

The University of Tennessee at Martin Winter/Spring 2019

CAMPUS SCENE



PAGE 20

GOING GLOBAL

A new partnership with **ESPN+**
opens Skyhawk athletics to the world

CHANCELLOR'S CORNER

Being present.

We talk quite a bit about our students being present at UT Martin. We want our students present for class. We want to see them present and participating in campus activities, student organizations and co-curricular activities.

This gives them the best opportunity to be engaged and connected with their campus community.

Results from a two-year research project conducted by Gallup Inc. offer important insights for how best to prepare our students for college success.

The results were amazing!

Eighty-eight percent of our students either agree or strongly agree that UT Martin is committed to academic excellence. That same percentage (88%) state they feel academically challenged by their major coursework. The overwhelming majority of our students stated they have had a faculty-initiated conversation about their careers. All of these percentages are above national averages.

So being present isn't just for students on this campus. The faculty and staff take being present pretty seriously, too.

It's the relationships that are built around an average class size of 23.

It's the intimate learning environment that occurs around a 15:1 student/faculty ratio.

It's faculty serving as academic advisers and mentors.

Being present is an intentional activity at UT Martin, and we've been doing it since 1900.

Do you have a special memory about a faculty member or campus mentor that made a difference in your life? Contact me at kcarver@utm.edu and let me know your story.



Dr. Keith S. Carver Jr.







FACULTY SPOTLIGHT ► Dr. Phillip and Dr. Abigail Shelton

Department of Chemistry and Physics

"We're very fortunate. The odds of two people both finding jobs at the same university are slim, and so we are very lucky that this worked out for us," said Dr. Phillip Shelton, whose wife, Dr. Abigail Shelton, works two offices down from him. Both the Sheltons are associate professors of chemistry, but Phillip focuses on organic chemistry while Abigail specializes in inorganic chemistry.

Despite their office locations, they don't actually see each other very much during the work day. With four children in school and childcare, the Department of Chemistry and Physics schedules the pair's classes opposite each other so that one is always available to handle family emergencies. They also don't spend much time discussing their classes or their students away from work.

"We don't actually spend too many of our dinner conversations talking about chemistry or our chemistry students," said Abigail. "We probably have more Star Wars conversations."

While Phillip began college with a chemistry major, Abigail tried several other fields before falling in love with chemistry. Phillip was hesitant to teach as a graduate student, but Abigail jumped into the classroom as an undergraduate laboratory instructor. While they took different paths to reach their current professions, both have the same goal for their students:

"I hope that at the end of my courses (my students) see the growth of when they started off and didn't know what a beaker was or what a test tube was, and now they know how to use it and how to do complex reactions with it. But I also hope that they realize they're a different person than they were when that started that course, and part of that is because they think differently now about how systems work," said Abigail.

Phillip agrees, adding, "We hope that we teach them the chemistry, but really it's the problem-solving and the thinking that we're trying to instill in them. We hope that's what sticks with them."

The University of Tennessee at Martin

CAMPUS SCENE

Dr. Keith S. Carver Jr., Chancellor
The University of Tennessee at Martin

Published semiannually by
The University of Tennessee at Martin
Martin, Tenn. 38238

Randy Boyd, Interim President
The University of Tennessee System

Andy Wilson
Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Jackie Johnson
Interim Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

Nathan Morgan
Campus Scene Editor, Assistant Director of University
Relations and Coordinator of Photographic Services

Editorial Contributions
Erin Chesnut ('12); Jackie Johnson ('08, '10);
Bud Grimes ('78); Nathan Morgan; Ryne Rickman

Design and Layout
David Deaton ('10)

Photo Contributions
Bud Grimes; Steve Mantilla;
Nathan Morgan; Vernon Matlock;
Sarah Knapp

Copy Editors
Erin Chesnut; Norma Coalter; Bud Grimes

Original story ideas, photo ideas and manuscripts may be used at the editor's discretion. Photos and submitted works cannot be returned. Some interviews are conducted via email and other electronic means. Unless otherwise noted, all towns and cities mentioned are located in Tennessee. Campus Scene is not a news magazine.

Comments and feedback may be directed to
Nathan Morgan, Campus Scene Editor,
nmorga15@utm.edu, 304 Administration Building,
Martin, TN 38238, 731-881-7617.

41,400 copies printed by Geographics,
Atlanta, Ga.



MARTIN

CONTENTS

FEATURES

20 GOING GLOBAL

A new partnership with ESPN+ opens Skyhawk athletics to the world

By RYNE RICKMAN

28 FROM THE ARCHIVES

A look at the Communications Building

By NATHAN MORGAN

30 TROMBONES AND FLOWERPOTS

Bringing music to life

By ERIN CHESNUT

34 LIFE AFTER BASEBALL

Education prepared Donnie Ross for a larger game

By BUD GRIMES

36 A COMMON THREAD

FCS alumna creates signature designs

By ERIN CHESNUT

DEPARTMENTS

SCENE & HEARD

6 NOTEWORTHY

News and views from on- and off-campus

14 ATHLETICS

26 ADVANCEMENT

ALUMNI NEWS

42 DIRECTOR'S NOTE

43 SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMS

45 IN MEMORY

46 CLASS NOTES

The who, what, when and where



MARTIN

utm.edu

731-881-7020

UTMartin

DiscoverUTM

utm.edu/photos

utm.edu/campusscene

Volume XCVII

Winter/Spring 2019

20



28



30



34



36



the

big

picture

COMING HOME – Family, friends and community members gather March 2 at Discovery Park of America in Union City to pay tribute to **Lt. Richard C. "Tito" Lannom ('65)**, a United States Navy officer and UT Martin graduate, who was declared Missing in Action on March 1, 1968. Lannom was assigned to Attack Squadron Three Five USS Enterprise when his A-6A aircraft went missing during a night mission over North Vietnam. Lannom and the pilot were declared missing after a search-and-rescue mission failed to locate the plane. A Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) team excavated a crash site in late 2017. Lannom was identified on Sept. 25, 2018, through the use of DNA as well as evidence found at the site. His wife, now Charlotte Shaw, a retired educator living in Florida, chose to have his remains buried in Union City, "the hometown he loved." During the service, the museum unveiled an updated Vietnam War Memorial reflecting Lannom's change in status from Missing in Action to Killed in Action in the Military Garden – 51 years and one day from the time he was declared missing.



SCENE & HEARD

NOTEWORTHY 8
ATHLETICS 14
ADVANCEMENT 26



Remembering George H.W. Bush's visit to UT Martin — George H. W. Bush, the 41st president of the United States, passed away Nov. 30, 2018, at the age of 94. Before he was president, he served as the 43rd vice president under president Ronald Reagan from 1981-1989. Before that, he spoke at UT Martin on Nov. 16, 1978, at the first public convocation in what is now known as the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. As former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, he discussed "The International Situation Today" and mentioned plans to run for president during the 1980 election. A short article about the visit was later published in the fall 1978 issue of Campus Scene.



Options available for student veterans — UT Martin provides a variety of financial aid and academic assistance options for military service members transitioning into a college atmosphere, including counseling regarding federal benefits, academic counseling and connection to other campus resources. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission awarded UT Martin a 2018 Veteran Reconnect Grant to improve prior learning assessments for service members.

This assessment process examines a veteran's military training and grants equivalent college credit for skills obtained during service, potentially allowing student veterans to complete their degrees faster. As a result, all student veterans have the opportunity to submit military training credits for standardized review toward their current degree program. The university is also included on the 2019-2020 list of Military Friendly schools, as designated by VIQTOY, and was designated a Tennessee Veterans Education Transition Support Campus in 2017 by THEC. Financial assistance is also available for veterans through the Tennessee STRONG Act.

A change of command — Longtime UT System President Joe DiPietro announced Sept. 17, 2018, that he would step away from his duties as UT president effective Nov. 21 and officially retire Feb. 14, 2019. He made a final official visit to UT Martin on Nov. 14 and attended a campus reception in his honor, where the university community thanked him for almost eight years of service. During the reception, Dr. Todd Winters, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, and Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier, university provost, presented DiPietro with the honorary title of distinguished professor of animal science in the Department of Agriculture, Geosciences, and Natural Resources. This is the first such title to be presented by UT Martin and acknowledges DiPietro's career as a veterinarian before he accepted the position as UT System president. DiPietro and his wife, Deb, were also honored with the dedication of a campus light pole in honor of their service to UT Martin during his tenure as UT president.

The UT Board of Trustees named Randy Boyd, a Knoxville businessman and UT alum, interim system president during a called meeting Sept. 25, 2018. Boyd officially began his new role Nov. 22 with a visit to the UT Martin main campus. He

has since begun work on several primary initiatives for his time in office, which will extend to 24 months or until a new president is appointed following an external search.



noteworthy



UT Martin Advisory Board holds first meeting — The UT Martin Advisory Board held its inaugural meeting Jan. 9 on the main campus. The board, created by the UT FOCUS Act passed by the state legislature in 2018, is the first of its kind and will provide localized oversight for the UT Martin campus. Board members elected **Art Sparks ('76)**, of Union City, to a two-year term as board chairman, and Devin Majors, president of the UT Martin Student Government Association, to a six-month term as student representative. Future student representatives will serve one full year beginning July 1, 2019. Pictured prior to the April 24 meeting of the UT Martin Advisory Board are board members (seated, l-r) Lauren Carter, incoming student representative for the 2019-20 academic year; Julia Wells, of Bells; **Katie Ashley ('08)**; **Monice Hagler (UTM '75, UTK '78)**, of Memphis; (standing) Dr. Chris Caldwell, faculty representative; Hal Bynum, of Sharon; Sparks, chairman, of Union City; Majors, outgoing student representative for the 2018-19 academic year; and Chancellor Keith Carver.

Academic programs add new concentrations — Students will have several new academic options to prepare them for specialized careers beginning with the fall 2019 course catalog. Those studying in the Department of Computer Science can choose a new concentration in either data science or digital hardware and embedded systems to prepare themselves to work with “smart” devices. A concentration in mechatronics — a field combining aspects of both mechanical and electrical engineering — will soon be an option in the Department of Engineering, and students in both the English and political science majors can choose a new legal studies option to participate in a “3+3 program” with the UT College of Law. Graduate programs have also seen changes with a decrease in required hours for five different programs and the addition of concentrations in higher education leadership, special education and literacy for those pursuing master’s degrees in education.

First WestTeach class graduates from program — Twelve educators from across West Tennessee participated in the first-ever WestTeach class, sponsored by the WestStar Leadership Program. Selected participants completed program sessions on West Tennessee agriculture, the humanity of leadership, economic development partnerships and community-building.

New administrative appointments — Dr. Andy Lewter (near right, UTM '94, UTK '09) was named vice chancellor for student affairs effective Jan. 2, 2019. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from UT Martin, a master's degree in education from the University of South Carolina and a doctoral degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. **Dr. Charley Deal (far right, UTM '92, '96, UTC '17)** was named executive director of research, outreach and economic development effective Feb. 1. He holds both a bachelor's and a master's degree in business administration from UT Martin as well as a doctoral degree in learning and leadership from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



Core10 opens new Martin location to reach computer science graduates — Core 10, a fintech software development company based in Nashville, opened a new Martin branch Nov. 30, 2018, on Lindell St. in downtown Martin. Founded in 2016, Core10 works exclusively with corporations in the financial technology industry, including those in banking, lending, securities, insurance and startups. Jeff Martin and Lee Farabaugh, company co-founders, said Martin was an attractive location because of the quality of graduates from the UT Martin Department of Computer Science. The company immediately hired three university alumni to work in the new location with plans to hire more in future months. Pictured (l-r) are **Robert Rayburn ('18)**, of Trenton; **Stephen Stinson ('18)**, of Holladay; and **Tannor Franks ('18)**, of Adamsville, who are all based at Core10's new Martin location.



Paluso competes on 'The Voice' — Keith Paluso ('12), a graduate with a bachelor's degree in biology, competed on season 15 of NBC's "The Voice" and advanced to the voting rounds. He performed at UT Martin on Oct. 19 as a kickoff for the 2018 homecoming festivities.

noteworthy

UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer celebrates 20 years — The UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer celebrated 20 years of operation Sept. 27, 2018, with a luncheon and open house event. The center, opened in 1998, was the first of UT Martin's five centers across West Tennessee. Funded largely through local dollars, the construction of the UT Martin center has given back to the Selmer community by providing a more highly educated workforce for area industry.

"There are many people in the area, in Selmer in particular, who have (earned degrees through) UT Martin Selmer and who are now working in Selmer," said Selmer mayor John Smith. "We're honored to have (the center), and we're looking forward to the future. We're hoping to expand some of the programs and add different (degree programs) that (students) can get here."

Pictured outside the UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer following the anniversary luncheon are (l-r) John Smith, Selmer mayor; State Sen. Dolores Gresham (R-District 26); Jai Templeton, then-Tennessee commissioner of agriculture; Mike Smith, former McNairy County mayor; Jimmy Whittington, former Selmer mayor; Larry Smith, McNairy County mayor; Dr. Bob Smith, UT Martin chancellor emeritus; and Chancellor Keith Carver. Mike Smith, Jimmy Whittington and Dr. Bob Smith are part of the original group that helped establish the center in 1998.



Bynum, Latimer, Parsons receive awards —

Alex Bynum ('09), of Dresden; **Tonya Parson ('93)**, of Memphis; and **William Latimer III (UTK '60)**, of Union City; received University of Tennessee at Martin Alumni Awards during homecoming festivities Oct. 27, 2018. Bynum (far left) received the 2018 Outstanding Young Alumni Award, which honors a university alum under 40 years of age for outstanding achievement in his or her chosen profession. He holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture and has been the owner and principal broker of Wendell Alexander Realty in Dresden since 2016.

Parson (center, left) received the 2018 Outstanding Alumni Award, which honors a university alum for outstanding achievement in his or her chosen profession. She earned a bachelor's degree in biology from UT Martin before later completing a bachelor's degree in nursing at Baptist College of Health Sciences in 1999. She went on to obtain a master's degree in acute and critical care nursing from the UT Health Science Center.

Latimer (center, right) received the 2018 Chancellor's



Award for University Service, which honors an individual for exemplary service to the university. He is responsible for providing the match funds required by the Tennessee legislature to finance the construction of the new Latimer Engineering and Science Building, which is named in his honor. The \$6.5 million gift is the largest single gift since university records have been kept. The honorees are pictured with Chancellor Keith Carver (far right).

Empty Bowls helps feed the hungry — The 15th-annual Empty Bowls Soup Supper, held Nov. 17, 2018, in the Student Life Center, raised more than \$12,000 for WeCare Ministries in Martin. David McBeth, associate professor of art, and many of his current and former students donated more than 1,500 handcrafted ceramic bowls to the event, and community members contributed 34 crockpots of soup. McBeth was selected in March by the Tennessee Higher

Education Commission as one of 10 recipients of a 2019 Harold Love Outstanding Community Service Award for his work with Empty Bowls.



noteworthy



Dr. Kenyatta Lovett speaks during spring 2019 commencement — Dr. Kenyatta Lovett, executive director for Complete Tennessee, addressed a capacity crowd in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center during spring 2019 commencement exercises held May 4. Lovett used the symbol of a fence as he congratulated graduates for overcoming the challenges that stand in the way of completing a college education. “The fence represents the hurdles, the hardships, and the heroics that make up your success journey in this college experience,” he said. “Some actions were minor; others tested every fiber of your being. The fence symbolizes the barriers faced when you first make the choice to enroll in college and all that took place to bring you here to this point in your life.” Lovett also noted a significant upside to the challenges that individuals face when earning a college degree. “Whatever the story, however the journey played out for each of you, you have successfully crossed that fence that has alluded so many,” he said. “Were it not for the hurdles, hardships and heroics, you would never know what greatness was inside of you.”

UT Board of Trustees meets in Martin — UT Martin hosted the March 1 meeting of the UT Board of Trustees, during which the board began looking toward 2030. Chairman John Compton said the board needs to think strategically about what it will take to grow enrollment and continue to graduate those students as well as increase research. UT System Interim President Randy Boyd also discussed the Transparent UT initiative, which aims to provide easier access to information system-wide.



University reports increase in minority enrollment — UT Martin saw an increase in enrollment for underrepresented students during the fall 2018 semester, with African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan student populations all seeing increased numbers. The African-American student population was the largest since fall of 2015, with 875 students enrolled at the university, and other underrepresented populations were the largest in the past 10 years. The spring 2019 semester saw an overall enrollment increase of 355 undergraduate students for the spring 2019 semester. The total undergraduate enrollment stood at 6,165 students as compared to 5,810 undergraduate students for the spring 2018 semester, representing a 6.1 percent increase. Total headcount, including both undergraduate and graduate-level students, was up 316 students (5.1 percent) compared to last spring.



Broadcasting program receives \$25,000 award
— Country Radio Broadcasters Inc. selected the UT Martin

broadcasting program, housed within the Department of Communications, as one of two recipients of this year's \$25,000 scholarship award. Faculty members Dr. Richard Robinson and Rodney Freed, along with four students, accepted the award during the organization's Country Radio Seminar held Feb. 13 at the Omni Hotel in Nashville. This is the first time UT Martin has received this award, which will be used to help fund the education of a student pursuing the broadcasting sequence each year. Pictured accepting the scholarship check are (l-r) Robinson, professor of communications and WUTM faculty adviser; **Brian Affolter ('19)**, a senior from Spring Hill; Jessica Davis, a junior from Sharon; Emma Bruner, a junior from South Fulton; John Thornton, a junior from Atoka; and Freed, instructor of communications and UTM Television faculty adviser.

Greek Garden at Unity Circle set to open at homecoming — UT Martin will officially dedicate the new NPHC Greek Garden at Unity Circle during a ceremony planned for 11:30 a.m., Nov. 2, during homecoming festivities. This area is designed to honor the "Divine Nine" historically African American fraternities and sororities on campus and will feature tribute plaques giving information about the founding and purpose of each member organization. A groundbreaking ceremony was held April 24 to celebrate the start of the project, which is under construction by the UT Martin Physical Plant.







the **big** picture
athletics

HONORING A LEGEND – UT Martin hosted a 90th birthday party Jan. 11 in honor of Bettye Giles (foreground), professor emeritus of physical education and former director of women’s athletics, in the Champions Club at Hardy Graham Stadium. Giles was instrumental in the development of women’s intercollegiate athletics nationwide and served on the committee that founded the Tennessee College Women’s Sports Federation. Her work, along with that of other women’s athletic champions, ultimately resulted in the passing of Title IX legislation.

athletics

New facilities and upgrades — The 2019 calendar year brought many facility improvements for Skyhawk athletics, including a brand-new facility for the UT Martin beach volleyball program and upgrades to the baseball and football stadiums.

After months of construction, the new beach volleyball complex was completed Feb. 5. The facility is located near the tennis courts on Pat Head Summitt Drive and features three sand courts raised two feet above ground level. The complex made its debut in time for the first-ever home beach volleyball match March 13 against the University of Southern Mississippi. The complex includes 100 tons of sand and was built with assistance from Allen Searcy Builder Contractor in Union City.

Also in early February, a large scoreboard was installed in left center field at Skyhawk Park. The scoreboard, which rises approximately 25 feet above the wall, features interchangeable fields for team names and a synced radar gun velocity reading on each pitch. The scoreboard made its official debut March 15 when UT Martin hosted Ohio Valley Conference rival Belmont. Fair-Play by Trans-Lux, a company located in Des Moines, Iowa, manufactured the scoreboard while Rainey Electric Inc. from Little Rock, Arkansas, handled the installation.

Hardy Graham Stadium obtained new turf in late February, replacing the artificial grass installed in 2008. The new playing surface features alternating shades of green every five yards, the Skyhawk head logo at midfield, two navy blue endzones and a pair of orange sideline boxes. It was designed and installed by FieldTurf, a Tarkett Sports Company based in Calhoun, Georgia.



Follow us on
social media



Heather Butler wins league championship —



Legendary Skyhawk **Heather Butler ('14)** has once again reached the pinnacle of women's basketball success, by helping to guide the Valur Reykjavik squad to the 2019 Icelandic League Cup.

Butler, who was part of six combined Ohio Valley Conference championships during her UT Martin career from 2010-14, joined Valur

last November. Her presence was immediately felt, as she averaged a team-best 21.9 points per game on 52 percent shooting. She also averaged 4.9 rebounds, 4.4 assists and 1.9 steals per contest as Valur posted a 22-6 record.

Valur's season was capped off with the Icelandic Cup in mid-February. That win sealed a regular season

championship for Valur, who followed that with their third championship in team history after a thrilling playoff run that concluded in late April.

The stay in Iceland is the latest in Butler's professional career. She averaged more than 20 points per game for two seasons (2017-18) in Sweden while also spending time in Poland in 2014. Those stints came after she became the first-ever OVC player to play in the WNBA with the San Antonio Stars shortly after her successful Skyhawk career ended in 2014.

The Medina native will go down as one of the best players in OVC history. Butler's 2,865 points still rank as the most in league history after she scored double-figures in all 129 of her career collegiate games. At the time of her graduation, she was tied for the most three-pointers (392) in NCAA women's basketball history. The four-time All-OVC first team honoree helped lead UT Martin to its first four appearances in the NCAA Tournament.

Tennis alum Tom Wride among best in the world

— After starring for UT Martin from 1997-2001, **Tom Wride ('01)** is still finding success in the competitive tennis world and recently moved into the top-20 in the International Tennis Federation world rankings for males ages 40 and over.

Currently residing in his hometown of Birmingham, England, Wride won the British Nationals tournament in February and also captained England at the World Championships held in Miami, Florida, last October.

"Tom is one of the most gifted players that I have coached over the years," said Skyhawk head coach Dennis Taylor. "He is a lefty with a wicked crosscourt forehand. But more importantly, Tom is a great person. He was one of the most popular and well-liked students on campus by both students and faculty."

Taylor's first-ever left-handed player at UT Martin, Wride was an All-Ohio Valley Conference honoree as a freshman in 1998 and won all-conference accolades again as a senior in 2001. He registered 75 career victories while playing a majority of his matches in the No. 1 slot in both singles and doubles. A four-time OVC Commissioner's Honor Roll recipient, he was inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame in 2012.

After graduating from UT Martin, Wride earned his master's degree from the University of Memphis in 2005. He worked in the city of Memphis for 17 years, including 11 at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where he was the lead clinical research associate.



Wride is pictured with his wife, Erin, in 2012.

The 40-year-old now works at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, 23 years after he was ranked among the top 25 players in all of England as a high schooler. He names UT Martin as an influential part of his life both on and off the tennis court.

"UT Martin gave me the opportunity to develop as a young tennis player and student," Wride said. "The positive support of my teammates and the welcoming UT Martin community have been instrumental in my career and tennis achievements."

athletics



Kate Fagan discusses mental health with UT Martin student-athletes — Kate Fagan (right), former ESPN sports journalist and author of the book “What Made Maddy Run,” spoke Feb. 4 to student-athletes and community members in the UT Martin Skyhawk Fieldhouse. She discussed the story of Madison Holleran, an all-star athlete at the University of Pennsylvania, and the mental health issues that can stem from the transition to collegiate life and athletics. Fagan stayed after her public presentation for a closed question-and-answer session with UT Martin student-athletes. Dr. Lisa Piercey (left), former executive vice president at West Tennessee Healthcare and newly appointed commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Health, moderated the discussion. Fagan’s appearance was sponsored by the UT Martin Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.



Visit utmsports.com for *SKYHAWK SPORTS* schedules.



Cubs pitcher Alec Mills speaks at First Pitch Dinner

— The UT Martin baseball program held its annual First Pitch Dinner on Jan. 26 in the Boling University Center's Duncan Ballroom. This year's featured speaker was Chicago Cubs right-handed pitcher Alec Mills, who is the first Skyhawk baseball alum to play in the major leagues. Mills, a Clarksville native, began his UT Martin career as a walk-on before blossoming into the staff ace. He made his MLB debut with the Kansas City Royals in 2016 after being selected in the 22nd round of the 2012 MLB Draft, and he is now in his third full season with the Cubs organization.







GOING GLOBAL

A new partnership with **ESPN+**
opens Skyhawk athletics to the world

STORY BY: RYNE RICKMAN
PHOTOS BY: STEVE MANTILLA



Students, including Rance Morris (previous page), Alex Hansen (above, left) and James Bowden (above, center), work in the Gooch Hall production studio.

You've put in a hard day's work and you're settled into your favorite chair to watch your Skyhawks go for another victory. You pull up the game on ESPN+ and notice that it looks the same as the Southeastern Conference game you just watched last night.

That's the result of a new joint effort between the Ohio Valley Conference and ESPN, who reached a partnership in August 2018 that allows member institutions to broadcast their home contests exclusively on ESPN+.

UT Martin's transition from OVC Digital Network to ESPN+ has been seamless, thanks in large part to two people: Rodney Freed, instructor of communications, and Trudy Henderson, coordinator of external operations in the Office of Intercollegiate Athletics.

"The communications department has always had a good relationship with athletics because we look at that as an avenue for a lot of our students to get experience," said Freed, who is in his 22nd year at UT Martin. "Then in the spring of last year, we found out that the OVC was

going to go to ESPN+ and it kind of sped up the fact that we really needed new equipment."

The ESPN announcement led to a state-of-the-art equipment upgrade in Gooch Hall. A Skyhawk sporting event on ESPN+ is now being produced, directed and streamed to ESPN's headquarters in Bristol, Connecticut, live from room 214 in Gooch Hall on UT Martin's campus.

"Our setup now is not only the best in the OVC, but it rivals any production studio in college athletics," said Henderson, who has worked on campus for a total of 34 years. "We have accomplished several 'firsts' throughout the league, and other schools in the OVC have tried to pattern their productions using our techniques. We are very fortunate to have such a strong working relationship with our communications department – they really made all of this possible."

Freed and Henderson, who both have live directing experience, collaborated on the best way to produce live content when the OVC Digital Network launched in 2012. After months of research, they settled on a production trailer modified from its original purpose of



Members of the UT Martin men's basketball team celebrate with their teammate Preston Parks (0) after Parks sank a game-winning three-point buzzer-beating shot to defeat UT Chattanooga at the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. The game, broadcast on ESPN+, gained national attention for UT Martin basketball.

cable splicing. They ordered racks, installed equipment from flight cases and also built storage units for cameras. One of its biggest advantages was mobility, as the trailer could be moved from location to location within minutes.

When news of a potential ESPN commitment hit, the duo envisioned the studio that is currently in Gooch Hall. The space was stripped and the equipment – which includes new replay and graphics systems among other items – was ordered, installed and rewired during a two-month span.

“We figured out pretty quickly that all of the new equipment was not going to fit in our little trailer,” Freed said. “So we can either buy a bigger trailer or we have a central control room and then we ship all the audio/video back to that one location. And from there it goes out to ESPN. In terms of wear and tear on the equipment and just for the ease of having it all here in a climate-controlled environment, we explored the Gooch Hall option. It was definitely the right decision to make.”

Not to say there weren't unforeseen issues throughout the process. Freed quickly discovered the data was having problems getting from point A to point B and enlisted the help of the campus Office of Information Technology Services.

“One of the biggest challenges that we originally faced was connectivity from the different venues back here to Gooch Hall,” Freed said. “The system that we are using relies on essentially the Ethernet to move audio and video back and forth. We found out there wasn't enough bandwidth on campus to support eight or nine different streams of video that we were trying to push. I have to say that our information technology services department here on campus has been really, really helpful in helping us figure out the connectivity issues. So with football and basketball, we're moving all the camera, audio, intercom signals through fiber optics.”

One advantage Henderson and Freed could count on was the production crew. Approximately 15 students have worked various live sporting events since OVC Digital Network's inception in 2012, but the same core of five part-time workers has been there from the beginning. **Mac Doran ('18)**, **Matthew Henderson ('17)**, **Alex Hansen ('16)**, Chris Patterson and **Zack Roberts ('16)** were the original group who helped launch the OVC Digital Network.

Doran, who also works part-time at WLJT-TV on campus, has served in almost every position needed during a live

broadcast – director, producer, graphics manager and camera operator. He was also part of a five-person UT Martin contingent that attended an ESPN training seminar hosted by the OVC and the equipment manufacturers this past October in Nashville. ESPN also offered sport-specific webinars throughout the year so each broadcast can be as polished as possible.

“The ESPN+ switch was stressful at first because we were having to learn all new software in a different surrounding,” Doran said. “On the flipside, I think we handled the adjustments very well because it helped that we had all worked together in the past. We knew what to expect, and once we got the hang of the new equipment, our broadcasts steadily improved throughout the year.”

Freed echoed Doran’s sentiments about the benefits of familiar faces during a production.

“I have to say that the crew that we have now has always been good about jumping in and getting things done,” Freed said. “Everybody pitches in to do all jobs – whether it be typing in rosters in the graphics system or pulling cables. That’s what you want to see. It’s been a learning curve, but I’m very pleased about our progress, too. From where we were in September to what we can do now is night and day.”

A typical ESPN+ broadcast begins with a call to Bristol to “fax the truck” – a technical term for making sure everything is in order. The call – which usually takes place a few hours before the broadcast goes live – is to ensure all the camera angles are sufficient, the lower-third graphics are placed correctly and a lipsync test to make sure the audio matches up.

The crew is then patched through to ESPN master control, which assists with running commercial breaks on the network. A dedicated staff member is in charge of staying on the line with ESPN throughout the broadcast, coordinating the timing and counting down the seconds for the broadcaster coming in and out of breaks – thus creating a new level of game management that was not a responsibility on OVC Digital Network.

UT Martin’s first live game on ESPN+ took place Sept. 15, 2018, during football matchup against UT Chattanooga at Hardy Graham Stadium. There was a level of excitement and nervousness among the crew leading up to kickoff.

“I was scared to death – I’ll be honest with you,” Freed said. “I was really nervous. I think everybody was. I had



A student controls the switcher during a UT Martin women’s basketball game.

done some freelance work several years ago for ESPN, and I knew that this was not going to be anything like what we had done in the past. When we were streaming OVC Digital Network, we may have 300-500 people watching that stream. It was important for our people to realize that this is not just a conference audience now – this is a global audience. ESPN has expectations about how they want their games to look because they want consistency. The bar had been raised – not only in terms of production but also what the expectations were.”

All jobs are equally important when working with multi-faceted components during a live production. However, Freed is quick to point out the importance of the lens capturing the moments the viewer will see.

“The camera operators make or break any game that you have,” Freed said. “The first game that we had, we had two or three people that had never done camera work for a football game. Some of them, while they may have casually watched a football game, they really didn’t even understand the game, and that is a huge challenge when you have people that don’t know what to anticipate. So my assignment to a lot of the camera people was to go and watch an ESPN game so you can see what they’re doing. That helped a lot because people were like ‘oh, now I know why we do that.’ It’s that lightbulb moment.”

Through its first year, the viewership numbers have been impressive not only at UT Martin but throughout the OVC. Kyle Schwartz, the conference’s assistant commissioner for strategic communications, has received encouraging feedback from all member institutions – which combined to

stream more than 600 ESPN+ events during the 2018-19 academic year.

"We've seen nothing but positive results from our debut on ESPN+," Schwartz said. "Moving forward, the conference is excited for the opportunity for growth by showcasing the talents of OVC student-athletes to viewers through a worldwide platform."

Henderson and Freed have already identified several ways to upgrade future Skyhawk broadcasts. That includes a new interface to combine the Gooch Hall telephone and intercom systems and a potential new graphics interface intertwined with the scoreboards at both Hardy Graham Stadium and the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center, automatically updating time and score.

"The sky is truly the limit for us here at UT Martin," Henderson said. "We have worked out several kinks through this first year that will only help us down the road. We are

extremely proud of the progress we showed, and with a first-class production studio like we have now, I am confident that our broadcasts will continue to get better."

"For students, it was important to understand that this is not just a class project, we're doing this for real," Freed said. "As long as you're using students, there's always going to be that ebb-and-flow with quality because you have new people coming in all the time. But that's part of what we do. I use the analogy that it's just like our teams – the players may come and go but by the end of conference season, you want to be doing your best. It's the same principle for our crew. ESPN has been very gracious and supportive – they have gone out of their way to develop a good partnership with us."

Savannah Cornelius operates a camera during a UT Martin women's basketball game. According to Rodney Freed, instructor of communications, "The camera operators make or break any game that you have."



advancement



Baby Skyhawk debuts — Hollianne Carver (foreground), UT Martin's first lady, reads "Spread Your Wings: The Story of Baby Skyhawk" during a book reveal reception Jan. 24. The book, written and illustrated by UT Martin art and English students, is available for purchase through utmforever.com. It is the first piece of a new UT Martin legacy program intended to capture the attention of the school-aged children of alumni.



Ted Mosch Remembered — UT Martin dedicated room 203 of the Business Administration Building to the late Dr. Ted Mosch, professor emeritus of political science, during a reception Nov. 8, 2018. Many of Mosch's former colleagues and students, as well as donors to the Ted Mosch Scholarship Fund, were in attendance. Mosch began working at UT Martin in 1970 and served the university until 1981 when he was granted educational leave to attend the National War College in Washington, D.C. He then served at the United States Army Intelligence Center and School from 1983-88 before returning to UT Martin, where he stayed until his retirement in 2002. Pictured during the naming reception are (l-r) **Dr. Chris Baxter ('94)**, chair of the Department of Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Political Science; **Dale Allen ('81)**, a Nashville attorney, former Mosch student and major scholarship donor; Dr. Ross Dickens, dean of the College of Business and Global Affairs; and Chancellor Keith Carver.

Give the gift of a scholarship to students by donating to the

CHANCELLOR'S ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE FUND!

Donate today at utmforever.com

Captain's Challenge 2019

Thank you for helping Captain soar to

\$319,384!



FROM THE ARCHIVES

THE COMMUNICATIONS BUILDING



Photos show the Communications Building during various stages of its life. (left) Students wait in line outside of the dining hall. (right, clockwise from left) Northwest Tennessee Public School Instructional Television; a communication class meets in the building's TV studio; administrators, including Andy Holt, then president of the University of Tennessee and Paul Meek, then chancellor of UT Martin, gather for a dinner.

THE DINING HALL and social building, as it was originally known, broke ground on Oct. 15, 1934, with a “dirt-breaking” ceremony at the site. According to the UT Junior College newspaper, *The Vquette*, the first shovel of dirt was turned by a student named Jean Heidelberg, then president of the Home Economics Club. The building opened in January of the following year.

A countless number of students have crossed over the threshold to this building, and the passage of time is evident in the terrazzo flooring that covers the lobby. This space has served the UT Martin campus for some 83 years, and it has served it well.

Later this year the Communications Building, as it is known today, will be razed to prepare the site for the Latimer Engineering and Science Building. Although the structure will be gone, after the dust settles, several things will remain.

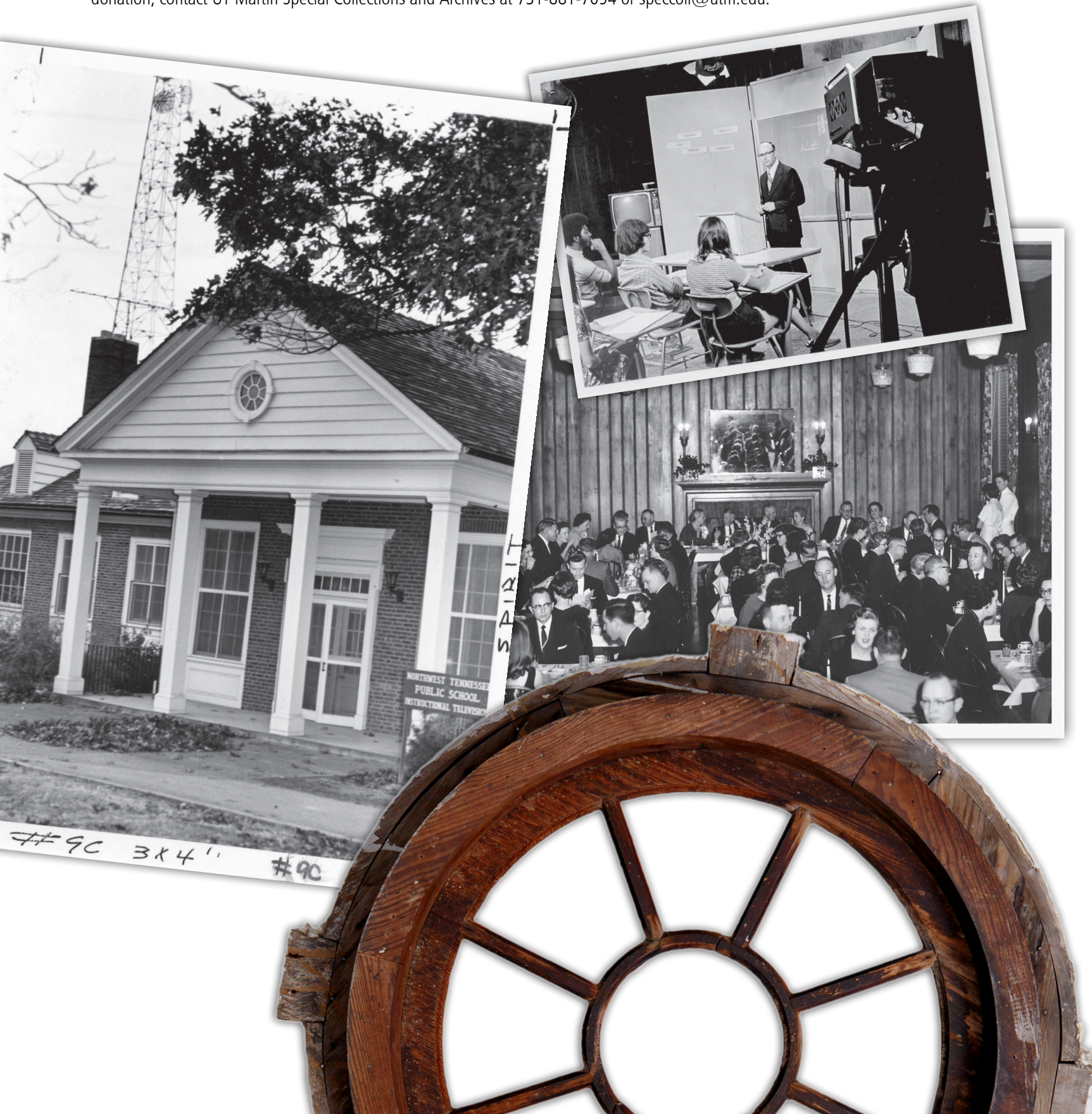
The railings that once adorned the recessed flagstone porch and the distinctive circular gable window have been sent to the Paul Meek Library's Corbitt Special Collections. The light fixtures that once illuminated the building's facade are being saved with the hope of being repurposed at a later date. There are also hundreds of photos of the building and its occupants from throughout the decades, some of which you can see here.

But, arguably, the most lasting pieces that will remain are the memories. Memories of formal events; memories of waiting in line and meal tickets; memories of sitting in communications classes; memories of famous visitors; memories of the photo darkroom; memories of Instructional TV, WLJT and WUTM; and more recently memories of marriage engagements.

Although it will be gone, the dining hall/cafeteria/TV studio/Communications Building will never be forgotten.

A quote from the Oct. 22, 1934, issue of The Volette regarding the pending construction said it best, "It is intended that (sic) this building shall serve as the center of the social life of the college. While the Junior College is young, it has already developed a distinct spirit which has grown along with the architecture of its buildings." And that spirit continues to this day.

To see more photos from UT Martin's collection, visit utm.edu/campusscene. "From the Archives" is a feature highlighting unique and interesting items from the Alliene and Jimmie S. Corbitt Special Collections. For more information or to make a donation, contact UT Martin Special Collections and Archives at 731-881-7094 or speccoll@utm.edu.



& Trombones flowerpots:

Bringing music to life

Story by **Erin Chesnut**
Photos by **Nathan Morgan**



Chris McDonald is pictured at Dan Rudin Recording and Production Studio in Nashville.

Chris McDonald ('77) and Stephen Downing ('18) have never met. And yet, they've walked the same halls and studied in the same classrooms; in some cases, they've even played the same instruments. While more than 40 years separate their graduation dates, both musicians found their style in the UT Martin Department of Music. And what different styles they are!

"I always tell people that my favorite instrument is whatever instrument is right in front of me," said Downing ('18). "It really runs the gamut from traditional instruments like the marimba or the xylophone to things like flowerpots or brake drums from a car."

Downing, a current student in Duke University's doctoral program for composition, is often inspired by the sounds created by man-made objects such as dishwashers. He says this makes his music more accessible to listeners.

"I think that when I play a piece like the piece (I have) for flowerpots, it really helps the audience connect to me as a performer, because they see me on stage playing flowerpots and speaking as part of a piece, and they think, either consciously or subconsciously, 'I could do that,'" he said. "I guess some performers might be turned off by that idea, but I want to break down this audience-performer divide. So instead of going onstage and playing a Stradivarius violin that costs millions of dollars, which probably none of the audience members could do, I like the accessibility we have, the relatability to the found objects."

Downing has composed dozens of pieces, from one-minute segments to 20-minute performances, and has had his music performed all over the country. A percussionist by training, he specializes in non-traditional instrumental combinations and has played up to 30 instruments at a time during a single composition. However, he says many of his compositions are dictated by the instruments themselves.

"I kind of let the ensemble tell me what it wants," he said. "I have a piece (that premiered in 2018) for this ensemble called Hypercube. . . . They have a saxophone, an electric guitar, piano and percussion. . . . So, with the saxophone and the electric guitar and the percussion, especially, they are instruments that want to be played loud and played fast and play tight rhythms just like it's jazz or rock. So, I took that as a springboard and wrote the rest of the piece based on that."

McDonald, who specializes in traditional big band and orchestral music, hears this voice as well. McDonald,



(above) Downing plays a marimba. (right) McDonald is shown in the largest sound studio at Dan Rudin Recording and Production Studio in Nashville..

a trombone player, says his experience playing in and composing for rock and roll, big band and jazz ensembles helps him anticipate the needs of every instrument in a piece.

"I think just from doing it so long, I know what every instrument is going to sound like in every register and how instruments are going to sound when they're combined together," he said. McDonald has made a career from composing and arranging music for commercials, popular records and movie soundtracks. Based in Nashville, he has worked with country music names such as Martina McBride, Willie Nelson and Reba McEntire as well as artists in other genres and around the world. His writing process is a bit different from Downing's because he is often creating music to fit an artist's already-recorded vocals.

"In the old days, I would sit at the piano with a sheet of score paper. We didn't even have Walkmans in the beginning. I had to play it on a cassette player, but now I get an MP3 emailed to me," he explained. "I give an initial listen and get rhythms and tempos. This is just getting a structure of things like verses and chorus on a grid so I can easily locate sections. I might line out my physical score paper... I might just clear my head and get some sounds up, not even thinking. I just imagine that I'm listening to this band or this song."

McDonald then uses sample clips to construct a rough estimate of what his additions to the track would sound like and, when those are approved by the producer, he drafts the entire score in digital music notation software and hires musicians to play on the live track. He says the best reaction he can get from an artist is tears.

"This has happened several times with country artists, but I like to make them cry. I've made Martina (McBride) cry, and I've made Sara Evans cry. It's the best feeling," he said.

Even though McDonald and Downing have very different composition styles, this hope to touch the hearts of audience members is one they both carry into every project.

"I hope (listeners) can hear a sound that kind of captivates them, not only on a personal level – something they can actually relate to and think 'I have prior experience with this type of sound' – but also on an intellectual level where something is going on underneath the surface of the music that might not be immediately audible, but once you hear it you can understand that things are unfolding," said Downing.



Downing is shown performing during his undergraduate days at UT Martin.



While these two men are at very different places in their careers, they both give credit to UT Martin as the place where they developed and refined their talents. McDonald has an established name in the Nashville music industry and hundreds of album credits under his belt, but he says UT Martin was one of the first places where his music really saw the light of day.

"I was able to get anything I wrote played, which is the best way to learn," he says, "They bent over backwards.... They scheduled my stuff on concert band programs. I wrote all the music for the Miss UT Martin pageant, which I got paid for. My work-study (position) my last year there was writing all of the marching band music. That's just the best thing in the world to hear everything played."

McDonald played in every existing university ensemble as well as several of his own. His first university band, called "Hangar," became the first rock and roll band to play at the original Opryland park in Nashville during McDonald's

freshman year at UT Martin. He also played with a university ensemble called "Today's People." This group, since retired, played a variety of music both on campus and off – as far away as Canada, Iceland and Greenland during McDonald's freshman year.

Now, he has composed music in a variety of genres, from salsa and Latin pop to soaring orchestral arrangements and gospel hymns. He has eight big band records under his name, recording as the Chris McDonald Orchestra and as Chris McDonald and Friends, and his current independent label, Constant Dreamer Records, has four records in distribution. He is always looking for new sounds and serves on The Recording Academy's craft committee, which votes on arrangers and composers for GRAMMY awards.

"What I always consider, when I hear something, is 'Is it something I haven't heard before?' People know how to do certain things in certain ways, and it can be done really, really well. But it's like, 'I've heard a lot of people do that. I can do that.' I want you to wow me somehow, either harmonically or by taking a song and treating it in an entirely different way. I think keeping things fresh is the value of new music," he says.

Downing, in his second year at Duke University, is certainly an example of fresh talent and new musical styles. He says one advantage of being a young composer today is the

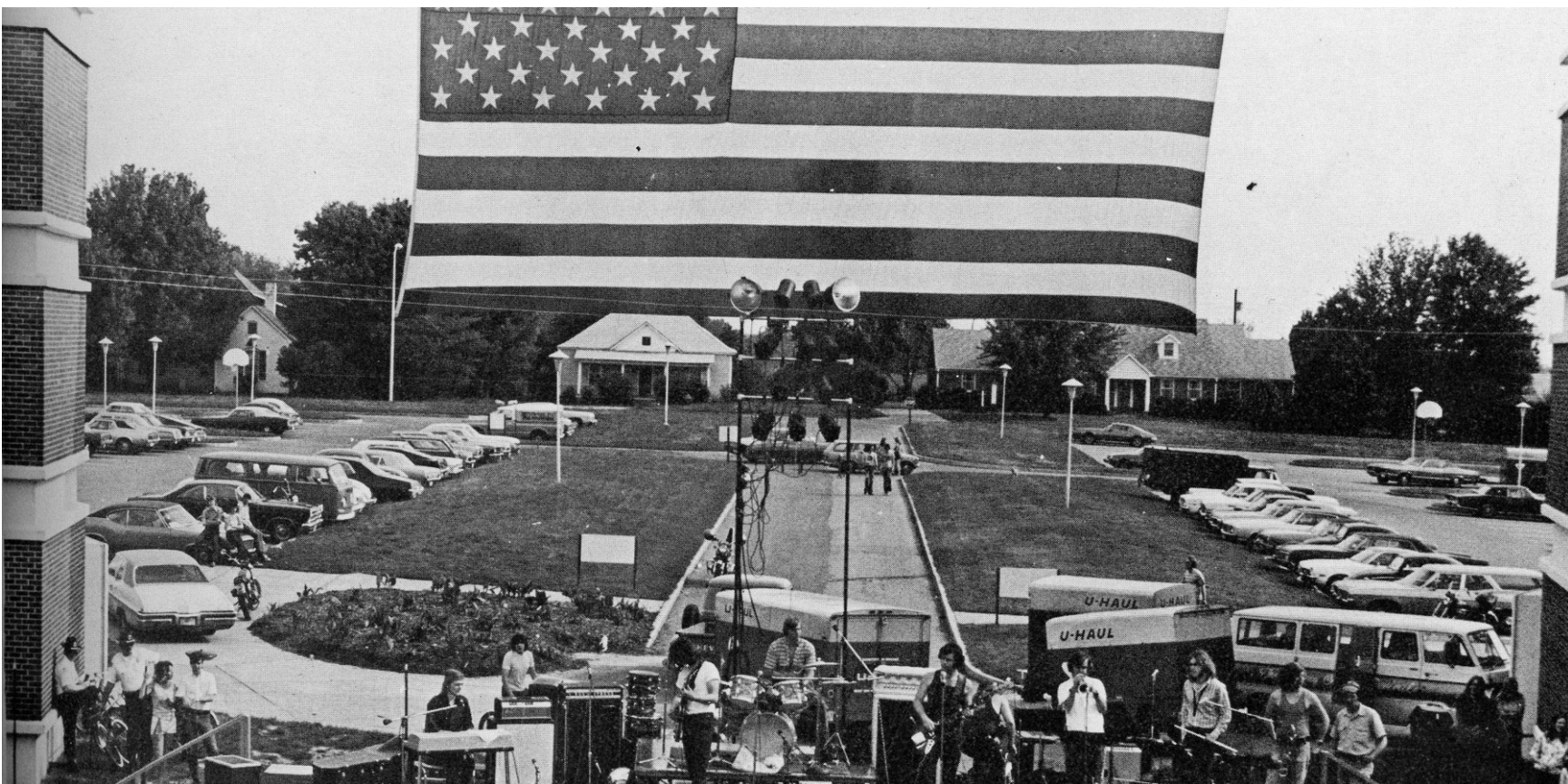
industry-wide desire to commission newer and more exciting music for each ensemble.

"I enjoy being a young composer because I kind of feel where the contemporary music scene is going and the different directions it can go," he said. "When (my fellow doctoral candidates and I) play each other our music, we all enjoy each other's work. . . . (My adviser) says that before our generation, it was not like that. It was very contentious between composers that wrote in different styles. I really enjoy being a young composer because most everyone is very open-minded and wants to experience different types of music."

Downing ultimately hopes to teach composition at the university level and form an ensemble that will combine rock and roll with classical music in a way that makes the music more accessible to younger generations. His advice to the UT Martin musicians who come behind him is simple: don't count yourself out.

"I've met far too many people who just think of themselves as performers, and we talk about composition, and they say, 'I always wish I could compose.' And I always say, 'Well, why don't you?'" he said. "A lot of times they say, 'Well, I don't know how, and I tell them if they figure it out, please let me know, because I don't know how either."

Chris McDonald plays with the band "Hangar" on the UT Martin campus in 1973.



Life after baseball:

Education prepared Donnie Ross
for a larger game

Story by **Bud Grimes**

Photos by **Steven Mantilla & Nathan Morgan**



Donnie Ross ('18, right), a policeman at UT Knoxville, completed his UT Martin Master of Business Administration degree online. He is shown embracing UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver as he crosses the commencement stage.

Donnie Ross ('18) found success in college and professional baseball, but he also prepared for life after baseball by earning a bachelor's and two master's degrees, the second of which he received from UT Martin in December 2018 after completing the university's online MBA program.

Years ago, while baseball and life were happening, Donnie met and married his wife, Alison, now the administrative assistant for UT System Interim President Randy Boyd. Their journey is one of mutual support and the ability to simultaneously enjoy the moment while also planning for the future.

A UT police lieutenant and former Tennessee Vols baseball player, Donnie was raised in California and is a lifelong Los Angeles Dodgers fan. In 1991, his family moved to Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, and he took his passion and talent for baseball to Columbia State Community College in Columbia. "My dream was to get to ... UT Knoxville and play in the SEC and, sure enough, the two-year wait (playing at Columbia State) helped," he said. He completed his college eligibility in 1999

before signing as an undrafted free agent with the Kansas City Royals organization and playing a combined seven years in minor league and independent baseball.

A minor league baseball stint with the Wilmington Blue Rocks ultimately introduced Donnie to Alison Kildow, a New Jersey native and English major at the University of Delaware, who would become his wife in 2005 after his graduation from UT Knoxville.

Alison moved to Knoxville early in the relationship and was already an established UT employee when the couple married. She started in a temporary position in 2003 and began working for Hank Dye, UT vice president for public and government relations, two years later. "I was just 24 years old at the time," she said. "I was young, and he (Dye) really took a chance on me, on this young Jersey girl that didn't really know anything." The position turned out to be a good fit, and her work with public and government relations continued until Dye's retirement in 2012. She then worked for his successor, Dr. Tonjanita Johnson, and followed her when she became executive vice president and chief

operating officer for the UT System in 2016.

With baseball likely behind him and Alison in a good place in her career, Donnie considered using his bachelor's degree in sport management to become a teacher and coach. Instead, he received an unexpected opportunity to work in a new position mentoring student athletes as a member of the UT Police Department. "I had contemplated finishing up playing baseball anyway, but this gave me a chance at a career," he said. The UT position allowed him to further his education and pursue a master's degree in sport management, which he received in 2012.

Even with a master's degree, Donnie believed he needed to make himself more marketable. He had learned about UT Martin's online MBA degree from program graduate **Tiffany Carpenter ('15)**, UT associate vice president for communications and marketing. He saw the MBA as a way to gain the financial and management knowledge and skills to potentially help him with future promotions. He was accepted into the program sooner than he expected and began in August 2016.

Donnie and his family encountered the usual challenges that face adult students when trying to balance family responsibilities, work and school. Being an online student was another adjustment he had to make, and he and his MBA cohort learned how to lean on each other during uncertain times. "When you're struggling through a program, and you could hear somebody else going through the same struggles, golly did it make it easier," he said. "There were some times where I was stressed out of my mind, and we'd talk ... and then we'd get to bounce ideas off each other. ... That part of the program is really, really neat."

Later, as Donnie prepared to walk the commencement line, Alison received the opportunity to work with President Boyd, which wasn't an easy decision to make with a young family. "Traditionally, people have maybe been 10 years older than me or have had older children," she said. "But again, it goes back to timing. I couldn't pass up this opportunity." She officially began her new position in December and hasn't looked back.


Both Donnie and Alison see Donnie's opportunity to earn a second master's degree as well worth the sacrifices. "Going through it ... was challenging. It was tough," he said. "But finding out I could do pretty well ... (in spite of) life getting in the way ... was good. It was very rewarding." He also has a message for others: "Don't be afraid to pursue your dreams."

As with any family, new challenges and opportunities lie ahead, but the same mutual support system that carried the couple through baseball seasons apart, late-night homework and challenges to family time still remains. Maybe the best news of all is that seven-year-old Mary Alice already understands the significance of her daddy's most recent educational accomplishment. On the December Friday before commencement, she said she's proud of her dad "because he's graduating college," to which Donnie proudly added, "And we're gonna see her do it one day."

Donnie Ross had a talent for hitting home runs both as a Tennessee Vol and as a professional baseball player. Beyond his athletic accomplishments, his educational goals and achievements set a strong example for his daughter and have prepared him for what's ahead in the larger game of life.



Donnie Ross is pictured with his wife, Alison, and daughter, Mary Alice, at the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center in December.



A

COMMON

THREAD

FCS alumna creates signature designs

Story by **Erin Chesnut**

Photos by **Nathan Morgan**





Kris Keys ('08), a fashion designer from Whitehaven, creates her signature designs – from the flow of the sleeves to the pattern on the fabric – based on the shapes and colors of human blood cells. And not just ordinary blood cells, but those found inside the veins and arteries of a person with hereditary elliptocytosis. This rare blood disorder affects approximately three to five of every 10,000 people and is more common in those with African or Mediterranean ancestries, including Keys herself.

While Keys was studying fashion design at the London College of Fashion in the United Kingdom, she found herself in the hospital with complications from her condition. Surprisingly, this is where she ultimately discovered the inspiration to create her first unique fashion line – “Hematology.”

“They kept coming into my room, the doctors, and taking more blood and more blood and more blood. I finally figured

they were bringing students into the lab, because you know, they might not come across a person with this blood disorder ever in their career,” she said. “So, I said, ‘I want to see it.’ They brought some photos, and to me they looked like watercolor paintings. Watercolor is the medium I use for painting. ...

“All I had in the hospital was my sketchbook, so I started to make these little prints. By the time I left the hospital, I had a little book of all these prints of my blood cells, and I decided that I wanted my first collection to be inspired by that.”

By this point, Keys had spent just over five years in the United Kingdom studying fashion design and illustration from professors who worked with high-fashion houses such as Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood. She had sat beside the runways during London Fashion Week and sketched passing models for fashion magazines and companies. She had observed the British method of fashion



design, which comments on topics such as economics, social injustice, health and nature through clothing. Now, it was her turn.

"The initial process is research," she said. Keys, who spent time at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital as a child, turned to her original doctor for help. "He gave me some old blood smears ... and photos from other patients that might have blood disorders. Then I met with people who have sickle cells just to get some symptoms. ... Then I spread out all this research and decided what components I wanted to take.

"The first thing was the colors – the colors of blood as it oxidizes. When you get a bruise, it's blue, and it might turn purple. Then, when you bleed, it might be a bright red, but as it dries it's (darker). So, I wanted that to be the palette for the collection," she said. Several of her garments also incorporate panels and pockets that resemble the shape of a blood cell.

After sketching her initial designs, Keys then began to test different types of fabric and piece garments together on test models and mannequins to see how the design would fit and flow on the human form. Her specialty is in travel wear for women, so all-day comfort and versatility are important elements in her work.

"I did a lot of testing to see if (the garments) travel well," she said. "I sat in airports and bus stations and train stations, and I observed people to see what they were wearing. Then I talked to them to see what their problem points were when they traveled."

After deciding what type of garment she wanted to create, Keys began to use her own blood smears to design the pattern of the cloth itself.

"I took those prints that I had from the hospital (in London) and started to scan them in and play around with them digitally," she said. "(Then) I printed them off on small swatches to see how they would look on different fabrics. I came up with two prints, 'Red Blood Cell' and 'Jaundice'" (a common symptom of her condition).

Patterns such as these are created on a computer by taking an original section of artwork and manipulating it many times until the desired look is achieved. Then, the files are sent to a special digital printer which prints them directly onto bolts of fabric. Key sewed all her sample garments herself from fabric she had printed with her watercolor designs. Once a garment is ready for mass-production, a designer must send a "spec sample" to the factory. This set of instructions includes the number of pieces required to make the garment; measurements for every detail, including

(opposite page) Kris Keys creates floral patterns using a watercolor painting method. (right) One of Keys' sketchbook illustrations.





placement of pockets and width of hems and collars; and the specifications for hardware such as buttons and zippers. The factory can then scale the instructions to fit a range of clothing sizes.

While Keys says her time in fashion illustration was originally a way to network with designers and fund her fashion education, she has realized how those experiences helped prepare her for the creation of her own original patterns.

"All my garments are textiles that I've painted, and they're printed on the garments. It was great that I had to take that detour to do illustration first because I knew how to paint and how to transfer it onto fabrics, which I think sets

my style apart," she said. She not only wants those who wear her designs to find comfort in the clothing itself, but to recognize a unifying element in the patterns.

"I really want them to feel inspired, because every line, every collection that I have, it ties in a story where you can take beauty from anything and from any type of situation," she said. "(My design is) personal, and it tells a story. Even though everybody doesn't have a blood disorder, blood is a thing that everybody has – it merges race and gender."

When you wear a pantsuit by designer Kris Keys, you showcase more than just a stylish figure – you take a stand for unity, compassion and the humanity that links us all.

(above) This scarf displays Keys' "Jaundice" pattern. (right) Keys is pictured at the Memphis College of Art, where she teaches a course on fashion illustration.



ALUMNI NEWS

Director's Note

I recently had the pleasure of meeting with three UT Martin alumnae who returned to campus for a ladies' weekend. These women were part of a group of five ladies who completed UT Martin engineering degrees during the same time. They bonded during the program and have remained friends as they established themselves as professionals, wives and mothers. They were looking forward to visiting EPS and reminiscing about their time with professors and mentors, and I was inspired by these five women who all excelled in a difficult major and have remained friends years later.

This interaction made me think about all the UT Martin stories we share about our time on campus. At UT Martin, we embrace our status as the smallest four-year higher education state institution in Tennessee, and there are opportunities available and connections made here that aren't always possible at larger universities. What's your UT Martin story? How did you benefit from your time on our campus?

Share your story on social media with the hashtag #myUTMstory and help us spread the word about what a wonderful experience is waiting for future Skyhawks! I look forward to seeing what makes you #UTMproud!

Jackie Johnson ('08, '10)

Interim Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

SEE MORE ONLINE

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



UTMAlumni

spotlight on alums

GET INVOLVED!

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

- ▶ Volunteer Opportunities
- ▶ Reunions
- ▶ Alumni Council
- ▶ Development Council
- ▶ Mentoring Program
- ▶ Young Alumni Council
- ▶ Speak Out for UT
- ▶ Alumni in the Classroom

UTMFOREVER.COM

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

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



Debra Gates ('75), chief administrative officer and certified public accountant for the Shelby County Trustee's Office, was named one of the 25 Super Women in Business by the Memphis Business Journal in fall 2018. Gates has spent more than 20 years in the Shelby County Trustee's Office and served under four different trustees in her role as chief administrative officer for the largest treasury in the state. She leads a staff of more than 60 individuals and directs day-to-day operations including banking, investments and property tax collections. In her interview with the Memphis Business Journal, she encourages women in business to "accept challenges, but be creative in your approach to the solutions. It is important to think outside the box about available resources."

spotlight on alums



Brenda Cude ('74, '75) a professor in the Department of Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics at the University of Georgia, was named a Georgia Athletic Association Professor in Family and Consumer Sciences in fall 2018. This endowed professorship is awarded for a four-year term to a faculty member with an "outstanding national reputation" who is a leading scholar in the field of family and consumer science. Cude is also director of the UGA Center for Economic Education and received the Educator of the Year Award from the Direct Selling Education Foundation in 2017. She was also the Family and Consumer Science Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 2007 and was inducted in the UGA Teaching Academy in 2008.

Elizabeth Sanders ('15) works as a family and consumer science extension agent and represented the United States 4-H program at the Committee World Food Security in England, United Kingdom, in fall 2018. She was also a guest speaker on the topics of youth and agriculture, knowledge shared among universities, and the private sector.

Dan Morris ('74) began working with The Jackson Sun soon after graduating in 1974 and was recently inducted into the Tennessee Sports Writers' Association Hall of Fame after more than 40 years as a sports writer, editor and columnist. According to The Jackson Sun, Morris' career with the paper was highlighted by events like Al Geiberger's PGA-record round of 59 in Memphis in 1977, Ed "Too Tall" Jones' appearance in the Super Bowl in 1979, multiple World Series games for the St. Louis Cardinals, Peyton Manning's last game in the Orange Bowl and the Vols' national championship game in Arizona in January 1999. He played a role in starting the Jackson-Madison County Sports Hall of Fame and was honored with the organization's 2007 Distinguished Service Award. Morris officially retired from The Jackson Sun in 2016 and is now the senior adult ministry coordinator at Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson.

Broaden your horizons with a graduate degree!

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Agribusiness and Risk Management
- Natural Resources Systems Management
- Systems Science in Agriculture

Business Administration

- General Business
- Agriculture

Education – Counseling

- Clinical Mental Health
- Counseling Addictions
- School Counseling
- Student Affairs and College Counseling

Education – Institutional Leadership

- Higher Education Leadership

Education – Teaching

- Curriculum and Instruction (Elementary or Secondary)
- Initial Licensure (Elementary or Secondary)
- Initial Licensure K-12 (Special Education only)
- Interdisciplinary
- Special Education
- Literacy

Family and Consumer Sciences

- Dietetics
- General

Strategic Communications

utm.edu/degreeprograms

in memory

Names, hometowns and dates of death are noted. Names listed either attended or graduated from UT Martin, unless otherwise noted.

- **Harold Cochran**, of Troy, Feb. 26, 2019 (current UT Martin employee).
- **Wyatt Cole**, of Owenton, Kentucky, Feb. 10, 2019 (current student).
- **Megan Cox ('18)**, of Camden, Nov. 15, 2018.
- **Thomas Lee Cobb ('79)**, of Memphis, Nov. 26, 2018.
- **Judge William Craig Hall ('70)**, of Collierville, Dec. 3, 2018.
- **Dr. LeeRoy Kiesling**, of Mustang, Oklahoma, Nov. 30, 2018 (retired faculty member).
- **Michael Landreth ('76)**, of Lexington, Jan. 4, 2019.
- **Lt. Richard "Tito" Lannom ('65)**, of Union City, Vietnam War, 1968.
- **Brett Malone ('84)**, of Brighton, Nov. 22, 2018.
- **Phil Miller**, of Scottsdale, Arizona, Oct. 19, 2018 (retired faculty member).
- **John Richard Ouzts ('90)**, of Goodlettsville, Oct. 2, 2018.
- **Houston Patrick ('72)**, of Martin, Feb. 16, 2019.
- **Dr. David Sammons ('66)**, of Union City, Oct. 12, 2018 (alum and former faculty member).
- **O.K. Smith Jr., MD ('59, UTHSC '63)**, of Martin, March 23, 2019.
- **Doris Tanner**, of Union City, Feb. 9, 2019 (retired faculty member).
- **Lisa Roberts Voss ('86)**, of Brownsville, Feb. 19, 2019.

we want to know

Please fill out the information below and mail it to us, or visit utmforever.com to update your address and let us know what you've been doing.

Full Name (include maiden name, if applicable): _____
 Years Attended: _____ through _____ School/College of: _____
 Degree(s): _____ Major: _____
 Home Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____
 Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
 Occupation: _____ Business Name or Employer: _____
 Business Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____
 Your Email Address: _____

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: _____
 Business Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____
 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:
 UT Alumni Association – Martin Office
 Dunagan Alumni Center
 1900 Alumni Way
 Martin, TN 38238



MARTIN

class notes

1959

Dr. Anne Meek ('59) was inducted into the Knox County Museum of Education Honor Roll in October 2018. Her induction recognizes the countless documents and memorabilia she has donated to the museum over the years, including professional materials from her years working in Knox County Schools and other places.

1967

Robert Paschall ('67) is a professor emeritus at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

1968

Houston Gordon ('68) recently served as one of the appeals lawyers for Cyntoia Brown, a Tennessee inmate who received national attention before being granted clemency by former Gov. Bill Haslam shortly before he left office.

1969

Col. Daniel Lindsey ('69, U.S. Army) is now fully retired from a career of service in community and veterans' affairs. He served the city of Parsons from 2002-2007 as community development coordinator in the mayor's office and assisted with the creation of the UT Martin Parsons Center. He also served on the Congressionally Mandated Advisory Committee to the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs during this time and has since volunteered with the Tennessee Disabled American Veterans organization.

1973

Robert Hill ('73) has retired from H.J. Baker & Bro. after 10 years with the company and a total of 35 years in the livestock feed industry. He has created Hill Consulting Services, LLC.

Demetra "Dee" Pratt ('73) was a 2018 recipient of the Medallion Award presented by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She currently serves on the advisory board for the UT Martin nutrition program in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Michael Spitzer ('72, '73), of Hohenwald, was appointed circuit court judge for the 21st Judicial District, which serves Hickman, Lewis, Perry and Williamson counties, in 2018 by then Gov. Bill Haslam. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in education from UT Martin and his law degree from the University of Memphis.

1975

Darlene McDonald Patton ('75) is currently serving as director of pharmaceutical services at the Jackson Clinic Professional Association. She is also the provider of infusion services for the main clinic campus.

Col. Kenneth Starr ('75, U.S. Army) has retired from the military.

1976

David Brown ('76) is serving as past-president of the Tennessee Association of Administrators in Special Education.

Martha Stroube Freeman ('76), is a retired Martin Primary School teacher. The grandfather of her late husband, **Linville Freeman ('74)**, helped to build what is now the Student Life Center, which opened as the campus gymnasium in 1930. Members of three generations of her husband's family attended UT Martin, as well as some of the spouses. She counts 14 family members, so far, who are alumni and, in her words, "All UT Martin proud."

1978

Michael Bullion ('78) went on to earn a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from UT Knoxville in 1983.

Belinda Turner Burnett ('78) has retired as postmaster from the United States Postal Service.

1981

Thomas McSweeney ('81) has retired after more than 25 years in medical research at The Ohio State University Medical Center, including more than 45 publications. He and his wife now live in rural Thailand where they raise flowers and teach English to local village children.

1982

Heather Gallagher Jensen ('82) has retired after 18 years as animal care coordinator at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

1985

Linda Brewer Gaskins ('85, '89) is now a full-time success coach at Rappahannock Community College after spending many years in the classroom. Her youngest son graduated from UT Knoxville in May.

1993

Chiyo Nonomura ('93) served as the 2018 vice president and chair of the Downtown Regional Committee of the Japanese Business Association of Southern California.

1995

Maj. Gen. Tommy H. Baker ('95)

was promoted to his current rank in a ceremony held Nov. 9, 2018, at the Tennessee National Guard Headquarters. He is the Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Tennessee National Guard, and is responsible for the training and supervision of the more than 9,000 soldiers in the Tennessee Army National Guard. (Courtesy Tennessee Department of Military)

Dr. Julie Lumpkins Basler ('95) has received the President of the United States' Volunteer Service Award three times (2016, 2017 and 2018) for her dedication to higher education volunteerism and her service as a commissioner and chair of the commission with the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges. She completed her four-year appointment to the commission in 2018.

1996

Joseph Morris ('96) operates a Christian internet radio station called Shekinah Connection.

1998

Tracy Garrett Hickey ('98) went on to earn credentials as a certified professional in health informatics in March 2017 and received a designation as a fellow of the American Health Information Management Association in April 2017.

1999

Frenchie Martin-Fuller ('99, '03, '09) went on to earn a master's degree in education in curriculum and instruction in 2003 and another with a focus in administration and supervision in 2009, both from UT Martin.

John Abel ('99, '02) and **Dr. Danny Donaldson ('99)**, received awards Jan.

21 during the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration and Breakfast at UT Martin. Abel received the Alpha Award of Merit for his demonstrated leadership on campus in the area of civil rights. Donaldson received the Harold Conner City of Martin Award, which is named for the first African American administrator employed by UT Martin after the university was desegregated in 1969.

2001

Lindsay Frilling ('01, '02) was selected as a member of Leadership Tennessee in fall 2018.

Heather Young Warmbrod ('01) married James Warmbrod III in March.

2002

Brian Carter ('02) became vice president of marketing and communication for Capital Metro, the transit authority for the greater Austin, Texas, area, in fall 2018.

Jill Stevens Ehrler ('02) and her husband, James, welcomed their first child, Willow Rose, in August 2018.

Jason Kemp ('02), of Dresden, was installed in December as 2019 president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators. He previously served as NAAE president-elect and is the first Tennessee teacher to become the organization's president. Kemp farms, teaches agriculture and serves as the FFA adviser at Dresden High School. He has held other state and national leadership positions in agricultural education, including president of the Tennessee Association of Agricultural Educators in 2012.

Marilyn Watt ('02) retired in fall 2018 after 17 years with the Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

2003

Jonathan Mills ('03) celebrated 10 years as a producer and writer with Country Music Television in the fall of 2018. His production credits include the Hot 20 Countdown, Southern Fried Flicks, Insider and Stacked programs.

2005

Dr. Phillip "Pip" Gordon ('05), of Platteville, Wisconsin, received the University of Wisconsin System's Dr. P.B. Poorman Award for Outstanding Achievement on Behalf of LGBTQ+ People in November 2018. He is assistant professor of English and the coordinator of Gay Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Gordon is the first UW-Platteville faculty member to receive this award.

2006

Michelle Butler ('06) teaches psychology and criminal justice at Jackson State Community College.

Ashley Branch Clark ('06) married Evan Clark in August 2017 and opened Pure Barre Hendersonville in March 2018.

Jessica Sarno McLaughlin ('06), recently published her first children's book, "Big Brother Hercules."

2007

Stephen Petty ('07) went on to earn an MBA from Oklahoma Christian University in 2012 and has a son, Wyatt, born in the same year.

class notes

2008

Bethany Adams Fouts ('08, '09) and her husband, Austin, have fostered 15 children and adopted a sibling set of three children and a one-year-old.

Christin Nicole Lewis ('08) is currently the community dance manager at Ballet Memphis.

2009

Gabrielle Golden ('09) promoted to USA training manager for the Italian clothing brand "Intimissimi" in fall 2018.

Ashley Harding Sallee ('09) earned a master's degree in management and leadership from Western Governors University in November 2017 and is currently a program mentor for WGU.

2010

Jamari Brown ('10), of Nashville, was named as director of the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development by Mayor David Briley. He previously served as director of business development for the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. He holds a degree in marketing. (Courtesy of The Tennessean)

Myron Driver ('10) married **Courtney Driver ('12)** in December 2015.

Mary Anderson Garner ('10) was elected to serve on the Wayne County Commission in August 2018. She is the youngest current commissioner and one of only three women on the commission.

2011

Megan Latimer Phillips ('11), of Memphis, has joined Levy Dermatology as a physician assistant. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree at UT Martin and a Master of Science in physician assistant studies from Bethel University. She was a member of the Skyhawk softball team from 2008-11.

2012

Laura McFall Bond ('12) is director of alumni affairs for Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, where she is responsible for creating an alumni affairs program, including a strategic plan and alumni board. She previously worked as director of special events and hospitality for the Pirate Club-East Carolina University's athletic booster club-and also serves as ECU's Chi Omega adviser. Her husband, **Kyle Bond ('10)** works as an independent sales representative for Professional Marketing Inc., covering North Carolina and Virginia in the hunting and fishing industry. His first job in the outdoor industry was with Final Flight Outfitters in Union City (see Campus Scene, Winter/Spring 2016). The Bonds have one son, Wilks Cade Bond, born June 25, 2018.

2013

Amber Replogle Barbour ('13) and **Tyler Barbour ('12)** got married in October 2018.

2014

Alex Wilson ('14) is the new business development officer for Dickson County. This recently created position is responsible for recruiting new companies to locate in Dickson County and encouraging local entrepreneurial endeavors.

2016

Rachel Crinklaw ('16) works in the Office of Alumni Relations and Resource Development at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Bethany Orban ('16) began serving as the marketing and communications manager for the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives this spring.

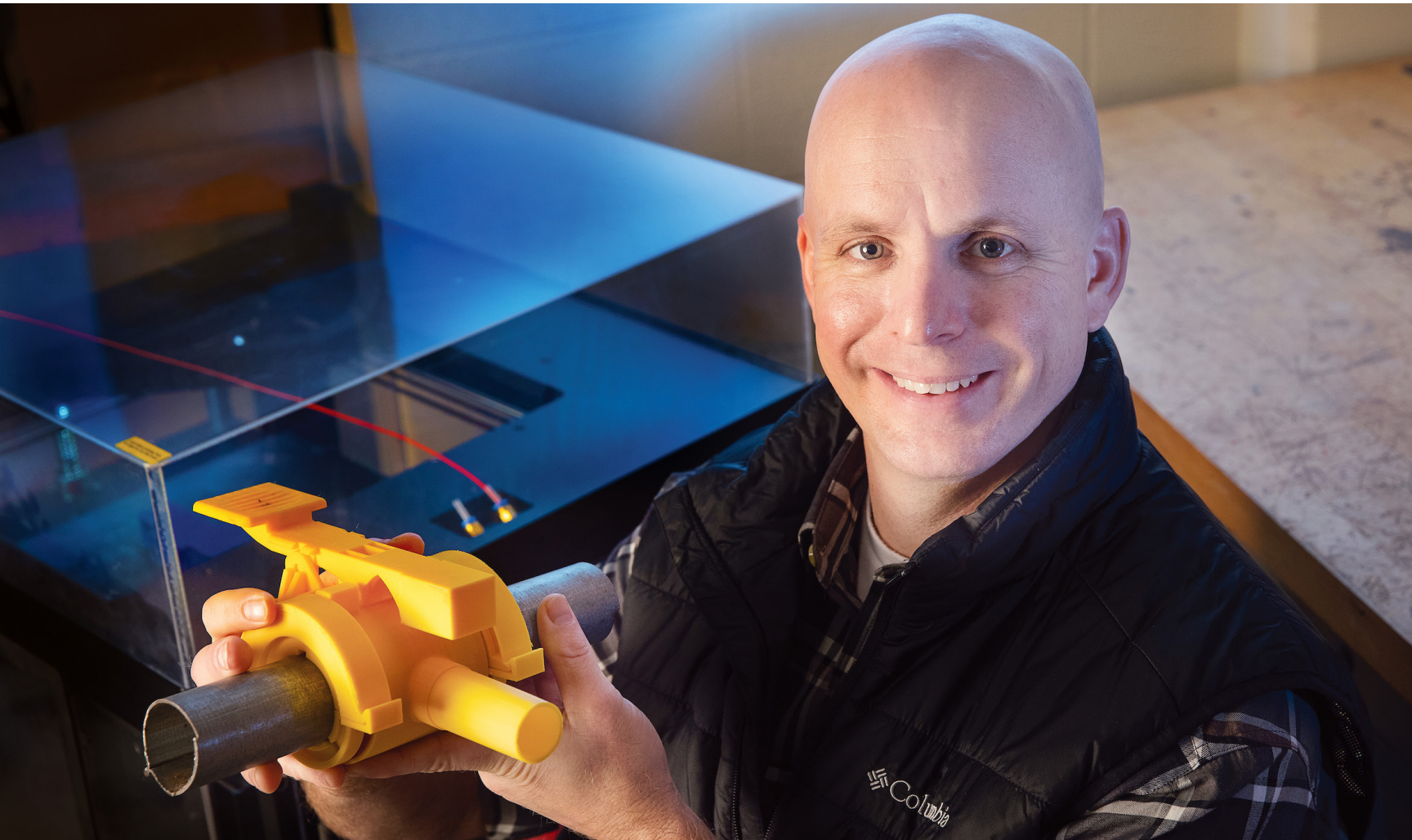
Want to see **more** of
Campus Scene?



Visit us online at
utm.edu/campusscene

Take a look back at
previous issues and share
your favorite stories!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT ► Mark Lister, *Martin*



Mark Lister, a recent graduate, invented a spring-loaded supplemental poultry feeder as part of his academic coursework.

In another life, **Mark Lister ('18)** coached college football at institutions across the country. Now, he is an inventor. Lister, a Martin resident and fall 2018 UT Martin graduate, has a patent pending for a spring-loaded supplemental poultry feeder, an idea that occurred to him two years ago while working in the poultry barns he owns and operates with his wife, Becky.

"When we get ready for new birds, we bring the feed lines down (from the ceiling) to about chest height, and we turn (the supplemental feeding tubes) down," he

said. After this, the lines are lowered to ground-level and the young chicks arrive. "Then, in 10 days, you've got to walk down the line and turn each one up. And there are about 1,000 of them."

The lines cannot be raised once they are filled with poultry feed, and repeatedly bending to rotate each tube is back-breaking work. Lister, then a junior engineering student, decided to find a solution.

"It's just one of those things where I thought, 'There's got to be a better way,'" he said. After more than a year of testing

models in his own poultry barns, Lister is comfortable with the current design and believes his improved supplemental feeder will be useful across the poultry industry.

Lister is currently working with an equipment manufacturing company to produce and refine test models for mass production. He is also working with the UT Research Foundation to determine the product's marketability in the United States. He says some poultry growers in the region have already expressed interest in the product, and one grower is willing to allow future product testing in his barns.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



ELEVATE YOUR FUTURE with a
Master of Arts in Strategic Communication!

Develop the strategic communication skills that employers value. Our 95-percent online program is great for working professionals and can be completed in as few as five semesters.

utm.edu/masc