UT MARTIN TO CELEBRATE HOMECOMING NEXT WEEK

October 1, 2021 @ 8:49 am Shannon McFarlin

Martin, Tenn.—The University of Tennessee at Martin will host its 2021 homecoming festivities Oct. 4-10 on the main campus. The annual Quad City tent festival will begin at 10:30 a.m., Oct. 9, with the homecoming football game against Murray State University starting at 2 p.m. in Hardy Graham Stadium. Masks are not required for homecoming events held outside, but they are recommended when social distancing is not possible. Masks are required for all indoor public events.

Attendees can reserve homecoming T-shirts and view the homecoming schedule at alumni.utm.edu/homecoming (https://alumni.utm.edu/s/1341/utm/19/interior.aspx?sid=1341&gid=5&pgid=13917). T-shirts range from $15 to $17, and shipping is available.
The 2021 homecoming theme is “There’s No Place Like Homecoming,” and various campus organizations will “follow the yellow brick road” during Quad City and other homecoming events.

Traditional homecoming events include rope pull at 4 p.m. daily with championships beginning at 3:30 p.m., Oct. 8; lip sync at 7 p.m., Oct. 5; the pyramid competition and pep rally at 7 p.m., Oct. 8; and the National Pan-Hellenic Council step show at 7 p.m., Oct. 9.

The annual University Choirs’ Dessert Evening will also be held at 7 p.m., Oct. 9, outside at the City of Martin Public Library. Admission is free and desserts will be available to purchase in the courtyard. Contact the Department of Music at 731-881-7402 for more information.

The Blaylock Inspirational Oracle will have a groundbreaking ceremony at 11:30 a.m., Oct. 9, on the lawn between Clement Hall and the Boling University Center. This space is named in honor of Dr. Paul D. Blaylock (’68). "The Blaylock Inspirational Oracle is a multi-purpose building that is designed for use by the campus and community for various activities. It is designed as an open-air Greek Parthenon that is home to the greatest and wisest philosophers waiting to inspire students and anyone else who visits. Some of the expected uses include a reflection area for students and alumni, an outdoor classroom and a meeting space. It will include a magnificent fountain and a large plaza to host various activities," said Dr. Charley Deal, vice chancellor for University Advancement.

Saturday, Oct. 9, is the primary day for homecoming activities and includes the Letterwinner’s Breakfast and Athletics Hall of Fame inductions, and the Chancellor’s Brunch and Alumni Awards Program (both by invitation only) prior to the opening of Quad City at 10:30 a.m. The Skyhawk football team will take its traditional “Hawk Walk” through the festival at 11 a.m. Homecoming week will end with brunch from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Oct. 10, in the Skyhawk Dining Hall.

A complete schedule of events is available at alumni.utm.edu/homecoming (https://alumni.utm.edu/s/1341/utm/19/interior.aspx?sid=1341&gid=5&pgid=13917). For more information about UT Martin homecoming activities, contact Jackie Johnson, assistant vice chancellor of alumni relations and annual giving, at 731-881-7610 or jjohn253@utm.edu (mailto:jjohn253@utm.edu).
How critical race theory law makes it illegal to teach Black history in Tennessee | Opinion

You cannot teach Black History – the history of this country from the perspective of Black people – without calling into question everything we know about ourselves and about our nation.

David Barber Guest Columnist
Published 12:05 p.m. CT Oct. 5, 2021

Story Highlights

David Barber is a professor of history at University of Tennessee at Martin.

On my first day of classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin recently, I told all three of my American History Survey classes that I would be in violation of a newly enacted Tennessee "education" law were I teaching the same history in K-12 schools that I would be teaching them over the course of the coming semester.

This past spring, Governor Bill Lee signed into law the anti-“Critical Race Theory” (CRT) Law. Prior to the appearance of a flurry of anti-CRT bills in more than two dozen states this past spring, few Americans had ever heard of CRT, and outside of law schools, it’s rarely taught, and taught not all in K-12.

Suddenly in this past year, however, in one of those patently Koch-type astroturfings, our conservative media and politicians came all ablaze with the discovery that children were being indoctrinated with this pernicious theory in K-12 schools.

Opinion

What is the real intent behind the law?
In Tennessee, our new law first makes it illegal for any public K-12 school to teach that one race is inherently superior to another; that people are inherently privileged or racist, etc., because of their race or sex; or that people's moral character is determined by race or sex.

While we should be glad that Tennessee is finally outlawing the teaching of racial superiority in any form, our legislature should have passed this part of its legislation 60 years ago, when it would have counted for something.

Right up into the 1960s public schools in Tennessee were segregated. Whites in Tennessee openly and proudly characterized themselves as superior, even as they characterized Black people as lacking in morality, as being lazy, irresponsible, criminal, over-sexed, and as being intellectually inferior.

But now, long after slavery and segregation's overt white supremacy has been closeted, only now does our legislature decide that it must condemn the teaching of racial superiority.

Of course, this legislation's real intent is not to prevent our public schools from "teaching" the superiority of one race over another, since no one is doing that. No, the real object here is to prevent educators from discussing nearly four centuries of white domination over Black people.

**Why should the truth cause people distress?**

The legislature tries to cover this up by saying that its new law does not prohibit the "impartial discussion of controversial aspects of history" or "on the historical oppression of a particular group of people based on race, ethnicity, class."

Impartial? Meaning we hear both sides? The side of the slaves and the side of their loving masters? Or the side of the 5,000 and more lynched African Americans and the side of the noble defenders of white women's purity?

Or is "impartial" just the "facts"?
But even here, a teacher dedicated to getting out the truth of this country's history wouldn't be safe. The law also enjoins educators from offering lessons in which an "individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or another form of psychological distress solely because of the individual's race or sex."

Simply telling the truth of what happened – for example, the lynch mob's merciless nature, slow roasting its victims, gouging out eyeballs with hot pokers, cutting off the victim's penis and testicles, slicing open pregnant women's wombs – simply telling that truth should cause a certain amount of distress, should it not?

New CRT law is about erasure, not illumination

With their anti-CRT law our state leaders are desperately attempting to cut off this discussion. Conservative leaders and media in over half the states in the Union have deliberately raised a furor over the little-known doctrine of "Critical Race Theory" only because they fear honestly naming their real target: teaching Black History.

You cannot teach Black History – the history of this country from the perspective of Black people – without calling into question everything we know about ourselves and about our nation.

Our Governor signed this legislation on May 25, one year to the day after the murder of George Floyd.

Coincidence to be sure, but one which highlights the real purpose of this legislation. As Princeton University's Keeanga Yamahatta-Taylor has noted, the anti-CRT frenzy is really about undermining the tremendous social movement of Black and white, which emerged following George Floyd's death; and most especially, undermining the understanding that rose with that movement: that institutional racism, systemic white supremacy, still structures American society and still tells us who we are.

David Barber is a professor of history at University of Tennessee at Martin.
SIGNING UP FOR LIBRARY CARDS — Martin Public Library staff members Jessie Newsome (left), technology coordinator, and Jenny Claiborne, youth and children’s librarian, encouraged all who came by their display table to apply for a new library card. Among the many UTM students, staff, and many community members present for the Paul Meek Library open house event held Sept. 23, was the beloved and enthusiastic Captain Skyhawk, who it has been reported, listed his address on the application as “Nest.” Others representing Martin Public Library at this event, which highlighted the collections, services, and spaces of the UTM Paul Meek Library, were Board of Trustee members Lynn Alexander and Jim Clark.

HOLDERS OF NEW LIBRARY CARDS — Captain Skyhawk and UTM Chancellor Keith Carver display their new Martin Public Library cards. Library tours introduced visitors to departments around the building, and numerous prizes were given. Public Safety Chief Monte Belew was also on hand with Morton, the service dog. Staff and board members of Martin Public Library welcomed the opportunity to partner with the Paul Meek Library for this special open house event.

‘BACK AND FORTH’ ART EXHIBITION — Vantage Coffee Roasters in downtown Martin will be hosting a pop-up exhibition of artwork by Isaiah Kennedy, a UT Martin senior visual arts student, in coordination with the Art 450 Professional Practices seminar called “Back and Forth.” The exhibition will be held Oct. 14 from 5-8 p.m. at 129 B Neal St. on the patio at Vantage. The show will consist of artworks centered around the multifaceted idea of conflict. There will also be live music performed by David Carithers from 5-7 p.m. The goal of the exhibition is to foster an understanding for the mutual benefits of supporting a healthy art community. A rain date will be Oct. 21 at the same time. For more information contact Isaiah Kennedy at johilenn@ut.tmmu.edu.
Sixteen-year-old violinist to perform at UT Martin

Iris Shepherd, a 16-year-old violin prodigy from Henry, will present her northwest Tennessee concert debut Monday, Oct. 11, at 7:30 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital, Fine Arts Building at The University of Tennessee at Martin. She will be performing a challenging repertoire that ranges from Bach to Paganini and Sebastian, with a little bluegrass thrown in for good measure. A student of Cornelia Heard at Vanderbilt University, she is a recipient of the Myra Jackson Blair Scholarship. Shepherd made her solo orchestral debut with the Georgia Philharmonic at age 12 and has since soloed with the Fairbanks Alaska Symphony Orchestra and the Curb Youth Symphony. Most recently, she was chosen to perform on the NPR nationally syndicated radio program “From the Top,” in addition to receiving the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Scholarship.

Iris is the 2021 Music Teachers National Association winner in the senior strings category for 15-18 year old musicians. A three-time MTNA national finalist, she has won the Tennessee Division and Southern Division three consecutive years. Earlier in 2021, she won first prize in the Heart Out Piano and Strings Competition sponsored by the Miami Symphony. Previously, Iris won the Curb Youth Symphony Concerto Competition, the Tennessee American Strings Teachers’ Association (TNASTA) Competition, the Delta Symphony Concerto Competition and is a two-time prize winner in the Hilton Head Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition. In 2020, Iris performed four solo recitals in the Hilton Head Young Artist Performances Program.

Shepherd has performed in master classes with Stefan Jackiw, Paul Kantor, Brian Lewis, Rachel Barton Pine, Catharine Carroll Lees and Ani Kavafian. Twice she attended the Brian Lewis Young Artist Summer Program, and for the 2020 summer, she was awarded a full fellowship for the Aspen International Musical Festival. She has served as concert master of various community and festival orchestras and is currently a member of Vanderbilt University’s Curb Youth Symphony.

Though her first love is classical music, she won the James G. “Bobo” Driver National Championship fiddle contest in 2017. She made her Grand Ole Opry stage debut during the summer of 2016, performing a featured solo as part of the Fine Arts Summer Academy.

Her collaborative pianist is Dr. Dawson Hull from Memphis. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Piano from the University of Memphis, a Master’s Degree in Piano from Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and a Bachelor’s Degree in Piano and Theory/Composition from Samford University in Birmingham. Dr. Hull is also a conductor and composer and was invited as a guest artist to premiere his compositions at the International Clarinet Association 2019 ClarinetFest and as part of the Jackson Symphony Orchestra’s 2020 Chamber series. He has appeared as soloist with the Paducah Symphony Orchestra, Delta Symphony Orchestra, Jackson Symphony Orchestra, Samford University Orchestra, Southeastern Chamber Orchestra, the Ocmulgee Symphony Orchestra, the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, and the University of Memphis.

Dr. Hull is the pianist for the 80-member Tennessee Men’s Chorale and is the Associate Pastor of Instrumental Worship Arts at Germantown Baptist Church where he leads the Conservatory of Music, orchestra, jazz band and student choir. Previously, he was the Minister of Instrumental Music and Director of the School of the Arts at Second Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Georgia.

The concert is free and open to the public.
SOUTH GIBSON COUNTY BAND WINS CHAMPIONSHIP – The South Gibson County High School Marching Band was named Grand Champion during the University of Tennessee at Martin Aviators Marching Band Invitational, hosted Sept. 26. Dr. John Oelrich, director of bands and professor of music, presented representatives from the South Gibson County High School with the award. The band also won the third-place award for Class AAAA percussion, the first-place award among Class AAAA field commanders, second place in Class AAAA color guard and first place among Class AAAA bands. For more information about UT Martin, visit utm.edu.
Troy student’s artwork featured in exhibition

A pop-up exhibition of artwork by Isaiah Kennedy of Troy — a University of Tennessee at Martin senior visual arts student — will be held at Vantage Coffee Roasters in downtown Martin in coordination with The Art 450 Professional Practices seminar, “Back and Forth.”

The exhibition will be held Oct. 14 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the patio at 129 B Neal St., Martin. It will be open to the public.

The show will consist of artworks centered around the multi-faceted idea of conflict. There will also be live music performed by David Carithers from 5-7 p.m.

The goal of the exhibition is to foster an understanding for the mutual benefits of supporting a healthy art community. A rain date will be Oct. 21 at those same times.

UTM kicks off $175 million RISE campaign

The University of Tennessee at Martin recently kicked off its fourth and most ambitious capital campaign, “RISE,” where university officials announced a goal of $175 million.

Today, public colleges and universities are required to operate at new levels of accountability, efficiency and entrepreneurship,” Dr. Charley Deal, vice chancellor for university advancement, said. “To achieve our aspirations, we know we must RISE to the challenge of becoming more innovative and consistently seek to strengthen partnerships with alumni, friends, businesses and other organizations.”

UT Martin recently completed the “Prepare for Takeoff” five-year strategic plan which was instrumental in the planning of this bold endeavor. This “road map” is the product of a thoughtful, inclusive process involving more than 600 administrators, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and members of surrounding communities.

The “RISE” campaign priorities are aligned with the strategic plan and focus on two of the strategic themes. It is within these themes that UT Martin will seek out partnerships and invite donors to RISE to the challenge throughout this comprehensive campaign effort. Those are Strategic Theme One: Enhance Student Outcomes (Recruit, retain and graduate students who are prepared to be responsible, informed and engaged citizens and leaders); and Strategic Theme Two: Strengthen Our Engagement (Be a model of responsible stewardship while improving the vitality and prosperity of West Tennessee and beyond).

“UT Martin is embarking on its fourth capital campaign in our 121-year history,” said Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor. “This effort essentially serves two purposes: achieving more successful outcomes for graduates and generating more donations to the institution.

“It also creates a virtuous cycle of well-served students becoming giving — of their time and money — alumni and therefore paying it forward to serve future students well. Our mission is the reason our campaign, ‘RISE,’ is important. I believe we, as a university, community and nation, will do just that.”

For additional information about the campaign and funding priorities or to make a gift, visit give.utm.edu; call 731-881-7620; or email development@utm.edu.
UT Martin to Host Fall Preview Day

MARTIN — The University of Tennessee at Martin is hosting an academic preview day from 9-11:30 a.m., Saturday, November 6, in the Boling University Center and the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center respectively for students who are considering attending UT Martin. There is no charge to attend, but families should register online in advance.

Students will be able to hear about the UT Martin experience from a panel of various current students and speak with representatives from the offices of housing, student life, and financial aid and scholarships to get answers to any questions they have.

Students are also offered a tour of the main campus and an opportunity to meet with faculty from their department of interest.

The Boling University Center is located at 11 Wayne Fisher Dr., and the Elam Center is located at 96 Mt. Pella Rd., both of which are located on the main campus. Parking is available in the lots adjacent to the buildings.

To register, go to www.utm.edu/preview. For more information, contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at 731-881-7020 or email admitme@utm.edu.

Student Exhibit to Be Held in Downtown Martin

Vantage Coffee Roasters in downtown Martin is hosting a pop-up exhibition of artwork by Isaiah Kennedy, UT Martin Senior Visual Arts student, in coordination with the Art 450 Professional Practices seminar called “Back and Forth.” The exhibition will be held on October 14 from 5-8 p.m. at 125 B Neal St. on the patio. It will be open to the public from 5-8 p.m.

The show will consist of artworks centered around the multifaceted idea of conflict. There will also be live music performed by David Carithers from 5-7p.m.

The goal of the exhibition is to foster an understanding for the mutual benefits of supporting a healthy art community. A rain date will be October 21 at the same time. For more information, contact Isaiah Kennedy by email at Jokenn@ut.utm.edu.

Portions of a featured piece in “Back and Forth” by Isaiah Kennedy.

WestTeach Program Announces Class of 2021

MARTIN (September 20) — The University of Tennessee at Martin WestTeach Program has announced its class of 2021 that includes educational leaders who represent 16 West Tennessee school districts. WestTeach is an extension of the WestStar Leadership Program, whose mission is to identify, encourage and equip community-minded people who want to become involved in West Tennessee’s economic success and are willing to accept leadership roles.

Among those graduates are Kandace Jackson, transition case manager for Weakley County Schools, and JB Suiter, 10th grade geometry and personal finance teacher at Union City High School.

Class members attend sessions throughout the fall semester to learn more about West Tennessee’s economic needs and opportunities and meet with regional industry and community leaders. Educators will also meet with community child resource agents to greater understand what their students might experience outside of the classroom. Members also become part of a growing network of educators and community leaders dedicated to serving the region.

For more information about the WestTeach Program, contact Virginia Grimes, assistant director, at 731-881-7298.
Voter Registration Drives Held at Local High Schools

BY DAVID FISHER

david@dresdenenterprise.com

WEAKLEY COUNTY (September 30) — The Weakley County Election Commission is supporting efforts to increase voter turnout in the 2022 Election.

An important part of adding new names to the list of qualified voters in Weakley County has involved hosting voter registration classes at area high schools, to explain the voting process and to assist those students who are at least 18 years of age or older, to register to vote in upcoming elections.

During September, which is National Voter Registration Month, registration drives were held at all county high schools, as well as at UT Martin.

Weakley County Administrator of Elections Alex Britt, who has spearheaded the registration drive, visited Dresden, Greenfield, Gleason and Westview high schools.

On Tuesday, September 21, Britt held a Voter Registration Class at Greenfield School, where 17 students completed the necessary paperwork to cast their ballots in the 2022 midterm elections.

On Thursday, September 23, a total of 40 Dresden High School students lined up to register to vote.

On Monday, September 27, 16 students at Gleason High School registered to vote in the upcoming 2022 elections.

Britt said, "We visited Westview High School Thursday and helped 67 students get registered to vote. That means 140 Weakley County Schools students got registered during National Voter Registration Month! #GoVoteTN #GoVoteweakley."

Britt also participated in TN Voter Registration Tailgate events at the University of Tennessee Martin Football games. Those participating in the voter registration drive include: the University of Tennessee at Martin, UT Martin Athletics, UT Martin Student Government Association, Weakley County Election Commission, Obion County Election Commission and others who worked together to help students and fans register to vote.

These voter registration tailgates are promoted by the Secretary of State's office and have the goal of holding a voter registration drive during the tailgate before a home game at each school.

"Like most Tennesseans, we love college football and the excitement of game day," said Secretary of State Tre Hargett. "These Voter Registration Tailgates are the perfect opportunity for us to show students and fans how easy it is to register to vote in Tennessee so that they can get in the game and make their voice heard on Election Day."

The Voter Registration Tailgates kicked off on Saturday, September 11, at Tennessee Tech University, and the University of Tennessee at Martin.

At each tailgate, students and football fans are guided through the registration process in minutes using the Secretary of State's easy, easy and secure online voter registration system, GoVoteTN.gov. They are also able to get their questions about Tennessee's easy voting process answered by local election officials.

The Voter Registration Tailgates are part of the Secretary of State's ongoing efforts to help all eligible Tennesseans register to vote and are one of the many initiatives the office is carrying out in celebration of National Voter Registration Month.

For the latest details about the Voter Registration Tailgates, follow the Secretary of State's social media channels: Twitter: @SecTreHargett, Facebook: Tennessee Secretary of State and Instagram: @tnsecofstate.

For more information about registering to vote in Tennessee, go to GoVoteTN.gov or call the Division of Elections toll-free at 1-877-850-4959.

For more information locally, check out the Weakley County Election Commission website https://tnmap.tn.gov/votertailgates/earlyvoting.aspx?County=Weakley, stop by the Weakley County Election Commission, located at 135 South Poplar St. in Dresden; give them a call at 731-364-5564; or email them at elections@weakleycountytn.gov. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office is closed one hour for lunch.
Violinist Prodigy to Perform at UT Martin

MARTIN— Iris Shepherd, the 16-year-old violin prodigy from Henry, will present her Northwest Tennessee concert debut on Monday, October 11, at 7:30 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital Hall in the Fine Arts Building of The University of Tennessee at Martin.

She will be performing a variety of challenging repertoire from Bach, Paganini, and Sibelius, with a little bluegrass thrown in for good measure.

A student of Cornella Heard at Vanderbilt University, Shepherd made her solo orchestral debut with the Georgia Philharmonic at age 12 and has since soloed with the Fairbanks Alaska Symphony Orchestra and the Vanderbilt Curb Youth Symphony. Most recently, she was chosen to perform on NPR’s nationally-syndicated radio program “From the Top.”

Shepherd is the 2021 MTNA national winner in senior strings. She has won the Miami Symphony’s Heart Out Piano and Strings Competition, the Curb Youth Symphony Concerto Competition, the Tennessee American Strings Teachers’ Association Competition, the Delta Symphony Concerto Competition, and is a two-time prize winner in the Hilton Head Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition.

Though her first love is classical music, she made her Grand Ole Opry stage debut during the summer of 2016, performing a featured solo as part of the Fine Arts Summer Academy and won the James G. “Bobo” Driver National Championship fiddle contest in 2017.

Her collaborative pianist is Dr. Dawson Hull from Memphis. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Memphis, a Master’s degree from Peabody Conservatory, and a Bachelor’s Degree from Samford University. He has appeared as soloist with the Paducah Symphony Orchestra, Delta Symphony Orchestra, Jackson (TN) Symphony Orchestra, Samford University Orchestra, Southeastern Chamber Orchestra, the Ocmulgee Symphony Orchestra, the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, and the University of Memphis.

Dr. Hull is the pianist for the 80-member Tennessee Men’s Chorale and is the Associate Pastor of Instrumental Worship Arts at Germantown Baptist Church.

The concert is free and open to the public.
Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Belle Fowler, of Gleason, plans to study mass media and strategic communication and is pictured with her mother, Karen Fowler ('92, '01, '15).

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Will Tuck, of Martin, plans to study agricultural business and is pictured with his parents, Jamie ('94) and Amy Tuck.

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Maddox Martin, of Dresden, plans to study mass media and strategic communication and is pictured with her parents, Mark ('05) and Alisha ('02, '06) Melton.

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Bethany Collins, of Dresden, plans to study mass media and strategic communication and is pictured with her parents, Benita Evans ('12, '21) and Brett Collins.
Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Jacob Cochran, of Gleason, plans to study computer science and is pictured with his mother, Stephanie Hopper ('05).

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Serenity Harrell, of Martin, plans to study management and is pictured with her mother, Persempathy Harrell ('06).

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Erin Mallory, of Dresden, plans to study agricultural education and is pictured with her mother, Donna Mallory ('89).

Several Weakley County families attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni, August 19. Luke Jackson, of Martin, plans to study finance and is pictured with his mother, Becky Jackson.
Westview ag students get hands-on learning at UTM labs

Dr. Jason Roberts, Program Director for UTM's Veterinary Technology, welcomed Westview students for the first of three presentations on the UTM campus. Vet technician instructors Amanda Waldron (holding dog Chico), Zach Morphis, and Kelly Garner (in blue scrubs) gave background on small animal surgery, restraint, venipuncture, and ultrasound. Westview students benefiting from the hands-on learning were (left to right after Roberts) Raymond Callahan, Joshua Dyer, Jenna Neblett, Aspyn Williams, Heidi Chapman, Elijah Boyd, Brice Cook, Jackson Abel, Garner Anderson, Cade Spaulding, and Carson Dinning with ag teacher David Hochreiter.

(by Karen Campbell, Weakley County Schools Communication Director)

Neighbors helping neighbors is a rural tradition that has forged communities. Agricultural students in Weakley County are benefiting from such a mindset as ties to the University of Tennessee at Martin are providing hands-on learning and, in dual enrollment cases, college credit.

Jason Roberts, DVM, Professor of Animal Science and UTM's Program Director for Veterinary Technology, launched the first of the school's post-pandemic-lockdown presentations to high schools at the Veterinary Science building on Monday. Westview students in David Hochreiter's animal science class served as the inaugural group.
Sixteen-year-old violinist to perform at UTM

Iris Shepherd, a 16-year-old violin prodigy from Henry, will present her northwest Tennessee concert debut on Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the Blankenship Recital of the Fine Arts Building on the University of Tennessee at Martin campus.

She will be performing a challenging repertoire that ranges from Bach to Paganini and Sebuelius, with a little bluegrass thrown in for good measure. A student of Cornelia Heard at Vanderbilt University, she is a recipient of the Myra Jackson Blair Scholarship. Miss Shepherd made her solo orchestral debut with the Georgia Philharmonic at age 12 and has since soloed with the Fairbanks Alaska Symphony Orchestra and the Curb Youth Symphony. Most recently, she was chosen to perform on the NPR "This is our part, looking forward to future collaborations."

Dr. Hull is the pianist for the 80-member Tennessee Men's Chorale and is the associate pastor of instrumental worship arts at Germantown Baptist Church, where he leads the Conservatory of Music, orchestra, jazz band and student choir. Previously, he was the minister of instrumental music and director of the School of the Arts at Second Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Ga.

The concert is free and open to the public.
UT President Randy Boyd visited West Tennessee on Friday, Oct. 1. His first stop of the day was at Benton County’s UT/TSU Extension Office Service where he was greeted by Extension staff and public officials including Judge John Whitworth, County Mayor Randy Shannon, and State Rep. Bruce Griffey.

During his visit, Boyd talked about the importance of Extension offices throughout Tennessee, the role they play in serving the needs of agriculture in all parts of the state, and the value they offer communities through the many services they provide.

After the Camden stop, Boyd and staff proceeded to Decatur County to visit the UT/M Parsons Center.

UT/TSU Extension serves the citizens of Benton County with educational programs in the areas of agriculture, family and consumer sciences, community resource development, and 4-H youth development programs. Extension is an outreach branch of the UT Institute of Agriculture. For more information, call 731-584-4601.
“BE THE MATCH” DRIVE FOR MARROW DONOR REGISTRY AT UTM

October 8, 2021 @ 8:21 am Shannon McFarlin

MARTIN, Tenn. – The University of Tennessee at Martin will host a registration drive for Be the Match 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Oct. 11-14, in the Boling University Center. Be the Match is a non-profit that manages the National Marrow Donor Registry, which is the most diverse bone marrow registry worldwide, and matches potential donors to patients in need of a transplant.

Participants will make an account with Be the Match at the drive and swab their cheeks. From there, the DNA collected from the swab is entered into the registry to potentially be matched with a patient. Those who register will only be contacted for donation if their bone marrow matches that of a patient in need.

“It’s free and easy to do, but it means the world to families who need a match for a loved one,” Dr. Kelle Alden, assistant professor of English, director of the Writing Center, and Be the Match affiliate. “I hope students will come by just to learn more about bone marrow donation because we don’t hear about it as often, yet it has impacted the lives of many people on our campus.”

For more information, contact Alden at kalden@utm.edu.
Students learn about UTM vet technology

By Karen Campbell
WC Schools

Neighbors helping neighbors is a rural tradition that has forged communities. Agricultural students in Weakley County are, benefiting from such a mindset as ties to the University of Tennessee at Martin are providing hands-on learning and, in dual enrollment cases, college credit.

Jason Roberts, DVM, professor of Animal Science and UTM's program director for Veterinary Technology, launched the first of the school's post-pandemic-lockdown presentations to high schools at the Veterinary Science building. Westview students in David Hochreiter's animal science class served as the inaugural group.

A brief bus ride landed the 11 Westview students – three of whom are already considering careers as vets – at the lab where vet technician instructors Amanda Waldron, Zach Morphis, and Kelly Garner gave background on small animal surgery, restraint, venipuncture and ultrasound. Rotating from room to room, groups of three and four were offered opportunities such as using ultrasound to find a vein, drawing blood and using an EKG device. Since the “patients” were simulators – except for Garner’s boxer Chico who willingly served up his belly for the pats and show and tell of the EKG – no animals were harmed in the making of the learning event.

Roberts explains that the experiences are set up to allow students from West Tennessee high schools to take advantage of at least three vet science offerings. In the coming weeks, Westview will return for a second visit to work with large animals – cattle and horses. The third trip will be centered in the diagnostic lab where they will look at specimens and observe a necropsy.

“This is our way to reach students in the area taking agricultural classes and let them know we’d love for them to come to UTM and study with us,” he said.

“Dual enrollment and opportunities like what these students are experiencing today are invaluable,” said Hochreiter who is new to Weakley County Schools this year. “In my previous positions, I longed to have this kind of relationship with UTM and am looking forward to future collaborations.”

HANDS-ON LEARNING — Dr. Jason Roberts (left), program director for UTM's Veterinary Technology, welcomed Westview students for the first of three presentations on the UTM campus. Vet technician instructors Amanda Waldron (holding dog Chico), Zach Morphis and Kelly Garner (in blue scrubs) gave background on small animal surgery, restraint, venipuncture and ultrasound. Westview students benefiting from the hands-on learning were (left to right after Roberts) Raymond Callahan, Joshua Dyer, Jenna Neblett, Aspyn Williams, Heidi Chapman, Elijah Boyd, Brice Cook, Jackson Abel, Garner Anderson, Cade Spaulding, and Carson Dinning with ag teacher David Hochreiter.
MARTIN (October 9) — Saturday evening, McKenzie Rebel alumnus Derek Carr was inducted in the 2021 Athletic Hall of Fame Class at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Carr was the starting quarterback for the Rebels in 2006 and 2007 and helped lead the Rebels to the State Championship Game in 2007. During his two years as starter, Carr threw for 4572 yards and 45 touchdowns.

At UTM, Carr set a single-game record for passing efficiency in 2012. He holds UTM single season records for passing yards, and touchdowns. Carr ranks in the top 5 in the Ohio Valley Conference history in pass completions, touchdowns, yards, and total offense.

Carr is an assistant coach and teacher at Milan.
BAND WINS CHAMPIONSHIP - The South Gibson County High School Marching Band was named Grand Champion during the University of Tennessee at Martin Aviators Marching Band Invitational, hosted Sept. 26. Dr. John Oelrich, director of bands and professor of music, presented representatives from the South Gibson County High School with the award. The band also won the third-place award for Class AAAAA percussion, the first-place award among Class AAAAA field commanders, second place in Class AAAAA color guard and first place among Class AAAAA bands. For more information about UT Martin, visit utm.edu.
REIGN ENDS — Abby Bruff, a Union City High School and University of Tennessee at Martin graduate now studying occupational therapy at Arkansas State, and Hayden Love prepare to crown the new UTM homecoming queen and king during halftime ceremonies Saturday at UT Martin. Miss Bruff and Love were crowned as the UTM football homecoming queen and king in 2019. Mackenzie McCommon and Jacob Williams won those honors, respectively, for 2021. It was a good celebration all around as the Skyhawks capped the week's festivities with a 48-24 win over Murray State.
AREA STUDENTS’ ART WORK IN UTM JURIED EXHIBITION

October 18, 2021 @ 9:09 am Shannon McFarlin

MARTIN, Tenn. – The Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at the University of Tennessee at Martin is hosting Bellwethers 2021, a juried exhibition of artwork by students from colleges throughout the Southeastern United States. The exhibition will be held from Oct. 12 through Nov. 6 at the UT Martin Fine Arts Gallery, located at 103 Fine Arts Building, and will be open to the public daily from 1-5 p.m.

This exhibition is competitive, and the juror for this year’s show was Bill Hickerson, director of the West Tennessee Regional Art Center.

Twelve of the 27 artists selected for the exhibit are from the UT Martin art program and include Miranda Brown, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Alexandra Chapman, of Bartlett; Jordan Dodd, of Lynchburg; Callie Dunlap, of Martin; Brandy Gaul, of South Fulton; Robert Hatcher, of Lebanon; Claria Heslop, of Martin; Stephanie Hopper, of Memphis; Isaiah Kennedy, of Martin; Daphne Lograne, of Rutherford; Matthew Mancusi, of Martin; Julie Mosley, of Dresden; and Dylan Schaefer, of Bradford.

The public is invited to attend free of charge. Masks and social distancing are required.

For more information, contact the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.
Cavin donation to benefit Family and Consumer Sciences students

The University of Tennessee at Martin recently received a gift of $25,000 from Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Dennis D. Cavin to establish the Mary Brann Cavin Family and Consumer Sciences Student Scholarship Endowment and $1,000 for the Mary Brann Cavin Family and Consumer Sciences Student Scholarship in memory of his late wife.

Mary Cavin graduated from UT Martin in 1970 with a degree in home economics and wanted to support the next generation of students who can benefit from the university just as she did.

While attending UT Martin, she reconnected with Dennis and they were married Aug. 31, 1968. The Cavins retired to Hendersonville after Dennis’ 34-year military career. Throughout her career, she worked as a bookkeeper for several construction companies, served as a substitute teacher in Germany and El Paso, Texas, and eventually held the position of budget analyst for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"The department is proud to honor Mrs. Cavin and her family through this scholarship, and we are grateful for Gen. Cavin’s continued support of our programs in Family and Consumer Sciences," said Dr. William Keith Dooley, interim chair and associate professor of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

For more information or to contribute to this scholarship, contact the UT Martin Office of Development at 731-881-7620 or visit the website at give.utm.edu.
Rutherford artist on display at UTM exhibit

MARTIN, Tenn. — The Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at the University of Tennessee at Martin is hosting Bellwethers 2021, a juried exhibition of artwork by students from colleges throughout the Southeastern United States. The exhibition will be held from Oct. 12 through Nov. 6 at the UT Martin Fine Arts Gallery, located at 103 Fine Arts Building, and will be open to the public daily from 1-5 p.m.

This exhibition is competitive, and the juror for this year's show was Bill Hickerson, director of the West Tennessee Regional Art Center.

Twelve of the 27 artists selected for the exhibit are from the UT Martin art program and include Miranda Brown, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Alexandra Chapman, of Bartlett; Jordan Dodd, of Lebanon; Callie Dunlap, of Martin; Brandy Gaul, of South Fulton; Robert Hatcher, of Lebanon; Claria Heslop, of Martin; Stephanie Hopper, of Memphis; Isaiah Kennedy, of Martin; Daphne Lagrone, of Rutherford; Matthew Mancusi, of Martin; Julie Mosley, of Dresden; and Dylan Schaefer, of Bradford.
GROUNDBREAKING HELD — A groundbreaking cer¬
emony was held recently during University of Tennessee
at Martin homecoming for the new Blaylock Inspirational
Oracle. The structure will be named for Dr. Paul Blaylock,
a UT Martin graduate from South Fulton who has worked
more than four decades as both a trauma physician and as
a trial attorney in the Portland, Ore., area. The structure
will be designed as an open-air Greek Parthenon and will
be located near Boling University Center. Some of the
expected uses include as a reflection area for students and
alumni, an outdoor classroom and as a meeting space.

The facility will include a fountain and a large plaza.
Participating in the groundbreaking were (from left) Dr.
Charley Deal, UT Martin vice chancellor for university
advancement; Petra McPhearson, UT Martin senior vice
chancellor for finance and administration; Dr. Keith
Carver, UT Martin chancellor; Blaylock; Dr. Phil Watkins,
UT Martin vice chancellor emeritus of student affairs; and
Dr. Andy Lewter, UT Martin vice chancellor for student
affairs. Watkins was a close friend and mentor to Blaylock
during Dr. Blaylock’s time at UT Martin.
UTM students to attend conference

MARTIN — Thirteen University of Tennessee at Martin agriculture students will attend the 2021 Agriculture Future of America Leaders Conference Nov. 11-14 in Kansas City, Mo. This is the largest number of UT Martin students selected to attend.

The AFA Leaders Conference includes four tracks that provide different personal and professional development skills based on each student’s year in college and past involvement with the conference. Skills include time management, goal setting, cultural competence and team leadership. The conference selects attendees based on their leadership and professional experience and community service.

The students that will attend are listed below:
- Paige Abruzzese, a freshman agriculture major from Hamburg, Pa.;
- Rebecca Glover, a sophomore veterinary science and technology major from Spring Hill;
- Matt Hale, a senior agriculture major from Manchester;
- Thomas Henson, a sophomore agriculture major from Hillsboro;
- Sydney Horton, a junior agriculture major from Tullahoma;
- Avery Lamberson, a freshman agriculture major from Watertown;
- Cassie Lewis, a sophomore agriculture major from Gates;
- Breanna Mills, a freshman agriculture major from Parsons;
- Samantha Peyton, a junior agriculture major from Morrison;
- McKenzie Reagor, a senior agricultural business major from Karnak, Ill.;
- Jordan Stringfield, a freshman veterinary science and technology major from McEwen;
- Sarah Tyler, a freshman agricultural business major from McEwen;
- Felicity Vargo, a freshman agriculture major from Memphis.

For more information about UT Martin’s participation in the AFA Leaders Conference, contact Dr. Ross Pruitt, professor of agricultural economics at rpruitl10@utm.edu.

To learn more about AFA, visit agfuture.org.
Groundbreaking held for Blaylock Inspirational Oracle at UT-Martin

A groundbreaking ceremony was held Oct. 9 during UT Martin Homecoming for the new Blaylock Inspirational Oracle.

The structure will be named for Dr. Paul Blaylock, a UT Martin graduate from South Fulton, who has worked more than four decades as both a trauma physician and as a trial attorney in the Portland, Oregon, area.

The structure will be designed as an open-air Greek Parthenon and will be located near the Boling University Center.

Some of the expected uses include as a reflection area for students and alumni, an outdoor classroom and as a meeting space.

The facility will include a fountain and a large plaza.
WestStar Leadership Program Holds Mini Session in Fayette County

The University of Tennessee at Martin's West-Star Leadership Program highlighted Fayette County during its annual mini-session Oct. 7 at the UT Martin Somerville Center. West-Star alumni gathered in Fayette County for the first time in an annual event designed to feature counties not visited during the leadership program's eight regular class sessions. Thirty-six participants registered for the day-long program that opened with welcoming comments from UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver, Fayette County Mayor Skip Taylor, Somerville Mayor Ronnie Neill and Rossville Mayor Judy Watters, all WestStar graduates.

WestStar graduate and Tennessee State Rep. Ron Gant (R-District 94) was the first speaker and provided an update about the recent Memphis Regional Megasite announcement by Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee. Gant was followed by a Fayette County agriculture panel, presentations about Fayette Academy and Fayette Cares, and a tour of the Somerville Center.

The afternoon program included visits to Fayette County public schools, the National Bird Dog Museum and the Ames Plantation.

The Fayette County Chamber of Commerce provided additional support for the day's activities, and Rep. Gant sponsored the dinner that evening at the Ames Plantation. Kara Tapp, a WestStar graduate and UT Martin Somerville Center director, said discussions about hosting the mini session began in 2018. Fayette County was chosen as a site in 2020, but the pandemic delayed the planned visit until this year.

"The goal of the Fayette County session was to highlight the many different factors that make Fayette County so unique and to show how we've overcome so many obstacles," Tapp said. She added that visiting the center was a key part of the program. "The UTM Somerville Center is so important to the Fayette County community. We were able to showcase not only our beautiful facility but also show that we are able to offer four-year degrees through UT Martin."

Discussions about a possible Fayette County higher education center began in 2004, and UT Martin classes were first offered in 2014 at the Fayette County Career Center. The UT Martin Somerville Center moved in fall 2017 to its permanent home at the former Methodist Fayette Hospital.

Tapp told the mini session audience that 12 students have now earned four-year degrees through the center, which is also an important partner for offering dual-enrollment classes in the area.

Tapp considered the day a success and credited the area's progress to the people of Fayette County. "Everyone in our community works together to make Fayette County a wonderful place to work and live," she said. "We all strive to make a difference."

WestStar is the oldest and largest regional leadership program in Tennessee and is recruiting its 32nd class that will begin in December. Each class is chosen annually by the program's board of trustees, and selection is based on individual leadership achievements and potential to contribute to West Tennessee's development.

Class members are selected from all occupations and levels of community and regional involvement. The class completes eight sessions covering topics including agriculture and transportation, energy and environment, public policy issues, education and tourism. The program has graduated 886 class members since it was established in 1989, and 34 Fayette County residents have completed the program.

Information about the program is available at utm.edu, or call the WestStar Leadership Program at 731-881-7298.
GROUNDBREAKING HELD FOR BLAYLOCK INSPIRATIONAL ORACLE — A groundbreaking ceremony was held Sunday, October 9, during UT Martin Homecoming for the new Blaylock Inspirational Oracle. The structure will be named for Dr. Paul Blaylock, a UT Martin graduate from South Fulton, who has worked more than four decades as both a trauma physician and as a trial attorney in the Portland, Oregon, area. The structure will be designed as an open-air Greek Parthenon and will be located near the Boling University Center. Some of the expected uses include as a reflection area for students and alumni, an outdoor classroom and as a meeting space. The facility will include a fountain and a large plaza. Participating in the groundbreaking were (L to R) Dr. Charley Deal, UT Martin vice chancellor for university advancement; Petra McPheasant, UT Martin senior vice chancellor for finance and administration; Dr. Keith Carver, UT Martin chancellor; Blaylock; Dr. Phil Watkins, UT Martin vice chancellor emeritus of student affairs; and Dr. Andy Lewter, UT Martin vice chancellor for student affairs. Watkins was a close friend and mentor to Blaylock during Dr. Blaylock’s time at UT Martin.

UTM Hosts Bellwethers 2021

MARTIN — The Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at the University of Tennessee at Martin is hosting Bellwethers 2021, a juried exhibition of artwork by students from colleges throughout the Southeastern United States. The exhibition will be held now through November 5 at the UT Martin Fine Arts Gallery, located at 103 Fine Arts Building, and is open to the public daily from 1-5 p.m.

This exhibition is competitive, and the juror for this year’s show was Bill Hickerson, director of the West Tennessee Regional Art Center.

Twelve of the 27 artists selected for the exhibit are from the UT Martin art program and include Miranda Brown, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Alexandra Chapman, of Bartlett; Jordan Dodd, of Lynchburg; Callie Dunlap, of Martin; Brandy Gaul, of South Fulton; Robert Hatcher, of Lebanon; Clarisa Heslop, of Martin; Stephanie Hopper, of Memphis; Isaiah Kennedy, of Martin; Daphne Lagrone, of Rutherford; Matthew Mancusi, of Martin; Julie Mosley, of Dresden; and Dylan Schaefer, of Bradford.

The public is invited to attend free of charge. Masks and social distancing are required.

For more information, contact the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.
UT MARTIN AND NILE UNIVERSITY PARTNER — UT Martin and Nile University officials announced a dual MBA-Executive MBA program agreement October 13, during a Zoom call that linked the universities virtually. Nile University is in Giza City, Sheikh Zayed District, which is about 28 minutes driving distance south of Cairo, Egypt. The agreement allows Nile University students to take UT Martin’s core courses and MBA capstone course, in addition to enrolling for courses at Nile University. Students who successfully complete the curriculum will be awarded the dual degree from UT Martin’s AACSB-accredited program. AACSB is the top business-school accreditation and is achieved by only five percent of the world’s university business programs. “Our university’s reputation will be affected positively, our college’s reputation will be affected positively, and then when the AACSB peer review team comes for accreditation visit around October 2024 ... this will be one of the highlights in our report,” said Dr. Ahmad Tootoonchi about the partnership’s significance. Tootoonchi is UT Martin College of Business and Global Affairs dean. Pictured from the college as Nile University officials join the announcement virtually are (L to R) Dr. Christie Chen, associate professor of management; Dr. Mahmoud Haddad, professor of finance; Jenny Killebrew, MBA Program and Student Services coordinator; and Tootoonchi.
Dr. Jason Roberts, Program Director for UTM’s Veterinary Technology, welcomed Westview students for the first of three presentations on the UTM campus. Vet technician instructors Amanda Waldron (holding dog Chico), Zach Morphis, and Kelly Garner (in blue scrubs) gave background on small animal surgery, restraint, venipuncture, and ultrasound. Westview students benefiting from the hands-on learning were (L to R) after Roberts Raymond Callahan, Joshua Dyer, Jenna Neblett, Aspyn Williams, Heidi Chapman, Elijah Boyd, Brice Cook, Jackson Abel, Garner Anderson, Cade Spaulding, and Carson Dinning with ag teacher David Hochreiter.

Westview Ag Students Get Hands-On Learning at UTM Labs

BY KAREN CAMPBELL
Weakley County Schools Communications Director

MARTIN (October 7) — Neighbors helping neighbors is a rural tradition that has forged communities. Agricultural students in Weakley County are benefiting from such a mindset as ties to the University of Tennessee at Martin are providing hands-on learning and, in dual-enrollment cases, college credit.

Jason Roberts, DVM, Professor of Animal Science and UTM’s Program Director for Veterinary Technology, launched the first of the school’s post-pandemic-lockdown presentations to high schools at the Veterinary Science building on Monday. Westview students in David Hochreiter’s animal science class served as the inaugural group.

A brief bus ride landed the 11 Westview students – three of whom are already considering careers as vets – at the lab where vet technician instructors Amanda Waldron, Zach Morphis, and Kelly Garner gave background on small animal surgery, restraint, venipuncture, and ultrasound. Rotating from room to room, groups of three and four were offered opportunities such as using ultrasound to find a vein, drawing blood, and using an EKG device. Since the “patients” were simulators – except for Garner’s boxer Chico who willingly served up his belly for the pats and show and tell of the EKG – no animals were harmed in the making of the learning event.

Roberts explains that the experiences are set up to allow students from West Tennessee high schools to take advantage of at least three vet science offerings. In the coming weeks, Westview will return for a second visit to work with large animals – cattle and horses. The third trip will be centered in the diagnostic lab where they will look at specimens and observe a necropsy.

“This is our way to reach students in the area taking agricultural classes and let them know we’d love for them to come to UTM and study with us,” he said.

“Dual enrollment and opportunities like what these students are experiencing today are invaluable,” said Hochreiter, who is new to Weakley County Schools this year. “In my previous positions, I longed to have this kind of relationship with UTM and am looking forward to future collaborations.”
Tolene, Hodges Receive Outstanding Employee Awards

MARTIN (October 18) Nathan Tolene and Heather Hodges, both of Martin, received Fall 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during a breakfast reception October 14.

Tolene serves as an information technology system administrator for all five of the UT Martin regional centers. His position requires him to travel to each center regularly, devoting long hours assisting faculty, staff and students. "He embodies servant leadership, and as a result of his vast knowledge of our IT systems and outstanding interpersonal skills, he has built lasting relationships all across the university community and West Tennessee," wrote his coworkers in his nomination letter.

Hodges is the program specialist for the Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communications. She manages the daily operations of the department and helps mentor student employees. "Her dedicated service is a model and inspiration to us all," coworkers wrote in Hodges' nomination package. "She works tirelessly to anticipate and meet the needs of her departmental family."  

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 731-851-7615.
University of Tennessee enforcing vaccine mandate for employees connected to federal contracts

UT President Randy Boyd said it will be up to each campus to determine which employees and locations are subject to the federal mandate.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — The University of Tennessee said it is enforcing a mandate that will require employees who do work connected to federal contracts across the system to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by December 8.

UT President Randy Boyd sent a letter to employees outlining the details of the mandate, saying the university is required to comply with an executive order issued by President Joe Biden in September mandating COVID-19 vaccines for all federal contractors.

Boyd said the system holds more than 1,900 contracts that may fall under the federal mandates, and employees who do work on those contracts or in the same location as those employees will be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

The mandate applies broadly, and the university is "closely reviewing" the order to determine how it applies to all 12,000-plus employees across each of its campuses. At the moment, Boyd said it will be up to each campus to determine which employees and locations are subject to the federal mandate.

UT said employees covered under the mandate will be legally entitled to an accommodation due to a medical condition or religious belief, later clarifying that those accommodations will not include suspending employees without pay.
For context, "accommodations" can mean employees are put on unpaid leave without benefits until the mandate ends or they decide to get vaccinated, which is what recently sparked a legal battle between some employees at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and its federally contracted operator, UT-Battelle, after it announced its vaccine mandate. UT-Battelle is a non-profit limited liability partnership between the University of Tennessee and the Ohio-based Battelle Memorial Institute established two decades ago specifically to manage and operate ORNL for the U.S. Department of Energy.

Employees under the federal mandate will not be given the option private company employees have of being tested for COVID-19 weekly as an alternative to the vaccine requirement. Employees who had a prior COVID-19 infection, as well as employees working remotely, are still required to be vaccinated.

Boyd said in the letter the federal mandate is being challenged in courts, but said the resolution of those cases is uncertain. U.S. Supreme Court justices have declined to block vaccine mandates in several circumstances, including declining an emergency injunction to block a statewide mandate for Maine health care workers on Tuesday.

"In the meantime, I am strongly urging all UT employees who have not been vaccinated to once again consider getting vaccinated," Boyd said. "I recognize that this is a very sensitive topic and that there are a wide variety of strongly held feelings about COVID-19 mitigation measures. We are in uncharted territory, but we are doing everything within our control to thoughtfully consider how best to address this latest federal mandate."

The UT System is comprised of the flagship campus in Knoxville, as well as campuses in Chattanooga, Pulaski and Martin, the Health Science Center in Memphis, the Space Institute in Tullahoma, the statewide Institute of Agriculture, and the Institute for Public Service. UT has a presence in all 95 Tennessee counties.
UT Students Plan To Attend Conference

Thirteen University of Tennessee at Martin agriculture students will attend the 2021 Agriculture Future of America Leaders Conference, November 11th through November 14th, in Kansas City, Miss. This is the largest number of UT Martin students selected to attend.

The AFA Leaders Conference includes four tracks that provide different personal and professional development skills based on each student's year in college and past involvement with the conference. Skills include time management, goal setting, cultural competence and team leadership. The conference selects attendees based on their leadership and professional experience and community service.

Students that plan to attend include Cassie Lewis, a sophomore agriculture major from Gates; Paige Abruzzese, a freshman agriculture major from Hamburg, Pa.; Rebecca Glover, a sophomore veterinary science and technology major from Spring Hill; Matt Hale, a senior agriculture major from Manchester; Thomas Henson, a sophomore agriculture major from Hillsboro; Sydney Horton, a junior agriculture major from Tullahoma; Avery Lamberson, a freshman agriculture major from Watertown; Breanna Mills, a freshman agriculture major from Parsons; Samantha Peyton, a junior agriculture major from Morrison; McKenzie Reagor, a senior agricultural business major from Karnak, Ill.; Jordan Stringfield, a freshman veterinary science and technology major from McEwen; Sarah Tyler, a freshman agricultural business major from McEwen; and Felicity Vargo, a freshman agriculture major from Memphis.

For more information about UT Martin's participation in the AFA Leaders Conference, contact Dr. Ross Pruitt, professor of agricultural economics at rpruit10@utm.edu. To learn more about AFA, visit agfuture.org.
KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The University of Tennessee system has increased the amount a family can earn and still have a student qualify for a UT Promise scholarship, the system announced Thursday.

**UT Promise** is a last-dollar scholarship that guarantees free tuition and fees after other financial aid is received. It is available to undergraduate Tennessee residents enrolling at UT campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Martin, Memphis or Pulaski. Beginning in August 2022, students with a family income under $60,000 who meet academic criteria will be eligible. The previous household income limit was $50,000.

Since the scholarship was created in 2019, more than 1,800 students have enrolled at a UT campus tuition-free. In addition to money, the scholarship program matches students with mentors to help ensure their success.
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Since the scholarship was created in 2019, more than 1,800 students have enrolled at a UT campus tuition-free. In addition to money, the scholarship program matches students with mentors to help ensure their success.
The University Trio will present a special program of music by women composers.

The centerpiece of the program is "Equality Now," a chant by Vermont composer Gwyneth Walker. Melanie Hollis, lecturer in music at Belmont University, will serve as the narrator of "Equality Now." The program also includes works by Australian composer Maria Grenfell, "Poems of the Scottish Play," written for trio and narrator by Vermont composer Gwyneth Walker. Melanie Hollis will narrate the works.

The performance is on Thursday evening, Oct. 26, at 7:30 p.m. in McQuiddy Recital Hall. Tickets are $10 and are available at the door or online at www.utm.edu/music.

The program will feature works by women composers, including Dr. Elaine Harriet Fulton, composer and pianist at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The program will also include works by Dr. Christa Frey, adjunct professor of music at Belmont University, and Dr. Gwyneth Walker, professor of music at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The performance is sponsored by the Women's Studies Program and the Department of Music.

For more information, contact the Department of Music at 731-881-7400.
Chi Omega concert scheduled to benefit Make-A-Wish Foundation

An exciting live concert featuring Reagan Strange will take place at Discovery Park of America Saturday, Nov. 13. The concert has been planned by the UTM campus chapter of Chi Omega, and all proceeds will be donated to Make-A-Wish Foundation. The money will be used in West Tennessee to fulfill wishes for local wish kids. When wishes come true, lives are changed forever!

Reagan Strange, a Northwest Tennessee semi-finalist on The Voice, Season 15 will be featured. Strange, from Collierville, is signed with Republic Records and is currently the reigning Miss Tennessee Teen Volunteer. In addition to Strange, a virtual appearance is planned with Crystal Hayslett, a Martin native, who is an actress best known for Tyler Perry’s ‘Sistas.’ Also, making an appearance is Matt Beatty, a Dresden native who currently plays Leftfielder and First Baseman for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Other guest appearances are to be announced. This event promises to be an entertaining and fun evening when Paige Dennis, owner of Joann’s, the largest formal wear store in West TN, located in Union City, emcees the festivities at Discovery Park of America.

Every 20 minutes a child is diagnosed with a critical illness. Make-A-Wish Foundation grants 15 wishes a day from a list of children who have been referred on their website. Make-A-Wish is truly a worthy organization. Chi Omega has chosen it as their philanthropy, and the 120 members of the UTM chapter work exceptionally hard to provide support and funds for Make-A-Wish.

Scan the QR code to be taken to the Eventbrite page to purchase tickets.
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021

RECEIVE MEMPLOYEE AWARD — Nathan Tolene and Heather Hodges, both of Martin, received the Fall 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the Fall Clerical and Support Staff Coffee Oct. 14. They are pictured with UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver.

Tolene and Hodges receive Outstanding Employee Award

Nathan Tolene and Heather Hodges, both of Martin, received Fall 2021 Outstanding Employee Awards from the University of Tennessee at Martin during a breakfast reception Oct. 14.

Tolene serves as an information technology system administrator for all five of the UT Martin regional centers. His position requires him to travel to each center regularly, devoting long hours assisting faculty, staff and students. “He embodies servant leadership, and as a result of his vast knowledge of our IT systems and outstanding interpersonal skills, he has built lasting relationships all across the university community and West Tennessee,” wrote his co-workers in his nomination letter.

Hodges is the program specialist for the Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communications. She manages the daily operations of the department and helps mentor student employees. “Her dedicated service is a model and inspiration to us all,” co-workers wrote in Hodges’ nomination package. “She works tirelessly to anticipate and meet the needs of her departmental family.”

UTM Outstanding Employee Awards are given to one exempt and one nonexempt employee each semester. Recipients are nominated by their co-workers and chosen by a selection committee.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615.
UTM to send 13 students to AFA leaders conference

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The AFA Leaders Conference includes four tracks that provide different personal and professional development skills based on each student's year in college and past involvement with the conference. Skills include time management, goal setting, cultural competence and team leadership. The conference selects attendees based on their leadership and professional experience and community service.

The students that will attend are listed below.
- Paige Abruzzese, a freshman agriculture major from Hamburg, Pennsylvania;
- Rebecca Glover, a sophomore veterinary science and technology major from Spring Hill;
- Matt Hale, a senior agriculture major from Manchester;
- Thomas Henson, a sophomore agriculture major from Hillsboro;
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- Avery Lamberson, a freshman agriculture major from Watertown;
- Cassie Lewis, a sophomore agriculture major from Gates;
- Breanna Mills, a freshman agriculture major from Parsons;
- Samantha Peyton, a junior agriculture major from Morrison;
- McKenzie Reagor, a senior agricultural business major from Karnak, Illinois;
- Jordan Stringfield, a freshman veterinary science and technology major from McEwen;
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- Felicity Vargo, a freshman agriculture major from Memphis.

For more information about UT Martin's participation in the AFA Leaders Conference, contact Dr. Ross Pruitt, professor of agricultural economics at rpruitt01@utm.edu.

To learn more about AFA, visit agfuture.org.
Bradford artist on exhibit at UTM

The Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at the University of Tennessee at Martin is hosting Bellwethers 2021, a juried exhibition of artwork by students from colleges throughout the Southeastern United States.

The exhibition will be held from October 12 through November 6 at the UT Martin Fine Arts Gallery, located at 103 Fine Arts Building, and will be open to the public daily from 1-5 p.m.

This exhibition is competitive, and the juror for this year's show was Bill Hickerson, director of the West Tennessee Regional Art Center.

Twelve of the 27 artists selected for the exhibit are from the UT Martin art program and include Miranda Brown, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Alexandra Chapman, of Bartlett; Jordan Dodd, of Lincnhburg; Callie Dunlap, of Martin; Brandy Gaul, of South Fulton; Robert Hatcher, of Lebanon; Clarisa Heslop, of Martin; Stephanie Hopper, of Memphis; Isaiah Kennedy, of Martin; Daphne Lagrone, of Rutherford; Matthew Mancusi, of Martin; Julie Mosley, of Dresden; and Dylan Schaefer, of Bradford.

The public is invited to attend free of charge. Masks and social distancing are required.

For more information, contact the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 731-881-7400.
FAMILY AFFAIR — A number of families from Obion County recently attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon, an event for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni. Among them were Carol Ullrich (left) of Union City, who plans to study electrical engineering, and her grandmother, Sara Sieber, a 1969 graduate of UT Martin.

FAMILY LEGACY — Incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of University of Tennessee at Martin alumni attended the college's annual Legacy Luncheon recently. Several Obion County families were among them, including Hannah Williams (center) of Union City, who plans to study music, and her parents, Shane and Susan (1985 graduate) Williams.
LOCAL LEGACY — The University of Tennessee at Martin recently hosted its annual Legacy Luncheon for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni. Several Obion County families attended. Among them were Garrett Slaughter (left) of South Fulton, who plans to study agricultural business, and his father, Jimmy Slaughter, a 1996 graduate of UT Martin.
LEGACY LUNCHEON — Among the several families from Obion County who attended the University of Tennessee at Martin's annual Legacy Luncheon recently were Jaden Knott (center) of South Fulton, who plans to study sports business, and his parents, Eric (1995 graduate) and Jamie (2011 graduate) Knott. The event was for incoming freshmen who are the children and grandchildren of university alumni.

The University Trio to perform

The University Trio will present a special program of music by women composers on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Blankenship Recital Hall on the University of Tennessee at Martin campus.

Members of the trio are pianist Dr. Elaine Harriss, UTM professor of music; flutist Dr. Elizabeth Darling, UTM adjunct professor of music; and clarinetist Dr. Christa Frey, adjunct professor of music at Bethel University.

The centerpiece of the program is “Equality Now” for trio and narrator by Vermont composer Gwyneth Walker. Melanie Hollis, lecturer of visual and theater arts, will serve as the narrator.

This lively work is a celebration of the first Women's Rights Convention held in Seneca Falls, N.Y., in 1848. The six-movement work includes readings from suffragists' writings and the Declaration of Sentiments that was written for the Seneca Falls convention.

Additional works on the program are “Poems of a Bright Moon” by Australian composer Maria Grenfell, “Trio” by English composer Elizabeth Poston and “Dash” and “Wedding Hymn” by the American composer Jennifer Higdon, winner of the Pulitzer Prize in music.

There is no admission charge and the public is invited to attend.
Former Tennessee State Senator Roy Herron will hold a student discussion, and book signing, next week at UT-Martin.

On Tuesday at 5:00 at Campbell Auditorium, Herron will speak with students about his new book titled "Faith in Politics: Southern Political Battles Past and Present".

Following the presentation, the former Dresden Senator will then hold a book signing at 6:30 at the Paul Meek Library.

The new book is a selection of writings over four decades as a legislator, attorney, teacher and Methodist minister.

Herron writes of how faith and politics are not mutually exclusive, as well as a belief that faith and spirituality should affect decision making and advocacy in public life.

Herron was a Democratic State Representative for the 76th District for ten years, followed by a term of 16 years as the 24th District State Senator.
Chi Omega event to raise funds for Make-A-Wish Foundation

An exciting live concert featuring Reagan Strange will take place at Discovery Park of America on Nov. 13 from 7-9:30 p.m.

The concert has been planned by the University of Tennessee at Martin campus chapter of Chi Omega and all proceeds will be donated to Make-A-Wish Foundation. The money will be used in West Tennessee to fulfill wishes for local wish children. When wishes come true, lives are changed forever, a spokesman said.

Miss Strange, a northwest Tennessee semifinalist on The Voice, Season 15, will be featured. She is from Collierville. She is signed with Republic Records and is currently the reigning Miss Tennessee Teen Volunteer. In addition to Miss Strange, a virtual appearance is planned with Crystal Hayslett, a Martin native, who is an actress best known for “Sistas.” Also, making an appearance is Matt Beaty, a Dresden native who currently plays leftfielder and first baseman for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Other guest appearances are to be announced at a later date.

This event promises to be an entertaining and fun evening when Paige Dennis, owner of Joann’s, the largest formal wear store in West Tennessee located in Union City, emcees the festivities at DPA, according to a spokesman.

Every 20 minutes a child is diagnosed with a critical illness. Make-A-Wish Foundation grants 15 wishes a day from children who have been referred on its website. Make-A-Wish is truly a worthy organization, a spokesman said. Chi Omega has chosen Make-A-Wish as its philanthropy and the 120 members of the UTM chapter work exceptionally hard to provide support and funds for Make-A-Wish.

Scan the QR code to be taken to the Eventbrite page to purchase tickets.

CHI OMEGA

Charity event planned — University of Tennessee at Martin Chi Omega members (from left) Chloe Smith, Caroline Schuster, Meghan Poore and Bentley Davis are among those preparing for the chapter’s upcoming event to raise money for Make-A-Wish Foundation. The event, set for Nov. 13 at Discovery Park of America, includes a concert by “The Voice” (Season 15) semifinalist Reagan Strange, as well as virtual appearances by actress Crystal Hayslett and Los Angeles Dodgers leftfielder and first baseman Matt Beaty. Miss Schuster is chairman of the event.
Teachers from West Teach Program come to Dyer County

Teachers from across West Tennessee came to Dyer County High School last Thursday afternoon to view the school’s STEM and Agriculture program. West Teach is a program through the University of Tennessee at Martin that gathers teachers from around the region who “aspire to stay in the classroom, but want to be a leader in their school.”

These teachers were given a student-led tour which began in Dyer County’s STEM Lab with a presentation from STEM instructor, Taylor Ricks. Ricks said, “We’re preparing our students for jobs and careers that don’t even exist yet. Here in our STEM program we focus on improving our students in the four Cs: Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, and Critical Thinking.” Following the presentation, the teachers walked around and interacted with several students currently in the program.

Afterwards, the teachers were brought to the school’s theatre where FFA officers presented a slideshow highlighting some of the aspects of the program including the live animal barn, green houses, and garden.

Every day principal Laura Brimm always closes her morning announcements with the phrase, “Let’s do our best and be our best,” and this was an opportunity for the school to show off some of the best of Dyer County.