

Newslog

Didn't waste his life: former Boyce student showed love for God and love for others

| By Aaron Cline Hanbury and RuthAnne Irvin |



Michaela Ray at Smith's memorial

Shelby Tyler Smith posted the text “Don’t waste your life” across his Facebook page. And, according to his family and friends, he didn’t.

Smith, a mid-year junior at Southern Seminary’s Boyce College, died, Dec. 28, from injuries sustained when the 20-year-old’s car collided with a tractor-trailer on Interstate 71 near Dayton, Ohio. In the collision with Smith was his girlfriend and fellow Boyce student, Michaela Ray. Immediately, first-responders took her to the hospital; the hospital discharged her later the same day.

At the beginning of the Boyce spring semester, the college held a memorial service to honor and celebrate Smith’s life, Jan. 23. At the service, Ray, along with Smith’s roommate, Ethan Holsteen and friend, Brian Van Doren, shared memories about the way Smith lived joyfully even amid long hours of work and study.

Ray’s father, Mark Ray, spoke about the way Smith pursued his daughter carefully, and encouraged the young men at the service to follow his example by loving Christ supremely and loving others after that.

According to Holsteen, Smith was often singing or dancing, making those around him feel welcome with his outgoing personality. Holsteen also said Smith shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with anyone who would listen. During the service, Holsteen read 14 resolutions that Smith made and recorded the previous year. Each resolution involved his desire to become a more Christ-like man, friend and student. The reading from Smith’s journal reiterated what

Smith’s friends said about him: he didn’t want to waste his life. Smith’s 14th resolution reads,

“I resolve that with God’s glory as my goal, and his word as my means, that I will never live a wasted life. Jesus, my life is yours. May all lesser aspirations cease.”

Boyce College dean, Dan DeWitt, said of Smith: “I have never met a student with a harder work ethic or a more upbeat personality than Shelby. He will be greatly missed by our student body. I was reading the biography of a Christian leader a couple days before Shelby’s funeral and I found the following statement that captures the way our students felt about Shelby Tyler Smith:

“He was a man with friends — this is well known. ... The kindness, sensitivity, zest for life, the fun, the deep sense of humor, the seriousness, the depths, the unexpectedness: they combined to make a man who was exhilarating to be with.”

The day after the accident, Dec. 29, seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. said through his Twitter account that Smith was a “wonderful and gifted and faithful young Christian.” He said that Smith, “in life and death, glorified his savior.”

Smith leaves behind his mother and step-father, Annette and Keith King; and his father and step-mother, Kristen and Brad Smith, along with four siblings and step-siblings.

Reporting from The Spencer Magnet contributed to this article.

SACS, ATS accreditation teams on campus March 2013, SBTS launches enhancement plan

| By SBTS Communications |

In March 2013, Southern Seminary will host teams from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and from the Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. The groups will be on campus as part the seminary’s ten-year accreditation reaffirmation process.

“Accreditation is an important peer-review process for an institution of higher education,” said Joe Harrod, director of assessment at Southern Seminary. “because it provides constituencies (trustees, alumni, churches of the Southern Baptist Convention) the assurance that a school is following good and acceptable practices related to governance, plan-

ning, faculty, admissions and recruiting, fiscal management and in academic programs.”

A key area of the renewal process is a strategic plan to strengthen a specific area of student learning. Leadership at Southern Seminary — including representative faculty and administrators from each of the seminary’s schools — decided to strengthen student writing. So starting fall 2013, the seminary will initiate a quality enhancement plan (QEP) to improve theological writing among master’s-level students.

“We recognized that that is a key feature of academic life, and also a key feature of pastoral life and ministry,” Harrod said. “Pastors, missionaries and those serving in other ministries —

whether they go on to do a higher academic degree or not — will always be writing. The variety of contexts in which our students and, eventually, our alumni will be writing is such that we think focusing on that aspect of student learning is key.”

In order to equip students for these new standards, the seminary’s Writing Center plans to produce brief video lectures that explain important aspects of the writing process. The QEP will also launch a campus-wide campaign to raise awareness for the initiative.

Those interested may submit comments related to the quality of the seminary or its academic programs in writing to the Office of the President, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY, 40280.