Local UTM Students Attend NYC Conference

Martin, Tenn.—The University of Tennessee at Martin College of Business and Global Affairs sent seven marketing students to the American Advertising Federation Student Career Conference, held Nov. 21-24 in New York City. Dr. Ashley Kilburn, professor of marketing, accompanied the students, who were able to network with professionals in the advertising field and learn about new trends that influence society. Pictured from left are Mackenzie Palmer, of Norfolk, Massachusetts; Anna Barnes, of Martin; Kevin Laird, of Memphis; Molly Carpenter, of Union City; Lauren Hutchinson, of McEwen; Connor Hatcher, of Waynesboro; and Timmy Russell, of Adamsville.
UT Promise - The next phase

RANDY BOYD 12/3/2019

Four days, 14 schools visited, 4,800 students reached and 1,573 miles traveled - all to spread the word to high school juniors and seniors about the University of Tennessee’s new, innovative scholarship program called UT Promise.

UT Promise is a last-dollar scholarship program that guarantees free tuition and mandatory fees for qualifying Tennessee undergraduate students with a family household income of under $50,000 after other financial aid is received (such as Pell Grants, HOPE Scholarship or other institutional scholarships) at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and UT Health Science Center.

Students must qualify for the Tennessee Hope Scholarship and meet the academic qualifications for the institution to be eligible for this new scholarship.

But this scholarship is about more than access. It’s also about ensuring success. All eligible UT Promise students will be matched with volunteer mentors and will complete eight volunteer service hours each semester.

Since we launched the UT Promise statewide tour in Memphis, Martin, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and Tri-Cities, more than 2,500 applications have been submitted by Tennessee high school students. Incoming freshman must fill out the UT Promise application by Dec. 15 to be considered.

And now, the application process is open for current UT undergraduate students who wish to apply for the UT Promise scholarship. Additionally, qualifying Tennessee residents who meet the criteria for UT Promise can transfer from any institution.

Current UT students wishing to apply for UT Promise must complete the following steps:

**Deadlines**

**Steps for Eligible Current UT Students**

Feb. 1, 2020 • Complete the UT Promise Application - Current UT Students.

Feb. 1, 2020 • File the 2020-2021 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

July 1, 2020 • Complete and submit eight hours of community service. • Students may begin working on their service hours Feb. 2, 2020.

We are committed to helping our students achieve their dream of obtaining an undergraduate degree, and the UT Promise scholarship helps alleviate some of the financial burden many future and current college students face.

UT Promise will welcome its first class in the fall of 2020, and the scholarship program will include those students who were previously enrolled in college when the program begins in 2020.

UT Promise will be another tool in the state’s Drive to 55 workforce development initiative, which aims to get 55 percent of Tennesseans equipped with a college degree or certificate by the year 2025.

More information about UT Promise is available at: [https://tennessee.edu/ut-promise/](https://tennessee.edu/ut-promise/).

Randy Boyd is the president of the University of Tennessee.
UT MARTIN HONORS 20 YEARS OF SERVICE — Faculty and staff members who have served the University of Tennessee at Martin for 20 years as of 2019 were honored Oct. 31 during a luncheon reception. Pictured are (seated, from left) Linda Luther, Department of Nursing; Rebecca Baker, Physical Plant; Petra McPherson, Division of Finance and Administration; (back row, second from left) Pete Gibson, Physical Plant; Amy Belew, Information Technology Services; Joe Estes, Physical Plant; and Lane Last, Department of Visual and Theatre Arts. The group is pictured with Chancellor Keith Carver (back row, far left), who was dressed as Elvis Presley in preparation for the chancellor’s community trick-or-treat event that evening, and UT System Interim President Boyd. Not pictured are Dr. Michelle Merwin, Department of Psychology; Fimis Halkias, McWherter Agricultural Pavilion; and Cheryl Branon, Office of the

PARTNERSHIP POTENTIAL — Mr. Yong Gang David Guo (center), of TXWheels Education Investment Branch, and his wife, Mei Han Guo (left), visited the University of Tennessee at Martin in mid-November to discuss potential partnerships between UT Martin and Chinese universities in the fields of business, agriculture and education. Chancellor Keith Carver (right) has been invited to visit China in late spring 2020.

RECOGNIZING SERVICE TO THE STATE — Landy Fuqua (right), director of the University of Tennessee at Martin REED Center, received the 2019 Tennessee State Star Award from the Tennessee Small Business Development Center in September. She accepted the award as one of 50 national winners, one from each state, at the 39th-annual America's Small Business Development Center National Conference held Sept. 3. She is pictured with State Rep. Andy Holt, who recognized her accomplishments Nov. 26 with an on-campus presentation.
UTM’s LSA presents annual art bazaar

The League of Striving Artists, a student art organization at the University of Tennessee at Martin, will host its 6th annual Holiday Art Bazaar from 5-8 p.m. Thursday; 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday; and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, in the Fine Arts Building Gallery. The event is free and open to the public.

The holiday art bazaar will allow members of the community to purchase a variety of handmade gifts made by UT Martin art students, faculty and alumni. These items include holiday cards, paintings, scarves, ceramics, glass ornaments and more.

All items will be available for purchase, and proceeds will support the LSA Scholarship Award Fund. The UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts is sponsoring the event.

Guests may purchase items with cash, check or charge to support local artists.

LSA is a student art organization that encourages art enthusiasts and students in the areas of academics, community service, leadership and artistic development.

LSA also encourages art within the community by completing art-related service projects.

Many of the artists who hand-crafted the pieces for purchase will be in attendance at the bazaar.

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, LSA faculty adviser, at 731-881-3402 or email jstout@utm.edu.

“Support the Arts” (STARTS) 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/starts or contact the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.
MARTIN, Tenn. – The League of Striving Artists, a student art organization at the University of Tennessee at Martin, will host its annual holiday art bazaar from 5-8 p.m., Dec. 5; 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Dec. 6; and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Dec. 7, in the Fine Arts Building Gallery. The event is free and open to the public.

The holiday art bazaar will allow members of the community to purchase a variety of handmade gifts made by UT Martin art students, faculty and alumni. All items will be available for purchase, and proceeds will support the LSA Scholarship Award Fund. The UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts is sponsoring the event.

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Chancellor serves region, state as well as UT Martin campus

University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver continues to serve not only the university but also the region and state through committee membership and leadership in a variety of organizations.

Carver was announced recently as a member of the Jackson State Community College search advisory committee to fill the role of college president.

The committee's first meeting and public forum was held last month to gather public opinion on the characteristics, qualities and skills needed in JSCC's next president.

The college's fifth president, Dr. Allana Hamilton, was appointed vice chancellor for academic affairs of the College System of Tennessee by the Tennessee Board of Regents in September and assumed her new role at the system office in October.

UT Martin serves students on the Jackson State Community College campus through the UT Martin Jackson Center, which allows area students to finish their associate degrees at JSCC and transition seamlessly into a UT Martin bachelor's degree program in the same location.

Carver was also approved to serve as chair of the Ohio Valley Conference Board of Presidents in September after a change in the board's rotational schedule. He will serve as chair for the 2019-20 academic year followed by Dr. Glenda Glover, president of Tennessee State University, in 2020-21.

Carver also serves on the advisory council for the Tennessee Coalition for Better Health, an organization focused on improving policy at the public and institutional level to improve health outcomes in Tennessee. The advisory council is made up of 18 people who serve as a think-tank for the organization and help provide feedback and expert opinion on statewide programming and policy. The council's first meeting is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2020, in Nashville.

KEITH CARVER
State commissioner to address grads at UTM ceremony

Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, will be the commencement speaker during the University of Tennessee at Martin’s fall 2019 graduation ceremony.

The ceremony is set for 11 a.m. Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

It will be broadcast live on the university’s Facebook page for those unable to attend in person.

McWhorter was named commissioner on Jan. 19 after serving as statewide finance chair during Gov. Bill Lee’s campaign.

Prior to becoming commissioner, McWhorter served as co-founder and chairman of Clayton Associates and has more than 25 years of experience in entrepreneurship and early-stage investing. He has also served as chief executive officer of the Nashville Entrepreneur Center, which helps Nashville-based entrepreneurs create, launch and grow scalable businesses. He has previously served on the board of directors of FirstBank Financial Corporation and as chairman of the compensation committee as well as a member of the audit committee.

He earned his bachelor of science degree in management from Clemson University in South Carolina and a master’s degree in health administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

The fall commencement ceremony is expected to grant approximately 520 undergraduate degrees and approximately 60 graduate degrees to those who completed the academic requirements to graduate during either the summer or fall 2019 semesters.

Visit facebook.com/UTMartin to access the live broadcast beginning at 11 a.m. Dec. 14.
Local students attend UTM event

Taylor Mayfield, left, and Madison Olds, right, both of Ripley, attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's Fall Preview Day on Nov. 16. They are both current students at Halls High School. The students are pictured with Mayfield's family members Kiley and Dusty Mayfield while visiting the campus. During preview days, high school students have the opportunity to hear about the UT Martin experience from a panel of current students. Those attending are then able to meet faculty members in their departments of interest and tour the main campus. For more information, visit utm.edu/previewday or contact the UT Martin Office of Admissions at 731-881-7020.
Guest speakers and UT Martin staff members attended the Debt Free Celebration last week at UT Martin Somerville Center. Pictured are Fayette County Mayor Skip Taylor; Charlie Deal–University of Tennessee at Martin executive director of Research, Outreach and Economic Development; Richard Rucker; Martin Mostzy; Senator Dolores Gresham; Somerville Mayor Ronnie Nell; Molly McCarter; Kara Topp–Director of UT Martin Somerville Center; and far right Bob Turner, Somerville city administrator.

In only 28 months, the UT Martin Somerville Center is completely DEBT FREE. There was a Debt Free celebration Open House from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the UT Martin Somerville Center on Monday, November 25, 2019. Light refreshments were served to the many guests who attended. There was a presentation at 5:30 pm in the Community Hall, with guest speakers Mayor Skip Taylor, Senator Dolores Gresham, Somerville Mayor Ronnie Nell, and Charlie Deal of UT Martin speaking. A special thanks was given to all the donors who contributed to this project including: Methodist La Romp Hospital, the State of Tennessee, the Fayette County Government, the University of Tennessee at Martin, the University of Tennessee Foundation and citizens and businesses from Fayette County who donated toward the construction phase and continue to donate funds toward the Center.

Left to right, Georgette and Bob Turner, La Grange Mayor Bill Cowan, Phyllis and Mayor Skip Taylor, Senator Dolores Gresham, and Jan Taylor at the event.
Somerville Alderman Mike French, Community Development Director Mendi Donnelly, Vice-Mayor Sandra Myers, County Commissioner Betsy Rice, and UT Martin Somerville Director Kara Tapp.

Somerville Mayor Ronnie Neill, La Grange Mayor Bill Cowan, Oakland Mayor Chris Goodman, and Somerville Alderman Jason Hamilton.
Morris

...From Front Page

Dr. Morris, a retired UT Martin Biology Professor PhD, oversaw Weakley County's educational system as chairman for nearly a quarter of a century and spent many years in the classroom at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Dr. Morris was a graduate of Gleason High School, Bethel University, Murray State University, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

School Superintendent Randy Frazier said, "Dr. Morris was elected to the Weakley County School Board in 1987 and participated in his last board meeting in January of 2018. Twenty-three of his 30 years in leadership were as the board chair. During that time, he oversaw a number of building projects and helped implement standards that elevated student learning across the county."

"Dr. Morris maintained a low-key posture in his leadership role but was widely respected statewide. Quiet and very thoughtful in his decision-making, he brought the perspective of having taught in both public schools and the university to the table when discussing issues. After teaching for many years in Palmersville, he went on to earn his doctorate, and that range of experience meant he had a perspective of what our students needed to be successful in post-secondary work."

"He was a friend to students, teachers and staff and was always willing to listen," Frazier added.

In addition to being an educator, Dr. Morris was a U.S. Army Veteran.

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Gordon Morris

Former Educator
Morris dies at 82

MARTIN (November 30) — Longtime educator and Weakley County School Board Chairman Dr. Gordon Morris of Sharon, Tennessee, died Saturday, November 30, 2019, at Diversicare in Martin, Tennessee, at the age of 82.

See MORRIS on Page 3
McWhorter to Speak at UT Martin Commencement

MARTIN — Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, is the commencement speaker during the University of Tennessee at Martin's fall 2019 graduation ceremony, 11 a.m., Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. The ceremony will be broadcast live on the university's Facebook page for those unable to attend in person.

McWhorter was named commissioner on Jan. 19, 2019, after serving as statewide finance chair during Gov. Bill Lee's campaign. Prior to becoming commissioner, McWhorter served as co-founder and chairman of Clayton Associates and has more than 25 years of experience in entrepreneurship and early-stage investing. He has also served as CEO of the Nashville Entrepreneur Center, which helps Nashville-based entrepreneurs create, launch and grow scalable businesses. He has previously served on the board of directors of FirstBank Financial Corporation and as chairman of the compensation committee as well as a member of the audit committee.

He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in management from Clemson University in South Carolina and a master's degree in health administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

UT Martin's fall commencement ceremony is expected to grant approximately 520 undergraduate degrees and approximately 60 graduate degrees to those who completed the academic requirements to graduate during either the summer or fall 2019 semesters.
Landy Fuqua (right), director of the University of Tennessee at Martin REED Center, received the 2019 Tennessee State Star Award from the Tennessee Small Business Development Center in September. She accepted the award as one of 50 national winners, one from each state, at the 38th-annual America’s Small Business Development Center National Conference held September 3. She is pictured with State Rep. Andy Holt, who recognized her accomplishments November 26 with an on-campus presentation.

Mr. YongGang David Guo (center), of TXWheels Education Investment Branch, and his wife, Mei Han Guo (left), visited the University of Tennessee at Martin in mid-November to discuss potential partnerships between UT Martin and Chinese universities in the fields of business, agriculture and education. Chancellor Keith Carver (right) has been invited to visit China in late spring 2020.
'A beautiful partnership': Lipscomb, UT-Martin launch leadership program for rural students

Published 5:26 p.m. CT Dec. 5, 2019 | Updated 8:15 a.m. CT Dec. 6, 2019

Lipscomb University President L. Randolph Lowry III, left, and UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver, right, sign an agreement for a new partnership to create a rural education program. (Photo: Lipscomb University)

Lipscomb University and the University of Tennessee at Martin on Thursday announced a new program focused on developing a new generation of leaders in rural parts of the state.

The schools unveiled the new initiative, called the Rural Leadership Scholars Program, during an event Thursday afternoon at Lipscomb.

As part of the program, in exchange for committing to return to a rural Tennessee community after graduation, students can earn an undergraduate degree at a reduced cost from UT Martin and a master of arts degree in leadership and public service from Lipscomb University in Nashville.

The first group of master's students will enter the program at Lipscomb in the fall of 2020.
In a statement, Lipscomb University described the goal of the program as developing master's degree-educated rural leaders "who will commit their careers to developing the rural segments of the state."

"This is really, really important work," Lipscomb University President L. Randolph Lowry, said at a signing ceremony to formalize the partnership.

"We as an institution need to be educating individuals who will go into the public sector, tackle those challenges that frankly can't be tackled by anyone else."

UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver called the agreement a "beautiful partnership" between the two institutions.

"The merger of these two programs where we take academic study of leadership, applying it — it's taking two great things and making a beautiful partnership," Carver said. "We are extremely excited about this and to see the impact that this will have."

State Rep. Mark White, chair of the House education committee, is the director of leadership and public service at Lipscomb University.

"The need for community leadership in all social contexts has never been greater than in the present, whether the context is urban, rural, suburban, economically challenged or affluent," White, R-Memphis, said in a statement on the program.

The program will include hands-on learning experiences in city and county governments, businesses and public and private organizations in Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, Knoxville and in small towns, including mentoring by top leaders around the state.
It will be offered in a flexible format to accommodate working students.

Courses will focus on leadership in rural and statewide settings, interacting with a range of interest groups, budget management and other topics.

"Leadership is difficult and only slightly more difficult in rural communities," said Jake Bynum, the mayor of Weakley County, Tennessee, and a student in Lipscomb's Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Service program.

"The challenges that our rural communities face are like nothing that we see in a lot of areas. With 70 counties across the state that are primarily rural counties, developing leaders in those areas is vitally important. It's my hope that those communities will encourage their local leaders to participate in this program to give their communities a better understanding of how they can be served more successfully."
UT Martin fall 2019 commencement set

Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, will be the commencement speaker during the University of Tennessee at Martin’s fall 2019 graduation ceremony, scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. The ceremony will be broadcast live on the university’s Facebook page for those unable to attend in person.

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Visit facebook.com/UTMartin to access the live broadcast beginning at 11 a.m. Dec. 14.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7612.

UT MARTIN STUDENTS ATTEND CONFERENCE — The University of Tennessee at Martin College of Business and Global Affairs sent seven marketing students to the American Advertising Federation Student Career Conference, held Nov. 21-24 in New York City, New York. Dr. Ashley Kilburn, professor of marketing, accompanied the students, who were able to network with professionals in the advertising field and learn about new trends that influence society. Pictured are (from left) Mackenzie Palmer of Norfolk, Massachusetts; Anna Barnes of Martin; Kevin Laird of Memphis; Molly Carpenter of Union City; Lauren Hutchinson of McEwen; Connor Hatcher of Waynesboro; and Timmy Russell of Adamsville.
UTM students place third in regional programming contest

Jay Downing of Hendersonville, Fate Hardin of Brentwood and Lukas Saul of Franklin won third place for the University of Tennessee at Martin during a local site competition of the Association for Computing Machinery International Collegiate Programming Contest, held Nov. 2 at UT Martin. The team solved the first two competition problems in under 10 minutes.

UT Martin has hosted this local site competition for four years and was among eight other host sites across the region for 2019. Fifteen teams from Austin Peay State University, Murray State University, Rhodes College, UT Martin and the University of Memphis competed in the five-hour competition, which tests a variety of computer programming skills through a series of challenges. Hundreds of other teams competed simultaneously at other locations across the region.

Downing, a junior, Hardin and Saul, both seniors, are computer science majors. Other UT Martin students who participated in the competition were James Chapman of Bartlett; Samantha Clayton and Cody Gonowski, both of Martin; Grace Looney of Millington; and Hayden Nanney of Dresden.

For more information on the UT Martin Department of Computer Science, contact the department at 731-881-7391 to speak with an academic adviser.

A trip to Italy: Le Contrade di Siena

A partnership between the University of Tennessee at Martin and the Dante Alighieri Society in Siena, Italy, has made it possible for UTM students to take part in an ongoing study abroad program. Six students through Dr. Jeff Longacre’s “Creative Non-Fiction: Travel Writing” class are a part of this unique program and plan to tell about their experiences living, traveling and studying in Italy for a series in The Press. The final segment comes from UTM student Erin Stone, who talks about the value of family in the foreign country.

By ERIN STONE
Special to The Press

Everyone has something that makes him/her unique.

CONTRADE — Siena, Italy is made up of 17 contrade, districts, that models the structure of family. Neighborhoods have their own colors and symbols.

It may be a certain skill, or it may be a specific habit. For the people of Siena, Italy, it's their contrade.

There are a total of 17 contrade, or ‘districts,’ within the city walls of Siena: Aquila (eagle), Brucio (caterpillar), Chiocciola (snail), Civetta (owl), Drago (dragon), Giraffa (giraffe), Istrice (porcupine), Leocorno (unicorn), Lupa (she-wolf), Nicchio (shell), Oca (goose), Onda (wave), Pantera (panther), Selva (forest), Tartuca (turtle), Torre (tower) and Valdimontone (valley of the ram).

These contrade, unlike your typical neighborhood or district in Northwest Tennessee, come complete with official colors, symbols, and even associated enemies and allies.

The contrada della Selva, for example, is represented by a rhinoceros adorned in armor standing in front of a lush tree that holds hunter’s tools, such as a bow and arrow.

The contrada’s colors are orange, green, and white, and — while they have no enemies — they have two allies: Tartuca and Chiocciola. Although these dis-
ITALY
From Page 1

tinctions most definitely set the members of Selva apart from the others, it's the overall loyalty and pride of Selva, or any other contrada, that makes the city stand out as one firmly grounded in community and unity.

Before I had even arrived in Siena, I had discovered the contrade of Siena through videos of an event known as the Palio. In the Palio, 10 of Siena's contrade compete for glory and a beautifully decorated banner (the Palio) by racing horses topped with jockeys who wear their contrada's respective colors.

This is a tradition that has been around for centuries, dating back to the early 17th Century. I was immediately entranced by the excitement and chaos that ensued for a mere 75 seconds. I watched in astonishment as a man wearing a bright green-and-yellow jacket was torn from his horse and violently jerked around as a mass of people hugged and kissed him. Only seconds later, though, I witnessed that same crowd cry in disbelief as it was declared that the horse that had tied with him, even though it bore no jockey, had won instead. Despite their loss, the members of what I would soon discover to be the noble contrada del Bruno marched on and chanted their motto proudly.

After watching this event, I found myself diving as far into the internet as I could in an attempt to search for anything and everything pertaining to these mysterious contrade.

I was like a child on Christmas when we arrived in Siena, after spending a couple of days in Rome, that first weekend we were in Italy. I immediately searched for signs of the contrada's existence. It was like a fairytale was coming to life for me and I would get to live for three months in this mystical world divided, yet united, by invisible borders.

I soon discovered my apartment was in the contrada della Selva, who happened to be the most recent Palio winners; the Palio happens twice every year, on June 2 and Aug. 16.

Immediately upon arriving to the district, you could see the lanterns and flags hanging in the streets. I found it peculiar that night to see only Selva adorned in light, but soon it was explained to me that only the winning contrada is allowed to keep their lights on throughout the year, at least until the next Palio the following summer.

Other contrade are allowed to put up their lights during celebrations, but it is only the winning contrada that gets the honor of displaying their lights every night. This was just the first of many things I would come to learn about the unique contrade.

The first weekend of staying in Siena wasn't even over before I began to understand just how much pride members have in their contrada. At around midnight on that Monday night came the sounds of drums beating and people screaming.

I thought there was a party happening in the small piazza (square) below my window and, with little thought, I promptly turned over with the full intention of falling swiftly back to sleep, except sleep never came, and the sounds only grew louder.

Finally, under the impression that there must have been some kind of important event going on outside, I opened my shutters, and looked below in the street, only for my eyes to be met with a large crowd screaming chants in Italian as they raised their fists to the heavens.

To this day I've never heard anything quite like the sound of a contrada chanting as one. It sounded as if an army was storming the streets screaming and cheering their victory song. I was amazed at how they were all perfectly in time and in tune.

More interesting than the constant chants that went on that weekend, which marked the one-month anniversary of Selva's winning the Palio, was the night of Oct. 5. Saturday, Oct. 5 was the day of the Victory Dinner in celebration of Selva's Palio win.

From my towering window, I watched as all members, young and old, gathered in order to start the impossible task of setting up the Victory Dinner in front of the Duomo di Siena. At first glance, the piazza at the bottom of the Duomo doesn't appear to be that large. It's just a small area of cobblestone tucked away from the street right at the feet of the basilica of the glorious Duomo, or cathedral. It took almost a day and a half, even with countless volunteers, to set up the beautiful scene of the Victory Dinner. Stereos lined the buildings and tables filled the streets, dressed in pure white tablecloths with simple green and orange stripes along the edges.

Each seat was carefully decorated with colored ribbons and a glistening silver plate with silverware placed carefully on top of cream placemats. Flags were placed in every possible flag holder, and even the small statue above a little grey shop was given a green, orange and white silk neckerchief.

At the top of the steps sat two long, curved tables for the jockey, the president and other government members, and behind them sat the giant and glorious Palio banner itself.

The Palio banner was surrounded by the bright greens and oranges of the Selva flags, with a flag on each side of the banner for Selva's two allies: Tartuca and Chioccoli.

Finally, in front of the officials' tables, sat a large white stable packed with dirt and a green wreath for the guest of honor: the winning horse himself.

The festivities went well into the night. I eagerly watched from my window as guests arrived around 5 p.m. to chat and socialize before beginning the procession around 6:30-7 p.m. Dinner wasn't even thought of until almost 9 p.m., which is normal throughout a majority of Italy and Italian culture, while partying and dancing and general celebrations lasted until well past 3 a.m.

This didn't stop members from showing up the next morning ready to restore the piazza to its former self. It was extremely humbling to see this course of events through my lone three-story window from above.

I was in awe of the dedication and loyalty that this group of people had to one another and to their contrada; your contrada is your family. It's your blood.
DR. SIMPHRONIA TAYLOR, right, Ripley Rotarian, was the guest speaker for the noon meeting Tuesday, November 19th. She shared information about a recent workshop at UT Martin in Ripley, where she serves as director at the facility in Ripley. She is pictured with Ethel Jones, left, club president.

https://www.thunderboltradio.com/

Lipscomb, UT Martin partner for Rural Leadership Scholars Program

Posted on December 6, 2019 by Steve James
(https://www.thunderboltradio.com/author/stevejames/) in Local News
(https://www.thunderboltradio.com/category/local-news/)
Lipscomb University and UT Martin are partnering to launch a new Rural Leadership Scholars Program designed to develop leaders across Tennessee with a particular focus on those from the state’s 70 rural counties as investment in leadership development and education in the state.

UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver said, "When I think about this collaboration and what UT Martin is doing in the 21 rural counties in and around west Tennessee and what Lipscomb is doing in terms of leadership, service, and advocacy with the curriculum and this program; the merger of these two programs where we take academic study of leadership applying it, it’s taking two great things and making a beautiful partnership. We’re extremely excited about this and to see the impact that this will have."

As part of the partnership, students earn their undergraduate degree at UT Martin and a Master of Arts degree in leadership and public service from Lipscomb University’s College of Leadership & Public Service. Students who agree to return to an officially designated rural community in Tennessee after completing their education will receive support and scholarships that will greatly reduce the cost of the last two years of the undergraduate degree as well as the master’s degree.

A select group of students from UT Martin will complete their undergraduate education at UT Martin and then complete a Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Service at Lipscomb University with an emphasis in rural initiatives.

The first cohort of students will enter the Master of Arts program at Lipscomb in fall 2020.
Lipscomb, UT-Martin launch leadership program

Partnership aims to help students living in rural communities

Natalie Allison
Nashville Tennessean
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Lipscomb University and the University of Tennessee at Martin on Thursday announced a new program focused on developing a new generation of leaders in rural parts of the state.

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“This is really, really important work,” Lipscomb University President L. Randolph Lowry, Lipscomb University said at a signing ceremony to formalize the partnership.

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“The need for community leadership in all social contexts has never been greater than in the present, whether the context is urban, rural, suburban, economically challenged or affluent,” White, R-Memphis, said in a statement on the program.

The program will include hands-on learning experiences in city and county governments, businesses and public and private organizations in Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, Knoxville and in small towns, including mentoring by top leaders around the state.

It will be offered in a flexible format to accommodate working students.

Courses will focus on leadership in rural and statewide settings, interacting with a range of interest groups, budget management and other topics.
"The need for community leadership in all social contexts has never been greater than in the present, whether the context is urban, rural, suburban, economically challenged or affluent."

State Rep. Mark White

"Leadership is difficult and only slightly more difficult in rural communities," said Jake Bynum, the mayor of Weakley County, Tennessee, and a student in Lipscomb's Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Service program.

"The challenges that our rural communities face are like nothing that we see in a lot of areas. With 70 counties across the state that are primarily rural counties, developing leaders in those areas is vitally important. It's my hope that those communities will encourage their local leaders to participate in this program to give their communities a better understanding of how they can be served more successfully."

Reach Natalie Allison at nallison@tennessean.com. Follow her on Twitter at @natalie_allison.
The department of music at the University of Tennessee at Martin has announced the following performances at the school.

**Community Music Academy Recital**
The UTM Community Music Academy will present its fall recital on Saturday at 3 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital Hall.
Performers range from beginning to advanced students who take lessons for voice, woodwind, brass, percussion and string instruments with UTM faculty and students.
It is free and open to the public.
For more information on the UTM Community Music Academy or to enroll in lessons, visit www.utm.edu/communitymusic.

**State Line Saxophone Ensemble Recital**
The State Line Saxophone Ensemble, under the direction of UTM alumnus Joseph Sam, will perform on Dec. 22 at 3 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital Hall located in the Fine Arts Building. The group will play classic selections for the holidays with a modern twist. On the same bill, Doug Owens will present Ding Dong Double Reeds II, returning this year with more double reed Yuletide action than should ever be allowed within the limits of good taste. Bassoonists, oboists and saxophonists of all ages are invited to participate in this event.
Contact Dr. Douglas Owens at dowens14@utm.edu by Sunday to register.
NASHVILLE — Lipscomb University has launched a new Rural Leadership Scholars Program, an initiative designed to develop leaders across Tennessee with a particular focus on those from the state’s 70 rural counties as investment in leadership development and education in the state.

On Thursday Lipscomb announced its first partnership in the program with the University of Tennessee at Martin. UT Martin is located in Weakley County, with a population of more than 33,000.

"This is really, really important work," said L. Randolph Lowry, Lipscomb University president, at a signing ceremony to formalize the partnership.

"We as an institution need to be educating individuals who will go into the public sector, tackle those challenges that frankly can’t be tackled by anyone else. I’m excited to see this new program here emerge and to imagine what that could do for our state in the next five, 10 or 15 years. I think a program that calls people to be collaborative and to listen and learn and then to say let’s do this together. Lipscomb University and the University of Tennessee at Martin is one example of that and seeing what together we can do for the state of Tennessee is pretty powerful," Lowry added.

Keith Carver, chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Martin, said among the most important considerations in life are people, relationships and experiences.

"What people are you surrounding yourself with? How are you pouring into those people with relationships, and with experiences, what are you spending your time doing," Carver asked the crowd gathered for the celebration.

"When I think about this collaboration and what the University of Tennessee at Martin is doing in the 21 rural counties in and around west Tennessee and what Lipscomb is doing in terms of leadership, service and advocacy with the curriculum and this program. The merger of these two programs where we take academic study of leadership and applying it — it’s taking two great things and making a beautiful partnership. We are extremely excited about this and to see the impact that this will have," Carver added.

As part of the partnership, students earn their undergraduate degree at UT Martin and a Master of Arts degree in leadership and public service from Lipscomb University’s College of Leadership & Public Service.

Students who agree to return to an officially-designated rural community in Tennessee after completing their education will receive support and scholarships that will greatly reduce the cost of the last two years of the undergraduate degree as well as the master’s degree.

A select group of students from UT Martin will complete their undergraduate education at UT Martin and then complete a Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Service at Lipscomb University with an emphasis in rural initiatives.

As part of their master’s studies, students will continue to live in their rural community and serve their community through projects and work. The goal is to produce master’s degree-educated rural leaders who will commit their careers to developing the rural segments of the state.

"Every community has unique needs and must have leaders who possess the capacity to both understand community complexities as well as the knowledge base to contend with the challenges that inevitably arise. Most importantly, community leaders must have the capability to respond by implementing solutions-focused interventions and policies," said Rep. Mark White (R-District 83), director of leadership and public service at Lipscomb.

"The need for community leadership in all social contexts has never been greater than in the present, whether the context is urban, rural, suburban, economically challenged or affluent," he continued.

"This program is a unique opportunity for current and future leaders across the state to make an impact on these communities. We are excited about this partnership with the University of Tennessee at Martin as we work together to engage, equip, and empower those who strive to serve the common good," White said.

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Leadership and Public Service at Lipscomb University has been created and designed to train leaders who can serve strong communities by implementing tangible solutions.

"Leadership is difficult, and only slightly more difficult in rural communities," said Jake Bynum, Weakley County mayor and student in Lipscomb’s Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Service program.

"The challenges that our rural communities face are like nothing that we see in a lot of areas. With 70 counties across the state that are primarily rural counties, developing leaders in those areas is vitally important. It’s my hope that those communities will encourage their local leaders to participate in this program to give their communities a better understanding of how they can be served more successfully. I’m proud that these two institutions who have understood leadership development for years now have made an even larger commitment to the growth of that leadership development," Bynum added.

Students will have the opportunity to discover ways to lead and serve with the State of Tennessee as a laboratory, providing a firsthand view of how this vibrant and growing state deals with dilemmas and opportunities.

Accordingly, Tennessee’s cities, counties, businesses and public and private organizations offer countless opportunities for field placements designed to help students gain a valuable understanding of diverse policy issues.

The program includes immersive learning experiences throughout the state in cities like Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville, as well as many of Tennessee’s smaller cities, towns and rural communities to learn the dynamics of leadership and governance in a variety of contexts and to explore how the policy development process works from current leaders.

"This truly has the potential to lead to a better, stronger Tennessee for years to come. It also has

SEE UTM
the potential to change the trajectory of thousands of lives, lives of those even yet unborn," Michael Anastasi, vice president/news and executive editor of the Tennessean and the TN Media Network, said in remarks made at the ceremony.

"Thank you Dr. Lowry and Dr. Carver for your vision, your commitment and your courage to take on something so bold. Because of my job I have the opportunity to get to know and work with leaders from Knoxville to Memphis and many places in between. I especially enjoy driving the backroads of those towns because I came from one just like them. One in rural northern California. A town of population 500," he added.

The first cohort of students will enter the Master of Arts program at Lipscomb in fall 2020.

The program, which may be completed in one year, facilitates the building of critical skills in leadership, communication and conflict resolution. Courses will focus on innovative leadership in rural and statewide settings, data analysis, connecting the community to resources, negotiation and conflict management, working productively in cross-sector settings, communicating to diverse interest groups and budget management among other topics.

Students will also study with and be mentored by top leaders from across Tennessee and will develop a statewide support system and network of resources. Part of the course of study will also include developing an initiative that is built around the needs of a particular community and then implementing it.

The program will be offered in a flexible format for working professionals. After students complete their studies, Lipscomb will continue to support graduates of the program with professional development opportunities and a statewide network of resources.

"Several years ago now, we created the Master of Arts Degree in Leadership and Public Service to train leaders who can serve strong communities by implementing tangible solutions. The genesis of the Master of Arts program was predicated on both informal and formal guidance of local, state, regional, and national public servants," said Michelle Steele, director of the Master of Arts in Leadership & Public Service at Lipscomb University.

"Today, we are taking the degree to the next level of service. We have been the place where Tennessee turns for leadership and today, we are making a formal statement of this commitment through our new partnership with the University of Tennessee at Martin. Through this partnership, we will teach students matriculating at both Universities to discover ways to lead and serve with the State of Tennessee as their primary laboratory, providing a firsthand view of how this vibrant and growing state deals with dilemmas and opportunities," Steele added.
UT MARTIN HONORS 15 YEARS OF SERVICE — Faculty and staff members who have served the University of Tennessee at Martin for 15 years as of 2019 were honored Oct. 31 during a luncheon reception. Pictured are (seated from left) Dr. Dawn Wilkins, Department of Biological Sciences; Tammy Stanford, Student Success Center; Dr. David Carithers, Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages; Avery Lawson, Building Services; Sharon Waterfield, Child and Family Grant Program; Dr. Amy Yeung, Department of Music; Dr. Charles Hammond, Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages; (back row, second from left) Debi Adcock, Division of Student Affairs; Janie Hamilton, Custodial Services; Dr. Kurt Gorman, Department of Music; Jamie Hamilton, Building Services; Dr. Misganaw Getaneh, Department of Chemistry and Physics; Brad Burkett, Physical Plant; and Brian Stubblefield, Information Technology Services. The group is pictured with Chancellor Keith Carver (back row, far left), who was dressed as Elvis Presley in preparation for the chancellor’s community trick-or-treat event that evening. Not pictured are Dr. Denise Williams, Department of Management, Marketing and Information Systems; Jennifer Stroh and Tony Warmath, Division of Student Affairs; Dr. Mark Simmons, Department of Music; Dr. Mohammad Obadat, Department of Engineering; Dr. Paula Moore and Susan Lemond, Department of Accounting, Finance, Economics and Political Science; David Klinkefus, Custodial Services; and Bart Belew, Office of Intercollegiate Athletics.
Local students attend WestStar's RisingStar Leadership Summit

Two Dyer County students attended the WestStar Leadership Program's 2019 RisingStar Leadership Summit held Nov. 15 at the University of Tennessee at Martin. RisingStar is a youth program for high school juniors and seniors designed to build leadership skills and personal confidence for students in West Tennessee. Pictured are (l-r) Virginia Grimes, program director, and students Madelyn Webb and Jared Norman. For more information on the WestStar Leadership Program or RisingStar, contact Grimes, at 731-881-7298.
**UT-Martin Music Events**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5TH**

**Wind Ensemble & Concert Band Concert**

The UTM Wind Ensemble will present their second performance of the year, "Americana," on Thursday, December 5th at 7:30 p.m. in The Harriet Fulton Theatre in the Fine Arts Building. This performance is shared by the UTM Concert Band and their conductor, Steve Barnett. The Wind Ensemble portion of the program includes wind band masterworks, both old and new. This program of American music opens with Clare Grundman’s American Folk Rhapsody, No. 2, conducted by the Instrumental Conducting Competition Winner, senior Music Education major, Annias Haney. Dr. Mark Simmons will serve as guest conductor for the next work in the program, William Schuman’s setting of the traditional American hymn, When Jesus Wept. The Wind Ensemble pays tribute to our armed forces with a performance of composer and Marine Corps veteran Onsby Rose’s monumental Symphony No. 1 "Heroes". This four-movement work is a musical depiction of life as a member of the armed forces with movement titles "From Sea, From Above, From Land, and For the Fallen.” The performance will conclude with the national march of the United States, The Stars and Stripes Forever, by John Philip Sousa. The performance is free and open to the public.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**

**Doug Owens, Faculty Recital**

Douglas Owens will perform works for oboe, bassoon and saxophone by Heiden, Cimarosa, Dunhill and Bedard with pianist Lisa Powell. Admission is free to this event.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**

**Community Music Academy Recital**

The UTM Community Music Academy will present its fall recital on Saturday, December 14th, at 3 p.m. Performers range from beginning to advanced students who take lessons for voice, woodwind, brass, percussion, and string instruments with UTM faculty and students. The recital will begin at 3 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital Hall; it is free and open to the public.

For more information on the UTM Community Music Academy or to enroll in lessons, please visit www.utm.edu/communitymusic

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH**

**State Line Saxophone Ensemble Recital**

Come celebrate the sounds of the season with the State Line Saxophone Ensemble under the direction of UTM Alumnus Joseph Sam. The group will perform classic selections for the holidays with a modern twist. On the same bill, Doug Owens will present Ding Dong Double Reeds II, returning this year with more double reed Yuletide action than should ever be allowed within the limits of good taste. Bassoonists, oboists and saxophonists of all ages are invited to participate in this event. Contact Dr. Douglas Owens at dowens14@utm.edu by December 15th to register.
UTM represented at trustees meeting

The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met last month in Knoxville for its annual fall session. UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver presented details on the university’s strategic enrollment plan during a separate meeting of the board’s finance and administration committee.

Carver’s presentation included information about the addition of three university positions: a bilingual recruiter, a financial aid director and a university videographer to assist with marketing to a broader section of the region’s potential students.

UT Martin is currently working with Buffalo Noel Levitz, an international leader in higher education enrollment and fundraising research, to develop a five-year enrollment plan.

In other board news, UT Interim President Randy Boyd informed trustees that work to reunify UT Knoxville and the UT Institute of Agriculture continues, as does planning for the creation of the Oak Ridge Institute. During the annual meeting in June, trustees approved both initiatives and requested progress reports be presented during the fall meeting. These initiatives seek to increase collaboration and to raise UT in national rankings.

Boyd said the UT Institute of Agriculture and UT Knoxville Land-grant Reunification Team hosted 39 listening sessions within the university and throughout the state. They also shared a survey with more than 5,000 individuals to collect additional data. The team compiled what they heard and the survey results into a report submitted to Boyd, UT Knoxville Chancellor Donde Plowman and Senior Vice President/Senior Vice Chancellor Tim Cross.

“We have more great ideas than we can incorporate in the next five years,” Boyd said. “Now we need to prioritize them.”

After reviewing the report, Ms. Plowman and Cross are addressing UTIA funding issues and needs, resolving parking and transit issues and involving UT Institute of Agriculture in the UT Knoxville Strategic Visioning process.

Boyd also created the UT Commission on Agriculture to help UT leaders hear directly from people, communities and industries involved in agriculture in order to better serve them.

“There are things that we can do now to make UT Institute of Agriculture and UT Knoxville stronger,” Boyd said.

Boyd also updated trustees on the ongoing plans for the Oak Ridge Institute. The institute seeks to capitalize on UT and Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s long-standing partnership by recruiting 60 new UT researchers and 60 new ORNL scientists. It would grow the collaborative Ph.D. program to 500 students and would have a goal of attracting more than $150 million in research funding.

“If we accomplish this, it would make UT a top 30 public research institution and lead to enhanced economic development opportunities for the region,” Boyd said. “I think 10 years from now this will be one of the biggest impacts that we could make.”

A 14-person steering committee with representation from both UT and ORNL has held information sessions and developed foundational principals and a system of accountability to make sure the institute’s long-term goals will be met. The committee will deliver its official recommendations by Dec. 31.

Boyd also informed the trustees of positive momentum across the UT System, including exceeding Tennessee’s goals for bachelor’s degrees awarded by almost 450 degrees, UT awarded more than 12,000 degrees in 2018-19. More than 51,000 students are enrolled at UT campuses this fall, which includes increased freshman enrollment of 0.7 percent at UT Knoxville, 2.4 percent at Chattanooga and 1.5 percent at UT Martin. UT Knoxville saw an overall enrollment increase of 2 percent and UT Martin had an increase of 3.3 percent.

These overall percentages could increase with the introduction of UT Promise, UT Promise, which begins in fall of 2020, is a last-dollar scholarship program that guarantees free tuition and mandatory fees after other financial aid is received for qualifying Tennessee undergraduate students who have a family household income of less than $50,000 annually.

The program will be available at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and the UT Health Science Center.
ATTEND CONFERENCE — The University of Tennessee at Martin College of Business and Global Affairs sent seven marketing students to the American Advertising Federation Student Career Conference, held last month in New York City. UT Martin professor of marketing Dr. Ashley Kilburn accompanied the students, who were able to network with professionals in the advertising field and learn about new trends that influence society. The participants included (from left) Mackenzie Palmer of Norfolk, Mass., Anna Barnes of Martin, Kevin Laird of Memphis, Molly Carpenter of Union City, Lauren Hutchinson of McEwen, Connor Hatcher of Waynesboro and Timmy Russell of Adamsville.

VISIT UT MARTIN — Obion County Central High School student Kaylee Cook (right) of Union City attended the University of Tennessee at Martin’s Fall Preview Day recently. She was joined by her mother, Lori Cook, while visiting the campus. During preview days, high school students have the opportunity to hear about the UT Martin experience from a panel of current students. Those attending are then able to meet faculty members in their departments of interest and tour the main campus.
At the college level

Several Obion County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-21 academic year. All of them will be freshmen at UT Martin.

The recipients include:
- Jett Allen of Troy, son of Jeff and Michelle Allen, who received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Dylan Boyle of Union City, son of Erik Boyle, who received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Isaac Copeland of Rives, son of Cindy Copeland, who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Will Crawford of Union City, son of Amy Crawford and Richard Crawford, who received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Jeremiah Fitzgerald of Troy, son of David and Sherrie Fitzgerald, who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Monserrat Guerrero of Union City, daughter of Jaime and Maria Guerrero, who received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Dalton Hall of South Fulton, son of Tammy Hall, who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Sara Hedgepath of South Fulton, daughter of Cathy Hedgepath, who received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Elizabeth Huggins of Union City, daughter of Dan and Julie Huggins, who received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Brandon Hutchison of South Fulton, son of Richard and Shannon Hutchison, who received the Achieve Scholarship.
- John David Kersey of Troy, son of Wade Kersey and Wendy Kersey, who received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Macy Little of Kenton, daughter of Greg and Kim Little, who received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Abigail Potts of South Fulton, daughter of Jonna Swindler and Gerald Potts, who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Bradley Strain of Troy, son of Christyna and Matthew Wilson and Bradley Strain Sr., who received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Lillian Virden of Union City, daughter of Letha and Jeremy Virden, who received the Achieve Scholarship.

Administrators Meet — Dr. Dawn Fortin Mattoon of Buffalo Noel Levitz gave the keynote address during the first Southern Regional Branch Campus Administrators’ Conference recently at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The National Association of Branch Campus Administrators represents more than 100 university, community, state and technical college campuses in the U.S. and abroad.
Local students attended WestStar summit

Four Lauderdale County students attended the WestStar Leadership Program’s 2019 RisingStar Leadership Summit held Nov. 15 at the University of Tennessee at Martin. RisingStar is a youth program for high school juniors and seniors designed to build leadership skills and personal confidence for students in West Tennessee. Pictured are, from left, Virginia Grimes, program Director; students Hayden Cherry, Madeleine Haynes, Colby Maclin and Coleman Bonds; and Jordan Gardner, program specialist.
Area students earn UTM scholarships

Several local students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-2021 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Among scholarship recipients are:
- Dalton Hall, of South Fulton, son of Tammy Hall, will be a freshman. He received the Deans Scholarship.
- Sara Hedgepath, of South Fulton, daughter of Cathy Hedgepath, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Brandon Hutchison, of South Fulton, son of Richard and Shannon Hutchison, will be a freshman. He 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, Tenn., 38238, or by calling (731) 881-7040.

Fayette County Students Attend RisingStar Summit

Three Fayette County students attended the WestStar Leadership Program's 2019 RisingStar Leadership Summit held Nov. 15, 2019 at the University of Tennessee at Martin. RisingStar is a youth program for high school juniors and seniors designed to build leadership skills and personal confidence for students in West Tennessee. Pictured are (l-r) Virginia Grimes, Program Director, and students Anna Taylor, Justice Watkins and Gracie Sparks. For more information on the WestStar Leadership Program or RisingStar, contact Grimes, at 731-881-7298.
Santa's Village offers visitors a tour through a winter wonderland filled with live, animated and stationary characters. It includes everything from a visit with Santa to a petting zoo and decorative displays sure to put everyone in the Christmas spirit.

Santa's Village to Celebrate 35th Season of Holiday Fun

MARTIN (December 12) — Santa Claus is coming to Martin, and whether you're on the Naughty or Nice list, young or old, everyone is invited. “Christmas is quickly approaching, and we're gearing up for the 35th annual Santa's Village celebration in Martin, which will be held in the Ned McWhertor Agricultural Complex, located on the main campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin,” said Martin Parks & Recreation Director Brian Moore. Santa will make his annual appearance December 12-15. The hours of operation are: Thursday 6-9 p.m.; Friday 6-9 p.m.; and Sunday 1-5 p.m.

According to Moore, the four-day Christmas celebration features a variety of animals from Hooker Farms petting zoo, carnival rides, live entertainment, MTD model train display, shopping at 50-plus arts and crafts booths, an enchanted forest with over 40 holiday displays, and visits with Santa Claus. The winter wonderland provides fun activities the whole family can enjoy and supplies food and toys for those less fortunate this holiday season. There is no fee for admission, however, a suggested donation of $5 worth of non-perishable food or children's toys is appreciated.

Parking is available at the UT Martin Football Stadium off University Street. The custom-designed 25,000 square-foot Santa's Village is co-sponsored by the Martin Parks and Recreation Department and UT Martin.

To learn more about this year's Santa's Village, call: 731-587-6784, or visit Martin's Parks & Recreation website at: https://www.cityofmartin.net/parks-recreation/
Tyler Tate awarded UT-Martin scholarship

Staff Report  Dec 12, 2019

Massac County High School student, Tyler Tate, of Metropolis, has been awarded the Explorer Transfer Scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-21 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Tate, is the son of Peggy Tate, and will be a freshman.

UT Martin is a four-year university located in northwest Tennessee and is part of the University of Tennessee System.

Attends WestStar

LAUDERDALE COUNTY STUDENTS, Hayden Cherry, Madeleine Haynes, Colby Maclin and Coleman Bonds, pictured with Virginia Grimes, left, program director; and Jordan Gardner, right, program specialist, attended the WestStar Leadership Program’s 2019 RisingStar Leadership Summit, held November 15th, at the University of Tennessee at Martin. RisingStar is a youth program for high school juniors and seniors designed to build leadership skills and personal confidence for students in West Tennessee. For more information on the WestStar Leadership Program or RisingStar, contact Grimes at 731-881-7298.
UTM commencement is Dec. 14

Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, will be the commencement speaker during the University of Tennessee at Martin’s fall 2019 graduation ceremony, scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

UTM’s fall commencement ceremony is expected to grant approximately 520 undergraduate degrees and approximately 60 graduate degrees to those who completed the academic requirements to graduate during either the summer or fall 2019 semesters.

The ceremony will be broadcast live on the university’s Facebook page for those unable to attend in person. Visit facebook.com/UTMartin to access the live broadcast, beginning at 11 a.m. For more information, contact the UTM Office of University Relations at 731-881-7612.

Area students receive merit scholarships

Four Benton County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-21 academic year, according to Executive Director Dr. James Manooth, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement. All four of these recent scholarship recipients will be freshmen at UTM in the fall.

Ryan Baker, of Holladay, son of Tracy and Denise Baker, received the Deans Scholarship, which awards $2,000 per year for four years.

From Camden, Sydney Bitikofer, daughter of Karen Bitikofer; Deanna Bradford, daughter of Tonya Watson; and Makayla Burton, daughter of Angela Smith and Tommy Burton, all received Excellence Scholarships, which award $1,000 per year for four years.

Students are automatically considered for merit-based awards when applying for admission, and priority consideration is given to students who apply for admission by Feb. 1. The minimum requirement for a merit-based scholarship is to have at least a 3.0 GPA and an ACT composite score of 20 or more.

Merit-based scholarships are awarded as funds are available, and are not available to students enrolled in online degree programs. Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting the UTM Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at 731-881-7040.
A UT Martin student has died, university confirms

Leanne Fuller  Dec 13, 2019 Updated Dec 14, 2019

MARTIN, TN — A graduate student at the University of Tennessee at Martin has died, the university has confirmed.

The university sent a message to the campus community Friday notifying students that graduate student Lauren Ashley Brooks died Friday morning. Brooks was a graduate assistant coach with the UTM rodeo team, pursuing a graduate degree in agriculture and natural resources management.

"Ashley was a fierce competitor, and was so impactful to our team. It's hard to imagine she's gone. She will be greatly missed," UT Martin Rodeo Head Coach John Luthi says.

UT Martin spokesman Bud Grimes tells Local 6 that Brooks, who was from South Fulton, Tennessee, received her bachelor's degree in agriculture in the spring of 2018.

Grimes says a moment of silence in Brooks' memory will be observed during UT Martin's commencement on Saturday.

The details surrounding Brooks' death have not yet been made public.

www.thunderboltradio.com

UTM announces passing of rodeo team graduate assistant


A UT Martin rodeo graduate assistant passed away Friday morning.

UTM Sports Information Director Ryne Rickman says 23-year-old Ashley Brooks was in her second season as a graduate assistant for the rodeo program following a standout career as a student-athlete.

Brooks had been a member of the UT Martin rodeo program since 2014, taking part in barrel racing, breakaway roping and goat tying events from 2014-19. In addition to her competing as a student-athlete throughout the course of the 2018-19 season, she also served as a graduate assistant coach.

In 2017-18, Brooks ranked fourth in the Ozark Region in barrel racing, compiling 460 overall points. She advanced to the 2015 College National Finals Rodeo as a freshman, finishing 23rd in the nation in barrel racing with a 43.33 average time.

In a statement, UTM head rodeo coach John Luthi said, "Ashley was a fierce competitor and was so impactful to our team. It's hard to imagine she's gone. She will be greatly missed."

Brooks was a South Fulton native and came to UT Martin from Obion County Central High School.

She graduated from UT Martin in the spring of 2018 with a degree in agriculture and was pursuing a graduate degree in agricultural and natural resources systems management at UTM.
MARTIN, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee at Martin has announced the death of one of its students.

Friday, the athletics department announced 23-year-old Ashley Brooks, a graduate student and rodeo team coach, died this week.

The South Fulton native graduated with her undergraduate degree in the spring of 2018.

Brooks was also working towards a graduate degree in agricultural and natural resources system management.

The university has not yet released her cause of death.

This is the third death the UTM rodeo team has faced since 2016 and the second this year.
Accident claims rodeo family member

Ashley Brooks, who was in her second season as a graduate assistant for the University of Tennessee at Martin rodeo program following a standout career as a student-athlete, died in a vehicle accident Friday at 23 years old.

According to a preliminary report issued by the Tennessee Highway Patrol, Brooks was traveling by ATV on Charles Bushart Road outside of South Fulton when she crossed the path of a 2011 Nissan Altima driven by 76-year-old Joan Jones of Obion. The Altima struck Brooks’ ATV causing it to overturn and exit the roadway.

Jones was injured in the accident.

Brooks was a member of the UT Martin rodeo program since 2014, taking part in barrel racing, breakaway roping and goat tying events from 2014-19. In addition to her competing as a student-athlete throughout the course of the 2018-19 season, she also served as a graduate assistant coach.

In 2017-18, Brooks ranked fourth in the Ozark Region in barrel racing, compiling 490 overall points. She advanced to the 2015 College National Finals Rodeo as a freshman, finishing 23rd in the nation in barrel racing with a 43.53 average time.

“Ashley was a fierce competitor and was so impactful to our team,” UT Martin head rodeo coach John Luthi said. “It’s hard to imagine she’s gone. She will be greatly missed,” Luthi added.

Funeral services for Brooks are being held today (Tuesday) at 11 a.m. at South Fulton Baptist Church, with burial to follow in Obion County Memorial Gardens.

A memorial rodeo scholarship fund has been established in memory of Brooks. This is the second death this year for the UTM Rodeo team.

SEE RODEO

FROM PAGE 1

Brooks came to UT Martin from Obion County Central High School.

The South Fulton native graduated from UT Martin in the spring of 2018 with a degree in agriculture.

She was pursuing a graduate degree in agricultural and natural resources system management at UT Martin.

Brooks was a member of the UT Martin rodeo program since 2014, taking part in barrel racing, breakaway roping and goat tying events from 2014-19. In addition to her competing as a student-athlete throughout the course of the 2018-19 season, she also served as a graduate assistant coach.

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Funeral services for Brooks are being held today (Tuesday) at 11 a.m. at South Fulton Baptist Church, with burial to follow in Obion County Memorial Gardens.

A memorial rodeo scholarship fund has been established in memory of Brooks. This is the second death this year for the UTM Rodeo team.
LOCAL STUDENTS ATTEND WESTSTAR LEADERSHIP SUMMIT — Three Weakley County students attended the WestStar Leadership Program’s 2019 RisingStar Leadership Summit held Nov. 15 at the University of Tennessee at Martin. RisingStar is a youth program for high school juniors and seniors designed to build leadership skills and personal confidence for students in West Tennessee. Pictured are (from left) Barbara Virgin, executive director for Weakley County Chamber of Commerce; Virginia Grimes, program director; students Martha Nichols, Kassidy Harris and Tristen Trevathan; Jordan Gardner, program specialist; and Marvin Flatt, Weakley County WestStar alum. For more information on the WestStar Leadership Program or RisingStar, contact Grimes at 731-881-7298.

Gibson County students receive UT Martin scholarships

Several Gibson County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-2021 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Sydney Cantrell of Bradford, daughter of Cathy and Frankie Simmons, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.

Alexis Cobb of Trenton, daughter of Chris Hopper, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.

Chloe Kirk of Bradford, daughter of Billy Kirk and Michelle Kirk, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.

Amy Lee of Dyer, daughter of Rita Camp and Quinton Lee, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.

Aashiyah Mendez-Howard of Milan, daughter of Risa Howard, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.

 Byron Morris of Bradford, son of Phelicia and Anthony Rodgers, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.

 Lavia Pybas of Trenton, daughter of Penny Pool and Todd Pool and Bob Pybas, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.

 Selah Simmons of Bradford, daughter of Michael and Melissa Simmons, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.

 Elizabeth Wiles, daughter of Jason and Kathey Wiles of Medina, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.

Additional information on financial assistance is available by calling (731) 881-7040.
Gibson County students receive UTM scholarships

MARTIN, Tenn. – Several Gibson County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-2021 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

- Sydney Cantrell, of Bradford, daughter of Cathy and Frankie Simmons, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Alexis Cobb, of Trenton, daughter of Chris Hopper, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Chloe Kirk, of Bradford, daughter of Billy Kirk and Michelle Kirk, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.
- Amy Lee, of Dyer, daughter of Rita Camp and Quinton Lee, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Aaliyah Mendez-Howard, of Milan, daughter of Risa Howard, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.
- Byron Morris, of Bradford, son of Phelicia and Anthony Rodgers, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Livia Pybas, of Trenton, daughter of Penny Pool and Todd Pool and Bob Pybas, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Selah Simmons, of Bradford, daughter of Michael and Melissa Simmons, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Elizabeth Wiles, daughter of Jason and Kathey Wiles of Medina, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor’s 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.

UTM awards four local students with scholarships

The University of Tennessee at Martin has awarded several scholarships to Henry Countians for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

- Chase Wyrick of Cottage Grove, son of Scott and Barbara Wyrick, is currently a freshman. He received the Dean’s Scholarship for 2019-2020.
- Abigail Littrell of Paris, daughter of Troy and Dianne Littrell, will be a freshman next year. She received the Chancellor’s Scholarship for 2020-2021.
- Byron Morris of Paris, son of Kristen Routon, will be a freshman next year. He received the Achieve Scholarship for 2020-2021.
- Emma Winstead of Paris, daughter of Blue and Sherry Winstead, will be a freshman next year. She received the Dean’s Scholarship for 2020-2021.
MARTIN, Tenn. - Lucian Freeze did not travel far to receive his bachelor’s degree in computer science. The 22-year-old Hornbeak native and Obion County Central High School graduate was one of 348 participants in the University of Tennessee at Martin’s December commencement ceremony held Saturday, Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Included in that number were 310 who received bachelor’s degrees and 38 who received master’s degrees. Summer and fall graduates were both eligible to participate in the ceremony.

Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, delivered the commencement address.
"I've always been kind of the 'tech guy' in my family and my friend group," Freeze said of his interest in computer science. "So, I decided I could take it a little further and decide how to build the things that I was fixing." The cum laude graduate and University Scholar is also a musician, which influenced his choice for a capstone scholars project for which he created a web application that allows the user to enter music chords. The chords are then processed by a machine-learning model that generates a melody over those chords. "It (the application) can create melodies and let you use them in your songs or inspire new ones with the melodies it created," he said.

For now, Freeze will remain at the university as a member of the university's Information Technology Services staff, where he works with the technology that supports distance-learning classes. Although he enjoys his current position, his future might include work in software development. Whatever lies ahead, he's grateful for the education UT Martin provided. "I just really like the campus and really like the school, and the professors have been nothing but fantastic here," he said.

After Lucian and his fellow graduates were seated Saturday, UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver welcomed the audience and opened with a moment of silence in memory of graduate student Ashley Brooks, of South Fulton, who died late last week in a vehicle accident. She was a 2018 agriculture graduate, a member of the UT Martin rodeo team during her undergraduate years and was currently a graduate assistant coach with the team.

Carver continued and noted that the graduates in the audience came from 63 counties, 24 states and five countries, including the U.S. "To our graduates, good luck to each of you, and rest assured that we wish you the very best," he said. "Remember that you are soon becoming a part of an alumni group numbering over 48,000 UT Martin graduates around the world." Following special music by Dr. Roberto Mancusi, associate professor of music, Carver welcomed Stuart McWhorter to the podium.

McWhorter, who was named Tennessee's finance commissioner in January 2019 by newly elected Gov. Bill Lee, previously served as co-founder and chairman of Clayton Associates and has more than 25 years of experience in entrepreneurship and early-stage investing. His father was the late Clayton McWhorter, a successful businessman and philanthropist, who established UT Martin's Ned Ray McWherter Institute, a three-year innovation and mentorship program for undergraduate students.
McWhorter's father-in-law is well-known West Tennessee businessman and entrepreneur Tom Hendrix, of Selmer, who established UT Martin's Tom E. Hendrix Chair of Excellence in Free Enterprise in the College of Business and Global Affairs. Hendrix, who delivered the UT Martin commencement address in spring 1990, was in the commencement audience along with other family members.

The commissioner offered the graduating class four principles for success instilled in him by his father. He advised graduates to first find a mentor “who can assist you in your professional and personal growth.” He added, “Look for someone to pattern your style after. I’ve been fortunate to have many mentors along life’s journey, and I will give much credit to my success knowing that it would not occur without their interest in me and support of me.”

Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier, provost and vice chancellor for student affairs, later recognized honors graduates, and UT Interim President Randy Boyd congratulated the graduating class on behalf of the University of Tennessee System. Boyd gave the graduates three charges as new University of Tennessee alumni.

“First, live a life that leaves the world a better place than you found it. Second, live a life that honors our tradition and makes former alumni proud,” he said. “And third, live a life that will inspire the future generations of Skyhawks that will follow you.”

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**Local resident receives degree from UT Martin**

Wendy Davis
Dec 18, 2019

A Warren County resident was among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus in Martin, Tennessee.

The student receiving a graduate degree was John Avery Acton of Williamsport.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 19 bachelor’s degree programs and five master’s degree programs. The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System. For more information, visit utm.edu.
Crash
...From Front Page
Brooks was in her second season as a graduate assistant for the rodeo program, following a standout career as a student-athlete. Brooks had been a member of the UT Martin rodeo program since 2014, taking part in barrel racing, breakaway roping and goat tying events from 2014-19.

In 2017-18, Brooks ranked fourth in the Ozark Region in barrel racing, compiling 490 overall points. She advanced to the 2015 College National Finals Rodeo as a freshman, finishing 23rd in the nation in barrel racing with a 43.53 average time. "Ashley was a fierce competitor and was so impactful to our team," UT Martin head rodeo coach John Luthi said. "It's hard to imagine she's gone. She will be greatly missed."

Brooks came to UT Martin from Obion County Central High School. She graduated from UT Martin in the spring of 2018 with a degree in agriculture. She was pursuing a graduate degree in agricultural and natural resources system management at UT Martin.

Funeral services for Brooks were held Tuesday, December 17 at South Fulton Baptist Church with burial in the Obion County Memorial Gardens.

See CRASH on Page 3
MARTIN, Tenn. - Parker Albright, of Obion, graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin on Dec. 14 with a bachelor's degree in pre-veterinary science. Approximately 348 students participated in UT Martin's fall commencement ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the summer and fall 2019 semesters. For more information on UT Martin, visit utm.edu (http://utm.edu/).

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MARTIN, Tenn. - Lucian Freeze, of Hornbeak, graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin on Dec. 14 with a bachelor's degree in computer science. He is pictured with family members (from left) Silas Freeze, Tony Freeze, Jordan West and Dana Freeze. Approximately 348 students participated in UT Martin's fall commencement ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the summer and fall 2019 semesters. For more information on UT Martin, visit utm.edu (http://utm.edu/).

MARTIN, Tenn. - Avery Partin, of Union City, graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin on Dec. 14 with a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies. Approximately 348 students participated in UT Martin's fall commencement ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the summer and fall 2019 semesters. For more information on UT Martin, visit utm.edu (http://utm.edu/).
Tickets available for MLK breakfast

One of the greatest Civil Rights' leaders of the country once said, "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it."

Known for his willingness to always do the right thing and bring people together to perpetrate equality, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., left behind a legacy and traditions that are fostered today across the nation.

Locally, the community comes together in his honor to pay tribute to Dr. King's legacy each January and recognize those who stand up for liberties and speak their voice for those who cannot.

As the 8th annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration and Breakfast approaches, community members are invited to be a part of the local celebration. Tickets to the event are free and can be reserved now through Jan. 17.

The annual MLK breakfast will be held Jan. 20 with breakfast opening at 8:45 a.m. and the program beginning at 9. The event will take place in the Duncan Ballroom in the Boling University Center on the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Hosted by the City of Martin, UT Martin and the UTM Black Student Association, this event brings together community and university to celebrate and honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and raise awareness to live with purpose.

UT Martin Career Planning and Development Dr. Mark McCloud will serve as the keynote speaker. Dr. McCloud has served as director of the UT Martin Office of Career Planning and Development since 2016 and served as interim assistant vice chancellor for student affairs and dean of students in 2018 during the search for a permanent vice chancellor in that area.

He spent nine years as assistant director for career development at the University of Mississippi in Oxford prior to working with UT Martin.

McCloud has more than 25 years of experience in fields including financial services, K-12 education, mental health, non-profits and higher education, with 12 years specifically spent in career services.

He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from UT Martin and both a master's degree in higher education and a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Mississippi.

Members of the UT Martin music department will provide entertainment. Three service awards — The Alpha Award, The Torch Award and The Harold Connor Award — will be given at the breakfast.

Tickets are available now through Eventbrite. They are free, but registration is required to attend the breakfast. Register on Eventbrite for the number of tickets needed and bring a digital or paper copy to the event.
AWARDED MEEK AWARDS — Trisdan Ragland (left) of Martin and Shelby Guffey (right) of Coopertown received the fall 2019 Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Awards during UT Martin’s commencement ceremony. They are pictured with Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Dr. Andy Lewter.

Meek Leadership Awards announced

Shelby Guffey of Coopertown and Trisdan Ragland of Martin were presented with Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Awards during the University of Tennessee at Martin’s fall commencement ceremony Dec. 14. These awards showcase outstanding community and campus service by graduating students and are the only awards given during commencement each semester.

Guffey served as a student ambassador for the UT Martin Office of Undergraduate Admissions for two years and as a Peer-Enabling Program Leader for two years.

Ragland served as both president and chapter parliamentarian during his time as a member of the UT Martin chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. He also won the university’s 2017 Emerging Leader Award and the 2018 University Service Award from the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs. He was active in the planning and execution of UT Martin events surrounding Black History Month and mental health initiatives and volunteered with the Stuart Center and Teen Center and RIFA Soup Kitchen each year.

“Trisdan is a leader who is much more interested in setting the example than running the show loudly. He is an observant, thoughtful young man who has a massive influence on his peers and even the staff that work with him, Trisdan proves you can lead quietly from the back of the room through gentle encouragement and willingness to work alongside the others on the team,” wrote Rachel Stephens and Anthony Prewitt, assistant directors in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs, in Ragland’s nomination materials.

Dr. Paul Meek served the UT Martin campus as executive officer, dean, UT vice president or chancellor from 1934 to 1967. This award was originally established and funded by the three Meek children to honor their parents.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
35th annual Santa’s Village event a community success

For more than three decades, the Martin Parks and Recreation Department has offered a wonderland of holiday lights and festive décor in the McWherter Ag Complex on the campus of UT Martin. The event, dubbed Santa’s Village, has grown throughout the years to include local entertainment, a petting zoo, PBS character visits and arts and crafts vendors.

The ever-present MTD train display is a delight for the young and young at heart. Visitors meet jolly old St. Nicholas and share their wish lists, after they meander through 25,000 square feet of holiday-themed displays sponsored by area organizations and businesses.

The three-day event requires no admission fee, but a suggested $5 donation of canned goods or toys is always welcome. The donations are given to WE CARE Ministries to help the 500 area families in need during the holiday season.

Attendance to the 35th annual Santa’s Village this year was the fifth highest in the event’s history with 16,805 people taking part. Collected canned goods totaled 18,000 and 26 large bags were filled with toys as a result.

“We want to thank everyone who attended the 35th annual Santa’s Village. It takes a team of sponsors, businesses and volunteers to make this event the success that it is. “We thank all who participated and all who attended to help families in need. We hope everyone enjoyed their experience and we look forward to our 36th year as we begin the planning process for next year’s Santa’s Village,” Martin Parks and Recreation Director Brian Moore said.
Jarrett Dial receives degree from U. of Tennessee

Richard Wilson
Dec 19, 2019

MARTIN, Tenn. – A Lee County resident was among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus in Martin, Tenn.

The student receiving a graduate degree was Jarrett D. Dial of Keokuk.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 19 bachelor’s degree programs and five master’s degree programs. The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System.

https://www.t-g.com/

Academic achievements

Friday, December 20, 2019

UT Martin

Tyler W. Eddings of Shelbyville was among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 18 bachelor’s degree programs and five master’s degree programs. The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System. For more information, go to utm.edu.
MARTIN, Tenn. – Several Weakley County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Dresden – Aleya M. Brent; Jacqueline Michelle Ellis; Gaylon Daniel Harris; Bryan Chandler Martindale; Jenifer Renee Matte; Tyler O’Brian McPeak; Tiffany LeeAnn Owens.
- Gleason – Chandler Nicole Beasley; Emily Mackenzie Bell; Autumn Anne Faulkner; Hannah Elizabeth Lokey; James Rance Morris.
- Greenfield – Savannah Brooke Cobb; Hannah Michelle Crawford; Allison Ferrell; Kayla Christine Harris; Ali Kate Randolph; Aubrey LeAnne Riggs; Tanner Joe Smithson.
- Martin – Brittney Alexia Rose; Amberly Cymone Baker; Ellen L. Bell; Connor Harrison Blanchard; Richard Cannon Brawley; Devon Wade Coble; Gian Mari Garma; Callie F. Garrison; Ashlynn R. Hamm; Joy Nicole Hazlewood; Michaela C. Johnson; Brendon M. Maitland; Jason H. Melton; Linda Anne Mitchell; Amy Pullen; Morgan Danielle Ross; Olivia Rebecca Ann Sken; Alyssa Jane Stegall; Bryelle White; Jared Fuqua Wortham; Dilu Wu.
- Sharon – Rachel Lauren Roberts.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

- Gleason – Charlotte E. Addison.
- Martin – Amelia Sue Coalter; Chris Gunlefinger; Ashley Johnielene Ruth Mealer; Ryan William Trump; Melanie Sue Young.
WPSD evening anchor completes her master's degree at UT Martin

Staff report
Dec 23, 2019

Jennifer Horbelt Bonds is shown embracing UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver as she crosses the commencement stage to receive her master's degree in strategic communications Dec. 14.

Contributed photo
UT Martin
MARTIN, Tenn. -- Jennifer Horbelt Bonds, a 2007 graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin and longtime evening anchor on WPSD Local 6 in Paducah, Kentucky, crossed the UT Martin commencement stage again Dec. 14 with a Master of Arts degree in strategic communication.

While Bonds, a fulltime broadcaster, wife and mother of a toddler, was initially hesitant to return to school, she says the UT Martin graduate program in communications is one she will never regret completing.

"The MASC program (at UT Martin) is very practical in nature. I feel like I'm walking away with knowledge and experience that I'll actually use in the workplace be benefit our current news product and to potentially climb the news management ladder as I progress in my career," she said.

This is high praise from a seasoned broadcaster who has covered not only Paducah's daily news for almost 10 years but also took a three-year stint in the middle to serve the Colorado Springs area at NBC-affiliate station KOAA. While in that position, Bonds reported on several high-profile events, including President Obama's 2012 campaign and the Aurora Theater shooting. She also anchored continuous 12-hour coverage of the massive Waldo Canyon and Black Forest wildfires.

"With the Waldo Canyon fire in 2012, we spent two days on the air in 12-hour shifts. I worked midnight to noon, no commercials, no breaks. The Black Forest Fire the next summer was worse. I did nights then - noon to midnight - and by day four I told my husband, 'I don't have anything else to say.' I never thought I would ever be able to do that, but now ad-libbing is no big deal," said Bonds in a 2015 interview on that experience.

Surprisingly, Bonds was originally torn between a life in news and one in education. She says September 11, 2001, sealed the deal.

'I grew up loving news in my hometown of Houston (Texas). I would wake up for school in the morning and watch KPRC's morning headlines as a third grader! But on 9/11 (I was a high school junior), I really understood for the first time the importance
of the media (for) informing people of a defining moment in history," she said. "Not every day or story may be to that magnitude, but the news (national and local) is a critical form of communication that connects us all. Journalists can help bring clarity to senseless acts (in the case of 9/11), or explain how issues that seem inconsequential to you (a tax vote, perhaps, by your city council) will impact your daily life.

"I respect journalists for seeking the truth, no matter what that looks like," she continued. "It isn't easy to set aside your own personal feelings and see stories from an objective point of view. That takes practice and sound judgment. I also believe a true democracy cannot exist without a free press, and so the industry itself is critical to the lives of this country's citizens."

As a veteran in a young newsroom staff, she enjoys being a mentor for other up-and-coming journalists in all areas of the daily broadcast. Now, with two UT Martin degrees in hand, Bonds says she is prepared for whatever her career may throw at her in the decade to come. She is also prepared to recommend her alma mater to anyone searching for a place to call home.

"UTM cares about each and every student. I felt like a person of value to the staff in the communications department as (both) an undergrad and graduate student. I knew they cared about my success and were willing to do what was needed to help me succeed," she said. "I have loyalty to UTM, and for good reason. (The university) not only helped to shape what I consider to be a successful career to date as an undergrad, but it has continued to be a resource to me.

"The MASC program's success is a direct correlation to the university's willingness to serve its students' needs," she continued. "When you provide a useful education to the students, they come back. They also tell their friends and colleagues. The MASC program is growing exponentially because people like me have gotten their money's worth and are spreading the word about the good things happening in the UT Martin communications department."
Finance Commissioner McWhorter offers principles for success to UTM graduation class

There were 348 participants in the University of Tennessee at Martin’s December commencement ceremony held Saturday, Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Included in that number were 310 who received bachelor’s degrees and 38 who received master’s degrees. Summer and fall graduates were both eligible to participate in the ceremony.

Stuart McWhorter, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, delivered the commencement address.

After graduates were seated Saturday, UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver welcomed the audience and opened with a moment of silence in memory of graduate student Ashley Brooks, of South Fulton, who died late last week in a vehicle accident. She was a 2018 agriculture graduate, a member of the UT Martin rodeo team during her undergraduate years and was currently a graduate assistant coach with the team.

Carver continued and noted that the graduates in the audience came from 63 counties, 24 states and five countries, including the U.S. “To our graduates, good luck to each of you, and rest assured that we wish you the very best,” he said. “Remember that you are soon becoming a part of an alumni group numbering over 49,000 UT Martin graduates around the world.” Following special music by Dr. Roberto Mancusi, associate professor of music, Carver welcomed Stuart McWhorter to the podium.

McWhorter’s father was the late Clayton McWhorter, a successful businessman and philanthropist, who established UT Martin’s Ned Ray McWhorter Institute, a three-year innovation and mentorship program for undergraduate students.

McWhorter’s father-in-law is well-known West Tennessee businessman and entrepreneur Tom Hendrix, of Selmer, who established UT Martin’s Tom E. Hendrix Chair of Excellence in Free Enterprise in the College of Business and Global Affairs. Hendrix, who delivered the UT Martin commencement address in spring 1990, was in the commencement audience along with other family members.

The commissioner offered the graduating class four principles for success instilled in him by his father. He advised graduates to first find a mentor “who can assist you in your professional and personal growth.” He added, “Look for someone to pattern your style after. I’ve been fortunate to have many mentors along life’s journey, and I will give much credit to my success knowing that it would not occur without their interest in me and support of me.”

His second principle is to always be prepared. “Life often throws us a curve ball,” he said. “You have to be prepared to meet those challenges and embrace the opportunities. I have many stories of life lessons learned from being prepared and more impor-
Local residents receive degrees from UTM

Several Weakley County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Dresden – Aleya M. Brent, Jacqueline Michelle Ellis, Gaylon Daniel Harris, Bryan Chandler Martin, Jenifer Renee Matte, Tyler O’Brian McPeak, and Tiffany LeeAnn Owens.

- Gleason – Chandler Nicole Beasley, Emily Mackenzie Bell, Autumn Anne Faulkner, Hannah Elizabeth Lokey, and James Rance Morris.

- Greenfield – Savannah Brooke Cobb, Hannah Michelle Crawford, Allison Ferrell, Kayla Christine Harris, Alix Kate Randolph, Aubrey LeAnne Riggs, Abd

Tanner Joe Smithson.


- Pulley White, Jared Fuqua Wortham, and Dilu Wu.

- Sharon – Rachel Lauren Roberts.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:


- Gleason – Charlotte E. Addison.

- Martin – Amelia Sue Coalter, Chris Gunlefinger, Ashley Johnielene, Ruth Mealer, Ryan William Trump, and Melanie Sue Young.
Local residents receive degrees from UT Martin

Several Gibson County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14 in the Kathleen Serrault.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

Bradford – George Michael Carroll; Hayli Marie Serrault.

Dyer – Sydney Dawn Inman; Grant Houston Jones; Rebecca L. Lee; Kimberly Nichole Roberson.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

Bradford – Courtney Brooke Jackson; Kendra Ruth Pollard.

Milan – Ryan D. Mathis.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 18 bachelor's degree programs and five master's degree programs.

Local residents...

(Continued from page 2)

Humboldt – Joshua Perry.

Medina – Jesse Burks; Jennifer Lynn Burns; Graham T. Hopper.

Milan – Shelly Suzanne Akins; Christian Allyn Coleman; Madison Brian Miller; Samuel Ross Stinson.

Trenton – Brant Matthew Allen; Hayden Patrick Barnett; Tony B. Bufford; Sable Leigh Estes; Olivia Grace Gibson; Charles Lewis Rowlett; Justin Ryan Weaver; Matthew David Wicker.

Yorkville – Tiffany Beth Boggis.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

Bradford – Courtney Brooke Jackson; Kendra Ruth Pollard.

Milan – Ryan D. Mathis.
Local students receive degrees from UT Martin

MARTIN, Tenn. – Several Gibson County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
- Bradford – George Michael Carroll; Hayli Marie Serrault.
- Dyer – Sydney Dawn Inman; Grant Houston Jones; Rebecca L. Lee; Kimberly Nichole Roberson.
- Humboldt – Joshua Perry.
- Medina – Jesse Burks; Jennifer Lynn Burns; Graham T. Hopper.
- Milan – Shelly Suzanne Akins; Christian Allyn Coleman; Madison Brianna Miller; Samuel Ross Stinson.
- Trenton – Brant Mattison Allen; Hayden Patrick Barnett; Tony B. Bufford; Sable Leigh Estes; Olivia Grace Gibson; Charles Lewis Rowlett; Justin Ryan Weaver; Matthew David Wicker.
- Yorkville – Tiffany Beth Boggis.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:
- Bradford – Courtney Brooke Jackson; Kendra Ruth Pollard.

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University recognized statewide, as well as nationally, this past fall

The University of Tennessee at Martin has received multiple statewide and national accolades during the fall 2019 semester — including praise for the online master of business administration program and the master’s degree in education with a major in school counseling.

The UT Martin MBA degree program consistently scores well among Tennessee schools and across the nation in lists published by various ranking services.

This fall, the program is No. 1 one among the best online MBA programs in Tennessee for 2019, according to CollegeConsensus.com; 11th among the best online MBA programs nationwide for 2020 and first in Tennessee, according to DiscoverBusiness.us; and 21st among online MBA programs nationwide and first in Tennessee, according to Intelligent.com.

These rankings consider factors such as program cost, school accreditation and reputation among peer institutions, convenience of course accessibility (online, in-person or hybrid courses) and graduation rates.

The UT Martin MBA program is housed in the College of Business and Global Affairs and is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, AASCB International. The program is designed for working professionals and can be completed online in as few as two years.

The online master’s degree in education with a major in school counseling is included among OnlinePsychologyDegrees.org’s top 30 degrees of this type for 2020. UT Martin falls at 11th place nationwide and is the highest-ranked Tennessee school on this list. This ranking considers factors such as the average cost of graduate attendance, college rankings by U.S. News & World Report and similar media outlets, and program accreditation.

Intelligent.com also ranks the program 16th nationwide and first among Tennessee institutions. The UT Martin program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation. The hybrid program combines online coursework with a three-day in-person campus residency and can be completed in as few as two years.

UT Martin Online, the university’s collection of online programs, is ranked 14th among the best online colleges in Tennessee for 2020 by SR Education Group.

AffordableSchools.net ranks UT Martin third overall on its list of the 20 most affordable schools for bachelor’s degrees in Tennessee (both online and on-campus), just above UT Knoxville in fourth place and below Johnson University and Tennessee Technological University in first and second places, respectively.

The same website specifically ranks the online bachelor of science degree in agriculture ninth nationwide among similar degrees by AffordableSchools.net, and UT Martin is the only Tennessee program on this particular top-20 list.

Students can still register for spring semester at UTM

Students hoping to begin classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin in spring 2020 still have time to enroll and register.

Applications are accepted through the UT Martin Office of Admissions, and online applications are encouraged at utm.edu under the “apply now” heading.

UT Martin administrative offices are closed through Friday and will be closed on Jan. 1. Applications will be processed and questions returned when offices are open Monday and Dec. 31, as well as Jan. 2 and after.

Students can enroll to attend classes on the main campus or at any of the university’s five centers.

Orientation for new students beginning in the spring will be Jan. 7, 2020. More details will be sent when students are accepted. The spring semester officially begins Jan. 9.
UT Martin grads include several from Obion County

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

The event was held Dec. 14 in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

Students who received undergraduate degrees were:
- Hornbeak — Lucian Patrick Freeze.
- Kenton — Mason T. Chandler, Taylor Medley Gansert and Haley Jo Horner.
- Obion — Parker Elizabeth Albright and Amanda J. Sanders.
- Rives — Marissa H. Howard.
- South Fulton — Kevin Bartholomew, Melanie Amber Johnson and Destinee Brooke Mayo.
- Troy — Jessica Layne Parnell and Todd Neal Smith.

Graduate degrees were awarded to:
- Rives — Garrett Daniel Ellison.
- South Fulton — Brie Ariiana Cobb and Casey L. Dixon.
- Union City — Laura Brewer Coker and Phillip Shane McTurner.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 18 bachelor's degree programs and five master's degree programs.

The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System.

For more information about classes and degrees, go online to www.utm.edu.

STUDENT GRADUATES — Lucian Freeze (center) of Hornbeak graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin recently with a bachelor’s degree in computer science. He was joined by family members (from left) Silas Freeze, Tony Freeze, Jordan West and Dana Freeze.

Nearly 350 students participated in UT Martin's fall commencement ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the summer and fall 2019 semesters.
Several Lauderdale County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
- Halls, Zachary Charles Harris,
- Logansport, Allen Blake Smith,
- Ripley, Charles Robert Walton,
- Kyle D. Brown,
- Emily Makole Ferrell,
- Eric Salgado,"Holloway,"
- William Lynch,
- Aliyah Lashae Maclin,
- Sharnesha Ryshea Palmer,
- Mishika Antionette Polk,
- Corvin Danielle Scott,
- Brooklyn Layne Simpson,
- Allison Paige Smith,
- LaShundra Latrice Taylor,
- and Allison P. Webb.

The student receiving a graduate degree was Shana S. Sims of Ripley.

Local Residents Receive Degrees From UT Martin

MARTIN — Several Carroll County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
- Atwood — Laura Beth Killen; James Dakota Sumler; Bruceton — Dylan Foster Brown; Clarksburg — Ellen L. Bell; Huntingdon — Hannah Olivia Boroughs; Savannah Elaine Britt; Tyler Lendon Bush; Ethan E. Maddox; McKenzie — Jake Matthew Chapell; Manuel Edward Jimenez; Kayla Brooke Sterling; Yuma — Ryan Keith McDaniel.

The students receiving a graduate degree were: McKenzie — David Kellett Hochreiter; Megan Danielle Jones.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 18 bachelor's degree programs and five master's degree programs. The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System.

For more information, visit utm.edu.
State, University of Tennessee disagree on whether board of trustees' approval is needed for new UT Promise scholarship program

December 29th, 2019 | by Andy Sher

NASHVILLE — The University of Tennessee system's implementation of its own "last-dollar" college tuition scholarship program has come under challenge from state auditors who question interim UT system President Randy Boyd's authority to implement it without getting the UT Board of Trustees' specific approval.

Comptroller Justin Wilson's office says in the finding that trustees "neither officially approved the UT Promise program nor ensured management assessed the program's long-term impact."

"We said UT should have gotten board approval before announcing Tennessee Promise," Wilson told state House and Senate Government Operations Committee members earlier this month. "They disagreed. We don't read the language the same way they do."
Indeed, UT does contest the finding in the audit, one of two done since the 2018 passage of then-Gov. Bill Haslam's UT Focus Act. The act, which restructured the UT system's board of trustees, was spurred by Republican lawmakers' penchant for ranting at UT. That was often directed at the Knoxville campus, which GOP lawmakers routinely attacked as a bastion of political correctness over issues like gender-neutral pronouns and promiscuity with regard to UT Knoxville's annual "Sex Week."

In its official audit response, UT disagreed with Wilson's finding. It said Boyd's UT Promise, which is modeled after the earlier Tennessee Promise program, which offers similar tuition aid and mentorships for students attending community and technical colleges, didn't require trustees' formal approval for a simple reason.

"UT Promise is not a policy; it is a mentorship program like many other scholarship programs offered by the University," UT said in its response. "Likewise, UT Promise is not a 'waiver or discount of students fees'" as characterized in the audit, UT said.

The university system also made the case in its formal response that when UT trustees approved the overall budget, they were in effect approving everything in it, including the new initiative.

**Boyd defends action, mildly**

In his own appearance before the joint committee, Boyd made the same argument about initiating the UT Promise but used a more conciliatory approach. And the interim president noted he did speak with new trustees individually in private before announcing it publicly.

"I should probably just start with saying that I agree with the comptroller," Boyd told legislators. "When we have major initiatives, that's something we should consider to have conversations publicly about them. So your chief, key observation is something that we agree with."

*Staff Photo by Robin Rufus/ Interim UT President Randy Boyd speaks to the media. Interim UT President Randy Boyd and UT Chancellor Steve Angle are at Red Bank High School to discuss the UT Promise Endowment campaign with the school's juniors and seniors.*
Noting that UT, which has campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Martin and Memphis, seriously takes its status as a land grant institution to provide "more opportunity for more Tennesseans," Boyd told lawmakers that if a student's family makes less than $50,000 and the student is academically qualified, they can enlist in the program and attend "free of tuition and fee."

"We'll also be providing them with a series of mentors," Boyd said, later adding, "we're going to require them to have skin in the game" by doing a day's worth of community service each semester.

UT Board Trustee Chairman John Compton, a 1983 UT Knoxville graduate and former PepsiCo CEO, told lawmakers "it's my personal opinion that the introduction of the UT Promise scholarship program further expands the university's commitment to affordability and access to all."

First tnAchieves, then Tennessee Promise, now UT Promise

Few people likely understand the ins and outs of combining last-dollar scholarships for students along with mentor guidance as well as Boyd, a Knoxville businessman.

After making a fortune in the pet product business — think "Invisible Fence" — Boyd spearheaded creation of tnAchieves, a private nonprofit Knoxville group working to get first generation students into college.

The idea is that with federal Pell Grants and similar aid already available, providing the additional "last dollar" scholarship money wasn't so huge a lift. Enlisting the help of volunteer mentors, the program helps prospective students apply for and succeed in school. The programs also require students to perform some type of community service.

The local program attracted the attention of a fellow Knoxvillian, Haslam, who wanted to boost the number of Tennesseans with community or technical college or university degrees.

With Boyd coming to work for Haslam as an unpaid adviser, Haslam initiated Drive to 55, an effort to get 55% of adult Tennesseans with college degrees or certificates by 2025.

Along with that was a method to get part way there, the Tennessee Promise, which now provides last-dollar scholarships and the voluntary mentor program for students attending community or technical colleges. It relies on funding from a special Tennessee Education Lottery account.

The program has drawn national attention. Haslam later made Boyd his commissioner of community and economic development. Last year, Boyd ran for governor, losing the 2018 GOP primary to now-Gov. Bill Lee in a four-candidate field. Before leaving office, Haslam named Boyd interim UT president.

And now there's a UT Promise which Boyd told lawmakers could allow a student to attend any UT campus "free of tuition and fees. We'll also be providing them with a series of mentors [and] we're going to require them to have skin in the game" by doing a day's worth of community service each semester.

The UT Promise is going to be a "lot less expensive than sometimes people might think," Boyd said. While first-year estimates peg it at $5.7 million, Boyd said "that may sound like a lot, [but] in our overall budget, that's less than 3% of the total institutional aid that we provide students in the system. And it's only .37% of our entire budget."

Moreover, the university is creating a $100 million endowment to fund it, Boyd said. Having already raised more than $25 million in the past three to four months, he said, that's a quarter of the way to the endowment's goal. "Alumni are excited about this program, and they're willing to support students that apply for this program," he told lawmakers.

He added: "In spite of all those things I just shared, it is something that in the future that when we do have big public initiatives, whether we're required to vote on it or not, it may be something that we'll look at and [have] the conversations about in the general forum."
Local Residents Receive Degrees From UT Martin

Several Fayette County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during Fall Commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin Campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Moscow - Sarah Elizabeth Knapp.
- Somerville - Danielle M. Ables; Elizabeth Faye Burns; Courtney Lynn Wilburn; Dorthy Rianne Williams.
- Williston - Demetric Renee Malbone.

Local Student Graduates From UT Martin

Sarah Knapp (left) of Moscow, graduated from the University of Tennessee At Martin on Dec. 14 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Communications. She is pictured with her mother, Ranae Knapp. Approximately 348 students participated in UT Martin’s Fall Commencement Ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the Summer and Fall 2019 Semesters. For more information on UT Martin, visit utm.edu.

Local Students Graduate From UT Martin

Four students from the University of Tennessee at Martin Somerville Center graduated on Dec. 14. Approximately 348 students participated in UT Martin’s Fall Commencement Ceremony, which officially awarded degrees to eligible students from both the Summer and Fall 2019 Semesters. Pictured are graduates (front row, l-r) Elizabeth Burns, Courtney Wilburn and Amanda Rucker with supporters (back row) Kara Tapp, Kayla Dillon, Richard Rucker, Mike French and Ronnie Neill. Not pictured but also receiving a degree is Danielle Ables. For more information on UT Martin, visit utm.edu.
Fayette County Students Receive Scholarships To Attend UT Martin

Several Fayette County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-2021 Academic Year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, Executive Director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

**Taylor Lollar** of Rossville, daughter of Clay and Krisien Lollar, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.

**Andrew McCraw** of Oakland, son of Tammy and Richard Raines, will be a freshman. He received the Deans Scholarship.

**Sarah McKinley** of Somerville, daughter of Laura McKinley and Steven McKinley, will be a freshman. She received the Elam Transfer Scholarship.

**Jasmine Whitemore** of Oakland, daughter of Angela and Chris Whitemore, will be a freshman. She received the Deans 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.

UT SCHOLARS

Several Lauderdale County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held December 14th in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees included, from Halls, Zachary Charles Harris, Logan Spencer Jones, Alan Blake Smith, and Charles Robert Walton; and from Ripley, Kimberly D. Brown, Emily Micole Ferrell, Erica S. Holloway, William N. Lynch, Aliyah Lashae Maclin, Sharnesia Ryshea Palmer, Melisha Antionette Polk, Corvian Danielle Scott, Brooklyn Layne Simpson, Allison Paige Smith, LaShundra Latrice Taylor, and Allison P. Webb.

The student receiving a graduate degree was Shana S. Sims, of Ripley.
Obion Co. Students Receive UTM Degrees

DECEMBER 27, 2019 AT 8:38 AM POSTED BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

MARTIN, Tenn. – Several Obion County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:

- Hornbeak – Lucian Patrick Freeze.
- Kenton – Mason T. Chandler; Taylor Medley Gansert; Haley Jo Horner.
- Obion – Parker Elizabeth Albright; Amanda J. Sanders.
- Rives – Marissa H. Howard.
- South Fulton – Kevin Bartholomew; Melanie Amber Johnson; Destinee Brooke Mayo.
- Troy – Jessica Layne Parnell; Todd Neal Smith.
- Union City – Chambry Lorelle Callicott; Molly Vaughan Carpenter; Catherine Alyssa Clancy; Megan LaCarol Dunn; Elizabeth Jean Gibson; Darrell LaShaun Huff; James Bradley Hutchens; Leandra Nicole Moore; Avery A. Partin; Taylor Renea Pruett; Chasity Nichole Smith; Parker Carstell Stewart; William Elliott Tomlinson; Eric Ramirez Torres; Karl Albert Ullrich II; Austin Garrett Walton; Charleston Tyler Yanders.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:

- Rives – Garrett Daniel Ellison.
- South Fulton – Brie Arliana Cobb; Casey L. Dixon.
- Union City – Laura Brewer Coker; Phillip Shane McTurner.
Local resident receives degree from UT-Martin

MARTIN, Tenn. — A Marquette area resident was among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during fall commencement held Dec. 14, 2019, in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus in Martin, Tennessee.

The student receiving a graduate degree was:

≤ Ishpeming – Alisa Marie Quayle.

UT Martin is a public four-year university offering 19 bachelor’s degree programs and five master’s degree programs. The main campus in northwest Tennessee is one of four primary campuses in the University of Tennessee System. For more information, visit utm.edu.

Airport’s media presence taking off with assistance from UT Martin students

By CHRIS MENEES
Senior Staff Reporter

Everett-Stewart Regional Airport’s social media presence is really taking off.

Plans for an increased presence have resulted in an airport newsletter being launched.

The newsletter is the work of University of Tennessee at Martin students who came on board to lend their talents.

The local airport maintains an excellent working relationship with UT Martin, which is an avid supporter and frequent user of the airport’s facilities.

The three-page color newsletter was created by a team of four UT Martin students as a public relations department project, according to airport manager Chris Rodgers.

He said the newsletter is an energetic undertaking which will likely be produced on a quarterly basis, rather than monthly.

“It gives the students good experience and it promotes Everett-Stewart,” Rodgers said, adding that the newsletter contains a good mix of local schools and business, as well as lots of photos.

The newly-launched newsletter may be accessed online on the airport’s Facebook pages — which include the new “Everett-Stewart Regional Airport” page which can be “liked” or the older existing “Everett Stewart” page which can be “friended.”

Rodgers said he also hopes to email the newsletter to those who have an interest in the airport or who utilize its facilities.

The online issue for December highlights the silver-medal success of the U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team — which held practice camps at Everett-Stewart this past year — at the world championships in France.

The newsletter also mentions the lease agreement signed in May with Hospital Wing for the potential of establishing a base at the local airport; and it reports that private pilot tests and drone tests were the most popular exams given at the local airport’s testing center in 2019.

An interesting feature is a listing of notable Everett-Stewart customers — an ever-expanding list which includes Gov. Bill Lee, former NFL quarterback Brett (See Page 5, Col. 3)
Airport...
(Continued from Page 1)
Favre, Titan Tire, Kohler, Dar Pro, Insteel, University of Tennessee athletic director and former head football coach Phil Fulmer, IndusTree, MIA Seating, Stella Jones Corp., National Forest Products, the University of Georgia equestrian team, Greenfield Products, the state Department of Human Resources, Texas A&M head football coach Jimbo Fisher, UT interim president Randy Boyd, UT head football coach Jeremy Pruitt, Clemson University and the Kohler organization, as well as several companies working on the Tyson Foods expansion in Obion County.

The airport's facilities have also been utilized by many small business flyers, recreational flyers and local airmen.

Tucked inside the inaugural edition of the newsletter are an employee spotlight (featuring Obion County Central High School senior Max Simmons, who participates in the Aviation Program as an airport lineman during the school year as part of the Career and Technical Education Program); and mention of airport-based businesses (Russell Flying Service and WillAero) which provide jobs for the local area.

There are also several photos of notable airport customers or their aircraft, as well as a picture of local pilot and former airport board member Stoney Orton talking to Lake Road School students about careers in aviation.

In addition to the student-produced newsletter and increased social media presence, Everett-Stewart's board has been talking with UT Martin leadership to explore the possibility of coordinating an internship program in the future.

Senior Staff Reporter Chris Menees may be contacted by email at cmenees@ucmessenger.com.
UT Martin MBA program recognized statewide and nationally this fall

The University of Tennessee at Martin has received multiple statewide and national accolades during the fall 2019 semester, including praise for the online Master of Business Administration program and the master’s degree in education with a major in school counseling.

The UT Martin MBA degree program consistently scores well among Tennessee schools and across the nation in lists published by various ranking services. This fall, the program is number one among the best online MBA programs in Tennessee for 2019, according to CollegeConsensus.com; 11th among the best online MBA programs nationwide for 2020 and first in Tennessee, according to DiscoverBusiness.us; and 21st among online MBA programs nationwide and first in Tennessee, according to Intelligent.com.

These rankings consider factors such as program cost, school accreditation and reputation among peer institutions, convenience of course accessibility (online, in-person or hybrid courses) and graduation rates.

The UT Martin MBA program is housed in the College of Business and Global Affairs and is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, AACSB International. The program is designed for working professionals and can be completed online in as few as two years.

The online master’s degree in education with a major in school counseling is included among OnlinePsychologyDegrees.org’s top 30 degrees of this type for 2020. UT Martin falls at 11th place nationwide and is the highest-ranked Tennessee school on this list. This ranking considers factors such as the average cost of graduate attendance, college rankings by U.S. News & World Report and similar media outlets, and program accreditation. Intelligent.com also ranks the program 16th nationwide and first among Tennessee institutions.

The UT Martin program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation. The hybrid program combines online coursework with a three-day in-person campus residency and can be completed in as few as two years.

UT Martin Online, the university’s collection of online programs, is ranked 14th among the best online colleges in Tennessee for 2020 by SR Education Group. AffordableSchools.net ranks UT Martin third overall on its list of the 20 most affordable schools for bachelor’s degrees in Tennessee (both online and on-campus), just above UT Knoxville in fourth place and below Johnson University and Tennessee Technological University in first and second places, respectively. The same website specifically ranks the online Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture ninth nationwide among similar degrees by AffordableSchools.net, and UT Martin is the only Tennessee program on this particular top-20 list.

For more information on university and program-specific rankings, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
Rea receives Beth Maloan award

Katie Rea of Martin received the University of Tennessee at Martin Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award for the fall 2019 semester during a ceremony Dec. 14. She is pictured with (from left) Dr. Wes Totten, chair, Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources, and Maloan family members Chancellor Mike Maloan, Jennifer Stroh and Colin Stroh.

"Katie is an enthusiastic, trustworthy and hardworking individual. The work she currently does for me is very fast-paced and subject to change at a moment's notice. She always has a positive attitude and handles these last-minute changes very well," wrote Arant in Rea's nomination materials. "I have faculty in our department and other departments compliments on how well she does her job."

According to Dr. Wes Totten, department chair, Rea was instrumental in the creation of a more streamlined financial management system for the Tennessee Governors School for the Agricultural Sciences, which reduces the time spent distributing funds to individual students and requires fewer supplies and special requests overall. She also serves as a student ambassador for the department and assists Totten with recruiting events, student visits and high school presentations across the region.

"It has certainly been my pleasure to advise, instruct and supervise Katie during my service here at Martin. Her diligent work ethic and productive collegiate experience is the subject of positive commendation and is held in high regard by the faculty here," wrote Totten in his nomination letter. "Her mother and father truly have a daughter to be so proud of."

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.
Jackson Sun Person of the Year 2019: Cindy Boyles moved many in Madison County to difficult, necessary conversations

Brandon Shields, Jackson Sun   Published 6:00 a.m. CT Dec. 30, 2019

It was in October of 2014 when Cindy Boyles first heard the name Eliza Woods and began learning about the history behind Woods’ death as the victim of a lynching on the Madison County Courthouse lawn.

It was in the summer of 2018 when Boyles first visited the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala., where all of the nation’s known lynching victims are honored.

"I went there and saw it and thought, 'We need to bring this to Jackson,'" Boyles said. "And a few friends and colleagues agreed with me, and from that we formed the Jackson-Madison County Community Remembrance Project."

It’s because of the efforts of that group, Boyles’ public appearances before the Madison County Commission to argue for the memorial, the difficult but necessary conversations the movement forced in Madison County and the eventual approval of the marker that Boyles is The Jackson Sun’s 2019 Person of the Year.

Meeting the Republican Caucus

The Republican Caucus of the County Commission will meet the week before County Commission meeting if there’s an important vote on the agenda.

Sunshine laws stipulate the Caucus send out public notifications of the meetings. Boyles, knowing there was possible opposition in the Caucus to the marker, asked to be able to speak at a meeting when they were discussing Jackson-Madison County Schools issues in the spring at Old Country Store.

"I was nervous as I was driving over to the meeting, but at the same time, if you feel what you’re doing is right, then you just simply do what you need to do for that cause," Boyles said. "And everyone seemed welcoming to me and listened to me, whether or not they agreed with me, and it was a good discussion where I was able to answer their questions that any of them had."
Eliminating misinformation

It was at the June County Commission meeting that the memorial placed on the Courthouse lawn came before the committee. Boyles had spoken to the entire body at a previous meeting, only for the vote to be tabled.

A committee had been formed earlier in the year to discuss the language that would go on the marker. The committee also had to determine if Madison County would allow the Equality Justice Institute — a national organization whose mission is to recognize black victims of lynchings and their place within the United States’ civil rights history — paying for the marker, as long as they got to dictate what was written on one side of the marker.

To get to the vote in June, they had to maneuver around an impasse on the committee because they couldn’t come to an agreement on the language. But Commissioner Terry Spearman spoke out against the marker based on information he had.

“The information he had was information I’d seen, but it was proven incorrect and not factual,” Boyles said. “But that was the information he had, and that was the last thing they heard before they voted.”

The final tally was 14-8 against the marker.

It was a few days later Boyles received a call from Commissioner Jeff Wall — who voted against the marker — who wanted to talk.

“He’d heard from many people in the community including many professors at Union University who said the Commission had made a mistake,” Boyles said. “He wanted to talk and get more information.”

They had a conversation, and Wall wanted to set up a meeting between Spearman and Boyles. Boyles, in making the case for the marker, was able to provide Spearman with information he didn’t have previously.
Overturning the vote

Boyles was able to bring Spearman and Wall around to seeing the need for the marker with the proposed language that told the story of Eliza Woods and two other known lynching victims in Madison County – Frank Ballard and John Brown.

The issue was brought back before the Commission at its August meeting.

Just like in June, there was a good bit of contentious discussion, but ultimately the Commission voted 16-8 for the marker.

It's tentatively scheduled to be unveiled on April 18, 2020, near the northeast corner of the Courthouse lawn.

"It was such a surreal moment," Boyles said about the minutes after the Commission meeting when about a dozen members of the Jackson-Madison County Community Remembrance Project met together after the vote. "Because it wasn't about me or any one person.

"It was about the group effort of a number of local people who had no connection other than one passion – to see victims of egregious actions over a century ago be properly honored near the place where they were killed. And so many people were a part of that movement – not just me."

Boyles said she hopes this is a small part of an ongoing change happening in Jackson and Madison County.

"2019 seems like a time when the winds of change are really prominent in this area right now," Boyles said. "I've lived here for more than five years now and really enjoy living here because people are generous and care about each other and are willing to help.

"This is a place where you can make a difference. This experience of making the marker happen has shown that more change needs to happen to where people try to understand differing view points and not brush an ugly chapter of our past under the rug. And if this is a part of making that happen permanently, I'm glad to be a very small part of it."

Reach Brandon Shields at bjshields@jacksun.com or at 731-425-9751. Follow him on Twitter @JSEditorBrandon or on Instagram at editorbrandon.

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