Noted Pollster
George Gallup Speaks at the 2004 Russell H. Perry Dinner Honoring the late Noble Hurley
A crowd of over 1,200 gathered to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late Noble Hurley, the 2004 recipient of the Russell H. Perry Free Enterprise Award. The gala event was held on October 12 at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel, with world-renowned pollster George Gallup serving as the keynote speaker and Barry Fanning serving as the chair of the event.

For seventeen years, Dallas Baptist University and community business leaders have gathered to honor leaders whose lives are testimonies of not only achievement in free enterprise, but also in service to the community. The Free Enterprise Award is named in memory of Dallas civic leader and philanthropist Russell H. Perry, whose life of service to Dallas impacted many. Mrs. Russell H. (Phoebe) Perry continues to be a friend to the city of Dallas and especially DBU. She and Mr. Perry began their support of the school in the 1960s.

Since its inception, the Russell H. Perry Dinner has honored many North Texas leaders, and in doing so has raised almost $2 million in scholarship funds for DBU students.

Addressing the crowd for the keynote speech, George Gallup described various trends in the public’s view of national politics, social problems, and personal ethics. He particularly pointed out some troubling statistics about the ethical state of the younger generation of American citizens.

However, Mr. Gallup suggested that institutions such as Dallas Baptist University who hold firm to their commitment to faith and service can actually work to reverse many of these trends and help secure a bright American future.

Before passing away on June 4, 2004, Noble Hurley distinguished himself through denominational service, civic involvement, professional accomplishments, and exceptional stewardship. He moved to Dallas from Sulphur Springs in 1935 to attend business college. After entering the brick and tile business in 1936, he established Noble Hurley & Company in 1948, where he served as president for thirty-two years. Noble Hurley & Company supplied bricks for many projects that form the Dallas skyline, including Truett Hospital at Baylor University Medical Center and the beautiful NorthPark Shopping Center.

The Dallas Baptist University Chorale, under the direction of Dr. Steve Holcomb, performed a selection of special patriotic music for the over 1,200 present at the dinner.
Mr. Hurley also served as chairman of Swiss Avenue Bank in Dallas for over twenty years. When the bank was sold, he donated his assets to the Baptist Foundation of Texas—establishing several endowment funds benefiting community projects as well as many Baptist institutions, including Dallas Baptist University.

Throughout his life, Noble Hurley continually involved himself in his community through various leadership roles. He was a member and former president of the North Dallas-Park Cities Kiwanis Club and served as a Baylor University Trustee from 1958-1969 and a Baylor College of Dentistry Trustee from 1958-1992. He was a member of the Baylor University Medical Center Foundation for 19 years and a member of the board of the Baylor Oral Health Foundation from 1993-2000. He also served on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention for 9 years and served on the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board for 14 years. In 2002, the Baptist General Convention of Texas honored him with the Elder Statesman Award.

Mr. Hurley gave generously of his time as a community leader; he also gave of his resources. He supported institutions and organizations from across the state of Texas, including the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Baylor Health Care System, Baylor University, Buckner Baptist Benevolences, Children’s Medical Center of Dallas, Dallas Baptist Association, Dallas Baptist University, George W. Truett Theological Seminary, International Linguistics Center, Texas Scottish Rite Hospital, and the Salvation Army. Mr. Hurley was particularly proud of the joint efforts of Dallas Baptist University, Dallas Baptist Association, and his couples Sunday School class to assist churches and Christian ministries in meeting holistically the needs of the homeless and street people in Dallas.

Mr. Hurley and his late wife, Jane, were charter members of the DBU Legacy Society, an organization comprised of individuals who support the University through their estate planning. Mr. Hurley received an honorary doctorate from DBU in 2000 and served as a trustee for DBU from 2000-2004.

In honor of his long-time support of the University, DBU recently dedicated one of its new Colonial Village apartment buildings in tribute to Noble Hurley and his late wife, Jane. Noble Hurley embodied the precepts and practices of a biblical servant leader in the spirit of our Lord and had a strong commitment to Christian education.

For many years, Mr. Hurley and his wife, Jane, were faithful members of Gaston Oaks Baptist Church (formerly Gaston Avenue Baptist Church). Mr. Hurley served his church in a number of ways, including as a church trustee, deacon, and Sunday School teacher for over six decades. He was the father of two sons, Bill, now deceased, and Jack, a 1977 DBU graduate. Mr. Hurley married the former Jane Marshall of Canton, Texas in 1943. Mrs. Hurley passed away in July of 2002.
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Rena Pederson from The Dallas Morning News, co-sponsor of the Russell H. Perry Free Enterprise Award Dinner.

Left: Dr. Jim Denison, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church, introduced a special video of Noble Hurley. Above: Dr. Kenneth Cooper and Forrest Smith, both previous recipients of the Russell Perry Award.