



LANCASTER BIBLE COLLEGE

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**The Art of Worship:
How Our Students
are Dedicating
Their Lives to
Praising God.**

May 2017 | Advancement Office
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Paul Thorlakson, WPA Chair (Left) and Dr. Bigley, Director of Chorale Vocal Studies (Right).

A FOUNDATION OF ADORATION

The Core of Worship and Performing Arts

We sat down with Worship and Performing Arts (WPA) Chair, Paul Thorlakson, and Director of Chorale Vocal Studies, Dr. Rob Bigley, to learn more about what comprises this vast department at Lancaster Bible College.

What is your role in WPA? How long have you been in this role? What does this role entail?

Bigley: I am the Director of Chorale and Vocal Studies. I currently direct two of the three choirs as well as oversee all the voice teachers. The other half of my job is Director of the Trust and Performing Arts Center. I have been here for ten years, and my role has continued to change as the program grows.

Thorlakson: I have been here two years come this July as Chair of the department. I teach piano as well as music theory.

What are the different facets of WPA?

Thorlakson: There are many different degrees within our program including Worship Arts, Live Production, Music Education, Musical Theatre, Music Performance: Instrumental & Vocal, and Music Performance: Composition.

Bigley: Worship Arts is the largest major in our department.

Thorlakson: But, Musical Theatre is competing; it has grown exponentially in the past two years. They are probably about equal.

Bigley: We are surrounded by such a rich theatre culture that our students are getting experience and jobs in musical theatre right out of school. It makes us more competitive in that major.

Describe WPA to someone those who has never heard of it before.

Thorlakson: I think WPA is a community that transcends all the majors within it. What we offer here is a vibrant artistic community of collaboration. Students learn from each other as well as their professors.

Bigley: When we started, we said, "We know we will have reached success when our students are collaborating on their own." They are starting bands and doing things outside of their requirements. That's when you know you have a certain synergy that makes a program like ours successful. We reached that point about two years ago.

Thorlakson: That ethos quality is truly something that draws in students.

Bigley: I think we bring that uniqueness because we haven't separated worship and performance; most schools have. ➤


 Bryson Buffington on stage of Sight & Sound's *Jonah*.

GOD'S BIGGER PLAN

Former LBC Student Takes Time to Work at Sight & Sound

Bryson Buffington was a senior at Lancaster Bible College whose academic plans were interrupted by an amazing opportunity to join Sight & Sound Theatres. Known for its grandiose productions, Sight & Sound is a live production theatre that has been performing shows for 41 years, bringing the biblical narratives to life. Bryson recalls the fast paced story of transitioning from being a college student to an on-stage performer.

"It was all very sudden, the day I got a text from the Director at Sight & Sound, this past January. I had auditioned for Sight & Sound in August 2016, and, at the time, they had no role for me. I entered into my senior year at Lancaster Bible College fully content on waiting to audition again when I graduated. But God had other plans.

Sight & Sound contacted me to offer a role in *Jonah*. A few days later, I was contacted by Human Resources and the ball started rolling. I sought the council of professors and mentors as I made the decision to take a break from college and pursue this opportunity in live production. I prayed about it so much and decided to take the leap of faith, putting college on hold and joining Sight & Sound.

The process was overwhelming. I was at LBC, finishing the last performance of *Hello, Dolly* on a Saturday night, and then I was in Sight & Sound's rehearsals starting the following Monday. I jumped right in to a real theatre experience, and it has been amazing! It was so interesting going from community theatre to something the size

of Sight & Sound. Everything they do is so grand!

Preparing a production is not easy. The transition from college student to full-time performer was difficult, but I was completely prepared from my experiences at LBC. I could handle the transition of going from rehearsal to production because of LBC's WPA program.

I love everything about where I am! I get to have fun every day while learning about something I love. The best thing about being a part of Sight & Sound is that I am surrounded by people with a vast amount of experience, far exceeding mine. When you're the youngest in a cast and in an environment like that, you have no choice but to grow and improve, and that is what I am getting to do."

Bryson is loving his time at Sight & Sound but has plans to finish his degree at LBC. For now, you will find him on the stage of Sight & Sound's *Jonah*, playing a soldier in Nineveh, driving a boat through a scene, or riding a horse on stage. No matter the role, Bryson is overjoyed about where his God given talents have taken him and is enthusiastic to continue to develop those talents even more. ➤

I was at LBC, finishing the last performance of Hello, Dolly on a Saturday night, and then I was in Sight & Sound's rehearsals starting that Monday.



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MUSIC IN EDUCATION:

Rachel Sidebothum directing LBC's Orchestra.

How LBC is Integrating a Major With Maximum Impact

“There I sat amidst the people who are in the trenches of this profession, surrounded by seven Music Education professionals from all over Lancaster county. Years had accumulated to this moment as I presented Lancaster Bible College’s ground work to revitalize our Music Education Program.”

Rachel Sidebothum earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education from LBC in 2002. For nine years, she worked as the Instrumental Music Director at Lancaster County Christian School. Then, Rachel felt a tug that her chapter of teaching there was coming to a close. Though she had nothing lined up, she followed that call from God and submitted her resignation. Within the week, LBC contacted Rachel about teaching a few college classes. God’s plan was beginning to be revealed.

After only a few years of teaching at LBC, Rachel began the process of rebuilding the college’s Music Education Program. As instructors in the WPA Department laid the ground work for rebuilding this complex major, they sought counsel from individuals with vast experience in the field. Rachel brought her own experience to the table and gathered music educators from various parts of Lancaster county and presented LBC’s idea to them.

Rachel knows a Music Education major isn’t easy to take on, “This is a complex major because students are taking Bible classes, music classes, education classes, and music education classes. When I presented our idea for this LBC major to educators, I wanted them to say yes or no to all of its aspects. I wanted their ideas of what this needed to look like, because they know the reality of this profession. They know what schools are looking for.”

Rachel knows the importance and uniqueness of this major as it integrates with a biblical worldview. The core of LBC has always been, and will always be, the Word of God, so in order to provide

an adequate amount of time for Bible classes as well as education and music education classes, the program was developed as a five-year degree. Graduates of our new Music Education degree will receive two degrees: a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education and a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies. Upon completion of this dual degree program, graduates will also earn two certifications: K-12 PA Certification for Music Education and K-12 Association of Christian Schools International Certification. “It’s a heavy load, but it’s worth it,” reflected Rachel.

The major will officially begin Fall of 2017 and Rachel is as excited as our students for the fall to come and for their program to begin. She comments, “They are so excited because they will finally get to do what they came for. They’ve been taking their Bible classes; they’ve been taking their Music classes; they’ve been taking their Education classes, and now they will get to finally start their Music Education courses.”

Rachel knows this major is important to both public and Christian schools and to the Christian community. When LBC sends out graduates, no matter what their major, they are sending out embedded missionaries, and the same principle applies for music teachers. Rachel reflects on her time as a music teacher herself saying, “Music is an avenue for scripture in ways we never could have imagined. Students are singing songs with Biblical truths in public schools, and we don’t know the impact those words are having on their lives.”

The career of music education is one of great influence, as Rachel explains: “We are all innately musical; we were all created to worship. What better ways to open up doors than to talk about lyrics and melodies that convey more than our words ever could.” ➤

For more information visit:
www.lbc.edu



A MELODY OF PRAISE

How Your Donations to the Scholarship Fund are Amplified

Dear Friend,

What greater use of our God-given talents than to share them with others? Perhaps you're one of over 10,000 people who attended our concerts and musicals last year and witnessed first-hand our students' vast talents. You've likely enjoyed hearing Samatha belt out "Don't Rain on My Parade" in *Hello, Dolly*. Or you enjoyed the melodic tones of Caroline's harp in our annual Christmas concert. Perhaps you were mesmerized by LBC Chorale's majestic performance of Mozart's *Requiem* with the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra. Each of these performances was the culmination of countless hours of hard work and dedication, frequently during students' semester breaks.

I have the privilege of working with students like the talented Bryson and Charity featured in this issue of *Even More*. They represent all students in the Worship and Performing Arts Department who are dedicated to giving even more of their energy, time and commitment for our community's enjoyment – your enjoyment. Over the past several years, the WPA Department has gained a reputation of excellence that is evidenced not only in our public performances but from professional artists who request to work with our students. Frequently, they are called upon to work in their fields even before they graduate. We are so proud of what Bryson is doing at Sight & Sound! He's only one example of our students' success.

As I direct our students' performances, I know it isn't just their talent and work ethic shown on stage. You are on stage, too! Every time you give a gift to the Scholarship Fund, you

allow a talented harpist to perform. Every time you give a gift to the Scholarship Fund, you allow a beautiful voice to be heard. Every time you give a gift to the Scholarship Fund, you allow the entire community to enjoy great music and performances. As I actively recruit future students, I am constantly aware that, frequently, it is the scholarship amount that ultimately brings them to Lancaster Bible College where we harmoniously combine the study of God's Word with artistic pursuits.

Thank you to all of you who have given! Thank you to all of you who attend our performances! Thank you to all of you who will help us reach our goal by June 30 with a generous gift today to the Scholarship Fund. I look forward to continually praising God for the melody He creates when talent meets gift.

In Christ Alone,

Rob Bigley
Director of Chorale Vocal Studies

"I look forward to continually praising God for the melody He creates when talent meets gift."

Dr. Bigley leads student chorale in song.





THE GOSPEL OF MUSIC:

One Student's Love for Music and Spreading the Gospel

The weather is balmy as spring overtakes the campus of Lancaster Bible College. Students hustle around, anticipating the end of another semester. Charity Kim, female student-of-the-year and senior, is preparing to graduate in May. As she sits down to tell about her time at LBC, she enters the conversation with a bubbly smile and a voice that holds both wisdom and grace. Charity began her journey toward LBC long before she stepped on this campus. Born in South Korea, she went to an international school for most of her early education. Later, her family moved to China when she was nine years-old. During most of her school years she enjoyed music and singing, but it wasn't until her senior year of high school that she considered music seriously, thanks to her choir director and LBC graduate, Tom Ford. Charity recalls the words that led her to leave China after graduation and start her education at LBC: "Tom spoke of LBC so highly as a great place to study music and an environment to grow in."

Ultimately, her love for music and the Bible influenced her decision to attend LBC. Charity commented, "I loved the idea of having a dual major in both music and the Bible. Those are the two things I treasure the most. But it wasn't the easiest decision. I was insecure in my musical ability. I always loved music but never thought I'd do it for life. So much of me was holding back out of fear because I thought I couldn't do it. I started to pray about it, and God clearly told me, this is what you love, and I will walk you through it. Now I am here getting to do it."

As a Vocal Performance Major, Charity has had many opportunities in the WPA Department. One of those being participating in a worship band. The core of LBC is the Bible and the core of the WPA department is worship. Charity had the opportunity to be on a worship team her freshman and sophomore year, followed by co-leading a worship team her junior and senior years. In reflecting on the experience, Charity commented, "It's a privilege to learn the making of a worship set that allows people to be comfortable and worship, while also avoiding pleasing the audience to become idol. I say it is a privilege because it allows me to stay rooted in scripture, because without it, I cannot lead. It takes a lot to prepare worship; so much prayer goes into it."

As Charity prepares to graduate, she has one big event still to come: her senior recital. She accredits so much of her music education and preparation for this recital to her professor, Dr. Dan Foster. Charity said the class that influenced her most was Introduction to Composition with Dr. Foster, where she discovered her love of writing songs. Charity quickly became very passionate

"I loved the idea of having a dual major in both music and the Bible. Those are the two things I treasure the most."



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as she talked about her song writing: "I have grown to love writing music and songs. I was supported and encouraged in that by Dr. Dan Foster. I would love to write music because it reaches people in ways we never can with words. Music reaches ears that we are unable to speak to. I would love to use music as an avenue to speak truth and awareness to people who are searching."

The requirements for Charity's senior recital are challenging and advanced. She explains how she must sing in three languages she doesn't know. She has chosen German, French, and Italian. Her recital will last 45 to 50 minutes and will display a variety of music and is based in the classical genre. One song she will be performing was written by Dr. Foster.

Beyond graduation, Charity has big plans. She will start a year long experience with International Project, an organization focused on missionary training and church planting to reach the unreached in New York City. Though Charity is taking a year to develop another set of her skills, she isn't done with music. She credits God for allowing her to perform music and giving her the strength to grow through four years of learning more about it and her abilities in it. She is well aware that music is a gift; she believes it is a tool to be utilized while also sharing the Gospel. Charity remarks, "I am excited for the opportunities before me. I live to share the Gospel, not to just do music, but to share the truth, no matter the avenue. I think this year will give me a voice to share, as well as show me how music ties into my life and sharing the Gospel." ➤



Charity received Student-of-the-Year award. Her parents surprised her by Skyping in from China.

I am excited for the opportunities before me. I live to share the Gospel, not to just do music, but to share the truth, no matter the avenue.

You are there...

every time
our students
perform.

every time
our students
minister
to others.

When you give,
you are there!

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WPA

Fall 2007 Enrollment: **29**

Fall 2016 Enrollment: **78**

Enrollment Increase:

169%



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