

THIS IS ONEIDA A VIRTUOUS WOMAN

Our Dean of Students, Judy Lawson, went to be with the Lord recently. While I am deeply saddened, I also rejoice in knowing Judy has received her eternal reward and is now in the presence of her Lord. During her 18 years of faithful service, Judy brought great joy to the students and adults of Oneida.

The funeral service for Judy was really a celebration of life and a time of worship. The service was held in our chapel, and Judy was then laid to rest up on Cemetery Hill just behind the chapel. Many former staff members and students attended, as well as most of our student body and faculty and staff. This large crowd, who gathered to show their love and respect for Judy, was indicative of a life well lived that had impacted so many for the cause of Jesus Christ. A former OBI teacher preached Judy's funeral and five of our students gave their lives to Christ during the service. I know this would have pleased Judy tremendously. The rain did not stop a large group from climbing a muddy Cemetery Hill for the interment.

Judy's life and ministry reflected Proverbs 31:26-31 which says, "She is clothed with strength and dignity, she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

Judy served faithfully in our ministry as a houseparent, Dean of Students, and admissions counselor during her 18 years at Oneida. I had the privilege of having a weekly meeting with her for the last year of her service. I was often amazed by her wisdom, resolve, and ability to minister to our students throughout difficult situations. We sometimes discussed some unpleasant incidents, but I always knew we would somehow laugh together and I would always leave her office encouraged. I am going to miss my friend, Judy. I know we will all miss her tremendously, but we will honor her memory by continuing the Lord's work here in this special place. Judy, without a doubt, helped make this a special place. She was a great source of strength, support, and encouragement for me personally, and she touched countless lives in her Oneida ministry.



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

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