Grads go global
Alumni build companies, revolutionize thinking and inspire others

Views expand through study abroad opportunities
Global LU
Cardinals are influential at home and abroad, their reach limited only by their imagination. For the alumni and students featured in this issue, their time at LU prepared them to seek opportunity and capitalize on it for success across the globe—whether entrepreneurial, corporate or philanthropic. At Lamar University, a Texas state of mind motivates graduates to become leaders.

Amy Becerra ’14 Spain
Miguel Elarba ’90 Venezuela
Thomas "Tomcat" Sewell ’84 Britain
Jack Albrecht ’88 Austria
Anita Riddle ’93, ’96 U.S.
Yolanda Conyers ’97 U.S. & China
Gideon Tibor ’85 Israel
Jishnu Kinwar ’01 India
Gerald White ’84 Philippines
Kelly Kirkpatrick ’96 Canada
Jack Everts ’79 Canada
Allan Bounds ’91, ’95 U.S.
Kelvin Collard ’80 U.S.
Valerie Segovia ’15 U.S.
Tipton Golias ’59 U.S.
Hermann Ortega ’67, ’72 U.S.
Noor Khan Ibrahim Khan ’87 Malaysia
Szilvia Game ’01 Australia

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designed by ANGELIA DESIGN
From the President

As you read this summer issue of Cadence, know that we are actively preparing for perhaps one of the busiest academic years in recent history. With the many existing and new programs and departments on campus, Lamar University is expanding its offerings and welcoming new administration.

We have three new deans, including Dennis Holtschulte as the dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, Srivani Palanuk as the dean of the College of Engineering and Robert Spina as dean of the College of Education and Human Development. James Margariu joins us as provost and vice president of academic affairs.

You will see in the following pages just how global our alumni and students truly are. With many alumni working now or in the past around the world, each has a unique story. LU students are featured during their recent travels through countries like Spain, Argentina and Panama among other travels.

Along with a world-view of LU, this issue features many other happenings and leadership of the institution. Sincerely,

Kenneth R. Evans, President

The Lamar University President’s Circle was created by President Evans to recognize extraordinarily committed individuals who have chosen to provide ongoing support to further the success of Lamar University. These dedicated alumni and friends are taking the lead by making a commitment to help the young men and women of Lamar University achieve their dreams and enable faculty to reach more ambitious goals.

Wont’ you join them?

Members are able to support the strategic priorities that are most meaningful to them. There are limitless opportunities available to make a difference. These influential donors are touching lives every day with generous gifts to support academics, scholarships, research, internships and more.

President’s Circle members

- are a network of Lamar University supporters, valuable to the President and leadership of the institution
- uphold and promote excellence in the educational experience at Lamar University
- provide funds for continued growth and distinction in chosen areas

President’s Circle members gain unique privileges, including special communication opportunities, reserved seating at selected university events, invitations to exclusive activities and unique opportunities to interact with students. Membership is open to individual alumni and friends of Lamar University based on varying contribution levels.

Spindletop $1,000,000
Ruby $500,000
Gold $250,000
Silver—Young Alumni $6,850
(10 years or less born first degree)

Diamond $250,000
Platinum $50,000
Silver $12,500

To become a member, call Lamar University Advancement, (409) 880-8422.

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To begin your own endowment or to add a gift to an existing endowment, please contact the Lamar University Foundation at (409) 880-2177.
The Glass Menagerie
Chloe Sullivan of Kountze as Amanda Wingfield; Sydney Haygood of Friendswood as Laura Wingfield; and Chaz Romero of Orangefield as Tom Wingfield

Le Grand Bal
Le Grand Bal celebrated its 40th anniversary in honor of the “Legends of the Arts” in Southeast Texas during a gala evening of dining and dancing March 28 in the Dishman Art Museum and Montagne Center.
1. Co-chairs for Le Grand Bal: Legends of the Arts, Mandie and Dr. Garrett Peel with Keith Carter ’70
2. Susan and Russ Schultz, dean of College of Fine Arts and Communication, with Ball honorary guest artist John Alexander ’68
3. Party Crashers band at Le Grand Bal
4. Le Grand Bal honorees Michele (Yennie) ’88 and Mitch Smith
5. Le Grand Bal committee members

Texas State University System night at the Houston Live Stock Show and Rodeo.
Juan Zabala ’07, Peggy Zabala, Clayton Lau ’69, Pam (Dugan) Springer ’69, Jerrol Springer. Both Clayton and Pam are volunteers with the rodeo.

LU bestows three honorary doctorates
During the commencement ceremony Dec. 13, President Kenneth Evans awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters degrees to LU friend and philanthropist Regina Rogers and to outstanding alumni Vann (V.J.) ’59, ’62 and Will Creavalle ’77. Pictured, Provost Steve and Suzye Doblin, with Regina Rogers.

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Christopher Troutman, assistant professor of drawing, accepted the grand prize at the 66th Miyazaki Sougou Art Exhibition, which includes a paid trip to Paris, France, this summer. He will exhibit artwork inspired by his trip at Friendswood’s President’s Circle Art Museum in October.

Eleanor Garrett receives a President’s Circle plaque from Joan Zabala ’61 at Garrett Industries headquarters in Garland. She and her late husband Charles Garrett ’59, ’61-HD, were inducted into the President’s Circle last October.

Joel Grothe, assistant professor of theatre, appeared in the Houston Grand Opera’s production of “Das Rheingold,” April 18 - May 3.

Brian LeTraunik, theatre instructor, will be the resident fight director and stage combat instructor at Central City Opera in Colorado this summer.

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Scholarship Recognition Dinner

Scholarship recipients met the donors who made their scholarships possible during the Scholarship Recognition Dinner April 22 in the University Reception Center on the eighth floor of the Mary and John Gray Library.

1. Frank and Nancy Newton from the Beaumont Foundation, right, along with the Southeast Texas Legends Scholarship recipients and Ted Stuberfield, left, director of the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities. Frank is president and CEO of the Beaumont Foundation of America.

2. Dr. Mark Kubala, left, with Distinguished Alumna Susan Williams Emmerson, left; President Emeritus James Simmons; Dean Robertos Alexino Del Lyle, 43, 56-63, and Marciment (Hendson) Lyle, 105.


4. Juan Zabala, left, vice president for University Advancement, and Peggy Zabala.

5. Mike ’77 and JoAnn Bonura, Josh ’14 and Lauren Bonura along with recipients of the Alicia Christine Bonura Memorial Scholarship in Engineering.


8. Lamar University Foundation Trustee Terry and Lou Ann (Dean) Garth ’79; President Emeritus James Simmons, Distinguished Alumnus Don Lyle 63, 66-69, and Maryann (Johnson) Lyle 105.

9. Lewis and Nancy Newton from the Beaumont Foundation, right, along with the Southeast Texas Legends Scholarship recipients and Ted Stuberfield, left, director of the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities. Frank is president and CEO of the Beaumont Foundation of America.

10. Larry ’73 and Cynthia (Sweany) Nonnou 72 with their scholarship recipients. Larry serves on the College of Engineering Advisory Council.

11. President Ken and Nancy Evans

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2015 Scholarship Dinner

Lamar University

Dr. Mark Kubala, left, with Distinguished Alumna Susan Williams Emmerson, left; President Emeritus James Simmons; Dean Robertos Alexino Del Lyle, 43, 56-63, and Marciment (Hendson) Lyle, 105.
When Amy Becerra ’14 crossed the stage a year ago and received her bachelor’s degree in psychology, she became the first in her family to obtain a college degree. A few years before, she had been the first in her family to earn a high school diploma.

Soon her commitment to education would take her even farther. As a recipient of a 2015-16 Fulbright U.S. Student Award, she will return to Spain as an English teaching assistant. While an LU undergraduate, she was a McNair Scholar and visited Spain in 2013 during the summer as part of her McNair research. She presented her work at a symposium at Harvard University last year. Since graduation, Becerra has been working on her post-baccalaureate classes for a teaching certification at LU and teaching full time at Memorial High School in her hometown of Port Arthur. She plans to pursue a Ph.D. in community psychology with the goal of teaching at a university, and sees teaching as a way to gain experience she believes will help realize her goal of creating mentoring programs for at-risk and first-generation students and as a way of giving back to the community.

As a first-generation minority, Becerra credits her education for improving her quality of life for herself and her family. “My parents came to the United States from Mexico, not knowing the language, in hopes of providing a better life for their children,” Becerra said. “Their example in how they were able to succeed and adapt in a new environment was so inspirational for me.”

“When I first went to Lamar University I had no idea what to expect,” she said. “My first exposure was being a part of the learning community in the psychology department. Through that experience, I learned of so many different things, including the McNair scholarship program.” Because she lacked experience with higher education, it was Judith Mann, associate professor of psychology, and McNair program director Daniel-la Medley who opened her eyes to the possibility of studying abroad. Mann and Medley introduced her to Norma Zarozsa, an instructor in English and modern languages at LU. “I started talking to her about study abroad, and she really encouraged me,” she said. “We talked about scholarships and other avenues. When I went to Spain in 2013, it was one of the best experiences of my life.”

Her Fulbright experience begins Sept. 7 and runs through June 2016. She will assist teachers and staff at a secondary school in Madrid with English language classes. She also plans to establish a community garden as part of her experience there. “Based on research I’ve done in psychology, students and people in general tend to be happier when they are more in tune with nature,” she said. She hopes to integrate the community garden into the education experience and see it continue to be enjoyed long beyond her time there.

In the months before she boards her flight for Spain, Becerra is learning about what life will be like in Spain’s capital of more than three million people. She also is connecting with the 40 or more colleagues in the program who will also be in Spain. “They will be my family away from home,” she said. “There will be a lot of collaboration with each other’s projects. It is really a well-rounded group of people, and I am really excited about working with them.”

“When I came to LU four years ago I had no idea that I would be able to go abroad, much less stay a year in Spain,” Becerra said. “That is something I thought was out of my reach.”
When he was old enough Miguel Elarba ‘90 joined his brothers in the family business, where most sons went to work. After high school, buoyed by the desire to attain an education and become an engineer, Elarba made the journey to the U.S. and enrolled at Lamar University in the College of Engineering. His dream came true in 1990 when he graduated as a mechanical engineer.

“By offering quality products, good service and personal attention, we have been able to maintain a thriving business in spite of the political challenges in my country,” he said. “Running a business in Venezuela can be difficult, but you get accustomed to the changing political climate; however, there is still plenty of opportunity to grow a business. We still have major international companies coming to Venezuela to do business.”

Elarba credits Lamar University instructors for giving him the knowledge to succeed in international business. The small class sizes were very good for him because it allowed Elarba to develop personal relationships with his professors. According to him, the professors really engaged the students, and “even though you may not particularly enjoy the class, the way they taught the classes made you see things for what they really were.” He recalls a particular design course where the main project for the semester was to figuratively climb a tree and cut the limbs of the tree. “The way the professors taught us to approach a problem and come to a viable solution made a huge difference in the way I approach any problem today,” he said. “The education I received at LU, in the business that I’m in, helped me a lot. I prepared for this world we’re now in.”

He supplemented his LU education with a certification in business administration from Harvard University in 2004. The certification was geared toward managing small to mid-size companies. It’s tradition in Venezuela to pass the family business to the next generation. Elarba has a son who will graduate from high school this year and he has high expectations for him. “While he is currently undecided if he wants to major in engineering, he will definitely be attending Lamar University.”

Coaching the fundamentals of life

Thomas “Tomcat” Sewell ’84 was drafted by the Philadelphia 76ers in the first round of the 1984 NBA draft, alongside the likes of Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Akeem Olajuwon and John Stockton. He came to Lamar University in 1981 from Amarillo Jr. College to play basketball. He studied physical education and finished his collegiate basketball career as All-American, All-Southland Conference and SLC Player of the Year in 1984. He helped the Cards to three playoff appearances, two SLC conference championships, two NIT tournaments and one NCAA tournament appearance.

He spent the next 18 years playing professional basketball, winning five scoring titles in Europe and South America and earning the most valuable player designation in the Switzerland basketball league in 1987. Sewell eventually made the transition to coaching basketball in Switzerland, Holland, Cyprus, Mexico and England, before meeting some like-minded people in London who shared his interest in mentoring young basketball players.

For the past 13 years, Sewell has spent his time working with young people as the director, administrator and coach of Hoop Dreams Basketball Club, the basketball program he founded in London. The program focuses on helping youth develop good fundamental basketball skills to become better players who can compete for scholarships or play in European basketball leagues. The program is a non-profit organization and relies heavily on grant funding, which he also manages.

“When you’re coaching, it’s all about winning,” Sewell said. “If you don’t win, you’re gone. What I’m doing isn’t about winning. For me, it’s all about helping young people reach their goals by mentoring them and instilling in them a sense of discipline. There are other more important things in life than basketball.”

His stellar basketball career led to his induction into the Lamar University Hall of Fame in 1991. According to Sewell, being at LU was life-changing and will always have a special place in his heart. “It was a great experience, and looking back, I realize how fortunate I was to be able to have that opportunity,” he said.

“The right tools for success

When he was old enough Miguel Elarba ’90 joined his brothers in the family business, as most sons do in Venezuela. After high school, buoyed by the desire to attain an education and become an engineer, Elarba made the journey to the U.S. and enrolled at Lamar University in the College of Engineering. His dream came true in 1990 when he graduated as a mechanical engineer.

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Courting customers throughout the world

The first time John “Jack” Albrecht ’88 got on a jet plane was when his employer sent him on an international assignment. “It was a monstrous adventure,” he said. “I grew immensely as a professional by taking an international position. When I look back over my career as a self-employed person, my only regrets are things I didn’t try.”

Albrecht is the general manager of Albrecht Software Consulting (ACo) located in Vienna, Austria. The business offers systems consulting and process calcula-
tions for the process energy industries (gas, chemical, power and renewables) and in now branching out to consumer products. Albrecht opened for business in 1994. When the company won a huge project in 2005, beating out companies 100 times bigger than ACo, their competitor began to respect them, Albrecht said. He now has two offices in Vienna with six employees and 11 contractors providing products and services to customers throughout the world, but concentrating on Europe. “We are really good at what we do,” he said.

Opening his own business in a foreign country was a bold decision for Albrecht. At the time, he had been working in Vienna as a consultant for Setpoint for several years. “I discovered that being an engineer with a broad background who could understand computer programs and apply them to process know-how was not very common,” he said. “When I quit and started my own company, I got paid better, but I had to learn not just how to do business—accounting, forms, taxes—but business in a foreign country.”

Albrecht majored in electrical engineering while at Lamar University, combined with what he describes as the equivalent of a business minor, though at the time there was no official designation. His LU professors prepared Albrecht for his future career path by emphasizing a key message. “They made it very clear at Lamar University that anywhere you work as an engineer, you’re going to be in business,” he said. “The math is important, but at the end of the day, you’ve got to be innovative to make products your customers need without unlimited time or money. Nobody pays you to have a big brain. As an employee or customer, if you don’t have something to put in my products or services to help sell them, I don’t care how smart you are. You’ve got to deliver value. That was excellent preparation for the real world and an awesome starting point, even though I didn’t know where my career would go.”

Albrecht provides management and sales for the business, but he still does technical work as well. “I enjoy it, and it keeps me sharp,” he said. “It keeps my street cred. If I was just a manager, I would lose touch with the technical aspects which could hurt me in bidding for a project.”

Building a legacy is one motivation for Albrecht. “Some of the systems we built have been in operation for 10 to 15 years, functioning day in, day out,” he said. “And there is our logo on the screen, helping those businesses run their plants and make their products. That’s what keeps me coming in to work. For example, we have a new project building a plant in about six months, this customer will have new software working that they will use every day, and it will help them make their plant more profitable. That’s a cool feeling.”

In deciding to go out on his own, Albrecht purposely decided to stay in Vienna and leave the engineering career ladder that many major corporations require, sending managers to Dusseldorf one year and Singapore the next, he described. “I love living in Vienna,” he said. “I’ve been here more than 20 years, and I’m still impressed with the beauty and history of this city. The quality of life here is awesome—clean air, clean streets, guaranteed health care—though the taxes are horrendous.”

Albrecht has maintained his American citizenship. He and his wife, Lara, intend to remain in Vienna, but would like to have a vacation home in Hawaii once they retire. As an expat, Albrecht blends in well. “My father’s family name, Albrecht, comes from Prussia, what is now the southern part of Poland and the northern part of Czechoslovakia, he said. “If I don’t open my mouth, no one knows I am a foreigner.”

In the offices of ACo, everyone speaks German, including Albrecht. However, international business is often conducted in English. Being a native English-speaker is an advantage in writing contracts and providing customer service, Albrecht said.

To be successful in any small business, ambition and organization are necessary, according to Albrecht. “A small business person is always prioritizing because you have to keep a lot of balls in the air,” he said.

Albrecht recently started a second business in cloth-
ing as an investment and to diversify. Though ACo has a niche market, competitors willing to work cheaper are always a factor. He notes that when he started his business in Vienna, Austria was on the edge of what was defined as Europe. Now the EU has 28 countries, and Austria is geographically central.

Albrecht returns occasionally to the U.S. He still has family in Houston, where he grew up. He recently attended a major technical conference in America to stay current, network and to listen for issues his business can address. “A medium-sized refiner will spend $1 billion on crude,” he said. “If you can improve the process by half a percent, that’s a lot of money.”
The rapid growth of China’s economy in the past decade, bring the prospect that this increased economic activity could bolster China’s GDP to surpass that of the U.S. in less than 15 years, American business students have been finding ways to study in the east to learn more about the culture and how Eastern ideas might influence Western economics.

For years, the MBA in China summer study abroad program has offered graduate students the opportunity of studying contemporary business and industry in China. “In the past only graduate students in the MBA program could participate,” said Jeff Palis, director of Global Studies and Study Abroad. Now undergraduate students can participate in a unique experience to refine their appreciation for both eastern and western business practices.

Opening the program to undergraduates this year provided an opportunity for upper-class business majors to study abroad with LU instead of seeking programs with other universities or agencies. Junior business management major Jacob Martin had dreamed for years of going to China and was looking into other programs.

“I have always wanted to go to China, and I saw that we had a business program incorporating study abroad yearly. I thought, ‘there’s my opportunity,’” said Martin. “Once I saw that this group was open to undergrads, I jumped at the opportunity to participate.”

The Business in the 21st Century course is an 11-day trip that includes facilitated interactions with significant international enterprises and cultural activities in the cities of Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Beijing. Janie and Mark Steinhagen created the Steinhagen Global Fellowships to cover the costs of study abroad for graduate business students. This year, one faculty member and four students traveled to China as Steinhagen Global Fellows.

The trip, led annually by John Pate of Sinogate, an international business consultant agency, guides students through the country, where they experience regional cuisine and indulge in new sights while rubbing elbows with major executives.

The business meetings varied from presentations by Hong Kong bankers to Guangzhou executive meetings and factory tours. Students witnessed the workings of major corporations, from concept to finished product. At the Crocs Factory, students learned about the ups and down the company has experienced and strategies it is implementing to build its consumer base.

“Not everything at Crocs is the foam shoe with the holes. Now they are trying out topsider styles, canvas lines and other things,” MBA student Hilary Allen said. “Upstairs, employees were manufacturing a different line with the foam bottom and hand-sewing all the canvas parts in an assembly line.”

During their stay in China, students took advantage of many modes of transportation, including subway, rail car and a pedicab—a rickshaw pedaled by a bicycle—to visit significant landmarks and other points of interest. Students also had fun sampling the six different types of cuisines, tobogganing down the Great Wall in Beijing and haggling over prices in markets.

Vivek Natarajan, associate professor of marketing and this year’s faculty study abroad sponsor, found the trip not only taught students about international business practices and supply chains in China, but also helped them develop a positive, global perspective by taking them outside of their comfort zone.

“Students have picked up a good attitude. They have a healthy appreciation for global culture, but they also are very proud to be from the United States,” Natarajan said.
Using an engineering approach to purchasing

For Anita Riddle ’93, ’96, shopping is a science. The procurement manager for ExxonMobil was educated as an engineer, and she uses an engineering approach to purchasing. “I use my chemical engineering training where we model oil refining and chemical processes to model global purchasing processes in new ways,” she explained. “We try to simplify supply chain for everyday products necessary for manufacturing every day around the world. I am responsible for modernizing how ExxonMobil buys materials and services to maintain global operations. I also lead global analysis of how ExxonMobil spends to find better sourcing strategies.”

Riddle, who earned a master of engineering management degree and a doctor of engineering degree from LU, is based at ExxonMobil’s new campus in Spring, Texas. She often does business with companies in Canada, the Czech Republic, Argentina and Thailand and has visited Australia, Singapore, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and Germany. Riddle also speaks Spanish, and that helps her feel more confident traveling in Europe and South America. She knows a little bit of German too. “I wish I knew Mandarin and Russian,” she said. Even though English is the language of business, she added, it’s still wise to learn another language if you only speak English.

Riddle’s favorite international destination is the Patagonia region at the southern end of South America, shared by Argentina and Chile. “It’s the most beautiful mountain range interspersed with lakes and little towns,” she said. “It’s an out-of-the-way paradise.”

Previously analyzing and inventing better ways to process oil, now Riddle analyzes and invents better ways to optimize purchasing. As the procurement manager for a huge global corporation, she wants to make the supply chain “greener” and more socially responsible. “We analyze our supply chain for environmental and social responsibility factors to make sure our suppliers are good corporate and global citizens,” she said. That’s challenging because hundreds of thousands of products are purchased each year from an extensive number of suppliers. She works with huge databases and creates algorithms to accomplish this task. “It’s a new combination of expertise,” she said. “I’m known in ExxonMobil for being strong in data analysis and finding new opportunities to improve through very large data sets.”

Riddle originally chose the field of engineering because of her father, John Riddle. He was an engineer in the copper mining industry in her hometown of Bisbee, Ariz. “I wanted to be an engineer because my dad was the best problem solver I’d ever met,” she said. He also was a leader—a superintendent of mines—and his workers admired him. “I wanted to be a leader in an engineering field too,” she added. At one point though, she aspired to be an astronaut. “My dad convinced me that an engineering degree was more versatile, and he was right,” she admitted.

The engineer/procurement professional chose LU’s engineering program because of its excellent reputation and the benefits Beaumont offered. At the time, she was single and wanted to live in a city that had a solid oil and gas industry, a university and just getting out of the U.S. Army. She wanted to attend graduate school and an Army Reserve unit. She had job offers in New Orleans, Houston and Beaumont and took a position in Beaumont as a process engineer for Mobil (before the merger with Exxon). “I wanted a practical, relevant advanced degree project that I could immediately apply to my job,” she said. “It is a perfect match for a person working in an oil refinery.”

She credits her engineering professors with teaching her the latest technologies to solve problems in the refinery—new ways to model processes and analyze data. Jack Hopper, former professor of chemical engineering and dean emeritus of the College of Engineering, was her mentor. “He gave me confidence to apply these new things to an existing refinery, and it worked!” she said. “I was able to optimize the equipment and then process flows through the equipment that had never been done before.”

The alumna is still active with LU, serving on the College of Engineering Advisory Council and the Chemical Engineering Advisory Council. She also was elected to Lamar University Foundation’s board of trustees.

Riddle is confident and analytical. “I’m a bold analyst,” she said. Leadership and innovation also are important to her. “I have been mentored well, and I love mentoring people,” she said. “I have been blessed at ExxonMobil to have bosses who believe in me. It’s a cocoon of invention.”
Working together a world apart

Although she now calls Austin home, Yolanda Conyers ’89 spends about half her year traveling the globe as vice president of worldwide functions for human resources and chief diversity officer for Lenovo, a global personal technology company with more than 60,000 employees. “It’s important for me to connect with employees in our 60 countries across the globe to help them solve problems and inspire solutions,” Conyers says. “In the past few weeks, my travels have taken me to Barcelona, Beijing and Raleigh, N.C.”

Conyers joined Lenovo in 2007 after the $3.9 billion Chinese-based company acquired IBM’s personal computer division and sought to merge Eastern and Western business approaches. “Our goal was to leverage the strengths—skills, products, services and brand—worldwide by integrating both companies as quickly as possible,” Conyers says.

Her hire as chief diversity officer was a first for a company of Chinese heritage, but the company’s “beyond diversity” policy encompasses more than just race and gender. “This policy is about how to acquire and weave into the fabric of the company the skills, experiences, cultures and other elements that make each Lenovo employee unique, from the factory level to executive management,” she said. “Our goal is to encourage and welcome different perspectives, different cultures and different backgrounds to be part of our discussions and collaborative efforts to make the most of doing business was not understood or well received, and I needed to better understand their work styles and, in turn, adapt mine. At Lenovo, we call this a zero mindset,” she said.

From Texas Instruments, Conyers moved on to Dell where she worked progressively in leadership positions in product development, sales, human resources and procurement, rising to the company’s executive team before being recruited to Lenovo. At Lenovo, Conyers has throughout her tenure promoted diversity in the workforce and told the conference attendees and organization culture and design.


One of the most important lessons Conyers learned along the way was the value of taking risks. After a disastrous conference call with Lenovo’s founders and a translator, she made a decision: “I knew that in order to efficiently make this cultural integration of East and West work, I needed to get out of my comfort zone and move to Beijing,” she said. For three years, she moved her family, which includes her husband and two sons, to a city of 23 million where English is not the primary language. Her family and friends in Port Arthur peppered her with questions about her “crazy move and the cultural differences that I was now facing on a daily basis.”

Part of her intention was to learn to operate in an Eastern culture so that she could translate the approach for Western colleagues. Initially, she encountered problems. “My Western style of doing business was not understood or well received, and I needed to better understand their work styles and, in turn, adapt mine. At Lenovo, we call this a zero mindset,” she said. “In the first year, I started to see myself and my entire family shift in terms of being more open and less judgmental about other cultures and points of view. It turned out to be an incredibly rewarding journey.”

Just as Conyers family learned to adapt to a new culture, Conyers has worked diligently to help her colleagues across the globe adapt in integrating multiple cultures into a singular successful corporation that is now the number one personal computer company in the world and a growing provider of smart phones, tablets and other devices. She identifies three key strategies for achieving success.

“The first is that you must include respect for diverse cultures or teamwork across cultures as a core value for the company, which Lenovo does. Second, you must provide cross-cultural training to help employees understand different cultures in the company and to define a common way of working and communicating together,” she said. Lenovo has done this through its managing across cultures course, which helps build better understanding, trust and plans for working together effectively.

“The third strategy for successful cultural integration is having leaders who are fully engaged from the very beginning and who actually walk the talk,” she said. To continue delivering on these strategies, the company has defined key actions it calls the “Five Ps” to guide its accountability: “plan before we pledge, perform as we promise, prioritize company first, practice improving every day, and pioneer new products/next frontiers.”

Wherever the next frontier or next flight takes Conyers, she is sure to take with her a problem-solving approach and appreciation for diversity as a core strength in building global business.

Beth Gallaspy


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Beneath the waves

uch of Earth’s geological record, as well as vast resources that can benefit mankind, lies beneath the waves covering 71 percent of the world’s surface. To explore that world of lakes, seas and oceans, senior research scientist and senior lecturer Gideon Tibor ’85 draws on a myriad of disciplines and the latest technologies.

He became interested in studying the ocean after serving more than five years as a patrol boat commander and a navigational officer on missile boats in the Israeli Navy. His journey to LU began after he left the service and decided to visit his father who worked at the World Bank in Washington, DC. “I decided to start my studies in the U.S., and, after applying to and visiting several universities, I chose Lamar University!” Tibor said, in part because the biology department chair accepted him into the program and acknowledged the considerable experience Tibor had already gained at sea and through relevant courses he had taken while at the Israeli Naval academy.

Foremost in his memories of his LU days is a field trip across the Gulf of Mexico from Beaumont to Key West. “It was the first and last time I ate a shark that we caught,” he said. During his career, his shark that we caught,” he said. During his career, his studies have focused on the late Tertiary tectonic and sedimentary evolution of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee and on quantifying basin analysis of the Late Tertiary sedimentary evolution of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee and on the environmental status of Israel’s neighboring seas and inland water bodies and predicting their response to external disturbances whether of human or natural origin. During the past 20 years, Tibor has organized and led many high-resolution marine geophysical research cruises in and around Israel and has received numerous national and international research grants. In 2008, he expanded his role when he joined the Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences in Haifa University as a part-time senior lecturer in the Department of Marine Geosciences. Currently, he is “teaching the training courses at Haifa University where the students learn how to plan, collect and process geophysical, geological, physical and geochemical data.”

In addition to the study of the Messinian Event, he continues to use remotely operated underwater vehicles and other autonomous vehicles, and to assist in search and rescue missions when needed. “My goal is to refit the Bat Galim into a ‘mini’ R/V Nautilus,” Tibor said.

Tibor holds a M.Sc. and a Ph.D. in marine geophysics from Tel-Aviv University. His primary research objectives include the evolution of the Sea of Galilee and the Gulf of Elat/Aqaba, the Messinian salinity crisis and its influence on Eastern Mediterranean processes, and developing innovative ways to monitor water quality in real-time using remote sensing platforms (e.g., satellites, airborne hyperspectral sensors, drone and stationary multispectral cameras).

His doctoral research, published in 1992, focused on quantitative basin analysis of the Late Tertiary Levant passive continental margin in the Eastern Mediterranean and its implications to the understanding of the salinity crisis called the Messinian event. During the Late Miocene, the Mediterranean Sea underwent periods of drying and partial filling, and more than one million cubic kilometers of evaporates were deposited in it.

In 2000, Tibor joined the Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research Institute as a senior scientist specializing in high-resolution marine geophysics and ocean color remote sensing. The national research institutions (similar to NOAA) is the government's scientific advisor. It seeks to develop knowledge for the sustained use and protection of Israel’s marine, coastal and freshwater resources. The IOLR’s staff of about 180 scientists, engineers, technicians and support personnel, as well as visiting scientists and graduate students, conducts scientific research in oceanography, limnology, marine biology, biotechnology, addressing issues of national, regional and global relevance. In fulfillment of its mandate as a national institution, much of IOLR’s scientific effort is focused on research, monitoring and assessment of the environmental status of Israel’s neighboring seas and inland water bodies and predicting their response to external disturbances whether of human or natural origin.

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In addition to the study of the Messinian Event, he has developed a way to monitor water quality in near real-time using ocean color remote sensing, taken a multi-disciplinary approach to studying the evolution of Lake Kinneret, and researched the evolution of the Gulf of Elat/Aqaba, providing new data for dating the tectonic processes of the region.
With more than 1.2 billion people, the Republic of India is the second-most populous country on Earth and the most populous democracy in the world. A pluralistic, multilingual and multi-ethnic society, it also is rapidly becoming one of the world’s largest Internet savvy populations.

Few can see that better than Jishnu Kinwar ’01. With more than 15 years experience in developing and managing product platforms with a focus on payments, financial systems and digital content delivery, he is now head of information technology for Times Internet Ltd., India’s largest digital products company. Kinwar has a finger on the pulse of all things digital and has plans in place to keep his company the leader in digital content delivery.

Times Internet is the digital venture of Times of India Group, a long standing leader in the print business, as well as an emerging leader in other forms of media, including radio, TV, magazines and more. The group’s key brands include the world’s largest English daily newspaper and second-largest financial daily newspaper, as well as India’s largest women’s and English film magazines, largest FM radio network, and the nation’s leading English news, business news and entertainment channels. Since its inception in 1999, Times Internet has led the Internet revolution in India and now has more than 40 million unique visitors monthly.

“The Internet is a great leveler,” Kinwar said. “It has allowed aggregation of a lot of small service providers, and it has allowed smaller cities to access the same goods as the major metros.” The Internet also is increasingly important to the nation politically. “During May 2014 elections, we experienced seven times more traffic on our sites as the winning side used social media and the Internet extensively.”

In addition to being the nation’s leading Internet network, Times Internet also is a business incubation center. There, Kinwar is responsible for strategic planning for next-generation services ensuring the company will be on the cutting edge of digital content delivery. “Our CEO, Satyan Gajwani, defines Times Internet to be more like Sequoia Capital and less like Yahoo. We invest in individuals and ideas and support those ideas so they can become No. 1 in their domain. The goal is to create and fund independent businesses and empower the business heads to make decisions that any entrepreneur would in his or her own company.”
I would not be where I am without my degree in computer science from Lamar University.”

—JISHNU KINWAR

Guiding that development involves all of the technologies of the constantly evolving Internet-world—on a mammoth scale. But most significant to his success is Kinwar’s staff of around 50 highly skilled and talented people.

“Setting goals and aligning everyone’s interest in achieving those goals is what makes teams function,” he said. “Giving people a lot of freedom, then rewarding and recognizing their work is important. At the end of the day, life has a weird way of working out. Do good and good things will happen.”

Before joining the Times, Kinwar was with Eko India Financial Services, from 2011 to 2014, as vice president for retail sales and distribution, after serving as its vice president of technology. Previous to this he served as director of IT operations for Lime Labs, building a 24/7 global team in the U.S., India and Europe; director of system software services for EPL in Birmingham, Ala., senior network engineer for Texas Home Health, and a system administrator for Lamar University.

Kinwar holds a bachelor’s degree in engineering from Maharshi Dayanand University, New Delhi, an M.S. in computer science from T.U., and an MBA from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

He was initially attracted to Lamar University in part because Beaumont offered a lower cost of living than many other options. He soon learned it “was considered one the best schools for people trying to change careers because of the rigorous curriculum,” he said.

Despite Kinwar’s background in chemical engineering, Larry Osborne, chair of the Department of Computer Science, encouraged him to pursue a new field. “I had to take six additional classes to catch up, and that turned out to be the best decision. I would not be where I am without my degree in computer science from Lamar University,” he said.

Air defense to biz offense

Military veteran Capt. Gerald White’s drive to achieve excellence in his military career translated to determined entrepreneurial spirit as a business career that started as a pharmaceutical sales representative. Today, White ‘84 is president and chairman of the board for Edge Medical Devices and Services.

The company, headquartered in the Philippines capital of Manila, promotes and distributes vascular intervention products primarily focused on the dialysis market’s cardiovascular needs.

White began his journey at Lamar University, coming a bachelor’s degree in government in 1984. After graduation, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and began a distinguished military career, reaching the rank of captain. White is credited with being the first Marine Corps officer to score 100 percent on the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation System in the surface-to-air missile air defense system (HAWK and Stinger missiles). Because he consistently ranked No. 1 against peers in performance evaluations, he was selected for the Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course for air defense officers and pilots, a counterpart to the Navy’s Topgun Fighter Weapons School.

He left the military in 1989 to begin a career as a pharmaceutical sales representative with TAP Pharmaceuticals in California, specializing in treatments for prostate, urology and gynecological disorders.

Advancing rapidly through a number of promotions with the company, White eventually became regional sales director for pharmaceutical rival AstaZeneca, leading a team of 11 district sales managers and more than 120 sales representatives covering California and Arizona.

In 2008, White founded Edge Medical Devices and Services Inc. distributor of cardiac rhythm management devices such as pacemakers, implantable cardioverter defibrillators, cardiac resynchronization therapy and other cardiology diagnostic products. Sales for the year ending in 2012 grew more than 300 percent with the formation of a separate division within the company to sell coronary and peripheral stents and balloons for angioplasty.

“Starting the business in the Philippines was more fortuitous than planned,” White said. “I originally attempted to start the business in southern California where I was working and living for many years, but the two manufacturers I approached decided not to give me a contract.”

A former cardiology customer, who was a native of the Philippines, suggested he should start the business in his native country. The suggestion at the time, according to White, was intended as a joke; however, after looking into the possibilities and conducting some research by phone, two weeks later he was on a plane to Manila. He contacted a manufacturing agent in Taiwan responsible for growing the Southeast Asian market who agreed to meet him in Manila and discuss the promising market.

“After conducting some market research locally, the agent arrived and saw first-hand what I described in terms of market opportunity. I was offered a contract from the same company that turned me down in California,” White said. “We are the first Biotronik distributor in the country to promote their cardiac rhythm management products.”

Edge Medical Devices and Services now has a sister company, CardioSource Medical Equipment, adding diagnostic equipment to the portfolio. “That expansion is part of an overall strategy to be a comprehensive distributor of cardiovascular products to our core customers and grow the profitability and market footprint within our cardiology franchise,” White said.
Cultural aesthetics give life to imagination

KELLY KIRKPATRICK

By Beth Gallapsy

Kelley Kirkpatrick ‘96 honed her artistic eye traveling the globe for photo shoots and similar assignments as an artistic and creative director for several magazine and fashion projects. Wherever her work and her passion for travel take her, she seems to find a bit of inspiration, be it the unique color palette of Iceland’s striking landscapes or a little art gallery in Jamaica introducing her to beautiful pieces from a fashion painter.

Travels to Paris a decade ago, when the training discipline parkour was an up-and-coming trend, later surfaced in Kirkpatrick’s art direction of an award-winning fashion photo shoot for a Canadian magazine. Another photo shoot, called Circus of the Strange, reinterpreted ideas she remembered from the many underground theater performances she watched while living in London in the early 2000s.

“I’ve traveled quite a bit, and I really enjoy using that as inspiration for my work. I always collect anything and everything visual when I go to a different country to see how other people can uniquely have a taste for color or a style of illustration that seems to be popular,” Kirkpatrick said.

By browsing through bookstores and visiting art galleries whenever her travels take her, she continues to broaden her perspective and fill her artistic toolbox. “I like to see what contemporary work is out there. It’s a social commentary on what’s happening in the culture. I do a lot of research to try to absorb what’s happening.”

Time spent living in London, Toronto, New York and then back to Toronto with multiple trips to farther thing places, has refined her style and her aesthetic instincts. Now, after years of working for others in print, social media, advertising and marketing, Kirkpatrick has launched her own no-borders business using the wealth of media, advertising and marketing, Kirkpatrick has launched her own no-borders business using the wealth of experience she has amassed. Her online art gallery, ednuroom.com, began this year featuring quality contemporary art for “babies, children and the young at heart.”

After the first of her two young daughters was born two and half years ago, Kirkpatrick began looking for quality artwork to decorate children’s rooms that would inspire a sense of wonder. Not finding much available, and hoping to shift to a professional schedule that would allow her more time with her children, Kirkpatrick began working on Eddy’s Room, named for her grandmother whose intricate wallpaper she still remembers staring at with fascination as a child.

“I remember that feeling and thought it would be really nice to curate a body of work that might inspire other children to be creative and use their imagination by looking at beautiful art,” Kirkpatrick said.

She has reached out to a variety of illustrators and photographers, mainly from Canada and the United States, to create her initial sales gallery and pulled together a range of talents she met in earlier phases of her career. “A lot of people from along the way will be represented,” she said. Among her artists is the creative director for Hatley, a large gift and apparel retailer for whom Kirkpatrick worked for a decade, designing several lookbooks and campaigns and expanding the business into Europe. Her collection also includes bilingual work in French and English from an artist in Quebec, letterpress prints from a Seattle artist and pieces from a Hong Kong-born artist who she met in art school in Toronto, where she enrolled after graduating from LU with her psychology degree.

Kirkpatrick was the creative director for Hatley, a large gift and apparel retailer for whom Kirkpatrick worked for a decade, designing several lookbooks and campaigns and expanding the business into Europe. Her collection also includes bilingual work in French and English from an artist in Quebec, letterpress prints from a Seattle artist and pieces from a Hong Kong-born artist who she met in art school in Toronto, where she enrolled after graduating from LU with her psychology degree.

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For Kirkpatrick, cultivating a global perspective began during her time at LU. A native of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, she attended on a golf scholarship. “I loved meeting different kinds of people from various backgrounds. The culture was quite different from where I was from,” she said. “I love connecting through food. Everywhere I travel, I always buy a cookbook. I still remember learning how to cook meat and games when I was in Texas.” Lamar University also provided her first opportunities to work in print. She has fond memories of writing for the student newspaper, the University Press, and the people she met there. Kirkpatrick said she enjoyed the art classes she took, but her schedule as a student-editor did not allow her to take many. After LU, she attended art school, where a design research trip to Asia furthered her understanding of design and her love of travel.

In her work at Hatley, Kirkpatrick traveled throughout Canada and the U.S. and was based in London for three years. “The culture there always seemed three years ahead of where I was from in Toronto. Everybody there was heightened in their knowledge of aesthetics.” Her time in London also allowed her to develop her design skills by working with a typographer who produced large catalogues for a London museum client.

After returning to a Toronto base, she moved into magazine work as a creative director and art director, then expanded into the online world, app development and social media as the industry evolved away from strictly print. Since then, her work has included shoots in New York for assignments from Lacoste and Blackbook magazine and broad travel for the fashion editorial photo shoots she conceptualizes and oversees. Freelance advertising work for brands and non-profits has also required sensitivity to various cultures and audiences.

“There’s a certain aesthetic that probably works best for a given country or culture, but Canada and the United States are such big, diverse countries they have subcultures. You really can’t do a broad brush to represent the whole coun-

try,” Kirkpatrick said. Rather than putting too much emphasis on demographics in crafting her designs, she relies more on her well-honed, globally informed instincts to determine what will work and what will not for a given audience. That instinct should serve her well as she moves on to a new demographic—children and their parents.
Jeremy Allen
by Kara Timberlake

Cardinal spreads wings

Jeremy Allen

uring his time at Lamar University, Beaumont resident Jeremy Allen has collected not only airline miles but also cultural learning experiences. ‘‘I have always wanted to be an international traveler,’’ Allen said. ‘‘Each one of the places I have been has served as a kick-start to the next opportunity. The experiences and contacts I’ve gained through my travels have provided me more possibilities for the future.’’

He is pursuing a five-year program to earn a bache-
lor of science in management information systems and a master of business administration with minors in Spanish and business law. For Allen, his university abroad experiences began in the summer of 2013 when he traveled to Salamanca, Spain, to fulfill his Spanish minor course requirements.

‘‘I wanted to use the knowledge I gained about the Spanish language while also furthering my Spanish-speaking skills,’’ he said. ‘‘Overall, I wanted to diversify my experiences, share in other cultures and see the world.’’

After discovering the value of studying abroad, Allen, with the help of Antoinette ‘’Toni’’ Mulvaney, professor of accounting and business law, and College of Business Dean Enrique ‘’Henry’’ Venta, created ‘’The Total Business Package: Connecting the Americas,’’ a project combining three faculties and departments at Lamar University to work with many of the lead officials on developing their data referencing architects in the U.S., and I was later introduced to the company representative for whom I was compiling the data. I also was fortunate to attend a break- fast of Peruvian embassy officials and Argentine business representatives, along with the Chamber of Commerce, to discuss Argentine businesses that are seeking to export products and services to Peru.’’

Alongitude LU connection paved the way for the third leg of Allen’s diversified internship. After alumnus and CEO of the Panama Canal Authority, Jorge Quijano ‘’73, ‘’74, presented a program on the canal expansion to LU faculty and students, Dean Venta contacted him about future opportunities for students. One such opportunity bore fruit for Allen, allowing him to leave Argentina for Panama to work at the Panama Canal as an executive intern.

‘‘I worked in business intelligence where I collaborated with many of the lead officials on developing their data governance scheme,’’ he said. ‘‘My mentor there, Jasmín Wong, vice president of information technology, and Jorge Quijano, CEO. Mr. Quijano wanted me to utilize my previous internship experiences and learn about the Panama Canal from a business perspective, so I worked under the vice president of planning and business development where I analyzed the Arctic Route Passport and made a recom- mendation to the council. This entire process allowed me to gain valuable knowledge about the transportation industry.’’

“My last stretch of study at the Panamá Canal was with the vice president of legal affairs, which confirmed for me why I want to go to law school. I got to take a look into the legal infrastructure of the canal, and I was able to use my textbook knowledge about different laws and cases to evaluate how the instances relate to the actual practices by large corporate legal departments.’’

Allen said that Quijano taught him how to hone his leadership skills. ‘‘Ultimately, Mr. Quijano allowed me to be under his wing,’’ Allen said. ‘‘He mentored me and gave me access to a network of important contacts. Overall, I am the reason that I was able to have this awesome experi- ence in Panama. He invited me to Panama, set up housing, and all I had to do was show up and be ready to work.’’

While in Panama, Allen received advice from Quijano on how to pursue his dreams. ‘‘During my last work week, Mr. Quijano and I decided to have a short breakfast where we talked about perseverance and striving for excellence,’’ Allen said. ‘‘One of the things mentioned was that I should focus on the actual job at hand and do the best I can at it. He worked for 10 years in an entry position before he got his first promotion. He relayed the message of hard work being the key fac- tor. If I focus mainly on developing myself, someone will always see the work.’’

In the course of his international endeavors and with the guidance of Ricardo Colon, LL assistant professor of accounting and business law, Allen accepted an internship at the Puerto Rico Department of State, serving under the leadership of Under Secretary of State Alexis Morales Preece. Allen also took two transferable classes at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón.

‘‘In life, I have always wanted to be in government or help people in some way,’’ Allen said. ‘‘While in Puerto Rico, I worked with the Campus Puerto Rico initiative to promote Puerto Rico as a premier academic destination, helped draft memorandums of understanding and connected the under secretary to individuals in specific state educa- tional sectors. I also helped plan a confer- ence event in Denver during the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities annual event for key officials and organiza- tions to learn about the Campus Puerto Rico program.’’

Showcasing success as a student and interna- tional intern, Allen took the opportu-

ny, provided by the Congressional Black Cau- cus Foundation Emerging Leaders Internship Program sponsored by Wal-Mart, to intern with the Latin America and the Caribbean department at the Center for International Private Enterprise in Washington D.C.

‘‘I loved working with CIPF in the LAC department because the organization’s about work with entrepreneur programs and developing businesses promoting democracy through market-oriented reform,’’ he said. ‘‘Being a business student and owning my own company that is contracted with the Texas Department of Rehabilitative Services, the Jeremy G. Allen Tutoring Program, I understand that the overall idea of private sector growth internationally is that it creates opportunities and economic development in underdeveloped communities. I learned so much professional and practical knowledge while adding to the skills I am learning as a student.’’

While interning in D.C., Allen said he en- joyed a visit from Kenneth and Nancy Evans. ‘‘Dr. Evans visiting me on my last work trip demonstrates how dedicated he is to student development,’’ Allen said. ‘‘Dr. Evans has been instrumental in my career. I could not have embarked on this journey without his help.’’

Allen said the opportunities he has encountered center around the connections he has made at LU. ‘‘I would have never thought attending Lamar University would have given me the opportunity to study abroad in Spain, intern in Argentina, Panama and Puerto Rico, and eventually lead to my selection as a scholar, interning with CIPF,’’ he said. ‘‘LU donors have been essential in providing me the fund- ing for these experiences. Their giving back has allowed me to thrive. I’ve been given many of opportunities since entering Lamar University as a transfer student, and it has been wonderful.’’
G rowing up in Beaumont, Jack Everts ’79 was eager to get out and experience the greater world. He attended one year at the University of Dallas primarily to take advantage of a semester abroad in Rome that was offered before transferring to Lamar University. After graduation, he spent several months backpacking around Europe before reporting to work and hasn’t let the grass grow under his feet since.

Everts is the pipeline execution manager for ExxonMobil on the Alaska LNG Project, a proposed $45 billion to $65 billion plan to export liquefied natural gas by 2024. The project is a joint venture by Exxon-Mobil, ConocoPhillips, BP, TransCanada and the Alaska Gasline Development Corp. The goal is to treat and route the natural gas on the north slope of Alaska to Nikiski in the south, the lead site for a liquefaction plant where gas will be cooled and condensed for export. Two pipelines, one running 60 miles and the other 800 miles, are an integral part of this enormous endeavor. The pipelines are in the preliminary stages of planning. Everts, who moved into his current position this year, is responsible for the broad technical and administrative oversight of the execution planning group and the engineering contractors’ work as it relates to the pipelines and facilities execution planning.

During his time at Lamar University, Everts earned a degree in civil engineering that has served him well. “I believed then and still do that civil engineering offers the most diversity of jobs,” he said. “The unfortunate part is I traveled a lot without my family. Once, my family was based in Houston, but I spent 100 days that year in Russia. Another time, my family was in Australia, but I spent 200 days in Mumbai, India. I missed a lot of the kids’ events. My wife, Mary, is a saint. There were postings I turned down that may have hurt my career, but family comes first.”

Though there were challenges, the Everts embraced the expat experience. “We loved our time in Brisbane, Australia,” he said. “The weather and scenery were fantastic. I took a catamaran to the rugged Canadian Rockies. Both he and his wife enjoy cycling and skiing.

Based now in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, Everts has worked himself out of a job by finishing a project and moving on to the next one, Everts described. “On some projects, I only worked on the front end and didn’t get to be with them all the way through,” he said. “Then there were other projects that we worked our heart and souls out, but they didn’t get built for economic or regulatory reasons. My philosophy has been to look ahead to what are my next two jobs. Who do I want to work with? I’ve worked with some tremendously intelligent and hard workers throughout the world, and I’ve enjoyed what I’ve done.”

With international living often part of the job description, Everts’ family of four sons has traveled to building bridges to pipelines to any infrastructure around the world.”

Based now in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, Everts has done his share of globetrotting during his 35-year career with ExxonMobil. During the years, Everts has had responsibility for design, operations and construction. Besides working in the U.S., he also has been on projects in the Gulf of Mexico, California, India, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Russia and the Arctic. “I’ve gone from a field engineer to design to execution construction, with some regulatory support and interface from the technical side,” he said. “I worked in operations for 10 to 15 years. One of the keys in this business is to learn how to operate, so you know what the client needs before designing and building.”

The nature of pipeline work is to work yourself out of a job by finishing a project and moving on to the next one, Everts described. “On some projects, I only worked on the front end and didn’t get to be with them all the way through,” he said. “Then there were other projects that we worked our heart and souls out, but they didn’t get built for economic or regulatory reasons. My philosophy has been to look ahead to what are my next two jobs. Who do I want to work with? I’ve worked with some tremendously intelligent and hard workers throughout the world, and I’ve enjoyed what I’ve done.”

With the Alaska LNG Project in early stages, Everts anticipates he may retire from this job. They may return to Texas then, but wherever there are grandchildren will probably top the list. Staying true to his philosophy of looking ahead, Everts said he is already thinking about activities and options for a stimulating retirement that will involve the four aspects—physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual—that he ranks as important for quality of life.

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Everts, who graduated last spring, begins his first job in Spain this fall. Another son volunteered for several months in Argentina after high school graduation. Everts has been stationed in Calgary eight out of the last 11 years. He loves the rugged Canadian Rockies. Both he and his wife enjoy cycling and skiing.

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Although Bounds only speaks English, he recommends learning a second language for those native English speakers planning to go into international business. He’s been able to do well because, he said, “English is the business language of the world.”

What led him into a corporate career? “Business was always where I wanted to be,” he said. “Business seemed to suit me.” He got into energy, he noted, because it’s hard not to in Southeast Texas. “When I had the opportunity to break into oil and energy, I took it,” he said.

He’s had many opportunities along his career path, including ones he gained at LU earning a bachelor of business administration degree in marketing and a master of business administration degree in management and finance. He’s thankful for his mentor marketing Professor Robert Swedlow, former associate dean of the College of Business. “He was a big influence on me,” Bounds said of Swedlow, who passed away in 2003. “He told me I was going to come back for my master’s. He was very much a part of my college experience.”

Bounds credits his time in the U.S. Navy with gaining leadership skills and nurturing his adventuresome spirit. He’s outgoing, resilient and persistent to a fault, he said. When it comes to being successful in business, Bounds believes, networking is important. “Get your face out of the computer,” he said. “That’s not networking. You’ve got to put some leather on the pavement. Face-to-face time is everything.” You also have to be in it for the long haul. “Have a never-quit attitude,” he advised. “Business itself is a marathon. You have to stay with it.”

GLOBAL LU

liquefied natural gas is natural gas super-chilled into a liquid state through a process known as liquefaction. This process also shrinks the volume of natural gas by a factor of 600, which makes it easier to store and transport by ships to places not connected by a pipeline. When LNG is warmed, or regasified, it returns to natural gas.

“It’s got a lot of momentum right now,” said Allan Bounds ’81, ’85, senior vice president of global LNG with Macquarie Energy in Houston. “It is one of the fastest-growing energy sectors.”

Bounds is in charge of business development for Macquarie Energy, the third-largest natural gas marketing and trading company in North America. The energy marketing division sells natural gas, oil, coal and liquefied natural gas. Bounds works with businesses in countries all over the world including in Asia, South America, Europe and Africa. “My job is to place physical LNG into these countries,” Bounds said. The LNG might go to government-owned or private energy companies. In many countries, there are no pipelines or adequate transportation infrastructure to move natural gas, so converting it to LNG is the most effective way to move it and store it.

Four liquefaction facilities are under construction in the U.S.: two in Texas, one in Louisiana and one in Maryland. Macquarie was highly involved in the Freeport, Texas, project. It also was one of the first companies to re-export LNG through the Freeport terminal. The company imports LNG cargo from another country, offloads it into holding tanks and then re-exports it to another customer. Storing it gives the ability to resell it at a higher price later. For example, the company might bring in a shipment of LNG in the summer and sell it in the winter. “It’s a way to recapture the pricing differentials of seasonality,” he said. “We’re missing part of the commodity chain when supply and demand don’t match up exactly. We’re not just flipping the product. It benefits the market.” Bounds also is working on 10-year to 20-year contracts to sell long-term LNG cargos.

The energy executive travels internationally several times a year. He’s been to Asia, Europe, South America, Mexico, Canada, India and the Middle East. Bounds always allows some time to visit important historical sites such as the pyramids in Egypt and the Great Wall of China. He and his wife, Lisa, consider Italy their favorite international destination. “I love the culture and the food,” he said. “I love the history—the Roman ruins.”

Working in the hot market of super-chilled natural gas

ALLAN BOUNDS

by Cathleen Cole

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Working in the hot market of super-chilled natural gas
A native of Houston, Collard came to LU in 1978 after completing two years at San Jacinto Junior College. “I came to Lamar University because I wanted to be what they termed at the time a ‘Big 8’ accountant,” he said. “LU had a very good reputation for their business and accounting group, and all the Big 8 firms interviewed there.” Collard earned a B.B.A. in accounting.

“The challenges of working for a global company are that you don’t just have the U.S. accounting standards and the U.S. tax standards to manage,” he said. Each country has its own accounting principles and tax structure that must be met. At the same time, “you are pulling information from the various international locations and you have to convert it to the U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. So, the degree of complexity is a lot higher.”

Collard and the company CEO recently finished a round-the-world trip visiting 10 company locations in 18 days. “We went around the world talking about our company’s core values and holding workshops with the intent of establishing a consistent culture of winning from our clients throughout all of our operations,” Collard said.

“Regardless of whether you are in accounting or you are in the operational environment, you have language and cultural differences that you have to reconcile and work within. It is very interesting because everywhere you go you have to adapt and change your presentation to fit those cultural differences.”

The company itself has supported more than 30 charities and organizations. “One very close to us is assisting our wounded troops,” Collard said. “For 11 consecutive years, Universal has helped severely wounded veterans heal emotionally and physically by donating the use of our company’s aircraft and coordinating additional aircraft donations to get those wounded heroes to life-changing events in their home.”

“Just as Universal exists to support our clients’ critical missions, our culture has always valued community responsibility, and this sense of ‘winning by giving back’ has only grown stronger as our business has grown,” he said. “Around the world our people pride themselves on supporting greater causes—from providing educational opportunities to orphans, raising money for charities, or serving as mentors for the youth.”

Universal played a role behind-the-scenes in transporting doctors and nurses to and from West Africa during the Ebola outbreak, helped sponsors attend the 2014 World Cup, and provided all trip logistics for the world’s first Flying Classroom, an innovative effort to inspire and enlarge students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics spanning three continents.

“These are just a few of the types of missions and people we help ‘move’ around the world,” Collard said. “I am proud to be part of an organization that makes an impact every single day. Whether we’re supporting those who are strengthening global commerce, developing policy, or saving lives in our promise states, ‘we’re moving organization that then move the world.’”

Collard’s accounting, finance and business experience from a wide variety of industries was just what the rapidly growing, privately held company needed to “bring its processes and controls up to a new level” when he joined the company in 2009.

The company has continued to grow recently adding its latest ground support location in the Philippines and announcing a new strategic partnership with NetJets China. The company has more than 1,700 employees around the world dedicated to making each client’s trip a success.

Collard, who visited Lamar University in 2013 as an ExxonMobil Executive in Residence in the College of Business, began his 35-year career with Coopers & Lybrand, one of the original Big 8 accounting firms that are now part of Price WaterhouseCoopers. After nine years in public accounting he expanded his career and continued on an opportunity with Atlantic Richfield Co. for 12 years. His assignments went from financial reporting and analysis to controller to vice president of finance at several subsidiary companies, including Lyondell Chemical Co., where he spent most of his time. While at Lyondell, he led the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system and the integration and consolidation of the controller’s functions.

Prior to joining Universal, Collard was the chief financial officer of The Brock Group, a private equity-owned specialty maintenance contractor. Within 16 months, he helped acquire six companies that increased the company seven fold.

Keeping business in the black so clients stay in the blue.
Valerie Segovia ’15 is stimulating young students’ interest in STEM programs and challenging preconceived understandings of the word “nuclear.” Through her work in educational outreach, she is furthering the mission of the Nuclear Power Institute (NPI) and Texas A&M University while also enlightening the world of the potential of nuclear applications, generating initiatives encouraging students from all over the globe to investigate the world around them.

With experiences ranging from teacher, counselor and principal, Segovia has been passionate about education and nourishing young minds since 1994. In September 2009, she made the transition from the classroom to her position as director of outreach and development of the NPI at Texas A&M University.

The NPI works with universities as well as two-year educational institutions and public schools to increase awareness about the benefits of nuclear energy. As opposed to fossil fuels, nuclear energy is the only energy source that can generate electricity reliably, efficiently and without producing pollution; however, electricity is not the only benefit of nuclear power.

“The focus for educational outreach at the NPI is developing programs and training for students in the field of nuclear technology,” said Segovia. “We are not just focusing on power, but also broader uses of nuclear technologies, such as its potential in medicine and making clean drinking water.”

In working with universities and public schools on the local, state and international level, Segovia has organized programs to stimulate interest in broader STEM themes, often serving underrepresented populations. Programs targeted to high school students explore themes in science, technology, engineering and math as well as career options in these fields. Many programs, such as Power GRID (Girls Responding to Industry Demand) and POWER SET (Power Opportunities for Women Eager and Ready for Science, Engineering and Technology) specifically cater to generating enthusiasm in young women for these fields.

Working with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Segovia and the NPI also have established programs in countries where nuclear education is still developing. Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and United Arab Emirates benefitted from the Compendium of Resources and Activities for Secondary School Teachers and Students, a program proposed by Segovia in 2012 with the objective of sparking curiosity and increasing knowledge of nuclear science and technology.

“In initiating these IAEA programs outside of the United States, we are providing education for countries interested in pursuing nuclear energy thoughtfully and safely; and the IAEA is not just...
Cardinal CadenCe

at Texas A&M University and working on her doctorate, she said. “This all leads to awareness and interest in the amazing programs and opportunities back in Texas.” Although she earned her undergraduate and master’s degrees from the University of Houston in Victoria, Segovia first became familiar with Lamar University when, as a principal of Palacios High School, her superintendent sent her to the LU Principal Academy in 2007. Through this program, she not only received advanced leadership training and cultivated skills in problem solving and team building but also gained a head start on earning her Doctorate of Educational Leadership. “The seed to pursue a doctorate was planted during my time at the Academy—I felt that the professors truly believed in me, which made me feel confident,” Segovia said. “I felt LU invested in me, and that the size of the program was cozy and allowed me to forge relationships with my professors.” Familiarity with the university was not the only appeal in undertaking a doctoral degree—the university’s role in increasing its presence on the international level also assured Segovia of her decision to pursue educational leadership at LU.

“LU’s efforts Lamar University is undertaking to increase their global impact, as well as the support I received from peers and mentors, has provided me with tools to continue to educate students all over the world,” she said. During her time at the Nuclear Power Institute at Texas A&M University and working on her doctorate at LU, Segovia has traveled all over the globe to attend conferences and give presentations regarding her experiences and current work with educational outreach programs. She has presented in Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Italy and Austria, as well as South Korea, Japan and Indonesia in regards to programs for both students and teachers.

Segovia was selected as Outstanding Doctoral Student and graduate commencement speaker for the May 2015 commencement ceremony at Lamar University. After graduation, Segovia will continue to improve and implement programs that help students at home and beyond. Segovia lives in a small, coastal community with her husband and three children, where they enjoy being near the water to listen to the birds and relax outdoors. She has run several marathons and a triathlon not because of the competitive aspects but rather as a stress reliever and a moment for meditation. Segovia also enjoys working in her yard and reading, cultivating seeds and her mind.

Tipton Godias ’59 grew up in Galveston, and the family moved to Beaumont in 1956 where he began attending French High School before continuing his studies as an engineering major at LU. He and his wife, Ann, founded Helena Laboratories Corp. in 1966, and, today, the company is the premier manufacturer of automated gel electrophoresis systems for serum proteins, immunofixation, cholesterol and hemoglobin analysis, and more. The company’s products have helped test more than a half billion people for blood disorders.

Under the Godias’ leadership, the worldwide company is still growing and developing new products and new technologies. The latest expansion is in Petaluma, Calif., where their plastics subsidiary Libeson has acquired an 80,000 square ft. building to do E-beam sterilization, a huge advance over their current sterilization process.

“We’ve been aggressive since our beginning in looking outside the U.S. for sales, production and development,” Tipton Godias said. “One major effort is in Europe where we now have two facilities.” Helena Biosciences Europe is headquartered in Newcastle, England, where the company develops, manufactures and sells a wide range of laboratory products. Helena also has a manufacturing plant in Emmen, Netherlands, where they develop and manufacture capillary electrophoresis products. Their base in Melbourne, Australia, is primarily sales, service and distribution facility, but also does some manufacturing. The company’s base for the Asian market is in Tokyo, Japan, and is a fully independent development, manufacturing and sales facility. “Our global expansion efforts have been very advantageous,” Godias said, “and, quite often, good ideas originating in Asia and Europe have improved the products and technology in the US and visa-versa.”—LA

Hermann Ortega

B orn in Bogota, Colombia, Hermann Ortega ’67, ’72, came to Lamar University to study chemical engineering and earned his bachelor’s degree and an M.B.A. He has more than 40 years of experience in engineering, operations and manufacturing.

Ortega worked for Air Products and Chemicals for 25 years, leading company expansion as vice president for global operations in the Americas. Later, he shared his skills with Honeywell International as vice president of integrated supply chain for the Specialty Materials Division where he shouldered global responsibility for 42 plants and managed an annual budget of more than $5 billion.

Ortega demonstrated proven ability for building and leading successful organizations. While at Honeywell, he delivered more than $100 million per year in productivity improvements. After retiring from Honeywell in 2009, he remains active in the consulting area, working as vice president of business development for Coelant and currently for MTG consulting.

“Hermann is a role model for students who desire to progress professionally to the highest ranks of a company,” Jack Hopper, dean emeritus of the College of Engineering, said. “He is an individual who took a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering, combined it with his own innate talent and advanced from an entry-level position to the leadership position of vice president.”

Ortega serves on the advisory board of the College of Engineering at LU and has established an endowed scholarship for engineering majors. The Hermann H. Ortega Scholarship in Engineering provides funding for full-time students seeking a bachelor’s or master’s degree in chemical engineering at Lamar University. He and his wife, Rea, have two children and two grandchildren.—LA
Building a blend of beauty and function

Noor Khan Ibrahim Khan ’87 is building a legacy through his contributions to the most visually iconic and architecturally marvelous buildings in Southeast Asia that also are among the most energy efficient.

“As more and more people move into the urban areas of the world, smart buildings and smart cities are becoming increasingly important,” Ibrahim Khan said. “We live in a world where we need to take care of our environment better, yet meet new expectations of a connected world.”

The chief executive officer of KFM Systems based in Putrajaya, Malaysia, Ibrahim Khan’s company specializes in building technologies, including building management systems, building security systems and high performance green building strategies. The company recently completed the Prime Minister’s Office in Putrajaya. The building received a certified platinum rating, the highest achievable by the Green Building Index. KFM Systems attained this HFGB rating through energy conservation measures, including high efficiency motors and strategic controls of air conditioning units; the use of daylight and motion sensors to turn on the LED lights only when necessary, and 650 kilowatt peak solar energy panels to offset the use of conventional electricity from the local utility company. “This building’s energy consumption is one of the lowest in the country as measured through its building efficiency index,” Ibrahim Khan said. “It is now to be used as the example that all Malaysian government buildings should strive toward.”

As a youth, Ibrahim Khan received a scholarship from the Malaysian government to study in the United States. After an intensive English language course at the University of Texas-Austin, he attended Lamar University, earning a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering. “I have nothing but good things to say about my student days at LU and in America,” Ibrahim Khan said. “I learned to adopt an open mind and appreciate the sometimes blunt opinions expressed by Americans, which was different than my
Ibrahim Khan attributes his success in a global market to perseverance and being receptive to learning new technologies. He also believes it helps to be adventurous and willing to appreciate diverse cultures. “Having worked in companies where colleagues and clients come from all corners of the world, cultural sensitivity goes a long way to get things done,” he noted.

From his own experience as an international student, he encourages young people to seize any opportunity to study or work abroad. “My business travels in Asia, America, Europe and the Middle East have taught me that we all strive for happiness and a sense of accomplishment no matter where we are or where we come from,” Ibrahim Khan said. “Your personal journey will undoubtedly open many international doors,” he said. "Studying at Lamar University was an amazing opportunity for me to gain confidence in speaking English and living in a new country. My degree from Lamar University was a key that later opened many international doors,” she said.

Multicultural, multilingual, & multi-talented

Szilvia Malik Game ’01 traveled more than 5,600 miles to study economics at Lamar University. With English as a second language for the Hungarian, she continued her educational and professional journey on a global highway spanning four countries and three continents.

Game first came to the U.S. in 1996 as a high school exchange student and attended Cathedral Christian School. Her host family at the time later encouraged Game to transfer her credits from her university in Hungary to Lamar University.

After earning her degree from LU, Szilvia returned to her native Hungary and earned a graduate certificate in journalism from Eötvös University. She worked for several newspapers as a freelance writer before moving to Denmark to complete her master’s degree in European cultural studies from Aarhus University.

It was there that she met her Australian husband, Ben, and moved with him in 2013 to Melbourne, Australia, where they currently live with their 2-year-old daughter, Matilda Róza.

Game began working as a producer and radio journalist for Australia’s largest multicultural public broadcaster, SBS. SBS Radio broadcasts in 74 different languages with “the belief that all Australians, regardless of geographic, age, cultural background or language skills should have access to high-quality, independent, culturally relevant Australian media.”

As a producer at SBS, Game developed one or two one-hour programs per week for the Hungarian-language program. Game said, “My daily duties included preparing interviews and features, editing and translating news items. I also broadcast the program live on-air, which included operating the technical equipment, reading the news, moderating talk-back shows and running live interviews.”

Game has spent a great deal of her time focusing on cultural issues plaguing Hungary. “I enjoy writing about stories that have the potential to make a difference. In the beginning of my career, I produced a big feature about the rise of racism in Hungary,” Game said. The article titled, “Racism was not fashionable before,” won the attention of The Hungarian Press Association, noting the article had the most impact on society in that given month, and it received the prestigious Award for Excellence in Journalism.

"Journalism is an amazing tool to give a voice to the marginalized, tell the stories of those who can encourage others and raise awareness of social, political, environmental or economic issues,” Game said. “I love that through this profession, one has the possibility to educate, connect, inspire and even change people.

Game credits her global reach to opportunities to study abroad. “Studying at Lamar University was an amazing opportunity for me to gain confidence in speaking English and living in a new country. My degree from Lamar University was a key that later opened many international doors,” she said.

Currently staying at home with 2-year-old Matilda and working for SBS as a contributor, she offers this advice to young aspiring students. “Love what you do. Being a journalist is incredibly hard. If you love what you do, your work will show it. It will influence people, and the joy you will get from that will make the whole experience worthwhile.”—DM
His past fall, President Ken Evans hired Jeffrey Palis as director of the Office of Study Abroad. Although Lamar University students have been traveling and studying around the world before the office’s official establishment, Palis is working not only towards increasing the number of students who study abroad but also to reach out to a larger demographic by developing programs and initiatives to make study abroad both a more fulfilling and affordable experience.

Already this year, the number of Cardinals abroad grew by 50 percent, an impressive feat that was accomplished with a strategy in mind. “We are growing our programs by the minute, but I think we also are doing it strategically,” Palis said. “It’s not simply a whatever-sticks-we-go-with-kind-of approach—it is what will fit best with what we do at Lamar University.”

Traditionally, students would participate in LU study abroad programs during the summer. For many students who must work or intern during the break between spring and fall semesters, summer programs are not always a viable option. “Our students work; our students often commute; our students have responsibilities outside of the classroom,” Palis said. “So for us to expect or encourage our students to go abroad, we have to create opportunities that fit their needs and their schedules, and that’s what we had the idea to create the spring break program.”

The study abroad session offered during spring break increases the number of students who can participate without worrying about conflicting obligations during the school year. “Spring break, for one, is a way for students to go abroad without getting behind in their coursework, without having to take a summer off, without the risk of turning down an internship or a co-op, so it fits,” Palis said. This year’s course, Geography of Tourism taught by Sarah Schwartz, visiting assistant professor of earth and space sciences, examined different aspects of the experience of traveling to a foreign place. Topics included subjective experiences of what people expect before arriving at their destination and how it compares with their new perspective after visiting. The optional one-week trip to Ireland allowed students to apply knowledge from seminars to their actual tour.

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“Sometimes when we were driving around, I would ask students, ‘Is this the Irish landscape you expected, are these the green fields you expected?’” said Schwartz. “The coastline…is it what you associated with Ireland before you got here? They ate things like blood pudding, authentic foods they could experience.”

During the week, students participated in numerous activities as a group, discussing topics from the course and sharing their excitement about their Irish adventures. “We had traditional Irish dinners one night and listened to storytellers and musicians in Dublin,” she said. “We went to a heritage museum in Cobh, which was the last port of call for the Titanic before it left Ireland. We had a day where I hired a tour bus so that they could see the coastline and the countryside. We went on a tour of the Waterford Crystal Factory where we saw the crystal being made.”

“We went to Blarney Castle, I think that is something that we as Americans associate with Ireland—the old, stone ruins and castles,” Schwartz said. The planned excursions permitted students to immerse themselves in topics covered in class such as dark tourism—travel to places where tragic events occurred. “Dark tourism, generally, is visiting sites where traumatic things happened. It can be old battlefields, sites of genocide,” Schwartz said. “We toured a replica of a famine ship, and we went to a cemetery with the burial plots of people who had died in the Irish Potato Famine.”

Students from different academic backgrounds such as computer science and engineering often have set schedules during the year, so the structure of the class was a perfect fit for many of the students who attended the trip. “I felt pretty lucky to have students in the class from a variety of backgrounds. They had interesting...
Before and I am really happy to have gained experiences rather than coursework. It was a differently Ireland, the focus was more on the cultural activities rather than coursework. It was a different experience for him an opportunity to expand his horizons. “During the semester, you took classes, and the trip was optional,” Morris said. “I liked the structure because during the week in Ireland, the focus was more on the cultural activities, and a very positive thing for the class.”

This past spring, seven under-Students win Gilman Scholarship
graduate students who dreamed of studying abroad were rewarded when the school informed them that they would have the opportunity to do so. “I was thrilled when they called me,” said one of the students, who wanted to study abroad but did not have the financial means to do so, had had the opportunity to try new things, she said. “The significance of these experiences abroad for students is life changing. For many students who have never traveled outside their home region, trips such as the ones organized by the Office of Study Abroad provide meaningful experiences and augment students’ viewpoints.

“This trip gave me a more global worldview. It reminded me that I have a world outside of the United States and the state of Texas, Morris said. “It has me considering both domestic and international options for furthering my education. I don’t know what the future holds for me, but I like to think that the door has been opened a little bit more.”

Als Sachs helps students find ways of financing study abroad, he has informed students of scholarships for which they are eligible and successfully pursued funding such as the 100,000 Strong in the Americas grant.

Pals is already looking for other means to support students and various programs. “Our administrators have been as supportive as they can be in terms of scholarship funding,” he said. “But I think as we are looking to grow the programs, we will need to create avenues for funding through grants, scholarships and opportunities for our students.”

Alumni who are interested in supporting Car-

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Alumni who are interested in supporting Car-
Communication disorders make teaching research to China

Samantha Moody, right

Communication disorders make teaching research to China

From Italy to Israel, Smithville native Samantha Moody has no shortage of interesting experiences to tell.

"I have always loved traveling," Moody said. "In the course of my life, I have traveled internationally multiple times. I love learning about the people, the culture and the stories."

While searching for a study abroad program to enhance her communication and historical aspects of China, Moody learned about the School for International Students, which is open to U.S. citizens, undergraduates, graduate students and staff.

"I knew I wanted to go on a trip abroad to China, and I knew I could use this opportunity to complete my research," Moody said. "I had so much I wanted to explore, and I knew I couldn’t do it in the four weeks I had for study abroad."

Moody said she was interested in learning about the history and culture of China, and she wanted to experience the language and traditions firsthand.

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**Online programs earn top spots**

Nursing programs ranked 3rd in nation

College Choice ranked Lamar University third in the 2015 Rankings of the Best Online Masters of Nursing Programs and 26th in the 2015 Rankings of the Best Online Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programs. The rankings are based on a variety of factors including faculty, technology and student support, accreditation, cost, and the national and regional reputations of each school.

“These rankings reflect highly of the work and effort put into the courses as well as the faculty willingness to integrate technology into classroom experiences. LU provides high quality education that leaves students prepared to excel in the workforce,” said Brenda Nichols, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Overall, the University’s online master’s program in nursing ranked higher than several universities, including the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, West Texas A&M University and the University of South Carolina, while LU’s online bachelor’s program in nursing ranked above Ohio University, Jacksonville University and Western Illinois University.

**Record set in enrollment, credit hours**

Spring 2015 enrollment figures show an increase from last spring of 4.8 percent in headcount and 2.05 percent in credit hours with a total enrollment of 14,052 students.

“These numbers are all-time records for the university,” said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost. “Most of this growth was at the master’s level and in online programs.”

Growth was especially noteworthy in computer science, up 9 percent, social work and criminal justice, up 6 percent, counseling and special populations, up 206 students or 17 percent, and all of the engineering fields grew 380 students or 25 percent. “Growth was most dramatic across the engineering departments, primarily in the master’s programs, which grew 42.6 percent,” Smith said.

**In international competition, LU Drumline takes second**

For the second consecutive year, Lamar University’s Drumline finished second in the “Drumline Battle” at the Percussive Arts Society’s International Competition. Forty-five students represent LU in Indianapolis, Ind., and performed music composed by Travis Fife, director of marching percussion and an instructor in the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music.

“Having the experience of going to this competition is truly an honor and a valuable opportunity for those students to grow and develop,” said Fife. “We are looking forward to competing again this November in several categories.” View LU’s Drumline in action at bit.ly/drum-LU.

**Washington Post: LU engineers top earners**

A recent Washington Post blog article recognized the return on investment realized by LU’s engineering graduates when it placed them in the Top 10.

In examining the relationship between college expenditures and future earnings, LU landed in the second spot among the Top 10 engineering programs in the nation, just behind Rice University, and among nationally ranked schools like UC-Berkeley and Vanderbilt.

“This ranking is a tribute to Lamar University graduates, showing that they took the work ethic they cultivated during their schooling and applied it effectively to the workplace,” said Victor Zakoum, interim dean of the College of Engineering.

The third documentary, “Cardinal Cadence,” was produced by seniors Kevin McKeel and Caleb McFarland, tells the story of the Wyble’s—a family that has been racing modified cars for three generations.

May 2015 graduate Janica Malborough of Houston said, “This experience has taught me a consistent work ethic. Prioritizing time, creating relationships off camera and shooting with editing in mind has matured my sense of storytelling.”

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Nursing faculty receives grant
Co-investigators Eileen DeGra, Iva Hall and Cindy Sinton from the Jocnine Gay Dolb

Department of Nursing received a grant funding of $10,096,996 from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Expand-
ing Commpetency and Excellence in Labs and Simulation project for the Nursing Innova-
tion Grant Program focuses on building lab and simulation resources for RSN students.

An additional 64 hours of mid-level and high fidelity simulation experiences will be added to the present 38 hours since August 2013. The ECELS project will renovate and redesign four patient bed areas in the department of nursing learning center to be equipped at a high fidelity simulation areas. The Nursing Innovation Grant Program was established by the 72nd Texas Legislature to help relieve the state’s nursing shortage.

Alex to advise Australians
The Australian government has invited Susan Alex, assistant professor of criminal justice in the Department of Sociology, Social Work & Criminal Justice and a world-recognized expert on the death penalty, to advise them in legal cases regarding Middle Eastern and North African legal and court proceedings. The invitation came from a country of origin researcher in the Refugee, Humanitar-
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Lecture Circuit

Mark Bowles featured lecturer for Entrepreneurial Studies Lecture Series

The Lamar University chapter of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society, hosted Robert Clarke, professor and dean of research in the Department of Oncology of Georgetown University Medical Center, for a lecture Feb. 23 in the University Reception Center.

“An Entrepreneur’s Journey from Innovation to Commercialization” was Bowles’ topic of discussion for the Entrepreneurial Lecture Series Feb. 5 in Landes Auditorium. The lecture series, sponsored in part by ExxonMobil and hosted by the Leonard Center for Entrepreneurial Studies, features successful entrepreneurs who share their experiences with students in the College of Business and the community.

Bowles was born and raised in Beaumont, attended Lamar University for three years before graduating from Texas A&M University with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering. He then enrolled in the University of Southern California and earned his engineering degree in 1984.

Bowles is the holder of a startup and investment company that he formed in 1984 while he was a graduate student. The company, BlueSteel Networks, was founded to commercialize technology that Bowles had developed at the University of Southern California.

Bowles’ company, which he named CardinCe, was acquired by Broadcom in 2000 for $350 million. He is the holder of nine patents with 30 patents pending.

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Spina named dean of education and human development

Robert Spina will lead the College of Education and Human Development as dean, having assumed that duty July 1. Spina, who has more than 25 years of combined teaching, research and service, succeeded Bill Holmes, who has been serving as interim dean since August 2014, and Helin Lowsry-Moore, who served as dean from 2004 to 2014. Spina, who holds a Ph.D. in health, physical and recreation education from the University of Pittsburgh, was associate dean of undergraduate education and college assessment at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va. He has served more than 10 years as a department chair and two years as an associate dean, gaining expertise in strategic planning and budgeting as well as knowledge of academic programming, learning assessment, enrollment management, research and service, and grants administration, accreditation, general education and distance learning.

An active researcher, he has been investigator or principal investigator under several grants from the NIH in the areas of exercise and aging. Spina and his wife, Elizabeth, who is a registered dietitian, have a daughter, Andrea.

Holzhausen named dean of fine arts and communication

The College of Fine Arts and Communication welcomes Derina Holzhausen as its new dean. Holzhausen, who has more than 27 years of teaching, research and service, began her tenure July 1 and succeeds Russ Schultz, who served as dean from 2000 to 2015.

Holzhausen holds a Ph.D. in communication science from the University of Johannesburg, an M.A. in Afrikaans literature from University of South Africa and B.A. degrees in Afrikaans-Dutch literature and in psychology and German, both from the University of Pretoria. She was director of the School of Media and Strategic Communication at Oklahoma State University, where she also served as professor. With a quarter century of experience as a journalist and strategic communications executive in the complex South African environment, Holzhausen is a strong proponent of the roles communication, media and the arts play in society to promote social justice and discussions on diversity and equality. Under her leadership, enrollment in the school grew 25 percent on its Stillwater and Tulsa campuses. Student diversity in the school increased under her watch from 18.4 percent in 2008 to 26.5 percent in fall 2014, and faculty diversity in gender and ethnicity grew by 50 percent.

She received a 2012 PRIDE Book Award from the National Communication Association for outstanding contribution to public relations theory for her book Public Relations as Activism: Postmodern Approaches to Theory and Practice.

Students receive breakthrough award

At the 2015 Texas Nursing Students Association convention in Austin, a team of 12 students received the Breakthrough to Nursing Award. The award was established to encourage recruitment to and retention of students in nursing programs. Seventeen teams entered the competition, and the winning LU team was led by seniors Shelby Harmon, president from Orange, Michaal Glorioso, vice-president from Port Neches, Morgan Stuckhouse, treasurer from Port Neches, and Hazel Mason, secretary from Nederland. Award-winning activities included a community awareness program, recruitment and education using hands-on activities at area middle schools, and a mentorship program via e-mail. Faculty advisors are assistant professor Mary Walker and instructor Kelli White.

Students receive NIST fellowships

The National Institute of Standards and Technology selected Nicolas Nikoloutsos, an electrical engineering senior from Vidor, and Kecley Torkel-Fly-Smith, a junior from Lumberton pursuing a double major in physics and electrical engineering, as recipients of Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships. Both students will work at the Gaithersburg, Md., campus in the physical measurement laboratories during the 11-week program. The two will gain hands-on research experience working with cutting-edge technology in one of the world’s leading research organizations.

Online MBA concentrations begin this fall

Several concentrations within the MBA program will be offered 100 percent online this fall for the first time. They include education management, criminal justice management, enterprise resource planning, healthcare administration and organizational management. The online MBA program is designed to be completed in 12-14 months for a student with a business background and 14-18 months for non-business majors.

The online courses will mirror the MBA classroom experience working with cutting-edge technology in one of the world’s leading research organizations. Students named dean of education and human development

Students win numerous awards at National Association of Teachers of Singing

Voice students from the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music earned numerous awards at the annual Greater Houston Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing classical auditions March 28 at the University of Houston. Winners were first place: Dorian McCall of Pearse, Talitha Jordan, Vidor, and Tyler Thibodeaux, Groves; second place: De’Vante Shan, Beaumont; Shavn Simonson, Carthage; and Emaley Trotter, Orange; and third place: Eric Gonzales, Fort Bend, Keenan Kelley, Port Arthur, TX.; and Christopher Martin, Beaumont.

New master’s program focuses on port management

The Department of Industrial Engineering and the College of Business have teamed with waterfront industry professionals to offer courses in port management that lead to the Master of Engineering Management or certifications specializing in port management.

World-class faculty and industry professionals teach the program’s interactive courses in traditional, online and hybrid formats. This opportunity provides a flexible, technician alternative education pathway for working professionals to strengthen their leadership, managerial and technical skills to become future port industry leaders. A balanced, waterfront industry-based curriculum allows graduates of the Port Management Program at LU to develop and fine-tune the much-needed bridge between engineering, business, transportation, logistics, design, operations management and cost efficiency. Four courses for a total of 12 credit hours cover management, capital projects, port logistics modeling, and financial and managerial accounting. More information is available from Brian Craig, chair of the Industrial Engineering Department, (409) 880-8804, brian.craig@lamar.edu.

Bellard assumes new role

Norman Bellard has been appointed to the new role of assistant to the president for community relations and athletics program liaison. He will oversee the Lamar University Community Outreach program, supporting university efforts in the identification of community need and alignment of resources, and assisting as a liaison in high school and community college relations. He also will support the growth and programming of the Cardinal Club and provide athletic program marketing support.

“The university displays an excellence that extends to the vibrancy of the community, city, county and the Golden Triangle,” Bellard said. “Its contribution to the quality of life, coupled with the millions of dollars the university contributes to the economy, truly makes LU an important and engaged partner with Southeast Texas.”
Kiel appointed Dishman Art Museum director

Dennis Kiel joined the LU administrative staff as the new director of the Dishman Art Museum Feb. 16. “Dennis Kiel brings a wealth of experience, imagination and vision to the Dishman,” said Russ Schulze, former dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. “With this appointment, it is our hope that the Dishman will become a greater component of the cultural opportunity of this area—not only of the campus, but the greater community as well.”

A respected curator, Kiel comes to Lamar University from Charlotte, N.C., where he served as interim executive director and chief curator at The Light Factory. Before joining The Light Factory, Kiel was the associate curator of prints, drawings and photographs at the Cincinnati Art Museum for 24 years.

Copeland named alumni affairs director

Shannon Copeland, ’02, ’03, ’17, has been named director of alumni affairs. The Nod- erland native was most recently director of advancement services, a position she has held since 2011, and she will retain supervisory responsibility for that department.

“Lamar University has been my second home since I entered here as a freshman in 1999,” Copeland said. “I see this role as an opportunity to connect alumni with each other and with our current students. Our alumni are the ambassadors of the university, helping us recruit new students and helping our university continue to grow.”

Copeland previously served as coordinator of advancement information systems from 2008 to 2011 and employee relations coordinator and career counselor from 2007 to 2008. She also has served as the College Pathways Adviser since 2009.

“We are extraordinarily fortunate to have someone with background, energy and creativity living this important area of Lamar University,” said Juan Zabala, vice president for university advancement.

Manchaiah named endowed professor

Vinaya Manchaiah has been designated the Jo Mayo Endowed Professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences. Manchaiah, an associate professor of audiology, is an international scholar with an impressive research and publication record. Manchaiah holds a Ph.D. in audiology from Linköping University in Sweden, an M.S. in audiology from the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom. “Dr. Manchaiah’s role as the Jo Mayo Endowed Professor will establish a national and international reputation of excellence for the program of audiology at Lamar University,” said Monica Haus, chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Science. “He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the department because of his active research projects in audiology as well as research collaborations with disciplines such as engineering and computer science.”

“Annie Jo Mayo, who died in 1993, estab- lished the bequest to fund a faculty position and, in so doing, benefit LU students as well as children with communication disorders.

STEM expertise draws Brazil students

As a result of an invitation to partner with the Institute of International Education on the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program because of LU’S world-class engineering and STEM-focused undergraduate research, the university will welcome its first cohort of seven Brazilian students in fall 2015. BSMP, an initiative funded by the Brazilian Ministry of Education, is a one-year, non-degree program for Brazilian students to study abroad in the U.S.

The master’s degree in Digital Learning and Leading is designed for educators teaching in and leading digital learning programs, integrating digital instruction and resources, and designing, developing, and researching digital learning environments. The degree is designed so students from different educational jurisdictions can customize the program for their unique needs while connecting their professional development activity to appropriate educational theory and best practice globally. More information is available at lamar.edu/digitaleducator.

NSF grant will help LU recruit underrepresented groups to engineering

The National Science Foundation has awarded Lamar University researchers in industrial and mechanical engineering a $625,300 grant to increase the number of students in engineering from underrepresented groups. The SOPEF program, which stands for Scholarships, Career Mentoring, Outreach and Advisement, Professional Societies and Engineering Learning Community, will serve three cohorts, totaling 46 scholars, in the five-year project beginning Sept. 1, 2015. The program will help to recruit and retain industrial or mechanical engineering students, selected for participation based on financial need and academic ability.

“This program will target students from sophomore to senior years and provide the support needed to help ensure degree completion,” said Weihang Zhu, associate professor of industrial engineering.

LU, Microsoft partnership to advance professional development announced

Lamar University and Microsoft Corp. are teaming up to advance technology literacy for educators worldwide by providing a pathway from professional development to post-graduate certificate programs or a graduate degree in digital learning and leading.

“We are very pleased to partner with Microsoft in this venture,” said Lamar University President Kenneth Evans. “Our position as a leader in online master’s-level education programs makes LU a great fit for this program.”

Beginning this year, educators who complete Microsoft’s Teaching with Technology professional development course (based on UNESCO ICT Frameworks) and pass the Microsoft Certified Educator exam will be eligible to receive three graduate credit hours from Lamar University. Three additional credit hours will be available with the demonstration of use of these technology skills in the classroom. LU will recognize any teacher who earns six credit hours as a Certified Digital Educator in addition the professional Microsoft Certified Educator credential awarded by Microsoft. Both of these credit-granting opportunities are available online and designed with the flexibility required by busy professional educators. Teachers can earn an Advanced Certi- fication in Digital Learning from Lamar Uni- versity by completing an additional six credit hours of online courses. For educators who choose to further their learning, these 12 credit hours are accepted as prior coursework toward an M.Ed. in Digital Learning and Leading or other possible graduate degrees at Lamar University.

“They partnered with us to identify the unique opportunity to leverage their learning and gain credentials in educa- tion,” Holmes said.

Digital learning master’s degree

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“Live from the Rothwell” clarinet chamber concert

Lamar University’s Clarinet and Clarinet Choir tuned up for the first of a new concert series, “Live from the Rothwell,” broadcast by 93.3 KJLV Public Radio April 8 in the Rothwell Recital Hall.

“Classical music fans are one of the staple audiences of KJLV,” said Byron Bulteni, station manager “We are excited for this oppor- tunity to collaborate with the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music to bring live performances to our listeners.” Live from the Rothwell returns October 27 with the Faculty Jazz Quintet. Proceeds will benefit the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music.

Searching for the sky

Since the Oct. 7 groundbreaking, the Wayne A. Reaud Administra- tion Building has begun to take shape as the new entrance to campus at the corner of Ge- rian Way and Road Christopher Drive thanks to a transformative gift from the 2011 donor, James D. Reaud. The new three-story, 45,000-square-foot building will be a state-of-the-art facility for university administration offices, information technology, human resources and other administrative services. The ground floor will be home to the Reaud Honors College.

MCLEMORE

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Morgan Moore Department of Music.

Rothwell returns October 27 with the Faculty

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During spring break, nine Lamar University students traveled to Hot Springs, Ark., for an "Alternative Spring Break," where they did volunteer work with Habitat for Humanity. Danelle Sanders, a sophomore from Bridge City, worked with the Office of Student Engagement to organize the trip. "It was definitely a unique experience, it's not really what you think it will be," she said. "We're like their assistant—you go behind them and hammer what they tell you to."

The students helped construct a frame for a house that would benefit a family in need. William Hill, a junior from Edna, has experience in construction, but this was the first time he had framed a house. "It was very interesting because they did everything by the book," he said. "Everything they used had to be brand new, so it was really cool seeing the right way to do it.

The students also worked in restore shops, which are similar to thrift stores except people bring in leftover building materials and the shops sell them for 100 percent profit to fund construction projects.

"It was different and unique," Chassidy Mayo, a senior from Houston, said. "They had coaches and just everything you may need for your home if you were remodeling it. It was very cool inside, and it was fun to paint the walls and help out."

The students volunteered in many ways, including gardening and cleaning up the neighborhood. "It was very humbling and made me feel good to volunteer," Hill said. "The first day we trimmed hedges, made gardens, moved lawns and power washed the sidewalks because they looked forward to the new adventures, and the students all agreed they would sign up for the Alternate Spring Break again. —KA

"This was definitely a unique experience, it's not really what you think it will be," she said. "We're like their assistant—you go behind them and hammer what they tell you to do it."

The group agreed that their favorite part was serving food at the Jackson House Crisis Center. "We helped prepare the meals—cooked, fixed them and passed them out," Mayo said. "I told my Dad I would like to have us start something like that around here."

Members of the group said it was not all work. "The students and I had fun at a St. Patrick's Day Parade," Le said. "Opening up was hard," Hill said. "At the beginning of the trip, we did not have much conversation. The hardest thing was going from a group of strangers to a tight-knit group."

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The nine Cardinals said the trip changed them a little bit, that it opened their eyes to see problems that people suffer. "This trip made me less selfish and want to give more rather than receive," Mayo said.

Kiet Le, associate director of student activities and civic engagement, traveled with the students. "It was very rewarding to get to know the students on a more personal level, because we were together 24/7 for almost a week, and also to see them all grow more as individuals—to go from strangers to friends," he said.

The students said that the hardest thing was to come together as a group, but in the end they became close. "Opening up was hard," Hill said. "At the beginning of the trip, we did not have much conversation. The hardest thing was going from a group of strangers to a tight-knit group."

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"This is an extraordinary opportunity for the students to share their research," said Kumer Das, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research. "It is truly an honor for the students to be chosen to present their posters. This is a prestigious competition where students from all over the country submitted abstracts. More than 500 applications were received, and only 60 posters were selected to be presented on Capitol Hill."

Hosted by the Council on Undergraduate Research, the event included a poster session and reception where students visited with U.S. senators and congressional leaders.

Nicolas Thanasis Nikoloutsos, Maritza Aguilar, Lauren Richardson, Jamie Tran and Gabriel Graham presented their poster, "Formation of Physiologically Realistic Cancer Cell Spheroids with Soft Substrate Macromolecules." "It means a lot to be able to go to D.C.," Le said. "To get feedback from the audience," Das said. "This demonstrates that Lamar University is committed to research and shows other students that they are capable of accomplishing similar achievements."

"Our signature event, the Research Expo, allows students to promote and share their research with peers and faculty while also providing them the opportunity to explore other areas of research available," said Das. The Office of Undergraduate Research provides funding to further research and to attend conferences. —MP
N ine graduate students from Lamar University participated in Ignite!, a three-day entrepreneurship conference Silicon Valley this spring, as 2015 Gill Scholars.

“The LU students, who are pursuing MBAs, master’s or doctoral degrees in engineering or science, visited leading Silicon Valley companies and exciting tech startups,” said Paul Latiolais, director of LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship. “They also spent two days learning from Rice Business Plan finalists who have gained success in the marketplace and are experiencing exponential revenues.”

At the conference, the LU students joined other graduate students from Rice University, University of California-Davis, and Texas Medical Center members UT Medical Branch, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston Methodist Hospital and UT MD Anderson Cancer Center. Conference hosts were the Rice Alliance for Technology and Entrepreneurship, Rice University and University of California-Davis, Graduate School of Management.

Lamar University Distinguished Alumnus Jack Gill ‘58, Houston philanthropist, successful entrepreneur and former Silicon Valley venture capitalist, supports the scholarship program that is now in its third year.

Gaining from the experience were MBA students BritAnn Burks, Matthew Chance, Joshua Davis, Martin Mani, and Evan Wujcik. Also attending were master’s students Sagar Bontlu, computer science, and Josue Bahena, chemistry, as well as doctoral students Albert Odell and Heng Ma, both in chemical engineering. LU faculty members Latiolais and Evan Wujcik, assistant professor of chemical engineering, accompanied the group.

“Founders and CEOs gave us a greater view of entrepreneurship, and the conference helped make connections with other students,” Bahena said. “Connections like these can be the difference in an idea reaching its full potential or not.”

During the conference, the attendees were divided into three groups for tours, visiting primarily cleantech companies.

“It was a great opportunity to look under the hood and see how the business world really works.”

—ALBERT ODELL

About the Lamar University Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship

The Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, or CICIE, is a partnership between Lamar University’s College of Business and College of Engineering and the Southeast Texas business community. The center is a conduit for industry and university interaction, including projects, on-going research, student experiential learning, special events and training. The center promotes a strong emphasis on student development and training to prepare graduates for rewarding careers by familiarising them with entrepreneurial real-world projects. New businesses supported by the center are technology-focused, providing products and services for existing and future industry needs.
“That was very poignant for me. You work on something in an office, but to see the change effected on the ground was very humbling for me,” she said.

Wenah thinks of that year as a time of great personal triumph—working for the first lady—and of tragedy. The same day she landed in Florida for her first assignment as part of the advance team, her father died, just months after being diagnosed with cancer.

“I think how you handle adversity is extremely important,” Wenah said, crediting her faith with helping her through hard times. “I want people to remain inspired and encouraged no matter how bleak a situation appears.”

Along with her role as part of Mrs. Obama’s advance team, Wenah became an associate for the President’s Boards and Commissions in 2013.

“It was interesting to find candidates that fill a particular niche or have a particular skill set to advance the different goals or needs of each commission, and working through the statutory interpretation was interesting from a legal perspective,” she said.

From there, Wenah moved on to the U.S. Department of Commerce in fall of 2013 as special assistant to the general counsel, advising the commerce secretary and supervising the department’s 14 legal offices. In that role, she also helped organize trade missions and had the opportunity to travel to Nigeria on Secretary Penny Pritzker’s May 2014 West Africa Trade Mission. The assignment was particularly fulfilling for Wenah because her parents are both from Nigeria. They immigrated to Houston before she was born. During a key speech in Lagos, Pritzker recognized Wenah and highlighted her story and goal of building stronger ties between businesses in the U.S. and Nigeria.

“arlier that year, after she had completed the internship and joined the first lady’s advance team, she saw firsthand the results of that effort on a visit to a Florida naval base when a sailor approached her and thanked her story and goal of building stronger ties between businesses in the U.S. and Nigeria.

Several months after that trade mission, Wenah moved to the Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration where she co-leads the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership. The initiative aims to help U.S. communities develop strategies to ensure they remain and/or become globally competitive. So far, 12 communities nationwide have been designated as “manufacturing communities” under the program, which provides them with support from a federal liaison and federal funding opportunities. Wenah and her colleagues are working with those communities and preparing for round two. The application period for the second group of communities to benefit from the program opened earlier this year.

“For me, it’s always been a people person. Being able to have conversations with people in designated communities or potential communities and different people who have an equity and interest in making sure the U.S. is competitive globally is what I enjoy most.”

Wenah’s penchant for working with and helping people was apparent during her time at LU as well. She started her career at the university as a pre-pharmacy major (at her mother’s urging) and a student athlete, running track. She even founded a new student organization, Pre-pharmacy Interscholastic League of Students, before changing her major to political science. She also was the chapter president and international officer of her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, a community advisor in Cardinal Village, and active in the Student Government Association, where she served as secretary-treasurer, organized the first Women’s Empowerment Conference and was elected homecoming queen.

“Lamar University was a really special place in my life in terms of the formative experiences I had as a young adult,” Wenah said. “There were peaks and valleys during my time at LU, but it made me an even more empathetic and resilient human being.”

She makes a point to return to campus for homecoming each year.

Wenah worked as a White House intern in early 2012 while completing her master’s in public administration and her law degree from Texas Southern University in Houston, her hometown. Among her White House projects was an initiative to make it easier for military spouses to secure professional licenses when military moves required them to find a job in a new state. Later that year, after she had completed the internship and joined the first lady’s advance team, she saw firsthand the results of that effort on a visit to a Florida naval base when a sailor approached her and thanked her for the office’s work on the spousal licensing issue.
He lives in Houston. He and his wife, Wokie, live in Pearland.

Teresa Scott ’74, B.A. accounting, a career and owner of Two Celebrations in Houston, is a local resident of Galveston. She lives in Galveston with her wife, Mable.

Matthews ’74, B.A. business administration, was a partner in the Houston law firm of Bontemps & White. He now lives in Houston.

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Students from various academic disciplines enjoyed the opportunity to engage with LU alumni professionals in their chosen fields during A Dinner and Conversation Feb. 12. Hosts meet students at their table during dinner, and students get a chance to discuss real-world application of the skills they are building in and out of class.

Alumni Table Hosts
Clara Brown Cooper, Distinguished Alumna for Community Service, 2007; BS Sociology 1989; President/CEO of Souper Bowl of Caring in Houston
Debi Derrick, BS Communication 1981, Senior Communication Specialist for Entergy
Alton Heckaman, Member of the College of Business Board of Advisors, BBA Accounting 1978, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Swift Energy Co. in Houston
Dr. Scott McKenney, BS Physics 1977, Oncologist with Texas Oncology Associates in Beaumont.
Jennifer Turner Nichols, Member of the LU Planned Giving Advisory Council; BBA Accounting 2003; Partner with Orgain, Bell & Tucker, LLP in Beaumont
Dr. Anita Riddle, Master of Engineering Management 1993, Doctor of Engineering 1996; Member of the Chemical Engineering Advisory Council; College of Engineering Advisory Council and LU Foundation Board Trustee; Procurement Sourcing Manager with ExxonMobile in The Woodlands

Faculty Hosts
Gisele Moss, Chair of Accounting and Business Law
Joe Nordgren, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
Terri Davis, Chair of Political Science

T.C. Ho, Chair of Chemical Engineering
Stuart Wight, Chair of Sociology, Social Work & Criminal Justice
O’Brien Stanley, Chair of Communication

Business | Alton Heckaman ’78 hosted business students.
Communication | Debi Derrick ’81 hosted communication students.
Engineering | Anita Riddle ’93, ’96 hosted engineering students.
Philanthropy | Clara Brown Cooper ’89 hosted students interested in non-profit work.
Pre-Med | Scott McKenney ’77 hosted pre-med students.
Pre-Law | Jennifer Turner Nichols ’03 hosted pre-law students.
Alumni enjoyed reconnecting with former classmates and meeting new alumni at the Houston Area Alumni gathering at El Patio Restaurant on Nov. 20.

1. Richard Valley ’70, President Ken Evans
2. Andy Saldana ’91, Larry Eastepp ’81
3. Kevin Robyler ’93, Joyce Johnson Scott ’72
4. Simon Tang ’76, Jesse Maldonado ’01, Charlotte Jungen ’97, Garret Duhon ’13
5. Evette Adams ’81, Gail Preston Hall ’86
6. Brian Roberson ’98, ’10, Jacquelyn Hurry, Juan Zabala ’07 VP of Advancement, Peggy Zabala
7. Garret Duhon ’13, Simon Tang ’76
9. Peggy Zabala, Richard Valley ’70, Eva Clifton Alumni Coordinator, Juan Zabala ’07 VP of Advancement
10. Vladinka (Rose) Oliva ’82, Antonio Oliva
11. Jena (Verrill) Still ’06, Brandon Still ’06
13. Juan Zabala ’07 VP of Advancement, Simon Tang ’76, Peggy Zabala
14. Gerald Bourque ’73, ’75
15. Gene Feigelson ’65, President Ken Evans
16. Lyndon Rojo ’88, Gerald Bourque ’74
17. Juan Zabala ’07 VP of University Advancement, Jason Walker ’92
Alumni Baseball Tailgate
Alumni enjoyed hotdogs, links, boudin, smoothies and more at the April 24 Alumni Baseball Tailgate before watching the Cardinals take on Incarnate Word at Vincent Beck Stadium.

Jiovanny Gomez, interdisciplinary studies, lives in Hardin. He and his wife, Josey, M.Ed. school administration, ’91, B.S. health and kinesiology, ’90, B.B.A. marketing, is a transportation engineer for the Texas Department of Transportation in College Station, where he lives.

Samer Yacoub, ’92, B.S. sociology, ’10, M.Ed. special education, is a transportation engineer for Sasol in Houston. He lives in Pearland with his wife, Anna.

Dr. Zainab Kayani, M.S. psychology-community, is director of student support services for Lamar University. She lives in Beaumont. She is recipient of the 2014 President-for-a-Day Standing Graduate Student Research Award from the National Council on Family Relations. She is a full-time doctoral student in the U.S. social work program.

Dr. Michael Spears, M.S. psychology, is a crisis intervention specialist for Gulf Coast MHMR. He lives in Galveston.

Ryan Dollinger ’14 and Amber Dillingham

Lamar University Alumni along with their friends and families gathered for a reception on Jan. 31 in the Cardinal Club Room between the women’s and men’s basketball games against the Abilene Christian Wildcats.


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**Distinguished Alumni Awards**

David E. Berenson ’73, Sandra Fresh Clark ’76, George A. Duhman Jr. ’49, and Roosevelt Petry Jr. ’92, ’96, were honored with the most prestigious award bestowed to graduates of Lamar University at a dinner held on February 27, 2015. The Lamar University Alumni Advisory Board’s Distinguished Alumni Awards Committee selects the annual recipients from nominations by LU alumni based on criteria that identify graduates who have made notable accomplishments in their chosen professions. The recipients must also display integrity and character that inspire pride in the university and its alumni and have demonstrated recognition of the importance of Lamar University in their career, deeds and actions.


**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

The Distinguished Alumni Awards are the most prestigious honor presented to Lamar University alumni. Each year, the Alumni Advisory Board appoints an awards selection committee to review all nominations and make the awards selections.

All Lamar University alumni and friends are eligible to submit nominations for Distinguished Alumni Awards. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- The candidate must be a graduate of Lamar University who is distinguished in his or her chosen profession or field of work.
- The candidate must be a person of such integrity, stature, and demonstrated ability that faculty, staff, students, and alumni will take pride and be inspired by his or her recognition; and
- The candidate must be an individual who, in deed and in action, recognizes the importance of his or her education at Lamar and whose interest and loyalty are evident.

The deadline for nominations for the 2016 Distinguished Alumni Awards is September 30, 2015. A letter of nomination along with any additional information available regarding the nominee is also acceptable. Please send your nomination to:

Alumni@Lamar.edu or
Distinguished Alumni Awards Committee
PO Box 10005
Beaumont, TX 77710

Lamar University Distinguished Alumni Nominations Requested

B.S. computer science. He is a computer programmer and manager for Capital One. They have a daughter, Brie.


Jeanne (Senegal) Crow ’73, B.A. applied arts and sciences, teaches at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School in Port Arthur, where she lives.

Ben Miller ’79, B.S. electrical engineering and physics, is an electrical engineer for Mentor Electronics. He lives in Boston.

Thomas Pugh ’01, B.S. mechanical engineering, earned a master’s degree in business from the University of Houston and is a reliability engineer for Marathon Petroleum. He lives in League City with his wife, Kim.

Kwame Roy ’16, B.S. criminal justice, earned a master’s degree in counseling and is a psychotherapist at West Olive Hospital. He lives in Houston.

Rosalie (Sellers) Savannah ’53, B.S. general studies, ’14, M.H. educational technology leadership, is a graduate certification officer for Lamar University. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Alvin.

Brian Sherman ’97, B.S. communication, is a division sales leader for Apache Corp. in Houston, where he lives.

Perry (Aceram) Cope ’77, B.S. psychology, is a certified health/clinical practitioner for Hartford Alliance, Youth and Residential Services. She lives in Chicago, IL.

Lucy (Bakie) Gardner ’77, B.S. biology, is a laboratory technician for Dupont. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Lee.

Dr. Lindsey (Cushen) Miller ’07, B.B. nursing, ’97, B.A. studies, is a faculty lecturer in business at Rice University. She has earned a master degree in human resource development from the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences/M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. She lives in League City with her husband, Andrew.

Sarah (Hallock) Perez ’77, B.A. psychology, earned a Bachelor’s degree in business education from Texas State University. She is a licensed sales officer for Capital One online Bank in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Thomae.

Amanda Rodriguez ’97, B.B.A. general business, earned a law degree and works for Bernard, Hardiman and Bohmson in San Antonio, where she lives with her wife, Charity (Gammie) ’97, B.B.A. general business accounting.

Joy Gross ’78, B.S. sociology, teaches in
Cardinal CadenCe
JULY 2015
43:1 JULY 2015
43:1 JULY 2015

Thank you, Morris!

A luncheon was held at the University Reception Center on Dec. 2, 2014, to honor Morris Lee for his volunteer efforts in spreading Cardinal Pride.

Odd is, if you have an Alumni decal or Cardinals decal on your vehicle or business, it is because of Morris. He enjoys spreading Cardinal Pride throughout our community. If you ever bump into him, give him a “Thank you, Morris!”

Judy McKee ‘66 and Morris Lee ‘73, ’79

Lunchun Honoring Morris Lee

LU Alumni Community Service Project at Habitat for Humanity ReStore

A number of Lamar University Alumni, their friends and family, and Lamar University Ambassadors volunteered to clean and organize donations at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, an event organized by the LU Alumni Office April 18.


2. Jackie Bell and Marcia (White) Berry, ’06. Assistant to the President for Community Relations Norman Bellard, ’70, O. Rosalva, ’11, Mercedes Watkins, ’19, and Tonya Hanson, ’11.

3. Al Alumni Advisory Board member Karen (Jones) Thomas, ’77, and Robert Vaughan, ’64, Mrs. Vaughan.


7. Al Alumni Advisory Board member Karen (Jones) Thomas, ’77, and Robert Vaughan, ’64, Mrs. Vaughan.

8. Heritage for Humanity ReStore Supervisor Miriam Morgan, ’84, Angela (Simon) Diona, ’76 and son Zach Diona.
Dream becomes reality
Team returns home to new stadium

Softball returned to Lamar University in 2013, and for the first two seasons the Cardinals played their home games at Ford Park west of Beaumont. Now, with the stadium completed, players are able to take the field for practice and conference play just steps away from their locker room inside the LU Soccer/Softball Complex building. The first home game was played in the new facility in March before stadium seating was completed.

The stadium designed by BRW Architecture features seating for 650 fans. Future plans call for an outfield berm that will accommodate an additional 250 spectators. The natural grass facility includes field lighting, bullpens, dugouts, an enclosed hitting area, an electronic scoreboard and a press box.

The area along Rolfe Christopher Drive is becoming a new gateway into the campus. The new softball stadium, the Wayne A. Reaud Administration Building and planned construction of the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship will create an entirely new face to greet visitors as they approach the south entrance to campus.