newspaper reporter, magazine writer, and blogger.

Marlene lives in Fort Wayne, Ind. and has three grown sons, and Andrea lives in Holland, Mich., with her husband **Keith g06** and their daughter **Kamryn, 3**.

# SAVE the DATE



September 18-19, 2015

# Friend,

The Alumni Center has been a place of excitement and action during the last four months. The Singing Collegians reunion, Homecoming 2014, and smaller gatherings brought over 360 alumni and friends to campus. Old friends were hugging as they greeted each other after many years apart, reminiscing together what life was like at the corner of Indiana and Rudisill, and laughing as videos reminded everyone of the fun and mischief of college days.

One of the greatest joys was hearing how alumni continue to minister literally around the world in numerous occupations. Many conversations were centered on the faith foundation received during college that became life's cornerstone.

**Bill Pannell g51** traveled from California to Homecoming 2014 and reflected, *"I didn't know the extent of how much I felt at home here, how much I missed it. . . This campus with our alumni are under the powerful impact of a living history, a legacy that simply will not go away."*

Those who came to the Alumni Center for the first time were amazed to learn all that is happening in the Center's ministry of caring, connecting, and celebrating.

The ministry continues! Will you, Friend, join a growing number of alumni in keeping the Alumni Center a wonderful place where friendships are renewed, stories of God's sustaining power are shared, and the memories of life-changing college days are celebrated? Your \$25.00 will keep the momentum moving forward to unite even more alumni and friends in 2015. Your tax-deductible gift sent by December 31 will be so appreciated.



*Michael Mortenson g91*



**Your gifts, no matter the amount, are appreciated and needed for us to continue our ministry of *Caring, Connecting, and Celebrating!***

**<http://fw.taylor.edu/gift>**



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