

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN

CAMPUS SCENE

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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RHODES GOLF CENTER HOMECOMING DEDICATION

Story on page 30



CHANCELLOR'S

Dr. Tom Rakes, *UT Martin Chancellor* CORNER

>>> Our primary role as a comprehensive university is building the future by boosting the collective and individual potential of our students. Additionally, as a vital member of the University of Tennessee, the reach of UT Martin extends well beyond classrooms as we connect with other like-minded individuals from the quadrangle to far-reaching global destinations. This has already been an outstanding year at UTM as we become a more active partner within communities throughout the region. Academic excellence is one of several targeted areas of distinction for UT Martin. We are building an increasingly successful four-year institution whose mission is focused on serving students throughout our region and beyond. As an institution, we are becoming a stronger workforce contributor through a growing number of successful student, faculty and staff efforts involving ventures in agriculture, business, engineering, health-related, humanities, scientific and social science programs that support a more academically-capable student population.

My headline for this edition of the Campus Scene is: "UTM's CCTA Productivity Gains Highlighted as Greatest Among Tennessee Public Universities." In a recently released Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) report, UT Martin was recognized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission for having the greatest productivity gains of any of Tennessee's nine public institutions. UT Martin increased seven percent (the highest percentage) in performance measures within the CCTA. This performance will bring an increase in funding to UTM for the 2014-2015 academic year.

One of the performance measures that makes me proudest is our student achievement toward increasing the number of degrees conferred, as well as faculty, staff and our loyal stakeholders, who have helped make this progress possible. In Tennessee, state institutions are funded at 62.8 percent of the higher education formula using this type of performance measure. We, as part of the University of Tennessee, are working hard to gain the confidence and support of our state legislature for full funding of the higher education formula. Doing so would enable us to limit the need for yearly tuition increases seen in recent years.

We are moving forward to increase opportunities for student engagement. In early November, students in the inaugural class of McWhorter Innovators were showcased during a portion of a program in Knoxville honoring Clayton McWhorter with the Jim and Natalie Haslam Presidential Medal. Clayton McWhorter is the creator and lead donor for the Ned McWhorter Institute for Collaboration and Innovation, the newest addition to leadership and entrepreneurial programs at UT Martin, which began in August 2013.

We have increased our presence around the region and have recruited more capable students, including a growing number of transfer, returning and out-of-state students. We plan to continue our ambitious building programs in athletics, nursing, fine arts, the sciences and sorority lodges. Through all of these efforts, UT Martin remains committed to academic excellence and the enhancement of the economic and cultural growth of the region. Thank you to those of you who share the personal values and passion for excellence that we seek to enhance further in the years to come.

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On the cover: UT Martin Skyhawk golf team members; (back row, l to r), Tyler Guy, Brandon Cabellero, Clay Harbin, Tyler Shellnut, Gavin Shellnut, John Michael Sisinni; (front row l to r), Ben Reeves, Austin Swafford, Peyton Demming.

the big picture



Pictured l to r: representing Chi Omega: **Linda Jessup Jennings** ('69, '72), Mallory Robinson, **Kathy Prince Bucy** ('72, '82); representing Alpha Delta Pi: **Renee Bailey Iacona** ('91), Shannon Cheatham, **Karen Y. Wright** ('71, '75); university representatives: Dr. Margaret Toston, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Chancellor Tom Rakes, Betty Ann Tanner, UT Board of Trustees, Andy Wilson, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, Nancy Yarbrough, Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration; representing Alpha Omicron Pi: **Vicki Whitworth** ('79), Bekah Payne, **Phyllis Pritchett** ('75); representing Zeta Tau Alpha: Susan Beard, Kelsey Breland, **Betty Murphee Allen** ('73, '75).



SORORITIES BREAK GROUND

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Dr. David Coffey

*Professor of History
Chair, Department of History and Philosophy*

Dr. Julie Hill

Associate Professor of Music

Drs. David Coffey and **Julie Hill ('94)** have a lot in common. They are faculty members in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, accomplished musicians, recipients of the Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award (Hill in 2012 and Coffey in 2013), and spouses.

The couple got to know one another when Hill began teaching at UT Martin in 2007. Hill bought an old house in Union City, and instead of attending to the house's much-needed repair, she decided to install a koi pond in her backyard.

"I had this huge hole in my yard with nothing in it. So, I was telling David when we first met, 'Well, I've got this large hole in my yard that's supposed to turn into a pond and bought a liner and everything. And I have no idea what to do now.'" Hill said. "So, David said, 'You know, I've always wanted to build one of those.' And he started coming over every day."

Coffey chimed in, "I lied." And the rest is history.

The couple may have bonded over the construction of a koi pond, but their similar interest in music has further enriched their lives. Coffey, professor and chair of history and philosophy, is an avid guitarist and plays in the House Band, which also features fellow UT Martin faculty members Dr. David Carithers, Dr. Chris Brown, Dr. Jim Fieser and **Micah Barnes ('95)**. Hill, associate professor of percussion, is a member of the acclaimed Caixa Percussion Trio, which has allowed her to perform in Mexico, Brazil, France, Puerto Rico, South Korea, and at the Percussive Arts Society International Conventions.

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NEW FINE ARTS BUILDING DEDICATION

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(noteworthy)>>>

TRIBUTE TO THE COWSERS>>> By Bobby Cowser

My mother Mary Ellen Cowser's official retirement this autumn means this is the first semester since 1970-- the whole of my lifetime-- when at least one of my parents wasn't a full-time member of UT Martin's English faculty.

That my father enters his 60th year of teaching and my mother her 45th, both now as adjunct lecturers, staggers me. Dad began as a high school teacher (both Spanish and English) on the Texas and Oklahoma prairies in what seems to me like another time. He earned the first-ever Ph.D. in English from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth during the time of the Kennedy assassination and it's aftermath and took his job at Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Conn., during the time of Black Panther Bobby Seale's trial there. Interesting times. Recently a Texas editor who frequently publishes Dad's reminiscences drove all the way to Martin to meet him and stay with my parents for a few days. "You're one of the most interesting people I've ever met," he told my father as he took his leave. "Can you believe that?" Dad asked me, incredulous. I absolutely can.

A native of Cleveland, Mom had been hired at Quinnipiac to teach science courses originally (her undergraduate degree is in medical technology) but in the meantime had begun to enroll in graduate courses in literature at the University of Connecticut for fun (what's a single girl to do?), eventually taking the master's degree and moving over to the English department. Enter Dad in 1967, my sister Mary in '68, and yours truly in 1970. We

moved to Martin as soon as I was old enough to fly, and they've been there ever since, raised two additional children, at the same address, answering the same phone number.

A college professor myself now (I'm a newbie with just over 20 years experience) I joke that I've taken over the family business, but of course teaching isn't a business at all but a vocation, a calling. I will never forget when in high school I began showing an interest in poems how my mother appeared in the doorway of my bedroom one afternoon to share a few of her favorites, an anthology open against her chest. This was my true inheritance, and she had been waiting for me to come into it. I only hope I've done them proud.

I think often of elementary school snow days sitting in my mother's composition classes in the Humanities Building (which I think should bear their names someday!) or walking hand in hand with my father heading to the bookstore for a snack as students hailed him. I don't know who was prouder of whom. Once as Dad and I walked across campus, a male student called out to him cheerily. "Who's that?" I asked him. "I have no idea," he answered, never breaking stride. Sixty years of teaching-- a century's worth between my parents-- is a lot of students, a lot of themes marked. I hope they know the impact they've had, on UTM and the students lucky enough to sit in their classes, on the Martin community. This is just to say, hallelujah Mom and Dad, well done. May you be at the head of those Humanities classrooms for another hundred years. <<<

Pictured above: Bob and Mary Ellen Cowser who taught at UT Martin for 60 and 45 years respectively. Dr. Bobby Cowser, professor of English at St. Lawrence University in New York, was asked to write this very personal story as a tribute to his parents. Campus Scene is grateful for this story contribution.

FOUR UT MARTIN SORORITIES BREAK GROUND FOR NEW LODGES >>>

Four sororities at the University of Tennessee at Martin participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for new lodges on campus Oct. 5 during 2013 Homecoming festivities.

Chi Omega, Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Omicron Pi and Zeta Tau Alpha, all founded on the UT Martin campus in the early 1960s, had small lodges in Grove Apartments on the north side of campus from the mid-60s through 2004.

"It was decided that the sorority membership had grown too large to continue to hold rush, or recruitment, as we call it now in our lodges," said Secily Scott, Panhellenic president and a member of Chi Omega Sorority.

"By building these lodges, our chapters will not only have a place to hold recruitment activities, sisterhoods, meetings and other functions, but most importantly the chapters will have a place to call their own," said Scott.

The new lodges will be built on the southern edge of campus near University Courts. Each sorority has committed to pay close to \$500,000 for their new lodge, which will be two stories and about 3,800-square feet.

"I've been waiting for this as a colony member of AOPi since the fall quarter of 1965," **Mandy Riley Williams** said. "At long last our dream is coming true."

More than 500 people braved the humid weather conditions to watch representatives of each sorority participate in the groundbreaking ceremonies.

"I must give most of the credit for us being here to the alumni members of these sororities who have worked diligently to raise funds to ensure these lodges would become a reality," UT Martin chancellor Tom Rakes said. "One of UT Martin's points of pride is that we encourage the development of student leadership through service and leadership opportunities enhanced by more than 125 campus organizations. Our sorority members are leaders on this campus and become loyal alumni as evident at the groundbreaking."

Construction is scheduled to start soon, and completion is expected in the 2014-15 academic year.

"We look forward to returning to this site to celebrate the opening of the sorority lodges during the next academic year," Rakes said. <<<

YEARBOOKS

The **UT MARTIN OFFICE OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS** has surplus copies of *The Spirit* yearbook that need to find their "forever" homes.

Available years include: 1982 and 1983, 1987 through 1989, 1991 through 1998, and 2003 through 2006. Note that all yearbooks are dated from the spring semester of the year they are published, meaning the 1988 yearbook covers the Fall 1987 and Spring 1988 semesters.

Yearbooks are free, but donations to help defray mailing costs are both needed and welcome.

To request your book(s) or to check the availability of a year not listed, please email your full name, mailing address and years you attended UTM to Student Publications Coordinator Tomi M. Parrish at tomimc@utm.edu, or call 731-881-7546.

To send a donation for mailing costs, please make checks payable to UT Martin and mail them to:

Tomi M. Parrish, coordinator
Office of Student Publications
305A Gooch Hall
The University of Tennessee at Martin
Martin, TN 38238



(noteworthy)>>>



Julius Johnson (left), Tennessee commissioner of agriculture, and Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, stand with the plaque of the late Congressman Ed Jones that will be displayed in the Tennessee Agricultural Hall of Fame. Jones was honored for his hall of fame induction during a reception and dinner Oct. 4 at UT Martin. The hall of fame collection is maintained by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture at the Tennessee Agricultural Museum in Nashville.

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES GATHER TO REMEMBER CONGRESSMAN ED JONES>>>

Friends and former staff members of 8th District U.S. Rep. **Ed Jones ('32)** gathered Friday evening, Oct. 4, of homecoming week to pay tribute to the late congressman and honor his induction into the Tennessee Agricultural Hall of Fame. Jones became only the 13th hall of fame member when he was elected in 2011.

A reception was held in the Paul Meek Library where a replica of the congressman's office is maintained and his congressional papers are held. A dinner followed in the Boling University Center where a large bronze plaque was displayed that will later reside in the Tennessee Agricultural Hall of Fame collection. The collection is maintained by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture at the Tennessee Agricultural Museum in Nashville.

Jones, a Yorkville native, earned a two-year degree in 1932 from UT Junior College, predecessor to UT Martin, and a bachelor's degree in 1934 from UT Knoxville. During his career, he served as a state dairy inspector, an agricultural agent for the Illinois Central Railroad, a farm radio host and was appointed Tennessee commissioner of agriculture under Gov. Gordon Browning. He is probably best known for his service from 1969-89 as U.S. representative, and he remained active in his family's farm throughout his career.

While in Congress, Jones was a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture during a time of change in the agriculture industry and the institutions that supported it. Notable events that occurred during his career were the Farm Strike and Tractorcade to Washington, D.C., in the late 1970s, the financial struggles of the Farm Credit System, the regulation of the futures market, and the transition of the soil and water conservation programs.

Anthony Haynes ('88), University of Tennessee System vice president for government relations, emceed the dinner and reminded the audience of the "Ed Jones is My Congressman" slogan used by the popular U.S. representative at election time. "If you were running for office ... you wanted your signs as close to his as possible," he said. "Ed Jones was to retail politics what Bear Bryant was to college football."

UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes welcomed the crowd of Jones friends, supporters and former staff members to campus and emphasized the importance of agriculture to the university. "I would argue that we have the strongest undergraduate agriculture programs in the state," he said. Rakes pointed to university's agriculture-related outreach, including the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex, the West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and the new Veterinary Health Technology program, as examples of outreach and commitment to the agricultural industry and education.

Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Julius Johnson, who knew Jones during his career with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation, commended Rakes and others in attendance "for helping to bring attention to one of Tennessee's agriculture true treasures, Congressman Ed Jones."

"I think it's appropriate that the university is building upon his legacy in agriculture through the Ed Jones Distinguished Lecture Series and scholarship fund," Johnson said. "I know Congressman Jones would certainly be proud."

The original Ed Jones Distinguished Lecturer Series began in 1989 at the university, and Jones actively supported the series until it ended in 1995. A lead gift of \$12,500 in June 2013 from Farm Credit Mid-America was the first step toward endowing the lecture series, which will now include the congressman's late wife's name and be called the Ed and Llew Jones Distinguished Lecture Series.

Commenting on the congressman's induction into the Tennessee Agricultural Hall of Fame, Johnson added, "He

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certainly left his mark on our nation's agriculture and is responsible for championing many of the programs in conservation, farm finance and risk management that we now take for granted. Through it all, Mr. Jones never lost sight of his life's mission to improve the livelihood of farmers and the lives of rural Americans."

Former U.S. Rep. John Tanner, who succeeded Jones in his congressional seat and served 11 terms, was the event's keynote speaker. "I never heard anybody say anything but that Mr. Ed Jones was a gentleman," Tanner said. "Whatever his politics were, whatever he stood for, he was a gentleman.

"And beyond that, he had a vision for the future. He understood that for this country to be strong and free, you had to have investment, public investment, in infrastructure. ... And he was pretty keen on a pretty robust agricultural policy as well."

Tanner recognized and thanked those who worked for Jones and the people of the 8th Congressional District. "I think he would be so proud to know that this network (of people) still exists," he said.

Dr. Jim Culver ('68, UTK '72, '78), president, CEO and director of VVC Exploration Corp. and a former congressional aide to Jones, offered highlights from the late congressman's life. He noted that Jones did many things in his career, "But through all of what he did in life, Ed Jones was always a farmer, and he always felt like he was a farmer."

"Working for him was the highlight of my career," Culver said.

Donations can be made to the Ed Jones Gift Fund, which supports the university's Ed and Llew Jones Distinguished Lecture Series. Contact the UT Martin Office of Development, 329 Hall-Moody Administration Building, Martin, TN 38238, or call 731-881-7620. Gifts to the lecture series fund can also be made online at www.utmforever.com/jones. <<<

UT MARTIN EARNS REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RANKINGS >>>

UT Martin enjoyed a banner year in 2013 for earning regional and national recognition in several categories, including educational value and academic quality. These are some of the key recognitions received throughout the year, starting with the most recent:

OCTOBER 2013 --- Listed for the eighth consecutive year among America's 100 Best College Buys, a listing compiled by Institutional Research & Evaluation, Inc. UT Martin is among three public Tennessee higher education institutions listed.

OCTOBER 2013 --- Selected as a top military-friendly school in the Military Advanced Education (MAE) 2014 Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges & Universities.

SEPTEMBER 2013 --- Named among 100 colleges and universities nationwide as most likely to earn top honors on President Barack Obama's upcoming value scorecard. UT Martin appears at No. 70 on the list and is the only Tennessee college or university listed.

SEPTEMBER 2013 --- Ranked in the top-tier for southern master's level universities in the 2014 edition of America's Best Colleges, compiled by U.S. News & World Report. UT Martin tied for 46th place among both public and private institutions and is 18th among southern regional public universities.

AUGUST 2013 --- Listed third among the 30 best online MBA programs in the nation by Affordable Colleges Online (AC Online).

AUGUST 2013 --- Listed among the best colleges in the Southeast according to the nationally known education services company The Princeton Review. UT Martin is one of 138 institutions The Princeton Review recommends in its "Best in the Southeast" section of its website feature "2014 Best Colleges: Region by Region." The university has been named to the "Best in the Southeast" listing for 11 consecutive years.

JULY 2013 --- Placed fifth among 54 colleges for the most affordable online degree programs in the nation by Affordable Colleges Online (AC Online).

FEBRUARY 2013 --- Named one of the nation's "Best Value" colleges and universities in The Princeton Review's book "The Best Value Colleges: 2013 Edition" and on www.PrincetonReview.com. UT Martin joined the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, as the only public Tennessee universities listed. This marked the second year that UT Martin earned the "Best Value" designation from The Princeton Review.

JANUARY 2013 --- The master of business administration program named one of the top-10 best online graduate business programs in 2013 by U.S. News & World Report. <<<

(noteworthy) >>>

UT MARTIN OFFICIALS, DIPIETRO CUT THE RIBBON ON RENOVATED, EXPANDED FINE ARTS BUILDING >>>

Gov. Bill Haslam's office was represented. Weakley County Mayor Houston Patrick and Martin Mayor **Randy Brundige ('73)** were there. UT Martin Chancellor emeritus **Margaret Perry ('61)** and her husband, Dr. Randy Perry, were there. So was former UT President Dr. Joe Johnson. Former UT Martin professor emerita Allison Nelson was there as were UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes and UT President Joe DiPietro.

They were all at the Fine Arts Building ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 18 on the UT Martin campus.

"Today is an exciting day," Rakes said. "We have not had a new building on this campus in 40 years, and this building gives you that feel. We have a nationally recognized faculty, and now we have the space to back that up."

The expanded building is now 112,000 square feet, and the completion cost was \$14 million. The expanded building houses the departments of music and visual and theatre arts, and includes more than 16 classrooms, 24 office/studio rooms, 35 offices, 23 individual practice rooms, a choir-recital hall, a band practice room, a percussion rehearsal room, a graphic arts lab, ceramic lab, fabrics lab, sculpture lab, costume shop, scene shop and a state-of-the-art black box (acting classroom) theater with the most up-to-date sound and lighting available. The new black box theater seats 110 people.

The existing 52,000-square foot building was expanded by 60,000 square feet. The renovation increased footage to the north, south and east by a total



Pictured l to r: UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes; UT Martin Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs **Jerald Ogg ('76)**; University of Tennessee President Joe DiPietro.

of almost 25,000 square feet. Plans are underway for Phase Two of this project, which will include the addition of a performance hall.

Classes and personnel vacated the building four years ago, and all classes have returned to the expanded building this semester.

"We are fortunate to share the completion of this building," Rakes said. "It was predominately funded by the state. Vision is essential, but execution is required."

DiPietro said he had a special fondness for the UT Martin campus and the Fine Arts Building because he grew up on a college campus similar to UT Martin where his father was a math professor and his mother was a librarian.

"This faculty is world renown and now the facilities match that," he said. "This building solidifies the quality of life for this region. This is important to the region, important to UT Martin, and important to the University of Tennessee."

Newbern senior William Kwasigroh was there, too. "The new building has everything we need," he said.

Kwasigroh, who is a percussionist in the Skyhawk marching band, was scheduled to report to band camp at 3:30 that Friday afternoon. "The new building will make band camp more logistic. Everything will be back where it needs to be."

For Kwasigroh and the other percussionists, that means their very own rehearsal hall. "The reverb, in the rehearsal hall and in all of the smaller practice rooms, is dead and that's a good thing."

"We are absolutely ecstatic to have all the arts under one roof," said Doug Cook, the chairperson of the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts.

"One-stop shopping for the arts is our goal," said Dr. Elaine Harriss, professor in the Department of Music. "I remember the excitement of the 1970 opening of the Fine Arts Building. What a thrill it is to witness the renovation and expansion."

DiPietro, Rakes and the more than 250 people at the ribbon cutting were fans. "This is a day to celebrate," DiPietro said. "This is a day to come cheer on this building." <<<



Members of the Pre-Medical Scholars program include (front, from left): Dr. Sukepma Giri, Dr. Chiniya Thapa, Ben Reeves, Amber Thompson, Brianna Foss, Ben Rollins, Morgan Gray, Michael Wilson, Saumil Patel, Sean O'Brien (back, from left) Alli McClure, Vance Pounders, Dr. Nikhil Patel, Dr. Richard Helgeson, Dr. Jack Grubaugh, Dr. Mark Armstrong, Mr. Darrell Blaylock, Dr. Rick Thomas, Dr. Walter Fletcher, Dr. Jabbar Saliba and Matthew Keathley. Not pictured is Christy Lee.

UT MARTIN PRE-MED SCHOLARS PROGRAM LAUNCHED WITH AREA PHYSICIANS >>>

Twelve UT Martin students have been introduced into the Pre-Medical Scholars program. Among the students are Brianna Jaye Victoria Rachel Foss, of Paris; Morgan Gray, of Trezevant; Matthew Keathley, of Union City; Alli McClure, of Huntingdon; Sean O'Brien, of Voorhees, N.J.; Saumil Patel, of Martin; Vance Pounders, of Nashville; Ben Reeves, of Knoxville; Ben Rollins, of McKenzie; Amber Thompson, of Arlington; and Michael Wilson, of Dresden.

The program is slated to last two years with at least 10 new students beginning each year. The program includes three parts: a series of shadowing opportunities; subject-specific MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test) review; and a test prep course at the end of the two-year program.

The program currently involves 12 area physicians and Volunteer Community Hospital in Martin. The physicians include Dr. Nikhil Patel, Gastroenterology Associates; **Dr. Walter Fletcher ('89)**, Martin Medical Center; Dr. Elizabeth Lund, Surgical Associates of Martin; Dr. Jabbar Saliba, Martin Specialty Clinic; Dr. James Hall,

Northwest Tennessee Cardiology Clinic; Dr. John Bates, Pediatric Place of Union City; Dr. Mark Armstrong, Union City Surgical Center; Dr. Michael Hinds, Hinds Medical Center; Dr. Susan Brewer, Martin Pediatric and Adolescent; Dr. Chiniya Thapa, Martin Specialty Clinic; Dr. Sukepma Giri, Martin Specialty Clinic; and Dr. Anna Hopla, Martin Medical Center.

"It's geared toward sophomores because it is a two-year program and is intended to prepare students for the MCAT and application to med school, which typically takes place at the end of the junior year or the beginning of the senior year," health sciences pre-professional coordinator Kristina Pitz said.

Students selected for the Pre-Medical Scholars program must have taken chemistry 121 and 122 and must have an average of 3.0 for the two classes. Preference is given to students who have taken biology 130 and 140 and students who have taken a math course.

"We want to get more students in medical school," Pitz said. "Our students are very competitive, but this program will make them more competitive." <<<



DR. MARGARET PERRY PARTICIPATES IN INAUGURATION >>>

UT Martin Chancellor Emeritus **Margaret Perry ('61)** participated in the inauguration Oct. 11, 2013, of Dr. Bill Duffy (center) as president of Upper Iowa University in Fayette, Iowa. She offered the formal introduction of Duffy, who was named the institution's 21st president on April 26. He is the former executive director of UT Martin's Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (now Extended Campus and Online Studies). Duffy came to UT Martin as a professor of military science for the ROTC's Skyhawk Battalion in 1995 during Perry's tenure as chancellor. He retired in 1998 as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army following 20 years of service and assumed his role of leading the university's extended-campus and continuing education programs.



(athletics)>>>

>>> PHIL DANE RETIRES AFTER 14 YEARS AS UT MARTIN ATHLETICS DIRECTOR.

Phil Dane ('84) was right in the middle of the latest Skyhawk championship celebration.

Jumping up and down with his hands in the air and a larger-than-usual smile on his face, the 14-year commander of the UT Martin athletics department was surrounded by nearly two-dozen soccer players who made it a point to include him in their postgame celebration after winning their fourth Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) championship in the last three years.

For Dane, it's just another championship notch in his belt – the 21st, to be exact. And for those who are keeping count, that's the 15th title for his athletic programs since 2009. With those types of stats, it's hard to argue that UT Martin athletics hasn't developed into one of the top-tier, all-around programs in the OVC, which was a far cry from the early part of the millennium.

"When I first came to athletics, I didn't sense that our membership was being taken seriously in the OVC," said Dane, who in October announced his intent to retire at the end of the year. "I remember Dan Beebe, who was the OVC commissioner

at the time, was not for UT Martin coming into the conference, and he said he had been right because we hadn't brought value or championships to the league. Now I feel that we are more respected as a bona fide OVC member. We've been right there competing as well as anybody in just about every sport."

After much prayer and consideration for the best interests of Skyhawk athletics, Dane – who had previously served as the UT Martin vice chancellor for business and finance for 13 years before moving to the athletics department – decided now was the right time to step aside and hand the reigns over to someone else.

"I've been ready for a couple years now," Dane said. "I'm at that stage in life, and my wife, Debbie, recently retired, so now was a good time."

Seven different UT Martin sports programs have captured an OVC championship under the direction of Dane, five of which (volleyball, football, men's basketball, softball, soccer) won their first-ever OVC championship. Dane's tenure also includes the supervision of the highly successful rodeo and equestrian programs. Individually, UT Martin has produced 18 All-Americans since Dane took over as Skyhawk director of athletics in 2000.

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Pictured above: UT Martin athletic director Phil Dane, who retired in December 2013, celebrates an OVC victory with the Skyhawk soccer team.

By Ryne Rickman

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In the world of college athletics, student-athletes, coaches and various support staffers come and go. Despite the constant revolving of scenery, UT Martin has maintained a level of excellence under Dane, which leads to major respect from Dane's co-workers.

Col. Bill Kaler, assistant athletics director for compliance, has worked at UT Martin since 1976 and considers Dane right at the top of the four athletics directors he has worked for.

"Phil's ability to think ahead and his way of creating resources always amazes me," Kaler said. "His background knowledge in management and business finance was a big part of his success. You won't find another athletics director at any level in the country who could create and manage money like Phil does."

Skyhawk head volleyball coach Darrin McClure has valued his relationship with Dane since he was hired as interim head coach of the program in 2008.

"I still remember every little detail from Phil's phone call offering me the job," McClure said. "Every single morning when I'm walking to my office, I think to myself that I am so thankful for Phil having the faith to hire me. I owe him an enormous amount of gratitude."

Dane insists the program's success is a byproduct of the program's immense academic prowess. Ten of the 78 OVC Scholar-Athletes (the OVC's highest individual honor) have attended UT Martin during Dane's tenure. Skyhawk athletics has set a new program record for OVC Medal of Honor (4.0 grade point average) and Commissioner's Honor Roll recipients (at least a 3.25 GPA) in three straight years under Dane, capped off with 116 UT Martin student-athletes (and 17 Medal of Honor recipients) earning OVC academic accolades in 2012-13.

Overall, 1,077 Skyhawk student-athletes have tallied OVC Commissioner's Honor Roll status, with 141 of those receiving an OVC Medal of Honor under Dane. The Skyhawk student-athletes have achieved at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA for three consecutive semesters.

"I can't claim credit for all of the championships, I was just fortunate to steer the ship when those things happened," Dane said. "I think I am most proud of the academic achievements of our student-athletes. You can only have the academic success we have had if the people at the top care about the notion that they are students first."

Without question, a big part of Dane's legacy began in 2006 when the program chalked up its first-ever OVC football championship. It was Dane's vision to generate extra revenue

with a student fee increase, and the operation of the Skyhawk athletics department took off.

"The excitement generated from our football championship was parlayed into a student fee increase of \$50 per semester starting in the fall of 2007," Dane said. "Before the student increase, we had no assistant coaches for volleyball, soccer, baseball and softball, and we only had one full-time employee in the sports information department. With the student increase, we were able to add assistant coaches to those sports and in other departments, as well as make immediate improvements for baseball and soccer facilities. The student increase generates about \$600,000 annually, and that has increased our operation and recruiting budgets."

With the additional funds over the past seven years, UT Martin now arguably boasts the finest facilities in the OVC. Dane administered facility upgrades for football, basketball, baseball, golf, soccer, softball and tennis facilities in his tenure. Almost \$2,000,000 in private funding was raised that funded a significant portion of the Bob Carroll Football Building and the new Rhodes Golf Center, among other amenities.

In fact, it's hard to look around at UT Martin's athletic facilities and not be reminded of Dane's commitment to improvement. Although Dane will no longer be around Skyhawk athletics on a day-to-day basis, his stamp on the program will live on.

Dane currently has a consulting opportunity that will allow him to share his expertise both inside and outside the athletics forum that he has spent the last 34 years working in. He intends to remain very active in higher education and athletics in general for "several years to come," he said.

With his resume of developing OVC championship teams, improved academic progress and numerous facility improvements, it is without argument that Dane has left the UT Martin athletics program in tremendous shape to thrive.

>>> **BRAD GOSS HIRED AS INTERIM HEAD**

BASEBALL COACH. Brad Goss ('06), who has served on the UT Martin baseball coaching staff for the past nine seasons, was appointed the interim head coach on Sept. 4.

A member of the Skyhawk coaching staff since 2004, Goss provides continuity to the UT Martin program. He has served as UT Martin's hitting coach while training the catchers and spent the past five seasons as the team's recruiting coordinator.

In his tenure at UT Martin, Goss has presided over 18 All-Ohio Valley Conference performers, one All-American and two Louisville Slugger Freshman All-Americans.

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(athletics)>>>



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Goss came to UT Martin from Arkansas Tech, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 2004 and was a three-time All-Gulf South Conference selection for his father, Billy Goss. A four-year starter at catcher, Goss held eight Arkansas Tech career records, including hits (220), runs scored (152), runs batted in (169), home runs (29), doubles (58), total bases (373), walks (110) and times hit by pitch (39).

Goss earned his master's degree in education from UT Martin in the fall of 2006. He married the former **Anna Moore** of Trezevant, a 2007 graduate of UT Martin.

>>> SKYHAWK TENNIS HOLDS SUCCESSFUL GRAND OPENING OF NEW COURTS. More than 350 fans attended the unveiling of the new Skyhawk Varsity Courts. Before the Skyhawks began their match with North Alabama, a group of leaders was recognized for their contributions to the new tennis courts. Among those recognized were: Tim Nipp, director of physical plant administration; Dr. Tom Rakes, chancellor; Gina McClure, director of campus recreation; Dr. Deborah Gibson, interim chair of health and human performance; Phil Dane, director of athletics; Danelle Fabianich, assistant director of athletics for administration; Ryan McDaniel, architect from A2H, Inc.

The reconstruction project began in January 2013 and lasted until August. Six of the 10 courts were completely bulldozed and built back from the ground up. Phase II of the project will take place in the future and will cover the last four courts. As a result of the construction, UT Martin played all of its matches in the spring of 2013 on the road.

>>> SOCCER'S CONC JOINS SLOVENIA NATIONAL TEAM IN PREP FOR WORLD CUP QUALIFIER.

UT Martin junior midfielder **Dominika Conc** joined the Slovenia national soccer team as her home nation competed in the FIFA Women's World Cup Qualifier in late September.

Slovenia was sitting tied for third heading into the Sept. 26 matchup with rival Slovakia, as Conc helped her native country to a 3-1 victory over Slovakia. Slovenia was joined in Group 1 with Germany, Russia, Republic of Ireland, Slovakia and Croatia striving to earn a berth in the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup.

The Maribor, Slovenia, native Conc has been a model of consistency for the Skyhawks during her decorated career. Conc has played in 65 games in three seasons while earning the starting nod in 39. She has been an offensive threat for UT Martin, scoring 10 goals while dishing out seven assists.

>>> JULIO FREIRE SELECTED AS ATHLETICS DIRECTOR.

Julio Freire, most recently senior associate athletics director for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, was named in December as the new UT Martin athletics director. An advisory search committee chose from among four finalists and recommended Freire for the position to Chancellor Tom Rakes. Freire succeeds Phil Dane, who retired as the university's athletics director at the end of December (see story page 14).

"Julio emerged as a strong choice from among an excellent pool of candidates," Rakes said. "He possesses the experience, knowledge and energy to lead the UT Martin's athletics program."

Freire was introduced to the news media and community during a Jan. 13 news conference.

>>> SKYHAWK ALUM MANNY COLON PAYS VISIT TO UT MARTIN STUDENT-ATHLETES.

Manny Colon, the director of team travel for the Miami Marlins and a 2001 graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, addressed around 300 Skyhawk student-athletes and sport management majors on Oct. 16 at Watkins Auditorium in the Boling University Center.

Colon, who is in his third season as the Marlins' traveling secretary, paid a visit to his alma mater on his way to an offseason trip to his hometown of Clarksville, Tenn.

Colon discussed his time at UT Martin and his journey to the front office of a Major League Baseball franchise. He then fielded questions from the crowd to conclude his hour-long informative session.

While at UT Martin, Colon was the first full-time person to play the role of Captain Skyhawk, the official mascot for intercollegiate athletics. He worked in athletics and even served as the public address announcer at UT Martin baseball games before graduating with a degree in business administration with an emphasis on international business.

Colon started working for the Marlins as an intern in 2002 and earned his first full-time job as a Marlins player relations assistant during the 2003 season, when the then-Florida Marlins defeated the New York Yankees in the World Series. He also briefly worked in player development before accepting his current position, where he serves as a personal travel agent for around 60 Marlins players, coaches and support staff from spring training in February until the end of the season in mid-October.

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This page (clockwise from top): interim head baseball coach Brad Goss (right) on the field with former player **Byron Johann ('13)**; the Skyhawk tennis team poses on the court for the grand opening of Skyhawk Varsity Courts; Skyhawk soccer's Dominika Conc; new UT Martin athletics director Julio Freire.

(athletics)>>>

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SKYHAWK
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>>> **FIVE ALL-TIME GREATS JOIN UT MARTIN ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME.** Former football members **Lee Mayo ('68)**, **Ross Elder** and **Jack Beeler**, former baseball player **Mack Terry ('69)** and former softball player **Kristin Runyan ('05)** were inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame during the Letter Winner's Breakfast on Oct. 5 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center concourse.

Mayo played at UT Martin from 1965-68 under head coach Bob Carroll. A 5-11, 215-pound left-footed kicker from Yorktown, Va., Mayo was part of the UT Martin team that won the 1967 Tangerine Bowl, winning the Atlantic Coast College Division championship to cap off a 10-1 season. In 1967, he led the nation in scoring by a kicker for the majority of the season with 76 points (40 PATs, 12 field goals), which stood as the most points in a single season by a UT Martin kicker for 21 years. He also kicked a then-school record 52-yard field goal against rival Southeast Missouri.

"This is an honor I would have never imagined," Mayo said of his Hall of Fame induction. "My fondest memories were the relationships and friendships I experienced at UT Martin. I met my wife there, played football with a great group of guys who were truly a 'band of brothers' to me and was able to play for a coaching staff that gave me an opportunity to be a part of a championship team. I will cherish these memories forever."

Elder served as an assistant coach at UT Martin from 1959-73 under Carroll, tutoring the defensive line. A Knoxville native, Elder helped guide UT Martin to a pair of conference championships (1960, 1967) and the 1967 Atlantic Coast College Division national championship after a victory in the Tangerine Bowl. He presided over several All-Americans who were known as the "Wild Bunch" for their hard-hitting reputation. An all-conference player at the University of Wyoming, he passed away on Oct. 9, 1986.

"My family and I naturally feel honored and very grateful to have my husband posthumously inducted," said Kathleen Elder, Ross's widow. "I know his fondest memories would include his relationships with many of the football players, some of which lasted to the end of his life. His pride in the team they took to the Tangerine Bowl would no doubt be another of his fondest memories."

Beeler served as an assistant coach at UT Martin from 1965-74 under Carroll, mentoring the defensive backs and quarterbacks. Also a native of Knoxville, Beeler helped coach the "Wild Bunch" unit who combined to yield only 15.9 points per game over a

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**HALL OF FAME
NOMINATION FORM**

{ NOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY MAY 1, 2014 }

Athlete or Coach to be Nominated

Years of Participation at UT Martin

Years Attended UT Martin and Date of Graduation

UT Martin Athletic Accomplishments

Name and Contact Numbers of Person Making the Nomination



Ryne Rickman
Sports Information Director
Room 40, Skyhawk Fieldhouse
The University of Tennessee at Martin
Martin, Tn 38238

or E-mail rickman@utm.edu



Pictured l to r: Jeff Elder, Dr. Mike Beeler, Mack Terry, Kristin Runyan and Lee Mayo. Jeff Elder, son of Ross Elder, and Mike Beeler, son of Jack Beeler, accepted their fathers' awards posthumously.

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seven-season span at UT Martin. He also was part of the staff that generated a national championship with its 25-8 victory over West Chester State in the 1967 Tangerine Bowl. An All-American quarterback at Wofford College during his playing days, he passed away on June 15, 1981.

"Coach Beeler was a generous giver," said Danny Walker, Beeler's son-in-law. "He listened and shared life experiences with all those he came in contact. His door was always open to coaches, players and students. I think Coach Beeler's fondest moments were the Tangerine Bowl year and being able to coach his son Mike while a few years later being able to coach me. We had so many good times and humorous conversations about football and life."

Terry played at UT Martin from 1966-69 under head coach Jim Swope. The Camden native was one of the best pitchers in the nation during his senior year, posting a microscopic 0.83 ERA (five earned runs in 54 innings pitched). He tossed back-to-back no-hitters as a senior and posted a 14-1 record on the mound over his final two seasons. He was part of one of the most successful teams in program history, as the 1968 squad posted a 19-3 record and captured the Volunteer State Athletic Conference championship.

"It's a big honor to be inducted into the Hall of Fame at UT Martin," Terry said. "I think I am the sixth player off the 1968 championship team to be inducted, and that says a lot about our team that year. We had one of the best records any team at UT Martin (has) ever had, and I am proud of that accomplishment."

Runyan played at UT Martin from 2003-05 under head coach Donley Canary. A 5-4 infielder from Overland Park, Kan., she captured All-Ohio Valley Conference accolades in all three seasons as a Skyhawk, including a pair of first-team mentions. She graduated UT Martin as the program's all-time leader in runs scored (93), home runs (21) and walks (50), while ranking second on the list with 83 runs batted in and 239 total bases. She helped the Skyhawks tally 94 victories in three seasons, including a then-school record 40 wins in 2005.

"While I always demonstrated the drive and commitment to improve and succeed, the majority of my accomplishments in softball and life can be attributed to the support of others in my life," Runyan said. "Being inducted into the Hall of Fame is a testament to all those who invested their time to teach me, pushed me beyond my limits and sacrificed to provide me the opportunity to play." <<<



(university advancement)>>>

MCWHERTER INSTITUTE ESTABLISHED AT UT MARTIN >>> Clayton McWhorter (UTK '52,'53)

knows how to make a difference, and a lead financial gift by the businessman and philanthropist has established the Ned Ray McWherter Institute for Collaboration and Innovation at UT Martin. The institute, currently in its first year, features a three-year, progressive, interdisciplinary program customized to the individual student.

The institute will inspire, develop and sustain a vibrant culture of collaboration and innovation while seeking to revolutionize Northwest Tennessee's economic landscape and workforce mentality. Ten students were selected fall 2013 to serve as the institute's inaugural class of "McWherter Innovators." Eventually, 30 students – six from each of the five colleges – will be paired with faculty managers to help them grow both personally and professionally before entering the work world.

For this and other support for the University of Tennessee, McWhorter was presented the Jim and Natalie Haslam Presidential Medal on Nov. 8 during the Volunteer Leadership Awards Dinner in

Knoxville. The award is given to individuals who have exhibited a distinguished record of supporting the university through exemplary giving, volunteer leadership and service. Recipients also possess a willingness to motivate others to support the University of Tennessee and a personal history of integrity and excellence in all aspects of life.

McWhorter, a longtime UT Martin and UT Knoxville supporter, served on the UT Board of Trustees from 1993-2005, including a term as vice chair. He also served as a UT Foundation Board of Directors member, and he currently represents UT Martin on the UT Development Council. He received the Chancellor's Award for University Service in 2012 from UT Martin.

Besides the McWherter Institute at UT Martin, McWhorter also established the R. Clayton McWhorter endowment at UT Knoxville in 1995 to assist deserving students who are working to contribute toward the cost of their college education. In addition, he supports the UT College of Law's General William Leech Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund.

McWhorter is CEO and chairman of Clayton Associates, L.L.C. located in Brentwood. He and his wife, Michelle, reside in Nashville. <<<

Pictured above l to r: Hollie Townes, Michael Coultis, Summer Bradley, Dwight Johnson II, R. Clayton McWhorter, Michelle McWhorter, Ana Whitten, Mical Cortez, Maryanna McClure, Zoë Stringer and Caroline Parish.

<<<(Our Sincere Thanks)

The Annual Donor Report is compiled yearly to honor the alumni, friends and companies that support UT Martin and its mission. We wish to publicly recognize these donors. The report is a list of gifts to UT Martin beginning July 1, 2012, and ending June 30, 2013. Each entry was carefully reviewed and every effort made to ensure accuracy. If there are errors or omissions, please contact the Office of Advancement Services at 731-881-7620.

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The GARDENS at DISCOVERY PARK

by Joe Lofaro

John Watkins has done a little bit of everything when it comes to taking care of the yard or more specifically the grounds at Opryland USA, Berry College, his own private landscaping company and now Discovery Park of America in Union City.

Discovery Park of America offers visitors a world-class educational and entertainment experience with more than 70,000 square feet of exhibits focused on nature, science, technology, history and art. The centerpiece of Discovery Park is Discovery Center, a 100,000-square-foot building showcasing 10 exhibit galleries: Children's Exploration, Energy, Enlightenment, Military, Native Americans, Natural History, Regional History, Science/Space/Technology and Transportation. In addition, a special exhibit gallery features traveling exhibits.

Discovery Park includes 50 acres of outdoor space worth seeing. The 50-acre site offers visitors a variety of experiences.

"I take care of basically anything outdoors," said Watkins, who graduated from UT Martin in 1988. "Alive, dead, growing, turf (maintenance), shrubs, trees, display beds. About 15,000-20,000 annuals a year."

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Clockwise from left: Discovery Park of America's Discovery Center; John Watkins examines the grounds in The Japanese Garden area of the park; aerial view of The Settlement (foreground) with The Barn, Mill Ridge and the Great Lawn across the lake.

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To be specific Watkins is responsible for four unique garden areas, a shrub-lined maze and the Great Lawn and grounds, which rival any garden in the world.

For Watkins, who is the son of retired vice chancellor for student affairs Phillip Watkins, the beginning was the result of a CO-OP placement at Flowerwood Nursey in Mobile, Ala. "I enjoyed the experience," John Watkins said. "I found out what I didn't want to do and that was grow stuff to sell to people."

Candy Goad, now the coordinator of the Student Success Center, said she remember that CO-OP placement. "John was a super kid."

Watkins went from the largest nursery in the world to a private plantation in Virginia; and from a private plantation to the largest contiguous college campus in the United States, Berry College.

At Berry College, in Rome, Ga., Watkins was responsible for 27,000 acres of woodlands, meadows and streams.

"I remember John's biggest problem at Berry College was the bears and deer population," Goad said.

Watkins went from 27,000 acres and the outdoors to teaching and the classroom like his dad, Phil, who was an associate professor of biology. For John, the classroom and the students were great for a while.

After a short stint in private business, Watkins landed at Discovery Park of America.

"When I went to Opryland and Disney World, I wanted to be wowed, and that's what I want to give the people here," he said. "I am going to have fun, and I am going to try new stuff."

With four themed gardens, 4,000 Azaelas, 24,000 plants, 750 trees and various flowers, Watkins is challenged by giving visitors something new each time they visit.

"My biggest concern the last six or seven months has been this place (Discovery Park of America) has been a construction site. We would try to plant something and we had to stop because some big truck was driving across the lawn," Watkins said.

Watkins has been in the landscape business a long time, so Discovery Park of America is no challenge for the Martin native.

"John has done a lot around campus," said Charley Deal, the assistant vice chancellor of alumni affairs. "He has done the landscaping around the "Friends" statue, and he played a key role in the landscaping around the new Rhodes Golf Center.

"He has a special eye," Deal said. <<<

UT MARTIN ALUM BELIEVES THAT
EVERYTHING
HAPPENS FOR A REASON

by Bud Grimes



Some people might say that Renee Bailey Iacona is fortunate, maybe even lucky, to enjoy personal, academic and professional success. Renee will say that everything happens for a reason. The 1991 UT Martin graduate saw her life's preparation and experiences come full circle as she returned to Martin for 2013 Homecoming festivities to accept the university's Outstanding Alumni Award. Returning to UT Martin is nothing new for the pharmaceuticals industry professional who has stayed involved with the university and her beloved Alpha Delta Pi sorority.

Raised in Hendersonville near Nashville, Renee attended Hendersonville High School and applied for Governor's Schools in the humanities and the sciences before her junior year in 1985. Acceptance to UT Martin's first-ever Governor's School for the Humanities brought her to campus, "and that's when I first fell in love" with the university, she recalled. She lived in what was then called G-H Hall, studied the Greek language and Latin and Greek mythology, and worked with longtime Honors Programs director Bill Zachary.

The next year, Renee was accepted to attend the Governor's School for the Sciences at UT Knoxville, one of the last times that a student was allowed to attend two Governor's Schools. Her UT Knoxville experience didn't change her leanings toward the Martin campus. Her Nashville roots made her final college choice between Vanderbilt University and UT Martin. She and her dad compared the cost to attend Vanderbilt with her scholarship offers there versus Leaders-in-Residence and Honors Seminar scholarships to attend UT Martin, a university that she already liked. She chose UT Martin and never looked back.

A first-generation college student, Renee was drawn to study the sciences. "I enjoyed the sciences in high school and then really got into it here (at UT Martin)," she said. "Didn't matter which science class it was. I even took ichthyology (the study of fish) with all of the wildlife biology class majors. And they all kept wondering, 'Why are you taking this class? This is one of the toughest classes for us.' But I loved it."

Dr. Bill Zachry asked her to join University Scholars her sophomore year after she took his Honors Psychology class as part of the Honors Seminar Program during her freshman year. The program exposed her to more science as she

worked on her scholars project with Dr. Jimmy Trentham, longtime biology professor and academic administrator. "And he taught me a lot about science that I wasn't getting from the classroom . . .," she remembered. Trentham, whom she had not seen in many years and first taught her in freshman biology, joined her at homecoming when she received her award.

Trentham remembered Renee as "just the kind of person you notice" and "one of the brightest people I've ever known." He added, "She understood (complex academic material). She could learn anything, but she understood it, and she was just so enthusiastic about subject matter."

Outside the classroom, Greek life provided an unexpected and lasting impact on Renee's life. She didn't plan on joining a sorority, and she requested a random assignment for a roommate. However, her roommate signed up for sorority rush, and Renee joined her as a way to meet people. Thus began a life-changing association with her sorority when she was initiated into Alpha Delta Pi.

Sorority members run for offices in the spring, and she was elected scholarship chairman. "And it's funny, because as a freshman, if you're trying to tell older students that they haven't made their grades, and they don't get to go do the fun things, that's not very fun," she said of holding the position. "It's a little tough, but it actually gives you some thicker skin, and it makes a leader out of you."

She later served simultaneously as chapter treasurer and executive vice president after the treasurer resigned. Because she didn't go home on weekends, her sorority experience and sorority sisters created "a home away from home" at Martin. Her sorority accomplishments earned her both Greek Woman of the Year and the Dorothy Shaw Leadership Award, ADPi recognition given to graduating seniors.

Renee came to UT Martin with the goal to attend medical school. "Well then organic chemistry happened, and that changed my plan," she said. "So, you know, having been a straight-A student, it feels a little bad when you get your first C, and that's what happened." Medical school would have still been possible, she said, but a C in a key course would make acceptance more difficult. Her love of science remained strong, "So, from there when I graduated (from UT Martin), I went through a little bit of a crisis not

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knowing what I was going to do right away, which I bet happens now a lot with students.”

Her situation was especially difficult for someone who had planned each step in her life, “And so I actually took a year off and served as a nanny for a year for a family with twin preemie babies.”

This lasted until Renee contracted a case of chicken pox that kept her from keeping the babies for a week. The mom stayed with the babies during Renee’s illness, realized what she was missing by not being at home, and she was released from the job after 18 months, requiring her to refocus on what she wanted to do.

She was eventually hired in a lab assistant’s position at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, which rekindled her passion for science. She assisted a researcher in the neuroscience laboratory “who was studying the brain waves and trying to understand neurotransmitters, and it really made me think back that I needed to get back into the science.”

Renee began to explore graduate school options, and she learned that Vanderbilt was starting an interdisciplinary graduate program that led to a Ph.D. The program involved taking core classes with a set of classmates. “You took classes together, and then you did rotations through different departments that made up this interdisciplinary program,” she said. “And in that, I ended up finding my path to taking a degree in pathology.”

In the pathology lab, she studied breast cancer under noted researcher Fritz Parl. “And I just loved what I was doing in that laboratory, loved that I felt like I was going to make a difference for women who had breast cancer,” she said. “And I think I ‘found my calling’ as they say to study the science and the biology of cancer.”

Her doctoral thesis included a lot of statistics, and roughly halfway through the program, Vanderbilt began a master’s of public health program. Her thesis committee recommended that she learn more about statistics, a subject important to her doctoral research. “So they actually offered to pay for me to take the classes that were required for my master’s of public health...,” she said, resulting in her earning two degrees in six years.

Transitioning from a come-and-go nanny position to graduate school at Vanderbilt seems an unusual journey, but Renee isn’t surprised at how life unfolded. “I’m a big

believer in everything happens for a reason, so I think I made that C in organic chemistry for a reason,” she said. “I think I ended up being a nanny for a reason, ... because I think that led me to where I am now.” She added, “For some reason, I’ve been in the right place at the right time, and that’s what it feels like.”

Her path continued to unfold when a new department opened at Vanderbilt at the time she received her degrees. The department focused on genetic susceptibility related to multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer’s and other diseases with familial genetics issues. Although cancer study wasn’t part of the research, the work was closely related to what she studied in graduate school. She went to work in the department in a position that lasted about two years. During this time, she was scheduled to attend a genetics conference in Philadelphia, and friends advised her that she needed to be careful traveling around the area, so they connected her with a friend named Nick. A romance ensued, and they dated long-distance for more than six months.

Many pharmaceutical companies are located in the Northeast, and the couple decided that she would apply for a pharmaceutical position with AstraZeneca. The hiring manager told her that Renee wouldn’t get to do much laboratory work, which was fine with her as her goal was to apply her knowledge in statistics and science in the industry. She had never before worked in clinical trials.

Renee got an interview, and she was told that she “wasn’t quite the right fit” for who they wanted for this position. However, the interview went well, and when it ended, she met with the department head, and she happened to mention ADPi. “And his daughter had been in a sorority, and he said, ‘You know what? I know a lot about these sororities, and I know now, you can do anything you want. If you have done those things for the sorority, I’m convinced that you’ll be able to do this job.’” She believes that her connection with ADPi helped to convince this manager that she would be successful in the company. She joined the company in 2001, and Nick became her husband within months of her taking the new position.

She started at AstraZeneca as an entry-level statistician in the oncology department and was promoted 18 months later. “Since 2001, I have been promoted up through the company in various positions and now have been

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a manager, a department head, and now I'm a global director for the company." Her department includes almost 300 people, including statisticians, programmers and bioinformaticians.

Because she works globally, workdays often start very early with international teleconferences, and she's a frequent traveler to countries like India, Sweden and the United Kingdom. "My passport's pretty thick, but I'm excited, because I love traveling. I love seeing new parts of the world," she said. Among her unusual travel experiences was eating a scorpion sold by a food vendor in China. Her Southern heritage came in handy as she remembered that the fried creature "just tasted like a pork rind."

As remarkable as her career path seems, Renee's loyalty to ADPi is even more notable. "For me, my love of ADPi started here (at UT Martin), and even after I graduated, I came back to Martin every summer for recruitment for 25 years. I didn't miss a year for 25 years," she said. She was in charge of the sorority's 45th anniversary celebration and was followed in 2012 by the 50th anniversary of the sorority at UT Martin. These events connected and re-connected her with ADPi alums and actives. "And so, what I'm proud to say about Martin and ADPi is that from the time I was in college until probably just about three years ago, I know just about every member," she added.

As an ADPi alum, she served from 2003-05 as the sorority's international vice president of finance, similar to the treasurer of the board. She's now international vice president of alumnae membership, "sort of a connector for alumnae." The work is time consuming, but it's a voluntary labor of love. "I think a lot of the collegiate women think that we live in Atlanta, Georgia, where our sorority's based," she said, adding, "They are surprised when they learn we do have other jobs and lives outside of Alpha Delta Pi."

Longtime friend **Karen Wright ('71, '75)** first met Renee when she pledged the sorority as a freshman. By that time, Karen was an ADPi advisor and watched as Renee grew as a chapter leader. She still remembers Renee's holding the executive vice president and treasurer positions simultaneously, leaving behind "zero accounts receivable" at the end of her dual terms, an accounting feat that nobody thought possible given

the number of people who owed money – and she did so without making enemies.

More importantly, Karen credits Renee with helping active members see beyond the UT Martin chapter. "I think they (current members) realize that they are part of the national ADPi group, and I think she helps do that for the chapter," Karen said, adding, "But to this chapter, she's always been such a role model, and I think it enhances their idea that they should always give back."

Renee is still all-in for ADPi as she commits both time and money to the sorority. She established an endowed leadership scholarship, proceeds of which go annually to a deserving ADPi member. "So for me it's about giving back, because I think people did it before me," she said. "I received a scholarship to come here, and so of course I want to do that so that someone else like me, when I was younger, gets the same opportunities that I got."

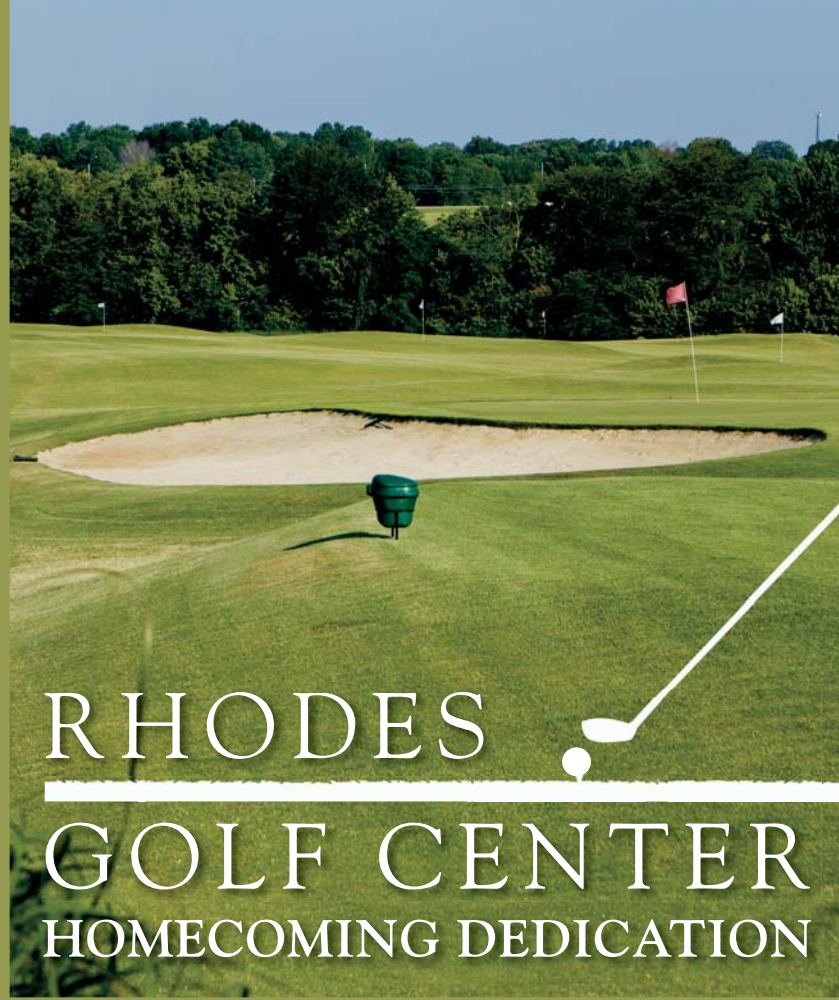
An additional opportunity for current and future UT Martin sorority members is the construction of lodges near University Courts. Alpha Delta Pi will join Alpha Omicron Pi, Chi Omega and Zeta Tau Alpha in constructing permanent homes for meetings and other activities. Sororities previously maintained individual lodges in Grove Apartments on the east side of campus. A groundbreaking ceremony Oct. 5 (see *The Big Picture*, pages 4-5) marked the beginning of the project, and Renee, who participated in the ceremony, is pleased to see the project happen. "Well, I work with a lot of chapters in ADPi, and I see the chapters who don't have a place on their campus to call home. ... So, I'm just really excited that they'll be finally back into a home."

Given her many accomplishments, Renee offers young people relatively simple advice for success. "There have been a few times in my life where I have said, 'I'll never do that. I'm never going to do that.' And if I look back, I've actually now done those things. And so I would actually caution them to not say, 'I'm never going to do that.'"

Her work with life-saving drugs has allowed Renee to hear patients' testimonies on how medicines produced by her company extended or saved lives. From her cutting edge work in pharmaceuticals, to seeing her sorority build a new lodge, to receiving an alumni award, Renee Bailey Iacona is reminded at every turn in life that everything really does happen for a reason.

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RHODES GOLF CENTER



RHODES GOLF CENTER HOMECOMING DEDICATION



This page (clockwise from top): Bill and Amy Rhodes, Pat and Grover Page; the golf center fairway; a team member shoots from one of the indoor hitting bays; (l to r): Chancellor Tom Rakes, coordinator of Skyhawk radio network Chris Brinkley, student Colton Jones and professor Wes Totten.

After months of anticipation, the Bill and Amy Rhodes Golf Center formally opened its doors on Oct. 4 with a dedication ceremony and reception that was attended by more than 150 friends of the UT Martin golf program. Among Rhodes family members attending was Bill's father, William C. Rhodes, Jr.

The ceremony allowed visitors to take in the new sights of the Rhodes Center with a tour of the property, as final construction of the state-of-the-art facility began in July 2013.

The building, located on Derryberry Lane, north of University Street and behind the Dunagan Alumni Center, is named in honor of Bill and Amy Rhodes. Bill is a 1987 UT Martin golf alum who is currently the chairman, president and chief executive officer of AutoZone, Inc. Amy, a 1991 UT Martin alum, has been instrumental throughout the entire process and has made numerous other investments in UT Martin, including contributions to benefit the communications department.

The finishing touches of the building included a spacious Grover Page Team Room. Skyhawk head golf coach Jerry Carpenter, who served as an assistant coach under Page before inheriting the head coaching duties in 2002, was an advocate that the team room be named after Page, who started UT Martin's intercollegiate golf program in 1967 and was later inducted into the school's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2002.

"When we were in the early stages of designing the building, I wanted to make sure that Coach Page's legacy was well-represented," Carpenter said. "Without that man, none of this would have been possible."

A native of Augusta, Ga., Page began his association with UT Martin as a member of head coach Bob Carroll's football staff and as an instructor in the physical education department. Page then coached the UT Martin golf program to become a NCAA Division-II powerhouse, leading the then-Pacers to five Tennessee Intercollegiate championships and a pair of national rankings.

However, the decision was made to discontinue the golf program in 1975. After a six-year layoff, Page was then asked to restart the program in 1981 and continued to guide the program through the NCAA Division-I process and Ohio Valley Conference membership in 1992-93. He continued his head coaching duties all the way up until 2001 when he turned the keys to the program over to Carpenter.

Page oversaw the progress of seven All-Americans, including Bill Rhodes, who was an honorable mention All-American and an academic All-American. A four-year letterman, Rhodes turned in an outstanding senior season in which he finished third in the 1987 Gulf South Conference championship and 32nd in the NCAA Division II national championship.

Bill Rhodes, who was inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame in 1993, credits Page for several of the core values he learned during his time at UT Martin.

"Coach Page taught me and my teammates many life lessons," said Rhodes, who was in attendance along with his wife, Amy, at the official ribbon-cutting of the Rhodes Golf Center during homecoming weekend. "He taught us commitment to success and the hard work that is required to get there. He instilled in us how to be competitive with each other while at the same time being a strong cohesive team. Probably most importantly, Coach Page turned boys into men."

The Rhodes Golf Center ranks among the finest collegiate golf facilities in the nation. The outdoor portion features a 6,000-square-foot putting and chipping green with a Tif-Eagle Bermuda grass surface, an 8,000-square-foot tee box; a 1,600-square-foot elevated tee box with Meyer and Palisades zoysia grass; an auxiliary tee box next to a 4,500 square foot putting green with Mini-Verde Bermuda grass; mini target greens with flags at 50-, 75-, 100-, 150-, 200- and 250-yards; two sand bunkers (spanning 1,200 square feet and 400 square feet) and a state-of-the-art programmable irrigation system.

The inside of the Rhodes Golf Center building features covered and climate-controlled hitting bays for indoor practice during cold weather, as well as complete computerized video and swing analysis camera, a 400-square-foot true putting green, a student lounge for golfers, office space, a kitchenette and restrooms.

The Skyhawk golfers are reaping the benefits of a year-round practice facility. UT Martin has posted four tournament championships in the span of one calendar year. The Skyhawks ranked fifth in the nation in fairways hit this past season and led the OVC in lowest scoring average (287.7) after the 2013 fall campaign.

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Individually, a Skyhawk golfer has been named Ohio Valley Conference Golfer of the Week six times since 2012 after only two weekly accolade mentions in the history of the program before that. Last season, Brendon Caballero became UT Martin's first All-OVC golfer since 1999, while Ben Reeves earned the program's first-ever OVC Freshman of the Year award.

"There is no doubt in my mind that our recent success has everything to do with the Rhodes Golf Center," Carpenter said. "Statistically, we have improved in just about every category over the past two years. Our guys are constantly coming and going, working hard to improve every aspect of their game."

The Skyhawk golfers aren't the only ones who are benefitting from the Rhodes Golf Center. Dr. Wes Totten from the UT Martin Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources heads a class in golf course management and can be seen perfecting his craft just as much as Carpenter and the Skyhawk golfers.

"Dr. Totten is one of the hardest-working employees on this campus," Carpenter said. "The dedication he has shown throughout this process is admirable. He and his students do a remarkable job of making sure our outdoor conditions are flawless."

Totten's course covers advanced art and science principles associated with turfgrass management such as modern golf courses, sports fields, sod production and commercial lawn care. It was Totten's vision that his students could have a hands-on approach with the Rhodes Golf Center.

"The entire practice area of the Rhodes Golf Center benefits golf course and landscape management students, because it provides experiential learning opportunities," Totten said. "Students learn best by doing, and that is the essence of experiential learning. The amenities provided at the Rhodes Golf Center, including modern mowing equipment, an automated irrigation system, USGA specification putting greens and room to expand ornamental beds, provide such experiential learning opportunities."

Rhodes says it is an honor for a building to be named after him and his wife at their alma mater that helps mold not only successful athletes but success stories in the educational forum as well.

"It is simply awesome to have this amazing academic/athletic joint venture that will help the agricultural students learn first-hand in a real-world environment," Rhodes said. "And with the golf team now having an incredible place to practice, evidently like none other in the OVC, I can't imagine how much better we would have been when I played if I had that facility!"

>>> RHODES GOLF CENTER RESULT OF ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS. by Joe Lofaro.

Dr. Wes Totten, an associate professor of plant science at UT Martin, has a passion for helping other people and coaching young people. Amazingly the Auburn graduate finds time to coach two soccer teams in the fall.

At the end of practice for his 4- and 5-year-old soccer team, Totten always asked his players what they learned. "It was a rough day for me, but this one player, named Russ, made my day when he said, 'Practice makes perfect.'"

The completion of the Bill and Amy Rhodes Golf Center is the perfect reminder of what Russ said that afternoon. "We are able to practice athletically, and we are able to practice academically," Totten said.

One of Totten's students, Colton Jones, participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Rhodes Golf Center, Oct. 4.

"Hands-on experience is priceless," Jones said. "That's what this building is for me, hands-on experience."

Jones said the facility and the hands-on experience should make the difference for him this spring when he looks for a job.

"I would put my education against anyone in the nation."

UT Martin head golf coach Jerry Carpenter is thankful for Totten and the relationship with academics and athletics.

"Without (Wes) Totten this building would not have come together," he said.

Totten gives the credit for the relationship between academics and athletics to former interim dean of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Dr. Jerry Gresham.

UT Martin chancellor Tom Rakes said Gresham was instrumental in establishing the relationship between academics and athletics.

"I've never been more proud of a project than this because of its academic relationship," said retiring athletics director Phil Dane. <<<

ALUMNI NEWS

(the real deal)>>>

Soaring through the Quad at speeds greater than one could imagine and seeing Quad City from high above. Yes, I was one of the “kids” that went down the zipline in Quad City during homecoming. As I stood atop the platform, harnessed up for my flight, I realized my companion on the ride down was none other than Captain Skyhawk. As we leapt from the platform, Captain cut through the air like a bird on a hunt, ending his journey on the ground with admirers taking snapshots and asking for pictures with him. I on the other hand, screamed all the way down and ended up with my feet dangling above my head. It was the thrill of the moment that leads me to write this issue’s article. The thrill of the moment...

What was that moment in your life as a student that maybe changed your focus on priorities or influenced your decision on a major? Do you ever wonder “what if” when you look through the alumni notes in the Campus Scene and read about classmates? As I stood there looking at Quad City, I was thrilled beyond comprehension. The number of alumni and friends visiting was simply outstanding. The participation from the student groups and Greeks, the

colleges and departments reminded me of my college days of always knowing somebody I would pass on the sidewalk around campus. Some have asked why we parked the parade and created Quad City. If you have not experienced homecoming or Quad City, you might ask the question, too. But, for those who have, the answer is simple...reconnecting.

My challenge for you this time is for you to visit campus during Homecoming 2014 activities and reconnect. You will be amazed by what you see and hear. To quote one individual this past year, “It is amazing a campus this size has something this wonderful!” For those who have not attended Quad City in the past, send an email to alumni@utm.edu and tell us you are attending. The first 25 alumni to respond will receive a gift at the alumni tent during Quad City.

Thanks to everyone for your continued support of UT Martin. See you October 25 for Homecoming 2014.

Charly Deal
(’92, ’96)

SEE MORE ONLINE

For the most up-to-date information, news and event schedules, check out the alumni website at www.utmforever.com.

Now you can stay connected, share news and photos and network all through utmforever.com.



(alumni notes)>>>

GET INVOLVED!

As an alum of UT Martin, your continued engagement and involvement are critical to our success. Your personal commitment of time, talent and treasure will ensure our future growth and success. Visit our website to discover meaningful ways you can impact your university:

- >Volunteer Opportunities
- >Reunions
- >Alumni Council
- >Development Council
- >Mentoring Program
- >Black Alumni Council
- >Young Alumni Council
- >CORPS
- >Speak Out for UT
- >RetireTenn
- >Alumni in the Classroom

UTMFOREVER.COM

In addition to visiting the website, also feel free to write, call or email the UT Martin Alumni Association for more information.

Office of Alumni Relations
Dunagan Alumni Center
1900 Alumni Way
Martin, TN 38238
(731) 881-7610
alumni@utm.edu

COWAN, IACONA, AYERS HONORED DURING HOMECOMING AT UT MARTIN >>>

Two former UT Martin students and two friends of the university received awards Saturday, Oct 5, as part of the university's homecoming activities.

This year's award recipients were:

- **Jim and Janet Ayers**, Chancellor's Award for University Service, given in recognition of outstanding service to UT Martin;
- **Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona**, Outstanding Alumni Award, given to an alum in recognition of outstanding achievement in his or her chosen profession;
- **Cade Cowan**, Outstanding Young Alumni Award, given in recognition of outstanding achievement in his chosen profession (the recipient must not be more than 40 years of age).

Cowan is a 1994, summa cum laude graduate of UT Martin.

A native of Gordonsville, he attended UT Martin as a University Scholar majoring in economics in the School of Business.

Additionally he served as Student Government Association president, vice president of Kappa Alpha Order, and perhaps most memorably donned the Pacer Pete mascot uniform for two years. At graduation he was awarded the Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Award.

"Home is where you look on the weather map, and Martin is a place I always look at on the map," Cowan said. "I am from Gordonsville, about 200 miles away, so, I used college to redefine myself."

Currently Cowan is a managing partner of the leadership development practice for Pivot Leadership, a consulting firm that equips senior leaders of Fortune 100 companies to more effectively execute their organizational strategies. During his career, he's worked in 31 countries on five continents with leaders from companies such as Microsoft, Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, Aetna and HP.

In addition to his UT Martin degree, Cowan holds a master's degree in organizational and social psychology from Columbia University in New York.

Iacona graduated from UT Martin in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in biology as a University Scholar. At UT Martin, she served as a resident assistant, biology laboratory instructor, held many leadership positions for Alpha Delta Pi and was awarded the Greek Woman of the Year Award by Panhellenic in her senior year.

"Alpha Delta Pi and UT Martin have made me the leader I am today," Iacona said. "My love for UT Martin started in high school."

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utm.edu

(congratulations)>>>



Two friends and two former UT Martin students were honored during homecoming festivities. Winners include (from left) Jim and Janet Ayers, the Chancellor's Award for University Service; Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona, Outstanding Alumni Award; and Cade Cowan, Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

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I was one of the first students to attend the Governor's School for the Humanities. UT Martin gave me many advantages, such as the Leaders-in-Residence, University Scholars, and this is where I learned to love science."

After UT Martin, Iacona pursued degrees at Vanderbilt University where she received her doctorate in pathology in 1998 and a master's degree in public health in 1999.

Iacona currently lives outside Philadelphia, where she lives with her husband, Nick Iacona. She has worked at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals since 2001 and now serves as the head of the alliance and operations office for the global biometrics function.

For Alpha Delta Pi, Iacona has continued to serve the organization since graduation from UT Martin and now serves on the Grand Council as the international vice president of alumnae membership overseeing the strategic development of the more than 220,000 alumnae members. For UT Martin, she has started a leadership endowment scholarship and is currently serving on the steering committee for building the Alpha Delta Pi Sorority lodge at UT Martin.

Because of their commitment and vision, Jim and Janet Ayers convinced the Tennessee Legislature to approve a \$200,000 annual

recurring state appropriation for establishing operation of the UT Martin Parsons Center. The Ayers also made a leadership gift of \$1 million to construct the UT Martin Parsons Center.

Ayers, a native of Parsons, established the Ayers Foundation Scholarship Program in 1999, which provides up to \$4,000 for four years to any Decatur County student in need, who meets the entrance requirements and attends any Tennessee college or university, community college or state-operated technical school. Ayers' wife, Janet, is foundation president.

"Jim and I are proponents of higher education," Janet Ayers said. "This is about breaking down barriers. It's not just about academics. It's about relationships, and relationships helped us break down barriers."

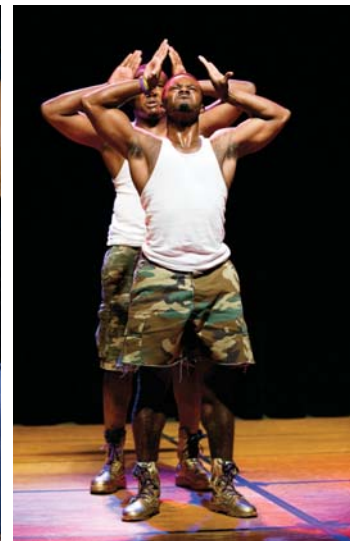
Jim Ayers, the owner and chairman of the board of FirstBank, served as the honorary co-chair of The Campaign for Tennessee (UT Martin) in 2010, was a member of the UT Foundation Board and the UT Martin Campaign Steering Committee, and is a former member of the UT Development Council. His gifts to The Campaign for Tennessee largely support the UT Martin Parsons Center and the UT Martin Ayers Scholars. <<<

(alumni notes)>>>

HOMECOMING 2013

From Rope Pull, Pyramid, Lip Sync and Step Show to Quad City and the football game with Jacksonville State at Hardy M. Graham Stadium, Homecoming 2013 was a week to remember! The theme was "A Roarin' Good Time," and students, alumni and friends celebrated the event with '20s flair.

Plan now to attend Homecoming 2014, Oct 25, at UT Martin.



This page (clockwise from top): Skyhawk Jeremy Butler (No. 3) runs the ball against Jacksonville State; fraternity groups compete in the annual Pyramid competition; a group competes on-stage in Stepshow; Alpha Gamma Rho, men's winner of the annual rope pull; fun at a booth on the quad; a crowd enjoys the festivities at Quad City; The House Band comprised of faculty members Dr. David Carithers, Dr. David Coffey, Dr. Chris Brown, Dr. Jim Fieser and UTM alum **Micah Barnes ('95)** play at Quad City; Tori Johnson is crowned homecoming queen; the Skyhawk Marching Band plays during the football half-time show.

A ROARIN' GOOD TIME!



(Clockwise from top): UT Martin Assistant Vice Chancellor for Alumni Relations and Annual Giving Charley Deal, follows Captain Skyhawk down a 250-foot zipline that ran through Quad City; homecoming queen Tori Johnson poses with her court; a sorority member celebrates victory in the Lip Sync competition; ZTA Sorority celebrates a victory during Rope Pull; LaQuante Boen (left) and James Cotton, both redshirt freshmen, participate in "Hawk Walk;" One of the fraternities competes in the annual Step Show; Dylan Davis (No. 8) makes a big catch during the homecoming game; Paulina Castro of Chi Omega has fun playing dress-up at Quad City; students poke fun at prohibition during Quad City.



(spotlight on alums)>>>

by Carmen Wagster

LATTUS FAMILY CALLED TO MISSION FIELD>>>

Many of us experience moments in our lives when we realize our purpose or calling. A few years ago, **Justin Lattus ('99)** was a firefighter EMT/IV and his wife, Jessica, was a practicing speech pathologist in Union City who also homeschooled their two children, Savannah and McCoy.

While reading his Bible during some downtime, Justin's heart was stirred as thoughts of impoverished children in Africa overwhelmed his mind. The next day, Justin discussed his experience with Jessica and as he mentioned his desire to reach out to help the children in Africa, Jessica's eyes filled with tears. She told him that as she was driving home from work two weeks earlier, she prayed for God's direction, and one word came into her mind, "Africa."

After Jessica's revelation, she and Justin fell silent in awe of God's calling for the future of their family. It was not long, the family began planning their future as missionaries in Liberia.

Justin said 43 percent of the population in Liberia are people under the age of 14. A young population, voodoo and cannibalism combined with the epidemic of HIV in the West Africa city are just some of the dangers Justin and his family face. "Our family has undergone some radical growth, and a lot of people wonder what is going on," Justin said. "It is God."

The family will live near the only other missionary couple in Liberia and the children, Savannah and McCoy, will continued to be homeschooled.

"Our passion is to help meet both tangible and spiritual needs of the people of Liberia. We want to provide water, food, clothing, shelter, compassion and medical care. We have a desire to dig wells, construct tabernacles, plant churches, preach and teach God's Word," Justin said.

Justin graduated from UT Martin in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture. He hopes to put his knowledge to work in helping with agricultural projects in Liberia. Jessica earned her degree in speech pathology from Murray State and will use her work experience to reach the children of Liberia.

Currently the Lattus family is traveling around the United States as Assemblies of God World Missionaries speaking at various churches and events.

"We are currently 29 percent funded, and we have speaking engagements booked through our departure date of summer of



2014. God continues to bless us beyond our wildest imagination, and we are so appreciative of the people that lift us up and allow us to walk in this amazing calling," Justin said.

The family will live for four years in Liberia, return to the United States for a year of fundraising, and then, return to serve another four years.

Though there are dangers to their mission and they will be far from their family, the Lattus family is looking forward to seeing how God will use them in Liberia. They titled their blog "But God Can" to reinforce that God is leading them with His purpose to reach out to a nation in need.

"We are grateful to be members of a church (Union City First Assembly of God) that places such a premium on missions. The investments that they are making around the world are impacting souls for all eternity."

To follow the story of the Lattus Family, please visit their website at www.lattusfamily.com. <<<

by Carmen Wagster

GEOCHEMIST GIVES BACK TO UTM>>> Dr. Amy (Amelia) Robinson ('97, UTK '02) grew up in Martin with a strong desire to learn. In high school, she worked on a science fair project with Dr. Michael Mullen, a professor from the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dr. Mullen recruited her for the, then new, environmental management major. Robinson earned her Bachelor of Science in geology and Bachelor of Science in natural resources management from UT Martin. She went on to earn a master's in geology at UT Knoxville, a doctorate in geology from the University of California-Davis and now works as a research geologist and petroleum geochemist with ExxonMobil.

As Robinson progressed professionally, she has continued to find ways to educate others about the many facets of geology and natural resources. She has had multiple opportunities to educate students in field and laboratory settings. While at UTM, she learned the importance of hands-on learning experiences during an environmental education internship at Ridley 4-H Center in Columbia. She has created multiple courses that get students actively engaged in science through a water sampling and data collection program, starting with college freshmen who may not have strong science backgrounds.

To emphasize the importance of experiential learning in higher education, Robinson created an endowment program for dedicated and hardworking students who want to conduct research or complete field studies in geology or soil science-related areas beyond the classroom. This award endowment program is designed as an enrichment opportunity and is considered separately from the UTM financial aid package.

"This is an investment that I know will pay off," Robinson told a class of geology students. "I want you to take advantage of it. I want you to work hard. Send me a photo from an outcrop or field site and say, 'this experience was awesome!'" She continued, "I want to know that this is helping you all out." One award was specifically set up to benefit students right away. The second is an endowed fund that will continue to grow over time and provide funding for students in the future. "And fortunately for me, my company matches what I donate three to one. And so this money will grow fast," she said.

In order to receive the award, students must apply by submitting a research proposal. Robinson said, "When students are actively engaged in the whole process, from conceiving the



idea or finding the opportunity, seeking funding, to conducting the research, students have full ownership of the project. As students delve into their projects, Robinson looks forward to seeing the students' scientific curiosity come to life as they explore their topics of interest and observe their abilities in addressing problems."

Robinson continued, "All of these tools are what employers are looking for, and that is something that requires effort beyond what is provided in traditional classroom settings. Students need to seek opportunities to set themselves apart and enrich the educational experience, and increase their marketability after they leave UTM."

Robinson is excited about the opportunity of helping students expand their learning opportunities during their time at UT Martin, and she looks forward to seeing the outcomes of the recipients of her endowment. <<<

(spotlight on alums)>>>



by Bud Grimes

NATURE'S CREATURES INSPIRE UT MARTIN GRADUATE AND PARK RANGER>>>

Snakes interest **Keith Paluso ('12)**. So do lizards, turtles and frogs. For that matter, he's interested in most any animal that he encounters in nature. His love for the outdoors and work with Tennessee State Parks during his college years prepared Paluso for his appointment in February 2013 as a ranger for the 1,247-acre Mousetail Landing State Park. The park is located on the east bank of the Tennessee River near Linden in Perry County.

Paluso, who lives with his wife, Bethany, near Parsons in Decatur County, earned a biology degree with a concentration in ecology and environmental biology in December 2012 from UT Martin. But, his fascination with animals and the outdoors began well before his college years. To say that he's had a lifelong interest in reptiles and amphibians is an understatement.

"Well, I've been interested in biology, especially in reptiles and amphibians, for as long as I can remember," he said in a December 2012 interview before his graduation. "I remember particularly in the third grade when my teacher, Miss Jenkins, asked me what I wanted to be when I grow up, and I said, 'a herpetologist.' And the look on her face was just unforgettable."

Swamps were common where he was raised in eastern Arkansas. He was active in Boy Scouts, spent most waking moments outdoors and read a lot about snakes. Homeschooled until the 3rd grade, his family moved to Atoka when he was in 6th grade, and he later graduated from Munford High School. His family camped almost year round, and his dedication to scouting led to an Eagle Scout Badge, the organization's highest award. He came to UT Martin after completing two years at Dyersburg State Community College and almost left Martin after the first semester. But strong relationships with biology faculty members convinced him to stay, and he considers Dr. Tom Blanchard, associate professor of biology, a mentor.

Paluso worked summers during his high school years as a nature director for a Boy Scout Camp. His first opportunity to work at a Tennessee State Park came when he served as a naturalist for a year at Natchez Trace State Park, located 35 miles east of Jackson. He then began a research project at Reelfoot Lake, needed a place to stay for the summer and inquired about becoming a naturalist at Reelfoot Lake State Park. He cold-called asking about the position and was hired almost immediately. "I'm surprised actually, because Reelfoot's the park that everybody wants to be at," he said, adding, "Reelfoot Lake has had a profound influence on my life."

As a naturalist, he provided environmental education for the public and gave lake tours, including tours for wildlife photographers from Project Noah and National Geographic Magazine. "I gave programs all across the state with the birds that we rehab at the park, but I've been known particularly for my snake programs," he said, estimating that he presented environmental education programs to more than 30,000 people during his three years at Reelfoot.

"Some of my responsibilities were not especially fun, like trail work in the swamp mid-summer, but the thing about the job is that you get out of it exactly what you put into it," he said. "If you place yourself in the state of constant curiosity and you're always learning something about the environment, you'll do a better job in educating the public, and you'll learn interesting things in the process."

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Paluso does have a special compassion for snakes. He has caught many snakes but has never been bitten by a venomous snake, which he doesn't attribute to skill but the "misunderstood temperament of a lot of these animals." For example, during his Reelfoot Lake work, he and others often caught cottonmouth snakes, sometimes a dozen in a day, measured and photographed them and then released the animals. In his view, cottonmouths have earned a reputation that doesn't fit them for being aggressive.

"You just have to be careful, and you have to know about that animal," he said. "Ninety percent of the documented venomous snakebites in the U.S. are on the face and on the hands, and that's not because the snakes are intentionally going for the face or the hands. It's because people are picking them up when they shouldn't be. That's how people get bit is picking them up."

His research project was made possible when he received the university's Smith, Henson, Sliger Undergraduate Research at Reelfoot Lake Grant, which secured his naturalist job at Reelfoot. Only two papers had been published about Reelfoot Lake's herpetofaunal life, both in the 1930s, and this was the project's focus. He and a Southeastern Louisiana University graduate student split a \$4,000 grant, which served as a stipend and helped to support him between his Natchez Trace State Park job and transition to Reelfoot Lake.

The research included surveying all of the reptiles and amphibians in the Reelfoot Lake complex, which included each of the national wildlife refuges in the area. He said the area includes approximately "30,000 acres of open water and swamp and bottomland hardwood forests," and the research involved obtaining various data from all the reptiles and amphibians in the area. The project was designed "so that the survey can run for about as long as there are people to work on it." He added, "Some of these long-term herpetofaunal surveys last as long as 75 years or more, and we hope that ours is going to last that long."

Outside his research, perhaps one of his most memorable Reelfoot Lake work experiences occurred during a boat tour. He was telling his audience about the black vultures that nest in duck blinds, which doesn't really involve building a nest at all; the birds just lay their eggs on the ground. The vultures are large and have a bad odor, but the eggs are distinctive and colorful.

He would often leave the boat during tours, pick up an egg from a duck blind and show it to the boat audience, something that didn't bother the mother bird. One very warm day, he had

about 15 people on the boat, and he pulled up to a familiar duck blind, entered to pick up a vulture egg, and a baby vulture had hatched. He picked up the baby vulture to show the group, but instead of amazed looks, the faces reflected a very different emotion. He turned to see the mother vulture sitting on the duck blind, staring at Paluso holding her baby.

"So before I could do anything, she reacted," he said. "When vultures get mad, they throw up on you, and vultures eat rotting flesh." Right on cue, the mother vulture threw up and hit him in the chest, causing him to get sick, and a chain reaction occurred among his audience members as others became ill. Chaos followed for several minutes, and when everything calmed down, he asked, "You guys want to go home?" Thus ended a three-hour tour in less than an hour and one of his most memorable educational efforts.

Paluso has never abandoned the dream he expressed in Miss Jenkins' class. He still wants to earn a doctorate and become a full-time herpetologist. In the meantime, his position as ranger at Mousetail Landing State Park is perfect. In this role, he can do what he loves most, "which is teaching people about the environment so that they can preserve our natural resources."

Given his lifetime of experiences in nature, Paluso says confidently, "There is always something going on." One day on the UT Martin campus he spotted a white-throated sparrow, a bird that travels from the northern U.S. and back during the year "when we've just been sitting around doing nothing."

"You have to be open to the world around you," Paluso said, "because there's always something spectacular right in front of your face." <<<

Kent Landers ('98), formerly group director, corporate media relations, the Coca-Cola Company, relocated to Tokyo on Dec. 1, 2013, for a 13-month assignment as vice president, public affairs and communications, for Coca-Cola Japan (CCJC). In this role, he will help implement the new PAC campaign model and news bureau; support capability building in CCJC PAC; serve as a liaison between CCJC and bottlers; and work to strengthen connections between CCJC PAC and the global Coca-Cola organization. Kent has been with Coca-Cola since 2011 in his previous role. Before joining the company, Kent worked for 12 years at Delta Air Lines, Inc., in a variety of senior communications roles. <<<

(spotlight on alums)>>>

by Joe Lofaro

ALUM COMES BACK TO RURAL NORTHWEST TENNESSEE FOR TRAINING, HUMANITARIAN MISSION>>> DR. RUSSELL KIRK ('90)

was just establishing his dental office in Lebanon when he received a letter informing him he was to report to active duty in the Navy.

"I had to get a storage unit and put everything in it and go," Kirk said.

The Obion County native and UT Martin graduate, who was in the United States Navy Reserve, closed his private practice after only three years to serve as the staff oral and maxillofacial surgeon at the United States Military Hospital Kuwait in conjunction with Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas.

In 2006, Kirk returned home and re-opened his practice. He settled down and married Dr. Ann-Marie Sutherland, and the couple has two daughters, Presley-Kate, 3, and Harper-Grace, 2.

Each year since he has been in the Navy Reserves, Kirk has had to complete a two-week training obligation. He's been to North Africa and, now, this past summer he was in Martin.

"I saw a video on Facebook, and I knew I had to get to Martin to see him," **Larry Wayne Armstrong ('89)** said.

Armstrong and Kirk grew up together in Troy, played high school football at Obion Central and were roommates at UT Martin.

"I always bring his two little girls corn on the cob," Armstrong said. "I loaded up a tote sack and brought it to Martin, but there were so many people I left it for him. I sure hope those two little girls got some fresh corn on the cob."

Armstrong, a wildlife biology major, graduated in December and Kirk graduated in the spring. "I got a job in Alabama and he came to work with me when he graduated. When Kirk went to dental school in Memphis at the UT Health Science Center (1994), Armstrong ended up in Memphis and roomed with Kirk.

The roommates have stayed in touch over the years, and Armstrong, now a regional wildlife manager in Kenton, tries to always call or see Kirk when he is in Nashville.

A lot of people will use the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) as their training. "When I heard this year's IRT was in Martin, I applied immediately," Kirk said.

Kirk was among 300 Navy, Air Force and Army personnel who were deployed to Martin this past summer. The primary mission of IRT is to conduct deployment, readiness and logistics training in an expeditionary, multi-service environment.



"This is training for us with benefits to others," Kirk said.

Kirk and other military personnel involved in dental exams provided more than \$300,000 in services, and his group saw more than 500 patients, performed more than 1,500 extractions and 200 restorations.

"Most of us checked in with our gear, and then a pod of dental equipment arrived a couple of days later," Kirk said.

"What happened then was remarkable. None of us knew one another or never worked with one another before. We set up our individual gear and then when the pod got here we set up the rest of our shop. We worked 12-hour clinics so we could see all the people."

Ruby Black, UT Martin professor of nursing and chairperson of the Board of Hope of Martin, applied for the IRT grant through Hope of Martin Community Development Corp.

While there were no eligibility requirements and all health screenings were free, the IRT program is the part of the United States Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

Kirk has a solo implant and oral surgery practice with offices in Lebanon and Mount Juliet, and he is the president and CEO of a medical waste company and a senior dental executive with the U.S. Navy for Expeditionary Medical Facility in Great Lakes, Ill. <<<

LONGTIME UNDERTAKER HAS HEARD IT ALL >>>

When Martin undertaker and businessman **David Murphy ('61)** was asked to be the grand marshal of this year's Tennessee Soybean Festival Parade he had to stop and think about it.

"And then he (**Brad Thompson, '96**, the city's community relations director) told me he was trying to get someone who had been in business several years.

"That's when I said I would do it," Murphy said. "I felt honored and humbled to be asked."

Murphy's Funeral and Florist has been in business since 1944 when David's father, Doug, purchased the present funeral home on Central Street. Murphy's Florist opened in 1958. St. Charles Florist and Gifts was added to the operation in the early 1970s.

The home was a landmark when it was built in 1890 and remains today some 83 years later. The home, originally of Victorian style in both architecture and furnish, was built by George E. Bowden and his wife, Claire Clemons Bowden, in 1890. The architect was John W. Campbell of Martin.

When the house was built, Martin had neither paved streets nor walks, neither electric lights, no telephone, no water distribution system and no homes with furnace heat. The Bowden house was heated by nine fireplaces, two being in the long south parlor and one in the kitchen.

In 1915, a number of exterior alterations were made changing the style of architecture from Victorian to Colonial. New rooms were added and the porch was enlarged. However, the same sturdy oak timbers of the original structure remained unchanged.

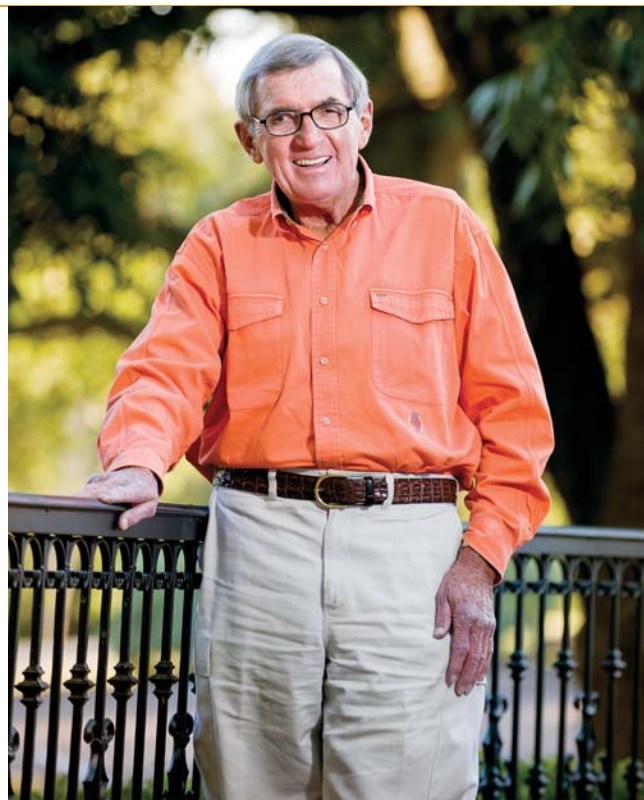
"I lived in this house the first 21 years of my life and the past 30 years," Murphy said.

The old joke is people are dying to see David Murphy. "I heard every undertaker joke and probably told more than you ever heard," Murphy said.

It may be a joke, but it is true. Murphy is one of two embalmers at the local funeral home and one of three licensed funeral directors. The other embalmer is Keith Pettit who is also a funeral director. Pettit has been working for Murphy since the fall of 1972.

Donna Wilson spent 12 years at Martin Junior High School on North McCombs before she became the manager of St. Charles Florist. After five years at the florist shop, she became the third funeral director at Murphy's.

"There is no way to predict this business," Murphy said. "The atmosphere in this line of work is different, and you have to remember this business has no respect for days off or holidays."



Being an undertaker or a funeral director presents its own challenges. "Each case is a challenge," Murphy said. "You have to deal with each one differently. You cannot keep emotions out of any one funeral. One of the minuses of being in a small town is you know everybody. We are emotionally affected by each case we handle."

But knowing everybody is also a good thing. "I am burying fourth generation family members," Murphy said. "You build relationships every time you work with a different family. If you don't, you are not very sensitive."

Murphy spent two years in the Army and was in Korea during peacetime serving with the Grave Registration Unit. The experience taught him more about emotions. "I don't speak Korean, and most of the Koreans I was around didn't speak English. When they cry, it is the same as when we cry, and when they laugh it is the same as when we laugh. You do not need to speak a certain language to understand crying and laughing."

One of the most important lessons Murphy learned from his father, Doug, was that the family's differences and disagreements were not part of this experience. "I have tried to encourage families to put their differences aside and allow the experience to

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(spotlight on alums)>>>

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happen with respect and dignity. I have learned to tell people to put their differences aside and work together to make this (funeral) happen. Differences are not my business."

Murphy admits he is an undertaker but he wears many hats. "I try to counsel people, I try to understand them and to offer options in their decision making. I realize people are dealing with emotions they have never dealt with in their lives. It is important to me that the families I deal with are comfortable with their final decisions."

When he is not working, Murphy likes to visit with his friends. "Sure, I have friends, but we are friends because we have a common ground. It has nothing to do with what I do or what they do.

"An undertaker's friends don't want to be where I am, and sometimes I don't want to be here. My friends and I have a common bond," he said.

The UT Martin alumnus recently served on a committee at his alma mater to help find a new athletics director. "I can tell you this about UT Martin ... It has put people in the workforce that improve the quality of life no matter where they are."

"I like to drink coffee a couple of times a week with the guys," Murphy said. "We used to humor ourselves and joke about sex, politics and religion. Now we joke about who is going to have the first colonoscopy."

For more than 15 years, Murphy was a jogger. "My friends would tease me all the time about how I was hurting business, because I was promoting good health."

Murphy's knees are wore out, and he had heart bypass surgery almost 20 years ago. He also had a hernia not long ago that's forced him to turn to others for help.

Oftentimes the undertaker speaks about death and dying. He often gets a common question, "What do you say when you go to the funeral home?"

"I always tell people you do not have to say anything. If you do say something, keep it short and simple because your presence at the funeral home makes your statement.

"One reminder, I have tried to carry on for more than 50 years is that I was fortunate enough to inherit this business," he said. "I am a third generation owner – grandfather, father and now me.

"Hopefully I have done this in a way to maintain the tradition in the business I inherited. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the staff who has helped me accomplish this tradition." <<<



Teela Jackson ('00) was named to the Atlanta Business Chronicle's "Top 40 Under 40" from among 550 nominees. Teela is vice president, talent delivery, for Talent Connections. She previously worked as a corporate recruiting consultant for CIGNA Healthcare, Georgia-Pacific and Turner Broadcasting. She earned a business administration degree from UT Martin and an MBA from Mercer University in Atlanta. (Courtesy of Talent Connections website). <<<

David Forrest ('76), led the 8-man football team at The Webb School in Bell Buckle to the Middle Tennessee Athletic Conference 2013 championship on Nov. 2. The Webb Feet, 11-0, in their third year of 8-man football, also placed second in the National Association of Christian Athletes Tournament in Dayton, Tenn. Forrest, of Murfreesboro, is a 1968 graduate of Fulton Ky. High School. He received a Bachelor of Science at UT Martin and a Master of Science at Austin Peay State University. He retired in 2010 after 33 years of teaching and coaching in public school systems in Tennessee and Kentucky and joined Webb in 2011 to start the football program. An independent college preparatory day/boarding school for grades 6-12, The Webb School was founded in 1870 and is the oldest continuously operating school of its kind in the South. <<<

(we want to know)>>>**1941**

Doris Brinker Tanner is a retired associate professor of history from the University of Tennessee at Martin. She taught at UT Martin for nearly 20 years. She is married

to **William Walker Tanner ('41)**, who attended UT Martin from 1937-1941, and received a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture. William is a retired farmer. The couple, which lives in Union City, had two children: **Debbie Bowlin ('73)**, a UT Martin graduate, and Tommy Tanner, who is deceased. Doris now writes in her time off. She has finished a book trilogy: *Up in the Air*, *Down to Earth* and *Up and Down*, children's picture books about flying. She was inspired to write these books by her time as an Air Force service pilot. She also enjoys gardening.

1964

Norman O. Gher ('64), graduated with a degree in physical education. He is married to Leona M. Gher, and they have one son, Christopher. He is retired and resides in Olney III. Email: normgher@gmail.com

1957

Jerry Kendall Riddick ('57) graduated with an associate education degree in health and physical education. He is now retired and lives in Dyersburg. He has one son: Ken. Jerry enjoys hunting, fishing and playing guitar.

1983

John R. Huffstutter ('83) is a sales coordinator for West Fraser, Inc. in Germantown. He is married to Dwana S.

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Please fill out the information below and mail it to us, or go to utmforever.com and let us know what you have been up to or update your address if it has changed.

Full Name (include maiden name, if applicable): _____
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 Occupation: _____ Business Name or Employer: _____
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 Would you like your Email address published in Campus Scene? Yes No

Full Name of Spouse: _____
 Did your spouse attend UT Martin? Yes No
 Years Attended: _____ through _____ School/College of: _____
 Degree(s): _____ Major: _____
 Occupation: _____ Business Name of Employer: _____
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 Spouse's Email Address: _____

Names and Ages of Children: _____

Additional News (honors, promotions, etc.): _____

List your current hobbies: _____

Would you consider taking an active leadership role in UT Martin alumni activities? Yes No

Would you like this information published in Campus Scene? Yes No

If you know anyone who may be interested in UT Martin and is a high school junior or senior, please give us his or her name and address.

Enclose a recent color headshot photo, if possible. No low-resolution digital photos, please! Photographs cannot be returned to you. Every effort will be made to use all color headshots submitted. However, space considerations and/or photo quality may prevent us from using submitted photos in some instances. Email photos to alumni@utm.edu.

Fill out, clip and return this form to:
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 Dunagan Alumni Center
 1900 Alumni Way
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alumni@utm.edu

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(class notes)>>>

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Huffstutter. She is the district pharmacy coordinator of Kroger. They have one son, Sam, who is a senior at Mississippi State University.

1988

Edith G. (Beard) Yates ('88) works as a children's welfare benefits counselor for the Department of Children's Services in Union City. Email: yates456@frontiernet.net

1994

Andy Lewter ('94) is the dean of students at Georgia College in Milledgeville, Ga. Email: dr.lewter@gmail.com

1995



Richard Scott Mears ('95) is a Spanish teacher for Robertson Co. Schools in Greenbrier. He is married to Rebeca Pinedo Mears, and the

couple lives in Hendersonville. Richard recently graduated from Tennessee State University with a doctorate of education degree (Ed.D.) in curriculum and instruction. He enjoys traveling internationally. Email: bullfighter93@att.net



Crystal G. Reece ('95) is an appointed missionary to the Kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific Islands. She works with the United Pentecostal Church

International in Hazelwood, Mo. She recently published her autobiography of the journey through missions services. The

book is titled *Island Splashes*, published by Westbow Press. Email: ruth1.16_17@yahoo.com

1998

Janna Beth Fesmire Shaull ('98) is the West Tennessee Family Health and Wellness director for the Tennessee Department of Health in Jackson. She is married to Bart Shaull, and they have two children: Carter and Cooper. She enjoys playing golf, camping and water skiing. Email: 3shaulls@chartet.net

1999

Cassidy Dawn Kirk ('99) is married to Jason Wade Kirk, a state trooper for the Tennessee Highway Patrol. The couple lives in Bethel Springs and they have two children: Lily and Anna. Currently, Cassidy is a homemaker. Email: mighty_maverick@msn.com

2006



Dr. Farrah R. Winstead Vernon ('06) works as a family practice physician and doctor of osteopathy at the Martin Medical Center in Martin. She is married to Michael W.

Vernon, and they live in Dresden. Email: farrah_rae@hotmail.com. <<<

(in memory)>>>

James Buckley Baylor Jr., of Dothan, Ala., passed away Sept. 12, 2013.

Maria Izabel Malone, of Franklin, passed away Aug. 11, 2013 (UT Martin faculty).

Michael Robert (Mike) Meschede, of Friendsville, passed away Aug. 29, 2013. (see expanded tribute below)

Ella Clift Poplin, of Virginia Beach, Va., passed away Aug 30, 2013.

Donald Ray Roberts (UTJC, '50), of Gainesville, Fla., passed away May 27 2013.

Thomas James Ruess, of Columbia, Mo., passed away July 20, 2013 (UT Martin faculty).

Anne Marguerite Shafer (UTJC), of Memphis, passed away Oct. 2, 2013.

Robert Roy (Bob) Stewart, of Honolulu, passed away July 28, 2013 (UT Martin faculty).

Mike Meschede ('88), UT Martin's all-time leading scorer in men's basketball, passed away Aug. 29, 2013, after a hard-fought battle with renal cancer. He was 47.

He played from 1984-88, concluding his stellar career with 1,729 points, the most in the history of UT Martin men's basketball.

Meschede holds several career top-10 and program records. He is a two-time All-Gulf South Conference first teamer ('86-'87, '87-'88) and was GSC Player of the Year ('87-'88). He was inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame in 1995.

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE MARTIN

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<<<(one last thought)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT>>> Tony Hudson, December Communications graduate
Halls, Tenn.



I want to be a
public relations specialist.



Tony Hudson is a December 2013 Communications graduate who worked as an intern for the Office of Alumni Relations. Hudson may be best known for his “thank you” videos that are sent to those who support the university, a project that is sure to benefit him as he pursues his aspirations to work in public relations.

“I think it’s better than a phone call because people actually get a visual of where their money is going. I really believe it’s a great tool to show the donors that we care. It would make me realize that they took the time to find me and reach out to me.”

UT Alumni Association – Martin Office
Dunagan Alumni Center
1900 Alumni Way
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Alyssa Counce, Caruthersville, Mo.
Plant and Soil Science major

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