

DBU REPORT

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2010 Russell H. Perry Dinner Honors Dr. Wright Lassiter

(From left to right) George Shafer, Honorary Co-Chair of the Russell Perry Dinner Committee; Dr. Wright Lassiter, 2010 Award Honoree; Pete Schenkel, Honorary Co-Chair of the Dinner Committee; and J.L. Sonny Williams, Chair of the Dinner Committee.



2010 Russell H. Perry Award Recipient Dr. Wright Lassiter, along with his wife, Bessie.

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23rd Annual

RUSSELL H. PERRY AWARD DINNER HONORS DR. WRIGHT LASSITER

Dallas Baptist University named Dr. Wright Lassiter, Jr., chancellor and CEO of the Dallas County Community College District, as recipient of the 2010 Russell H. Perry Free Enterprise Award during the annual award dinner held on November 22, at the Hilton Anatole Hotel in Dallas. Pete Schenkel, former Russell Perry Award recipient and vice chair of Dean Foods, along with George Shafer, also a former Russell Perry Award recipient and the former president of Industrial Properties, served as the honorary co-chairs for the dinner, which saw over 1,200 people in attendance.



Neal Jeffrey, associate pastor at Prestonwood Baptist Church served as the dinner speaker prior to the presentation of the award.

J.L. Sonny Williams, a DBU and a DCCCD trustee, who has been honored with the Russell Perry Award in the past, was this year's dinner chair.

The annual gala event marked its 23rd anniversary as it continues to honor Texas leaders whose lives are testimonies of achievement in free enterprise and service to the community. The event is named in memory of Dallas leader and philanthropist Russell H. Perry, whose life of service to Dallas impacted many people.

Mrs. Russell H. (Phoebe) Perry continues to be a friend of the city of Dallas and DBU. She and Mr. Perry began their support

of Dallas Baptist University in the 1960s.

Over the past 23 years, the dinner has honored many North Texas leaders, and in doing so, it has raised over \$3 million in scholarship funds for over 1,450 DBU students.

Pete Delkus, Chief Meteorologist for WFAA Channel 8 and DBU Board of Trustees member, served as the evening's emcee. He began the evening by thanking the guests in attendance for their continual support of DBU.

Ebby Halliday Acers, founder and chairman of the board of Ebby Halliday Realtors, offered the Pledge of Allegiance to begin the dinner's ceremony, which was followed by the DBU Grand Chorus singing the National Anthem.

Bryan Carter, pastor of Concord Church where Dr. Lassiter and his wife attend church, offered the invocation before dinner. Then Dr. Gary Cook, DBU president, offered a word of gratitude for all those guests in attendance.

During the dinner, Neal Jeffrey, former all-American quarterback for Baylor University and current associate pastor at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, served as the keynote speaker. Jeffrey gave what he described as a pep talk on life.

Drawing from the motto of the Olympians, "High-

er, Swifter, Stronger", Jeffrey gave three keys needed to strive for a greater life. First, cultivate a positive attitude in difficult times, seeing the obstacles in life to be ways to rely on God. Second, dream big dreams, not willing to waste time on anything that does not require all of your effort. Third, cultivate the power of love, a love which supports, encourages, and com-

forts in good times and bad, the kind of love that is given to those who trust Jesus Christ and that pushes them to do more.

"Because of that love," Jeffrey said, "I am going to love well, I am going to live well, and I am going to make my life count, and that is why I am going to go, higher, swifter, stronger."

This year's recipient, Dr. Wright Lassiter, is responsible for a district of seven colleges as chancellor of the Dallas County Community College District. All together, the colleges have an enrollment of over 81,000 students in credit courses and over 27,000 students enrolled in continuing education and self-improvement courses. The DCCCD has a \$400 million budget, along with approximately 7,000 full-time and part-time employees.

Dr. Lassiter has taught business ethics and leadership classes for Dallas Baptist University as dis-



Over 1,275 individuals attended the gala event held at the Hilton Anatole Hotel in downtown Dallas on Monday, November 22.



WFAA-TV's Chief Meteorologist and DBU Board of Trustees member Pete Delkus provided introductions as the evening's emcee.



Former Russell Perry Award recipient Ebby Halliday Acers led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.



Bo Pilgrim (right), former Russell Perry recipient, along with Dr. Gail Linam (left), DBU provost, and her husband, Dennis Linam, DBU vice president for external affairs.

The DBU Grand Chorus, directed by Dr. Stephen Holcomb, sang the National Anthem before dinner, as well as special performances throughout the evening.

tinguished adjunct professor of management and leadership for over 20 years in DBU's College of Business. He has also received an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from DBU. He was also named the 2000 DBU-Oak Cliff Good Samaritan.

Previous to serving as chancellor of DCCCD, Dr. Lassiter spent 20 years as president of El Centro College within the DCCCD. Prior to that position, he was president of Bishop College in Dallas, president of Schenectady County Community College in New York, vice president of finance and management at Morgan State University in Baltimore, and business manager of Tuskegee University of Alabama.

In addition, Dr. Lassiter has taught business courses

at Bishop College, Oregon State College, the University of Kentucky, and Tuskegee Institute throughout the years. Dr. Lassiter received his undergraduate degree from Alcorn State University, his MBA from Indiana University, and his doctorate from Auburn University. He has served as chairman of the board of United Way of Dallas, chairman of the board of Dallas CAN Academy, and as a member of the board of Methodist Medical Center and the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas. He has served for several years as a member of the DBU Board of Trustees and is currently the chairman.

Dr. Lassiter and his wife, Bessie, have been married for 52 years. They are the proud parents of Wright III



Forrest Smith, former Russell Perry recipient and member of the 2010 Dinner Committee, along with daughter, Candy Smith.

(from left to right) DBU supporters Bill and Ann Quest, along with Orville Rogers, whom the DBU Orville and Esther Beth Rogers Prayer Ministry is named after, and Robert Whitfield, DBU advancement officer.



Former Russell Perry recipient Boone Powell, Jr. and his wife, Peggy (left), along with Judge Os Chrisman (right), who serves as a DBU adjunct professor, and his wife, Marilyn.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

- 2009-Tom Leppert
- 2008-Drayton McLane, Jr.
- 2007-Andy and Joan Horner
- 2006-David Dean
- 2005-Pete Schenkel
- 2004-Noble Hurley (posthumously)
- 2003-The Weir Furniture Family
- 2002-George A. Shafer
- 2001-Mary C. Crowley (posthumously)
- 2000-Erle Nye
- 1999-Ross Perot, Jr.
- 1998-Jim L. Turner
- 1997-Rodger Meier
- 1996-W. Forrest Smith
- 1995-Lonnie "Bo" Pilgrim
- 1994-Bob Minyard, Liz Minyard,
Gretchen Minyard Williams,
J.L. Sonny Williams
- 1993-Boone Powell, Sr.,
Boone Powell, Jr.
- 1992-Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper
- 1991-Tom Landry
- 1990-Maurice and Ebby Halliday Acers
- 1989-Trammell Crow
- 1988-John Stemmons, Sr.

and Michele, and they are also the proud grandparents of Ryan and Loren. Dr. Lassiter and Bessie are residents of Dallas, and they attend Concord Church in Dallas. Dr. Lassiter also serves as Teaching Pastor at Concord Church, and he has written several books, one entitled *The Power of Prayer*.

After a special video presentation about Dr. Lassiter from friends and colleagues, Pete Schenkel and J.L. Sonny Williams presented the evening's award to Dr. Lassiter. The DBU Grand Chorus then sang the song "Go Light Your World," as a testimony to Dr. Lassiter and the work that he has done as a servant leader in the realm of education.

In accepting the award, Dr. Lassiter thanked those

in attendance and expressed special appreciation to those who serve with him in the Dallas County Community College District as well as at DBU. He then explained his motivation for his work and ministry.

As a young man, Dr. Lassiter's father, Wright Lassiter, Sr., pulled him aside to give him a special definition of service. "Junior, service is the rent that you pay for the space that you occupy here on earth," explained his father. Later in life, he added a caveat to the definition. "Junior, I want you to always live in a high-rent district."

Over the course of his life, Dr. Lassiter has lived up to that definition, seeking ways to serve his fellow man through his humble and generous manner.



Ken Pilgrim along with his wife, Donna. Ken is a current DBU trustee.



DBU trustee Patsy Smith (center), along with Hubert Martin (left), DBU advisor to the president in business affairs, and his wife, Claudia (right).



Former recipients J.L. Sonny and Gretchen Min-
williams (left), and their daughter, Claire.



The DBU Grand Chorus performs a patriotic melody during the Russell Perry din-
ner, honoring each of the branches of the armed forces.

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