

THE VOICE



The One and Only

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 A Word from the President
- 2 Who Are Central Students?
- 3 Honoring Outstanding Alumni
- 4 The One and Only
- 7 Central's New Planned Giving Society
- 8 Celebrating Rev. Dr. Ruth Rosell
- 9 The Retirement of Rev. Dr. Robert Johnson

"When I was looking for a seminary, Central made sense. I was looking for something affordable, accessible, and accredited, and Central met all those needs."

CJ Duffie
Current MDiv Student



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A Word from the President

리더십의 중심 센트럴, 센트럴에서 리더십으로

“If you’re going to live, leave a legacy. Make a mark on the world that can’t be erased.”

—Maya Angelou

As president, I have enjoyed so much hearing the stories of Central alums and friends—stories about their time in seminary, their vocational journeys, and their deep faith and commitment to the church. Everyone’s story is different—but there is a common theme: a shared interest in Central’s future.

Many of our alums and friends have chosen to help secure a good future story at Central by making a legacy gift, and we invite you to join with them by making a planned gift in your will or estate. A legacy gift ensures that your love for Central will last beyond your lifetime and that your influence and care of our seminary will not be erased.

If you are interested in learning more about legacy giving, we welcome a conversation and the opportunity to discuss your philanthropic goals. We are here to help you make a lasting mark on Central Seminary. ✨

“삶을 살려거든, 세상이 지울 수 없는 흔적을 남기는 삶, 업적을 남기는 삶을 살아라.”

-마야 안젤로우

센트럴의 총장으로서 저는 센트럴 졸업생들과 친구들을 만나 그들의 재학시절 이야기, 그들의 직장생활 이야기, 또한 교회 공동체를 향한 사랑과 헌신에 대한 이야기를 듣는 것을 무척 좋아합니다. 그들이 나에게 들려주는 이야기는 다 다른 것 같지만 그 속에는 공통적인 주제가 있었습니다. 그것은 바로 센트럴의 미래에 대한 그들의 관심과 사랑이었습니다.

센트럴을 사랑하는 친구들 중 상당수는 유산 기부를 통해 앞으로도 센트럴에서 이런 좋은 이야기들이 지속되도록 도움을 주기로 선택했습니다. 우리는 자선유증 또는 재산을 통한 기부와 같은 유산 기부에 동참하시도록 여러분을 초대합니다. 유산 기부는 여러분의 센트럴을 향한 변함없는 사랑, 관심 그리고 영향력이 여러분의 일생을 넘어서도 지속되도록 도울수 있기 때문입니다.

우리는 유산 기부에 대해 궁금하시거나 더 알고 싶으신 분들을 위해 대화할 준비가 되어 있습니다. 여러분의 자선적인 기부 목표에 대해 논의할 기회 또한 활짝 열어 두었습니다. 여러분이 센트럴 신학교 역사에 길이 남을 업적을 남길 수 있도록 최선을 다해 돕겠습니다. ✨

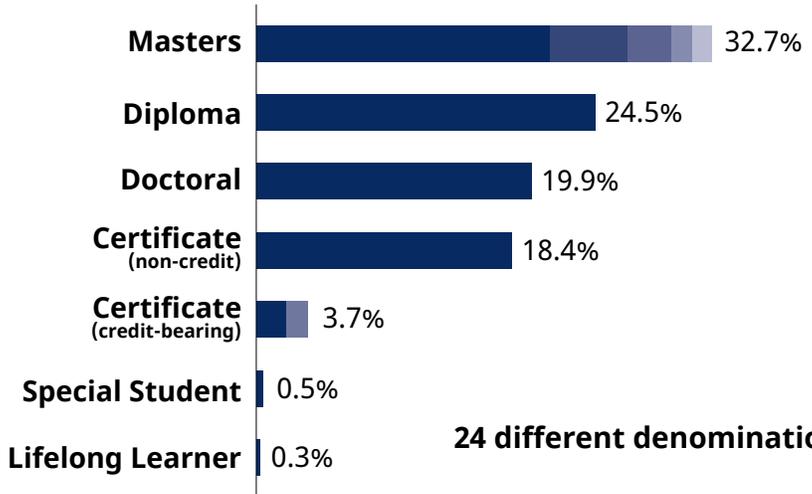
Pam Durso



Who Are Central Students?

MASTERS	32.7%
MDiv	21.2%
MACO	5.8%
MAMCS	3.0%
MCCC	1.7%
MATS	1.3%
DIPLOMA	24.5%
DOCTORAL	19.9%
DMin	19.9%
CERTIFICATE (NON-CREDIT)	18.4%
Foundations	18.4%
CERTIFICATE (CREDIT-BEARING)	3.7%
Professional Certificate	2.2%
Graduate Certificate	1.5%
SPECIAL STUDENT	0.5%
LIFELONG LEARNER	0.3%

By program



24 different denominations reported

Presbyterian United Church of Christ
Baptist Methodist
 African Methodist Episcopal
 Episcopal Non-Denominational
 Disciples of Christ Many more

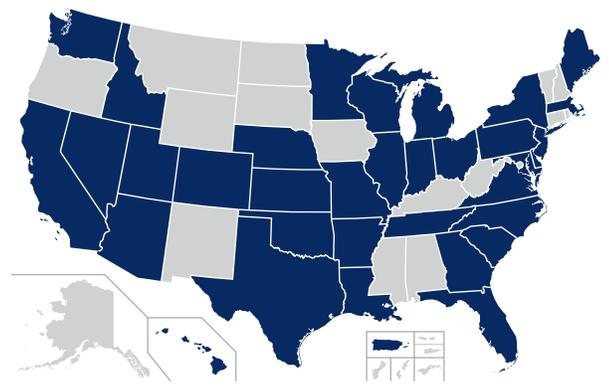


BY CONTINENT/COUNTRY

NORTH AMERICA	21.2%	AFRICA	3.2%
United States	79.2%	South Africa	1.5%
Canada	0.3%	Eswatini	0.3%
ASIA	16.9%	Malawi	0.3%
Myanmar	7.6%	Uganda	0.3%
Korea	7.1%	Ghana	0.2%
Japan	0.6%	Mozambique	0.2%
Malaysia	0.3%	Tanzania	0.2%
Pakistan	0.2%	AUSTRALIA	0.2%
Thailand	0.2%	EUROPE	0.2%
		Romania	0.2%

BY U.S. STATE/TERRITORY

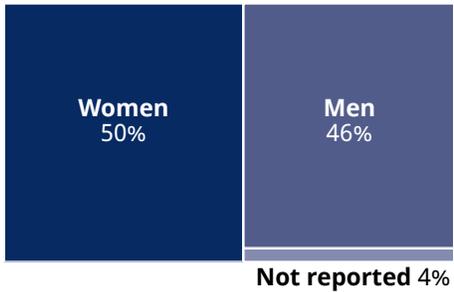
Texas	21.2%	Louisiana	2.0%	Nevada	0.6%	Hawaii	0.2%
Georgia	12.1%	Michigan	2.0%	New York	0.6%	Idaho	0.2%
Kansas	6.9%	Washington	1.9%	Pennsylvania	0.6%	Massachusetts	0.2%
Missouri	6.5%	Indiana	1.1%	Arkansas	0.3%	Maine	0.2%
Florida	4.1%	Virginia	0.9%	Minnesota	0.3%	New Jersey	0.2%
Illinois	4.1%	Tennessee	0.7%	North Carolina	0.3%	Oklahoma	0.2%
California	3.5%	Utah	0.7%	Ohio	0.3%	Puerto Rico	0.2%
Nebraska	2.8%	Colorado	0.6%	Arizona	0.2%	South Carolina	0.2%
Wisconsin	2.6%	Maryland	0.6%	Delaware	0.2%		



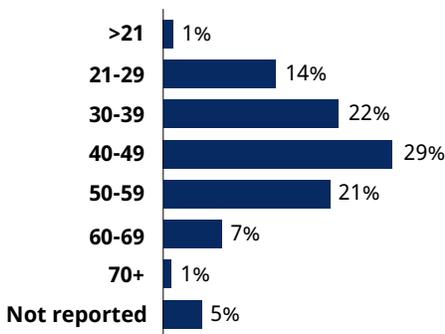


Honoring Outstanding Alumni

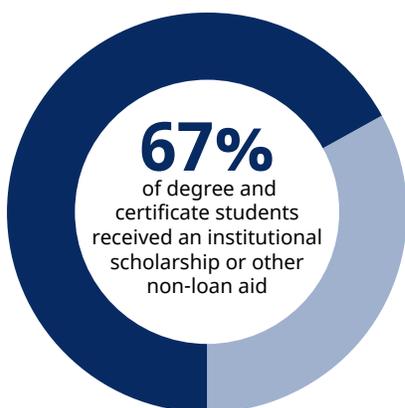
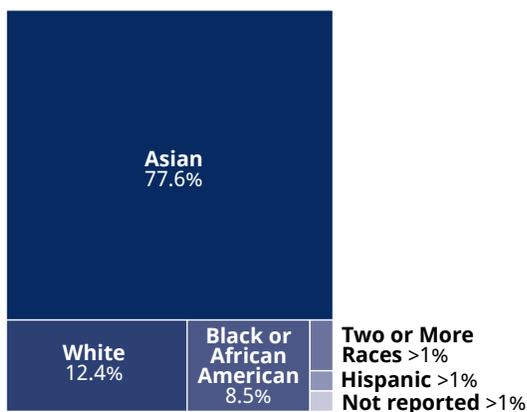
Gender



Age



Race/ethnicity



Since 1973, Central Seminary has been honoring alumni who have made extraordinary contributions in their ministry context and exemplify the mission, values, and legacy of Central Seminary. The 2022 winners of the Alumni Award for Ministry Excellence were presented the award during Centralize, our annual alumni gathering.



**Dr. Jeff Buscher,
D.Min. '16**

Jeff earned his Doctor of Ministry degree at Central in 2016, while serving in campus ministry at William Jewell College. He currently serves as Community Impact Coordinator for the United Way of Lewis & Clark Area in Helena, Montana. Jeff was nominated for the Alumni Award for Ministry Excellence by Dr. Ircel Harrison, Supplemental Associate Professor of Missional Theology.



**Rev. Denise Hill,
M.A.R.S. '82, M.Div. '86**

Denise graduated from Central in 1982 with a Master of Arts in Religious Studies degree and in 1986 with a Master of Divinity degree. She recently retired from Saint Luke's Health System in Kansas City, Missouri after serving as Manager and Clinical Pastoral Certified Educator, supervising CPE residents and interns. She now ministers as a spiritual director and retreat leader. Denise was nominated for the Alumni Award for Ministry Excellence by Rev. Lee Rader, M.Div. '88. ✨



The One and Only

To tell the story of the life and ministry of Helen Moore–Montgomery needs far more than a couple of pages. After all, she has been ministering to and mentoring students of all ages for seventy-six years, was a successful entrepreneur for decades, and was instrumental in the founding of a Baptist movement. While her whole story can't even be summarized here, what can be shared is what has defined her life—her love of students.

While Helen's formal work with students began when she was asked to lead a Texas Baptist church's youth group as Director of Students (she could not be called "minister"), she knew much earlier in life that she was called to this type of ministry. Helen remembers sitting in church camp meetings as a young person, but she did not feel connected to the celebration and worship happening around her. Instead, her thoughts were filled with high school students she knew

were in trouble. She sat in those meetings composing letters in her head, letters she never sent, but letters of encouragement and support.

After she married, Helen moved with her husband, Charles, to Oklahoma, where they joined First Baptist Church of Shawnee. Charles had a thriving corporate career, and Helen was once again invited to serve as a director. First Baptist asked her to be the Director of Students

At left, Helen Moore-Montgomery, seated in front, and her best friend, Gail Ashby

(she still could not be called “minister”) and to lead the church’s ministry with Oklahoma Baptist University students. Helen jumped right in, encouraging and mentoring college students while also working as an assistant in the University’s development department.

Hundreds of students were recipients of Helen’s compassion. One evening she received a frantic call from two students who needed her to come to their dormitory as soon as possible. The students had returned from Thanksgiving break to discover that their roommate had taken his own life. When Helen called the roommate’s family, she learned that they no longer considered him a son because of his sexual orientation. Helen and Charles paid for the young man’s burial in a local cemetery, where the cemetery manager selected a plot for him far away from others. Other than the roommates and Helen, no one from the university or church attended his graveside service.

Helen remembers standing over the grave. In that moment, she heard what she describes as the audible voice of God saying, “this will be part of your journey.” And from that day forward it always has been. “If we don’t learn to love, inclusive love, then there is no place for us in the Kingdom. That is as scriptural as it gets. All means all,” Helen says.

Another move with her husband led her to First Baptist of Oklahoma City, where she was again the Director of Students (she still could not be called “minister”). But in 1983, First Baptist did ordain her as a deacon, and news of the ordination, including Helen’s name, was published in *The Oklahoman*. The church’s decision resulted in a tempestuous relationship with Southern Baptist Convention leaders, and in 2001, First Baptist voted to end its long-standing affiliation with the convention. Helen says, “I carried the battle scars with me, and I was proud, happy, and grateful to do so.”

In 1991, First Baptist leaders were invited to attend a meeting of disaffected Southern Baptists

in Atlanta, Georgia, to talk about their future in Baptist life. Helen’s pastor asked her to represent him and their congregation at the meeting. More than 6,000 Baptists attended, and together they adopted a name for this new movement: Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF). They drafted a constitution, and Helen was one of those who signed that constitution.

A few years later at a CBF General Assembly, Dr. Tom Clifton, then president of Central Seminary, approached Helen about serving on the school’s Board of Trustees. His hope was to create more formal ties between CBF and American Baptists. Helen saw this as yet another opportunity to serve students. She was elected to the board in November 2000 and has served as very active board member emeritus since 2018.

Many years later, Charles and Helen moved back to Texas, and the pastor at their new church in McKinney introduced both as ordained deacons. She recalls an interesting comment made while they stood at the door after worship being greeted by their new fellow congregants. A man walked up to Helen and said, “I’ve never seen an ordained woman.” Helen took his hands and replied, “I hope you’ll let me love you.”

► Help us grow the Helen Moore-Montgomery Fund for Student Assistance! Simply scan the QR code to give securely using your mobile device and a credit card. Or mail a check in the enclosed envelope. Please make checks payable to Central Seminary with HMM in the memo.



The other person Helen met at her new church was Gail Ashby, the woman she now calls her “precious bestie.” Helen and Gail became fast friends. One of the fun things they did together was attend CBF General Assemblies. Gail remembers Helen being nearly mobbed at those gatherings. People approached her for hugs, a quick conversation, or advice. Little did those people know, they were making a lifelong connection. Those gatherings are where Gail first began “watching [Helen’s] witness, watching her legacy in action.”

In 2016, when Gail’s mother passed away, she received a small inheritance. Knowing that she wanted to do something with the money to honor some of the important people in her life, Gail made a plan, and on Helen’s 90th birthday in January 2017, a post appeared on Central’s Facebook page that said the Helen Moore-Montgomery Fund for Student Assistance had been created in honor of Helen by an anonymous friend. An avid Facebook user, Helen saw the post and remembers, “When I read it on Facebook that morning, I was stunned. I knew exactly who did it. I called Gail and tried to talk to her about it through my tears.”

Gail’s mother had a lifelong dream of pursuing a college education, and a lifelong regret of not being allowed to. Gail’s desire to remember her

mother seemed to perfectly align with her desire to honor her friend. With her husband, Walter, Gail had made a practice of paying tribute to those significant to them while the person is still living. She explains, “We give in honor of those who are still living and celebrate the lives they have lived just to say thank you. We want to say that we noticed you have done phenomenal things with your life, and that we are going to honor you as you have honored us in our lives.” This is what Gail wanted to do for Helen. “It was one little thing I could do for her, for all she has done. It’s a small way to say thank you. And [by allowing others to contribute to the fund] it gave

others a way to say thank you as well. My mother would have been thrilled to know that the gift she gave me was going to help students, even though she was never able to be one herself.”

With the many accomplishments of Helen’s life, she admits that a few of the challenges she

encountered did give her pause. She sometimes contemplated if she was up to the job. Her husband, Charles, was always her biggest cheerleader. No matter what the challenge or opportunity Helen was presented with, Charles was always the first to say, “you could do it better than anyone I know.” Her Central family agrees. To the one and only Helen Moore-Montgomery, no one could have done it better than you. 🌟

“We give in honor of those who are still living and celebrate the lives they have lived just to say thank you.”

Gail Ashby



Would you like to honor or remember someone special to you?

You can create and name a scholarship fund that helps students and honors your loved one! Central offers multiple options for establishing funds like these. Please direct your questions to President Pam Durso (pdurso@cbts.edu or 913.667.5700).

Central's New Planned Giving Society

“It only makes sense for me to make sure that a portion of what I have will continue to live on beyond me in the institutions I have loved and believed in.”

Bruce Morgan
Former Central Board Member



Beyond honors givers whose estates and life plans ensure the seminary's mission and ministry into the future.

Beyond has both wonderful practical and beautiful symbolic meanings. Planned gifts will sustain the seminary and multiply its mission beyond our lifetime. Like pebbles tossed in a pond, these gifts will create ripples of impact that swell beyond our imagination.

You are invited to become a member of *Beyond* by naming Central as a beneficiary in your will, retirement account, or life insurance, as well as through a variety of other means. Leaving a legacy is much easier than you might think!

Will you consider a planned gift? If you have questions or would like to notify the seminary of your plans, please call or email President Pam Durso (pdurso@cbts.edu or 913.667.5700). 📧



Celebrating Rev. Dr. Ruth Rosell



After more than 20 years of service at Central Seminary, Rev. Dr. Ruth Rosell retired from the faculty as of July 31, 2022. Dr. Rosell began teaching at Central in 2000 as a supplemental faculty member and joined the standing faculty as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, Pastoral Care and Counseling in 2004 – sharing a full-time position with her husband Dr. Terry Rosell and pastoring at Prairie Baptist Church in Prairie Village, Kansas. In 2019, Dr. Rosell was installed as Chair of the Dianne C. Shumaker Chair of Peace and Justice and Director of the Buttry Center for Peace and Nonviolence. Most recently she also served as Director of Contextualized Learning.

Dr. Rosell received a B.A. in Nursing from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, a M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in Religion from Vanderbilt University. She is a Certified Pastoral Counselor and Fellow with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, and now is recognized as an ACPE Psychotherapist. She also has many years of experience as a psychiatric nurse. Dr. Rosell was ordained in 1983 by the American Baptist Churches, USA and served congregations in New York and Kansas.

Dr. Rosell's interest in peace and justice issues has roots in her early life experience of being born and raised by missionary parents in Tanzania, East Africa, amidst the poverty of a developing country. While her professional training has largely focused on personally caring for the suffering of persons through pastoral care, counseling and nursing,

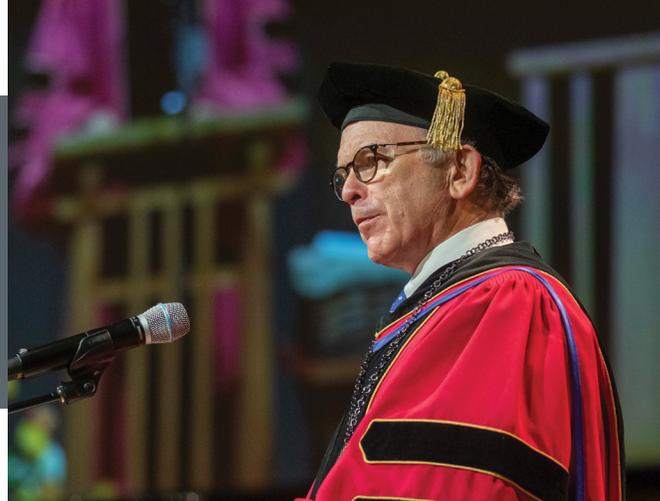
the larger contexts of injustice and violence that contributed to such suffering have been kept in view. This has been nurtured by her participation in the Society of Pastoral Theology, a professional society of theological educators in the pastoral care field.

In addition to the many positions held and courses taught to Central students focused on peace and justice topics, she also co-taught a course with her husband called, "Transforming Society and Conflicts in Ministry: Building Peace (with Justice)" at the Myanmar Institute of Theology as part of Central's Doctor of Ministry program. With climate change now contributing to global conflicts, resulting in millions of climate refugees and causing increased suffering, her attention has turned to helping people of faith mobilize to address the climate crisis through education, advocacy and action.

On November 3, Dr. Rosell's long tenure was celebrated during a chapel service and the Board of Trustees honored her with the title of Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology Emerita.

On behalf of the board of directors, former students, and fellow faculty and staff, congratulations, Dr. Rosell. Thank you for sharing your wisdom, compassion, and justice-seeking spirit with the Central community. We hope this next season of life provides you with well-deserved rest, enjoyment, meaningful time with your husband, children and grandchildren, and continued leadership of the Buttry Center for Peace and Nonviolence. ✨

THE RETIREMENT OF REV. DR. ROBERT JOHNSON



Central Seminary has announced that Rev. Dr. Robert E. (Bob) Johnson, Provost and Dean of the Faculty, will retire at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year.

“Over the past twenty-four years, Dr. Johnson has made substantial contributions to Central,” said President

Pam Durso. “He has actively advanced our unique community of learning into seasons of growth and expansion. His innovative vision has been a gift to Central, pushing us to embrace new and cutting-edge pedagogical approaches and calling us to pay careful attention to the ever-changing needs of our students and the churches and ministries they serve. I am deeply grateful for his faithful service, his wisdom and insight, and his unwavering support during my nearly three years at Central.”

Dr. Johnson joined the Central community on June 1, 1998 and moved into the position of Professor of Christian Heritage in 1999. He was named Academic Dean in 2009 and promoted to Provost in 2015.

A native of Virginia, Dr. Johnson earned his Master of Divinity and Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. From 1979 to 1992, he served as Professor of Church History at the Faculdade Teologica Bautista de Sao Paulo, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Dr. Johnson also has served as professor and as guest professor at several other seminaries, including the Baptist Seminary in St. Petersburg, Russia; Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri; and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Under Dr. Johnson’s leadership as dean of the faculty, Central revitalized its mission, and enrollment increased from 120 students in 2009 to 546 students in the fall of 2022. This success stemmed from his vision for distance and virtual delivery of Central’s educational programs. He led the seminary to explore and then embrace online and distance education. This forward-thinking planning and action enabled Central’s community to adapt seamlessly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

During his tenure at Central, Dr. Johnson guided the school’s increase in student diversity, expanded its outreach to under-served communities, led in the creation of 9 teaching sites across the United States, and developed new programs and degrees, including the Korean Language Program, the Doctor of Ministry in Creative Leadership degree, the Doctor of Ministry in Missional Church Studies degree, and the Master of Arts in Counseling degree.

He was instrumental in establishing and continuing partnerships with Myanmar Institute of Theology, the Judson Communities, and Calvin University in Seoul, South Korea.

In recent years, Dr. Johnson oversaw the curricular revision of the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Theological Studies programs, and under his leadership, Central recently added two new certificate programs: a Certificate in Chaplaincy (2021) and a Certificate in Peace and Justice Ministry (2022). In addition, his diligent leadership and oversight resulted in successful accreditation processes with both the Association of Theological Schools and the Higher Learning Commission.

Dr. Johnson’s excellent leadership at Central will be celebrated at the 2023 Commencement Service. His tenure will officially conclude on July 31, 2023, following a two-month sabbatical leave beginning on June 1. 🎓



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 - Chaplaincy Certificate
 - Fully Online Programs
- And much more...

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