



January 31, 2023

Dear Covenant College Community,

Today is an exciting day to be the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Covenant College. I have the great privilege of announcing the creation of the new Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership at Covenant College and the honor of naming President Derek Halvorson to lead the Center. While transitions in leadership can be hard as we experience sadness or a sense of loss, we are thankful Dr. Halvorson is not leaving the Covenant community and will continue to educate, train, and mentor students that come to this great institution.

The idea of the Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership has been germinating within the college leadership for more than a year as part of the strategic planning update reviewed by the Board in October 2022. The goal of the Center is to inspire and equip Covenant students to take up and excel in selfless, Christ-like leadership exemplified by the remarkable men for whom the Center is named. Frank Brock (the College's fourth president) and Marion Barnes (the College's second president) were beloved leaders on campus who also played important leadership roles in the church and in the Chattanooga community.

As the concept of the Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership was developed, Dr. Halvorson became increasingly enthusiastic about the prospect of an initiative that could have a significant impact on Covenant's students and—through them—on the church and the world. In early January, he approached the Board leadership to discuss a transition out of the presidency. In that conversation, we also began to explore the possibility of transitioning from President of the College to this new Center. Rather than launching a national search for a Center Executive Director, the Board of Trustees approved on January 25 a transition plan to begin fundraising and enable the Center to launch in the summer of 2023.

Dr. Halvorson will continue as President of Covenant College through June 30, 2023, and immediately launch the Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership. Dr. Halvorson has built a strong and capable Cabinet of vice presidents who will provide continuity and stability throughout the presidential transition. This moment, between strategic plans and fundraising campaigns, is well-timed for the search for Dr. Halvorson's successor. The Board of Trustees will immediately launch a national search for our next President in collaboration with students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

The early announcement by Dr. Halvorson affords everyone the opportunity for a smooth and well-managed transition which is further evidence of why he is the right person to train the current and next generations of Christian leaders.

Dr. Halvorson's leadership as President has borne amazing fruit, and we look forward to celebrating that with the Covenant College community this Spring. The Board of Trustees is deeply grateful for the notable accomplishments of Dr. Halvorson and his leadership team:

- Led the College through the IMPACT Campaign, the largest endowment campaign in the college's history. Over \$32 million in gifts and pledges were raised, exceeding the \$30 million goal.
- Raising a total of \$71.5 million between 2012 and 2022.
- Between investment growth and giving, endowments grew from \$31 million to more than \$60 million.
- The historic renovation of the exterior of Carter Hall, Covenant's "signature building." This was the single largest capital project in the college's history (\$19.4 million).
- Leading the college through the pandemic. After the initial national shutdown, the college quickly returned to in-person classes and clearly demonstrated both the safety and effectiveness of this model of instruction.
- The Construction of the new Lucas Art Workshop.

The academic leadership of substantial note:

- The four-year graduation rate moved from 48% to 66%.
- The six-year graduation rate moved from 58% to 73%.
- Launched new majors in Political Science and Sport Management.
- Launched the Master of Arts in Teaching program.
- Added certificate programs in Arts Administration, Entrepreneurship, Environmental Stewardship & Sustainability, Medical Ethics Consultation, Neuroscience, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and Journalism and Society.
- The successful completion of 10-year accreditation reaffirmation with SACS-COC, with no recommendations.

The development in the athletic programs:

- Transitioned the College from the NAIA to the NCAA Division III
- Launched Track & Field as an intercollegiate sport.

Notably, the average tenure for college presidents is less than 6 years. Dr. Halvorson has served Covenant College almost twice that time, and at 11 years as President, he is the third-longest serving President in the history of the College. None of those had to navigate the challenges of a global pandemic, although each was extraordinary in his own right. Dr. Halvorson adds a great deal to the legacy of exceptional leaders at Covenant College.

Dr. Halvorson's credentials as a scholar, a President, a leader, a fundraiser, and a faithful servant of our Lord Jesus Christ make him the ideal candidate to be the first Executive Director of the Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership. The Center will develop leadership programming at the college, will bring outstanding Christian leaders and leadership scholars to our campus and community, and will collaborate with like-minded organizations locally and nationally to promote and encourage a God-honoring approach to leadership. Through this initiative, the college will expand its connection to PCA and like-minded communities around the country.

Launching the Center requires significant vision, fund-raising, scholarship, and a passion for teaching and writing. Dr. Halvorson represents all of those attributes, which makes him uniquely qualified to clarify the mission and purpose of the Center in alignment with the mission of Covenant College and its programs, develop a strategic vision for the Center, and raise the funds to sustain the Center.

Our great joy is that Dr. Halvorson is not leaving the Covenant College community but continuing to leverage his strengths and accomplishments as President to serve us in a new and significant way.

With thanksgiving to our God, who is always faithful,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Craig Wood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

R. Craig Wood