Now is the time to invest in Lamar, invest in our students, invest in the future of Southeast Texas...

A growing number of Lamar University’s friends are enjoying the benefits and satisfaction of planned gifts that help both donor and student.

“With a little planning, a gift to the university can help achieve your financial, philanthropic and estate-planning goals,” said Floyd McSpadden, director of planned giving at Lamar since June 1.

“Properly structured planned gifts can allow you to realize income tax and capital gains tax savings as well as reduce your exposure to estate taxes. They can provide lifetime income for you or future benefits for your family. Planned gifts can be much larger than other gifts, so you can leave a legacy that fits your philanthropic goals,” McSpadden said. “These goals can be met through established planned giving strategies.”

Planned giving is a significant part of Investing in The Future: The Campaign for Lamar University. More than $58 million has been raised in the comprehensive campaign. Planned gifts are expected to become an important part of the funds raised toward the campaign’s $100 million goal, said Camille Mouton, vice president for university advancement.

Planned Giving is a complex program of various financial instruments that can be adapted to each donor’s needs and requires consideration and planning in light of the donor’s overall estate plan, McSpadden said.

“With your goals in mind, we can work with you and your professional advisors to find the strategies that work best for you,” McSpadden said. “Just give us a call.”

Floyd F. McSpadden Jr.
Director, Planned Giving, University Advancement
(409) 880-8422 | Floyd.McSpadden@lamar.edu

A member of the state bar since 1973, McSpadden has been board certified in estate planning and probate law since 1994 and was a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas. He is a member of the Real Estate, Probate & Trust Section of the State Bar of Texas.
These are exciting days at Lamar University. We are again anticipating record enrollment, both on campus and online, as we begin the new academic year. The sounds of building continues to ring across the campus, from Provost Umphrey Stadium, where state-of-the-art artificial turf is going down on W.S. “Bud” Leonard Field and the new athletic complex is going up, to the new soccer field complex at the south end of campus. Lining these is Rolfe Christopher Drive, which the city of Beaumont has beautifully updated with an esplanade.

Renovation of the music building continues, and the expansion of Cherry Engineering will begin soon. Changes on campus extend to the relocation of Lamar’s adult studies programs and the Small Business Development Center into spacious accommodations in Beaumont’s Downtown Library.

Lamar’s comprehensive campaign, now totaling more than $88 million, is another way we’re building for the future. Included in that total is $498,000 from this spring’s highly successful LU employee campaign.

The enthusiasm and dedication of Lamar’s people was echoed in the selection of our university by The Chronicle of Higher Education as one of its 2009-2010 Great Colleges to Work For. Lamar was one of 39 colleges nationwide, and the only public college in Texas, named by the Chronicle to an honor roll because of the number of categories in which it was recognized for best practices.

We continue to see strong enrollment in both traditional on-campus programs and in distance education. Lamar’s online courses are growing steadily, with classes filling as quickly as they can be offered. The tremendous growth in LU programs offered online is breathtaking. Distance education. Lamar’s online courses are growing steadily, with classes filling as quickly as

From the President

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Just as exciting is the expansion of Lamar’s online Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree completion program, and dual-enrollment courses offered to high school juniors and seniors statewide. Both programs are ramping up this fall. On campus or online, exciting days are ahead at Lamar University.

With Cardinal Pride,

James M. Simmons
President
Lamar University
Investing in the future

Employee participation in campaign exceeds expectations

Lamar University gained an overwhelming show of support this spring from some of the people who know it best—its employees.

As part of the $100 million Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign, faculty and staff members were asked to participate in the university’s first-ever employee campaign from Feb. 16 to April 3. The seven-week effort drew donations from 827 people, or more than 70 percent of LU’s employees.

“We’re really excited because our campaign consultant told us that employee participation in a first-time campaign like this is generally around 30 percent,” said Janice Trammell, development director and executive director of the Lamar University Foundation. “It opens up all sorts of doors for us. When donors see that everyone who works here loves to work here and wants to give back to the university, it shows that we as employees have confidence in Lamar and they should as well in making that investment in our great university.”

Rather than setting a dollar goal for the employee campaign, the campaign team focused on attracting widespread participation with employees giving at whatever level they could. Collectively, employees gave $498,068.

“We wanted this to be more about building excitement about all the progress and changes that Lamar is undergoing,” Trammell said. “It allowed participation from all areas of the university, no matter what the salary level.”

Leading the effort to garner employee support were a 23-member steering committee chaired by William Holman, assistant dean of the College of Education and Human Development, and 29 team captains representing departments across the university.

Carlyenne Graff, executive assistant in the College of Education and Human Development, was thrilled to receive an invitation to serve on the steering committee.

“It was so exciting to know that he’s loved and respected by the community. They’ve been behind him and encouraged him in every step. To see the community and the university come together as a team is amazing,” she said.

Steve Ford, a groundskeeper in facilities management and steering committee member, urged his coworkers to contribute to help the university and make a positive statement for their department, one of 56 departments to achieve 100 percent participation.

“It’s a major accomplishment how everybody came in and gave what they had. It didn’t matter the size of the gift, but they gave,” said Ford, a Lamar employee for 28 years. “I’m glad I’m a part of it amongst everybody else.”

Sarah Tasa, associate professor in the Mary and John Gray Library and steering committee member, said giving back to Lamar University “just seemed the right thing to do” after years of steady employment with full benefits and regular raises despite hurricanes and economic uncertainties.

“Not everybody has that kind of security that we’ve enjoyed,” said Tasa, who has worked at Lamar for almost 20 years. “Financially, we’re much better off than when I came here, and the campus has just had a facelift. I think, overall, everybody’s been very pleased with the direction the campus has been going in the past several years.”

Norman Bellard, associate vice president for student affairs and a team captain, said achieving 100 percent participation for every department in the division of student affairs was “a rather easy task.”

“It wasn’t so much what I did or I said as it was the type of employees that we have. It didn’t take much persuasion,” Bellard said. “That’s a testament to the type of people we have employed here.”

Bellard, a former LU basketball player who is proud to “ bleed red and white,” said it is a great time to be employed at Lamar thanks to Simmons. “My line about Dr. Simmons is he’s the coach, and he calls the plays, and we just run them. He manages to always call the right play. We’re just following his lead.”

Bellard said. “Okay, we’ve had some growing pains and some other challenges, but we’re up to the challenge, and we’re looking forward to great things to come.”

The Lamar University family celebrated the success of the employee campaign with an April 22 barbecue at the Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum and received a hearty thank-you from Simmons for giving so generously.

“I would never have dreamed we would raise the funds we have,” Simmons said at the event. “We already knew we had the best employees in the country. When I heard the results of the campaign, I was truly overwhelmed. I can’t tell you how proud I am.”
Building a legacy, building a community

by Larry Acker

CHARLES E. “CHUCK” MASON JR. ’72 represents the third generation at the helm of Beaumont-based Mason Contractors, the family business. Begun in 1939 by his grandfather, as one of its first projects this fledgling company undertook building part of the massive seawall at Galveston. During the 1960s, Mason’s father enhanced the infrastructure and improved the safety of residents in Jefferson County by building many of the drainage systems still in use today. With the help of wife Becky (Dickson) ’71, they are now advancing the economic development prospects for the entire Golden Triangle as a leading petrochemical and industrial construction contractor. Mason and his brother Reed ’74 took over operation of the company in the early ’70s with six employees and have since expanded the company to its current staffing level of more than 250 workers, many of whom are family members.

“Oh yes, nepotism is alive and well here,” said Becky, who oversees safety and employee safety and training. “Since she joined the firm, it has won many state and national safety awards along with the Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Business Ethics as a result of her efforts.

Aside from the business, the Beaumont couple has their hands in many community projects. It was Chuck’s science background that sparked his interest in the JASON project, a nonprofit subsidiary of the National Geographic Society. He was one of the founders of the JASON as good providers of educational presentations to their destination is the Cayman Islands where they own a beach home. Unfortunately, that purchase was completed just 10 days before Hurricane Ivan wreaked havoc on the Caribbean island in 2004. Since then, they’ve had a good deal more experience with hurricanes, remodeling and restorations. Hurricane Rita took the roof off the Wilden Road office, and Hurricane Ike leveled their beach house near Bolivar and caused major damage to their Beaumont residence, which is still in the process of being repaired and remodeled.

This year, the Mason family is celebrating 70 years in the construction business in Southeast Texas. Their daughter, Kristin, broke with family tradition, choosing big city life to work as the corporate communications coordinator for the New York Times. Their son, Chad, is now a project manager for Mason Construction, and, if history is any indication, he will play an integral role as the fourth generation takes on day-to-day operations of the business. Whether building economic development in the Golden Triangle, building goodwill in Nicaragua and Haiti or building opportunities for deserving students, the Masons have proven themselves to be builders. From 1939 until today, and well into tomorrow, they are building a legacy and a community.
A committee of the Young Men’s Business League, led by Herman Iles, worked closely with the officials of Lamar College and the school board of South Park, spearheading the task of creating a junior college district.

About 65 people gathered to hear the proposal discussed at an evening meeting of the South Park Civic League in the South Park High School auditorium. There, they heard John Gray, then dean of men at Lamar College, and Herman Iles, president of the South Park Civic League and second vice president of the YMBL, speak in favor of the proposed expansion. Iles, who was also one of seven candidates for membership on the board of trustees, said the college would be “built on a site already owned near its present location,” according to a newspaper clipping from the Herman Iles papers, a special collection of the Lamar University archives. In 1938, the South Park board had purchased a 58-acre tract three blocks east of what was then the Lamar campus. The tract was most unattractive, having been used as a tank farm for oil storage by the Texas Co., but the company was willing to sell it for $18,000.

In an election on Sept. 21, 1940, voters approved the creation of a Lamar Union Junior College District, the issuance of bonds to construct an entirely new college facility, a new tax for support and maintenance and the election of trustees to govern the college.

Iles and his wife, Delma Lea, entertained with a post-election party at their home on Lavaca Street as a compliment to the scores of people who worked for the greater Lamar College bond issue. The 21 months between the election and June 8, 1942, the day classes were held for the first time on the new campus, was a period of significant transition. Iles had been elected to the board of trustees, one of three men who had “been active in promoting the enlarged Lamar college plans since their inception more than two years ago, and a part of the central committee making plans for the election of the project,” according to a clipping from the collection.

By December 1941, the last major construction contract had been awarded, by the end of the spring of 1942, sufficient buildings had been completed for the college to be moved into its new, and present, location. On June 1, 1942, at the college was moving to the new campus, John Gray assumed the presidency. In 1943, the college “graduated 68 in the first class of the greater institutions dedicating the new $1 million plant to the ‘youths of tomorrow who will perpetuate the democratic principles for which our boys are now giving their lives,’” said Judge J.M. Combs, president of the board of trustees and commencement speaker, according to a clipping from the collection.

In December 1946, the Lamar board of trustees decided to ask the Texas Legislature to make Lamar a four-year state college. The board was under no illusion that securing state support would be an easy task, no junior college in Texas had ever changed to state-supported senior college status. In 1947, Iles, then in his second term as a trustee, was elected to head the board. He was honored that year among individuals and organizations for having contributed to the building of Lamar College.

President Gray, Iles and other members of the board, attorney J.B. Morris, area legislators and many other Southeast Texas citizens helped formulate and execute a plan to secure legislative approval. Easily in the legislative session of 1947, a bill to make Lamar a state-supported senior college was introduced in the Texas House by Rep. Jack Brooks, a former Lamar student.
When Grace (Davis) England ’55 began college, women’s career choices were limited—teacher, nurse, secretary, homemaker. Fortunately, becoming a teacher was exactly what she had in mind. England was among the first Lamar students to earn bachelor’s degrees in elementary education. The lessons she learned at Lamar built a strong foundation for a career that has carried her from the elementary classroom to administrative offices to college lecture halls and educational consulting work around the globe. England has offered some phenomenally innovative approaches to education, to teaching that good teachers are out there in deaf education and all areas of education. I think that message needs to be told,” she said. After graduating with high honors from Lamar, England taught at a Port Neches elementary school for six years. When she and her husband, Bill, who also attended Lamar, moved to Dallas, England discovered an area of interest that has stayed with her. A pilot program for children with neurological disorders needed a pilot’s degrees in elementary education. The lessons she learned at Lamar built a strong foundation for a career that has carried her from the elementary classroom to administrative offices to college lecture halls and educational consulting work around the globe. England has offered some phenomenally innovative approaches to education.

The trip to Kansas City her senior year also paid off in another way. When England stepped off the train at her destination, she had a surprise reunion with her brother, Otto Davis ’57, who was stationed as an Army medic at Fort Leavenworth. After completing his Army service, Davis finished his degree at Lamar and became a respected athletic trainer. As executive director of the National Athletic Trainers Association, Davis helped establish state certification requirements for athletic trainers. He worked for Duke University and the Baltimore Colts before spending 24 years with the Philadelphia Eagles. England has established a scholarship in her brother’s memory at Lamar.

For the past 16 years, England has worked to educate a new generation of teachers by serving as a lecturer at University of St. Thomas in Houston. She is currently an adjunct lecturer there and is working as an educational consultant with the Spring Branch school district. She also hopes to work with Lamar’s Department of Deaf Education and Deaf Studies to expand opportunities for the education of interveners to support students who are both deaf and blind.

England enjoys travel, both for professional conferences and personal enrichment. Visiting her adult children at times has meant worldwide travel. Two of her sons are electrical engineers whose job assignments have included locations in Australia, China, Mexico and Algeria. Her third son is a master electrician. Her daughter, a physical therapist who has taught the subject in Houston, Armenia and Vietnam, is also an avid traveler. England is thankful that all four children now live in the Houston area. She and Bill enjoy spending time with them, their eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

HELEN LOU  University Scholar

Earning the University Scholar Award from Lamar University is the crowning achievement of Helen Lou’s career as a scholar and a teacher. The award recognizes Lou’s outstanding contributions to research, teaching, and service, and her leadership in the College of Engineering.

Lou, a native of China, is active in professional organizations, most notably in the establishment and development of the Sustainability Engineering Forum within the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE). She served the forum as chair and will serve as chair in 2010-2011.

Lou’s selection as University Scholar “will, no doubt, set the ‘bar’ for future selections at a very high level,” said Jack Hopper, dean of the College of Engineering and executive scholar-teacher, said Jack Hopper, dean of the College of Engineering and executive scholar-teacher. “She excels in every aspect of the scholar-teacher,” said Hopper. “Her publication record is to be admired and respected,” Hopper said. “Her service to the profession and to Lamar is exemplary for the level of activity and commitment.”

The award includes a $5,000 grant to support future research activities. Lou is engaged in leading-edge work in computing. The capacity to endure

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DreamMakers

Recently, alumni and friends have created more than 10 new scholarship endowments with an eye toward shaping the futures of our students in a positive way. We are grateful for their generous commitments that continue to help Lamar University students conquer the financial hurdles of a college education. Thank you for your vision and your generosity.

Named Scholarship Endowments

DR. WENDELL C. BEAN SCHOLARSHIP IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING | This scholarship was established by Hashem “Hash” Hashemian in honor of his dissertation advisor, Wendell Bean. Hashemian received his doctorate from Lamar in December 2008 and then returned to Knoxville, Tenn., where he is president of a company he co-founded, Analytics and Measurement Services Corp. Bean graduated from Lamar in 1955 with a degree in electrical engineering and mathematics. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Pittsburgh and worked as a senior engineer at the Westinghouse Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory before returning to Lamar in 1967 to serve as chair of the electrical engineering department.

STERLING CRIM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN MATHEMATICS | Sterling Crim, a native of Corsicana, was a lifelong scholar earning six degrees and, after retirement, continuing to study German and Spanish. Crim taught for 43 years at the junior high, high school, junior college and university levels. His last 31 years were at Lamar University, which included two years in Malaysia under an international teaching program. He served his country during World War II in the Philippines. This scholarship for mathematics majors was established by his wife of 53 years, Mary Louise. The Crims had two children, Kathryn and Randy.

DR. IRVING G. DAVISON SCHOLARSHIP IN POLITICAL SCIENCE | Davison served as professor in the political science department at Lamar University from 1951 to 1971 and was department chair from 1960 to 1971. He became the chair of the political science department in 1971 at the University of Texas at Arlington, where he worked until his retire- ment. He still resides in Arlington. He amassed an impressive body of research related to the field of public administration, co-authored Government Teams, a widely used college textbook, and held several federal government positions. This scholarship was established in his honor by former student David J. Beck for political science majors.

DR. OPAL P. DIXON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN EDUCATION | Opal Dixon, a faculty member at Lamar University, was encouraged early on by her husband, John, to go to college. She entered Lamar University in 1989, 15 years after graduating from high school, and graduated with high honors while raising two children. Her degree in education landed her a teaching position with Nelderwood School district. She returned to Lamar and worked on a master’s degree while teaching full time. In 2002, Dixon began work on her doctoral degree and came to work at Lamar University in the College of Education as the director of the student teacher program. After completing her doctorate in 2007, she became a full-time assistant professor. In October of that year, she was diagnosed with cancer and worked full time until Sept. 29, 2008. She died just 12 days later. This interdisciplinary studies scholarship was established in her memory by her husband, her children and her many friends and family.

FIRST FIDELITY RESERVE FUTURE OF AMERICA SCHOLARSHIP | First Fidelity Reserve has established the Future of America Scholarship as an extension of its education and student work initiative programs. The scholarship is designed for all majors who have graduated from high schools in Jefferson, Orange or Hardin counties. First Fidelity Reserve is a Beaufort-based precious metals and rare coins company that is locally owned and operated but serves rare coin collectors nationwide as well as precious metals investors who are seeking portfo-ilio diversification. President and General Manager Jason Whitney, his wife, Jessica, and their family are major contributors to Southeast Texas and are excited to assist Lamar University in building future leaders through this scholarship.

DOROTHY PIERCE (STAFFORD) GEERS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES | Geers was in the first graduating class of Lamar State College of Technology in 1953. She received her bachelor’s degree in home economics and completed a master’s in elementary education in 1979. Geers was an avid volunteer, assisting future teachers through Lamar’s student teacher program and mentor- ing one student who later became a Beaumont school superintendent. This scholarship for family and consumer science majors was established by her husband, Arthur E. Geers, in memory of his wife, who died in October 2007.

FRED HARTMAN AND JOHN BLAIR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP | Fred Hartman and John Blair met in 1971 when Gov. Preston Smith appointed Blair to fill the Gov.-elect Bill Hobby’s unexpired term on the Texas Air Control Board, of which Hartman was already a long-standing member. Their common interests forged a strong and enduring friendship. Hartman began his career as a sportswriter and eventually became the editor and publisher of the Baytown Sun. Blair was a prominent businessman in Humble County as the owner of Kosnute Insurance Agency and engaged in property and timber investment and management. Blair also served on the John Gray Foundation as chairman until his death. During his tenure, the John Gray Institute was created. This scholarship was established in loving memory of Fred Hartman and John Blair by Blair’s daughter, Frances Berthea and her husband, Sam Berthea. The scholarship will benefit a print journalism student who is interning at a newspaper.

KETTY KUBALA SCHOLARSHIP IN NURSING | Ketty Fertitta Kubala graduated from Lamar in 1957 with a bachelor’s degree in medical technology. Immediately after graduation, she married Mark Kubala and supported her family while he was a medical resident. Ketty and Mark have three sons and one daughter. In 1966, Mark established a private neurological surgery practice in Beaumont. Betty is an active community volunteer and activist, having served as president of the Kelly Catholic High School Foundation and as treasurer for Some Other Place, where she is now an honorary board member. She also gives her time to the Julie Rogers “Gift of Life” program and the cancer center at Christus Hospital St. Elizabeth. Betty has survived several medical conditions, and, although these events have altered her life, she continues to enhance the lives of those around her. This scholarship was established in her honor by her husband, Mark.

COACH JOHN PAYTON SCHOLARSHIP | Coach John Payton’s career at Lamar University spans 38 years. He came to Lamar in 1970 as an assistant football and track coach after a 14-year career at the high school level. He was the first African-American coach in any sport at Lamar. Payton’s impact on track relations has been enormous. For many students, Payton was their first coach of another race. His knowledge, skill and preparation, combined with an attitude of love and consideration for all, have made Payton an icon for the Health and Kinesiology Department. Inducted into the Prairie View A&M Athletic Hall of Fame and the Lamar University Cardinal Hall of Honor, he also holds honors in the Prairie View A&M Interscholastic League Hall of Honor, the Southeast Texas Coaches Association Hall of Honor and the State of Texas Distinguished Service Award for basketball officials. In 2005, Payton was inducted into the Texas Black Sport Hall of Fame. This scholarship for health and kinesiology majors was established by students and friends of Payton.

CYNTHIA BOOKER WEST MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN ART | A 1984 graphic design graduate of Lamar University, Cynthia (Booker) West died in 1999 of breast cancer. She was a loving mother and wife to her husband, Roy West Jr. ’83, and her two children, Whitney, a junior at Lamar, and Evan, who entered Lamar in fall 2009. This scholarship was started by her parents, Jimmy ’56 and Merele (Merritt) Booker ’59, husband, Roy, brother and sister-in-law Bryan and Anita Booker; sister and brother-in-law, Sherrie ’81 and Jeff Brandick ’81, and her aunt Maggie Booker Gray. They have all contributed to honor and memorialize Cynthia’s life through this scholarship that will help art majors at Lamar realize their dream of a college education.

Presidential Scholarships

MARIE CONCETTA CLONINGER PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN THEATRE | A native of Beaumont, Concerta graduated from Lamar Junior College in 1938 and was then awarded a scholarship to the Pasadena Playhouse College of Theatre Arts where she graduated cum laude in 1941. Her acting career took her to New York City where she acted in plays and worked at the National Broadcasting Co. while also modeling. When the Beaumont Community Players was recognized in 1947, Concerta directed her first play and met her husband, Morris, when she cast him for one of the roles. In addition to her love of art, she has worked as a legal secretary and is a published author. From Calabria, Italy, to Beaumont, Zoa, U.S.A. details her grandparents emigration from Italy and is fondly referred to as the “Mazzu Bible.” The Cloningers raised one son and three daughters. This scholarship was established by a bequest from her husband, who died in December 2008.

To begin your own scholarship endowment or to add a gift to an existing scholarship, please contact the Lamar University Foundation at (409) 880-2117.
One of the fondest memories in the 39-year career of coach and educator John Payton was the 18-17 win over the top-ranked Baylor Bears in 1981 at Cardinal Stadium. Larry Kennan was the Cardinals’ head coach at the time. Payton would eventually serve as assistant coach for four Cardinal head coaches before hanging up his own coach’s whistle in 1982.

A two-time All-American running back at Prairie View A&M University, Payton still holds the distinction of second all-time leading rusher in school history. He played basketball and ran track for the Panthers and earned All-Academic Athletic Team honors in 1955. The 1952 graduate of Dunbar High School in Livingston earned the bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Prairie View before embarking upon an impressive coaching career.

“I was drafted by the Chicago Bears, but an injury kept me from playing pro football,” he said. “That injury ended my football career. So, I decided to do the next best thing, and that was to coach.”

He began his career at Scott High School in Woodville, where he posted back-to-back state championships in 1957 and 1958, compiling an amazing 77-7 record. After one year as a head coach at Dunbar Junior High School in Beaumont, he spent the next 11 years at Beaumont’s Charlton-Pollard High School as head coach for the basketball and track teams and offensive coordinator for the football program. His basketball teams won a district championship in 1962 and a state championship in 1964. His track squads were successful as well, winning University Interscholastic League district and regional championships.

Payton joined the Lamar University coaching staff in 1970 as the running backs coach, the first black coach in university history, at the urging of then-athletics director J.B. Higgins. He split time between the football and track programs as an assistant coach. During his first year coaching track, the Cardinals won the Southland Conference championship. In his second year as coach, they tied for the conference crown.

“I was a little apprehensive about making the move to coaching in the college ranks,” he confided. “I had never coached white players, and I didn’t know what to expect. But, every year, things just kept getting better as the players began to realize you knew your business and were there to help them succeed.”

After a successful 1981 campaign, head coach Larry Kennan left the Cardinals for the pro ranks, and Payton stepped in during spring workouts as interim head coach. Ken Stephenson was eventually tapped to lead the Cardinals and immediately named Payton his assistant head coach. The 1982 season would be his last year coaching on the gridiron, and, after more than 25 years, he retired from coaching to focus his attention on the classroom. Serving as associate professor in the department of health and kinesiology, Payton has recently been honored by his colleagues with a named endowed scholarship.

“For many students in Southeast Texas who were enrolled at Lamar in the ’70s, he was their first teacher of color, and his impact on race relations at Lamar has been enormous,” said Remaudette Moore, assistant professor in health and kinesiology and a member of the scholarship committee.

“I am very grateful to Coach Payton for allowing me the honor of establishing the scholarship in his name,” said Kathleen Ritchel, associate director for development, assisted in setting up the scholarship fund for the health and kinesiology department. Often, named scholarships take many months or sometimes years to reach the threshold of becoming endowed. But the Coach John Payton Scholarship fund took off like a rocket, with donations pouring in from colleagues, businesses and organizations who had worked with Payton and even his former students. According to Ritchel, most of the donation forms that came into the development office had personal notes of admiration, love and praise for Coach Payton. She said he has been the named endowed status fastest in recent memory.

During his career, Payton has been inducted into numerous halls of fame, including the Prairie View A&M Athletics Hall of Fame, Prairie View A&M Interscholastic League Hall of Fame and the Southeast Texas Coaches Association Hall of Honor. In 2003, he was inducted into the Cardinal Hall of Honor, and, in 2005, he was honored as an inductee into the Texas Black Sports Hall of Fame. He also received the State of Texas Distinguished Service Award for basketball officials.

“I really appreciated the award for officiating, probably more than any other award I’ve received,” he said. “When you’re officiating, you try to be as fair as possible to everyone in all circumstances. This award, to me, is an acknowledgement by my peers of being fair and impartial throughout my many years of officiating. That’s a good feeling.”

His most recent award came in 2008 when he earned the Lamar University Merit Award. With recipients selected by a university-wide committee from nominees from each college, the award recognizes outstanding classroom performance and excellent interactions with students.

“Students who have taken John Payton’s classes praise his expertise, his accessibility and his attention to their personal needs,” said Hollis Lowery-Moore, dean of the College of Education and Human Development.

Coach Payton has been more than a teacher and coach for many students who have been under his wings. He has been a mentor and surrogate father to students at Lamar and Charlton-Pollard . . . Coach Payton taught me about having the capacity to do things that I thought I couldn’t do. —SPENCER CHARLTON ’76
A

as an engineer and as a teacher, Ku-yen Li is changing the world. He works with industry in his hometown and around the world to pro-
duce chemicals that are safer, better for the environ-
ment and more cost-effective. And he is passing his
expertise and devotion to the field of Chemical engi-
neering to generations of Lamar students.

“I am amazed at the influence of education, and I also feel proud of our students,” Li said. “For example, a student changed the traditional insulin injection into
mouth dosage by using molecular diffusion theory he had learned from my class.”

As a professor in the Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering, Li has served Lamar University more than 30 years. Lamar honored him as the 2009 University Professor, the university’s most prestigious faculty honor, awarded for life to recognize an out-
standing senior professor for academic excellence.

President James Simmons conferred the medallion of University Professor presented “as a lasting symbol of this high honor and esteemed title.”

Soon after accepting the medallion, he was off to Taiwan where he is leading a “flare minimization” research group to work with the chemical industry in the Asia-Pacific area, including Taiwan, Malaysia and China, to promote safety, economic and environ-
mental impacts. He is doing so under a one-year developmental leave.

Li has worked with the United States chemical industry on flare minimization for many years, present-
ing the results at international conferences. “Several chemical companies in Asia showed their interests,” he said. “I believe the experiences here will benefit the U.S. chemical industry.”

Li selected National Cheng-Kung University as a base for the research because it is his alma mater. He was born and educated in Taiwan before coming to the
United States, where he earned his Ph.D. from
Texas A&M University. His interests lie in both
United States and China, to promote safety, economic and environ-
mental impacts.

Li received a two-year National Foundation teaching grant to improve Lamar’s chemical engi-
neering curriculum and align it with industry practices.

His honors include the Outstanding Educator Award from the American Institute of Chemical Engineering, Texas-Sabine Section; the Amoco Outstanding Teaching Award; and the University Teaching Excellence Award at Lamar. Li is a long-standing member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineering, holding various offices. He is a member of the American Chemical Society, Blue Key, Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society and Phi Tau Phi Scholastic Honor Society of America. His wife, Sherry, retired from Texas and is an instructor of chemistry at Lamar. They have two children, Joey, 32, and Joanna, 26.

Dr. Li is an outstanding professor who has devoted his entire career to Lamar University,” said T.C. Ho, chair and professor of chemical engineering. “He is recognized as an effective and knowledgeable instructor who sets high standards and is remembered by his students long after they graduate.”

His touch of excellence is apparent throughout the chemi-
cal engineering program in the courses he has taught, the leader-
ship he has provided, the faculty he has hired to the field and the relations he has cultivated with industry and, in big ways and small, the students he has educated,” said Stephen Dobblin, provost and vice presi-
dent for academic affairs.

Li has supervised almost 50 graduate students and has advised and directed hundreds of under-
graduates. Last year, Li received a two-year National Foundation teaching grant to improve Lamar’s chemical engi-
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McSpadden joins LU in planned giving

Floyd McSpadden of Beaumont joined the advancement division as director of planned giving June 1.

As director, McSpadden provides leadership in the area of planned giving on behalf of Lamar University and the Lamar University Foundation. He will provide constituents with information on charitable giving opportunities, including gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, bequests, life insurance and retirement benefits.

“Floyd has contributed greatly to the university in voluntary service with the LU Foundation and Friends of the Arts. Now, his legacy at Lamar will grow even more through this expanded role,” said Camille Mouton, vice president for advancement at Lamar.

McSpadden has been an attorney with Benckenstein, Norvell & Nathan since 1989. He has been board certified in estate planning and probate law since 1994 and has been a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas. He is a member of the Real Estate, Probate & Trust Section of the State Bar of Texas.

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Appropriation increases 28.5 percent

With the signing of Senate Bill 1 into law June 19, Gov. Rick Perry provided a balanced budget for the 2010-2011 biennium, funding key priorities from higher education to job creation to border security.

During the two-year period, Lamar University will receive $118.5 million in state appropriations, which includes $88.6 million in general revenue. The appropriation is up 26.5 percent over the last biennium, and the general revenue portion is up 28.5 percent.

“It was a good legislative session for Lamar thanks to the support of our strong legislative delegation and the continued commitment of the state to higher education,” said President James Simmons.

Lamar will receive $2.5 million in institutional enhancement funding and $2.8 million in supplemental appropriations for costs due to Hurricane Ike. Lamar’s Higher Education Assistance Funds for the biennium total $16.3 million and allow purchase of land, construction, repair or rehabilitation of buildings and other permanent improvements, acquisitions of capital equipment, and library books and materials.

Tuition assistance program announced

Lamar University is providing tuition assistance for spouses and dependent children of its employees beginning with the fall 2009 semester. The university is continuing its employee education and training plan that provides employees with assistance in obtaining additional college-level education and training, said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost.

The LU Tuition Assistance Program, or UTAP, covers family members of full-time employees, whether they are members of the staff or faculty. All courses must apply and be credited toward Lamar University degrees.
he attended Lamar between 1965 and 1966. Beggan is researching an academic fellowship that allowed Beggan and 14 other Texas educators to learn about Qatar’s educational reforms in the Middle East and their impact on democracy in the future. Kevin Dodson, professor of philosophy, has been selected as the result of a national search to serve as the permanent director of the University Honors Program. Dodson is no stranger to the program, having served as its assistant director from 2003-2008. He coedited the Online Encyclopedia of Enlightenment and Revolution and was senior editor of Way of Knowing: Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Knowledge. Theatre historian, theorist and director Judy Sebesta has been named chair of the newly formed Department of Theatre & Dance, effective Sept. 1. The new department represents a leap forward for the theatre and dance arts at Lamar, which were formerly combined with the music department. “Music, Theatre & Dance was a very large department,” said Russ Schultz, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. “Music tended to be the biggest area, and, as such, it took some of the gloss away from theatre and dance. Separating these departments allows for autonomy and lets each shine.” A native Texan, Sebesta received her Ph.D. from the University of Texas. She has been a professor of theatre for more than 12 years and previously taught at the University of Missouri, the University of Arizona and the University of Evansville. Mary Evelyn Collins has been named chair of the Department of Communication. Collins comes to Lamar from Sam Houston State University and has also held teaching posts at Hardin-Simmons University and Wingate College. Collins earned her doctorate in communication from Florida State University. “It is important to me to be at a student-centered university,” Collins said. “There is nothing better than encouraging their research and seeing their successes when they graduate from the program.” Sandra Richardson, assistant professor of mathematics and education, was selected as the Lamar Advisor of the Year at the 53rd annual Texas State Teachers Association convention in Austin. Richardson’s selection resulted from a recommendation made by the students she advises in the Lamar Student Educator Association. Also at this year’s convention, the Lamar Student Educator Association received several recognitions including the 2009 Glenn W. Kidd Outstanding Local Chapter Award, Outstanding Human Relations Project Award and Outstanding Local Advisor Award.

Spring commencement sets record

Lamar conferred 878 degrees during spring commencement May 16, including 28 doctorates, 224 master’s degrees, 587 bachelor’s degrees and 39 associate degrees in nursing—a record number for the university. Roger Williams, who served from 2008 to 2007 as Texas’ 105th secretary of state, delivered the keynote.

This graduating class included participants in the new 18-month academic partnership program in the College of Education and Human Development, granting degrees in teacher leadership and school administration to 143 recipients. “This was the largest spring commencement in the history of Lamar University,” said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost. “Driving these numbers will be the largest number of master’s degrees Lamar has ever conferred at a graduation ceremony.” Seven students attained perfect 4.0 grade-point averages to share Plummer Award honors with the top academic graduates in the class. A total of 117 students graduated with honors.

Veteran finance officer Bob Lovitt joins LU administrative team

Robert “Bob” Lovitt joined the administration of Lamar University as vice president for finance and operations Sept. 1. Bob brings both a wealth of financial experience and a long history of success in higher education to the position,” said James Simmons, president of the university. “I am very pleased to welcome him to the administrative team.”

Ongoing Vice President for Finance and Operations Mike Ferguson will remain on staff for part of the fall semester to ensure a smooth transition, Simmons said. Ferguson, who joined Lamar as CFO in 1999, will retire at the end of the semester.

Lovitt served as executive vice president for finance and administration at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi from June 2005 to August 2008. There, Lovitt oversaw the university’s annual operating budget of $110 million.

Before moving to Corpus Christi, Lovitt served as senior vice president for business affairs at the University of Texas at Dallas, 1985 to 2005, where he managed an operating budget of $200 million and physical assets of about $450 million. Before joining UT Dallas, Lovitt served as assistant vice chancellor for planning and budgeting at the University of Houston–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University 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University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–University University–Uni...
Sisk named Distinguished Faculty Lecturer

The 2009 Distinguished Faculty Lecturer is Dorothy Sisk, professor of professional pedagogy. Sisk holds the Conn Chair for Gifted Education in the College of Education and Human Development.

Five honored as Distinguished Staff

Five Lamar University employees earned Distinguished Staff Awards at Lamar’s annual staff recognition program this spring organized by the Staff Senate. President James Simmons presented the Distinguished Staff Awards to Diana Brodmax of Orange, coordinator of advising in the Department of Developmental Studies; Charla Pate, Port Neches, Web specialist with the division of academic affairs; Patrick Stewart, Beaumont, manager of network services for the Department of Infrastructure and Security Services; Henrietta Sols, Nederland, executive assistant to Kevin Smith, senior associate vice president; and Tayet Tran, Nederland, director of records.

Open House dates set

High school and transfer students will be able to choose from three Saturday open houses in the upcoming academic year to gain an overview of the opportunities at Lamar. Full Academic Open Houses are scheduled for Sept. 26 and Nov. 21. These events are designed to allow high-ability students to explore the generous scholarship opportunities and excellent academic programs offered at LU. Spring Open House is scheduled for Feb. 27, 2010. This event will cover all aspects of Lamar University with information about academics and financial aid for campus organizations and activities.

At the podium

Bridges to Life founder featured entrepreneurial speaker

John Sage, founder and executive director of “Bridges to Life,” a prison rehabilitation program, was guest speaker at the Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies April 7. Sage discussed the business of rehabilitating inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice System and explained how “Bridges to Life” has become one of the most successful private rehabilitation programs contracted by TDCJ.

Engineering hosts Entergy Texas CEO

The College of Engineering hosted Joe Donino ‘75, president and chief executive officer of Entergy Texas as the guest speaker for its spring 2009 All College of Engineering Seminar April 28.

Four honored as Distinguished Staff

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CPA chapter honors Lamar accounting, business law students and faculty

The Southeast Texas Chapter of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants (TSCPA) has honored several students and faculty in the Department of Accounting and Business Law. Cemelia Lynn of Houston was the recipient of the Accounting Excellence Award. Melissa Henry of Port Neches received the Southeast Texas Chapter of TSCPA Endowed Scholarship. The chapter awarded scholarships to Elizabeth Bryan and Misha Dayama of Beaumont, Jennifer Do of Port Arthur and Whitney Winder of Orange.

$4 million appropriated for fuel cell research

Lamar’s Advanced Fuel Cell project has received $4 million in federal funding in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for 2010.

CAMPUS...

Prospective students who wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive more information about these and other events may contact the Recruiting Office by phone at (409) 880-8316 or by e-mail at recruitment@lamar.edu.

Center conducts studies

Students in the master of public administration program presented findings and recommendations regarding the revitalization of historic downtown Silsbee during a community forum May 20 at the Silsbee Chamber of Commerce.

The Lamar University Center for Public Policy Studies, at the invitation of the Silsbee Economic Development Corp., coordinated a study for the purpose of making recommendations for the revitalization of historic downtown Silsbee, said James Vanderer, director of the center. Student teams were involved in numerous aspects of the multi-part project.

The center, in collaboration with the Sabine River Authority, Division of the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission, also conducted a regional survey on alcohol and marijuana use. Southeast Texans rank alcohol use and marijuana use as the dominant problems among teenagers, survey results showed. The survey also covered pregnancy, violence, truancy and tobacco use.

Avae Watkins, chair of the Department of Accounting and Business Law, presents the SET TSCPA Endowed Scholarship to Melissa Henry.
Students earn top honors

In competition at the 2009 Texas Water Conference in April at Galveston, three students earned top honors and had an opportunity to discuss current issues regarding the wastewater field. Jerry Lin, faculty advisor and associate professor of civil engineering, led the team. Qiachen Xin and Ruolin Zhang both of China, and Sehul Patel of India, won second place in the design contest. They presented a thorough nutrient removal plan to meet the 2015 discharge standard for a plant treating 162 million gallons per day of municipal wastewater. With the win, the team brought back a $650 award, part of which will be used toward membership fees for the Water Environment Association of Texas. “To receive an award among hundreds of people who are actually professionals working in the wastewater field for 15-20 years, is really a proud moment for me as a Lamar University student,” said Patel.

Students enter competition with car they designed, built

Seven mechanical engineering students designed and built an off-road vehicle to compete with students across the country and beyond in the Society of Automotive Engineers Collegiate Design Series – Baja SAE Alabama competition hosted by Auburn University. LU’s mini baja team was one of 100 teams from five countries. Team members are Josh Durham of Bridge City, Tyler Hamilton, Nederland; Jeremy Hays, Fannett; Cody Heinrimmin, Fannett; Brent Klima, Vidor; Jeff Ratliff, Lumberton, and Caleb Riu, Port Neches.

Gospel choir reaches 25th anniversary

The award-winning Palm 150 Gospel Choir marked a 25th anniversary with its annual youth and young adult gospel music retreat in July. With a theme of “Access Granted: Spiritual Reality Edition,” the retreat enhanced the musical abilities of young ministers of faith. The annual event, led by the team of The Choir, marked the milestone.

Future instructors gain perspective

Seventeen Southeast Texas science teachers explored the wonder of the natural world and the environmental challenges it faces at the Department of Earth and Space Sciences hosted the 14th annual Teaching Environmental Science summer institute. The 10-day field institute is offered in conjunction with the Region S Science Collaborative and 24 local industries, state and federal agencies, and environmental non-governmental organizations. Participants in the graduate-level, summer course included teachers from Beaumont, Hardin, Jasper, Kirbyville, Kountze, Liberty, Port Arthur, Sam Rayburn, Silsbee, Tarkington and Woodville.

Students complete legislative internships

Students complete legislative internships. Curtis Smith of Beaumont, Minnie Simon of Silsbee, and Cymone Williams of Bridge City were awarded stipends to participate in Texas’ premier internship program and received academic credit from Lamar’s political science department. The Beamont Foundation of America provided $35,000 to enable the students to participate. The internship program is funded by the William G. Mcgowan Charitable Fund, it is only awarded to business students at select colleges and universities nationwide.

Students complete legislative internships

Four students participated in the Texas Legislative Internship Program during the legislative session that ended June 1. Morris Williams of Arlingtont, Curtis Smith of Beaumont, Melissa Griffiths of Bridge City and Darianus Holland of Longview were awarded stipends to participate in Texas’ premier internship program and received academic credit from Lamar’s political science department.

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Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp

Fifty four area middle school students participated in the ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp. Lamar was one of 30 campuses nationwide to host the camp, which aims to attract middle school students to math and science fields. The two-week residential camp offers hands-on, real-world, lab activities to enhance middle school students’ knowledge in science, technology, engineering and mathematics while encouraging youth to stay in school and develop their leadership potential and citizenship skills.

Science teachers experience environment

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Hands-on computing

INSPIRED Lamar hosted three computing academies for middle and high school students recently with the support of a National Science Foundation Broadening Participation in Computing grant, said Peggy Deuschel, professor of computer science. INSPIRED (Increasing Student Participation in Research Development) seeks to increase the number of U. S. women and minorities who earn computing degrees and to help meet the demand for computing professionals in today’s high-tech society. INSPIRED supports teams of Lamar undergraduates as they perform research and outreach under the direction of Lamar’s computer science faculty.

Nightingale Experience preps future nurses

Fifty high school students from 18 area schools visited campus and CHIRSTUS Hospital St. Elizabeth and St. Mary June 12 and 13 to learn first hand about the medical profession. Participants practiced nursing skills in the JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing and at St. Mary and St. Elizabeth.

Future teachers gain perspective

Nearly 150 high school students interested in becoming teachers visited campus in May for “A Celebration of Teaching.” This event, sponsored by an ExxonMobil grant and hosted by the College of Education and Human Development, introduced Lamar faculty and provided students with admissions and scholarship information. Students heard presentations such as “Nut and Bolts of Teaching” and “Teaching Around the World.”
When off the air, Stelly is busy meeting with clients, selling the station’s programming, handling the business end of the operations, doing on-the-site news reporting and preparing for his next sporting event. There’s never an idle moment.

“It’s easily 18 hours a day, six days a week,” said Stelly in describing his workload. “Unlike what some people think, though, I no longer jump out of bed in the middle of the night to go to a wreck scene or a fire—unless, of course, it’s a major one.”

In Stelly’s eyes, though, all news in Orange County is major news, and it’s his obligation to report it to his constituents, both on the air and through KOGT’s Web site. “I’m just doing the job,” Stelly modestly said. “We provide a service. It became addictive to me years and years ago. If there’s a story out there, the people depend upon me to provide it.”

A voice before... and after... the storm

by Rush Wood

N THE VERY DAY GARY STELLY ’90 became the owner of KOGT Radio in Orange, Hurricane Andrew crossed the state of Florida and headed into the Gulf of Mexico.

“It was predicted that Andrew would pick up force and hit land again on the upper Texas coast,” said Stelly, a mass communication grad-
tion. “I was recalling that day in late August of 1992. My first thought was, ‘Oh, my gosh, I’ve just purchased a radio station that’s going to be blown off the map as just a couple of more days.”

Well, history tells us—Stelly’s station was not blown off the map as Andrew gratuitously destroyed and did no damage whatsoever, to the Texas coast.

Since that time, however, Stelly’s voice has guided residents of Orange County and flood through two major hurricanes: first Rita in 2005 and, most recently, Ike last fall.

That resonant voice has described destruction, despair, disruption, desperation and pure devastation. On the other hand, that voice has also panned on inspiration, invigoration, encouragement, optimism and a belief in a rejuvenated Orange County.

That voice has also kept Orange Countians in close contact with their athletic teams. Itregaled listenersthe exploits of West Orange-Stark’s football team during the Mustangs’ march to the 2000 Class 4A state championship game, climbs by Orangefield and Bridge City to the state baseball tournament and a state champi-
onship by Little Cypress-Mauriceville’s 2006 softball team.

In Orange County, Stelly’s voice is constant. He hits the air at 5 a.m. for his four-hour morning show. He jumps starts his listeners’ days by delivering overall newscasts, sports news, commercials and other items of local interest.

When off the air, Stelly is busy meeting with clients, selling the station’s programming, handling the business end of the operations, doing on-the-site news reporting and preparing for his next sporting event. There’s never an idle moment.

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“I’m just doing the job,” Stelly modestly said. “We provide a service. It became addictive to me years and years ago. If there’s a story out there, the people depend upon me to provide it, and I don’t want to disappoint them. Most impor-
tantly, I want it to be accurate. It’s imperative that I keep up to speed on everything.”

Stelly really had to get up to speed on that early morning in late September of 2005 when Hurricane Rita slammed into Southeast Texas. “Rita was something new to me, new to you and new to everyone,” said Stelly. “We knew what it was like to have threats of hurri-
canes, but we had never experienced an actu-
al, full-blown hurricane. By the time Ie got here last year, though, we knew what to expect, and we were much more prepared.

First off, after Rita hit, I didn’t even know if I had a radio station to go back to. I live in the Little Cypress area a little north of Orange. There were some so downed trees, it took us four hours with chainsaw to cut our way out of the neighborhood. In my mind, I was cutting my way out to nothing.

Fortunately, the station had withstood the storm with relatively little damage, and we were able to get back on the air. Sometimes, I want to tear up when I think about some of the things I had to report, but it was my obligation.

“In retrospect, though, I sometimes think Rita was good for us as a community, because it brought us together. After getting over the initial shock of what had happened, we became so fired up. We had messages we had to get to the people. They were starved to know, and we thrived on knowing we were providing them with the information.

“Richard Conder (longtime KOGT disc jockey and newsmen) and I were a two-man crew. We got a couple of mattresses and set up camp in the station. We went out and took pic-
tures for our Web site; we interviewed it seems like hundreds of citizens, and we worked close-
ly with officials of Orange County and the Red Cross in getting out the news.

“Up until that time, the worst natural disaster situation I had covered was the ice storm in 1997. This was 10 times worse. There was tremendous devastation, and it tore at my heart.

“We had evacuees out there, and they had lots of questions. They wanted to come home, and it was difficult to tell them there wasn’t a whole lot for them to come back to at that time because of the lack of power and the inability to get into town because of flooded roads. That led us literally to pick up the truck, but it was like a military vehicle, and it got us through the ordeal.

“To this day, I don’t know how Fox News got my cell phone number, but they called me, and I did a live interview with them. It was my duty to let as many people as possible know what the situation was in Bridge City and in Orange County.

“It was a difficult time for me because I knew so many people in Bridge City. The things I had to tell them made me sick. I had to tell them about lost homes and lost businesses. Fortunately, I don’t have to tell about lost lives.”

Stelly during his coverage of Hurricane Rita’s aftermath was the loyalty of left-behind pets.

“I’ve always had a soft spot for pets, and I saw so many over the first few days after.

“Ike,” said Stelly. “There were dogs so wet and so hungry and so scared, but they were still protectively of their owners’ property. When you first approached them, they were still protect-
ing their yards.

“Our station became a drop-off point for a lot of people who wanted to donate dog food and cat food and other pet items. The halls were cluttered with it, and I distributed it as best I could while I made my daily rounds. It was gratifying to see how the community responded to pets in need.”

On the evening of April 24, Stelly broadcast what most people would think was a routine West Orange-Stark-at-Orange Baseball game.

“It was a fitting game to have as my 1,000th,” said Stelly. “I thought it was nice to be able to make that call in what had been my home stadium.

“Although still serving as the lead man on KOGT’s sports coverage adds hours to Stelly’s workday, he says it’s a labor of love—one he would not even consider relinquishing.

“Still get excited with almost every game I call,” said Stelly. “Recently, he called LCM’s baseball playoff game against Buda Hayes in College Station.

“They (LCM’s Batlin Bears) were down 4-0 to a 26-1 team, and they hadn’t even been close to getting a hit since the second inning. Somewhat, they managed to score four runs in the bottom of the seventh, and they eventually won the game 5-4 in the ninth. If you can’t get excited about someth-
ing, you can’t get excited about anything.”

Chances are Orange Countians are hoping the 43-year-old Stelly continues to stay excited for many years to come.
Doug Marchand ’70 knows how to get things moving. As executive director for the Georgia Ports Authority, Marchand oversees the coming and goings of 2.7 million boxes of containerized cargo at the country’s fourth-largest container port last year. Georgia ports, koolin clay and forest products head out toward countries on the Pacific Rim and elsewhere. Clothing and electronics head in, bound for retailers up and down the East Coast.

It wasn’t always this way. When Marchand arrived in 1994, the Georgia Ports Authority enjoyed a strong export business, especially in forest products, koolin clay and frozen poultry. Missing were the imports. He decided to change things at the quasi-state agency that oversees deepwater ports at Savannah and Brunswick and two inland barge ports.

“We set out to market to the beneficial owners of the cargo,” Marchand said. “We worked with the big-box retailers and the cross-dockers, koolin clay and forest products headed out of the country. We did that. That was our first step. We imported a lot of goods. We were the imports. He decided to change his approach. But it was always interesting to see it and be on the periphery of it,” he said.

Marchand advanced from his entry-level job to serve as general operations manager in Galveston before leaving in 1984 to become managing director at the Port of Corpus Christi. He returned two years later as general manager and port director. Then, in 1994, he was approached about the opportunity in Georgia. Marchand said he was not looking for a job, but the more he looked at the potential there, the more interested he became.

“The aspects of the port industry that first attracted Marchand to the field are still what keep him engaged in his work today. “It’s a lot of different things every day. There’s absolutely no monotony to it,” he said. He even enjoys the extensive travel his job requires, mainly to countries where ocean carriers serving his ports are based. That includes countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Norway, Germany, France, Israel, Kuwait, Switzerland, Austria and New Zealand where imports originate and exports end up.

“I enjoy the challenge,” Marchand said. “If you own and operate this place, how can you make it better? How can you get more out of it? How can you put more people to work and at the same time generate an income that you can plow back into your business, but it was always interesting to see it and be on the periphery of it,” he said.

Marchand’s business leadership has even had an impact in his own family. His son, Jack, received his degree in logistics and business management at the University of Texas and is now a manager at Ikea’s operations in Savannah. When he chose his major, Marchand asked, “Are you sure?” His son answered, “Yeah, I don’t know what else to do.”

The rest of the family remains in Texas. Marchand and his wife, Brenda Gail Marchand, return to the Galveston area a few times a year to visit relatives, including daughter Kristen, who is employed by Rolls Royce Global Marine, grandson Preston, Doug’s siblings and Brenda’s parents. Marchand’s brother, George, Marchand ’64, deserves the credit for Doug’s decision to attend Lamar, where his younger sister, Cathy (Marchand) Nerios also received her degree. Senior-in-law Leah Rae (Magloola) Marchand, brother-in-law Manuel Nerios, and two cousins, James D. Neaton and Dennis J. Neaton, also earned degrees from Lamar. His niece, Amanda Gail Pletiere, is now a junior at Lamar.

Doug had been accepted to both the University of Texas and Lamar. His brother urged him to choose Lamar because of the smaller size and his own good experience as a business major there. Doug decided to start at Lamar, planning to transfer to UT later. “I went and never left,” Doug Marchand said. “We had to do our work, but we also played hard. Looking back on it now, it was a really good time. I feel good about my training in marketing and sales. College in general gives people a chance to mature. It gives them a chance to determine what it is they really want to do. I think it did that for me. I wouldn’t trade it for anything. It was a great time. I have lifetime friends that I’ve kept as a result of meeting them at Lamar.”

Marchand’s fond memories of his time at Lamar include many golf games at Tryrell Park, sometimes during park hours and sometimes after dark. He still enjoys golf and tries to squeeze in a round on Saturdays.

During the week, he stays busy trying to constantly improve the operations of the ports he oversees and anticipate what changes might be coming next in an industry that he has seen move from shiploads used to track inventory at automation at every stage of the process. More improvements in technology, cargo handling and safety are just a few of the challenges that he believes lie ahead for the port industry.

Port managers also have the challenge of determining how to pay for expensive improvements that are constantly required. A new ship-to-shore crane to move the 20-foot containers standard in the industry costs more than $9 million, and Marchand has 23 of them on a single 1,200-acre terminal. Balancing all those interests while trying to constantly improve the operations of the ports he oversees and anticipate what changes might be coming next in an industry that he has seen move from shiploads used to track inventory at automation at every stage of the process. More improvements in technology, cargo handling and safety are just a few of the challenges that he believes lie ahead for the port industry.

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**Family affair**

Mother, dad, daughter & son-in-law earn master’s degrees online

**Cardinal Cadence | 31**

1,009 teachers graduate in August

Through its partnership with Higher Ed Holdings, Lamar offers the 18-month program leading to a Masters of Education in Teacher Leadership, Educational Leadership or Educational Technology Leadership. More than 1,000 teachers from across the state graduated with the degree this August. Of those, about 400 walked across the Montagne Center stage to receive their diplomas.

**High school and college credit**

Lamar is expanding its Dual Credit programs to school districts across Texas, with the first course to begin Sept. 14. Dual Credit courses allow high school juniors or seniors to enroll in a college course and receive simultaneous academic credit from both the college and the high school. Participants will be drawn from the 568,028 students in 11th and 12th grades in Texas.

**B.A.A.S. now online**

Lamar is also expanding its offering of the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree entirely online. The first course will begin Oct. 12. The potential for students in the program is huge. Data from the 2000 census shows there are 2,144,625 Texans with some college hours but no bachelor’s degree, and an additional 681,363 with associate degrees. A great number of those Texans could qualify for the online degree completion program.

In addition to the programs above, Lamar University online programs include five undergraduate degrees – Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of General Studies, RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology, and the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science — and two graduate programs — the Master of Science in Nursing and Master of Science in Health Promotion.

www.academicpartnership.com/lamar
Le Grand Bal

1. Pat Willard ’60 and Susan Schultz. 
2. Allison and Michael Diet ’78.
3. From left, Mary Dunagan, Kathryn Cherry ’82, Sally, Keith ’79 and Wanda Echenhofer ’68.
4. Paul Henderson and Susan Byrom.
5. Monica and Jimmy Brockland and James and Regent David Montagne ’74.
7. Jerry and Iris Nathan.
8. Sherry (Magee) Dishman ’81 and Christy Persia.
9. Dennis and Jean Moncla.
12. Dorothy and Sonny Sherman.

Tim Sudela ’85, president of American Valve & Hydrant, poses with his wife, Lisa, and daughter, Casey, before the Lamarissimo! Faculty Artists Concert, which his company sponsored.

Featured performers, from left, Travis Harris ’90, Jimmy Simmons, Maria Harris and Dan Rudder. ‘33 talk about old times before the Lamarissimo! Jazz Concert.

A graduating Zeta Tau Alpha member shows off her sorority’s Greek letters.

Professor of chemical engineering Ku-yen Li, 2009 University Professor, is surrounded by his students and faculty colleagues: Yuan Wen, front row, and, standing, from left, Chunyan Zhao, Chenwei Liu, Shikho-hin Changhwon, Zongping Yang, assistant professor Zhang Fei, Jie Fu, Jian Zhang and Nagendra Kote.

University Scholar Hakan Lee proudly displays her award plaque, signed by her department chair, Regents’ Professor T.C. Wu.

LaVernia’s sponsor Joe Damkar ’75, president and chief executive officer of Datapoint Texas, poises for a photo with the Cardinal Singers at a television taping in the University Reception Center.

President James Simmons and Susan (Williams) Simmons ’68, class president, pose with commencement speaker Roger Williams before the graduation ceremony.

President of business law Frank Cavallaro ’76, the 2006 University Professor, poses with the University Singers at a television taping in the University Reception Center.

Graduation candidates await their big moments at May commencement.

University Scholar Helen Lou proudly displays her award plaque, joined by her department chair, Regents’ Professor T.C. Ho. Retired professor of communication Mary Alice Baker, the 2005 University Professor, receives well wishes from longtime colleague Patrick Harrigan, then interim chair of the Department of Communication and professor of communication.

Professor of business law Frank Cavallaro ’76, the 2006 University Professor, poses with the Cardinal Singers at a television taping in the University Reception Center.

Graduation candidates await their big moments at May commencement.

Professor of chemical engineering Ku-yen Li, 2009 University Professor, is surrounded by his students and faculty colleagues: Yuan Wen, front row, and, standing, from left, Chunyan Zhao, Chenwei Liu, Shikho-hin Changhwon, Zongping Yang, assistant professor Zhang Fei, Jie Fu, Jian Zhang and Nagendra Kote.
A life of examination

by Cynthia Hicks

Dr. Karen Geheb ‘81, ’86, ’91, draws upon a tenacious spirit, keen intellect and analytical approach to problem-solving as a passionate patient advocate.

For Dr. Karen Geheb and her husband, Michael Harris, the lure of the Northwest was too attractive to ignore. Amid fishers and native tepees, they were both eager. Geheb says, for a place “a little more geographical relief.”

When an opening became available in a residency program in Spokane, Wash., Geheb, armed with a medical degree and specialty in internal medicine, happily hooked it, and the couple moved north-westward bound.

When she completed her residency, Geheb wanted to practice in a rural setting, “someone farther away because that’s where I came from,” she said. So, from Spokane, the couple moved south to Pullman where she is now director of hospitalist services for Pullman Regional Hospital. Like many of the lakes she now enjoys, Geheb took a somewhat circuitous route to begin her life as a physician.

Hard work, resilient determination and an indefatigable interest in caring for others are in her blood. Her Irish moth- and Texan father met and married in England, where her mother trained as a social worker. The crossing of two cultures too difficult to endure.

She returned home, began work at the hospital as a clerk and enrolled at Lamar University. Searching to regain confidence and feeling her way toward a career, Geheb took a drafting class and began EMT certification.

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She worked for an ambulance company that summer, finished her degree in drafting and then began work for Dresser Industries in research and development for oil field equipment. But, as one of the last hired before the oil industry collapse in the ‘80s, she was one of the first to get a pink slip. “There’s nothing worse than having worked to begin a career—especially as a woman in a traditionally male profession—and being laid off. I felt so disheart- ened. But always in the back of my head, I could hear my mom pushing, ‘Go back to school. Be a doctor.’”

After a semester in Lamar’s pre-med program, she chose to pursue a dual degree in biology and chemistry, partly at the urging of a chemistry professor who recognized her potential. That fulfillment would be delayed again, however. “I kept looking at all the classes I needed to take and thinking how old I felt. I decided I needed to finish school,” Geheb said. She changed her major to education, and, as she finished her first year teaching chemistry at West Brook High School, the scientific honor society Sigma Xi selected her as teacher of the year. But something was missing. “At the end of my third year of teaching, my heart was still saying, ‘There’s something else; there’s something more.’”

She returned to Lamar and earned a master’s in biology, deciding to apply to medical school. “This time,” she said, “the decision was a thoughtful one, and it was with the intent of being a researcher, not a physician.” After several inter- views, she chose the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, and, later, while preparing her thesis, took a job as a microbiologist for Helena Laboratories. There, she met her husband, who had worked in medical research, and focused on choosing a residency.

Evolving career

Today, as a hospitalist—the newest outgrowth of internal medicine—Geheb often treats patients with complex conditions, an inefficient and expensive effort within the typical physician’s office setting.

“When you have someone who is elderly, who has multiple medical problems, with many organ systems involved, the problem becomes that internal medicine doctors spend more time taking care of the oldest and the sick- est,” she said. On a good day, a doctor in family practice will see many more patients than the 20 or so an internal medicine doctor sees. To that 8-to-5 day, add on a couple of hours of paperwork to check labs, communicate requests, refill orders and complete medicare paperwork, in addition to making rounds in the hospital before that day begins and after it ends. As a result, physi- cians make a choice between committing to a clinic or to a hospital.

Out of this reality came the hospitalist focus—a way to not only improve efficiency for the clinician, but also improve efficiency for hospitals by decreasing wait times in the management of patient care. “You might have a three-to-four-hour wait because you have someone waiting in the emergency department to go to a floor,” Geheb said. “If the patient on the floor was ready to be discharged but is waiting for the physician who is in clinic all day, and a social worker is waiting to arrange a patient’s home health, call in medications and explain follow-up, it becomes very rushed. The patients wind up suffering because they aren’t comfortable with their instructions.”

When a clinician assigns a doctor to work in the hospital, that doctor takes responsibility for the clinic’s hospital patients, ensuring they are treated in a timely fashion, which improves flow and continuity of care.

She loves interacting with patients most. Geheb left a successful, but wearying, clinic practice. When on call, it was for two hospitals and seven doctors. “I would have rather been on call twice as often for one hospital,” she said. When Pullman Regional decid- ed they wanted a physician on call capable of seeing high-acuity, intensive-care patients, Geheb accepted the position. By keeping the patients and consolidating care, the hospital captures that billing, and patients receive prompt, quality care.

After a year and a half, Geheb became the program’s full-time director. “I love helping patients get better,” she said. “I love educat- ing patients about what medicine is, what is wrong with them, how medication is going to work, what someone has to watch out for, what someone can do without having to be on a medication, what their choices are.”

In the clinic, Geheb felt she could only affect one person at a time, but in the hospital setting, she could influence people and pro- grams as she became part of the team to write policy and protocols to ensure patient safety. She championed the 5 Million Lives campaign the Institute for Healthcare Improvement developed, believing there are a lot of needless accidents that can be prevented through more attentiveness and drilled procedures. “Patients who have heart attacks should get aspirin. They should get oxygen. They should get certain medica- tions. Unless there is a reason not to, they should get that because evidence shows that they are going to have a better out- come,” she said. “That leads to fewer complications, which leads to going home sooner. There’s no reason a patient should ever be a wrong-site surgery.”

Through her involvement with the Washington State Hospital Association, Geheb works to craft and enforce guidelines for patient safety. The movement is away from a hierarchy and toward a team approach to patient care, encouraging communication.

When Geheb sets aside her stethoscope, she bikes and takes ballet classes three days a week. And, even after three degrees, she contin- ues learning. She’s pursuing a master’s in medical management. With the winding road she took, “I am most proud of the fact that I’ve come from a very meager background and am able to now work at the state level to try to influence these decisions. As far as I was concerned growing up, being a physician was probably the highest thing I could be called to do. Having accomplished that, I feel very good,” she said. “Yeah, I love what I do.”
B y the time Chuck Harris was 7, he was climbing onto a stool to cook scrambled eggs or a batch of macaroni and cheese. At 12, he was preparing family meals. And on Lamar’s fraternity row in the 1990s, he was chilling and grilling to turn out feasts for his brothers in Alpha Tau Omega.

At 32, Harris ’99 is a certified chef—one of fewer than 5,000 in America—and owner of the Spindletop Steakhouse and Continental Cuisine on Crockett Street in downtown Beaumont.

Colorful attractions grace the menu, including seafood flashings, smoky-scared salmon Oscar and a variety of steaks—Japanese-crusted with sesame seeds or in the classic bayou style with crawfish and smooth red, new potatoes, one I use to make it a challenge. When we get compliments, it’s like with people addicted to extreme sports—“that rush, that feeling of, ‘It’s good, and I did it.’”

A big compliment came Harris’s way when the Go Texas Committee selected him to represent Texas at the 2009 Great American Seafood Cookoff in New Orleans in July. He placed fifth with a creation that was strictly Southeast Texas: beer-battered shrimp and a shrimp and okto-panko-crusted shrimp cake with shrimp-flavored sauce—garnished with a barbecued shrimp on top of roasted-corn salsa.

The fraternity house had no kitchen—just microwaves and hotplates. “I’d have something going in every room. I could publish my own microwave cookbook,” he said. “I’d put out a buffet. That’s when I started creating. Probably the best thing that came out of it was my recipe for bacon-smothered red, new potatoes, one I use to this day.”

But, said Harris, “I didn’t know I’d be a chef until I was 18 or 19. I wanted to be in the restaurant business. I think when you own something, you should know every aspect of it, so I wanted to know the kitchen. But I didn’t think I’d come to work every day in a chef’s jacket.”

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Schedules permitting, his wife, Jammie Marie (King) ’99 runs him. “She was in New Orleans to cheer me on.” High school sweethearts, they married in 2000 and have two daughters, Kymlee, 4, and Addison, who will be 2 in October. A food and nutrition graduate, Jammie is director of the Women, Infants and Children program in Beaumont.

“He’s had to stick with me and raise our kids so I can do what I’m doing,” Harris said. “It’s been tough, but it’s starting to get better. Now, I can promise Sundays with my family. I know I am going to be off by 66 days in 2009.

That might not sound like many, but, in my field, that’s a lot. Between 2004 and 2008, I had 60 days off.”

Harris harkens back to his own childhood. “I loved to eat,” he said. “There was always a lot of food around, and I was fortunate my mother and grandparents were good cooks.”

His maternal grandmother specialized in desserts and fried shrimp. His paternal grandmother lived on Lake Raybarn at Zavalla, where some of his favorite memories originated. “I could sit on the counter and watch without getting in the way,” he said. “She had acres of gardens, and included lots of things she grew. She always had all the burners going. These were such good times, and they inspired me to know food.”

During his early adventures in cooking, adults trusted Harris to fix easy dishes. As he advanced to cooking dinner, “I’m sure my mom always had a watchful eye on me, but I could pretty much produce everything,” he said.

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While his menu includes classical dishes—Oscar, Diane and Caesar—we try to put a twist on everything,” Harris said. His is a veteran of cooking classes and is, in fact, collecting photos and writing recipes in hopes of publishing a cookbook next year. “Some people have a bunch of novels. I have thousands of cookbooks.”

Harris was born in Port Arthur but lived in West Palm Beach, Fla., from age 5 until he was almost 17. He enrolled as a junior at Nederland High School where he joined the Bulldogs’ baseball team, which advanced to the state tournament his senior year. Several teammates earned LU baseball scholarships, but a shoulder injury prevented his competing. With other scholarships and grants, he enrolled at Lamar.

He became ATO president and served in the Student Government Association and on the Greek Council. He was an engineering major but, as a junior, started thinking about the restaurant business. “I was going to become an engineer, make a lot of money and open a restaurant.”

Harris worked at a service station owned by his stepfather, Tommey Spinks ’71, who offered advice: “Do what you believe in. Do what you love, and the money will come.” A customer told him if he wanted to be in the restaurant business, he needed to work in a restaurant, and recommended him for a job at David’s. Harris interviewed with the legendary Chef Alex Pickens. “He gave me three days to prove myself?” Harris remained at the iconic restaurant in Galveston Shopping Center until the night it closed.

He switched his major to hospitality management, and determined to graduate on schedule, worked as much as he could. “It was a lot of cramming, a lot of staying up late, but it was the right way to do it.”

Harris maintains strong ties to the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, where, he said, “The culinary program is constantly growing. It’s accredited by the American Culinary Federation, putting it on a par with the country’s best culinary schools.”

Today, his lunch menu caters to employ-ees of nearby businesses, with quick service, homestyle cooking and blue-plate specials. Dinner is upscale, and specialties include 14 cuts of steaks, cut in house, including Kobe beef, plus gourmet seafood and other dishes. A chef’s tasting is generating a lot of buzz. “It’s a new concept in Beaumont, and we’re doing more and more,” Harris said. “It helps me be creative.”

Harris loves what he does and does what he loves. He has big dreams. “This is real life. It’s definitely not 9 to 5,” he said. “I think people get into the restaurant or hospitality business because they want to serve people. It makes me happy to know they’re happy. That was the beginning motivation. Now, it’s about trying to have the best restaurant in Beaumont and, eventually, the best in Texas.”
McCartney knew at 13 that she wanted to be a lawyer. She saw her brother, a construction worker, being unfairly treated. “If we had had a lawyer, it might have gone a different way. And it really motivated me to try to do something for my family and to do something for other people,” she said.

In her first appointment, she served as a settlement judge. In addition, when acting on her own, McCartney is also involved in multi-party, involve millions—sometimes billions—of dollars and are of national importance. One electric power case before her required six weeks of hearing, had more than 22 expert witnesses and culminated in an initial decision almost 300 pages long. “It requires strong analytical skills,” she said. “I think I have come a long way. And it really motivated me to do all the things I dream of doing in terms of public service.”

Although she says you never know what the future may hold, McCartney reports she is happy at the commission. She and her husband, who joined her in Washington, D.C., enjoy the city’s restaurants, museums, art galleries, jazz venues and other cultural opportunities. With all of her professional accomplishments, she is most proud of her children: son, Chin, 25, is employed with Garmin Inc., an information technology research firm, and daughter, Denor, 16, attends The Field School in D.C. McCartney enjoys unraveling the Gordian knots of an intricate case. It is the cutting-edge nature of cases before the commission that continues to capture her interest and challenge her skills.

As an example, one of her cases went to the U.S. Supreme Court this past February. It involved the legal standard of review to be applied to long-term contracts between the state of California and electric power suppliers and producers that had been negotiated during that state’s energy crisis in 2001-2002. After a prolonged evidentiary hearing, McCartney found that the contracts should only be set aside by the commission if the terms and conditions of the contracts when considered as a whole were found not to be “as the public interest.” In the companion case before the Supreme Court this past February, the Court affirmed those findings, a ruling and legal precedent in which she shared full responsibilities with the chief administrative law judge for managing its nationwide operation of more than 1,100 judges in 140 hearing offices.

As FERC’s deputy chief judge, McCartney resolves contested cases, either through impartial hearing and decision or through negotiated settlement, ensuring that the rights of all parties are preserved. She conducts fair and impartial investigations and also performs various alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedures, including mediation, arbitration, facilitation and acting as settlement judge. In addition, when acting on behalf of the chief judge in his absence, her responsibilities expand to include the administrative and oversight functions associated with running the office.

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The intricacies of such cases keep her on her toes. “Then I have some cases that are a little more fun, like wind power cases,” she said. “One settlement involved wind power and how you integrate renewable wind energy onto the electric power grid. Another interesting area is liquefied natural gas and how sources outside the country pose quality control issues in terms of integrating that gas into our domestic gas supply lines.”

Not yet 55, McCartney recently received her 30-year service pin. “I have been fortunate in my career,” she said, “in that I have been able to do all the things I dream of doing in terms of public service.”

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Airplane art takes off

The attractions of Menasha’s Franconia Sculpture Park, just northeast of the Twin Cities, are many, but Kurt Dyhrung, associate professor of art, is especially drawn to its size. “Franconia allows you to work on a scale that just isn’t possible in most places,” said Dyhrung. “They have cranes and forklifts and overnight lodging to support artists over the many days or weeks it can take to construct/build and install large-scale sculptures.”

These resources were invaluable when it came to building Tractor Fin, a carved, gleaming wood structure that stands at a striking 18 feet in height and 25 feet in length. Its impressive wingspan, tailfin and wheels are reminiscent of a jet airplane, yet the John Deere-green tractor seat jutting from the back suggests not only another mode of transportation, but another era altogether.

“It has a playful quality that I think draws people in,” Dyhrung explains. “It implies movement through the formal wing shape, and placing the tractor seat on it adds functionality. It’s modern art, but there is certain recognizability to it. Young children get it right away.”

Dyhrung received both a Research Enhancement Grant from Lamar and a fellowship from the Jerome Foundation to work on Franconia Sculpture Park. “It was also a great experience to work with Cheleah Manak, my student assistant,” said Dyhrung. “She was able not only to help with the construction and installation, but get terrific hands-on knowledge of the process of contemporary working artists.”

Manak, who hails from Buna, is pursuing a bachelor of science in graphic design. She said the assistantship provided an invaluable learning experience.

Dancing Games

Lamar’s Department of Theatre & Dance has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to present the groundbreaking work of choreographer Donald McKayle. The $15,000 grant will support the restaging and performance of McKayle’s Games, a seminal dance work, first performed in 1951, that explores childhood and youth-ful play set against themes of poverty and discrimination.

“Don McKayle is one of the preeminent choreographers of the 20th century,” Michelle Ormson, assistant professor of dance. “He is a pioneer of African-American themes in choreography, and we are honored to introduce his work to the Southeast Texas community.”

McKayle will visit the Lamar campus in October 2009 to work personally with the dance troupe. Games will then be performed during the fall full dance concert Nov. 19 and 20 in the University Theatre. In spring 2010, the dancers will present the work at area schools.

Han named director

As he assumes duties as the new director of choral activities at Lamar University, James Han’s goal is to provide enriching cultural experiences to the leaders of tomorrow.

“I want to introduce students to our treasures from the past, and also always try to find the new work and the new sound, which can often be the most compelling and challenging to a choir,” said Han, who joins the Department of Music this fall as an assistant professor.

Han will conduct both the A Cappella Choir and the Grand Chorus.

“When Dr. Han came to campus and directed the choir, there was an immediate enthusiasm for his style and knowledge, and a strong belief that he would elevate the choir from the successes they have experienced to new heights,” said Russ Schultz, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

A native of Seoul, South Korea, Han has taught at the University of Illinois and at Knox College in Galesburg, IL. He has also trained many church choirs. He earned a master of music degree in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ.

Reveling in Red Piano

A talented line-up of keyboard artists performed March 30 on the Elton John limited-edition Red Piano, a hybrid acoustic/digital piano created for John’s hit Las Vegas show. The Department of Music presented the special recital in the University Theatre. Featured performers included music faculty members Barry Burleson Hines and Nick Rissman, President Jimmy Simmons, the Ken Ward Trio and alumni Wade Duniel ’81, Craig Escamilla ’06 and Joel Love ’07, among others.

Pamela Saar, professor of English and modern languages, has translated a book of essays by Austrian scholar and writer Rose Maryeder (1888-1958). The volume, Gender and Culture, is the first English translation of this 1923 collection, containing some of Maryeder’s most important writings. Saar has taught English and German at Lamar since 1988. Maryeder, a feminist and peace activist, explores ideas and viewpoints about gender in a broad context, reaching back to Greek and Roman antiquity as well as tracing church history and interweaving views of philosophers, writers and the intellectuals of her day. Noted British poet John Whitworth read from his work April 23 at the Dishman Art Museum. The event included a book-signing and reception, sponsored by Sigma Tau Delta, English honor society. Whitworth also was honored with the first Eleanor Poetry Room Award, funded by the family of the late Eleanor Perlstein Weisbun, longtime supporter of poetry at Lamar...

City honors Simmons with lifetime achievement award

President James “Jimmy” Simmons became the inaugural recipient of the Dr. Raul Ornelas Lifetime Music Achievement Award, presented May 9 at the annual reunion of the Lamar University JazzFest. The city of Beaumont honored Simmons “for his contributions to music and for being an exemplary citizen and ambassador to the city of Beaumont,” according to a proclamation Mayor Becky Ames read during the festival.

The award was established to recognize the many contributions Ornelas, who was a professor of music at Lamar University from 1972 until his death in 2008, has made to the city. Ornelas furthered music education at Lamar, teaching and mentoring music students who went on to national prominence as performers and teachers.

Dishman Art Museum

The Dishman Art Museum is happy to announce the fourth annual Beaumont Jazz+Blues Festival. The award was established to recognize the many contributions Ornelas, who was a professor of music at Lamar University from 1972 until his death in 2008, has made to the city. Ornelas furthered music education at Lamar, teaching and mentoring music students who went on to national prominence as performers and teachers.
The Lamarissimo! concert series will bring the curtain up this fall on its 20th-anniversary season. Lamar’s acclaimed off-campus showcase for student and faculty talent will celebrate the milestone beginning with the Wind Ensemble and Concert Band Oct. 6. Season tickets are $40 for adults and $20 for students and are on sale, along with gift certificates, in the Department of Music, (409) 880-8144.
Coach Brandhorst, an assistant at Lamar from 1979-1991, in May, Wood retired from The Beaumont Enterprise after more than nine years as assistant sports editor. As Lamar's assistant AD for sports information, Wood will oversee the media relations efforts of Lamar's men's and women's athletic program. He will be the school's primary contact for football and baseball.

"We are confident in Rush's ability to help us make a smooth transition in the resurrection of our football program and in helping to provide a stabilizing force for the sports information department," said Billy Tubbs, Lamar's director of athletics.

Coaches, trainer come on board

Former standout Emily Spickler is the new assistant coach for the Lady Cardinals basketball. The SALINA, Kan., native spent the last two seasons as the top point threat for the Lady Cardinals. "With Emily, we are getting the complete package as her court awareness and knowledge of the game, displayed while playing for the Lady Cardinals, was amazing," head coach Larry Todwell said. David McDonald, who most recently worked with TCU's Horned Frogs program, has joined the staff as assistant athletic trainer to work primarily with the men's basketball program. Angie Nickens has joined the Cardinals as an assistant women's soccer coach after spending the previous six seasons as a student-athlete and staff member at TCU. After starring on the field for the Horned Frogs from 2003-07, she served as director of operations for the program.

Rush Wood rejoins Lamar University athletic staff

Longtime Southeast Texas sports journalist Rush Wood has come out of retirement to assume the duties of assistant athletic director for sports information at Lamar.

Wood, who began his sports journalism career in 1967, formerly served 12 years as sports information director at Lamar from 1979-1991. In May, Wood retired from The Beaumont Enterprise after more than nine years as assistant sports editor. As Lamar's assistant AD for sports information, Wood will oversee the media relations efforts of Lamar's men's and women's athletic program. He will be the school's primary contact for football and baseball.

"We are confident in Rush's ability to help us make a smooth transition in the resurrection of our football program and in helping to provide a stabilizing force for the sports information department," said Billy Tubbs, Lamar's director of athletics.

Stroud nears $1.7 million; Stefani earns first title

Team Stroud turned out in force when Lamar's favorite son of the PGA Tour had the rare opportunity to play in his own back yard—just three miles from the home in North Houston he shares with wife, Tiffany. For Chris Stroud '94, the Shell Houston Open at Redstone Golf Club was like a reunion, attracting a hundred or more family, friends and fans. "Team Stroud is coming with full impact this week," said Stroud, taking a break from a day of practice that often involves shipping or putting up to 400 balls. "It's awesome. I just have great support." Brian White '89, Lamar's head golf coach, stayed close to Stroud's side. "He's been my swing coach forever, and we have had good success together," said White's student.

Through mid-August, the two-time Lamar All-America golfer had collected season earnings of $33,890, bringing his career total to $1,699,751. His best finish this season was a tie for sixth at the ATT Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. At Redstone, Stroud tied for 21st.

For Stroud, the PGA Tour is a seven-day-a-week commitment. "Monday is a travel day, and Tuesday through Sunday is the tournament," he said. "The travel part is a little tough. But being with all these great people and everybody who is part of the PGA Tour is just a fantastic deal."

In a season highlight, Stroud and former Lamar teammate Shawn Stefani '05 both qualified for the U.S. Open, though neither made the cut.

Stefani, a Bartow resident, won his first title on the NGA Hostors Tour in the Onion Creek Classic July 27-Aug. 2 in Austin, shooting a 7-under-par 63 in the final round. "I made some nifty swings," Stefani told the Austin-American Statesman. "When I hit good shots, I took advantage. When I hit bad shots, I got lucky breaks and took advantage of those too."

The win at Onion Creek earned Stefani a $33,566 paycheck. "The money's just a bonus," he said. "You play golf to win."
Robert Evans '57, B.S. health and physical education, retired after a 20-year teaching career and lives in Beaumont.

George Davis '59, B.A. psychology, is retired and lives in Highland Village.

Bill Kelly '60, B.S. elementary education, is retired and lives in Liberty.

William Martin '60, B.S. general business, is retired and lives in Houston.

Dr. (Annette) White Dekker '61, B.S. graphic design, is owner of Design Associates in Houston. She lives in Magnolia City.

Stacy (Gardner) Hunter '62, B.S. nutrition, is a teacher in Nederland High School and now teaches part time at Lamar State-College Port Arthur. She lives in Groves.

Terry Luevanos '64, B.B. computer information systems, is a CEO of the Luevanos Group in Brookeland.

Sandra (Cockrell) Sherman '65, B.S. elementary education, is retired and lives in Baytown with her wife, Judy.

Pat (Wolfgang) Pry '66, B.S. criminal justice, is retired and lives in Houston with her husband, Lee.

Sallie (Alexander) Srour '66, B.S. elementary education, is a teacher in Harmony, Texas. She lives in Spring with her husband, Cardara.

Myeil King '66, B.A. educational studies, is a teacher in Nederland High School and now teaches part time at Lamar State-College Port Arthur. She lives in Groves.

Mary Jane Dereu '67, B.S. music, is retired and lives in Longview with her husband, Hugh.

Bill Fram '68, B.S. business administration, is retired and lives in Austin.

Ann Marie Thompson '69, B.A. graphic design, is owner of Design Associates in Houston. She lives in Magnolia City.

Bill Stringer '69, B.B.A. business administration, is retired and lives in Orange.

Melvin (Harold) Gilchrist '70, B.S. graphic design, is owner of Graphic Supplies Plus, a printer in Humble. She lives in Richmond.

Bonnie (Ownby) Longnion '71, B.S. music, is retired, lives in Richmond, and is judge of the 179th District Court of Harris County. She has a daughter and four grandchildren. Now retired, they enjoy taking opportunities to do what I can do to assist.”

It’s one way that anybody and everybody who is a Lamar graduate can help Lamar, Lee said. Help Morris reach this goal...one ride at a time. Morris Lee ’73, ’79, is only one man, but his self-imposed mission is for every vehicle belonging to a Lamar graduate to display an L.U. Alumni window decal. He began with family and close friends. Now, the retired Travis Elementary School principal has moved on to businesses and friends of friends. Sooner, he’ll be knocking on your door.

Lee remembers the day in the mid-’50s and later, when he was a Lamar Tech student, almost every car sported a Lamar Tech decal. Recently, he solicited a current Alumni from Coach Steve Roccaforte, whom Lee used to umpire in Little League baseball. Lee put up his blue Chevrolet pickup truck. Sometime later, he called the Alumni Office for another, but thought twice and asked for five or less. Lee said, “I got rid of them instantly. I thought, ‘Who a minute. We have season tickets to Lamar baseball games. I would like some that say Lamar Cardinals and some that say Lamar Alumni.’ She sends them to me. They go like hotcakes. People want more. I say, ‘Well, I can take care of you.’” Since then, Lee has paired more than 400 alumni with window decals.

“I am a firm believer in that order for you to be successful, you have to surround yourself with people of like mind who are goal-oriented, that have a belief in setting attainable, measurable goals that are realistic,” Lee said. “You monitor yourself as you go along; you make adjustments where you need to, and you continue to move forward. If you do that, and you probably go. You’ve got to keep going. It’s our responsibility to promote our own product because if we don’t, no one will. Success breeds success, and the more successful you are, the more opportunities are available to you. All I want to do is take opportunities to do whatever I can do to do.”

With more than 75,000 L.U. graduates and counting, the Alumni decals have the potential to make Lamar University’s name known around the world.

To get free Lamar University Alumni auto decals, e-mail alumni@lamar.edu or call the Office of Alumni Affairs at (409) 880-8821 or (800) 296-4839.
The Miller sisters—then and now

The Miller sisters, Kathleen '50, Helen '46 and Jeanne '45, are pictured at the May 2 alumni gathering at the home of Mary and Bill Mitchell. Helen and her husband, Bill, live in Lakewold. Georgan Campbell lives in New Braunfels, and Kathleen lives in Austin. All three Miller sisters were homecoming queen at Lamar as college sweethearts in 1946, Helen as homecoming queen in 1946 and Kathleen as homecoming queen twice in 1947 and 1948. The Nov. 20, 1948, issue of the Houston Chronicle stated, “Reason there will be no more Miller girls as queen of the college homecomings is that there are no more Miller girls.”

Dorrie Stephenson '73, B.S. health and physical education, is a physical education teacher at Elisondale in Houston, when she is not.

Josephine (Curtis) Winer '73, M.Ed. counseling and development, is a counselor in Austin, Texas, with her husband, Warren '72, B.S. government, '74, M.A. political science.

Christine Gardner-Hunt '74, B.S. communications, was recognized for her outstanding community service as Woman of the Year by the Beaumont branch of the National Association of University Women. She is a licensed counselor, a department head for the Department of Composite Health Services and lives in Katy.

Donnie Stephenson '73, B.S. health and physical education, is a physical education teacher at Elisondale in Houston, when she is not.

Donald Siau, '62, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a German language specialist for Freescale Semiconductor. He owns Administrative Leadership Services and lives in Humble.

Lee Graham '73, B.A. social work, a reading technical assistance specialist, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the San Antonio school district, where she lives with her husband, Jeff.

Penny Franklin-Skiba '62, B.S.B. marketing, is an associate professor in Central High School in Beaumont, where she lives.


Kathy Fourier '60, B.S. elementary education, is an executive director of the Shoal Creek Chapter. She lives in Houston.

Patricia Bakert '66, B.A. management, is senior vice president of commercial lending at First Community Bank in Anchorage.

Joseph Wilson '82, B.B.A. accounting, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Paul.

Linda Kelsey '89, B.S. dental hygiene, is a dental hygienist and works for Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. She works on the north slope.

Charlesie Russell '83, B.S. psychology, '90, B.S. sociology, coaches gymnastics at Ozen High School in Beaumont, where she lives.

Theresa (Greenhaw) Landry '78, B.A. social work, was named executive director of the Share Blood Centers in Beaumont. She lives in Beaumont.

Gary Leger '89, B.S. psychology, '90, B.S. sociology, coaches gymnastics at Ozen High School in Beaumont, where she lives.

John Pugh Don Bussell, B.B.A. accounting, is a partner in Wofith, Delawer & Bussell in Dallas. Don Bussell, B.S. elementary education, who teaches at St. Anna Catholic Church, lives in Dallas.

Scotty Davis '42, M.S. vocational nursing, is a lead counselor in the Angleton school district. She lives in Angleton.

Donald Shaw, '79, A.A. social work, earned a doctorate degree from the University of Houston and practices in Atlanta. He is a lawyer with Oaks, Hartline and a law degree from the University of Houston.

Helen Blue Jr. '50, B.A. psychology, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Dean.

Harry Gilbert, B.S. education, is a medical技术 in the medical education program at the University of Texas and practices in Houston. He is a partner in Wofith, Delawer & Bussell in Dallas. Don Bussell, B.B.A. accounting, is a partner in Wofith, Delawer & Bussell in Dallas. Don Bussell, B.S. elementary education, who teaches at St. Anna Catholic Church, lives in Dallas.

Theresa (Ward) Matejick '85, B.S. elementary education, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Kathleen.

Terry Sorrell '89, B.S. psychology, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Paul.

Lee Blue Jr. '50, B.A. psychology, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Dean.

Don Pumphrey, B.A. education, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Paul.

Lee Blue Jr. '50, B.A. psychology, is a reading technical assistance specialist in the Mid-Katy school district, where she lives with her husband, Dean.

Kenneth Wall '74, B.A. psychology, '76, A.A.S. mid-management, is a college professor at Lamar University in the 1970s. He is a lawyer with Oaks, Hartline and a law degree from the University of Houston.

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Gerry Courtice '74, B.S. health and physical education, after 15 years with the Federal Aviation Administration, he is now a partner in Wofith, Delawer & Bussell in Dallas. Don Bussell, B.S. elementary education, who teaches at St. Anna Catholic Church, lives in Dallas.

Kevin Hargis '88, B.S. chemical engineering, is a petroleum engineer for BP in Anchorage.

Carolyn Ryan, B.S. chemical engineering, is an engineering specialist for Freescale Semiconductor. He owns Administrative Leadership Services and lives in Humble.

Raymond Davis '72, B.S. mathematics, was named executive director of the Share Blood Centers in Beaumont. She lives in Beaumont.

Theresa (Greenhaw) Landry '78, B.A. social work, was named executive director of the Share Blood Centers in Beaumont. She lives in Beaumont.

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Seven honor students for teaching excellence

The Beaumont Foundation of America has chosen seven honor students to receive the inaugural Regal Excellence in Education Award in appreciation of superior contributions of teachers whose leadership and dedication inspire a spirit of learning.

These alumni are Deborah (Commack) Amy ’73, B.S. educational technology, a teacher at Henderson Middle School in the Harris-Jefferson school district; Sharon (Womack) Woyte ’75, B.S. home economy, Bridge City High School; Cheryl (Mittlerlehner) Adams ’80, B.S. elementary education, China Elementary School in the Jefferson-Harding school district; Shelly (Kemetis) Borrell ’95, B.S. elementary education, Hamshire-Fannett Middle School, Carol (Fahm) Edgar ’88, B.S. secondary education, Vidor High School, Delinda (Witty) Taylor ’98, B.A.S. applied arts and sciences, Bayside Elementary School in the Beaumont Independent School District. Nearly half of the 15 laps are Lamar graduates. Each winner received $10,000.

Mary (Gregg) Childs ’80, B.S., business, a product manager of the Greater Southwest Chamber of Commerce and civic service commissioner for the city of Port Arthur, lives in Port Arthur with her husband, Robert, and their five children.

Denise Pomroy ’89, B.S. social work, is a clinical psychologist at William Beck Center, and she and her husband, Vann, have three children.


Paula (Commack) Woyte ’81, B.S. educational technology, is director of great compliance at the School of Education in San Marcos. She lives in Lufkin with her husband, Todd, and their three children.

Rick Shaw ’91, B.S. business, is an owner of a restaurant and real estate company in Vidor. He and his wife, Stacy, have three children.

John (Robbins) Whitehill ’85, B.S., chemical engineering, is a research engineer at Fluor Daniel, where he lives with his wife, Melinda, and their son.

Alkire Harrell ’99, B.A. accounting, is head auditor for Tesoro Inc. in Houston. He and his wife, Melissa, live in Spring.

Raymond Morcos-Rama ’09, B.S. mathematics, is a principal in the San Antonio Independent School District.

Amy (Elizabeth) Moore ’93, B.S. chemical engineering, ’92, B.S. business administration, is a sales representative at Chevron Phillips Chemical, where she lives with her husband, Kirk, and her two children.

Class notes

Mary Aubry

works for Depuy Orthopaedics and lives in Nederland, with her husband, Robert, and their four children.

Breeze, Fla., with her husband, Scott, and her two children.

and Risk Management Services in League

ness development manager at

School of Excellence in Education in San

ton Stockman

Lynette Vincent

Kirk Smith

Michael, and their two children.

with his wife, Laura, and their two children.

registered nurse in the intensive care unit at Memorial Hermann Baptist Beaumont. He lives in Missouri City.

Elaine Gabert ’96, B.S. nursing, is a

an energy specialist in Bakersfield, Calif., where he lives.

Witte Snowden ’82, B.S. finance and

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these seven honor students to receive the inaugural Regal Excellence in Education Award in appreciation of superior contributions of teachers whose leadership and dedication inspire a spirit of learning.

Cheryl (Mitterlehner) Adams ’80, B.S. elementary education, China Elementary School in the Jefferson-Harding school district; Shelly (Kemetis) Borrell ’95, B.S. elementary education, Hamshire-Fannett Middle School, Carol (Fahm) Edgar ’88, B.S. secondary education, Vidor High School, Delinda (Witty) Taylor ’98, B.A.S. applied arts and sciences, Bayside Elementary School in the Beaumont Independent School District. Nearly half of the 15 laps are Lamar graduates. Each winner received $10,000.

Mary (Gregg) Childs ’80, B.S., business, a product manager of the Greater Southwest Chamber of Commerce and civic service commissioner for the city of Port Arthur, lives in Port Arthur with her husband, Robert, and their five children.

Denise Pomroy ’89, B.S. social work, is a clinical psychologist at William Beck Center, and she and her husband, Vann, have three children.


Paula (Commack) Woyte ’81, B.S. educational technology, is director of great compliance at the School of Education in San Marcos. She lives in Lufkin with her husband, Todd, and their three children.

Rick Shaw ’91, B.S. business, is an owner of a restaurant and real estate company in Vidor. He and his wife, Stacy, have three children.

John (Robbins) Whitehill ’85, B.S., chemical engineering, is a research engineer at Fluor Daniel, where he lives with his wife, Melinda, and their son.

Alkire Harrell ’99, B.A. accounting, is head auditor for Tesoro Inc. in Houston. He and his wife, Melissa, live in Spring.

Raymond Morcos-Rama ’09, B.S. mathematics, is a principal in the San Antonio Independent School District.

Amy (Elizabeth) Moore ’93, B.S. chemical engineering, ’92, B.S. business administration, is a sales representative at Chevron Phillips Chemical, where she lives with her husband, Kirk, and her two children.

Class notes

Mary Aubry

works for Depuy Orthopaedics and lives in Nederland, with her husband, Robert, and their four children.

Breeze, Fla., with her husband, Scott, and her two children.

and Risk Management Services in League

ness development manager at

School of Excellence in Education in San

ton Stockman

Lynette Vincent

Kirk Smith

Michael, and their two children.

with his wife, Laura, and their two children.

registered nurse in the intensive care unit at Memorial Hermann Baptist Beaumont. He lives in Missouri City.

Elaine Gabert ’96, B.S. nursing, is a

an energy specialist in Bakersfield, Calif., where he lives.

Witte Snowden ’82, B.S. finance and

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More than 200 Houston-area alumni took a private tour of the recent exhibit, Terra Cotta Warriors: Guardians of China’s First Emperor, at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Attendees met in the Cockrell Butterfly Center Lobby for a special presentation by Wea Lee ’76, chairman and CEO of Southern News Group, who spoke about the International Trade Center in Houston and its role in trade between Houston businesses and overseas markets.
Kirsten Craig '08, B.S. communication, served as a, host on the Game Show Network in Beaumont. She lives in Port Arthur.

S made an appearance on the Houston弈, at a community center for the state comptroller's office in Irving. She lives with her husband, Amit.

Kattie von Alt '06, B.S. material sciences, is proposal coordinator for CB&I in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Joshua. They live in Port Neches.

Julia Shanks '08, B.S. studio arts and design, is a freelance graphic designer at Games People Play in Beaumont, where she lives.

Shawn (Wolfe) Robbins '08, M.S. chemical studies and deaf education, is a deaf educator in the AISD school district. She lives in Austin.

Jesse Schenker '02, B.S. criminal justice, is no officer in the Beaumont Police Department. He lives in Lamar. 

John Shafer Jr. '08, B.S. history, teaches in the Kirby School district. He lives in League City, with his wife, Heather (Shiner) '08, B.S. communication disorders, '05, M.A., special education. 

Cristina (Gantt) '96, M.S. general studies, and Todd Shuford married November 22. They live in Houston.

Paul Stupka '08, M.S. deaf studies/ deaf education, lives in Austin with his wife, Kristin. '06, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, '07, M.S. deaf studies/ deaf education.

Chandra Vemuri '06, M.S. deaf studies and deaf education, is a deaf educator at Lamar University. She lives in Lamar. 

Catherine (Sellers) Warren '98, B.S. music, teaches viola at the Texas Academy of Music. She lives in Beaumont.

Clarence (Taylor) '06, B.A. history, and Matthew Shuford married March 7. They live in Beaumont.

Every Day You’re Over There, a short film that won the Audience Award at the Traverse City Film Festival. They live in Traverse City.

S. E. Hinton, hit play and director of the film "The Outsiders." They live in Travis. 

Bryan Shook '07, B.S. education, is a materials expediter at Lamar University. He lives in Groesbeck.

Eric Perez '08, B.S. education in Iraq. His wife, Fatema. They live in Groesbeck.

Brian Leger '07, B.S. chemical engineering, is an engineer at KBR in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Todd Shuford married November 22. They live in Houston.

Penny (McDowell) Miller '06, B.G.S. general studies, married with Todd Shuford married November 22. They live in Houston.

Mandy Lane '07, B.S. communication, is an engineer at Worley Parsons in Irving, where she lives with her husband, Adam. 

Anushree Khare '07, B.A. B.A. business and sciences, is proposal coordinator for CB&I in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Joshua. They live in Port Neches.

Matthew Jones married March 7. They live in Fannett. 

Janet (Buck) Weinert '07, M.E.S. chemical engineering, lives in Lumberton. 

Jessica Mitchell '06, B.G.S. general studies in Fannett. 

Chandra Vemuri '06, M.S. deaf studies and deaf education, is a deaf educator at Lamar University. She lives in Lamar. 

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Lamar University gained national attention this summer as one of 20 Great Colleges to Work For. The Chronicle of Higher Education, the nation’s leading source of news for and about colleges and universities, named Lamar to its Great Colleges honor roll because of the number of categories in which it was recognized for best practices. LU was one of 39 colleges nationwide—and the only public college in Texas—on the list. It joined institutions including Cornell University, Duke University and the University of Notre Dame on the Honor Roll.

Valentine Andrus, 2009-2010 Faculty Senate president, said he was extremely happy but not surprised to hear the news because of the tremendous spirit and high morale among Lamar employees in recent years.

“It is a very easy work on campus. It gives you a positive feeling when you see that the campus has improved and see these new buildings. We hire good faculty and good staff, and that helps very much,” Andrus said, associate professor of mathematics. “The president and provost have really shown their ability to be effective and positive. Faculty and staff have responded.”

Andrus said the challenge now will be for Lamar to continue to meet these high standards and improve the atmosphere even more.

Overall, the Great Colleges to Work For survey recognized 150 colleges and universities nationwide for best practices in one or more categories based on responses from administrators, faculty and professional staff.

“Among the categories in which LU was recognized for best practices were healthy faculty-administration relations; respect and appreciation; collaborative governance; job satisfaction; confidence in fair treatment; internal communications; work/life balance; professional/career development programs; confidence in senior leadership; policies, resources and efficiency; and supervisor relationships.”

Steve Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs, said he knew that Lamar University was a great place to work from the time he arrived in 2001.

“What’s gratifying to know is that our faculty and staff—the people who make this university run—feel that way, too,” Doblin said. “They’re the people who make this a great place to work.”

Recognition in a national publication like The Chronicle of Higher Education will alert others, such as potential employees and potential students, to the great atmosphere at Lamar University, Doblin said.

Jana Duigle, president of the LU Staff Senate, also said the recognition as confirmation of something the university’s 1,200 employees already know.

“It is an honor to work here. It’s fun to work here. It’s like a giant family,” Duigle, who works in the student and support services. Staff members know they have support from all levels of administration, starting with the president, she said.

“If you have happy employees, you have an efficient workplace, and that’s going to show with your customers,” Duigle said.

More than 100 from around the country applied for the Great Colleges to Work For program and 247 completed the entire process this spring. The program recognized 122 four-year colleges and universities in at least one of 26 categories and honored 28 two-year colleges in at least one of 15 categories.

The Chronicle worked with human resources consulting company ModernThink to conduct the survey, which was based on an assessment tool used in more than 55 Best Places To Work programs with more than 4,000 organizations.

“Despite the down economy, colleges are still hiring,” said Jeff Selingo, editor of The Chronicle of Higher Education. “Through this program, The Chronicle is able to provide more information to job seekers about the colleges that are the leading innovators when it comes to providing a rewarding work environment.” —BG

LU only public college in Texas to do so
LARRY BEAULIEU took a roundabout path to Southeast Texas and Lamar University. Born and raised in the Dallas area, he initially enrolled at Texas Tech University with the intent to study electrical engineering. Once he realized the math requirements involved in an engineering degree plan, he changed the channel to another love, mass communication. His work as an announcer at both the Tech and local radio stations led him to his first real job as a television producer, photographer, reporter and eventually to the anchor desk. In 1974, made the move to Beaumont, where he would build a television career regarded by his peers with admiration. Last year, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Lone Star Chapter welcomed him into its Silver Circle for his quarter-century in broadcasting. Beaulieu came to CBS affiliate KFDM-TV as the news director, producer and anchor. Although faithfully employed in his chosen field, he continued his mass communication studies at Lamar and graduated in 1977. He was named general manager in 1983. Along the way he married Nancy, his wife and companion of 41 years. They have two children, Lara and Brad, and one granddaughter, Maggie.

“I didn’t want to leave my degree hanging, so it was more of a personal accomplishment for me to complete my degree at Lamar,” Beaulieu said. “They allowed me in my career. I became president and CEO of one of the leading petroleum companies in the industry, so Lamar must have done something right by me.”

BYRON DYER ’57

Lamar hasn’t been a four year college very long when I enrolled back in 1955. The geology department was perhaps the strongest on campus at the time because of the petroleum industry. It’s a real honor to be recognized in this fashion. I appreciate what Lamar has done for me in my career. I became president and CEO of one of the leading petroleum companies in the industry, so Lamar must have done something right by me.

I feel like I’m representing more than just myself. I feel like I’m representing the world of Lamar.

For reservations and information, please call the Alumni office, (409) 880-8921.

Lamar University Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner Saturday, September 19, 2009 | 6:30 p.m. Reservations required

It’s a wonderful distinction to be honored as a distinguished Lamar alum. I think the world of Lamar and to be recognized for some of the work I’ve done is an extraordinary feeling. I feel like I’m representing more than just myself.

Byron Dyer spent his childhood and teen years in Mont Belvieu and around the surrounding Houston environs. He initially enrolled at Baylor University before his education was interrupted and he served in the Army during the Korean War. Upon his return in 1955, he enrolled at Lamar and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in geology in 1957. His first jobs were with oil exploration companies that eventually landed him a district manager position with King Resources in Houston.

Dyer jumped at the chance to work for T. Boone Pickens and Mesa Petroleum as a division manager; but, after several years, decided to become an independent geologist and formed the Sierra Production Co. In 1982, he was offered the opportunity to develop a U.S subsidiary for Norcen Explorer Inc., a Canadian oil and gas company. He spent the next 15 years as president and CEO of Norcen before retiring. Under his leadership, Norcen became a leading company in offshore oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. His retirement, however, was short lived. He moved into the banking industry where he enjoyed a second career as chairman of the Community Bank of Katy until Sterling Bancshares purchased the bank in 2002, leading him, at last, into an enduring retirement.

In 1957, Dyer was credited with the discovery of a new mineral called Chambesite, named for the county in which it was first found. Brine returns from a gas storage well yielded mysterious crystals, the likes of which he had never seen. He and a mineralogist provided a complete scientific description of the new mineral.

Dyer has been married to the former Connie Mayes for more than 50 years, and they have three children, Jeff, John and Kelly. They are also blessed with six grandchildren, Blaine, Meredith, Grayson, and triplets Mackenzie, Madison and Lane.

LARRY BEAULIEU ’77

Southeast Texas is a great place to live and raise a family, and a big draw for this area is Lamar University. To me, Lamar is a prime catalyst for undergirding and supporting economic and industrial development in this area. I’m not sure if I’ve done anything to be worthy of this great honor, but it’s humbling for me to be named a distinguished alumnus from an institution that has the respect and prestige that Lamar enjoys.

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PAUL FREGIA grew up with his maternal grandmother’s southern “comfort” food on the Sunday dinner table. As a tribute to her, in 1994, Fregia established Grandma Maud’s Inc., a Chicago-based company dedicated to bringing this traditional American cuisine to the masses with convenient preparation that even his grandmother would endorse.

His career began as a 1981 graduate of Lamar University with a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering. He also earned a master’s degree in business administration from the Krannert Graduate School of Management at Purdue University.

“Going from electrical engineer to food service really isn’t as dramatic as one may think,” he said. “Like most engineers, I ended up in management. Container Corp. of America was owned by Mobil Oil, and I was being trained as an officer of the company. It was that experience that led me to earn the MBA.” Corporate and entrepreneurial management have become hallmarks of his career. He has served as a business consultant to Tiger Woods for more than five years. He was an original member of “Team Tiger,” responsible for orchestrating the transformation of the young phenom into a professional golfer. He was the agent for the best-selling book Training a Tiger, authored by Earl Woods, and was the founding executive director of the Tiger Woods Foundation. Fregia has also held management positions with Hewlett-Packard and Danzoo Corp. He is a recipient of the prestigious Chicago Tribune’s Good Eating Award and is an inductee into the National African-American Culinary Arts & Hospitality Museum.

The attrition rate for black students in engineering became a matter of concern for Fregia, and, with the guidance of Richard Price, retiring Lamar University professor of mathematics, he was instrumental in chartering the Lamar chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers. His involvement with this organization and with other student organizations on campus continues today. Fregia said, “With all the positive changes that have happened at Lamar in the past 10 years, it’s practically a new school.”

Fregia is married to Dr. Adrienne Fregia and they have two children, Danielle and Preston.
Looking ahead and give back

Want to leave a legacy? Create opportunity for others? Help future generations realize their potential through the gift of education? Make your dream come true for the university you love.

“Properly structured planned gifts can allow you to realize income tax and capital gains tax savings as well as reduce your exposure to estate taxes. They can provide lifetime income for you or future benefits for your family.”

—FLOYD McSPADDER

A growing number of Lamar University’s friends are enjoying the benefits and satisfaction of planned gifts that help both donor and student.

“With a little planning, a gift to the university can help achieve your financial, philanthropic and estate-planning goals,” said Floyd McSpadden, director of planned giving at Lamar since June 1.

“Properly structured planned gifts can allow you to realize income tax and capital gains tax savings as well as reduce your exposure to estate taxes. They can provide lifetime income for you or future benefits for your family. Planned gifts can be much larger than other gifts, so you can leave a legacy that fits your philanthropic goals.”

McSpadden said: “These goals can be met through planned giving strategies.”

Planned giving is a significant part of Investing in The Future: The Campaign for Lamar University. More than $58 million has been raised in the comprehensive campaign. Planned gifts are expected to become an important part of the funds raised toward the campaign’s $100 million goal, said Camille Mouton, vice president for university advancement.

Planned Giving is a complex program of various financial instruments that can be adapted to each donor’s needs and requires consideration and planning in light of the donor’s overall estate plan, McSpadden said.

“With your goals in mind, we can work with you and your professional advisors to find the strategies that work best for you,” McSpadden said. “Just give us a call.”

Floyd F. McSpadden Jr.
Director, Planned Giving, University Advancement
(409) 880-8422 | Floyd.McSpadden@lamar.edu

A member of the state bar since 1973, McSpadden has been board certified in estate planning and probate law since 1994 and was a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas. He is a member of the Real Estate, Probate & Trust Section of the State Bar of Texas.