UT Martin steel band and piano students to give performances

The UT Martin steel band and piano students have upcoming performances in the university’s Fine Arts Building.

The University Steel Band performs Monday, December 3, at 6:30 in the Blankenship Recital Hall.

The performance includes a short, informal selection of traditional Caribbean music and an arrangement of pop artist Pharrell Williams' "Happy."

The steel band is composed of both music majors and campus musicians. The ensemble performs on the steel pan, the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago.

The UT Martin piano ensemble’s program will be Saturday, December 8, at 3:00, also in the Blankenship Recital Hall.

The program pays homage to composer Claude Debussy, honoring the centennial anniversary of the death of the noted French impressionistic composer.

The ensemble is comprised of students Gian Garma and Abigaie Plunk, both of Martin; Grant Larcom and Benjamin Beard, both of Union City; Emily Campbell, of Trenton; Meleah Gateley, of Humboldt; Raven Tharpe, of Greenfield; and Anna Johnson, of Dresden.

Dr. Elaine Harriss, UT Martin professor of music, serves as ensemble director.

UTM holding ACT prep courses

The University of Tennessee at Martin will host an ACT success tactics training session from 8 a.m.-noon, Dec. 1, on the main campus. The registration fee is $45 per student. The test prep session will offer quick tips to improve student scores on each of the four test sections. It will also focus on time-saving strategies and study habits as well as provide guidance for answering questions more efficiently. Participants will need to bring a pencil and paper. Alex Beene, UT Martin adjunct instructor, will teach the course. In five years, Beene has mentored more than 1,000 students who have received a combined total of $4.2 million in scholarships and financial aid. UT Martin will hold additional sessions from 8 a.m.-noon, Feb. 2, March 2 and April 8, 2019. For more information or to register, visit utm.edu/actprep. For assistance, contact the UT Martin Office of Educational Outreach at 731-881-7082.
Wolters earns recognition at UT-Martin

By The Associated Press
Posted Dec 2, 2018 at 12:01 AM
Updated Dec 2, 2018 at 7:49 PM

The University of Tennessee-Martin’s Ned Ray McWherter Institute recognized graduating senior Aaron Wolters, right, of Culleoka, during a reception Nov. 26 at the Lindell in downtown Martin. Wolters has been part of the program since 2016 and will graduate during the Dec. 15 commencement ceremony. The Ned Ray McWherter Institute is a three-year professional development program that provides travel, networking and growth opportunities for selected UT Martin students. Wolters is pictured with Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor. (Courtesy photo)

UTM Jackson Center hosting ACT prep

The University of Tennessee at Martin Jackson Center will host an ACT success tactics training session from 4:30-8:30 p.m., Dec. 4, in Jackson State Community College’s McWherter Building. The registration fee is $45 per student.

The test-prep session will offer quick tips to improve student scores on each of the four test sections. It will also focus on time-saving strategies and study habits as well as provide guidance for answering questions more efficiently. Participants will need to bring a pencil and paper.

Alex Beene, UT Martin adjunct instructor, will teach the course. In five years, Beene has mentored more than 1,000 students who have received a combined total of $4.2 million in scholarships and financial aid.

The UT Martin Jackson Center will hold additional sessions from 4:30-8:30 p.m., Feb. 5, April 2 and June 4, 2019.

The UT Martin Jackson Center is located on the campus of Jackson State Community College at 2046 N. Parkway in Jackson. For more information or to register, visit utm.edu/actprep. For assistance, contact the UT Martin Office of Educational Outreach at 731-881-7082.
As America mourns the passing of the 41st President of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush, a former UT Martin Chancellor is remembering his encounter with the future President.

Dr. Nick Dunagan was working at UT Martin, years before he was to become Chancellor, when he was assigned to pick up the future President in Union City.

Dr. Dunagan says President Bush was in Martin to make a speech at the university.

When asked about the legacy that George H.W. Bush leaves behind, Dr. Dunagan says...

George H.W. Bush served as President from 1989 to 1993. He died late Friday night at his home in Houston at the age of 94.

Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam will attend the funeral service Wednesday for former President Bush in Washington D.C.

Haslam had previously ordered all flags over state buildings and the Tennessee Statehouse be lowered to half-staff until sunset on December 30 to honor Bush's life.
Members of the Martin and UT Martin communities gathered Nov. 30 to officially open the new Core10 branch on Lindell Street. Pictured cutting the ribbon are (first row, l-r) Barbara Virgin, Weakley County Chamber of Commerce; Suzanne Harper, Twin Oaks Technology; Tatum Utley, Cody Robertson and Jeff Martin, Core10; Charles Anderson, Weakley County Chamber of Commerce; Lee Farabaugh, Tannor Franks and Robert Rayburn, Core10; Mayor Randy Brundige, city of Martin; Chancellor Keith Carver, UT Martin; and Stephen Stinson, Core10.

MARTIN, Tenn. – Graduates from the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Computer Science now have a close-to-home option when looking for skilled work in the software development field. Core10, a fintech software development company, officially opened a new Martin branch Nov. 30 in Martin's historic downtown area on Lindell Street.

Founded in 2016, Core10 works exclusively with corporations in the financial technology ("fintech") industry, including those in banking, lending, securities, insurance and start-ups. The Nashville-based company opened its second branch in Huntingdon, West Virginia, to be near graduates from the Marshall University computer science program, and has now done the same with a third branch near the UT Martin main campus.

Jeff Martin, Core10 CEO and co-founder, says there are several characteristics the company considers when choosing a site for a new location.

"Obviously, number one is that there's a university that is producing modern software engineering principles," he said. "Martin is our smallest market.... But, for us to be successful there doesn't have to be hundreds of employees. Thirty to 50 employees in a market like this makes a huge difference in the community."

Lee Farabaugh, Core10 chief communications officer and co-founder, says they have been impressed with the quality of UT Martin's computer science program and decided to locate a branch in Martin to make use of the emerging talent pool.

"One of the things that we sometimes struggle with in our field is that when graduates come out of undergrad they have a good theoretical knowledge, but they don't understand really how to work on software development teams. So when they come into the business world and they're working on client software projects, they're not that well prepared. But we've found UT Martin graduates to be the opposite. They are very well prepared," she said. "These young men have come out of the program, and they can hit the ground running. They work very well on our teams. ... Most grads just don't have (that), but these grads do. They really get it."
There are currently three employees at the Martin branch, all of whom are recent UT Martin computer science graduates. Stephen Stinson, of Holladay; Tannor Franks, of Adamsville; and Robert Rayburn, of Trenton, all graduated within the past two years and are glad to have an option to work in software development while remaining in the northwest Tennessee area.

Cody Robertson, also a recent UT Martin graduate from Union City, is based at the Nashville location and is excited to be involved with such a young company.

“A lot of these bigger companies have been around for a while, and it’s really hard to move (up). Especially in the software industry, it’s very common that if you ever want to move up from the position that you’re in, you’re essentially going to have to switch companies and go somewhere else to be able to keep moving up,” he said. “With Core 10, with it being early on and it being a start-up, we have an opportunity to get in really early and make a name for ourselves in this industry.”

Core 10 has trademarked the concept of the “HEREshore” movement, which seeks to keep software development jobs in the United States by locating employees in areas where the cost of living is low. This not only keeps costs down for clients in larger cities, it also helps revitalize rural areas with high-tech employment opportunities.

“Oftentimes, the reason that (companies) offshore is that it’s so much cheaper. But there are so many problems with that – there’s language, there’s time zone (issues), there’s cultural barriers, there’s security issues, ... You don’t know that your intellectual property is safe,” said Farabaugh. “When you can do software development in the United States you don’t have those problems, but historically it’s been cost-prohibitive. So what we’re trying to do is say ‘you can have your cake and eat it too.’ You can have your high-quality, safe work done in your time zone, but it doesn’t cost you a fortune. ...

“One of the things that we’ve seen in West Virginia is that so many (companies) want to come in and find the grads and then take them away. We want them to stay here,” she added. “That’s why our model works. It’s the economic difference in cost of living in an area like Martin versus a big city – Nashville, or even an area like Boston or New York. (It’s) helping our clients understand that high-quality software development can be done in small towns and rural areas, and how much of an economic benefit it is for them.”

Dr. Joshua Guerin, chair of the UT Martin Department of Computer Science, and Dr. Shadow Robinson, dean of the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences – of which computer science is a part – both agree that Core 10’s new location brings a huge benefit to up-and-coming computer science graduates.

“One of the best things about having a company like Core 10 coming to Martin and coming to West Tennessee is that not only are they bringing an entire industry to the area, but the ability for our students to get jobs with them provides a really great connection for the university,” said Guerin.

“I think what you find with a lot of our students is that they are very skilled at what they do, and they are also frequently from this area and they believe in this area. So it can be very frustrating for our students when they really want to stay in northwest Tennessee and make a difference here and build their families here and their careers here, and I think having this opportunity for them is amazing,” added Robinson. “We have the talent in northwest Tennessee to do these kinds of things. And as this succeeds and as other companies succeed, it’s going to be a win because other companies will want to come knowing that we’re producing this talent and that this talent really is committed to this region and that they have the skillsets that these companies want.”
The Nov. 30 open house event included members of the Martin Business Association, UT Martin faculty and students, representatives from Core10's leadership team and many community members interested in the new industry. Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor, and Randy Brundige, city of Martin mayor, both spoke during the event to welcome Core10 to the region and thank them for choosing Martin as a home for their newest branch.

For more information on Core10, visit core10.io.

For more information on the UT Martin Department of Computer Science, contact Guerin at 731-881-7246 or jguerin@utm.edu.

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UC Students Chosen For RisingStar Youth Summitt

DECEMBER 5, 2018 AT 8:29 AM ▲ POSTED BY SHANNON MCFARLIN
Union City, Tenn.-Aubree Keeling admitted she was a little nervous before attending the eighth annual RisingStar Youth Leadership Summit at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

At the end of the two-day conference, though, she didn’t want it to end.

"It really opened my eyes some, said Keeling, who, along with fellow Union City High School junior Caroline Conley, was chosen by school administration to attend the summit, “I met a lot of new people. I learned some new things about how to be a leader and it opened my eyes about some new opportunities and jobs.

“It really made me see myself differently.”

Conley also deemed the experience both pleasant and enlightening.

“We participated a lot in team-building activities and learned about truly being a team player,” she said. “We were put in a lot of trial-and-error situations and learned about listening to ideas other than our own.

“And UTM wasn’t necessarily on my list (of college choices) before I went. But I’d say it is an option now. I really liked the campus."

The RisingStar program is designed specifically for high school juniors and seniors in West Tennessee and is a byproduct of the WestStar Leadership program. The main purpose of the RisingStar Summit is to give student leaders across the area the chance to develop leadership skills and learn the importance of community involvement.

More than 40 students from 12 rural West Tennessee counties participated in this year’s program at UT Martin. Those who attended were involved in a number of team-building activities, listened to a variety of speakers and got customized campus tours from a variety of educational fields.

Keeling chose to get further information on sports business and nursing, while Conley sought details on nursing and ACT test scores to gain admittance into the school’s nursing program.

UT Martin Chancellor Emeritus Dr. Robert Smith – the founder of WestStar Leadership – was among the guest speakers, along with Gina McClure, the university’s current vice chancellor for Residential and Student Life.

Also among the speakers was Dr. Charley Deal, executive director of WestStar Leadership, and Lisa Smartt, noted author, columnist and motivational speaker.

Union City High School guidance counselor Martha Townes called the program “a very positive experience” for all those involved and said, “The opportunity to interact with kids all over West Tennessee and be on their own for a couple of days was priceless.”

“I found out there are a lot of opportunities out there that I hadn’t thought about or considered,” Keeling added. “Just meeting new people was fun, but we did a lot of little things – like learning about fine dining and learning about the proper utensils to use when eating in that setting.

“We gave each other little nicknames that we were able to use when we played a game that didn’t allow us to use each other’s real names. So many things we did in the team-building were fun.”
Perhaps Conley best wrapped up the experience.

"I found out that nobody determines my future... I do. I can do and will have the opportunities to do what I want," she said.

Being a leader, will no doubt be a part of that.

Haslam appoints 20 members to advisory boards for University of Tennessee system

December 5th, 2018 by Staff Report in Breaking News Read Time < 1 min

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam on Wednesday appointed 20 members to the new advisory boards for each of the four campuses within the University of Tennessee system: The University of Tennessee at Knoxville; The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; The University of Tennessee at Martin; and The University of Tennessee Health Science Center.

The advisory boards were created under the UT FOCUS Act passed by the General Assembly last session.

"These board members will positively impact the multiple and diverse campuses that comprise the UT system," Haslam said in a news release. "We wanted members who could focus their attention on the individual campuses and respond nimbly to the specific needs of each institution."

The UT advisory board members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. Each board is comprised of five public members, one faculty member and one student member.

The governor's appointees are as follows:

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- The Honorable Muecke Barker, Signal Mountain
- Fred Decosimo, Signal Mountain
- Serina Desai, Chattanooga
- Carole Hoffman, Hixson
- Scott LeRoy, Chattanooga

University of Tennessee Health Science Center
- Vicky Gregg, Chattanooga
- Lynn Massingale, Knoxville
- The Honorable Mark Norris, Collierville
- Michael Ugwueke, Germantown
- Phil Wenk, Brentwood

University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Alexia Poe, Nashville
- Tom Smith, Nashville
- John Tickie, Bristol
- Syreeta Vaughn, Knoxville
- Tim Williams, Knoxville

University of Tennessee at Martin
- Hal Bynum, Sharon
- Monice Hagler, Memphis
- Art Sparks, Union City
- Kyle Spurgeon, Jackson
- Julia Wells, Jackson
New software company locates close to UT Martin grads

MARTIN, Tenn. — Graduates from the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Computer Science now have a close-to-home option when looking for skilled work in the software development field. Core10, a fintech software development company, officially opened a new Martin branch Nov. 30 in Martin’s historic downtown area on Lindell Street.

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Dr. Joshua Guerin, chair of the UT Martin Department of Computer Science, and Dr. Shadow Robinson, dean of the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences — of which computer science is a part — both agree that Core10’s new location brings a huge benefit to up-and-coming computer science graduates.

The Nov. 30 open house event included members of the Martin Business Association, UT Martin faculty and students, representatives from Core10’s leadership team and many community members interested in the new industry. Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor, and Randy Brundige, city of Martin mayor, both spoke during the event to welcome Core10 to the region and thank them for choosing Martin as a home for their newest branch.

For more information on Core10, visit core10.io. For more information on the UT Martin Department of Computer Science, contact Guerin at 731-881-7246 or jguerin@utm.edu.
UT Martin Chancellor Carver Chosen To Chair Search Committee

Randy Boyd, interim president of the University of Tennessee System, has appointed University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Keith Carver chairman of a search committee tasked with finding the next chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The UT Knoxville chancellor serves as a member of the UT System leadership team, reporting directly to the university president, and as chief academic and administrative officer of the Knoxville campus. The chancellor is responsible for providing visionary leadership and promoting continued development of the campus’s academic programs, research productivity, national reputation of excellence and various strategic initiatives.

“The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is positioned very well for the future. Enrollment is up, we are producing more graduates in less time, our research enterprise had a record-breaking year, and our fundraising had a record-breaking year,” said Boyd. “I am excited to find a generational leader who can build on this momentum as we look to increase our talent development for the state of Tennessee and grow our research endeavors.”

The search will officially begin in January with hopes to announce a new chancellor in May. The committee includes members of the UT Board of Trustees and faculty, staff, student, and alumni communities: Misty Anderson, Faculty Senate president and professor of English, UT Knoxville; Chip Bryant, vice chancellor for advancement, UT Knoxville; Mark Dean, interim dean, College of Engineering, UT Knoxville; Bill Fox, director of the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, UT Knoxville; Ovi Kabir, SGA president, UT Knoxville; Amy Miles, UT trustee; former CEO of Regal Entertainment; Donnie Smith, UT trustee; former CEO of Tyson Foods; Thomas Zacharia, laboratory director, Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

A website will launch in January to provide more information about the search, including the job description.

UT Martin Ned Ray McWherter Institute Recognizes Local Senior

The University of Tennessee at Martin’s Ned Ray McWherter Institute recognized graduating senior Chrystele Alexander (right), of Martin, during a reception Nov. 25 at the Lindell in downtown Martin. Alexander has been part of the program since 2016 and will graduate during the Dec. 15 commencement ceremony. The Ned Ray McWherter Institute is a three-year professional development program that provides travel, networking and growth opportunities for selected UT Martin students. Alexander is pictured with Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor. For more information about the Ned Ray McWherter Institute, contact Joyanne Gansereit, program coordinator, at 731-881-3620.
Rural Development director to speak at commencement

Jim Tracy, Tennessee’s state director for the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, will serve as keynote speaker Dec. 15 during the University of Tennessee at Martin’s fall commencement exercises.

Commencement will begin at 11 a.m. in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Originally from West Tennessee, Tracy spent 13 years as a Tennessee state senator for the 14th Senatorial District from 2004-17 and was an advocate for rural and agricultural issues during his time in office.

He also has 24 years’ experience as a small business owner and is a former high school agricultural education teacher. He earned his bachelor of science degree in agricultural education from UT Martin.

He and his family currently live in Shelbyville. UT Martin’s fall commencement exercises will grant degrees to those students who completed academic requirements during either the summer or fall semester. Fall commencement is not a ticketed event; however, seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Some handicap seating is available at court level.

The event will be available for live viewing online courtesy of the OVC Digital Network at owc-digitalnetwork.com/watch/?Live=6896.

UT Martin students honored for computer machining skills

Four students from the University of Tennessee at Martin received awards for their entries in the 2018 Fall Association for Computing Machinery Mid-Southeast Conference held recently in Gatlinburg.

The Department of Computer Science took nine seniors from the department’s capstone class to the conference where teams of students presented four separate projects as part of their course requirements.

Students Jeremy Coleman of Camden and Amie Newman of Martin won first place for their capstone work, “EGGY: The Egg-cellent Home Security System.” The intelligent system records images and videos when motion is detected and sends alerts to a corresponding app on a user’s iOS device. The name comes from the egg-shaped enclosure the team built for the project. Coleman and Newman received a certificate and a cash prize for their submission.

Steven Alford of Dyersburg and Ruchik Patel of Ahmedabad, India, received honorable mentions for their project “All the King’s Men (Video Game).” The game is a 2D action role-playing game in which the user plays as a deposed king attempting to reclaim his castle from a corrupt council.

For more information, contact Dr. Kathleen Ericson, assistant professor of computer science, at (731) 881-7587.
Tech hub forms in Martin

High-tech company to bring 50 jobs

Adam Friedman
Jackson Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

Martin is starting to form a small technology hub in West Tennessee after a second high-tech company moved into downtown.

“We have high-speed internet and we are a gig city,” said Martin Mayor Randy Brundige. “The whole business section is fiber ready — and with those capabilities, tech companies can look here.”

Savant Learning Systems already had an office in downtown Martin, employing close to 100 people. On Friday, Core 10, a financial technology software development company, opened its first office in Martin.

Core 10 has offices in Nashville and Huntington, West Virginia. The company has developed a business model of opening offices in more rural communities that are connected to colleges with strong computer science programs.

Core 10 chose Huntington because of Marshall University, and Martin because of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

“We found the hospitality and the quality of the computer science graduates at UT Martin to really be top notch,” said Core 10 co-founder Lee Farabaugh.

Core 10 plans to hire 20 employees in the next year for its Martin office, located at 233 Lindell St. The company hopes to have 50 employees working out of Martin by the end of three years.

The plan is to hire most of their employees straight from UT Martin and West Tennessee technical schools.

“The thing that has impressed me the most is that Core 10 invests in their communities,” UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver said. “Just to come in and start a business in Martin, and really partner with the city and education institution, to provide jobs for this community and region is great.”

The other aspect of Core 10’s business model is opening offices in areas where technology jobs aren’t always found. There isn’t the same competition among employers to find workers, so wages aren’t driven to the extreme like in many metropolitan areas.

“We wanted to go to a place where people wanted to live but there aren’t a lot of opportunities,” Farabaugh said. “We thought we could provide them a great opportunity and still pay

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Tech

Continued from Page 3A

very good wages.”

Farabaugh said most clients of software companies value good, fast and cost-effective — but most companies can usually only provide two of those three things.

By basing their offices in the United States and in a smaller community, costs don’t become inflated and its employees are still in the same time zone as its clients, making it easier for communication.

“The quality of living is much cheaper here than in bigger cities, and for what they’re making they can live here comfortably,” Bundige said.

Core 10 hosted an open house on Friday for prospective workers and plans to continue events like that as they try to fill up their office space.

Reach Adam Friedman by email at afriedman@jacksonsun.com or by phone at 731-431-8517.
The 34th Annual Santa’s Village opens Thursday and runs through Sunday at the Ned Ray McWherter Ag Pavilion at UT Martin.

The annual event is sponsored by the City of Martin and UT Martin.

Santa’s Village will be open to the public Thursday and Friday 6pm to 9pm, Saturday 11am to 9pm, and Sunday from 1pm to 5pm.

There is no admission charge, however, visitors are asked to donate $5 dollars-worth of canned food items or an unopened children’s toy to benefit needy families in the area.

The 2017 Santa’s Village set a new attendance record with more than 19,000 visitors. More than 18,300 cans of food were donated, and toy donations filled 23 55-gallon bags.

Santa’s Village will include the traditional forest of lights and MTD model train as well as a petting zoo from Hooker Farms and amusement rides from Pope’s Amusement Rides.

Live entertainment will perform throughout the event, and Santa will there to hear what the local children want for Christmas. An arts and crafts vendor fair will also be conducted during the event.

UTM Master’s program recognized

The University of Tennessee at Martin’s Master of Science in Natural Resources and Master of Business Administration degrees have been nationally recognized for quality and affordability by a variety of online higher education websites in the past month.

SR Education Group, an education research publisher founded in 2004, ranks the UT Martin Master of Science in Agriculture and Natural Resources degree program 16th among the most affordable online colleges in the nation for this particular degree.

The UT Martin program offers three concentration areas in agribusiness and risk management, natural resources systems management, and systems science in agriculture. UT Martin is the highest-ranked Tennessee university in this category.

OnlineMBAPage.com evaluated MBA programs across the nation and chose the top program in each state for inclusion in their most recent list. UT Martin represents Tennessee in this ranking, which is based on online availability, program value, internship and capstone opportunities, and accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

The UT Martin Master of Business Administration degree is ranked seventh among the best online MBA programs for 2019 by OnlineMasters.com.

UT Martin is the highest-ranked Tennessee program on this list behind such institutions as Auburn University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The next Tennessee program enters the list at number 32.

TopManagementDegrees.com ranked the top online MBA programs in the nation for 2019 and included UT Martin as tied for 50th place. UT Martin is the only Tennessee institution to appear on this list, and is included among such programs as those at Indiana State University and George Washington University.

SR Education Group has also evaluated the UT Martin Online program offerings as a whole and ranked UT Martin 11th among the best online colleges in Tennessee for 2019.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
Weakley County is the place to get in the holiday spirit

HOLIDAY ART BAZAAR

The University of Tennessee at Martin’s League of Striving Artists will host the fifth-annual Holiday Art Bazaar this weekend in the Fine Arts Building’s art gallery. This event is open to the public from 7-8 p.m. Thursday; 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday; and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday.

Co-sponsored by the UT Martin League of Striving Artists and the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts, the Holiday Art Bazaar displays items handcrafted by UT Martin students, faculty and alumni. These items, which include holiday cards, paintings, scarves, ceramics, glass ornaments and more, will be available for purchase during the event. Guests may purchase items with cash, check or charge to support local artists.

“Support the Arts” contributors will have early access to an exclusive opening reception from 5-7 p.m. Thursday. For information on how to become a “Support the Arts” contributor, visit utm.edu/supports or contact the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.

The League of Striving Artists is an organization for UT Martin art students who strive to promote an appreciation for art and artist development through academics, service learning, community service projects and leadership both on campus and in the community.

The art gallery is in room 201 of the UT Martin Fine Arts Building, located at 16 Mt. Pelia Road in Martin. For more information, contact Jason Stout, UT Martin assistant professor of art and faculty adviser for the League of Striving Artists, at 731-881-3402 or email jstout@utm.edu.
Gleason native’s dedication evident in new film

By KAREN CAMPBELL
Press Reporter

When movie goers take in Bernie the Dolphin at the Cine Theater in Martin Friday through Thursday of next week, they will learn a variety of things. First, dolphins can indeed get sunburned. And, secondly, artists from small towns like Gleason, TN, can “make it” in Hollywood.

Marty Poole, a native of Gleason and the son of the mayor Diane Poole, wrote and produced the new film. A University of Tennessee at Martin graduate and former player in the Vanguard Theater, Poole engenders great pride from current Fine Arts Department dean Doug Cook.

“Marty was a fixture on the Vanguard stage during the late 1980s while pursuing a degree in Communications,” said Cook remembering that he appeared in several productions including Great Expectations and holiday farces.

Cook says he often tells students, “If you want to do a thing, you have to go where they actually have that thing. You can’t be a movie star in Martin.”

Poole followed that advice and, according to Cook, originally left to become a model and then became involved in the movie industry.

“He’s a great kid and I’ve very proud of him,” said Cook. “I would like to encourage all those current and former UT Martin grads to please support the film while it plays here in Martin.”

Mayor Poole, while proud, misses her son whose career path took him first to New York (which he left after tiring of “too much concrete”) and then Los Angeles.

He is currently on location in Florida filming the sequel to Bernie the Dolphin and will not be able to attend the showing this week. But his mother has plans to see the latest of his big screen accomplishment.

“He’s a determined boy,” said the obviously pleased Mayor. “He couldn’t have survived if he didn’t have the faith that he has. He has worked hard.”

The film’s website describes the plot as a family adventure about a brother and sister who befriend a badly sunburned dolphin separated from his family and uncover a secret plan that could destroy the beach and their new friend’s home. The kids must devise a clever plan to stop the bad guys, protect the sea life, and, most importantly, save their best friend, Bernie.

In a recent interview star Kevin Sorbo describes the film as “Spy Kids meets Flipper” and points to the rarity of a G-rated movie coming out of Hollywood.

Known for his former role as Hercules, Sorbo has recently focused on making films that reflect his Christian faith.

The film also includes performances by Lola Sultan, Logan Allen, William Patrick Muldoon III, Dahlia Legault, and Lily Cardone. The film is directed by actor-filmmaker Kirk Harris.

Harris also serves as CEO of Fairway Film Alliance the full-service independent film sales and production company founded by Poole. While Cook praises “the kid” who has made good, Poole’s background includes twenty years of world sales and having written and produced a number of successful films including Army Dog” with Casper Van Dien, “Standing Still” with Amy Adams, Colin Hanks, Mena Suvari and James Van Der Beek, and “Protecting the King” with Peter Dobson and Tom Sizemore.

A Christian movie review site dove.org says the film makes a case for “more complex storytelling in the realm of children’s movies” adding that it “divides between two stories and asks tricky questions.” Set in St. Augustine, Florida, the film also includes insights into wildlife. Dove adds that “seeing positive choices, like families standing together and believing in one another, should prove noble for young audiences.”
MARTIN, Tenn. – The University of Tennessee at Martin’s League of Striving Artists will host the fifth-annual Holiday Art Bazaar, Dec. 6-8, in the Fine Arts Building’s art gallery. This event is open to the public from 7-8 p.m., Dec. 6; 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Dec. 7; and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Dec. 8.

Co-sponsored by the UT Martin League of Striving Artists and the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts, the Holiday Art Bazaar displays items handcrafted by UT Martin students, faculty and alumni. These items, which include holiday cards, paintings, scarves, ceramics, glass ornaments and more, will be available for purchase during the event. Guests may purchase items with cash, check or charge to support local artists.

"Support the Arts" contributors will have early access to an exclusive opening reception from 5-7 p.m., Dec. 6. For information on how to become a "Support the Arts" contributor, visit utm.edu/starts or contact the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.

The League of Striving Artists is an organization for UT Martin art students who strive to promote an appreciation for art and artist development through academics, service learning, community service projects and leadership both on campus and in the community.

The art gallery is in room 201 of the UT Martin Fine Arts Building, located at 16 Mt. Pelia Road in Martin. For more information, contact Jason Stout, UT Martin assistant professor of art and faculty adviser for the League of Striving Artists, at 731-881-3402 or email jstout@utm.edu.
State Ag Commissioner Jai Templeton Inducted Into UTM Ag Fraternity

DECEMBER 7, 2018 AT 8:29 AM • POSTED BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

Photo: McNairy County resident and Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton (center) is pictured Dec. 5 following his induction into the UT Martin chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. Also pictured (from left) are Marvin Flatt, fraternity adviser and director, Career Technical Education, Weakley County Schools; Dr. Todd Winters, fraternity adviser and dean, UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Matthew Edmaiston, of Union City, Alpha Gamma Rho chapter president; and Dr. Charley Deal, executive director, WestStar Leadership Program. Templeton is a 1999 WestStar graduate.

MARTIN, Tenn. – Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton is proud of his farming and agriculture heritage, and the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity chapter at the University of Tennessee at Martin has recognized his achievements in a special way. The chapter welcomed Templeton as an AGR member during an induction ceremony Dec. 5 in the Boling University Center. His induction recognizes Templeton's longtime leadership and involvement in the agriculture community at the local, state and national levels.

The McNairy County resident has served as the state's 37th commissioner of agriculture since his appointment in May 2016 by Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam. State veterinarian Dr. Charles Hatcher will succeed Templeton in January when Bill Lee becomes Tennessee's 50th governor.
"I have a lot of respect for (the fraternity), not just the chapter here at Martin but across our state," Templeton said following his induction. "When you think about agriculture, the impact on rural Tennessee and urban Tennessee even, the fraternity Alpha Gamma Rho has meant so much to our state and will continue to do so. I'm just honored that they were happy to have me join tonight."

Templeton joins other leaders with strong agriculture backgrounds who have been inducted by the UT Martin chapter, including University of Tennessee President Emeritus Joe DiPietro, the late Tennessee Gov. Ned Ray McWherter and the late Tennessee Congressman Ed Jones.

According to the fraternity's website, discussions to form the UT Martin chapter began in 1959 and eventually led to the installation of the Alpha Upsilon Chapter in April 1963. Today, AGR serves as a professional and social organization for male students pursuing careers in agriculture.

"We as a chapter are honored to have the opportunity to initiate Commissioner Jai Templeton as a brother of Alpha Gamma Rho. ... We are appreciative of his service in agriculture to the state of Tennessee," chapter president Matthew Edmaiston said in a statement. Edmaiston is a senior agriculture business major from Union City.

Templeton began his state service as deputy agriculture commissioner in 2011, previously served as McNairy County mayor and is a sixth-generation farmer producing grain, cotton, hay, cattle and timber in McNairy and Hardin counties. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Union University and is a 1999 graduate of UT Martin's WestStar Leadership Program. As the state's commissioner of agriculture, he also is an ex officio, voting member of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

"Commissioner Templeton's outstanding leadership for agriculture in Tennessee, as well as his involvement in his community and farm background, are recognized by Alpha Gamma Rho by bestowing upon him the highest honor the chapter has – membership in our fraternity," said Richie Brewer, AGR Alumni Association president, in a separate statement. Brewer, of Pulaski, is a 1983 UT Martin agriculture graduate.

For additional information about the fraternity or Templeton's induction, contact Edmaiston at mataedma@ut.ttm.edu or call 731-592-1803.
New software company locates close to UTM grads

Posted on December 8, 2018 by Steve James in Local News

Graduates from the UT Martin Department of Computer Science now have a close-to-home option when looking for skilled work in the software development field.

Core10, a financial technology software development company, officially opened a new branch November 30 in Martin’s historic downtown area on Lindell Street.

Core10 works exclusively with corporations in the financial technology industry, including those in banking, lending, securities, insurance, and start-ups.

Core10 chief communications officer and co-founder Lee Farabaugh, says they’ve been impressed with the quality of UTM’s computer science program and decided to locate a branch in Martin to make use of the emerging talent pool.

The three employees at the Martin branch are all recent UTM computer science graduates. Stephen Stinson, of Holladay; Tannor Franks, of Adamsville; and Robert Rayburn of Trenton, all graduated within the past two years and are glad to have an option to work in software development while remaining in the northwest Tennessee area.
UTM Student Named Maloan Award Winner

A UT-Martin student from Springfield is the latest person to receive the university's "Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award".

Christopher Austin Avallone was presented the award for the Fall semester by Chancellor Mike Maloan and Sharon Maloan.

The "Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award" is named for the late Beth Maloan, who was a longtime UT-Martin director of budgeting and payroll, and a strong advocate of student employment.

The award recognizes exemplary work ethic and commitment to the university, and is given each semester to a student nominated by his or her supervising office or department.

Avallone is a senior political science major and has been a member of the Office of Housing residence life staff for the past three years.

As part of his duties, he assists with the administration and assessment of the residence life program, including campus programming, assessment data tracking and student care.

Templeton Inducted Into UT-Martin Fraternity

An induction ceremony was recently held on campus to recognize Templeton's longtime leadership and involvement in the agriculture community at the local, state and national level.

Templeton is a McNairy County resident, who served as the 37th Commissioner of Agriculture upon his appointment by Governor Bill Haslam.

With his induction into the UT-Martin chapter, Templeton now joins other leaders with agriculture backgrounds, including the late Governor Ned Ray McWherter, the late Tennessee Congressman Ed Jones and UT President Emeritus Dr. Joe DiPietro.

Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton (center), also (from left) Marvin Flatt, Career Technical Education, Weakley County Schools; Dr. Todd Winters, UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Matthew Edmaiston, of Union City, Alpha Gamma Rho chapter president; and Dr. Charley Deal, executive director, WestStar Leadership Program.
Jai Templeton inducted into AGR fraternity

Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton is proud of his farming and agriculture heritage, and the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity chapter at the University of Tennessee at Martin has recognized his achievements in a special way. The chapter welcomed Templeton as an AGR member during an induction ceremony Dec. 5 in the Boling University Center. His induction recognizes Templeton’s longtime leadership and involvement in the agriculture community at the local, state and national levels.

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For additional information about the fraternity or Templeton’s induction, contact Edmaiston at mat-edma@ut.utm.edu or call 731-592-1803.
Japanese students experience holidays in the American way

By KAHO FURUTA and YUI YASUNAGA
Special to the Press

Editor's Note: Furuta and Yasunaga are completing a half year of study in the U.S. which included conducting an interview with one of our Press reporters. During the visit to our office, we asked if they would share their recent experience of celebrating the holidays. They agreed, and the following is the story in their own ... English ... words.

We have been in the United States for six months and we are thankful that we got to celebrate Thanksgiving. We had Thanksgiving break in Memphis. We stayed at our friend's house for six days. Her family was friendly and kind. We had traditional Thanksgiving dinner three times, once with her parents, grandparents, and friends. We were always full during the break.

The most interesting experience was Black Friday shopping. We got up at 3:30 a.m. and waited in a parking area for the time when the shopping mall opened. Many people came into the shopping mall, and it became crowded soon. Black Friday was similar to Hatsumi, which is the first sale of the New Year in Japan. During Hatsumi, many products are sold at more than 50 percent off prices. We were surprised at the cheap prices and the number of people in the Memphis shopping mall. We were glad to get a lot of winter clothes at cheap prices.

After the shopping, we went back home and started to decorate for Christmas. It is interesting that many American families switch to Christmas mode as soon as Thanksgiving is over. We were surprised that her family has two big Christmas trees, and they used memorable ornaments that their parents used when they were children.

Japan also has Christmas and many families decorate Christmas trees but there is only one Christmas tree per household. Our families also have Christmas trees and decorate them every year. Usually, we start decorating for Christmas after Halloween because Japan does not have any holidays between Halloween and Christmas.

After decorating in Memphis, we went to see Christmas lights. We saw the lights from our car. We were impressed with the idea of the drive-through system. We did not feel cold and tired because we could see from inside the car. We enjoyed seeing the Christmas lights and listening to Christmas songs at the same time.

On the last day, we had English tea with her grandparents. We ordered different flavors and shared with each other. We realized that it is possible to experience cultures of various countries in the United States. We ate two kinds of sandwiches which tasted different from usual ones. One of them had cream cheese and cucumbers. Another one had raspberry jam and ham. By comparison, Japanese sandwiches have cheese, mayo, and ham, so the taste of English style sandwiches was interesting for us, and it surprised us that different ingredients are used. When we left her house, we felt so sad because her family was so nice to us. We felt comfortable and they treated us as their children. We really enjoyed the break. We have to go back to Japan before Christmas but we were glad to experience one
of the American holidays, Thanksgiving.
Through this study abroad, we experienced how wonderful American culture is. Americans, especially people who are living in Martin, like talking. They talked to us a lot. At first when we came here, we were depressed because we could not speak English at all. However, friends, teachers and strangers talked to us. Many Americans spend time with friends, so they invited us to have lunch and dinner. They were not afraid of cultural differences. Thanks to their kindness, we gained the ability to speak English. This culture helped us to improve our English-speaking skills. This case might rarely happen in Japan because there are few immigrants, and we have a mono culture. Therefore, Japanese people are not familiar with foreigners and cultural differences. We appreciate the kindness of Martin people.
If our friends wish to study abroad, we will encourage them to choose Martin.

GOING HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS — Yui Yasunaga (left) and Kaho Furuta, both of Japan, have been studying at UTM for six months. They will return home this week with the memories of celebrating the holidays in the U.S. they share in this short piece they wrote in English for the Press.
New software company locates close to UT Martin grads

Graduates from the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Computer Science now have a close-to-home option when looking for skilled work in the software development field. Core10, a fintech software development company, officially opened a new Martin branch Nov. 30 in Martin’s historic downtown area on Lindell Street.

Founded in 2016, Core10 works exclusively with corporations in the financial technology (“fintech”) industry, including those in banking, lending, securities, insurance and startups. The Nashville-based company opened its second branch in Huntington, W. Va., to be near graduates from the Marshall University computer science program, and has now done the same with a third branch near the UT Martin main campus.

Jeff Martin, Core10 CEO and co-founder, says there are several characteristics the company considers when choosing a site for a new location.

“Obviously, number one is that there’s a university that is producing modern software engineering principles,” he said. “Martin is our smallest market. But, for us to be successful there doesn’t have to be hundreds of employees. Thirty to 50 employees in a market like this makes a huge difference in the community.”

Lee Farabaugh, Core10 chief communications officer and co-founder, says they have been impressed with the quality of UT Martin’s computer science program and decided to locate a branch in Martin to make use of the emerging talent pool.

“One of the things that we sometimes struggle with in our field is that when graduates come out of undergrad they have a good theoretical knowledge, but they don’t understand really how to work on software development teams. So when they come into the business world and they’re working on client software projects, they’re not that well prepared. But we’ve found UT Martin graduates to be the opposite. They are very well prepared,” she said. “These young men have come out of the program, and they can hit the ground running. They work very well on our teams. Most grads just don’t have (that), but these grads do. They really get it.”

There are currently three employees at the Martin branch, all of whom are recent UT Martin computer science graduates. Stephen Stinson of Holladay, Tannor Franks of Adamsville, and Robert Rayburn of Trenton all graduated within the past two years and are glad to have an option to work in software development while remaining in the northwest Tennessee area.

Core10 has trademarked the concept of the “HER-...”

CORE10 EMPLOYEES (from left) Robert Rayburn of Trenton, Stephen Stinson of Holladay, and Tannor Franks of Adamsville are all based at Core10’s new Martin location. All three are recent UT Martin graduates.

New software company...

(Continued from page 5)

Eshore movement, which seeks to keep software development jobs in the United States by locating employees in areas where the cost of living is low. This not only keeps costs down for clients in larger cities, it also helps revitalize rural areas with high-tech employment opportunities.

“I think what you find with a lot of our students is that they are very skilled at what they do, and they also are frequently from this area and they believe in this area. So it can be very frustrating for our students when they really want to stay in northwest Tennessee and make a difference here and build their families here and their careers here, and I think having this opportunity for them is amazing,” said Dr. Shadow Robinson, dean of the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences. “We have the talent in northwest Tennessee to do these kinds of things.”

For more information on Core10, visit core10.io.

The proposed hospital expansion would increase the current Emergency Dept. from six rooms to 10. Milan ED currently has to use one exam room for triage, reducing the effective number of exam rooms to five.

The construction project would renovate 6,965 sq. ft. of existing space and add 2,656 sq. ft. of new space.

Two new trauma bays would be added. These would be specialized, large rooms to stabilize and treat patients with major traumatic injuries and those in need of CPR/full resuscitation.
UT launches transparency database that includes contracts, salaries

Interim president Randy Boyd said many residents told him they'd like to see more information about how the UT system operates as well as data on its school's outcomes.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Want to know about a University of Tennessee contract? How about a UT employee's salary?

Those items and more will be available online as part of interim President Randy Boyd's push to make it easier to find information about the UT System.

The initiative, called "Transparent UT," will provide public access to information in a centralized online location. The website includes many items often requested of the school system.

The push is part of Boyd's six priorities, which he plans to work on during his time as president.

Boyd said accountability and transparency is central to who he is as a businessman. Since his appointment as interim president in September, many residents have said they'd like to see more information about how the UT system operates as well as data on its schools' outcomes, he said.

"Not that we haven't been transparent before, but we will be even more so," said Boyd during a meeting last week with The Tennessean's editorial board.

"The core way to empowerment is information."

The site will include:

- Information on enrollment, student demographics, degrees awarded, retention, graduation rates, post-graduation outcomes, student quality indicators, the number of faculty, faculty workload, research activity, economic development, revenues and expenditures
- Information about the university's presence and impact in each county
- A searchable employee salary database
- Tuition information
- Executive staff and coaching contracts for each campus
- Information about how the system is funded and how funds are spent
- Other various annual reports
- Endowment investment information

Along with the search for his successor and a new chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Boyd's priorities include: increasing talent development; improving relationships with the system's research partner; better engaging Tennesseans in the mission of the university system; strengthening the relationship between the board and its campuses; and enhancing the University of Tennessee's brand.

Trustee, faculty senate meetings to be broadcast

As part of his push for a more transparent system, Boyd also plans to broadcast and archive all board of trustee committee meetings and faculty senate meetings.

He wants to provide online access to board materials at least a week in advance. And he plans to announce finalists in executive searches at one time, including for the next chancellor of the Knoxville campus.

He also has formed a board that he said will provide input and guidance on transparency efforts. The short-term group includes representatives from UT campuses, institutes and community members. The Transparency Advisory Group members are:

- Advisory group chair Tiffany Carpenter, UT System associate vice president for communications and marketing.
- Sally Bedour, UT Health Science Center assistant vice chancellor for communications and marketing.
- Harry Brooks, a retired legislator from East Tennessee.
- Edie Gibson, UT Martin chief of staff.
- Scott Gurdy, UT Institute for Public Service information technology manager.
- David Manderscheid, UT Knoxville provost.
- Rachel Smith, a UT Chattanooga student.
- Lannett Edwards, UT Institute of Agriculture professor of animal science.
- Carey Whitworth, UT System assistant vice president for government relations.
UTM Students Awarded at Computing Machinery Conference

Four students from the University of Tennessee at Martin received awards for their entries in the 2018 Fall Association for Computing Machinery Mid-Southeast Conference held Nov. 15-16 in Gatlinburg.

The UT Martin Department of Computer Science took nine seniors from the department's capstone class to the conference where teams of students presented four separate projects as part of their course requirements.

Students Jeremy Coleman, of Camden, and Amie Newman, of Martin, won first place for their capstone work, "EGGY: The Egg-cellent Home Security System." The intelligent system records images and videos when motion is detected and sends alerts to a corresponding app on a user's iOS device. The name comes from the egg-shaped enclosure the team built for the project. Coleman and Newman received a certificate and a cash prize for their submission.

Steven Alford, of Dyersburg, and Ruchik Patel, of Ahmedabad, India, received honorable mentions for their project "All the King's Men (Video Game)." The game is a 2D action role-playing game in which the user plays as a deposed king attempting to reclaim his castle from a corrupt council.

Avallone Receives Beth Maloan Student Employee Award

MARTIN, Tenn. - Christopher Austin Avallone, of Springfield, received the University of Tennessee at Martin's Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award for the fall 2018 semester during a presentation Dec. 7.

Avallone is a senior political science major and has been a member of the Office of Housing residence life staff for the past three years. As part of his duties, he assists with the administration and assessment of the residence life program, including campus programming, assessment data tracking and student care.

Avallone oversees the residence life year-end awards banquet and often organizes the distribution of student care packages throughout the year. He also keeps the residence life calendar and social media platforms up to date, coordinates the move-in block party to welcome incoming students, and works with local law enforcement and first responders to organize a two-week training period for residence life staff members.

"He genuinely wants to make UTM a great place for all students," said Phil Bright, director of human resources, during the award presentation. "From taking one of our blind students camping to peer-counseling students in mental distress, he is always willing and able to go above and beyond. Austin embodies the definition of servant leadership."

The Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award is named for the late Beth Maloan, longtime UT Martin director of budgeting and payroll, who was a strong advocate of student employment. It recognizes exemplary work ethic and commitment to the university. The award is given each semester to a student nominated by his or her supervising office or department.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
UTM Commencement to be held Saturday

The University of Tennessee at Martin will hold fall commencement exercises on Saturday, Dec. 15, at 11 a.m. in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Jim Tracy, Tennessee's state director for USDA Rural Development, will serve as keynote speaker.

Originally from West Tennessee, Tracy served as a Tennessee State Senator for 13 years and was an advocate for rural and agricultural issues. He earned his B.S. in agricultural education from UTM. He has 24 years' experience as a small-business owner, and is a former high school agricultural education teacher.

UTM's fall commencement exercises will grant degrees to those students who completed academic requirements during either the summer or fall semester. Fall commencement is not a ticketed event; however, seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Some handicap seating is available at court level.

The event will be available for live viewing online courtesy of the OVC Digital Network at ovcdigitainetwork.com/watch/?live=6896. For more information, contact UTM at 731-881-7615.
MARTIN, Tenn. – Dr. Timothy Smith, a lecturer in the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of History and Philosophy, has released his newest book, "The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson’s Epic 1863 Civil War Raid Through Mississippi".

"The Real Horse Soldiers" is a modern, academic study of one of the most well-known Civil War efforts conducted by Union cavalry general Benjamin Grierson that discusses the horse soldiers’ raid on the Confederacy. Published by Savas Beatie publishing company, Smith’s book is the first deeply researched study on the topic in six years.

“This was one of the most fun books I’ve ever written, not only because it is such a neglected topic, but also because it allowed me to work on the history of my native state of Mississippi,” said Smith. “I grew up in the very areas discussed in the book, so that made it doubly fun to research and write, and I’m convinced this made it a better book. An intimate knowledge of the subject and, in this case, geography and terrain are especially important to writing history.”

Smith has written, edited and co-edited eighteen books, including the award-winning titles “Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg,” “Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle Occupation” and “Shiloh: Conquer or Perish.” His awards include the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters’ nonfiction book award, the Fletcher Pratt Award, the McLemore Prize, the Richard B. Harwell Award and the Tennessee History Book Award, among others. Smith is also the recipient of the 2009-2010 UT Martin Online Teacher of the Year Award. He holds both bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Memphis as well as a doctorate from Mississippi State University.

Smith is currently working on a book about the May 19 and 22 Vicksburg assaults.

For more information, contact Smith at tims@utm.edu.
Matlock Earns Master’s Degree After Years Of Personal Struggles

MARTIN, Tenn. – Rachel Matlock, originally from Camden and now from Paris, crossed the commencement stage Dec. 15 to receive her Master of Science degree in family and consumer sciences from the University of Tennessee at Martin. While receiving any degree is a milestone, Matlock has been through more heartache to reach this goal than most.

After starting her undergraduate degree in social work at UT Martin in 2010, Matlock’s father passed away the following spring after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. Then in October, two months after beginning her sophomore year at the UT Martin Parsons Center, Matlock, then Rachel Dickinson, married Matthew Draper. Exactly eight months later, Draper was killed in an automobile accident with a drunk driver.

“’He would always tell me ‘school first, school first,’ That is what’s important. You need to focus on school.’ He always made certain that I put that first. And so, when he passed away ... I wasn’t able to make my Tuesday class because my husband’s funeral was that day, but I was back in class by Thursday because all I could hear was my husband saying ‘school first. You need to focus on school. School first,’” she said. “I needed to not give up on it. No matter what happened, I knew that was what I wanted, and I didn’t want to give up on it.”

The following years were difficult while Matlock dealt with the loss of her husband. Not wanting to let go of the dream of higher education, she took a brief absence from UT Martin to earn an associate degree from Nashville State Community College. However, the dream never died, and she returned to UT Martin in 2013 to finish what she started. She graduated summa cum laude in the spring of 2014 with a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies.
"I've always known that I wanted to do something big. ... It was never a question for me growing up that I would go to college. I'm one of those people that so many things interest me, and I love to learn, and I love to grow. So I could never have seen myself not getting my degree," she said.

Having finished both two-year and four-year degrees, Matlock intended to start immediately on a master's, but life again had other plans.

"That fall of 2014, my mother was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer, and she became my priority. In the spring of 2015, I found myself divorced (from her second husband) and taking care of my mother while working full time. My three brothers, their wives, and I did the best we could to see after her. She lost her battle in my arms on Aug. 14, 2015," said Matlock. "Somewhere, very deep down, I knew I was more than this loss as well, but it took much longer to realize that."

The following year, in 2016, Matlock married her current husband, Doug Matlock, and learned she would give birth to her first child, a daughter she once thought would never come.

"Throughout this pregnancy, I knew I wanted more. Not just for myself any longer, but for my child. I wanted to give her the world, and I also wanted to show my stepson that you don't give up," she said. She soon enrolled in the UT Martin master's degree program in family and consumer sciences and finished her coursework during the summer of 2018.

Now, the 26-year-old lives in Paris and is the public health educator at the Henry County Health Department, where she teaches school and community classes on health issues and personal care. She says her background in social work helps her understand what her clients may be going through.

"I started out working in mental health when I got my bachelor's degree from UT Martin. I worked with people who were severely and persistently mentally ill. They were coming out of psychiatric hospitals, and we were trying to rehabilitate them and teach them different independent living skills and life skills so they could live on their own," she said. She began to notice a pattern of mental health issues combined with medical health issues, and now uses this connection to assist those in her community.

"I'm a firm believer that anything medical health is all going to be fueled by mental health. So many of our medical issues, they revolve around what we have going on in our minds. So I feel like they go hand-in-hand," she added.

Looking back on her journey, Matlock says UT Martin played a major role in helping her achieve her educational dreams.

"Especially through all of the difficult times that I've had, UT Martin has been so good to me. ... The professors I had during that time (when her husband died), there's not one that gave me a problem any time I needed anything. When I was at (the UT Martin Parsons Center) when my husband passed away, they were so good to me - checking on me and sending me a card. Just like a family," she said.

Her academic adviser at the time, Michelle Horton, professor and director of the social work program, helped support Matlock through the uncertain time after her first husband's death and encouraged her to continue her pursuit of higher education. Horton herself passed away in 2016 after a battle with brain cancer.

Matlock would love to complete a doctoral degree someday, but she no longer holds to a life plan.
"If I've learned anything, it's that life plans are kind of a joke because you don't know," she said. "I hope to know more than I know now. I hope to still be loving my family. I hope to still have all of my family that I have left. I hope to be happy. I hope to be doing something I'm passionate about. I hope to still be teaching people. I hope that people can still look to me as an example of doing things with your whole heart."

Her lesson to her children is this: "No matter what you choose to do, no matter what path you come across, no matter what cards you get dealt, whatever you do, do it with your heart. Put everything you've got into it. Don't halfway do anything. Anything worth doing is worth doing with your whole heart."
Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Jai Templeton is proud of his farming and agriculture heritage, and the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity chapter at the University of Tennessee at Martin has recognized his achievements in a special way.

The chapter welcomed Templeton as an AGR member during an induction ceremony held recently in the Boling University Center. His induction recognizes Templeton’s longtime leadership and involvement in the agriculture community at the local, state and national levels.

The McNairy County resident has served as the state’s 37th commissioner of agriculture since his appointment in May 2016 by Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam. State veterinarian Dr. Charles Hatcher will succeed Templeton in January when Bill Lee becomes Tennessee’s 50th governor.

“I have a lot of respect for (the fraternity), not just the chapter here at Martin but across our state,” Templeton said following his induction. “When you think about agriculture, the impact on rural Tennessee and urban Tennessee even, the fraternity Alpha Gamma Rho has meant so much to our state and will continue to do so. I’m just honored that they were happy to have me join tonight.”

Templeton joins other leaders with strong agriculture backgrounds who have been inducted by the UT Martin chapter, including University of Tennessee President Emeritus Joe DiPietro, the late Tennessee Gov. Ned Ray McWherter and the late Tennessee Congressman Ed Jones.

According to the fraternity’s website, discussions to form the UT Martin chapter began in 1959 and eventually led to the installation of the Alpha Upsilon Chapter in April 1963. Today, AGR serves as a professional and social organization for male students pursuing careers in agriculture.

“We as a chapter are honored to have the opportunity to initiate Commissioner Jai Templeton as a brother of Alpha Gamma Rho. ... We are appreciative of his service in agriculture to the State of Tennessee,” chapter president Matthew Edmaiston said in a statement. Edmaiston is a senior agriculture business major from Union City.

Templeton began his state service as deputy agriculture commissioner in 2011, previously served as McNairy County mayor and is a sixth-generation farmer producing grain, cotton, hay, cattle and timber in McNairy and Hardin counties. He holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Union University and is a 1999 graduate of UT Martin’s WestStar Leadership Program. As the state’s commissioner of agriculture, he also is an ex officio, voting member of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

“Commissioner Templeton’s outstanding leadership for agriculture in Tennessee, as well as his involvement in his community and farm background, are recognized by Alpha Gamma Rho by bestowing upon him the highest honor the chapter has — membership in our fraternity,” said Richie Brewer, AGR Alumni Association president, in a separate statement.

Brewer of Pulaski is a 1983 UT Martin agriculture graduate.

For additional information about the fraternity or Templeton’s induction, contact Edmaiston at mataedmna@ut.mt.edu or call (731) 592-1803.
Edlin Graduates Summa Cum Laude from UTM

MARTIN (December 15) — Rachel Lynn Edlin of McKenzie graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin with Highest Honors Saturday. She walked the line with her fellow 2018 UTM fall graduates being honored as Summa Cum Laude with a 4.0 GPA and a degree in Social Work.

During Rachel’s academic career at UTM, her honors and achievements include being on the Dean and Chancellor’s List since enrollment in 2015 and serving as secretary of the Student Social Work Association and as president of the Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society. She received the prestigious Outstanding UTM Social Work Student award as a senior during the university’s Honors Day Ceremony in April 2018.

Rachel’s future plans include first enrolling in the University of Tennessee at Knoxville Masters Social Work Program and ultimately working as a school guidance counselor.

She is a 2015 graduate of McKenzie High School, the daughter of Cathy Edlin and Chris Edlin and the granddaughter of JoAnn Cooper and Phyllis Edlin, all of McKenzie.

UT Martin Holiday Closings

DECEMBER 19, 2018 AT 3:29 PM  POSTED BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

Martin, Tenn.—The University of Tennessee at Martin will close all administrative offices Dec. 24-28 for the winter holiday and Jan. 1 for New Year’s Day. This applies to offices on the main campus and at the five centers in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley, Selmer and Somerville. Offices will be open regular business hours on Monday, Dec. 31, and will reopen for regular hours on Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Spring semester classes start Jan. 10.
UT Martin Sees Increase In Minority Enrollment

MARTIN, Tenn. – The University of Tennessee at Martin saw an increase in enrollment for underrepresented students this past semester, with African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan student populations all seeing increased numbers.

The African-American student population was the largest since fall of 2015, with 875 students enrolled at the university, and other underrepresented populations were the largest in the past 10 years. UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver feels this increase is because of the university’s dedication to creating a diverse campus atmosphere.

“We have put a focus on diverse student programs over the past few semesters, and our new hires in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs have done an excellent job including all our student populations in their choice of campus events and outreach,” said Carver. “Diversity is also a key component in the university’s new strategic plan, and while we still have improvements to make, I feel we are moving in a good direction.”

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has worked closely with the UT Martin Black Alumni Council, based in Shelby County, to increase and improve student recruitment efforts in that area. A popular event is the Red Carpet Day, which welcomes students from underrepresented populations to campus for a weekend visit each fall.

“We make sure to incorporate our current students within that programming so (attendees) can actually have that first-hand knowledge of what it’s like to be an underrepresented student here at UTM,” said John Blue, director of the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs.

Blue and his assistant director, Anthony Prewitt, are also working with the student body to start the university’s first Hispanic/Latino student organization. Blue says student activities this past semester worked to expand on current offerings for underrepresented students and included the university’s first observance of Hispanic Heritage Month. His office is also partnering with the UT Martin Women’s Center and the Office of International Programs and International Admissions to make sure those student groups are included in campus programming as well.

“It’s a known fact that students from underrepresented populations relate better to students, faculty and staff and amenities that look like them. ... So (relevant student programming is) also a big factor in the retention of students,” said Prewitt. "We wanted to be very intentional in providing programs, leadership opportunities and other initiatives that develop those students, that encourage their participation in campus activities and expose them to a lot of different things."

Blue and Prewitt facilitate the Black Student Mentoring Collaborative across campus to provide a framework through which African-American students can create mentoring relationships with African American faculty and staff members across campus. This idea was originally created by John Paul Robinson, a former coordinator in the Office of Student Life.

“The Black Student Mentoring Collaborative assists with retention of our currently enrolled students. I’m a firm believer that your current students are your best means of recruitment, so if they feel like they are valued and are seen on campus, then they’re going to go home to Nashville or Memphis or Jackson and talk about UTM in a positive manner,” said Blue.
A new multicultural student council is also in the works and will be in charge of planning both social and educational events focused on multicultural affairs in semesters to come. Blue says this group will seek to enlighten the student body by bringing an extra-curricular component to learning about the various populations represented on campus.

Both Blue and Prewitt say the university's emphasis on diversity and inclusion can be seen in the way upper administration approaches the student body and student programming.

"I think it really helps us that we have a chancellor who is an advocate for our area and our office. The fact that he's even included the diversity and multicultural component within the strategic plan is big," said Prewitt. "He's here, he's visible, he's supportive of our students. ... That type of presence and support matters. ... Whether it's in residence life, Greek life or campus (recreation), it's important that students are engaged, they're involved and that they feel supported."

The university hosted the fourth-annual Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony the night before fall commencement. More than 75 African-American students were eligible to graduate this past semester, and Blue and Prewitt seek to have that number increase each year.

For more information, contact the Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.

Photo: From left, Tayh'lore Chism, Kendal Brookins, Chris Bass and Jason Andrews, all of Memphis, attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony held Dec. 14.
Harlem Globetrotters To Appear At UTM; Tickets On Sale

MARTIN, Tenn. - The Harlem Globetrotters will bring their 2019 Fan Powered World Tour to the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin at 7 p.m., Jan 25, 2019. Tickets are on sale now at harlemglobetrotters.com and from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., weekdays, at the UT Martin Student Recreation Center.

Tickets are on sale online when the Student Recreation Center is closed. The university is closed Dec. 24-28. The university’s offices reopen Dec. 31, so tickets will be on sale 8 a.m.-5 p.m. that day. Tickets will remain on sale through the day of the game, unless tickets are sold out.

Chairback seats are $35 plus fees, and bleacher seats are $25 plus fees. The Globetrotters will also offer a pre-show Magic Pass for an additional $15, which will allow passholders to meet the stars of the team, learn tricks, shoot hoops and take pictures on the court prior to the game. Military discounts are available on day-of tickets with a valid military ID. A military chairback seat is $29 plus fees, and a military bleacher seat is $19 plus fees.

According to a Globetrotters press release, the game will include more than 20 opportunities for fans to interact with team members before, during and after the event.

The Flying Globies, the Globetrotters' acrobatic trampoline dunk team, are included in the 2019 tour and will perform during breaks in the game. An interactive mobile app is new to the Globetrotters experience this year and includes an augmented reality basketball toss game and exclusive image filters for social media.

In addition to 93 years of success in the entertainment business, the Globetrotters also hold 21 standing Guinness World Records. The most recent five records were set Nov. 8 in celebration of Guinness World Records Day and include a somersault basketball shot made by Bull Bullard from 58 feet, 1.25 inches away from the hoop; most basketball under-the-leg tumbles in one minute (female) by Torch George (32); most blindfolded basketball slam dunks in one minute by Zeus McClurkin (five); most behind-the-back three-pointers in one minute, also by Zeus McClurkin (three); and most under-the-leg slam dunks by a team using a trampoline in one minute by the Flying Globies (28).
For more information on the Harlem Globetrotters, visit harlemglobetrotters.com. For information on their appearance at UT Martin, contact Chris Stachewicz, UT Martin Office of Campus Recreation, at 731-881-7746 or email cstachew@utm.edu.
Speaker to UTM grads:
Reach for greater things in life

Political science became a passion for Jordan Long of Martin while he was a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Now, with his political science degree in hand, Long heads to Nashville and a staff position with state Sen. John Stevens (R-Huntingdon) just ahead of the 2019 legislative session.

Long joined other summer and fall graduates who received degrees during commencement Saturday in the university’s Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Jim Tracy, UT Martin graduate and state director for USDA Rural Development, was commencement speaker.

“It’s very exciting. It’s a great time in my life,” Long said in an earlier interview about receiving his degree. “I’ve looked forward to this day. I’ve enjoyed my time here, though, greatly. UT Martin has been such a good school for me to attend.”

Long traces his interest in political science to family members who held elected office. In addition to political science classes that increased his academic knowledge, he gained practical experience in government through involvement in the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature, also known as TISL.

The annual event in Nashville provides college students with real-world exposure to the workings of the Tennessee General Assembly. The proceedings include debates and lobbying for bills among delegates. Lieutenant governor was one of several elected positions he held through TISL, and Long is proud of the accomplishments and connections he gained through the organization.

Long also served as UT Martin’s Student Government Association president during the 2017-18 academic year. As with TISL, his SGA presidency helped him to gain leadership experiences and expand this professional network.

“It was a great opportunity,” he said of being SGA president. “It was an interesting year. ... It was a growing year in SGA’s life here at Martin.”

Life after college began immediately, as Long started Monday in his position with Sen. Stevens’ office, a role in which he will work with legislation and assist Stevens in his various committee roles.

“IT’ll be a learning curve for sure, but it will be an experience that very few people at this age get, and I’m appreciative of him for that,” Long said.

Regardless of what lies ahead, Long is up to the challenges, thanks to lots of hard work and preparation.

“I do not think there’s any other school that would have afforded me the opportunities that UT Martin has,” Long said.

As Long and others prepared to graduate Saturday, UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver welcomed a capacity Elam Center audience that included graduating students from 60 Tennessee counties, 19 states outside of Tennessee and the countries of Australia, China, India and Saudi Arabia. The university’s Office of Academic Records reported that 659 students were eligible to graduate, including those who completed degree requirements in the summer.

A total of 375 graduates participated in commencement exercises.

Speaker’s remarks

Following a performance by members of the university’s Department of Music, Carver introduced Tracy, a West Tennessee native who served as a Tennessee state senator for the 14th Senatorial District from 2004-17. He also has 24 years’ experience as a small-business owner and is a former high school agricultural education teacher.

Tracy, who lives in Shelbyville, challenged graduates to go beyond the milestone of earning a college degree and reach for greater things in life. He focused on the word “pride” and assigned a word to each letter to emphasize his points. He spoke of potential, responsibility, influence, determination and enthusiasm as qualities that build pride in all a person does.

He said each graduate present has potential “whether you’re going to be a teacher, whether you’re going to be an engineer, whether you’re going to be a business owner, whether you’re going to go back on the family farm and be involved in agriculture, you have tremendous potential to be the very best you can.” He challenged graduates to tap into unrealized abilities and to become involved in public service, noting his own 23-plus years of public service roles.

“You’re the future of
your community or wherever you decide to land," he said.

Tracy said that responsibility includes "being accountable for your actions."

He added, "You've taken the responsibility this far to get your degree today. You've got your degree. Now take the responsibility to go forward into your life. Whatever that is in your life to do, take the responsibility to do that."

He then noted the importance of using influence properly.

"All of you graduating today, you may not realize it... but you have a tremendous influence on people in your life," he said. "Never forget that you have an influence on peoples' lives, and use that influence."

Tracy's final points emphasized determination and enthusiasm. He advised graduates to set goals no matter the professions they pursue and stay determined to achieve those goals. He closed by noting that having enthusiasm is important to building pride.

"Enthusiasm is catching. If you're enthusiastic, you're going to make people around you be enthusiastic. Find something you enjoy to do in this life. Be enthusiastic of what you're doing, have pride in it, enjoy it, live for it, have excitement in what you're doing," he said.

"And if you have excitement in what you're doing, your fellow workers are going to have excitement. You're going to bring enthusiasm. You're going to be a better employee. You're going to be a better citizen. You're going to be a better person. You're going to influence people, so have enthusiasm for what you decide to do," he said.

Award presentations and recognition of honors graduates followed Tracy's keynote address.

Dr. Linda Martin, University of Tennessee vice president for academic affairs and student success, congratulated all graduates on behalf of the UT System and highlighted the accomplishments of several members of the graduating class.

"We are extraordinarily proud of your accomplishments and your attainment of this significant milestone," she said to all graduates.

The recognition of graduates by Carver included the awarding of a posthumous degree in psychology to the family of Megan Cox, a senior from Camden who died Nov. 15 in a traffic accident. A standing ovation by the Elam Center audience honored the family and her accomplishments and memory.

AMONG GRADS — Bryce Warner (second from left) of Troy graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin Saturday with a bachelor's degree in agriculture. More than 650 students from the summer and fall semesters were eligible to graduate during the ceremony, which featured Jim Tracy, state director for USDA Rural Development, as keynote speaker. Warner was joined by (from left) his girlfriend, Liz Haberly; and his parents, Mary and Brent Hayes, also of Troy.

Obion County students awarded degrees

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

Among those who received undergraduate degrees, listed by hometown, were:

Kenton — Mary B. Chandler, Lacey Michelle Petty, Mckenna Hope Vinson, Darryl L. Walker Jr., Morgan Leigh Whitworth and Jakeb Lee Wylie.

Obion — James L. "Jamie" Evans and Timothy Scott Runions.

Rives — Ethan Wayne Ellison and Melissa Ann Mathis.

Samburg — Dylan Lee Turner Riddle, South Fulton — James Ryan Moore.


Union City — Brady T. Baird, Travis Layne Crum, Kayla Ann Ford, Aubree Anne Guess, Joshua T. Hutchens, Madison Lorraine Quinn, McKenzie M. Reed, Victor Guerrero Rico, Connor Danton Rinker, Eric Ramirez Torres, Carly Brooke Whipple, Wendi Leigh Wright, Ashley Nicole Yates and Recie Renee Yanders.

Woodland Mills — Geronimo "Jerry" Garcia.

Among the students awarded graduate degrees were:

South Fulton — Stanley Gordon Jones III.

Troy — Cori Brady Tucker.

Union City — Taylor M. Edwards, Tina Harrison, Ashley Noel Martin and Chelsea Lashea Smith.
Local students earn degrees at UT Martin

Several Henry Countians were among those receiving degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the fall commencement, held on Saturday in the Elam Center on campus.

Those who received undergraduate degrees were Austin K. Conger of Henry; and Megan Nicole Aiosa, Blair Christen Barber, Madison Nicole Barnhill, Tanner Lucas Boley, Meredith Brooke Bullock, Kelsey Jean Faith, Jeffrey Todd Marshall, Jacob R. McElroy, Jaelan M. Mustain, Wayne Royce Powers III, Evan Ryan Pugh, James Z. Stone and Brooke Ann Williams, all of Paris.

Students who received graduate degrees were Jennifer Susanne Barnett and Rachel Dickinson Matlock, both of Paris; Jennifer Denise Cooley of Puryear; and Amanda Dee Hamm and David Eric Worthey, both of Springville.

Several locals graduate from UTM

Several Lauderdale County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.


A local student receiving a graduate degree was Lauren E. Wooster of Halls.
Braden graduates from UT-Martin

Shemyra Braden of Ripley graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin on Dec. 15 with a bachelor's degree in social work. More than 650 students from the summer and fall semesters were eligible to graduate during the ceremony, which featured Jim Tracy, state director for USDA Rural Development, as keynote speaker.
Gruduutes Recognized For Teaching Excellence

MARTIN, Tenn., Dec. 14, 2018 – GRADUATES RECOGNIZED FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE – Matthew Castleman (left), of Martin, and Candace Tucker (right), of Greenfield, were recognized Dec. 6 with Jodi Woods Special Education Awards for the fall 2018 semester from the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Educational Studies. This award was established in memory of the late Jodi Woods, a special education major who died June 24, 2006. It is given each semester to one graduating special education major who excels in student teaching by including and building self-esteem in students with special needs. Castleman completed his student teaching rotations at Dresden Elementary School and South Fulton Middle School, and Tucker completed both her rotations at Rutherford Elementary School. They are pictured with Dr. Beth Stratton (center), UT Martin assistant professor of educational studies.

Matthew Castleman, of Martin, and Candace Tucker, of Greenfield. Both received special education awards from the UT Martin Department of Educational Studies for their work with area students.
Santa's Village was held this December 6 through December 9 this year and was held inside the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex. The colorful winter wonderland provided activities to put anyone in the Christmas spirit.

There was a petting zoo available with animals from around the area provided by Hooker Farms, such as goats and cows, as well as camels and kangaroos.

Visitors enjoyed the petting zoo provided by Hooker Farms.

Children enjoyed the carnival rides offered by Pope's amusement.
Long nets job with state senator

Political science became a passion for Jordan Long while he was a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Now, with his political science degree in hand, Long heads to Nashville and a staff position with Tennessee State Sen. John Stevens (R-Huntingdon) just ahead of the 2019 legislative session. Long joined other summer and fall graduates who received degrees during commencement Dec. 15 in the university’s Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Jim Tracy, UT Martin graduate and state director for USDA Rural Development, was commencement speaker.

“It’s very exciting. It’s a great time in my life,” Long said in an earlier interview about receiving his degree. “I’ve looked forward to this day. I’ve enjoyed my time here, though, greatly. UT Martin has been such a good school for me to attend.”

Long traces his interest in political science to family members who held elected office. In addition to political science classes that increased his academic knowledge, Long gained practical experience in government through involvement in the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature, also known as TISL.

The annual event in Nashville provides college students with real-world exposure to the workings of the Tennessee General Assembly. The proceedings include debates and lobbying for bills among delegates. Lieutenant governor was one of several elected positions he held through TISL, and Long is proud of the accomplishments and connections he gained through the organization.

Long also served as UT Martin’s Student Government Association president during the 2017-18 academic year. As with TISL, his SGA presidency helped him to gain leadership experiences and expand this professional network. “It was a great opportunity,” he said of being SGA president. “It was an interesting year. ... It was a growing year in SGA’s life here at Martin.”

Life after college began immediately, as Long started his position with Sen. Stevens’ office Dec. 17, a role in which he will work with legislation and assist Stevens in his various committee roles. “It’ll be a learning curve for sure, but it will be an experience that very few people at this age get, and I am appreciative of him for that,” Long said. Regardless of what lies ahead, Long is up to the challenges, thanks to lots of hard work and preparation. “I do not think there’s any other school that would have afforded me the opportunities that UT Martin has,” Long said.

As Long and others prepared to graduate Dec. 15, UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver welcomed the capacity Elam Center audience that included graduating students from 60 Tennessee counties, 19 states outside of Tennessee and the countries of Australia, China, India and Saudi Arabia. The university’s Office of Academic Records reported that 659 students were eligible to graduate, including those who completed degree requirements in the summer. A total of 375 graduates participated in commencement exercises.

Following a performance by members of the university’s Department of Music, Carver introduced speaker Jim Tracy, a West Tennessee native who served as a Tennessee state senator for the 14th Senatorial District from 2004-2017. He also has 24 years’ experience as a small-business owner and is a former high school agricultural education teacher.

Tracy, who lives in Shelbyville, challenged graduates to go beyond the milestone of earning a college degree and reach for greater things in life. He focused on the word “pride” and assigned a word to each letter to emphasize his points. Tracy spoke of potential, responsibility, influence, determination and enthusiasm as qualities that build pride in all a person does.

He said each graduate present has potential “whether you’re going to

SEE GRADUATION, PAGE 12
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 fall commencement held Dec. 15 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Dresden — Allison Reavis Baggett, Isabella Danielle Brackett, Kyle Lee Goode, Carly Denise Greer, Katie Marie McWherter-Kail, Taylor Marie Stout and Kallista Rae Wales.
- Gleason — Rachel Elizabeth Maxwell, Claire Elizabeth Oliver, Shawn Allen Rennison, Archie Donald Rich, Spencer Cale Stewart and James Ethan Terrell.
- Palmersville — Jacob Hartford Gatewood.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

- Dresden — Lisa Renae Chambliss and Alisha Montgomery Melton.
- Martin — Jolyta Henderson, Debra N. Lawrence, Bobby Bruce, Shannon Marci Cooley Perry and Ashley Marie Liford.
UTM offices to close

The University of Tennessee at Martin will close all administrative offices Monday through Dec. 28 for the winter holiday and Jan. 1, 2019, for New Year's Day. This applies to offices on the main campus and at the five centers in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley, Selmer and Somerville.

Offices will be open regular business hours on Dec. 31 and will reopen for regular hours on Jan. 3. Spring semester classes start Jan. 10.

Harlem Globetrotters to play at UTM on Jan. 25

The Harlem Globetrotters will bring their 2019 World Tour to the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin at 7 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25, 2019. Tickets are on sale now at harleglobetrotters.com and from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays at the UTM Student Recreation Center.

The Flying Globies, the Globetrotters' acrobatic trampoline dunk team, are included in the 2019 tour and will perform during breaks in the game. According to a Globetrotters press release, the game will include more than 20 opportunities for fans to interact with team members before, during, and after the event.

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Military discounts are available on day-of tickets with a valid military ID. A military chairback seat is $29 plus fees, and a military bleacher seat is $19 plus fees.

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Recent records include a somersault basketball shot made by Bull Bullard from 58 feet away from the hoop; most under-the-leg basketball tumbles in one minute (female) by Torch George (32); most blindfolded slam dunks in one minute by Zeus McClurkin (five); most behind-the-back three-pointers in one minute, also by McClurkin (three); and most under-the-leg slam dunks by a team using a trampoline in one minute by the Flying Globies (28).

For more information on the Harlem Globetrotters, visit harleglobetrotters.com. For information on their appearance at UTM, contact Chris Stachewicz at 731-881-7746 or cstachew@utm.edu.
Two Lakeway Area residents earn degrees from UT Martin

From Contributed Reports  Dec 22, 2018

MARTIN – Two Hamblen County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15, 2018, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Morristown – Sydney Elizabeth Helton.

- Whitesburg – Kinsley Rhea Graves.

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Chamber CEO on UTM board

Kyles Spurgeon, president/CEO of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce, was named to the University of Tennessee Advisory Board by Gov. Bill Haslam.

“Gov. Haslam actually called and told me I was one of the names that was a possibility because he thought the fact that I was in Jackson and familiar with West Tennessee would lend itself to being a good member of the board,” Spurgeon said.

The other members of the UT-Martin advisory board are Julia Wells, also from Jackson; Hal Bynum of Sharon; Monice Hagler of Memphis; and Art Sparks of Union City.

Advisory board members are nominated by the governor and approved by the general assembly. There are three other UT Advisory Boards for Knoxville, Chattanooga and the Health Science center.
UTM offices closed

The University of Tennessee at Martin will close all administrative offices Dec. 24-28 for the winter holiday and Jan. 1 for New Year’s Day. This applies to offices on the main campus and at the five centers in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley, Selmer and Somerville. Offices will be open regular business hours on Monday, Dec. 31, and will reopen for regular hours on Wednesday, Jan. 2. Spring semester classes start Jan. 10.

International residents receive degrees from UTM

Several international residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15, 2018, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
- Melbourne, Canada — Benjamin Aslett.
- Beijing, China — Xueying Fang; Xinran Liu; Pengfei Qi; Pengcheng Ren; Daoqin Wang; Yu Xie; Haochi Yang; Qian Zang; Bo Zou.
- Shangqiu, China — Wenhe Zhu.
- Ahmedabad, India — Ruchik Patel.
- Chennai, India — Divya Rajan.
- Dammam, Saudi Arabia — Fatimah Albukhamsin.
- Dhahran, Saudi Arabia — Omar Abdulrahman Alsaeed.
- Medina, Saudi Arabia — Talal Saad Alahmadi.
- Qatif, Saudi Arabia — Ahmed Alsulayyim.
- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia — Abdulaziz Mahdi Alanazi; Mohammed Albazi; Meshal Alkhathiri; Abdulrahman Almutairi; Saleh Alsharif; Salman Binobaid.
- Saimat, Saudi Arabia — Ahmed Tahnoon.
- Ahmed Alfadel; Mohammed Alhalal; Mouied Alhalal; Khalil Alkhabbaz; Ali Alomran; Taleb Alsaihat; Yousef Alsaihat; Jassim Alshuwaikhat; Saleh Alyami; Matoog Alyousef; Ahmed Howaidi.

RETIREMENT RECEPTION — Phil Bright (center), director of the University of Tennessee at Martin’s Office of Human Resources, is retiring after 40 years of university service, effective Dec. 31. A retirement reception in his honor was held Dec. 13 in the university’s Holland McCombs Center. Bright is pictured with his wife, Vanessa, and Chancellor Keith Carver. The Brights plan to move to Florida to enjoy their retirement.
Locals receive science awards

Four students from the University of Tennessee at Martin received awards for their entries in the 2018 Fall Association for Computing Machinery Mid-Southeast Conference held Nov. 15-16 in Gatlinburg.

The UT Martin Department of Computer Science took nine seniors from the department’s capstone class to the conference where teams of students presented four separate projects as part of their course requirements.

Students Jeremy Coleman of Camden, and Amie Newman of Martin won first place for their capstone work, “EGGY: The Excellent Home Security System.” The intelligent system records images and videos when motion is detected and sends alerts to a corresponding app on a user’s iOS device. The name comes from the egg-shaped enclosure the team built for the project. Coleman and Newman received a certificate and a cash prize for their submission.

Steven Alford of Dyersburg and Ruchik Patel of Ahmedabad, India, received honorable mentions for their project “All the King’s Men (Video Game).” The game is a 2D action role-playing game in which the user plays as a deposed king attempting to reclaim his castle from a corrupt council.

For more information, contact Dr. Kathleen Ericson, UT Martin assistant professor of computer science, at 731-881-7587.

Brewer wins Gallup prize

Makenzi Brewer (left) of Paris, a sophomore chemistry major at the University of Tennessee at Martin, receives an Apple watch from Keith Carver, UTM chancellor. Brewer was chosen to win an Apple watch from UTM after completing a survey as part of the university’s partnership with Gallup Inc. earlier this year. Students were asked to complete these surveys to share opinions on the culture, community and opportunities available at UTM. Brewer was randomly selected to receive the top prize.
Local residents receive degrees from UTM

MARTIN, Tenn. — Several Gibson County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15, 2018, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Bradford – Kecley Ann Davis; Barbara Guy; Matthew Puckett; Hayli Marie Serrault; Tracy L. Sison.
- Dyer – Alyssa Paige Kesterson; Sarah L. Mullins.
- Humboldt – Sere Jackson; Lendell Thomas Lynch; Janet Leigh Wagner.
- Medina – Bradley Kyle Duncan; Jason Russell Kail; Alex Paul Kastner; Jessica Lynn Newell; Madeline Grace Ort; Logan H. Youmans.
- Milan – Lucas R. Brake; Anne Seibert Connell; Bethany L. Evans; Shelby Blazer Garmany; Lauren Elizabeth Hoke; Erin Elizabeth Kelley; Lauren Kristen Loeffel; Leigh A. Malanga; Cheyenne Marie Mason; Benjamin Michael Ort; Emily A. Rice; Shelby Grace Vasquez.
- Rutherford – Austin Emrich Brewer; Markee Deshun Brown; John A. Floersh; Christian Hollis Kemp; Garner Allen Perkins.
- Trenton – Gina E. Abbott; Sarah Katherine Coday; Olivia Grace Gibson; Ross Cullins Johnson; Jessica Judith Jones; Eli Thomas McCaig; Grant Harrington McEwen; Katrinka L. Nance; Candace Leigh Tucker; Michael Shane Wofford.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

- Milan – Garth Patton Webb.

The Banner • McKenzie, Tennessee • Tuesday, December 25, 2018

Huntingdon’s Smith Completes Veterinary Technical Program

MARTIN (December 25, 2018) — Amanda Smith, of Huntingdon, completed course requirements for the University of Tennessee at Martin Veterinary Health Technology Program during the fall 2018 semester. She received her veterinary health technologist pin during a ceremony December 14 and will finish a six-week internship at Tri-County Animal Clinic in McKenzie before receiving her degree in the spring.

She also received the Jackson Wyatt Gallimore Scholarship from the veterinary health technology program.

For more information on the UT Martin Veterinary Health Technology Program, contact Dr. Jason Roberts, professor of animal science and program director, at 731-881-1071.

Amanda Smith

Local Residents Graduate from UT Martin

MARTIN — Several Carroll County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement on December 15, 2018.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Atwood – Jamal N. Glenn.
- Bruenston – Amanda Lynn Stockdale.
- Clarksburg — Lindsey Danielle Foster; Brianna Faith McClure; Madeline M. Stokes.
- Hollow Rock – Jordan Mack Davis.
- Huntingdon – Brianna Bartholomew; Victoria B. Davis; Leah Michelle Martin; Taylor McCarty; Emily M. Swallows.
- McKenzie – Anna Elizabeth Anderson; Rachel Lynn Edlin; Courtney Jo Fowler; Travis Lane Prather.
- McMurry – Jana C. Vestal.
- Westport – Cathy Jo Kirk.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

- Huntingdon – Ashley C. Webb.
- McKenzie — Aimee Smith.
MARTIN — Ashley Jackson, of Nashville, is dedicating her career to helping young people overcome life’s difficulties – something the deaf-blind professional knows well.

Jackson, a recent graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, majored in child and family studies and intends to use her training to help children and their families find the opportunities and resources they need to succeed in the classroom and in life.

“(A career counselor) told me about a position called an education assistant, and you work with a child who needs special attention in a special needs classroom. She suggested it might be something I would like to start off with,” said Jackson.

She most recently completed an internship at Bridges for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Nashville, where she spent almost four months working with the after-school program and with children who have adverse childhood experiences. She led several classes where parents learn communication methods such as sign language and body language to interact with their deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

See UTM on Page 3
Ashley Jackson (center), of Nashville, crossed the commencement stage Dec. 15 to receive her bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Jackson is a deaf-blind student and plans to use her degree to assist children and families with various disabilities. She is pictured shaking the hand of Dr. Linda Martin, University of Tennessee vice president for academic affairs and student success, with the assistance of Lisa Cepparulo, an American Sign Language interpreter from the Jackson Star Center. Cepparulo and two other interpreters have worked with Jackson throughout her time at UT Martin.

MARTIN — Ashley Jackson, of Nashville, is dedicating her career to helping young people overcome life's difficulties — something the deaf-blind professional knows well.

Jackson, a recent graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, majored in child and family studies and intends to use her training to help children and their families find the opportunities and resources they need to succeed in the classroom and in life.

"(A career counselor) told me about a position called an education assistant, and you work with a child who needs special attention in a special needs classroom. She suggested it might be something I would like to start off with," said Jackson.

She most recently completed an internship at Bridges for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Nashville, where she spent almost four months working with the after-school program and with children who have adverse childhood experiences. She led several classes where parents learn communication methods such as sign language and body language to interact with their deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

"I want to understand enough (about children) to be able to talk with
the parents about how to understand their children better and how to communicate with them. I want to be a mediator between the parents and children who have special needs or are at-risk," she said. "I want to help with showing opportunities for the child ... whatever skills they need help with, whether it's for school or life at home or mobility skills."

Jackson's experiences as a deaf-blind person have given her unique insight into what children with vision, hearing and related mobility challenges face every day. She also has an advantage when helping parents and families understand the opportunities available for children facing similar struggles.

Her condition is one that developed over time, starting with the removal of ocular tumors formed by retinoblastoma — a type of cancer of the eyes. Her struggle to hear began with a series of severe ear infections as a young child.

"After my first birthday is when (my hearing) really started getting worse ... It wasn't dramatic, but I still declined," she said.

In 2012, Jackson, her audiologist and other experts on her medical team began discussing cochlear implants. The clock was ticking, as medical insurance would not cover the implants after her 21st birthday. Cochlear implants allow an external processing unit to communicate with electrodes in the brain to translate sound waves into discernable noises. But sometimes the operation is unsuccessful, and the person can lose all hearing ability.

"That's one of the biggest changes in my life, and one of the scariest ones, too, because if it didn't work for me, I would be completely lost," she said. "I would have no hearing and no vision, so if it didn't work, that would have been a disaster. I wouldn't be able to be a part of society the way that I want to be. I'm just glad that it turned out the way that it did."

"We have people all over that are deaf-blind, and some people don't identify themselves that way because they don't know that deaf-blind is OK to be," Jackson said. "There's nothing wrong with being that way; it's just a good description of what you have."

Jackson has found ways to overcome her challenges and says the UT Martin community has supported her goals from the beginning.

"Sometimes the teachers will collaborate together to figure out a plan for how to help me, and how I can help them. That's how we learn from each other, and we know what we can do for future reference. ... I can't do pictures and things that are more visual, so we have to talk about modifications that will allow me to do homework along with the other students," she said.

Jackson uses a system of electronic aids to help her, including special software to read online documents aloud and Bluetooth braille translators for her iPhone and laptop. All her assignments were done electronically, with the translator changing on-screen text to braille and back again. She completed exams in the Student Success Center, where staff members fed an emailed file into a braille embosser, which then created a textured surface for Jackson to read.

With bachelor's degree in hand, Jackson plans to continue on to earn a master's degree in either public speaking or communications at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. "It's a deaf university, but it also has people who are hearing," she said. "They get to learn about deaf culture and learn about American Sign Language. So it doesn't just have to be for deaf people. It can be for anyone who is interested in deaf culture."

While Jackson's time at UT Martin has come to an end, she hopes to have left the path a bit smoother for those who come behind her.

"I try to make things accessible for others who may be walking in my shoes later on," she said.

Jackson crossed the UT Martin commencement stage Dec. 15 to receive her Bachelor of Science degree in family and consumer sciences.
UT Martin sees increase in minority enrollment

The University of Tennessee at Martin saw an increase in enrollment for underrepresented students this past semester, with African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan student populations all seeing increased numbers.

The African-American student population was the largest since fall of 2015, with 875 students enrolled at the university, and other underrepresented populations were the largest in the past 10 years.

UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver feels this increase is because of the university’s dedication to creating a diverse campus atmosphere.

“We have put a focus on diverse student programs over the past few semesters, and our new hires in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs have done an excellent job including all our student populations in their choice of campus events and outreach,” Carver said.

“Diversity is also a key component in the university’s new strategic plan, and while we still have improvements to make, I feel we are moving in a good direction.”

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has worked closely with the UT Martin Black Alumni Council, based in Shelby County, to increase and improve student recruitment efforts in that area. A popular event is the Red Carpet Day, which welcomes students from underrepresented populations to campus for a weekend visit each fall.

“We make sure to incorporate our current students within that programming so (attendees) can actually have that first-hand knowledge of what it’s like to be an underrepresented student here at UTM,” said John Blue, director of the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs.

Blue and his assistant director, Anthony Prewitt, are also working with the student body to start the university’s first Hispanic/Latino student organization.

Blue says student activities this past semester worked to expand on current offerings for underrepresented students and included the university’s first observance of Hispanic Heritage Month. His office is also partnering with the UT Martin Women’s Center and the Office of International Programs and International Admissions to make sure those student groups are included in campus programming as well.

“It’s a known fact that students from underrepresented populations relate better to students, faculty and staff and amenities that look like them. ... So (relevant student programming is) also a big factor in the retention of students,” Prewitt said. “We wanted to be very intentional in providing programs, leadership opportunities and other initiatives that develop those students, that encourage their participation in campus activities and expose them to a lot of different things.”

Blue and Prewitt facilitate the Black Student Mentoring Collaborative across campus to provide a framework through which African-American students can create mentoring relationships with African American faculty and staff members across campus. This idea was originally created by John Paul Robinson, a former coordinator in the Office of Student Life.

“The Black Student Mentoring Collaborative assists with retention of our currently enrolled students. I’m a firm believer that your current students are your best means of recruitment, so if they feel like they are valued and are seen on campus, then they’re going to go home to Nashville or Memphis or Jackson and talk about UTM in a positive manner,” Blue said.

A new multicultural student council is also in the works and will be in charge of planning both social and educational events focused on multicultural affairs in semesters to come. Blue says this group will seek to enlighten the student body by bringing an extracurricular component to learning about the various populations represented on campus.

Both Blue and Prewitt say the university’s emphasis on diversity and inclusion can be seen in the way upper administration approaches the student body and programming.

The university hosted the fourth annual Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony the night before fall commencement. More than 75 African-American students were eligible to graduate, and Blue and Prewitt seek to have that number increase each year.
MARTIN — In another life, Mark Lister coached college football at institutions across the country. Now, he is an inventor.

Lister, a Martin resident and recent graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, has a patent pending for a spring-loaded supplemental poultry feeder, an idea that occurred to him two years ago while working in the poultry barns he owns and operates with his wife, Becky.

According to Lister, a system of feed lines in each barn automatically fills feeder hoppers spaced along the lines. However, very young chicks are not large enough to reach these hoppers and require supplemental food in feeding trays placed on the floor. The openings that allow this additional food to fall into the trays can be rotated up or down to start or stop the flow of supplemental feed as needed.

“When we get ready for new birds, we bring the feed lines down (from the ceiling) to about chest height, and we turn (the supplemental tubes) down,” he said. After this, the lines are lowered to ground-level and the young chicks arrive. “Then, in 10 days, you’ve got to walk down the line and turn each one up. And there are about 1,000 of them.”

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

“It’s just one of those things where I thought, ‘There’s got to be a better way,’” he said. “So I talked to the people who sell the equipment. ... I asked, ‘Why can’t you guys just come up with something where I can do all this without bending over?’ ... But nobody ever did it.”

Lister began working on his first design during the summer of 2016 and entered into a partnership with the University of Tennessee Research Foundation to help finance the project and obtain a U.S. invention patent. The UTRF later selected his project to receive one of eight UT Research Maturation Grants in 2017, which allowed him to purchase a 3D printer and create new iterations of his design more quickly.

The 3D printer is now the property of the UT Martin Department of Engineering. It is a top-of-the-line fused deposition modeling printer that allows engineering students to print large projects in a range of materials.

After more than a year of testing the models in his own poultry barns, Lister is comfortable with the current design and believes his improved supplemental feeder will be useful across the poultry industry.

“I basically made (the supplemental tubes) spring-loaded. So, you turn it down, and it’s tensioned, so it clicks. And you’ve got a lever. ... I have to walk down the (feed) lines every day anyway to check on the birds, ... so while I’m walking I can just tap these levers with my bucket, and they’ll just snap (upward),” he explained. “It seems simple, but nobody had thought of it.”

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

“(The new feeder) could be used all over the world, actually, because they have these types of poultry operations all over the world,” he said. “I’ll be happy if I can get them in my barns and if I can also sell them that would be a bonus.”

“I feel like I would be remiss if I didn’t thank the entire UTM engineering department for their guidance in all matters big and small throughout my four years as a non-traditional student,” added Lister.

“I would like to especially thank Dr. (Doug) Sterrett, my adviser, for advocating for this project on my behalf so that it could be used as an internship. I’d also like to thank Dr. (Bob) LeMaster for his guidance throughout the project and creating the initial introduction with the UTRF,” he said.

Lister finished his bachelor’s degree in engineering this fall and graduated from UT Martin during commencement exercises Dec. 15.
Deaf-blind grad dedicates career to helping young people overcome

Ashley Jackson of Nashville is dedicating her career to helping young people overcome life's difficulties — something the deaf-blind professional knows well.

Ms. Jackson, a recent graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, majored in child and family studies and intends to use her training to help children and their families find the opportunities and resources they need to succeed in the classroom and in life.

“(A career counselor) told me about a position called an education assistant, and you work with a child who needs special attention in a special needs classroom. She suggested it might be something I would like to start off with,” Ms. Jackson said.

She most recently completed an internship at Bridges for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Nashville, where she spent almost four months working with the after-school program and with children who have adverse childhood experiences. She led several classes where parents learn communication methods such as sign language and body language to interact with their deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

“I want to understand enough (about children) to be able to talk with the parents about how to understand their children better and how to communicate with them. I want to be a mediator between the parents and children who have special needs or are at-risk,” she said. “I want to help with showing opportunities for the child ... whatever skills they need help with, whether it's for school or life at home or mobility skills.”

Ms. Jackson’s experiences as a deaf-blind person have given her unique insight into what children with vision, hearing and related mobility challenges face every day. She also has an advantage when helping parents and families understand the opportunities available for children facing similar struggles.

Her condition is one that developed over time, starting with the removal of ocular tumors formed by retinoblastoma — a type of cancer of the eyes. Her struggle to hear began with a series of severe ear infections as a young child.

“After my first birthday is when (my hearing) really started getting worse. ... It wasn't dramatic, but I still declined,” she said.

In 2012, Ms. Jackson, her audiologist and other experts on her medical team began discussing cochlear implants. The clock was ticking, as medical insurance wouldn't cover the implants after her 21st birthday. Cochlear implants allow an external processing unit to communicate with electrodes in the brain to translate sound waves into discernable noises. But sometimes the operation is unsuccessful, and the person can lose all hearing ability.

“That’s one of the biggest changes in my life, and one of the scariest ones too, because if it didn’t work for me, I would be completely lost,” Ms. Jackson said. “I would have no hearing and no vision, so if it didn’t work, that would have been a disaster. I wouldn’t be able to be a part of society the way that I want to be. I’m just glad that it turned out the way that it did ...

“We have people all over that are deaf-blind, and some people don’t identify themselves that way because they don’t know that deaf-blind is OK to be,” she said. “There’s nothing wrong with being that way; it’s just a good description of what you have.”

Ms. Jackson has found ways to overcome her challenges and says the UT Martin community has supported her goals from the beginning.

“Sometimes the teachers will collaborate together to figure out a plan for how to help me and how I can help them. That’s how we learn from each other, and we know what we can do for future reference. ... I can’t do pictures and things that are more visual, so we have to talk about modifications that will allow me to do homework along with the other students,” she said.

Ms. Jackson uses a system of electronic aids to help her, including special software to read online documents aloud and Bluetooth braille translators for her iPhone and laptop. All her assignments were done electronically, with the translator changing on-screen text to braille and back again. She completed exams in the Student Success Center, where staff members fed an emailed file into a braille embosser, which then created a textured surface for Ms. Jackson to read.

With bachelor’s degree in hand, Ms. Jackson plans to continue on to earn a master’s degree in either public speaking or communications at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

“It’s a deaf university, but it also has people who are hearing,” she said. “They get to learn about deaf culture and learn about American Sign Language.

So it doesn’t just have to be for deaf people. It can be for anyone who is interested in deaf culture.”

While Ms. Jackson’s time at UT Martin has come to an end, she hopes to have left the path a bit smoother for those who come behind her.

“I try to make things accessible for others who may be walking in my shoes later on,” she said.

Ms. Jackson crossed the UT Martin commencement stage earlier this month to receive her bachelor of science degree in family and consumer sciences.
OVERCOMING — Ashley Jackson (center) of Jackson crossed the commencement stage earlier this month to receive her bachelor’s degree from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Ms. Jackson is a deaf-blind student and plans to use her degree to assist children and families with various disabilities. She shook the hand of Dr. Linda Martin, University of Tennessee vice president for academic affairs and student success, with the assistance of Lisa Cepparulo, an American Sign Language interpreter from the Jackson Star Center. Ms. Cepparulo and two other interpreters worked with Jackson throughout her time at UT Martin.
UTM names winners of scholarships

Several Lauderdale County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2019-2020 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Students received scholarships included Dawson Davis of Ripley, son of Jennifer Davis, who will be a freshman. He received the Excellence Scholarship; Scott Littles of Ripley, son of Grover Littles and Sandra Littles, who will be a freshman. He received the Dean Scholarship; Shelby Odom of Ripley, daughter of Robert Odom and Jill McKee, who will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship; and Jaylan Tate of Halls, son of Andrew Tate and Angela Tate, who will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor Scholarship.

Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting the UT Martin Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, Martin, Tenn., 38238, or by calling (731) 881-7040.

Kamryn Gitchell completes veterinary technician program

Kamryn Gitchell of Ripley completed course requirements for the University of Tennessee at Martin Veterinary Health Technology Program during the fall 2018 semester. She received her veterinary health technologist pin during a ceremony Dec. 14 and will finish a six-week internship at the University of Tennessee School of Veterinary Medicine before receiving her degree in the spring. She also received the Jerry D. Gresham Memorial Scholarship from the veterinary health technology program. For more information on the UT Martin Veterinary Health Technology Program, contact Dr. Jason Roberts, professor of animal science and program director, at 731-881-1071.
The University of Tennessee at Martin saw an increase in enrollment for underrepresented students this past semester, with African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan student populations all seeing increased numbers.

The African-American student population was the largest since fall of 2015, with 875 students enrolled at the university, and other underrepresented populations were the largest in the past 10 years. UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver feels this increase is because of the university’s dedication to creating a diverse campus atmosphere.

“We have put a focus on diverse student programs over the past few semesters, and our new hires in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs have done an excellent job including all our student populations in their choice of campus events and outreach,” said Carver. “Diversity is also a key component in the university’s new strategic plan, and while we still have improvements to make, I feel we are moving in a good direction.”

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has worked closely with the UT Martin Black Alumni Council, based in Shelby County, to increase and improve student recruitment efforts in that area. A popular event is the Red Carpet Day, which welcomes students from underrepresented populations to campus for a weekend visit each fall.

“We make sure to incorporate our current students within that programming so (attendees) can actually have that first-hand knowledge of what it’s like to be an underrepresented student here at UTM,” said John Blue, director of the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs.

Blue and his assistant director, Anthony Prewitt, are also working with the student body to start the university’s first Hispanic/Latino student organization. Blue says student activities this past semester worked to expand on current offerings for underrepresented students and included the university’s first observance of Hispanic Heritage Month. His office is also partnering with the UT Martin Women’s Center and the Office of International Programs and International Admissions to make sure those student groups are included in campus programming as well.

“It’s a known fact that students from underrepresented populations relate better to students, faculty and staff and amenities that look like them...so (relevant student programming is) also a big factor in the retention of students,” said Prewitt. “We wanted to be very intentional in providing programs, leadership opportunities and other initiatives that develop those students, that encourage their participation in campus activities and expose them to a lot of different things.”

Blue and Prewitt facilitate the Black Student Mentoring Collaborative across campus to provide a framework through which African-American students can create mentoring relationships with African American faculty and staff across campus. This idea was originally created by John Paul Robinson, a former coordinator in the Office of Student Life.

“The Black Student Mentoring Collaborative assists with retention of our currently enrolled students. I’m a firm believer that your current students are your best means of recruitment, so if they feel like they are valued and are seen on campus, then they’re going to go home to Nashville or Memphis or Jackson and talk about UTM in a positive manner,” said Blue.

A new multicultural student council is also in the works and will be in charge of planning both social and educational events focused on multicultural affairs in semesters to come. Blue says this group will seek to enlighten the student body by bringing an extra-curricular component to learning about the various populations represented on campus.

Both Blue and Prewitt say the university’s emphasis on diversity and inclusion can be seen in the way upper administration approaches the student body and student programming.
Moore, Jones receive degrees from UT-Martin

James Ryan Moore, of South Fulton, received an undergraduate degree, and Stanley Gordon Jones III, also of South Fulton, received a graduate degree, from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

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 fall commencement held Dec. 15, 2018, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
- Dresden – Allison Reavis Baggett; Isabella Danielle Brackett; Kyle Lee Goode; Carly Denise Greer; Katie Marie McWherter-Kail; Taylor Marie Stout; Kallista Rae Wales
- Gleason – Rachel Elizabeth Maxwell; Claire Elizabeth Oliver; Shawn Allen Rennison; Archie Donald Rich; Spencer Cale Stewart; James Ethan Terrell
- Greenfield – Kristin LeAnn Bates; Kendal McCall Cook; Amanda Kae Evans; Brittany Mechelle Evans; Rachel LeAnn Graves; Austin Blake Pence; Ashley M. Sellers; Scott Namney Stout; Russell Williams
- Martin – Areli Guadalupe Aguilar; Mariella A. Aguilar; Chrysele Jeannine Alexander; Christopher Tyrone Brown; Heather Lynne Butler; Matthew Kendall Castelman; Melanie LeaAnn Davis; James Thomas Eskew; Lexie D. Forrester; Allison Marie Garner; Jessica Leigh Garrigus; Jessica Renee Gathings; Jami Lea Gilbertson; Seth Taylor Hayes; Matthew Isaac Jacks; Billy Ray Killebrew; Matthew Edward Kimsey; Brianna Kay Last; Brittnie Deniece Lewis; Macy Kendall Leyhue; Samantha Ragan Liles; Mark A. Lister; Jordan H. Long; Andrei V. Malacapay; Andrew V. Malacapay; Patricia Abigail Ramos; Ryne Reynolds; Sydney Suzanne Robbins; Colton Carl Rogers; Megan L. Shelton; Corine Thomas Simpson; Kayley N. Tyner; Anthony M. Vendusen
- Palermosville – Jacob Hartford Gatewood

The students receiving graduate degrees were:
- Dresden – Lisa Renae Chambliss; Alisha Montgomery Melton
- Martin – Jolyta Henderson; Debra N. Lawrence; Bobby Bruce; Shannon Marci Cooley Perry; Ashley Marie Liford
Local Graduate Invents Spring-Loaded Poultry Feeder

MARTIN, Tenn. — In another life, Mark Lister coached college football at institutions across the country. Now, he is an inventor.

Lister, a Martin resident and recent graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, has a patent pending for a spring-loaded supplemental poultry feeder, an idea that occurred to him two years ago while working in the poultry barns he owns and operates with his wife, Becky.

According to Lister, a system of feed lines in each barn automatically fills feed hoppers spaced along the lines. However, very young chicks are not large enough to reach these hoppers and require supplemental food in feeding trays placed on the floor. The openings that allow this additional food to fall into the trays can be rotated up or down to start or stop the flow of supplemental feed as needed.

“When we get ready for new birds, we bring the feed lines down (from the ceiling) to about chest height, and we turn (the supplemental tubes) down,” he said. After this, the lines are lowered to ground-level and the young chicks arrive. “Then, in 10 days, you’ve got to walk down the line and turn each one up. And there are about 1,000 of them.”

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

“It’s just one of those things where I thought, ‘There’s got to be a better way,’” he said. “So I talked to the people who sell the equipment. ... I asked, ‘Why can’t you guys just come up with something where I can do all this without bending over?’ ... But nobody ever did it.”

Lister began working on his first design during the summer of 2016 and entered into a partnership with the University of Tennessee Research Foundation to help finance the project and obtain a U.S. invention patent. The UTRF later selected his project to receive one of eight UT Research Maturation Grants in 2017, which allowed him to purchase a 3D printer and create new iterations of his design more quickly.

After more than a year of testing the models in his own poultry barns, Lister is comfortable with the current design and believes his improved supplemental feeder will be useful across the poultry industry.

“I basically made (the supplemental tubes) spring-loaded. So, you turn it down, and it’s tensioned, so it clicks. And you’ve got a lever. ... I have to walk down the (feed) lines every day anyway to check on the birds, ... so while I’m walking I can just tap these levers with my bucket, and they’ll just snap (upward),” he explained. “It seems simple, but nobody had thought of it.”

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

“The new feeder could be used all over the world, actually, because they have these types of poultry operations all over the world,” he said. “I’ll be happy if I can get them in my barns and if I can also sell them that would be a bonus.”

“I feel like I would be remiss if I didn’t thank the entire UTM engineering department for their guidance in all matters big and small throughout my four years as a non-traditional student,” added Lister. “I would like to especially thank Dr. (Doug) Sterrett, my adviser, for advocating for this project on my behalf so that it could be used as an internship. I’d also like to thank Dr. (Bob) LeMaster for his guidance throughout the project and creating the initial introduction with the UTRF.”

Lister finished his bachelor’s degree in engineering this fall and graduated from UT Martin during commencement exercises Dec. 15.
Workshop Series To Teach Farmers How To

Develop A Business Plan

Many farmers may want to start their new year by attending a workshop series designed to teach them how to develop a business plan. "Building a Sustainable Business Workshop Series" will be held in Jackson with satellite locations via web conferencing in Columbia, Knoxville and Memphis. The workshop is being conducted by the University of Tennessee Center for Profitable Agriculture in cooperation with UT-Martin, UT Extension, AgLaunch and the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.

Having a written business plan improves communication between producers and their business partners, stakeholders, lenders and other funding sources, says Hal Pepper, financial analysis specialist with the UT Center for Profitable Agriculture. "Business planning is an on-going, problem-solving process that can identify business challenges and opportunities and develop strategic objectives to move toward an operator's vision. And some funding sources require a written business plan," Pepper says.

Pepper, along with instructors from UT-Martin and UT Extension, will present a two-hour workshop each Tuesday evening beginning January 8, for eight weeks to help producers of direct marketing, food processing and agritourism enterprises develop a business plan. Different topics and speakers will be featured each night. Specialists will be available at each workshop location to answer questions and provide one-on-one technical assistance in the development of business plans over the eight weeks of the workshop series. The course will meet on these dates: January 8, 15, 22 and 29 and February 5, 12, 19 and 26.

Pre-registration is required, and the workshop will begin with check-in at 5:30 p.m. Central Time/6:30 p.m. Eastern Time. The workshop will begin at 6 pm Central Time/7 pm Eastern Time. Class locations are provided upon registration.

The registration fee is $25 for the total workshop series for one person or $20 per person for two or more people from the same farm. Space is limited and pre-registration is required no later than December 31. Information about the workshop series is available on the CPA's website: ag.tennessee.edu/cpa and registration is now open online at tiny.utk.edu/bizplan.

This workshop series fulfills a Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) requirement in the Agritourism, Fruit and Vegetable and Value-Added Producer Diversification Sectors. Producers must attend a minimum of four sessions to receive one TAEP credit. Value-Added producers are eligible to receive two credits if all eight sessions are attended. For TAEP credit, missed sessions cannot be made up.
Bedford County student gets UT-Martin scholarship

Thursday, December 27, 2018

A Bedford County student has been awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2019-2020 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Jazmin Clark, of Shelbyville, daughter of Kenneth and Melody Terry, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.

Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting the UT Martin Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, Martin, TN, 38238, or by calling 731-881-7040.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WC students receive scholarships to UTM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Several Weakley County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2019-20 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dylan Ingram, son of Craig and Jan Ingram, of Martin, will be a freshman. He received the Dean Scholarship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Darla Mallory, daughter of Claude and Donna Mallory, of Dresden, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor Scholarship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mason Riser, son of Ronnie Risner and Jyl Risner, will be a freshman. He received the Excellence Scholarship.</td>
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<td>• Marisa Rubio, daughter of Ben and Debra Rubio, of Martin, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Allyson Spain, daughter of Mark and Stacy Spain, of Gleason, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.</td>
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<td>• Emma Taylor, daughter of Mike and Camiel Taylor, of Martin, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.</td>
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<td>• Damon Thurman, of Martin, son of Tammy and Justin Hall and Steven and Becky Thurman, will be a freshman. He received the Achieve Scholarship.</td>
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</table>
| • Bradley Young, son of Rickie and Lee Young, of Dresden, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor Scholarship. 
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Minority enrollment on campus increases during fall semester

The University of Tennessee at Martin saw an increase in enrollment for underrepresented students this past semester, with African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan student populations all seeing increased numbers.

The African-American student population was the largest since fall of 2015, with 875 students enrolled at the university, and other underrepresented populations were the largest in the past 10 years. UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver feels this increase is because of the university's dedication to creating a diverse campus atmosphere.

"We have put a focus on diverse student programs over the past few semesters, and our new hires in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs have done an excellent job including all our student populations in their choice of campus events and outreach," said Carver. "Diversity is also a key component in the university's new strategic plan, and while we still have improvements to make, I feel we are moving in a good direction."

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has worked closely with the UT Martin Black Alumni Council, based in Shelby County, to increase and improve student recruitment efforts in that area. A popular event is the Red Carpet Day, which welcomes students from underrepresented populations to campus for a weekend visit each fall.

"We make sure to incorporate our current students within that programming so [attendees] can actually have that first-hand knowledge of what it's like to be an underrepresented student here at UTM," said John Blue, director of the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs.

So if they feel like they are valued and are seen on campus, then they're going to go home to Nashville or Memphis or Jackson and talk about UTM in a positive manner," said Blue.

A new multicultural student council is also in the works and will be in charge of planning both social and educational events focused on multicultural affairs in semesters to come. Blue says this group will seek to enlighten the student body by bringing an extra-curricular component to learning about the various populations represented on campus.

Both Blue and Prewitt say the university's emphasis on diversity and inclusion can be seen in the way upper administration approaches the student body and student programming.

"I think it really helps us that we have a chancellor who is an advocate for our area and our office. The fact that he's even included the diversity and multicultural component within the strategic plan is big," said Prewitt. "He's here, he's visible, he's supportive of our students. ... That type of presence and support matters. ... Whether it's in residence life, Greek life or campus (recreation), it's important that students are engaged, they're involved and that they feel supported."

The university hosted the fourth-annual Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony the night before fall commencement. More than 75 African-American students were eligible to graduate this past semester, and Blue and Prewitt seek to have that number increase each year.

For more information, contact the Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.

"It's a known fact that students from underrepresented populations relate better to students, faculty and staff and amenities that look like them... So [relevant student programming] is also a big factor in the retention of students," said Prewitt. "We wanted to be very intentional in providing programs, leadership opportunities and other initiatives that develop those students, that encourage their participation on campus activities and expose them to a lot of different things."

Blue and Prewitt facilitate the Black Student Mentoring Collaborative across campus to provide a framework through which African-American students can create mentoring relationships with African American faculty and staff members across campus. This idea was originally created by John Paul Robinson, a former coordinator in the Office of Student Life.

The Black Student Mentoring Collaborative assists with retention of our currently enrolled students. I'm a firm believer that your current students are your best means of recruitment.
GRADUATES RECOGNIZED FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE — Matthew Castelman (left), of Martin, and Candace Tucker (right), of Greenfield, were recognized Dec. 6 with Jodi Woods Special Education Awards for the fall 2018 semester from the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Educational Studies. This award was established in memory of the late Jodi Woods, a special education major who died June 24, 2006. It is given each semester to one graduating special education major who excels in student teaching by including and building self-esteem in students with special needs. Castelman completed his student teaching rotations at Dresden Elementary School and South Fulton Middle School, and Tucker completed both her rotations at Rutherford Elementary School. They are pictured with Dr. Beth Stratton (center), UT Martin assistant professor of educational studies.

UTM MCWHERTER INSTITUTE RECOGNIZES LOCAL SENIOR – The University of Tennessee at Martin’s Ned Ray McWherter Institute recognized graduating senior Chrysele Alexander (right) of Martin during a reception at the Lindell in downtown Martin. Alexander has been part of the program since 2016 and graduated during the Dec. 13 commencement ceremony. The Ned Ray McWherter Institute is a three-year professional development program that provides travel, networking and growth opportunities for selected UT Martin students. Alexander is pictured with Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor. For more information about the Ned Ray McWherter Institute, contact Joyanne Gansereit, program coordinator, at 731-881-3620.
Williams credits military for his success in college

Lamarcus Williams of Brownsville graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin on Dec. 15 with a bachelor’s degree in sociology – a degree he says he would never have earned if not for the military.

“When I joined the (Tennessee) Army National Guard, I found a brotherhood that I never had growing up. I found friendships; I found a bond that I was never exposed to before. Being part of that, it created something inside me that I wanted to bring to others as well,” he said. “It’s been a very big part of my life. I definitely would not be here if it hadn’t been for the military. They have helped me out tremendously – personally, professionally and academically.”

When he first enrolled at UT Martin, Williams was fresh out of basic training with the Tennessee Army National Guard. Unsure of his future plans, he turned to classmates and teachers to help find his way.

“When I first came, I had a hard time. I was studying a lot, yet I wasn’t getting the grades that I wanted,” he said. “So I met some students who were getting the grades that I wanted as well, and I saw how they aligned their free time and their work load and how they balanced all of that out. They all helped me along the way to make sure that I kept coming back each semester and putting my best foot forward.”

However, he didn’t always have a clear path ahead of him. After rejecting suggestions to follow a career in computer science or engineering, Williams chose to study sociology after discovering an interest in the forces that shape society and the personal choices of each individual.

“I really had to do some soul-searching. I really had to find out what do I like to do?” and find out what my hobbies are,” he said. “(Sociology) has allowed me to get a better understanding of different cultures around me and how people inter-

act…. It challenges different biases that I had growing up, and it makes me reevaluate the world around me and look at it from a different perspective.”

While Williams does have a job offer following graduation, he says he won’t commit himself to just one career choice just yet.

“I’m a person that’s constantly evolving each year, so for me to have a ‘dream job,’ I don’t really have one at the moment because I’m involved in so many aspects in different parts of life,” he said. “I have a lot of hobbies and a lot of interests in life, so for me to just put myself into one category of what I want to do, I would be selling myself short. I have unfurled potential that I know is going to come to light in the future.”

Many students complete internships as part of their academic requirements, but Williams found an internship position on his own purely to gain experience working with the public and learn skills he could apply to a wide range of industries.

(That internship) was something that I wanted to do. I wanted to make sure I had myself set up for the future. A lot of times in this world now, it doesn’t do you any good just to have academics and have your B.A. and your classes. People now want you to have real-world experience,” he said. “I wanted to make sure that I had something concrete that I could easily adapt and be flexible for whatever (an employer) wanted from me.”

He worked in the Enterprise Rent-A-Car Cordova office near Memphis, and says the fast-paced environment challenged him to be better each day than the day before. He was also able to apply his sociology training to gain insight into his customers and the company’s business system. One of several student interns, he quickly rose to the top of the group and became a personally-requested servant member for repeat clients and other Enterprise locations in the area.

Williams says the college experience has changed him over the years and helped him become someone better than the boy who first enrolled in 2014.

“I’ve changed to where I have a lot of love in my heart now for myself. When I first came here, I had a bad view of myself because of my background and what I’ve been exposed to. But coming here was a fresh start for me … to really define myself and get to know myself. I was able to have positive role models in my life at UT Martin – things that I didn’t have before,” he said.
Several Lauderdale County residents received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement, December 15th, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

Students receiving undergraduate degrees included Stephanie LaShun Johnson, of Gates; Madison Elise Mountjoy, Jessie L. Sanderson, and Jessica Leigh Sorrell, all of Halls; and Teri Brooke Allred, She'Myra B. Braden, Kimberly D. Brown, Caleb S. Copeland, Kamryn Lee Gitchell, Anetta Marie Hall, Cynthia Lor- raine Johnson, Brooklyn Layne Simpson, Mary Faye Smith, Regina R. Toomes-Bledsoe, and Clayton Cole Worley, all of Ripley. Lauren E. Wooster, of Halls, received a graduate degree.

KAMRYN GITCHELL, of Ripley, completed course requirements for the University of Tennessee at Martin Veterinary Health Technology Program during the fall 2018 semester. She received her veterinary health technologist pin during a ceremony December 14th and plans to finish a six-week internship at the University of Tennessee School of Veterinary Medicine before receiving her degree in the spring. She also received the Jerry D. Gresham Memorial Scholarship from the veterinary health technology program.

SHEMYRA BRADEN, of Ripley, graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin December 15th with a bachelor's degree in social work.

GUESTS, from right, Jason Holloway, assistant director at University of Tennessee at Martin - Ripley Center; Jacqueline Springfield, Paraprofessional; and Monica Mack, HiSet instructor, were the speakers for the noon meeting, Tuesday, December 18th of the Ripley Rotary Club at Rolling Hills Country Club. Monica and Jacqueline presented information about HopeWorks which is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Adult Education. Tennessee Adult Education offers High School Equivalency prep classes during the day, at night, and on the weekend, online classes for Distance Learners, preparation for the workforce, individualized and small group instruction, and integrated English literacy and civics. They are pictured with Lee Johnston, left, club president. For additional information about HopeWorks Adult Education, call 1-844-721-8800.
Matlock completes degree

Rachel Matlock, originally from Camden, crossed the commencement stage Dec. 15 to receive her Master of Science degree in family and consumer sciences from UTM. While earning any degree is a milestone, Matlock has been through more heartache to reach this goal than most.

Matlock began her freshman year at UTM in 2010, pursuing an undergraduate degree in social work. During her first spring semester, Matlock’s father died after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease.

In October of her sophomore year, Matlock (then Rachel Dickinson) married her love Matthew Draper. Exactly eight months later, Draper was killed in Camden by a drunk driver.

“He would always tell me ‘School first, school first, that is what’s important. You need to focus on school.’ He always made certain I put that first. When he died, I wasn’t able to make my Tuesday class because my husband’s funeral was that day, but I was back in class by Thursday because all I could hear was him saying ‘School first, you need to focus on school,’” Matlock said. “No matter what happened, I knew that I didn’t want to give up.”

The following years were difficult while Matlock dealt with the loss of her husband. Not wanting to let go of her dream of higher education, she earned an associate degree from Nashville State Community College, then returned to UTM to graduate summa cum laude in the spring of 2014 with a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies. She intended to start immediately on a master’s, but life again had other plans.

“That fall of 2014, my mother was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer, and she became my priority. In the spring of 2015, I found myself taking care of my mother while working full time. My three brothers, their wives, and I did the best we could to see after her. She lost her battle in my arms on Aug. 14, 2015,” Matlock related. “Very deep down, I knew I was more than this loss as well, but it took much longer to realize that.”

In 2016, Matlock married her current husband Doug Matlock. To her joy, they learned she would give birth to her first child, a daughter she once thought would never come.

“Throughout my pregnancy, I knew I wanted more - not just for myself, but for my child. I wanted to give her the world, and I wanted to show my stepson that you don’t give up,” she said. She enrolled in the UTM master’s degree program, and finished her coursework last summer.

Now, the 26-year-old lives in Paris and works in community outreach at the Henry County Health Department, where she teaches school and community classes on health issues and personal care. She says her background in social work helps her understand what her clients may be going through.

Looking back on her journey, Matlock is grateful for all the support she received along the way from UTM faculty and staff. Former UTM social work program director Michelle Horton, who was Matlock’s academic adviser, helped support Matlock through her uncertainty after her first husband’s death, and encouraged Matlock to continue her pursuit of higher education. Horton herself passed away in 2016 after a battle with brain cancer.

“If I’ve learned anything, it’s that life plans are kind of a joke because you don’t know,” Matlock said. “In five years, I hope to know more than I know now. I hope to still have all of my family that I have left, and to be happy. I hope to be doing something I’m passionate about. I hope that people can look to me as an example of doing things with your whole heart.”

Being a good example is something this recent UTM graduate is very passionate about. Her lesson to her children is this:

“No matter what path you take, no matter what cards you are dealt, whatever you do, do it with heart,” Matlock stressed. “Put everything you’ve got into it, don’t do anything halfway. Anything worth doing is worth doing with your whole heart.”
**Locals graduate from UTM**

Several Benton County residents received degrees during the UTM fall commencement on Dec. 15.

UTM awards degree to the late Megan Cox

The University of Tennessee at Martin awarded a posthumous bachelor's degree in psychology to Megan Cox, of Camden, during the university's commencement ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 15. Cox, a senior at UTM, died Nov. 15 after a traffic accident.

Her sister, Stephanie, joined the line of UTM graduates at the point where Megan herself would have been stationed and crossed the commencement stage to receive Megan's degree from UTM Chancellor Keith Carver when Megan's name was announced. UTM faculty, graduates, and audience members gave the family a standing ovation in Megan's honor.

Although official diplomas normally are printed and mailed after commencement, Carver presented Megan's official diploma to her mother Paula Cox.

Camden students who graduated with bachelor's degrees were Amanda D. Belisle, Jeremy T. Coleman, Zachary T. Farmer, Brianna L. Hollowell, Tanya L. Phillips, Garrett A. Todd, Kayla M. White, and Zachary S. Wofford.

**IN HONOR** - From left, UTM Chancellor Keith Carver hands Stephanie Cox the degree that would have been awarded to her late sister Megan. All present stood in Megan's honor.

**WITH RESPECT** - From left, UTM Chancellor Keith Carver shares a moment with Stephanie and Paula Cox, family of the late Megan Cox, after the graduation ceremony in which Megan's diploma was awarded posthumously.
MARTIN – The Harlem Globetrotters will bring their 2019 Fan Powered World Tour to the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin at 7 p.m. Jan 25. Tickets are on sale now at harlemglobetrotters.com and from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., weekdays, at the UT Martin Student Recreation Center.

Chairback seats are $35 plus fees, and bleacher seats are $25 plus fees. The Globetrotters will also offer a pre-show Magic Pass for an additional $15, which will allow passholders to meet the stars of the team, learn tricks, shoot hoops and take pictures on the court prior to the game. Military discounts are available on day-of tickets with a valid military ID. A military chairback seat is $29 plus fees, and a military bleacher seat is $19 plus fees.

According to a Globetrotters press release, the game will include more than 20 opportunities for fans to interact with team members before, during and after the event.

The Flying Globies, the Globetrotters' acrobatic trampoline dunk team, are included in the 2019 tour and will perform during breaks in the game. An interactive mobile app is new to the Globetrotters experience this year, and includes an augmented reality basketball toss game and exclusive image filters for social media.

In addition to 93 years of success in the entertainment business, the Globetrotters also hold 21 standing Guinness World Records. The most recent five records were set Nov. 8 in celebration of Guinness World Records Day, and include a somersault basketball shot made by Bull Bullard from 58 feet, 1.25 inches away from the hoop; most basketball under-the-leg tumbles in one minute (female) by Torch George (32); most blindfolded basketball slam dunks in one minute by Zeus McClurkin (five); most behind-the-back three-pointers in one minute, also by Zeus McClurkin (three); and most under-the-leg slam dunks by a team using a trampoline in one minute by the Flying Globies (28).

For more information on the Harlem Globetrotters, visit harlemglobetrotters.com. For information on their appearance at UT Martin, contact Chris Stachewicz, UT Martin Office of Campus Recreation, at 731-881-7746 or email csta-chew@utm.edu.
Local Residents Earn Degrees From UT Martin

Dec 31, 2018

Several Wayne County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held December 15, 2018, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students from Wayne County receiving undergraduate degrees were Keeton Scott Kelly, Caitlin Estes Leighton, Felicia Love, Lukas D. Pierce, and Chandler Dane Prince, all of Waynesboro.
Chester County resident Madison Reed receives degree from University of Tennessee at Martin

kmorris  Dec 31, 2018

Madison T. Reed, a Chester County resident, was among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 15 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.