



MIKE LINGLE '92

Whether he's talking with an Olivet student or seeing a Broadway show with his wife or finalizing a major gift to Olivet, Mike Lingle does everything with enthusiasm. He describes himself as a competitive problem solver who looks for opportunities to help people get excited about things they can be a part of.

Mike is one of five Lingle boys who earned degrees from Olivet. He remembers his college search and his own decision to attend Indiana University. "My dad told me I could go to any college I chose," he says. "But he was going to pay for me to go to Olivet. I'm so grateful God changed my mind."

He still remembers the day when he dropped to his knees on Olivet's baseball field and told God he was done living for himself. He promised God he would do what God wanted him to do, even if the plan didn't make sense to him.

"When you trust the Lord, He opens doors for you," Mike says. "I never would have dreamed the life I've had."

After graduating from Olivet, Mike married his wife, Cati, and took a full-time job in the Office of Admissions. Five years later, he was ready to get some life experience and also live closer to family. His career in pharmaceutical sales spanned 21 years, and he won multiple awards for his achievements. He also served on Olivet's Board of Trustees for 10 years.

In 2017, he began exploring a full-time position with Olivet's Development team. His skill set was a perfect fit, but leaving a successful career seemed like the last thing he should do. Thanks to his wife and her encouragement, Mike decided to schedule an interview with Olivet.

During the interview process, Mike clicked with everyone he met. He definitely had the exact skills needed for the job, but making the change from for-profit to non-profit seemed like a crazy thing to do. "I prayed all the way on my drive home," he recalls. "I reminded God that we had two kids going into college and what our financial needs were going to be. That day, God put a number in my head for what I would need as my starting salary. Cati and I prayed about our

decision. When the offer letter came from Olivet, the salary amount was exactly the same as that number God had given me. And it was 50 percent of what I was making in my current job.”

Mike stepped out in faith and accepted the position. Since then, he has watched God multiply his resources — and his faith. He and Cati have given more to the Lord in the past four years than at any time in their lives. Both of their children chose Olivet for their undergraduate studies.

In addition to these faith boosters, Mike now has many opportunities to work with phenomenal alumni and friends of Olivet, as well as Olivet’s outstanding leaders. He continues to be impressed with the way Olivet does everything first class and without cutting corners.

“When I started this job, I asked the Lord to help me finalize a major gift within five years,” Mike says. “In less than three years, I received a \$1 million donation from a 90-year-old person who didn’t graduate from Olivet.”

Through that experience and many others, Mike is seeing the results of being available to people, listening to find out what they’re excited about, and then talking with them about giving

opportunities that match their interests. “Money can never be the motivator,” he says. “It will come up short every time. Money is the by-product of doing what you love to do. When I can match donors with needs and help prepare students with the foundation they need to succeed in life, I’m living victoriously.”

Now, Mike understands the importance of having purpose behind everything he does and intentionality in everything he does.

“I’m finally the man I always wanted to be,” he says. “That’s because I’m working in the environment that I live by. Working in the world, you have to stand firm and stand alone. Working at Olivet, I have found the joy of living for Jesus. Everything fits together to guide me in the way I want to go.”

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