

THIS IS ONEIDA A LIFE OF SERVICE

In addition to the thousands upon thousands of young people who have passed through Oneida, there have been thousands of adult faculty and staff members whose lives have been touched by this ministry. Many, including myself, have had the privilege of being both a student and a staff member. About 20% of our current faculty and staff were also students at Oneida. Many staff members have had a great impact on the people of this campus.

I was recently privileged one Saturday afternoon to attend a birthday party for one of our longtime staff members who is now retired. Even in her retirement, this dear lady volunteers to work in our main office whenever needed.

The party was held in a beautiful setting in Beattyville. The venue was filled with lots of people who had come to show their love for this lady. If one's life and ministry can be measured by admirers and friends, then it was confirmed this longtime friend of Oneida has lived a tremendous life. It was a great day that included food, fellowship, and fun. On the way to the event, Angie told me this lady was one of the most respected and loved people she has ever known. She has such a sweet, Christlike spirit, and brightens my day each and every time I see her.

I want to encourage you to come and meet our faculty and staff. It's the people--students and staff--who make Oneida so special, and I would love for you to meet some of them. I can write about them each week, but come and see for yourself. This ministry is most definitely a calling, and if you are not called here you will not make it here. Many of our staff leave everything behind and come to this place to serve their Lord and others.

The calling of our faculty and staff reminds me of Jesus' calling of the first disciples in Luke 5. Jesus took some ordinary fishermen and called them into obedience. Simon Peter and the others were obedient and dropped their nets on the other side of their boat. They did this not because they hadn't already tried it that night, but because He said so. The Lord rewarded their obedience with a miraculous catch of fish. It was so large their nets began to break and their boat began to sink. Jesus called those first disciples to be fishers of men, and those men left everything, including the massive catch of fish, and followed Him.

Even at 85 years of age, this wonderful friend of Oneida continues to bless others. It is my heart's desire that all of our current 313 young people will one day touch the lives of so many in the same way Mrs. Pattie Midkiff has.



Larry A. Gritton, Jr.
OBI President

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