



DON REDDICK '79

A trailblazer and a visionary, Don Reddick finds joy in uniting the past, present and future for the greater good of ONU. He was the first person in his family to enroll at ONU, and he entered as a freshman in 1973.

“My friends from my hometown church, Roxana [Illinois] Church of the Nazarene, were going to Olivet, and I joined them,” Don recalls. “I graduated with a music degree. My wife, Dena; our daughter and son-in-law; and our son are also Olivet grads.”

Don has always appreciated the infusion of ONU’s Christian purpose in everything the University does. “Spiritual teaching and growth are more than a class or a worship service,” he says. “Revival services still take place each year. Chapel services are held each week. Class meetings begin with prayer and devotions.” “

It’s amazing how our faith is woven throughout all aspects of the Olivet experience and is integral to what we

do. Olivet provides students with the foundation they need to succeed in their work and life.”

Music is God’s purpose for Don, and he has lived out that purpose from his early days as a student to today. One of his favorite ONU student memories is being a member of the Churchmen Quartet — with Doug Bias, Charlie Dautermann, Mark Murphy, Dale Dafoe, Jim Yates and Steve Moore — and traveling to sing at many churches. “Ted Lee was ONU’s director of church relations at that time, and he gave us the schedule,” Don recalls. “We rehearsed our programs of traditional Christian music on our own.”

In 1997, Don joined ONU’s music faculty and retired as dean of the School of Music in 2023. During his long and trailblazing tenure, Don led his team of faculty members and students in achieving many goals, including: starting the “Sounds of the Season” holiday concert in 1999; revival of the ONU Marching Band and the band’s trips to perform in London, England;

achieving the Apple Distinguished School designation for the use of technology in all aspects of rehearsal and performance; and the establishment of a recording studio that is now named in his honor.

For 30 years, Don also served as the music pastor at Kankakee First Church of the Nazarene. In addition, he served the Nazarene Church by planning and leading music at General Assemblies, conferences, camp meetings and revival services. Today, he serves on the board and assists with an adult Sunday School class at College Church of the Nazarene.

Spending time with family — especially his two grandchildren — is at the top of Don's priority list. He is also a licensed pilot and enjoys flying to southern Illinois to visit family and friends. If he were to write a book about his life, the title would be Extremely Blessed because he never could have imagined the life God has permitted him to live.

“Olivet changed my life, first as a student and then professionally,”

Don says. “I am so thankful for all the opportunities I've had, and all the wonderful people I've met and worked with.

Most of all, I'm thankful for the blessings I've had in seeing students' success in and enjoyment of music. Connections I've made because of ONU have led to many unexpected opportunities in my life.”

One of those opportunities is Don's new role as the Development team's director of friends of the fine arts. “This emphasis goes beyond raising scholarship money for music majors,” Don says. “This avenue of giving targets what wouldn't otherwise be possible, such as needs for equipment and instruments. Expenses related to maintenance, touring and performances. Hiring and funding quality faculty members. Our focus is to continue to increase the quality of the School of Music.”

Don is thankful for the support and encouragement of ONU's Development team as he continues to define and shape this new fundraising focus. “We're providing opportunities for alumni and friends to fund what people rarely think about funding,” he says. “We're making connections with alumni who were part of Olivet's music program in the past and yet have never given to Olivet. I want to be the person who gets to talk with them about giving.”

Don Reddick

*Director of the Friends of the
Fine Arts & Artist in Residence*
(815) 928-5492
dreddick@olivet.edu