

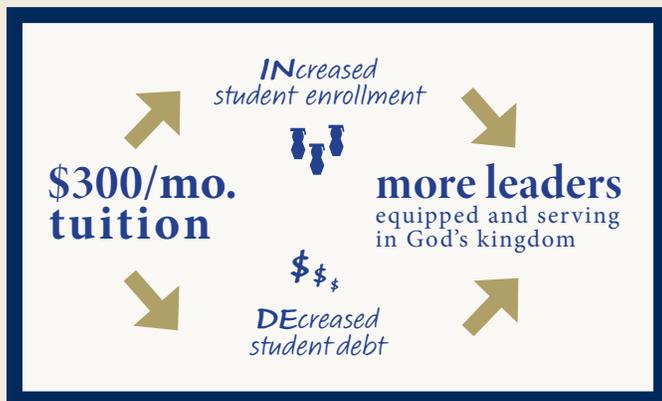
MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT SLEASMAN

Historic Board Decision for Greater Kingdom Impact

In 2020, Winebrenner Seminary was the recipient of a grant from the CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. That money was used to offset tuition for the current academic year, bringing student cost to \$300/month.

I am pleased to announce that on Friday, February 19, 2021, Winebrenner’s Board of Trustees took a historic vote that is intended to remove the financial obstacle for many students. The members affirmed that **Winebrenner’s tuition will be \$300/month for any student enrolled in a graduate program, starting with the fall 2021 trimester.**

As pictured here below, our team’s proposal to the Board was written with the belief that this decision will lead to 1) increased student enrollment and 2) the equipping of more leaders for service within God’s kingdom.



While the cost of education in the United States continues to increase, this move is intentionally designed to lessen the financial burden on students as they pursue God’s call on their lives.

As part of this decision, we are trusting that those who financially and prayerfully support Winebrenner will continue to see the tremendous value of their kingdom



investment. When I shared our Board’s decision with a friend who serves as president of another seminary, she exclaimed, “What a remarkable investment in current and future students!”

This shift to a \$300/month tuition rate is a positive change, one that will lead to greater Christian leaders serving in our cities, communities, and around the world. Through this transition and the many that have come before, our team’s deep purpose has remained constant: to assist students in their pursuit of Jesus and their service to Him.

At this point in our Seminary’s history, we are confident of our future. More importantly, we have confidence in the God who is in control of both our present and our future. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (13:8).

In this issue of *The Call*, you will hear from our many stakeholders who have a personal interest in this recent decision: our students, alumni, donors, churches, and collaborative partners.

Thank you for joining Winebrenner Theological Seminary as, together, we equip leaders for service in God’s kingdom.

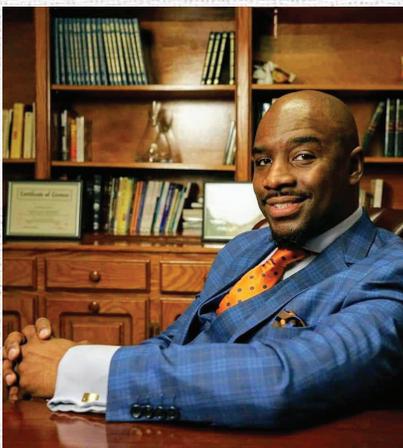
FOLLOWING GOD'S CALL

Students Share Impact of New Tuition Rate

My immediate thought upon hearing the tuition discount was relief. I stepped out on faith in a time where budget wise it was going to be a stretch, but I knew I was being led to pursue graduate studies and sharpen my craft and calling. **This decision means I can strictly concentrate on school instead of trying to moonlight or work a second job to cover the costs.** It allows me space to be fully committed to learning and not trying to make a living. This allows me to stay on course to graduate within 3 years and continue to operate as a more skillful senior pastor in my community.

I appreciate the generosity of the donors who made this possible and the decision makers who made this a reality. This tuition discount will allow others in the ministry to complete their education which ultimately benefits the kingdom. I pledge to pay it forward as well once I complete my studies.

*Pastor OJ Newburn, Sr., student
Master of Divinity*



*Pastor
Katie
Treadway,
student*

Master of Arts in Clinical Counseling

When the announcement came out about the new \$300/month rate, my phone started buzzing as every member of my [counseling] cohort started giving praise to God. Who would have thought that buzzing phones could be praise songs?!

Winebrenner donors, thank you a million times over for this opportunity to build my skillset so that God can use me fully in my gifts!

I am already a pastor (20 years!) but have always felt that my counseling skills were sub-par. My experience in ministry plus the additional licensure in counseling will allow me to serve the people God loves in new and needed ways. I've imagined what it would be like to work full time in counseling to pay the bills while serving a church who can't afford a pastor. I've wondered what it would be like to minister to pastors and others who struggle with mental health issues or simply have had a bad experience in the church. God might just send me to the people who are longing to be loved and known and understood, using me in the local church as well as allowing counseling to reach those who will never set foot in a church.

In January of 2020 God called me into the classroom of Global Vision Christian School PA Campus as the Biblical Studies teacher for international senior high students. Having a Bachelors of Arts of Religious Studies was not going to be enough in the classroom, nor enough to help with the Ministry Training Institute established by the Eastern Regional Conference of the CGGC. My prayer to God was that if this is where He called me, I would need for Him to supply the master's degree. **This was going to take a miraculous act of God, since there were no extra finances in our budget.**

When Winebrenner announced the \$300/month plan, it was an answer to my prayers. I was unsure what I would do once the limited program ended, but knew God had brought me this far. Hearing that the decision was made to make the \$300/month program permanent is a blessing I cannot praise God for enough. It is something I will let everyone know about and encourage them that seminary education is not just for pastors and Christian professionals; it is for anyone looking to go deeper in Scripture and grow in their faith.

*Pastor Tom Myers, student
Master of Arts in Practical Theology*



A RESPONSE FROM OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Expanding God's Work Together



"In a time when so many are struggling with finances and added stress that comes with all that's going on around the world, it's wonderful to know, and to be able to count on, that God still takes care of his own and still makes a way when there seems to be no way...so glad to hear this [tuition] news for the students.

Other than being that vessel used by God to help win lost souls into the Kingdom, no other work is more important than training and help developing individuals to be leaders and disciples in the Lord's work. It has been our pleasure for many years now to be a monthly supporter of Winebrenner Theological Seminary. God has truly blessed Kimberly Church of God. It's only fitting for us to reinvest these blessings of God back into students wanting to serve God. Supporting the Seminary allows us that opportunity.

Thank you Winebrenner, for stepping out in faith to provide more opportunities, to even more called servants of God, to become impacts for the Kingdom of God."

Pastor Dana Jones on behalf of Kimberly Church of God, WV

"When I first heard the news about Winebrenner's limited-time \$300/month program, I was shocked and impressed! I am even more so now with the news of this becoming a permanent incentive. With over 40 million Americans burdened by student loan debt, on top of the countless more who are otherwise dealing with the pain and suffering that comes from living in our broken and fallen world, **helping to equip more people for leadership and ministry to send into our communities, pulpits, and hospitals is a Godsend.**

As a two-time alumnus of Winebrenner, I know that making a graduate-level education easier to pursue and complete, through the easing of the financial burden, will enable so many more people to take those first steps towards spiritual development, Christian maturity, and being equipped for ministry, without the fear of economic hardship that traditionally comes with an advanced degree."

Pastor Brandon Goodling (pictured with wife Stephanie), Alumnus and Donor, PA



"We are thrilled with the news regarding the new tuition rate! This widens the possibility of who can come to seminary, and more people can now attend without such financial worry.

We are very pleased with how the Seminary is operating under the leadership of Brent Sleasman. He has done a masterful job. Winebrenner has revisioned in ways it has not done before. Our commission is to preach the Gospel; Winebrenner Theological Seminary has really turned the page and is working with others in a meaningful way to do so."

Dr. George and Mrs. Shirlee Whitson, Donors, OH

The Board is committed to accomplishing the mission and doing that in ways that create new and expanded pathways for accessibility to all. We are grateful for the innovative and bold risk taking of the Winebrenner team to invest in and release leaders for God's Kingdom.

Pastor Phil Scott, Acting Chairperson, Board of Trustees



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2...

Students Share Impact of New Tuition Rate

“PRAISE GOD! I felt such relief and joy [at the news of the \$300/month tuition rate] that I was not sure what to do except shout the good words from the rooftops. I immediately started singing the hymn “How Great Thou Art.” Then I began thanking God profusely for answering my prayers. I did not know how I would manage to continue my seminary training without a significant reduction in the normal tuition rates. But he called me to the ministry and led me to Winebrenner.

My children and grandchildren are excited that I am attending seminary. My older great grandchildren think it is exciting that I am going to be a minister like our pastor. I think my kids are relieved by the tuition reduction because they will not have any need to worry about whether I am eating or paying tuition. Seriously, they are incredibly happy for me because they know I am dedicated to what I am doing and would find a way to complete what God has called me to do. At this point I feel drawn to small group ministry with single moms.”



*Dr. Glenda Stelnicki
Master of Divinity student*



I've been on the fence about continuing in my program. One of the reasons is the financial expense. If tuition had gone back up, I would have easily decided to hold off on continuing my program until I was more stable financially. Now, I can continue with ease. **It's such a privilege to have found an affordable program where I am challenged to grow academically and spiritually.** My hope when I graduate is to be the most effective worship leader that I can be.

To everyone who has contributed to the process of lowering Winebrenner's tuition, thank you. Thank you on behalf of myself and all my classmates who could not be doing this without your support. Our study is transforming and refining us, and our degrees will be the cherry on top to help open doors for new opportunities to build God's Kingdom.

Lauren Koetje, Master of Arts in Practical Theology student

Fuel Students' Education

We invite you to partner with us in our commitment to *make seminary education affordable*. When you give regularly, you are preparing pastors and Christian counselors for service in the kingdom year round. Here are examples of how you can come alongside our students:

- ▶ **\$300/month** (x12)
- ▶ **\$300/trimester** (x3)
- ▶ **\$300/year** (x1)

Give online at winebrenner.edu/give or use the enclosed envelope to support our students at the amount that God has laid on your heart.

Thank you!

Get In Touch

Katerina Hinkle
Director of Advancement
PO Box 479
Findlay, OH 45839

419-434-4274
hinklek@winebrenner.edu

winebrenner.edu/give
winebrenner.edu/planned-giving
facebook.com/winebrennerseminary