The search for a new athletic director at UT Martin is now down to four.

In identifying the four candidates, the search has been close to home with one already working on campus and has also stretched to Michigan, Illinois and Nevada.

The successful candidate will succeed Phil Dane, who earlier announced his retirement as the university's athletics director effective Dec. 31.

Each candidate will appear at open forums starting the second week of this month in the Boling University Center. The forums are open to the public.

The finalists include Richard R. Schoeberl, Robert C. Heller, Tim M. Van Alstine and Julio Freire.

Schoeberl is already employed within the UTM athletics department, having served as assistant AD since 2011.

Heis open forum will be 3:30 p.m. Dec. 13.

Heller has served as associate athletics director and major gifts officer at Central Michigan University since 2010.

The school's open forum for Heller will be 2 p.m. Dec. 11.

Van Alstine will meet with UT Martin supporters at his open forum 3:30 p.m. Dec. 16.

He currently serves as assistant vice president and director of athletics at Western Illinois University, a position he has held since 2001.

Freire has been the senior associate athletics director at UNLV since 2010.

His open forum is set for 3:30 p.m. Dec. 17.

UT Martin competes in NCAA Division I in men's and women's sports and the Football Championship Subdivision.

The university is a member of the Ohio Valley Conference.

The UT Martin rodeo team, the only collegiate rodeo team in Tennessee, is a member of the Ozark Region and the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.

UTM's new athletic director will inherit a full agenda, including the overseeing of construction on an upgraded football facility, hiring a new baseball head coach and building on the recent successes of the football program and many of the women's teams.

Dane has served as the director of athletics since 2000 after serving as vice chancellor for Business and Finance at UT Martin for 13 years guided the university through its most recent NCAA Division I Certification.

LISTEN WELL — Laura Foltz, one of three narrators who guide the audience through a story about life choices and the changes that are possible, is part of the cast in the Masquerade Theatre production of the Charles Dickens classic, "A Christmas Carol."
The University of Tennessee at Martin’s Vanguard Theatre will premiere Sheri Fink’s No. 1 best-selling, award-winning children’s book as a play adapted by Leon Scioscia and Sheri Fink.

“The Little Rose” will have its premiere Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. in the newly-renovated Fine Arts Building’s “Little Theatre.”

Admission is free. General seating will be available. The Little Theatre is located directly off the main parking lot of the Fine Arts Building. Seating for performances will begin at 6:30 p.m. Call 731-881-7400 or 731-881-7090 for information.

Both Sheri Fink and Leon Scioscia will be in attendance at performances and will also be available at Wonderland Books in the Looking Glass Coffee Shop in downtown Martin for a very special book reading and signing event Saturday starring at 9:30 a.m.

“The Little Rose,” Ms. Fink’s first children’s book, enjoys massive popularity due to its heartfelt central message: be yourself, even in the face of bullying. Ms. Scioscia, and Mr. Fink, knew that the story was perfect for the stage so they teamed up to develop, adapt and write the theatrical version of the book.

“I’m so grateful to have worked on this with Leon,” Fink said. “Together we were able to translate the universal themes into a memorable stage event. I know that my fans will love The Little Rose play as much as they have loved The Little Rose book.”

Scioscia said, “Sheri’s vision of The Little Rose reaches out and touches young and old. She has created a timeless story that tugs at the heart, and makes you think about right and wrong. I am honored to have had the opportunity to adapt the story, with Sheri, because of its worldwide appeal.”

Fink is a No. 1 international best-selling, award-winning children’s author and international speaker. She created “The Whimsical World of Sheri Fink” children’s brand to inspire and delight kids while planting seeds of self-esteem that can have lifelong benefit. Sheri’s books include The Little Rose, The Little Gnome, Exploring the Garden with the Little Rose, and The Little Firefly.

Scioscia has written over 14 plays, several short stories, including The Snow Fort, and poetry. His day job enables him to support his writing desires. He has worked for theatre companies all over the United States.

Vanguard Theatre is part of the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The department provides educational, artistic and cultural opportunities for the students of the University and the people of West Tennessee.

The faculty and students serve the area through a quality undergraduate professional arts program with performances and exhibits enhancing the aesthetic and cultural awareness of the campus and region while preparing students for careers in the arts, teaching and for advanced study.
UT Martin's Arnett Elected Governor of Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature

Jamie Arnett

For the first time since 1974, a UT Martin student has been elected governor at the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature's 44th General Assembly, Nov. 14-17. There were about 430 students representing 39 Tennessee colleges and universities in attendance.

UT Martin senior Jamie Arnett, of Bartlett, a political science and communications major, became the first female from UT Martin, the first female governor since 2002 and only the fourth female to win the governor's election in TISL (Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature) history.

"I am so honored to be able to serve as the 45th governor of TISL," Arnett said.

Arnett talked junior Brandon Chrisman, of Nashville, out of running for governor and then defeated senior Michael Loy, who waged a write-in campaign, for governor. Both Chrisman and Loy are students at UT.

Arnett and Chrisman served on the executive committee this past year. She was the secretary of state while Chrisman was the speaker of the House of Representatives.

"This experience will definitely help me in deciding what I want to do in my future endeavors, especially throughout my career after I graduate," Arnett said.

The UT Martin delegation, 22 strong, was a top-five finalist for the Best Delegation, while Mark Maloney won a Carlisle Award, one of six outstanding legislators. Maloney is a junior communications major from South Fulton.

The UT Martin delegation included Arnett, Maloney, Nathan Daniels, John Domanski, John Herron, Elizabeth Sanders, Cassie Rogers, Dylan Gillespie, Benjamin Allen, William Morris, Esaias McKinney, Leia Mitchell, Mary Irby, Mary Jean Hall, Baily Hudlow, Morgan Fitzgerald, Dana Maurzio and Amber Sherman.

Daniels, from McNairy County, was appointed the chief clerk of the House by the Speaker of the House and Domanski, one of three, was elected to the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) Board of Directors. His term on the board begins July 1, 2014.

TISL, operated by an alumni board of directors and an elected student executive council, conducts student legislature elections and debates and votes on bills that could affect the future of Tennessee. The top bills that were passed by the student legislature will be sent to the Tennessee State Legislature for consideration.

Alumni of this collegiate mock legislative program include Secretary of State Tre Hargett; State Treasurer David Lillard; former State Senator Roy Herron and current state representatives Mike Kernell and Ron Lollar.
Four Finalists named for UTM AD Position
December 5th, 2013 - By Steve James

Four finalists have been named to interview for the athletics director’s position at UTM.

The successful candidate will succeed Phil Dane, who earlier announced his retirement as AD effective Dec. 31st.

The four finalists are: Robert C. Heller from Central Michigan University, Richard Schoeberl from UTM, Tim Van Alstine from Western Illinois University, and Julio Freire from UNLV.

Each candidate will appear at open forums at the Boling University Center. Heller’s open forum will be Wednesday at 2, Schoeberl on the 13th at 3:30, Van Alstine at 3:30 on the 16th, and Freire on the 17th at 3:30. The forums are open to the public.
Four finalists emerge in UT Martin’s AD search

The search for a new athletic director at UT Martin is now down to four.

In identifying the four candidates, the search has been close to home with one already working on campus and has also stretched to Michigan, Illinois and Nevada.

The successful candidate will succeed Phil Dane, who earlier announced his retirement as the university’s athletics director effective Dec. 31.

Each candidate will appear at open forums starting the second week of this month in the Boling University Center. The forums are open to the public.

The finalists include Richard R. Schoeberl, Robert C. Heller, Tim M. Van Alstine and Julio Freire.

Schoeberl is already employed within the UTM athletics department, having served as assistant AD since 2011.

Heis open forum will be 3:30 p.m. Dec. 13

Heller has served as associate athletics director and major gifts officer at Central Michigan University since 2010.

The UT Martin rodeo team, the only collegiate rodeo team in Tennessee, is a member of the Ozark Region and the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.

UTM’s new athletic director will inherit a full agenda, including the overseeing of construction on an upgraded football facility, hiring a new baseball head coach and building on the recent successes of the football program and many of the women’s teams.

Dane has served as the director of athletics since 2000 after serving as vice chancellor for Business and Finance at UT Martin for 13 years guided the university through its most recent NCAA Division I Certification.

The school’s open forum for Heller will be 2 p.m. Dec. 11.

Van Alstine will meet with UT Martin supporters at his open forum 3:30 p.m. Dec. 16.

He currently serves as assistant vice president and director of athletics at Western Illinois University, a position he has held since 2001.

Freire has been the senior associate athletics director at UNLV since 2010.

His open forum is set for 3:30 p.m. Dec. 17.

UT Martin competes in NCAA Division I in men’s and women’s sports and the Football Championship Subdivision.

The university is a member of the Ohio Valley Conference.
For the past 28 years, Santa Claus has made the trek to Martin and enjoyed his stay at Santa’s Village. This year will be no different. The big man in the red suit confirmed he will be here for Santa’s Village Dec. 12-15 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex.

“I love talking to children and being myself around them,” Claus said. “I want to spread good cheer.”

Santa said he has always asked children what they want for Christmas. “Sometimes they just nod their head, and I ask them to tell me one thing they want.”

A couple of years ago during the Friday preview day, two first-graders, about 20 minutes apart, asked Santa for something real simple. “They wanted Bibles,” Claus said. “It just about brought tears to my eyes. And I have heard everything. A year ago, a young man in his early twenties didn’t know if he wanted to see me or not. He finally came up to me and asked for a new pair of blue jeans ...”

“I had a little girl sit in my lap not long ago and all she wanted was her daddy to come home for Christmas from Afghanistan.”

Santa Claus did cry. He said, “We will see what we can do.”

As the little girl walked away, Santa grabbed a candy cane and got up out of his chair. He walked toward the little girl and said, “Here is a candy cane for your daddy. Give it to him with a big hug and tell him I said thank you for what he does.”

Santa said he has heard some great stories with some simple wishes and...
"I like the soft chewy kind, peanut butter and oatmeal-raisin are my favorites, especially when they are real soft and fresh."

Another 14-year-old believer asked Santa Claus why he always wears a red suit. "Well, to be honest, I have never had anyone ask that before. I wear red because in the North Pole we have a lot of snow and everything is always white. I like the red suits because they always make people laugh and have a good time."

When asked about the naughty and nice lists, Santa Claus couldn't lie, he had to tell the truth. "There are really not that many people on the naughty list. My elves and helpers help me watch throughout the year, and usually we put most people on the nice list."

Santa's Village is slated for 6-9 p.m., Dec. 12-13; all day Dec. 14 and from 1-5 p.m., Dec. 15. Santa and the enchanted forest will be at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex on the UT Martin campus.

---

**UTM has four athletic director candidates**

The Jackson Sun

- UT Martin announced Wednesday its four final candidates to replace Phil Dane as the school's athletic director. They are:
  - Robert C. Heller
  - Richard R. Schoeberl
  - Tim M. Van Alstine
  - Julio Freire

Van Alstine was the athletic director at Western Illinois from 2001 to this past summer.

The other three candidates have most recently served as assistant or associate athletic directors. Schoeberl did so at UT Martin, Heller at Central Michigan University and Freire at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV).

The school will hold four forums open to the public, one for each candidate, this month at the Boling University Center on Campus.

Heller's is at 2 p.m. Dec. 11. Schoeberl's is at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 13. Van Alstine's is at 3:30 p.m. Dec 16 and Freire's is at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 17.

Dane is set to retire Dec. 31. If a candidate has not been chosen by then, chancellor Tom Rakes said recently, the school will select an interim athletic director.
Santa Claus commits to annual Martin event

For the past 28 years, Santa Claus has made the trek to Martin and enjoyed his stay at Santa's Village. This year will be no different.

The Jolly Old Elf confirmed he will be there for Santa's Village from Thursday through Dec. 15 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Santa's Village is set for 6-9 p.m. Thursday and Dec. 13; all day Dec. 14; and from 1-5 p.m. Dec. 15. Santa and the enchanted forest will be at the ag complex on campus.

"I love talking to children and being myself around them," Claus said. "I want to spread good cheer."

Santa said he has always asked children what they want for Christmas.

"Sometimes they just nod their head and I ask them to tell me one thing they want," he said with a twinkle in his eyes.

A couple of years ago during the Friday preview day, two first-graders, who visited about 20 minutes apart, asked Santa for something very simple.

"They wanted Bibles," Claus said. "It just about brought tears to my eyes. And I have heard everything.

(See Page 2, Col. 5)

Santa...
(Continued from Page 1)

A year ago, a young man in his early 20s didn't know if he wanted to see me or not. He finally came up to me and asked for a new pair of blue jeans.

"I had a little girl sit in my lap not long ago and all she wanted was her daddy to come home for Christmas from Afghanistan," he said.

The touching request made Santa cry and he replied with, "We will see what we can do."

As the little girl walked away, Santa grabbed a candy cane and got up out of his chair. He walked toward the little girl and said, "Here is a candy cane for your daddy. Give it to him with a big hug and tell him I said thank you for what he does."

Santa said he has heard some great stories with some simple wishes and the only thing he can say is, "We will see if we can make that happen."

Not long ago, a 9-year-old girl asked how many cookies Santa eats on Christmas night.

"I have to be careful with the cookies because Mrs. Claus stays on me about my diet. What I try to do is taste everyone's cookies. If I don't, I take the cookies with me and give them all to my elves," he said. "I like the soft chewy kind; peanut butter and oatmeal raisin are my favorites, especially when they are real soft and fresh."

Another 14-year-old believer asked Santa Claus why he always wears a red suit.

"Well, to be honest, I have never had anyone ask that before. I wear red because in the North Pole we have a lot of snow and everything is always white. I like the red suits because they always make people laugh and have a good time," he said.

When asked about the naughty and nice lists, Santa Claus couldn't lie.

"There are really not that many people on the naughty list. My elves and helpers help me watch through-
Martin police help with a car that has stalled on University Street in Martin. More than an inch of ice accumulated in Martin on Friday. JOSH LEMONS/THE JACKSON SUN

Flags fly at half staff in honor of Nelson Mandela in front of the University of Tennessee at Martin. All classes were canceled Friday due to the inclement weather. JOSH LEMONS/THE JACKSON SUN
Education major deals with muscular dystrophy to earn bachelor’s degree

Anthony Radcliffe was playing organized sports in the fourth grade. He loved soccer and he played basketball to get through the winter and get ready for the next soccer season. In the fall of 2000, he went from running up and down the pitch and the basketball court to using a walker and a wheelchair.

The interim youth minister at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Martin and the son of Cynthia Radcliffe, a teacher, and Ronald Radcliffe, a music minister, was diagnosed with a form of muscular dystrophy, congenital myopathy.

"I didn’t go anywhere without my walker or my wheelchair,” Anthony said. “By fifth grade, it looked like the doctors were right.”

That was then. Now, about 11 years later, Anthony never leaves home without his wheelchair and will graduate Saturday from the University of Tennessee at Martin with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education.

"Now we, (his wife, Shirah included) are thinking about the next phase of our life,” Anthony said. “My whole life is based on prayer.”

A devout Christian, who was “saved” when he was 12 years old and surrendered to the ministry when he was a junior in high school, Anthony still decided to major in education.

“I was thinking practical and besides, I come from a family of three teachers,” he said. His mother is a teacher, as is his sister, Victoria. His dad is also a certified music teacher. “I have seen the joy my mother comes home with every day after school.”

Life was not always a joy for Anthony. At the end of the ninth grade, the Radcliffe family decided to move from Panama City, Fla., back to Munford. “I made it known I didn’t want to be back in Tennessee,” he said.

“I wore black jeans, long sleeve black tee shirts and I had a chain hanging from my belt to my pocket.”

Despite his muscular dystrophy, Anthony was involved in BMX Bike racing and being a rebel. He managed to finish junior high and his freshman year of high school.

Enough was enough. Anthony finished high school as a home schooler. He was involved in church, but that was it.

Then he got an invitation from Steve Douglas, who was the music minister at the time of Central Baptist Church, to play the drums. The two knew each other from summer camps. Douglas, now a Martin Middle School teacher and a youth minister at Central Baptist, extended another invitation to Anthony when he finished high school.

“I told him to come to school here, and we could use him at the church,” Douglas said.

“He also had a room in his house for me to rent,” Anthony said.

So, Anthony came to Weakley County and has been here since his freshman year.

He married his sweetheart after his sophomore year and the couple has settled down and bought a house in Martin. "This is where our feet are planted,” he said.

In addition to going to school, playing the drums and serving as the interim youth minister at Pleasant Hill, he has worked as a chef’s administrative assistant for Sodexo at UT Martin.

"He doesn’t let anything slow him down,” Douglas said. “He is not bashful or embarrassed by it (his muscular dystrophy).”

“It has been a big challenge for me getting across campus; it’s not hilly, but it is enough,” Anthony said.

SEE RADCLIFFE, PAGE 2
For Anthony, who finished his college career as a student teacher for Stacie Hawks at Martin Elementary School, the challenge of getting around the UT Martin campus is over, but commencement brings about new challenges for him.

“My life is God’s life,” he said.


Luke 9:29 reads, “As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.”

Galatians 2:20 states, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

http://www.wbbjtv.com/UT Martin Reaffirmed For AccreditationStory Created: Dec 10, 2013 at 5:41 PM CST (Story Updated: Dec 10, 2013 at 5:34 PM CST)

MARTIN, Tenn. — The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reaffirmed the University of Tennessee at Martin for accreditation, Tuesday.

The action was announced during the annual SACS Commission on Colleges meeting in Atlanta. UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes was among several university officials who attended the meeting that included approximately 4,500 participants.

The announcement Tuesday follows a SACS team visit to UT Martin in February as part of the university’s 10-year review.

“We are pleased with this positive report and acknowledge the successful outcome of the reaffirmation process, which reflects the hard work and dedication of many faculty and staff members who guided UT Martin through this critical process,” Rakes said. “This review makes us a better university and keeps our focus on providing students with a value-added education.”

The SACS Commission on Colleges requires a five-year interim report before the next 10-year review.
Greenfield show man to provide attractions for Santa’s Village

The first carnival attraction at Santa’s Village 29 years ago was the Alpine Slide. A merry-go-round and a Ferris wheel followed.

All three attractions were the result of Pope’s Concessions, owned and operated by James Pope, of Greenfield.

“We did the first two years of Santa’s Village and then took a little hiatus, but we have probably been at Santa’s Village for more than 20 years,” Pope said.

“The Alpine Slide was perfect for Santa’s Village. It fit in perfectly with the winter wonderland theme,” he said. “The Ferris wheel was cool. I thought it looked good in there (Ned McWherter Agriculture Complex).”

The Alpine Slide has been refinished and will be at this week’s Santa Village as will the merry-go-round and the barrel of fun.

“The merry-go-round is the first carnival ride most small children get on, so we will see lots of pictures of babies on the merry-go-round being taken,” Pope said. “The slide and the barrel of fun appeal to all ages.”

Pope should know. He is a true “carnie.”

Pope’s grandfather and his father both ran Pope’s Concessions, which has been in business for 90 years. “I am a third generation “carnie,” Pope said as he drove to St. Louis Friday night.

“The term carnies is derogatory,” he said. “We want to be called show men.”

Pope was driving to St. Louis where he was to be inducted as the president of the Show Men’s League of America, Missouri chapter.

POPE

FROM PAGE 1

The show man is also a member of the Tennessee State Fair Board and the International Show Men’s Association in Florida.

“I have been doing this all my life,” Pope said.

“We have done the MTD picnic for more than 20 years and numerous events at UT Martin such as the

Fiddlesticks stand there.”

How about the Tennessee Soybean Festival?

“No, we are always at the Dyer County Fair. But the guy that does the Soybean Festival and I grew up together.”

“We have done a bunch of festivals and Relay for Life events,” Pope said.

“We probably do about 50 events a year.”

If Pope has it his way, there will be a fourth generation of show men in the family. Well, show man and show woman.

“My son, Joseph, is a freshman at UT Martin and my daughter, Sara Ann, is in high school here in Greenfield. They have both worked events with me.”

Pope said he will set up his attractions early this week, Santa’s Village opens Thursday night and goes through Sunday afternoon.

See Pope, Page 2
Dr. Charles A. Julian, director of the Paul Meek Library, was officially commended for his lifelong commitment to the development and delivery of excellent library services to the state of West Virginia by West Virginia Library Commissioners at their meeting on Nov. 8 in Charleston.

Julian served as a gubernatorially-appointed state library commissioner from July 2000 until his employment at UT Martin, which commenced in July 2013.

In a formal resolution, commissioners commended him for his work on behalf of all West Virginia libraries and noted that “in addition to his dedicated service to the West Virginia Library Commission, Julian has extensive experience with the joys and challenges of academic, public, school and special libraries, celebrating those joys and confronting those challenges with unparalleled enthusiasm and determination linked with extensive research skills.”

Throughout his 30-year career, Julian has been active in professional library associations, with local historical associations and as a library trustee while serving as a presenter, author, mentor and researcher. He is a member of the Tennessee Library Association, West Tennessee Academic Library Consortium and Friends of the C.E. Weldon and Paul Meek libraries.

“The West Virginia Library Commissioners do not frequently pass resolutions, so it is a real honor to receive this recognition from my colleagues and my professional peers,” Julian said.

“I am pleased to use the knowledge and expertise that I honed in West Virginia here at UT Martin. We have a talented library/information team here and I look forward to achieving great results with their support and assistance,” Julian said.

“We are poised to do great things at UT Martin.”
UT-Martin Gets SACS Reaccreditation

The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reaffirmed the University of Tennessee at Martin for accreditation yesterday.

The action was announced during the annual SACS Commission on Colleges meeting in Atlanta. UT-Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes was among several university officials who attended the meeting.

The announcement Tuesday follows a SACS team visit to UT-Martin in February as part of the university's 10-year review.

The SACS Commission on Colleges requires a five-year interim report before the next 10-year review.

University’s library director lauded

Dr. Charles A. Julian, director of the Paul Meek Library, was officially commended for his “life-long commitment to the development and delivery of excellent library services” to the state of West Virginia by West Virginia Library Commissioners at their meeting recently in Charleston.

Julian served as a gubernatorially-appointed state library commissioner from July 2000 until his employment at UT Martin, which commenced in July 2013.

In a formal resolution, commissioners commended him for his work on behalf of all West Virginia libraries and noted that “in addition to his dedicated service to the West Virginia Library Commission, Julian has extensive experience with the joys and challenges of academic, public, school and special libraries, celebrating those joys and confronting those challenges with unparalleled enthusiasm and determination linked with extensive research skills.”

Throughout his 30-year career, Julian has been active in professional library associations, with local historical associations and as a library trustee while serving as a presenter, author, mentor and researcher. He is a member of the Tennessee Library Association, West Tennessee Academic Library Consortium and Friends of the C.E. Weldon and Paul Meek libraries.

“The West Virginia Library Commissioners do not frequently pass resolutions, so it is a real honor to receive this recognition from my colleagues and my professional peers,” Julian said.

“I am pleased to use the knowledge and expertise that I honed in West Virginia here at UT Martin. We have a talented library/information team here and I look forward to achieving great results with their support and assistance,” Julian said. “We are poised to do great things at UT Martin.”

Travel study to focus on gothic literature

Study gothic literature and the science that inspired it by visiting major landmarks in England and Scotland through the UT Martin Honors travel study tour May 5-19, 2014.

Sites included on the tour are Westminster Abbey, Stonehenge, the British Museum, Oxford University, the Tower of London, Highgate Cemetery, Stratford upon Avon, Edinburgh Library, Siccir Point and a host of historic homes of the most famous individuals involved in this topic, such as Newton, Freud, Keats, Dickens and the Bronte sisters.

UT Martin students must sign up for either English 496 or Honors 368 for the spring semester.

All academic majors are welcome. For anyone interested in the trip but not in either of the courses, there may be opportunities to sign on for only the trip.

Deposits are due soon; spots will be held on a first-come first-serve basis. Contact Lionel Crews at lcrews@utm.edu or Jeffrey Longacre at jlongacr@utm.edu for more information.
UT Martin commencement set for Saturday morning

Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona, the head of the alliance and operations office for global biometrics at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, will be the commencement speaker at her alma mater, the University of Tennessee at Martin, at 11 a.m. Saturday.

Commencement will be held in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center, with 523 graduates slated to receive diplomas.

UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes will preside over the ceremony and confer degrees. Dr. Joe DiPietro, UT president, will congratulate graduates.

Dr. Michael Gibson, UT Martin geology professor, will be the mace bearer, and the procession marshals will be Dr. Jefferson S. Rogers, faculty senate president; Dr. Brian Wayne Donovant, faculty senate vice president; Nancy J. Yarbrough, interim vice chancellor for finance and administration; and Andrew A. Wilson, vice chancellor for university advancement.

Delana Easley, UT Martin accompanist, will perform the processional and recessional music.

Immediately following commencement, a reception will be hosted in Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

Complimentary tickets to admit guests to the commencement ceremony will not be required.

A live webcast of the commencement ceremony will be available at http://www.ovcdigitalnetwork.com/showcase/?Live=1197.

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

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

She currently lives outside Philadelphia with her husband, Nick Iacona. She has worked at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals since 2001.

For Alpha Delta Pi, Dr. Iacona has continued to serve the organization since graduation from UT Martin and now serves on the Grand Council as the international vice president of alumnae membership, overseeing the strategic development of the more than 220,000 alumnae members.

For UT Martin, she has started a leadership endowment scholarship and is currently serving on the steering committee for building the Alpha Delta Pi Sorority lodge at UT Martin.

UTM student with muscular dystrophy set to graduate

By UT Martin

MARTIN — Anthony Radcliffe was playing organized sports in the fourth grade. He loved soccer, and he played basketball to get through the winter and get ready for the next soccer season. Then in the fall of 2000, he went from running up and down the pitch and the basketball court to using a walker and a wheelchair.

The interim youth minister at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Martin and the son of Cynthia Radcliffe, a teacher, and Ronald Radcliffe, a music minister, was diagnosed with a form of muscular dystrophy, congenital myopathia.

Now, about 11 years later, Anthony never leaves home without his wheelchair and will graduate Saturday from the University of Tennessee Martin with a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

"Now we, (his wife Shira included) are thinking about the next phase of our life," Anthony said. "My whole life is based on prayer." A devout Christian since he was 12 years old, Anthony surrendered to the ministry when he was a junior in high school but still decided to major in education.

"I was thinking practical, and besides I come from a family of three teachers," he said. Anthony's mother and sister Victoria are teachers. His dad is a certified music teacher.

Life was not always a joy for Anthony. At the end of ninth grade, the Radcliffes decided to move from Panama City, Fla., back to Munford. "I made it known I didn't want to be back in Tennessee," Anthony said.

Despite his muscular dystrophy, Anthony was involved in BMX bike racing. He managed to finish junior high and his freshman year of high school.

Anthony finished high school as a home-schooleder. He was involved in church, but that was it.

Then he got an invitation from Steve Douglas, who was the music minister of Central Baptist Church at the time, to play the drums. The two knew each other from summer camps. Douglas, now a Martin Middle School teacher and a youth minister at Central Baptist, extended another invitation to Anthony when he finished high school.

"I told him to come to school here, and we could use him at the church," Douglas said. "He also had a room in his house for me to rent," Anthony said.

He married his sweetheart after his sophomore year, and the couple bought a house in Martin.

"He doesn't let anything slow him down," Douglas said. "He is not bashful or embarrassed by his (muscular dystrophy)."

For Anthony, who finished his college career as a student teacher for Stacie Hawks at Martin Elementary School, the challenge of getting around the UT Martin campus is easier, but commencement brings about new challenges.

"My life is God's life," he said.
Karen Robinson, originally from Detroit, now calls Humboldt home.
She is a 1992 graduate of Mumford High School. She obtained her Bachelor degree from Lane College and is currently pursuing her Master's at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Robinson said she wants to create a positive learning environment for her 1st graders at Stigall Primary School, one that motivates children to want to come to school and learn. When asked about her motivation to teach she said, "I love children and I'm passionate about shaping young minds."

UT Martin reaffirmed for accreditation

MARTIN – The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges on Tuesday reaffirmed the University of Tennessee Martin for accreditation, according to a news release from the school.

The action was announced during the annual SACS Commission on Colleges meeting in Atlanta. UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes was among several university officials who attended the meeting, which included approximately 4,500 participants.

The announcement Tuesday follows a SACS team visit to UT Martin in February as part of the university's 10-year review.

"We are pleased with this positive report and acknowledge the successful outcome of the reaffirmation process, which reflects the hard work and dedication of many faculty and staff members who guided UT Martin through this critical process," Rakes said. "This review makes us a better university and keeps our focus on providing students with a value-added education."

The SACS Commission on Colleges requires a five-year interim report before the next 10-year review, the release said.
Entertainment schedule set for 29th annual Santa’s Village

Entertainment for the 29th annual Santa’s Village is set, and it includes UT Martin professor Johnathan Vest; UT Martin alumnus Dr. Danny Donaldson; Dr. James Fieser and David, Michelle and Emma Fieser; and UT Martin students Erica Glisson and Blake and Katie Snider.

The Martin Elementary School fourth-grade choir and the Martin Elementary School fifth-grade choir, both under the direction of Robin Pape, will perform Friday and Saturday. All the entertainment has been coordinated by Reba Wade and will appear Thursday through Sunday at Santa’s Village in the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex.

Entertainment on the main stage is scheduled for 6-9 p.m. Thursday and Friday; from 10:45 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday; and from 12:45-5 p.m. Sunday.

A $5 gift of non-perishable foods or new toys is the recommended admission price.

More than $1 million in donations has been collected since Santa’s Village started.
U. of Tenn. Martin graduation today

Renee Bailey Iacona, the head of the alliance and operations office for global biometrics at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, will be the commencement speaker at her alma mater, the University of Tennessee at Martin, at 11 a.m. today. Set in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center, 523 graduates are scheduled to receive diplomas.

UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes will preside over the ceremony and confer degrees. Joe DiPietro, UT president, will congratulate graduates. Michael Gibson, UT Martin geology professor, will be the mace bearer, and the processional marshals will be Jefferson S. Rogers, faculty senate president; Brian Wayne Donovant, faculty senate vice president; Nancy J. Yarbrough, interim vice chancellor for finance and administration; and Andrew A. Wilson, vice chancellor for university advancement. Delana Easley, UT Martin accompanist, will perform the processional and recessional music. Immediately following commencement, a reception will be hosted in Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

A live webcast of the commencement ceremony will be available at http://www.ovcdigitalnetwork.com/showcase/?Live=1197.

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

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

She lives outside Philadelphia, with her husband, Nick Iacona. She has worked at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals since 2001.

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

Complimentary tickets to admit guests to the commencement ceremony will not be required.
UTM graduates urged to ‘never say never’

By UT Martin

MARTIN — Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona quoted writer Charles Dickens, actress Gloria Swanson and singer Justin Bieber while encouraging University of Tennessee Martin graduates to “never say never” as she provided the December commencement address for UT Martin.

Iacona, of Philadelphia, works for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals and returned to her alma mater as she spoke to a capacity crowd Saturday in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. More than 500 graduates from summer and fall were scheduled to receive diplomas.

Before the ceremony, Katelyn Watt, 22, of Medina, a Milan High School graduate, talked about her plans to become a 4-H extension agent. She has already interviewed for a position. “I’m excited. It’s been a long road, and sometimes it’s like ‘I can’t do it anymore,’ but it’s here,” she said of receiving her degree.

John Nicholson, 22, of Centerville, a Hickman County High School graduate, received his bachelor’s degree in communications with a concentration in broadcasting and a minor in theater. He described college graduation as “surreal” but was excited about commencement and added, “It’s really great to finally be here.”

Antonio Thomason, of Savannah, stood in the concourse holding a bouquet of flowers for his daughter, Alison, who was getting in line to receive her bachelor of university studies degree.

“Oh, I am so excited. I’m glad that this is the last child that I have (in
college),” he said as he smiled. As he walked away with a grandchild tugging at his hand, his wife, Patricia, added, “We are so happy for her and proud, because she is the third one in the family that has graduated from college. So we are very proud of her.”

UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes presided over commencement and welcomed the crowd, noting that the graduates represented 48 Tennessee counties, 10 states and four foreign countries. UT President Joe DiPietro later congratulated the graduates and conferred degrees.

Rakes introduced Iacona, who heads the alliance and operations office for AstraZeneca’s global biometrics function. She holds two graduate degrees from Vanderbilt University and received the “Outstanding Alumni Award” from UT Martin during homecoming in October.

Raised in Hendersonville near Nashville, Iacona always expected to attend Vanderbilt University. But when she attended UT Martin’s inaugural Governor’s School for the Humanities, her first “never say never” decision was made. Once enrolled at the university, she said her life changed in unexpected ways.

“First of all, I got involved in an organization that has changed my life, Alpha Delta Pi sorority, where I have stayed involved since I graduated, and I now serve ... on our board of directors, which is known as our grand council,” she said. The opportunity places her in contact with ADPi alumnae, volunteers and members across the country, including chapters at close to 200 college campuses.

Next, she recalled taking two classes, genetics and honors psychology, that influenced her future.

“It was through these two classes that I was offered the opportunity at the end of my freshman year to join the University Scholars program,” Iacona said, adding, “For the next few years, I learned more about science in a way that the classroom wouldn’t have provided. I later graduated as a University Scholar and found a love of science that has continued to today.”

Iacona went on study breast cancer and genetic susceptibility at Vanderbilt, calling on what she had learned in her freshman genetics class.

“Today I use these skills as I work for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals,” she said. “I began in the pharmaceutical industry in 2001 ... and now I lead a global department.”

When she considers her own life, Iacona said she never considered doing many of the things she has done. “So graduates, as I reflect back on my life, and all the ‘nevers’ I use to say, I have become a true believer now on ‘never saying never’.”

She then pointed to some famous people who shared the same philosophy.

Iacona noted use of the phrase in the Charles Dickens novel “The Pickwick Papers” and quoted the late actress Gloria Swanson, who said, “Never say never, for if you live long enough, chances are you will not be able to abide by the restrictions.”

Even singer Justin Bieber named a 2011 concert film “Never Say Never,” and Iacona quoted inspirational lyrics from his song by the same name.

“So graduates, today is a day to dream, a day to celebrate your accomplishments and for families to be proud of what your graduate has done, and to help them dream about all that is ahead for them,” she said.

Iacona closed by admittedly contradicting her own theme and suggesting “nevers” that the graduates should follow. She urged them to never forget their time in college and to “never forget to give back.”
UT Martin graduates Winter class

December 14th, 2013 - By Steve James

Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona quoted writer Charles Dickens, actress Gloria Swanson and singer Justin Bieber while encouraging UT Martin graduates to “never say never” as she provided the December commencement address for University of Tennessee at Martin. Iacona, of Philadelphia, Pa., works for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals and returned to her alma mater as she spoke to a capacity crowd Saturday in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. More than 500 graduates from summer and fall were scheduled to receive diplomas.

Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, presided over commencement and welcomed the crowd, noting that the graduates represented 48 Tennessee counties, 10 states and four foreign countries. Dr. Joe DiPietro, University of Tennessee president, later congratulated the graduates and conferred degrees.

(submitted by Bud Grimes, Director of University Relations)
The University of Tennessee Martin Department of Public Safety earned its accreditation recently from the Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation program. Participating in the award presentation were Nancy Yarbrough, interim vice chancellor for finance and administration; David Moore, Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police and Martin police chief; Scott Robbins, director of the department of public safety; Cpl. Jerry Garcia, a member of the department of public safety; and Cpt. Ray Coleman, with the department of public safety. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

UTM Department of Public Safety granted accreditation

The Jackson Sun

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation program recently announced that it has granted accreditation status to the University of Tennessee Martin Department of Public Safety.

UT Martin was awarded the achievement during the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police meeting Dec. 5 in Nashville, according to a news release from the university.

To achieve accreditation with TLEA, an agency voluntarily submits to a process of enhancing the agency's professionalism and effectiveness by utilizing 160 law enforcement standards and participating in a thorough on-site assessment.

The standards address a variety of areas including organizational, operational and budget management practices, according to the release. The program is intended to encourage cooperation, recognize professional standing, develop professional services and ensure public safety throughout the state.

The release said the TLEA program is a valuable and cost-effective way to enhance overall agency effectiveness and professionalism.

The UT Martin Department of Public Safety successfully accomplished TLEA accreditation by meeting criteria that measured the professionalism, organizational and overall readiness in law enforcement policy and procedures.

"The standard of excellence that is met through this process is to be admired," Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police President David Moore said. "We are proud to recognize the hard work of this department and its staff."

UT Martin Department of Public Safety director Scott Robbins said the department is proud to have achieved accreditation through the program.

"It has been an exhaustive, time-intensive two-year project that will prove beneficial to the university by the department meeting established best practices of law enforcement professionalism and by being more accountable to the campus community we serve," Robbins said.

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation Program is a voluntary program that recognizes the excellence and professional achievement in law enforcement agencies, according to the release. The program began in 2010 through the efforts of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police.

More than 60 agencies are currently involved in the state accreditation program. The release said it takes commitment, dedication and hard work from the agency head, agency personnel and campus leaders to meet the program standards. The time commitment involvs up to a three-year process.
ATTEND CONVENTION — Lindy Dunavant (left) of Union City and Ruby Black of Martin served as delegates to the 42nd Biennial Convention of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) held recently in Indianapolis. Mrs. Dunavant, president of the local chapter of STTI, Pi Tau, is a board certified psychiatric registered nurse at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Union City. She also works part-time as a clinical psych instructor for Bethel University in McKenzie and Dyersburg State Community College. Ms. Black, treasurer of Pi Tau, is a professor of nursing at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International was formed in 1922 with a mission to support the learning, knowledge and professional development of nurses committed to making a difference in health worldwide. Membership is by invitation to baccalaureate and graduate nursing students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship and to nurse leaders exhibiting exceptional achievements in nursing. Ninety years later, STTI serves 130,000 active members in more than 85 countries and the nursing profession at large.

OVERCOMING
— Anthony Radcliffe, who uses a wheelchair and a walker after being diagnosed with a form of muscular dystrophy, graduated Saturday from the University of Tennessee at Martin with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education. He is interim youth minister at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church near Martin.

UTM student overcomes challenges to earn degree
Anthony Radcliffe was playing organized sports in the fourth grade. He loved soccer and he played basketball to get through the winter and get ready for the next soccer season.

In the fall of 2000, he went from running up and down the pitch and the basketball court to using a walker and a wheelchair.

Radcliffe — the interim youth minister at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church near Martin and the son of Cynthia Radcliffe, a teacher, and Ronald Radcliffe, a music minister — was diagnosed with a form of muscular dystrophy, congenital myopathia.

“I didn’t go anywhere without my walker or my wheelchair.” Radcliffe

(See Page 6, Col. 4)

UTM...
(Continued from Page 1)

said, “By fifth grade, it looked like the doctors were right.”

That was then. Now, about 11 years later, he never leaves home without his wheelchair and graduated Saturday from the University of Tennessee at Martin with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education.

“Now we, (his wife, Shirah included) are thinking about the next phase of our life,” Radcliffe said. “My whole life is based on prayer.”

A devout Christian who accepted Jesus as Savior when he was 12 years old and surrendered to the ministry when he was a junior in high school, Radcliffe still decided to major in education.

“I was thinking practical and, besides, I come from a family of three teachers,” he said.

His mother is a teacher, as is his sister, Victoria. His dad is also a certified music teacher.

“I have seen the joy my mother comes home with every day after school,”
UT Martin’s public safety earns accreditation status

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation (TLEA) Program has granted accreditation status to the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Public Safety.

UT Martin was awarded this achievement during the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police (TACP) meeting earlier this month in Nashville.

To achieve accreditation with TLEA, an agency voluntarily submits to a process of enhancing the agency’s professionalism and effectiveness utilizing 160 law enforcement standards and participating in a thorough on-site assessment.

The standards address a variety of areas including organizational, operational and budget management practices. The program is intended to encourage cooperation, recognize professional standing, develop professional services and ensure public safety throughout the state. The TLEA program is a valuable and cost-effective way to enhance overall agency effectiveness and professionalism.

The UT Martin Department of Public Safety successfully accomplished TLEA accreditation by meeting criteria that measured the professionalism, organizational and overall readiness in law enforcement policy and procedures.

“The standard of excellence that is met through this process is to be admired. We are proud to recognize the hard work of this department and its staff,” said TACP President David Moore, who is Martin’s police chief.

“UT Martin’s Department of Public Safety is proud to have achieved accreditation through this program. It has been an exhaustive, time-intensive two-year project that will prove beneficial to the university by the department meeting established best practices of law enforcement professionalism and by being more accountable to the campus community we serve,” UT Martin Department of Public Safety director Scott Robbins said.

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation Program is a voluntary program that recognizes the excellence and professional achievement in law enforcement agencies. The program began in 2010 through the hard work and efforts of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police. There are currently more than 60 agencies involved in the state accreditation program. It takes commitment, dedication and hard work from the agency head, agency personnel and campus leaders to meet the standards prescribed by the program. The time commitment involves up to a three-year process.

WestStar planning local session

For the second consecutive year, the WestStar leadership program will hold a session in Union City.

The local session is part of a two-day program that will begin at the University of Tennessee at Martin on Jan. 9, 2014, with presentations from guest speakers scheduled throughout the day.

This year’s 29-member WestStar class includes Lolly Bearden of Rives, as well as members from 15 cities across the state, such as Jackson, Trenton, Dyersburg and Martin.

The WestStar group will meet with UTM chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes, Martin Mayor Randy Brundige and Weakley County Mayor Houston Patrick, as well as a full lineup of speakers involved in agriculture during the first day of the January WestStar program.

The focus of WestStar’s January session is agriculture, transportation and regionalism.

The second day of the WestStar program, Jan. 10, will begin with a tour of the local Tyson Foods complex given by complex plant manager Keith Riley.

The Tyson Foods tour will be followed up by a tour of Discovery Park of America, where class members will meet with Obion County Mayor Benny McGuire, Union City Mayor Terry Hailey and state Rep. Bill Sanderson of Kenton.

Also on the agenda is a presentation on Everett-Stewart Regional Airport by airport manager Jo Ann Speer, a presentation on economic development by Obion County Joint Economic Development Council executive director Lindsay Frilling and a presentation on the Port at Cates Landing given by Forcum Lannom project manager Randall Rhodes.

The day’s agenda will finish up with a presentation on selfless giving by Robert Kirkland and Jim Rippy.
Santa’s Village - a winter wonderland of fun!

Santa and his elves visit with local children at Santa’s Village over the weekend. The annual winter wonderland, which features rides, displays, live entertainment, arts and crafts, concessions, and other fun-filled activities, was held inside the UT Martin Agriculture Pavilion Dec. 12-15. (See additional photos in next week’s edition.)
Santa Claus visits children at Santa’s Village

By David Fisher
Staff Reporter

Ole’ Saint Nick recently discussed his annual appearance at Santa’s Village with the staff at the Dresden Enterprise.

The winter wonderland, which celebrated its 29th season, took place inside the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Santa says what he likes most about his job is “getting to meet the kids, to talk with them, and see the expressions on their faces and the delight in their eyes. It’s very rewarding to hear their stories.”

He states some of them have really long wish lists, but others only ask for a single, inexpensive gift.

“I had a little girl who didn’t want anything elaborate,” Santa said. “All she wanted was a simple doll for Christmas.”

“Some of them want hugs, while others want to take a photo and be gone,” he laughed.

Santa stated some of the youngsters know exactly what they want, while others are not sure.

One of the more unusual requests he received was from a little girl who had just visited the Petting Zoo and asked to get a camel for Christmas.

“I asked her why she wanted a camel, and she said, ‘Because, I saw one over there, and it was really nice.’

He then explained to the child, ‘They’re hard to take care of. They have a special diet; and they don’t do really well around here (in this climate).’ He then suggested the child consider asking for a puppy or kitten before attempting to care for an animal so large.” He recalled that she said, “Oh! Okay!”

Santa said, “For whatever time they are here, they just forget about the rest of the world – it’s all about the bright lights, the music and entertainment (at Santa’s Village).”

He stated it’s important to know about the toys. Because some of the children know what they want, but don’t know what the toys are called. So they are very impressed when Santa can tell them the name of the toy and describe what they do.

When children sometimes ask where is his reindeer? Santa explains they are at the North Pole being trained by the elves so they’ll be in shape and ready to go Christmas Eve.

When youngsters ask if he eats all of the cookies left out for him, Santa tells them he can’t possibly eat all of the cookies, but he does try to taste all of them. Also, Mrs. Claus has him on a strict diet.

“Kids are great to talk to,” he said.

“Several years ago, a little girl came to see me, but we were very busy and she had to stand in a very long line,” Santa said. He stated the child told him, ‘Santa, I brought you something,’ and handed him a giant sugar cookie in a sandwich bag with a bite out of it. “Her head was down when she gave it to me, and she said, ‘Santa, I had to wait a long time to see you and I got really hungry, so I took a bite out of it.’ I said, ‘That’s all right, Sweetie. I don’t mind one bit.’ She said, ‘really?’ and I said, ‘I tell you what, I’ll trade you a candy cane for that cookie, and she said, ‘Oh, that would be great.’ - then I asked her what she wanted for Christmas.”

“I think the best advice I can give to parents is to listen to their kids,” Santa said.

He explained, when talking with children, he tries to refrain from sounding loud and grandiose. Instead, he prefers to just be himself and speak in a normal voice, so he can communicate with the youngsters more effectively.

“Some of them are funny, and some are very serious,” Santa said. “You have to keep your mind open and treat them as equals, talk with them on their own terms, and not look down on them.”

Santa stated senior citizens also enjoy meeting with him at Santa’s Village. He mentioned one lady who has her photo taken with him every year. “That’s special to me that they allow me to become part of their lives every year, even if only for a few minutes.”

When asked what is his message to give to our readers, Santa replied, “Take the time you have with members of your family, and enjoy the season and the blessings you have. Think of those who are not with us for some reason - those in the service or elsewhere.”

He stated this year’s Santa’s Village featured the return of the “Enchanted Forest” theme in scenes depicting the holidays, which was greatly expanded, with interactive exhibits that allowed the visitors to be a part of the scenery.

Other attractions included: wagon rides, the MTD model train display, children’s rides and vendor booths. Twenty hours of continuous local entertainment and a petting farm added to the festivities.

Each year, visitors are asked to donate $5 worth of nonperishable foods and/or toys to be donated to those last fortunate, as the price of admission.

Service agencies receiving food and toys collected at Santa’s Village this year include: Chimes for Charity, We Care Ministries, NWTN Disaster Services, NWTN Healthy Start, and the Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council.

Co-sponsors for the event are the City of Martin and UT Martin.

For more information about Santa’s Village, contact the Martin Parks and Recreation Department at 731-587-6784.
Area children visit 'Ole Saint Nick and his elves at Santa's Village each year to tell Santa what they want for Christmas.
The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Public Safety earned its accreditation recently from the Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation (TLEA) Program. Participating in the award presentation were (from left) Nancy Yarbrough, interim vice chancellor for finance and administration; David Moore, Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police and Martin police chief; Scott Robbins, director of the department of public safety; Cpl. Jerry Garcia, a member of the department of public safety; and Capt. Ray Coleman, with the department of public safety.

UTM’s Department of Public Safety receives accreditation status from TLEA

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation (TLEA) Program announced it has granted accreditation status to the University of Tennessee, at Martin Department of Public Safety. UT Martin was awarded the achievement during the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police (TACP) meeting Dec. 5 in Nashville.

To achieve accreditation with TLEA, an agency voluntarily submits to a process of enhancing the agency’s professionalism and effectiveness utilizing 160 law enforcement standards and participating in a thorough on-site assessment.

The standards address a variety of areas including organizational, operational and budget management practices.

The program is intended to encourage cooperation, recognize professional standing, develop professional services and ensure public safety throughout the state of Tennessee. The TLEA program is a valuable and cost-effective way to enhance overall agency effectiveness and professionalism.

The UT Martin Department of Public Safety successfully accomplished TLEA accreditation by meeting criteria that measured the professionalism, organizational and overall readiness in law enforcement policy and procedures.

“The standard of excellence that is met through this process is to be admired. We are proud to recognize the hard work of this department and its staff,” said TACP President David Moore, also Martin’s police chief.

“UT Martin’s Department of Public Safety is proud to have achieved accreditation through this program. It has been an exhaustive, time-intensive two-year project that will prove beneficial to the university by the department meeting established best practices of law enforcement Professionalism and by being more accountable to the campus community we serve,” UT Martin Department of Public Safety director Scott Robbins said.

The Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation Program is a voluntary program that recognizes the excellence and professional achievement in law enforcement agencies. The program began in 2010 through the hard work and efforts of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police.

There are currently more than 60 agencies involved in the state accreditation program.

It takes commitment, dedication and hard work from the agency head, agency personnel and campus leaders to meet the standards prescribed by the program.

The time commitment involves up to a three-year process.
Dr. Renee Bailey Iaconna quoted writer Charles Dickens, actress Gloria Swanson and singer Justin Bieber while encouraging UT Martin graduates to "never say never" as she provided the December commencement address for University of Tennessee at Martin.

Iaconna, of Philadelphia, Pa., works for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals and returned to her alma mater as she spoke to a capacity crowd Saturday in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. More than 500 graduates from summer and fall were scheduled to receive diplomas.

Before the ceremony, commencement, adding, “It’s really great to finally be here.”

Antonio Thomason of Savannah stood in the concourse holding a bouquet of flowers for his daughter, Alison, who was getting in line to receive her bachelor of university studies degree.

“Oh, I am so excited. I’m glad that this is the last child that I have (in college),” he said as he smiled.

As he walked away with a grandchild tugging at his hand, his wife, Patricia, added, “We are so happy for her and proud, because she is the third one in the family that has graduated from college. So we are very proud of her.”

Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, presided over commencement and welcomed the crowd, noting the graduates represented 48 Tennessee counties, 10 states and four foreign countries. Dr. Joe DiPietro, University of Tennessee president, later congratulated the graduates and conferred degrees.

Rakes introduced Iaconna, who heads the alliance and operations office for AstraZeneca’s global biometrics function. She holds two graduate degrees from Vanderbilt University and received the Outstanding Alumni Award from UT Martin during homecoming in October. Rakes introduced Iaconna, who heads the alliance and operations office for AstraZeneca’s global biometrics function. She holds two graduate degrees from Vanderbilt University and received the Outstanding Alumni Award from UT Martin during homecoming in October.

Raised in Hendersonville near Nashville, Iaconna always expected to attend Vanderbilt University. But when she attended UT Martin’s inaugural Governor’s School for the Humanities, her first “never say never” decision was made. Once enrolled at the university, she said her life changed in unexpected ways.

“First of all, I got involved in an organization that has changed my life, Alpha Delta Pi sorority, where I have stayed involved since I graduated, and I now serve … on our board of directors, which is known as our grand council,” she said.

The opportunity places her in contact with ADPi alumnae, volunteers and members across the country, including chapters at 200 college campuses.

Next, she recalled taking two classes, genetics and honors psychology, that influenced her future.

“It was through these two classes that I was offered the opportunity at the end of my freshman year to join the University Scholars program,” she said. “For the next few years, I learned more about science in a way that the classroom wouldn’t have provided.

Katelyn Watt, 22, of Medina, a Milan High School graduate, talked about her plans to become a 4-H extension agent and has already interviewed for a position.

“I’m excited. It’s been a long road, and sometimes it’s like ‘I can’t do it anymore,’ but it’s here,” she said of receiving her degree.

John Nicholson, 22, of Centerville, a Hickman County High School graduate, received his bachelor’s degree in communications with a concentration in broadcasting and a minor in theatre. He described college graduation as “super-real” but was excited about
Protecting a tradition of service and saving ROTC at UT Martin

Stephen Fincher
Special to the Press

The U.S. Army announced plans to close 13 ROTC programs throughout the nation without any warning to those affected back in October. The decision placed Tennessee ROTC programs in the crosshairs of a battle that threatened to close three programs active in Tennessee public universities. One of the programs at risk is located at the University of Tennessee at Martin (UT Martin) in Tennessee's 8th Congressional District. Without these ROTC programs, not only will these key opportunities be lost, but our tradition of service may fade.

The decision to close specific ROTC programs throughout the nation was based largely on metrics applied to every school as the Army is developing a new recruitment strategy. This strategy closes certain ROTC programs while opening new programs at schools in regions of the nation that have more diverse and dense populations.

Fortunately, after significant pushback from West Tennessee students and community leaders, and after many meetings and diligent work by the Tennessee congressional delegation, we were successful in encouraging the Army to suspend the closure of all 13 ROTC programs for two years. This is an important accomplishment as ROTC programs continue to give students the tools they will need to become future leaders.

We should give the ROTC significant credit for the development of students who want to serve our country in uniform. Year after year, we have sent the best and the brightest from our community to serve our nation and defend our freedoms. ROTC programs like UT Martin's also provided officers for our National Guard who stand ready to defend and protect our nation's citizens overseas at war or at home during natural disasters. It is important that we continue, as Americans and as Tennesseans, to work toward defending what we are known for: our determination, diligence, commitment and generosity. Securing the continuation of an ROTC program, which is accessible to individuals with a heart to serve will do just that.

That said, while I am thankful for the Army's decision to suspend the closure of 13 student ROTC programs, it is equally important to note that this is not a permanent fix. We still have much work to do. Going forward, not only do we need to continue to support students who will need encouragement to participate in the ROTC, but we also need to provide support to their leaders as well. Everyone in our community has a role to play to ensure the ROTC programs continue in our great state. As your Member of Congress, I will continue to fight to ensure that the tradition of Tennessee ROTC continues.

Congressman Stephen Fincher serves the 8th District of Tennessee.
Santa’s Village attendance second best in its history

More than 15,500 people attended the recent 29th annual Santa’s Village, held Dec. 12-15 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The number surpassed the 2011 record-setting number of 15,365 by 415. The highest attendance in the event’s history was 17,810 visitors in 2012.

Food donations totaled $47,766 and toy donations added up to $7,754, making the final donation total $55,520 — $2,245 more than a year ago.

"This is my 25th year to work at Santa’s Village, and I believe this has been one of the best villages to date with the expanded forest. I truly appreciated the success of this year’s village. We were able to enjoy a holiday event and at the same time help those less fortunate," said Kim Kirby, Martin Parks and Recreation Department program director.

Santa’s Village featured 26,000 square feet of lights, holiday displays and continuous entertainment. Admission was the donation of $5 worth of food items or toys.

Service agencies that will receive food and toys collected from Santa’s Village this year include Chimes for Charity, We Care Ministries, Northwest Disaster Services, Santa’s (See Page 5, Col. 6)
UT Martin hires Julio Freire as AD

By Craig Thomas
cthomas2@jacksonsun.com

There's a special relationship, Julio Freire says, between a small college town and the university based there. An athletic department can take advantage of it, and he's seen that happen in places like Cookeville and Athens, Ohio.

Now he has a chance to oversee that relationship in Martin.

Freire was announced Friday as the new athletic director at UT Martin.

He is expected to start some time in January, according to the school. He will replace Phil Dane, announced in late October his intention to retire effective Dec. 31.

A search committee of eight UT Martin staff representatives, one faculty member, four community members and three students (two of them athletes) recommended Freire over three other candidates.

This is Freire's first time to be an athletic director. When asked to describe his feelings after UT Martin chancellor Tom Rakes told him he was hired, Freire said simply, "Dream come true."

"I am absolutely thrilled and excited to be part of the Martin community," Freire said by phone Friday night.

Before he starts making decisions about the athletic department's future, Freire plans a "listening tour" in which he meets with every coach, administrator and athletic staffer and as many fans and Martin residents as possible.

"People love the orange and blue from Mar-

tin to the surrounding counties," he said.

Freire (whose name rhymes with "prairie") has worked at several universities, including Tennessee Tech, where he was an associate athletic director for development.

He said he's familiar with how UT Martin has competed in the Ohio Valley Conference, following OVC news online and keeping up with friends working within the league.

Echoing what his predecessor Dane said, Freire said one of the biggest challenges ahead for UT Martin is "developing more sustainable revenue streams." Some of the school's teams are not fully funded, meaning they have fewer coaches or scholarships than the NCAA maximum.

"There are some great coaches in place at UT Martin and many of them are outperforming their resources," Freire said.

Freire most recently served as a senior associate athletic director at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He left UNLV in September and has done some consulting work since then.

Earlier this fall, he interviewed for the athletic director position at Austin Peay.

UTM's other three candidates were Robert C. Heller, who most recently worked at Central Michigan, Richard R. Schoebel (UT Martin) and Tim M. Van Alstine (Western Illinois).

Freire, 47, is a native of Tucson, Ariz. He ran cross country and track at Arizona State. His wife, Cherie, was on the swimming and diving team at Northeastern. He has two children, Christopher and Gabriella.

Craig Thomas, 425-9634
VETERINARY TECHNICIANS — The University of Tennessee at Martin's Department of Agriculture, Geosciences, and Natural Resources (AGN) has developed a curriculum in the area of Veterinary Health Technology that provides extensive "hands-on" learning opportunities. Students completing this curriculum earn a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a concentration in Animal Science and an option in Veterinary Health Technology (VHT). Among those who graduated Dec. 14 or will graduate in May are (front, from left) Dana Hendrix of Stanton, Sara Jo Couch of Jackson, Rachel Carter of Dyersburg, Kelly Kennedy of Jackson, Keley Lee of Lebanon, (back row) Amanda Waldron of Dyer, Ashley Hughes of Tennessee Ridge, Dr. Jason Roberts, Rachel Stegall of Martin, Dr. Danny Walker, Elsie Jones of Atoka, Jennifer Mansfield of Dukedom and Erica Carroll of Gleason.

UT Martin hires AD

Julio Freire, most recently senior associate athletics director for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has been named athletics director for UT Martin.

An advisory search committee chose from among four finalists and recommended Freire for the position to Dr. Tom Rakes, university chancellor. Freire will succeed Phil Dane, who will retire as the university's athletics director effective Dec. 31.

Freire's appointment is expected to be finalized by the end of December. He will be introduced to the community and the media in early January and is expected to begin his duties later that month.

"Julio emerged as a strong choice from among an excellent pool of candidates," Rakes said.

At UNLV, Freire was heavily involved in internal operations, fundraising and ticketing. Among his successes, he led the fundraising team that more than doubled the donor base and annual donations in three years.

He is no stranger to the Ohio Valley Conference of which UT Martin is a member, having served two successful years as associate athletics director for development at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville.

UTM investment portfolio winners

Each semester the University of Tennessee at Martin students of the portfolio management course present their portfolios to the board of directors, invited guests and others who are interested in the progress of the TVA portfolio.

Since fall 2008, the managers of the sector that made the most progress and who exhibited the most passion and tenacity for their duties as portfolio managers have received the Kelly Murray Investment Portfolio Award.

David Wharton of Union City and Robert Wharton of Newbern, were the fall 2013 winners.

The award presentation was made in the Kelly Murray Investment Management Room in the Business Administration Building, which is the TVA classroom and trading room/finance lab.
Santa's Village attendance was second best in history

More than 15,500 people attended the recent 29th annual Santa's Village, held Dec. 12-15 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex.

The number surpassed the 2011 record-setting number of 15,365 by 415. The highest attendance in the event's history was 17,810 visitors in 2012.

Food donations totaled $47,766 and toy donations added up to $7,754, making the final donation total $55,520 — $2,245 more than a year ago.

"This is my 25th year to work at Santa's Village, and I believe this has been one of the best villages to date with the expanded forest. I truly appreciated the success of this year's village. We were able to enjoy a holiday event and at the same time help those less fortunate," said Kim Kirby, Martin Parks and Recreation Department program director.

Santa's Village featured 26,000 square feet of lights, holiday displays and continuous entertainment. Admission was the donation of $5 worth of food items or toys.

Service agencies that will receive food and toys collected from Santa's Village this year include Chimes for Charity, We Care Ministries, Northwest Disaster Services, Santa's Helpers, Healthy Start and the Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council. Co-sponsors for the event were the City of Martin and UT Martin.

As part of the event each year, WCMT Radio sponsors a can caravan for canned food donations collected at schools.
Scenes from Santa's Village

Photos by Randy Cavin and Mary Jean Hall
WANT TO SEE MORE PHOTOS? To view all of The Press' 300 photos from Santa's Village, please visit our Facebook page. "Like" us while you're there.
Local residents receive degrees

Several Weakley County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the recent fall commencement held in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

**Dresden:** Casey McKennie Bennett; Allison Mae Brock; Carolyn E. Hagen; Brittany Dawn Kemp; Riley Elizabeth Moran; Alayna Shae Owens; Hilerie Dawn Rickman; Jeremy Levi Robertson and David Andrew Walker.

**Gleason:** Megan Rita Crider; Leah NiCole Mebane; Dagan Evon Smith-Wilkey; Trevor Cavallotti Torre and James Alexander Verdell.

**Greenfield:** Summer Lee Ann Hoke.

**Martin:** Michael Gene Boyd; Chelsea D’Anne Breeden; Stacy Lee Connor; Gregory Richard Curd; Melinda Chachele Dortch; Rebecca Dawn Dowden; Travis G. Eakin; Stacey Renee French; Brian P. Gilbert; Jennifer Nicole Gilbertson; Casey Lauren Hazlewood; Ashley Michelle Hinman; Sierra Lorene Kirk; Sigrid Elizabeth Lillegard; Chase Austin Moss; Ezra F. Nance; Kendra Gunnnettia Owens; Dana L. Prince; Brigitte Ashley Reaves; Julie Marie Reddick; Priscilla Lorrynn Richards; Landon Graham Scott; Martha Stutts; Rory D. Stutzman; Joseph Michael Thomas; Jared R. Towe; Libbi Alise Wilson Verdell and Lindsey Rae Wade.

**Sharon:** Tonya Marie Evans; Amber Renee Nannya and Hannah L. Wade.

**Graduate degrees:** The students, all from Martin, receiving graduate degrees were Rebecca Marie Acred; Phornramp Athwongthanawat; Landy G. Fuqua; Christopher R. Gillies and Mukayasit Jootawattananonte.
At the college level

A number of Obion County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during recent fall commencement.

Among those who received undergraduate degrees were:
Hornbeak — Jeffrey Adam Alexander and David Tyler Thornton.
Kenton — Jordan Brooke Jones, Caleb Michael Poore and Megan Brooke Sanford.
Obion — Savannah Jewell Jones, Rives — Christopher Lee Palmer.
South Fulton — Colin Skylar Cherry, Charles Scott Ellegood, Ken Lee Glisson, Andrew Parker Greer, Jennifer Suzanne Martin and James Dean Mulcahy.
Troy — Bradley James Barbour, Cari Beth Cash, Dayna Lynnette Cox, Justin D. Preuett and Joshua Crafton Robinson.
Graduate degrees were awarded to:
Obion — Christopher William Birmingham.
Union City — Matthew Thomas Sparkman and Lea Shea Spurlock.

The award recognizes teachers of all levels, from early childhood instructors to university faculty.

Smith began his teaching career as a high school and middle school educator and behavior intervention specialist. As a special education teacher, he modeled the philosophy that all students can learn.

“'To me, in the words of Tony Attwood (noted psychologist and author), a student with a disability 'lives in our world, but in his or her own way,’” Smith said. “Sometimes you have to learn their 'way' to help them achieve.”

Smith has studied and implemented applied behavior analysis principles to control classroom behavioral issues. He seeks to understand the lives of his students and their social environment, which determines their behavior inside of the classroom and out. He believes educators can be most effective when they are involved in the lives of the students and has acted as educator, disciplinarian, counselor, coach and father to his students.
Area students graduate from UTM

Several Fulton County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the recent fall commencement held in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were: from Cayce, Nathanael Taylor Grasfeder; from Fulton, James David Lucy; from Hickman, Taylor Ann Greer; from Obion, Savannah Jewell Jones; and from South Fulton, Colin Skylar Cherry; Charles Scott Ellegood; Keri Lee Glisson; Andrew Parker Greer; Jennifer Suzanne Martin; James Dean Mulcahy.

The student receiving a graduate degree was Justin E. Totty, from Fulton, and Christopher William Birmingham, from Obion.

UTM names Freire new athletics director

Julio Freire, most recently senior associate athletics director for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has been named athletics director for the University of Tennessee at Martin. An advisory search committee chose from among four finalists and recommended Freire for the position to Dr. Tom Rakes, university chancellor. Freire will succeed Phil Dane, who will retire as the university’s athletics director effective Dec. 31, 2013.

Freire’s appointment is expected to be finalized by the end of December. He will be introduced to the community and the media in early January and is expected to begin his duties later that month.

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

At UNLV, Freire was heavily involved in internal operations, fundraising and ticketing. Among his successes, he led the fundraising team that more than doubled the donor base and annual donations in three years. He is no stranger to the Ohio Valley Conference of which UT Martin is a member, having served two successful years as associate athletics director for development at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville.

“On behalf of my family, I am thrilled with the opportu

UTM names Freire . . .

Continued from page 1

“We have an incredible opportunity to embrace comprehensive excellence in all our actions, all in support of the educational mission of the university,” he added. “We will be fully committed to our student-athletes and embrace the responsibility to assist them as they develop their fullest potential from an academic, athletic and social perspective.”

Kevin White, vice president and director of athletics for Duke University, said that UT Martin “made an exceptional hire in Julio Freire.”

White added, “He (Julio) will bring immeasurable experience, particularly in fund-raising, from a variety of top-notch institutions to the position. Most importantly, he will exhibit tremendous passion and an unwavering commitment to excellence every day that will greatly benefit the Tennessee-Martin athletics family for years to come.”

UT Martin competes in NCAA Division I in both men’s and women’s sports and the Football Championship Subdivision. In addition to 14 NCAA-affiliated athletics teams, the university sponsors the only collegiate rodeo team in Tennessee. The rodeo team is a member of the Ozark Region and the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.

...Continued on Page 2
Local residents receive degrees from UT Martin

Several Weakley County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the recent fall commencement held in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:


The students receiving graduate degrees were:

Martin - Rebecua Marie Aced, Phomramp Athiwongthanawat, Landy G. Fuqua, Christopher R. Gillies, and Mukayasit Jootawattananone.

More than 15,500 people attended the recent 29th annual Santa's Village, held Dec. 12-15 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The number surpassed the 2011 record-setting number of 15,365 by 415. The highest attendance numbers in the event's history was 17,810 visitors in 2012.

Food donations totaled $47,766, and toy donations added up to $7,754, making the final donation total $55,520, $2,245 more than a year ago.

"This is my 25th year to work at Santa's Village, and I believe this has been one of the best villages to date with the expanded forest. I truly appreciated the success of this year's village. We were able to enjoy a holiday event and at the same time help those less fortunate," said Kim Kirby, Martin Parks and Recreation Department program director.

Santa's Village featured 26,000 square feet of lights, holiday displays and continuous entertainment. Admission was the donation of $5 of food items or toys.

Service agencies that will receive food and toys collected from Santa's Village this year...
Residents receive UT Martin degrees

Several Gibson County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the recent fall commencement held in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

• Brazil – William Wesley Morgan;
• Gibson – Cody F. Houck;
• Humboldt – Lance David Alexander; Queena Lalitha Brown; Annalynn Smith Floyd; Danielle Janae Goff; Jordan Rae King; Marquita Sheree Patterson; Taylor A. Perry;
• Medina – Kimberly Ann Boswell; Maigan Suzanne Bradbury; Katherine Allison Estes; Joshua Andrew Hill; Cody Lee Marbury; Tyler Christopher Ray; Rebecca Diane Smith; Katelyn D. Watt; Charles Darren Wyatt;
• Milan – Mahendra Arora; John Casey Barnes; Matthew L. Browning; Christy Marie Cunningham; Bradley Wayne Gardner; Anthony Lynn Launsby; John Walter Szopinski; Amanda Anne White;
• Trenton – Amy Allison Hill; Joshua Glenn Holt; Ashley Helen Johnstone; Jacob Scott Mathenia; Lindsay Nichole Moore; Robert D. Reeves; Jarrod Johnston Slaughter; Rebecca Jordan Smith; Marilyn Lauren Tyree; Brice Dale Watson; Jared Hunter Whitby.
Commencement speaker urges graduates to “never say never”

Dr. Renee Bailey Iacona quoted writer Charles Dickens, actress Gloria Swanson and singer Justin Bieber while encouraging UT Martin graduates to “never say never” as she provided the December commencement address for University of Tennessee at Martin. Iacona, of Philadelphia, Pa., works for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals and returned to her alma mater as she spoke to a capacity crowd Saturday in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. More than 500 graduates from summer and fall were scheduled to receive diplomas.

Before the ceremony, Katelyn Watt, 22, of Medina, a Milam High School graduate, talked about her plans to become a 4-H extension agent and has already interviewed for a position. “I’m excited. It’s been a long road, and sometimes it’s like I can’t do it anymore,” but it’s here,” she said of receiving her degree.

John Nicholson, 22, of Cennterville, Tenn., and a Hickman County High School graduate, received his bachelor’s degree in communications with a concentration in broadcasting and a minor in theater. He described college graduation as “surreal” but was excited about commencement, and added, “It’s really great to finally be here.”

Antonio Thomason, of Savannah, stood in the concourse holding a bouquet of flowers for his daughter, Alison, who was getting in line to receive her bachelor of university studies degree. “Oh, I am so excited. I’m glad that this is the last child that I have (in college),” he said as he smiled. As he walked away with a grandchild tugging at his hand, his wife, Patricia, added, “We are so happy for her and proud, because she is the third one in the family that has graduated from college. So we are very proud of her.”

Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, presided over commencement and welcomed the crowd, noting that the graduates represented 48 Tennessee counties, 10 states and four foreign countries. Dr. Joe DiPietro, University of Tennessee president, later congratulated the graduates and conferred degrees.

Rakes introduced Iacona, who heads the alliance and operations office for AstraZeneca’s global biometrics function. She holds two graduate degrees from Vanderbilt University and received the “Outstanding Alumni Award” from UT Martin during homecoming in October.

Raised in Hendersonville near Nashville, Iacona always expected to attend Vanderbilt University. But when she attended UT Martin’s inaugural Governor’s School for the Humanities, her first “never say never” decision was made. Once enrolled at the university, she said her life changed in unexpected ways.

“First of all, I got involved in an organization that has changed my life, Alpha Delta Pi sorority, where I have stayed involved since I graduated, and I now serve . . . on our board of directors, which is known as our grand council,” she said. The opportunity places her in contact with ADPi alumnae, volunteers and members across the country, including chapters at close to 200 college campuses.

Next, she recalled taking two classes, genetics and honors psychology, that influenced her future. “It was through these two classes that I was offered the opportunity at the end of my freshman year to join the University Scholars program,” she said, adding, “For the next few years, I learned more about science in a way that the classroom wouldn’t have provided. I later graduated as a University Scholar and found a love of science that has continued to today.”

She went on study breast cancer and genetic susceptibility at Vanderbilt, calling on what she had learned in her freshman genetics class. “Today I use these skills as I work for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals,” she said. “I began in the pharmaceutical industry in 2001 . . . and now I lead a global department.”

When she considers her own life, Iacona said she never considered doing many of the things she has done. “So graduates, as I reflect back on my life, and all the ‘nevers’ I use to say, I have become a true believer now on ‘never saying never.”

She then pointed to some famous people who shared the same philosophy.

Iacona noted use of the phrase in the Charles Dickens novel The Pickwick Papers and quoted the late actress Gloria Swanson who said, “Never say never, for if you live long enough, chances are you will not be able to abide by the restrictions.”

Even singer Justin Bieber named a 2011 concert film “Never Say Never,” and she quoted inspirational lyrics from his song by the same name.

“So graduates, today is a day to dream, a day to celebrate your own accomplishments and for families to be proud of what your graduate has done, and to help them dream about all that is ahead for them,” she said.
It was a family affair for Patricia Henning of Ripley on Dec. 14 as she graduated from the University of Tennessee Martin in commencement exercises in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Celebrating with Henning, from left, are Terrance Henning Jr., Candus Jones, Cristal Davis, Terrance Henning Sr., Braylen Davis, Patricia Henning, Patrice Henning and Sondra Henning. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Mingle

Tonya Evans, of Sharon, and Kara Kidwell, of Dresden, graduated from UT Martin. Kidwell was one of three Paul and Martha Meek winners. UT MARTIN
Morgan Whiteaker, of Jackson, second from right, graduated from UT Martin. Celebrating with her, from left, are her parents, Mike and Dawn Schwartz, and her grandmother, Pat Quesenberry.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

More than 500 students graduated from UT Martin on Dec. 14 in commencement exercises in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Renee Bailey jacobs delivered the commencement speech and told graduates to 'never say never.' PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Robert Steward Jr., center, of Bolivar, graduated from UT Martin on Dec. 14 in commencement exercises in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Celebrating with Steward are, from left, Robert Steward, Ashlee Smith, Betty Steward, Steward Jr., Brook Steward and Brian Smith. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN
Landy Fuqua, right, of Martin, received her master's of business administration at UT Martin's commencement exercise on Dec. 14. She is pictured with her husband, Bill Fuqua. Landy is the director of the Regional Entrepreneur and Economic Development (REED) Center. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Anthony Radcliffe, of Martin, and formerly of Munford, didn't let muscular dystrophy get in his way as he graduated from UT Martin on Dec. 14 in commencement exercises in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Radcliffe earned a bachelor's degree in education. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Kimberly Boswell, of Medina, and her parents, John and Shelia Boswell, attended the reception in Skyhawk Fieldhouse after the Dec. 14 commencement exercises in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center at UT Martin. More than 500 students earned their degrees. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Several sisters of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority graduated from UT Martin on Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. The sisters, from left, included Savannah Jones, of Obion; Beth Ann Sanders, of Jackson; Christine Hassel, of Clarksville; Candace Wood, of Parsons; and Lauren Tyree, of Trenton. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN

Robert Reeves, of Trenton, participated in the Order of the Engineer Ceremony before commencement exercises Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Also participating in the ceremony with Reeves were Ed Wheeler, right, engineering professor and department chairman, and Rich Helgeson, left, dean of the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences. PHOTO COURTESY OF UT MARTIN
UT-Martin Hires New Athletic Director

By JOHN WALKER

The University of Tennessee At Martin has new athletic leadership. Julio Freire, most recently senior associate athletics director for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has been named athletics director for the UT-Martin.

An advisory search committee chose from among four finalists and recommended Freire for the position to Dr. Tom Rakes, university chancellor.

Freire will succeed Phil Dane, who will retire as the university’s athletics director effective at the end of this year.
The University of Tennessee-Martin has named a new Athletic Director for the school.

Julio Freire, who most recently served as senior associate AD for the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, will replace the retiring Phil Dane in January.

At UNLV, Freire was involved in internal operations, fundraising and ticketing, and was at one time in the OVC as associate Athletics Director at Tennessee Tech.

Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes said Freire emerged as a strong choice from an excellent pool of candidates, and possesses the experience, knowledge and energy to lead the UT-Martin athletic’s program.
Martín — Julio Freire, most recently senior associate athletics director for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has been named athletics director for the University of Tennessee at Martin. An advisory search committee chose from among four finalists and recommended Freire for the position to Tom Rakes, university chancellor. Freire will succeed Phil Dane, who will retire as the university’s athletics director effective Dec. 31.

Freire’s appointment is expected to be finalized by the end of December. He will be introduced to the community and the media in early January and is expected to begin his duties later that month.

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

At UNLV, Freire was heavily involved in internal operations, fundraising and ticketing. Among his successes, he led the fundraising team that more than doubled the donor base and annual donations in three years. He is no stranger to the Ohio Valley Conference of which UT Martin is a member, having served two successful years as associate athletics director for development at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville.

"On behalf of my family, I am thrilled with the opportunity to serve as the director of athletics at UT Martin," Freire said. "As a former student-athlete, educator and intercollegiate athletics administrator, I understand the importance and influence of our work."

Freire said that he "was struck with the strong sense of community and desire to succeed" when he visited the campus and sees the university positioned to build on the athletics program’s success.

"We have an incredible opportunity to embrace comprehensive excellence in all our actions, all in support of the educational mission of the university," he added. "We will be fully committed to our student-athletes and embrace the responsibility to assist them as they develop their fullest potential from an academic, athletic and social perspective."

Kevin White, vice president and director of athletics for Duke University, said that UT Martin "made an exceptional hire in Julio Freire."

White added, "He (Freire) will bring immeasurable experience, particularly in fundraising, from a variety of top-notch institutions to the position. Most importantly, he will exhibit tremendous passion and an unwavering commitment to excellence every day that will greatly benefit the Tennessee-Martin athletics family for years to come."
The University of Tennessee at Martin’s World Percussion Ensemble will explore a variety of cultures musically at the “Roots of Rhythm” concert Monday at the Latta Theater of the McNairy County Visitor’s and Cultural Center in Selmer.

Julie Hill, associate professor of music and director of percussion studies, said the goal of the performance is to help elevate cultural awareness while providing a unique musical experience.

“The ensemble’s mission is to encourage cultural diversity both on the UT Martin campus and within the greater West and Middle Tennessee community,” Hill said. “The ‘Roots of Rhythm’ presentation includes interdisciplinary subjects such as history, geography and, of course, music that coincides with the National Standards for Arts Education that can be used in a variety of subject matters relating to the live concert being performed.”

The multi-sensory performance will include instruments such as the steel drums and tambo bamboo instruments from Trinidad, Shona marimbas from Zimbabwe, traditional dundun drums from Guinea and Brazilian samba instruments, Hill said.

With the performance focusing on the cultures of Africa, Cuba, Brazil, the Caribbean and the United States, Hill said that attendees can experience how societies are created and interact musically.

“Much more than an exciting concert, this complete program allows audiences to gather information through listening, participating, observing and visualizing,” Hill said. “Through the UT Martin World Percussion Ensemble’s ‘Roots of Rhythm’ presentation, the possibility for community and student enrichment within the context of multicultural education is limitless.”

The performance begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets go on sale at 6:30 p.m. at the Latta on the night of the performance. Admission is $5 for adults and $3 for students.

To make advanced reservations for groups of 10 or more, contact Paige Holmes, managing director of Arts in McNairy, at (731) 439-2891.

To view part of the ensemble’s performance last year, visit youtube.com/watch?v=qC7MqlkmlxM. For more information about “Roots of Rhythm,” visit utm.edu/departments/percussion/rootsofrhythm.php.