



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



PRESTON ATWOOD (prestonatwood@regentsacademy.com)

Panel Discussion: "Virtue and Spiritual Formation"

Preston Atwood serves as the headmaster of Regents Academy in Nacogdoches, Texas. He earned his Ph.D and M.A. in classical & ancient Near Eastern studies (Hebrew Bible major; Greek minor) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a Th.M. and M. Div. at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a B.A. in humanities at Scarborough College. Dr. Atwood was previously the headmaster at Grace Classical Christian Academy in Granbury, Texas, and has held administrative appointments at UW-Madison (2014-2019), the National Association of Professors of Hebrew (2015-2017), and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (2010-2014). Dr. Atwood has also been the recipient of several fellowships and grants, affording him opportunities to present his scholarly research in many countries and states, including a summer-long research stay in Jerusalem, Israel. Dr. Atwood is married to Emily and has eight kids, five of whom attend Regents. Aside from his more administrative and scholarly pursuits, Dr. Atwood enjoys writing piano music, fishing, conducting experiments with his sons, crafting with his daughters, drinking Mediterranean coffee, and taking his wife to non-chain restaurants. Email: prestonatwood@regentsacademy.com



GREGORY S. BAYLOR (ksnarey@adflegal.org)

"Facing Legal Threats to Your School's Religious Liberty"

Gregory S. Baylor serves as senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom, where he is the director of the Center for Religious Schools and Senior Counsel for Government Affairs. Since joining ADF in 2009, Baylor has focused on defending and advancing the religious freedom of faith-based educational institutions through advice, education, legislative and public advocacy, and representation in disputes. He has testified about religious liberty issues three times before congressional committees. Greg regularly comments on religious liberty and higher education issues in television, radio, and print media, including *The New York Times*, *Christianity Today*, National Public Radio, and network and cable news programs. Additionally, he serves on the board of directors for the Museum of the Bible and the International Alliance for Christian Education. Greg earned his Juris Doctor in 1990 from Duke University School of Law, where he graduated Order of the Coif, with high honors, and served on the editorial board of the Duke Law Journal. He received his bachelor's degree in honors English in 1987 from Dartmouth College. Following graduation from law school, he served as law clerk to the Hon. Jerry E. Smith on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He practiced labor and employment law at two large international law firms for three years before joining the staff of Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Religious Freedom, where he served for 15 years prior to joining ADF. He lives in Northern Virginia with his wife (a medical doctor) and two daughters.

LEADER'S DAY PRE-CONFERENCE: SPEAKERS



MATT BEATTY (mbeatty@bloomfieldchristian.com)

Panel Discussion: "Educating Our Parents"

Matt Beatty is the head of school at Bloomfield Christian School, a charter member and accredited school in ACCS. He also serves on the ACCS board of directors. Matt has been a pastor, college professor and working in and around Christian and classical education since 1996. He has a B.A. from Grove City College, an M. Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and counseling certificates from CCEF. He has been married to his college sweetheart, Lynnae, for thirty years and has four children in their twenties.



JAMES COWART (james.cowart@trinitaschristian.org)

Panel Discussion: "Educating Our Parents"

James Cowart serves as headmaster at Trinitas Christian School in Pensacola, Florida. He previously served as headmaster at an ACCS school in TN before moving to Pensacola almost ten years ago. James and his wife Joy have five children, all of whom attend Trinitas.



TIM DERNLAN (tdernlan@accsedu.org)

"Identifying and Training New Board Members"

Dr. Timothy Dernlan earned an Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership from Ashland University and was named the Outstanding Graduate in 2013. He also holds an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Lehigh and a B.A. in Communication and Education from Purdue. He currently serves as Vice President for the Association of Classical Christian Schools. He has served as Head of School at institutions ranging from 200 to 1300 students and has served on a variety of non-profit boards and committees. He consults with schools and specializes in board governance, strategic planning, organizational structure, and financial stability. He has authored several books including *A Guide to Understanding Classical Christian Education* and *Classical Christian Virtues*. Dr. Dernlan and his wife, Kara, were married in 2000 and they have two sons and two daughters (Boaz, Ezekiel, Rebecca, and Anna). They enjoy hiking, reading, camping, exercising, theology, and playing board games together as a family.



DAVID GOODWIN (david.goodwin@accsedu.org)

"Taking Truth Seriously"

David Goodwin has served as the full-time president of the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS) since 2015. Formerly, he was the head of the Ambrose School, a classical Christian school in Boise, Idaho from 2003 through 2014. He served on the ACCS Board as an elected member from 2010 to 2014, and helped develop the strategic plan for the ACCS. Prior to his work in classical Christian education, Mr. Goodwin spent 13 years in marketing and new business development for a large computer products manufacturer. He holds an MBA and BIS from Boise State University. He and his wife, Stormy, work as a team on many ACCS projects and attend The King's Congregation in Boise, Idaho.



GEORGE GRANT (george@parishpres.org)

"The Great Continental Revival: Haldane, d'Aubigne, and Groen"

George Grant has started a lot of things and somehow or another he has even managed to finish a few of them. Currently, he is the pastor of Parish Presbyterian Church in Franklin,

LEADER'S DAY PRE-CONFERENCE: SPEAKERS



Tennessee, where he also serves as the director of the King's Meadow Study Center and teaches at the Franklin Classical School. He has planted four churches, established a fistful of schools and co-ops along with two colleges, accumulated a bottom drawer full of academic degrees, and is the author of enough out-of-print books to keep half the garage sales in the South fully stocked. But, by his own testimony, his greatest accomplishment is his ongoing role as husband of one, father of three, and grandfather of six (and counting).

TY HENSLEY (thensley@bayshorechristian.org)

Panel Discussion: "Virtue and Spiritual Formation"

Ty Hensley is currently the upper-school principal at Bayshore Christian School where he has served for the last three years. He has a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and a masters in educational leadership from Georgia College and State University. His greatest blessing during his college years was meeting his beautiful wife Kelly at GC&SU. They were married in 2005 and have two beautiful children together, Avery (15) and Ace (12). After eight years of teaching in public education, Ty realized that public education was not the answer for his kids or for the students that he taught. He began researching classical Christian education and was immediately hooked. Shortly thereafter, he became the headmaster of Providence Classical Christian School in Oxford, Georgia, in 2010. Later, God called him on a new adventure at Annapolis Christian Academy in Corpus Christi, Texas, in 2016. He left Texas in 2020 and has been at Bayshore for the past three years and loves the school and the lower Alabama gulf coast area. He is passionate about classical Christian education and has a deep-seated desire to advance the classical Christian vision.



KYLE HUGHES (khughes@stonehavenschool.org)

Panel Discussion: "Virtue and Spiritual Formation"

Kyle R. Hughes (Ph.D., Radboud University Nijmegen) is an author, pastor, and educator who currently serves as the inaugural lower school principal at The Stonehaven School in Marietta, Georgia. He is the author of three books, including most recently *Teaching for Spiritual Formation: A Patristic Approach to Christian Education in a Convulsed Age* (Cascade, 2022), the writing of which further sold him on the crucial importance of classical Christian education. He also works as the director of catechesis and as a member of the clergy team at Christ the King Anglican Church in Marietta.



TONY JEFFREY (tony.jeffrey@covenantchristian.net)

"The LBTQ+ Challenge—Is your School Ready?"

Tony was born and raised in Fairmont, Minnesota, and became a believer in 1972 while attending a worldview summer camp called the Summit, located in Manitou Springs, Colorado. He has a B. A. in biblical studies from American Christian College, a Th. M. from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Ph. D. from the University of North Texas. He and his wife Kathy have been married for forty years and he has three grown children and two (so far) grandchildren. Tony began his career in Christian schools in 1982 and has served over the years as a high school teacher, registrar, college and guidance counselor, accreditation coordinator, learning difference program coordinator, director of admission, director of development, assistant headmaster and headmaster for two classical Christian schools for over fifteen years. Tony also serves an elder in his church, is on the director's development board of the Jesus Film Project, a ministry of CRU, and is very

LEADER'S DAY PRE-CONFERENCE: SPEAKERS



active in the pro-life movement. Tony's two favorite leadership and management books are: *Good To Great* by Jim Collins, and *The Way of the Shepherd* by Kevin Leman.



GENE LIECHTY (gliechty1@gmail.com)

Panel Discussion: "What We've Learned: Do's and Don'ts in Fundraising and Development"

Gene Liechty is the director of advancement at Sandhills Classical Christian School in Pinehurst, North Carolina. Prior to this, he served in a similar capacity at Cary Christian School in Cary, North Carolina and Logos School in Moscow, Idaho. Gene has also planted/pastored several churches in the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches (CREC) over the past twenty years. Gene and his wife, Kimberly, have four college-age children: Grace, Carter, Silas, and Ian.



COURTNEY PALUMBO (cpalumbo@regents-school.org)

Panel Discussion: "What We've Learned: Do's and Don'ts in Fundraising and Development"

Courtney Palumbo is the head of school at Regents. After experiencing the fruits of a classical Christian school in Texas and finding Charlottesville without such a school, Mrs. Palumbo founded Regents in 2010. She has taught kindergarten, first grade, and fifth and sixth grade literature. Mrs. Palumbo holds a bachelor's of communication from Vanderbilt University. Additionally, Mrs. Palumbo serves on the board of academic advisors for the Classical Learning Exam. Prior to moving to Charlottesville, she served as an assistant account executive for a worldwide public affairs firm in Washington, DC and opened her own event planning company in Austin, Texas. Mrs. Palumbo also served on the vice-presidential advance team for the 1992 election and in the logistical operations office of the 1992 Republican National Convention. For more than 25 years, Mrs. Palumbo has been married to Tom, who keeps life exciting, and they have three beautiful children who have all attended Regents—Katherine, Matthew, and Olivia.



DAN PETERSON (dpeterson@regentsaustin.org)

"The Situation Room: Answers for Common Problems"

Dr. Peterson has served as the head of school at Regents School of Austin since 2018. Originally from Tennessee, he obtained a M. Div. degree in theology from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He served for one year at Heritage Academy in Columbia, Missouri. He then served for six years as founding head of school at Cornerstone Academy in Tennessee, while pursuing and earning his Ph. D. in leadership and Christian education in 2012. He began his tenure at Regents in 2012 serving as the head of school of logic until 2015. He served as the head of school and president of Evangelical Christian School in Tennessee from 2015 to 2018 before returning to Regents. Dr. Peterson has presented at several national and regional conferences, and he has completed the Colson Fellows National Program. He serves as a board member for the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS), Classic Learning Test (CLT), and Baylor University's Center for School Leadership.

LEADER'S DAY PRE-CONFERENCE: SPEAKERS



DAVID SEIBEL (dseibel@accsedu.org)

“Using a Strategic Vision to Grow Fundraising and Fill Classrooms”

As the head of school, David Seibel aims to cultivate a generation of scholar-disciples who are passionate about learning. Husband to Brooke and father of two current and an additional two future Coram Deo Academy students, David holds a doctorate of education from Southern Theological Seminary, an M. Div. from Southern Theological Seminary, an M. Ed. from Marian University, and B. A. in Economics and Spanish from Wabash College. His family attends Cornerstone Bible Church in Carmel, Indiana.



ERIC SPEE (spee@shcssharks.com)

“Classical Christian Education in Urban Diverse Environments”

Eric Spee has been the head of Sheridan Hills Christian School since 2016. He has a bachelor's degree in history and a masters in school administration. He serves on the Schools United Broward leadership team and has spoken at various conferences on history, Shakespeare, and the role of athletics in Christian education. Eric and his wife Cathy have been married for 22 years. They have two children that attend SHCS and a son who graduated in 2023.



DAVID STANTON (dstanton@oakdaleacademy.com)

Panel Discussion: “Educating Our Parents”

David J. Stanton IV holds a doctorate in education (Ed. D.) and an education specialist (Ed. S.) from Liberty University along with a master of arts from Central Michigan University, and a bachelor of arts from Hillsdale College, along with diplomas from the United States Naval War College and the Joint Forces Staff College. David brings experience as a former public school teacher and administrator for years, a private Christian school teacher, collegiate teacher, and as a classical Christian school teacher and administrator. He recently retired from the U. S. Navy Reserve, having achieved the rank of Commander. During his 21 years of service, David deployed twice—once to Afghanistan (2007) and most recently to Bahrain (2021) and has numerous personal and unit/campaign decorations. Currently, he serves as the headmaster of Oakdale Academy, a classical Christian school in Waterford, Michigan. David is married to the former Joanna (Jodie) Autry and they reside outside Detroit, Michigan, with their five daughters and one son.



MEREDITH TOFLINSKI (mtoflinski@bayshorechristian.org)

Panel Discussion: “What We’ve Learned: Do’s and Don’ts in Fundraising and Development”

Meredith Toflinski is currently serving as the director of development, marketing, and donor relations at Bayshore Christian School in Fairhope, Alabama. She is working on a \$25 million dollar capital campaign for an upper school campus. Meredith graduated with a degree in telecommunication and film from The University of Alabama. She spent 5+ years working as a television reporter and is an Emmy award-winning journalist for her work covering the April 27, 2011 tornado in Tuscaloosa. Since broadcasting, Meredith worked for a Tuscaloosa-based sales and marketing firm. She is a member of the Leadership Baldwin County Class of 2023, a member of the Eastern Shore Optimist Club, and she and her husband are active members of Eastern Shore Presbyterian Church.