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COLLEGE OF THE OZARKS®

The Keeter Report



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College of the Ozarks
Featured on CBS's
The Morning Show
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General Peter Pace Visits Campus

Student Senate president, Jesse Bright, and vice president, Chelsie Moore, present General Pace with a basket filled with student-made items and a stained glass clock made on campus.

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Peter Pace Speaks at Character Forum

by Ann Pierce, senior at College of the Ozarks

"The time to decide who you are and what you will do is not when someone is shot, it's now." With these words General Peter Pace set the tone for the Spring 2008 Character Forum. This year's theme was "The



Forum honoree and longtime Missouri State Senator Emory Melton with General Pace

Role of Faith in Public Life," a subject that has been at the forefront in the current presidential race. General Pace spoke of both his experiences working under President George W. Bush and his years spent in military service where his high standards earned him the nickname "Perfect Peter Pace."

General Pace spoke openly about his faith and how critical it was while he served in active duty. Even when he questioned God, Pace said he saw more of His presence in Vietnam than anywhere else. The General served in Vietnam and was never wounded; after one mission requiring over a hundred men he was one of only three to remain unharmed. He described two instances when he knew he should have died. The first occurred when he accidentally wandered into a minefield; after seeing a mine right by his boot he spent an hour moving the ten feet to safety. The second instance occurred when a sniper attempted to kill General Pace, but another man stepped in front of Pace the moment the sniper fired. The bullet hit the other soldier and Pace was spared again. After these two instances, Pace told God he was not sure why He had saved him but he would strive to be a good leader. Since then, the Lord has placed General Pace in a number of leadership positions. Pace said he has learned that "The good Lord will not give me any more responsibility than He and I can handle together."

The General also gave the audience solid advice concerning leadership principles that have served him well:

- Pick where you will go and then lead
- Grow where you are planted
- Make decisions and live with them
- Have courage
- Make sure your moral compass has its true north
- Take care of those in your charge

The General told students there are only two things no one can take away from them: their name and integrity. “Only you can change your name or give it away.” He also said he pities those who sell their integrity for material possessions.

“Amazing conference, would highly recommend [it] to any military academy cadet.” —Forum participant survey respondent

Before the General even arrived on campus, a great deal of work had already been done for his arrival. Approximately 40 College of the Ozarks students were selected to participate in the Forum. The students met in small groups to discuss their ideas on faith in public life. The College also invited guests from other institutions to participate in the Forum. The participating schools included Patrick Henry University, Evangel University, Southwest Baptist University, and the Marine Military Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Naval Academy. The students also had their picture taken with General Pace, enjoyed a banquet, and had a private question and answer session with him. When asked his opin-



2008 Character Forum participants



Hillcrest High School Junior ROTC group from Springfield, Missouri

ion about the Forum, College of the Ozarks senior Jon Phinney said, “I enjoyed the way it brought [together] so many people and perspectives to discuss issues that are really relevant to life, specifically the political realm.” General Pace provided much insight and advice to those who attended the Spring 2008 Character Forum.

Prior to General Pace’s speech, Forum participants enjoyed hearing three plenary speakers discuss the Forum’s topic, “The Role of Faith in Public Life.”

In his recent book, *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*, Dr. Michael Lindsay, Rice University Sociology professor, interviewed hundreds of leaders in very senior positions in business, entertainment, sports, public service, and the arts to learn how they integrate their faith and convictions in their leadership roles. Dr. Lindsay recounted many of those interviews in his remarks during the opening session of the Forum.

Dr. Allen Hertzke, an internationally recognized expert on religion and politics and author of *Representing God in Washington* and *Freeing God’s Children: The Unlikely Alliance for Global Human Rights*, shared



General Peter Pace greets a student from the Citizenship Class.

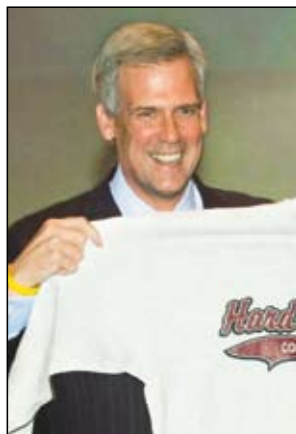
insightful stories of the influence that people of faith have had on policies and initiatives around the world.

Finally, a former Military Intelligence Officer, Dr. Evan Offstein, gave many practical examples of using a personal moral compass in leadership positions. His recent book, *Stand Your Ground: Building Honorable Leaders the West Point Way*, was the basis for his remarks.

Prior to General Pace's remarks, a banquet was held at The Keeter Center for special guests of the College. Five Junior ROTC groups and two Army ROTC groups were recognized for their patriotism and character. The leaders and cadets of the Branson USAF Junior ROTC, Forsyth USMC Junior ROTC, Hillcrest Army Junior ROTC, Nixa Army Junior ROTC, and the Southwest Area Career Center Army Junior ROTC in Monett, Missouri, were recognized. In addition, the Missouri State University Army ROTC and the College of the Ozarks Army ROTC companies were also recognized. Each group received a plaque and was photographed with General Pace and President Davis. The College was pleased to acknowledge the commitment each group had made to each other and to the Country.

College of the Ozarks Remembers Special Friend Tony Snow

Former White House Press Secretary Tony Snow visited College of the Ozarks in December 2007 as the Gittinger Community Convocation speaker. Mr. Snow spent a full day on campus visiting with students, speaking to a Citizenship class, and touring various work stations. President Jerry C. Davis remembers the personal interest he took in the students, "His message of courage, determination, and faith resonated with our campus family." Tony Snow, remembered as one of the College's most personable guests, called Dr. Davis the day after his visit to express thanks for inviting him to campus.



First PLACE! Expands to Stone County

The dream of expanding First PLACE! from its home base in Taney County into neighboring Stone County finally became a reality on April 1st of this year. One hundred people from throughout Stone and Taney counties gathered at the area's premier theme park, Silver Dollar City, to kick-off the newly formed partnership and to vote on a combined trait list. Silver Dollar City general manager Brad Thomas said, "Our hills and valleys could tell stories of folks who have settled and lived here for generations practicing character—with their relationships to their neighbors, to strangers, and to their Lord day after day. I'm thankful for the First PLACE! program teaching the children of today about those very character traits that helped Stone County become the wonderful place we all love today. Through First PLACE!, we will ensure Stone County is a great place to work and visit in the generations to follow us!" The citizens of both counties quickly got to work to further the positive results of the initiative. The number of partners in the initiative stands at 503 and continues to grow.

As the 2007-2008 school year drew to a close, two exciting events occurred. A campus-wide "character parade" at the Branson Cedar Ridge campus featured cars, puppets, and a pirate ship! School children lined the curb that runs around the entire campus and cheered for parade participants who carried banners with character traits, for fire trucks, and for their school counselors and administrators. School



spokesman Brenda Romine said, “The Parade of Good Character is becoming a tradition on this campus and a great way to celebrate all the hard work that teachers and students have contributed to improving the character of our campus.”

Another end of the year event developed when a special First PLACE! community partner stepped forward to provide an exciting celebration that focused on character and good, wholesome fun for families. The Track Family Fun Parks, which owns four locations along Branson’s popular strip, wanted to kick off summer for the families of Stone and Taney County school children. The park opened its gates and offered all its rides (including arcade games) to families at no charge for three hours on a Saturday morning in May. Banners with character traits were hung around the park as well as special signage that linked certain character traits to desired behavior. Vans and cars of children filled the parking lot, and each person received a bag filled with a First PLACE! magnet, trait list, and pencil. Each attendee also received a free cup of custard from Andy’s Frozen Custard. Winners of drawings for free prizes were announced throughout the day.

Special go-cart races were held, pitting school bus drivers against each other, and school principals got behind the wheels and roared through the three-story, wooden race track called Wild Woody. By the end of the three hours, happy children (and parents) had enjoyed a special morning—complete with picture-perfect weather, free rides, and a great time with their families at this special end-of-the-year event. The owners and staff of the Track Family Fun



Parks provided the perfect opportunity for students to celebrate the start of summer.

Another project that has evolved in Stone and Taney counties that reinforces the character traits of First PLACE! is the WHEELS program ("Wheel Be Connected"). The brainchild of Gina Crump, southwest Missouri facilitator with CHARACTER*plus*®, WHEELS has been in its pilot program this year at Branson School district. The initiative involves the elementary school bus drivers who have learned to interact with school children in more positive and respectful ways. Aside from being role models for the students, school bus drivers have the opportunity to get the day off to a positive start with the children on their buses. Many of the drivers have displayed the character bus traits inside the bus as a visual reminder to the children about good character. Mr. Gene Lamb, a committed and enthusiastic bus driver, and Ms. Crump will be presenting the WHEELS concept to other bus drivers from school districts across the state at the CHARACTER*plus*® Conference training session in St. Louis this summer.

Another activity related to the First PLACE! initiative is a high school IMPACT group, comprised of students from the area high schools, who have just completed their first collaborative project. The students created a magazine full of student-written articles describing the impact character education has had in their schools. The publication included photographs, an opinion page, a restaurant review, and a feature page of elementary school students' artwork. Mr. Roger Frieze, marketing director of Ozark Mountain Bank and First PLACE! partner, spent countless hours helping bring this magazine to print and encouraging the students every step of the way.

As the fourth year of First PLACE! begins, The Keeter Center for Character Education looks forward to working with all the schools in Stone and Taney counties and providing opportunities to share ideas, host speakers, and recognize students and community members who demonstrate good character. The focus will be on helping Stone and Taney county schools embed character education in the hearts of their students as they change the culture of their schools.



The S. Truett Cathy Poverty Summit

by Natalie Hinds, senior at College of the Ozarks

The Keeter Center for Character Education at College of the Ozarks hosted its Second Annual Poverty Summit April 23-25. This year's summit was dedicated to Truett Cathy, founder of Chick-fil-A® Corporation, who provided a gift used to fund this three-day event. Cathy and his family, longtime friends of the College, have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to Christian values and a heart for children, especially those in poverty. The Summit featured poverty expert Dr. Rita Pierson, who has an extensive background in education and serves as a national consultant for schools and communities seeking effective solutions for problems caused by poverty. Each of the three one-day workshops was open to the greater community, with the goal of fostering a better understanding of poverty and how to reduce its effects.



S. Truett Cathy

The opening workshop, intended for business owners and managers, was entitled “The Hidden Rules of Class at Work” and focused on tools to improve employee retention rates, build a positive outlook in the workplace, and raise overall productivity. Pierson also explained the different hidden rules that exist in the low, middle, and wealthy classes. Amanda Manuel, a College of the Ozarks student participant, felt that Pierson’s examples helped to clarify the realities of hidden rules. She said, “Dr. Pierson made this reality come to life with a story about how households in poverty spend money. She told of a man buying a high-end television with his last dollar because he knew bringing home a television would make him a hero. As a member of the middle class, I would have immediately judged him as irresponsible for spending all the money he had on a television, but now I realize that hidden rules are associated with all economic groups.”

The second seminar, “A Framework for Understanding Poverty,” centered around learning more about the day-to-day lives, communication patterns, and relationships of those in poverty. Pierson discussed



Dr. Rita Pierson visits with workshop attendees.

the hidden rules of class, registers of language, discipline interventions, and 12 key points in understanding poverty. The purpose of the topics was not to excuse the behavior of those in poverty but to understand what life is like for those who live in it every day.

The summit concluded with a workshop entitled “Learning Structures for Classroom Teachers.” Many area teachers attended and listened to Dr. Pierson explain the structures of learning in terms of the what, why, and how. Pierson also explained “mental models” for vocabulary, math, and reading that are very effective in helping school children who live in poverty. Dr. Danita Frazier, an education professor at C of O, attended the workshop and found it to be very helpful. She said, “Dr. Pierson’s approach was very down to earth and logical. It was usable information. It just made sense.” She also felt that all teachers in attendance benefited from Pierson. “She gave some very good hands-on examples that teachers can use in the classroom to be more productive in meeting students’ needs.”

College of the Ozarks Featured on CBS

On July 29th, a story about Hard Work U. on CBS’s *The Early Show* featured several students describing the work program in addition to beautiful shots of the campus. Emily Howard, a pre-med student, said the work experience she has gained from the College’s Work Education



Program will reflect her strong work ethic to medical school officials and future employers. Graduating debt-free through hard work is an opportunity given to all College of the Ozarks students.

Butterflies at Branson Takes Flight

by Elyse Vasquez, senior at College of the Ozarks



Bright lights. Family fun. Entertainment. Music. Shopping.

These are some of the attractions that Branson is known for, and soon “butterflies” will be added to the list. Not just any butterflies, but larger than life butterfly sculptures that help support a good cause. *Butterflies at Branson*, presented by The Butterfly Palace and Rainforest Adventure, is an art exhibit benefiting Christian Action Ministries (CAM) whose mission is to help those in need; this event will help them do just that.

CAM was first organized in 1984 to provide a much needed center for food distribution. CAM opened the food pantry in March 1985 with the participation of 11 churches and many individuals. CAM has since expanded its services to include assistance with rent, utilities, prescriptions, and clothing for those in desperate need of help. CAM is now supported by area businesses, schools, clubs and civic organizations, individuals, and more than 25 churches.

To support *Butterflies at Branson*, local businesses are sponsoring the fiberglass butterflies that have been painted by local artists. More than 60 butterflies will be on display, including two in The Keeter Center Lodge, with a wide range of artists that includes Yakov Smirnoff and Mel Tillis.

In addition to these large butterflies, a set of twelve baby butterflies was distributed among the Stone and Taney Schools with an assigned First PLACE! character trait to use in their decorating theme. The classroom that decorated the butterfly will win a classroom-sized butterfly pavilion. All twelve butterflies have been reunited and are on display at The Keeter Center at College of the Ozarks.



Set of twelve butterflies distributed among the Stone and Taney county Schools

The large butterflies made their first appearance during a brunch on March 29, 2008, at The Butterfly Palace and Rainforest Adventure in Branson. These butterflies are now on display at each sponsor's location of choice—whether sidewalks, lawns, or offices—until early October. They then will be gathered for the final exhibit at the Butterfly Ball and Benefit Auction on October 10 at The Chateau on the Lake. The butterflies will be auctioned off with the proceeds going toward a new building for CAM so they can provide their services more effectively for the community. Joan Westfall

explained, “Christian Action Ministries has been blessed by great community participation for more than 22 years. The need for a building of our own has become a primary focus as we look to the future. We want to expand services and be of more value as a service organization, but we just don’t have enough room. We think this project will prove to be a winning, enjoyable activity for 2008. It is our hope that sponsors, artists, tourists, local families, and Christian Action Ministries will all benefit from this activity and will eagerly await our 2009 project when *Branson Goes Electric!*”

Butterflies at Branson isn’t just about displaying beautiful masterpieces of art but rather about reflecting a growing community spirit of caring and sharing. Community. Support. Family. A helping hand. This is what Ozark Mountain Country is increasingly being known for. Sue Head, director of The Keeter Center for Character Education said, “The College is honored that Christian Action Ministries saw an opportunity to partner with First PLACE! in this worthy project. Many area school children contributed to decorating their school’s butterfly, which will be auctioned at the Butterfly Ball, and funds raised will help other families in the area.”

CIAO – Character Inside And Out

By Jennifer Freeman, Women's Discipleship Director

C of O heralds the vision of “Citizens of Christ-like character” for students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Fondly known as *Hard Work U*, the College’s vocational emphasis is more than a means to earn the cost of tuition, but a way in which individuals are shaped by the hand of Christ. Working is one of the ways in which humility is grown in the heart. Although work is sometimes approached with negative thoughts, it is how creativity is expressed, problems are solved, new discoveries are made, and dreams come to life.

Serving others is sometimes the hardest work. Most Christians like to talk about serving until they are treated like a servant. Yet the greatest model in all of history was mocked as He sacrificed His life to serve others. There is tremendous blessing in having the freedom to learn, worship, and work without fear.

The challenge to the C of O community in the CIAO initiative is for groups of people of mixed ages and gender to get together and determine some way that they as a group can serve others, and let the Lord grow their hearts as they willingly look to the interests of others.

CIAO, (pronounced “chow”) an acronym for Character Inside And Out, is the name of the servant initiative that promotes a practical demonstration of the College of the Ozarks dedication to hard work and character. It is an effort to raise awareness of the needs of the community and to empower current students and employees of the College to act on those needs as responsible citizens.

Students, faculty, and staff sought ways to serve the community through the CIAO project. Thirty-five students and staff cut wood, cleared brush, and remodeled cabins at an area Christian camp. The C of O basketball teams and members of the athletic department worked with



Bonnie Harrell spends some time with a nursing home resident during a CIAO luau.



the Bonner Community Service Program and First PLACE! to provide a Family Fun Day at designated men's and women's basketball games. Seventy students participated in a 30-hour famine to raise funds for the hungry. The WATCH Bible study group gave one night a week to babysit during a single mothers Bible study. Another group helped area families who were victims of flooding this spring.

The people who participated in the CIAO program this semester learned what a blessing service and being focused on others can be. A large team from the College served at Camp Barnabas, a camp for disabled and terminally ill children and their siblings. The group's service to the camp made a tremendous difference. "The C of O students who came and helped at the camp literally saved us five weeks of work! This means so much to Camp Barnabas because we work with families who are financially stressed, and any money we save through volunteers is passed on through scholarships." The College of the Ozarks family demonstrated its commitment to presenting Christ-like character to the others in southwest Missouri.

What Is a Catalyst Group?

Catalyst: An agent that causes an event or process

Twice a month over 60 people are meeting and working together to improve southwest Missouri. It all began in the spring of 2006, when a group of community members gathered at The Keeter Center for a "Cooperation Celebration." This event provided an opportunity to celebrate some of the area's best cooperative efforts and to encourage attendees to participate in one of four newly formed Catalyst Groups. A Catalyst Group is comprised of 12-15 people who have agreed to recognize Christ as the builder of the community and to work collaboratively on projects in the area without seeking any recognition.

The four catalyst groups correspond to sectors of the community that have been identified as concerns to area residents through a survey: healthcare, healthy families, education, and employment. Each group has at least two mentors and meets 36 hours per year, usually twice a month for 1½ hours. The underlying purpose of these groups is

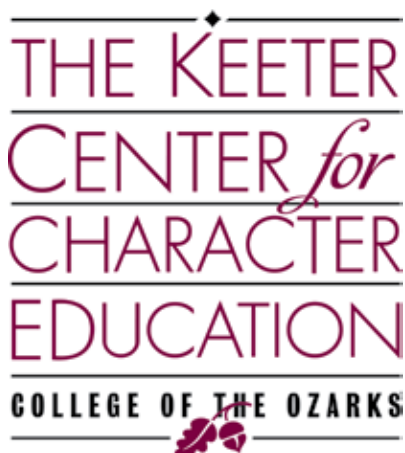


Members of the Healthcare Catalyst Group and other guests traveled to Memphis to attend the Church Health Center's replication workshop. The group is working to establish a health clinic and wellness program for the working uninsured and homeless in Stone and Taney counties.

expressed in their mission statement: We seek to honor God by striving to improve our community through positive change based on Christian values and ethics. We serve, influence, and lead by providing vision and resources in synergy with others as we value our past and guide our future.

Member criteria include a willingness to be vessels of God's will, a confidence in the power of optimism, a commitment to action, an openness to serving others and the community, a dedication to regular attendance, an attachment to values, an interest in the future, a desire for personal growth, the ability to teach leadership lessons, and a belief that strong character, integrity, and self-sacrifice can change hearts and communities. Members of each catalyst group take on certain roles—meeting leader, leadership lesson teacher, prayer facilitator, secretary, and dessert provider—and these roles rotate among the members. These groups have identified and selected projects in the community on which to focus; for example, the Celebrating Families event targeted struggling families in the area by providing parenting and life skills classes at no cost, a pastors' prayer breakfast, and public library strategic planning assistance. The healthcare group is presently working to establish a low-cost health clinic for the working poor and homeless in the area.

The Christ-centered Catalyst Group framework is becoming the model for other communities that are interested in fostering a collaborative spirit and seeking to improve the culture by identifying and working on projects. Longtime Catalyst Group mentor and community leader Edd Akers captures the heart of the projects: "It's amazing what can get done when no one cares who gets the credit."



The Keeter Center for Character Education was established at College of the Ozarks by the generosity of the James P. Keeter family and many friends from across the country. The purpose of the Center is to provide programs and activities which enhance the development of character and good citizenship. In so doing, the Center reflects the principle upon which the College of the Ozarks was established: that

character in young people is best developed from an education which includes the head, the heart, and the hands.

Over the past several years, The Keeter Center for Character Education has hosted such noted speakers as General Colin Powell, Former Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu, Mrs. Barbara Bush, President Gerald Ford, General Norman Schwarzkopf, and General Tommy Franks. During the annual forum, cadets from each of the nation's military academies are guests of the College through the Thoresen Cadet Exchange Program.

College of the Ozarks, nicknamed "Hard Work U" by *The Wall Street Journal*, is a unique college that provides a tuition-free education to deserving young people who are willing to work. Every student on the 1,000 acre campus in southwest Missouri works 15 hours a week in one of 80+ work stations on campus. The College was recently recognized by the Young America's Foundation as one of the nation's "Top 10 Conservative Colleges." *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked College of the Ozarks among America's best liberal arts colleges yearly since 1989. College of the Ozarks is a shining example of conservative ideals.

The Keeter Center for Character Education

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