

# Our Patriotic Foundation

A COLONIAL-INSPIRED CAMPUS



**At Dallas Baptist University, we have transported the historic richness of early American architecture 1,300 miles west to North Texas, and in doing so, changed an entire campus to the glory of God.**

The transformation began in 1988 when Dr. Gary Cook took office as President of Dallas Baptist University. He faced some daunting challenges as a young thirty-seven-year-old university president. He inherited an aging campus and enormous debt. God used the fiscal responsibility and leadership of Dr. Cook and Chief Financial Officer Harold Norris, along with the sacrifice of many supporters, to free the University entirely from debt in 1992. The freedom from debt paved the way to envision a new future for the DBU campus.

The architectural style Dr. Cook selected for the first new building constructed under his leadership would set the pace for any future construction. However, the decision proved to be much more important and far-reaching. Architecture would soon become a driving force behind a powerful new vision for DBU to become a campus of distinction among Christian colleges and universities.

The President realized that if DBU were to become a leading institution of faith and learning, the architectural style of the new buildings would need to capture an iconic look that represented the integrity and fortitude of the University. Dr. Cook was drawn to



*John G. Mahler Student Center bell tower from which rings hymns, songs of praise, and patriotic anthems across the DBU campus*



*Gate house entry inspired by the octagonal magazine armory at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia*



*East elevation of the Global Missions Center inspired by Pavilion VII, one of the oldest buildings designed by Thomas Jefferson located on the University of Virginia campus*



DBU President and Vice Presidents around the replica of the Liberty Bell located in the bell-tower entrance to the John G. Mahler Student Center (from left to right) (front row) Dr. Adam Wright, Dr. J. Blair Blackburn, Dr. Gary Cook, Dr. Denny Dowd (second row) Dr. Blake Killingsworth, Dr. Cory Hines, Randy Byers, Dan Malone (back row) Dr. Matt Murrah, Eric Bruntmyer

the red brick, Georgian Colonial style found on many East Coast campuses.

On a trip to Philadelphia in 1989, the Lord led Dr. Cook to search within the pages of America’s architectural history for inspiration. While admiring the grandeur of Independence Hall one day on his trip, he felt impressed to use it as the model for the John G. Mahler Student Center. No other private Christian university in Texas or in the United States had attempted to pattern an entire campus after historic building replications from America’s history. This providential decision would both honor the historic contribution of our nation’s most celebrated early American architects and challenge modern-day builders with an unusual task.

Groundbreaking began in the fall of 1989 for the Student Center. If this first project was a success, they could choose more replications from a number of iconic historic buildings in the same Neoclassical style. A few years after the John G. Mahler Student

Center was completed in 1992, the University adopted its style of architecture for all the subsequent buildings in a Master Plan. The Georgian style implemented by early American architects (named in deference to King George) was not only beautiful, but it also conveyed a sense of academic distinction and devotion to our nation’s historic values of faith, honor and integrity.

The inspiration of the Classical American Colonial architecture created a traditional collegiate atmosphere on campus—it also gave DBU the opportunity to celebrate the fundamental elements of our shared American heritage. As DBU’s campus identity began evolving to something distinctly patriotic, it was also deepening its commitment to exceptional Christian education. Today, we see how DBU’s colonial-inspired architectural style became the foundation that would revive a student body and transform an entire campus one brick, one building and one person at a time.



Henry Blackaby Hall, modeled after the north elevation of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



The spiritual center of campus, the Patty and Bo Pilgrim Chapel was inspired by the first Baptist church established in America, located in Providence, Rhode Island



*Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

In 1992, the John G. Mahler Student Center became the first building constructed at Dallas Baptist University in more than 20 years, signaling the dawn of a new day on the DBU campus. It seems particularly fitting that Dr. Cook chose Independence Hall, the birthplace of America's freedom, as the inspiration for our own rebirth as a University. The same historic building where God poured out His blessing on a burgeoning nation with unlimited potential would now grace DBU—a debt-free campus that was likewise on the verge of endless possibilities.

Perhaps no other early American building is as easily recognized as a symbol of American freedom as Independence Hall. The Mahler Student Center also quickly became an iconic symbol of our campus with its Neoclassical architectural design. The Student Center was the first to determine the course of our entire Master Plan regarding all our ensuing buildings.



Atop a foundation of Georgian-style red brick, the brilliant white bell towers in both Philadelphia and Dallas still ring freedom for all who hear it today. Our replication inspires a unique sense of campus pride among DBU Patriots and reminds us of early American Patriots who crowned the original Independence Hall with timeless significance because of what took place there.

On June 14, 1775, inside the Assembly Room of Independence Hall, our Continental Congress (a body of representatives from the 13 Colonies) nominated George Washington as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. A little over a month later, they also appointed Benjamin Franklin Postmaster General of what would later be known as the United States Post Office. As the desire for revolution gained momentum among the

colonists, the Declaration of Independence was adopted inside the same four walls of Independence Hall on July 4, 1776. The design of the new American Flag was also approved there, and the Constitution was drafted there in 1787. Today, Independence Hall is part of Independence National Historical Park and part of the heart of every American who appreciates the significance of the events that took place within its walls.

Likewise, since its opening in 1992, the Mahler Student Center is in the heart of every DBU student as a symbol of the campus. With the Mahler Student Center as its architectural cornerstone, the DBU campus has evolved into a warm, connected environment with high-quality design elements and a nearly seamless Colonial theme.

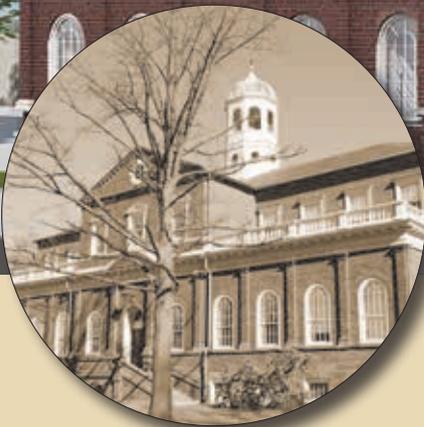


The Wren Building on the College of William and Mary campus in Williamsburg, Virginia

Spence Hall, patterned after the Sir Christopher Wren Building—the oldest academic building in use today. Trustee Donna Spence provided the major gift for this replica of the building where Presidents Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and John Tyler once studied, and George Washington served as chancellor over the college. Spence Hall serves as a residence hall for 235 female students and is home to the living-learning community, Jewel House.

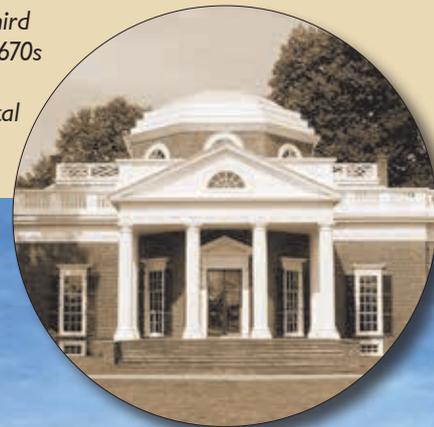


Joan and Andy Horner Hall stands as the closest replication DBU has constructed to date. Modeled after the historic Congress Hall, which once served as the nation's capitol, Horner Hall is home to DBU's state-of-the-art recording studio. It also houses the College of Fine Arts, including the Music Business and Communication departments. Horner Hall was awarded Outstanding Design in the 2011 American School & University Architectural Portfolio.



Harvard Hall on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts

The Dr. William B. Dean Learning Center, currently under construction, is modeled after Harvard Hall III, which was completed in 1766. It was the third building at Harvard to bear this name, the first of which collapsed in the 1670s and the second destroyed by fire in 1764. During the Revolution, Harvard Hall, along with other buildings on campus, was occupied by the Continental Army. This new building on the DBU campus will house the Dr. William B. Dean Center for Service-Learning, as well as other University offices.



Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia



Jim and Sally Nation Hall is modeled after Monticello. Designed by Thomas Jefferson as a place for personal restoration and retreat, as well as a place to cultivate learning, Monticello is the perfect inspiration for Nation Hall—the future home of the Gary Cook School of Leadership with its mission to develop generations of Christian scholars, servant leaders, and global thinkers. Nation Hall is currently under construction and is located adjacent to Pilgrim Chapel, overlooking Swan Lake.

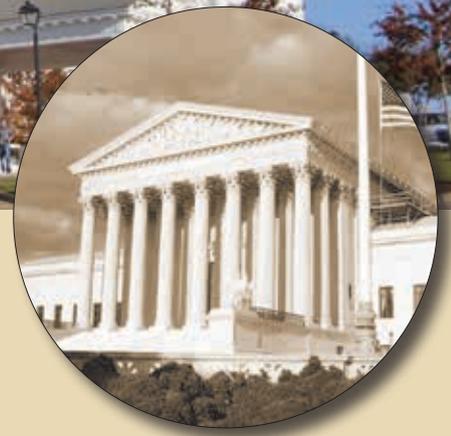


*First Baptist Church of Providence,  
Rhode Island, built in 1775, as the first  
Baptist church in America founded in  
1638 by Roger Williams*





(Left) Patty and Bo Pilgrim Chapel, inspired by the First Baptist Church of Providence, Rhode Island. (Above) The west elevation of Pilgrim Chapel, patterned after the symmetry of the Supreme Court building.



Supreme Court building in Washington, DC

The Patty and Bo Pilgrim Chapel is a four-story, 80,000 square-foot building—much larger than its 6,400 square-foot inspiration, First Baptist Church of Providence, Rhode Island. The Chapel stands as a radiant white focal point among its red brick, Colonial-style counterparts on campus. The massive steeple on Pilgrim Chapel reaches 192 feet and is crowned by a 24 karat gold-leafed cross facing due east. The steeple and the elevation of University Hill make Pilgrim Chapel one of the highest points in the region. The Chapel was featured for education design excellence in the November 2010 issue of *American School & University* magazine.

After decades of praying for the opportunity to build a chapel, DBU received the first gift toward the project in 1998, and others soon followed. The purpose was clear: build a chapel that would serve as a campus landmark and draw the entire DBU family together for spiritual development. In 2006, Patty and Bo Pilgrim of Pilgrim’s Pride chicken fame provided the lead gift of \$8 million, and many other donors, faculty, and staff contributed to the construction costs for the Chapel.

Pilgrim Chapel stands as the spiritual center of the campus and is also home to the Graduate School of Ministry. Since its opening in August 2009, over 1,300 students congregate in its beautiful sanctuary several times per week to worship as a student body. The Chapel is visible anywhere on campus and also from surrounding major highways, making it the most prominent building on campus. (“Our Patriotic Foundation” section was adapted from *A City on a Hill* by J. Blair Blackburn, 2014, pp. ii-163. Copyright 2014 by Dallas Baptist University.)



Colonial-style homes in Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia



The Colonial Village Apartments, patterned after the Colonial-style homes of Colonial Williamsburg, were built to encourage upperclassmen to stay on campus to serve as peer leaders for younger DBU students. To date, five apartment buildings have been completed and more are under construction to accommodate DBU’s expanding student enrollment.



Mabee Village features townhomes (above) and brownstones (below) that were inspired as well by the homes of Colonial Williamsburg and early American brownstones respectively. The community features green belts and close proximity to classrooms and athletic facilities. The Union, a unique campus dining facility, is housed in the brownstones and features a special tribute to the American Presidency.