Nicholas Haas receives dean's scholarship to UT Martin

May 1, 2021

Nicholas Haas, son of Heather Haas, of Alcoa, was awarded the dean's scholarship to attend UT Martin, in Martin, Tennessee. He will be a freshman in the fall.

UT Martin to hold in-person commencement May 7-8

By Jessica Ladd
Published: May 4, 2021 at 6:38 PM UTC

MARIN, Tenn. (KFVS) - The University of Tennessee at Martin will hold spring commencement in four separate in-person ceremonies May 7-8 on the main campus in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Commencement times are 6 p.m., May 7, and 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. May 8.

Tickets are required to enter the Elam Center and masks and social distancing are required at all times.

Doors will open 45 minutes before each ceremony begins, and guests are asked to clear Skyhawk Arena for cleaning within 30 minutes after each ceremony ends.

All four commencement ceremonies will be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube.

The ceremonies will be archived.

While tickets are required to enter the Elam Center, additional tickets will not be required to access Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

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May 4, 2021

Ask the Experts

Mahmoud Haddad

Professor of Finance, The University of Tennessee at Martin

Do credit card companies lose money by not charging foreign-transaction fees? Credit card companies do not lose money by not charging foreign transaction fees because they make their profit from the spread. This is from the difference in purchase price (bid price) and selling price (ask price). Spread = Selling price – Purchase price

Do credit cards with no foreign fee just make up for it with other charges? Yes, credit card companies make up for the return from the spread and interest income on delayed withdrawals.

Do you think most people know whether their credit cards have foreign transaction fees? Most people do not know about credit card foreign transaction fees. International credit card users know that credit cards have foreign transaction fees.

Are there any other pitfalls people should watch out for once they have a no-foreign-fee credit card? Credit card users should be aware of annual fees and foreign countries' ATM transaction fees.

Do people who get credit cards in other countries have to pay foreign fees in the U.S.? Yes, those individuals who get credit cards in other countries have to pay foreign fees in the U.S. if the card currency is based on the U.S. dollar.

Does it cost card issuers/networks more to process international transactions than domestic ones? Whether it cost card issuers/networks more to process international transactions than domestic transactions depends on the liquidity and illiquidity and the level of risk of the exchanged currencies.
Wilkins named UTM featured faculty scholar

Dr. Dawn Wilkins, a professor in the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Biological Sciences, has been named the university's 2021 spring semester Featured Faculty Scholar.

She was honored April 15 with a reception in the Paul Meek Library, and her name will be added to a plaque bearing the names of past recipients that is permanently displayed in the library.

Examples of her research can be seen in a case near the library's main entrance.

The Featured Faculty Scholar award, instituted during the 1996-97 academic year, recognizes faculty members whose reseach and creative works are judged to be among the most prestigious of those produced by individuals in the UT Martin academic community.

Wilkins began her career at UT Martin in fall 2004 as an assistant professor. She was promoted to associate professor in 2008 and then to professor in 2013.

Wilkins holds a bachelor's degree from UT Martin, a master's degree from Eastern Kentucky University and a doctoral degree from Mississippi State University.

Wilkins is a woodpecker biologist who has pursued projects with students investigating the ecology of various species including barred owls, osprey, herons and even the microbes that live in the digestive track of sapsuckers.

"As a student at UT Martin, I participated in an undergraduate research project and was hired as a summer research technician working at Reelfoot Lake," Wilkins said. "These experiences sparked my passion for birds and led me to pursue opportunities that allow me to incorporate this passion into my career. My hope for the UT Martin students that I mentor is that they find their passion through participating in active research projects and attending scientific meetings."

Outside of the classroom, Wilkins has served on many university committees and has been active in public service.

"She is often invited as a speaker at other university and professional gatherings," Dr. Nancy Buschhaus, a professor and biological sciences interim chair said. "She also serves as scientific judge, scientific advisor, moderator and scientific committee member for multiple professional scientific meetings and societies both within the state and within the region."

Her professional memberships include the American Ornithological Society, the Association of Southeastern Biologists, the Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Tennessee Academy of Sciences. Wilkins was previously honored for teaching and scholarship when she received one of two Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Awards in spring 2016 by UT Martin.

Weakley County student receives scholarship to attend UTM

Will Tuck of Martin, son of Jamie and Amy Tuck, has been awarded the Excellence Scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-2022 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

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.
Milan’s Bill Haney to be inducted into 4th HOF

By Victor Parkins

A legendary radio voice will soon be inducted into his fourth hall of fame. The late Bill J. Haney, a veteran sportscaster and political leader from Milan, will be inducted into the 2021 Tennessee Radio Hall of Fame Legacy Class on Saturday, July 31 at the Embassy Suites Hotel & Convention Center in Murfreesboro.

Haney, who passed away in 2008 at 73, has already been inducted to the TSSAA Hall of Fame, the Gibson County Sports Hall of Fame and the University of Tennessee at Martin Hall of Fame.

Haney started in radio in 1955 then became part owner of WKBJ in Milan. He was the radio voice for many sports teams, including the Milan High School Bulldogs, the University of Tennessee Martin Pacers and Skyhawks, and the pro football Memphis Grizzlies. He was one of the first to broadcast state basketball tournaments and was co-founder of the Tennessee Basketball State Network. He also started the UTM Sports network in 1978 and covered TSSAA sports for 38 years.

Haney’s original basketball call of, “shot it, got it”, on free throws is still a favorite of many broadcasters today. After his death, Milan named the press box at Johnnie Hale Stadium in his honor.

Haney’s beloved bride of almost 52 years, Peggy, said her late husband would shy away from this honor if he were here today.

“He would say that he didn’t deserve it,” said Ms. Haney, who noted that Bill died just 3 days before their 52nd anniversary. “Bill was a very humble but proud man and he would probably say, ‘I don’t know why they picked me for this.’”

Ms. Haney said her husband truly loved his job, no matter what kind of sporting event he was broadcasting.

Bill was once quoted saying “Sports broadcasting has always been my first love.”

“Bill just loved sports,” Ms. Haney added. “And he always knew he wanted to get into broadcasting. He lived for it and it didn’t matter if it was a little league baseball game. That’s where he started and then worked his way up to a high school game, then college and even some professional football games. I didn’t know anything about sports until I married him but he changed that,” she said.

Ms. Haney described her late husband’s broadcasting

(Cont. on pg. 2)
Milan’s Bill Haney…(cont. from page 1)

husband as a loving, fair man that loved the Lord.
“Bill always tried his hardest to be fair when he was broadcasting and that’s how he would want people to remember him,” Ms. Haney added. “He was a good broadcaster but he would brag on the other teams if they deserved it just like he would for Milan. Bill never mistreated anyone.”

A pioneer in Tennessee sports broadcasting, Haney was credited as being the first to broadcast state tournament basketball games and a founder with the late Monte Hale, Sr. of the Tennessee Basketball State Network. The network of 22 radio stations was authorized by TSSAA in 1993 and managed by Haney and Dick Palmer. Mr. Haney was credited with starting the UT Martin Sports Network in 1978. He broadcast UTM basketball and football games until 2000.

He covered TSSAA high school sports for 38 years (1955-92), estimating that he covered over 1,500 high school games. He was often being assisted by wife, Peggy, as the statistician.

Born in Newbern, Tennessee January 9, 1930, Mr. Haney was a 1949 graduate of Newbern High School where he was quarterback and captain of the football team and a three-year letterman. He later worked as a TSSAA high school football official and baseball umpire many years.

After high school he was employed by the FBI in Washington, D.C., where he attended the School of Broadcasting. He was a U.S. Army veteran, serving in the “Big Red 1” First Infantry in Germany during the Korean War.

Finishing radio school at the Keegan’s School of Broadcasting in Memphis, Tennessee, he worked one year in Aberdeen, Mississippi before moving to Milan.

Mr. Haney was active in civic affairs and held many public offices, including a term as Gibson County Executive starting in 1986. He was a long time member of the Gibson County Commission representing Milan and served as a city alderman and school board member in Milan.

Haney received many community honors, being named the Milan Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year (1996) and Jaycees Young Man of the Year (1965). He was active in the Milan Cumberland Presbyterian Church, where he was an Ordained Deacon.

Bill and Peggy had three children, Terry, Tim and Tami.

Tim Haney is the superintendent of schools for the Trenton School District.

Gibson County students receive scholarships

MARTIN, Tenn. – Two Gibson County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-2022 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantoosh, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Elijah Ball, of Dyer, son of Carlos Ball, will be a freshman. He received the Achieve Scholarship.

Maria Cunningham, of Medina, daughter of Steve and Micki Cunningham and Leven and Christie Ward, will be a freshman. She received the Chancellor’s Scholarship.
UTM student-run radio station earns 14 broadcasting awards

WUTM 90.3 FM “The Hawk,” the University of Tennessee at Martin student-run campus radio station, won 14 awards from the 2021 virtual Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Annual Conference.

For the 11th consecutive year, WUTM won the Platinum Award — the highest peer-reviewed award given by the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System.

WUTM won one first-place award, as well as 12 top-five finalist awards at the conference, including the designation as one of the top-five best college radio stations with under 10,000 students enrolled.

WUTM has earned a position in the top five for this category nine of the past 10 years.

“Once again, the students of WUTM under the direction of Dr. Richard Robinson immensely impressed our judges,” said Chris Thomas, IBS president. “Year after year, when they see entries from 90.3 The Hawk, they know they will not be disappointed. Congratulations to the students and staff of WUTM on these accomplishments. They should be very proud of their work.”

The station’s finalist awards also included best newscast, best spot news coverage and best live broadcast promotional event by the WUTM staff, as well as two best underwriting spots.

Kayla Brooks, a senior communications major from Dickson, won first place in community news coverage for her newscasts of the protests in Martin and received finalist awards in best on-air personality, best station blog and best news promotion in partnership with the WUTM staff.

Dylan Ingram, a junior communications major from Martin, won finalist awards for best use of social media and best celebrity/artist interview. In partnership with Ingram, Davis Gregory, a sophomore communications major from Knoxville, won finalist awards for best football play-by-play and best women’s basketball play-by-play.

“Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and given the fact that our broadcast students were working remotely much of this academic year, our students and WUTM did very well in this competition,” said Dr. Robinson, WUTM faculty adviser. “I think that speaks well for our students and their commitment to broadcast excellence for ‘The Hawk.’”

WUTM 90.3 FM “The Hawk” is produced by the Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communications.

Martin Freshman Student Earns Scholarship to UT Martin

MARTIN (April 29) — A Weakley County student has been awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-2022 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

Will Tuck of Martin, son of Jamie and Amy Tuck, will be a freshman. He 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, TN, 38238, or by calling 731-881-7040.
UTM Spring Commencement Ceremonies

MARTIN, TN - The University of Tennessee at Martin will hold spring commencement in four separate in-person ceremonies May 7 and 8 on the main campus in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Commencement times are 6 pm on May 7 and 10 am, 2 pm and 6 pm on May 8.

Tickets are required to enter the Elam Center, and masks and social distancing are required at all times. Doors will open 45 minutes before each ceremony begins, and guests are asked to clear Skyhawk Arena for cleaning within 30 minutes after each ceremony ends. All four commencement ceremonies will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/utmartin and www.youtube.com/utmartin.

The ceremonies will be archived for later viewing on YouTube and will also be broadcast live in Skyhawk Fieldhouse located adjacent to the Elam Center, which will allow up to 350 additional guests to view the commencements. While tickets are required to enter the Elam Center, additional tickets will not be required to access Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier, provost and UT Martin vice chancellor for academic affairs, will preside over the commencement ceremonies, offer the commencement address and confer degrees. In addition, several speakers will appear virtually: The Rev. Amanda Crice, campus minister, UT Martin Wesley Foundation, will offer the invocation; UT President Randy Boyd and UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver will offer greetings and personal congratulations; and Student Government Association immediate-past President Hunter McCloud and UT Martin Alumni Council President Victor Andrews will each address the graduating class. Each ceremony will close with a performance of the Alma Mater by the UTM Virtual Choir, recorded and edited by 2010 UT Martin graduate Joseph Sam. Additional information is available by calling the Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
Sellers, Prewitt receive Outstanding Employee Awards

UT Martin's Stephanie Sellers and Anthony Prewitt have been chosen for the Spring 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards.

Sellers is the student services specialist for UTM's Regional Centers and Online Programs and provides support to online faculty and students. She's been instrumental in the success of the online agribusiness program and has been diligent in supporting the university and its mission, especially for faculty new to online teaching.

"Faculty have extreme confidence in her, no matter the issue," coworkers wrote in Sellers' nomination package. "She is always looking for ways to improve our processes and make them more efficient for our online students and faculty."

Sellers has served as advisor for the Non-Traditional Student Association and volunteers her time to Tennessee Promise mentoring, the university's Annual Civil Rights Conference and other programs on campus.

Prewitt is the co-interim director for the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs, as well as the campus coordinator for the UT Promise Scholarship Program. He works tirelessly to ensure hundreds of UT Martin students have access to this scholarship.

"Anthony is a true servant leader, providing mentorship and support to students and colleagues alike," wrote his coworkers in his nomination letter. "Through endless examples of action, he models how to create an inclusive space in which all persons may thrive academically, professionally and personally."

Prewitt also serves as the National Panhellenic Council adviser, co-adviser of the Flight Crew, a leader in the 'Call Me Mister' program, and other campus initiatives and programs.

UT Martin Outstanding Employee Awards are given to one exempt and one non-exempt employee each semester.

Recipients are nominated by their coworkers and chosen by a selection committee.
UT MARTIN TO HOLD IN-PERSON SPRING COMMENCEMENT

May 6, 2021 @ 8:48 am Shannon McFarlin

Martin, Tenn.—The University of Tennessee at Martin will hold spring commencement in four separate in-person ceremonies May 7-8 on the main campus in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Commencement times are 6 p.m., May 7, and 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. May 8. Tickets are required to enter the Elam Center, and masks and social distancing are required at all times. Doors will open 45 minutes before each ceremony begins, and guests are asked to clear Skyhawk Arena for cleaning within 30 minutes after each ceremony ends.

All four commencement ceremonies will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/utmartin (http://www.facebook.com/utmartin) and www.youtube.com/utmartin (http://www.youtube.com/utmartin). The ceremonies will be archived for later viewing on YouTube and will also be broadcast live in Skyhawk Fieldhouse located adjacent to the Elam Center, which will allow up to 350 additional guests to view the commencements. While tickets are required to enter the Elam Center, additional tickets will not be required to access Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier, provost and UT Martin vice chancellor for academic affairs, will preside over the

the invocation; UT President Randy Boyd and UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver will offer greetings and personal congratulations; and Student Government Association immediate-past President Hunter McCloud and UT Martin Alumni Council President Victor Andrews will each address the graduating class. Each ceremony will close with a performance of the Alma Mater by the UTM Virtual Choir, recorded and edited by 2010 UT Martin graduate Joseph Sam.

Additional information is available by calling the Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
UTM SPRING PREVIEW DAY

Brent Townsend and his daughter Delanie Townsend, a junior at Camden Central High School, attended Spring Preview Day on Saturday, April 10, at the University of Tennessee at Martin. A campus tour and an academic fair were offered along with the opportunity to meet students, faculty, and staff members. Students interested in attending UTM can register at www.utm.edu or call the Office of Admissions at 731-881-7020 for more information.
University of Tennessee at Martin holds spring graduation

May 7, 2021 by WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News Staff

MARTIN, Tenn. — College students walked across the stage at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

UT Martin held one of their spring graduations Friday evening.

Students, family, and friends gathered inside the Elam Center to celebrate the big milestone while still complying with mask requirements and physical distancing.

The graduates have overcome a lot, especially after adjusting to COVID-19 restrictions, online classes and more.

And Chief Communications Officer Bud Grimes couldn't agree more.

“This graduating class has been through quite a bit. And it's exciting for us, for any university, to again bring back something close to normal and let them celebrate as much as they can this tremendous achievement,” Grimes said.

This is one of four spring graduations for UT Martin.

Graduations will continue Saturday, May 8 at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 6 p.m.
College of Law student Kaleb Byars of Rives has been selected as the outstanding graduate of the class of 2021.

During an event at the college last week, Interim Dean Doug Blaze praised Byars for his accomplishments throughout his three years of law school.

"Kaleb has distinguished himself not only through his exceptional academic performance, but also through his outstanding leadership and service," Blaze said.
Byars, a first-generation college student from arguing, Tennessee, attended the University of Tennessee at Martin to earn his undergraduate degree in economics and finance. At the College of Law, Byars earned the top GPA and received recognition for his exceptional academic work throughout his three years.

He also excelled during the College of Law Advocate's Prize intramural moot court competition earning recognition as the best oralist and a member of the best team. Byars served as editor-in-chief of the Tennessee Law Review and as a staff editor for Transactions: The Tennessee Journal of Business Law.

Byars said the experiences he’s had as a law student have been remarkable and have exposed him to new and diverse points of view.

“I specifically enjoyed arguing the final round of the Advocate’s Prize Competition,” he said. “Arguing in front of federal appellate judges is an extreme privilege for any law student.

“The practical skills I learned during moot court competitions and in the advocacy concentration will follow me throughout my career,” he said.

Outside the College of Law, Byars has been a legal extern with the U.S. Attorneys’ Office for the Eastern District of Tennessee, a judicial extern for former Judge Pamela L. Reeves of the Eastern District of Tennessee and a judicial intern for U.S. Magistrate Judges H. Bruce Guyton and Debra C. Poplin.

Byars will begin work in August as a judicial clerk for Judge Thomas A. Varlan of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. He also has secured a second judicial clerk position that will begin in August 2022 for Judge Ralph R. Erickson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit.

UTM photo.
She didn't expect children - but now 11 call her 'Mom'

Saturday, May 5, 2021
By DAVID HANKINS - dhankins@t-g.com

Faith and love abound within the Osterhaus family. Children in need over the years have benefitted from their loving and caring home. They are members of Longview Baptist Church, where Jonathan has served as pastor for 13 years.
Submitted photo

Emily Osterhaus was told at a young age she'd likely never bear children. Fast forward to 2021, when she and her husband, Jonathan, occasionally tool around in an older model bus/camper - one which bunks 11.

"It looks like a tour bus for a singing group or [we're] trying to hide out a famous country music singer," says Emily. "When we go places we get looks!"

Call it fate; Emily and Jonathan refer to their lives as one fully planned by God.

She admits that sometimes it is hard to explain nearly a dozen kids and two parents to the general public.

"I really try hard not to tell everyone I meet the story of my children. They are mine and I will love them no matter what ... don't want people to look at them differently, but sometimes folks can be rude."

Emily explains her children do not come to their front door via the State of Tennessee; they do not receive any type of foster care funding. She is proud that so many people in their community want to help them with diapers and any other necessary items for the children.

Regardless of the situation or how they wind up at the couple's home, Emily is adamant they are all loved like they were hers by birth. As for Mother's Day, well it's traditional, with just a few modifications here and there for theirs, mine and ours.

Theirs is a story of love, for sure. Emily explains a little background.

She and Jonathan were in agreement not to have biological children when they wed 25 years ago. Emily had plans for her career from the get-go; she admits it.

A Mt. Juliet High School graduate, she received her bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, where she majored in family and consumer sciences and minored in education.

The two married while she was in college; they were living in Nashville but realized they would have to move in order for Emily to reach her goal of becoming a 4-H agent.

"So after graduation, I looked at openings in Middle Tennessee for 4-H and Bedford County had an opening. I applied and was accepted. So we moved to Shelbyville. Thirteen years later, I received my master's degree in family and consumer sciences from the University of Tennessee at Martin. So my goal was to be a 4-H agent and that is what I have done for almost 24 years."
While they did not plan to have children, life changed for the couple pretty quick after marriage. "Two months shy of our 4th wedding anniversary, our first child, Jon, was born," Emily says.

This mom is a planner and an organizer, after all, she's in charge of 4-H kids' camps. So this surprise baby was a bit of a shock, she says.

Little did Emily realize that this was just the beginning of motherhood. "Almost four years later, our second child, Jessica, came along. After she was born, the doctor suggested I not have any more; she was afraid I might not be around to raise any more — if I went through another pregnancy. So our family of four was perfect."

Then, devastation hit. Less than two years after Jessica's birth, Jonathan had an accident in training as a police officer.

Emily recalls their lives changed dramatically at that point. "He went through more surgeries than I can count and spent over two years in a wheelchair. Little did I know God was using all of this to make us parents again."

Emily shares their testimony of how during that time in their lives, they accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. Their lives were about to change again. No doubt God was in control, she says.

"God called my husband into the ministry."

The blessings were only beginning. After pastoring Longview Baptist for about a year, there was a teenage boy, she says, who needed a place to live, so they opened their hearts and home to him. "He was able to finish his junior and senior year ... then move on with his life," Emily says.

While he was living with them, there was a teen girl that had a 3-year-old that needed a place to live for about 9 months, so they became part of our family as well.

Those young people, she explains, left their home to live their own lives in 2012. "People kept asking us what we were going to do with just our family of four now. On August 1, we got a call ... a young mom with a 2-year-old and another on the way needed a place to live. We once again opened our home. Although we felt plenty blessed with the home we had, we thought it would be nice to have a little more room with seven people in the house."

Emily credits God for opening that door, several, to be exact. The family was blessed with a larger place.

A month after moving into their new home, the phone had that familiar ring to it again, she says. On the other end was the message there were more children in need.

This time, the request was pretty big. "There were three children, ages 8, 14 months and 4 weeks old, that needed a temporary home. So we moved some furniture around and welcomed them in our home."

Eight months later... another teenage girl needed a home.

One year later... a 3-month-old was placed in their arms.

Eldest son, Jon, had since joined the U.S. Marines.

Then, there was 11 in the home.

Emily reveals the place became really crowded. "But the love, joy and peace of mind, knowing these children were safe and sound, was totally worth it!"

She still maintains the most important thing in her life is to raise their children in Christ — in such a way they grow up to love and serve Him.

This year has certainly required a lot of faith, she says.

"I have to say when everything was first shut down, I was upset, not because I had to go home, but because I was thinking about all the opportunities our youth were missing. I am a 4-H agent, so summers are busy for me with camps, classes and fun! All of this shut down. But what I realized was it was a special time for me to spend with my family."

She admits that the first two weeks home was chaotic. "Schools were trying to figure out what to do about school and University of Tennessee Extension was trying to figure out what we as 4-H agents were going to do."

Of course Emily says she instituted a schedule. The children had school, play time, chore time and nap time. The highlight of their week was when I loaded them up and we went to school to get a week's worth of lunches.*

She says how much she loved being at home. In fact, going back to work was kind of difficult, she shares.

"When my office started opening back up it was hard. I really enjoyed the time at home and was going to miss the time with them."

Emily remembers hearing several people make comments about how crazy they were going at home. For someone who never imagined she'd have children, Emily says in hindsight that their quarantine time was well-spent.

"I love being a mother and I am so proud and blessed that God entrusted me with some of His children. I just pray I can be the example I need to be for them."
Bryan Crouser of Flintstone selected for 2021 THEC Community Service Award

Maryville College senior Bryan Crouser (1921) of Flintstone, Ga., is among five college students in Tennessee to be named a recipient of the 2021 Harold Love Outstanding Community Service Award sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC).

The Outstanding Community Service Award was named for the late Rep. Harold Love Sr., who was instrumental in establishing the first awards in 1991. With the welfare of his community as his primary concern, Love would go to any lengths to help a constituent in need, even if it meant giving from his own pocket.

The individuals selected to receive recognition represent the many dimensions of community service/volunteer work, public service, charitable service and leadership roles in community organizations. The award recipients serve as ambassadors for community service among the diverse higher education communities in Tennessee. Each winner receives a $1,000 cash prize.

This year, the commission received “a record-breaking number of nominations.”

“Even in the midst of a global pandemic, Tennesseans from Memphis to Bristol have lived up to our nickname of the Volunteer State, and our communities are all the richer for it,” said Brittany Mosby, director of HBCU Success at THEC.

Crouser, a biology major from Flintstone, Ga., was nominated for the award by administrators at the College. In his nomination letter for Crouser, Maryville College President Bryan F. Coker praised Crouser’s service as a faithful volunteer in organizations that serve young people. During his career at MC, Crouser has mentored children and teens in the after-school program at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center in Alcoa, Tenn. He has spent summers as a lifeguard at summer camp, and then as an AmeriCorps member, working with middle school and elementary students at the Emerald Youth Foundation in inner-city Knoxville, Tenn.

“In these ways, through his tireless work and bright spirit, he helps young people believe in themselves and catch a vision of what life could be,” Coker wrote, adding that Crouser has used his college years not only to prepare for a career serving others as a physician’s assistant, but also to serve others now — whether on or off campus. Through his volunteer service with the Care Today Clinic at East Tennessee Medical Group, Crouser offered much-needed help during the COVID crisis, learning to give COVID tests, as well as tests for strep and flu. He also gained skills in other lab areas, “and his willingness to serve where he was needed was an asset every day,” Coker said.

“Furthermore, his work of mentoring students on campus, whether in the Bonner Scholarship Program, where he has been a key support to younger students, or tutoring first-year chemistry students, as well as filling a variety of leadership roles, demonstrates Bryan’s commitment to serving others everywhere he is,” Coker said. “Both in his service work, and in friendly demeanor and generous spirit, Bryan has been an outstanding example of the principles of public service and the highest values of the college and our state.”

The four other Tennessee students who received the 2021 award are: Leigh Holdsambeck of Belmont University; Alexis Millsaps of the University of Tennessee-Martin; Miura Rempis of Middle Tennessee State University; and Deepesh Subedi of Austin Peay State University.
The University of Tennessee at Martin is saddened to announce the passing of Hall of Fame men's basketball coach Cal Luther. He was 93 years old.

While Luther enjoyed a long and decorated coaching career, which featured head coaching positions at five different institutions, it was his nine-year stint at UT Martin which built the foundation for future success within the program.

Tabbed by UT Martin athletics director Don McLeary to guide the program through the NCAA Division-I reclassification process, Luther had more than 30 years of coaching experience.

After rebuilding DePauw (Ind.) to an Indiana Collegiate Conference championship, Luther moved on to Ohio Valley Conference member Murray State, where he was credited for laying the groundwork of a budding dynasty.

At Murray State, Luther led the Racers to three OVC titles, was named OVC Coach of the Year three times, and earned a spot in the school's athletics Hall of Fame after leading the team to two NCAA Tournaments.

From Murray State, Luther went to Longwood in Virginia, where he led a former all-girls school to a transition from Division-III to Division-II, earning five winning seasons and a 20-7 record in 1988-89.

At UT Martin, Luther guided the team into the OVC and made the change from the Pacers nickname to Skyhawks.

While the team scheduled the toughest opponents for most of Luther's tenure to keep up with Division-I budget restraints, his teams still found success - earning OVC Coach of the Year in 1996 after his program earned its first OVC winning season.

With his third individual honor he became the only coach to win Coach of the Year honors at two different OVC institutions.

Luther was inducted into OVC Hall of Fame in 2000 before joining the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame as a pioneer in 2017.
University of Tennessee College of Law

Obion County student named outstanding grad

University of Tennessee College of Law student Kaleb Byars of Rives has been selected as the outstanding graduate of the Class of 2021. During an event at the UT College of Law recently, interim dean Doug Blaze praised Byars for his accomplishments throughout his three years of law school.

"Kaleb has distinguished himself not only through his exceptional academic performance, but also through his outstanding leadership and service," Blaze said.

Byars, a first-generation college student, attended the University of Tennessee at Martin to earn his undergraduate degree in economics and finance. He graduated from there in May 2018. At the College of Law, Byars earned the top grade point average and received recognition for his exceptional academic work throughout his three years. He also excelled during the College of Law Advocate's Prize intramural moot court competition earning recognition as the best oralist and a member of the best team. Byars served as editor-in-chief of the Tennessee Law Review and as a staff editor for Transactions: The Tennessee Journal of Business Law.

Byars said the experiences he’s had as a law student have been remarkable and have exposed him to new and diverse points of view. "I specifically enjoyed arguing the final round of the Advocate's Prize Competition," he said. "Arguing in front of federal appellate judges is an extreme privilege for any law student."

"The practical skills I learned during moot court competitions and in the advocacy concentration will follow me throughout my career," he said.

Outside the College of Law, Byars has been a legal extern with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Tennessee, a judicial extern for former Judge Pamela L. Reeves of the Eastern District of Tennessee, and a judicial intern for U.S. Magistrate Judges H. Bruce Guyton and Debra C. Poplin.

Byars will begin work in August as a judicial clerk for Judge Thomas A. Varlan of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. He also has secured a second judicial clerk position that will begin in August 2022 for Judge Ralph R. Erickson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit.

Dyer County students receive scholarships to attend UT Martin

MARTIN, Tenn. – Several Dyer County students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-2022 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement.

- Blakely Mink, of Dyersburg, daughter of Rachel Hall, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.
- Ashely Parker, of Dyersburg, daughter of Kimberly Parker, will be a sophomore. She received the Elam Transfer Achieve Scholarship.
- Brylee Pride, of Finleg, daughter of Bryan Pride and Jennifer Dickens, will be a freshman. She received the Excellence Scholarship.
- Kloye Townson, of Dyersburg, daughter of Joseph and Kerrie Townson, will be a freshman. She received the Deans Scholarship.

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

Two Fayette County Students have been awarded scholarships to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-2022 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement. **Elizabeth Bass of Oakland, daughter of David and Michele Bass, will be a freshman. She received the Achieve Scholarship.**

**Ariel Woods of Oakland, daughter of Cassandra Morrow, will be a freshman.** She received the Harold Conner Scholarship and 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, TN, 38238, or by calling (731) 881-7040.

UTM Hall of Fame Coach Remembered

MARTIN (May 9) — The University of Tennessee at Martin is saddened to announce the passing of Hall of Fame men's basketball coach Cal Luther. He was 93 years old. Luther died over the weekend in Dresden.

While Luther enjoyed a long and decorated coaching career, which featured head coaching positions at five different institutions, it was his nine-year stint at UT Martin which built the foundation for future success within the program. Tabbed by UT Martin athletics director Don McLeary to guide the program through the NCAA Division-I re-classification process, Luther had more than 30 years of coaching experience.

After rebuilding DePauw (Indiana) to an Indiana Collegiate Conference championship, Luther moved on to Ohio Valley Conference member Murray State, where he was credited for laying the groundwork of a budding dynasty. At Murray State, Luther led the Racers to three OVC titles, was named OVC Coach of the Year three times, and earned a spot in the school’s athletics Hall of Fame after leading the team to two NCAA Tournaments. From Murray State, Luther went to Longwood in Virginia, where he led a former all-girls school to a transition from Division-III to Division-II, earning five winning seasons and a 20-7 record in 1988-89.

At UT Martin, Luther guided the team into the OVC and made the change from the Racers nickname to Skyhawks. While the team scheduled the toughest opponents for most of Luther’s tenure to keep up with Division-I budget restraints, his teams still found success — earning OVC Coach of the Year in 1998 after his program earned its first OVC winning season. With his third individual honor he became the only coach to win Coach of the Year honors at two different OVC institutions. Luther was inducted into OVC Hall of Fame in 2000 before joining the UT Martin Athletics Hall of Fame as a pioneer in 2017.
Former UTM, Bethel Coach Luther Was a Winner

BY JIM STEELE
Special to the Enterprise

I remember getting the call very early on a cool fall morning in November that there had been a change in the Tennessee-Martin basketball program.

Coach Cal Luther would be introduced as the Pacers’ new coach at a press conference in about an hour. I was conflicted. I had a good rapport with Tom Hancock, the outgoing coach, who led UTM to great things.

Once Luther took over the team, I knew I had nothing to fear. He and I developed a great rapport that continued until his passing.

Coach Luther always laid out the red carpet for me anytime I needed something pertaining to the UTM basketball program. He welcomed me at practice, was more than accessible in post-game interviews and always returned phone calls.

One time, I was told by someone in sports information that I wasn’t supposed to call coaches directly. I wondered if a coach had lodged a protest, so I called Coach Luther and asked if he’d prefer I go through SID if I had a question about something. He didn’t mince words.

“No, you call me directly,” he said, almost with angry passion, as if someone had offended me.

That’s what I liked about Luther. He told it like it was, but always was accountable. He was a demanding coach who expected nothing less than the best from his players.

If the team didn’t perform, he let them know in a very terse manner that their effort was unacceptable. Off the court, he was as nice and charming as could be.

He helped usher UTM into Division 1 basketball and the Ohio Valley Conference. When a Division 2 team makes the move to D-1, it can’t go to the NCAA tournament as a conference champion. It can get an at-large bid, but when was the last time that happened with an OVC team? So, what did Luther do? He scheduled the likes of Kentucky, Duke, Louisville, Indiana, Virginia and a few others.

Why?

Well, he explained, if UTM couldn’t go to the Dance, why not give the team and fans and NCAA-tournament caliber opponent once a month or so during the course of the season? On December 5, 1994, Luther even lured Southern Cal to come to Martin. UTM almost beat the Trojans, bowing 67-62. That strategy was a great recruiting tool for Luther.

He came to Martin after a successful tenure as Murray State’s basketball coach, where he won three OVC titles. He was the coach of the Egyptian National Team. When he retired from coaching, Bethel College came calling and lured him away from his gold watch. While serving as the Wildcats’ coach, he picked up his 500th career victory.

Luther passed away Saturday at the age of 83. He was a good coach, a good teacher, a good molder or young men.

Most of all, he was a friend who treated me with fairness and generosity. He’ll be missed.

Editor’s note: Jim Steele is a correspondent for Magic Valley Publishing and the host of The Pressbox, which airs 4-6 p.m., Monday-Thursday on WRJB, 95.9 FM, Camden.
UT Martin Honors Outstanding Employees

Stephanie Sellers (L) and Anthony Prewitt (R), both of Martin, received Spring 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during a virtual reception on April 29. They are pictured with UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver.

MARTIN (May 3) — Stephanie Sellers and Anthony Prewitt, both of Martin, received Spring 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during a surprise virtual reception held April 29.

Sellers is the student services specialist for UT Martin's Regional Centers and Online Programs and provides support to online faculty and students. She has been instrumental in the success of the online agribusiness program and has been diligent in supporting the university and its mission, especially for faculty new to online teaching.

"Faculty have extreme confidence in her, no matter the issue," coworkers wrote in Sellers' nomination package. "She is always looking for ways to improve our processes and make them more efficient for our online students and faculty."

Sellers has served as advisor for the Non-Traditional Student Association and volunteers her time to Tennessee Promise mentoring, the university's Annual Civil Rights Conference and other programs on campus.

Prewitt is the co-interim director for the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs, as well as the campus coordinator for the UT Promise Scholarship Program. He works tirelessly to ensure hundreds of UT Martin students have access to this scholarship.

"Anthony is a true servant leader, providing mentorship and support to students and colleagues alike," wrote his coworkers in his nomination letter. "Through endless examples of action, he models how to create an inclusive space in which all persons may thrive academically, professionally and personally."

Prewitt also serves as the National Panhellenic Council adviser, co-adviser of the Flight Crew, a leader in the "Call Me Mister" program, and other campus initiatives and programs.

UT Martin Outstanding Employee Awards are given to one exempt and one non-exempt employee each semester. Recipients are nominated by their coworkers and chosen by a selection committee.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
Illinois student receives scholarship to attend UT Martin

May 13, 2021

MARTIN, Tenn. – An Iroquois County, Illinois, student has been awarded a scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin for the 2021-22 academic year, according to Dr. James Mantooth, executive director, Office of Enrollment Services and Student Engagement, in a news release.

Jameson Cluver, of Watseka, son of Chad and Sherry Cluver, will be a freshman. He received the Voyager 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.

Fourteen Vietnam War veterans honored at UT-Martin

Shamarria Morrison
May 15, 2021

MARTIN, TN—University of Tennessee at Martin’s Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity honored fourteen Vietnam War veterans as part of its annual Founders Day event. The honorees were UT Martin graduates and alumni of the Alpha Upsilon Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity.

The pinning ceremony was conducted by three retired generals. John “Glad” Castellaw served in the U.S. Marine Corps, Dennis Cavin served in the U.S. Army and Ron Sholar served in the U.S. Army Airborne.

More than 3 million people were killed in the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was fought between communist North Vietnam and the government of Southern Vietnam.

In a release, UT Martin said fourteen of the 17 living alumni returned for the event that included the presentation of Vietnam War veteran pins as part of a Founders Day luncheon program. Twenty-one Alpha Gamma Rho alumni served in Vietnam.
(L-R) John "Glad" Castellaw (U.S. Marine Corps), Dennis Cavin (U.S. Army) and Ron Sholar (U.S. Army Airborne).
Fraternity Chapter at area university honors Veterans

May 16, 2021 by WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News Staff

MARTIN, Tenn. — A West TN fraternity chapter honors Vietnam War veterans at their annual Founder’s Day Celebration.

According to a news release from UT Martin, Vietnam War veterans who are alumni from the university were honored Saturday during the Alpha Upsilon Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho’s annual Founder’s Day celebration. The event had previously been delayed due to the pandemic.

PHOTO ID: (Foreground) Retired Army Lt. Gen. Dennis Cavin and retired Marine Lt. Gen. John “Glad” Castellaw present Vietnam War veteran pins to alumni of UT Martin’s Alpha Upsilon Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. The recognition was part of Founder’s Day held on May 15 at the Martin Parks and Recreation Complex.

The news release stated the event was held on Armed Forces Day at Martin Parks and Recreation Complex, and honored 14 of the 17 living veterans and alumni members who returned for the presentation. Twenty-one total AGR alumni served in Vietnam.
The veterans in attendance were honored with a presentation of Vietnam War veteran pins per the release. Three retired generals, who are also UT Martin grads conducted the pinning ceremony. And they were all met with an excited crowd who enjoyed speakers and recognitions, while also having the opportunity to take helicopter rides.

The news release also noted that four deceased veterans were honored with the display of colors and playing of taps by the UT Martin ROTC Color Guard.

Per a statement from the news release, Vietnam War veteran Buddy Mitchell stated, "Certainly, the wonderful thing here today is we all came home, and but for inches we would not have," Mitchell said. "I believe the greatest tragedy of war is not just that the soldier dies, and we would not have been able to live the fulfilling lives that we lived. Our children would not exist. Our beloved grandchildren would not exist, and any contribution that that lineage would make to the world would not exist."

Keynote remarks were made by Dennis Cavin, per the release, and he expressed appreciation for his part in honoring those that served.

Cavin stated per the news release, "Today's recognition, belated though it may be, is designated as corrective effort to make sure you know how much your service and sacrifice are appreciated." He finished by stating to those in attendance, "Through your presence today, you have chosen to honor American's soul, this generation of Vietnam warriors. A hardy welcome home, brothers. Stand tall, be proud, and we salute you."

Luther remembered at Murray funeral

MURRAY – Family and friends gathered to remember and honor Murray State legendary coach Cal Luther on Sunday at J.H Churchill Funeral Home.

Luther, one of the icons in the history of Racer athletics, died May 8 at his home in Martin, Tennessee. His passing means Murray State has recently lost two of its coaching legends as Ron Greene passed on March 31. Greene coached the MSU men's basketball team from 1978-85.

Luther was hired at MSU after a successful four-season (1954-58) stint at DePauw, as he began coaching the Racers in the 1958-59 season. When his 16 seasons came to an end with the 1973-74 season, Luther had coached the Racers in 395 games, a record that stands today. His longevity produced three Ohio Valley Conference regular-season championships and a pair of OVC Coach of the Year awards and NCAA Tournament appearances.

Luther was inducted into the Murray State Hall of Fame in 1986 and later to the OVC (2000) and UT Martin (2017) halls of fame.
In the Luther era, Racer fans camped out days before a game just to get a seat at Racer Arena, which was a new building having opened only four years before he arrived. From Nov. 27, 1968, to Feb. 21, 1970, Luther's teams set the arena home winning streak of 27 in a row, while winning 80% of the time.

Accepting the additional responsibilities of athletic director in 1967-78, Luther's zeal for sports kept the Racers strong in the OVC, winning the coveted OVC All-Sports Trophy in 1973 and finishing in the top three in All-Sports competition in eight of Luther's 11 years. During that span, MSU claimed nine conference championships in various sports. Luther was AD when Murray State opened Roy Stewart Stadium in 1973.

Luther also coached at Longwood (1981-90), UTM (1991-99) and Bethel (1999-00). In all, Luther won 500 games in 40 seasons. He coached 17 All-OVC players for the Racers who were honored 28 times and three that earned the OVC Player of the Year award four times including Jim Jennings (1963-64), Claude Virden (1968-69) and Les Taylor (1971-72, 1972-73). All three are members of the MSU Hall of Fame. Dale Alexander, Steve Barrett, Dick Cunningham, Herb McPherson and Jimmy Young gave Luther eight members of the MSU hall.

Luther's 1963-64 team became Murray State's first squad to play in the NCAA Tournament. He led the Racers back to the NCAAs at the end of the 1968-69 season. The 1964 team was honored at Racer Hoopalooza in 2017, when the team made it back to Murray State along with Luther. It was obvious even 42 years after he coached a game at MSU how much he adored the place.

"Anybody who doesn't think that old friends are the best friends hasn't been to one of these functions, I'll tell you that," Luther said. "This is an inspiring feeling to see all of these people from the past that are sincerely interested in this school and the program."
Luther continued those sentiments on the Runnin’ with the Racers podcast in 2019: “Murray State has a manner about it and people are attracted to it and stay attracted even after they leave,” he said. “There are very few schools that can match what has gone on here for 50 years or so in men’s basketball.”

During Luther’s tenure, Murray State was one of the first universities in the South to desegregate athletics. Stewart Johnson was one of the first Black student-athletes to play at Murray State, arriving from Pittsburgh to play for Luther.

In the time of OVC history when the Racers were in constant battles with Western Kentucky, Luther’s teams consistently played at a high level and had one five-season run from 1967-71 in which they either won the OVC basketball title or finished second.
UTM AGR fraternity chapter honors Vietnam War veterans

Vietnam War veterans who are alumni of the University of Tennessee at Martin’s Alpha Upsilon Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity were honored Saturday during the chapter’s annual Founders Day celebration held at the Martin Parks and Recreation Complex. Fourteen of the 17 living alumni returned for the event that included the presentation of Vietnam War veteran pins as part of the Founders Day luncheon program. Twenty-one AGR alumni served in Vietnam.

The event, which fell on Armed Forces Day, was delayed a year by the COVID-19 pandemic and attracted an enthusiastic crowd that participated in an alumni meeting, heard several recognitions and speakers and were treated to optional helicopter rides. The UT Martin Army ROTC Color Guard posted the colors and also presented taps at the event’s conclusion in honor of the four deceased veterans.

The program included recognition of Cindy Kent, biographer and editor of the book Better Men: Alpha Upsilon in Vietnam released in 2020. The book includes her interviews with each of the 14 veterans about his Vietnam War experiences. “It’s been the honor of my life to do this,” Kent said. “We all want to do something that matters to somebody else that we know. … These men that you read about (in the book), they’re my brothers.” A Friday night reception held in honor of the 14 veterans provided opportunities for each to collect signatures for personal copies of the book and to share college and war memories.

The pinning ceremony was conducted by three retired generals who are UT Martin graduates: John “Glad” Castellaw, U.S. Marine Corps; Dennis Cavin, U.S. Army; and Dr. Ron Sholar, U.S. Army Airborne. A composite photograph of the honorees was then unveiled that will hang near the chapter room in the AGR house located on 225 University Street. Buddy Mitchell acknowledged the recognitions on behalf of his fellow Vietnam War veterans and called his friends a “band of brothers” for the bond they share.

“Certainly, the wonderful thing here today is we all came home, and but for inches we would not have,” Mitchell said. “I believe the greatest tragedy of war is not just that the soldier dies, and we would not have been able to live the fulfilling lives that we lived. Our children would not exist. Our beloved grandchidren would not exist, and any contribution that that lineage would make to the world would not exist.”

SEE VIETNAM VETS
PAGE 16
VIETNAM VETS FROM PAGE 1

Dennis Cavin offered the event’s keynote remarks and expressed appreciation for his part in honoring those who served. “It’s the most humbling and a sincere privilege for me to acknowledge the lives, the service and the sacrifice of 21 men, brothers – 19 soldiers, one Marine, one sailor – who served our nation during possibly the most difficult time in our nation’s history.”

Cavin thanked veterans and their families but acknowledged that gratitude for their sacrifices was delayed. “Today’s recognition, belated though it may be, is designated as corrective effort to make sure you know how much your service and sacrifice are appreciated,” he said. “... Freedom more often than not comes cloaked in uncertainty. The cost of independence remains high, but we’re willing to pay it. We do not pay it gladly, but we pay it in deep reverence and thanks to those who shoulder the burdens, the pain, the loneliness of separation for us.”

Cavin said he closes many of his presentations by quoting Isaiah 6:8 that says, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’” He used the verse to honor the courage of those who responded to the call of service in Vietnam. “For 19 soldiers, one Marine, one sailor – their response was, ‘Here am I, Lord, send me,’” Cavin said.

“Through your presence today, you have chosen to honor America’s soul, this generation of Vietnam warriors. A hearty welcome home, brothers. Stand tall, be proud, and we salute you.”

The Alpha Upsilon Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho was established in 1963 at UT Martin. More than 1,100 members have been initiated since the chapter’s installation.

BETTER MEN: Alpha Upsilon in Vietnam

The book can be found at tnmagazine.org. Profits from its sales go to an UTM scholarship.

KIWANIS SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED – Bryce (right) and Blake Holliman, recent graduates of Greenfield High School, have each received a Christie Ricketts Memorial Kiwanis Scholarship to help with expenses during their first year of undergraduate studies at The University of Tennessee at Martin. The $1,000 scholarship, formerly named the Martin Kiwanis Club Service Scholarship, is awarded annually to a Martin Westview or Greenfield High School senior who has exemplified the highest degree the basic principles of caring and sharing in the home, school and community. In addition to having outstanding academic records and numerous hours of community service, both Bryce and Blake have been active in Kiwanis events at the local and district levels and have served as lieutenant governor of Key Clubs in the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee Kiwanis District. Both Martin and Greenfield have Kiwanis clubs, and both high schools have active Key Clubs. Bryce plans to study nursing at UT Martin, and Blake plans to major in veterinary science.
Stephanie Sellers and Anthony Prewitt, both of Martin, received Spring 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during a surprise virtual reception.

**Sellers and Prewitt receive awards**

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For more information, contact the UTM Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
UT Martin's AGR Fraternity Honors Vietnam Veterans

BY BUD GRIMES
UT Martin University Relations

MARTIN (May 15) — Vietnam War veterans who are alumni of the University of Tennessee at Martin's Alpha Upsilon Chapter of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity were honored Saturday during the chapter's annual Founders Day celebration held the Martin Parks and Recreation Complex.

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See Vets on Page 3A

Vets
...From Front Page
UT Martin Army ROTC Color Guard posted the colors and also presented taps at the event's conclusion in honor of the four deceased veterans. The program included recognition of Cindy Kent, biographer and editor of the book Better Men: Alpha Upsilon in Vietnam released in 2020. The book includes her interviews with each of the 14 veterans about his Vietnam War experiences. “It's been the honor of my life to do this,” Kent said.

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The Alpha Upsilon Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho was established in 1963 at UT Martin. More than 1,100 members have been initiated since the chapter's installation.
Lakeside Lutheran scholarship recipients announced

Jordyn Jaeger, daughter of Deb of Lake Mills and Eric of Jefferson: University of Tennessee - Martin $5000*. She will attend University of Tennessee-Martin to study biochemistry and molecular biology and pre-medicine studies.

MASKS NO LONGER REQUIRED ON UT MARTIN CAMPUS

University of Tennessee at Martin
Chancellor's Message:
"On Thursday, May 13, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidelines related to mask wearing and social distancing for individuals who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Simply put, if you are fully vaccinated you can return to most activities that you enjoyed prior to the pandemic.

Effective immediately, people on the main campus and five regional centers who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear masks or social distance on campus. This change applies to summer activities and classes, as well as the 2021 fall semester. In keeping with new CDC guidelines, individuals who are not vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask on campus and at the centers and continue to keep socially distanced from others. Any individual is welcome to wear a mask at the university, whether vaccinated or not.

Vaccines are available locally at the Weakley County Health Department and at pharmacies and health departments all across West Tennessee. CDC research has shown that the COVID-19 vaccines will reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission and are effective at preventing the spread of the virus.

We will proceed with our full return to work plan, starting June 1, 2021.

I want to continue to encourage everyone to get vaccinated for maximum protection and prevention of illness. Thank you for your assistance in keeping our university as safe as possible during the past year."
Tradition continues as five Vienna seniors earn dual diplomas

By SCENE STAFF
May 24, 2021

Vienna High School seniors (from left) Kalysta Nicole Conley, Harmony Grace Vivian Womack, Aubrey Danyelle Anderson, Addison Marie Bent, Alivia Jean Montgomery have not only completed their requirements for high school graduation but have also completed their associate's degrees.

For the ninth consecutive year, Vienna High School has multiple students who are marching to pomp and circumstance back-to-back.

Seniors Aubrey Danyelle Anderson, Addison Marie Bent, Kalysta Nicole Conley, Alivia Jean Montgomery and Harmony Grace Vivian Womack have not only completed their requirements for high school graduation but have also completed their associate's degrees either at Shawnee Community College (SCC) or Southern Illinois College (SIC).

Like other graduating classes, the VHS Class of 2021 has been celebrating the scholarly achievements of its members, including seven valedictorians, two salutatorians, 23 four-year honors students, 11 Illinois State Scholars and countless scholarship recipients.
“These impressive achievements are only enhanced by the five students graduating with their college degrees,” said Vienna superintendent Joshua Stafford. “The achievements of the Vienna Class of 2021 are very impressive. It is a group of young adults that will undoubtedly be successful in life.”

Vienna has a comprehensive college partnership with SCC and SIC. Components of this partnership include dual credit, dual enrollment, articulation, remedial curriculum, credit recovery, extension center services, GED classes and numerous other points of cooperation between the institutions.

Stafford shared that all parts of the cooperation are vitally important to student success, but emphasized the importance of remedial course work.

“Students graduating with their associates is great; however, another win, that is not as easy to bring attention to, is the remedial course work we have made accessible to students while they are in high school,” Stafford said. “Twelve years ago we had only 40% of the graduates reading- and writing-ready at the college level. Due to the hard work of our instructors and those at the colleges, we have now brought that college readiness number to over 85%. This has major implications for students as they move into the future of college and careers.”

The Class of 2021 at Vienna has collectively completed over 2000 credit hours towards their college degrees through the dual credit/enrollment partnership with SIC and SCC. These hours have been earned not only through dual credit offerings at the high school, but also by students attending classes at the college, both online and at the colleges' campuses.

“As these students move into the future, they have varied plans and ambitions,” Stafford said.

Anderson, Bent, Conley and Montgomery earned their associate's degrees through SCC; Womack through SIC.
Anderson is the daughter of Daniel and Julie Anderson. She is a member of The Talon staff, Beta Club and Scholar Bowl, and she is an Illinois State Scholar and four-year honor student. Anderson plans to attend Southeast Missouri State University to major in social work.

Bent is the daughter of Chris and Kim Bent. She is a member of the National Society of High School Scholars, Pep Club, Dale Fowler's Youth Advisory Committee and a State Scholar. Bent has committed to Rockhurst University on a basketball scholarship to continue her athletic career and pursue a degree in communication science disorders.

Conley is the daughter of Randall and Lori Conley. She is a competition and basketball cheerleader and is a member of the CNA program, Beta Club, Pep Club and prom committee. She is also an Illinois State Scholar and four-year honor student. Conley will attend Southern Illinois University Carbondale to major in physiology, and then move on to medical school.

Montgomery is the daughter of Todd and Jodi Montgomery. She is a member of CNA, Beta Club, Pep Club, prom committee and has played softball throughout high school. She is also a four-year honor student. Montgomery will attend Union University to major in social work.

Womack is the daughter of Jason and Rachel Womack. She is a member of Beta Club, Pep Club and Student Council, and she has played volleyball all four years. She is an Illinois State Scholar and a four-year honor student. Womack plans to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin to enroll in the psychology program.

Vienna Christian Ministerial Alliance hosted the VHS Baccalaureate Service on Wednesday, May 19. Tivo McCrary, who serves as the Next Gen Pastor at Cornerstone Church, was the speaker. The event for graduates, families, and friends was held at Fellowship Baptist Church in Vienna. VHS graduation was held Friday, May 20.
Alexis Millsaps of Columbia is a 2021 graduate of the University of Tennessee Martin. She is a recipient of The Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Award.

Photo: Submitted

Columbia graduate recognized for exemplary leadership at UT Martin

The Daily Herald
Published 1:37 p.m. CT May 25, 2021 | Updated 1:41 p.m. CT May 25, 2021

Alexis Millsaps is graduating from the University of Tennessee Martin with an accolade for the leadership she offered her fellow students while attending the institution.

Millsaps was presented with the Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Award during the University of Tennessee at Martin Spring 2021 commencement on Saturday.

The commendation is presented to graduating seniors, who demonstrate outstanding campus and community service during their time at UT Martin.

A communications graduate, Millsaps, who graduated from Columbia Central High School in 2016 and transferred after earning her associate degree at Columbia State Community College, making a sizable impact on UT Martin in a short amount of time, the school's leadership said.

She is also the recipient of the Harold Love Community Service Award. Named for the late representative Harold Love, the award recognizes students for their outstanding achievement in public service.

She had spent much of her time volunteering with the Boys and Girls Club and the Carl Perkins Center.

"I'm extremely grateful to have been awarded both," Millsaps said. "I'm thankful that there are people at my school who take the time to notice students working behind the scenes, too."
As a SOAR orientation leader, Millsaps traveled to conventions and attended numerous leadership seminars.

"If you ask anyone about me, they'll probably tell you two things: that I'm bad at taking credit where it's due, and that I have a hard time gauging when a project is done," Millsaps said. "In a lot of ways, these awards are a spectacular honor to receive, but they also remind me of what else the campus, and myself, needs growth in."

She also served as a Transfer Boot Camp mentor, which allowed her to use her own experiences as a transfer student to help fellow classmates with their transitions. The opportunity led Millsaps to establish the institution’s Transfers for Life student organization.

Millsaps has also held leadership roles in the Black Student Association and on the Civil Rights Conference Planning Committee.

During her time at UTM, she has been a vocal leader in the push for a mandatory African American history class on campus.

This summer, Millsaps will be relocating to Honesdale, Pennsylvania to work at Lake Bryn Mawr, an esteemed and traditional summer camp for girls.

A nomination letter in support of Millsaps noted her outstanding leadership abilities and her proven record for fighting for causes she believes in.

Dr. Paul Meek served the UT Martin campus as executive officer, dean, UT vice president/chancellor from 1934 to 1967. This award was originally established and funded by the three Meek children to honor their parents. The Paul and Martha Meek Leadership Award is the only award given during commencement each semester.

Millsaps received the award alongside fellow graduates Kayla Brooks of Dickson and Bailey Radnitzer of Des Plaines, Ill.

Brooks, a communications graduate, served as the TISL Times Newspaper Editor for the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature, is currently president of the Radio, Television and Digital News Association, and rose to the role of program director at WUTM 90.3 “The Hawk” radio station. She performed in the Vanguard's production of Arthur Miller's “The Crucible,” and served on the SOAR staff, welcoming incoming freshmen.

In her work in the Office of Campus Recreation as group fitness instructor, Brooks led more than 300 yoga classes for students, faculty and staff and is certified by the Fitour Fitness Group.

During COVID-19, Brooks led the courses through Instagram, teaching two classes per week with more than 1,900 students in attendance.
As the university navigated the pandemic, Brooks became an essential worker and produced daily newscasts for WUTM.

"Kayla raises the bar when it comes to being a role model for students because she genuinely values teamwork and is highly motivated to succeed in everything she does," said Kimberly Olive-Milligan, office of campus recreation. "We greatly appreciate her contributions to our programs."

Radnitzer, a bachelor of fine arts graduate, has been involved in service, scholarship and leadership from her very start at UT Martin. She served as SOAR orientation leader for her first three years and as a First Year Initiative PEP leader for the last three years. She has received several registered student organization awards, including the University Service Award and the Emerging Leader Award. She has held three leadership positions of the League of Striving Artists student art group, including president. She is an active volunteer both on-campus and off, working with Red Fern Animal Shelter in Dresden, where she photographs animals, updates their biographies, and promotes them on social media to aid in their adoption.

"Bailey is an amazing recipient for the Meek Award, as she has lived every part of it and continues to push the values behind its conception," said Jason Stout, professor of art. "She is the best of what we strive for here, and the best example of what we try to get other students to be a part of."

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UT Martin to host annual Memorial Day ceremony online

May 21, 2021 by Tristan Fieichel

MARTIN, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee at Martin is taking one of its annual events online.

In a news release, the university says it will host its annual Memorial Day Commemoration Ceremony online.

The event will be livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube on Friday, May 28 at 9 a.m., according to the release. The university says it will be broadcast on WUTM FM 90.3 as well.

The release says this year's keynote speaker will be Lt. Col. Rodric McClain, a UT Martin professor of military science.

Rep. David Kustoff will also be there to speak.
State rep secures $500,000 for UTM

State Rep. Tandy Darby (R-Greenfield) has successfully secured $500,000 in state funding for the University of Tennessee at Martin. The moneys will be used for renovations to dormitories on the campus. The appropriated funds are part of a $42.6 billion balanced budget passed by the Tennessee General Assembly that cuts taxes and provides significant investments in education, health care and economic development.

"These funds will contribute to campus enhancement efforts at the university and will improve campus life for current and future Skyhawks," Darby said. "I appreciate my colleagues in the House and Senate for their continued support of UT Martin and their mission to educate future generations of leaders."

Located in rural northwest Tennessee, the University of Tennessee at Martin is one of three universities within the UT System.

With a current enrollment of more than 7,200 students, UT Martin provides high-quality undergraduate and graduate educational programs to students in West Tennessee and beyond.

Darby represents House District 76, which includes Weakley County and parts of Obion and Carroll counties. He serves on the Agriculture and Natural Resources, Calendar and Rules, and Education Administration Committees, as well as the Agriculture and Natural Resources and Higher Education Subcommittee.
Troy native excels as chemistry standout at UT Martin

By JANE NORDBERG
Special to The Messenger

The last 12 years haven’t been the easiest for Kyle Carter, but the last two have been the best of his life.

The Troy native first came to the University of Tennessee at Martin in 2009 to pursue a music degree. But despite trying a variety of majors and academic programs, Carter struggled.

“I really hadn’t found anything I was passionate enough about to turn into a career,” he recalled. “As a result of that, I didn’t feel motivated to do my best. I did eventually pursue biology and chemistry as a major (in 2013), because I had Chemistry 121 with Dr. Shelton and it just clicked with me, but by that time I was still lacking motivation, and that played a huge part in me not being able to succeed at that time in my life.”

Dr. Abigail Shelton, UT Martin associate professor of chemistry, recalls having Kyle as a student in her general chemistry lecture and lab in fall 2012.

“Kyle was figuring out who he was and what he wanted to study,” she said. “He occasionally skipped lecture and labs … and had some bumps in the road soon after.”

Carter eventually withdrew in Spring 2014, under a cloud of incompletes and poor academic performance. Convinced he needed a fresh start, he moved to Murfreesboro and enrolled at Middle Tennessee State University in fall 2017.

“I’d never lived outside of this area, and I thought maybe I might do better without the baggage of my past performance,” Carter said.

For a short while he did excel, doing undergraduate research and earning a 4.0 grade point average. But it wasn’t long before his past caught up with him. After one semester, his financial aid was pulled due to his past academic performance, and Carter moved back to Martin, regained his prior job doing property maintenance, and considered his next move.

“One thing I did have was the experience of meeting (Dr. Shelton), as well as that one semester at Middle Tennessee State that allowed me to prove to myself that I was ready to be a good student,” Carter said. “I looked into different career paths before coming back and I distinctly remembered I enjoyed chemistry. I enjoy the theory, the classroom setting, I have a personal aptitude for it. Working in the lab stresses a lot of students out, but for me, it’s relaxing. I thought chemistry could be something I enjoy enough to make a career out of.”

Dr. Shelton was happy to see him return to UT Martin. “Kyle found that the two general chemistry courses he had taken, along with the labs, had sparked something in him worth coming back for,” she said.

Re-enrolling in spring 2019 and with only enough financial aid for three semesters, Carter said he “worked my butt off to graduate in that time frame,” taking 18 upper-division courses in fall 2019, 20 credits in spring 2020 and 19 credits in fall 2020 to wrap up his chemistry degree.

UT Martin associate professor of chemistry Genessa Smith, as Carter’s advisor, also had some concerns about his heavy course load and met with him to discuss it.

“I learned that his choice of classes was not borne out of ignorance or naiveté,” Smith said. “He had given careful thought to every detail of his plan. He explained to me about the three semesters of financial aid, and made it clear he wanted to take as many classes as possible to improve his GPA enough to go to graduate school. Although the odds did not seem in his favor, I was compelled by his determination.”

Carter admits he likes to stay busy and thrives under pressure.

“(My professors) were really unsure about my course load at first, but they let me make that decision, and were flexible with me in a way that helped me succeed,” he said.

As the semester unfolded, Smith and Shelton watched Carter launch himself into his studies.

“To my delight, he set the pace in every single one of his courses,” Smith said. “I observed his classmates seeking out his help on assignments. I overheard him asking intelligent, informed questions of his professors. He was quick to learn from mistakes and did not shy away from asking for help or clarification when needed.”

In his last two semesters, Carter’s upward trend continued. He completed 27 additional credit hours
of upper-division chemistry and physics courses, and significantly raised his cumulative GPA.

He scored above the 90th percentile on his organic chemistry, analytical chemistry, and physical chemistry (thermodynamics) American Chemical Society final exams.

"While it's not uncommon to do well in one of those, it's rare to do well in all three," Smith said. "That is almost unheard of."

Carter took the Medical College Admission Test in 2020 and scored in the 94th percentile, and when he took the Chemistry Major Field Achievement Test, Carter scored in the 98th percentile — the highest score ever recorded in the history of the UT Martin chemistry department.

"The field test is the exit exam all graduating chemistry majors take," Shelton explained. "We expected Kyle to do well, but the shock came from him outperforming all previous chemistry students."

Not surprisingly, he received both the Outstanding Chemistry Major award and the Outstanding Chemistry Student award.

"My first time in college, I never came close to deserving anything like that," Carter said. "It feels good to know I'm doing what I need to do to prepare for my success."

He was elected by his peers to become president of the Student Members of the American Chemical Society student organization, a challenging position during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There were a lot of restrictions on the student organizations, and it was not easy trying to keep the group going," Carter said. Group meetings moved to a virtual platform, but events were trickier. "We made up boxes, little care packages, and sent them out to members and then opened them all up together over Zoom. That made us feel a little bit like we were together."

Carter graduated in December 2020 with an American Chemical Society-approved bachelor of science degree in chemistry and a minor in physics.

"The ACS-approved major is more rigorous than the regular chemistry degree; the department and

the student have to meet certain requirements," Smith said.

But Carter wasn't done yet. Having been accepted into the doctoral program in chemistry at Mississippi State University in the fall of 2021, Carter chose to do an additional semester at UT Martin to complete a biology minor and an additional biochemistry specialization.

To bridge the gap financially, Carter was offered a continuation of his prestigious teaching assistant position in UT Martin's chemistry department, allowing him to stay for a post-baccalaureate semester after officially graduating.

"Teaching (Chemistry 121 lab) has been my absolutely favorite job I've ever had," Carter said. "I really enjoy the opportunity to work with other students and communicate with them, but it also helps me to further hone my skills. I do my best to leave no question unanswered. If I don't know, I try to find out. Then that is something I learn myself, and that strengthens my chemistry knowledge."

Smith called Carter "a model of grit," whose performance at UT Martin has been nothing less than exceptional.

"It can be difficult to come back as a non-traditional student, but it's not impossible," said Carter, who will turn 30 in August. "I've gotten more out of my experience at UT Martin than I ever thought I could, and it has been 100 percent worth the work."

Editor's note: Jane Nordberg writes for University Relations at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

OVERCOMING — University of Tennessee at Martin chemistry major Kyle Carter, a native of Troy, overcame many obstacles to eventually graduate in 2020 with his bachelor of science degree in chemistry and a minor in physics. He graduated from Obion County Central High School in 2009.
UTM to hold virtual Memorial Day commemoration

The University of Tennessee at Martin will hold its annual Memorial Day Commemoration Ceremony virtually at 9 a.m., Friday, May 28, in lieu of the traditional in-person service. The ceremony will be livestreamed on UT Martin’s Facebook and YouTube and will be archived for later viewing. The program will also be broadcast on WUTM FM 90.3 “The Hawk.”

Col. Ardis Porter, a retired U.S. Army military officer, will serve as this year’s keynote speaker. In his last assignment, he served as deputy chief of staff for the U.S. Army Human Resources Command at Fort Knox in Kentucky. He received his commission as a second lieutenant through Vanderbilt University’s ROTC program. With more than 30 years of experience in human resources, he has been recognized for his extensive leadership in the military.

Porter currently works at the Agricenter International in Memphis as the program manager for Veterans Employed in Technology and Service in Agriculture (VETSA), a program designed to prepare transitioning military personnel and veterans for civilian careers in the agricultural service and support sectors.

Lt. Col. Rodric McClain, UT Martin professor of military science, will serve as the master of ceremonies, and UT Martin student DaeShuana Aldridge will sing the national anthem at the start of the program. Porter will speak following the invocation by Chaplin Debra McGuire and comments by UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver. At the conclusion of the ceremony, U.S. Rep. David Kustoff will speak, Dale Willis of the UT Martin Physical Plant will offer the benediction, and UT Martin student Aaron MacDonald will play taps.

Memorial Day is observed annually on the last Monday in May and honors those who have died in the protection of the United States of America. Originally known as Decoration Day, the observance was renamed upon becoming a federal holiday in 1971.

For more information, contact Joyanne Gansereit, UT Martin coordinator of public occasions, at ganserei@utm.edu.

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The University of Tennessee Martin
Summer Activities

Lego robotics camp

A robotics camp is being offered from 9-11 a.m., June 7-11, on the main campus by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of University Outreach. Camp participants should be comfortable using a computer and keyboard and be prepared to follow all university COVID-19 guidelines.

The LEGO® WeDo 2.0 Camp is for rising first and second graders and teaches participants how to build a satellite and maneuver it to avoid a meteor, as well as how to build a spy robot. The registration fee is $175 and includes a camp t-shirt.

Parents can register their children online at www.utm.edu/robotics. For more information, email nondegree@utm.edu.
Pelren receives Kiwanis award

Joseph Pelren, a UT Martin junior from Martin, has received the 2021 Martin Kiwanis Award for Leadership and Service and was recognized at a virtual ceremony.

Joseph is majoring in geosciences and has maintained an outstanding grade-point average while taking many honors and natural sciences courses. The selection committee for the award was impressed with Joseph’s commitment to service and his leadership at UT Martin and in the community.

Dr. Jack W. Grubaugh, professor of aquatic ecology and entomology in the department of biological sciences at UT Martin, nominated Joseph for this award and noted that Joseph truly excels in the area of service.

An Eagle Scout who has worked with Weakley County youth through his efforts at C.E. Weldon library, with the St. Jude Toy Drive, and with the West Tennessee High School Ethics Bowl, Joseph is currently developing an elementary education curriculum in geology for the Martin Enrichment Academy. He also works with students at UT Martin in his role as a laboratory instructor for general chemistry classes and serves the community by working with Habitat for Humanity and the LUNGevity Foundation.

He serves the university through both his leadership roles in student organizations and volunteering his time and labor to help construct the new courtyard for the Holland McCombs Center.

Joseph is the son of Suzanne and Eric Pelren, Martin.

Kiwanis president Annie Jones sent a letter of congratulations to Joseph and said she hoped that he would be able to attend a Kiwanis meeting in the fall to receive inperson congratulations from members. The award was present May 9 to present a plaque to Joseph. Also present May 9 to congratulate Joseph was Dr. Andy Lewter, UT Martin vice chancellor for student affairs.

The $1,000 Kiwanis Award for Leadership and Service was begun with an initial contribution to establish the endowment by S. K. Airee, longtime professor of chemistry at UT Martin, and his wife Shashi.

On February 15, 2017, officers and charter members of the Martin Kiwanis Club joined University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Keith Carver to celebrate the establishment of an endowment for the annual Martin Kiwanis Award for Leadership and Service. Dr. Airee was a charter member of the Martin Kiwanis Club.

This award honors students whose leadership and volunteer activities reflect the Kiwanis motto of "improving the world, one child and one community at a time."
Free online ACT prep for students and teachers

From staff reports
May 26, 2021

All Tennessee high school students and teachers have access to free virtual workshops, office hours and classes on how to succeed on the ACT college entrance exam.

Beginning this summer, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education, the University of Tennessee at Martin is providing the ACT Success Tactics Workshops and Mastery Classes for free via Zoom, designed for rising 11th and 12th graders, to gain knowledge and skills to prepare for and be successful on the ACT.

“These workshops and classes are tremendous free resources that will help better prepare our students for postsecondary success while equipping our teachers with tools for focused classroom instruction on college readiness and career pathways,” state Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn said.

Beginning June 1 and continuing through the fall of 2022, the series of workshops, office hours and classes are being held via Zoom for free. Register at http://bit.ly/TNACTprep.

The ACT Success Tactics Workshop is designed to help students develop new strategies for how to manage exam questions, receive a detailed plan for practice opportunities to improve performance, learn crucial time-saving tips and familiarize themselves more generally with higher education.

The virtual office hours are offered in one-hour increments and provide students with the opportunity to do a deeper dive into areas where additional assistance is needed.
The ACT Mastery Classes are available upon completion of the Success Tactics Workshop for a more indepth look into a certain section of the exam where additional assistance is needed.

For Tennessee teachers the ACT Workshop is offered via Zoom during subsequent semesters, with the first session on Monday, Aug. 2, to learn how to build ACT curriculum into instruction and how to use ACT data to inform teaching strategies. The two-hour workshop may be used for professional development points upon completion.

Funding for the workshops and classes is from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund.
UT Martin Student Earns Kiwanis Award

AWARDED FOR SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP — Joseph Pelren (Center) was honored with the 2021 Kiwanis Award for Leadership and Service. On hand to congratulate him and give him a plaque were Dr. Andy Lewter (L), vice chancellor for student affairs at UT Martin and Steve Lemond, treasurer of the Martin Kiwanis Club.

MARTIN (May 5) — Joseph Pelren, a UT Martin junior from Martin, has received the 2021 Martin Kiwanis Award for Leadership and Service and was recognized at a virtual ceremony on May 5.

Pelren is majoring in geosciences and has maintained an outstanding grade point average while taking many honors and natural sciences courses. The selection committee for the award was impressed with Pelren’s commitment to service and his leadership at UT Martin and in the community.

Dr. Jack W. Grubauh, professor of aquatic ecology and entomology in the department of biological sciences at UT Martin, nominated Joseph for this award and noted that Joseph truly excels in the area of service.

An Eagle Scout who has worked with Weakley County youth through his efforts at C.E. Weldon library, with the St. Jude Toy Drive, and with the West Tennessee High School Ethics Bowl, Pelren is currently developing an elementary education curriculum in geology for the Martin Enrichment Academy. He also works with students at UT Martin in his role as a laboratory instructor for general chemistry classes and serves the community by working with Habitat for Humanity and the LUNGEVity Foundation. He serves the university through both his leadership roles in student organizations and volunteering his time and labor to help construct the new courtyard for the Holland McCombs Center.

He is the son of Suzanne and Eric Pelren of Martin.

Kiwanis president Annie Jones sent a letter of congratulations to Joseph and said she hoped that he would be able to attend a Kiwanis meeting this fall to receive in-person congratulations from members. Kiwanis treasurer Steve Lemond was present on May 5 to present a plaque to Joseph. Also present on May 9 to congratulate Joseph was Dr. Andy Lewter, UT Martin vice chancellor for student affairs.

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KID COLLEGE SET

Parents of children entering kindergarten through fifth grade in fall 2021 can register their children for Kid College activities June 7-11 or June 14-18 at the University of Tennessee at Martin main campus. In order to comply with UT Martin’s COVID-19 guidelines, children will be divided into four small groups based on the grade they will enter in fall 2021.

The children will stay in their classroom while teachers rotate in and out. Children will attend either a morning session from 8:15 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. or an afternoon session from 1 p.m. – 4:35 p.m. and will take all four classes offered. Registration is $120 per student, and the children will receive a Kid College T-shirt. Classes offered include Moving and Grooving, Animal Adventures, Adventures in Art, and Curious Minds-Science Investigation.

Parents will receive an email the week before Kid College containing additional information for this year’s activities. Anyone who does not receive this email should contact the Office of University Outreach at 731-881-7062. To register and review the COVID-19 guidelines, visit www.utm.edu/kidcollege.
**UTM to Host Virtual Memorial Day Event**

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**State Rep. Tandy Darby**

**Rep. Darby Secures $500,000 For UT Martin**

NASHVILLE (May 20) — State Rep. Tandy Darby, R-Greenfield, has secured $500,000 in state funding for the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The monies will be used for renovations to dormitories on the campus. The appropriated funds are part of a $42.6 billion balanced budget passed by the Tennessee General Assembly that cuts taxes and provides significant investments in education, health care and economic development, according to a release issued by Darby’s office.

“These funds will contribute to campus enhancement efforts at the university and will improve campus life for current and future Skyhawks,” Darby said. “I appreciate my colleagues in the House and Senate for their continued support of UT Martin and their mission to educate future generations of leaders.”

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Darby represents House District 76, which includes Weakley and parts of Obion and Carroll counties. He serves on the Agriculture and Natural Resources, Calendar and Rules, and Education Administration Committees as well as the Agriculture and Natural Resources and Higher Education Subcommittees. He can be reached at rep.tandydarby@capitol.tn.gov or 615-741-7847.
Persistence Payoff: UT Martin Student Excels Despite Life-Threatening Condition

BY JANE NORDBERG

MARTIN (May 13) — At first glance, Luke Winters is your typical successful University of Tennessee at Martin graduating senior — a Martin native with a 3.9 grade point average, engaged in a variety of extracurricular activities and well-liked by his peers. In fact, he’s a bit of an overachiever, earning Bachelor of Science degrees in both Business Administration (accounting) and Agricultural Business, Magna Cum Laude.

You’d never guess Luke had four life-threatening brain surgeries before he entered kindergarten.

“We thought he may have been deaf,” said his mother, UT Martin Nursing Assistant Professor Susan Cramer Winters. “You’d slam a door near him and he wouldn’t flinch.”

Scans showed that Luke was born with hydrocephalus, a chronic neurological condition caused by an abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid around the brain. CSF has many functions in the human body; it surrounds the brain and spinal cord and acts as a protective cushion against injury. It also provides nutrients and proteins that aids in the brain’s normal functioning, and carries waste products away from surrounding tissues.

Hydrocephalus occurs when there is an imbalance between the amount of CSF that is produced and the rate at which it is absorbed. The CSF builds up, causing the brain’s ventricles to enlarge and the pressure inside the head to increase. The condition affects more than 1 million Americans, ranging from infants and older children to older and middle-aged adults, as well as seniors.

Typically, those with hydrocephalus display a disproportionately large head, caused by the pressure of the CSF against the cranium. In Luke’s case, he was relatively fortunate to have been diagnosed in infancy.

“Luke was lucky in that he was young enough that his skull was still somewhat malleable,” Susan said. “People who are diagnosed later in life have a lot more damage because the skull is already fully formed.”

Once a death sentence, hydrocephalus is now treated surgically through the insertion of an internal shunt from the brain to the abdomen, providing for release of excess fluid. But while technology has extended the life of hydrocephalus patients, that life is not easy. The condition affects fine motor skills, making simple tasks like buttoning a coat or holding a fork a difficult procedure. Balance is also affected; Luke was 18 years old before he could fully ride a bicycle.

“He had physical therapy twice a week for three years and could not ride on one leg,” Susan recalled. “With the bicycle, he just persisted — he would just try and try and one day, we looked out the window and he was motoring down the street. He just keeps trying until he gets it.”

That persistence has aided Luke throughout his entire life, from playing soccer and golf in high school, to earning a Spanish language scholarship, to learning how to drive.

“There’s nothing wrong with Luke’s IQ,” Susan said. “He’s undergone some very strenuous neuropsychological evaluations. He’s very smart, but his processing speed is slow. Something that another kid gets right away, it takes him a little while to process it.”

Instead of getting discouraged, Luke has learned to adapt, finding alternate approaches to a situation. This makes him an excellent employee at UT Martin’s Office of Career Planning and Development, where Luke meets with students as a career peer educator.

“Luke is a visionary,” said Kameron Echols, CPAD assistant director and Luke’s supervisor. “He’s able to look at the bigger picture, and he is able to figure out the best way to talk to a student who might not be able to articulate what they want to say.”

Admittedly, Luke said he has a certain affinity for helping those freshmen and sophomores who come to the CPAD not knowing what to do next.

“I switched majors a few times at UT Martin, and I definitely can relate to those people who come in that need to find some focus in what they want to do as a major, or as a profession,” Luke said. “I have a lot of diverse interests and situational experiences that have helped me grow and helped my problem-solving skills.”

As president of the UT Martin College Democrats, Luke started a podcast to keep the group active under the COVID-19 pandemic when meeting in person was not possible. In his work with the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences student organization, Luke organized a quiz bowl team that competed nationally and presented at a conference.

“He’s a great organizer,” said Dr. Annie Jones, CPAD career counselor and MANRRS advisor. “He’s easy to talk to, intelligent and charismatic. You naturally feel very comfortable with him, whether you’re a student or faculty member. He just has a natural ability to put people at ease and bring out the best in them.”

As an agricultural business student, Luke led a student-centered marketing project with the Memphis Grizzlies basketball team. The NBA organization was looking to expand their marketing to appeal to Tennessee’s rural agricultural communities.

“(Luke) really took the lead on that,” said Dr. Joey E. Mehlhorn, professor of agriculture, geosciences and natural resources. “He kept the students going, pulled it all together, and presented the report to the Grizzlies. Employers are looking for people who can motivate others and stick with a project until it’s done, and that is Luke to a ‘T.’”

It was Mehlhorn who recommended a second degree in agricultural business to Luke, who was majoring in accounting and initially resistant to the thought of additional coursework.

“He comes from a long line of agricultural people, and he already had the business acumen from the accounting side that would be a natural fit,” Mehlhorn said. “But the reality is, I couldn’t see Luke in a solitary position like accounting. He’s definitely a people person, he’s outgoing, and he will do well in a position where he’s working with people and helping them.”
Ironically, those with hydrocephalus typically find math and foreign languages the most difficult subjects to master - two subjects at which Luke excels. "We'd go to hydrocephalus conferences and I would hear horror stories of parents who were pulling their hair out trying to help their kids learn math," Susan said. "I was always the exception to the rule, with Luke graduating with an accounting degree. I say they must have added something to him during one of his surgeries."

During his time at UT Martin, Luke endured two surgeries to repair a failing shunt. The first was over a Christmas break, but the second occurred while he was taking a summer class. Neither caused a break in his studies.

"Fortunately, it was (an) American Politics (class), and I was familiar with the subject, even though I had just had brain surgery, it really wasn't that much of a problem," Luke said.

Not that he would have asked for help if he had needed it, he admitted. Because of his condition, Luke likely would have qualified for accommodation by UT Martin's Office of Disability Services. He may have been offered extra time to take exams or complete assignments, but he declined to pursue those accommodations, despite Susan's encouragement to do so.

"It really comes down to the fact that any person with a chronic condition such as mine, we want to see ourselves as normal," Luke said. "In some cases, I probably should have asked for more time to complete some things, but I guess through my own stubbornness, I wanted to be seen on the same level as any other student."

What everyone seems to agree on is that UT Martin was the right fit for Luke.

"I'm grateful to my parents and everyone who made (UT Martin) a fantastic place to be these last five years," he said. "The next step is a little scary, but I do feel that I am prepared for whatever comes next."

Whether that future includes marketing, accounting, career counseling, helping people in a medical capacity, or something entirely unforeseen, Luke's family and friends are confident in his abilities to excel.

"He is a special person - someone with empathy, with knowledge, with talent, and the ability to roll with the punches," Echols said.

"I would say he has a 100 percent chance of succeeding wherever he goes."

Luke Winters of Martin graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin, Saturday, May 8, 2021. Winters earned Bachelor of Science degrees in both Business Administration (accounting) and Agricultural Business, Magna Cum Laude.
UTM welcomes back Governor’s School programs

May 28, 2021 by Maranda Faris (https://www.wbbjtv.com/author/maranda-faris/)

MARTIN, Tenn. — Two Governor’s Schools will return to the University of Tennessee at Martin this summer following virtual programs last year, according to a news release.

The program will return with virtual options, the release says.

The Tennessee Governor’s School for the Agricultural Science will run from May 29 through June 25, the release says.

The Tennessee Governor’s School for the Humanities will run from June 6 through July 2.

Both programs bring select high school students from across the state to UT Martin for college classes and activities, according to the release.

Students must complete an application process and receive an invitation to attend, the release says.

The Tennessee Governor’s School for the Agricultural Sciences has 31 in-person participants and four virtual, according to the release.

The Tennessee Governor’s School for the Humanities anticipates 51 in-person participants and eight virtual participants.

For more information, contact the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Agricultural Sciences at (731) 881-7211 or the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Humanities at (731) 881-7579.
TDOE and UT Martin offer free ACT prep workshops to all TN high school students and teachers

NASHVILLE — The Tennessee Department of Education and University of Tennessee at Martin have announced all Tennessee high school students and teachers have access to free, virtual workshops, office hours, and classes on how to succeed on the ACT, one of the most important college entrance exams offered to high school students across the country.

The ACT is a comprehensive college entrance exam covering a wide range of subjects that assess students' mathematical skills, grammar usage, and reading comprehension.

Beginning this summer, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education, UT Martin is providing the ACT Success Tactics Workshops and Mastery Classes for free via Zoom to all Tennessee high school teachers and students, designed for rising 11th and 12th graders, to gain knowledge and skills to prepare for and be successful on the ACT.

“We are excited to partner with UT Martin for rising 11th and 12th graders, to gain knowledge and skills to prepare for and be successful on the ACT.”

For all high school Tennessee teachers:
- The ACT Workshop is offered via Zoom during subsequent semesters, with the first session on Monday, August 2nd, and open to all Tennessee high school teachers to learn how to build ACT curriculum into their instruction and how to use ACT data to inform teaching strategies. The 2-hour workshop may be used for professional development points (PDPs) upon completion.

For all Tennessee high school students:
- The virtual office hours are offered in 1-hour increments and provide students with the opportunity to do a deeper dive into areas where additional assistance is needed.
- The ACT Mastery Classes are available upon completion of the Success Tactics Workshop for a deeper dive into a certain section of the exam where additional assistance is needed.

The funding for the workshops and classes is from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER).

Interested students and educators can click here to learn more about the workshops, office hours, and classes.

To learn more about the department’s college readiness testing resources and materials, click here. For Tennessee Department of Education media inquiries, contact Edu.MediaInquiries@tn.gov.

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to focus on ACT readiness and college and career success for all Tennessee high school students,” said Commissioner Penny Schwinn. “These workshops and classes are tremendous free resources that will help better prepare our students for postsecondary success while equipping our teachers with tools for focused classroom instruction on college readiness and career pathways.”

Beginning June 1 and continuing through the fall of 2022, the series of workshops, office hours, and classes are being held via Zoom for free and accessible here to register.

For all Tennessee high school students:
- The ACT Success Tactics Workshop is designed to help students develop new strategies for how to manage exam questions, receive a detailed plan for practice opportunities to improve performance, learn crucial time-saving tips, and familiarize themselves more generally with higher education.
- The virtual office hours are offered in 1-hour increments and provide students with the opportunity to do a deeper dive into areas where additional assistance is needed.
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“ACT”