

THE 20TH ANNUAL

DALLAS BAPTIST

BASEBALL BANQUET



Keynote speaker and former DBU Patriot Ben Zobrist of the Tampa Bay Rays (center), along with DBU President Dr. Gary Cook (far left); Andy Horner, (left); Tom Horner (right); and DBU Executive Vice President Dr. Blair Blackburn (far right).

The 20th annual DBU Patriot Baseball Banquet provided a special time for members of the DBU community to celebrate the victories of the 2011 baseball season and look forward to a 2012 season full of promise. During the dinner, former DBU Patriot and current Major League Baseball player Ben Zobrist provided the keynote address.

A member of the 2004 NCCAA national champion DBU Patriots (the first Patriot team to compete as an NCAA Division I) Ben was drafted in the sixth round by the Houston Astros. Two years later, he was traded to the Tampa Bay Rays. For six years, Ben has carved out a name for himself as a super-utility player for the Rays, playing in the 2009 All-Star Game and 2008 World Series.

Ben shared with the capacity crowd the story of how the Rays miraculously made the 2011 playoffs, overcoming a nine game deficit. "We were so far out of the race, we weren't thinking about making the playoffs. We were just trying to put one foot in front of the other," Ben explained. But with an improbable come-from-behind victory, the Rays propelled themselves into the playoffs, accomplishing what no other team had done before.

As he related the story to those gathered, Ben shared a few truths that he learned. "Just because it has never been done before doesn't mean that it can't happen," Ben stated. "Regardless of our situation, whether it be in baseball or in life, nothing is impossible with God."

In closing, Ben shared, "My prayer for this team is that it would be known for its belief in the seemingly impossible, for your perseverance amidst adversity, and for that kind of Christ-like servant leadership. For those are the things that God is looking at and He is pleased with."

Following Ben's address, members of the 2011 NCAA Fort Worth Regional Championship team stood and received special rings signifying their great accomplishment. After only its second invitation to the NCAA National Tournament in program history, DBU defeated the University of Oklahoma, TCU, and Oral Roberts to win the Fort Worth Regional and move on to become one of the top 16 college programs in the nation. Although they lost in the following round to the University of California, the season was a high mark of success for the baseball program and for DBU athletics. Two of the members of that winning team shared their memories and testimony of what God has taught them through their time at DBU.

In addition, special recognition was given to Jason Krizan, a member of the 2011 team and NCAA All-American. Krizan, who was drafted by the Detroit Tigers organization following the season, was honored as the Howard Green SABR Metroplex Player of the Year, presented by Paul Rogers and Bo Carter. Among his many highlights, Krizan set a new NCAA record for most doubles in a season last year.

The evening ended with a special word from Head Baseball Coach Dan Heefner, who introduced the 2012 Patriot Baseball Team, whose season opened February 17, with a three game sweep of Southeast Missouri State University.

Former DBU Patriot Outfielder Jason Krizan (left) accepts a regional championship ring from Head Coach Dan Heefner (right), after being honored as the SABR Metroplex Player of the Year.



UPCOMING HOME GAMES

3/1	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi	6:30 p.m.
3/2	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi	6:30 p.m.
3/3	Texas A&M-Corpus Christi	1:00 p.m.
3/8	Houston Baptist University	6:30 p.m.
3/9	Houston Baptist University	6:30 p.m.
3/10	Houston Baptist University	1:00 p.m.
3/13	University of Oklahoma	6:30 p.m.
3/20	UT at Arlington	6:30 p.m.
3/30	Missouri State University	6:30 p.m.
3/31	Missouri State University	2:00 p.m.