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On the Cover

Was it maybe a lawyer joke?

Attorney and PBA alumnus Emin Toro received good natured recognition in Chapel when he visited here in February. At right is Toro’s wife Katie, also a PBA grad. Behind them is Emin’s cousin Andia Luzi, a current PBA student. The Toros arranged a campus visit by a special guest: U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Story on page 16.
Dear Friends,

Dr. Donald E. Warren, founding chairman and tenacious titan of Palm Beach Atlantic University, was called home to be with our Lord and Savior on March 31. In his life, Dr. Warren dreamed the impossible dream – to establish a Christ-centered university in the heart of downtown West Palm Beach. His primary purpose in doing so was to help young adults grow in Christ, not stray from their belief in God.

Dr. Warren dedicated his life to making sure the University succeeded by developing relationships that led to extremely generous financial and volunteer commitments by some of the most notable business and philanthropic leaders in our country. Even a few days before his passing, Dr. Warren was planning tours of the Rinker Athletic Campus with prospective donors. He raised millions of dollars for PBA, never taking credit for one penny of it.

Along with his wife of 57 years, Betty Ann “Bebe” Warren, and their children, Leigh, Julie and Amy, Dr. Warren fought to keep the University alive and progressing, even in the early years, when they had to pitch in to clean and paint dorm rooms, greet the freshman classes and organize Bible studies for students and faculty.

In reviewing this issue of “Current,” Dr. Warren would be most satisfied. He would embrace the discipleship of David Carson, who takes mission trips to India to help exploited women and children and Linda Ellington, who is teaching kids to stop bullying and love and respect one another. He would be proud of American military hero Norm Hooten, who has retired from military service and is pursuing a Pharm.D. degree at PBA in order to help combat warriors transition to civilian life. And he would nod his head in approval of Lukas Colombo, a young PBA alum who is spreading the Gospel in Hollywood through a promising career in film directing and producing.

One of Dr. Warren’s guiding scriptures was Psalm 59:9-10.

9 You are my strength, I watch for you; you, God, are my fortress, my God on whom I can rely.

10 God will go before me.

Dr. Warren believed that God went before him, leading his work with PBA. About every success, he said, "it is God’s doing."

The torch has been passed from Dr. Warren to us. We will make sure it continues to burn brightly for him and his incredible faithfulness to our God and to PBA.

Sincerely,

William M. B. Fleming, Jr.
Norman “Norm” Hooten soldiers on. He still keeps his head down and keeps moving, taking it one boot at a time.

In 1993, he led an elite Delta Force team into what became the Battle of Mogadishu, the bloody operation depicted in the movie “Black Hawk Down.” After 20 years of silence, last fall Hooten went on national television, helping to tell the Mogadishu story for “60 Minutes.”

Now this combat veteran has traded his battle fatigues for the student’s lab coat in the Lloyd L. Gregory School of Pharmacy. And he marches toward a new role: a pharmacist helping returning soldiers adjust to “the real world.” He described PBA’s rigorous program as “gut-wrenching,” but said, “the people I’m doing it with, and the people who are teaching it, are as good as anywhere in the world.”

He’s accustomed to working with the best. He served 15 years in Delta Force, the highly selective combat arm of the Army’s Special Forces. Hooten traveled to hot spots all over the globe, winding up in many situations where people were shooting at him. But none of those missions had the intensity and the publicity of the engagement in Mogadishu, Somalia.

“It was probably the most sustained, fierce firefight that American soldiers have been involved in since the war in Vietnam,” said Mark Bowden, author of the book “Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War.”

That firefight resulted from the U.S. military’s efforts to protect a humanitarian mission. Civil war in Somalia had left millions of people starving. The international community responded with relief supplies, but AK-47-toting clans hijacked much of the donated food. Hooten’s team and others in Delta Force, along with Army Rangers and other specialists, went on a security mission: to capture ringleaders among those stealing the food.

The mission went south when two of the Army’s Black Hawk helicopters got shot down. Then through the night some 160 Americans fended off thousands of angry Somali militiamen and armed civilians. Though Hooten, “by the grace of God,” was unharmed, his squadron suffered 70 percent casualties, including 18 dead.

“It was a terrible sacrifice,” Hooten said, “but it saved us in the end.” He believes the battle resulted in the U.S. Army learning much and changing tactics and equipment for wars to come. “If we had rolled into the Global War on Terror without that experience, we would have lost hundreds, if not thousands of people trying to learn those same lessons,” he said.

Hooten learned personal lessons as well: “It taught me to appreciate life, to appreciate the time I spend with my family, and not get worried about the little things in life.”

Ultimately, the pull of family caused Hooten to retire from the Army after 20 years. But what then? He told his wife Bonnie, “Hey, I
don’t know how to do anything else but be a soldier.” Bonnie, a pharmacist, replied, “Try going to pharmacy school.” So he did.

Hooten entered the program here in August of 2012. One of his professors, Dr. Daniel Brown, described Hooten as a very disciplined student, one showing “a quiet leadership.” Brown was stunned when he learned, after the fact, that Hooten had been featured on “60 Minutes.” “Most people would have been shouting it from the rooftops,” said Brown, “but Norm has such a profound humility.”

A similar description came from Dr. John M. Gregory, a pharmacist and PBA trustee whose family has made generous gifts to the pharmacy program here. “I met Norm at a recent Board of Trustees meeting for Palm Beach Atlantic University and was impressed with his integrity and humility,” said Gregory. “The Lloyd L. Gregory School of Pharmacy is privileged to train and educate someone like Norm to become a pharmacist and serve the pharmaceutical needs of his community.”

Hooten now sees how God might use his new knowledge of pharmacy to serve the military community. He observed significant drug problems in the service, as men got injured or wounded, received painkillers and developed addictions. After he graduates from PBA, he hopes to help run a program of medication therapy management for the military. Macho soldiers often try to deny they need help, but Hooten would have an entrée with them: “Hey, look, I used to be one of you guys.”

The pharmacy program takes four years, so Hooten acknowledges that he has a lot to learn, with plenty of tough classes ahead. But he’s approaching those pharmacy challenges the same way he handled tough assignments in the military: “The deal is, just go in there, and put one boot in front of the other one, keep your head down, keep moving, keep moving and don’t listen to all the stuff going on all around you.”
By giving to Palm Beach Atlantic University’s **ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**, you directly and positively impact the lives of students by assisting them in affording a college education.

At PBA we are committed to enriching the educational experience through a unique focus on faith, service and free enterprise. Your gift creates opportunities for the next generation of servant leaders.

*Roma Nemtala ’15  
Medicinal and Biological Chemistry*

Thank you for your support.

Make your gift at www.pba.edu/giving or by mail to Palm Beach Atlantic University, Development Office, 901 S. Flagler Drive, P.O. Box 24708, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4708. For more information, contact 561-803-2011.
Hearing the Whos

PBA Theatre played to sellout crowds in the spring production of “Seussical” at the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts. At left, Stephen Hedger, playing Horton the Elephant, listens to the cries of the tiny Whos, below, while Lissette Kortright looks on in her role as Gertrude McFuzz.

News Briefs

New provost arrives

On June 2 Dr. Gene C. Fant Jr. began his duties as Palm Beach Atlantic’s new provost and chief academic officer. He comes to PBA from Union University in Jackson, Tenn., where he had served as executive vice president for academic administration and dean of the faculty. Dr. Joseph A. Klobo, retiring PBA provost, had served the university for nearly 20 years.

pba.edu/klobo-retires-14

Grants over $280,000

The Quantum Foundation has awarded Palm Beach Atlantic University grants totaling more than $280,000 over two years for health care needs in Palm Beach County. A grant for $250,000 will go toward the PBA School of Nursing’s Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program. A separate Quantum grant for $30,744 will go toward MedData, to provide prescription assistance to indigent and uninsured patients.

pba.edu/Quantum-Foundation-grants-14

Sailfish in SSC July 1

Palm Beach Atlantic University will become a provisional member of the Sunshine State Conference (SSC) beginning July 1. If the University meets all requirements during a three-year provisional term, the Sailfish will begin competing fully in the SSC during the 2017-18 athletic season.

pba.edu/PBA-Sunshine-State-Conference

‘Birdies’ donations up

Donors gave $100,131, an increase of about 20 percent over last year, to student missions at PBA through Birdies for Children. The program raises money for charities, which receive 100 percent of the proceeds donated online plus a 10 percent matching donation courtesy of The Honda Classic golf tournament.

pba.edu/Birdies-results-14
A youth pastor wants quality theological education for future ministry, but she finds no good options within commuting distance.

A sailor longs to finish his college degree, but he’s facing a three-month deployment in the Mediterranean.

A PBA transfer student needs summer school to stay on track for graduation, but she’s landed a great summer job back home in Georgia.

For frustrating problems like those, students from all over are finding creative solutions from Palm Beach Atlantic’s award-winning efforts in online learning.

“Simply, online learning has changed my life, and will continue to change it for the better,” summed up a student in a PBA course last fall. Testimonials like that are increasing as nationwide the growth of online enrollment far exceeds the overall growth in college enrollment.

“I don’t think we’ll ever lose the undergraduate day experience,” said Dr. Pat Bassett, director of online learning at PBA. But she sees “the wave of the future” in the way PBA goes online to meet the needs of students, especially “non-traditional students, the 25-to-60-year-olds.”

Bassett, who is also associate professor of mathematics, recently won Course of the Year from the Association of Christian Distance Education. It marked the third year in a row that PBA has won the award, the previous honors going to ministry professors Dr. Victor Copan and Dr. Karelynne Ayayo.

Ayayo won for her course Exploring the New Testament, in which she works hard to “build community” among classmates who might never physically meet. She designed her course asking herself, “How do you mimic the best of the interaction that you would have in a face-to-face setting?”

In week one of the course, Ayayo leads the class in a “threaded discussion,” called “meet the class.” Class members post photos and information about themselves, and they respond to each other.

“I spend a lot of energy and time that first week trying to draw out those discussion threads,” said Ayayo. She responds to students’ posts with encouragement, follow-up questions and tips to help them make connections with their classmates.

Every week Ayayo gives a new prompt relating to the course material, and she requires each
student to respond to her and then respond to at least two peers. She uses prompts “a little bit edgy,” to “push a few buttons and make them stretch themselves and think in a different way, and then have to do it in community, where people are coming from a wide range of denominational backgrounds and histories.”

Discussion threads weave through at a variety of times, according to the work schedules and time zones of the class members, and with technical support available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But the classes also have several “Class Live” sessions, during which members log on at the same time, and interact via chat, audio and video.

“I love the structure of an online course,” Ayayo said. “It’s very regimented, so a student coming in knows exactly what’s expected from the get-go.”

With the structure comes accountability. Ayayo and Bassett agreed that students sometimes have the misconception that an online course will be easier than a traditional one.

“There are no back-row sleepers in an online class,” said Bassett. “Students are responsible for watching the content, engaging with the content and keeping pace with the course.”

Approximately 25 percent of PBA students take at least one online course each year. Students can earn degrees completely online in some subjects, including ministry, organizational management, leadership and psychology.

“I must admit that I was a bit skeptical about taking an online course,” wrote one student in her evaluation. But now, she has concluded, “The platform is very easy to use, the interaction with my classmates and my professors is awesome and the support is outstanding.”

Such praise is not isolated. In January U.S. News & World Report rated 205 online bachelor’s degree programs, and ranked PBA number 21 in the nation.
Alumni making a difference at Community Partners

Some see an MBA as a stepping stone to move up the corporate ladder. Gregory Demetriades views his PBA degree as a tool to help make his community stronger.

As chief financial officer for the non-profit agency Community Partners, Demetriades oversees an annual budget of $15 million for programs dealing with child and family mental health, housing and other community needs.

“I feel we make a difference every day,” he said. “Unlike the movies, they’re not storybook endings, but we do make a difference.”

Within Community Partners, headquartered in Riviera Beach, are two non-profits: Housing Partnership, Inc. and the Parent-Child Center, Inc. These agencies offer classes, counseling and a variety of support services. Of the 200 employees there, 15 are Palm Beach Atlantic graduates, all working under the motto “changing the odds for the children and families in our communities.”

As an example of changing those odds, Demetriades cited “Crossroads.” This program serves young adults who have mental health disabilities and who are “aging out” of the foster care system. “At the age of 18, they’re basically put out on the street,” he said. Twelve of these young adults find a temporary home at Crossroads, where they obtain independent living coaching and help with job hunting and education.

Demetriades described the satisfaction in hearing of a Crossroads client graduating from high school and settling into a job. “Seeing that and knowing you’ve made a difference in somebody’s life” is one of the
“biggest moments” in his job, he said.

Another program provides counseling, budget training and support for homeowners facing foreclosure. Demetriades showed off a display overflowing with “another home saved” posters, representing over 600 homes. “Every single one of those individuals is back in the home, making payments, not defaulted,” he said. “We have successfully managed to save their homes, deal with the banks. It’s just an amazing feeling.”

Demetriades came to Community Partners in 2006. In 1996 he earned his MBA from Palm Beach Atlantic, which he chose because of the school’s size and intimate atmosphere. Having done his undergraduate studies at a large public university, he found a refreshing difference at PBA in “the attention that each student received from the professors and the staff.”

He still sees and interacts with some of his PBA professors, including Dr. Joe J. Eassa Jr., “one of the most amazing people I have ever met.” Eassa was the founding director of PBA’s MBA program, and in 1997 the Rinker School of Business Alumni Association established the Dr. Joe J. Eassa, Jr. Endowed Scholarship in his honor.

“He’s unique,” said Demetriades of Eassa. “His demeanor, his approach to things, the way he teaches, the way he manages to get you interested in what he wants you to learn.”

What Demetriades and the other PBA grads learned, they now put into practice helping Community Partners reach out to some of the most high-risk neighborhoods in Palm Beach County. In those neighborhoods, the odds are stacked against children and families, but Demetriades and his co-workers believe you “change the world” by “changing the odds.”
The third-graders gathered on a colorful rug in their school library, and at the request of Dr. Linda Ellington, they all closed their eyes tightly.

“If you’ve ever been teased or made fun of or felt excluded, raise your hand,” said Ellington. All the hands shot up.

“The reason I started writing about bullying is because we’ve all been bullied,” Ellington said. “And when we get bullied at this age, it hurts your heart, and it stays with you for a very long time.”

Ellington, professor at Palm Beach Atlantic University, had come to the elementary school bringing her series of children’s books about bullying. The characters in her books are sea creatures, and she’s designed and sewed stuffed animal versions of these characters for the kids to hug as they listen to the stories and talk about bullies.

As most of us can recall, bullies often pick their targets because of the way people look. So meet Finlee, an overweight grouper with buck teeth and orange skin. In the book bearing Finlee’s name, the sad, shy fish explained why he stayed hidden.

“If I don’t hide, then everyone will see me and call me names.”

Ellington has taken her storytelling to a variety of South Florida schools, ranging from a National Blue Ribbon School to a school serving largely low-income families. All across that range, she said, the children report that bullying is widespread.

Ellington has been researching bullying for the last three years. She cites an estimate of 13 million U.S. youngsters being bullied in 2013, with three million of them missing school at some point each month because they felt unsafe.

With the help of characters like Finlee and a friendly whale named Wetlee, Ellington offers kids ways to understand and deal with bullying, including the new trend of cyber bullying. At West Melbourne
Ellington has created stuffed animals to help tell her stories.

New thrust, writing children's books, was born of personal loss

Elementary School for Science she told students about her new character, Jenlee the jellyfish: “She gets cyber-bullied on her Fishbook, which is kind of like Facebook, only in the ocean.”

At the end of the West Melbourne story time, Ellington led the kids in line dancing to the Wetlee song: “I like me. And I am strong. Love is good. And bullying is wrong.” They left the library with Wetlee wrist bands and bead bracelets they had made as reminders that they “have a voice,” that is, a voice to say “you will not bully me.”

School staffers say Ellington and her anti-bullying message strike a chord with the kids. “She made the children feel special and valued,” said Cathy Mistretta, guidance counselor at West Melbourne. “Dr. Ellington’s visit has had a tremendous and long-lasting impact on our students.”

Ellington’s bullying research won her a contract for an academic book to be called “The Cultural Faces of Bullying.” She’s studying bullying in 11 countries, hoping to compile a list of best practices for bullying intervention. This month she journeys to Wales to present at an international conference, “A Child’s World – Next Steps.”

The research, the books, the Child’s World conference – all this comes as a different thrust for Ellington, who previously has published textbooks on education and leadership topics. She came to this new passion after struggling with personal loss.

“Three years ago my husband died,” she said. “I was lost. I didn’t know what to do; I felt my life was over.”

Ellington recalled praying and praying, “asking God where I was supposed to go.” She felt God responding: “Use your gifts.” But what gifts? She continued to pray, and eventually wrote down the word “wetlee.”

“And then my thought process and my heart started wrapping around wetlee,” Ellington said. “What is wetlee? And so Wetlee was born out of my heart.”

Now Wetlee the whale stars in all of Ellington’s children’s books, including narrated versions on YouTube. The books have been translated into Spanish, with Creole versions also in the works. Meanwhile, Ellington continues her regular work in the Catherine T. MacArthur School of Leadership, teaching subjects like consulting and coaching. Her work with Wetlee and friends happens on off-hours and weekends.

“I do all of this as a volunteer,” she said. “I love it. And I just want to make a difference with people and bullying.”
On June 5, 2011, a rescue helicopter rushed a comatose Lauren Graham to St. Mary’s Medical Center, leaving her family and friends to pray through an agonizing series of questions:

- Would she survive the trauma of the car crash that crushed her body?
- If she awakened from the coma, would she remain in a vegetative state?
- Would she ever again walk, talk and return to her classes at PBA?

And so on May 10, 2014 when a beaming Lauren Graham walked the stage to receive her diploma, the crowd erupted with special rejoicing.

“The statistics of those who experience what I did are so grim, the fact that I am standing here and speaking today is nothing short of a miracle,” Lauren had said, addressing Senior Chapel two weeks before commencement, and telling of the “precious cornerstone” cited in Isaiah 28:16. “I want to share how, when life hit me head-on, the Lord taught me to rely on Him and find refuge in our rock.”

A graphic arts major, Lauren had finished her sophomore year and just returned from a PBA mission trip to India three days before the accident in Hobe Sound. She spent 60 days in the hospital, the first three weeks in a coma. She endured multiple surgeries and long hours of physical and brain therapy.

“I had to learn how to eat again, walk again, even talk again,” she told her chapel audience. “So many fears and anxieties threatened to

### Many of the people praying for Lauren Graham after her accident followed her story on the website Caring Bridge. The chronology below lifts portions of Caring Bridge entries written by Lauren’s father Sherwood Graham, and ultimately, by Lauren.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Entry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 6, 2011</td>
<td>“Twenty-four hours since the accident, and Lauren cleared her first significant hurdle. She is still with us.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>Despite the coma, the neurosurgeon seemed encouraged, reporting that Lauren turned her head and blinked today.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>“Our encouragement yesterday was matched by our discouragement today.” Lauren had pneumonia and infection in her lungs.</td>
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<td>June 16</td>
<td>“For the first time in 11 days she opened her eyes wide this morning and looked around the room.”</td>
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<td>June 20</td>
<td>“The last two days have brought a mixed bag of blessing, burden, smiles and tears. Our girl is no longer on life support! She is still, as best as anyone can tell, in a coma.”</td>
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<td>June 26</td>
<td>“For the first time, today Lauren turned her head to the left and to the right in response to our voices.”</td>
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<td>June 28</td>
<td>“The R.N. asked Lauren four times to blink her eyes and she did.”</td>
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<td>June 29</td>
<td>A physical therapist coaxed a wave out of Lauren. “The news spread like wildfire and all the nurses were going to Lauren’s room to get their own personal wave from her.”</td>
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<td>July 7</td>
<td>“On Monday morning, Lauren was a totally new girl. The physical therapists were staggered by Lauren’s steely resolve and fierce determination.”</td>
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<td>July 15</td>
<td>“With the new mercies of a new day... Lauren found her voice.”</td>
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<td>July 27</td>
<td>Feeding tube removed, “Lauren is now totally rid of all lines of external support. Thanks be to God!”</td>
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<td>July 29</td>
<td>Lauren can feed herself and brush her own teeth. “When can I go home?” she begged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 21</td>
<td>Lauren had not only come home, but she went to church for the first time since the accident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Lauren’s entry: “After the doctor’s appointment, I went to PBA. It was very nice to get to see a lot of my friends, but it was sad to not be going back to school like everybody else.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 24</td>
<td>“This season is a celebration of Christ’s birth,” wrote Lauren. “Let it also be a celebration of the truth that whenever God ordains a season of setbacks or struggles, He is – even then – in total and complete control, working all things for our good according to His purpose.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 8, 2012</td>
<td>To those who visited the hospital, prayed, sent emails and posted to Facebook, “God used you to help me heal. Not just while I was in the hospital, but today.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12, 2012</td>
<td>After being a guest speaker at PBA commencement, Lauren wrote, “Even if you don’t get to speak at graduation, you can speak to your family or your friends. If God has shown himself strong to you, tell your story.”</td>
</tr>
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overwhelm me. And the Lord had to keep reminding me, ‘I’m here. I’m your rock. You can trust me.’”

“It was a tremendous testimony to her resilience that she kept fighting and striving through all those therapies,” said John Anderson, pastor of college and career ministries at Lauren’s church, Grace Immanuel Bible Church in Jupiter. The church family rallied around Lauren and her family, as did the Palm Beach Atlantic family. Many of those praying for her, including PBA President William M. B. Fleming, Jr., wore a special reminder: a white bracelet bearing the words "Lauren is my Sister."

“If you want to know why the rock I’m talking about is so precious,” said Lauren, “you'd have to read the posters and notes my friends and classmates signed, or see the pictures of the girls from school and church sitting in a circle, praying for God to spare my life.”

During the long therapy, “that whole time she was in pain,” said Anderson, “but she was still rejoicing to see her friends.” Then later, as Lauren rebuilt her communication skills, Anderson marveled at her sweet demeanor and spirit.

“With all the difficulties that she was facing, she would still come to church and look for opportunities to serve and to minister,” he said.

As brutal as the physical recovery was, “the hardeast of all” was integrating back into academic life, Lauren said. She returned to school in the fall of 2012, having missed two semesters.

“I literally had to learn how to learn all over again,” Lauren said. Her professors Tim Eichner and David Pounds as well as President Fleming “were a huge encouragement and support,” she said. “I still get people saying ‘I pray for you every day’.”

As a new graduate, she said, “nobody here will be prouder of their alma mater, and no one has been more enriched and enlarged by their university experience than me.”
It’s an amazing story,” said Steve Templeton, as he began to tell about Albanian native Emin Toro. This young man, who grew up in a poverty-stricken, atheistic society, had come back to PBA as an honored alumnus, bringing a special friend: U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Templeton, chairman of the advisory board of the Rinker School of Business, first met Toro in the early 1990s, when he journeyed to Albania with a Christian group seeking to help the country’s orphanages.

“Albania at the time did not have a working traffic light in the country,” said Templeton. “Just poverty, and the orphanages were in dire need of some help.” Templeton’s group needed a translator, and they found a high school student with a strong grasp of English: Emin Toro.

Toro’s family believed learning English was important, so he had studied English “ever since I was a little kid.” He translated for Templeton’s group and later for missionary students who came to teach
Vacation Bible School. The translated Gospel took root with Toro, who came to faith and later came to the U.S., with the help of Christians in West Palm Beach. After a senior year making straight A's at The Kings Academy, Toro entered Palm Beach Atlantic, where he continued his record of excellence, finishing in 1997.

"We were so proud of him graduating at the top of his class and have followed his career ever since," said Templeton. After law school at the University of North Carolina, that career took Toro to the nation's capital for a judicial clerkship in the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Then in the 2002-2003 Supreme Court session, he clerked for Justice Thomas. This past February, when Toro and Thomas came to PBA, Toro told students here about his experience with the justice.

“He gives you the scariest speech at the beginning of the term,” said Toro. He summarized Thomas' expectations: “I want my job done right. I want it done on time. No mistakes. No excuses.”

Thomas nodded in acknowledgment. “I can't have you whining and crying in your milk,” he said. Many hard cases come before the court, and the justice wants his clerks remaining focused to help him get those cases right.

Thomas and Toro were enjoying a lengthy Q-and-A session with a group of high-achieving PBA students. As Thomas explained his rigorous expectations of his law clerks, he urged PBA students, “Don't let people lower the expectations of you. You have to have high expectations. You have to demand things of yourself.”

(Continued on following page)
CURRENT SUMMER 2014

Thomas also spoke in Chapel, but he seemed most to enjoy the informal setting with the smaller group. “He loves talking with students, about how the court works and about his own life story,” said Toro. “That’s what he comes to schools for.”

The justice came to PBA because Toro invited him, at the suggestion of President William M. B. Fleming, Jr. Joining Toro on the visit was yet another smiling PBA grad, Toro’s wife Katie. “It was just such an honor to share someone we love with the college that we love,” she said.

Katie Nordine Toro ’96 is the daughter of Ed Nordine, assistant dean of PBA’s Warren Library. “We have just great memories of our time here,” she said. “How much individual attention we got from faculty and staff, and how love was poured into our education. We were just really thrilled to be able to share Justice Thomas with the students who are here now.”

She is now a stay-at-home mom with their three children, ages 10, 8 and 4. Toro is now a partner with the D.C. law firm Covington & Burling LLP, where his practice concentrates on the needs of multinational companies. His former boss Justice Thomas described him as brilliant. “He’s really pleasant to get along with, and really, really, really smart,” said Thomas.

Thomas closed his Q-and-A session with brief mention of his controversial confirmation hearings, “the darkest days of my life.” But looking back, he said, “God has never gotten me into anything that he wasn’t going to show me a way to get out of.”

The justice had remarked on heavy issues, such as partial birth abortion, health care and The First Amendment, and he concluded quoting the University refrain, “Enlightening Minds, Enriching Souls, Extending Hands.”

“You do that faithfully,” said Thomas, “and some of the things you’re talking about will not be a problem for the next generation.”
In the red light districts of India, the average age of girls in brothels is 14 – just one example of the child sexual abuse so widespread there. Dr. David Carson said, “It’s just a huge problem,” one of the weighty problems that draw him again and again to serve this country.

Carson is a licensed marriage and family therapist and professor of psychology at PBA’s Orlando Campus. In short-term mission trips to India, he’s been helping prepare the rehabilitation home workers who minister to these exploited young women.

“These girls are beaten, tortured; they have just faced horrific, multiple attacks,” he said. Often girls from poor areas have been tricked or kidnapped to wind up in brothels. “Some very poor parents will actually sell their children to these thugs,” he said.

Carson works with Oasis India, a Christian group that collaborates with the International Justice Mission. Once a girl escapes from the brothel system, such groups provide medical and legal help, counseling and vocational training.

For several weeks a year Carson trains staff associated with such indigenous Christian organizations. His work ranges from training doctoral students to helping ministries develop youth projects in India’s slums.

For more than 20 years Carson has collaborated with Indian scholars on research and writing. He has published extensively on various topics relating to child sexual abuse, counseling, family therapy and family life education.

His passion for South Asia and its people took root in 1975, when he first went to India on a three-month mission as a young college graduate. In 1997-1998 he was a Fulbright senior scholar in India, and he won a Fulbright senior specialist award.

Though Carson finds vibrant Christian organizations serving the poor and exploited in India, he often goes into areas where Christians suffer persecution. In parts of the Himalayas, he sees “just a ferocious kind of Hinduism” that won’t allow church planting.

“Or if you try to build something, the people in the community will just keep tearing it down and threatening you,” said Carson. “So the alternative is for people to create house churches.” With house churches “sprouting up all over” in India, Carson sees God’s spirit “mightily at work.” And he serves among people “who tend to pay a much bigger price for their faith than we do here.”

Once again this year he plans to return to the country, to continue his service, research and relationship building. “To me,” he said, “it’s really all about the relationships that I make every year.”
In Los Angeles, the “Entertainment Capital of the World,” some 800 people packed the Regal Premiere House for the movie premiere. As the opening credits rolled across the giant 70-foot screen, in the back row, his heart beating fast, sat the film’s young director, Palm Beach Atlantic alumnus Lukas Colombo.

His former dean’s prophecy had come true. Just a few years earlier, at a PBA awards banquet, Dr. J. Duane Meeks predicted: “some day we’ll see Lukas’ work on the big screen.”

Despite the confidence expressed by Meeks, that day came sooner than anyone reasonably should have expected. On Jan. 25, “I Love You” premiered, and with this urban retelling of the Prodigal Son parable, PBA celebrated the first time an alumnus has directed a feature film.

“I was overwhelmed, just thanking God,” said Colombo in a telephone interview from his California home. “So many people are out here for years and years and they don’t get to make their first film until they’re middle aged.”

For Colombo, the Hollywood magic began just a month or so after he moved to California in May 2012. In 2010 he had finished at PBA, where he had played on the tennis team and been the outstanding departmental graduate of the Cinema-Television program. After graduation he had been developing his own film company in Atlanta.

“I just felt a calling to come out here” to California, he said, “and it just came down to God and trusting him.” Then, “out of the blue, I got a call from a producer who had seen my work.”

The producer had a script, and he needed a director. Soon he and Colombo joined others for a meeting at a

A trailer for the film “I Love You” runs at http://vimeo.com/48656168
Three students from the School of Communication and Media were among the winners at the Broadcast Education Association’s Festival of Media Arts, held in conjunction with the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in Las Vegas in April. Junior public relations major Rachel Bartolotta tied for first place in the feature category of the scriptwriting competition for her project “Callie O’Shay’s Name in Lights.” Cinema-television major junior Amber Clack took first place in the short subject category with her project “Mirror,” while sophomore Anthony Rose received an honorable mention in the same category for “Three Years Strong.”

Students in Cinema-Television have won three more AVA Digital Awards, which brings the total to 18 major video/film awards for the program during the academic year. The AVA winners are:

• A Platinum Award for “Tell Someone,” directed by senior Ande Kirkham
• A Gold Award for “Nike Nightmare,” directed by Nick Natale (’13)
• A Gold Award for “Solitude,” which was jointly written, produced and directed by junior Chris Butler, Nick Natale, senior Erica Paul, and junior Brittany Sabie during a 36-hour time frame last spring.

There were more than 2,100 competition entries. The AVA Digital Awards are administered by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals. PBA students have won 81 awards since the inception of the program, most of which can be viewed in Pembroke Hall.

Students keep winning


But with the blessings came challenges aplenty. “This feature was a roller coaster,” said Colombo. He put together “an awesome crew” of 25 people and directed a week of shooting, “and then things got hairy.” Snags developed between producers and investors, and production halted. Some months later Colombo began a second shoot, but he had to cut his crew in half because money was tight.

Then once again, production stopped, leaving a frustrated director with the shooting two-thirds done. Finally there was so much trouble with the funding, Colombo concluded, “Heck with this. I’m just going to do it myself.” So the final third of the movie got shot “with just me and a couple of helping hands, whoever we could scrounge up for the day.” This meant Colombo was directing the actors, telling helpers where to move the lights and operating a 50-pound camera on his shoulder, all for 11 or 12 hours a day.

(Continued on page 22)
Moai Films, Colombo’s own three-person company, did the post-production work, but not without “lots of conflicts and arguments” with producers. He wanted more time to fine-tune the production, but the producers rushed ahead and booked the premiere.

They say the show must go on, but as it did, Colombo said, “I was sitting in the back row cringing a little bit because of certain sound elements.” Nonetheless, he said, “everyone seemed to enjoy it,” including PBA’s Dean Meeks, who had come to L.A. for the occasion.

A trailer for the film runs at http://vimeo.com/48656168. Capitalizing on the Prodigal Son theme, the producers hope for a Father’s Day release in 20 cities nationwide. But that’s out of director Colombo’s hands, which points to the major lesson he said this “roller coaster” project taught him: “The next feature film I would want to be able to direct AND produce.” The director’s job, he said, is to “interpret the script and give it life.” He wants to be producer as well, “to be sure my vision comes to life.”

When Colombo was a PBA student, Antonio Zarro, associate professor of cinema-television, saw leadership qualities that a director/producer would need. “He was a lover of film, and he would take ownership of his projects,” said Zarro. “I was impressed by his enthusiasm.”

Dean Meeks recognized Colombo as one who “thinks in pictures,” and who can effectively translate his ideas into compelling stories. “Lukas’ work clearly demonstrated to me that he has an unmistakable talent for visual storytelling,” he said.

Colombo recalled that his PBA professors handed him significant projects and boosted his confidence. “Everyone there was great,” he said. “They were more than just my professors; they became friends and mentors.”

Other PBA friends have joined Colombo in the L.A. entertainment scene, and three made appearances in “I Love You”: Ben Anklam ’10 Film Production, Laura Marina Rodriguez ’09 Cinema-TV and Barbara Baker ’10 Theatre Arts.

Yet another PBA alum, the former Gina Battista ’10 Biology, is now Mrs. Lukas Colombo. Their first child, a son, is to make his debut in September.
Like other working adults looking to further their education, Clay Hahn found everything he was looking for in Palm Beach Atlantic University’s MacArthur School of Leadership: A Christian worldview, excellent instructors and flexible scheduling.

As for the 620-mile one-way commute (as the crow flies) from his home near Tuscaloosa, Ala., to West Palm Beach: Certainly not a problem in this era of online learning, but Hahn wanted to earn his master’s degree in leadership the old-fashioned way.

Since 2012, Hahn has traveled each week to South Florida by commercial aircraft to attend classes. “I wanted the experience of being on campus,” said Hahn, who has been the senior vice president of Burnam-Hahn, Inc. (his family’s business) for seven years as well as lead pastor of Wildwood Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa County for seven years.

In addition to logging frequent flyer miles, Hahn also made lasting connections with his fellow students. “My classmates have been great,” he said. “They would even come pick me up at the airport for class.”

On May 10, Hahn traveled to West Palm Beach yet again to join his cohort at spring commencement. He said he plans to use the skills he’s learned in organizational leadership in both business and church ministry. “I was at a season of my life and career where I could do this,” he said. “This program really fit me.”

Hahn took three classes taught by Dr. Art Johnson, professor of leadership and organizational development, who noted that Hahn didn’t miss any classes despite his long-distance commute. “In the LDR (Leadership Masters) program, graduate students have many assignments that require them to complete projects in the community with either businesses or non-profit organizations,” Johnson said. “Clay always seemed to enjoy this consulting role, and the organizations benefited from it. He always brought a ‘God-centered focus’ to his work.”

Before enrolling in the master’s program in leadership at PBA, Hahn already had two master’s degrees: a Master of Divinity degree from Liberty University and a Master of Ministry degree from Tennessee Temple University. He had heard about PBA as an undergraduate but felt he was supposed to attend the University of Mobile, where he earned a bachelor’s degree with a double major in business communication and pastoral ministry.

He said he is grateful that he had a chance to come to PBA after all. “God opened the door to do this,” he said. “I pray that I can integrate my educational experience at PBA into all aspects of life and become the kind of servant leader that God desires for me to be.”
Sailfish Nicolas Uryson plays on the new, high-tech courts. The surface colors were designed to reduce eye fatigue.
If you’ve never understood that it takes science and engineering to build great tennis courts, then you’ve never walked a court with Sheldon Westervelt.

The new courts at the Marshall and Vera Lea Rinker Athletic Campus take shape under the design and watchful eye of Westervelt, an expert who’s overseen the construction of more than 7,000 tennis courts around the globe.

“There’s a lot of technology developed over the years that we incorporate in these designs,” said Westervelt, principal of Global Sports & Tennis Design Group. He pointed out a few of the fine points in the Mitch Gornto Tennis Center, including tailor-made touches for South Florida.

For example, windscreens are a common feature on tennis courts, but here in hurricane territory Westervelt’s windscreens know when to quit hanging on. The screens are attached by specially rated plastic ties, which will break and release the screens in critically high wind. Otherwise, a screen catching that wind could easily rack and ruin the fence surrounding the courts, leading to costly repairs.

And when the Sailfish players must take a break for an afternoon thunderstorm, Westervelt wants to get them back on the court as soon as possible. To drain the water quickly, he has placed long, thin “slot” drains between courts. The courts slant and drain side-to-side, not end-to-end, by design. “It’s very important that when two players play opposite each other they’re on a level plane, so there’s no advantage of one over the other,” Westervelt said.

Westervelt laid out the courts running north-south, so that players wouldn’t be looking into the setting sun.

Between courts the backstop fence juts out with an extra corner, to prevent loose balls rolling from court to court and stopping play. Westervelt has planned carefully with the spectators in mind as well, providing shade shelters to give a break from the sun.

There’s even planning and science behind the color choice. The court surface colors of green and blue are the same as those at the U.S. Open. “We try to match up the colors with light reflectivity to reduce eye fatigue,” Westervelt said.

To all that careful planning, the University has added “quality of construction of the highest grade” by the company Big D Paving, said Carolyn Stone, director of athletics. “It’ll be one of the premiere Division II tennis facilities in the country when it’s completed.”

Already, the Sailfish “love it,” said tennis coach Chi Ly. “They’re very excited every time we have practice.”

(Continued on following page)
Located on Parker Avenue near Southern Boulevard and Interstate 95, the Mitch Gornto Tennis Center now has six courts completed, with six more in the works. Collegiate tennis needs six courts for a match, so at 12 courts the center will accommodate visiting teams of men and women at the same time. Eventually the complex will gain a 13th court: a championship court with permanent gallery seating.

The center gets its name from the late Mitch Gornto, a local tennis legend who taught three generations of players at the Bath & Tennis Club in Palm Beach. Paul Van der Grit, one of the key donors behind the new PBA courts, recalled that once Gornto had to tell Bobby Kennedy to get off the court because he was not properly attired. “But that was Mitch,” said Van der Grit. “He was very fair; that’s why people loved him. He was gentle, but he made you better.”

Van der Grit heads TEAM First – PAL, which stands for Tennis Education And Mentoring First – Police Athletic League. The organization uses tennis to impact the lives of at-risk youth. During an early fund-raising dinner for the new PBA tennis center, Van der Grit introduced one of the young people who has benefited from the mentoring program. That young man’s story so touched the dinner guests, Van der Grit said, that donations began flowing to get the project started.

The donors caught the vision that the tennis courts and the entire athletic complex will do much more than benefit PBA students. As student athletes volunteer in mentoring and other outreach efforts, Van der Grit said, “it’s going to have an enormous impact on the community.”
Charles Bernal '79 is the lead pastor of LifePointe Church in Crowley, Tex. He was named one of the top 10 fittest Christian leaders in America by Health Fitness Revolution. He suffered a spinal cord injury in 1999 and was confined to a wheelchair until 2003. With intensive therapy and hard work, he was able to regain limited mobility and has worked for the past 11 years to regain his ability to walk. He committed himself to lose weight and reached his goal, losing 141 pounds, and has kept the weight off for almost three years.

Susan Gladys Cray Kackley '84 was named elementary principal at Southwest Florida Christian Academy in Ft. Myers, Fla. She received her master's degree in education from Southeastern University last December. Email: susie.kackley@mccgregor.net

Michael James Zumpf '89 retired from full-time ministry and moved to Marion, Va. Email: mzumpf@centurylink.net

Alexandra Carpenter Cook '93/'94 MBA is the director of finance for the Health Care District of Palm Beach County.

Mark Nicoletti '94, of Los Angeles, has been promoted to partner in the Sklar Kirsh firm’s Real Estate Practice Group.

Dr. Chris Harmon '94, headmaster of Legacy Christian Academy in Frisco, has been named the Texas Private School Music Educators Association 2014 Distinguished Administrator of the Year. Since his arrival on campus six years ago, Harmon has encouraged the success of the fine arts program, even taking the stage in the LCA’s productions of “Music Man” and “The Best of Broadway.”

Matthew Perry '94 will lead a September conference in Point Fortin, Trinidad & Tobago, on the topic “Is Jesus Really Enough? Looking at the Promises of the Prosperity Gospel.” Perry is pastor of preaching and vision at Arapahoe Road Baptist Church in Centennial, Colo. He celebrated 15 years of marriage to his wife, Cindy, and has four children: Hannah, 13, Holly, 10, David, 8 and Daniel, 8. Email: matthew_perry@arbc.net

Beth Dunn Ryther '96 received her master’s degree in public administration with a concentration in public policy from Valdosta State University in December. She is a member of the senior executive team at Cook Medical Center in Adel, Ga., serving as the director of physician clinics and customer service. Email: beth.ryther@tiftregional.com

Jacqueline Rogers '96/'97 M.S. received her doctorate in Health Care Education from Nova Southeastern University last August. Rogers serves as dean of Health Sciences and Public Safety at Palm Beach State College. She received the PBA Praxis Award for integration of theory and application of concepts to her professional endeavors. Email: rogersj@palmbeachstate.edu

Homecoming 2014
Save the date:
Nov. 12-15
Enjoy the Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, Sporting Events, Family Cookout.
Class Reunion Gatherings for '74, '79, '84, '89, '94, '99, '04, '09
www.pba.edu/alumni-events
Dan Hulen ‘97, of Stuart, Fla., was named to Vantiv’s 2013 President’s Cup for the fourth consecutive year as a result of his 2013 sales performance. Vantiv, Inc. (NYSE: VNTV) is a leading, integrated payment processor differentiated by a single, proprietary technology platform. Email: Dan.Hulen@ftpsllc.com

R. Joseph Ritter ‘98, of Stuart, Fla., recently obtained certification as a certified financial planner and founded the non-profit organization Zacchaeus Financial Counseling, Inc., which provides low-cost financial planning services to lower income families. Web: www.ZacchaeusFinancial.org Email: rjmitterjr@bellsouth.net

Kevin Patrick Corbett ’99 is executive director of learning and performance in the offices of university advancement at the University of Southern California. He has been hired specifically to engage, develop and retain talent within the division with an aim to increase fundraising performance and realize success for the university’s ambitious campaign. Email: corbettkp@gmail.com

Matt Alan Klein ’00, of Rochester Hills, Mich., last year started a peer-to-peer car review channel called Voteoncars.com. This April he began shooting a television pilot as a spin-off from the website. Email: kleinfam04@comcast.net

Steve Ruff ’02 graduated from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago, Ill., with his master’s of divinity degree. He serves at Parkside Church near Cleveland, Ohio. Email: steveruff16@yahoo.com

Jean South ’01’04 MBA, of Cinnaminson, N.J., moved into the private sector working with McChrystal Group, which was founded by General Stanley McChrystal and former Navy SEAL David Silverman. The group seeks the best and brightest from the U.S. military, government service and the private sector.

Amber Powella Gleason ’05, of Gibsonton, Fla., graduated with a master’s in public health from the University of South Florida College of Public Health. Gleason also became certified in public health by the National Board of Public Health Examiners. Email: agleasonpharmd@gmail.com

Ruthie Ann Miles ’05 received the 2014 Lucille Lortel award for Best Actress in a Musical, the highest award offered for shows off Broadway, for her starring role in “Here Lies Love.” Based on the life of Filipino leader Imelda Marcos, the musical reopened for its commercial run in New York City on May 1. The show will have a London premiere at the National Theatre in October.

Robert “Bobby” Tripplett ’07, of Riverview, Fla., has published the first installment of “Epic of Haven,” a trilogy of allegorical fiction (www.epicofhaven.com). He reports more than 40,000 downloads of the book since its release in March. He was founding pastor and senior pastor of Element Church in Tampa, and has also been a music pastor.

Joy Ziaja ’09 is teaching in Asia. Email: joy.ziaja@elic.org

Cait Harte ’09 is vice president of marketing and business development with Coast Real Estate Services. Based in Seattle, Wash., Coast is a full service real estate company with a focus in property management for commercial and multifamily buildings throughout the Pacific Northwest. Email: charte@coastmgt.com

Palm Beach Atlantic University
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

27th Annual Golf Tournament

October 4
Save the date

pba.edu/alumni-events
Bruce Burk ’10, a proud graduate of the Rinker School of Business, will graduate from law school next year and is going into transnational and real estate law in Florida. Email: bdburk@gmail.com

Lou Heffernan ’13, of Jupiter, Fla., has published “Tomorrow’s Heroes” a multimedia project designed to offer support and encouragement to people in pursuit of difficult dreams. This “toolkit” is available on Amazon, with a sample song posted on Soundcloud.com. Email: heff7@comcast.net

What's your news?
Share the word about that new job, promotion, spouse or baby:
pba.edu/alumniservices
(And send us a high-resolution photo with your news item)
Weddings

Clare Margarita Vazquez ’96, of Lantana, Fla., married Matt Peace on Sept. 22, 2012. Email: clarepbfl@gmail.com

Elise M. Warner ’98 married Maxwell Fowler in Duluth, Ga., on Nov. 2, 2013. Max is a civil engineer with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Elise works for Growing Leaders, Inc. specifically in the areas of sales and customer relations in Norcross, Ga. Growing Leaders is a non-profit organization that serves to prepare tomorrow’s leader today. The couple lives in Sugar Hill, Ga. with their awesome dog, Bailey. Email: thefowlerfamily@outlook.com

Breanne Fairfax ’10 married Shaun Castillo ’01 on April 13 at Memorial Presbyterian Church in West Palm Beach. They live in West Palm Beach where Shaun is business development and corporate events manager for the Sun Sentinel Company and Breanne is an account manager for Kirkland Event & Destination Services, Inc. Emails: scastillo@sunsentinel.com and breanne.fairfax@gmail.com

Tiffany Herndon ’10 and her husband Nate Herndon ’11, of Steilacoom, Wash., celebrate the birth of their daughter Rebecca Joy Herndon, born Jan. 6, 2014.

In Loving Memory

Reilly Adams ’10 passed away March 18, 2014.

Births & New Additions

Shila Schweigert Garrett ’06 and husband, Gary welcomed their son Levi Samuel Garrett on Oct. 6, 2013. They live in Royal Palm Beach, Fla. Email: ShilaGarrett@gmail.com

Katie Sharpe Rowe (formerly Cartier) ’06/’09 M.S. and husband, Josh, welcomed their son Nathaniel Allen Rowe. They live in Jupiter, Fla.

Carlton McCartney ’11 passed away March 8, 2014, just a few weeks before earning his master’s degree from the MacArthur School of Leadership. At commencement his wife Erica accepted his degree on his behalf.
Top 10 reasons to give

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From left, Jade Scarmazzo (current student) and Kim Scarmazzo ’07

From left, Annah Wolf ’01 and Claudia Wolf Moore ’05 Pharm.D.

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7. Say “Thanks PBA.” A donation expresses your gratitude for a life-changing experience at PBA.
8. Tax Deductible. Reduce your taxes and direct more of your income to help students at PBA. You’ll thank us on April 15.
9. To Leave a Legacy. By making a bequest to PBA, you ensure that your personal legacy lives on and makes a difference to students forever.
10. We make it easy to give. www.pba.edu/giving

Supporting PBA with your gifts and pledges secures PBA’s future. We love our donors! As you contemplate your contribution, please consider these 10 top reasons to give:

1. To Make a Difference. Your gift, small or large, directly impacts the lives of PBA students, faculty and staff. Combine your gift with the gifts of thousands of alumni, parents and friends and the impact is amazing.
2. To Maintain Traditions. The vision set by our founders in 1968 for providing the very best Christian education is still carried out today at PBA. Your gifts help keep the tradition alive.
3. Every gift is important to the Annual Fund Initiative ... and to PBA. Give back to provide future PBA students the opportunity to receive the personal attention and academic excellence that set PBA apart.
4. Your gift enhances the value of a PBA degree. When national rankings are calculated by authorities such as the Princeton Review, alumni giving is a key factor. Your gift helps increase PBA’s rankings and reputation.
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Hear their blend online

You take the high note, Jeanny Alexandre motions to Stephanie Barrera (far right) and Olivia Melendez as they harmonize for the Chapel Worship Team. To see and hear the team go to www.pba.edu/chapel-praise-14