

**THIS IS ONEIDA
WE NEED YOU NOW AND LATER**

As parents, we do everything we possibly can to ensure better lives for our children than we have had. We teach and train them from the time they are babies. We work hard to give them food, shelter, clothing, and safe and fulfilling lives. We sacrifice our wants and desires to meet their wants and desires. We set aside college funding and start savings accounts for them. We pay for diapers, toys, cars, insurance, and weddings. We invest everything that we have and are in our kids. Angie and I often wonder what we did with our time and money before we had children, but we would do almost anything to secure a safe and happy future for our kids.

My paternal grandmother was a spunky little thing who loved her family more than life itself. As a kid, I remember watching her smile from ear to ear as we crammed 60-70 family members into her little house every Christmas Eve. I have heard my father, who was the youngest of seven children, speak of her asking for the back of the chicken whenever the family had chicken for dinner. There isn't much meat on the back of a chicken. My grandmother asked for the back of the chicken so her family could have the better parts of the chicken.

Thousands and thousands of folks have given to and blessed the Oneida ministry over the years. Individuals and churches have given of their time, talents, and resources to help make Oneida a school that can minister to kids who otherwise might not have ever had a chance to become who the Lord intended them to be. When the Lord has our hearts, he has our time and our finances.

I consider our donors and friends to be parents to our students. Even though some of our longtime friends have never been to our campus or haven't been to our campus in a long time, they continue to bless our young people. Many of our friends give to us until they draw their very last breath and go to be with their Lord, and many of these friends give to us even after they are gone because they have included Oneida in their wills. Doing this is such an amazing way to continue a legacy in Christ even after we are gone. Just as we do our best to care for our own children after we are gone, many of our friends bless their adopted Oneida children after they are gone. My parents have served in Christian ministry for a long time and have often joked about leaving debt to my brother, sister, and me, but even if that were the case they will leave us and their grandchildren a wonderful Christian foundation and heritage.

The Lord's work continues even after our time on this earth is done. We can continue to contribute to His work and divine plan when we designate part of that with which the Lord has blessed us to go to a place like Oneida. Have you considered placing Oneida in your will so that you can continue to bless this ministry even after you have been called home to be with the Lord? Our ministry and students need you now and will also need you later. I pray God blesses all of our wonderful supporters.



**Larry A. Gritton, Jr.
OBI President**

*First printed in the Western Recorder October 29, 2013.
Reprinted with the permission of the Western Recorder.*