

CARDINAL

CADENCE

THE MAGAZINE OF LAMAR UNIVERSITY

VOL. 44, NO. 1 | SPRING/SUMMER 2016



From the President



Welcome to this first in a series of themed *Cardinal Cadence* issues centered on Lamar University: A Texas State of Mind. An important part of who we are is our sense of community, which is prevalent throughout campus and beyond. Just a few of these areas are highlighted in this issue.

One of our initiatives during the past year focuses on the creation of the Greater South Park Neighborhood Partnership, which has and will continue to assist our community bordering the

university. We also are looking toward an exciting future with our recently formed Office of Sustainability, headed by faculty member Alicen Flosi, and the continued growth of the LU Community Garden on campus.

Many groups on campus are making a difference in our immediate community and extended communities. From our study abroad program to LU's rotary student organization to the Office of Student Engagement, we feature just a few of the ways our students are involved in the community.

We also highlight in this issue, a number of individuals in LU's community. Kumer Das, associate director of mathematics and director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, was this year's Julie and Ben Rogers Community Service Award recipient and created a successful tutoring program in Southeast Texas. Two alumni, John Alexander and Anthony Wingate are both greatly contributing to the development of students and their futures. Alexander through his recently dedicated painting studio for LU students and Wingate within his own community. LU's director of the Disability Resource Center, Kyle Mutz, also is making an important impact in his contributions to the diversity of our campus.

Last summer, we welcomed a new provost and three deans to the administrative team. Here they share their reflections of the first year on campus. Additionally, I would like to direct your attention in this issue to one of our outstanding students - Lamar University football player and Purple Heart recipient, Marcus Abbott. His story is one of courage and determination and we are proud to have him as a member of our community.

Thank you for being part of the Lamar University family and I hope you enjoy this issue of *Cardinal Cadence*.

Sincerely,

Kenneth R. Evans, President



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Lamar University is a Texas State of Mind. Cardinals embrace a sense of community, approach challenges with a can-do attitude and live life with an indomitable independent spirit. This issue focuses on the sense of community we exhibit on campus and on the wider world stage. #WeAreLU

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Community victories transform South Park

by Caitlin Duerler



LU student volunteer, Brian Stafford, mechanical engineering major



LU student volunteers follow neighbor, Camron Green, as they work in the neighborhood.

Community volunteer, Burnell Hankton



Even as Lamar University prepares students to succeed across the nation and around the globe, LU also maintains a strong connection with its South Park neighbors. A sense of shared community led LU students, faculty, staff and administration to join with South Park residents and greater Beaumont community members to reimagine, rebuild and revitalize the area.

In March 2015, the Greater South Park Neighborhood Partnership was born.

Norman Bellard, special assistant to the president for community relations at Lamar University and chair of the partnership, said “the hopeful outlook keeps drawing enthusiastic supporters to the project.” Since its beginning, the committee has grown from 12 members to more than 40, representing a good cross-section of Beaumont including the South Park area. “At the inaugural meeting, we started talking about what would be some of our short-term and long-term goals,” he said. “We identified four areas that we want to target: community engagement, infrastructure, safety and security, and networking and communications.

“It is our goal to help the people of South Park build a more prosperous future by working together to meet challenges and create opportunities,” said Bellard.

The South Park neighborhood encompasses MLK Parkway in the east, the railroad tracks bordering the Pear Orchard neighborhood to the west, Washington Boulevard to the north and Cardinal Dr. to the south, with Lamar University nestled in the middle. “If you look at the history of the university, we began as South Park Junior College and ultimately became Lamar University,” said Bellard. “We have grown with this neighborhood, and we have embraced this neighborhood. There are many challenges facing residents of South Park, but we believe that by working together we can address them.”

Residents, along with LU faculty, staff and students, celebrated with the inaugural ‘A Day in the Park,’ last fall which included music by the Jimmy Simmons Band and the Jazz Innovators. “We had a big party—we had music, food, games and activities for the kids and beautiful weather,” Bellard said. “About 1100 community members joined in the festive, family atmosphere.”

Terry Mena, member of the partnership committee and associate vice president and dean of students for the Division of Student Engagement, finds that students are eager to help residents’ efforts to beautify the neighborhood. Besides ‘A Day in the Park,’ students



participated in ‘A Day of Service in South Park.’ “South Park is our neighbor—they are a part of our community, and we are a part of theirs,” Mena said. “Students walked and picked up trash and enjoyed meeting some of the residents.”

Beyond LU students’ volunteerism, the City of Beaumont has played a major part on the committee in carrying out plans to improve the neighborhood’s infrastructure—starting with demolition of dilapidated buildings no longer in use. “Those structures, from a safety and cleanliness aspect, needed to go in order to revitalize,” Bellard said. Since the start, almost 40 structures have been taken out and many properties identified for future revitalization, both commercial and residential.

“To ‘Reimagine’ is both inspirational and aspirational,” Bellard said. “We believe that those who are part of the greater South Park neighborhoods can reimagine their neighborhoods as vibrant, growing and dynamic communities in which to live, work and play.” Working alongside chiefs of the Beaumont Police Department and the Lamar University Police Department, committee members are making safety a priority. “We are identifying and addressing concerns through proactive policing, appropriate lighting and greater involvement of the community. We have made some great strides.”

While the project aims to improve the South Park neighborhood, that effort is just its launching point. “We began in South Park, but it will not end in South Park,” Bellard said. “What we hope to do, ultimately, is to have an inviting and secure environment and make our community an attractive community, whether it’s for someone moving here with their family or expanding their business.”



Besides reaching out to the greater Beaumont community, the project hopes to serve as a foundation for future renovation projects throughout the region and stimulate involvement from other institutions. “We are going to blossom from these smaller projects,” Mena said, “to extend beyond just the two-mile radius of our campus, and hopefully we will be able to send a team to different areas throughout the Golden Triangle as an LU-driven example of how to engage with and strengthen community.”

For more information on the Greater South Park Neighborhood Partnership, visit Greater South Park Neighborhood Partnership on Facebook, or contact Norman Bellard at (409) 880-7721

“South Park is our neighbor—they are a part of our community and we are a part of theirs.”

—Terry Mena
associate vice president
and dean of students

Moving the LU community forward: New leadership

by **Beth Gallaspy**

Preparing students to meet global needs in a rapidly changing world requires visionary leadership. Fortunately, Lamar University has the fresh perspectives of a quartet of new leaders ready to build on the university community's past successes as they look to the future.

It is a transformational time for Lamar University with the arrival a year ago of a new provost and three new academic deans all selected following exhaustive national searches to succeed retiring administrators. Coming just a few short years into the tenure of President Ken Evans, these academic leaders are working to strengthen bonds among faculty, students and alumni, equipping them to make a difference on campus, across Texas and around the world.

- ★ **James Marquart**, provost and vice president of academic affairs
- ★ **Derina Holtzhausen**, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication
- ★ **Srinivas Palanki**, dean of the College of Engineering
- ★ **Robert Spina**, dean of the College of Education



“We’re working to bring in more students, get the best possible faculty we can in the classrooms to provide those students access to a great education, and help them graduate within four years with as little debt as possible so they can enter the workforce and be successful. If they’re successful, that’s the full circle. They’ll become great alumni.”

**—James Marquart,
provost and vice president of
academic affairs**

James Marquart

As provost and vice president of academic affairs—the academic leader of Lamar University—James Marquart relies on the collaboration of deans who, like him, came aboard last year as well as the input of LU veterans. “The great thing about it is we’re all focused on the same areas, whether we’re new on the ground or we’ve been here a while,” he said.

Topping the priority list is attracting more students with the potential to succeed. Second is continuing to recruit top quality instructional faculty. Additionally, Marquart stresses the need to renovate facilities and bring new resources in to enhance the student experience. He cites ongoing planning for a new science and technology building as an example.

Marquart, who came to LU from his post as vice provost of academic affairs at University of Texas-Dallas, said he has been impressed by the quality of the Lamar University community—both on and off campus—since moving to Beaumont. Faculty and staff members are “hard working. They want to do what’s right for the campus community and the Beaumont community,” he said. Also, he has been “amazed” by alumni he has met locally and from across the state. “They’re very dedicated and committed to the future of this university,” he said. “That’s a huge intangible. It’s wonderful to be able to call on them.” And call on them he will. Marquart intends to begin involving alumni in recruiting to bring the best and brightest students to LU as it continues its growth as a top teaching and research institution.

Derina Holtzhausen

Although she leads a diverse college with academic disciplines ranging from deaf education and speech and hearing sciences to visual and performing arts, Derina Holtzhausen strives to build a common sense of community among faculty by focusing on the aspects they all share.

“We are student centered. Our students must have the best possible education, the most forward-looking education and that is something we all must do,” she said.

To support that, Holtzhausen, who came to LU after serving as director of the School of Media and Strategic Communication at Oklahoma State University, has been evaluating policies and procedures to ensure everyone is treated equitably and reviewing

curriculum to prepare students to solve problems and to be prepared to succeed in jobs and fields that might not yet exist.

An important focal point for Holtzhausen is encouraging “thought leaders” in each department within the College of Fine Arts and Communication to create outstanding niche programs. She does not expect faculty to excel at everything, but she wants them to “be THE best at what they do, so that people come here to be educated in those areas,” she said.

Another common thread for Holtzhausen is promoting social justice, “and understanding that social justice doesn’t only pertain to people but also to the environment and nature.” In speech and hearing sciences, that might mean improving access to services for all populations, as where in communication, spreading awareness through media and strategic communication is an important contribution, she said. In the visual and performing arts, it could mean holding a mirror to society to encourage reflection on both the good and the bad. “For both faculty and students, you must constantly ask the question, ‘How do we as a college contribute to the well being of people in our surrounding communities?’” she said.



“Our vision is to provide outstanding, innovative and cutting-edge education for our students so that they can become influential citizens who contribute to their communities wherever they go.”

**—Derina Holtzhausen,
dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication**



Srinivas Palanki

Building on Lamar University's national reputation for excellence in engineering, Srinivas Palanki let faculty know early on that innovative research matters and needs to be shared and celebrated, starting with the campus community.

Research posters explaining inquiries and discoveries have become standard outside faculty offices, starting with Palanki's, giving students a better idea of what their professors do and helping colleagues find collaborators. Another way Palanki tries to foster collegiality is by taking a daily 10 a.m. coffee break and inviting anyone to drop by for a cup.

"I was trying to break down some departmental silos. Usually, the topic moves quickly to research," he said. On one occasion, a faculty member looking for someone with expertise in a particular topic found the perfect partner sitting next to him. "They don't have to talk to me. They just have to talk to each other."

Students benefit as well. Palanki has instituted a series of monthly faculty workshops to share experiences, challenges and best practices in teaching. "Teaching and research are linked. My experience is the best teachers are also the best researchers in general."

Along with building community within the college, Palanki, who was chair of the Department of Chemical Engineering and Biomolecular Engineering at University of South Alabama before his move to LU, encourages connection across the university and beyond. For example, he plans to use a gift from a donor for a competition in which teams of engineering and fine arts students will create kinetic sculptures on campus. "Art students will do all the aesthetics, and engineering students will work on how to make the thing move," he said. "Those are the kinds of intangibles that can make LU an interesting place for students."

“We should have strong programs at all levels. The undergraduate program focuses on innovative teaching. The doctoral program targets innovative research. The master’s program combines aspects of both. All three should be integrated seamlessly.”

**–Srinivas Palanki,
dean of the College of Engineering**

Robert Spina

As a new dean coming in from the outside, Robert Spina has spent time studying the culture and community of Lamar University as well as the College of Education and Human Development—and he likes what he sees.

Most impressive to him are the strong and continually growing online educator preparation programs. Spina, who previously served as associate dean of undergraduate education and college assessment at Old Dominion University, said he hopes to create additional infrastructure to support those programs and perhaps develop a center to provide forward-looking leadership in the management of large-scale digital learning efforts.

Along with varied educator preparation programs, the college encompasses family and consumer sciences and kinesiology. Although the offerings are diverse, Spina strives to build community among the departments by focusing on commonalities—efforts to recruit top faculty and students. Additionally, “we want to use best practices in terms of curriculum development and how we design the curriculum in the year 2016 for what students need in this global world,” he said.

Along with creating connection among faculty and students, Spina recognizes the importance of the alumni community. Earlier this year, the college for the first time hosted a reception for anyone with an LU connection—alumni, faculty, current students—at the Texas Association of School Administrators Conference in Austin. With the success of that event, Spina plans to continue such receptions each year and perhaps host similar events at other educational and professional conferences.

“I’m a firm believer that connecting alumni and current students is so critical,” Spina said. “We establish connections and relationships between alumni and current students that could potentially help people in their careers.”

“I think there is a real opportunity for our college to be a leader in the management of digital learning. Given the history of the College of Education and Human Development with online learning, we have expertise because we have done this on a very large scale.”

**–Robert Spina, dean of the College of Education and
Human Development**





Innovation fund honors dean emeritus

A new fund honoring **Russ Schultz's** leadership while serving as dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication has been established through the Lamar University Foundation. **Sandra (French) Clark '80** established the flexible Dr. Russ A. Schultz Innovation Fund in Fine Arts to support the areas of music, theatre, dance and visual arts.



Harn named Shaver Professor

Lamar University has named **Monica Harn**, chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, the inaugural recipient of the Diane H. Shaver Professorship in Speech and Hearing Sciences. **Diane (Howell) '76** and **Don Shaver '76** established the five-year appointment, which carries an annual stipend and research activity awards, to recognize faculty performance and leadership.



Percussion wins world championships

LU's Drumline and Percussion Ensemble both took first place at the annual Percussive Arts Society's International Competition last November in San Antonio. Winning first place at the Percussive Arts Society is among the highest honors a collegiate percussion ensemble can receive. The awards establish LU's percussion program as one of the finest in the world. **Travis Fife**, director of marching percussion, and **Matt Holm**, instructor of percussion, conduct the ensembles.



Master class with violinist Goto

The Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music hosted a master class with internationally renowned violinist **Ryu Goto**, whose career began at age 7. Jan. 21 in the Rothwell Recital Hall through a grant from the Symphony League of Beaumont.



Troutman goes international

Last November, Assistant Professor **Christopher Troutman's** drawing, *Underground*, received an Award of Excellence, one of 10 prizes available in an exhibition of 305 works, at the 70th Annual Southern Japan Art Exhibition at the Kagoshima City Museum Prefectural Museum Nov. 28-Dec. 13.

Fischer speaks art

Published in August 2015 by Cognella Press, Assistant Professor **Julia Fischer's** book, *How to Speak Art: Understanding Its Language, Issues, and Themes*, is written for those new to art and art history. It explores works of art from prehistoric cave paintings to modern artists and addresses common themes in the visual arts.



LU Opera Theatre shines

LU's Opera Theatre presented scenes from musical theatre and operettas featuring works by Gilbert and Sullivan, Stephen Sondheim, Franz Lehár and more Nov. 13-14 in the Rothwell Recital Hall. The selections provided students an opportunity for cross-genre performances to the delight of the audience. Assistant Professor of Voice **Serdar Ilban** directs LU Opera Theatre.

Wright performs at festival

Golden Wright performed and choreographed *The Next Chapter* at the Bailando Dance Festival in Corpus Christi this past fall. Students **LaTroy Gable** and **Renekah Gonzales** performed *A Moment in Time*, choreographed by Wright. He also taught a non-traditional partnering master class.

Department of Art Recognized

The National Association of Schools of Art and Design recognized the Department of Art with initial membership this past September. It has more than 340 accredited institutional members and establishes national degree standards.

Thomas wins ArtPrize

Prince Thomas, associate professor of art, won the prestigious 2015 ArtPrize time-based category. Thomas's entry, "That Was Then," layered audio reporting of the first hours of Operation Desert Storm on CNN over footage of a 4th of July fireworks display to jarring effect. ArtPrize is an international art competition held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



STATS FCS National Player finalists; Eastern Washington receiver, **Cooper Kupp**, left, **Kade Harrington**, center, and Illinois State running back, **Marshaun Coprich**.

Harrington earns NCAA honor

Unanimous first-team All-America selection **Kade Harrington** received honors April 16 from the NCAA for leading the nation in rushing yards, all-purpose yards and points per game. The 2015 Southland Conference Player of the Year recorded one of the more special seasons in the history of NCAA Division I football when he became just the seventh running back ever to rush for 2,000 yards in only 10 games, joining a list that includes **Barry Sanders** and **Marcus Allen**. By year's end, Harrington led the nation in total rush yards (2,092), rushing yards per game (190.2 ypg), rushing

touchdowns (21), all-purpose yards (213.36 ypg), and third nationally in yards per carry (7.86 ypc). Harrington set numerous school and conference records throughout the season. The school's all-time leading rusher enters the 2016 season eighth all-time in Southland history with 3,712 career yards, and is on pace to become just the fifth Southland back ever to rush for at least 4,000 yards in a career. Harrington also is currently ranked among the league's Top 10 in rushing touchdowns and total touchdowns.



Tennis returns to nationals, first time in 40 years

The Lamar University men's tennis team made a return to dominance in 2016. The Cardinals went 17-6 (.739) on the season and posted a perfect 5-0 record in Southland Conference play to win their first league title since 1976. LU entered the conference tournament as the No. 1 seed and defended its national ranking by defeating rival Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in the championship match to earn the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Championships – the program's first since moving to the current bracketed format. Along the way the Cardinals also beat two nationally ranked teams.

Davis named head coach

Will Davis, who has served on staff at LSU, one of the nation's most prestigious programs, for eight seasons, took the reins of the Lamar University baseball program after the conclusion of the 2016 season, following the retirement of legendary Head Coach **Jim Gilligan**. Davis has seen tremendous success with his alma mater, including a 2009 College World Series Championship.

Davis has been a part of four College World Series teams, three Southeastern Conference Championship and five SEC Tournament Championship teams. "I will lead a program that the fans, community, and Lamar University will be excited to follow and support," Davis said.



Holeman heads soccer



Steve Holeman joined the Cardinals as soccer coach this past January. A coaching veteran of 22 years, Holeman has more than 200 career

wins to his credit, brings a strong recruiting foundation with him and will lead a program that went 8-11-1 last season. Holeman's career has been spent in the Southeastern Conference, including two programs he started from the ground up. He arrives at LU after spending five seasons at the University of Georgia, where he recorded a 53-39-11 (.568) overall record, and guided the Bulldogs to two NCAA tournament appearances. "Lamar University has a strong combination of academic excellence and athletic facilities, which provides great potential for positive things to happen," Holeman said.

40 YEARS AGO

- Cost of gas: .59/gallon
- 1st Rocky Horror Picture Show midnight screening
- The Dow closed at 1004
- The Eagles' *Hotel California* released
- Apple Computer Co. formed
- Laverne & Shirley premiered
- Matsushita introduced VHS home VCR

► Led by medalist **Wenny Chang**, a junior, the LU women's golf team won an unprecedented fourth straight Southland Conference championship April 14.

► LU senior **Taylor Stockton** became the first women's golfer in SLC history to be a member of four championship squads.



What's going to stop me?

by Sam Khan Jr.

Considering his military background, Marcus Abbott's teammates made a habit of calling him "Sarge." It's a nickname that developed organically, a nod to his status as an Army veteran. The 27-year-old Lamar University defensive lineman traveled a path to college football unlike most college freshmen. Recently, his teammates became more aware of Abbott's past. How he survived an IED (improvised explosive device) attack. How he's lucky to be alive. The Purple Heart he earned. What he had to deal with in the aftermath. Suddenly, they realized the gravity of Abbott's life experience.

"They don't call him Sarge anymore," defensive line coach Carey Bailey said. "That's kind of sacred ground."

Growing up in nearby Port Arthur, Texas, Abbott fell in love with football at 10 years old. As an adolescent, it was a way to keep him out of the streets and out of trouble. In his old neighborhood, "it's very easy to get caught up into criminal life. It's easy to get into a gang. I hung on to football."

He excelled in high school. As a two-time second-team all-district defensive lineman at Memorial High School in nearby Port Arthur, Abbott had dreams of playing college football. He hoped big-time programs like LSU and Texas would recruit him, like they did with his one-time

teammate Jamaal Charles, but they didn't. Junior college and Division II playing opportunities existed, but ego got in the way and Abbott didn't pursue them.

A few months after graduating from Memorial in 2007, Abbott was 19 and working at a local sporting goods store with no real plan. He decided to join the Army. Once he enlisted in February 2008 and began basic training, Abbott thought "Man, what did I get myself into?"

"I think that was the day I became a man," he said. That summer, he was stationed at Fort Lewis in Washington (now Joint Base Lewis-McChord) as a military policeman. In 2009, he received word that he would be deployed to Afghanistan. In June 2010, after a year of training missions at Fort Polk, Louisiana, "I guess you can say that's when the fun began," Abbott said.

He would spend a year deployed to Kandahar province in Afghanistan, but it was Sept. 21, 2010, when Abbott's life changed forever. Abbott and about a dozen other soldiers were on their way to an Army stronghold from a forward operating base. They were walking on a busy main road, took a left turn and "all of a sudden it was just dead," Abbott recalls. "It starts getting real eerie. Things start getting real quiet. Everybody had a gut feeling that something's wrong here."

They pressed on. Their mine detector spotted what Abbott called a dud on the left side of the road. They kept moving and the minute they moved to the right side of the road an explosion went off. The force threw Abbott and knocked him unconscious, resulting in a traumatic brain injury. He doesn't remember much beyond the explosion. He was knocked out for about three to five minutes but wasn't coherent for at least two hours. Miraculously, nobody else was injured.

"We were very fortunate," Abbott said. "My whole squad should be gone right now. Only a part of that bomb went off."



BARRANCO, BEAUMONT ENTERPRISE

BRENT, BEAUMONT ENTERPRISE



Abbott has used his experience to reach out to at-risk youth. In February, he spoke to students at Clear View High School delivering a message of "Not Why Me, but Try Me."

They daisy-chain their explosives. They can have anything from homemade explosive jugs with three artillery rounds and they're all linked together so that when it goes off, everything hits and the artillery rounds will shred off all the shrapnel and cut you right up. "It would've wiped out the whole squad, but luckily, they don't know how to wire. Their wires were frayed and the portion that hit me is what went off."

He returned to his mission about a month later, and in December 2010, was awarded a Purple Heart, given to armed service members wounded or killed in action. The honor took on a different meaning months later, when he lost two of his best friends four days apart in IED attacks. David Fahey was killed Feb. 28, 2011, and Jason Weaver was killed March 3, 2011; both were awarded Purple Hearts posthumously.

"All I could think about was 'I've got a Purple Heart, but I'm walking,'" Abbott said. "How can I be on the same level as them? Those are heroes. I'm no hero. I don't care what anybody says about me ... I did my job. I went out there and did my job and came home. The heroes don't come home. They laid their life on the line."

Fahey and Weaver's names are tattooed on his left forearm. On his right wrist, the date he was injured by the IED is tattooed as "9-21-10." Every morning, he wakes up and looks at the tattoos as reminders of what happened, and they motivate him when he might have a rough day on the football field. When he talks about them, his eyes well up.

"They make me realize that it could be so much worse," Abbott said. "Today really isn't going to be that bad." Abbott remained

in the Army until 2013, when he then returned home to Port Arthur and "basically my world came crashing down," he said.

Still reeling from the loss of Fahey and Weaver, he discovered that his then-wife cheated on him. They divorced. He had surgery on a torn pectoral muscle. He dealt with alcohol problems, substance abuse problems and post-traumatic stress disorder. He wanted to play football but was unmotivated. He gained weight and was out of shape. For a year, he was stagnant.

"I looked in the mirror, I was 25 years old, 330 pounds with high blood pressure," Abbott said. "How in the hell am I going to make this dream happen? I was disgusted with myself."

He changed course, began running and making daily trips to the gym. The weight melted away. He enrolled at Lamar where he majors in kinesiology. In the fall of 2014, at 275 pounds, Abbott walked on with the Cardinals. His first scheduled practice was on his 26th birthday, but it got canceled because of rain. It didn't dampen his spirits, though. "You couldn't give me a better birthday present," he said. He redshirted that season.

Abbott was definitely modest. Teammates and coaches were aware of his veteran status but not of the details of his military past. "He didn't tell me his whole story," Lamar head coach Ray Woodard said. "He doesn't talk about it a lot."

Most people on the team didn't become aware of his Purple Heart until it was mentioned in a recent story published by the Beaumont Enterprise. Abbott confided in only a couple teammates, but primarily Bailey, the defensive line coach. He had

weekly, sometimes twice-weekly, sit-down meetings with Bailey where Abbott would open up about everything that came with transitioning back to civilian life. When Abbott struggled to find a counselor he could confide in, Bailey filled that role.

"Honestly, the man should be a counselor," Abbott said. "He pulled me out of some tough times." Football provided a smoother transition for Abbott to civilian life. The structure that accompanies a football team has been invaluable. His passion for the game is what drives him.

"This has been my therapy," Abbott said. "This has been counseling. It gave me a purpose again." What the future holds is unknown, but Abbott has goals. He wants to obtain his degree and pursue a career in the NFL. He knows that between being 6-foot-1 and being out of football for eight years, the odds are against him. Bailey said Abbott is around 245 pounds now and is still developing his skills. It's too early to tell how much of an on-field impact he can have at Lamar, but Abbott is "headed in the right direction," Bailey said. He provides leadership and sets an example for his teammates.

"There's not one kid in this program that doesn't respect him because they know his journey," Bailey said. "He's taken a path that none of us will ever see."

Once his playing days are over, Abbott wants to coach Texas high school football and eventually become an athletic director. He's convinced he'll accomplish all of his stated goals. Why? "After everything I've been through, I'm [still] alive," he said. "What's going to stop me?"

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Empathy and connection: the soul of community service

by Cheryl P. Rose

On a Thursday evening at the R.C. Miller Library in Beaumont, pairs of adults and children have their heads together and pencils out. One pair is quietly laughing.

"It was this young girl's first day attending our free math clinic, and she was very shy at first," said Kumer Das, associate professor of mathematics and director of the Office of Undergraduate Research. "By the end of our tutoring session, she was so playful with me. It was enjoyable for both sides. I learn from these sessions, too. I can see human beings from a different perspective."

The Free LU Math Clinic for K-12 students provides math homework assistance for children throughout Southeast Texas. In its second year, about 30 to 40 students attend each week. The clinic is the inspiration of Das, a frequent community volunteer who saw a need within his area of expertise and rallied others to create the clinic. Local citizens and LU students serve as the volunteer tutors. "My wife is one of the tutors; my students come and even my fifth-grade son helps the younger students," Das said. "Last year, every Thursday I would get scared about how many tutors would show up. But they came and now they bring their friends, which means they think highly of what they are doing."

The clinic is at the top of a long volunteer resume for Das, which includes organizations within LU, such as forming the Bangladesh Student Association, and in the greater community. In 2015, Lamar University celebrated Das's volunteerism with the Julie and Ben Rogers Community Service Award. The Rogers family established the award in 1979 to encourage Lamar University faculty and staff to volunteer their service and talents to the community.

For Das, his call to community service stems from a deep empathy for others. He credits his father as his model for civic responsibility. "It is important to connect with people," Das said. "I don't think of community service as a favor for someone, but for my own pleasure. I consider it a responsibility to be a good citizen and to do as much as you can."

Connection is valuable to Das, whether he is working with a graduate student, a kindergartener or even a prisoner. When leading a math clinic in a juvenile detention facility, one of the incarcerated youth told Das that his teaching had encouraged the young man to attend college after his release. "I started to think if you can

motivate other people, even people we think of as already lost, then even they can think of life in a different way," Das said.

Das leads by example, but he also is a persuasive and positive cheerleader, encouraging others to experience the satisfaction of volunteer service. Two Lamar University students serving as tutors for the K-12 math clinic are grateful Das recruited them to serve, an activity they might not have deliberately sought on their own. Freshman Maria Azpilicueta began tutoring at the clinic last fall. "I continue tutoring because I truly enjoy the hour a week I put into the experience," she said. "I enjoy teaching math concepts to kids and explaining to them what math is all about. Every time I see they understand the concepts and are able to do their homework on their own, I get a very rewarding feeling. I will remember this experience as a very valuable lesson and apply the same concept of reaching out and giving back to the community in other areas of society that might be in need."

For senior Timothy Gonzales, his respect for Das as a professor is what enticed him to work as a volunteer. "Dr. Das is someone that I look up to not only academically, but also for his attitude and helpfulness," he said.

Participating in community service activities expands students' ideas and perceptions, Das believes, and it can be beneficial to their future job prospects. "I feel excited about students who have done community service because it tells you something about them other than their GPAs or SAT scores," he said. "Not everyone can do service, but if given the opportunities, it will help them in life. I have no doubt about that."

Das also sets an example in his professional field. In 2015, he received the University Scholar Award, the most prestigious research honor bestowed upon a Lamar University faculty member. In 2016, Das received the Robert V. Hogg Award for Excellence in Teaching Introductory Statistics from the Special Interest Group of the Mathematical Association of America on Statistics Education. Das said receiving these awards only motivates him to do more. "I'm so proud to set an example for my kids and for my community of students that if you work hard, you can do anything you want to do in this country," he said.



“I don't think of community service as a favor for someone, but for my own pleasure. I consider it a responsibility to be a good citizen and to do as much as you can.”

—Kumer Das



Communities connected

An artist and his canvas inspire current and future artists

by Maggie Kaspura

Artist John Alexander (B.S. commercial art, 1968) has accumulated a great many accolades during his career: shows in London, Paris and New York, even a retrospective at the Smithsonian. His work hangs in some of the most prestigious museums and private collections in the world. But it was an honor much closer to home that Alexander described as overwhelming: The October 2015 christening of the John Alexander Painting Studio on the LU campus. “Nothing has moved me the way that did,” Alexander said. “That really just did something to me that I can’t describe. It was overwhelming, actually. Very, very touching.”

The christening of the painting studio inspired the entertainment at the President’s Circle dinner featuring Alexander and honoring many longtime

university donors. Faculty and students collaborated to bring some of Alexander’s works to life through costume design, dance, music and on screen visuals of his paintings in a remarkable cross-disciplinary production.

“Lamar University has a very active and important group of people called ‘Friends of the Arts,’ President Ken Evans said. “Where John plays such an important role is that here you have an extremely prestigious artist with an amazing career. He breathes life into that community in a way that you rarely see. When we named the art studio in John’s name, the energy in the room was palpable. He brings that energy to LU, and he brings it to that community of people that are excited about what we are doing. People around John just feel warmed by his presence.”

Despite his international profile and New York studio, Alexander has maintained close ties to LU. In part, it’s because he draws inspiration from the places of his childhood. “I always loved that landscape and everything about it, all up in deep East Texas,” the Beaumont native said. “That was just ingrained in me. It was a source of inspiration to me to come back to it. I love to be up in the woods and down on the bayous, and even though I was living in lower Manhattan, that source—the natural environment around East Texas—was something to which I always stayed connected.”

The other draw has been his love for Lamar University and its professors, in particular the way they helped shape and encourage him as a young art student. “The entire faculty was a group of heartfelt men

and women who really did a great job with the students,” he said.

When Alexander was growing up, there was no such thing as a successful Beaumont artist who went on to international renown. Thankfully, his parents allowed him to pursue his love of art, including enrolling in the art school at LU. “So I got encouragement from my family at a time when it wasn’t a popular thing for a young man in East Texas to become an artist,” he said.

At LU, Alexander found professors within the university community who encouraged and inspired him. “That was where my source of inspiration and strength came from—from within the university itself,” he said. The late Jerry Newman, a former professor, especially was a role model—as an artist and a man. “He taught me so much about being a painter and about life,” Alexander said. “Jerry really did sacrifice his career for the business of teaching. He could have left Beaumont and left his teaching job and made a lot of

money as a professional artist. But he loved being a teacher, and he was very good at it—and his students picked up on it.

Witnessing that generosity of spirit prompted Alexander to do the same for new generations of students. “It’s not where you’re from; it’s where your heart takes you,” Alexander said. “If I can make younger people understand that, I feel like I’m accomplishing something. I like to share the journey with young people.”

LU students are thrilled to spend time with Alexander, said Donna Meeks, chairman of the Department of Art. “On his last visit, John walked out and pointed to where he stood on the balcony thinking about his future,” she said. He showed the students where his studio was and told them about how he stood there one afternoon and thought about what he wanted to do with his life. “Just knowing that this is where he was, and now I am here as a student...” Meeks said. “It means it’s possible. The

“It’s not where you’re from; it’s where your heart takes you.”

—John Alexander, ‘68





John Alexander, *Lost Souls*, 2013

inspiration is that it's possible, when maybe before you thought it wasn't."

Throughout his career, Alexander has returned to campus to spend time with art students, talking about the business, their work and that journey from student to someone making a living with their art. "I hope that my paintings inspire them in that. Here's a person from Beaumont, from a very working class family, who can go out and have a long career as an artist," Alexander said. "I hope that inspires them that they can do it, too."

Those who know Alexander aren't surprised by his urge to give back. "John wants to help others achieve success," said Regina Rogers, an art patron and longtime friend of the university. "He believes deeply in lending that helping hand. Most prominent people go about their lives, but John has never lost his connection to his roots. He's never forgotten those who

helped him achieve, and he's always willing to give back to those coming up the ranks behind him."

Rogers said Alexander is unique in that he's an artist who is free with his praise of other artists' works. "He's very secure in himself, and he's someone who wants others to be successful," she said. That trait—along with a gift for gab—makes him an excellent teacher for today's students, who hang on his every word, according to Rogers. "John has that tremendous ability to capture your attention," she said. "It makes it even more meaningful for his students when he's teaching, because they have this brilliant artist and this extraordinary communicator."

The self-deprecating Alexander said any words of encouragement can mean so much to a young artist, so he's more than willing to pass out deserved compliments. In fact, he'll be back at LU in

the fall, hanging out with the art students, critiquing their work and perhaps even donating one or two more of his own works to the ever-growing collection at the Dishman Art Museum.

"I'm trying to get stuff from various periods of my life so you can make a comparison," Alexander said. "I think it's important so that a young person, or anybody, can see where I was."

Alexander said his goals for donating his time and work to the university are simple. "There are some extremely generous and very, very dedicated alumni doing wonderful stuff for the university," he said. "I hope that I inspire others to give."

Secondly, he wants to share his experiences and opinions, gathered over five decades as a professional artist, with the young artists on campus. "I hope they're inspired—and maybe they can learn something, too."

College Profile: Business



Rogers Chair named
Career businessman, scientist and entrepreneur **Brandon Price** has become the first Ben J. Rogers Chair in Entrepreneurial Studies in the College of Business. Price will work with the colleges, institutes and centers – primarily the College of Business and the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship – at LU to teach business planning, aid in starting up innovative enterprises, engage in outreach to area businesses and entrepreneurs, and connect the university to business and academic communities throughout North America, Latin America and Europe.

Price, who holds a Ph.D. in biophysics, is actively engaged in entrepreneurial start-ups, including Nascent Biotech, a Florida-based clinical-stage company developing a treatment for brain cancer, and OcuSciences, a Michigan-based company developing a retinal metabolic imaging tool for early detection of diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration. Three decades of work in biophysics and leadership in establishing numerous successful biotech start-ups are part of the exceptional experience Price brings to his new role.



Business course gains recognition for innovation

An new business course for sophomores at Lamar University is gaining attention. The Southwest Business Deans' Association named BUSI 2300, "Introduction to Critical Thinking for Business Decision Making," as the 2016 Bobby G. Bizzell Innovative Achievement Award runner-up.

The association searches for business programs that demonstrate innovative excellence. The idea for the course originated after student assessments showed room for improvement in critical thinking. LU's business faculty came together as a team of seven from the departments of management, accounting, business law, marketing, entrepreneurship, and information systems and analysis to start what would become a year-and-a-half course development project.

"Bringing together different disciplines into a single course adds a certain richness," said committee chair **Toni Mulvaney**, professor of business law and director of accreditation and assessment.

The course builds from a foundation on induction, deduction and logical thinking. New concepts and methods that build decision-making skills are introduced each week of the course that is provided online and taken by students pursuing their degrees both on campus and entirely online. A section on business writing introduces how to effectively present a logical argument.

As the team began course development, "what we found were executive education courses, but we didn't find a lot of resources," said **Craig Escamilla**, instructor in management and marketing. "Most of the materials we found are not from business literature, but from the vein of critical thinking and decision making," he said. "In our assignments, we tie it back to business."

In addition to the course work, students play a marketplace game, operating a virtual business for a year-and-a-half, during which time, they make quarterly decisions.

Latiolais earns InBIA Business



Paul Latiolais, director of the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship at Lamar University joins an elite group of graduates who have demonstrated

their commitment and support for the entrepreneurial ecosystem by earning the Business Incubation Management Certificate from the International Business Innovation Association. Through the program's curriculum, globally recognized as the gold standard, Latiolais gained knowledge of best practices connected to managing successful entrepreneurial support programs.

Savoy returns as executive in residence

As ExxonMobil Executive in Residence, **Brian Savoy (B.B.A. Accounting, 1997)** returned to campus to present "Don't be Transactional with Your Career" in Landes Auditorium last October. A native Southeast Texan, he is senior vice president, chief accounting officer and controller for Duke Energy.

College of Business ranks with best

Princeton Review's "Best 295 Business Schools: 2016 Edition" has recognized LU for its exceptional MBA and leadership programs in the College of Business. Of the 295 business schools recognized, 280 are in the U.S. and 15 are international. The review characterized LU's program as affordable, respected and flexible.

Alumnus shares knowledge

The Michael G. Weinert Entrepreneurial Lecture Series welcomed **Anthony George '88** to Landes Auditorium this past fall. George, an entrepreneur and inventor for 25 years in the fields of automation and control systems and marine fuel management, is the CEO of Nautical Control Solutions and founder and president of Control Dynamics International.

George is also a founding member of The Woodlands chapter of The Entrepreneurs' Organization, a global network for entrepreneurs providing peer-to-peer learning, experiences, and connections to experts, with more than 11,000 members in 153 chapters in 48 countries.



An accomplished academic and distinguished career accountant **J. Donald Warren Jr. '63** became the newest member of the College of Business Hall of Fame

this past fall, recognizing him as an outstanding role model for current and future students. Warren is professor of accounting and Schlobach Distinguished Chair in Accounting in the School of Management at Marist College. He began his education career, which includes posts at the University of Hartford and Rutgers Business School, after retiring from a distinguished 31-year career with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

Business study abroad

This past spring, senior **Danny Grigsby**, a triple major in management, entrepreneurship and general business, was the first LU student to experience the new study abroad program with ESC Rennes School of Business in northwestern France, ranked by the Financial Times as one of the Top 10 business schools in France. LU is its sole Texas partner.



Big Red goes green

by Beth Gallaspy

From classrooms to offices to every residence hall, green bins for recyclables have become ubiquitous on campus. Between the tennis courts and the Communication Building, kitchen scraps from Brooks Shivers Dining Hall break down into nutrient-rich compost for the LU's Community Garden. In the quadrangle, the LU Green Squad student organization celebrates Earth Day artistically by upcycling discarded plastic bottles into an original sculpture. These are just a few of the ways sustainability is taking root in the community and culture of Lamar University.

"Students are excited. Employees are excited. The timing is right. People are realizing that we have to start taking care of the environment," said Alicen Flosi, instructor of information systems and analysis, who was named LU's director of sustainability in spring 2015.

When she stepped into her role leading the Office of Sustainability, Flosi said, her first priority was to increase student involvement with the creation of the LU Green Squad, which now numbers about 30 active members among a larger group of occasional helpers. These students and Flosi then focused on improving recycling efforts across campus. In the past year, the Office of Sustainability and LU Green Squad have obtained more than 3,000 green bins made from recycled milk cartons, tagged them with informational stickers and distributed them across

campus. With recycling made easier through ample, identifiable collection points, attention has now turned to educating the campus community to make recycling a habit. "Tossing a water bottle or used battery into the appropriate container should become as routine as putting on a seatbelt when getting into a car," Flosi said.

Kurt Fischer, LU Green Squad president, said his understanding of the importance of sustainability has increased through both his work with the Office of Sustainability and the business courses he has taken as a management information systems major.

"For businesses to survive, including colleges, we need to be able to sustain our habits," Fischer said. "We like doing certain things. We want to be able to sustain what we're doing. I think a lot of people mix it up and think being green means we need to stop what we're doing. That's not what we're talking about. We want to be able to sustain life and the way we like to live life."

As the Environmental Protection Agency puts it, "To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations."

Examples of creating a more sustainable environment in LU's campus community might include steps such as installing additional motion sensor lighting so that electricity is not used

to illuminate empty classrooms or incorporating a water retention feature on the new Reaud Administration Building to capture and reuse rainwater.

A rainwater collection tub outside the Communication Building has already proven to be a helpful feature for the LU Community Garden. The rainwater tub feeds into an irrigation system that runs through multiple beds of fruits, vegetables, herbs and ornamental plants nearby. The garden, which is also featured on page 32 of this issue, is now affiliated with the Office of Sustainability.

Along with the garden's student group, which has about 20 active members, other groups from the Lamar University community and outside organizations have contributed countless volunteer hours to keep things growing. Fraternities, sororities, the softball and rugby teams, and the Reaud Honors College Student Association all have given time to the LU Community Garden, learning more about sustainable food production and fostering a greater sense of community. Freshmen Interest Groups often visit the garden, sparking humorous responses from urban natives reluctant to leave the sidewalk or unable to tell a papaya from a cucumber.

The connection to the university's larger sustainability efforts through the Office of Sustainability has been helpful for the LU Community Garden with access to supplies and additional resources. For example, Flosi worked with the Construction Management Program in the College of Business to have students build a supply shed and two new raised planters for the garden.

Making connections to build a culture of sustainability among the LU community is a large part of the Office of Sustainability's focus, Flosi said. "What I hope is that everyone on campus will be involved in some way," she said. So far, some of those ways have included communication students making a video to promote recycling and the tennis team saving empty ball canisters to collect used batteries. The Office of Sustainability also has worked with the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission to promote carpooling among students and employees.

"We have a long way to go, but I think a lot has happened so far," Flosi said. "Lamar could be a starting point to spread throughout Southeast Texas. There's so much more we could all be doing for the environment."

“Students are excited. Employees are excited. The timing is right. People are realizing that we have to start taking care of the environment.”

–Alicen Flosi

LU Rotaract improves community

by Enoma Agbongiasede



LU Rotaract students attend Beaumont Cops and Kids Bike Rodeo.



Ryan Nunez plants saplings at Big Thicket National Preserve.

Students make things happen in the community—whether on campus or beyond. President of LU Rotaract and the Honors Student Association Ryan Nunez makes sure that the Reaud Honors College group plans service projects within the community, participating in efforts such as the Beaumont Cops and Kids Bike Rodeo, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards and planting saplings at Big Thicket National Preserve in Kountze at the centennial celebration with more than 50 volunteers.

“It’s a great way to meet new people and get to meet students with a wide spectrum of interests. It really expands your outlook,” Nunez said.

Within Rotaract, past LU chapter members who are now working for local non-profits return to campus to give presentations to current members and talk with Reaud Honors College students about volunteering with them on a community project.

“It opens students’ eyes to what’s available in the community and the organization needs that they didn’t even realize. It also builds skills that they can add to a resume that can round out what they can offer an employer,” said Rebekah Maxwell, Reaud Honors College coordinator.

The hours LU Rotaract students volunteer becomes a force multiplier for any project, helping those close to home as well as people of communities further afield as part of Rotary International. For one project, students helped assemble diaper bags to send to new moms at a women’s shelter in Nicaragua. LU Rotaract is one of only two Rotaract clubs in its district to receive international recognition for community involvement.

Nunez said working with the group’s members, who have many different working styles, helped her learn about leading. “My communication has gotten a lot better. I am learning to work with students who have a wide variety of talents,” Nunez said.

College Profile: Engineering

Faculty Notes



University Professor and Scholar **Jerry Lin**, senior director of graduation programs for the College of Engineering, received the 2016 Excellence in Engineering Education Award from the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. Lin is director of the Center for Advances in Water and Air Quality and is an Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar.

Springer International has published associate professor of electrical engineering **Selahattin Sayil**’s book *Soft Error Mechanisms, Modeling and Mitigation*.

James Ellis, a senior electrical engineering student, won the 2016 Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Region 5 East Area paper competition.



Robotics to combat lionfish

The popular aquarium species, native to the Pacific, has grown from an intentional or inadvertent release of as few as eight females off the Florida coast in the 1980s to a scourge along the eastern seaboard of the U.S., throughout the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. Today, Lionfish populations threaten to collapse entire reef ecosystems and cause incalculable losses for sport and commercial fisheries.

Harley Myler, the William B. and Mary G. Mitchell Endowed Chair in Engineering and chair of the Phillip M. Drayer Department of Electrical Engineering, recently began research to create a semi-autonomous robotic submersible system capable of working discretely or in concert with others in a swarm to locate, positively identify and remediate the Lionfish outbreak in coastal waters. “This project will be to develop the robot, recognize the Lionfish, work cooperatively with humans and do all this in the marine environment,” Myler said.

Using existing technology, Myler’s proposal to the National Science Foundation describes the plan to test and refine the submersible system through three levels—on campus using models, at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s 3,200-gallon saltwater tank in Corpus Christi using live Lionfish in a captive environment, and, finally, with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration supervision, on Lionfish in varied habitats of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.



Students win design challenge

Mechanical engineering students **Clay Robinson**, **Matthew Perdue**, **Megan Campbell**, **Allen Giberson** and **Caleb Washburn**, with faculty mentor and Professor **Kendrick Aung**, were awarded first place as the top design team at the 2015 NASA Texas Space Grant Consortium Design Challenge.

They were among nine first-semester teams competing in the fall 2015 Challenge. The team modified a portion of the Mars drill design currently operating on the Mars Curiosity Rover to improve its operational efficiency. Scientists are using the drill to locate permafrost, which could result in creating water on Mars, a vital element for further space exploration.



Community draws TALH student to LU

From her time in the LU Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities, electrical engineering and mathematics major, **Tyler Doiron** knew she wanted to be involved in the space industry. “I was given the opportunity to explore academic areas in depth,” she said. That inspiration allowed her to “discover at a younger age what really intrigued me.” Doiron chose to continue her undergraduate education at LU because of the university’s sense of community. “I know almost everybody at LU” she said. “I’ve had the same people in my electrical engineering classes for two years, and now we’re just like a big family.” While conducting space Internet research with Professor Ruhai Wang, Doiron took the opportunity to intern with Scott Burleigh, a principal engineer at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory through LU’s Presidential Faculty Fellowship.

▶ Competing in Baja

A team of 16 senior mechanical engineering students took the culmination of a year’s work designing and creating a mini dune buggy and put it to the test in the SAE Baja Design Series West competition May 19-22 in Gorman, California.

▶ Beck Fellow Taiwan bound

Junior electrical engineering and physics major, **Nicolas Nikoloutsos** will explore experimental procedures for drug delivery in nanomedicine under the direction of Che-Ming Jack Hu of Academia Sinica in Taipei, Taiwan, during the summer as one of two 2016 David J. Beck Fellows.

▶ Torres earns LOFT Fellowship

Roberto Torres, a junior mechanical engineering major, is one of 20 Hispanic students chosen from universities across the nation for ExxonMobil’s LOFT Fellowship. The competitive fellowship includes a \$1,000 grant and will pair Torres with ExxonMobil plant manager Fernando Salazar as his mentor to guide him as he prepares to enter the workforce.



Kyle Mutz

Access opens doors

by Lionel Mitchell

Education and access stand as touchstones for Kyle Mutz, director of the LU Disability Resource Center, as he works to build a more integrated and welcoming community at LU. Mutz comes to Lamar University from a service-oriented career in Tucson where he worked as a transitional counselor for students with disabilities who were graduating from high school. This experience gave him a lesson on the importance of education and access for students from different socioeconomic backgrounds and ability levels.

"I really learned about how life can affect a person's ability to get an education and how disability can affect that because everybody comes from a different background and has different challenges." Mutz' understanding of those challenges has allowed him to train faculty and staff to become better allies for disabled students and to provide those students with the opportunities they need to be fully integrated members of the community.

Mutz believes that LU's greatest strength is its diversity, which comprises all categories including disability. Additionally, Mutz prides himself and LU on big strides in ensuring that all students including the deaf or hard of hearing have equal access to campus events, which includes providing captioning and interpreters at important events like graduation. "LU has one of the highest percentages of deaf students of any college in the nation. The buy-in to make the university fully accessible has been huge," Mutz said.

Another source of strength for Mutz comes from representing the U.S. in the Paralympics. His involvement in the multinational event and sports in general has had a major influence on his leadership. "I was able to see the disability issue through an international lens," Mutz said. Considering LU's large international student population, Mutz' international experience allows him to better understand and serve the needs of students with disabilities regardless of their national origin.



Kyle Mutz and Allie Valentine, Fort Worth, biology

The Paralympics also influenced Mutz' decision to bring Paralympic style sports to campus. He believes that sports are great tools for promoting community because they can give people with and without disabilities the opportunity to play together and build long-term positive relationships. Faced with a range of options, Mutz decided to begin with basketball. "The reason I wanted to do wheelchair basketball first is because anybody can do it, whether you're disabled or not. All you have to do is sit in a chair. That's one of the things I want to do. I want to make the experience as inclusive as possible," Mutz said.

With three successful wheelchair basketball tournaments completed, Mutz has turned his attention to expanding the variety of sports offered on campus. He is looking forward to adding wheelchair tennis and track and field events in the future. "My goal is for students to choose to come to Lamar University in part because of our disability policies." Thanks to Mutz' leadership, LU has another reason to stand out in the minds of our students, and the campus community is an even more welcoming place for all students.

LU online education program leads pack

Lamar University's College of Education and Human Development offers the largest online education program in the state of Texas. Through organization, hard work and an unwavering commitment to excellence, faculty and staff are driving the success of LU's online education degree programs by offering students flexibility, academic rigor and practical professional training.

Since 2008, more than 12,000 teachers have earned master's degrees from LU online programs. "For many," Dean Bob Spina said, "online delivery eliminated the need to rob time from job and family and allowed them to pursue their dreams, gaining knowledge at a time and place of their choosing."

In a 2014 Texas Education Agency survey
96% of LU graduates recommended the program to their colleagues.

U.S. News and World Report identified LU's program as a top-ranked online education program in 2013.

The college has prepared **1 in 4** of new aspiring school principals statewide.

On the 2014-15 Texas principal certification exam, LU grads outperformed other test takers by almost 10 percent.



Master of Public Health now online

The Department of Health and Kinesiology introduced a new online Masters of Public Health program specializing in health disparities this past fall. The program, offered entirely online, allows enrollees to earn a master's degree at their own pace and addresses a community need to provide care for chronic conditions.

"The program is mainly designed for working professionals—those who want a tool to give them an edge or to keep them moving up the ladder," said **Praphul Joshi**, program director and associate professor of health. "Our target is to recruit professionals in health-related fields, including those employed at public health agencies, non-profit organizations, physicians, nurses and other allied health professionals as well as students planning to attend medical school."

The Association of Schools of Public Health estimates that by 2020, the U.S. will be facing a shortfall of at least 250,000 public health workers. Many public health-related jobs require a graduate degree. The program has already surpassed expected student enrollment and began the accreditation process this past spring, which usually takes two years. Students who complete the program prior to accreditation, however, will be considered students of the accredited program after the process is complete.

"It's the first MPH program offered through the Texas State University System," Joshi said. Obesity, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and several forms of cancers, among others, contribute to chronic health issues. Currently, no other university in Texas or Louisiana offers an MPH program specializing in health disparities. "Before now there were no public health degree programs between Houston and New Orleans," Joshi said. "It's a vast gap, so you have a lot of need for public health professionals, but no skilled workforce to fill that need." More information is available by contacting Praphul Joshi, (409) 880-8944.



Hamza trains field specialists in refugee camps

Kal Hamza, professor of counseling and special populations, visited Turkey and Jordan's refugee camps last summer. During his visit, he trained mental health field specialists on diagnosing and treating refugees and war survivors. Hamza also delivered six workshops on autism and ADHD treatment and diagnoses. The Syrian American Medical Society appointed Hamza chair of the Psychosocial Subcommittee Medical Team. This committee is in charge of offering psychiatric and psychosocial services to Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. He also was invited to join the editorial board as a reviewer for Avicenna Journal of the Medicine-Psychiatric Department.

Dietetics Programs Commended

In January, the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics board voted to continue full accreditation of both LU's Internship Program in Dietetics and the Didactic Program in Nutrition and Dietetics for a seven-year period ending in 2023. Clinical Instructor Jill Killough is director of the IP, and Associate Professor Connie Ruiz directs the didactic program. The council commended both programs: the internship had a 100 percent pass rate on the National Registration Exam for Dietitians for the third consecutive year and the didactic program has a 92 percent five-year pass rate.



Online master's score high
The online Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling scored second place in onlinecolleges.net's "Best Online Master's in Counseling 2016" which considers colleges and universities across the U.S.

LU tops M.Ed. list
Lamar University is at the top of the list of 35 schools selected for best value by Top Masters in Education for online master of education programs in the U.S.

Brain Rules author visits
John Medina, a developmental biologist and author of *Brain Rules: 12 principles for striving and thriving at work, home and school*, gave a lecture on how the brain functions to a standing-room-only audience Feb. 23 for the spring Academic Lecture Series. The lecture also streamed live to an online audience.



J. Anthony Wingate expands sense of community for many

by Cheryl P. Rose



When talking to college students, J. Anthony Wingate keeps it straight up. Visiting a classroom of freshmen, I'll recognize that many of them probably couldn't wait to get away from mom, dad and curfews, but that I'm here to tell them if they compromise their GPAs during their freshman and sophomore years, they cannot overcome it by the time they're seniors," he said. "Corporations like mine are looking for the best and



brightest, and one of the first flybys is GPA. At my company, that is a 3.2 or better. I'm not telling them not to have fun, but to manage their fun and manage their class work."

In the last eight years, Wingate (B.S. mechanical engineering, 1985) has invested a lot of time interacting with young people, actively encouraging them to dream big and showing by his example that professional success is possible. Wingate grew up in Beaumont, influenced by the careers of two uncles, W. Preston Shaw, a high school principal who rose to become superintendent of schools, and Don Sinegal, an engineer. When he entered Lamar University,

Wingate appreciated the mentorship of Richard Price, who was then a faculty member in the mathematics department. After college, he worked for several companies, including GE and Lockheed Martin, working in numerous roles such as a quality, product, production engineer and project manager. In 1994, he joined Sandia National Laboratories, a corporation that employs nearly 11,000 people. In his current role, he manages a department within product realization and engineering assessment.

Though he lives in Albuquerque, N.M., Wingate travels to colleges across the country to recruit minority students to Sandia and to STEM paths in general. "The percentage of people of color in STEM careers is very low," he said. "I got involved in recruiting to identify talent that I know is out there among minorities and to create opportunities for those individuals."

As a manager and a leader in diversity efforts, Wingate is utilizing connections made during a 32-year career to help promising minority students get hired. For corporations or recruiters who claim they can't locate and identify qualified minority candidates, Wingate points to developing relationships with schools and spending time discussing opportunities with students as the solution.

When he spends hours manning a table at a college career fair, Wingate knows that his small part in encouraging minority students' professional paths contributes to larger goal. "Diversity is extremely important," he said. "You can't play a piano with just the white keys or just the black keys. You have to use both to make beautiful music. History has proven that diversity is key to the success of this country and this world. The more we work to improve diversity in workplaces, schools and communities, the better we are as a human race."

Sandia National Laboratories leaders nominated Wingate in 2013 as the Professional Engineer of the Year for Diversity Leadership sponsored by the Black Engineer of the Year awards.

Wingate was chosen and enjoyed an "Academy Award-style" moment at the national gala. "I was humbled to be nominated," he said. "But for me, I don't need thank-yous and attaboys, because I reach out to youth from compassion, love and a desire to serve. I like to serve—whether as a foster parent or at national recruiting events. The satisfaction is beyond monetary; it's about being able to change or influence a life."

Wingate and his wife of 22 years, Kim, have served as foster parents for eight years. "We've had over 100 kids come through our home," he said. "While we have them, we try to influence their minds and assure them that there is a better way of life than that from which they came."

By sharing time with both college students and foster children, Wingate hopes to pass on insights about the challenges ahead for them, but also the opportunities. "Serving and working with young people, that's what I get excited about," he said.

Wingate's desire to serve has also led him to participate in five international missions, taking him to South America, Africa and, most recently, the Philippines. On the last trip, Wingate got to meet a child that he and his wife sponsor. "Prior to the trip, I learned the boy, Kim, had an interest in science," Wingate said. "I brought him several science projects, a soccer ball, books, pens and paper and several other items. His response was, 'It's too much.' To be able to influence a child's life with hope is the greatest blessing one can experience."

Looking ahead to his retirement years, Wingate anticipates becoming more deeply involved in his church, perhaps even entering the ministry. "My priorities in life are God, my family and my job," he said. "That's the order, and I don't compromise it. A deacon at a church I attended used to say, 'I can't hear what you're saying for watching what you're doing.' You can talk the talk, but if you don't back it up with your actions, young people, especially foster kids, will see that."



**“Serving and working with young people, that's what I get excited about.”
—J. Anthony Wingate '85**

Faculty Notes

After praise from The Washington Post and The New York Times, crime novel publisher Brash Books added to its library **Jim Sanderson's** novel "El Camino del Rio"—first published more than 20 years ago—in paperback and e-book form. Professor Sanderson is chair of the Department of English and Modern Languages.

The Special Interest Group of the Mathematical Association of America honored **Kumer Das**, associate professor of statistics, with the Robert V. Hogg Award for Excellence in Teaching Introductory Statistics.

Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice **Stuart Wright** is lead author of *Storming Zion: Government Raids on Religious Communities*, a book he and his collaborator Susan Palmer, professor of religious studies at Dawson College in Montreal, believe is the first comprehensive study ever conducted of government raids on religious communities. The Oxford University Press publication is the result of extensive research that took the two from Central and West Texas to the streets of Paris and Brussels to the most remote parts of the Alps and Pyrenees.

Jeff Forret, professor of history and author of four books on the topic of slavery, has been awarded the selective William Nelson Cromwell Foundation Research Fellowship for continued work on his next book, *Williams' Gang: A Slave Trader, His Cargo, and Justice in the Old South*. Forret also received a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend to help complete the work on the history of the domestic slave trade.



Nursing students help mend memory with music

Students from the LU Texas Nursing Student Association are helping implement the innovative Music and Memory project to enhance the quality of life of resident dementia patients through music. The work is part of a Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services grant to College Street Health Center in Beaumont. Music and Memory is based on the belief that a link exists between dementia sufferers' favorite songs and forgotten autobiographical memories. The grant provides each of the 32 nursing homes in the state 15 iPods, some 'music money' to load the iPods with songs, and training of staff. The 15 nursing students in the association participating in the project helped residents diagnosed with dementia build their personal playlists and turned in weekly journals detailing their experiences and the reactions of the residents.

First physics conference

Faculty coordinators brought together a large number of renowned scientists from across the country to present their work at the Joint Spring 2016 Meeting of the Texas Sections of the American Physical Society, the American Association of Physics Teachers and Zone 13 of the Society of Physics Students. More than 200 leaders in the physics community attended from top universities in Texas, Kansas and Florida, as well as from leading national laboratories. More than 60 science teachers and students from across the country learned from plenary talks, breakout sessions, poster presentations and workshops. Associate Professor of Physics **Cristian Bahrim** considers the conference a major success. "We grew from a small program a few years ago to the top 11 percent in graduation rates nationwide in 2014-2015, and now we have successfully organized a complex, far-reaching conference. All the support we've received has paid off," Bahrim said.

Nursing Students Educate

By collaborating with the Julie Roger's Gift of Life Tobacco Control Coalition Program, nursing faculty and students are helping the community promote tobacco cessation by visiting local high schools to present information on the health risks of tobacco use, accomplishing a three-fold goal: informing students statistically at high-risk to use tobacco of its damaging effects, educating future medical professionals, and recruiting students by showing LU's commitment to health and the community.

Hello Moot Court

Four undergraduate students broke new ground for the university last February when they represented LU as its first participants in a Moot Court invitation held by the Texas Undergraduate Moot Court Association at Southern Methodist University. Participants were **Megan Collins**, a senior from Nederland, **Siera Dodds**, a sophomore from Beaumont, **Mason Gardner**, a senior from Lumberton, and **Nathaniel Henry**, a senior from Winnie.

Walking in another's shoes

Rising to meet the challenge of a rapidly aging population, social work majors gathered in February to cycle through activities aimed at helping them understand the unique set of challenges the elderly face daily: listening with impaired hearing and cognitive ability, sorting medication with poor vision and coordination, using transportation while reliant on equipment and writing an advanced directive for end of life care. Students were equipped with ill fitting, bulky shoes, vision impairment goggles, thick jackets, earplugs and mobility devices as they had to navigate daily activities. "A lot of students said, 'You know, I really didn't know this. I didn't realize this is what it was like to age at all,'" said **Nan Nelson**, adjunct instructor of social work.



Ties for first

Two students from the Lamar University Department of Computer Science, **James Wilson** and **Bharatkumar Tejwani**, won first prize at the Student Poster Contest during the Association for Computer Educators in Texas 2015 conference. LU will host the 2016 conference this fall.

Townley-Smith honored

Physics and engineering major **Keeley Townley-Smith** has been named Texas State University System Regents' Student Scholar. She becomes the first so honored from LU, and represents the very best student scholars from among the more than 66,000 undergraduates enrolled in TSUS colleges and universities.

Schlumberger gives software

Schlumberger has given the Department of Earth and Space Sciences two three-year software licenses valued at roughly \$1.7 million. The Petrel E&P Platform shows reflection seismic data, one of the main ways to image the subsurface of an area. Techlog software aids in interpreting borehole information through rock formation assessment.

ACCOLADES



Daniel Chen became the 2016 University Professor and Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar during a ceremony April 14 in the University Reception Center. Chen is a professor in the Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering. The title University Professor is awarded for life and is the most prestigious faculty award conferred by LU's academic community. It is given to select faculty chosen for their academic stature and achievements as an emblem of highest merit.

Lamar University honored four faculty members with 2016 University Merit Awards in recognition of outstanding performance in the classroom. This honor was presented to Ricardo Colon, assistant professor accounting; Rebecca Weinbaum, assistant professor of counseling and special populations; Ashwini Kucknoor, assistant professor of biology; and Evan Wujcik, assistant professor of chemical engineering.

Erik Stromberg, a more than 30-year career expert in the port industry, becomes the inaugural executive director of the Center for Advances in Port Management after an extensive national search. Stromberg served as CEO of the American Association of Port Authorities for nearly a decade and as head of the North Carolina State Ports Authority for 10 years.



After a national search, **LaTanya Afolayan** has joined the LU advancement division as associate vice president for university advancement, bringing 15 years of experience in development and major gifts. The 15-year career development professional comes to LU from Appalachian State University in North Carolina where she served as major gifts officer and director of development since 2011. Previously, Afolayan served as vice chancellor of institutional advancement at North Carolina Central University from 2009 to 2010.

Jocelyn Robbins has joined the Division of Student Engagement as director of Career and Professional Development. With her background as a human resources specialist, Robbins brings experience to LU from business, banking and health care in human resource development, new hire recruitment and skill sets valuable to students as they prepare for careers.



Angie Collins, LU employee; Maegan Collins, Nederland, political science; Gayne DeTorres, Nederland, pre-nursing; Allie Valentine, Fort Worth, biology; and Annie the dog

LU community comes together to help

Faculty, staff and student volunteers helped man the Montagne Center as it served as an American Red Cross Shelter for more than 250 people in response to Sabine River flooding this past March. Facilities maintenance staff quickly prepared the facility for service, and the student organization Caring Cardinals—the first student organization to target disaster relief as its mission—collected pet food and supplies to help pet owners dislocated by the flood and gave stuffed animals to children making the Montagne Center their temporary home.

Enrollment tops last spring

14,056
ENROLLED STUDENTS

152,256
CREDIT HOURS

Enrollment and semester credit hours both set new records. LU has 14,056 enrolled students, which sets "an all-time record for spring enrollment at the university," said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost. "Most of our growth was at the undergraduate level." Semester credit hours gained two percent over last year, reaching 152,256 hours.

Students net EPA grant

LU students have received a \$15,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's P3 Program (People, Prosperity, and the Planet) with their proposal to design and synthesize sustainable, environmentally friendly coating systems with self-healing and feedback properties using linseed oil monomers. Chemistry majors Chuanxing Zhan and Lauren Ware, and Yang Lu, a chemical engineering major, started developing this solution to metal corrosion problems in 2014 under the supervision of Assistant Professor Evan Wujcik in the Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering and Suying Wei, associate professor of analytical chemistry.

LU boosts research data transfer speed 20-fold

Lamar University's research community will soon benefit from a 20-fold increase in data transfer speed thanks to a major project funded by a National Science Foundation grant. Through the NSF grant, the LU research community will realize up to 10 Gigabits per second (Gbps) speeds, according to Priscilla Parsons, vice president for information technology at LU.

Developing Cardinal community on campus

LU offers students, faculty opportunities for campus engagement

by Caitlin Duerler

Each semester, Lamar University welcomes thousands of new students, as it experiences record-breaking enrollment each year along with new faculty and staff members. While welcoming new individuals to the Cardinal community is an important task, so is making sure they have opportunities to grow during their time at LU.

LU's Division of Student Engagement works with incoming students to familiarize them with opportunities beyond their classes and the Support and Mentoring to Advance Research and Teaching program (SMART) helps orient faculty. Terry Mena,

associate vice president and dean of students for student engagement, says his office works with new students to help them identify groups or organizations that relate to their interests and connect them so they can start off on the right foot during the first weeks of the semester.

"We start from day one—the first day a student is accepted into Lamar University, our goal is to contact them and share how they can become involved on campus," Mena said. "Our orientation program is the key vehicle for forming those connections."

At the beginning of the semester, Student Engagement also plans "Week of

Welcome," a period that allows students and their fellow classmates to learn about civic engagement activities, fraternity and sorority organizations, and attending athletic events, as well as movie and game nights.

"We create circles of opportunities where students can be involved and find a niche for themselves. It is about their personalized college experience," Mena says. "Involvement is more than just showing up to an event. It's taking the time to learn about who you are as a potential leader moving forward."

Freshman Interest Groups

Along with the Division of Student Engagement, the new Freshman Interest Group program works with incoming students to help them find success within their major. Celine Hodge, cardinal learning engagement and development coordinator, said, since its initiation in fall 2015, the program has more than a two-thirds completion rate, and the number of students who typically have academic probation dropped 10 percent.

Juan Martinez, a freshman in French, completed the humanities FIG in its first semester and found the program useful in meeting other students who shared similar interests and who were taking the same courses, helping him foster friendships and making him more confident to talk with his professors.

"I thought it was really cool that we were in a group with students from the same major, so we had a lot of things in common," Martinez said. "I made several friends who I still run into around town and in my classes. It was great when I came back from winter break and went to my new classes; I already had a buddy to sit with. I liked how close-knit we all were, and it really did help me feel less alone when starting college."

FIGs also provided an opportunity for staff and faculty to work together in coordinating the group sessions. "These

programs involve a lot of joint work between groups across campus, including staff members who wouldn't normally talk to each other because of their jobs being so separate," Steven Zani, director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement, said. "A whole lot of collaboration and community building goes on at the staff and faculty level before the students are involved."



Tom Matthews leading a natural science FIG meeting.

Mentoring to advance research and teaching

Just like incoming freshman, new faculty and staff can feel overwhelmed when first hired because of their unfamiliarity with the resources available on campus and new processes. Amy Smith, associate director of the Support and Mentoring to Advance Research and Teaching program and Don and Diane Shaver Distinguished Faculty Fellow, says that SMART offers connections to others who are going through similar transitions to fill in gaps in their pedagogical training, helping them design more efficient courses from the beginning of their LU careers.

"SMART brings together new faculty from all over the university—different departments and disciplines—and we work on navigating the new job and some other resources on campus as well as having a place where you can talk about the challenges of teaching, ask questions and discuss things they may feel unsure about," Smith said.

"While academic programs at Lamar University are improving all the time for students and faculty, the university truly flourishes through these community-building opportunities that encourage and enable new Cardinals to spread their wings," Smith said.



LU students at Poas Volcano National Park, Lake Botos in Costa Rica.

Study Abroad: Connecting students beyond campus

The Office of Study Abroad provides students a sense of belonging and gives them a chance to develop relationships with students and universities around the world. Jeff Palis, study abroad director, says it is important to offer students opportunities to represent LU on the international level and engage in a global university exchange.

"Our mission is to globalize the academic experiences for students at all levels in all majors," he said. "We have developed a process to implement bilateral exchange programs; we are not only sending our students to other campuses, but bringing in students from outside the United States to our campus."

Even in preparing for the trip, students develop friendships among their cohort while fundraising to offset costs for

activities during their trip. Amy Smith, associate professor of English, alongside Yasuko Sato, assistant professor in history, planned a trip to Japan offering students history and literature courses while visiting sites in Hiroshima, Kyoto and Tokyo.

"You have all these students who didn't know each other before, and when they start working together for a common goal they become friends," Smith said. "We held a tea sale in the fall, and for Valentine's Day we had a candy and fruit sushi sale—they spent hours getting together to make and sell those things. It helped them to come out of their shells. Getting together and

forming that sense of community before the trip is really valuable."

Kay-Alana Turner, senior in business management, went to Spain in summer 2015 and on the spring break 2016 trip to Panama and Costa Rica. She intends to study in France for a semester-long program in spring 2017 and says the experiences have helped her network with both classmates locally and contacts abroad.

"When you go abroad with a group of students you have shared experiences in another country, you develop these long-lasting friendships," she said. "It is also great to study in other parts of the world because of the network you develop there. I have my Spain family who I stayed with for a month, and they tell me I can stay with them if I come back. I went to Costa Rica, and I have a family there."

"It really is spectacular to be developing a sense of community with people around the world," Turner said.



Kirby Clayton visits Gyeongbokgung palace in Seoul, South Korea.



LU students visit London.

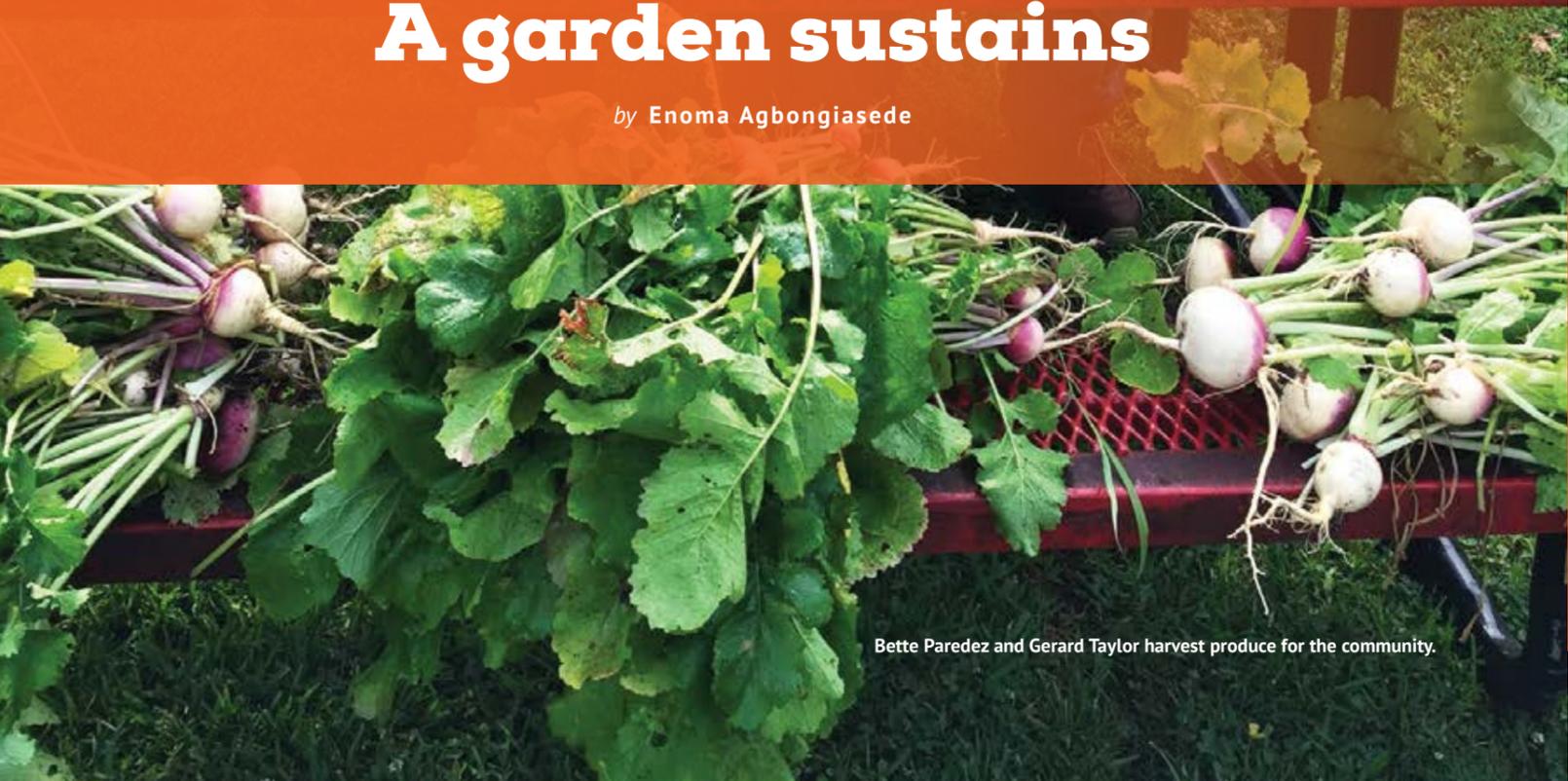


Autumn Hardin has close encounter with the Arachnid kind in Belize.



A garden sustains

by Enoma Agbongiasede



Bette Paredez and Gerard Taylor harvest produce for the community.



Planting carrots with her dad hooked Bette Paredez on gardening as a child, but the whiff of green fragrance from a tomato plant fast became her favorite. “I like that you can take a little seed and then get to eat a delicious food from it,” said Paredez, a Beaumont nursing major.

A plan of construction that started in fall 2012 has now bloomed into a lush garden that Bette and her fellow students work to tend, producing clean, nutritious food using sustainable methods to share with those in the community who may have limited access to fresh food. “My first summer here, we donated 250 pounds of produce to the Southeast Texas Food Bank,” Paredez said. “The 20 to 30 pounds per month helps people in need get good quality food. We don’t use any fertilizer or pesticides but compost from the dining hall to mix in with the mulch, and that’s what makes the garden flourish.”

LU’s Office of Sustainability helps with funding, and sometimes community garden

volunteers accept plant donations. “There is vibrant community here when students gather and work together. We really can’t keep them away,” said Tom Matthews, director of assessment and founder of the community garden.

David Devers, an environmental science major from Killeen, said, “There’s a direct proportion with how much work you put into the garden to the results that you see. Besides that, I also see the garden as a little oasis on campus.”

Volunteers’ latest efforts have focused on creating a food forest of produce-bearing trees and shrubs, such as apple, peach, fig, pineapple guava, papaya and sugar cane.

The student-run garden located between the tennis courts and the communication building welcomes green thumbs from around Beaumont and campus. Word of mouth keeps students and volunteers coming back to help. Matthews believes that students feel a sense of

community at the garden with their peers and other volunteers. “The joy they find in creating something from the beginning is what has students telling their friends to help volunteer,” he said.

With students putting in the work to tend the garden, the naturally wholesome harvest is distributed to the Southeast Texas Food Bank, Some Other Place and local soup kitchens around Beaumont to serve those in need around the community.

A legacy planting is one of the most lasting ways the garden instills community in those that nurture it. “Students really enjoy putting a plant in at the beginning of the semester, then at the end, coming back to see how its grown,” Paredez said. “We just started with trees too. You can plant a tree, come back years later, and it’s still here. Seeing that makes you feel connected to campus.”

“Students really enjoy putting a plant in at the beginning of the semester, then at the end, coming back to see how its grown.”

—Bette Paredez





We hope you enjoy reading about former classmates. If you have news to share—a position announcement, milestone, achievement, wedding, baby—or know the whereabouts of a lost alumnus, we want to hear from you.

Send us your news:
Cardinal Cadence
P.O. Box 10011
Beaumont, TX 77710

e-mail alumni@lamar.edu
or call (409) 880-8921

50s

Vernon Klassen '55, B.B.B. management, retired after 35 years as director of marketing with Fisher Controls. He lives in McKinney.

Don Owen Sr. '57, B.S. geology, earned a master's degree in 1959 and his Ph.D. in 1963. He has been named Professor Emeritus of Earth and Space Sciences after thirty years of faculty service at LU. He is a member of the Lamar University Legacy Society and lives in Silsbee.

Betty (Welch) McLean '58, B.B.A. business administration, retired from Entergy and lives in Silsbee.

J.O. Bedsole '59, B.S. mechanical engineering, retired from Texaco as an engineering and maintenance supervisor. He currently lives in Pharr with his wife, Nancy.

Dr. Tony Singletary '59, B.S. biology, is a dentist. He lives in Richmond with his wife, **Raynell** '58, certificate secretarial science.

Charles Swanson '59, B.B.A. management, retired as a golf coach for a private high school and currently works in real estate in metro Atlanta, where he lives with his wife, Martha.

60s

The Texas Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates recognized **David J. Beck** '61, B.S. government, '12, LU honorary doctorate, as Trial Lawyer of the Year. He co-founded

Beck Redden LLP and has received the TACTAS Lifetime of Excellence in Advocacy Award. The firm is a finalist for Texas Lawyer's Litigation Departments of the Year. He lives in Houston with his wife, Judy.

Jesse Whitaker '63, B.S. chemistry, retired as senior staff research chemist for Shell Research. He lives in Rusk with his wife, Jeannie.

Morris Edelson '64, B.A. English, '65, M.A. English, earned a Ph.D. in 1974 and is a writer, editor and English professor at Houston Community College. He lives in Houston with his wife, Melissa.

Maulin Desai '64, B.S. chemical engineering, '66, B.S. mechanical engineering, '69, M.E.S. engineering science, retired as an engineer with Bateman Engineering. He and his wife, Meena live in Aurora, Colo.

Kenneth L. Hodges '64, B.S. elementary education, retired from teaching after 51 years. His last 34 were spent in Jasper as a special education teacher.

George Barrow '65, B.S. secondary education, '70, M.Ed. secondary education, owns Barrow Insurance Agency. He lives in Bon Wier with his wife, Jo Ann.

Ken Clark '65, B.S. secondary education, retired from Lockheed Martin. He lives in Coldspring with his wife, **Patricia (Jones)** '65.

Jim Davis '65, B.S. government, '67, M.B.A. business administration, is retired and lives in Houston.

Gene Feigelson '65, B.S. government, is a broker for Re/Max United in Houston, where he lives.

Pauline (Hopkins) Mouton '65, B.A. English, '74, M.Ed. elementary education, retired from Beaumont school district as an educator and guidance counselor who made history as the first African American to head of the English Department at South Park High School. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Nelson.

Bill Moye '65, B.A. history, earned a master's degree in 1967 and works as a teacher at Warren High School, where he and his wife, Melinda, live.

Dr. Jerry Reed '65, B.S. biology, earned his medical degree from University of Texas Medical Branch in 1968 and works at Children's Physician Services of South Texas, affiliated with Driscoll Children's Hospital. He lives in Corpus Christi with his wife, Ruth.

Dr. Larry Rose '65, B.S. biology, is a retired orthodontist in Houston, where he lives with his wife, Helen.

Sandra (Cockrell) Sherman '65, B.S. elementary education, earned a master's degree in education in 1980. She retired as a coordinator for Education Service Center Region 6. She lives in Huntsville with her husband, **Jacob** '65, B.S. secondary education.

Linda (Tomlin) Taylor '65, B.B.A. secretarial science, earned a master's degree in education in 1995. She retired as principal for Williamson County Academy. She lives in North Richland Hills.

Ron Comeau '67, B.B.A. marketing, retired from Chevron and Rocky Mountain Oil Co. where he worked

as a lubrication engineer. He lives with his wife, Nancy, in Rockland, Maine.

Charles Gongre '67, B.A. English, earned a Ph.D. in English in 1980. He retired from Lamar State College Port Arthur after 38 years of service. He has served as dean of academic programs and has been named professor emeritus. He lives in Nederland with his wife, Lisa.

Marvin Davenport '69, B.A. secondary education, earned a doctorate in educational leadership in 2001 and a second doctorate in educational administration and leadership in 2015. After retiring, he is now an adjunct instructor in the Psychology Department at LeTourneau University in Longview. He lives in Diana with his wife, Melanie.

Dianne (Daigle) Pieper '69, B.S. elementary education, is an interior designer with Ken Pieper and Associates LLC. She lives with her husband and business partner, Ken, in Golden, Colo.

70s

Patricia (Perry) Isles '70, B.S. home economics, '87, M.S. home economics, retired as an educator in 1997 to pursue a career restoring and selling homes. She lives in Dallas.

Ronald DeLord '71, B.S. government, is an attorney and formal patrol officer and detective. He was one of the founders of the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of

Texas and has authored five books, two focusing on police labor and three on Texas history. His latest is *Eternity at the End of a Rope*, published by Sunstone Press. He and his wife, **Brenda (Robnett)** '70, B.S. elementary education, live in Georgetown.

Joe French '71, B.S. geology, is an environmental scientist with the Department of Defense Air Force Civil Engineer Center. He lives with his wife, Neldan, in Shreveport, La.

Cindy (Koepf) Pursley '72, B.B.A. business administration, retired as a purchasing agent for Jacobs Engineering and lives in Fort Worth.

After 13 years of flying and five years at the Pentagon, **Col. Charles South** '72, B.S. industrial engineering, is now retired from civilian management of guidance and navigation systems testing for the Air Force. He lives in Cuba Lake, N.Y., with his wife, Sue.

Bill Colburn '73, B.B.A. accounting, retired after 36 years with Hines Interests in Houston. Colburn remains active in the Houston Grand Opera and is a trustee and member of the HGO Endowment Board. He lives in Houston.

David Lightfoot '73, B.B.A. marketing, '74, B.B.A. accounting, is the manager of Luminant Energy. He lives in Wylie with his wife, Linda.

Lawrence C. Smith '73, B.B.A. general business, is retired from DuPont. He lives in Silsbee, with his wife, **Cindy (Drake)** '89, B.S. elementary education, '99, M.Ed. leadership.

Mark Allen '74, B.S. communication, is vice president of Rohn Tower. He lives in Peoria.

Delores Black '74, B.S. instrumental music, '84, M.Ed. music education, is the senior administrative associate in the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music at Lamar University. She recently celebrated 40 years of service to the music department and is the secretary/treasurer of Iota Xi chapter of the national honor society in music. She lives in Vidor.

Chuck Crow '74, B.S. music, owns Crow and Associates real estate firm. He and his wife, Rita, live in Wimberley.

Manit Jaiyen '74, M.E. civil engineering, is the principal mechanical engineer for Fluor Enterprises. He lives in Stafford.

Linda Simpson '74, B.S. elementary education, works as an ESL specialist at Willowridge High School in Fort Bend school district. She lives in Houston.

Michael Thompson '74, B.S. biology, earned an M.S. microbiology in 1983 and an M.B.A. in healthcare administration in 1994. He works for Methodist Healthcare System and lives in Converse with his wife, Maria.

Neal Weaver '74, M.Ed. administration, is the director of athletics for Forney school district. He lives in Canton with his wife, Amanda.

Joey Blazek '76, B.F.A. graphic design, owns Blazek Design and has created print and electronic media for clients in Beaumont,

Houston and Louisiana. Inspired by local landscapes, he enjoys painting and lives in Beaumont.

Sylvia McMullen '76, B.S. communication, earned her M.Ed. in 1982 and doctorate in 2006, and works as the executive director of resource and grant development at Blinn College. She lives in College Station with her husband, Ulman.

1. LU Alumni Football Tailgate Party

Alumni and Friends gathered at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame Museum in Waco for a pre-game reception before the Cardinals took on the Baylor Bears Sept. 12.

Cecilia Marquart, Jim Marquart (Provost & VP of Academic Affairs) Cathy Price, Richard Price

2. Ambassadors Etiquette Dinner

Ambassadors gathered for etiquette training conducted by Tracie Craig, director of the Lamar University Event Center, Sept. 29.

Christian Brent, Lauren Scholdt '15, Kara Timberlake, Devyn Coleman, Jeremy Allen, Zach Holt

3. Alumni Fall Community Service

Alumni, friends and ambassadors gathered to help pack nutritional self-stable meals for area seniors served by Nutrition and Services for Seniors Oct. 3.

Lisa (Bowen) Meshell '88, '97, Edward Meshell, Ambassador Keeley Townley-Smith, Paula (Russian) Lovoi '68, '93.

4. Golden Circle Luncheon

Dr. and Mrs. Evans welcomed back to campus alumni from the Classes of 1924-1965 and honored the Class of 1965, who celebrated their 50th anniversary of their graduation from Lamar State College of Technology, Oct. 24.

Margaret (Pugh) Bostic '64, '75, and Carol (Anderson) Chenault '65 browse through yearbooks and reminisce about their time at LU.



Class Notes

Larry P. Smith '76, A.A.S., '93, B.S. political science, has retired from teaching in Port Neches Groves school district. He lives in Groves with his wife, **Robin (Childress)** '78, B.S. elementary education.

Jake Tortorice '76, B.B.A. marketing, owns Rao's Bakery, which has five locations throughout Southeast Texas and Houston. *USA Today* listed Rao's king cakes among the best Mardi Gras king cakes of 2016, calling the Voodoo King Cake a standout. He and his wife, Mary, live in Sour Lake.

George Bowden '77, B.S. mass communications, won the top prize at the 2015 University of North Texas Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference. The prize includes a provisional book contract with University of North Texas Press for *That I Must Tread Alone*, a memoir about his father-in-law's Korean War experience. He lives in Fort Worth.

Tom Harvey '77, B.A. music education, is now a graduate faculty member in the Educational Instruction and Leadership Department at Southeastern Oklahoma State University after 38 years of service to public schools in Texas. He lives in Woodville with his wife, Rita.

Gov. Greg Abbott appointed **Michael Truncale** '78 B.B.A. economics, to the Prepaid Higher Education Tuition Board for a term set to expire Feb. 1, 2021. The board oversees the Texas Tuition Promise Fund and the Texas College Savings Plan. Truncale is senior partner at Orgain, Bell & Tucker LLP. He is a past member of the Texas State University System Board of Regents. He and his wife, Denise, live in Beaumont.

David Bass '78, B.S. secondary education, '79, M.S. biology, earned his Ph. D. in zoology in 1985. He is professor of biology and curator of invertebrates at the University of Central Oklahoma. His wife, **Donna Pace** '80, B.S. home economics, is an advancement coordinator at the University of Central Oklahoma. They live in Edmund, Okla.

Jerry Fleming '78, B.M. vocal performance, retired after 45 years in music ministry in Texas Baptist churches. He lives in Fort Worth.

Gary Garrison '78, B.S. speech, is executive administrator at the Tisch School of the Arts, where

he develops and operates a professional training program for playwrighting and screenwriting. He lives in New York, N.Y.

Steve Moore '78, B.S. communication, received the Dr. Raul Ornelas Lifetime Music Achievement Award in 2015. Moore is a former CEO of the Country Music Association and the creator of the CMA Foundation, which has given more than \$11 million to organizations enhancing the lives of students through music. He is the owner and director of Moore Development LLC. He lives in Arrington, Tenn., with his wife, **Charmione** '79, B.M. music education.

Bart Standley '78, B.S. civil engineering, has joined the firm RPS Klotz Associates as vice president and public works practice manager. He lives in Waller with his wife, Mary.

Robert Brush '79, B.B.A. management, '81, B.B.A. finance, earned a law degree from the University of Houston in 1993 and works as an environmental attorney with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in Austin, where he lives.

Skip Hildebrand '79, B.S. health and kinesiology, is a tax preparer for Grant Enterprises. He lives in San Antonio with his wife, **Terry** '79.

Joyce (Trahan) James '79, sociology, works as the principal and senior racial equity consultant with Joyce James Consulting and serves on the board of directors for Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates. She lives in Round Rock with her husband, John.

80s

Dr. Alan B. Coleman '80, B.S. biology, received a 2015 Presidential Council on Fitness, Sports Nutrition Leadership Award. This award is reserved for those who improve the lives of others in the community by providing enhancing health opportunities. He is a dentist and lives in Beaumont with his wife, **Julie (Dubois)** '80, B.G.S. general studies.

Tommy Fain '80, B.M. music education, is the associate director of band for Lake Dallas Middle School and president and CEO of Fain Music Services. He lives in Plano.

Chris Pearson '80, B.S. government, is a partner at the firm Germer, Beaman & Brown. He lives in Austin with his wife, **Annette** '83, B.A. English, '91, M.A. English.

Mark A. Peterson '80, A.A.S. drafting technology, '87, mechanical engineering, earned a B.F.A. in industrial design in 2000 and works at HP as a senior product designer in the retail solutions mobility group. He lives in Houston.

Ronald Strybos '80, B.S. chemical engineering, is facility manager of Spindletop storage for Air Liquide. He and his wife, Gwen, live in Kountze.

Brad Brown '81, B.B.A. accounting, is a senior vice president at First Financial Trust Asset Management. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, **Debbie (Williams)** '06, M.S. family and consumer sciences, instructor and clinical coordinator for the Lamar Institute of Technology dental hygiene program.

Kennette Frank '82, B.S. special education, '83, M.Ed. special education, works as an educational diagnostician for Beaumont school district. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Lloyd Guillory.

Mattamy Homes, North America's largest privately owned homebuilder, has named **Jim Leiferman** '82, B.B.A. accounting, president. He lives in Windermere, Fla., with his wife, **Melinda (Thomason)** '82, B.B.A. accounting.

Vickie (Marshall) Passmore '82, B.S. medical technology, works at Helena Laboratories as a quality assurance assay supervisor. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Scott.

Debbie (Reynolds) Rice '82, B.B.A. office administration, lives in Dickinson with her husband, **Randall** '73, B.B.A. accounting.

Michael Ross '82, B.S. geology, is principal consultant for Environmental Resources Management in Houston. He and his wife, Paula (Kirby) '84, B.S. computer and information sciences, who is director of network infrastructure and communications for Cy-Fair school district, live in Houston. They have two sons.

Debra Briggs '83, B.S. medical technology, is a technical supervisor of clinical microbiology at University of Texas Medical

Branch. She and her husband live in Galveston.

Carolyn (Schwartz) Doolittle '83, B.B.A. accounting, is the finance director for Shoreline Church. She lives in Cedar Park.

Mahdi Fatourae '83, M.E. engineering management, works at MAFTO LLC in industrial automation and lives in Stafford.

John Moore '83, B.S. electrical engineering, is a product engineering manager at Texas Instruments in Sugar Land.

Andrew Smith '83, B.S. chemical engineering, is a comfort specialist for Reed Service Co. in Beaumont, where he and his wife, Susan, live.

Judy (Gracey) Brown '84, B.S. sociology, is an attorney with her own firm. She lives in Arlington.

Mike Carrabine '84, B.S. physical education, '85, M.S. kinesiology, is a teacher and basketball coach for Dulles High School in Fort Bend school district. He lives in Sugar Land with his wife, **Ginger (Gilgillian)** '87, B.S. criminal justice.

James W. Dorrell '84, B.S. electrical engineering, is the vice president of technology and product innovation for skunk works at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. He lives in Palmdale, Calif., with his wife, Pamela.

Todd Dragulski '90, B.S. industrial technology, is a senior project manager at Worley Parsons and lives in Katy.

Shelly Leedy '84, B.S. chemical engineering, works for Richard Automation Inc. She lives in Spring with her husband, Erik Fuller.

Janet (Melancon) Lemons '84, M.S. nursing, '99, B.S. nursing, '05, M.S. nursing, is an instructor for the Upward Mobility Nursing Program at Lamar State College-Orange. She lives in Groves.

Sara Kelley '84, B.S. music education, teaches music in Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She lives in Beaumont.

Lenny Matthews '84, B.S. chemical engineering, is operations manager for Huntsman Corp. He lives in Conroe with his wife, Danette.

Donna Gunter '85, B.S. deaf education and communication disorders, opened BizSmart Media,

a company that helps Southeast Texas business leaders and professionals promote themselves as authorities in their fields. She lives in Orange.

Michael Maggio '85, B.S. chemical engineering, was promoted to process automation superintendent at Chevron Phillips Chemical Co. LLP in June 2015. He lives in Labelle with his wife, Cindy.

Rick Riley '85, B.S. electrical engineering, '90, M.E. engineering management, is president of Entergy Arkansas Inc. He and his wife, **Alicia (Jackson)** '88, B.S. elementary education, live in Little Rock, Ark.

Chris Shawhan '85, A.A.S. technical arts, works as a security officer. He lives in Austin.

Danny Miller '86, B.S. computer and information sciences, is the chief information security officer for Texas A&M University System. He and his wife, Jayne, live in College Station.

Steve Abalos '88, B.B.A. finance, is chief financial officer of Vortech Contracting Inc. in Winnie, where he and wife, Julie, live.

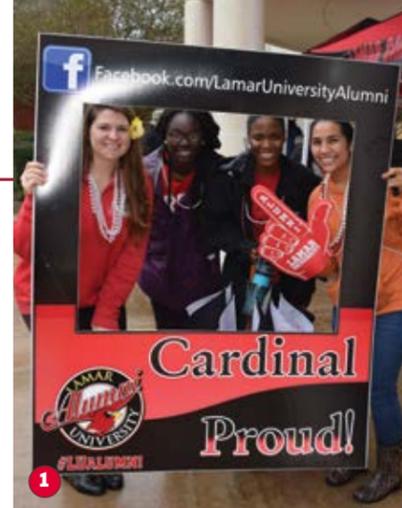
David E. Moore '88, A.S. law enforcement, '89, M.P.A. public administration, '00, B.S. criminal justice, retired from Pine Forest Elementary. He lives in Vidor with his wife, **Kathleen** '91, B.S. elementary education.

Mike Eaves '89, B.B.A. general business, received his law degree from South Texas College of Law in 1993 and is now the managing partner at Calvert Eaves Clarke & Stelly LLP. He lives in Beaumont, with his wife, **Sandy (Simmons)** '00, B.A. English.

Terri Gordon '89, B.B.A. office administration, received a degree from the National Center of Paralegal Training and works as a certified litigation paralegal for the Office of the Attorney General in Atlanta, Ga., where she lives.

90s

Tracy Glende Sr. '90, B.S. electrical engineering, is chief executive officer of Valence Surface Technologies. He lives in Spring with his wife, Janet.



1. Spirit Station
During Cardinal Fan Fest, the Alumni Office spirit station was the source for free spirit items after the parade.

2. Alumni Tailgate
Alumni and friends gathered together to celebrate before the football game at a reception on the Montagne Center deck. Breanna Pollard, Marcus Pollard, Dawn (Vallery) Pollard '88, and Samuel Pollard

3. Homecoming Parade
Lindsey (Carpenter) '04, '07, and Chad Powell '07 and their children.

4. Cardinal Walk of Honor
Alumni and friends who purchased bricks viewed the Cardinal Walk of Honor before the Walk of Champions over to the football stadium. Sherrie (Booker) Branick '81, Merte (Merritt) Booker '58, Jimmy Booker '55, '56

5. Spirit Team Alumni Reunion
Alumni from the Spirit Team reunited and performed during the football game.

Homecoming 2015 | Nov. 7



Alumni Past President's Lunch | Dec. 1

Past presidents of the Alumni Advisory Board gather together for a lunch meeting at the Lamar University Event Center with President Kenneth R. Evans and current Alumni Advisory Board President Carol (Patteson) Hebert '89, '90.

Dr. J. Chad Davis '90, B.S. chemistry, earned his medical degree in 1994 and is the medical director of the pediatric intensive care unit at University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston. He lives in Port Neches.

Julie (Byerly) Theobald '90, B.B.A. office administration, is a program manager at Partners Resource Network TEAM Project. She lives in Missouri City.

Ahmal Renee Tuck '90, B.S. communication, is the virtual school administrator for Alief school district. She lives in Houston.

Warrington Goudeau III '91, B.S. criminal justice, is counsel for BP specializing in international trade sanctions. He and his wife, Ebony, live in Pearland.

Robin (Slott) McCutcheon '91, B.S. elementary education, is a consultant with Stetson and Associates after serving as an intern coordinator in teacher education and an instructor in professional pedagogy at Lamar

University. She and her husband, Darren, live in Groves.

Chet Deaver '92, B.S. sociology, '10, M.Ed. administration, '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, is principal of Kountze High School. He lives in Kountze with his wife, **Shelly (Williams)** '89, B.S. computer science.

Mark Dykes '92, B.B.A. general business-law, is an attorney with Howard L. Nations P.C. He lives in Houston with his wife, **Keri (Vincent)** '93, A.A.S. radiologic technology.

Alfonso Pina '92, A.A.S. business data processing, is a contracts administrator at Air Energi. He lives in Houston.

Troy Whiteman '92, A.A.S. instrumentation technology, '93, B.S. industrial technology, is coordinator of inside sales for Condit Co. He and his wife live in Houston.

Anita Riddle '93, M.E.M. engineering management, '96, Eng.D. chemical

engineering, is global procurement manager for ExxonMobil's Sourcing Process Center of Excellence. She is a 2016 distinguished alumna, and she and her husband, Stephen Schmidt, live in Spring.

Lisa Kethley '94, B.S. dance, is president of Dance Attitudes Inc. She lives in Beaumont.

Christina (Berard) Latiolais '95, A.A.S. radiologic technology, '11, A.A.S. nursing, is a registered nurse working for Folsom Medical Group. She and her husband, Todd, live in Beaumont.

Stephan Malick '95, B.S. communication, is assistant director of the Lamar University Press. He lives in China with his wife, **Renee (Manning)** '95, B.S. criminal justice.

Holly (Crawford) Boudreaux '96, B.S. biology, is a senior district manager for Johnson & Johnson. She and her husband, Jeff, have a daughter, 14, and live in Port Neches.

Cordelia (Mollyn) Cole '96, B.G.S. general studies, '13, M.Ed. administration, is fine arts supervisor for Port Arthur school district. She lives in Port Arthur.

Kelly (Kirkpatrick) McNeill '96, B.S. psychology, owns an online contemporary art gallery, ednasroom.com. She lives in Toronto, Canada.

James Molina '96, B.S. political science, has worked for 13 years in the U.S. House of Representatives as a legislative correspondent for Congressman Mike Turner. He lives in Alexandria, Va.

Divyakumar Sosa '96, M.E. industrial engineering, works at MSA Worldwide LLC as a business analyst and lives in Cranberry Township, Penn.

Sojourner Stephens-McLemore '96, B.S. health education, '08, M.S. family and consumer sciences, is a student success specialist. She and her husband, **Brian** '06, B.A.A.S., '14, M.Ed. education administration, live in Atascocita.

Joseph Pace '97, B.S. political science, '98, B.S. sociology, '04, M.P.A. public administration, is city manager for the City of Lorena. He and his wife, Lori, live in Belton.

Tonya (Andris) Whitaker '97, B.S. sociology, earned an M.A. in English in 2015. She teaches English composition and developmental reading and writing at North Lake College in Irving where she lives in Plano.

Ward Willis '97, B.S. health education, is a commander in the U.S. Air Force and lives in Del Rio.

Keith Tennison II '98, B.S. biology, is director of business operations-managed markets for Sunovion Pharmaceuticals Inc. and lives in Farmingham, Mass.

Melissa (Rice) Chance '99, B.B.A. accounting, '03, M.B.A. business administration, is a controls advisor and certified public accountant for ExxonMobil. She and her husband, Chance, live in Lumberton.

Bryce Darby '99, B.S. chemical engineering, is the senior account manager for Nalco Champion. He lives in Pearland.

Jenna Powell '01, B.S. communication, '14, M.Ed. counseling and development, is assistant director of career development for the Lamar University Career and Testing Center. She lives in Beaumont.

Jerad Saindon '01, B.B.A. marketing, is a senior digital media representative for Cars.com. He lives in Lumberton with his wife, **Jenny (Walker)** '11, A.A.S. nursing, who is a registered nurse for Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas.

Spencer Acadia '02, B.A. psychology, earned his doctorate in 2013 and is an associate librarian for Stephen F. Austin State University. He lives in Nacogdoches.

Daniel Grooms '02, B.S. chemical engineering, earned a Ph.D. in chemical engineering in 2006 and is a senior process engineer for AkzoNobel. He lives in Bacliff.

Kelley (Martin) Williams '02, B.S. psychology, earned her doctorate in psychology in 2001 and is director of training and MindWorks testing at Krist Samaritan Center in Houston. She and her husband, Greg, live in El Lago.

Paige Blankenship-Grisanti '03, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches at Sallie Curtis Elementary School. She and her husband, Frank '02, who is a regional manager for RC Restaurant Group, live in Beaumont.

Nicole Lewis '03, B.S. chemical engineering, earned an M.B.A. in 2003 and is a supply chain director for Athlon Solutions. She and her husband, **Jacob** '03, B.S. Psychology, '10, M.Ed. administration, who is a science teacher and department chair in Celveland school district, live in Liberty.

Lindsay Matlock '03, B.B.A. management, '14, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, is an instructional technology specialist in Liberty school district. She and her husband, Thomas, live in Beaumont.

David Paul '03, M.S. applied criminology, is a warden for the Federal Bureau of Prisons at the Federal Correctional Institution in Waseca, Minn. He lives in Wynne, Ark., with his wife, Pamela.

Amanda (Hansen) Eichelberger '04, M.B.A. accounting, is a financial

analyst with National Oilwell Varco in Fort Worth. She and her husband, Billy, live in Bedford.

Ashley Johnson '04, B.S. communication disorders, earned a master's degree in speech-language pathology in 2013 and is a speech therapist at Mirabeau B. Lamar Elementary. She lives in Houston.

Angel Murphy '04, B.G.S. general studies, '15, Ed.D. educational leadership, teaches in Port Arthur school district, where she lives.

Robbie (Waters) Robichau '04, B.B.A. marketing, earned her doctorate in public administration in 2013 and is an assistant professor at Georgia Southern University. She lives in Statesboro, Ga., with her husband, sports artist **Jason** '02, B.B.A. general business.

Tracey (Perry) Allen '05, B.S. criminal justice, is a warden for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Correctional Institutions Division. She and her husband, Kenny, live in Beaumont.

Paul Bryan '05, B.S. communication disorders, '09, M.Ed. administration, '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, is assistant principal of Port Neches Middle School. He and his wife, **Griseida (Soto)** '02, B.F.A. fine arts, who teaches at Port Neches-Groves High School, live in Groves.

Nicole (Harlan) Feldkamp '05, B.B.A. accounting, '06, M.B.A. business administration, is senior accountant for iFly Corporate. She and her husband, Jacob, live in Leander.

Dr. Stephanie (Cryer) Glover '05, B.S. psychology, earned her medial degree in 2009 and is a pediatric oncologist at Southwest Children's Center. She and her husband, Mark, live in San Antonio.

Chris Guy '05, B.S. civil engineering, earned a master's degree in civil engineering in 2012 and is a senior project engineer at Lanier & Associates Consulting Engineers. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, **Kiley (Hoggins)** '08, B.B.A. general business-advertising, who earned a master's degree in advertising in 2012.

Bob Kalaria '05, M.E. chemical engineering, is a principle process engineer at Kellogg Brown and Root Inc. He lives in Houston.

Ricaflor (Mendoza) Rowley '05, B.B.A. marketing, is the elementary secretary for Legacy Christian Academy. She and her husband married Nov. 29, 2008, and have a daughter, 4. They live in Beaumont.

Crystal Batiste '06, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies, teaches at Kempner High School. She lives in Houston.

Scott Carver '06, M.B.A. business administration, is director of sales for AT&T Arkansas. He lives in Maumelle, Ark., with his wife, **Paige (Furlow)** '10, M.Ed. teacher leadership.

Lori Clark '06, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches fourth grade at Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She lives in Beaumont.

Lori East '06, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches fourth grade in Nederland school district. She lives in Orange.

Nikki (Breed) Jackson '06, B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse at North Cypress Medical Center. She and her husband, **Billy Jackson III** '04, B.G.S. general studies, were married June 24, 2014, and have four kids, Benjamin, 7, Aubrie, 4, Jai, 3, and Nikolas, 1. They live in Katy.

Melanie Lanuza '06, B.S. Communication, '08, B.S. graphic design, was honored with the Ben and Julie Rogers Community Service Award while she worked as graphics publications specialist for Lamar Institute of Technology. She is now a graphic designer for the marketing agency, The Refinery Source, in Beaumont, where she lives.

Steven Sanders '06, B.B.A. general business, is secretary/treasurer of I.L.A. Local 24 Credit Union. He and his wife, **Karmen (Broussard)** '04, B.S. communication, who is head track coach for Pasadena Memorial High School, live in League City.

Jack Williams Jr. '06, M.B.A. business administration, is an international compensation and benefits analyst for Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and lives in Spring.

Jaclyn Young '06, B.S. sociology, earned a master's degree in social work in 2012 and works at Houston Methodist Willowbrook as a team lead social worker. She lives in Houston.



A Dinner and Conversation
Successful alumni host a table of students who are majoring in their same field of study.

1. Host Tim Sudela '80, '85, '92, and his table discuss careers in management: Lauren Schuldt '15; Tim Sudela '80, '85, '92; Rebekah Drummond; and Jeff Dyson '82, '91, director of the MBA Program.
2. Host Jennifer (Stilley) Warren '96, shares stories of her career in marketing: Ashley Goforth; Rebecca Higginbotham; Kabir Sen, chair of Management and Marketing; Harold Stilley '68; Jennifer (Stilley) Warren '96; Kristeen Reynolds; and Tyler Sumrall.
3. Host Brad Brown engaged his table in a discussion about a career in accounting: Breana Delaney-Spates; Brad Brown '81; and Brittney Graham.

Distinguished Alumni 2016



Lamar University named four alumni as Distinguished Alumni for 2016, noting that their dedication to their professions, service to their communities and loyalty to their alma mater epitomizes the Lamar University spirit. The award is the highest granted by the university to its graduates.

Mallory (Marshall) Barnes '07, B.B.A. general business, is senior branch associate at BBVA Compass. She and her husband, Jason, live in Silsbee.

Brian Halligan '07, B.S. computer science, is a senior computer programmer at American National Insurance. He and his wife, Samantha, live in Dickinson.

Whitney (Reeves) Henson '07, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is a realtor for Silver Bay Property Corp. in Arlington, where she lives.

Venkatanaga Kolluru '07, M.E. mechanical engineering, is a programming analyst for Verizon Wireless. He lives in Queens Village, N.Y.

Dr. Lindsey Minter '07, B.S. biology, '07, B.A. music, earned a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences and is a faculty lecturer at Rice University.

John Morrell '07, M.B.A. business administration, is senior vice president of commercial banking at BBVA Compass Bank. He and his wife, **Brianne (Mirabella) '04**, B.S. nursing, who is a registered nurse at Christus St. Mary Hospital, live in Beaumont.

April Rich '07, B.B.A. accounting, '09, M.B.A. business administration, is an audit manager for Deloitte Services LP. She lives in Pearland.

Nick Vikos '07, B.F.A. graphic design, was a production artist for Jason's Deli Corp. and is now a freelance graphic designer, pursuing a career as a character animator. He lives in Beaumont.

Penny (Howard) Wooten '07, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, earned a master's degree in public administration in 2013 and is an adjunct instructor at College of the Mainland. She and her husband, Claude, live in Beaumont.

C.A. Dickey '08, B.B.A. human resource management, is a training coordinator for Dupont, E.I. De Nemours Corp. He and his wife, Bonnie, live in Orange.

Dakota J. Doman '08, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, '11, M.B.A. business administration, is assistant vice president of student life and engagement at West Virginia State University. He lives in Charleston, W.Va., with his wife **Ashly (Henson) '08**, B.S. psychology, who earned a master's degree in forensic psychology in 2012.

The American Nuclear Society has honored **Hash Hashemian '08**, Eng.D. electrical engineering. The group selected his team for the Robert L. Long Training Excellence award in 2015. He holds two Ph.D.s, one in electrical and computer engineering and one in nuclear engineering and applied physics. Hashemian is president, CEO and co-founder of the Global Analysis and Measurement Services Corp. He and his wife, Nazzy, live in Knoxville, Tenn.

Dawn Katz '08, B.S. communication, '10, earned a master's degree in public relations in 2010 and is program coordinator for communication and social science in the General Education and Development Studies Department

at Lamar Institute of Technology. She lives in Nederland.

Kirk Lewis '08, Ed.D. educational leadership, has released a book, *The Chase: Our Passionate Pursuit of Life Worth Living*. He is the superintendent of Pasadena school district and lives in Pasadena.

Alfred C. Robinson '08, B.S. kinesiology, '12, M.Ed. school administration, teaches in Beaumont school district. He lives in Beaumont.

Catherine Warmack '08, B.M. violin performance, performed with the Beaumont Community Orchestra. She now teaches violin in Phoenix, Ariz., where she lives.

Joyce Blain '09, B.A. English and history, '14, M.A. English, teaches in Hamshire-Fannett school district and is UIL coordinator. She and her husband live in Beaumont.

Tracie Gibbs '09, B.S. corporate communication, '11, M.B.A. service management and marketing, is a marketing liaison for Neighbors Emergency Center. She and her husband live in Beaumont.

Diana (Davis) Miles '09, B.S. nursing, is regional director of quality and infection control for Christus St. Elizabeth Hospital. She and her husband, Rodney, live in Beaumont.

Sehul Patel '09, M.S. environmental engineering, is a research and development engineer for De Nora Water Technologies. He and his wife, Ektaban, live in Richmond.

Natalie Pueschel '09, B.S. criminal justice, is the assistant state attorney for the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office in Miami, Fla., where she lives.

Darnisha Rigsby '09, M.Ed. administration, '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, is the assistant principal of Stephens Elementary School in Aldine school district. She lives in Humble.

Brian Roberson II '09, B.S. communication, '10, M.Ed. education technology leadership, is assistant principal of Eisenhower Ninth Grade School in Aldine school district, where he and his wife, Jocquelyn, live. On Sept. 14, 2015, they welcomed their first child, Brian Keith Roberson III. **Raemi (Fryar) Thompson '09**, M.Ed. administration, was named the 2014-2015 Texas Classroom Teachers Association Administrator of the Year for her work as principal of South Elementary in Levelland school district. She and her husband, Ross, live in Levelland.

Kelly (White) Tupper '09, A.A.S. nursing, is a registered nurse at Jennings American Legion Hospital. She and her husband, Chad, live in Iota, La.

Marti Turner '09, M.Ed. teacher leadership, is the executive director of curriculum instruction and special programs for Marlin school district. She lives in Waco.

Paul Van Fleet '09, M.Ed. administration, owns The Teacher Creature Store and is coordinator of secondary science content at

Klein school district's instructional center. He lives in Spring.

Jennifer (Erickson) Roberson '09, M.Ed. administration, teaches in Lewis Palmer school district. She and her husband, William, live in Monument, Colo.

Vita (Zaimon) Rodriguez '09, M.Ed. administration, is district coordinator of special education in Huntsville school district. She and her husband, Gregory, live in Huntsville.

10s

Kendal Clayton '10, B.B.A. marketing, is a student minister at North Monroe Baptist Church. He and his wife, Rebekah, live in Monroe, La.

Cey Gammill '10, industrial engineering, is a waste water operations engineer for Valero. He and his wife, Sarah, live in Groves.

Joshua Leventry '10, B.S. chemical engineering, is a process contact engineer for ExxonMobil Corp. He lives in Monroe with his wife, **Kristin (Lemond) '08**, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies.

Jessica Roberts '10, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies, is a transaction coordinator for AmCap Mortgage. She lives in Houston.

Kyle Seipp '10, M.Ed. administration, is director of college and career

readiness for Northwest school district. He lives in Ponder.

Ashley (Gooden) Stewart '10, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is the founder and executive director of the Baby Stewart Foundation in La Marque where she lives with her husband, Darnell.

Jennifer (Brechtel) Theriot '10, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches kindergarten in Hamshire-Fannett school district. She married her husband, Cody, July 20, 2013. They live in Groves.

Beccy (Fenter) Burleson '11, B.S. family and consumer sciences-dietetics, '12, M.S. family and consumer sciences, is a Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi. She is a registered dietitian and worked in Dallas after graduation before joining the Peace Corps as a health volunteer in Africa. Her blog, "One Girl's Journey from Southeast Texas to the Warm Heart of Africa," may be found at beccyinnmalawi.wordpress.com.

Joseph L. Cantu '11, B.S. mathematics, '14, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, teaches calculus at Clifton J. Ozen Magnet High School. He lives in Beaumont.

Amber (Alexander) Clark '11, B.G.S. general studies, is a youth case supervisor for Court Appointed Special Advocates at Tekoa Academy. She and her husband, Gregory, live in Beaumont.

Meagan (Nelson) Clayton '11, B.G.S. general studies, teaches at IDEA Public Schools-Rundberg. She



1. Alumni Basketball Between the Games Reception

Alumni and friends gathered for a reception between the Lady Cardinals and the Cardinals game and watched both teams take on the HBU Huskies. Kourtney Bolser; Kristin (Bradford) Bolser '05, '15; Lupe Rodriguez; Kay Rodriguez

2. Alumni Basketball Between the Games Reception

Brian Wulf; Brandi (Spoonemore) Wulf '97, '13; Caroline Wulf; Cody Wulf

3. MBA/MSA Alumni & Student LinkedIn Night

MBA/MSA alumni and students gathered Feb. 2 for a networking reception and presentation on how to improve their LinkedIn profiles for business networking. MBA Students Liana Zong and Shilpana Bhawal; Sarah Parker '07, social media manager

lives in Austin with her husband, **Ryder** '11, B.B.A. entrepreneurship, who is a business clerk for IDEA Public Schools.

D'Shondra Dixon '11, B.A. English, teaches English at North Forest High School and lives in Humble.

Christopher Collier '11, B.S. communication, earned a master's degree in public policy and works as an advisor for the state of Texas. He lives in Houston.

Surya Garimella '11, M.E. electrical engineering, is a software systems specialist at University of Texas Medical Branch. She lives in Webster.

Harrison Jones IV '11, M.Ed. administration, is principal of West Oso High School. He lives in Corpus Christi.

Valerie Juarez '11, B.S. mathematics, is a software engineer for National Instruments. She lives in Hutto.

Suni Meeks '11, B.B.A. accounting, is a customer service representative for Cameron in Andrews, where she lives.

Leslie Prince '11, B.S. studio art, is a processor at Talon Insurance Agency. She lives in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Michelle Shelton '11, M.Ed. teacher leadership, teaches second grade in Schertz-Cibola-Universal City school district. She lives in New Braunfels.

Varun Shinde '11, M.E. chemical engineering, is a process engineer for the Jacobs Engineering Foundation. He lives in Baton Rouge.

Ashley Young '11, B.S. fashion retailing and merchandising, is an allocation analyst for Landry's Inc. She lives in Stafford.

Chelsea Barnard '12, B.A. English, is a project specialist for United Capital in Irving. She lives in Dallas.

Lakeshia Butcher '12, B.S. studio art, is an art teacher at Cesar E. Chavez High School in Houston, where she lives.

Blake Duerler '12, B.A. general business entrepreneurship, is a fire alarm project engineer for Honeywell Process Solutions. He lives in Tyler.

Crezetta (Smith) Guess '12, M.Ed. administration, '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, teaches in Galena Park school district. She and her husband, Arlo, live in Pearland.

Monica Schmidt '12, B.S. nursing, is a critical care registered nurse at Memorial Hermann Hospital. She lives in Houston.

Nora (Letney) Winger '12, A.A.S. nursing, is a registered nurse at Christus St. Elizabeth Hospital. In November 2013, she married her husband, Justin. They live in Vidor.

Gary Wright '12, M.Ed. administration, is an information technology teacher and golf coach at Joshua High School. He lives in Burleson.

Rachel Colvin '13, B.A. american sign language, is a recruiter and job coach for Empowered Hand and Kirby Placement. She lives in Beaumont.

Garret Duhon '13, B.S. civil engineering, is an engineer for AECOM in Houston, where he lives.

Angela (Baker) Garvin '13, M.Ed. school counseling, is a school counselor at Richard E. Lee Elementary. She and her husband, Mark, live in Coppell.

Ronald Hebert III '13, M.S. kinesiology, is an athletic trainer in East Chambers school district. He lives in Port Arthur.

Donny Khalaf '13 B.A.A.S. applied sciences, is a technology specialist for Huffman school district. He and his wife, Stacie, live in Kingwood.

Mike King '13, M.B.A. business administration, is the technical and quality assurance manager for Hexion Inc. He lives in Seabrook.

Rezvan Khoshlessan '13, Ed.D. educational leadership, published the article "An Explanatory Study on International Students' Study Anxiety" in *International Research and Review Journal* and is research director for the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement at Lamar University. He lives in Beaumont.

Megan (Fournerat) Mistic '13, B.G.S. general studies, is a youth minister for the Diocese of Beaumont. She and her husband, **Nathan** '13, B.B.A. entrepreneurship, live in Beaumont.

Jeff Pack '13, Ed.D. educational leadership, is director of assessment, evaluation and compliance for Dickinson school district. He lives in Alvin.

Meagan Silva '13, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, and **Lawson Hartwick** '13, B.B.A. general business, married June 6, 2014. They live in Fomey and both work in Humble school district.

Vonda Washington '13, Ed.D. educational leadership, is assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction for Beaumont school district. She lives in Beaumont. **Sabrina (George) York** '13, B.B.A. finance, is a department business administrator for the University of Houston. She and her husband, Zachary, live in Houston.

Sunny Adhikari '14, M.E.M. engineering management, is a technical manager for Anwar Petroleum Inc. He lives in Guthrie, Okla.

Ahmet Cetinkaya '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, published the article "A Phenomenological Narrative Study: Elementary charter principals' roles as an instructional leader" in *School Leadership Review*. He is director of accountability at Harmony Public Schools and lives in Houston.

Brandy Doucet '14, B.S.W. social work, is a district parole officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division. She lives in Humble.

Nikki Looper '14, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, is an academic advisor in Lake Dallas school district. She lives in Carrollton.

Eric Mings '14, B.S. criminal justice, '16, M.S. criminal justice, is a private investigator for Veracity Research Co. He and his wife **Vanessa** '14, B.S. computer and information sciences, who is a z/OS mainframe operator for Jack Henry and Associates, live in Spring.

Johnny Thompson '14, M.Ed. administration, is director of transportation for Benton Public Schools. He and his wife, Michelle, live in Benton, Ark.

Crissie (Richmond) Vandehoef '14, B.S. chemistry, '14, B.S. biology, is pursuing her medical degree and Ph.D. She and her husband, Nicholas, live in College Station.

Andrew Arnold '15, B.S. criminal justice, is a detective in Nederland, where he lives with his wife, **Danna (Lee)** '06, B.A. history.

Rachel (Wells) Benham '15, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is a senior financial aid specialist at Lamar University. She and her husband live in Beaumont.

Chelsea Boling '15, B.S. computer science, '15, B.S. mathematics, is an application developer for IBM. He lives in Baton Rouge, La.

Meg (Baertl) Brown '15, M.S.N. nursing administration, is a registered nurse at University of Texas Medical Branch. She and her husband live in Orange.

George Burns '15, M.Ed. school counseling, is a teacher for Omaha Public Schools. He lives in Omaha, Neb., with his wife, Adrienne.

Matthew Bukovicky '15, B.B.A. marketing, is the cofounder of Aegis Shield LLC. He lives in Beaumont.

Kevin Domingue '15, B.S. industrial technology, is a field service manager for ABB Inc. in Houston. He and his wife, Phyllis, live in Spring.

Lisa Batten '15, M.Ed. teacher leadership, teaches at Westfield High School in Spring, where she lives.

Jerry Crouch '15, Ed.D. educational leadership, works for the U.S. Army at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital. He lives in Fort Campbell, Ky., with his wife, Teresa.

Seth Fortenberry '15, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal at McGregor High School. He lives in McGregor.

Kimberly (Bryant) Fritchman '15, M.Ed. administration, is a teacher and coach in Blue Ridge, where she and her husband, **Rodney** '14, B.G.S. general studies, who is a QRA technician for Texas Instruments Inc., live.

Nichelle (Coles) Owens '15, B.S.W. social work, is a qualified mental health professional for Spindletop Centers Mental Health and Mental Retardation. She lives in Port Arthur.



EDWARDS/BEAUMONT ENTERPRISE

In Memoriam

Charline Dauphin

1930—2016

A devoted LU Cardinals football fan, Dauphin enjoyed watching home games from Coach Ray Woodard's office, a part of the Dauphin Family Football Office Suite, named to recognize a campaign gift from the family. Charline Dauphin is living proof that the Lamar University community extends beyond its employees, students and alumni. Although Dauphin did not attend LU, she recalled visiting campus to perform as a Rangerette while she was a student at Kilgore College. Her late husband, Sidney "Chief" Dauphin, also visited LU during his college days as a football player at Tyler Junior College. His scrapbooks were filled with football programs from Lamar-Tyler games in the late 1940s.

Dauphin was born in Benoit, Mississippi, to Violet and Charles Ready. She will be laid to rest in Longview, preceded in death by her husband Sidney "Chief" Dauphin. Survivors include her only daughter, Robin; her sister, Sandra Godwin; one niece, Darla Denby; and two nephews, Dalton and Brandon Brister.

As a result of a \$2 million gift to Lamar University's Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign, then-president James Simmons dedicated the Dauphin Athletic Complex on campus during Homecoming Week in 2011 to recognize Charline and Robin Dauphin and in memory of Sidney "Chief" Dauphin. The complex plays an important role in the success of all Lamar University athletics programs by providing support student athletes need to be successful both on and off the field.

The Dauphins' family business, Texas Home Health, began in their kitchen, with 100 patients and one nurse. By the time the Dauphins sold the business in 2000, they employed 12,000 and operated 37 offices across the state.

In addition to contributing to Lamar University, the Dauphin family has generously supported charities to help those touched by cancer, including the Charline and Sidney "Chief" Dauphin Cancer Screening and Prevention Center in Beaumont. Charline Dauphin also has worked with the Julie Rogers "Gift of Life" Program and served on the Board of Visitors for M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

The Dauphin name will live on in the hearts of Lamar University community members through the Dauphin Athletic Complex. The family's sincere generosity seeded a Dauphin legacy that extends throughout Southeast Texas and beyond.



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SAVE THE DATE
OCT. 29

HOMECOMING PARADE

Lamar University Campus • 1-2 PM

Area high school bands • LU Band and spirit groups • Floats by student organizations • Alumni and community entries

CARDINAL FAN FEST

Wimberly Parking lot E-2 • 2-4:30 PM

Music by Katie Whitney and The Draw • 2-Row Distributing free craft beer tasting • Food trucks • Alumni spirit station



vs.



LAMAR UNIVERSITY VS. HOUSTON BAPTIST

Provost Umphrey Stadium • Kick-off 6 PM

Visit lamar.edu/homecoming for parade entry information and more!