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A merger between Emmanuel Christian Seminary and Milligan College has provided Emmanuel with financial stability and Milligan with more space.



Milligan students meet inside Emmanuel Christian Seminary.

Looking ahead with an eye on the past

Milligan sees growth with next move being offering more programs, more

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Milligan College is currently putting the wraps on a year-long commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the school's founding, and the milestone is certainly worthy of celebration.

But for Milligan president Bill Greer, the sesquicentennial was never a destination — it was more like a mile marker on a continuing journey. So while Greer certainly took a few appreciative glances into the rear-view mirror over the past year, he admitted that he spent most of his time with his hands on the wheel and his attention on the road ahead.

"At the same time as we've been celebrating our history, most of our work has been toward the future," Greer said. "I would say probably only 20 percent has been on (our history) and 80 percent has been on looking forward."

As the president of a private Christian liberal arts college steeped in a century and a half of tradition, there is a balance Greer has to strike when moving Milligan into the future. Without state funding, it is vital for the school to find ways to stand out in a highly competitive marketplace in order to continue attracting high-caliber students.

Greer says the lack of state funding is a dou-



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Milligan College president Bill Greer has streamlined the school's academic structure and added several new degree paths during his time in office.

ble-edged sword in the respect that it makes enrollment and private giving vital to the school's survival, but the lack of oversight allows Milligan to move more quickly when it comes to altering course offerings and degree paths in an effort to adapt to a rapidly changing job market.

"It has forced us, over the run of our history, to be

very nimble and to have to be flexible and responsive," Greer said. "I think you can see Milligan adding programs at a bit faster pace with a little more urgency than a state institution might be able to do because of the bureaucratic structure and so forth.

"We have our checks and balances in place. It's not just me out here doing



New lab space is located inside Emmanuel for Milligan students in the school's occupational therapy and physician assistant programs.

crazy things, but we are able to move faster."

Over the course of Greer's presidency, which is now in its sixth year, the focus has largely been on streamlining Milligan's academic structure. Prior to this decade, Milligan's structure had remained virtually unchanged going back to the 1950s when Dr. Dean Walker, perhaps the most influential president in the school's history, developed a framework for the college's academic departments.

Greer said the structure served the school well for a long time, but the addition of several programs over the years eventually made the model inefficient.

"There really hadn't been much of a change to that structure in all of those decades despite the fact that we had added a lot of academic programs," Greer said. "So one of the things I set out to do with the help of the team here was to reorganize our academic programs, and that's when we came up with the five different schools we have now."

Once everything was

reorganized, Greer and his staff were able to add several programs at Milligan in recent years to help attract new students to the college. A merger with Emmanuel Christian Seminary, which was formally announced in 2015, helped create some space for Milligan's engineering offerings as well as the physician's assistant and occupational therapy programs.

While Greer and the leadership team at Milligan strive to be flexible when it comes to modernizing the school's curriculum, they are unbending when it comes to adhering to the school's original mission. "We have a deep, deep commitment to our roots as a Christian liberal arts college, which we've been since 1866 when we were first founded," Greer said. "We didn't want to add (engineering) unless we had the very same components within the engineering programs that all our students get at Milligan, the Christian liberal arts core and foundation."

As Milligan moves forward, Greer is also focused on improving the residence

life program to better serve the 70 percent of traditional students who live on campus. He wants to bolster the school's athletic facilities and add advanced degrees in arts and humanities as well as education while adding resources to the science and computer science programs.

In short, Greer says he is committed to finding ways to prepare young men and women for a world he believes can be changed for the better through the mission Milligan has been working to accomplish for 150 years and counting.

"We want to produce graduates for the mission field, for education, for pulpit ministry, for Christian education, for social work," Greer said. "Not every field is necessarily going to be a high-paying field, but it's high reward because these are jobs the world needs. That's why I'm committed to seeing Milligan continue to grow. I believe our mission is such that the world needs more Milligan graduates wherever they find themselves."

Explorer post offers young adults insights into law enforcement

KINGSPORT TIMES-NEWS

The Sullivan County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Explorer Post 172 was established in 1972 to offer young men and women an insight into the field of law enforcement.

At the same time, post members provide helpful services to the community and the Sheriff's Office. Membership in the post is limited to young adults between 14-21. Explorer Post 172 has a strict set of rules and regulations followed by each member.

Meetings are held every Tuesday evening from 6-8. Different aspects of law enforcement are studied and reviewed at each meeting. Some of the areas include: traffic stops, building searches, criminal law, domestic violence, defensive tactics, handcuffing, meth labs and many others.

Explorer meetings alternate from administrative



Explorer officers undergo training

meetings to physical training meetings. When administrative meetings are held, all explorers wear their uniforms. Physical training meetings consist of a physical workout followed by study of a specific law-enforcement subject.

The Explorer program is one of only two year-round

law-enforcement training programs for teenagers and young adults offered in the region. The other is at the Kingsport Police Department, which was established in 1988.

Several who have gone through the program go on to become officers for the Sullivan County Sheriff's



A trainee in a police cruiser

office. It has become a great recruiting tool for the SCSO.

The membership in the Explorer Post continues to grow. Adult leaders are made up of officers that work for the Sheriff's Office. The adult leaders provide training and also coordinate specialized training courses taught by other officers from other agencies.

This year there have been several specialty classes



Contributed/Sullivan County Sheriff's Office

Two Explorer officers take in a training session.

including FIRST, Man Tracking, Crime Scene Investigations and Spanish. Through the increased number of specialty classes, the office has achieved greater officer involvement.

The Explorers also receive advanced scheduling of happenings in the program each month by receiving a calendar of events. These improvements have

increased the morale of the Explorers and kept the active membership between 15 to 20 Explorers.

For more information on the Explorer Post, contact Detective John Porter at 423-224-1784 or jporter@scsotn.com or Officer Carolyn Crabtree at 423-279-6064 or by email at ccrabtree@scsotn.com.

PROJECTS

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the current Jonesborough elementary and middle schools to place the new Jonesborough K-8 school.

The current Jonesborough middle school is slated to be renovated to accommodate an academic high school for excelling high school students, the third school on this list of school projects in the Washington Way.

The Boones Creek K-8 school got its footprint a few months later as a single-level school with different grades situated in different wings of the building. The board opted

for an auxiliary gym, metal roofs and chiller/boiler systems, the latter two because of their longevity, but those plans were soon challenged by a financial cutoff from the Washington County Commission.

The proposed \$30 million facility received a \$25 million cap from the commission, plus a \$1.8 million contingency fund. The Jonesborough and magnet school projects received about \$20.8 million for their facilities, leaving the board to decide how to fit the projects within the budget constraints.

The first step was nixing the athletic facilities from the plans and working out payment of those with

the county. That still left both projects about \$7 million over their budgets in total, so the board next looked at removing the auxiliary gym, changing to the cheaper flat-top roofs and rooftop units, and maybe even shaving some classrooms off to meet budget requirements.

Some of these options didn't sit well with board members, like Keith Ervin, who said he would rather get the roofs and chiller/boiler system with a better longevity because the payoff would be better overall. The board voted with Ervin, moving forward with the more expensive, yet more durable, roofs and temperature

control systems, and decided to push the two Jonesborough projects back one year in the hopes of softening the financial blow.

Site plans for the Jonesborough K-8 school followed shortly after, and board members were not happy with the current plans including the current Jonesborough Elementary school building. Mary Beth Dellinger said she didn't support keeping the building, which has proved troublesome in the past with its lack of windows and small classrooms.

However, demolishing the current building and starting from scratch wouldn't just cost more money — it would further push back

the two Jonesborough school projects, including the magnet school. Halliburton expressed dismay at pushing the projects back another year, stating that gave too much time for a charter school to come in and begin offering higher-education services before the charter school is completed.

The discussion is expected to continue, and bids for the Boones Creek K-8 school should soon follow.

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