Lin Dunn, Indiana Fever head coach, reaches the WNBA finals.
In the 2007 winter edition of Campus Scene, I reported a fall enrollment of 7,173, which, at that time, was an all-time record. This fall our official headcount enrollment was 8,101 students, which reflects a two-year increase of more than 12.9 percent. More importantly, our graduation rate is also at a historic level. Most recent information reveals that UT Martin has the second highest six-year graduation rate among public universities in Tennessee.

Our fall 2009 enrollment figures reflect that approximately 67 percent of our total enrollment base is located at the Martin campus with the remaining 33 percent either online or in one of our center locations in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley and Selmer or one of our 39 dual-enrollment sites. In 2000, 87 percent of our total enrollment was based in Martin. This demographic is a clear indicator of the importance of balance in instructional delivery options that support both student access and success. We are also reporting a fall 2009 dual enrollment of 928 outstanding high school students, which is one of the largest enrollments among all public universities in Tennessee.

Improving quality and a record enrollment are clear reflections of the successful programs at UT Martin. I am also encouraged that state legislators, along with higher education representatives and UT Board of Trustees members, are now discussing an adjustment in the funding formula that would include specific incentives involving student performance indicators.

On the budget front, we have been asked to prepare an 8.2% budget reduction for FY 2010-11. This amounts to approximately $2.1 million. Unless state revenue improves dramatically over the next few months, we will be faced with implementing additional budget adjustments. It will be necessary to further limit spending and seek more revenue sources. These actions will have an impact upon instructional and service areas. We are reviewing earlier suggestions from our constituents and plan to have a preliminary budget completed by February 2010. We have no formal information about a possible tuition increase for the coming academic year, but this item will be reviewed as part of our planning.

We are seeking to enable students to complete their degree programs in a timely manner while struggling with availability and staffing issues in every college. As part of our commitment to access, this fall a BS/BA degree in business management became available online. Early enrollment indicates more than 50 students have enrolled in this program using the online delivery format.

The 2009 fall semester was exciting, and there’s much anticipation for what lies ahead. UT Interim President Jan Simek traveled to our campus on three different occasions during the fall to spend time with faculty, students, staff and alumni, including joining us for a victorious football game against our nearest OVC rival from Murray, Ky. In early November, we gathered one morning to cheer our co-champion soccer team as they headed to Morehead to compete in the conference tournament.

Looking ahead, students are particularly excited about moving into the new Student Recreation Center this spring. We also anticipate a February or March groundbreaking for construction of the first phase of the Fine Arts Building expansion. In February 2010, members of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees will be meeting on campus. We are looking forward to the visit and an opportunity to showcase specific individuals and programs.

I continue to be excited and enthusiastic about a growing number of alumni events throughout the state. Participation continues to increase, as we experience growing interest in our programs. Despite the economic climate, I remain positive and very proud of the accomplishments of our faculty, students, staff and alumni. Progress continues, and we can all take pride in past accomplishments and look forward to a positive future.
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Women’s Basketball Pioneer Reaches Professional Basketball’s Highest Stage

By Matthew Maxey and Heather Scarano

In Dunn, (’69), one of the pioneers in women’s basketball history, reached yet another milestone in her highly decorated basketball career. Dunn made her debut as a head coach on the sport’s highest professional stage, the WNBA Finals, when she guided the Indiana Fever against the Phoenix Mercury in early October.

Even though the Fever ultimately fell in five games to the Mercury, Dunn guided her team through the highest attended and most-viewed WNBA Finals series in the history of the league.

Dunn became widely known as one of the most successful collegiate coaches of all time before making the jump to the professional ranks in 1996. As a professional head coach, she served as the inaugural head coach of the ABL’s Portland Power before moving on to lead the WNBA Seattle Storm and eventually to her present post with the Fever.

What many do not realize is that even though Dunn never scored an official point in the record books at UT Martin, she still played a very instrumental role in the original team’s development.

Dunn was an energetic, curly-haired high school basketball star from nearby Dresden, Tenn., who just couldn’t seem to understand why members of her sex were allowed to play basketball in high school, but not in college; why they could play tennis and badminton, but not her beloved basketball?

It was the late 1960s, a time of turbulence and change across the nation, and Dunn was lobbying to anyone who would listen for another change to come about; one that allowed her to play collegiate basketball instead of only for her sorority intramural squad. Dunn talked to several people on campus and had the same question for each of them, “Why can’t we play?”

In the years before Title IX, the 1972 federal law that prohibited sex-based discrimination in “any education program or activity,” women were not permitted to participate in college athletics and, in some states, were even kept from playing sports in middle or high school.
At the same time Dunn was lobbying for women's basketball to be played at UT Martin, many other women across the state were also doing the same to their respective athletic administrations.

At a meeting of the Tennessee College Physical Education Association during the summer of Dunn's junior year, collegiate female physical education teachers from across the state of Tennessee were gathered for a conference, and the topic of women's basketball surfaced. What the school representatives realized was that they all had people on their campuses like Dunn who were questioning why women could not play basketball.

Out of that TCPEA conference came the development of the Tennessee College Women's Sports Federation, which was comprised of 26 member institutions from across the state. Through the work of the TCWSF in the fall of 1969 — a few months after Dunn graduated but still three years before Title IX and well before most other schools in the country established athletic programs for women — UT Martin had its first women's basketball team.

Though she never had the chance to play college basketball herself, Dunn's passion for the sport and persistence helped open the door for countless female athletes who would come behind her at UT Martin. The list includes the eventual winningest basketball coach of all-time, Pat Head Summitt, who was a member of the team from 1970-74.

After Dunn graduated, she received a master's degree in physical education from the University of Tennessee, then began her storied coaching career. Dunn became the first women's basketball coach at Austin Peay in 1970 and guided that program through its first five years of existence.

She is perhaps best known as the architect of the Purdue University women's basketball program, guiding the Boilermakers for nine seasons (1988-96) and collecting three Big Ten conference titles. She led the Old Gold-and-Black to seven NCAA Tournaments, four Sweet Sixteen appearances and a trip to the Final Four in 1994. In nine years at Purdue, she earned a 206-68 (.552) record. She is still the program's winningest coach.

Dunn coached and recruited three Kodak All-Americans, three Big Ten Players of the Year and two Big Ten Athletes of the Year. Future WNBA stars who emerged from her tenure at Purdue were Summer Erb, Ukari Figgs, Stacey Lovelace, Michelle VanGorp and former Fever star, Stephanie White.

Since her collegiate coaching career began, she put together a remarkable 25-year record that includes a .635 career winning percentage at four schools (447-257). She left three of those schools — Purdue, Miami and Austin Peay — as the winningest coach in program history.

On the national level, she served on USA Basketball staffs for the 1992 Olympics and 1990 gold medal-winning World Championship and Goodwill Games teams. She was head coach of the 1995 bronze medal-winning USA Jones Cup team and also served for eight years on the USA Basketball Team selection committee.

Prior to arriving in West Lafayette, she coached at the University of Miami (Fla.) from 1979-87. She posted a 149-119 (.556) record through eight seasons and was the first coach to award a scholarship to a women's basketball player. Dunn was named the Florida Coach of the Year in 1980-81.

Dunn moved to the professional ranks in 1996, when she was named the head coach of the American Basketball League's (ABL) Portland Power in mid-season. One year later, she guided the Power from a worst-to-first run, posting a 27-17 record and a Western Conference championship and earning ABL Coach of the Year honors. Dunn also helped build the franchise to the league's highest marketing revenue and the second-highest attendance, and Portland was in first place in the ABL at 9-4 when the league ceased operations in December of 1998.

Dunn was named the first coach and general manager of the WNBA expansion Seattle Storm in 2000. Dunn was part of the organization when it drafted the 2002 NCAA Player of the Year, Sue Bird, and eventual WNBA MVP, Lauren Jackson, and she guided the Storm to their first-ever WNBA playoff appearance in 2002. That same season, Dunn finished second in the WNBA Coach of the Year balloting. As the head coach of the Storm, she posted her 500th career victory at Indiana, a team that would coincidentally be her next career coaching stop the following season.

Dunn moved back and joined the staff at Indiana in 2003, serving as a scout for former coach Nell Fortner. She was formally added to the staff as an assistant in 2004, and spent four years as an assistant with on-court responsibilities for a Fever defense that allowed the fewest points in the WNBA during both the 2006 and 2007 seasons.

Dunn, with more than 550 career victories when combining her college and professional coaching experience, was named the fourth head coach in Fever history on Dec. 12, 2007. In her first season, she guided Indiana to the WNBA Eastern Conference Semifinals and in 2009 bettered that by taking the Fever to the fifth game of the WNBA Finals.

She is perhaps best known as the architect of the Purdue University women's basketball program. ... She is still the program's winningest coach.
Nothing “Luckey” About UT Martin Grad’s Farming Success

By Bud Grimes

Maybe the farming business isn’t what it once was, but that doesn’t seem to bother Jason Luckey, ’92 and other family members who own and operate a row crop and beef cattle farm near Humboldt in South Gibson County. Their farming business is thriving, even as urban development encroaches on the family’s land. It might be a new day in agriculture, but Jason and his family meet the challenges with optimism, good business sense, a little humor and an obvious pride in what has taken years of hard work to build. That success hasn’t gone unnoticed, including recognition for Jason as a “2009 High Cotton Winner” by Farm Press.

It’s clear and warm on an early September day as the Luckey family members gather midmorning outside a large equipment shed that also houses the farm’s office. Near the shed is a 1970s vintage railroad caboose that has continuously housed a Luckey family member since Jason purchased and remodeled the car in 1994.

Inside the office, father Rege Luckey, ’51, 78, who attended UT Junior College in fall 1950 on a basketball scholarship, sits behind a desk across from Jason. He listens as Jason, sitting in one of several easy chairs lined in front of the desk, does much of the talking about the business. He sometimes adds his thoughts and offers the kind of wisdom shaped by years of experience and hard work. To Rege’s right, three UT Martin diplomas are lined in a row near the top of the wall, belonging to sons, Jason and Ken, ’75, and grandson, Zac, ’07. Visitors can’t miss seeing them, and that’s the way Rege wants it.

Every so often, an audio prompt comes from Jason’s Blackberry as another market update arrives, serving as a reminder of how the farming business has changed.
Every so often, an audio prompt comes from Jason’s Blackberry as another market update arrives, serving as a reminder of how the farming business has changed.

Jason was raised just across the road in the Luckey family home, attended Humboldt High School and recalled that he wasn’t set on attending UT Martin. “I wanted to go to Knoxville so bad I could taste it,” he said. “But my dad says, ‘Son, you’ll go to Martin the first year, and if you have grades good enough, we’ll talk.’ And I got up there (to Martin), and I loved it.” He studied animal science and music; he continues to use his animal science knowledge on the farm and his musical skills playing piano at his church.

A big sports fan, Jason followed the UT Martin football team, made road trips to Neyland Stadium to see the Vols and traveled to St. Louis for Cardinals baseball and St. Louis Blues hockey. Sports analogies fit well with farming, especially as they relate to practicing the fundamentals and teamwork.

Recalling that his grandfather “preached diversification,” Jason estimated that 2009 plantings were divided roughly into 1,400 acres each of corn, cotton and soybeans. “I make all the decisions on the cotton and do the majority of the planting,” he said, adding that Zac plants the corn and the beans while Ken manages the beef herd, so the business is covered for fickle markets on several fronts.

Rege added, “When we first started off, we had hogs, ... they’d be down for a while and then they’d be up and you’d make a little money. But then they’d be down, and you’d just break even.” Unfortunately, the Luckeys were in the hog business when hog prices went down for several years, and Rege laughed as he remembered that they were “losing money on every hog we sold” until they “got enough sense to get out of it.” Even with a track record of successful diversification in their row crops, there’s been temptation to change the strategy, but Jason said that his dad would remind his sons, “You never plant to a market.”

Although some things remain constant in production agriculture, other aspects of farming have changed considerably. “When I graduated Martin in ’92 and came home, everything was pretty much still conventional,” he remembered. Then around 1997, the Luckeys began planting some Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis) cotton and Roundup soybeans. Bt cotton contains a gene that kills the worm when it feeds on the cotton, while Roundup is a widely used herbicide produced by Monsanto. “When we got to where we could spray everything over the top with Roundup, that really fed the no-till,” he said. Today, the passage of time has made Roundup less effective, so he’s watching the progress of research that targets plant genes for new-and-improved ways to control weeds. “That’s the path we’re going to take now. That’s agriculture today, ... dealing with all of these genes and those kind of issues,” he said.

Changes in agriculture go beyond planting and harvesting – co-existing with an increasing urban presence is a growing challenge. Today’s modern views toward agriculture have necessitated community and political involvement for the Luckeys. Jason is a county director for Gibson County Farm Bureau, serves on the Tennessee Farm Bureau’s state board and is also active in the Future Farmers of America Alumni group. He was also 2004 state president of the Young Farmers and Ranchers, a group sponsored by the Tennessee Farm Bureau and the UT Agricultural Extension Service. Meanwhile, brother Ken is active in the local Rotary Club. Additionally, Jason has taken on “a role of trying to be a spokesman for ag,” accepting speaking engagements whenever he can.

The encroachment of urban development is real for the Luckeys and particularly for Rege. “Pushed. Sort of crammed up a little bit,” Rege said, explaining without hesitation how these changes made him feel. However, Jason doesn’t characterize the changes as a fight for survival. “I don’t want to downgrade progress,” he said. “Everybody’s about progress, but when you see land and farmers start losing land to houses ... they (farmers) got to get their acres to pay their bills.” He pointed to Jackson’s and nearby Medina’s rapid growth...
as examples of how quickly development is taking up farmland.

Given the changes that farmers are facing, there are clearly easier ways to make a living, but Jason said that farming is all he ever wanted to do. “I love being with my dad and being on the tractors.” His 18-month-old son, Leck (the Luckey’s also have two daughters, Camille, 9, and Rachel, 5), is already interested in the tractors and cattle and has an early start in following Jason’s and Rege’s footsteps. “The love I had for it I hope to instill in him. I did it for love of my father and the love of what I was doing,” Jason said. When he was young, Jason remembered his dad leaving him hoeing the garden while Rege left to do other work, and this made him mad. “I wasn’t mad because he left me hoeing the garden, but I was mad because I wasn’t with him.”

They might be family, but they don’t always agree when it comes to business. Good communication keeps everyone involved and informed. Jason tells Ken when he makes a cotton decision, but Ken normally just listens and leaves the final decision to Jason. “They think I’m hard-headed, but I think they’re hard-headed, too,” Jason said. Rege recalled that Jason wanted to plant 1,400 acres of cotton this year (in 2009), and he tried to discourage him. “I said, ‘You’re going to have trouble picking 1,400 acres, especially if it’s a wet fall,’ Rege advised him. “But, we’ve got 1,400 acres of cotton.”

The current family arrangement happened when Jason was a high school senior and Rege broke off from other family members to partner with his sons. This created leadership opportunities for Jason and a business opportunity for Zac, who joined the business in 2007. “We try to give him a little responsibility, too,” Rege said of Zac. “We don’t want to treat him like a hired hand. He’s part of us.” Before Zac, they worked their finances from a farm account and took what they needed to live and operate. With Zac’s joining the business, their accountant helped the Luckeys work out a monthly pay scale. They also pay one full-time worker, and they hire a retired schoolteacher who drives the grain trucks during harvest.

Like all farming operations, the Luckeys are adapting to new financial pressures, including the costs that Jason said have grown five-fold since he started. While the costs of fuel, fertilizer, seed and chemicals have all gone up, the prices they receive for crops haven’t changed much, he said. However, he added that seed and technology are better, citing the time when making 100 bushels per acre in corn was exceptional. Today, he said, exceeding 100 bushels per acre is expected.

Clearly, maximizing production is critical to making a profit, “And that speaks to where we’ve advanced in seed,” Jason said. In another example, he said that a bale and a half of cotton weighs 750 pounds, and he remembered being told in the early 1990s that “you need 750 pounds to break even.” Now, he says that number is more in the 800s, and from 2005 to 2008, his production level reached the mid-900s three out of four years (2007 was a drought year). Jason likens planting the new seed to having an insurance policy. “In cotton, we’ve had a very light bug year this past year, but you still plant your worm cotton, because in the spring, you really don’t know what kind of bug year you’re going to have,” he said.

Speaking of insurance points to another change in the farming business. A few years ago, crop insurance wasn’t that common, but now, the government mandates it for the farm programs. “But even before they mandated it, Ken and I saw that crop insurance was a good tool to have in your toolbox,” Jason said. Given the cost of inputs, add in a drought, and a farming operation can find itself in big trouble. “In ’07 (a drought year), we were glad we had the insurance. It saved us.”

What hasn’t changed over the years is the amount of work required to run a large farm, and harvest time signals the busiest season. Take away Sundays when they don’t work, and six-day, 100-hour workweeks aren’t unusual. His wife, Amy, a music teacher in Bells, leaves for school by 7 o’clock on a...
the love for farming in family members, but if there father. There probably isn’t an award for instilling you that their real passion is working with their are successful at what they do, but something tells his love of being a cotton producer. The Luckeys Jason’s award recognized his success as a farmer and proud for Dad.”

Besides business risk, there’s also personal risk to consider. Once again, Rege has offered valuable advice, such as setting up Individual Retirement Accounts, establishing college funds for the children, and even purchasing cancer insurance, just in case handling chemicals causes health problems someday. “Being self-employed, you’d better sit down and be sure you’re taking care of yourself,” Jason said, adding, “Just my father’s wisdom on those kind of things has … made us all aware of preparing for the future.”

Given farming’s risks and uncertainties, Jason is fine that his son might one day join the family business, but he’ll first have to add his college diploma to the others hanging on the farm office wall. Long ago, Rege made it clear to his sons that a college education is important, and Jason will expect no less before his son joins the business.

As for his 2009 High Cotton award, Jason remains humbled that he received it. He didn’t even know that he was nominated and says the person who nominated him for the award is a far better cotton farmer than he is. When Jason learned about the honor, he drove to a field near Gibson where Ken was shelling corn to tell him the good news. Ken told him, “I’m proud for you, Jason, but … I’m most proud for Dad.”

Jason’s award recognized his success as a farmer and his love of being a cotton producer. The Luckeys are successful at what they do, but something tells you that their real passion is working with their father. There probably isn’t an award for instilling the love for farming in family members, but if there was, Rege Luckey’s name would be on the plaque.

typical day. A babysitter arrives a short time later so that Jason can begin work in the fields. After he prepares the equipment, Jason then tries to start picking by 9:30 and ends an hour or so before midnight, about the time dew starts to form. In the past, rain in the forecast has caused him to pick all night. “As long as everything runs pretty good, it’s not a bad deal. But then when you have your breakdowns and all, well then that can kind of get irritating,” he said.

You can’t miss the turnoff for the Luckey farm on Highway 186 in Gibson County. When you see a railroad caboose, you’re there. That’s right. A 1972 Illinois Central caboose sits near the equipment shed and farm office, home at one time or another to Jason Luckey and five of his nephews. Adam Johnson, (‘06), a UT Martin admissions counselor, son of Jason’s sister, Lisa Jane Johnson, is the current resident.

The story of the caboose began when Jason graduated from UT Martin and returned home to farm. He recalled his dad telling him, “If you’re going to farm with me, you can live with me.’ He thought an apartment was throwing away money,” Jason said. He also didn’t want him to build a house until he was married, so he moved in with his parents. Some time later, during a trip to St. Louis for a baseball game, he saw a train caboose at a salvage yard in Sikeston, Mo. He began thinking that the caboose offered an option for a new living arrangement. He’d farmed a couple of years by this time, and by living at home, he “had more money than I knew what to do with.”

He returned to Sikeston, but the caboose had been sold. Not giving up, he told a college friend of his caboose idea, and his friend told Jason about seeing a caboose in Memphis. He went to see the caboose, convinced his dad to go along with the idea and purchased the caboose from a retired railroad employee as it sat in an Illinois Central railroad yard. Jason remembers Rege saying, “Let’s set it right down there (near the equipment shed), and when you get this out of your system, at least we can use this for some kind of chemical storage or something.”

Jason’s research uncovered that Illinois Central has the largest cabooses of all trains, with Jason’s caboose sporting a slightly larger porch on each end. Illinois Central delivered the caboose on the rail to the Gibson County Co-op, which had a rail spur for delivering fertilizer. His dad helped to get cross-ties in place, and a friend gave them rails, which they placed and leveled to set the caboose on before it arrived. He hired some cranes to bring it to the farm, and the rest is history.

Buying and placing the caboose were just the beginning. He still had work to do to show his dad that this would work. He labored on the caboose’s one-room interior and reached a point where his dad asked him about air conditioning. Jason was ready to place an air conditioner unit in one of the caboose’s few windows, when his dad said, “Son, you’ve come too far. You ought to put central heat and air in this thing.” Including modern heat and air, the finished interior has all of the amenities of a studio apartment, plus the added charm that only a caboose can offer.

“I’m proud of it,” Jason said of his caboose, describing it as “a conversation piece.” The caboose has received its share of attention, including a story in the Tennessee Cooperator Magazine that has brought unexpected visitors to the farm wanting to refurbish cabooses like Jason’s. “I’ve had people stop out of the blue, just pull up and ask me how to get one, …” he said.

The succession of Luckeys living in the caboose is already set. Jason looks forward to the time when he and his son, Leck, will “fix it up” for Leck to live in and provide some privacy for them to watch St. Louis Cardinals baseball games. Could there be a better way to use a retired railroad caboose? 

About that caboose...
Willie and Waylon may have cautioned, “Mamas, don’t let your babies grow up to be cowboys” – but for S.L. Pemberton, the life of a cowboy couldn’t have been better.

S.L. (’96) not only has made a career of riding, roping and entertaining, he’s recently parlayed his talent into production manager at the original Dixie Stampede, a modern-day wild west show. It is owned by Dolly Parton and located just outside her theme park, Dollywood, in Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

“When I was about 10, I started performing Roman riding, which is standing on two horses, and trick roping, and that’s pretty much been my career path all along. That’s how I paid my way through college,” he said. “When I came to work for the Dixie Stampede in ’96, that’s what I was doing. I was hired as a performer.”

S.L. continued performing until about a year and a half ago when he was named production manager. “If you come to Dixie Stampede in Pigeon Forge, I’m responsible for anything you see entertainment-wise from the time you walk into the building until you leave – all the performers, costuming, the horses, lights – it’s all on my head.”

S.L. seems to be a good fit for Dixie Stampede and would like to advance with the company. “I’m getting to do everything I’m trained to do.” As production manager, he said the biggest challenge is dealing with performers and keeping them happy. That includes 60+ people and 45 horses. “Every day, everybody (people and horses) comes in in a different mood.”

On a typical day, he arrives at work and prepares a show board lining up the day’s acts. “If you come to a show, what you watch is like a puzzle.” He said performers’ jobs and acts differ day to day based on the available cast. “On any given day, we try to put the best show together. We do a little over 600 shows a year.”

His favorite part is showing up for work “and never knowing what you’re getting into.” It might be a performer who calls in sick or an equipment breakdown. “I know that would probably drive some people nuts, but I really enjoy it.”

Through the years, he has met a host of well-known entertainers – not the least of whom is Parton. “I’ve been around her when there’s nobody around, when she’s killing time. You don’t have to talk to her. She’ll just start talking to you.” He added, “If she’s in a group of people, she’ll make a point to speak to everybody. She really genuinely cares about people. She’s a good lady and has done a lot for this area.”

Performing was always his strong suit, but now he only steps under the lights at Dixie Stampede if he’s needed. “Every once in a while, if we’re short-handed, I’ll jump in an act or two.” He added, “I just turned 40, and it seems to get a little harder on my body. I still trick rope a lot … that’s about it.”

This from a man who has a true showman’s spirit. In his early years when he perfected some death-defying acts, he knew there was going to be entertainment value no matter how it turned out. S.L. said he would try to polish his act as much as possible to eliminate hazards, because when people paid to see him perform, they wanted to see a good show. “There was one trick I used to do where, as the horse jumped over a jump, I did a complete flip and landed back up in the saddle on it. There was probably a 75 percent rate of return on that. So that was going to be a big wreck. I tried to put my level of tricks up where if I did have a wreck or a mishap, it was still going to be a good show either way.”
Early on, S.L. also jumped a car with a team of horses as part of his act. “I’d get thrown off or under them and dragged. When I was in my 20s, I took a pretty rough toll on my body just trying things and doing different tricks. I’ve been run over and trampled,” he said, adding that it never was as bad as it could have been. “I didn’t really have any traumatic injuries. I had a couple of knee surgeries – just little things like that. I was pretty blessed over the years.”

S.L. also thought he was blessed when he met a cowgirl, Loretta, a trick rider, who was performing at a Boston rodeo in the early 1990s. Loretta comes from a rodeo family in rural New York. Her father and brothers were bull and bareback horseriders, and her sister was a barrel-racer. Loretta still performs at Dixie Stampede. “We’d been in the rodeo business, so there was really nothing else that I would rather have done,” she said. “I don’t know how long I’ll be able to trick ride. It really depends on my body and, I guess, who would want to see an old lady hanging off the side of a horse?”

The couple married in 1996. When he and Loretta performed in the early years, they traveled somewhere every week, and it was a challenge. “People love traveling and going different places. When we go … we typically have horses in the trailer, and we don’t want to stop and take a break. So we saw a lot of the country, but a lot of it was at night and a lot of it was with no stopping to enjoy it.”

They now have two cowboys of their own – Cy, 12, and Seth, 9 – who seem to have inherited their parents’ talent. S.L. said Cy is naturally talented. “In two or three aspects of crafts that he does – the roping, the guns and whips … he can pick it up and be very entertaining, and the crowd really loves him.” But he is not interested in practicing, S.L. said. Seth, on the other hand, is “really into it all the time. You’ll catch him around the house just spinning a rope or out in the yard playing with his whip.”

S.L. still contracts for enough shows outside of the Dixie Stampede so the family can travel and perform together. The boys perform trick riding and shooting, gun spinning and whip cracking when the family takes its act on the road. “It’s kind of like our little vacation, but at the same time, we’re getting to perform and do what the kids enjoy. “Now, we might do it six to 10 times a year.”

While some people toil away, even in very good career positions, because they are not happy, S.L. couldn’t be happier with his life. “I’ve been really blessed. My wife and my children, we can all do something as a family to make money to support ourselves, but at the same time, we’re getting to be together. It is something that we enjoy.”

S.L. had already logged many miles performing by the time he graduated from Milan (Tenn.) High School in 1987. He immediately enrolled at UT Martin, but then took what he calls a “hiatus” to continue to perform. He returned to Martin in 1993 and graduated in 1996 with a bachelor’s degree in natural resources management.

“I was working shows at the same time I was going to school (college) and really did not have time to do anything,” he said. “A lot of my friends were on the rodeo team. With the rodeo team, it’s all competition in events, and they’re competing with each other. With what I do … people hire me on a contract to come perform at their show. I was not competing against anyone. I was the entertainment, more like a circus act … in between the events.”

S.L. credits a number of his professors for being accommodating with his schedule. “I would have to miss a lot of Friday classes because a typical rodeo would be a Friday night and Saturday night and sometimes Sunday afternoon.” He said many times he’d leave after classes on Thursday night, drive 12-14 hours to a show, do the show, and “I would pull back in Monday morning 30 minutes before a class. There were a lot of times I would park my horse trailer right out there across from Brehm Hall and be parked … with my horse trailer and truck still hooked up” and go to class.

Even though he is not working in his field, having a degree has been important to him. “I think a lot of employers look at that as the person at least took the initiative to take the time to get the degree – that they had to discipline themselves to do that.

“I feel like I’ve been blessed. I said for years I would not want to be in management – didn’t want to deal with people. Now that I have, I really enjoy it. The only thing I would do different in my career – if I could have the job I have now and have it close to my family (in West Tennessee).”

Maybe “mamas” should reconsider. UTM
A Year of Living Dangerously Takes a Toll on Undercover Memphis Officer

She "was always on edge" in her role as a junkie.

April Leatherwood no longer goes by the name Summer Smith.

Summer's brown, greasy hair has been cut and bleached, highlighted to April's honey blond. Summer's glasses have been removed to reveal April's 20/20 vision.

And Summer's feet — once covered by the same filthy pair of socks for an entire year — now slide into April's black flip-flops with a fresh pedicure and red toenail polish.

The physical transformation is complete — a signal that one life is over and another can resume.

Leatherwood always wanted to be a police officer, to wear the crisp, blue uniform, the shiny, gold badge. After graduating from the police academy in December 2005, she worked as a patrol officer and then in the organized-crime unit, catching thieves and busting violent felons. She loved the camaraderie of the department and its protect-and-serve mission.

Then the rumors started in fall 2008. April was unhappy. Police work left her unfulfilled. She quit. Somebody said she moved to Miami. She stopped returning phone calls from family and friends, even recruits she was closest to in the academy. Nobody was sure what happened to her.

In fact, Leatherwood, the once-proud police officer, was living as Summer Smith, the junkie.

Undercover work is all about making and breaking relationships, Sherman explained. And the gift of gab.

As Summer Smith, Leatherwood followed addicts into houses without electricity or plumbing, where people defecated in buckets. Sometimes she watched toddlers run around while their drug-dealer dads played video games and sold crack to customers with guns lying on the table.

She talked her way out of unwanted sexual advances and always scanned the room for a way out if a deal went bad.

She worked alone.

"The scariest times were when you felt like you were backed up in a corner when it comes to guys talking to you like that," she said. "That was probably my biggest fear."

Leatherwood's training taught her how to buy crack cocaine but not use it, a tricky game to play with dealers. But she never used. Not once. She passed every drug test the department gave her.

She also had to restrain her police instincts to break up a fight at a convenience store or call social services if she saw a dealer hit his child because being caught would compromise the larger goal.

She often met her handler, Louis Brownlee, a former Memphis undercover officer himself, in seedy motels to receive assignments and relay messages to her parents. He also provided moral support.

"This work is important because we, as undercovers, can do things that the regular police could never do," Brownlee said.
“When the ward car is coming down the street, guys hide their dope. They straighten up. ... We come in, and we get to see them as they are. We come in and the dope’s not hidden. The conversation is not censored.

“There are crimes that the undercover program has helped to solve because of who we are.”

Last week, April talked about her undercover experience to a group of police officers from across the country who participated in the Memphis Police Department’s undercover school. At the behest of Director Larry Godwin, Sherman created the program 3½ years ago, modeling it after the FBI’s undercover certification course at Quantico, Va., where he trained.

Since then, 10 classes of officers have participated, three at the Regional Counterdrug Training Academy at the Naval Air Station in Meridian, Miss. There, officers attend presentations and role-play in a small area of the base called Mount City, which is modeled after the FBI’s Hogan’s Alley. It’s like a movie set, with a two-floor motel, a trailer outfitted to look like an inner-city row house, a pharmacy and other buildings.

Joe Pistone, the legendary FBI agent who infiltrated New York’s Bonanno crime family by posing as jewel thief Donnie Brasco, teaches in Memphis’ undercover school.

The Bluff City’s undercover unit is unique, he said, compared with other local law enforcement agencies’ programs nationwide, which usually focus on short-term dope busts.

“In most of the departments, the undercovers go home every night,” Pistone said. “They may work a case long term but not deep undercover like in Memphis.”

Undercover work is not for everybody, even the most dedicated officers, Leatherwood said.

In early August, she pulled herself out of the program. She felt depressed and numb. She could feel herself slipping away.

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Seniors Watched
Brehm Hall Expansion
Project Develop

The future joined the past at Brehm Hall on the UT Martin campus. The Brehm Hall expansion opening ceremony and open house were staged during homecoming and attracted a large number of alumni and current students – some of whom have watched the progress of the project for several years.

“I first heard of the plans for the Brehm Hall expansion as a scholar in the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Agricultural Sciences (at UT Martin) in 2005. As I learned about the additional classrooms, laboratory space and conference areas, I was intrigued at the opportunity that these facilities would provide,” said Ashley McDougal, a senior animal science major from Pulaski. “This helped in my decision to come to UT Martin. Throughout the years, I have seen the development of the project and the eventual completion. As a senior, I will only get a year of use out of the expansion. However, this will prove to be very beneficial for future students.”

The $1.7 million 9,900-square-foot project provided an additional lecture room, laboratories, lab preparatory areas, conference rooms and offices joining an original structure built in 1950.

Nicholas Lewis, a senior agricultural business management major from Ocoee, also has watched the project come to fruition. “The expansion will benefit the students so much,” said Lewis. “The rooms that are available now are more technology-enabled and are more conducive to the learning experience here at UT Martin.” And, he added, the prep rooms are perfect for professors to get ready for classes and provide students with more visual examples of the classroom material being studied.

Dr. Jim Byford, College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences dean, welcomed the group attending the Oct. 10 ceremony and introduced guests that included Donna Brehm Matlock, who retired from UT Knoxville and is the granddaughter of C.E. Brehm, the 15th UT president. “We are just as pleased as we can be,” Byford said of the expansion.

“I just appreciate ... the fact that he is still being remembered and recognized,” said Matlock. Noting that he was a modest man, she said he would say, “Don’t shine the spotlight on me, it belongs on the outstanding faculty and students.”

Chancellor Tom Rakes, highlighted the history of the building, noting that 39 years ago, the building was named the C.E. Brehm Agriculture and Biology Hall honoring Dr. Brehm, who served from 1946-1959.

“Today is an exciting day for us,” said Rakes. The chancellor spoke of the years since expansion plans were initiated in 1991 through construction in 2007-09. “That’s a long wait,” he told those involved in the project. “It just shows if you are tenacious, you plan well and deserve it, things do come.”

Rakes thanked legislators, UT trustees, Drs. Byford and (Jerry) Gresham, Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources chair; Chancellor Emeritus Nick Dunagan; Chancellor Tom Rakes; Donna Brehm Matlock, Brehm’s granddaughter; Dr. Jerald Ogg, vice chancellor for academic affairs; Al Hooten, vice chancellor for finance and administration; Tim Nipp, Physical Plant director; Jamie Stempel, Haizlip Studio PLLC, Memphis, project architect; Lynn Smith, Allen Searcy Builder-Contractor, Inc., project superintendent; and Allen Searcy, Allen Searcy Builder-Contractor, Inc., Union City.
Community residents and elected officials joined UT leadership and others to officially celebrate completion of a UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer expansion project Aug. 12 in Selmer. The ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand-opening celebration drew a large crowd to the facility that was originally constructed in 1997. The expansion was funded by a one-time $500,000 state appropriation in a joint venture with the city of Selmer and McNairy County and each contributing $60,000.

Dr. Jan Simek, UT interim president, said that “the university and all of its parts is a better university today than it’s ever been.” He later added, “This center represents, I think, the very essence of the statewide mission of the University of Tennessee. It brings together all of our strategic priorities, facilitating especially student access and student success. These are the foremost goals of the university today and provide outreach to all Tennesseans.”

Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, thanked all who made the center and the recent expansion possible. “And even in tough times, growth is still available,” he said of the center’s expansion. “It (growth) still happens, and the state finds a way to support what we do.”

26th District State Sen. Dolores Gresham said that an important principle has contributed to the center’s success. “Feed them, and they will come,” she said. “There is this hunger for education here, and I appreciate the leadership of the University of Tennessee for acknowledging that hunger.”

82nd District State Rep. Craig Fitzhugh added, “Education is not a quick fix. It is not something that happens overnight, but it is the only fix. You understand it here, and you’ve seen by this center, the success of this center over a 10-year period and now the huge expansion, that people in this city and this county know what education’s all about.”

73rd District State Rep. Jimmy Eldridge noted, “Education is so important in Tennessee. It’s a root. It’s a foundation of the growth of Tennessee.”

McNairy County Mayor Jai Templeton also thanked all who made the center possible and noted the cooperation among elected officials. He also acknowledged the students who take advantage of the center’s opportunities.

Those attending were invited to tour the 4,330-square-foot expansion, which also includes additional classroom space, art studio, conference room, computer lab, student lounge, science lab, administrative offices, library and distance-learning classroom.

Selmer Mayor David Robinson thanked former 71st District State Rep. Randy Rinks and former Lt. Gov. John Wilder for their efforts in securing the $500,000 grant from the state of Tennessee for the addition. He also thanked UT Martin faculty and staff for their role in the center’s success.

Deidra Beene, center director, also thanked the center’s supporters, donors and the Higher Education Committee and said, “I also want to tell you that the reason I come here every day is because people’s lives are changed for the better here at this center.”

In 1997, UT Martin and local officials approved an agreement for the university to manage a new McNairy County Center of Higher Education that was constructed with local funds. UT Martin agreed to certain financial commitments, including funding for a one quarter-time coordinator, some operating funds and university assistance in raising private monies to fund some equipment purchases.

In 2006, a pavilion was constructed with donor funds and student activity fees. In 2007, a $75,000 upgrade to the distance-learning room was completed, and a digital sign was recently funded by a $50,000 Tennessee Department of Transportation grant.

The center, located at 1269 Tennessee Ave., Selmer, originally opened in 1998 as the first of four UT Martin extended-campus sites.
UT Martin Tops 8,000 in Fall Enrollment

UT Martin has more than 8,000 students for the first time and set all-time enrollment records in numerous categories, based on fall 2009 enrollment figures.

A total of 8,101 students were enrolled for the fall semester, an increase from 7,578 recorded for fall 2008.

The fall 2009 total included all-time record fall enrollments for total headcount, incoming freshmen, undergraduates, dual-enrollment students, transfer students, total credit hours and total full-time equivalent. Public higher education funding is based on fall semester full-time equivalency.

“We are pleased to see this level of continued student interest in our programs,” said Dr. Tom Rakes, university chancellor. “Such enrollment growth is one indicator of support and affirmation concerning the overall quality of the college experience UT Martin provides.”

Based on final figures, this fall’s enrollment at UT Martin was a 6.9 percent increase over fall 2008. Final figures were compiled by the university’s Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

Fall enrollment indicated that first-time freshmen had an average 3.39 high school grade-point average, up from 3.38 in 2008, and an average ACT score of 22.5, up from 22.4 in 2008.

“Although enrollment growth is exciting, more important is the fact that this entering class is the most academically capable group of new students we have admitted,” said Rakes.

Compared to fall 2008’s totals, UT Martin had 523 more undergraduates and graduates for a 6.9 percent increase; 81 additional dual-enrollment students, a 9.6 percent increase; and 66 more transfer students, a 13.5 percent increase.

UT Martin began the 2009-10 school year with the announcement that the university continued its top-tier ranking for master’s level public universities in the South in the 2010 edition of America’s Best Colleges compiled by U.S. News & World Report. Also, in late summer, UT Martin again earned the designation as one of the best colleges and universities in the Southeast, according to The Princeton Review, 2010 Edition. The New York City-based educational services company selected the school as one of 141 institutions it recommends in its “Best in the Southeast” section on its Web site feature, “2010 Best Colleges: Region by Region.”

FCS Celebrates 100 Years

Ann Pope (l), associate professor emeritus of textiles and clothing, presents UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes with a costume-of-the-day image from her personal collection. The image was part of a larger display of historic clothing and related items assembled by a UT Martin textiles, clothing and fashion merchandising class to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences. The framed image, which will be kept in the Paul Meek Library’s Corbitt Special Collections, possibly dates back to McFerrin College of Martin and the early 1900s. A reception and banquet recognizing the AAFCS milestone was held Homecoming night, Oct. 10, in the Boling University Center. Among the banquet speakers was Dr. Sue Byrd, UT Martin professor of textiles, clothing and fashion merchandising, who was named 2009-10 president-elect of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences at the recent AAFCS 100th Annual Conference and Expo in Knoxville.

BCM Celebrates 70 Years

Baptist Collegiate Ministry was honored for 70 years of service at UT Martin, Oct. 10, during 2009 Homecoming. David Taylor (r), UT Martin student organizations coordinator, presented a plaque during Quad City festivities to the BCM recognizing the milestone. On hand for the presentation were, l to r, David Stephan, BCM board president and music minister, Martin First Baptist Church; Morgan Owen, BCM director; and Joe Cook, UT Martin student from Cordova and BCM president.
Online Repository Features UT Martin Academic Works

Academic works authored by UT Martin graduates, students and faculty have a worldwide audience, thanks to an online resource established in January 2008 by the Paul Meek Library's Corbitt Special Collections. Known as an "institutional repository," Internet browser hits for Scholarship@UT Martin exceed 2,100 just since July 1, 2009, and continue to grow. Nobody is more pleased than Richard Saunders, the university's curator and university archivist.

Several years back, Saunders had the idea of giving university-authored academic works a virtual home. In 2005, he received an advertisement for institutional repository software that would manage online document storage. Although the software was impressive, the ongoing five-figure annual subscription charge was prohibitive. The library staff looked for other options, seeking software that was open-source or inexpensive to use. Jim Nance, system librarian, computer-science student John Britton and Saunders discovered a product called EPrints. "EPrints is an open-source, open-archive database developed at the University of Southampton in Great Britain," Saunders said. "It was written by a bunch of computer-science students who just simply had the idea that research needs to be available publicly." The program was adapted for use in the library service pages, and the digital world opened for UT Martin scholarly works.

Saunders said about 600 open-archives repositories exist around the world, with UT Martin's repository about in the middle in terms of size. He added that there are approximately another 1,000 databases on commercial platforms similar to what University Archives is using but which carry considerable operating costs. "They're slicker. They have a little more customizability, but they're a whale of a lot more expensive, so we struck a balance between cost and effectiveness," he said. "And, as we have used this, we are absolutely certain that we came down on the right side of things, both for the taxpayers of Tennessee and for the type of scholarship that the campus has generated over the last years."

More than 324 full-text files were accessible in the online repository as of early October. In the past year, that small number has accounted for more than 5,000 downloads to researchers in 133 countries across the globe. "That sort of activity suggests UTM students produce research of real value," Saunders said. Graduate students in education wrote a majority of the 280 UT Martin master's theses available. "Still the single most downloaded item on the whole database is a 30-year-old master's thesis on Tennessee teacher-tenure policy," he said. The next step in the project is capturing master's projects, followed by University Scholars papers. Faculty are encouraged to contribute their own work.

Besides the search feature, the site includes a "Paper of the Day," randomly chosen by the software. "It's just a way to get people remembering that there is real research here," he said. "It's not just a site with a number on it. There's something to take a look at."

So far, Saunders is pleased with what Scholarship@UT Martin has accomplished. "Number one, it's always good to have a digital presence out in the world. That was a big driving force," he said, adding, "What the software does is put UTM as a research institution into an international context," he said. "We have a presence now."

To find the repository, point a browser to http://scholarship.utm.edu. UT Martin Academic Works. Faculty are encouraged to contribute their own work.

The Wildlife Society Honors Byford

Dr. James Byford, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, retired in December. Byford, who joined UT in 1972 and UT Martin in 1987, also served as professor of wildlife biology. He received a bachelor's degree at UT Martin and a doctorate at Auburn University. In recognition of his contributions to the wildlife profession through four decades as an “exemplary steward, educator, scientist and administrator,” The Wildlife Society, based in Bethesda, Md., recently presented Byford with lifetime honorary membership.

As a certified professional wildlife biologist since 1979, he spent 20 years as extension wildlife specialist in Georgia and Tennessee – giving hundreds of presentations and writing numerous articles on wildlife conservation. Byford was featured in the 1983 Sports Afield hunting annual, the June 1985 issue of Outdoor Life and appeared regularly on TNN Outdoors from 1996-98. He has been a speaker at numerous seminars on agriculture, land management and natural-resource conservation throughout the U.S., Ecuador and Japan. In 1999, he authored a book through UT Press, titled Close To The Land. UT Martin Academic Works.
What do a UT Martin engineering professor, two engineering alums, and the Tennessee Technology Center at McKenzie have in common? They’re part of a 12-member West Tennessee Baja team that built a Baja car to race Nov. 19 in the Tecate SCORÉ Baja 1000, a 24-hour off-road race in Ensenada, Mexico. The Class 1 desert racecar was unveiled Oct. 26 at the Boling University Center.

Dr. Bob LeMaster led the team with assistance from UT Martin engineering grads, Brian Boggs, (‘08), of Martin, and Ashley Owens, (UTM ‘05, UTK ‘09), of South Fulton. A third graduate, Jonathan Kolwyck, (‘08), of Dyersburg, assisted with the car through August but is now attending graduate school at the University of Tennessee Space Institute. Jimmy Kee, who teaches welding at the technology center, also played a major role in car construction. Because of the car’s size and noise output, the vehicle is being stored at Fuqua Farms near Martin.

LeMaster became interested in building the car through the university’s participation in the Little Baja Project. He annually leads UT Martin engineering students in constructing a small Baja racecar that competes against teams from other universities. His work with these small cars evolved into the current Class 1 desert racecar, which is about 18 feet long and sports 35-inch tires. Lemaster says that his team might be in uncharted territory, having “never heard of an unlimited-class vehicle being built out of Tennessee.”

The total investment for the race is about $30,000, so sponsorships are important. BF Goodrich is the tire sponsor, while other sponsors include Legens Hot Rod Shop and Fuqua Farms, both in Martin, and Southern Custom Metalworks in Camden, Tenn. Competing in off-road races is challenging, and West Tennessee Baja will face racing teams that have greater financial resources. However, LeMaster and his team aren’t intimidated. “I’ve often thought that if the only reason not to do something is because you’re scared, that’s not a good reason not to do it,” Lemaster said.

More about the November race can be found on the Web at www.score-international.com/, while more about West Tennessee Baja can be found at www.west-tennessee-baja.com/.
Skyhawk Soccer Ties for OVC Regular Season Championship

Coming off its first Ohio Valley Conference championship appearance in 2008, the UT Martin women’s soccer team had set lofty goals for the 2009 season. However, after a 2-0 win over Lipscomb to open the season, the Skyhawks slid—losing three straight matches before returning home to host the PUMA Skyhawk Invitational.

In its seventh season, the PUMA Skyhawk Invitational has traditionally served as a springboard for success for the UT Martin soccer team, and this year was no different. The Skyhawks won the tournament, claiming its eighth straight PUMA Skyhawk Invitational match, allowing zero shot attempts in a 3-0 win over Missouri-Kansas City. After a 3-0 loss at SEC power Vanderbilt and a dominant 5-0 win over future OVC member SIU Edwardsville, the Skyhawks began OVC play with a 3-4 overall record.

After a grueling 1-0 double overtime loss at Tennessee Tech to open OVC play, the Skyhawks rebounded in full force—winning four straight OVC matches to take over the lead in the conference standings heading into an Oct. 18 home matchup with Morehead State. UT Martin appeared in control of the match, leading 2-0 with just 15 minutes left, but a late run by Morehead State led to a 3-2 loss and dropped the Skyhawks out of first place.

Rather than hang their heads at the loss, the Skyhawks came back to dominate in a 3-0 win at Austin Peay on Oct. 25, setting the stakes high for its regular-season finale against Eastern Illinois. In a match that was rescheduled twice and was moved to a neutral site, the Skyhawks needed to win against Eastern Illinois to claim a share of its first-ever OVC title in program history. A win was also big because it would give the Skyhawks a first-round bye in the OVC Tournament as the No. 2 seed.

On Halloween evening, the Skyhawks got a goal from freshman Kendyl Wilson in the 81st minute to propel UT Martin to a 1-0 victory, tying them with Morehead State for the OVC regular-season championship. The win was the Skyhawks’ sixth in their last seven matches, as they appeared to be peaking at the right time heading into the OVC Tournament in Morehead, Ky., on Nov. 5-8.

Earning the first-round bye, the Skyhawks learned they had to play Murray State in the semifinals on Nov. 6. In a physical match, the UT Martin offense out-shot the Racers, 11-9, and constantly put pressure on the Murray State goalkeeper, but ultimately couldn’t convert on its chances. The Racers came up with a goal in the 39th minute off a corner kick for the 1-0 win, ending the Skyhawks’ spectacular season.

Despite the disappointing loss to end the season, head coach Craig Roberts and his Skyhawks had a wildly successful season, as they broke or tied four school records en route to the first-ever OVC championship. UT Martin also had the program’s first-ever OVC Defensive Player of the Year, as Danielle Rogers took home the honor. Rogers headlined four players garnering six All-OVC mentions, as sophomore midfielder Brooke Robertson joined her on the All-OVC first team. Freshman Kendyl Wilson earned a spot on the All-OVC second team and was named as an All-OVC Newcomer, while freshman goalkeeper Aubrey Buehler also earned a spot on the All-OVC Newcomer team. Senior defenders Sophie Cox and Nuala Deans were also recognized for their outstanding efforts, as they were both tabbed to the OVC All-Tournament team.

Roberts has guided the program in the right direction, as he has compiled 29 victories over the past three seasons, which is more victories than the program had in its first seven seasons of existence. Under Roberts, the Skyhawks have also earned 16 OVC Players of the Week, after earning only nine such mentions in the program’s first eight seasons. With only three seniors on this year’s squad, UT Martin looks primed to repeat for the OVC championship in 2010.

The Skyhawks had a wildly successful season... en route to their first-ever OVC soccer championship.
When the Dan Post Boot Co. of Clarksville, Tenn., sought out one of the best collegiate rodeo teams in the nation to “wear, test, and promote its new Cowboy Certified boots,” it didn’t have to go far.

The UT Martin rodeo team was in Dan Post Boot Co.’s backyard and answered the call. Recently representatives from the Dan Post Boot Co. presented each member of the UT Martin rodeo team with a new pair of cowboy boots.

The boots are made of tough leather and have special features on the outsole and the first-ever stitched gel insole system. Cowboy Certified boots are designed for riding, rodeo, working or just achieving the authentic cowboy look.

“It is huge to have this kind of rapport with a company like Dan Post,” said John Luthi, UT Martin’s head rodeo coach. “This is a good situation for both Dan Post and the UT Martin rodeo team.”

Former UT Martin rodeo team member Bill Hoy helped finalize the details with Dan Post for the new boots. Hoy, now with Legends Bank, was a steer wrestler from 1973-77 at UT Martin. Among those representing Dan Post Boots at the recent presentation were Rodney Lockerman, Tommy Sharon, Greg Hensley and Denise Long.

Luthi said he is extremely happy with the new boots, and so are his team members. “We are excited about the new boots. They look and wear good. They’re comfortable, and they are a real quality pair of boots.”

The UT Martin softball team capitalized on Homecoming 2009 by staging a championship ring presentation and officially turning on the new lights at Bettye Giles Field for the first time. The 2009 squad is the most successful team in program history. The team won its first Ohio Valley Conference postseason tournament and advanced to the NCAA Regional Tournament in Louisville, Ky., for the first time in school history. Despite losses to Arizona and Purdue, the Skyhawks posted a 38-23 record on the year, which stands as the second most wins in school history.

Athletics Hall of Fame
Four former athletes and longtime philanthropist Kathleen Elam were inducted into UT Martin’s Athletics Hall of Fame during Homecoming Festivities, Oct. 10. Among those inducted into the Hall of Fame, l to r, were Kendra Kosco-Morgan (softball); Helen Joyce King (volleyball); accepting for Elam was her niece Betty Smith; Ki Tok Chu (football) and Dick Algire (baseball).
AFTER FIVE YEARS OF TRAINING, MARY Vowell reaped the rewards last summer in the national Senior Games held at the Avery Aquatic Center at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif.

More specifically, Vowell, a 1945 graduate of the University of Tennessee Junior College, won four medals and one ribbon in swimming. “I wanted to win at least one medal,” Vowell said.

She was counting on winning that one medal in her signature event, the 100-yard breaststroke. Vowell turned in a time of 3:09.57 to win gold. She also won gold in the 200-yard breaststroke (6:44.37). She won silver in the 50-yard breaststroke (1:23.07) and bronze in the 50-yard freestyle (59:07).

Vowell had a chance to pick up a second bronze medal, but was disqualified from the 100-yard medley.

What makes Vowell’s success so amazing is her age. The Martin native is 83 and competed in events for athletes 80 to 84 years old.

Vowell has been swimming since she was 10. Her father was the project manager at Natchez Trace State Park, and her family lived on the project in 1936. They swam in Cub Creek Lake.

“When we were young we would always ask our friends if they wanted to go swimming, and, if they said ‘yes,’ we would tell them get us a ride and we will go,” Vowell said. Once the con was accepted, Vowell said they would swim all over West Tennessee. “We used to swim in Fulton in the waste water from the ice house. We swam in Paris, Dyersburg … all over. Sometimes I think we did more playing than actual swimming.”

She started swimming at the UT Martin pool in 1992. “I was swimming 18 laps three times a week,” Vowell said. In 1997, Vowell was encouraged by retired Weakley County teacher Louise Murphy to swim in the Northwest Tennessee Senior Games. “Louise told me ‘if you wanted to get your heart rate up you have to do better than this.’” Vowell managed to get in the Senior games in Clarksville that year. Her biggest concern about swimming competitively was she was not fast enough.

Vowell talked Frank Leach, UT Martin International Programs instructor and a former member of the Indiana University swim team, into helping her.

“She was just like a sponge,” Leach said. “For five years, he wrote my workouts and coached me during the summer.” Leach was in California with Vowell at the National Senior Games.

“It was the most fun I have ever had,” Vowell said. “I am sure it is more fun when you win.”

In addition to the National Senior Games, Vowell has participated in the nationals in Orlando, Fla. (1999), Baton Rouge, La. (2001), Hampton Roads, Va. (2003), Pittsburgh (2005) and Louisville, Ky., in 2007. UTM
UT Martin: First UT Campus To Reach 100 Percent of Campaign Goal!

UT Martin is the first campus in the UT System to reach 100 percent of The Campaign for Tennessee goal. Five years ago, the University of Tennessee announced a historic $1 billion Campaign for Tennessee. At that time, UT Martin set a $25 million goal.

When UT Martin met the $25 million goal in 2007, the Campaign Steering Committee voted to raise the UT Martin goal to $40 million. In October 2009, that second goal was met, as well. With two years left in the campaign, UT Martin will continue to forge ahead, encouraging annual giving to the UT Martin Campus Fund, as well as major and planned giving opportunities for academic and athletic initiatives across the campus.

The Campaign for Tennessee Campaign Steering Committee for UT Martin is comprised of Honorary Chairs Jim Ayers and J. Houston Gordon, Campaign Co-chairs Lew Dougherty Jr. and Ray Smith, and Bill Blankenship, D. Crawford Gallimore, Bettie Graham, R. Newell Graham, Ron Kirkland, Charlie Moore, Margaret Perry and Betty Smith. The UT Martin Family Campaign, which raised more than $1 million from 54% of faculty and staff, was chaired by Charley Deal, Bettye Giles and Dr. Jerald Ogg Jr.

While many leadership gifts, particularly from Campaign Steering Committee members, have enabled UT Martin to meet the $40 million, the most recent gift that catapulted the campus over the second goal was from Pat and Warren Carmichael of Treasure Island, Fla. Warren Carmichael is a 1972 UT Martin business graduate. He and his wife have visited UT Martin on several occasions in recent years and have been impressed by and excited about the education provided on the Martin campus. Their initial gift endowed the Carmichael College of Business and Global Affairs Week. Warren spoke at that event and said, “Dean Ernie Moser is a high-energy person and is on the right track emphasizing international business education. I have always appreciated the education I received at UT Martin and felt that it played an important role in the success of my business career.”

Carmichael served as the CFO of Kleer-Vu Industries and held financial management positions with several companies before founding Three Rivers Health Plans, Inc., in 1995. He served as the CEO of that organization until he retired in 2004. He is also an avid football fan, and he and Pat have supported UT Knoxville athletics as well as the UT Martin football team. During a recent visit to the UT Martin campus, he encountered several members of the team in the university center. “They had no idea who I was, but I asked a few questions about the status of practice and other questions. They were friendly, helpful and perfect gentlemen. Coach Jason Simpson is teaching his young football players a lot about football, I’m sure, but even more about growing up and being responsible citizens.”

Pat and Warren Carmichael believe that UT Martin students get a name-brand education, and potential employers know that the University of Tennessee at Martin stands for educational excellence – a huge advantage for UT Martin graduates entering the job market. “UT Martin is on the move. I would recommend that alumni and friends get involved and support the growth and progress going on at this campus — and consider having their sons and daughters educated here.”

Another UT Martin third-generation alumnus whose gift moved UT Martin over the campaign goal line is J. Houston Gordon. His grandmother, Ava Darnall Gordon, traveled to Hall-Moody Institute, the predecessor of UT Martin, in the early 1910s in a horse and buggy to obtain her teaching certificate; and the Gordon family has been traveling to the campus ever since. Three generations of Gordons have graduated from UT Martin besides Houston. His father, H. D. Gordon,
his older brother, Chester, his sister, Sarah, his older brother, David, and his nephews, Chip and John Gordon, are also UT Martin graduates.

Gordon is not only a loyal alumnus of UT Martin and the UT College of Law, but has also served as a UT trustee, a Development Council member, on the UT Alumni Association Board of Governors and the UT Martin Development Committee. His wife, Debbie, attended the UT Health Science Center. She served on the Women’s Alliance of Philanthropists and, as an entrepreneur, established Le Chic Boutique in downtown Covington. She and Houston have assisted the Scott family (Chef Nick Scott) in opening a restaurant, Marlo’s Down Under. These businesses are located in one of two historic downtown buildings, including the Hotel Lindo, where Houston practices law. In April 2009, he celebrated the 25th anniversary of being included in the prestigious Best Lawyers in America listing.

Houston and Debbie are passionate about students being educated citizens, and they have supported the newly formed Institute for Civic Engagement at UT Martin with a $500,000 gift during the next five years, in addition to previous private support of the Paul Meek Library, the UT Martin University Scholars Program, the Gordon Family Scholarship Endowment and the UT College of Law. Their most recent commitment will support service learning, community service and engaged scholarship on the Martin campus because, as Houston has said, “It is my firm belief that the mission of higher education should include the goal of a well-informed citizenry with the knowledge of the historical bases and present responsibilities for this free society.”

Service to Others

The concept of “service to others” is sweeping the country in a wave not seen for 80 years or more. Historians may well point to Sept. 11, 2001, as a turning point. Members of UT Martin’s current freshman class were 10 or 11 years old when they watched these events unfold. Many students are coming to UT Martin already having been heavily involved in community service at their local high schools. A new initiative at UT Martin will provide service-learning classes for student groups, Greek organizations and other co-curricular activities involved in performing service activities. In fall 2009, UT Martin unveiled the new Institute for Civic Engagement (ICE), and one of the first major undertakings was to devise a plan for more than 1,200 students in the First-Year Initiative class to engage in community service and reflect on that service in a paper. The best papers will be identified and those students honored at a banquet in spring 2010. Coordination of this project has been a massive undertaking and is a testament to the dedication of the UT Martin First-Year Initiative mentors, led by Dr. George Daniel, director of the Student Success Center, and David Belote, assistant vice chancellor for student affairs. This requirement has become a part of the First-Year Initiative program, and each student will be required to engage in a service-learning project during his or her first semester.

The director of the Institute of Civic Engagement, Dr. Mike McCullough, says, “In my 15 years here at UT Martin, I’ve become accustomed to faculty, staff and students figuring out how to do what they know they should. The First-Year Initiative Service Program is one more example of that kind of networking and support. Houston and Debbie Gordon’s generous support, along with the UT Martin campus being designated the pilot for Campus Compact, (UT) system-wide, has given incredible momentum to the American Democracy Project and all aspects of engaged scholarship on our campus.” Others involved in these initiatives include ICE program coordinator, Jessica Butkovic; ICE student liaison, Rachel Henderson; and SGA president, Phillip Masengill.
Let us know what you’re up to!
Please also use this form to update your address if it has changed.

Full Name (include maiden name, if applicable): __________________________________________

Years Attended: ______ through _______ School/College of: ______________________________

Degree(s): ___________________ Major: ____________________________________________

Home Address: __________________ City/State/Zip: ________________________________

Home Phone: __________________ Business Phone: ________________________________

Occupation: __________________ Business Name or Employer: _________________________

Business Address: __________________ City/State/Zip: ______________________________

Your Email Address: _______________________________________________________________

Would you like your Email address published in Campus Scene?  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

Full Name of Spouse: _____________________________________________________________

Did your spouse attend UT Martin?  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

Years Attended: _______ Through ______ School/College of: ____________________________

Degree(s): __________________ Major: _____________________________________________

Occupation: __________________ Business Name of Employer: _________________________

Business Address: __________________ City/State/Zip: ________________________________

Spouse’s Email Address: ___________________________________________________________

Names and Ages of Children: _______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

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

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

List your current hobbies: ___________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

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

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

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

_______________________________________________________________________________

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Enclose a recent color headshot photo, if possible.

No low-resolution digital photos, please! Photographs cannot be returned to you. Every effort will be made to use all color headshots submitted. However, space considerations and/or photo quality may prevent us from using submitted photos in some instances.

Fill out, clip and return this form to:
Office of Alumni Relations
University of Tennessee at Martin
1900 Alumni Way
Martin, TN 38238
alumni@utm.edu

The UT Martin Skhawk football program received more than $1.7 million of Mrs. Elam’s gifts. This included a $560,000 challenge gift to launch a private campaign to build the Bob Carroll Football Building located in the south end zone of Hardy M. Graham Stadium. The multipurpose room in the Bob Carroll Football Building was named the Kathleen H. Elam Room in her honor.

In addition to these gifts, Mrs. Elam, who died in April, bequeathed most of her estate to UT Martin, UT Knoxville and UT Health Science Center. The bequest is the largest gift in UT Martin’s history.
The Real Deal

There are four numbers I invite you to review:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8,101</th>
<th>5.7%</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What do these numbers mean? Here are my explanations... I hope my math is correct. It should be after I had the pleasure of taking Charlie Gamble’s class a couple of times!

8,101 is the number of students enrolled at UT Martin this fall. A record number, on several different accounts, but all of these students came to UT Martin with a dream.

5.7% is the current rate of alumni supporting our university. Five out of every 100 alumni are financially giving back to UT Martin. The national average is approximately 10%. To just be average, we need 3,600 additional graduates to make donations.

50 is the magic number for our Golden Grad reunion each year. Fifty years since graduation from UT Martin, we invite the golden grads back to celebrate their accomplishments. This past year, we included breakfast in the old cafeteria and had classroom immersions. The next reunion will take place April 19-20, 2010. Anyone graduating between 1953 and 1960 is encouraged to attend.

1 is the easiest number to discuss. It only takes one to make a difference. One to help a student achieve a dream. One to give back to the university. One to make the extra effort to attend a reunion or alumni event. There is tremendous power in one, but we must make it a priority to make a difference at UT Martin. I will end my column by asking two questions:

Did interaction with faculty and staff during your collegiate career influence you in a positive way?

Have you taken or are you planning to take the necessary steps to let those who influenced your life know that you appreciated their extra efforts?

I hope you answered “yes” to both of these. Your alumni office stands ready to assist you in finding your own place in our school’s history. But you must feel the power of one and take the first step.

Are you ready?

More than 300 alumni and friends gathered Sept. 22 in Memphis to support the Skyhawks in their upset bid against the University of Memphis. The Skyhawks came up short, but the enthusiastic crowd was not disappointed. The "Blues and Orange Tailgate Party" was sponsored by the UT Martin Office of Alumni Relations and generous support from Memphis area alumni. Pictured with Captain Skyhawk at the party are Hanna Grace Garner (l) and Carson Carver (r).
The Campus Fund

This past year, UT Martin alumni were introduced to the new UT Martin Campus Fund. This fund was developed to provide the UT Martin Chancellor access to unrestricted gifts so that those gifts could be used in the areas of greatest need. For the first two years, Chancellor Rakes has designated those funds to be used by the Office of Alumni Relations to support activities and programs at the new Alumni Center.

Gifts to the Campus Fund during the past year enabled the university to do the following:

- Legacy Scholarships have been awarded to first-year students who are daughters or sons of UT Martin alumni. These first-year students are all children of UT Martin alumni and were awarded the scholarships during the annual UT Martin Legacy Luncheon;

- A golf cart has been purchased to provide riding tours of campus to alumni and university guests;

- An endowment for the Alumni Center has been established and fully endowed by proceeds from the Campus Fund. Interest from this endowment will be used to provide funds for reunions, special events and to offset the cost of operating an Alumni Center on the campus.

Gifts to the UT Martin Campus Fund are tax deductible. Please consider making a gift to this year’s campus fund and help your alma mater!

Alums, Friends Find Special Ways to Give Back to UT Martin

The five people honored with awards during the UT Martin annual Homecoming Alumni Awards Banquet share the common goal of better preparing UT Martin students to achieve, but each has chosen a special means to give back to the university.

This year’s award recipients were Dawn Gabriele, Tampa, Fla., who received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award; Bill and Roberta Blankenship, Sandestin, Fla., Outstanding Alumni Award; and Charlie and Bettye Moore, Baton Rouge, La., Chancellor’s Award for University Service. Each has endowed scholarships and supported other programs based on particular areas of interest.

Moore credited his wife, Bettye, with initiating their support of the university. “A few years ago, we were getting ready to retire, and she said, ‘We need to figure out some way to give something back to the university.’” Four years ago, they began providing scholarships, and their subsequent gift to The Campaign for Tennessee established the Charlie and Bettye Moore Scholarship Endowment for UT Knoxville and UT Martin students. “Today, we have a senior, junior, sophomore and freshman (scholarship) at UT Martin, and we plan on continuing that every year.”

Moore explained that one particular area of interest is the UT Martin off-campus centers, “where people, … who didn’t get a chance to go to college, are going to Parsons, Ripley, Selmer and places like that and now have opportunities that they did not have in the past.”
Dr. Jan Simek, far left, University of Tennessee interim president, and Dr. Tom Rakes, far right, UT Martin chancellor, are pictured with: A) Bettye and Charlie Moore, who received the Chancellor’s Award for University Service; B) Roberta and Bill Blankenship, who received the Outstanding Alumni Award; and C) Dawn Gabriele, who received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

The Moores are Sharon natives. Charles attended UT Martin and earned a bachelor’s degree in engineering from UT Knoxville. Both are retired from careers with Boeing, where Charles was a senior specialist with the Apollo Programs and Bettye was the administrative aide for senior management at a number of Boeing locations and corporate headquarters. Charles also served as vice president of corporate engineering at Ethyl/Albemarle and as executive vice president/chief operating officer with Stone and Webster.

He is a member of the UT Development Council and the UT Martin Campaign Steering Committee. Bettye is a member of the UT Martin Development Committee.

The Blankenships were in the second graduating class of the University of Tennessee-Martin Branch.

“There are a lot of new faculty, and the enrollment … has increased some 10 times what it was when we were here. But what has not changed is the environment. The caring and mentoring of students certainly was here and still exists today,” Blankenship noted that the educations that they both received at UT Martin “without question aided us in our business careers and our lives.” He added, “Education is the key to meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow.” The couple’s contributions to The Campaign for Tennessee support the UT Martin College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and other UT Martin programs.

Blankenship cited 30 percent state support to the university and noted the remainder has to be generated from tuition and private gifts. He added, “There are a lot of good reasons why we should make contributions for higher education. I can tell you it’s just the right thing to do. We’re passionate about UT Martin and what it means to the economic growth … of the region. UT Martin is truly preparing the next generation of leadership.” He closed issuing a challenge to all alumni, “Let’s provide support for the students of today and of the future.”

Roberta graduated from UT Martin with a bachelor’s degree in home economics and from the cytotechnology program at the UT Health Science Center. She later worked on cancer research projects at UTHSC with Dr. Cyrus C. Erikson and Irma Rube. Bill graduated with a bachelor’s degree in agriculture. He currently is a member of the UT Development Council and the UT Martin Campaign Steering Committee and is a former member of the UT Martin Development Committee.

After obtaining his UT Martin degree, Bill, a Covington native, was accepted in the Navy Officer Candidate School and, on receiving his commission, was assigned to the Commander In Chief Pacific Fleet Staff. He started his business career with Buckeye, a division of Procter & Gamble. P & G sold the cellulose business in the early 1990s to an investment group that formed Buckeye Technologies, and he was vice president of cotton manufacturing. Roberta is a Memphis native.

Gabriele took some time to explain the background of her UT Martin Aspiring Women’s Scholarship Endowment, noting that it is meant to assist female graduates transitioning from academic to career environments. “That’s really where I feel like there is a gap,” she said, “in terms of what I learned in college and the real work world. The scholarship is to create a network of women who are aspiring to do something with their lives.” Also, she said, decisions about personal career goals, financial management and other issues graduates will face for the first time entering the job market can be daunting. The goal of the scholarship is to assist the UT Martin graduates through mentorships and networking with other professional women as they get established in their fields and advance in their careers.

“I’ve been very fortunate to have some wonderful mentors in my life,” said Gabriele in introducing her parents, George and Karen Gunter of South Fulton. From them, she said she learned the “value of hard work and dedication.” From her grandparents Gabriele said she “learned to be self-sufficient and keep a positive attitude.”

To several scholarship recipients attending the banquet, Gabriele said, “I do hope you will find a way to pay it forward.” She added, “Dream, do, dare and most importantly, aspire.”

Gabriele joined Mirixa Corp., a privately owned health information and pharmacy-based company, in May 2009, following a 16-year career at Pfizer pharmaceuticals. She is vice president, health plans and employer services. With a blend of corporate marketing and field sales experience, she was responsible for implementing Pfizer’s first fully integrated Hispanic marketing campaign. Her most recent work includes developing the southeast employer and health plan markets while consulting with them to optimize their healthcare costs.

Gabriele, a Fulton, Ky., native, received a bachelor’s degree in marketing from UT Martin in 1990 and holds a master’s degree in organizational management from Tusculum College. She is a member of the Junior League of Tampa and the UT Alliance of Women Philanthropists. In her free time, she enjoys traveling with her husband, Franco, and playing tennis. **UTM**
1947
Bill W. Webb, ('47), lives in Selmer and is retired. He has been married to Tommy Lancaster Webb, ('47), for 61 years. Both were named Citizen of the Year in McNairy County, and they also founded Future Teachers Org., UTJC in 1946. They have three children: Becky, 57; Molly, 55; and Amy, 52.

Ben Wortham, ('67), lives in Orange Park, Fla., and is superintendent of Clay County Schools. He earned his master's in education from Memphis State University in 1968. After serving 39 years as deputy superintendent of Clay County Schools, he retired in 2007 and was then elected as superintendent in 2008. He is married to Sylvia Wortham, and they have four married daughters and nine grandchildren. Email: bswortham@comcast.net.

1967

1973
Woo S. Ahn, ('73), and his wife, Seung-Ja Cho, live in Auburn, Wash. He received a doctorate from Oklahoma State University in 1975. He was a community college division chair for four years, high school teacher and community college faculty member for five years, community college dean for 10 years and community college president for seven years. He retired as president in 2006. He has three children: Jeanie, 29; Kay, 27; and Michelle, 9. Email: woodyahn2@msn.com.

1974
Dr. Brenda Cude (B.S. ‘74, M.S. ’75), a housing and consumer economics professor in the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences, has been named a Distinguished Fellow by the American Council on Consumer Interests. She was recognized at the annual ACCI conference in September in Milwaukee, Wis. Distinguished Fellows are recognized leaders in the consumer field who have contributed significantly to ACCI and have displayed high standards of professional and ethical conduct throughout their careers. Cude earned her doctorate in consumer economics from Purdue University in 1978. (courtesy UGA Office of Public Affairs)

1976
Arthur L. Sparks Jr., ('76), and his wife, Tammy, live in Union City. He is a partner with Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs and was recognized as one of Tennessee’s best accountants by Business TN Magazine. This is the second consecutive year that he has received the honor. He and his company have established the AFA Distinguished Professorship in accounting, information systems and internal controls at UT Martin. Email: aspark@atacpa.net.

1979
Dr. Buddy Bibb, ('79), and his wife, Sally Newton Bibb, ('77), live in Munford. He is Tipton County Schools director of insurance. He earned a doctorate of education degree from the University of Memphis Department of Leadership in the summer of 2009. He is also serving his 28th year as a Tipton County commissioner. He has two children: Eric, 27; and Rachel, 23. Email: bbibb@tiptoncounty.com

1980
David H. Bryan ('80), is a financial professional with the Tennessee branch of AXA Advisors, LLC, and has been inducted into the company’s hall of fame. He has 29 years of experience in the industry and joined AXA Advisors as an associate in 1980. He is active in professional and community organizations including a role as past president of the Chattanooga chapter of the National Estate Planning Council, a board member of The Society of Financial Service Professionals, a member of the University of Tennessee Alumni Board of Governors and a board member of the Center for Global Studies and International Education at UT Martin.

“David has always impressed me by his organizational ability and his dedication. I am not surprised by his AXA award. I know it was well-earned. He has been a great supporter of UT Martin and remains active in many university activities,” said Dr. Ted Mosch, UT Martin professor emeritus of political science.

1981
Doris Scott Battle, ('81), lives in Brownsville with her husband, Walter. She works as a deputy superintendent for Jackson-Madison County Schools. They have two children: Max, 18; and Paige, 16. Email: dsbattle@jmcss.org.

Johnnie Ferrell, ('81), received the State University of New York (SUNY) system-wide service award for the 2008-09 academic year at a ceremony, Aug. 28, 2009. He is an associate professor of theatre and technical director in Geneseo’s School of the Arts, Genesco, N.Y. Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher said, “Johnnie Ferrell goes above and beyond the call of duty in managing the technical workload of the numerous productions in the School of the Arts.” In addition to his teaching...
Bobby Goode ('79) was appointed in August by President Barack Obama to serve as USDA Rural Development state director for Tennessee.

Goode's first job out of college was working as assistant county supervisor for the USDA-Farmers Home Administration in Memphis and in Mountain City. He later served with the same agency as county supervisor and area supervisor in an area that included most counties in Northwest Tennessee. In 1995, he became a farm loan manager for USDA's Farm Service Agency until 2006 when he was appointed Union City area director for USDA Rural Development.

A native of Crockett County, Goode grew up working on his family's farm. He graduated from Alamo High School and earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture. Goode and his wife of 26 years, Melinda Poteet Goode, have two sons, Garner and Crockett, and live in Dresden.

Goode and his entire family are graduates of Leadership Weakley County. He is a 2007 graduate of the WestStar Regional Leadership Program and is a 2009 graduate of the Delta Regional Authority Leadership Institute.

He is an active community leader serving on numerous boards and committees including the Dresden Parks and Recreation Board and was instrumental in organizing and developing the Dresden K-8 Outdoor Classroom. He attends Lebanon Church of Christ, is a Rotarian, serves on the Dresden Foundation and is Tennessee Iris Festival Event co-chair. Goode was honored recently in Dresden as Tennessee Iris Festival Citizen of the Year for 2009.

responsibilities in stagecraft, technical theatre and lighting and sound design, he provides direct support of student designers. He also manages an array of faculty-directed and student-directed theatre productions, community-produced theatre productions, dance concerts and musical theatre revues. Ferrell is active in the U.S. Institute of Theatre Technology. Ferrell resides in Avon, N.Y., with his wife, Crystal.

1985

Mark L. DuPriest, ('85), lives in Nashville and is a courier for FedEx in Brentwood. He currently enjoys bowling and collecting CDs, DVDs and sports collectibles. Email: dup0562@aol.com.

Shelia Porter Harris, ('85), lives in Brandon, Fla., with her daughter. Email: shelia@plainridge.com.

1991

Ken White, ('91), lives in Trenton with his wife, Joetta, and their daughter, Kendra Jo, 7. He was promoted from principal at Rutherford School (K-8) to athletic director for the Gibson County School District. He enjoys hunting and fishing. Email: whitek3@k12tn.net.

1993

Scott Wayne Gilmer, ('93), lives in Nashville with his wife, Amber, and he works for the Tennessee General Assembly. Email: scottgilm-er@hotmail.com.

Carol Spain Godwin, ('93), lives in Martin with her two children, William and Caroline. She works as an attorney for Lang Unger. She graduated in May 2009 with a doctor of jurisprudence from Nashville School of Law and recently sat for the Tennessee Bar Exam. Email: cgodwin@ungerlaw.net.

1995

Yolanda Siples, ('95), recently accepted the assistant general counsel position with Florida Department of Elder Affairs, located in Tallahassee, Fla.

1996

Tasha Blakney, ('96), lives in Knoxville with her husband, Michael Rogers, and is a lawyer for Eldridge & Blakney. Gov. Phil Bredesen recently appointed her to the Tennessee Community Services Agency board of directors. She enjoys reading, traveling, hiking and spending time with her family. Email: tblakney@eblaw.us.

Stacey Brewer, ('96), lives in Oakland and works for Shelby County Schools in Cordova. Email: conesta- cey@yahoo.com.

1997

Jason Alan Beck, ('97), and his wife, Jennifer, live in Farmington, Mo. He works for SRG Global, Inc., in Farmington. They have three children: Jonathan, Anthony and Spencer. Email: safety_defense@yahoo.com.

1999

Stephen Faulkner, ('99), and his wife, Patricia, live in New York. They have a son, Liam, 5 mos.

Lisa Shaver Finn, ('99), and her husband, Kevin Finn, ('99), live in Richmond, Ky. She works at Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington, Ky. She earned a master's in public health in 2002, her medical degree in 2006, and completed her internal continued on next page
2000

Leigh Ann Kowalsky-Goodwin, ('00), lives in Pantego, Texas, with her husband, Eric. She recently joined the sales team of Sanofi-Aventis to promote Lantus & Apidra insulin to endocrinologists based in Dallas, Texas. Email: lakowalsky@hotmail.com.

Phillip "Chip" Eugene Pinion II, ('00), lives in Murfreesboro and works for the Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corp. Email: cpinion@mt EMC.com.

2002

Sweetricia M. Giaimo-Baker, ('02), lives in Memphis. She is a substitute teacher and a mentor to the students of Memphis City Schools and is currently pursuing a teacher's certification. She is also a community volunteer. She is married to Jeremy R. Baker, and they have two children: Jordan, 7; and Jonathan, 2. Email: s.giaimo@yahoo.com.

Xiaojiang Ji, ('02), and Yong-Hsin Liu ('03), live in Taipei, Taiwan. Email: jixiaojiang@hotmail.com.

2003

Shawndy Moulton, ('02), lives in Pensacola, Fla., and works for the University of West Florida. Email: nickmaster@hotmail.com.

Julie Crowell Wyatt, ('02), above, and her husband, Jaime, live in Brentwood. She received a bachelor's degree in interior design at Watkins College of Art and Design. She is a commercial interior designer at Shonna Sexton Studio in Nashville. She became a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Accredited Professional and will be opening a Gigi's Cupcakes in Murfreesboro along with her sister, Jan Crowell Zamudio. Email: julie_crowell@hotmail.com.

Stephen Lee Cavness, ('03), lives in Cave City, Ky., with his wife, Chrisi. He is a pastor of Cave City Baptist Church. He received his master's degree from the School of Theology of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and has had his writings on Christianity, the church and culture published by both local and national publications. They have two children: Charlie and Piper.

Kendra Marie Kosco Morgan, ('03), lives in Morton, Ill., with her husband, Daniel Morgan. She is employed at Dee-Mack High School in Mackinaw, Ill., and was inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame on Oct. 10, 2009. Email: kuott21@yahoo.com.

Jonathan Kendall Spiceland, ('03) and his wife, Emily Sample Spiceland, ('03), live in Oakland with their children, Porter, 2, and Audrey Anne, born on Sept. 9, 2009. He works at the University of Memphis. Email: jonathanspiceland@gmail.com.

2004

Sandra Daniel Hartness, ('04), recently accepted a position as an agriculture specialist at the Department of Homeland Security located in Raleigh, N.C.

2005

Patrick W. Wood, ('05), lives in Nashville. Email: patwood82@yahoo.com.

2006

Mary Jane “Janie” Robinson, ('06), lives in Dyer and works as a receptionist for the Tennessee State Veterans Home. She first attended UT Martin in 1976 and was later encouraged by her daughter, Elizabeth, to finish her degree. She graduated, along with Elizabeth, in 2006. She enjoys reading, cross-stitching and being a grandmother. She has three children: Elizabeth, 24; Whitney, 23; and Lauren, 18. Email: jrobinson@tsv.h.

Candace Garmany Zarecor, ('06), and her husband, David Hall Zarecor, ('05), live in Milan. They moved back to Tennessee from Arkansas in 2008. She works as a billing clerk at Milan Public Utilities. Email: candacemorgan@gmail.com.

2007

Rachel Bibb, ('07), is in her third year of teaching health at Atoka Elementary School in Tipton County.

Jenny Perry, ('07), lives in Columbia and is a sales representative for Simplex Healthcare, located in Brentwood. She received her M.B.A. in May 2009 from Bethel College in McKenzie. She is also a Zeta Tau Alpha Nashville Alumna Chapter member. Email: jennykperry@yahoo.com.

2008

William Freeman, ('08), lives in Madison, Ala., and works as a systems engineer on a missile defense program for the Boeing Company in Huntsville, Ala. Email: freeilliman@gmail.com.

Candace Aikiah Hooper, ('08), lives in Memphis. Email: candace.hooper@yahoo.com.

Justin Wade Howell, ('08), lives in Bolivar and works as an insurance agent for Jimmy Howell Insurance. He enjoys hunting, going to the lake and riding his motorcycle. Email: jhfarmers@gmail.com.

2009

Ryan Lee O’Neal, ('09), lives in Smyrna. Email: onealryan25@gmail.com.

Christina Warford, ('09), has been accepted to graduate school at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn. She is pursuing a master's degree in family life education.

Elaine Nicole Wilson, ('09), lives in Dyersburg. Email: lanewils@cableone.net.

UTM
Kristy Nichols (‘95) took a business degree from UT Martin and subsequent degree in mass communication from the University of Louisiana in Lafayette and pursued a career that led her to a Louisiana state secretary’s post. Nichols was appointed secretary of the Department of Social Services by Gov. Bobby Jindal in December 2008. She accepted the post after a 10-year career in health care and social services in Louisiana.

“I planned a career in business,” said Nichols, a Memphis native. “The business degree I earned at UT Martin provided a solid foundation for me as I continued my education. Having that business background has provided tools and a useful perspective in my work as a community organizer and program manager in both the non-profit and public sector. It also gave me a strong appreciation for the value of customer service, which is equally important in the non-profit and public sectors as it is in the private sector.”

From July 1999 to June 2002, Nichols served as the director of the Southwest Louisiana Area Health Education Center’s Louisiana Rural Health Access Program, where she worked to establish four formal rural health networks that were successful in securing more than $4 million in funding for community health improvement initiatives, including an integrated rural transportation system, local pharmacy access initiatives and a free volunteer clinic.

From July 2002 to November 2007, Nichols served as the director of the Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health at the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) where she oversaw a $36 million grant budget and administered grant funding from federal, national and state philanthropic organizations. Nichols also oversaw recruitment and retention services, health-systems development and health-information services, led a pharmacy access initiative and oversaw chronic-disease programs.

The business degree I earned at UT Martin provided a solid foundation for me as I continued my education.

Nichols increased funding for community health initiatives from $3 million to $36 million over four years. She also led community-based Hurricane Katrina recovery planning and coalition building, resulting in more than $21 million in federal funding for restoring access to primary health-care services in disaster-recovery areas and $50 million in federal funding for health-care workforce development in disaster-recovery areas. Because of her work in this position, she was a recipient of the 2006 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leadership Award, considered the nation’s highest honor in community health leadership.

Before being appointed secretary, she served as a policy adviser on health- and social-services initiatives to Gov. Jindal. She worked on the successful passage of the governor’s health-care legislative package during the 2008 legislative session, including legislation on mental health-care reform, health-care transparency initiatives, increasing health-care technology and increasing access to private health insurance for uninsured Louisiana children.

Nichols said that the aspects of her work that have been most fulfilling centered on serving people, both in health care and social services. “Most of my work has focused on providing access to services for people who are in need,” she said. “When you do this and see improvements in public systems that impact people’s lives, it is very gratifying. I also have enjoyed leading and managing people. Management is a huge responsibility, but building a team and watching the impact that a strong team can have on critical issues is extremely important.”

Her career choices have had their challenges. Among them has been managing a state agency, especially one that is charged with protecting children from abuse and neglect. “This is an awesome responsibility and one that you cannot fully prepare for emotionally,” Nichols said. “It is also the best part of my job. Every day, children and their families are involved in stress and crisis that have a devastating impact on children, our communities and society as a whole. Protecting children and helping families move out of crisis so that parents can properly care for their children is the most important work that we can do.”

Nichols maintains that health care and social services are excellent fields because they are complex and ever-changing. “Both are challenging fields, and the problems require long-term solutions. You have to stay engaged and use every skill you have to succeed.”

Nichols and her husband, Ryan, have a daughter, Isabelle Grace. The family lives in Baton Rouge. UTM
Former Rodeo Team Members Have Plenty of Respect for Coach

Former members of the UT Martin rodeo team are now serving in other capacities in the Ozark Region. (From l to r) Ken Mason (’98) is the head coach at Missouri Valley College; Jolyn Lowry Wells (’99) is the head coach at the University of Arkansas-Monticello; Kathy Curry McCloy (’00) is the secretary for the Ozark Region; and Chad Phipps (’02) is the head coach at the University of West Alabama.

It’s an underlying rule in the coaching fraternity that you do not play against your closest friends unless it’s mandatory. For example, in last year’s College World Series, Brian O’Connor at Virginia and Paul Mainieri at LSU were forced to play each other. The two were on the same staff at Notre Dame and vowed they would not play each other unless forced.

You can toss the rule to the wayside at the University of Tennessee at Martin where head rodeo coach John Luthi has to worry about coaching against his former team members at three Ozark Region Schools. Ken Mason (’98) is the head coach at Missouri Valley; Jolyn Lowry Wells (’99) is the head coach at Arkansas-Monticello and Chad Phipps (’02) is the head coach at the University of West Alabama.

“John’s main goal was to make you a better person, not a better rodeo competitor.”

– Kathy Curry McCloy

Luthi also gets to work with former team members, Kathy Curry McCloy (’00) and Ty Atchison (’08). McCloy serves as the secretary for the Ozark Region, and Atchison is trying to make a name for himself on the pro circuit and helped at this past year’s UT Martin collegiate rodeos on behalf of his sponsors.

The competition among the coaches is fierce. The rivalries are heated. But for Luthi, his former team members are good people and will always be good people. “I don’t look at them like they are the opponent,” Luthi said. “I worry about my team and pray the Good Lord gives us the opportunity to have success.”

Mason, Wells and Phipps do not look at Luthi as the foe.

“He’s one of my heroes,” Phipps said about Luthi. “When I came to UT Martin, I felt I could hold my own in the rodeo arena. When I left, I was 100-fold better because of Coach Luthi.”

Phipps worked all the events except bareback riding at UT Martin for Luthi for four years. He’s spent the past two years coaching at UWAL. “The first year I was coaching, every time we would go to a rodeo, I would have lunch with Coach Luthi. He’s not going to tell you how to run your deal, but he will answer your questions.”

Phipps said everything he does as a coach is what Luthi taught him. “My team handouts, my meetings, practice, everything is what Coach Luthi showed me.”

Wells said Luthi does a lot of things right. “He has the respect of the whole region.”

Mason is the oldest of Luthi’s former team members. He was on the team Luthi’s first year (1997) and then served as an assistant coach. “John Luthi has made the biggest impact on me other than my father,” Mason said. “Coach Luthi reminds me of John Wayne: he doesn’t sugar-coat it.”

McCloy ran barrels and worked the breakaway roping for Luthi from 1996-2000. “I talk to John all the time,” McCloy said. “He’s the measuring moral stick and the elder in this region.”

“John’s main goal was to make you a better person, not a better rodeo competitor,” she said.

While Atchison is pursuing a pro career and doesn’t coach against Luthi, he’s thankful for what the UT Martin mentor taught him. “He taught me how to win in every aspect. He has morals, discipline and all the keys,” Atchison said.

While it’s fun to win, when it comes to the rodeo arena and one of Luthi’s prodigies is in the house, it is all about respect for the UT Martin coach who is in his 14th season.
No. 7: A Master of His Craft

Jeff Arnett, ('88), entered UT Martin on an academic scholarship, unsure as to whether he wanted to be a doctor or an engineer. “The thought of ten years of college, medical school and residency helped me find my way into the engineering path,” he recalls.

In the mid '80s, UT Martin only offered the first two years of a four-year engineering degree, which required you to transfer to another university to receive your degree. Jeff chose the University of Alabama to complete his degree.

After graduating, Jeff met a recruiter from Procter & Gamble who was hiring for the New Orleans Folger Coffee plant. “So, I packed my bags for Louisiana and made coffee for the next four or five years,” Jeff recalls.

After Folger in New Orleans, he transferred to Sherman, Texas, for his next assignment and made Sunny Delight. He served as the manager over the blend module and also worked very closely with research and development to introduce several new flavors of Sunny D during his tenure there. All told, Jeff served in a variety of capacities with P&G, including department manager, project engineer, quality control and new product initiatives leader. He lived in three different states and produced coffee, citrus beverages and potato chips.

In 2001, a voluntary separation package prompted Jeff to check out the possibility of other employment.

Jeff was hired by Jack Daniel's Distillery and began as the quality control manager. He was later promoted to oversee the whiskey processing and warehousing departments. After being with the distillery for seven years, Jeff became the master distiller.

Upon learning he had been selected as the seventh master distiller in the distillery's history, Jeff was stunned. At the time he was named master distiller, he was seven years younger than the previous master distiller was when he assumed the title.

“I was honored just to be considered, and I never thought that I would ultimately be the seventh master distiller for Old No.7 after only working here for seven years. With all those sevens in the story, I guess I'd have to say I felt like the luckiest guy in the world.”

Jeff spends 80 percent of his time overseeing the quality and every aspect of the making of Jack Daniel's whiskey. The other 20 percent of his time is spent representing the brand and educating friends around the world how fine Tennessee whiskey is made.

“I’ve told people that my worst day at Jack Daniel's was still a pretty good day, and there aren’t many jobs you can say that about.”

Jeff and his family reside in Lynchburg, Tenn. His wife, Lori, is a native of Columbia, Tenn., and works as a part-time speech and reading teacher at their children's school. Their son, Will, is 6, and daughter, Elizabeth, is 5.
Lester Hudson, Celtic

Lester Hudson, (’09), the 58th pick in June’s NBA draft, has signed a contract with the Boston Celtics. Hudson played the past two seasons at UT Martin and is a two-time winner of the Ohio Valley Conference Male Athlete of the Year award.

The Celtics, who own more NBA titles (17) than any other team in the league, opened the season with six consecutive victories. Hudson appeared in three of the season’s first six games. After Boston defeated the Cleveland Cavaliers 95-89 on Opening Night on Oct. 27 to snap an 11-game losing streak in Cleveland, Hudson made his NBA debut one night later against the Charlotte Bobcats.

Hudson entered the game at the 9:36 mark of the fourth quarter and played the duration of the game, stuffing the stat-sheet just as he did at UT Martin. He grabbed one rebound, handed out one assist, and had one steal.

Boston then played two nights later, hosting the Chicago Bulls in a 118-90 victory in a re-match of last season’s epic seven-game first-round playoff series. Hudson checked in at the 10:15 mark of the fourth quarter and once again finished the game, scoring his first career NBA points at the 3:58 mark when he hit the first of two free throws. The Memphis native then scored his first field goal a little over three minutes later, creating some separation between a defender before launching a 20-foot jumper that found nothing but net.

The Celtics took down the New Orleans Hornets 97-87 on Nov. 1. Hudson did not play in that game, but returned two nights later for the best game of the season so far in a 105-74 win over the Philadelphia 76ers. Hudson helped the Celtics improve to 5-0 for the second time in the last three seasons by scoring six points, dishing out three assists, and blocking a shot in just six minutes of playing time.

Hudson entered the game at the 6:45 mark and immediately made his presence felt, blocking a lay-up attempt by 6-foot-10 Marreese Speights just 32 seconds later. Hudson earned the assist on an 18-foot jumper by Shelden Williams at the 5:30 mark before converting his first career NBA three-pointer, a 25-foot jumpshot with 4:58 left.

A little over a minute later, Hudson connected again from downtown - this time a 24-foot jumper. Hudson then was credited with the assist on Boston’s last two field goals - a two pointer from JR Giddens and a trois from Brian Scalabrine. Overall, Hudson has averaged 3.0 points, 1.3 assists (opposed to 0.33 turnovers), 0.33 blocks and 0.3 rebounds in 9.0 minutes per game.

Hudson helped UT Martin win its first-ever OVC Championship and advance to the NIT Tournament in 2009. The team finished the season with an overall record of 22-10 and was first in the OVC with a 14-4 league worksheet. Hudson was the nation’s second leading scorer, averaging 27.5 points, ending his two-year career just two points shy of the all-time UT Martin scoring mark, behind Mike Meschede’s 1,729 points from 1984-88. One of college basketball’s most all-around players, Hudson also averaged 7.9 rebounds, 4.2 assists and 2.3 steals per game last season.

Gift of Retirement Assets

You may find that gifts of retirement assets are simple, can save your heirs undue tax burdens and allow you to accomplish your charitable objectives. When you bequeath retirement assets to your heirs, you are leaving them taxable assets. After your heirs pay the taxes due on these assets, their inheritance will be considerably less than the original amount. However, if you bequeath retirement plan assets to the University of Tennessee at Martin, no income tax is owed on those assets. In addition, naming UT Martin the beneficiary of an IRA or other retirement plan is usually as simple as updating your beneficiary form information.

For example, Mrs. Jones plans to leave her IRA to the university in her will. Her estate will receive an estate tax deduction, and there will be no income tax on the earnings that accumulated tax-free during her life.

You may also want to consider setting up a charitable trust with retirement assets. With a trust, you simply transfer your retirement assets to the university as the remainder beneficiary. The trust can provide payments for your spouse or loved one for the rest of his/her life. After the death of your spouse, the assets remaining in the trust will be used by UT Martin for the designation of your choice. There will be no estate or income taxes imposed on the assets at the time of the gift.
Dr. John William Dougherty, 73, former professor and chair, UT Martin Department of Music, died June 21, 2009, at Volunteer Community Hospital. He held bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Eastern New Mexico University and a doctorate from Florida State University. He came to UT Martin in 1989 and retired Jan. 31, 2004.

Besides his many local performances, Dougherty also performed for audiences in other cities. A news release in the Oct. 26, 2006, edition of The Weakley County Press reported that he performed for Opera Memphis, Nashville Opera and Arkansas Opera Theatre. He also performed as a soloist with the Memphis Symphony, Paducah Symphony and Jackson Symphony.

He received the title of professor emeritus of music following his retirement.

Cora Lee Graham, of Union City, died Oct. 31, 2009, at her residence. She was 93. She and her husband, the late Harry Moore Graham, who died June 16, 2007, were longtime champions of athletics, were among the earliest scholarship donors and leaders in library support and faculty development at UT Martin. The couple’s financial support allowed students from the region to attend college and the university’s athletic programs to grow over the years. The Graham family’s financial contributions to the university exceed $1 million.

She is survived by two sons, Hardy P. Graham of Meridian, Miss., and R. Newell Graham, and his wife, Bettie Y. Graham, of Union City. Newell and Bettie are members of the UT Martin Campaign Steering Committee and responsible for the Coca-Cola Foundation’s campaign gift of $50,000 to establish the Graham Seminar Series.

Marion Hudson, 83, of Sharon, died Oct. 26, 2009, at Volunteer Community Hospital in Martin. She was employed for 30 years at UT Martin and retired from the university’s bookstore in 2001.

Cora DeBerry Lake, (UTJC ‘46), died Nov. 18, 2009. Her daughter, Cathy Lake Black, (‘77), wrote, “She almost never missed a UTJC reunion as long as she was able to drive.”

Gloria Mansfield, retired geology instructor, died Aug. 7, 2009. She earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from UT Martin. She began working for UT Martin in 1967 as the secretary for the science department and later became a geology lecturer and instructor. She retired in December 2008 with more than 40 years of service.

Dr. Stephen D. Raines, 55, of Union City, died Sept. 11, 2009, at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital. He was a doctor of podiatric medicine. A graduate of UT Martin, he graduated cum laude from the Illinois College of Podiatric Medicine. Consumer Research Council of America named him one of America’s top podiatrists in 2007. Raines was a founding member and elder of Crosswind Church in Union City, a first-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and a member of the Union City Rotary Club. (Courtesy Union City Daily Messenger)

Correction: The Summer/Fall 2009 issue of Campus Scene reported Kevin Rogers’ death incorrectly. He died on Jan. 7, 2009. We regret the error and apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Lauren Jean Witty, 23, of Memphis, died May 23, 2009, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Witty completed her UT Martin undergraduate degree in 2008, graduating magna cum laude, and was a member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority. She was pursuing an MBA degree at UT Martin at the time of her death. Witty was a member of Christ United Methodist Church, participated in mission trips and received honorable mention in the April 2004 Memphis Woman Magazine’s “Outstanding Women of Memphis.” (Courtesy The Commercial Appeal)

Nadine Gearin

The first head coach of UT Martin women’s basketball team, Nadine Gearin, died July 12, 2009, at VanAyer Nursing Home in Martin after a long illness. Gearin was 73.

She coached the UT Martin Lady Pacers basketball team from 1969-78. One of Gearin’s former players was Pat Head Summitt (1971-74). Gearin also coached the women’s volleyball team from 1969-73 and the UT Martin badminton club from 1968-70. She served the university for 40 years, officially retiring June 30, 1997. She was inducted into the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame in 1988. Gearin’s basketball teams won the 1970-71 Tennessee College Women’s Sports Federation and won three Western Division titles. Her 1971-72 team posted the most wins in Lady Pacer history and also became the only basketball team in school history to advance to the national championship tournament. Gearin sported an overall basketball coaching record of 104-86. When Kiwanis International allowed women to join its organization, Gearin was one of the first two women inducted into the local chapter in March 1988. She was the adviser for the local Kiwanis’ Aktion Club. Dr. Brenda Cude, a University of Georgia professor who played for the 1971-72 team, remembered Gearin as a coach who “truly cared about her players.” In a tribute to her former coach, Cude wrote, “She coached because she loved the game of basketball. In a 1975 newspaper interview, Nadine said of coaching, ‘I do it because I like it. I have a great bunch of girls to work with and I feel like I accomplish something worthwhile each season.’”
UT Martin Recognized for Small Class Size and Affordability

A usnews.com story, Colleges That Offer Small Classes on a Budget, posted Nov. 24, 2009, included UT Martin among “30 well-regarded and affordable colleges with lots of small classes.” UT Martin was the only Tennessee college or university listed. “Attending a big, affordable public university doesn’t doom a student to huge lecture halls,” wrote Kim Clark. “U.S. News has found dozens of lower-priced colleges in which at least half of all classes have fewer than 20 students.” Her story listed “colleges and universities where in-state tuition and fees were under $10,000 in 2008.”

Calendar of Events for Alumni

March 20 UT Martin Alumni Council Meeting
March 25 and 26 UT Martin Dance Alumni Reunion
April 19 and 20 UT Martin Golden Grad Reunion (Classes of 1953-1960)
April 23 UT Martin Night at Pringles Park in Jackson, Tenn. May 5 Grand Finale Celebration and Senior Walk
May 15 UT Martin Spring Commencement