

Summer 2009

Never To Be Forgotten

Danielle Parker

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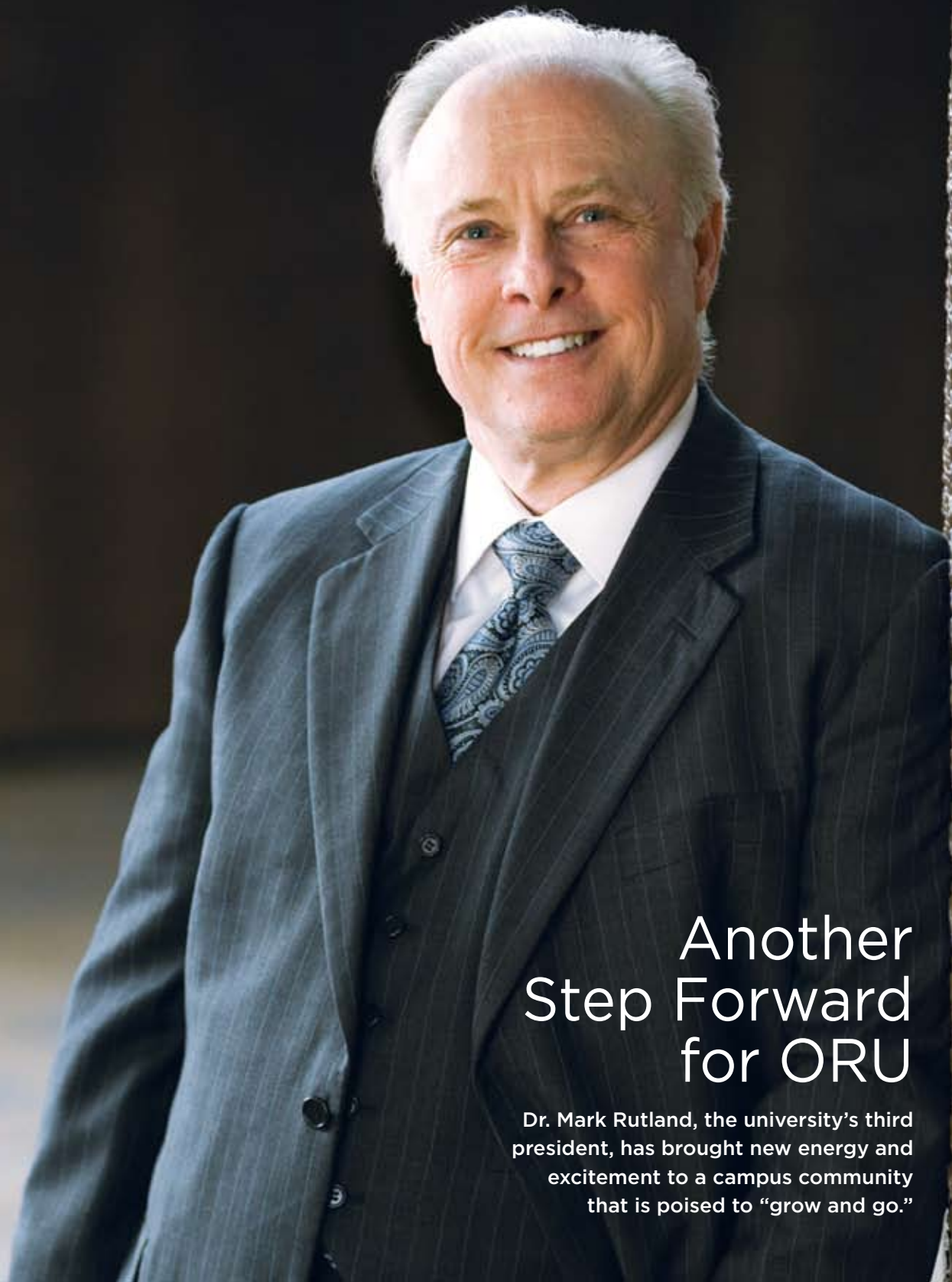
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summer2009

excellence

for oral roberts university alumni and friends



Another Step Forward for ORU

Dr. Mark Rutland, the university's third president, has brought new energy and excitement to a campus community that is poised to "grow and go."

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MISSION STATEMENT
The purpose of Excellence magazine is to share
alumni stories and recent university news with
alumni and friends of ORU, thereby demonstrat-
ing that the mission of ORU is being carried out
on a daily basis all over the globe – "in every
person's world."



*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*

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ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2009 | vol. 21 no. 2

excellence

YOU'LL FIND IT AT ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY



PHOTO BY SCOTT HARRISON

In the developing world, many walk three hours each day to get water . . .
unsafe water. **Page 5**

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PHOTO BY DAVID DAUGHERTY/EPIC IMAGES

Seth Silvers prays before heading up on stage to
speak at a Thirst Youth Conference in June 2008.

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Corrections

In the spring '09 issue, there was an incorrect date
on pages 3 and 45. Dr. Rutland's first ORU press
conference was held on Jan. 28, not Jan. 29.
We regret the error.



Never to Be Forgotten

Dr. Howard Ervin once called himself “something of a fixture” at ORU. To the campus community, he was a pillar of the university’s theological education.

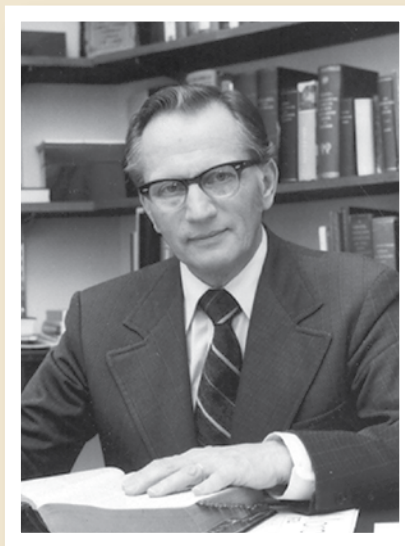
BY DANIELLE PARKER 07

Those who knew and loved and respected Dr. Howard Ervin came together on Aug. 15 to mourn his passing and celebrate all that he meant to so many. Along with the indelible mark he left on the lives of countless ORU students, Ervin was a key player when it came to helping those in more traditional denominations understand and accept the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Ervin joined the ORU faculty on Sept. 1, 1966 and retired on Dec. 5, 2006 at the age of 91. By the time he left the classroom for the last time, he had served as a professor of graduate theology, the assistant dean and dean of the original ORU seminary, and chair of undergraduate theology.

“I had him as both a professor and a colleague,” Dr. Larry Hart 70, ORU graduate theology professor, said. “He was an internationally respected scholar, yet he was also a warm and friendly gentleman. He brought to this university authentic spirituality, sound scholarship and genuine concern for his students.”

Outside of ORU, Ervin was known for his ecumenical endeavors among many denominations in the U.S. and around the world. It was his solid theological background and position at ORU that enabled him to reach across the aisle, denominationally speaking — most notably, as a participant in the International Roman Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue that had begun in 1972.



The ORU library and Holy Spirit Research Center have books, tapes, CDs and videos containing Dr. Ervin’s teachings on a variety of subjects, dating from the 1960s to the 2000s.

“The Pentecostal and Charismatic movement did not have a lot of trained, scholarly voices in the ’60s and ’70s,” said Daniel Isgrigg 00, 07-MA, author of Ervin’s biography, *Pilgrimage into Pentecost: The Pneumatological Legacy of Howard M. Ervin*. “He had a Th.D. from Princeton University, so he had the credentials to talk about the spirit of baptism from an academic standpoint. That made him accepted by the non-Pentecostal denominations and made his message more popular with them.”

In his lifetime, Ervin pastored two Baptist churches, earned five degrees and authored six books. His 1968 book, *These Are Not Drunken As*

Ye Suppose, is recognized as the first scholarly defense of the Pentecostal experience.

“He was sort of the forerunner of Pentecostal scholars,” Hart said. “Dr. Ervin was one of those pioneers who believed that careful scholarship and the charismatic movement belong together.”

He is remembered as a man that loved sports, had a large vocabulary and an even larger heart, was distinctly educated and had a desire to see the church as a whole experience the working of the Holy Spirit.

“Dr. Ervin expected excellence in academics and insisted that we listen to the message of the Holy Spirit,” Dr. James Shelton 73, ORU undergraduate theology professor, said. “He demonstrated that you could be a top-rate scholar and be a spiritual person too. Dr. Ervin provided us a role model to be firmly Pentecostal, firmly scholarly and firmly ecumenical.”

Ervin’s legacy lives on in his students, his colleagues and his brothers and sisters in Christ, now that he has “grasped the hand of God,” as it said in his obituary.

“Bricks and mortar will pass away, but what is built in the human character will never fade,” Shelton said. “That was Dr. Howard Ervin.”

Dr. Ervin passed away on Aug. 12, 2009. Read more about him and his legacy at alumni.oru.edu.

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Back to School? That's Cool!



"Do I get aerobics points for this?"



Some of this summer's multi-million-dollar renovations were still in progress when students and families arrived in August, but that didn't dampen anyone's spirits. The Alumni office served free lemonade as new students, assisted by student leaders, emptied their cars and filled their dorm rooms with touches of home. In those rooms, students found a gift from the Alumni Association: salt and pepper shakers (to complement the micro-fridges that were installed last year) and a note that said "Welcome to ORU" from the Classes of 1968-2009. The day after move-in began, the Alumni office welcomed alumni back to campus at a Legacy Breakfast in the newly renovated cafeteria. It was attended by 180 alumni and their offspring. More than ever before, alumni are sending their sons and daughters to ORU. That's because it's a great time to be an ORU student!

Saga: new tables/chairs/carpet/tile/kitchens!