

# College of **The** the Ozarks® KEETER REPORT

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## General Tommy Franks Visits Campus



*In a basket of student-made products, General Tommy Franks receives the famous College of the Ozarks fruitcake.*

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# General Tommy Franks Visits College of the Ozarks

“Serve your family, your faith, and your flag, and you can’t go wrong.” With these words General Tommy Franks opened his address at the Willard and Pat Walker Character Forum on April 14, 2005. A crowd of approximately 3,000 College of the Ozarks students, faculty, staff, and friends gathered in Keeter Gymnasium to hear General Franks speak on the importance of character, citizenship, values, and the American dream.



General Franks has had a distinguished 38-year military career. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1967 and eventually earned the rank of four-star general in June of 2000. He was assigned Commander in Chief, United States Central Command, where he directed the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He retired August 1, 2003.



*Colonel Donald McMahon, College of the Ozarks professor, is recognized by General Franks for recently serving in Iraq.*

Throughout these years, he has received many awards that include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

When college President Jerry C. Davis introduced General Franks, the audience gave him a standing ovation. Franks responded with a smile and said, “What a hoot it is to come to the Ozarks and the College of the Ozarks and see the real

Americans who are not afraid to stand up for ‘One Nation Under God.’” Franks then described his life growing up in Texas and his somewhat less than successful experience in college. After leaving college, he decided to enlist in the Army for four years, instead of being drafted for only two years. He made the comment that he has gone to school ever since then. “I go to school on everyone I meet, whether it is young privates, sergeants or older people. I know that I have learned from everyone I ever met, and everyone has something to offer.” Franks addressed the students and reminded them of the value of the C of O work program that is required of all students. “All of you young people will get experience here at College of the Ozarks. You will learn a good work ethic, and that is invaluable.”

The General also commended President George W. Bush, Franks’ Commander-in-Chief during the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Franks received his rank of four star general under President Bill Clinton, but not long afterward, Franks said, “He (Clinton) left office and a new guy came to town. George W. Bush was elected, and we are blessed to have such a man as this to run our country.” Franks stated that in the 1990s, America was attacked repeatedly, but nothing was done about it. In 2000, the USS Cole was damaged, and America once again did nothing. That was not the case when America was attacked on September 11, 2001; with General Franks in command, the United States responded by going after terrorists and the countries that support them.



*College of the Ozarks students hosted cadets and students from nine other academies and universities.*

Franks said that Bush "...is one who wants and values the opinions of his generals." Discussing war and the sacrifices that come with it, he added, "War is a bad thing, and so many have paid the price for all of our freedoms that we enjoy each day." Franks turned his attention to those present who were in uniform and ended with this statement, "As you listen to one old guy talk about character, we are honored to have you now serve this country and wear the uniform. God bless all of you, God bless America, and God grant us peace in 2005."

After his speech, students were given the opportunity to ask questions. These students were members of the Character Forum that included not only College of the Ozarks students, but also participants from Bluffton College, Evangel University, Grove City College, Marine Military Academy, North Central University, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Military Academy and U.S. Naval Academy. The representatives of these schools joined with C of O students to discuss ideas regarding character and to participate in various activities. Five members of the C of O faculty and staff led the discussion groups. During these sessions the participants developed questions they were permitted to ask at the end of the convocation. When the General was asked his favorite book, he responded immediately, "The Bible. This is one book that we should all read. I have never met or heard of an atheist in a foxhole in combat." Franks answered many questions in a straightforward manner that reflected his integrity and easy-going nature.

General Franks' visit to College of the Ozarks highlighted to the campus family and to the visitors that the character of a leader matters.



## An American Hero, Scott O'Grady, Speaks to Forum Participants



*Captain Scott O'Grady is recognized for his bravery in surviving in enemy territory for six days.*

Captain Scott O'Grady visited College of the Ozarks on April 14, 2005, during the Willard and Pat Walker Character Forum. O'Grady was shot down over Bosnia while helping enforce the NATO no-fly zone in an F-16. He was alone and faced with survival in hostile enemy territory for six agonizing days and nights. He spoke to College of the Ozarks students, along with forum participants from various institutions. O'Grady described his tale of courage with much intensity and description. He discussed his survival tactics, which included eating ants to stay alive.

"I would say my time in Bosnia was completely positive—nothing bad has come out of it," he said. "From the instant that my plane blew up around me, I opened my heart to God's love. That day five miles up, with death at my front door, I found my key to life. It took a mighty big jolt to open my eyes, but it was worth it. I knew I'd never be lost again."

O'Grady's visit to the campus was beneficial to everyone. Jill Wright, a forum participant, said, "I am still inspired by him today; he reminded me of how vital it is for America's citizens to love and serve."



# **Hard Work and Great Books— The Character Curriculum**

College of the Ozarks is probably best known as “Hard Work U,” a nickname that emphasizes the College’s belief that hard work and perseverance will enable its students to become independent citizens who will contribute to the common good of our society. In effect, “hard work” liberates our students, as it does all people, from dependence on the state or dependence on their families; hard work enables them to stand on their own, to be fully autonomous adults. “Hard work” also is an antidote to the reckless pursuit of pleasure that has destroyed so many lives, both young and old. Experience bears out that only people who are prepared to work hard are truly free to live the American dream.

However, College of the Ozarks is also a liberal arts college, and the liberal arts go hand in hand with our ethos of hard work. Why? Because the liberal arts, traditionally understood, and hard work both have the same end in mind: they are the means by which a virtuous people become free and remain free. That’s right. The liberal arts, traditionally understood, have sought to promote those “arts” by which a virtuous people safeguards its liberty. Of course, the word “liberal” carries a lot of baggage nowadays, but the “liberal” in “liberal arts” should denote the hard-won freedoms we cherish as Americans. (This also explains why an American liberal arts institution should necessarily include patriotism as part of its mission. To our knowledge, aside from the military academies, College of the Ozarks is the only liberal arts college that openly promotes patriotism, which shows how degraded the concept of the liberal arts has become in most academic circles.)

In 2001, College of the Ozarks took its liberal arts program a step further by introducing the Character Curriculum. Inspired by The Keeter Center for Character Education, the Character Curriculum seeks to examine and promote the intellectual and spiritual principles necessary to sustain a free people. This five-course curriculum offers classes in the Ideals of Character that may be substituted for existing classes in the general education program. The Character Curriculum

is not an honors program, nor is it required; it is open to all interested students. Furthermore, students may take as many or as few of the classes as they want.

Not surprisingly, the Bible is the cornerstone of the Character Curriculum, and in Biblical Ideals of Character, students examine the highest ideals of character as they are revealed in Jesus Christ. The next course is Classical Ideals of Character, in which students read Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Aristotle's *Ethics*, Plato's *Gorgias*, and Cicero's *On Duties*. In the Medieval/Renaissance Ideals of Character course, students read St. Augustine's *Confessions*, selections from St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Shakespeare's *King Lear*; among other works. Next in line is Reformation/Modern Ideals of Character, a course that examines character from the perspective of the Reformers, particularly Luther and Calvin, and then from the perspective of Enlightenment thinkers, namely, Locke and Hume. Finally, students may take the junior level capstone course, American Ideals of Character, a class that explores what the founders of our country believed about character and the relationship between a virtuous citizenry and self-government.

The Character Curriculum brings together theology, literature, history, and philosophy in an effort to answer the question, "What is character?" The ultimate goal is that students who join this great conversation will receive the most beneficial of answers—the wisdom to live good and free lives. Hard work and great books—these remain the necessary tools to sustain a virtuous democracy.



# In the Good Ol' Summertime



Every summer 500 children, ages 8 to 12, spend five days at Camp Lookout on the College of the Ozarks campus. This summer camp is designed especially for kids from southwest Missouri

who might not otherwise have a camp experience. There is no cost for the five full days of fun, and the camp even provides a Bible, toothbrush, toothpaste, towels, sheets and a pillow for each camper. Since its inception, thousands of children have been influenced by outstanding C of O students who serve as their counselors and mentors.

Camp Lookout runs for ten weeks each summer, with campers arriving on Monday and leaving on Friday at noon. Packed into those five days are activities, games, field trips, sing-alongs, and wholesome outdoor fun. Camp Lookout is a Christian camp, and for most of the kids, it is a life-changing experience.

In 1993, an 11-year-old girl from the nearby town of Kirbyville stepped into her cabin and realized that she did not recognize a single girl there. Little did she know that during that week, a seed would be planted that would impact the rest of her life. On that first day of camp, Nikki Thurman met her camp counselor, Sheila West, who was a junior at College of the Ozarks at that time.

Not only did Sheila bond with “her” kids and serve as a great cheerleader and role model for the campers in her cabin, but she also shared the gospel with the group of wide-eyed sixth-graders. Sheila formed a special bond with Nikki that was cemented over the following months after camp when she, a busy college student juggling her classes and work assignment, began corresponding frequently and attending some of Nikki’s games. Sheila’s interest made Nikki feel truly cared for.

Sheila West shared her memories of this





young camper. “Nikki was an enthusiastic camper—tiny in size, but gigantic in personality and energy. She woke up early, fell asleep late and seemed to be there watching every move I made. She was hungry for a role model and found several good ones in the Camp Lookout counselors.”

Nikki says that Sheila has been a major influence in her life and an incredible role model for her as she passed through her junior high and high school years.

When Nikki graduated from high school, C of O was the only place she applied, specifically because she wanted to work at Camp Lookout. Nikki said, “If I could be an influence in one young child’s life, it would be worth going all four years to College of the Ozarks. Sheila’s influence in my life has gotten me where I am today.”

This summer you will find Nikki loving and encouraging kids at Camp Lookout. In her testimony to other counselors, she said, “You have the opportunity during each five-day term of camp to impact the rest of a child’s life! Don’t miss it!”

Camp Lookout and the environment of committed and enthusiastic counselors provide a safe and Christ-centered focus for youth in the Branson and Springfield areas. For many of them, it is a respite from difficult situations they are facing at home. Nikki Thurman is now passing on the blessing she received so many years ago.



*Nikki Thurman (second from left) enjoys her campers.*

*Photo courtesy of Public Relations Department*

# Beyond the Gates of Opportunity

As an extension of the Character Curriculum, eight students from the Tolkien and Lewis class spent a week in England with English professor, Dr. Hayden Head and his wife, Sue. The trip was in conjunction with the Keeter Center for Character Education's Citizens Abroad program. "It was the greatest opportunity I have ever had," said Lauren Johnson, a student who went on the excursion. "I've heard it said that you learn something new every day, but on this trip, I learned 100 new things each day."



*Lauren Johnson*

The group began its stay in London on a Sunday. During an evening stroll, they found St. Paul's Church in Covent Gardens. In front, a group of street performers was putting on a show to raise money for the church. It is known as the "actors' church" because most of its funds come from local actors.

Monday was the first full day in London for the group. After breakfast in the hotel, they met their guide, Jane. This wonderful "British history encyclopedia" was the group's companion throughout the week, giving details on everything from how to read a coat of arms to why lunch was called a ploughman's special.

Before the travelers reached their first destination, Westminster Abbey, the tour guide recommended they visit the British Museum on Tuesday, because they had the Elgin Marbles on display. "Even though I had no idea why ancient Greek marbles would be so exciting," said Lauren, "I figured they must be very important."

After an extensive tour of Westminster, the group took a stroll along the River Thames to the Globe Theater, where they were able to purchase tickets for *Romeo and Juliet* that Saturday.

Tuesday they toured several places including: St. Paul's Cathedral, the National Gallery, the Changing of the Guard, St. James Park, Trafalgar Square, the British Museum, the British Library and Hyde Park. "I wanted to make sure I saw two things: the Rosetta Stone and the Elgin Marbles," said Lauren.

“After the Rosetta Stone, I followed a lady's directions: through the door, down the hall, to Room 18. I passed ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Greek artifacts, finally arriving in Room 18. I was a bit exasperated because I could not find a display case with marbles in it anywhere. All I could see were square stones with relief carvings on them and some statues at each end of the rectangle-shaped room. In desperation I walked up to the guard on duty and said, ‘Excuse me, sir, can you tell me where the Elgin Marbles are?’ In as polite a tone as he could, he replied, ‘They’re all around you, Madam.’ I almost doubled over in laughter as a bell went ‘ding’ inside my head. The Elgin Marbles are not little stone playthings; they are statues from the Parthenon, and they are quite impressive.”

Wednesday the travelers visited Windsor Castle, The Kilns, (Lewis’ private residence) and Headington Church, where C. S. Lewis is buried, before going to their hotel outside Oxford. That night they enjoyed classic British fare at The Perch, a restaurant outside Oxford.

Thursday the group spent the day in Oxford, touring the town and a couple of the colleges. One of the many buildings they passed was the Radcliffe Camera. It is now part of the Bodleian Library. They also meandered along Addison’s Walk, where C. S. Lewis became a Christian, and visited 21 Merton St., Tolkien’s last residence.

The group visited three little villages and Blenheim Palace on Friday of their journey. Blenheim is the home of the Duke of



*The Tolkien/Lewis tour group stopped for a photo with a replica of the **Lord of the Rings** character named Gollum.*

*Photos courtesy of Lauren Johnson*



*Blenheim Palace Gardens*

Marlborough. It is also Winston Churchill's birthplace and where he proposed to his wife. "I knew that large houses and grounds in England are called estates," said Lauren. "After visiting the beautiful grounds at Blenheim, I know why. They are so extensive, they even include a waterfall!"

On Saturday the exhausted travelers returned to London and said good-bye to Jane. They squeezed in a trip to Harrod's and 221B Baker St., before getting ready for their final outing.

At dusk, the group stood in the center of the Globe Theater and watched *Romeo and Juliet*. "Before we even had our airline tickets, I'd wished we could see a play at the Globe, but I didn't think it was possible. But there I was," said Lauren.

Sunday the travelers got up early and flew home. "I was glad to be home in the U.S.; however, my greatest wish is to return to England and then visit Europe," Lauren said. "I have several hundred things to learn every day."

*Contributed by Lauren Johnson, College of the Ozarks student*

## Tom Brokaw to Speak on *"The Greatest Generation"*

Tom Brokaw, one of the most respected figures in broadcast journalism, will be the guest speaker for the Leonard B. and Edith Gittinger Community Convocation on Thursday, November 10, 2005.



Brokaw will speak on *"The Greatest Generation,"* the title and theme of his first best-selling book which highlights the heroism of America's veterans. This convocation will be held during Branson's Annual Veterans Homecoming Week.

Brokaw had a distinguished 38-year career at NBC News, including more than 20 years as the anchor and managing editor of **NBC Nightly News**. Brokaw has had many "firsts" in his career, including the first exclusive United States one-on-one interview with former Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev. He was the first and only anchor to report from the scene the night the Berlin Wall fell. He has received several awards for his hard work and outstanding accomplishments. The Peabody Award, seven Emmy awards, the National Headliner Award, and The Dennis Kauff Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement in Journalism are just a few of the honors he has received. Brokaw has written articles, essays, and commentaries for several publications, including the **New York Times**, **Washington Post**, **Los Angeles Times**, **Newsweek**, **Sports Illustrated** and **Life** magazine. He is the author of four best-selling books.

### FALL 2005 EVENTS

Character Camp for new students. . . . . August 12-21

Character Education Expert Hal Urban . . . . . September 8

Fall Community Convocation. . . . . November 10

Tom Brokaw *"The Greatest Generation"*



# First PLACE!

Partners Linking Arms for Character Education

The Keeter Center for Character Education is leading a county-wide character education initiative in partnership with all the public schools in Taney County and CHARACTER<sup>plus</sup>®. Once the magnificent Keeter Center building was completed in the fall of 2004, The Keeter Center for Character Education was ready to expand its programs. The 17 school buildings in Taney County each sent a team through a CHARACTER<sup>plus</sup> training at The Keeter Center. Each team was comprised of a school building administrator, a counselor, a teacher, a community member, and another teacher or board member. This character education is a “process” instead of a program since it is ongoing and incorporates ten essentials in drawing together a comprehensive plan that focuses on School, Home, and Community.



*Performers from ACTION Impact Ministries highlighted the traits.*

*Photo by Shann Swift*

The First PLACE initiative has three goals: 1. Improve school climate to positively impact achievement, attendance, discipline, and drop-out rate. 2. Cultivate visible community support. 3. Increase parent participation and awareness in character development.

The Taney County initiative is called “First PLACE – Partners Linking Arms for Character Education.” On April 29, 2005, an official kick-off brought community members and school representatives together for a “town hall” meeting.



Attendees were given the opportunity to campaign for particular traits that they felt represented the values in Taney County. After the campaigning session was over, those in attendance voted on the nine traits that would be used throughout the school year. The winning traits were announced at the close of the evening. They are: Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Compassion/Kindness, Commitment, Honesty, Cooperation, Perseverance, and Self-discipline.

Not only are schools going to be implementing numerous ways to incorporate the “trait of the month” into the classroom, but businesses, civic organizations, and churches are encouraged to become intentional about teaching and demonstrating good character. Anyone can sign up to be a partner as long as they are committed to do one thing each month to reinforce the “trait of the month.” Ideas include putting the trait on a marquee, in a newsletter, or on a website or bulletin board. The trait could also be included in staff training or in a sermon.

“In order to change the culture, it is going to take everyone linking arms and moving towards a common goal. We don’t have time to wait for someone else to come in and help our kids. We are responsible; and it’s up to us to work together and change the culture in our county,” said Sue Head, executive director of The Keeter Center for Character Education. “College of the Ozarks has been helping develop character in young people for nearly 100 years. We are glad to be involved in this worthy initiative.”

# College of **The** the Ozarks®

# KEETER CENTER

F O R C H A R A C T E R E D U C A T I O N

The Keeter Center for Character Education was established at College of the Ozarks through 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 our 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* ranked College of the Ozarks among the America's best liberal arts colleges yearly since 1989. College of the Ozarks is a shining example of conservative ideals.

[www.keetercenter.edu](http://www.keetercenter.edu) • 417-334-6411, ext. 4242

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