

PURSUE A HIGHER CALLING



2022 Grad
Elizabeth Platt

**Faith and
Firewalls:** How God
Opened Doors in
Information Security



**BOB JONES
UNIVERSITY**
EST. 1927

**ADVANCEMENT
ANNUAL REPORT**



ABOUT THE FRONT COVER

Featured is 2022 graduate Elizabeth Platt, who traces her journey to BJU and into a cybersecurity career shaped by God's clear leading at every step.

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A LETTER

from the VP of Advancement & Alumni Relations



The 2025/26 fiscal year has been a year of building momentum! New undergrad student enrollment was up 10 percent in the fall. University finances are improved and stable. Students are enjoying their faculty and thriving in their college experiences. And the campus community is rallying around our new President, Dr. Bruce McAllister.

In the following pages you'll be moved by testimonies and see how God has been working at BJU. Let me highlight one example here:

BJU earned a Financial Responsibility Composite Score of 2.9—near the highest possible rating—reflecting strong financial health and stability. The U.S. Department of Education awards passing scores between 1.5 and 3.0 to institutions that demonstrate sound financial strength, ensuring they are well positioned to steward federal funds responsibly.

Thank you for your prayers and the many ways we have experienced your support this year. God is good and faithful.

John D. Matthews

John D. Matthews

Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations

PS: We'd love for you to join us as we celebrate our centennial Homecoming on November 13–14, 2026!

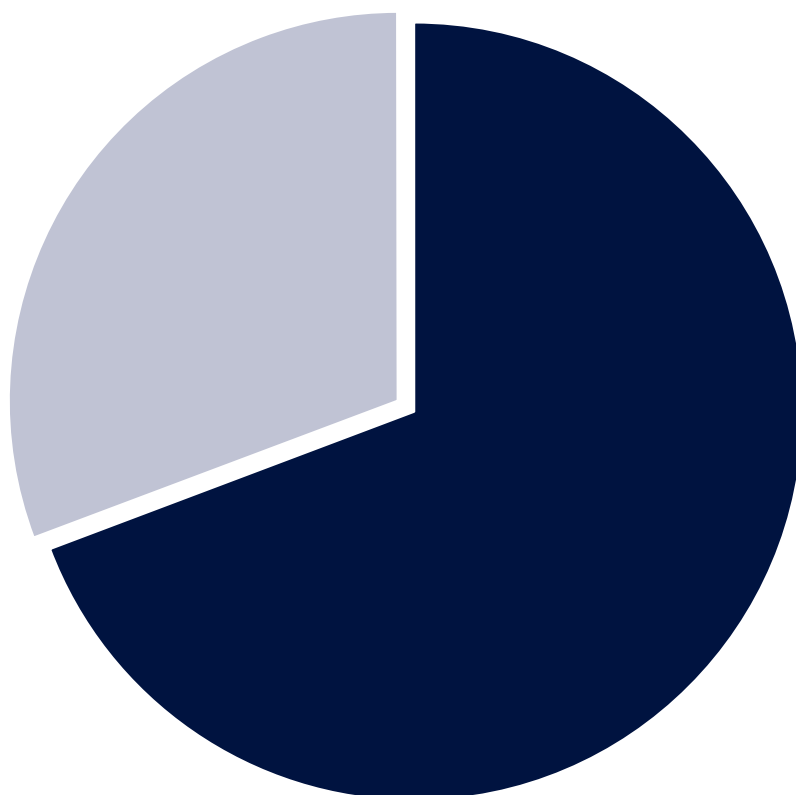


ENDOWMENTS

Total BJU Endowment \$24,057,759

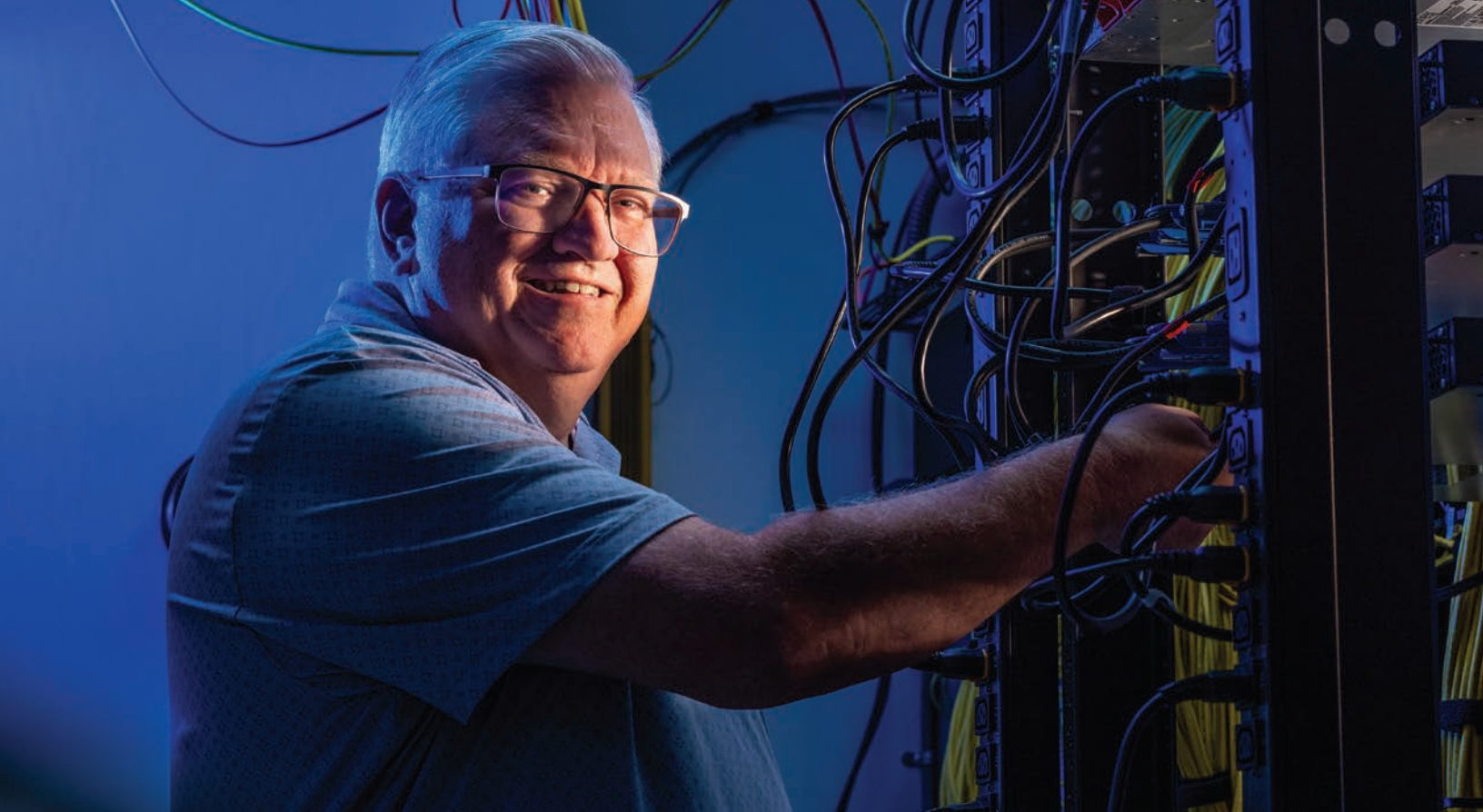
Scholarship Endowments make a BJU education more affordable for students who want to be part of a Christian community where they can be challenged academically and thrive spiritually. The investment from scholarship endowments secures annual financial aid for years to come. These scholarships provide a means to recruit, retain and rescue needy students. **This year we're using \$949,596 to fund student scholarships.**

The Science & Engineering Endowment funds new lab equipment and helps science educators further develop their teaching skills through the Summer Institute in Teaching Science (SITS). This fund also gives students the chance to participate during the summers in the Research Immersion for Undergraduates (RIU) program, in which they conduct chemistry, physics and cancer research on a full-time basis for eight weeks. **This year, \$282,966 was used to fund the Summer 2025 SITS and RIU programs.**



■ S&E \$6,767,941

■ Scholarship \$17,289,818



BRIAN BURCH SPOTLIGHT

Brian Burch, a 1992 graduate of Bob Jones University, has recently joined the University's senior leadership team as the Chief Operations and Technology Officer. He brings with him more than two decades of experience from KEMET, a global manufacturer of electronic components used in modern electronic devices. Burch served on KEMET's leadership team for 24 years, most recently as Chief Information Officer, where he helped oversee a global technological infrastructure supporting customers around the world.

Burch will assist President McAllister and the leadership team in three primary areas.

01

First, he will apply technological solutions to complex business challenges, drawing on his extensive experience leading enterprise-level systems in a global organization.

02

Second, he will contribute his expertise to BJU's Student Information System (SIS), a critical platform that affects faculty and students every day. The SIS

supports essential functions such as maintaining course catalogs and degree requirements, managing attendance, calculating academic progress and enabling faculty to assist students both academically and financially.

03

Third, Burch will provide guidance on the responsible use of artificial intelligence. He will advise the leadership team on how AI can be implemented thoughtfully to avoid misuse while leveraging its potential in ways that honor and glorify God. In addition, he will assist in developing AI-driven solutions that support digital transformation within BJU's internal systems.

The decision to invest in both a comprehensive SIS system and a leader with Burch's skillset reflects BJU's long-term commitment to excellence and growth. Burch is enthusiastic about contributing to the mission of BJU. He believes the Lord has used the University significantly in the lives of many and is confident that God will continue to use it to bring glory to Himself. 🏡

FRONT CAMPUS RENOVATIONS

At a recent BJU faculty and staff meeting, leadership shared plans for updating the front of campus. This project follows last year's decision to drain the fountain after discovering structural issues, which have caused thousands of gallons of water to leak into the ground each day. As the fountain reached the end of its usable life and questions were raised about the functionality of the bridge, the University consulted outside experts to explore new possibilities for this space.

Decisions were made carefully, recognizing the strong affection students, faculty and alumni have for the bridge and the fountain. The team identified several key priorities to keep in mind moving forward: practicing responsible stewardship of both financial and human resources, improving accessibility for all and completing construction with minimal disruption to students and faculty and in time for the centennial celebration next year.

After months of research, revisions and negotiations, a final plan has been developed to remove and replace the bridge with a landscaped walkway. Other locations on campus are being explored to display the international flags. While a large fountain is now out of the picture, a smaller water feature may still be included.

We are incredibly grateful to our financial partners who are aiding in the funding of this significant project. The Lord has truly blessed our University with generous support from the members of the BJU community.

Lord willing, we expect construction to be completed by fall 2026. The BJU Marketing Department will share regular updates, so the BJU community can keep up with our progress. 🏠

Artist Rendering of Area



FAITH AND FIREWALLS



How God Opened Doors in Information Security

Elizabeth, the daughter of a Naval aviator, traveled far and wide as a child. The Pratts moved often, and every move was an adventure, including when the Navy transferred the family to San Diego, California.

Not long after moving to San Diego, the Pratt family began attending Faith Community Bible Church—home to many BJU alumni. Elizabeth, though in middle school, was already thinking about college—and Bob Jones University wasn't on the list. In fact, until her family began attending FCBC, she was only vaguely aware of BJU.

A friend presented Elizabeth with a unique opportunity. Bob Jones University was willing to fly her—far from home—to Greenville, to visit the campus and experience BJU. This was an intriguing offer and too good to pass up. She reasoned, “What's there to lose? It's a free adventure and an opportunity to experience the South.” God, in His providence, was guiding Elizabeth.

“I was deeply impressed by the beauty of the campus, the genuine care shown by the faculty and, most significantly, the quality of an education intentionally infused with timeless biblical truth. From that point, I was BJU-bound.”

Her parents supported her decision and also encouraged their daughter to continue to explore other options, which Elizabeth did—finding that BJU consistently surpassed all others.

Her freshman year was challenging, but God had a purpose—maturity and growth.

BJU's emphasis on personal discipline, spiritual discipleship and establishing a foundation for life, anchored in God's Word, proved invaluable to Elizabeth as she made the transition into adulthood.

One professor in particular, Dr. Alan Hughes, played a significant role in molding her into the professional she is today.

Elizabeth said, “Dr. Hughes had the rare ability to seamlessly weave biblical truth and practical wisdom into his lectures. Much of his counsel I have implemented throughout my career.

Beyond the classroom, Dr. Hughes hosted weekly ‘Friday Wisdom’ sessions, dedicating time for students to ask questions about life, work and leadership. These conversations not only prepared us personally and professionally, but also fostered a strong, unified culture



within our major—cultivating friendships and mentorships that have endured well beyond graduation.”

Elizabeth chose an ambitious academic path at BJU. She double-majored in information technology and criminal justice, while participating in the Air Force ROTC program for two years.

“The faculty, deans and academic advisors worked collaboratively across divisions to ensure my schedule was feasible each semester. . . . Their flexibility and commitment ensured that the quality of my education never suffered.”

Elizabeth recalls one particularly grueling week. A professor recognized that her schedule left little time for breakfast. Remembering a previous conversation, the professor surprised her with a Chick-fil-A breakfast burrito—her favorite.

“That simple act of kindness left a lasting impression and exemplifies the intentional care [BJU’s] professors show their students every day.”

Bob Jones University also provided Elizabeth with experiential learning opportunities—one of which led to an internship at BMW. The Center for Career & Calling worked closely with her to refine her resumé and assist with interview prep—enabling her to pursue the internship with confidence.

While serving as a Security, Investigations, and Emergency Services intern at BMW, she experienced firsthand how the quality of a Bob Jones University education translated into professional excellence.

“What I had learned was not merely theoretical—it was immediately applicable. The technical writing course I never expected to use became a daily tool

for documentation. Situational questions that might have caught me off guard were already familiar, thanks to the practical wisdom instilled through classroom discussions. Most importantly, the biblical foundation I received allowed me not only to excel professionally but also to approach challenges through a Christ-centered worldview.

Supervisors and senior leadership frequently remarked on my sense of responsibility, integrity and professionalism—qualities that [BJU] intentionally cultivates.”

After nine months of internships, God provided an opportunity for Elizabeth to serve as an Information Protection Specialist at BMW. In this role, she was responsible for ensuring best practices for data protection across company locations in Mexico, Brazil, Canada and the United States.

This position further developed her leadership skills and reinforced the importance of ethical decision-making in a global environment.

“Bob Jones University instilled in me a lifelong love of learning and adaptability. I am grateful for the preparation BJU provided—academically, professionally and spiritually.”

The adventure—to pursue a higher calling at BJU—set Elizabeth on the path to where she is today. She now serves as an Information Security Consultant with Sera Brynn.

NOTE: You may have noted that Elizabeth’s last name is Platt and her maiden name was Pratt. This is not an error. Elizabeth Pratt, class of 2022, met her husband, Andrew Platt, at BJU (also a ’22 BJU grad). 🏠

FROM CASSETTE TAPES TO A VAULT

In the 1980s, before cell phones, social media and the internet, there was a young boy who loved listening to sermons on cassette tape—the only medium available at the time.

For this young man, listening to sermons on cassette became a lifeline. The preacher's voice would be the last thing he heard before falling asleep. In those quiet nights, the boy was learning the truth of Scripture.

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17) Night after night, sermon after sermon—the Lord was planting His Word deep in the heart of the boy.

This young man, like many of his generation, was a gamer and soon after, a computer programmer. He was fascinated by the world of technology, which was becoming more accessible and user-friendly.

During his college years, he attended a small church—pastored, according to him, by “the world’s greatest preacher.” Week after week, the young man would hear sound and faithful exposition of the Scriptures.

Soon, the young man began to ask himself this question: How could more people hear and be blessed by the messages he was hearing?

One day, in a back room of the church pastored by “the world’s greatest preacher,” he found a rack of audio cassette tapes. The cassettes had gathered dust, and the powerful messages they contained were likely to never be heard again.

This, thought the young man, isn’t right. Sermons, when faithfully preached, shouldn’t be limited to a single Sunday or to a single audience. They should be enjoyed for generations to come.



But how?

The answer came to him in an avalanche of innovation and technology. IBM and Apple led the way by introducing personal computers to the masses. Audio cassettes were replaced by compact discs. Then came digital audio and a new thing called MP3, which allowed for the compression of audio files, making it easier to store and share.

Then, in 1989, the World Wide Web was invented.

The young man, a child of the '80s, was captivated by all these technological breakthroughs, even as he continued to love hearing God's Word proclaimed.

One day, that love for preaching led him to ask his pastor whether he should enter the ministry. While his pastor loved the young man's passion for God's Word, he detected stronger giftedness—but not for preaching.

While this was disappointing, his pastor's counsel turned out to be one of the greatest blessings to this talented, passionate and tender-hearted young man—Steven Lee, BJU 1995 graduate.

Steven Lee's love for preaching, his desire for God's Word to reach thousands and his fascination with technology would soon converge into a new calling.

This convergence was the birth of an idea which sprung from seeing those dusty audio cassettes containing priceless messages delivered by “the world's greatest preacher.”

What if the preached word could travel through the internet? What if technology could become the servant of theology?

With that thought, Steven threw himself into work. Night after night, line by line, pixel by pixel, he began



creating an entirely new media platform. He was a man on a mission.

The work was grueling, the hours were long and the tools were primitive. Yet he felt as though a hand greater-than-his-own was guiding him. At long last, after a full year of coding, the vision became reality.

On May 1, 2000, SermonAudio was born. From day one, the mission—to preserve and propagate solid Bible teaching—was clear.

Technology and innovation continued to advance by leaps and bounds. The iPod “put a thousand songs in your pocket.” The iPhone redefined communication. Streaming became the new normal. How we communicated, listened, watched and learned—changed forever.

Yet, even as the noise of innovation grew louder, Steven Lee found his strength the same way he always had—listening daily to God’s Word being proclaimed.

As technology became more available to users, more people discovered SermonAudio and by 2002, the site had achieved 1 million sermon downloads.

Each change in the world of technology opened a new path for the company. When it became mainstream to livestream, SermonAudio’s webcasting system was rebuilt with multicasting support. When the world went mobile, SermonAudio became mobile-friendly. As social media came to the forefront, cross-publishing to multiple platforms was introduced.

SermonAudio grew into a platform known and trusted worldwide—reaching hundreds of thousands.

By 2012, the SermonAudio library contained more than 500,000 messages, 100 million sermon

downloads and thousands of churches and ministries broadcasting. This was the Lord’s doing. There was no other explanation.

Then, the world began to shake. The digital realm became dark. In 2021, a preacher found that a gaming platform had, in an instant, erased his entire library of 3,000 sermons. There was no warning. No alarm had sounded. Everything was just . . . gone.

Not long after, SermonAudio became the target of a crippling cyber-attack. There was a threatening message on Facebook, followed by every link to SermonAudio being blocked.

Steven realized the technology that once was an ally had become a sword. This realization gave birth to SermonAudio’s greatest undertaking—the building of The Vault.

In the same way persecuted Christians of the past hid manuscripts in caves, the time had come to do the same in the present digital world.

The Vault is not a metaphor. It is an actual infrastructure made of stone and steel, servers and switches, cables and circuits—built to protect preaching.

In 2019, an idea was proposed to the leadership of Bob Jones University. What if SermonAudio constructed The Vault—a secure, physical home for the preservation and propagation of preaching—on the campus of Bob Jones University? It was agreed and on December 9, 2022, The Vault officially opened.

But storing sermons safely in The Vault was only half the story. Steven’s desire was for these messages to not simply reside in The Vault, but instead, he wanted the messages to travel and to be available in every language.

Continued on the next page.

But how?

The “how?” was answered with a remarkable gift—an H100 GPU, which gave SermonAudio the power to utilize artificial intelligence privately, enabling the translation of sermons into multiple languages. And so began Global Sermons.

Today, SermonAudio contains the world’s largest library of sermons with almost 500 million downloads. Its reach spans the globe . . . and beyond. Beyond, you ask? One day, word arrived that a sermon and livestream from The Vault had reached the International Space Station! On that day, the heavens, by way of The Vault, declared the glory of God.

And so, the boy with the cassette tapes became the man who engineered The Vault. The cassettes that once played in the solitude of a bedroom became the sermon that soared through the expanse of space.

The neglected shelf of dusty cassette tapes became the global library of voices heard by millions, and the dream once thought impossible—every sermon in every language—is becoming a reality.

This is not the end of the story, but the beginning of its final chapter. When all is said and done, this is not Steven Lee’s story or SermonAudio’s story.

It is the story of the God Who preserves His Word, Who multiplies it, Who carries it farther and higher than any one man could dream. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.

And then Christ shall return!

Oh, and who was “the world’s greatest preacher”? For the answer to that question, come visit Steven, and his dedicated team of 10 SermonAudio preservationists, guardians, missionaries and global distributors, on the campus of Bob Jones University. 🏠

YOU’RE INVITED TO BJU’S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION!

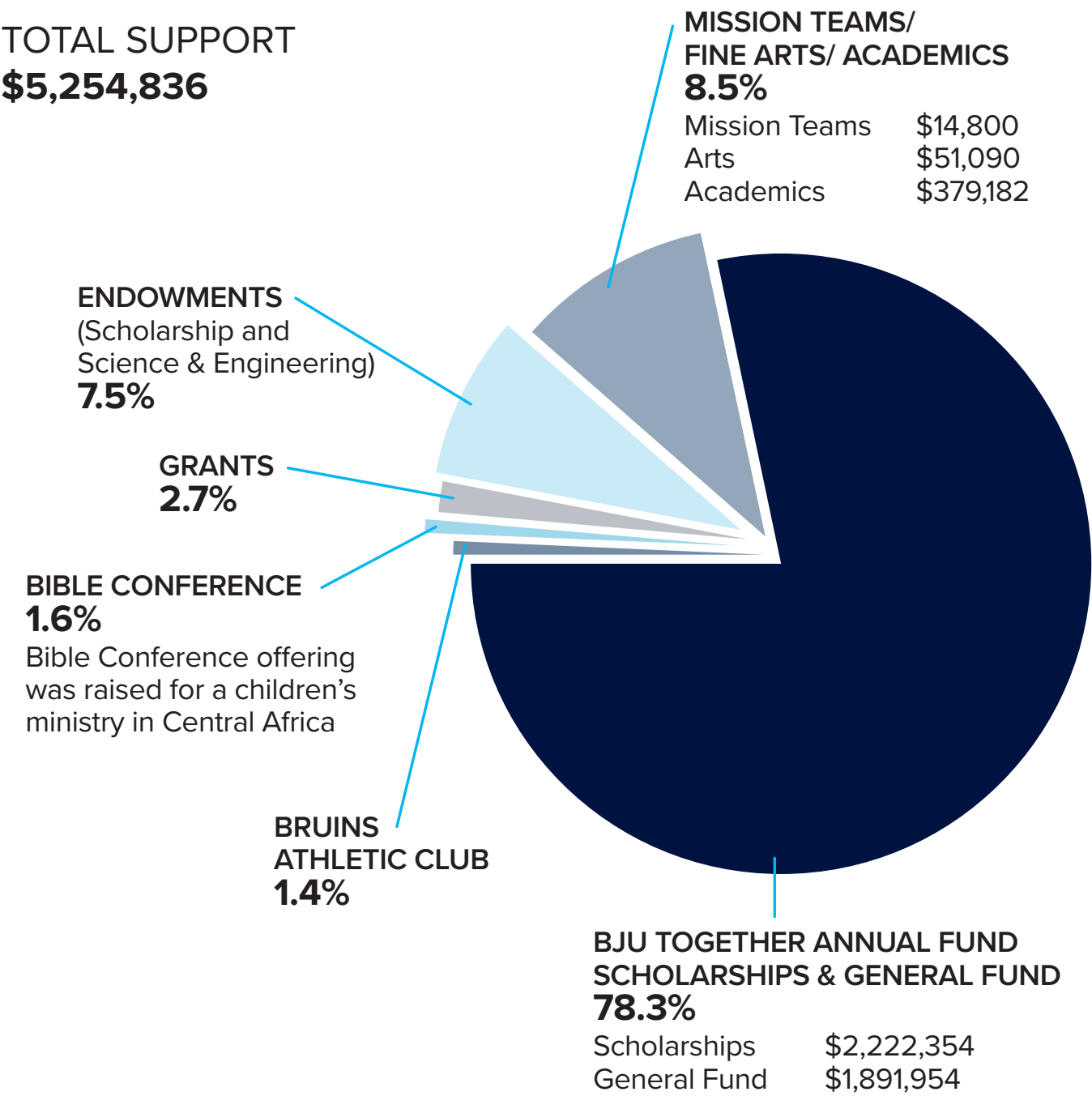


Through Opening Exercises, Heritage Day, Homecoming on November 13–14, Christmas Vespers, Bible Conference, Commencement and many moments in between, the year will clearly reflect not only gratitude for God’s faithfulness and His guiding hand into our next century, but also our appreciation for our BJU community. **We desire to say thank you to our graduates—the outcome of the mission—and to all those who support that mission.**

GIVING TOTALS

June 1, 2024–May 31, 2025

TOTAL SUPPORT
\$5,254,836



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"Thank you to every ministry partner who has invested in student scholarships at BJU. Your generosity has shaped my education and allowed me to grow both as a designer and as a person. With both of my parents serving in full time ministry, your support has played a vital role in making my education possible. I'm deeply grateful for the alumni and friends whose gifts have made my time here a reality."
—Hannah Glass



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"I am so thankful for the scholarships I have received through the generous giving of others. It shouldn't be possible for me to attend BJU. I did not have the financial means to be here, neither did my parents. I fully expected to pay my own way forward, relying on God's grace to carry me through. Sure enough, He did, and continues to do so through faithful donors, willing to give in order for students to receive a Christian education. Coming to BJU has been a huge blessing, changing my life for the better. There is something about learning, growing and having fellowship with other believers while getting an education that is very special. I have made, and will continue to make, friendships that will last a lifetime. BJU is not just a place of learning for me, its home, a place I will always hold dear. I feel called to the mission field after college. I want to use my experiences here to spread the love of Christ like so many people have done to me. Thank you so much for giving." —Grace Owens

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