

2014 ALUMNUS OF POINT LOMA AWARDS

Dr. Brent Strawn (92)



Dr. Brent Strawn grew up in the Church of the Nazarene. In fourth grade, he felt a call into ministry, which determined the trajectory of his life. He shared this call with his pastor, Dr. Thomas Goble, who allowed him to preach his first sermon at the young age of 12. Though Strawn had to stand on a box to see over the top of the pulpit, his ability to reach others through his first sermon was evident.

"We all knew that we had just experienced the beginning of an outstanding ministerial career," Goble said.

After he earned his B.A. in religion from PLNU, Strawn went on to receive his master of divinity in 1995 and his Ph.D. in Old Testament in 2001, both from Princeton Theological Seminary. He took his first teaching position at Asbury Theological Seminary. Three years later, he joined the faculty at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, where he currently teaches. He was ordained in the Church of the Nazarene in 2002 and is now an elder in The United Methodist Church (North Georgia Conference).

Strawn's ministerial career has included media exposure. In 2011, he was asked to be on CNN's faith-based news segment, "Faces of Faith," and has since appeared as a guest on CNN almost 20 times. He has been asked to discuss a variety of topics in top news headlines from a Christian perspective, including the 2011 end-of-the-world warnings, forgiveness, the Pope, and how religious texts can comfort us in the midst of tragedies like the Newtown, Conn., shooting.

"These are unbelievable opportunities to try to represent, in a reasonable and thoughtful way, the most important theological truths to thousands of viewers," said Strawn.

"The box on which he first stood has become a world-wide platform to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to the academic community and the world-at-large," said Goble.

Strawn finds his call to ministry is lived out most prominently in the academic world and in teaching. Through the three main aims of professorship—teaching, research, and service—he has earned a significant amount of influence.

He has authored *The Bible and the Pursuit of Happiness: What the Old and New Testaments Teach Us about the Good Life*, published more than 150 articles and chapters, and edited 20 books to date. His second book will be published in 2015.

Strawn and his wife, Holly Verner Strawn (92), have three children: Caleb, 18, Annie, 15, and Micah, 7.

Beryl Pagan (84)



Beryl Pagan has served 20 years at PLNU as an instructional services librarian, a vocation she didn't expect early on.

Pagan grew up in a family of musicians. Her father, Dr. Keith Pagan, served 37 years in PLNU's music department (many of those years as chair), while her mother taught piano mostly out of their home. After graduating from PLNU with a bachelor's in music theory and a certificate in computer science, Pagan worked at a music publishing company. In 1994, her vocation became clear when she earned her master's in library and information science from UCLA and joined the PLNU faculty.

As librarian, Pagan is passionate about using her skills to assist and serve others. She enjoys her job most when she is helping students navigate the world of research and forming relationships on campus.

Pagan develops web design for the library; teaches research sessions for PLNU freshman composition courses; and serves as library liaison to the Department of Mathematical, Information & Computer Sciences; Department of Music; and School of Theology & Christian Ministry.

Pagan has served on many committees, including the WASC Educational Effectiveness Review Task Force II, Faculty Council, Faculty Retreat Committee, Faculty Status Committee, Rank and Tenure Committee, steering committee for the San Diego/Imperial County Libraries Disaster Response Network, and search committees for Ryan Library. She was named the Association of Christian Librarians volunteer of the year in 2011 and is a member of the American Library Association. She has also been president of PLNU MUSICALumni and has served on the San Diego First Church of the Nazarene's church board.

At 13, Pagan had extensive back surgery and she continues to struggle with health challenges. Because of the support she has received from others, she in turn serves, out of gratitude.

"The journey has been all the richer because I've made that journey knowing I do all things through Christ, who strengthens me," said Pagan.

Brenda Martin, assistant professor of piano, described Pagan as both a servant and friend.

"She is a model of quiet strength; in fact, she is one of the strongest people I have ever met," said Martin. "She has been an inspiration to me in navigating through my own challenges, and I can honestly say that my life is better for knowing her."

In her spare time, Pagan loves to be with friends and go to Padres games. She recently bought an annual pass to Disneyland, which she plans to use often.



Doug Bowman (94)



Doug Bowman graduated from PLNU with a bachelor's degree in graphic communications. Since then, he has directed design efforts at leading tech companies such as Wired, Google, and Twitter.

"I push myself to do things that matter and mean something to the world," said Bowman. "There's a bigger purpose in everything we do, in serving other people. Growing up in the church and my time at PLNU gave me a solid foundation in my faith, and shaped my character early on. And it's still the basis for why I serve and volunteer in different capacities."

Bowman began his career working for Mentus, a small design firm in San Diego. He then worked as a designer for HotWired, the digital arm of *Wired* magazine, where he was an integral part of the company during its early years. Bowman continued there when Wired Digital was acquired by Lycos, the second largest web search engine behind Yahoo at the time. He became the company's international design liaison when Lycos was acquired by the Spanish media portal, Terra Networks.

After leading the redesign of *Wired.com* in 2002, Bowman gained significant notoriety in web design circles. Later that year, he left HotWired to launch his own consulting firm, Stopdesign, designing for clients such as Google, Blogger, Capgemini, and Cathay Pacific Airlines.

Bowman placed his firm on hold in 2006 to join Google full time as its visual design lead. In 2009, Bowman left Google to become creative director at a small social media company named Twitter. There, he built the design team from scratch, and helped grow it and the product into the massive, worldwide service it is today.

Former PLNU classmate and friend, Dave Shoemaker, has high regard for Bowman's integrity and personal values.

"When it comes to his faith in God, Doug believes actions speak louder than words," said Shoemaker. "He is one of the most ethical people I know, who rarely believes that the ends justify the means. He does not cut corners on his ethics. His words are true and his commitments are rock solid."

Recently, Bowman left Twitter to spend more time at home with his family. He speaks at design conferences and events around the world, serves on the board of directors at his daughter's preschool, and continues to advise and serve organizations in which he believes. He, his wife, Cam, and their two daughters enjoy going to Disneyland and traveling as often as they can.

Dr. Brad Strawn (88)



After Dr. Brad Strawn graduated from PLNU with a degree in psychology, he went on to earn his master's in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary in 1994 and his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, in 1996. That same year, he realized his vocational call to higher education and returned to PLNU to teach for 10 years.

Sensing a need to expand his administrative and theological experiences, Strawn moved to Southern Nazarene University in 2006, where he was the dean of chapel for six years and vice president for spiritual development. He was ordained in the Church of the Nazarene and served as the Oklahoma City First Church of the Nazarene Sunday school superintendent, as well as a Sunday school teacher and small group leader.

Most recently, Strawn began teaching at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., in the Graduate School of Psychology. This is his third year as the Evelyn and Frank Freed Professor of the Integration of Psychology and Theology, an endowed chair, which allows Strawn to be in the center of the two disciplines about which he is most passionate.

He has co-authored *The Physical Nature of Christian Life: Neuroscience, Psychology, and the Church*, edited two other books, and written over 40 scholarly articles and book chapters. He has also edited a number of works in the psycho-therapeutic community in integrative journals within his specific discipline.

"The most rewarding part about my job is that it involves forming students in Christian ways," Strawn explained. "I'm able to use psychology and theology to help form the person and professional they will become."

"Looking back, I see that [Brad] challenged me to be mature in my faith at a time in my life that was crucial," said Dr. Michael Sapp, clinical psychologist and former member of Strawn's youth ministry. "He may not have said it explicitly, but he didn't seem to think that being an adolescent was a good excuse not to think deeply about one's faith."

In addition to his faculty responsibilities, Strawn maintains a private practice in Pasadena, where he works with individuals and couples. He serves at Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene as a Sunday school teacher and occasionally in the pulpit.

Strawn and his wife, Suzanne (87), recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. They have two sons: Evan, 16, and Keaton, 14.

