



Founded in 1899

ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

Education for Time and Eternity

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

September/October 2008

“Everyone needs a friend”



The Brad Dorough Friendship award, established in 1990 by the family of a former student, is voted on each year by OBI students. The award provides a full room/board scholarship to the recipient for the upcoming school year. Last spring our students selected **Beimet Kebede**, the youngest student ever chosen.

Beimet enrolled at OBI two years ago as a sixth grader from Ethiopia. She recalled, “When I first got here, I was sad all the time. I asked God for joyfulness and happiness and I guess He gave it to me!”

Helping others be happy became her mission. “Everyone needs a friend...I try to be nice to people and comfort them when they are homesick or sad,” she said.

One of Beimet’s peers stated, “She makes people feel welcome.” Others said, “Her smile brightens the day”...“She is always there to cheer you up.”

Houseparent **Jamie Jory** agreed, noting, “Beimet is constantly encouraging other girls. She is probably the friendliest person in the dorm.” ■

Do we really need them any more?

It is estimated that until about the 1880’s over half of America’s secondary schools were private academies. Many of those were boarding schools. After the turn of the century the numbers began to decline as more public schools were available. Today only a handful of the boarding academies still survive. If you were to research the reasons most of those boarding schools closed their doors you would discover that it was not because there was no longer a need for them, but because of a lack of funding.



Certainly our ministry has had its share of financial challenges. Just after World War I and just before and after the Great Depression, OBI was brought to her knees by financial debt. Salaries could not be paid and bills were months in arrears. Nearly all of our suppliers were demanding cash for purchases. In 1921 our students were sent home and our doors were closed for four months. Only two students graduated in 1921 and we had no graduates in 1922.

Do we really need Christian boarding schools any more? I would encourage anyone seriously thinking about that to talk to the teachers, administration, support staff and students of those ministries before concluding they are no longer needed. Let them tell you of the many life-changing experiences they have seen in the lives of young people.

One of the unique opportunities we have at Oneida is being able to provide a living environment free of drugs, alcohol, physical and family conflicts and many of the other life degrading influences our young people were often living in before coming to OBI. I was one of those young people who desperately needed the advantages provided by this ministry. My home environment was a nightmare. As a new Christian, I needed not only the advantages of a Christian boarding school, but I desperately needed to be out of my environment. Like so many of our students, however, I did not have the \$1.00 per day room and board paid by full-paying students in the 1950’s and early 60’s.

I don’t believe a day that goes by that I do not think of the generosity of Kentucky Baptists and the many other friends who make it possible for so many low-income students, just like me, to live in an environment that is radically different from the one I left in Ohio. Those wonderful friends made it financially possible for me and countless others to attend, even though I didn’t have

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the modest fees that were requested.

God has indeed blessed this ministry with a wonderful loving and generous family of friends. After 25 years I can say from firsthand experience that it will not be because of a lack of need that we may have to close our doors someday, but from lack of financial support. ■

Written by Dr. W. F. Underwood, OBI president. Revised from a guest editorial appearing in the August 5, 2008 Western Recorder. Reprinted with the permission of the Western Recorder.

From Germany to Oneida



Every year hundreds of short-term volunteers come to OBI for a few days, a week or more to help us with a variety of tasks. Many are from Kentucky, but we are blessed with volunteers from other states as well. In July we welcomed a very special guest--all the way from Germany.

Charlotte Becher is from a town near Hanover, Germany. She spent 11 months in western Kentucky as an exchange student at Owensboro High School. Her hostess was **Leesa Pendley** of Bell's Run

Baptist Church in Ohio County. When Leesa came to Oneida with a group from her church, Charlotte came, too.

Though she is Baptist, Charlotte had never before been on a mission trip. "We don't do things like that in Germany," she said. "It's been a good experience." Charlotte was active at Bell's Run, going to church twice weekly and even singing in the choir.

Charlotte initially wanted to be an exchange student "to improve my English and to learn a new culture." Although she had studied English for five years, "My English was really bad," she recalled. "I couldn't even make a sentence." Leesa added, "After just a few weeks of attending school here, Charlotte made major inroads with her English."

What are some cultural differences Charlotte noticed between the U.S. and Germany? "The people are really friendly here," she said. "In Germany there's a lot more distance...And the food here is very different; it's deep-fried a lot!" Charlotte also stated that she has enjoyed American fast food. "In Germany all we have are McDonald's and Burger King," she explained.

Charlotte worked with Leesa and others to stain our outdoor freezers while volunteering on campus. She found OBI to be a unique ministry. "It's really impressed me," she said. ■

A good likeness

A year ago we introduced readers to our new OBI mascot (below). We're happy to announce that now we also have a mascot costume (right).



The "real" mascot made his debut in a chapel service during the fourth quarter of the 2007-08 school year. He reappeared to welcome Homecoming guests this summer. We look forward to the fun we'll have when he becomes a regular feature at basketball games this fall.



Bits and tidbits

Are you receiving duplicate mailings from us?

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(We will still keep your "snail mail" address in our files.)

We are collecting labels

OBI is participating in three special promotions:

- Tyson's "Project A+"™
Send us the entire labels from specially marked Tyson chicken products and our school can redeem them for 24¢ each.
- General Mills "Box Tops for Education"™
Specially marked General Mills box tops are worth 10¢.
- Campbell's "Labels for Education"™
Send us the UPC codes from Campbell's soups and other food products with the "Labels for Education" symbol. (For some soups and sauces, send the lids.)

Want to contact us?

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Introducing some of our Most Improved students for 2007-08

Every spring our faculty, school administrators and houseparents meet together to decide on the recipients of our Most Improved awards. These may be youngsters who have done better in attitude, character, study habits, academics or self esteem. They may also be those who have worked hard to overcome personal difficulties. "Most Improved" indicates that these young people have responded in a positive way to the instruction, discipline, patience and love we have tried to share with them. Below are the stories of three of our Most Improved students from 2007-08.



John was voted the Most Improved seventh grade boy. He came to OBI near the end of sixth grade from western Kentucky. He has attended summer school at OBI two years in a row.

John had been making "straight F's" at home. "I needed help and was too stubborn to admit it. Basically, I refused to work with the teachers. I had a rebellious attitude," he recalled.

"The public school was ready to quit on me and send me to an 'alternative' school. My dad looked for a school that was cheap and would help me with my grades."

At OBI, John got the help he needed, especially in math. He took his math class in the Tutoring Lab. "The Tutoring Lab worked with me and gave me everything I needed and tried different ways to help me learn math. They slowed it down and went over it step by step until I got it," John said.

He added, "The teachers [at OBI] are really nice. My grades have improved dramatically."

John noticed a change in his attitude about school. "I realized I was close to getting out of middle school, and I couldn't keep doing what I was doing before. I needed to get through school," he said.

John accepted Christ and chose to be baptized at OBI last year. ■

A. J. is from Maryland and has been at Oneida since the eighth grade. He described himself as "the troublemaker in the family." A. J. estimated that before he enrolled at OBI he had only attended classes approximately half of the days that year. "The rest of the time I was suspended," he said.

He arrived at Oneida with an attitude. "When I first came here I was really little," A. J. explained. "I had an anger problem. I fought whenever I was picked on. I got mad at little things."

Despite a good start academically, things soon declined in that area as well. "I got lazy and got an F in pre-algebra," A. J. recalled. Behavior at school was also a problem. A. J. liked being the center of attention and was disruptive in class. Excessive tardies and defiance toward adults added to the trouble. When asked how many times he was suspended, A. J. shook his head. "I can't even count it," he confessed. "It was a lot."

One day A. J. was -- again -- campused (grounded) and was sitting in his dormitory room. "It just came to me," he said. "I realized I was getting in trouble for dumb stuff and I needed to change."

Last year A. J. was named Most Improved sophomore boy. This year he hopes to make the honor roll. "At a certain point I get lazy and I let it get the best of me," he stated. "All the time I've been in school I've never made the honor roll." ■



Emily was named Most Improved junior girl. She is from Tennessee. Emily came to OBI in the sixth grade. Her father had remarried and Emily was struggling to find her place in the newly blended family.

After one year at Oneida Emily's father thought she could do well at home, so she returned to the family for seventh grade. Conflict between Emily and her stepmother resumed, however. She came back to OBI for the eighth grade and has stayed ever since.

Emily's Most Improved status comes after years of negative behavior. Numerous incidents at school and in the dorm kept her in constant trouble. Interestingly, Emily did not want to get expelled. "I just wanted to act out," she said. "I didn't really care." She explained: "I wanted attention from my parents. They didn't call me much then, but they called whenever I was in trouble."

The turning point came last year when several of her peers were expelled for a group offense involving Emily. The administration let Emily stay, but put her on strict probation. "When that happened, I knew if I did one more thing it wouldn't be a joke this time," she recalled. "And I didn't want to go home."

Emily didn't find it difficult to alter her behavior once she really began trying. She earned a Good Worker award and Most Improved in commercial arts class for 2007-08. Another benefit of her changed attitude has been a much better relationship with her family. "I've always had a good relationship with my dad," she said. "It's a lot better with my stepmom now. We can talk."

Emily has specific goals for this year. "I'm going to get on the honor roll," she promised. "I'm not going to try; I'm going to do it! This is my senior year. I've got to step up to the plate." What else does Emily have planned? "No more suspensions!" she declared. "Definitely not!" ■

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OBI choir takes to the road again



It's that time once more. The Oneida choir is traveling to Baptist churches across Kentucky. Are any of these locations near you? The students would love for you to come and hear them sing. To schedule the choir in your church, call Kay Underwood at ext. 203. But be aware: the choir stays booked approximately one year in advance.

Fall choir schedule

10-12-08

Evarts Baptist Church
Evarts, Kentucky 40828
Service: 11:00 a.m. EST

10-26-08

Clarkson Baptist Church
5115 Elizabethtown Road
Clarkson, Kentucky 42726
Service: 10:30 a.m. CST

11-9-08

Laurel River Missionary Baptist Church
2985 Rough Creek Road
London, Kentucky 40744
Service: 11:00 a.m. EST

11-23-08

New Clover Creek Baptist Church
6308 N. Highway 105
Hardinsburg, Kentucky 40143
Service: 10:00 a.m. CST

10-19-08

Good Hope Baptist Church
388 Walker Pike
Paint Lick, Kentucky 40461
Service: 11:00 a.m. EST

11-2-08 Daylight Savings Time

Unity Baptist Church
2320 29th Street
Ashland, Kentucky 41101
Service: 10:45 a.m. EST

11-16-08

Burgin Baptist Church
433 E. Main
Burgin, Kentucky 40310
Service: 11:00 a.m. EST

12-7-08

Friendship Baptist Church
5411 Bengal Road
Campbellsville, Kentucky 42718
Service: 11:00 a.m. EST



OBI Campus Ministry sponsored the first of our two annual Spiritual Emphasis Weeks September 7-10. Our guest preacher was Kevin Slep from Berea Baptist Church. One of our own worship teams led in worship through music.