Welcome to the travels and whirlwind that is the Miss Tennessee Volunteer life! I have rung in 2020 after having spoken to 27,000 students in 105 schools! 2020 promises to be just as busy, and I'm so grateful to the volunteers, school officials, and students for helping me continue to spread a message of caring across the state!

In addition to my school tour, I have had the opportunity to speak at several service-oriented events across the state. These include the WestStar – UT Martin Annual Working Women's Conference and the Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism & Service-Learning. My choice of a speaking topic was SERVE, which is the acronym that encompasses the mission of the Miss Tennessee Volunteer program.

SERVE stands for:
- Scholarships
- Education
- Responsibility
- Volunteerism
- Empowerment

Each aspect of the SERVE acronym means so much to me. Not only because I will complete my year earning $25,000 in college scholarships, but because I have been empowered with the responsibility to spread a message about caring to Tennessee. At first, I thought of my speech as one geared toward children, but I get e-mails and requests from organizations of all kinds who'd like to hear more about "being a bucket filler."

Kindness, good words, and generosity are universal messages, and I see that more and more as I continue to meet as many students and Tennesseans in my role as Miss Tennessee Volunteer.

With six months in, and more than 30,000 more students I have scheduled to speak with, it's hard not to reflect on my personal journey with the pageant. I used to think of myself as an
“introverted extrovert.” I am very outgoing, but when it came down to speaking and singing in front of others, I wasn’t always the first person to volunteer. I can now say with confidence that Miss Tennessee Volunteer has gotten me out of my “shell,” and given me the confidence to perform and share the SERVE mission with others.

I’m also extremely grateful to the West Tennessee community and beyond for their incredible support of me and the pageant. I have spoken to schools in nearly every county in West Tennessee!

The support and encouragement I’ve received have motivated me through the long drives and sometimes six or more appearances in a day. I’m so proud to SERVE you as Miss Tennessee Volunteer.

I’m certainly not slowing down in 2020 – if you would like me to come speak at your school or event, please contact my Business Manager at MissTNVolBusinessManager@gmail.com.

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**UT Martin First Seed in OVC Tournament**


For the first time since the 2015-16 season the University of Tennessee at Martin women’s basketball team has reigned supreme over the Ohio Valley Conference, tallying the program’s sixth league title with a 78-72 victory over Southeast Missouri on Saturday afternoon.

The Skyhawks (20-9, 16-2 OVC) added to its championship history by clinching a share of the OVC title, joining the championship campaigns of 1998-99, 2011-12, 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16. The win also marked the 10th time in which UT Martin has posted 20 wins in a single season. As a result of a tie-breaker with Belmont, the Skyhawks have earned the No. 1 seed in next week’s OVC Basketball Championship.

According to UTMSports, UT Martin will now shift its focus to the OVC Basketball Championship which will be held at the Ford Center in Evansville, Ind. beginning on Wednesday, March 6 in a matchup against No. 8 seed Murray State. Tipoff is scheduled for 1 p.m., airtime will begin at 12:30 on WCMT.
The annual Tennessee Soybean Festival earned nine Kaleidoscope awards at the Southeast Festivals and Events Association Conference last week. Representing the City of Martin at the event were Camille Noe, Suzanne Harper, David Belote, Mayor Randy Brundige, Tim Barrington and Brad Thompson.

Soybean Festival brings home the gold

The best and brightest were spotlighted last week at the Southeast Festivals and Events Association’s Kaleidoscope Awards, in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, Wednesday. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the SFEA Annual Conference. Top festivals and events throughout the southeast were recognized for their outstanding contribution to the events industry.

The Tennessee Soybean Festival brought home nine Kaleidoscope awards at the Southeast Festivals and Events Association Conference including:
- Gold in the following categories: Best Festival Overall, Best Marketing Campaign, Best Print Ad, Best TV Ad or PSA, Best Website, Best Social Media: Instagram, and Best Social Media: Twitter
- Bronze in the following categories: Best Social Media: Facebook and Best Program or Brochure

The best and brightest were spotlighted last week at the Southeast Festivals and Events Association Conference last week. Representing the City of Martin at the event were Camille Noe, Suzanne Harper, David Belote, Mayor Randy Brundige, Tim Barrington and Brad Thompson.

These awards represent a year of hard work and dedication by the Tennessee Soybean Festival committee and volunteers. They help us showcase the past 26 years of growth, innovation, true community spirit. We strive to make each year unique and one of a kind while enhancing the community events we have celebrated.

SEE SOYBEAN PAGE 10

SOYBEAN FROM PAGE 1

for so many years. People from all across the county now travel to Martin, Tennessee, to experience the magic of the Tennessee Soybean Festival. It truly is the magic bean,” said David Belote, executive director of the Tennessee Soybean Festival.

“The quality of submissions continues to increase each year. This year there were 171 entries from seven states,” noted Lisa McCray, executive director for SFEA.

“Of course, to ‘win gold,’ becomes all the sweeter when there is additional competition and the recognition a festival receives for winning is priceless,” she added.

The name “kaleidoscope” was selected due to the colors in the logo image that represent the many different elements and facets within festivals and events.

A call for entries was posted last fall and all southeast festivals and events were encouraged to participate. The judges looked for originality, creativity, media impact, volunteer programs, and the overall impact to the community.
PARTNERSHIP — Pictured are representatives from UT Martin and Farm Credit Mid-America including (from left) Ben Jones, associate director of development, UT Martin Office of University Advancement; Andrew Melton, regional vice president, Farm Credit Mid-America; Tim Williams, senior vice president agricultural lending, Farm Credit Mid-America; Dr. Todd Winters, dean, UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor; and Jason Sullivan, director of development, UT Martin Office of University Advancement.

Farm Credit Mid-America supports UT Martin agri-business programs

Farm Credit Mid-America has partnered with the University of Tennessee at Martin to support students in the university’s Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources. The recent collaboration will support the recruitment of minority students in agricultural business fields and the creation of an agricultural business futures and options course.

“Roughly one in 10 American jobs are filled by people working in production agriculture or in businesses adjacent to or dependent on agriculture,” said Tim Williams, senior vice president for Farm Credit Mid-America. “Drawing a diverse group of students into the agriculture industry and exposing them to the many career options available – from farming to food science to ag education – is the goal of the program and why we supported it.”

The new course in agricultural business futures and options will give undergraduate students the opportunity to gain real-world experience by using funds to make futures and options trades and gain a better understanding of how agricultural markets function and how agricultural producers handle uncertainty in the food and fiber supply chain.

“Farmers are all too familiar with the uncertainty of markets and crops,” said Williams. “One of the best ways we can invest in agriculture is to invest in the youth who will one day be at the forefront of this industry. Supporting programs that teach the methodologies of hedging analysis – and ways to mitigate risk and help ease the stress associated with it – is one of the ways we can help secure the future of rural communities and agriculture.”

The new programs will launch in fall 2020.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources at 731-881-7260.
Farm Credit Mid-America supports UT Martin programs

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The new programs will launch in fall 2020.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources at (731) 881-7260.

SUPPORTS PROGRAMS — The University of Tennessee at Martin can work toward recruiting more minority students in agricultural business fields and create an agricultural business futures and options course thanks to a partnership with Farm Credit Mid-America. Those on hand for the recently announcement were (from left) Ben Jones, associate director of development, UT Martin Office of University Advancement; Andrew Melton, regional vice president, Farm Credit Mid-America; Tim Williams, senior vice president agricultural lending, Farm Credit Mid-America; Dr. Todd Winters, dean, UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor; and Jason Sullivan, director of development, UT Martin Office of University Advancement.
UT interim president to host Town Hall at UT Martin

Interim President Randy Boyd is scheduled to visit the University of Tennessee at Martin for a town hall meeting from 3 to 4:30 p.m., March 10, in the Boling University Center Watkins Auditorium to discuss the proposed removal of the interim designation from his title as UT president.

Boyd’s appearance on campus is in response to the Feb. 19 UT Board of Trustees meeting in which Chair John Compton proposed to appoint Boyd as the official UT System president, allowing Boyd to serve for an additional five years. Boyd will host a town hall meeting at each UT campus to discuss his vision for the future of the UT System and receive feedback from faculty, students, alumni and community members on his performance to date as interim president before final decisions are made.

Boyd has served as the interim president since November 2018 and spent his first day in office at UT Martin.

Attendees who want to submit a question for Boyd in advance of the town hall meeting can do so at presidenttownhall.questionpro.com.

For more information, visit trustees.tennessee.edu/ut-president-townhall.

Local student attends UT Martin test flight academic preview day

Tanner Balthrop, a senior from Dyer County High School, is pictured attending Test Flight Academic Preview Day at the University of Tennessee at Martin on Feb. 17. High school students have the opportunity to meet with professors and students in their intended academic majors, sit in on classes with current students and go on a walking tour of campus. Parents and families are also encouraged to come and experience a day in college life with their student. For more information, visit utm.edu/testflight or contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at 731-881-7020.

State Gazette photo/submitted
Scott Robbins, longtime UTM Public Safety Director, to retire

Posted on March 4, 2020 by Steve James in Local News

Longtime UT Martin Department of Public Safety Director Scott Robbins is announcing his retirement after 13 years at the university.

Chief Robbins has been in law enforcement for over 30 years starting as a dispatcher with the Martin Police Department in 1990.

Chief Robbins tells Thunderbolt Radio News that the UTM Public Safety Department is continuously working to keep the campus safe.

Robbins says he'll miss his colleagues and interacting with students.

Throughout Robbins' time as the university's Public Safety Director, UTM has been listed as one of the safest campuses in the state.

Robbins last day at UT Martin will be May 31st. After that, he'll join his wife's family business in Union City.
UT Martin suspends international travel

The continued spread of COVID-19 prompted the University of Tennessee at Martin officials to indefinitely suspend international travel for employees and cancel Maymester international travel courses. (Source: KFVS)

By Amber Ruch | March 5, 2020 at 5:51 PM CST - Updated March 5 at 5:51 PM

MARTIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - The continued spread of COVID-19 prompted the University of Tennessee at Martin officials to indefinitely suspend international travel for employees and cancel Maymester international travel courses.

The University said Maymester courses that include a domestic travel component and domestic travel for employees are not currently affected.

Maymester is an accelerated academic semester that runs May 11-29.

"While this news will be disappointing for many, and particularly for our students enrolled in Maymester travel courses, these changes are in the best interest of our university community at this moment," said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver in an email to university faculty and staff.

UT Martin students are currently on spring break.

UTM suspends international travel programs

March 5, 2020 by WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News Staff (https://www.wbbjtv.com/author/wbbj7eyewitnessnewsstaff/)

MARTIN, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee at Martin confirmed Thursday that officials have opted to indefinitely suspend all international travel programs.

According to a news release, the suspension includes international travel for employees and the cancellation of Maymester international travel courses.

The release says domestic travel for Maymester courses and for employees is not currently affected.

Maymester is an accelerated semester that runs from May 11 through May 29.

"While this news will be disappointing for many, and particularly for our students enrolled in Maymester travel courses, these changes are in the best interest of our university community at this moment," said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver in an email to university faculty and staff.

UT Martin students are currently on spring break, the release says.

COVID-19 is caused by a member of the coronavirus family that is closely related to the SARS and MERS viruses that have caused past outbreaks.
Donna Flagg-Brown is not a typical college student. Not only does she hold five university degrees and several passports full of world travel stamps, at age 69, she is back in school to learn something new.

"I’m at the point in my life where every two years I go back to school and take a course. I have degrees, but I don’t do it for the degrees. I do it for the knowledge. So, I try to do something that’s totally out of my comfort zone," she said.

"Two years ago, I took sign language. Two years before that, I took Chinese. So, this time I said, ‘Ok, time to get away from the languages.’ I’ve taken medical courses and legal courses, and so now I’m taking some art courses."

Flagg-Brown is auditing a class on enameling at the University of Tennessee at Martin after starting with a course on jewelry making last fall. She actually already has experience in this area after making jewelry extensively in the ‘60s, but for her, it’s all about discovering new processes. In fact, she has even shown her professor a new technique or two along the way.

However, Flagg-Brown isn’t a jewelry-maker by trade. In fact, she has worked in many different trades, including the tourism, legal and newspaper industries.

"For most of my work life, I was a tour director doing youth groups, bands, drama clubs and things like that. . . . I’ve been all over Canada and the U.S. with the youth groups, and I’ve worked for seven different companies — some from the U.S., some from the U.K. and Canada — doing adult tours: bus tours, train tours, multimodal, cruises, whatever," she said.

She has not only covered all of North America, but has also visited England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France, Venezuela, Cuba, China and some stops in Africa, among others. Her specialty with one particular travel company was a train tour of Canada: coast to coast.

“These people would all fly into Quebec City, all different airlines from all over the world. . . . We met and we would have a welcome dinner, and I would give them information. Then the next day we would head out, and that particular trip was a train tour. So, we would go from Quebec City all the way across to Victoria. We got off (the train) in Vancouver and took the ferry over to Victoria, and then they all flew back home, and I did it in reverse with another group. So that was a pretty typical thing for me," she said.

"One year I started with a new company that kept me pretty busy, and that was the youth tours. I actually was on the road 207 days without a day off."

After years of extensive travel, Flagg-Brown decided it was time to discover something new. So, she returned to school.

“My main interest was that I wanted to get involved with the school newspaper. So, I went to a community college and took journalism and became the editor-in-chief of the school newspaper and did that for two years. Then I thought, ‘Ok, that’s interesting. I know how that all works now,’ she said. But travel was ultimately her passion, so she returned to the tour circuit.

Being a successful tour director requires more than a knowledge of stops along the route, however. Flagg-Brown says her work involved extensive research.
into the culture, customs and
daily habits of the people
in each country she
visited.

"There are a lot of count-
tries where, if I am lead-
ing a group in that country,
I need to know how to say,
'We don't speak your lan-
guage fluently, so please
repeat slowly, in English if
possible.' I try to learn that
phrase. And then the little
quirks about countries," she said.

"In this country, we have
the habit of saying 'good
job!' (using the 'thumbs
up' gesture). Well, in other
countries it's not such a
good gesture, and you may
get into big trouble. Or if
you're having a drink at the
bar and you turn your glass
upside down, like a lot of
guys will do when they are
done, that means you're
looking for a fight. It's just
simple little things, but if I
don't know it to pass on to
my passengers and my cli-
ients, it's going to bite me in
the butt because what hap-
pens to them, I am respon-
sible for."

"It's lots of research,
which brought me to an-
other time (when) I went
back to school and decided
I would become a research-
er in legal things," she said.
"It's a thing with me, the
what-ifs and the why. So,
research was a good area
for me to ponder around in."

Flagg-Brown holds asso-
ciate degrees in fine arts
and English, a bachelor's
degree in education and a
separate bachelor's degree
in secondary art education,
a master's degree in edu-
cation and an unfinished
doctoral degree, as well as
a degree from the Interna-
tional Tour Management
Institute in California.

"My philosophy about
education is that there's
always something new to
learn. You're never too old
to learn it, and if you pass
up an opportunity, sorry for
your luck," she said. "When
I came here (to Martin),
and I started looking (at UT
Martin), and I realized that
they have the 65-and-over
deal where I can audit a
class. I'm like, 'Wow! Why
are there not lines of people
over 65 at the door? I don't
understand that.... People
will say 'I've always want-
ed to do this' or 'I've always
wanted to learn that,' and
when you have the oppor-
tunity to audit a class at no
charge, would you say 'Oh,
I don't know,' or would you
say 'Absolutely'?"

With so much experience
both inside and outside of
a classroom, Flagg-Brown
says the knowledge you
gain from one truly impacts
the other.

"The classroom experi-
ence gives you the basics
and prepares you for real
life, because it's never
gonna be as you were
taught, but it allows you to
work with it, whatever it
may be," she said, remem-
bering the start of her tour
guide career.

Her midterm at the Inter-
national Tour Manage-
ment Institute required
her to present a 15-minute
introduction for a tour in a
randomly selected country,
and she learned the basic
facts to share with a stan-
dard group. However, not
all groups are standard, and
thinking on her feet became
a vital skill.

"My first tour was a group
from the U.K.... and it was
a Canadian tour. They all
came in together, and that
first night I always do a
cocktail party or something
to introduce myself and let
them ask their questions....
I found out at that time that
every one of them were re-
tired professors, so no
pressure there," she said. "But
I said, 'I'm prepared for this.
They're people on vaca-
ton. I'm prepared for this.'
So that's the difference be-
tween what you're learning
and how you use it."

As for her future plans,
Flagg-Brown doesn't have
a particular direction to
travel from this point for-
ward.

"I don't think I'm that
kind of personality, ... I
think the plans that I've
made in my life have come
to fruition," she said.

"That sounds like there
isn't any plan at all, but I
think my journey in life is
to fill it with as many differ-
ent things, different people,
as much knowledge as I
can cram in there. I've got a
long way to go yet. I'm 69,
and I don't say that very of-
ten because it's only a num-er to me."

Her next class choice,
however, is an easy one:
"Maybe I'll take travel and
tourism!"
UT Interim President Boyd to visit UTM

University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd is scheduled to visit the University of Tennessee at Martin for a town hall meeting from 3-4:30 p.m., March 10, in the Boling University Center Watkins Auditorium to discuss the proposed removal of the interim designation from his title as UT president.

Boyd’s appearance on campus is in response to the Feb. 19 UT Board of Trustees meeting in which Chair John Compton proposed to appoint Boyd as the official UT System president, allowing Boyd to serve for an additional five years.

Boyd will host a town hall meeting at each UT campus to discuss his vision for the future of the UT System and receive feedback from faculty, students, alumni and community members on his performance to date as interim president before final decisions are made.

Boyd has served as the interim president since November 2018 and spent his first day in office at UT Martin.

Attendees who want to submit a question for Boyd in advance of the town hall meeting can do so at presidenttownhall.questionpro.com.

Boyd will also visit UT Chattanooga on March 4; the UT Health Science Center on March 5; UT Knoxville on March 9; and constituents in Nashville at the UT Polk Avenue Building on March 11, which will be live-streamed for UT employees.

For more information, visit trustees.tennessee.edu/ut-president-townhall.

Six week Digital Photography Course to be offered

The University of Tennessee at Martin will host a six-week digital photography course for students and community members from 6-9 p.m., Mondays, March 23 – April 27, at the Robert E. Lee Academy for the Arts in Paris. The registration fee for this course is $185.

The course will be taught by Dr. Tom Gallien. Students will learn the various functions of a digital camera and how to take quality photographs in different environments, including low-light and night settings. Students will also practice macro – or close-up – photography during the course.

Online registration and payment can be found at utm.edu/departments/non-degree by choosing the “Other locations” option.

For more information, contact UT Martin Outreach at 731-881-7104.

Miss UTM Rodeo Pageant planned

The University of Tennessee at Martin Rodeo Booster Club will sponsor the Miss UTM Rodeo Pageant March 21 at Watkins Auditorium in the UTM University Center. The pageant is open to all girls, ages 0-20. Contestants will be judged in formal/evening gown only. Doors open at noon with pageants as follows: 0-12 months at 1 p.m.; 1-3 years at 1:30 p.m.; 4-6 years at 2 p.m.; 7-9 years at 2:30 p.m.; 10-12 years at 3 p.m.; 13-15 years at 3:30 p.m.; and 16-20 years at 4 p.m. Registration is at the door only. The fee will be $25 for beauty only with side categories available for additional cost.

Winner of the 16-20 division required to participate in UTM Rodeo week activities and is eligible to compete in Territorial Queens Review/Strawberry Festival. Junior, Teen and Miss Division Queens will be recognized at UTM Rodeo performances April 16-18.

For more information, contact Beth Weldon at 731-225-1227.

UTM’s Vanguard Theatre to perform “God of Carnage”

The University of Tennessee at Martin Vanguard Theatre will perform “God of Carnage” at 8 p.m., March 13-14 and 19-21, and at 3 p.m., March 15, in the Vanguard Little Theatre located inside the Fine Arts Building. Tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for students and can be bought at the box office the night of the event.

“God of Carnage,” a 2009 Tony Award winner, is about how a playground alteration between 11-year-old boys brings together two sets of Brooklyn parents to resolve the matter. At first diplomatic niceties are observed, but as the meeting progresses, tensions emerge and the gloves come off. The couples are left with more than just their liberal principles in tatters.

For more information, contact the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.
UTM Parsons offers pharmacy tech course

Community members hoping to become pharmacy technicians are invited to enroll in a certification course that will begin on Saturday, March 14. Registration for the course is $1,199 and includes all textbooks and supplies.

Classes will be held on Saturdays at the UTM Parsons Center from 8 a.m.-noon. from March 14-June 20. This comprehensive 50-hour course will prepare students to pass the pharmacy technician certification exam and work in a pharmacy setting.

Topics to be covered will include pharmacy measures; Roman numerals and abbreviations; prescription label requirements; major drug classes; formularies and unit dose systems; allegation methods and math review; total parenteral nutrition; and others. The course also includes an optional 80-hour clinical rotation.

Interested participants can visit utm.edu/pharmacy to register online. For more information, contact the UTM outreach office at 731-881-7082.

Music programs set at UTM

The University of Tennessee at Martin will host several musical programs. They include:

- Pre-College Piano Competition — Saturday in the Blankenship Recital Hall.
- Amitica Duo, guest clarinet duo recital — Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital Hall.
- World Bizarre — March 27 at 6:30 p.m. at Discovery Park of America. Tickets are $10 when purchased online and $15 when purchased at the door.
The University of Tennessee at Martin Rodeo Booster Club will sponsor the Miss UTM Rodeo Pageant March 21 at Watkins Auditorium in the University Center on the campus of UTM.

The pageant is open to girls from birth to 20 years old. Contestants will be judged in formal/evening gown only.

Doors open at noon, with pageants as follows: birth-12 months at 1 p.m., 1-3 years at 1:30, 4-6 years at 2, 7-9 years at 2:30, 10-12 years at 3, 13-15 years at 3:30 and 16-20 years at 4. Registration is at the door only — $25 for beauty only with side categories available for additional cost.

The winner of the 16-20 age division is required to participate in UTM Rodeo Week activities. Junior, Teen and Miss Division queens will be recognized at UTM Rodeo performances April 16, 17 and 18.

For more information, contact Beth Weldon at (731) 225-1227.
National scholarship organization and pageant competition announced

The Miss Tennessee Volunteer organization recently announced the expansion of its flagship state program into a national entity with the establishment of the Miss Volunteer America organization in Nashville.

This will include the production of its very first national pageant competition in Jackson. The national event will hold preliminary competitions on March 10-12, 2021, and the finals will take place on March 13, 2021, at the Carl Perkins Civic Center.

In May 2018, Christine Williamson broke ties with the Miss America Organization and made history by accepting the inaugural title of Miss Tennessee Volunteer 2018. "In my lifetime, Jackson has been the ultimate pageant destination in our state and the gateway to big opportunities. It is exciting that young women from across the country now have the chance to share in that same goal and spend a life-changing week in Jackson."

Last year on June 22, 2019, Miss Williamson crowned her successor, Kerri Arnold of Holladay, who was a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin. With the assistance of the West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation and many generous sponsors, Miss Tennessee Volunteer raised and awarded a record-breaking $125,000 in scholarships to its 36 state finalists at the 2019 pageant. Miss Arnold was awarded $25,000 in scholarships, and the opportunity to serve as Gov. Bill Lee's Official State Spokesman for Character Education.

She has traveled the state sharing her message about the character trait "Caring" to more than 33,000 students statewide.

Miss Arnold said, "I have loved meeting students all across our state and have worked extremely hard this year because I want many more young women to benefit from the bountiful scholarships and endless opportunities this program has afforded me."

Following Miss Tennessee Volunteer in June 2019, founder of the national organization, Allison Alderson DeMarcus, began hearing from people across the country who were interested in establishing state pageants similar to the independent program in Tennessee.

"I am extremely pleased so many individuals and groups across the country are eager to work with us to establish a national program aimed at improving the lives of young women and helping them achieve their higher education goals. We are honored to provide alternatives for young women who are inspired to compete for scholarships and opportunity-rich experiences. The directors establishing Volunteer pageants in other states have the shared goal to build financially sound state organizations which will be the cornerstone of a successful national program," Ms. DeMarcus said.

"Miss Volunteer America aims to equip women with critical thinking skills and unparalleled communication proficiency in order to prepare its participants to be effective leaders in their fields and philanthropists at every stage of their
lives. We believe that as a result of their involvement, these outstanding, intelligent and well-rounded young women will positively impact and elevate their respective communities for years to come. Currently, this organization is 100 percent run by volunteers at every level. Therefore, we will focus on cultivating an environment of respect and gratitude for our passionate volunteers and the monumental efforts required to run programs at the local, state, and now national levels.”

Jackson’s Community and Economic Development Commission president and Miss Tennessee Volunteer president Jimmy Exum said, “We are very pleased that so many states have enthusiastically joined our efforts to build a strong national organization, as we lay the groundwork for the first national Miss Volunteer America crown.

I’m looking forward to working with not only our family of volunteers here in Tennessee, but also volunteers from across the country to establish a program we all believe in and support.”

Scoring for Miss Volunteer America is weighted most heavily in the interview category to reflect the bulk of the job of the titleholder, which is to serve as a spokesman for the local, state and national organizations. Private interview will be 12 minutes to allow for additional time for participants to better share their passion for the platform cause of their choosing, as well as additional qualifications they possess which equip them to be the best fit for the job.

While there are hundreds of pageant systems across the country, Miss Volunteer America’s goal is to create a platform to help young women be able to begin their professional career with little to no student loan debt.

“If we can decrease or eliminate the student loans that young women accrue and help them establish financial independence faster in their lives then we have done our job and achieved our goal,” a spokesman said.

The program is designed to provide an opportunity-rich experience that will celebrate all forms of beauty, shape their collective future and be a catalyst for success. Miss Volunteer America is comprised of volunteers who are inspiring young women to thrive in their own lives and become tomorrow’s volunteers and philanthropists.

https://www.radionwtn.com/

FIRST MEMORIAL TULIP POPLAR DONATED AT UTM

MARTIN, Tenn.— Ashley Kite-Rowland, president of the Martin Tree Board, and her husband, Dr. Aaron Rowland, associate professor of Sociology at UT Martin, donated the first tree in the new campus tree honorariums and memorials program, sponsored by the Center for Sustainability, in honor of the founding Martin Tree Board from 1994. The Tulip Poplar tree was planted March 4, in between Brehm Hall and the Hall-Moody Administration Building. For more information on how to donate a memorial tree, visit utm.edu/sustainability or contact Dr. Eric Pelten, coordinator of the Center for Sustainability, at sustain@utm.edu. Pictured with the tree, from left are Chris Virgin, James Wick, Earl Wright, Guy Robbins, Dr. Aaron Rowland, Ashley Kite-Rowland, Ryan Morris, Dr. Eric Pelten and Greg Moore.
MARTIN, Tenn. — Randy Boyd, the University of Tennessee's interim president, visited the UT Martin Campus Tuesday.

Boyd says this was a time for him to share his vision for the UT system.

This was also partly a vetting opportunity for Boyd to audition to be the full time president of the university.

WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News asked Boyd what he has learned since becoming interim president in November of 2018.

"One of the most important things that I've learned is that we have brilliant scientists and researchers and faculty all across the state of Tennessee, but that we really weren't talking together enough. We had too many silos. One of my biggest opportunities is to be a connector, try to bring us together as one team, as one UT, so they can really transform lives of the people in the state of Tennessee and make the biggest contribution we can," Boyd said.

Boyd says it is a blessing for him to just be a part of an organization that can do so much good.
TRADE CONFERENCE — Daniel Whitley (left), associate administrator for the Foreign Agriculture Service, and Dr. Charlie Hatcher, Tennessee Agriculture commissioner, were among the speakers who participated in the inaugural Mid-South Agriculture Trade Conference on Thursday at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The speakers identified upcoming international trading trends Tennessee farmers and agribusinesses can expect to see and how to best utilize international trade in a local production market.

UT Martin suspends international travel
The continued spread of COVID-19 has prompted
SEE BRIEFS
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BRIEFS FROM PAGE 1

University of Tennessee at Martin officials to indefinitely suspend international travel for employees and cancel Maymester international travel courses. Maymester courses that include a domestic travel component and domestic travel for employees are not currently affected. Maymester is an accelerated academic semester that runs May 11-29.

"While this news will be disappointing for many, and particularly for our students enrolled in Maymester travel courses, these changes are in the best interest of our university community at this moment," said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver in an email to university faculty and staff.

UT Martin students were on spring break when the first confirmed case of the virus was announced in Tennessee.

COVID-19 is caused by a member of the coronavirus family that is closely related to the SARS and MERS viruses that have caused past outbreaks.

UTM is providing updates the university's utm.edu home page.
UTM HOSTS AG CONFERENCE— Daniel Whitley (left), associate administrator for the Foreign Agriculture Service, and Dr. Charlie Hatcher, Tennessee Agriculture commissioner, were among the speakers who participated in the inaugural Mid-South Agriculture Trade Conference on March 5 at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The speakers identified upcoming international trading trends Tennessee farmers and agribusinesses can expect to see and how to best utilize international trade in a local production market.

https://www.thunderboltradio.com/

UT Martin closing in-person classes until April 3

As a proactive measure in response the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, UT Martin will be suspending in-person classes until April 3rd.

UT interim president Randy Boyd says while there are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

Boyd says each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding details of the suspension and any online accommodations that will be made.

Meanwhile, UT Martin Director of Athletics Kurt McGuffin issued a statement Wednesday saying athletic events, both home and away, will resume as-scheduled until further notice.
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The University of Tennessee announced Wednesday that it would temporarily suspend all in-person classes as the state’s cases of new coronavirus rose to nine.

The university’s campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga and Martin, and its Health Science Center in Memphis, were moving courses online as a response to the coronavirus outbreak, university officials said in a news release.

In-person classes at the Chattanooga campus will be suspended until March 30. In Knoxville and Martin, they will be suspended until April 3, officials said.

The medical school in Memphis will offer all face-to-face lecture classes remotely, while clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual, officials said.

The UT system enrolls about 50,000 undergraduate and graduate students statewide, according to its website. Spring break starts next week.

“While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take,” said Randy Boyd, interim president of the university system.

In Nashville, a Vanderbilt University Medical Center health care worker tested positive for the coronavirus, the university said it had learned Wednesday.

Vanderbilt has canceled classes for this week and suspended in-person classes for the rest of the semester. Online and alternative learning will launch Monday for undergraduate, graduate and professional students. Undergraduate residential students should make plans to move out by Sunday, the school said in a statement on its website.
Rhodes College in Memphis also suspended in-person classes and moved to a remote learning plan Wednesday.

Dozens of people remained quarantined or were under self-monitoring Wednesday as the Tennessee Department of Health added two cases to its list of patients with the virus, which has sickened more than 1,000 people and killed 33 in the U.S.

Five cases have been confirmed in Williamson County, two in Davidson County, and one each in Shelby and Sullivan counties, the department said on its website.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

In the Memphis area, about 80 people were under quarantine or were monitoring themselves after contacting health officials, Shelby County Health Department Director Alisa Haushalter said at a news conference Wednesday.

Haushalter said she did not know how many patients had been tested in the county. Tests are analyzed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the state health department and private labs, she said.

The Shelby County patient traveled out of state but not out of the country, officials have said. Haushalter declined to release the location of the patient's travel, but she did say the health department does not know of other coronavirus cases in the community where the patient went.

One school employee who had come into contact with the Shelby County patient has been released from quarantine, superintendent Joris Ray said at the news conference.

In Nashville, Belmont University said it had extended its current spring break as a precaution.
The University of Tennessee-Martin announced it will move to online classes for at least the next three weeks. (Source: KFVS)

By Amber Ruch | March 11, 2020 at 7:03 PM CDT - Updated March 11 at 7:03 PM

MARTIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - The University of Tennessee-Martin announced it will move to online classes for at least the next three weeks.

The University said that while there are no known cases of COVID-19 at UT Martin, it continues to monitor the situation.

Classes will be canceled on Thursday, March 12 and Friday, March 13, so that faculty and staff can plan for remote education. Classes will resume online via UTM's Canvas learning management system on Monday, March 16.

According to UTM, residential students should leave their rooms by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 13. If a student is not able to return home, they can apply for an exemption to remain on campus.

Also starting on March 16 and running through April 5, they are canceling all non-athletic university events that involve gatherings of 50 or more people.

Decisions on athletic events are under evaluation, according to UTM, and information will follow in the next few days.

All UTM-sponsored study abroad programs with departure dates before June 1 will be suspended.

All university-sponsored travel was also suspended unless approved by the provost or vice chancellors.

According to UTM, the campus will remain open and all faculty and staff should report as normal.

For more information, you can click here to visit UTM's COVID-19 page.
University of Tennessee suspending in-person classes starting March 23 due to coronavirus concerns

UT Knoxville will suspend all in-person classes after Spring Break until at least April 3 and move to online classes in the meantime.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee will be temporarily suspending all in-person classes starting March 23 as a proactive measure in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd announced the measure Wednesday, saying this will affect UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and the UT Health Science Center.

UT Knoxville and UT Martin will suspend in-person classes until at least April 3. UT Chattanooga will suspend in-person classes until at least March 30.

UT Health Science Center will assess its online options within the next 10 days and communicate directly with its campus community. Clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual.

Physical locations for UT Libraries will close starting Saturday, March 14, until further notice. Library services and resources can still be accessed online.

All campus tours and undergraduate admissions events between March 16 - April 5 have also been canceled.

UT Chancellor Donde Plowman sent a letter to students, faculty and staff, saying, all classes will be moved online following spring break.

Students are expected to stay at home after spring break and participate in the online classes and not return to campus. Those living in residence halls or fraternity/sorority houses are told to stay home after spring break, and those who are unable to stay at home should register for an exemption to continue to live on campus.

Beginning March 16 through April 5, all non-athletic university events which involve gatherings of 50 or more people are canceled.

All study abroad before May 20 is also suspended.

Research facilities will remain open, including labs.

Any student that goes on a cruise, no matter the location, is told to self-isolate for two weeks upon their return home and to not attend work, classes, athletic events, or other social gatherings until that 14 days is over.

"I understand the hardship that this presents to all of you, and these are not decisions we made lightly. Our campus response to COVID-19 has been based on ongoing CDC updates and regular communication with public health officials and our own infectious disease specialists at the UT Health Science Center," Plowman said. "This remains a fluid situation. The uncertainty of spring break travel adds to the changing dynamics of the situation specifically related to campus. Additional updates may be forthcoming."

While there are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

"Our top priority is the health and safety of our students," Boyd said. "We are taking this preventative measure with all of our campuses that provide face-to-face instruction out of an abundance of caution."

UT said each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding the details of the suspension and any online accommodations that will be made.

"While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take given the current COVID-19 situation," Boyd said.

The UT System recently announced a comprehensive resource guide that provides information and resources surrounding COVID-19: tennessee.edu/coronavirus.

The news come as a wave of major event cancellations and closures in light of COVID-19's spread across the United States. COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on Wednesday.
University of Tennessee suspending in-person classes systemwide

Updated: March 11, 2020 6:09 PM | Published: March 11, 2020 6:09 PM

The University of Tennessee announced Wednesday that it will be temporarily suspending all in-person classes starting March 23 and will move to online classes following spring break until at least April 3 at some of its schools.

The measure announced by University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd will affect the UT Health Science Center in Memphis, UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga and UT Martin.

Following spring break, UT Knoxville classes will be moved online through at least April 3. This decision will allow UT Knoxville and UT Martin to suspend in-person classes until at least April 3. UT Chattanooga and UT Martin will suspend in-person classes until at least March 30.

Students, faculty and staff were sent letters notifying them of the changes due to COVID-19 even though there has been no confirmed case of the virus on campus.
Tulip Poplar Tree Dedicated at UT-Martin

MARTIN (March 5) — Ashley Kite-Rowland, president of the Martin Tree Board, and her husband, Dr. Aaron Rowland, associate professor of Sociology at UT Martin, donated the first tree in the new campus tree honorariums and memorials program, sponsored by the Center for Sustainability, in honor of the founding Martin Tree Board from 1994. The Tulip Poplar tree was planted March 4, between Brehm Hall and the Hall-Moody Administration Building. For more information on how to donate a memorial tree, visit utm.edu/sustainability or contact Dr. Eric Pelren, coordinator of the Center for Sustainability, at sustain@utm.edu. Pictured with the tree (L to R) are Chris Virgin, James Wick, Earl Wright, Guy Robbins, Dr. Aaron Rowland, Ashley Kite-Rowland, Ryan Morris, Dr. Eric Pelren and Greg Moore.

University Trio to Perform in Honor of Women’s Suffrage

MARTIN — The University of Tennessee at Martin University Trio will perform a concert celebrating the music of women composers in honor of the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage at 7:30 p.m., March 17, in Blankenship Recital Hall. The concert is free for all to attend.

The work is a dedication to the first Women’s Rights Convention held in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, and includes readings from suffragists’ writings such as the Declaration of Sentiments. The trio, pianist Dr. Elaine Harriss, UT Martin professor of music; flutist Dr. Elizabeth Darling, free-lance musician; and Dr. Christa Frey, adjunct professor of music at Bethel University, will be joined by UT Martin faculty members Henrietta Giles, lecturer in the Department of communications; Dr. Vicki Seng, associate provost and professor of nursing; and Dr. Renee LaFleur, director of the Center for Women and Gender Equality and associate professor of history, as narrators.

The leading work of the program is “Equality Now” by Gwyneth Walker, accompanied by the music of Elizabeth Poston, Jennifer Higdon and Maria Gronefell. For more information, contact Harriss at elaineh@utm.edu.

Weakley County Students Receive UT-M Scholarships

MARTIN — Several Weakley County students were awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Dr. James Manton, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

• Kimberly Barnett-Stone, of Martin, daughter of Junior Barnett and the late Nettie Joyce Barnett, is a senior. She received the Rose Construction Scholarship for the 2019-2020 academic year.
• Taylor Jones, of Dresden, daughter of Amanda Jones and Jimmy Jones, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic year.
• Allison Murphy, of Martin, daughter of Josh Murphy and Jennifer Cothran, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic year.
• Tristen Trevathan, of Dresden, daughter of Richard and Kelley Trevathan, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor’s Scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic year.
UT Martin students won a scholarship 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.

Brandon Rushing, of Fulton, son of Nicky and Jenny Rushing, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.

UT Martin is a four-year university located in northwest Tennessee and is part of the University of Tennessee System. Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting the UT Martin Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, 205 Hall-Moody Administration Building, Martin, TN, 38238, or by calling (731) 881-7040.
UTM to host Alzheimer’s disease and dementia care seminar

The University of Tennessee at Martin University Outreach program will host an online Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Care seminar from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on March 28-29 for students, medical specialists and community members.

Registration for this course is $350, which includes the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners fee for the certified dementia practitioner application for those qualified to apply.

The live online seminar will address issues concerning Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia beginning with diagnosis and treatment, and will also discuss symptomatic behaviors such as depression, wandering, aggression and more.

Instructions concerning personal care, pain and nutrition will also be provided.

Attendees who are pursuing a certified dementia practitioner certification must submit the application within seven days of completing the seminar. The application will be mailed to participants in the student handout notebook before the seminar.

To register for the seminar, visit utm.edu/dementia.

The deadline to register is March 21. There is a $75 cancellation fee.

For more information about the certified dementia practitioner’s certification qualifications, visit nccdp.org.

For more information about the seminar, contact Dr. Mike Chua at miche@DrMikeChua.com or (731) 882-7783.

Several Obion County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2019-20 academic year.

The recipients include:
- Hannah Blakely of Rives, daughter of Laura Blakely and Dan Blakely, a sophomore who received the Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship.
- Kaylee Cook of Union City, daughter of Shawn and Lori Cook, an incoming freshman who received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Grace Cunningham of Troy, daughter of Ben and Jamie Cunningham, an incoming freshman who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Nicole Hall of Union City, daughter of Carlene Burkeen and Charles Hall, an incoming freshman who received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Blade Johnson of Union City, son of April Johnson, an incoming freshman who received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
- Liv Murphy of Kenton, daughter of Laura Murphy, an incoming freshman who received the Dean’s Scholarship.
- Thompson Paschall of Rives, son of Kevin and Amy Paschall, a sophomore who received the Elam Transfer Achieve Scholarship.

UT Martin indefinitely suspends world travel

The spread of COVID-19 has prompted the University of Tennessee at Martin to indefinitely suspend international travel for employees and cancel Maymester international travel courses.

Maymester courses that include a domestic travel component and domestic travel for employees are not currently affected.
UTM names scholarship winners

Several Lauderdale 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.

Leighann Braden, of Ripley, daughter of Lois Dunger and Harold Braden, will be a sophomore. She received the Elam Transfer Scholarship and the Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship.

Cassie Lewis, of Gates, daughter of Allen and Tammie Lewis, will be a freshman. She received the Gooch Academic Scholarship.

Tori Washington, of Ripley, daughter of Jubonne Coleman and Joe Washington, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence 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 Hall-Moody Administration Building, Martin, Tenn., 38238, or by calling 731-881-7040.
UTM students, faculty respond to campus restrictions

March 12, 2020 by Julia Ewoldt

MARTIN, Tenn. — The largest university in West Tennessee is sending students home amid coronavirus concerns.

The UT Martin campus is usually buzzing with activity. Thursday, it was almost silent.

"It's pretty crazy. It was kind of expected. All the professors had been talking about it," said student Kristen Rice.

Wednesday night, the University of Tennessee announced the entire system, including UT Martin, would go to online courses until April 3rd due to coronavirus concerns.

"It gives students an opportunity to not be in such large groups, but also gives us an opportunity to see how this virus is spreading, and the incubation period on it is about 14 days, so I think we'll have a better idea next week and the week after how things look," said UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver.

University officials said that while they're trying to clear out the parking lot and the campus, it is ok if some students need to stay. They can fill out a waiver and stay on campus if they have obligations they need to fulfill.

"I think it's a good idea, even though it's a slight inconvenience for some people, but at the end of the day they're just taking their precautions and making sure it doesn't get worse than it is now," said student Aaron Washington.

But with labs and lectures, students and professors are now having to figure out how they're going to make online classes work for everyone.

"My chemistry professor just sent out an email saying we are going to have a quiz on Monday. So hopefully I'm still going to get my grade up," said student Kaitlyn Jamerson.

In the meantime, the University of Tennessee system is evaluating campuses every day.

"We're making every effort to make sure that first week of April, in-person classes resume as normal," Carver said.

The university has also created a link on their website (https://tennessee.edu/) with daily updates.

The University of Memphis has extended its spring break and is also transitioning to distance learning. This does include the Lambuth campus.
UTM Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver discusses in-person classes closing on campus

Posted on March 12, 2020 by Steve James in Local News

As a proactive measure in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, UT Martin will be suspending in-person classes until April 3rd.

Classes are closed Thursday and Friday for faculty to prepare for online and remote classes on Monday.

UTM Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver tells Thunderbolt Radio News...

(AUDIO)

Residential students are also being asked to leave their rooms by 5:00 Friday. If students aren’t able to return home, they can apply for an exemption to remain on campus.

In-person classes have also been suspended at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, and the UT Health Science Center in Memphis.
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The University of Tennessee announced Wednesday that it would temporarily suspend all in-person classes as the state's cases of new coronavirus rose to nine.

The university's campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga and Martin, and its Health Science Center in Memphis, were moving courses online as a response to the coronavirus outbreak, university officials said in a news release.

In-person classes at the Chattanooga campus will be suspended until March 30. In Knoxville and Martin, they will be suspended until April 3, officials said.

The medical school in Memphis will offer all face-to-face lecture classes remotely, while clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual, officials said.

The UT system enrolls about 50,000 undergraduate and graduate students statewide, according to its website. Spring break starts next week.

"While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take," said Randy Boyd, interim president of the university system.

In Nashville, a Vanderbilt University Medical Center health care worker tested positive for the coronavirus, the university said it had learned Wednesday.

Vanderbilt has canceled classes for this week and suspended in-person classes for the rest of the semester. Online and alternative learning will launch Monday for undergraduate, graduate and professional students. Undergraduate residential students should make plans to move out by Sunday, the school said in a statement on its website.

Rhodes College in Memphis also suspended in-person classes and moved to a remote learning plan Wednesday.

Dozens of people remained quarantined or were under self-monitoring Wednesday as the Tennessee Department of Health added two cases to its list of patients with the virus, which has sickened more than 1,000 people and killed 33 in the U.S.

Five cases have been confirmed in Williamson County, two in Davidson County, and one each in Shelby and Sullivan counties, the department said on its website.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.
In the Memphis area, about 80 people were under quarantine or were monitoring themselves after contacting health officials, Shelby County Health Department Director Alisa Haushalter said at a news conference Wednesday.

Haushalter said she did not know how many patients had been tested in the county. Tests are analyzed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the state health department and private labs, she said.

The Shelby County patient traveled out of state but not out of the country, officials have said. Haushalter declined to release the location of the patient’s travel, but she did say the health department does not know of other coronavirus cases in the community where the patient went.

One school employee who had come into contact with the Shelby County patient has been released from quarantine, superintendent Joris Ray said at the news conference.

In Nashville, Belmont University said it had extended its current spring break as a precaution.

KNOXVILLE – University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd announced that all in-person classes beginning March 23 will be temporarily suspended until further notice as a proactive measure in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

UT Chattanooga will suspend in-person classes until March 30, while UT Knoxville and UT Martin will suspend in-person classes until April 3. UT Health Science Center will assess its online options within the next 10 days and communicate directly with its campus community. Clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual.

While there are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

“Our top priority is the health and safety of our students,” Boyd said. “We are taking this preventative measure with all of our campuses that provide face-to-face instruction out of an abundance of caution.”

Each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding the details of the suspension and any online accommodations that will be made.

“While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take given the current COVID-19 situation,” Boyd said.
UT classes moving online due to coronavirus

Classes at the University of Tennessee are being temporarily suspended and moved online in response to COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the new coronavirus.

UT Chattanooga will suspend in-person classes until March 30, while UT Knoxville and UT Martin will suspend in-person classes until April 3. Beginning March 23, UT Health Science Center will offer all face-to-face lecture classes remotely until further notice. Clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual, a press release said.

University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd—in consultation with chancellors at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin, and the UT Health Science Center—announced the temporary suspension of all in-person classes in a press release on Wednesday. It's being called a proactive measure.

There are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, but there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

"Our top priority is the health and safety of our students," Boyd said in the press release. "We are taking this preventative measure with all of our campuses that provide face-to-face instruction out of an abundance of caution."

Each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students, and staff regarding the details of the suspension and any online accommodations that will be made, the press release said.

"While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take given the current COVID-19 situation," Boyd said.
The UT System recently announced a comprehensive resource guide that provides information and resources surrounding COVID-19: tennessee.edu/coronavirus/.

In December 2019, the global health care community identified a new respiratory virus that originated in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and has since been labeled 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), according to the World Health Organization—previously it was referred to as 2019-nCoV). Spread of coronavirus is correlated with circumstances of close and sustained contact with others who are infected.

More information will be added as it becomes available.

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THE LAUDERDALE COUNTY ENTERPRISE, RIPLEY, TENNESSEE, MARCH 12, 2020

Students Awarded UT-M Scholarships

Several Lauderdale County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2020-2021 academic year including Leighann Braden, of Ripley, daughter of Lois Dunger and Harold Braden, will be a sophomore. She received the Elam Transfer Scholarship and the Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship.

Cassie Lewis, of Gates, daughter of Allen and Tammie Lewis, will be a freshman. She received the Gooch Academic Scholarship.

Tori Washington, of Ripley, daughter of Jubonne Coleman and Joe Washington, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
UT System suspending in-person classes

KNOXVILLE — University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd — in consultation with chancellors at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and the UT Health Science Center — has announced that all in-person classes will be temporarily suspended until further notice as a proactive measure in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

UT Martin will suspend in-person classes through April 3.

While there are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

“Our top priority is the health and safety of our students,” Boyd said. “We are taking this preventative measure with all of our campuses that provide face-to-face instruction out of an abundance of caution.”

While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take given the current COVID-19 situation,” Boyd said.

In a letter to UTM system personnel, it was reported university offices will remain open. Beginning Monday, all courses will be conducted online through at least April 3. Faculty should be prepared to continue online past April 3, should the need arise. The reason for this three-week period is to move beyond the known COVID-19 incubation period.

The letter further notes:

• University housing — Residential students are being asked to leave their rooms by 5 p.m., Friday. If you live in a residence hall and are not able to return home, you will need to apply for an exemption to remain on campus.

• University events — Beginning today (Thursday), and running through April 5, the university is canceling all non-athletic university events, including those hosted by registered student organizations, which involve anticipated gatherings of 50 or more people. Decisions concerning athletic events are being evaluated by the director of athletics in coordination with the chancellor, the Ohio Valley Conference, and NCAA.

I understand the hardship that this presents to all of you, and this is not a decision we made lightly. Below is specific information on what you should do to prepare for the weeks ahead. Over the next few days, we will be sending out more detailed information to students, faculty, staff, researchers, and parents.

Students

Again, we are asking students to return to your permanent home, if possible. If you live on campus, please take those things you will need for the next three weeks, especially your course materials. If you are unable to return to your permanent residence, you will need to complete an exemption form. You will receive additional information concerning university housing in a separate email.

Faculty and Staff

Faculty should begin immediately moving all coursework online. Faculty should be prepared to continue with online instruction past April 3, in the event that becomes necessary.

Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and others in supervisory roles should make preparations for continuity of operations while keeping the health and wellness of our employees in mind.

This situation is being monitored daily and additional guidance will be forthcoming. Please contact Human Resources for support and assistance.

The safety and wellbeing of our UT Martin community remain our top priorities during this challenging situation. We will continue to offer updates, and you can find the latest information at http://www.utm.edu/coronavirus.

Keith S. Carver
Chancellor

The campus will remain open and all faculty and staff should report as normal, according to university communications.

Among the many questions being asked is the availability of testing for the virus. In response to growing concern, the Tennessee Department of Health has now authorized COVID-19 testing seven days per week. The department’s website is www.tn.gov/health and the public information line is 1-877-857-2945.

The Tennessee Department of Health oversees 89 county health departments and serves as a partner to the six major metropolitan jurisdictions including: Shelby, Madison, Davidson, Knox, Hamilton and Sullivan counties. Tennesseans are encouraged to take routine precautions used in guarding against respiratory viruses:

• Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

• Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing

• Don’t touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands

• Stay home if you are sick

• Stay away from people who are sick

Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have mild respiratory illness with fever, cough and shortness of breath. A smaller number of patients have severe symptoms requiring hospitalization. The CDC has updated information and guidance available online at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.
University of Tennessee suspends in-person classes

KNOXVILLE — University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd — in consultation with chancellors at UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and the UT Health Science Center — has announced that all in-person classes will be temporarily suspended until further notice as a proactive measure in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

UT Chattanooga will suspend in-person classes until March 30, while UT Knoxville and UT Martin will suspend in-person classes until April 5. Beginning March 23, UT Health Science Center will further notice will offer all face-to-face lecture classes remotely. Clinical rotations in hospitals will continue as usual.

While there are no reports of active confirmed cases involving COVID-19 on any University of Tennessee campus, there are confirmed cases in Tennessee.

“Our top priority is the health and safety of our students,” Boyd said. “We are taking this preventative measure with all of our campuses that provide face-to-face instruction out of an abundance of caution.”

Each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding the details of the suspension and any online accommodations that will be made.

Wednesday evening, UT Martin sent out a statement from Chancellor Dr. Keith S. Carver stating classes were suspended today and Friday, with university offices remaining open. Beginning Monday, all courses will be conducted online through at least April 3.

“We will continue to communicate throughout this period so that faculty, staff and students know what to expect going forward. Faculty should be prepared to continue online past April 3, should the need arise. The reason for (See Page 8, Col. 1)

UT suspends...
(Continued from Page One) this three-week period is to move beyond the known COVID-19 incubation period,” Dr. Carver wrote.

Students who utilize university housing are being asked to leave their rooms by 5 p.m. Friday. If students live in a residence hall and are not able to return home, they will need to apply for an exemption to remain on campus.

All non-athletic university events, including those hosted by registered student organizations and those which involve anticipated gatherings of 50 or more people are canceled through April 5. Decisions concerning athletic events are being evaluated by the director of athletics in coordination with the chancellor, the Ohio Valley Conference and NCAA.

All UT Martin-sponsored study abroad programs with departure dates prior to June 1 will be suspended.

While classes have been moved online, and the university is taking significant steps to encourage social distancing, the main campus and research facilities will remain open.

“I understand the hardship that this presents to all of you, and this is not a decision we made lightly,” Dr. Carver stated in the email.

“While we do not want to create undue anxiety on our campuses, we firmly believe that suspending our in-person classes is a prudent and important measure to take given the current COVID-19 situation,” Boyd said.

The UT System recently announced a comprehensive resource guide that provides information and resources surrounding COVID-19: tennessee.edu/coronavirus.

In December 2019, the global health care community identified a new respiratory virus that originated in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and has since been labeled 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19, according to the World Health Organization — previously it was referred to as 2019-nCoV). Spread of coronavirus is correlated with circumstances of close and sustained contact with others who are infected.

Other universities across the nation, including Vanderbilt in Nashville, have also made the decision to transition to online classes.

University of Memphis students, who are on spring break this week, have had their breaks extended by one week, according to an email sent to students this morning from university President M. David Rudd.

The university, as well as campus housing and dining facilities, will remain open at this time.

“As faculty and staff return to campus on Monday, the additional time will allow for preparation and transition to remote and virtual learning for the majority of courses and educational activities for the remainder of the spring semester. Any exceptions regarding some smaller classes with unique demands, laboratories and some performing arts instruction to continue with limited face-to-face contact are at the discretion of the Provost and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis,” Rudd wrote, adding

“Instructors are expected to communicate with students in their courses via email and provide detailed instructions for next steps by close of business on March 20. These instructional changes will remain in place through the end of the spring semester. As classroom instruction transitions to online or remote alternatives for the remainder of the semester, students are encouraged to return home.

“In an effort to reduce risk on our campus and protect the health and safety of our community, we are taking a number of actions designed to help limit coronavirus exposure. To be clear, there are no confirmed cases on our campus. As reported by the City of Memphis, however, there are cases in the broader Memphis community,” Rudd stated.

Consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization recommendations, university-sponsored events (i.e. outside of academic instruction) with more than 50 attendees need to be postponed, canceled or reconfigured as to minimize large gatherings. In cases where larger gatherings do occur, advance cleaning and other health guidance will be followed.

This does not include intercollegiate athletics. Those events are being coordinated with guidance from the American Athletic Conference and NCAA.

The Memphis campus is not closing. Buildings will remain open, and day-to-day campus operations will continue. There will likely be some limitations in operations and services, however, as there will be a need for remote operations of some units.
By Jasmin Adams | March 13, 2020 at 11:32 AM CDT - Updated March 13 at 11:32 AM

MARTIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - The Department of Athletics with the University of Tennessee at Martin will not play NCAA-sanctioned sports for the duration of the 2019-20 academic year.

"The health and well-being of our student-athletes is always our primary concern," Skyhawk Athletic Director Kurt McGuffin said. "In accordance with the OVC's decision today, we regret to announce that the rest of the 2019-20 UT Martin Athletics season has been canceled. It is truly an unfortunate and disappointing situation but it is necessary given the COVID-19 spread. There are still a lot of unknowns and we ask for patience during this time."

On March 12, the NCAA announced all remaining winter and spring championships were canceled.

Additionally, the Ohio Valley Conference board of presidents announced that athletic related activities involving member institutions had been suspended until further notice due to the COVID-19 public health threat.

On March 11, the UT System announced it was transitioning to online-only courses until April 6 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

University officials said UT Martin also sponsors non-NCAA sports in equestrian and rodeo.

The National Collegiate Equestrian Association announced on March 13 it is canceling its championship event.

School officials said a decision on the 52nd Annual UT Martin Spring College Rodeo is still pending and will be reevaluated at a later date.

The rodeo is currently set for April 16-18.

Further updates will be available at utmsports.com.
UNIQUELY UTM — The University of Tennessee at Martin’s Aviators Marching Band revealed its new uniforms, modeled by Byron Cupples of Newbern, this week in front of upcoming and current members of the marching band, as well as faculty, staff and Department of Music alumni. According to Steve Barnett (right), director of athletic bands, the new lightweight uniforms took over six months to design and are unique to UT Martin.
Online classes at UT Martin to continue for rest of spring semester

Leanne Fuller
Mar 16, 2020

MARTIN, TN — The University of Tennessee at Martin made the switch to online classes last week amid concerns about the coronavirus outbreak. On Monday, the university announced all formerly in-person classes will remain online for the rest of the spring semester.

That's also the case at all campuses in the University of Tennessee system, UT interim president Randy Boyd has announced.

"In an effort to avoid further disruption for our students, faculty and staff, we will move instruction entirely online for the remainder of the spring semester," Boyd said in a news release. "In addition, commencement ceremonies will not be held in May. Each campus is looking at alternative commencement options at this time."

Boyd said each campus will send communications to its faculty, students and staff with more information about how they will be affected.

To read Monday's announcement in full, click here.
All University of Tennessee at Martin Athletics have been suspended indefinitely due to the threat of COVID-19.

On Saturday morning’s Coaches’ Corner, UT Martin Athletic Director Kurt McGuffin gave an update on the situation and the challenges this brings.

Coach McGuffin says once the NCAA announced the closing of their postseason tournaments, UTM’s ruling became inevitable.

Thunderbolt Radio and Digital will provide further updates as they are made available.
Deal named Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Dr. Charley Deal has been named vice chancellor for university advancement for the University of Tennessee Foundation Inc. and the University of Tennessee at Martin. Deal will assume responsibilities April 1, 2020.

As the vice chancellor for university advancement, Deal will be responsible for managing UT Martin's fundraising and alumni programs; coordinating development efforts with UT Foundation and UT System administration; representing UT Martin in the community, and among alumni groups and potential university supporters; and will serve on the UT Martin chancellor's cabinet.

"Charley has a long track record of success in university advancement, and we are fortunate to have him assume this role. He has the dedication, work ethic, leadership skills and passion for the university that are important as we work to advance the mission of UT Martin," said Kerry Witcher, president and CEO of the UT Foundation Inc.

Deal currently serves as the executive director of research, outreach and economic development, overseeing research grants and expenditures, and non-degree courses and camps at UT Martin.

He began his career at UT Martin in 1992 and served in the Office of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving before moving to the Office of Research, Outreach, and Economic Development in 2019. Deal is also the executive director of the WestStar Leadership Program.

Deal earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from UT Martin and a doctoral degree in philosophy, learning and leadership from UT Chattanooga.

"This is truly an honor to work with a seasoned team of advancement professionals, and I look forward to building upon their successes in providing life-changing opportunities for our students, staff and faculty. I appreciate the confidence Chancellor Keith Carver and UT Foundation President Kerry Witcher have in my abilities, and I am excited to be working with two of the best leaders in higher education in the state," said Deal.

Deal says he will not only focus on opportunities to engage UT Martin faculty, alumni and donors in the region, but also stakeholders from around the world to ensure success for the foundation.

"We are excited about the appointment of Dr. Charley Deal to be our new Vice Chancellor for University Advancement. Charley's knowledge of the university, the region and our state will serve him well in this leadership role," said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver. "I look forward to working with Charley and our entire advancement team to achieve the goals and priorities of the University of Tennessee at Martin."

Dr. Shadow Robinson, dean of the UT Martin College of Engineering and Natural Sciences, served as the search committee chairperson, which included representation from UT Martin faculty and staff as well as UT Foundation Inc. representatives. Committee members were Petra McPherson, vice chancellor for finance and administration; Philip Smartt, chair of the UT Martin Faculty Senate; Love Collins, UT Foundation Inc. vice chancellor for advancement at the UT Health Science Center; Bill Blankenship, UT Martin supporter and member of the UT Martin Development Committee; Phillip Clendenin, UT Foundation Inc. board member and UT Martin alumnus; Jennifer Hampton, UT Martin alumnae; Dana Prince, UT Foundation Inc. advancement staff; and Andrew Hart, UT Foundation Inc. central staff and UT Martin alumnus.

The UT Foundation Inc. is an interdependent nonprofit corporation that supports the University's educational, research, and outreach activities.
UT Martin to continue online classes for remainder of spring semester, alternative commencement ceremonies being planned

UT Martin will continue online-only classes for the remainder of the spring semester and alternative commencement ceremonies will be planned in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd made the announcement Monday afternoon, saying, "In an effort to avoid further disruption for our students, faculty and staff, we will move instruction entirely online for the remainder of the spring semester.

"In addition, commencement ceremonies will not be held in May. Each campus is looking at alternative commencement options at this time," Boyd said.

Each UT campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding the impact to its respective campuses.

UT Martin Rodeo canceled

The annual spring rodeo was scheduled for April 16-18, but after the CDC recommended that all large events and mass gatherings of 50 people or more be cancelled or postponed for the next eight weeks, the event was canceled.

"Gold Buckle Seating, the online ticketing service used to manage the ticket sales, will be emailing all ticket buyers and providing detailed information about refunds.

Those who do not want a refund on this year's tickets will have their money deposited as a donation to the rodeo program."
Deal tapped for university advancement

Dr. Charley Deal has been named vice chancellor for university advancement for the University of Tennessee Foundation Inc. and the University of Tennessee at Martin. Deal will assume responsibilities April 1.

As the vice chancellor for university advancement, Deal will be responsible for managing UT Martin’s fundraising and alumni programs; coordinating development efforts with UT Foundation and UT System administration; representing UT Martin in the community and among alumni groups and potential university supporters; and will serve on the UT Martin chancellor’s cabinet.

“Charley has a long track record of success in university advancement, and we are fortunate to have him assume this role. He has the dedication, work ethic, leadership skills and passion for the university that are important as we work to advance the mission of UT Martin,” said Kerry Witcher, president and CEO of the UT Foundation Inc.

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Deal says he will not only focus on opportunities to engage UT Martin faculty, alumni and donors in the region, but also stakeholders from around the world to ensure success for the foundation.

“We are excited about the appointment of Dr. Charley Deal to be our new Vice Chancellor for University Advancement. Charley’s knowledge of the university, the region and our state will serve him well in this leadership role,” said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver.

“I look forward to working with Charley and our entire advancement team to achieve the goals and priorities of the University of Tennessee at Martin.”

Dr. Shadow Robinson, dean of the UT Martin College of Engineering and Natural Sciences, served as the search committee chairperson, which included representation from UT Martin faculty and staff as well as UT Foundation Inc. representatives.

In addition to the announced members, the committee also includes Petra McPhearson, vice chancellor for finance and administration; Philip Smartt, chair of the UT Martin Faculty Senate; Love Collins, UT Foundation Inc. vice chancellor for advancement at the UT Health Science Center; Bill Blankenship, UT Martin supporter and member of the UT Martin Development Committee; Phillip Clendenin, UT Foundation Inc. board member and UT Martin alumnus; Jennifer Hampton, UT Martin alumnae; Dana Prince, UT Foundation Inc. advancement staff; and Andrew Hart, UT Foundation Inc. central staff and UT Martin alumnus.

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

SEE DEAL ON PAGE 12
County students receive scholarships to UTM

Several Weakley County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

They include:
- Kimberly Barnett-Stone of Martin, daughter of Junior Barnett and the late Nettie Joyce Barnett, is a senior. She received the Rose Construction Scholarship for the 2019-20 academic year.
- Taylor Jones of Dresden, daughter of Amanda Jones and Jimmy Jones, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship for the 2020-21 academic year.
- Allison Murphy of Martin, daughter of Josh Murphy and Jennifer Cothran, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship for the 2020-21 academic year.
- Tristen Trevathan of Dresden, daughter of Richard and Kelley Trevathan, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor's Scholarship for the 2020-21 academic year.

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

UTM music plans altered

The University of Tennessee at Martin has suspended in-person classes until April 6, causing musical performances to be altered.

Live music events are canceled, but select events will be live streamed at 7 p.m. on UTM Music Facebook Live Stream. They include:
- Corona Connection: Dru Davidson, Culturally Responsive Teaching, tonight.
- Corona Connection: Alexis Derryberry, Hip Hop & You Don’t Stop, Wednesday.
- Corona Connection: Doug Owens, Faculty Woodwind Recital, Thursday.
- Corona Connection: Reece King, Multiple Careers in Music, Friday.

Dozens of area events canceled, offices closed in response to coronavirus concerns

which have been canceled are:
- University Trio Concert, today.
- Small Jazz Group Concert, Thursday.
- Voice Studio Recital, March 24.
- SAI Musicale, March 25.
- Chamber Players Concert, March 26.
- UTM Music presents WORLD BIZARRE, March 27.
- Chamber Fest Concerts, March 28.

"The Darkness & The Light," Robert Mancusi, Faculty Voice Recital, March 29.
- Ed Sargent Series presents SAM HANDLEY with the UTM Choirs, April 7.

Tickets have been refunded and this performance will be postponed.
For the most up-to-date listings of cancellations, visit utm.edu/musicevents.
Deal Named Vice Chancellor For University Advancement

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As the vice chancellor for university advancement, Deal will be responsible for managing UT Martin’s fundraising and alumni programs; coordinating development efforts with UT Foundation and UT System administration; representing UT Martin in the community and among alumni groups and potential university supporters; and will serve on the UT Martin chancellor’s cabinet.

“Charley has a long track record of success in university advancement, and we are fortunate to have him assume this role. He has the dedication, work ethic, leadership skills and passion for the university that are important as we work to advance the mission of UT Martin,” said Kerry Witcher, president and CEO of the UT Foundation Inc.

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UTM-Ripley closes for two weeks; Spring Fling cancelled

The University of Tennessee at Martin Ripley campus will close for at least two weeks, and UTM-Ripley officials have cancelled the Spring Fling that was scheduled for today, officials with the school announced this past week.

All University of Tennessee campuses closed with classes going on-line through at least April 3, according to school officials. School officials said the reason for the three-week period is to move beyond the known COVID-19 incubation period.
UT Martin’s Dr. Deal chosen for vice chancellor position

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He will assume responsibilities April 1.

As the vice chancellor for university advancement, Deal will be responsible for managing UT Martin’s fundraising and alumni programs; coordinating development efforts with UT Foundation and UT System administration; and representing UT Martin in the community and among alumni groups and potential university supporters.

He will also serve on the UT Martin chancellor’s cabinet.

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ATTEND PREVIEW — Jett Allen (center), a senior from Obion County Central High School, was joined by his parents, Michelle and Jeff Allen, at the recent Test Flight Academic Preview Day at the University of Tennessee at Martin. High school students had the opportunity to meet with professors and students in their intended academic majors, sit in on classes with current students and go on a walking tour of campus. Parents and families were also encouraged to come and experience a day in college life with their student.

Corona Connection Music Series Hosted by UT-M Department of Music

MARTIN — The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Music is hosting a nightly web series at 7 p.m., beginning March 16, titled “Corona Connection” as a way to continue engaging students and community members during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The interactive Facebook Live series will feature various guest performers teaching singer/songwriter skills, music education and production.

The schedule for this week’s performances is as follows:

March 16: Keegan Paluso, “How to Make it as a DIY Musician”
March 17: Dru Davidson, “Culturally Responsive Teaching”
March 18: Alexis Derryberry, “Hip Hop & You Don’t Stop”
March 19: Doug Owens, “Faculty Woodwind Recital”
March 20: Reece King, “Multiple Careers in Music”

All livestream videos can be found on the UTM Music Facebook page.

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Hill, chair, at jhill@utm.edu.
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For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
In-Person Classes At UT-Martin Convert to Online This Week

MARTIN — The University of Tennessee system has created the policies concerning the COVID-19 virus.
The university of Tennessee at Martin has no known cases of the virus, however, the school is converting to online classes for three weeks. Here is some of the information from the university's website.

Cleaning: The university is disinfecting high-touch campus areas during each work shift or three times daily, including all computer labs.

Academics
Classes: In-person classes will not be held through April 3 but will be conducted online. Students who do not have computer access should contact local libraries for possible use of technology resources.
Nursing clinicals: All nursing clinicals are cancelled.
Student teaching: Contact the Department of Educational

See UT-MARTIN on Page 3

UT-Martin
...From Front Page

Studies for more information.

Vet Tech mandatory labs: Alternate plans are being determined for these mandatory labs.
Advising and Registration: Advising is scheduled April 6-9; registration begins the following week.

Events
All in-person events are cancelled through April 5. All intercollegiate spring sports are cancelled through spring semester. Decisions about other key university events will be made as more information is available.

Prospective Student Tours: Prospective student tours are suspended through April 3.

Spring Preview Day: Spring Preview Day scheduled for Saturday, April 4, is cancelled.

Food Services
Dining Services: Limited food service featuring a varied menu will be available for students through this period.

Housing
Residence Halls: Students who can return to their permanent homes during this period should do so if possible. Students who cannot return home must complete an exception form.

Services
Boling University Center: The Boling University Center will open to accommodate dining services for students but will not host meetings or events at this time. Skyhawk Dining Hall hours will be posted later.
Testing Center: The Testing Center will not conduct testing March 16-April 5.

Perry Children's Center: The Perry Children's Center is closed through April 5.

Student Health and Counseling: Current students may use Student Health and Counseling services while in-person classes are suspended.

Student Recreation Center: The Student Recreation Center is closed through April 5 and will reopen April 6 or when students return to campus.

Online Visitor Parking Passes: Online visitor parking passes will not be issued again until April 5.

Student Workers
Essential Workers: Students may work if duties are deemed "essential" by their supervisors and the appropriate vice chancellor. Otherwise, students may not report for work through April 5.
Work-Study: Work-Study students will continue to be paid. Check with supervisors for more information.

COVID-19

UT Martin Rodeo is Canceled

COURTESY UT MARTIN

The 52nd installment of the University of Tennessee at Martin Spring College Rodeo is cancelled, the Skyhawk Athletic Department announced today.

On Monday, University of Tennessee system universities announced classes continue as online-only courses for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic year. On Sunday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended all large events and mass gatherings of 50 people or more be canceled or postponed for the next eight weeks because of the COVID-19 threat.

Gold Buckle Seating, the online ticketing service managing ticket sales will email all rodeo ticket buyers and providing detailed information about refunds. Those who do not want a refund on this year's tickets will have their money deposited as a donation to the rodeo program.
COVID-19

UTM: NCAA-Sanctioned Sports Canceled

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"The health and well-being of our student-athletes is always our primary concern," Skyhawk athletic director Kurt McGuffin said. "In accordance with the OVC's decision today, we regret to announce that the rest of the 2019-20 UT Martin Athletics season has been canceled. It is truly an unfortunate and disappointing situation but it is necessary given the COVID-19 spread. There are still a lot of unknowns and we ask for patience during this time."

Please continue to check UTM-Sports.com for further updates as they are made available.

TULIP TREE DEDICATED TO UTM — Ashley Kite-Rowland, president of the Martin Tree Board, and her husband, Dr. Aaron Rowland, associate professor of Sociology at UT Martin, donated the first tree in the new campus tree honorariums and memorials program, sponsored by the Center for Sustainability, in honor of the founding Martin Tree Board from 1994. The Tulip Poplar tree was planted March 4, in between Brehm Hall and the Hall-Moody Administration Building. For more information on how to donate a memorial tree, visit um.edu/sustainability or contact Dr. Eric Pelren, coordinator of the Center for Sustainability, at sustain@utm.edu. Pictured (From left) are Chris Virgin, James Wick, Earl Wright, Guy Robbins, Dr. Aaron Rowland, Ashley Kite-Rowland, Ryan Morris, Dr. Eric Pelren and Greg Moore.
STUDENTS TRAVEL TO BRAZIL — UTM students traveled and learned some different lessons on a trip to Brazil in the fall 2019. Making the trip (from left) were Sarah Perry, a junior from Ripley; Aaron Dyer, a sophomore from Union City; and Emily Hudgins, a junior from Paris; and also 12 other UTM students and two faculty members.

UTM students find different lessons in Brazil

Sarah Perry is studying social work, Aaron Dyer is an agricultural business major, and Emily Hudgins is studying both chemistry and plant science. It seems these three students would have little in common. However, they all traveled to the Brazilian rainforest in August 2019, and they came home with three different views on how that trip will influence their future careers.

Perry, a junior from Ripley, focused on the cultural diversity of the area and the differences and similarities between life in the rainforest and life in America. “It was a good opportunity to learn about the Brazilian culture and the culture of the Amazonian tribes,” she said. “We got to actually experience and see some of their cultural dances that they do in their ceremonies, like when a baby is born or for a marriage.”

Dyer, a sophomore from Union City, was most interested in the farming techniques used to grow crops in the rainforest. “When we went, it was flooded – a flooded forest – so I wanted to look at farming in the flood season,” he said. “The soil is really, really bad there. … And so, (Amazonian farmers) have to cut down the actual rainforest and burn it and use the ash to fertilize the ground. That ground is only good for a couple of years, so they have to move to another plot.”

Dyer says that while Brazil’s large-scale agricultural practices are similar to those used in West Tennessee, their small-scale agriculture has evolved to suit the needs of the ecosystems in which they live. As a future agricultural business professional, Dyer says he would be interested in finding a way for tribes such as those the group visited to produce genetically modified crops that would give higher yields in tropical areas.

Hudgins, a junior from Paris, took a particular interest in the plants and animals of the region and the way they can be harvested and used in the scientific world. With majors in both chemistry and agriculture, and a concentration in plant science, she says the crossover between ecology and chemistry in the rainforest was fascinating to see.

“We went on this hike through the forest, and we pulled up on the bank and spent the night there. … There was one tree that stuck out to me specifically (because) they actually shave the bark, and they can get iodine extracted from the bark,” she said. “It helped me to see … that everything is really interconnected and understanding one thing can really help you understand something else.”

This particular travel-study course, led by Dr. Dawn Wilkins and Dr. Tom Blanchard, both faculty members in the UT Martin Department of Biological Sciences, included 15 students from 10 different academic majors – a true example of the academic diversity found in travel courses. Most UT Martin travel-study courses are open to students across a wide range of academic disciplines, and many open spaces for alumni, faculty and community members as well.

“It’s definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I think everyone should do at least one travel study before they graduate. It opens a whole new world to you and exposes you to different cultures and different ways of life,” said Perry. Hudgins and Dyer agreed, making mention of the scholarship opportunities available to undergraduate students at no other time in their lives.

“I don’t think it will ever be as cheap (to travel) as it is when you do it in college,” said Hudgins. “It’s a good opportunity to take (a course) that you wouldn’t normally take as part of your major … and get to go out of the country and see another place.”

UT Martin faculty lead approximately 15 travel-study courses each year to places such as Iceland, Italy, Guatemala, the United Kingdom, Japan, Scandinavia, Dubai and others. For more information on university travel, contact the UT Martin Center for International Education at 731-881-1023.
Interim UT president shares vision for UT System

UT System Interim President Randy Boyd hosted the President's Town Hall Tour at the University of Tennessee at Martin on March 10 in Watkins Auditorium to discuss his vision for creating the greatest decade in UT history if he were to be named president of the UT System.

"When we talk about this being the greatest decade, that's a big challenge, but I think we're up to it," said Boyd. "I also want to say this is not meant as any disrespect to those who came before us; I think they expect us to build on the foundation they have given us and to make this the greatest decade... We owe that to them..."

During the town hall meeting, Boyd discussed five key goals he believes will create a successful "One UT System" culture:

- Student success: Creating the opportunity for higher education for all Tennesseans and the resources needed for each student to graduate and be successful through programs, like the UT Promise. The UT Promise is a last-dollar scholarship for students in low-income households that promotes socioeconomic equality, accountability and support in the classroom, according to Boyd.
- Research: Capitalizing on research opportunities for students and faculty in order to contribute to the UT research mission through partnerships with organizations like the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. In 2019, the UT System had $424 million worth of research expenditures, the most the system has ever produced before in one year.
- Service: Making a difference in communities across Tennessee by identifying common issues that can be solved through the sustainable resources the UT System can provide, such as the current fight against the opioid crisis. By utilizing the geographic reach of the UT System, the institution is capable of solving long-term problems that continue to afflict Tennessee.
- Collaboration: Introducing cost-effective initiatives for day-to-day operations to save resources that will then in turn be used to support students and faculty.
- Building the UT brand: Creating a recognizable and respected UT brand that promotes transparency and community in the UT System.

"The most important thing I could do would be creating a "One UT" culture," said Boyd. "The most important thing we want to leave our system with is the idea of how we can work together to be more effective... Yes, every one of our universities is different... but if we're all the same, there would be no reason to work together. We wouldn't learn from each other. The strength of working together outweighs our differences."

"When we work together, there is not a single problem in the state of Tennessee that we can't solve."

After his speech, Boyd opened the floor up to the audience members to ask questions and give feedback about his abilities to take on the official role as UT president.

Boyd began the tour to all UT campuses after the Feb. 19 UT Board of Trustees meeting in which the removal of the interim designation from his title as UT President was proposed. Boyd was urged to visit each campus to share his goals for being UT President and to receive feedback from faculty, students, alumni and community members on his performance to date as interim president before final decisions are made.

Boyd has served as the interim president since November of 2018 and spent his first day in office at UT Martin.

Once the President's Town Hall Tour is complete, the board of trustees will evaluate the system's response and vote whether or not to allow Boyd to serve for an additional five years.

For more information, visit https://tennessee.edu/transparency.
Brooks, communications student at UTM, shadows AP Journalist Meg Kinnard

Kayla Brooks, a senior Communications major from Dickson and current News Director of WUTM-FM 90.3 “The Hawk,” received the opportunity to shadow Associated Press journalist Meg Kinnard for four days leading up to the 2020 South Carolina Democratic Primary.

Brooks, who aspires to be a political reporter among many other things, said she is extremely thankful for the chance to work with Kinnard because it has given her a new appreciation for the work she is doing now at UT Martin. Even as a student, Brooks was able to network with current reporters, sit in on interviews with presidential candidates and by the end of the weekend, conduct her own interview utilizing the lessons Kinnard and UT Martin taught her.

“It made me feel very important and reminded me that being a student doesn’t mean I’m not qualified… I don’t have to limit myself,” said Brooks.

The pair met at UT Martin when Kinnard was the guest lecturer in Brooks’ broadcast news writing class. After her presentation, they quickly connected on Twitter where Brooks asked if there was any chance she could shadow her the next time she was in Tennessee.

“Impressed by the gutsiness” of Brooks’ request, Kinnard responded by flying her to South Carolina to follow her on the presidential campaign.

“I thought this was a bold, assertive move on her part, and showed a lack of shyness that’s also vital to being a good journalist,” said Kinnard. “For someone interested in political journalism, the opportunity to shadow an AP political reporter is a tremendous opportunity.”

Brooks’ greatest takeaway from the entire experience was realizing even though she is reporting for a student news outlet, she plays just as important of a role as a journalist objectively reporting the truth as Kinnard does.

“I matter as a student journalist,” said Brooks. “Everything you write is going out on a radio station. I realize it’s student-run, but that doesn’t mean it can’t be good. That doesn’t mean it can’t be very good.”

Kinnard teaches objectivity as the most important foundation a journalist should stand upon no matter how long he or she has worked for the media, which was the focus of their externship. “In a day and age where fewer people trust established media, it’s so important that we remove ourselves from the story and simply give an accurate accounting of what’s happening. After spending a weekend with Kayla, I’m encouraged that she’s willing to accept that challenge and already seems to have a keen ability to do just that,” said Kinnard.

Brooks has already begun implementing the techniques she learned on the campaign trail at the radio station, including staff lessons on objectivity and proper AP style. With the network connections she made in South Carolina, Brooks says she is more conscious of not only what she produces for the radio station, but also what she puts out on her social media.

Her mentorship with Kinnard continues across state borders as Brooks turns to Kinnard daily for insight on how to handle difficult questions, like ones concerning the 2020 presidential campaign. Brooks concluded her externship with Kinnard feeling more confident in her abilities as a journalist and knows that if she ever needs advice, Kinnard is just a tweet away.

“I can talk to people I might not have felt qualified to talk to before and I can ask big questions. I can ask questions about voting and I can ask people why aren’t you going to vote. But I can do it with a greater confidence that I am being objective...,” said Brooks.

As news director of WUTM-FM 90.3 “The Hawk,” Brooks said the entire staff is now more cognizant of the news they produce to make sure it is not only accurate, but representative of the UT Martin campus.

“Kayla is indeed smart, thoughtful and inquisitive - and yet another great ambassador for the University of Tennessee at Martin, a school with a history of turning out impressive people who make a difference beyond the region,” said Kinnard. “We need more Kaylas in the news business.”

Kinnard, the granddaughter of former Tennessee Congressman and UT Martin alumnus Ed Jones, has reported for The Associated Press since 2005. Kinnard is also the sponsor of an endowed scholarship awarded to a student dedicated to objective journalism at UT Martin.
University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd has announced that all in-person delivery of classes will be moved online for the remainder of the spring semester and alternative commencement ceremonies will be planned at all UT campuses in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"In an effort to avoid further disruption for our students, faculty and staff, we will move instruction entirely online for the remainder of the spring semester," Boyd said. "In addition, commencement ceremonies will not be held in May. Each campus is looking at alternative commencement options at this time."

Each campus will be sending out specific communications to their faculty, students and staff regarding the impact to its respective campuses.

The UT System recently announced a comprehensive resource guide that provides information and resources surrounding COVID-19: tennessee.edu/coronavirus.

In December 2019, the global health care community identified a new respiratory virus that originated in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and has since been labeled 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19, according to the World Health Organization—previously it was referred to as 2019-nCoV). Spread of coronavirus is correlated with circumstances of close and sustained contact with others who are infected.

The 52nd installment of the University of Tennessee at Martin Spring College Rodeo has been cancelled, the Skyhawk Athletic Department announced this week.

On Sunday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that all large events and mass gatherings of 50 people or more be cancelled or postponed for the next eight weeks because of the COVID-19 threat.

Gold Buckle Seating, the online ticketing service used to manage the ticket sales, will be emailing all ticket buyers and providing detailed information about refunds.

Those who do not want a refund on this year’s tickets will have their money deposited as a donation to the rodeo program.

The University of Tennessee is a statewide system of higher education with campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Martin and Memphis; the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma; the UT Institute of Agriculture with a presence in every Tennessee county; and the statewide Institute for Public Service.

The UT system manages Oak Ridge National Laboratory through its UT-Battelle partnership; enrolls about 50,000 students statewide; produces about 10,000 new graduates every year; and represents more than 387,000 alumni around the world.

AVIATORS MARCHING BAND REVEALS NEW UNIFORMS — The Aviators Marching Band revealed their new uniforms March 10, modeled by Byron Cupples, of Newbern, in front of upcoming and current members of the marching band, as well as faculty, staff and Department of Music alumni. According to Steve Barnett, director of athletic bands, the new light-weight uniforms took over six months to design and are unique to UT Martin. For more information regarding the Aviators Marching Band, contact Barnett at sbarne28@utm.edu or 731-881-1852.
UTM music offers ‘Corona Connection’

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Music is hosting a nightly web series at 7 p.m., which began Monday, titled “Corona Connection” as a way to continue engaging students and community members during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The interactive Facebook Live series will feature various guest performers teaching singer/songwriter skills, music education and production.

The schedule for remaining performances this week is as follows:

• Today (Thursday): Doug Owens, “Faculty Woodwind Recital”
• Friday: Reece King, “Multiple Careers in Music”

All livestream videos can be found on the UTM Music Facebook page.

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Hill, chair, at jhill@utm.edu.

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY PRESS
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

HOPE
FROM PAGE A1

The main benefit, of course, is the convenience it offers parents, but with those children who have the instruments, Hampton also offers free, basic music lessons. “I taught the kids some basic piano,” Hampton said of a recent babysitting job.

In order to offer the best care possible, Hampton says she keeps her house very clean, follows up with cleaning after every job, and maintains basic hygienic standards. “I have about 12 cans of Lysol right now,” Hampton said.

Of course, Hampton has the same sort of concerns as anyone else during this time. She said she always takes the proper precaution of cleaning and sanitizing, but she also takes the extra time to do just a little more. She said her experience with childcare is a bonus with this current service and those responding to her Facebook post seem to agree.

People have responded with encouragement and well-deserved praise for what Hampton is doing to help her community and those affected by this virus.

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY PRESS
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020

UTM student offering hope

By CHRISTIAN ASHLAR
Press Reporter

The social landscape of the local communities has darkened in the wake of COVID-19. People are practicing social distancing and are being very careful about who they are coming into contact with.

Schools, restaurants and other businesses are closing.

Things in the community are changing. In this time of change, Brianna Hampton, a UT Martin music major and resident of Martin, is offering up some much-needed help and hope.

On March 13, Hampton made a very simple Facebook post in which she reached out to parents. With schools and daycare centers closing, many of them are facing a unique difficulty and Hampton offered to look after their children for them.

“I love the kiddos,” Hampton posted. Almost right away, she had more than 40 responses and several requests for babysitting services.

Hampton has always been involved in childcare, as well as the care of pets. She has experience with after-school programs and with so many of them closing, her offer was one with a lot of benefits.

SEE HOPE PAGE A8
MARTIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - The University of Tennessee at Martin has partnered with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency to create personal protective equipment for COVID-19 relief aid.

UT Martin has taken all of their 3D printers on campus to Rogers Media Center where they are being used to print headbands for medical face shields.

"We are pleased to engage with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and other educational partners across the state to provide safety materials to Tennessee's health-care workers. Our faculty and staff are working to create filament bands for safety masks on our campus 3D printers," said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver. "We want to be a resource for the region and state's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic situation."

Currently, the center is running eight printers around the clock to produce as many headbands as possible.

THEC has also purchased two additional 3D printers to aid UT Martin's capacity.

The printers are being operated by faculty, staff and students who all agree they are making a difference for Tennessee medical professionals fighting COVID-19.

"It's an eye-opening experience because we've been doing 3D printing, but not on this scale before. It's amazing what we are able to do, and it is a humbling experience that we are able to help as many people as we can in this situation that we are in," said student worker Jordan Bell, of Dresden.

The center is also responsible for cutting out sheets of acetate, as well as elastic to complete the shields that will be assembled after being transported to TEMA.
UTM postpones summer orientation, transfer orientation

March 25, 2020 by WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News Staff

MARTIN, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee at Martin confirmed Monday that two summer registration programs have been postponed.

In a news release, university leaders say the Summer Orientation and Registration, or SOAR, and Transfer Orientations have been rescheduled as a precaution due to COVID-19.

The first SOAR dates were originally planned for May 18 and May 20. Those have now been rescheduled for June 22 and June 24, according to the release.

The release says instead of the regular seven sessions, SOAR will now be five sessions on June 22, June 24, July 10, July 28 and Aug. 7.

Transfer Orientation will now be on June 23 and July 16, according to the release.

There are currently no cases reported in Weakley County at this time, but UT Martin is holding all classes online and has cancelled student tours through April as a precaution.

UT Martin Admissions are looking into alternative dates in the event that the new dates need to be rescheduled.

For more information, call (731) 881-7020.

**UTM RODEO CANCELED DUE TO COVID-19 CONCERNS**

MARTIN (March 17) — The 52nd installment of the University of Tennessee at Martin Spring College Rodeo has been canceled, the Skyhawk Athletic Department announced today.

It was announced on Monday that all University of Tennessee system universities will continue online-only courses for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic year. On Sunday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that all large events and mass gatherings of 50 people or more be canceled or postponed for the next eight weeks because of the COVID-19 threat.

Gold Buckle Seating, the online ticketing service used to manage the ticket sales, will be emailing all ticket buyers and providing detailed information about refunds.

Those who do not want a refund on this year's tickets will have their money deposited as a donation to the rodeo program.
Obion County sophomore included
UT Martin students find different lessons in Brazil

Sarah Perry is studying social work, Aaron Dyer is an agricultural business major and Emily Hudgins is studying both chemistry and plant science.

It seems these three students would have little in common. However, they all traveled to the Brazilian rainforest in August 2019, and came home with three different views on how that trip will influence their future careers.

Ms. Perry, a junior from Ripley, focused on the cultural diversity of the area and the differences and similarities between life in the rainforest and life in America.

"It was a good opportunity to learn about the Brazilian culture and the culture of the Amazonian tribes," she said. "We got to actually experience and see some of their cultural dances that they do in their ceremonies, like when a baby is born or for a marriage." Dyer, a sophomore from Union City, was most interested in the farming techniques used to grow crops in the rainforest.

"When we went, it was flooded — a flooded forest — so I wanted to look at farming in the flood season," he said. "The soil is really, really bad there. ... And so, (Amazonian farmers) have to cut down the actual rainforest and burn it and use the ash to fertilize the ground. That ground is only good for a couple of years, so they have to move to another plot."

Dyer says that while Brazil's large-scale agricultural practices are similar to those used in West Tennessee, their small-scale agriculture has evolved to suit the needs of the ecosystems in which they live. As a future agricultural business professional, Dyer says he would be interested in finding a way for tribes such as those the group visited to produce genetically modified crops that would give higher yields in tropical areas.

Ms. Hudgins, a junior from Paris, took a particular interest in the plants and animals of the region and the way they can be harvested and used in the scientific world. With majors in both chemistry and agriculture, and a concentration in plant science, she says the crossover between ecology and chemistry in the rainforest was fascinating to see.

"We went on this hike through the forest, and we pulled up on the bank and spent the night there. ... There was one tree that stuck out to me specifically (because) they actually shave it, and they can get iodine extracted from the bark," she said. "It helped me to see ... that everything is really interconnected and understanding one thing can really help you understand something else."

This particular travel-study course, led by Dr. Dawn Wilkins and Dr. Tom Blanchard, both faculty members in the UT Martin Department of Biological Sciences, included 15 students from 10 different academic majors — a true example of the academic diversity found in travel courses. Most UT Martin travel-study courses are open to students across a wide range of academic disciplines, and many open spaces for alumni, faculty and community members.

"It's definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I think everyone should do at least one travel study before they graduate. It opens a whole new world to you and exposes you to different cultures and different ways of life," Ms. Perry said.

Ms. Hudgins and Dyer agreed, making mention of the scholarship opportunities available to undergraduate students at no other time in their lives.

"I don't think it will ever be as cheap (to travel) as it is when you do it in college," Ms. Hudgins said. "It's a good opportunity to take (a course) that you wouldn't normally take as part of your major and get to go out of the country and see another place."

UT Martin faculty typically lead about 15 travel-study courses each year to places such as Iceland, Italy, Guatemala, United Kingdom, Japan, Scandinavia, Dubai and others.
AT CONFERENCE — University of Tennessee at Martin faculty and students who attended the recent Southeast Journalism Conference were (from left) Dr. Richard Robinson, professor of communications and WUTM faculty adviser; students Brooke Boshers of Mt. Pleasant, Evan Parkhill of Puryear, Jason Repath of White House, Taylor Larson of Covingston, Antonia Steele of Ashland City, Jilliane Moncrief of McLemoresville, Emma Bruner of South Fulton, Anaí S Bocher of Orléans, France, Emily Wilson of Lawrenceburg and Callie Dunlap of Martin; and Tomi McCutchen, coordinator of student publications and instructor of communications.

UTM students excel in journalism competition

Students from the University of Tennessee at Martin’s student newspaper, The Pacer, and student-run radio station, WUTM-FM 90.3 “The Hawk,” competed during the 34th annual Southeast Journalism Conference in Hattiesburg, Miss.

They brought home numerous awards for the Department of Communications. The students competed in on-site competitions and for the title of “Best of South” in their respective categories from previously submitted work against 30 colleges representing seven Southeastern states.

WUTM ranked first in the Best College and Audio Newsicast category for the fifth consecutive year and third in Best College Radio Station. The Pacer ranked fourth in Best College Newspaper and 10th in Best College Website.

UT Martin students who placed individually in the Best of South competition were:

- Best Radio News Reporter: Kevin Bartholomew, a 2019 graduate from South Fulton, first place;
- Best Advertising Staff Member: Jessica Davis, a senior from Bells, second place;
- Best Arts and Entertainment Writer: Emily Wilson, a senior from Lawrenceburg, fourth place;
- Best Radio News Feature Reporter: Jilliane Moncrief, a senior from McLemoresville, fourth place;
- College Journalist of the Year: Sarah Knapp, a 2019 graduate from Moscow, seventh place;
- Best Arts and Entertainment Writer: Hannah Hughes, a sophomore from Paris, ninth place.

In the on-site competition, students competed in journalism-based exercises to test their knowledge and media skills.

UT Martin students who placed in the SEJC 2020 on-site competitions were:

- Media Law and Ethics: Jason Repath, a senior from White House, first place;
- Arts and Entertainment Writing: Antonia Steele, a junior from Ashland City, third place.

“Our students continue to do well at the conference. They did a great job again this year,” said Dr. Richard Robinson, professor of communications and WUTM faculty adviser.

Tomi McCutchen, coordinator of student publications and instructor of communications, was re-elected as acting secretary during the SEJC business meeting and is the UT Martin faculty delegate for the convention.

“I’m so proud of our award-winning students from The Pacer and WUTM, as well as those who excelled in on-site individual competition in other media areas,” said Dr. Robert Nanney, chair of the Department of Communications. “They and their faculty mentors represent our department and UT Martin with distinction.”
TREE DEDICATED — Ashley Kite-Rowland, president of the Martin Tree Board, and her husband, Dr. Aaron Rowland, associate professor of Sociology at the University of Tennessee at Martin, donated the first tree in the new campus tree honorariums and memorials program, sponsored by the Center for Sustainability, in honor of the founding Martin Tree Board from 1994. The Tulip Poplar tree was planted March 4, in between Brehm Hall and the Hall-Moody Administration Building. On hand were (from left) Chris Virgin, James Wick, Earl Wright, Guy Robbins, Dr. Aaron Rowland, Ashley Kite-Rowland, Ryan Morris, Dr. Eric Pelren and Greg Moore. For more information on how to donate a memorial tree, visit utm.edu/sustainability or contact Dr. Eric Pelren, coordinator of the Center for Sustainability, at sustain@utm.edu.
UTM closes mail services for cleaning after individual reports COVID-19 symptoms

March 26, 2020 by WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News Staff (https://www.wbbjtv.com/author/wbbj7eyewitnessnewsstaff/)

MARTIN, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee at Martin has closed the University Mail Services after officials were notified of an individual who had symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

The university confirmed Thursday that officials were notified Wednesday afternoon, and the individual has been tested for COVID-19.

Officials say that, while the results are not known, Mail Services is closed and will be cleaned according to CDC standards in an abundance of precaution.

Mail Services employees have been asked to stay home until the individual's results are known.

Alternative plans for receiving mail will be announced on Thursday, March 26.

UT Martin notified faculty, staff and students on Wednesday, and all members of the campus are asked to practice social distancing, handwashing and work from home where possible and practical.
MARTIN, TN -- UT Martin officials say an individual working in the UT Martin mail services had symptoms consistent with COVID-19. The person has been tested, but the results are not yet known.

The mail services area are now closed out of precaution and will be cleaned by the university’s Physical Plant following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention standards and using CDC-approved disinfectant, say UTM officials.

Mail services employees have been asked to stay at home until test results are known.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Dr. Andy Lewter says alternative plans for receiving mail will be announced on Thursday.

Lewter also says the university has encouraged social distancing for persons working on campus and the small number of students who remain in residence halls.

The UTM campus has also locked all academic buildings for extra COVID-19 security measures starting Tuesday, March 24.

UTM Chancellor Keith Carver says the Paul Meek Library, Crisp Hall, Boiling University Center, and the Hall-Moody Administration Building will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Carver explains that campus is still operational, and all building keys will continue to work as usual during the weekend.

More so, if students have appointments with Student Health and Counseling, they should call ahead to (731) 881-7750 to confirm their visit.

MORE INFORMATION

UT Martin mail services reopen after the person tested negative for COVID-19
UTM Mail Services closed after individual with COVID-19 symptoms was in the area

Posted on March 26, 2020 by Steve James in Local News

The UT Martin Mail Services area is closed until further notice after officials learned that an individual with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 had been in the area.

Director of University Relations Bud Grimes says the individual has been tested for COVID-19, but the results are not known.

Grimes says following CDC standards, the Mail Services area will be cleaned by the university’s Physical Plant using CDC-approved disinfectant and that Mail Services employees have been asked to stay at home until the test results are known.

Alternative plans for receiving mail will be announced Thursday.

Grimes says more information will be provided as it becomes available and that UT Martin is working closely with the Tennessee Department of Health, which is familiar with the possible case, to follow guidelines to ensure the safety and health of the campus community.

Person with COVID-19 symptoms in UTM Mail Services tests negative

Posted on March 26, 2020 by Steve James in Local News

UT Martin officials say university Mail Services will resume Friday after a person who had been in the area with COVID-19 symptoms tested negative for the virus.

Mail Services was closed Wednesday and employees were sent home after the possible case became known.

Director of University Relations Bud Grimes says the area was cleaned by the university’s Physical Plant following CDC standards and using CDC-approved disinfectant.

Grimes urges the UTM community to be vigilant with handwashing and social distancing.
UT Martin closes mail services area as precaution

By CHRIS MENEES
Senior Staff Reporter

As a precaution, the University of Tennessee at Martin has closed its mail services area after learning someone with coronavirus symptoms was there. The individual has now been tested for COVID-19, but the results are not yet known, according to University Relations director Bud Grimes. A message explaining the closure of University Mail Services was sent out to faculty, staff and students Wednesday night.

In the correspondence, Grimes said UT Martin officials were informed Wednesday afternoon that an individual who had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 had been in the mail area, located in Clement Hall on campus.

"Out of an abundance of caution, the Mail Services area is now closed and will be cleaned by the university's Physical Plant following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention standards and using CDC-approved disinfectant," he said in the message.

Mail Services employees have also been asked to stay home until the test results are known.

Alternative plans for receiving mail at the campus were to be announced today.

Grimes said the notice informing the university community of the development was sent in accordance with guidance from public health officials at the county and state levels.

UT Martin has also encouraged social distancing for people working on campus and the small number of students who remain in the residence halls there.

Grimes said more information about the developing situation will be provided as it becomes available.

"UT Martin is working closely with the Tennessee Department of Health, which is familiar with the possible case, to follow guidelines to ensure the safety and health of the campus community," he said in the correspondence.

The UT Martin community is being urged to continue to be vigilant with handwashing and social distancing. Telecommuting for employees is also being strongly encouraged where possible and practical.

"Anyone with infection concerns should call his or her health care provider to discuss symptoms and requirements for monitoring," according to the correspondence. "The university's top priority is to make sure that the needs of our students, faculty and staff are addressed."

Senior Staff Reporter Chris Menees may be contacted by email at cmenees@ucmessenger.com.
UTM aids in COVID-19 relief

By SARAH KNAPP
Special to The Press

The University of Tennessee at Martin, along with multiple Tennessee higher education institutions, has partnered with THEC and TEMA to create personal protective equipment for Tennessee COVID-19 relief aid. UT Martin has centralized all of the 3D-capable printers on campus into the Rogers Media Center and is currently printing headbands for medical face shields.

“We are pleased to engage with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and other educational partners across the state to provide safety materials to Tennessee’s health care workers. Our faculty and staff are working to create filament bands for safety masks on our campus 3D printers,” said UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver. “We want to be a resource for the region and state’s efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.”

The media center, located in the Paul Meek Library, continues to add more printers to the operation each day increasing maximum production and support. Currently, the center is running eight printers...
DIGITAL TO 3D — UT Martin student Greyson Lambert, a geology major from Paris and student worker, is utilizing 3D printers on campus to create medical face shields to be donated to TEMA to help the state with COVID-19 relief efforts.

TEACHING MOMENTS — UT Martin professor Dr. Renee LaFleur teaches her daughter Eleanor how to make medical face masks with quilting material. The pair have donated their homemade masks to a personal protective equipment supply drive in New York.

UTM FROM PAGE 1

around the clock to produce as many headbands as possible. THEC (Tennessee Higher Education Commission) has also purchased two additional 3D printers to aid UT Martin’s capacity.

The printers are being operated by faculty, staff and students who all agree that while the work is time-consuming, it is rewarding knowing that they are making a difference for Tennessee medical professionals fighting COVID-19.

“It’s an eye-opening experience because we’ve been doing 3D printing, but not on this scale before. It’s amazing what we are able to do, and it is a humbling experience that we are able to help as many people as we can in this situation that we are in,” said student worker Jordan Bell, of Dresden.

The center is also responsible for cutting out sheets of acetate, as well as elastic to complete the shields that will be assembled after being transported to TEMA (Tennessee Emergency Management Agency.)

“We are grateful that our staff and student workers are really passionate about helping people. Without all of us, we couldn’t get this done,” Olivia Fernandez, UT Martin Information Technology Services manager, said.

UT Martin has a quota of 1,000 masks, but will continue printing as many headbands as needed until the crisis has ended, according to Fernandez.

The relief project originally began at Austin Peay State University after Gov. Bill Lee called universities to action in the fight against the novel coronavirus. After creating the prototype for the medical mask, universities across Tennessee, including UT Martin and UT Knoxville, joined the effort and have produced hundreds of 3D printed shields so far.

Scott Sloan, chief of Staff and Emergency Services coordinator for THEC, says the contributions from campuses like UT Martin are making a difference in the state.

“There is impact here. My interactions and communications with TEMA have reinforced that this effort is genuinely making a difference,” said Sloan. “Every band that these schools can produce right now is furthering an assessment and virus testing for a Tennessean somewhere in the state.”

Other members of the UT Martin community are also contributing to the cause.

Dr. Renee LaFleur, associate professor of history, and her daughter, Eleanor, are creating medical face masks out of quilting material to donate to hospitals where supplies are needed the most.

LaFleur, wanting to show her young daughter how important it is to help others, donated the first batch of face masks to Dr. Nikhil Patel’s, of Gastroenterology Associates of Martin, supply drive that is sending medical equipment to New York.

“(Her father and I) consistently try to teach her that when you have, you need to share, and we have time and resources to make these masks, so it is our responsibility to share and help others,” said LaFleur.

From the mass production of face shields for TEMA to a mother-daughter team sewing masks together for doctors across the country, the UT Martin community is working together during a time of crisis to ease the effects of COVID-19.

Editor’s note: Sarah Knapp is interim staff writer for UT Martin’s University Relations Department. She may be contacted by email at sknapp3@utm.edu.
FORTNIGHTLY CLUB VISITS WOMEN'S CENTER AT UTM — Dr. Renee LaFleur (second from left) gave a presentation for the March 2 meeting of the Fortnightly Club. Pictured with Dr. LaFleur are (from left) co-hostesses Barbara Trentham, Judy Clark, and Carolyn James. Her presentation, "Furthering of Right Thinking: the Fortnightly Club, Women's Activism and the Suffrage Movement, 1907-1920," was a highlight of this year’s programming for a club that was founded in Martin in 1907. In 1916, the club joined the Federated Women's Club of Martin, which also included the Twentieth Century Club, the Philharmonic Music Guild, the Martin Garden Club, and the Fine Arts Club. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing all American women the right to vote and a turning point in American history. Dr. LeFleur explained that the right to vote was achieved through a lengthy and difficult struggle that involved decades of protest and agitation. She also described how Tennessee played a pivotal role in the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. The map in the photograph shows that 35 of the 36 states necessary had ratified the amendment and the importance of Tennessee in casting the final vote. An associate professor of history in the Department of History and Philosophy Dr. LeFleur is also director of the Center for Women and Gender Equality housed in Room 225 of the Paul Meek Library on the UTM campus. Fortnightly members met in the Women’s Center and enjoyed sharing a box lunch before the program. During the business portion of the meeting, a check was presented to Dr. LeFleur to help in the purchase of books or supplies for the center.

https://www.wpsdlocal6.com/

UT Martin mail services reopen after the person tested negative for COVID-19

Jillianne Moncrief
Mar 27, 2020

MORE INFORMATION

UT Martin mail services closed in precaution to COVID-19

MARTIN, TN -- The person working in the UT Martin mail services has tested negative for COVID-19.

On Wednesday, the mail services were closed and cleaned by the Physical Plant on campus and workers were asked to stay at home until the test results were available.

Since the test results returned negative, UTM officials say the mail services will reopen Friday.

UTM officials say that even with this good outcome, the UTM community should continue to wash their hands and practice social distancing. UTM says they are encouraging telecommuting for employees when it is possible. More so, they say anyone with infection concerns should call his or her health-care provider.
By Ashley Smith | March 27, 2020 at 5:03 PM CDT - Updated March 27 at 5:03 PM

MARTIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - Friday afternoon, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees selected Randy Boyd to be UT's 26th president for the next five years.

"As I’ve said, naming the president of the University of Tennessee System is one of our most important decisions that we undertake as trustees," Board Chair John Compton said. "We wanted to make sure we were comprehensive and considerate to all key stakeholders in reaching our decision. Randy Boyd is absolutely the right person to lead the university at this time."

Trustees approved Boyd serving in the position up to June 30, 2025.

He will continue to serve without a salary.

He will receive $10,000 per year to cover state health insurance costs.

"I am thankful to all who have shown confidence and support for me to continue as the 26th president of the University of Tennessee," Boyd said. "It is an honor and a privilege to serve my alma mater and our great state with this great team. Together, we will make this the greatest decade in the history of the University of Tennessee."

Boyd, was a UT Knoxville alumnus and Knoxville businessman.

He has served as interim president of the UT System since Joe DiPietro retired in November 2018.

As president, Boyd serves as chief executive officer of the statewide system, which includes the flagship campus in Knoxville, campuses in Chattanooga and Martin, the Health Science Center in Memphis, the Space Institute in Tullahoma, and statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service.

After a positive performance review, Compton recommended foregoing a national search to fill the president position. The other trustees agreed.

"The recommendation was informed by a number of considerations, including the positive momentum of the University, the strategic initiatives that are underway, and, most notably, the favorable feedback received from key stakeholders," Compton said about moving forward without a national search.

During his time as interim, Boyd established the UT Promise scholarship and mentoring program providing free tuition for Tennessee residents whose family household income is less than $50,000 a year and are academically qualified to attend UT. He also led the initiative that created the Oak Ridge Institute at UT, which seeks to create a robust talent pipeline in areas of growing national needs. He also reunited UT Knoxville and UT Institute of Agriculture to elevate the impact and reputation of both.

During the November 2019 Board of Trustees meeting, discussions began to remove the interim title. In December 2019, Compton conducted a formal review of Boyd’s performance, which included requesting feedback from leadership of faculty, staff and students as well as alumni, legislators and others.

After extensive discussion of Boyd’s review and leadership during the February 2020 Board meeting, Compton requested Boyd participate in a series of town hall meetings across the state to share his vision for leading the University. Town hall meetings were held in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, Martin and Memphis between March 4-11.
Boyd is the founder and chairman of Radio Systems Corp., a Knoxville-based business. He also serves as chairman of Boyd Sports and is the owner of the Tennessee Smokies, Johnson City Cardinals, Greeneville Reds and Elizabethton Twins.

Boyd served as chair of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and as commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. He is founder and co-chair of the Governor’s Rural Taskforce, which exists to help state government and industry leaders find solutions to the biggest challenges facing rural Tennessee.

Boyd also served as Gov. Bill Haslam’s adviser for higher education and was the architect for Tennessee Promise, Drive to 55 and Tennessee Achieves—initiatives aimed at increasing the number Tennesseans with post-secondary degrees to 55 percent by 2025 and decreasing financial hardship for those Tennesseans pursuing degrees.

Boyd is the first in his family to graduate from college. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business with an emphasis on industrial management from UT Knoxville. He also earned a master’s degree in liberal studies with a focus on foreign policy from the University of Oklahoma.

Boyd and his wife, Jenny, live in Knoxville. They have two children and one grandchild.

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Test is negative; college mail room reopens

By CHRIS MENEES
Senior Staff Reporter

The University of Tennessee at Martin’s mail services reopened today after an individual tested negative for COVID-19.

University Mail Services, located in Clement Hall, was closed as a precaution Wednesday after it was learned someone with coronavirus symptoms had been there.

Mail services employees were asked to remain at home until test results for the virus were available. In addition, the area was cleaned following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention standards and using CDC-approved disinfectant.

In a message sent Thursday evening to the university community, University Relations director Bud Grimes said even with the good outcome, those remaining on campus should continue to be vigilant with handwashing and social distancing. Telecommuting for employees is also strongly encouraged where possible and practical.

“Anyone with infection concerns should call his or her health-care provider to discuss symptoms and requirements for monitoring,” Grimes said in the correspondence to students, faculty and staff. “Stay safe and well.”

There have been no confirmed cases of coronavirus reported in Weakley County or neighboring Obion County.

Seniors Staff Reporter
Chris Menees may be contacted by email at cmenees@ucmessenger.com.
RELIEF EFFORTS — University of Tennessee at Martin junior Garrett Roberts (left), a student worker in the media center and a natural resources management major from Dukedom, and chancellor Dr. Keith Carver examine a medical face shield headband created from a 3D printer at the campus. UT Martin and other Tennessee higher education institutions have partnered with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency to create personal protective equipment for COVID-19 relief aid.

UT Martin community aids in coronavirus relief effort

The University of Tennessee at Martin is among multiple higher education institutions statewide which have partnered with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency to create personal protective equipment for COVID-19 relief aid.

UT Martin has centralized all of the 3D-capable printers on campus into the Rogers Media Center and is currently printing headbands for medical face shields.

“We are pleased to engage with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and other educational partners across the state to provide safety materials to Tennessee’s health-care workers. Our faculty and staff are working to create filament bands for safety masks on our campus 3D printers,” UT Martin chancellor Dr. Keith Carver said. “We want to be a resource for the region and state’s efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.”

The media center, located in the Paul Meek Library, continues to add more printers to the operation each day, increasing maximum production and support. Currently, the center is running eight printers around the clock to produce as many headbands as possible. THEC has also purchased two additional 3D printers to aid UT Martin’s capacity.

The printers are being operated by faculty, staff (See Page 7, Col. 3)
Randy Boyd approved as UT System president

University of Tennessee Interim President Randy Boyd speaks at the press conference announcing the Grow Your Own partnership between the University of Tennessee and Knox County Schools at the Baker Center in Knoxville on March 2. RANDY SARTIN/SPECIAL TO THE NEWS SENTINEL

"Five years from now, I hope people will look back and say 'The UT Promise was transformative and provided more access to more Tennesseans to get a better education than any one program has every done at the University of Tennessee.'"

Randy Boyd president of the University of Tennessee System
Randy Boyd has been named the next president of the University of Tennessee System.

The Board of Trustees unanimously approved him in a special-called meeting on Friday.

The meeting was unconventional: Board members joined via video to vote, practicing social distancing while coronavirus has changed most of the normal practices at UT.

Boyd, a 2018 candidate for governor and Knoxville businessman, has been serving as interim president since November 2018. He originally agreed to take on the job for 12 to 24 months, but at the end of 2019, began indicating he would be interested in staying in the position.

He will now be the system president through June 30, 2025.

"It's the opportunity of a lifetime to serve both my alma mater, the University of Tennessee, and the state of Tennessee all at the same time," Boyd told Knox News. "There's no better place to make a bigger difference for the people that I care about than serving in this role."

Unanimous approval from the board

Board of Trustees Chair John Compton said he saw how Boyd approached the job "from day one," and that made him confident he was the right person for the job.

"I've never seen anyone work as hard and as passionately, and to me, he was the right choice," Compton said.

Compton said he admired Boyd for his leadership and how he pushed the university to constantly improve.

"Randy is a servant leader," Compton said. "He serves the University for 20 hours a day."

"I know he sleeps for four hours a day, because he stops texting me," Compton joked.

Trustee Jamie Woodson said she felt like the board had been able to do a "year-long interview," and admired how Boyd was student-focused.

"We just deeply appreciate your leadership, particularly at this time where we're all focused on the right thing," Woodson said.

Time as interim president

Since becoming interim president, Boyd has launched several initiatives. UT Promise, modeled after the Tennessee Promise program, will begin this fall and give eligible students the chance to attend a University of Tennessee school free of tuition and fees.

The program will cover tuition and fees for students with a household income of less than $50,000 a year. It also includes a community service requirement and a mentor program for students.

Boyd also spearheaded the unification of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and the Institute for Agriculture. He announced the Oak Ridge Institute, which will bring an additional 120 faculty positions and 500 graduate students when completed. Both are part of Boyd's goal of further promoting science and research at UT.

Boyd also made hiring a new chancellor for the UT-Knoxville campus a priority. Last year, Donde Plowman was hired for that role.

Goals for the next 5 years

Boyd told Knox News he wants to continue to build on these initiatives as president.

"Five years from now, I hope people will look back and say 'The UT Promise was transformative and provided more access to more Tennesseans to get a better education than any one program has ever done at the University of Tennessee,'" Boyd said. "We are truly a university that provides an opportunity for the middle class and the working class, a ladder up for everyone."

Boyd also has high goals for the Oak Ridge Institute, which he said he hopes becomes "the most successful research project since the Manhattan Project in the state of Tennessee."

With issues like the opioid crisis and the current COVID-19 pandemic, Boyd said he wants to see UT live up to its land-grant university status.

"The University of Tennessee stepped up in ways it had never done before to solve real-world problems for the state of Tennessee," Boyd said.

Performance review

Boyd was given high marks during his first performance review. John Compton, Board of Trustees chair, praised Boyd for his work across all UT campuses and with the state legislature.

"It was noted that, through his efforts to engage, listen and communicate regularly, Interim President Boyd has been effective in improving the perception of the University and in building relationships with members of the state legislature," Compton wrote in a January memo to the board. "His abilities to think big, resolve issues and be innovative were listed among his strongest leadership qualities."

Boyd also received praise in a survey sent to UT Chancellors, administrators and other staff. In response to the statement "Interim President Boyd's overall performance during 2018-2019 exceeded expectations," 84.5% of respondents said they strongly agreed and 9.7% said they agreed.
UT Trustees appoint Boyd to 5-year term

KNOXVILLE (AP) — The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees voted unanimously Friday to appoint Interim President Randy Boyd to a 5-year term as president.

The Tennessee alumnus faced some opposition when he was initially appointed in 2018 over his lack of experience in higher education. That was not the case on Friday as the trustees took turns praising Boyd’s leadership during an online meeting.

Before his appointment, the board surveyed students, faculty and other constituencies about Boyd’s leadership. Boyd also held town hall meetings at the university’s campuses. At the Friday meeting, Board Chair John Compton said (See Page 5, Col. 4)

UT Trustees...

(Continued from Page 1) There was strong support for Boyd to continue as president and called him “absolutely the right person to lead the University at this time.”

Trustee Brad Box said that as the parent of a UT sophomore who was taking classes “upstairs online right now” he was appreciative of all Boyd and Compton have done during the coronavirus crisis.

“This is the honor of my life,” Boyd said after the vote. “I realize this is an incredible responsibility, and I try to live up to it every day. I’ve dedicated the rest of my life to giving back, and I can’t think of a better place to do it.”

The University of Tennessee system includes the flagship campus in Knoxville, campuses in Chattanooga and Martin, the Health Science Center in Memphis, the Space Institute in Tullahoma and the statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service.

During his time as interim president, Boyd established the UT Promise scholarship program providing free tuition for Tennessee residents whose family household income is less than $50,000 a year and who academically qualify to attend UT. He also led the initiative that created the Oak Ridge Institute at UT and he reunited UT Knoxville and UT Institute of Agriculture, according to a news release on the appointment.

Boyd will continue to serve without a salary but will receive $10,000 per year to cover state health insurance costs, according to the release.

When he was first appointed in 2018, Boyd had just lost to Bill Lee in the Republican gubernatorial primary and had recently served as state Economic and Community Development commissioner under former Gov. Bill Haslam.

Boyd also was an architect of Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative, which is aimed at increasing the number of Tennesseans with a post-secondary degree or certificate to 55 percent by 2025. Boyd founded Radio Systems Corp., a Knoxville company that produces invisible fences and other pet products.
TWINS ATTEND NURSING PROGRAM —
Madison (left) and Megan Winchester of Hornbeak are first-year nursing students at UT Martin.

Sisters navigate UTM nursing program together

Megan and Madison Winchester of Hornbeak are first-year nursing students at the University of Tennessee at Martin. They are twins and say they have always shared a similar love for helping people.

"I chose nursing because growing up I knew I always wanted to help people, especially when they need someone at possibly one of the most vulnerable times of their lives," said Megan. "There are so many different areas I can choose from in this field. We chose UTM because it was close to home, and it has one of the best nursing programs around!"

Both are on track to graduate in May 2022, and plan post-graduation paths.

"I have considered working in the NICU with infants," said Megan. "I have also considered working in the emergency department. I like waking up to something different every day. In the ER, you never know what is going to come through the doors." Madison agrees with both options but adds anesthesia and surgery to her personal list.

Both have participated in a travel-study to Brazil last August, and said that experience has broadened their world and made them both consider travel nursing as a career option. Travel nurses work for a parent company and relocate several times a year depending on the need for health-care professionals in different areas of the country. This option could potentially separate the sisters for the first time in their lives, but they are up for the challenge.

"We had never traveled out of the country before that trip, and it has always been our goal. We chose that trip because it was an amazing opportunity to experience different cultures outside of the U.S.,” said Madison. “The nursing program at UTM provides us with knowledge in the classroom and allows us to apply the information in clinicals,” she added, which will give both the skills and experience necessary to succeed in the health-care field.

The sisters have some advice for nursing students. "Be prepared to put effort and time into this program, and always ask if you do not know something. There are many people here who want you to succeed," said Megan. "Always make time for yourself, too. Your health comes first.”

The UT Martin Bachelor of Science in nursing degree is rated among the top nursing programs in the region.
UT Martin Community Aids in COVID-19 Relief Effort

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'Keeping the Beat hosted by TNMEA' premiered March 30

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Music is partnering with the Tennessee Music Education Association and the CMA Foundation to broadcast "Keeping the Beat hosted by TNMEA," an interactive, educational livestream series created to engage students and artists during the COVID-19 crisis.

"Keeping the Beat hosted by TNMEA" premiered at 8 p.m., Monday, March 30, and will air Mondays-Thursdays on the UTM Music Facebook page as well as the "Keeping the Beat hosted by TNMEA" Facebook page and YouTube channel.

"Keeping the Beat" is an expansion of the current Department of Music program "Corona Connection," but will be hosted by Tennessee Music Education Association with the support of UTM Music.

Nightly guest artists will lead interactive discussions about topics in music ranging from education and performance to administration and advocacy. The focus of this series is to teach K-12 and university music students and educators, how to host live-streamed performances by individual artists.

The series will be funded by the Country Music Association Foundation and Shelby County schools, while the Tennessee Music Education Association and the UT Martin Department of Music are contributing additional staff time.

To tune into "Keeping the Beat," visit the UTM Music Facebook page. For more information, contact Hill at jhill@utm.edu or 731-881-7418.