Like many other imaginative, nature-loving kids, there was a time in my childhood when my greatest dream was to have my very own treehouse. Yet I didn’t want just any treehouse; my arboreal residence was a veritable mansion in the sky, a castle in the leafy canopy. I spent rainy days scribbling blueprints on scrap paper, drawing a spiral staircase here, a rope ladder there and trapdoors everywhere. Each multi-level floor plan was more preposterous than the one before, but I was blissfully unaware that my dreams were so implausible.

Much of our world is formed and controlled by expectations. We believe the world around us should function in a certain way, and we craft assumptions as a result. Some of them are simple, so routine as to remain almost subconscious — we expect the sun to rise every morning, cars to stop at red lights and a cup of coffee to be fresh and hot. Others are more complex and often more difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill — we expect our parents to love and provide for us, a career to fit perfectly with our skills and our treehouse to have a spiral staircase.

The world also places certain expectations on us. As college students, we’re supposed to complete homework assignments, take part in extracurricular activities and prepare for our futures — all while maintaining our social lives. As Christians, we’re supposed to be involved in the church, serve the less fortunate and cultivate healthy relationships with God. As Americans, we’re supposed to be patriotic, indulge in consumerism and exercise our right to vote. Society, and the larger world, demands that we satisfy these requirements or risk the consequences.

As a magazine staff, we, too, have expectations to uphold. Each semester, that task grows increasingly difficult as we continue to craft our legacy — a legacy of success, innovation, quality and telling meaningful stories. And as we present this issue of our publication to you, we once again subject ourselves to your expectations, which we hope we have not only met, but exceeded.

We believe expectations can, and should, be challenged. Are the world’s expectations of us reasonable? Do our expectations of others place unnecessary burdens on them? Do we allow ourselves to be shaped too much by our own and others’ expectations? Or are all these expectations realistic? Whether in obvious or subtle ways, the stories we chose to tell in this issue all center around expectations — breaking them, confirming them, questioning them, revising them.

When I was a young teenager, my dreams were actualized in a real bolts-and-boards treehouse my dad constructed between three trees in our backyard. It didn’t have a rope ladder or spiral staircase; it had a straight, gradual one our dog could climb. It was only one level, but it was solidly built with a roof to keep its occupants sheltered. And it actually did have a trapdoor. It wasn’t anything like my crazy drawings, but it was just what our family needed.

And for that, it was perfect.

—Kelsey
CARS WITH CHARACTER

CLIMB INTO THE PASSENGER SEAT FOR A RIDE IN BIAŁA’S COOLEST VEHICLES.

1966 FORD MUSTANG
- Dr. David Bourgeois
- Associate professor of information systems, Crowell School of Business

When it comes to classic cars, Dr. David Bourgeois has had his share of bad luck. His first Mustang was totaled in 2006, while Bourgeois was driving home from an early morning Bible study. His car was parked at a stoplight when a semi-truck flipped off a freeway exit ramp, crushing Bourgeois’ car and two other vehicles. He was knocked unconscious in the wreck, but escaped without serious injury.

About a year later, Bourgeois bought his second vintage Mustang, which literally went up in flames after it stalled leaving Biola’s campus. Recent maintenance had caused a fuel line to leak, and when he restarted his car, the engine caught on fire. A half-hour and clouds of black smoke later, his metallic blue ‘Stang had burned to a crisp.

Bourgeois began to reconsider his love for the American-made sports car. “I was trying to decide if I really should have a Mustang at that point,” he says. “But then I thought, ‘You know, I’ve had two cars get totaled, and I haven’t been hurt. Maybe it’s just such a bad thing.’” So on Superbowl Sunday in 2009, Bourgeois bought his current set of wheels. He has not named his car, though his kids sometimes call it Dusty or Misty. He just calls it The Mustang, joking, “I don’t want to get so attached to it because I’ve lost two [Mustangs] already.”

1956 FORD FAIRLANE
- Savannah Faranal
- Junior majoring in music education

When Savannah Faranal’s mom went shopping at her local Pick n’ Save supermarket in January 1983, a used car was nowhere on her grocery list. However, when she caught sight of a red-and-white sedan for sale, she was immediately drawn to its vintage charm. She paid $2,500 to become only the second owner.

The younger Faranal has fond memories of the car from her childhood years, when she spent hours playing on “the couch” — i.e., the back seat. She had always hoped the car would be hers someday, and on her 19th birthday, she became the third owner. “I get a lot of attention driving it, as you can imagine,” she says. “People are always honking their horns and always waving.”

Though in good shape for its age, the car requires regular upkeep and has its fair share of quirks. In 1956, only the second year of production for the Fairlane, it was common for cars to come equipped with three separate keys for the trunk, the doors and the ignition. Since it lacks power steering and power brakes, and is still without seatbelts in the back, Faranal admits the car can be a little challenging. “It’s like driving a boat,” she laughs. Still, despite its gas-guzzling tendencies, Faranal, like her mother, sees value in the old automobile.
1993 Chevy Cheyenne 1500

-Robert Keyes
-Sophomore majoring in political science

With military rations, a Coleman stove and old ammo boxes full of tire repair supplies in the back of his truck, it’s fairly safe to say that Robert Keyes is ready for anything. “Plan for the worst, hope for the best,” he says. But when his vehicle got stuck in a riverbed near his house in 2009, even his wealth of disaster preparedness wasn’t enough.

Keyes called his uncle to get the truck out of the mud, but while he waited for help to arrive, a police car pulled up nearby. The two officers approached Keyes’ truck and told him to get out and put his hands on the hood. The cops grilled Keyes while searching him and his truck, and finding nothing amiss, told him the reason for their suspicious. “Apparently early that month or the month before, there were actually a few body dumps in that area, and so they were just being cautious,” Keyes says.

Since purchasing his truck in 2007, Keyes has put tons of time and money into fixing up his ride. Keyes purchased the vehicle, originally a stock work truck complete with toolboxes and dumps in that area, and so they were just being cautious.” Keyes says.

In one Day9 episode, Plott turned self-reflective, contemplating the maturity professional gaming had produced in his own life. He was inspired by the way the shared interests and experiences had brought him closer to others, including old hometown friends and even his own family. Plott’s testimony inspired Beck, who has since become an advocate of competitive gaming, having experienced its communal benefit herself.

Competition among humans is nothing new, but the medium through which we display our drive for domination is constantly evolving. In the workplace, on the field, tearing up the dance floor, we relish the chance to show off our skills and defeat any challenger. Yet this modern, technological age is beginning to witness the rise of a new arena for competition: major league video gaming. Moreover, gaming at a professional level is more than just an outlet for people to burn off steam or validate themselves with fame and fortune. It’s a full-fledged community, and one that affects lives in surprisingly meaningful ways.

Video game enthusiasts are hardly strangers to the Iola community. Of one them, Rachel Beck, is a regular online participant in Starcraft, an extraterrestrial military strategy game. Beck is a graduate student with a B.A. in communications and first became interested in online gaming early in her undergrad years. She began following streaming sites, which link to recorded videos of gameplay, as well as the “Day9” podcast, where host Sean Plott would feature various high-profile gamers.

In one Day9 episode, Plott turned self-reflective, contemplating the maturity professional gaming had produced in his own life. He was inspired by the way the shared interests and experiences had brought him closer to others, including old hometown friends and even his own family. Plott’s testimony inspired Beck, who has since become an advocate of competitive gaming, having experienced its communal benefit herself.

Beck even had the opportunity to visit a tournament in Anaheim organized by Major League Gaming (MLG), one of the largest broadcasters of competitive video game events in America. MLG’s website links to dozens of recorded “play-throughs” by professional gamers, including live streams where the play-through can be viewed by audiences over the web as the game is played in real time. “It was phenomenal,” Beck says of the experience.

MLG also organizes participation events where gamers can compete against each other. Those associated with playing certain games often form “leagues” or “clans” that may vary in scale depending on the game. A league is divided into several levels, or “divisions.” Beck explains, ranking players through a system known as “laddering.”

To ensure new players are put up against others of a similar skill level, gamers are separated into divisions based on their performance during competition. Points awarded for victories allow the players to ascend into higher divisions, which is where the term ‘laddering’ originates. It usually takes five matches to determine a gamer’s division placement, and those at the top become the league’s official representatives. In Beck’s Starcraft league, there are seven divisions: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Diamond, Platinum, Masters, and Grand Masters. Gamers who play together often can also form independent teams within their divisions, establishing even closer communities.

League gamers most often prefer well-known, high-profile releases by large companies like Microsoft, typically making their decision based on whether a game emphasizes a single-player, multiplayer or strategy gameplay configuration. The most common games include titles from the Halo franchise, Team Fortress Two, and the Smash Bros. series. Because of the variety of options, players can tailor their gaming experiences in order to perfect certain skills.

Beyond the attractive perks that professional gaming entails, players are largely motivated by the prospect of bonding with others in their field. For Beck, joining such a large league of gamers, particularly one so centralized around a single franchise, felt a little intimidating at first. However, after getting to know her fellow league members, whom she describes as the nicest people she’s ever known, her hesitations quickly vanished. “They want to see you see yourself
better," she says. "There’s the stereotype that gamers are socially awkward, but they say there’s nothing cooler than being proud of the thing you love.

Professional gaming is expanding quickly. In 2009, during the first Starcraft tournament MLG hosted in the U.S., the audience barely filled the tournament’s designated room, and was almost exclusively composed of those competing in the tournament. But by the next year, more than 20,000 people spilled out of the building and into the street. Growth has been exponential, and comes with its share of concerns.

“You have to love the game for its own sake to be a part of it, not just to get money, otherwise you’ll burn out,” Beck says. “But [other gamers] support you, and eventually you learn to carry yourself as well.” She stresses the need for real enjoyment when playing video games. “Deliberately addictive games like Farmville are designed to play mind games with you . . . make you feel bad if you stop playing,” says Beck. “That’s different from a continual enjoyment, which energizes you. Real playing increases your refresh rate; you learn better multitasking; your mind becomes more organized from learning to keep track of the game’s variables.”

Professional gaming still has many obstacles to overcome on its road to greater and wider acclaim. It has stereotypes to shatter and assumptions to overturn. But it is clearly more than merely a gang of Halo geeks gathered in a living room; it is a growing community of individuals who share not only a passion, but the drive to turn that passion into a professional reality. And with such a supportive band of brothers and sisters pursuing the same dreams, perhaps a better world is just one level ahead.

"There’s the stereotype that gamers are socially awkward, but they say there’s nothing cooler than being proud of the thing you love."
The art world can often seem exclusive, reserved only for high-class galleries and museums. There are those, however, who have set out to give art a practical function among the poor, the homeless, the disadvantaged. These champions of culture use beauty and expression to inspire hope in the otherwise hopeless and downtrodden.

Alegria, founded in 2003 and operated by the Salvation Army, is one such organization that has adopted art as a means of redemption. Located on Sunset Boulevard, the institution houses 72 homeless families affected by HIV/AIDS and provides childcare, food services, professional medical facilities, job coaching, G.E.D. completion and spiritual care.

While the care offered by Alegria is extremely comprehensive, Paul Hobblethwaite, its former executive director, noticed in 2008 that the program had not provided aesthetic outlets for its residents. In response, he approached Dan Story:
Callis, professor of drawing and painting in Biola’s art department, to help him institute an art program at Alegria.

“Hebblethwaite realized that all the parts of the people were being served except for their aesthetic soul,” Callis says. “He has a deep belief that to be fully human one needs to speak to the aesthetic part of man as well as his physical needs, and he’s always pursued that.”

[The pair discussed ways in which the Biola art department, as well as other artists, could creatively collaborate at Alegria. According to Callis, Hebblethwaite then made space in the Alegria buildings for “a constant turnover of artwork for the 200-plus residents that walk through the halls every day.”

Hebblethwaite had created a way to blend the art community with Alegria’s diverse population. Because of its location, the Alegria gallery was an easy area for not only residents, but also members of the community to come see an art show featuring works by artists from the L.A. area. As a result, the gallery has helped bring aesthetic development to the residents of Alegria and raised the art community’s awareness of the program and its outreach.

“Seeing how the community gathers around the work in Alegria has been a breath of fresh air,” Callis says. “I have seen parent and child stop and engage the art work with one another, and their observation is such an incredibly refreshing, sincere engagement with the work that has been gifted to them.”

Just as the community of Alegria offers fresh insight to the art placed there, the art itself offers the residents of Alegria new insight into their own environment. “They’re not just surviving the streets of L.A.,” Callis says. “They’re now understanding it as a culturally rich landscape that is their home, which provides such a positive turning point in their personal identity.”

While Alegria is a strong example of how art can beneficially influence a community, there are multiple other mediums through which art can be used beneficially. Senior art majors Jason Leith and Christine Fuchs were able to experience the benefits of using art as outreach when they volunteered to work with the Watts House Project — a nonprofit, artist-run organization with a mission to redevelop and revitalize the neighborhoods in Watts through art.

Last semester, Fuchs and Leith volunteered to give inner city kids art lessons through the program, which was a growing experience for both of them. “As an artist, to share the subject that you love with kids who don’t appreciate it and often resist getting involved can be really frustrating,” Leith says.

As time went on, however, he began to see change in the children he worked with. “[They] became much more open the more we worked with them, and seeing someone finished spurred others on to work harder on their own projects,” he explains. “Once they completed a project, they were able to feel a sense of pride and ownership in something they had created themselves. That’s not an experience they get to have very often.”

Fuchs related how she and Leith were able to communicate with one adolescent girl through a mosaic project. Frustrated with the project in general, the girl had refused to participate. She revealed that her mother had treated pictures outright contempt. But by participating in the mosaic project, she was able to feel love and encouragement through the affirmation Fuchs and Leith showed for her work.

Throughout their time as volunteers, Leith and Fuchs came to realize the importance of their artistic investment. The children discovered a creative outlet that helped cultivate their self-worth, identity and work ethic; Leith and Fuchs were challenged to develop their patience and love by setting aside their frustrations to reaching the children through art. In such a context, art shows that its worth extends beyond just aesthetics. It provides a platform on which community and relationship can be built, a gateway through which broken minds and hurting hearts can be healed.

In addition to volunteering in Watts, Leith and Fuchs also worked in conjunction with other Biola art students to coordinate a show for Alegria this past summer. “It was a real challenge to put together the show,” says Leith. “We had to construct a collection whose content was at once relevant to the art world and the community of Alegria.”

Fuchs and Leith, who curated the show, worked to establish a theme and a body of work that they felt would have a powerful effect. The show, titled “Art’s Worth Extends Beyond Just Aesthetics, It Provides a Platform on Which Community and Relationship can Be Built, A Gateway Through Which Broken Minds and Hurting Hearts Can Be Healed.”

At first, the two had concerns about the pieces being produced for the show. “We recognized pervading themes of pain, suffering, doubt, and solitude, and we wondered whether it would be too heavy to be enjoyed,” Fuchs explains. “We were worried that, since the people who live there...
When college kids go culinary

It’s a typical Monday afternoon. Students hurriedly make their way into the Caf, ID cards in hand, desperate to satisfy their ravenous appetites as they grab lunch between a mess of classes. Whether they have less than ten minutes or a full hour, most students take advantage of the plethora of food options the Caf has to offer.

Yet, as much as Biola students love eating their fill in the Caf, sometimes the simple fact remains that there really is nothing like a home-cooked meal. To some students, “cooking” is a term limited to Easy Mac or Top Ramen. However, preparing a simple-yet-tasty meal does not have to be daunting.

Most students living off campus no longer frequent the Caf, but instead venture bravely to the local grocery store. There’s nothing like strolling down the aisles at Stater Bros. and having an array of meats, veggies and produce readily available. Whether following a recipe, or concocting some delicacy on a whim, creating a meal can be a relaxing and interesting experiment.

Katie Whittaker, a senior, has found cooking much easier since moving out of the dorms and into a house with several other girls. “I love cooking, and me and my housemates are always trying out new things,” she says. “Cooking essentially always brings back a little piece of home, and when we do make meals together we usually call them ‘family dinners.’ It really is a great way to come together and show your hospitality for one another.” One of Katie’s favorite recipes is for easy-to-make cookies.

Junior Jamie Bartlett, who lives in the off-campus apartments, still has a meal plan, but appreciates the times when she can cook from the comfort of her own kitchen. “For me, cooking is a way to express my creative juices, both literally and figuratively,” she says. “I enjoy it so much because it’s like an art form, where the possibilities are endless.” One of her favorite recipes is chocolate chip pumpkin bread — a perfect treat for the holiday season.

Off-campus senior Janet Wi cooks because it allows her to pursue her passion for food while also being health conscious. “I like to say that some people eat to live, but I live to eat,” she says. “So for food lovers, it’s essential to know how to cook. Also, you can control what goes into your food and eliminate a lot of the bad oils, fats and salts that are in a lot of prepared foods.” One of Janet’s favorite healthy meals to cook is feta cheese turkey burgers.

Contrary to what some students may believe, diving into the culinary realm is far from difficult. Food Network shows, the Internet or even old cookbooks can serve as valuable resources for finding recipes. Whether cooking alone or with friends, creating a meal is a great way to save money, express creativity, develop a new skill and relieve the stress of college life.

After successfully establishing Alegria’s art gallery, Pauline Balmas has moved on to the East Coast. He plans start up similar programs at shelters in major cities such as New York and Chicago. These programs, he hopes, will not only feature artwork, but also invite shelter residents to participate in their own art creation.

To learn more about Hebblethwaite’s Art and Shelter campaign, visit www.artandshelter.org
Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 3/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients, except chocolate chips. Blend until dough is wet and sticky, then mix in the chocolate chips. Using your fingers, form 1 1/2 inch balls and place onto an ungreased, parchment-lined cookie sheet. Cookies will spread during baking, so leave enough space for expansion. Bake for 9 minutes. Let the cookies sit for about 30 seconds to 1 minute before removing from cookie sheet. Place cookies on a wire rack to cool. Makes approximately one dozen small cookies.

Feta Cheese Turkey Burgers

- Two handfuls of ground turkey
- 1/2 cup feta cheese
- 2 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp garlic pepper
- Ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Balsamic Vinegar

Knead together ground turkey, feta cheese and spices (as with dough), then form into patties. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Place patties into the pan and cook for about 10–12 minutes, turning halfway through. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar.

Grocery Stores to Check Out

- Best Way
- Value + Warehouse
- Northgate
- Korean Super 1 Market
- Trader Joe’s
- Fresh and Easy
- Costco
- Vons
- Stater Bros.
- Ralphs

Chocolate Pumpkin Bread

- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 3/4 cups pureed pumpkin
- 3 eggs
- 3-4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 cups chocolate chips (or substitute butterscotch chips)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a mixer, cream the brown sugar and butter together on medium high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Beat in pumpkin, eggs, and mix until smooth. In a separate bowl, combine all the dry ingredients except the chocolate chips. Mix 3 cups of the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients, then add as much of the fourth cup as necessary to achieve the proper consistency (moist, but thick enough to stand a spoon). Fold in the chocolate chips. Pour or spoon the batter into greased muffin tins or a bread pan. Bake in the center rack, 20–25 minutes for muffins or 50 minutes to 1 hour for a loaf, or until a toothpick poked into the center comes out clean.
UNFAITHFUL

CONFRONTING ADULTERY IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

Story: Claire Callaway
Photo: Ashley Jones
Design: Brodie Canta Carvalho
“I remember when I was in kindergarten, and I had a friend whose parents had broken up,” says Sarah,* a sophomore. “I asked my mom if she and my dad would ever get a divorce, and of course she said no. It was so surprising because they both loved God—they still do. Neither of them expected it to happen.”

Fractured Trust

Sarah’s parents divorced when she was eight after her father had an affair. He was a musician and toured frequently with his bands. “[My mom] trusted [my dad] even though he was gone a lot,” Sarah says. “My dad used that opportunity to make a mess of a lot of different things in his life. He got addicted to alcohol. They were fighting all the time . . . And then one day he left, and it wasn’t like he was going on tour. He was gone. Then there was this girl that he was living with. I didn’t understand what was going on . . . I didn’t understand that he had cheated on my mom.”

Both of her parents wanted the marriage to work, but her father’s addiction and repeated infidelity prevented any real reconciliation. “He tried to get his life back on track after that, but it didn’t happen for such a long time,” Sarah says. “There was trust that couldn’t be there ever again.”

After the divorce, members of her church who had gone through similar difficulties supported Sarah and her mother. “There were all these people telling me that God was my father, and that He would be faithful and not lie and love me unconditionally,” Sarah says. In many ways, Sarah’s view of God was solidified though this difficult period. “Right after my parents divorced, I remember writing this poem about there being a storm inside of me, and how there were all these things ripping me in different directions, and I didn’t know what to believe or who was right and who was wrong,” Sarah says. “The turning point was ‘But God.’ That was a huge thing for me. That became such a central thing in my life that I associate the word ‘father’ more with an idea of God than I do with my dad. Some people would think that’s sad in a way, but I think that’s beautiful that something could be so redeemed.”

While this redemption has provided her with a deeper understanding of God, the pain from her parents’ divorce has given Sarah a more serious regard for marriage. In her view, Christian marriages should be more stable than non-Christian ones, and she is disappointed that this is so often not the case. “I wish that we took seriously that loving each other is laying down our lives for each other,” she says. “I wish we would see that in marriage there is so much beauty in being able to give things up to God and struggle with each other and love each other even when you don’t feel in love with each other.”

Confronting the Brokenness

Lydia,* a sophomore, was also profoundly affected by adversity, although she didn’t learn that until about a year ago. “A really big puzzle piece . . . was missing that fit into the whole picture of my parents’ divorce,” she says. After struggling with their marriage for several years, Lydia’s parents divorced when she was 12 years old.
“My dad has a really severe porn addiction that was detrimental to their marriage,” Lydia says. “My mom tried so many things to stop it . . . And one day, I’m not sure how far before the divorce, my mom was looking through his trunk for some stuff and she found a box of things that were very obviously not hers that he had tried to hide. That’s how she found out about the affair he was having.”

Even though Lydia’s mother still wanted to make their marriage work, her father decided to file for divorce. “My mom could have been a better wife in a lot of ways,” Lydia says. “But she was a saint compared to him. And my dad divorced my mom, not the other way around . . . In a lot of ways [my parents] weren’t reconcilable because my dad needed a lot of help that he wasn’t seeking.”

Since then, Lydia has been forced to confront her father’s brokenness. “There are a lot of secret things about my dad, a lot of things he has shame for, but he just lets it run wild,” says Lydia. “He doesn’t hide [his problems] very well. It was just this box that was shoved in the back of his car . . . It’s almost like he wants to be found out. Maybe it comes to a point with these really deep sins, where you can’t talk about it, but you almost wish someone would just confront you and help you, because you’re so deep in it yourself that you don’t know where to go to let go.”

Lydia feels that it was ultimately her father’s overpowering shame that prevented her parents from staying together. Moreover, her parents avoided seeking help, even from their church, because the nature of their struggle was too sensitive. “I’m not sure it would have been different if the church had been involved, because that would have meant dealing with all of my dad’s problems, and I don’t think that’s something that my parents would have been comfortable with,” she says.

Like Sarah, Lydia views marriage with more gravity because of her parents’ ordeal, and she says Christians should set an example for successful marriages. “I believe that marriage is sacred,” Lydia says. “Marriage should be a relationship that grows and gets better and the love gets deeper and deeper . . . and God has to be the foundation of your relationship, or it will very likely fall apart. You have to go into it knowing that it’s a compromise and that there will be times that you will want to end it. But if you push through, then it will be one of the most rewarding things you can do.”

Cracks in the Foundation

First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes life. After pledging their lives to one another, two people find themselves in situations they never truly anticipated. Their house is filled with screaming children, and they dread the monthly mortgage bill, working overtime just to get by. Eventually, they realize they have been drifting apart, but don’t know what to do about it.

These circumstances can make a marriage particularly susceptible to infidelity. Dr. Tim Muehlhoff, professor of communications at Biola and author of Marriage Forecasting, offers some insights into the causes of adultery. “You go home to your second job—that is, raising kids, dealing with your wife, fixing the toilet,” Muehlhoff says. “Your spouse has heard all of your jokes before. You’re infatuated by them because you don’t really know them. You know your spouse backwards and forwards. But there’s mystery to this person, and it’s really attractive.”

An overly hectic lifestyle, and consequent lack of rest, chips away at the foundation of a marriage, according to Muehlhoff. Connecting with God regularly is crucial to a healthy relationship, because “if your soul is fatigued, your defenses are down, so you’re more susceptible to an affair,” Muehlhoff says.
Other factors come into play as well. According to Dr. Rob Lister, an assistant professor of biblical and theological studies at Biola, a lack of accountability to fellow Christians is often another precursor to adultery. Without the support this accountability makes possible, it becomes easier to give in to the temptation of infatuation.

While rest and accountability are important, at the end of the day, the success of a marriage is built on a healthy focus on God, as well as daily patience and perseverance. “On one hand, we’re connecting our marriages to the gospel,” Lister says. “Our marriages are little mirrors of Christ’s love for the church. But we must also do the nitty-gritty detail work of building a relationship together.”

Couples must establish practical steps for combating the temptation to walk out of a deteriorating marriage. Muehlhoff suggests avoiding the negative views of sex and marriage that are prevalent in the media. Largely because of media’s influence, modern culture has cheapened the idea of marriage and taken faithfulness too lightly, freely allowing one or both spouses to seek fulfillment elsewhere when their marriage goes awry. Muehlhoff also cautions again living beyond one’s means, because financial trouble is one of the most common sources of stress on a marriage.

If a couple fails to take those practical steps and falls into infidelity, Lister emphasizes the importance of immediately seeking support from the church community. “The church is a place for sinners, a place for broken people,” he says. “It should be a place where sinners feel welcome to come for counsel, encouragement, nourishing—to be helped along by other sinners who are deeply in love with the grace of Christ.”

According to Lister, the first step to forgiveness and restoration is to remember that all people are sinners. In that sense, every person has broken a much greater vow with God. But whereas the human capacity for unconditional forgiveness is often limited, God’s grace has no limits, regardless of the sin committed against him. “Operating with the cultural mindset, [Christ] would have divorced his bride a long time ago,” Lister says. “But he persists in love, fidelity, care and provision of his bride in spite of our many adulteries.”

Furthermore, Lister says, God’s grace does even more than simply forgiving individual sins: Through his forgiveness, God also makes possible the restoration of other relationships. “The good news is,” Lister says, “that if our sins against God may be forgiven, then in a horizontal dimension it is possible to experience healing, forgiveness and reconciliation as well.”

*Names have been changed to protect privacy*
In 1959, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles moved from its bustling downtown location to a quiet plot of land dotted with olive trees. That same year, the school broadened its academic offerings from evangelism and Bible training to a full-fledged liberal arts curriculum, obtained accreditation, and was officially renamed Biola College. Fifty years later, Biola has grown into a university comprising seven schools and 37 undergraduate majors ranging from philosophy to kinesiology.

“Biola’s mission has remained the same, but the outreach has really broadened,” says Dr. Rick Bee, director of Alumni Relations. “Now, it’s not just people being prepared to serve in the church or on the mission field; it’s people being prepared to serve for Christ in the board room, in the classroom, in making films, in very diverse roles.”

Bee believes that Biola’s ever-expanding spectrum of majors has not only remained faithful to, but also furthered the founders’ original vision for the school. However, Jason Oakes, assistant professor of biblical and theological studies, has noticed a disconnect in the way some students perceive certain fields of study.

“I think the students who come in every year have carried in this idea of two calls: a higher call and a lower call,” he says. This mentality, according to Oakes, likely originated with the early church, when St. Eusebius first made a distinction between the “active life” — that is, the everyday life of those who pursue careers — and the “contemplative life,” which is solely devoted to pursuing a deep understanding of God’s goodness.

To explain in more familiar terms, Oakes refers to Luke 10:38-42, the story of Mary sitting at Jesus’ feet while her sister, Martha, busied herself with household tasks. Churches have often interpreted Jesus’ gentle rebuke of Martha to mean that sitting at Jesus’ feet, or living the contemplative life, is always better than working, or living the active life. At Biola, Oakes says students often seem to compare biblically-focused majors to Mary, and all other majors to Martha.

But the catch, Oakes says, is that this interpretation, while extremely common, is an incorrect one. “The passage says [that] Mary, at this particular time, was sitting at the feet of Jesus, and that was a good thing for her to be doing.” Oakes explains. “It doesn’t say that Mary should never do any work. . . The next day, Jesus might have told her, ‘Now it’s time for you to go back to your work.’”

If Oakes’ alternative interpretation of the Mary-and-Martha story is correct, the implication for students is that there is no distinction between those who choose to serve God through studying theology and those who do so through, for example, engineering.

Julianna Plumb, a junior, is one such engineering student. A longtime math and science enthusiast, Plumb became interested specifically in engineering after interning with NASA while she was in high school. She has returned to that internship every summer since, researching and working on fighter jets and other specialized aircraft.

At first, Plumb says, she didn’t see a connection between God and her major. “I was sitting there thinking, ‘Why the heck am I doing engineering? This isn’t missions, this isn’t preaching the gospel, this is science!’” she remembers. But as time went on, she began to see physics as a unique means of discovering truth — something she says she owes to Biola physics professor Dr. John Bloom. “Whenever you do a physics problem, and you
Matthew Weathers, assistant professor of mathematics and computer science, feels similarly about his fields. For many people, math is synonymous with misery, recalling to mind hopeless hours spent agonizing over proofs and theorems in high school geometry; for Weathers, math is both a means of better understanding creation and a constant demonstration of God’s greatness. Exponents, he says, give him a sense for the vastness of the universe; probability and statistics remind him of how perfectly God orchestrates even the smallest details; studying mathematical infinity gives him “a sense of awe about God’s infinite nature.

“The better you understand creation,” Weathers says, “the better you understand the Creator.”

While Plumb and Weathers value their areas of study as ways to learn more about God, Dr. Scott Waller, assistant professor of political science, affirms politics as a means for Christians to influence their culture.

“The common [misconception] is that religion and politics are like oil and water—they just don’t mix,” he says. “But really, the whole venture of politics is a moral enterprise because . . . what we decide within [a] civil society determines what we think is moral and right and just. Christians have a lot to say about what is moral and right and just, so, we of all people, should be weighing in on these issues.”

Waller has no delusions, however, about the moral and ethical tightrope Christians in politics are forced to walk. How, for example, can a Christian acknowledge his faith honestly while also avoiding the potential pitfalls of making his faith the basis for his platform? If a Christian politician is not “wearing his heart on his sleeve,” what remains to set him apart from his well-principled, but non-religious counterpart?

Even though there may not be perfect answers to these and other more complicated questions, Waller firmly believes that Christians have a collective responsibility to engage the political world.

“God is calling people particularly into areas where we can have impact,” he says. “Politics has a huge impact on people’s lives and on the direction we’re going to go as a culture.”

Nursing, in a similar sense, affords Christians the chance to affect the lives of others, but on an individual rather than cultural level. Jessie Webster, a junior, chose to pursue nursing because she sees it as a hands-on way to live out her faith.

“It’s really an inlet to spiritual care, because when you’re tending to a person’s needs, that tends to open up a gate of trust,” she says. “They feel you can trust you, as their caretaker, with their emotions, with their needs, and that gives you the opportunity to administer spiritual care as well.”

For Webster, administering spiritual care does not necessarily mean outright evangelism, because she believes it is crucial to remember that patients’ physical needs are usually more immediate than their spiritual needs. Instead, she says, a nurse can show God’s love by responding directly to a patient’s concerns and by simply doing her job the best that she can.

“Instead of being blatantly obvious [about sharing your faith], which can actually turn people away, it’s better to be a good nurse first, and then on top of that show that you’re a Christian,” she says. “Look what Jesus did when he was on earth. What he did was not just the speaking portion of things, and it was not just that salvation aspect. He added into it physical healing.”

Webster captures perfectly the approach Oakes suggests Christians take to use careers even outside of the church as a ministry. Being a Christian artist, he says, does not mean the artist must always paint religious pieces, and being a Christian author does not mean the author must always write stories with an overt message of salvation. If a Christian author feels that God has called him to a particular field outside of missions or the church, his responsibility is to produce the best work he can in that field.

“If I’m a Christian filmmaker, it seems like what I’m primarily called to do is to make excellent films,” Oakes says. “If I’m making films, I want them to glorify God, and the best way to do that is for them to be excellent.”

According to Oakes, nearly all majors and careers are equally valid means both of pursuing personal spiritual growth and of ministering to others. Not only that, but a career can, in and of itself, become a form of worship. “One mistake we make is to think that God is only interested in the spiritual stuff. When really, he created a world and he created us with imaginations— he is interested in business, and he’s interested in art,” he says. “God created it all, and Christ came to restore it all. . . and one of the main reasons why we work is because God works. He created us and gave us work to do, and there’s something glorifying about doing the work that he has given us.”
“Everything I’ve ever done has been who I am, because I’m authentic. I didn’t do what was fashionable; I did what mattered to me, and that brought me back to who I was inside.”
IT LOOKED SO REAL. DRAWING THE BARN WITH TEXTURE AND SHADING. IT AMAZED ME THAT of eyes; on the opposite wall, a giant painting of Fathers, the Statue of Liberty, practice drawings of F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan measuring easily 15 feet long; on one wall, sketches of the Founding Fathers, the Statue of Liberty, practice drawings of eyes; on the opposite wall, a giant painting of the barn with texture and shading. It amazed me

of what Twitchell considered himself a part, was in full swing. "We were painting on our shirts and on our pants, on our window shades — we were just painting everything to make it beautiful," Twitchell says. "It was just about the world being beautiful. It wasn't about anti-war until later." Twitchell remembers with a laugh. "And I thought, 'Oh, that's right. I'm Mr. Slow News Day...' Thank you, God, I needed that."

More than 30 years later, Twitchell may have grown even more humble, but his public recognition has continued to expand. He has created more than 100 murals across the country, and he is widely credited for earning Los Angeles recognition as the "mural capital of the world."

Twitchell’s road to renown has not been without hardships. In 1994, his Sunset Boulevard studio of 18 years was destroyed in a magnitude 6.8 earthquake, and 10 years later, the studio he had moved to in Northern California flooded. Twitchell lost a number of studio pieces to both disasters, and those are not the only works he’s seen ruined: Several of his murals have been marred beyond recognition by graffiti or intentionally obliterated. For the amount of time and painstaking attentiveness Twitchell puts into his art, he is far less possessive of his work than one might expect. "Take whatever pictures you want," he tells the photographer who accompanied me to his studio. "It’s all public art as far as I’m concerned."

He regards even the defacement of his earlier murals with the same composure. A portrait of artist Jim Morpheets that Twitchell painted along the 110 Freeway was tagged beyond recognition; a mural depicting runners in the LA Marathon was also vandalized; his first mural featuring Steve McQueen was completely painted over. Twitchell is understandably saddened by the harm done to these pieces — remarking wryly that Los Angeles has devolved into "the graffiti capital of the world" — and admits he has developed fonder feelings for indoor murals. In most cases, though, he takes his losses in stride, sometimes restoring or relocating pieces that had been particularly meaningful to him or to the community, but not seeking any retribution. "I never sue anyone unless I’m lassoed into it by the art world," he explains. The only such instances where Twitchell felt obligated to pursue litigation were when two of his most iconic murals — one an homage to his late grandmother overlooking the Hollywood Freeway, the other of local pop artist

LOS ANGELES USED TO BE THE MURAL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD, AND IT’S NOW THE GRAFFITI CAPITAL OF THE WORLD."

Initially, Twitchell participated in the psychedelic artwork that was popular at the time. He explains how these sorts of paintings gave rise to LA’s murals, and although he was competent at what he calls "abstract expressionism," his passion was for realism. "Nothing was less fashionable then than realism," he says. "And yet, that was who I really was." In 1971, Twitchell opted to pursue his first love, and painted a strikingly lifelike portrait of actor Steve McQueen — his first of many large-scale murals — on the side of a friend’s childhood home in downtown LA.

Outside of the four-member troupe of artists who called themselves the Los Angeles Fine Arts Squad, Twitchell was the only artist in the world at the time creating realism-based street art. And when the Fine Arts Squad disbanded in 1974, Twitchell continued his work. The media, fascinated with the uniqueness of Twitchell’s projects, quickly made him a regular fixture in newspapers and broadcasts, although Twitchell jokes that most reporters only followed him because "they had nothing else to cover."

He admits, however, that as a young man who had become something of an overnight sensation, he was not always so modest. He recalls one day from the late 1980s when a television camera crew had surrounded him as he worked on a mural alongside the 405 Freeway. Suddenly, the reporters noticed a column of smoke in the distance.

"One of them said, 'Look! There’s real news!'

Twitchell remembers with a laugh. "And I thought, 'Oh, that’s right. I’m Mr. Slow News Day... Thank you, God, I needed that.’"

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Ed Ruscha on the side of a government-owned building — were illegally painted over in 1987 and 2006, respectively.

“I’ve had other pieces painted out, and I don’t care,” Twitchell says. “But [the Ed Ruscha monument] had become sort of a symbol of street art in Los Angeles. It was just so public, and to just ignore it would have weakened [laws protecting artists’ moral rights].”

With a long career marked by critical acclaim and triumph in many forms, Twitchell has every right to self-importance, yet his demeanor is anything but egotistical. The pride he takes in his work is obvious, but it derives from a pure love of art, rather than from a sense of accomplishment.

Presumably, Twitchell could afford to live in luxury; instead, he spends his nights in his studio, or in a condo he shares with his uncle. He’s well-connected enough that he could use any beautiful face as inspiration, but most often chooses his models based on their character or their histories. He has done his fair share of commissioned work, but created most of his pieces to honor people whom he admires.

At heart, it seems, Twitchell is still that simple Michigan farm boy, largely unaffected by the attention — both positive and negative — his work has attracted. Somewhat paradoxically, Twitchell credits his art for keeping him grounded and authentic. “Art is who I am,” he says. “Everything I’ve ever done has been who I am. I didn’t do what was fashionable; I did what mattered to me, because it was a lot more fun and a lot more rewarding, and that brought me back to who I was inside, which was a Christian.”

Twitchell says his faith is inextricably intertwined with his art, influencing every piece he creates. Biola’s Jesus mural, officially titled “The Word,” is his only overtly Christian piece, but most of his murals contain some religious allusion. For example, “The Freeway Lady” and a carpenter Twitchell featured in a mural at Otis College of Art and Design represent the Virgin Mary and Jesus, respectively. “I like people to look up at my monuments and see the clouds behind them and see [my subjects] as sacred beings set apart, created by God,” he says.

As Twitchell’s faith informs his art, his art, likewise, helps cultivate his faith in multiple ways. The time he spends working gives him the opportunity to listen to Bible studies or sermons on his iPhone, and he says that God has spoken to him both through the art itself and through the world’s response to it. And that, more than recognition, more than lawsuits, more than even his own passion, is what has defined his career.

“My mother always told me that one day I was going to be a big artist,” Twitchell remembers. “I was just this farm boy, very simple, and then suddenly one day people were knocking down my door who I’d seen on television. I knew it had to be that God was doing something.”
Biola sophomore Madison Krueger was walking into class when a girl stopped her mid-stride to compliment her outfit. Another girl, pointing to Krueger’s sweater asked, “Where do you get your style ideas from? You’re always dressed so stylishly?” Krueger shrugged and replied, “I’m from Washington; I just shop at the local stores.”

In a community of more than 6,000 students from all across the country, Kreuger is just one example of how students represent their home-towns through their personal style. Biola, like almost any other college, is a social melting pot, and in many ways, students share more and more common ground with each other as their time here goes on. Fashion, however, gives students a way not only to express their personalities, but also to maintain a connection to the places they call home.
East Coast
East Coast style is usually classic, minimalist and urban, characterized by cooler colors — especially black — and often labeled as ‘preppy.’ From Washington, D.C. to New York City, the home of high fashion, outfit pieces from major brand names such as Ralph Lauren, J. Crew and Lilly Pulitzer frequently appear in classy ensembles fit for big city streets.

The South
From genteel ladies to cotton farmers and from cattle ranchers to country singers, the south has a way of making a name for itself. Playing off of the Southern drawl and laid-back poise, female fashions from this region are airy and elegant. Males, on the other hand, sport robustly practical styles suited to the hard-working attitude of the region. Popular name brands include Tory Burch, Sperry and True Religion.

Midwest
Hearkening back to its agricultural heritage, the Midwest relies on comfort and convenience. In big cities such as Chicago, fashion pieces like designer purses and floral tops have made their mark, but Midwesterners often fall back on more casual looks. Outfits are adapted to the drastic weather changes of four distinct seasons through the use of layers and the simple-yet-stylish practicality found in sweatshirts and jeans.

West Coast
The West Coast, home to Hollywood and some of the best beaches in the world, hosts a striking variety of individuals with an equally diverse sense of fashion. However, living within miles of the ocean has a noticeable impact on style, and has created a culture of simply assembled, but conspicuously unique outfits brought to life by bright colors and certain essential accessories. Rainbow sandals, cutoff jeans, and other distinctive staples give West Coast fashion a fun, edgy feel year round.

Wild West
In the rugged land of the Rocky Mountains and the Grand Canyon, where hiking and biking are often preferred over shopping, fashion is characterized by practicality. Name-brand athletic clothes are nearly as common as name-brand jeans, a Wild Wester’s favorite accessory is bright color, and, of course, ranch-hand-inspired pieces like boots or sturdy flannel button-downs are prevalent across this resilient region.

Pacific Northwest
The Pacific Northwest takes layering to the next level, with a strong emphasis on texture and earth tones to play on the rich natural environments of Oregon and Washington. Stylishly relaxed outfits, featuring vests or flannels on both guys and girls, dominate urban Awhile Northwesterners living outside the city stay comfortable in reliable brands such as North Face, REI and Columbia.

The South
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Students at private, Christian universities are typically expected to fit a specific mold. The prevailing assumption is that they are raised in church-going families and sheltered from the barrage of secular culture. They are often labeled as "good kids" with little real-world experience. While pieces of this stereotype may ring true, it is never really that simple. Some students shatter the mold entirely, throwing off common expectations as they transition from uncommon pasts. A few of these remarkable individuals have arrived at Biola University, each with his or her own powerful story.

"I wanted to go out. I wanted to travel. I wanted to learn about myself, learn more about life. Everything I wanted, I got."

John Reid leans forward eagerly, clasping his hands in front of him, as he discusses his decision to join the Marine Corps. Reid has a mature air about him, regularly slipping a "ma'am" or two into his answers.

As soon as he graduated from high school in 2003, Reid entered boot camp and began seven years of service in the military police. "We do everything from traffic control, to law enforcement, to criminal activity and force protection," Reid explains.

After spending two years in Japan, Reid applied for a presidential security detail in Washington, D.C. He was accepted and spent two years with President George W. Bush and two years with President Barack Obama. "Bush never wanted to talk politics," Reid remembers. "He would if you wanted to, but he wanted to talk sports, life, anything else."

When Reid lived in D.C. he was actively involved with the church he attended, which helped him transition to Biola. "[Adjusting] wasn’t difficult socially so much," he says. "I was really involved in my church. I led a high school small group and went with them on retreats."

Of course, some things took getting used to, such as dorm life. After spending most of his time around his peers, 26-year-old Reid had to adjust to living with so many young people. "The biggest adaption I had to make was how I respond to people," he says. "I had high expectations, and I needed to realize I’m not a sergeant; I am a student along with these guys here."

Reid looks at his situation as preparation for the calling that God has given him. "I’m here to go to school, but I’m also here to be trained," explains Reid. "I stay in the dorms because I want to be with guys. I want to be able to coach them."

Reid looks at Biola as a place of rest, where he no longer has to be on guard against both the ridicule he had faced in the Marines. "You’re surrounded by people who don’t know much — and don’t care much — about religion in general," Reid says. "If you, in any way, are associated with Christianity or any religion, they’re going to know. You’re going to be called ’The Jesus Guy,’ ’The God Guy.’"

Reid transferred to Biola as a journalism major last spring. Ultimately, he wants to go through Talbot and return to the military as a chaplain.
I needed to realize I'm not a sergeant; I am a student along with these guys here.

where he will help educate other soldiers in theology, apologetics and ethics. "I want a full-time job where I can minister to those on the battlefield, to those who are serving," Reid says. "As a Christian and follower of Christ, I know that it is my responsibility to administer the true Gospel."

Steven Oatey

Steven Oatey had never planned on going to a Christian college. "I assumed, probably arrogantly, that I wouldn't learn as much [as I would at a secular school]," he explains.

Originally, Oatey's dream school was UC Davis. However, when he was not accepted, he had to consider the other state schools he had applied to, which he says was a humbling experience. After a semester of community college, Oatey decided to enroll in UC Berkeley's rigorous engineering program.

Because of the school's liberal reputation, he received mixed reactions from his friends and family about his decision, but his experience defied expectations. "The professors were very liberal, but I found the students were more moderate, especially regarding their beliefs in God," Oatey says.

Even so, the theological discussions Oatey had with fellow students forced him to critically examine his beliefs. "It was refreshing to have my own thoughts challenged by non-Christians," Oatey explains. "There were a lot of very intelligent people there, which made for a lot of really good conversation."
Oatey intended to spend the rest of his college days at Berkeley, but was surprised when, halfway through the semester, he felt God pointing him in a completely different direction. “I distinctly remember a sudden realization of ‘I need to do something more involved with people,’” Oatey says. “It wasn’t any more specific than that. It was just a realization that engineering, while good and full of potential, wasn’t what I was supposed to be doing.”

After this shift, he decided to pursue teaching and was eager to become involved in mentoring at his church. It wasn’t until he started searching for Christian universities online, at the urging of his parents, that he found Biola.

Now in his junior year, Oatey is majoring in math and secondary education. “It’s my practical pursuit of ministry,” explains Oatey. He views his time at Biola as a “taste test” of formal Christian education, the area of teaching that interests him. Eventually, he plans on attending seminary and becoming a pastor.

Oatey says when he transferred to Biola he had to remind himself to see his Christian peers as family. Because of his new perspective, Oatey often addresses other believers as “brother” and “sister,” even in text messages and emails. His recognition that Christians act as one body changed the way he interacted with others. “Being committed to people in that way is something I’m very convicted about,” Oatey says. “The expectation of community is not how much you can get but how much you can give.”
Taija Ziegenfuss

Taija Ziegenfuss pedaled over on her bike with a can of Coca-Cola in hand. She had been helping her elderly neighbor with chores, and the beverage was her reward. “I don’t usually like soda, but I worked for this,” she explains playfully.

Working for things has come to define Ziegenfuss’ life. She has lived in nine different homes with nine different families. Fighting the odds, Ziegenfuss has made a new life for herself—and she isn’t done yet.

As an infant, Ziegenfuss was taken from her first home by Social Services because of her mother’s drug addiction. “I was born with drugs in my system: Methamphetamine and cocaine,” she explains. Her mother died of a drug overdose when Ziegenfuss was 12, and she never knew her father. From then on, it was foster home after foster home, though she says nine different homes is a relatively small number compared to the experiences of other children in the foster care system.

Ziegenfuss knows firsthand the problems of the system, including abuse at the hands of a foster family. To make matters worse, no one seemed to care. “I had pictures of my bruises and scratches, and [my foster family] still won [the court case],” she says. “Things happen like that in foster homes all the time, and no one really knows it.”

The summer before she entered Biola, Ziegenfuss lived in government-subsidized housing. Her foster mother, who depended on child support checks and food stamps, began demanding money from her in exchange for room and board—money Ziegenfuss didn’t have. Eventually, the situation became too much to handle. Ziegenfuss called her future Biola roommate, whose family came to help her move out while her foster mother was at the store.

Despite her traumatic living situation, Ziegenfuss graduated high school with honors and was accepted into Biola, her dream school. “I was infatuated with Biola,” she says. “I felt so honored to get a letter from them.”

After so many years in unloving foster homes, Ziegenfuss found Biola’s atmosphere difficult to adjust to. “It was hard to be in an environment where there was so much love and not much negativity,” she explains. “It was very overwhelming. I got really depressed my first year here. . . Even though it was positive, I was panicking.”

She was also forced to experience new things completely on her own, which she says was a significant struggle. “I couldn’t call my mom and be like, ‘Oh my gosh, Mom, you wouldn’t believe what happened to me today.’ I didn’t have that,” Ziegenfuss says. “And it’s still hard right now because Mom’s not here. She’s not coming back, and she won’t see me graduate.”

After graduating in May, she hopes to earn her master’s degree in social work at USC. She feels called to minister to children in the foster care system who are in the same situations she faced. “I just want to be with [foster children], talk with them, care for them,” she explains. “I want to make sure these kids are taken care of, because the only reason why this system exists is for their benefit, and I think we’ve strayed away from that.”

Despite a rough past, Ziegenfuss still acknowledges God’s providence and is optimistic about her future. “God is good,” she says. “I’m here at my dream school. I’m going to graduate on time. He brought me out of [a painful situation], and I feel like I’m on top of the world.”