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Annual Giving: Your gift helps students. Send it today

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from the President

A s the semester comes to a close and we look forward to the coming year, it is important to pause and remember the events of 2014 and celebrate the support we received from our wonderful Lamar University family.

It was an exciting year as we broke ground on the new Wayne A. Reaud Administration Building that also will be home to the Reaud Honors College. This magnificent building is the result of exceptionally generous gifts from Distinguished Alumni Wayne Reaud ’71 and Jan Huntman. Earlier, we welcomed Mr. Huntman to campus as our Judge Joe J. Fisher Distinguished Lecturer and learned of his inspirational life and career.

You can read about another Southeast Texas icon, the late Rudy Williams, father of L.U. First Lady Susan (Williams) Simmons ’68, in this issue of Cardinal Cadence. One of the buildings at the John Gray Center is named in his honor as a long-standing supporter of education and Lamar University.

We celebrated a generous gift this fall from LU Distinguished Alumnus and entrepreneur Jack Gill ’58 and his wife, Linda. Their support will fund the Gill Chair in Engineering and programs of the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship.

In the inaugural gathering of the Lamar University President’s Circle, we honored and recognized a number of individuals whose commitment to the success of our students is exemplary. These leaders in philanthropy are making so many important differences to the university and its future.

In this issue, we also highlight 40 young alumni who, while early in their careers, are doing great things to help their communities. This sample of talent and determination represented by our young alumni is truly inspirational. These leaders in philanthropy are making so many important differences to the university and its future. These leaders in philanthropy are making so many important differences to the university and its future.

You can read about another Southeast Texas icon, the late Rudy Williams, father of Lost Lady Susan (Williams) Simmons ’68, in this issue of Cardinal Cadence. One of the buildings at the John Gray Center is named in his honor as a long-standing supporter of education and Lamar University.

We also celebrate in these pages the lives and work of Distinguished Alumni Kenneth Evans ’50, President of Lamar University System and an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.

Cardinal Cadence is published by the Division of University Advancement, Lamar University, a member of The Texas State University System. All editorial and cover photographs are by Cardinal Cadence. The Lamar University System and Lamar University are equal opportunity educational institutions.

Brian Sattler, Director of Public Relations
Cynthia Hicks, Manager, Division of University Advancement
Kevin Jordan, Matthew Lemke, Tanny Chatlosh, Gary Christopher, Evie Clifton, Cathleen Cole, Beth Gallaspy, Molly Porter, Cheryl Rose, Anna Timbrook, Rose, Kara Timberlake, Mary and John Gray Library. The event honored founding University Reception Center on the eighth floor of the Mary and John Gray Library. The event honored founding University Reception Center on the eighth floor of the Mary and John Gray Library.

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Lamar University and Texas State University System officials broke ground this fall on a new administration building. The project that officials are calling “transformational” is made possible by gifts that also allow the university to upgrade its long-standing honors program into the Reaud Honors College.

by Brian Sattler
The gift from Wayne Reaud ’71 and an additional gift from Jon Huntsman Sr. are “real game-changers for Lamar University,” said LU President Ken Evans. “This is the very definition of a transformational gift.” Joining in breaking ground were Reaud, Evans, Huntsman, Jon Huntsman, TSUS Regent David Montague and LU President Emeritus James Simmons.

The Wayne A. Reaud Building will become a part of a new gateway to campus on the corner of Jim Gilligan Way and Rolfe Christopher Drive.

“For many, many years, we were the largest employer in Southeast Texas in the chemical business and virtually all of our supervisors and senior management had done work at Lamar,” said Jon Huntsman Sr. during a visit to campus earlier. “It really has been a tremendous university for helping to train people going into energy-related fields. When our board saw what we were doing, it was logical that we would participate in something like this in honor of Wayne but also of Lamar and our great association through the years. It’s a great honor for our company and our family.”

“If you took a poll of our board of directors and our family, there isn’t a man that we admire more,” Huntsman said of Reaud. “He’s part of the family and also one the great legal minds in America. We’ve won two of the three largest out-of-court settlements in America thanks to Wayne Reaud.”

As one of the most successful trial lawyers in the U.S., Reaud is renowned for his litigation work in asbestos and tobacco cases and for his representation of major national corporations. Reaud’s visionary approach to bridging the “digital divide” led to the landmark settlement in the Shire v. Toshiba America Information Systems Inc. case through which $400 million was directed to the Beaumont Foundation of America.

He is a life fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation, fellow of the International Society of Barristers, past president of the Southeast Texas Trial Lawyers Association, Jefferson County Bar Association and of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association.

Without it being here, I may not have gone to college.

—Wayne Reaud ’71

The Wayne A. Reaud Building

The new three-story building will be a state-of-the-art facility for university administration offices as well as Information Technology, Human Resources and other administrative functions. The ground floor of the building will be home for the university’s growing honors college that celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.

The building will become the cornerstone of the redesigned formal campus entrance, a new gateway to the Lamar University campus. The presence of many essential and central campus activities in the Reaud Building will create a sense of arrival for visitors to campus and will serve as the catalyst to connect the campus with the community.

The project will encompass approximately 45,000 square feet. Page Southerland Page is architect for the project and SportGlass will serve as construction manager.

The new building will be on the site of the former Brooks-Shivers dormitory that was demolished earlier this year. The university had previously named its dining facility the Brooks-Shivers Dining Hall to retain the names of former U.S. Congressman Jack Brooks and former Texas Governor Allan Shivers on the campus.

Reaud Honors College

Establishing the Reaud Honors College at Lamar University will provide a clear indication to high-ability students of our commitment to provide them with the highest-quality education, well suited to their needs, capabilities and aspirations, said Steve Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

“I believe that the honors college is going to be a wonderful addition to Lamar,” Reaud said. “It is my dream, my hope, my desire, that students who pass through this institution will not just be educated but will be challenged to change the face of the age.”

Founded in 1963 with just a handful of students, the program has grown to be one of the most vibrant and attractive programs on campus with enrollment of around 300 students, said Doblin.

With this gift, the Reaud Honors College will become the ninth honors college in Texas, joining those at Baylor University, Texas State, Texas Tech, the University of Houston, Prairie View A&M, the University of North Texas, the University of Texas at Arlington and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

“The additional development of Lamar Honors education through this generous gift by Mr. Reaud will serve to enhance student success and leadership development,” Doblin said. “In a typical year, more than half of the university’s honors graduates continue their education in graduate or professional school, he said.

Reaud’s philanthropy has benefited hundreds of organizations across the nation. His commitment to education is reflected in scholarship programs he has established in higher education throughout Texas, including many at Lamar University, said Juan Zabala, vice president for university advancement.

The recent gift is a continuation of Reaud’s strong support for Lamar University, including the Gema and Albert E. Reaud Scholarship valued at $1.6 million and the Reaud Scholars Program. It also encompasses the $3.6 million Southeast Texas Legends Endowed Scholarships that honor Manie T. Bell, Jack Brooks, Don Burgos, Dr. Joe Dickinson, Reverend E. L. Gilbert “Buddy” Low, George McLaughlin, Hubert Oxford III, Carl Parker Jr., James M. Simmons, Ward Stephens, Joe H. Tonahill, John G. Tucker, Walter Umphrey and Bob Waltham.
Carden, Texas, to Vesse and Lily Williams. Rudy was the youngest of four children. He recalled that his family, living on the farm, did not have electricity, running water or indoor plumbing until the early 1940s. The Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative first brought electricity to Sabine County in 1938.

Williams attended Genesis Grammar School in Geneva, Texas, and graduated from Hempfield High School in 1940. He lettered in basketball and made spending money raising and selling tomatoes. At 15, he worked at a tomato shed in Hempfield.

After graduating high school, his sister Carma Cates convinced their father that Rudy should not stay on the farm. He took $35 that his father had given him for a car and rented a room in Beaumont where he attended Chester’s Business School. While attending classes, Williams worked every day at the San Jacinto Drug Store as a short order cook, sold shoes at Rosenthal’s Department Store and worked at Tyrell Hardware on the weekends doing odd jobs.

In 1941, his first “real” job was with Atlantic-Gulf and Pacific Dredging Co. First, he worked as a payed clerk for this company that dredged up and down the Intracoastal Canal from Mobile Bay to Corpus Christi. He learned as many skills aboard the barge as he could, and by 1942 the company classified him as a civil engineer. In 1944, he was employed as an assistant purchasing agent for the Lummus Co. in Port Neches, Texas. Then he went to work for the Defense Plant Corp. (part of the U.S. Government). This corporation coordinated materials to build chemical plants and refineries in the Port Neches, Port Arthur and Beaumont areas. In December 1944, he married Jean Hilliard, and they had three children: Susan, Reed and Richard.

In 1945, Roy Manes and Williams started Gulf Consolidated Services. Williams became president and CEO of the company and also, as CEO of Gulf Consolidated Services, he operated 21 divisions throughout the world and employed 1,600 people. Also, in 1976, Rudy and Jean built a lake house in Livingston, Texas, which became their weekend place.

In 1977, Williams and his partners sold Gulf Consolidated Services to the Mead Corp. From 1977-1985, he served as consultant for the Mead Corp. In 1985, he started another company, Oil Company Specialties, and then sold this company to John Mecom in 1988. That year, Williams retired, and he and Jean bought a house in Beaumont where they lived part time and part time at the lake. While living in Livingston, he was very active in community affairs. He helped organize the fundraising drive to build a new facility for Livingston’s Port United Methodist Church. He also served on the board and the building committee for the county hospital.

In 1999, Jean and Rudy returned to Beaumont to live. Jean died in 2005, and Rudy married Helen Hatchell Freeman the following year.

An avid sportsman and “farmer,” Williams enjoyed fishing, hunting, golfing, working in his yard, managing his investments and talking about his travels. He especially enjoyed his visits to the Middle East: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran.

In his later years, Williams still enjoyed watching basketball and golf and telling “tall tales.” His favorite saying was “Life is good.”

---SUSAN (WILLIAM) SIMMONS ’68---
The Gill Foundation of Texas, founded by Jack ’58 and Linda Gill, has given $1 million to support innovation-based entrepreneurship programs at Lamar University. Jack Gill, who is 1989 LU Distinguished Alumnus and holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Indiana University, was on campus recently to announce the gift. Half of the gift will add support to the Jack M. Gill Endowed Chair in the College of Engineering and half will support LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship (CICE).

A successful technology entrepreneur, venture capitalist, educator and philanthropist, Gill said, “This contribution from Linda and me is a vote of confidence in the capacity of universities to accelerate entrepreneurship in society. Entrepreneurship drives the economy and brings advances in science, engineering and medicine to market so everyone can benefit.”

The gift will enhance the capacity and reach of the CICE to foster innovation at Lamar University and technology entrepreneurship across the region, said Center Director Paul Latiolais.

Part of the donation will be used to create student internships and cross-disciplinary teams to support new ventures in a “learning lab” environment in the new Business Accelerator scheduled for completion in early 2016, added Latiolais.

The donation will help accelerate student learning, encourage innovation among faculty and students, and support fast-growing economic sectors through technology development and entrepreneurship, he said. The funds will help meet the growing needs of the CICE, and help develop new entrepreneurial programs, student internships and technology-to-business teams.

“I am very excited by the steps taken at Lamar and remain an avid supporter of the CICE,” Gill said.

The gift also adds support to the Gill Chair in the College of Engineering held by David Cocke, an active researcher and professor in the Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering. Cocke is an expert in environmental and surface chemistry and catalysis, advanced materials and biomedical research. He is a member of the American Chemical Society, Electrochemical Society, Society of Applied Spectroscopy, National Association of Corrosion Engineers, Materials Research Society and American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Gill’s million-dollar gift supports LU’s entrepreneurial enterprise

—Jack Gill ’58

Jack Gill is the founder and managing partner (retired) of Vanguard Ventures in Palo Alto, Calif. During his career, Gill has earned distinction and honor as a scientist, senior executive, entrepreneur, venture capitalist, university professor and philanthropist.

Gill has more than four decades of experience working in Silicon Valley and Boston as a company founder and venture capitalist. Gill has founded and financed start-up companies in the instrumentation, computer, communications and medical industries. Vanguard Ventures’ first five funds invested $155 million in 107 start-ups and generated more than $1 billion return to investors.

In 1998, Jack and Linda established The Gill Foundation of Texas. In 2000, he joined the faculties of Harvard Medical School and MIT and served as senior advisor to the Center for the Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology. Since 2007, he has been professor of the practice of entrepreneurship at Rice University. He has taught scientific, medical and entrepreneurship courses at 12 major universities. He is now working on converting his experience and the course materials into several books.

Gill is a past president of the LU Foundation and member of Lamar University’s College of Engineering Advisory Council. Jack and Linda Gill support students in many ways, including recently sponsoring LU MBA students’ participation in the Ignite! Entrepreneurship Conference at UC-Davis. The Gills are members of Lamar’s Legacy Society in recognition of their support to the university. In 1999, he received the prestigious Horatio Alger Award for Distinguished Americans.
We express our deep gratitude to the alumni and friends of Lamar University, known to us as Dream Makers, who have recently established endowments and gifts through estate plans. These gifts encourage students to pursue a college education and help faculty create innovative learning environments. An endowment creates a legacy that becomes a permanent piece of LU’s history. To learn more about how you can begin your own giving plan, we invite you to visit lamar.edu/development. In this issue of Cardinal Cadence, we are honored to acknowledge our Dream Makers.

Diane (Keating) Woodcox -62, who studied English between 1960 and 1962, endowed the Diane Keating Woodcox Scholarship in English and Modern Languages within the College of Arts and Sciences. Her generous follow-a-family tradition of supporting Lamar University with endowments she created through a family foundation. She has honored the memory of her father James A. Keating -73, who earned a master’s degree in engineering at Lamar. The scholarship supports students pursuing a course of study in chemistry, engineering, and the fine leaders who will help others and helping those in need.

Karen Brownlee ’57 and Glenn Smith ’67 endowed the Juanita Brownlee Memorial Scholarship for Mathematics teachers in memory of Karen’s mother, Juanita, to help her many years as a math teacher. The scholarship was established in the College of Arts and Sciences. Brownlee ’63, ’73, earned a bachelor’s degree in home economics and a master’s degree in education. She authored the textbook Tangram Geometry in Metric.

Anita Riddle ’93, ’96, created the Dr. Anelio L. Riddle College of Engineer- ing Innovation Fund as a “strong vote of confidence for Dean Jack Hopper, as well as the fine leaders who will succeed him in the future.” Riddle earned a master of engineering management degree and her doctorate in engineering, both from Lamar University. Riddle and her husband, Dr. Steven Schmidt, have generously supported educational excellence in the areas of faculty enrichment and scholarships for the Society of Women Engineers. Dr. Riddle serves as a trustee for the Lamar University Foundation and as a member of the College of Engineering Advisory Board.

Jimmy Booker ’55, ’56, has established the Merle Merrell Booker Scholarship in Art to honor his wife, Merle. ’58, she earned her bachelor’s degree in commercial art at LU. The scholarship is an endowment created in the College of Fine Arts and Communication. Jimmy has served Lamar University for many years in multiple areas, including on the LU Alumni Education Consortium, an independent, self-funded, non-profit corporation opened a branch campus of TEP at Lamar University.

The Gammill family established the Dr. Wayne Hughes Memorial Regents Scholarship in Chemical Engineering in memory of Dr. Hughes. The scholarship was established in the College of Arts and Sciences. The scholarship is an endowment created in memory of Karen’s mother, Juanita, to help her many years as a math teacher. The scholarship was established in the College of Arts and Sciences. Brownlee ’63, ’73, earned a bachelor’s degree in home economics and a master’s degree in education. She authored the textbook Tangram Geometry in Metric.

The Schlitterbahn Student Scholarship in Engineering Open to students from Nederland, the first recipient of the Mr. Nederland Scholarship. The scholarship is an endowment created in memory of Ed Hughes, an entrepreneur. Hughes was also the principal trombonist with the Symphony of Southeast Texas.

Ynhi Doquang Nguyen endowed the Dr. Hai N. Nguyen Memorial Schol- arship in Chemical Engineering in memory of Dr. Nguyen. Dr. Nguyen was the first recipient of the doctor of engineering degree con- cluded at Lamar University in 1975. Through this scholarship, Ynhi Nguyen wishes to encourage worthy students to pursue a course of study in chemical engineering.

Jackie (Dezele) ’58, ’60, and Ray mon Bean -60 endowed the Amie Lynn Bean Memorial Scholarship in Memory of their daughter, Amie, who lost her battle with leukemia in 1991. The Beans attended Lamar University between 1956 and 1960. Amie was a senior specializing in health care at Texas A&M when she received her diagnosis. The Beans hope this en- dorsed scholarship in the College of Arts and Sciences will pave the way for caring and dedicated nursing stu- dents to achieve their goals of serving others and helping those in need.

Sri Chittaluri ’90 endowed the Sri Chittaluri Graduate Research Scholarship in Engineering to honor him a master’s degree in engineering at Lamar University. The scholarship helped him pay tuition and living expenses, which assisted him in successfully earning the master of engineering degree there. In its words, “has transformed his career.”

Pat ’71 and Melody O’Reilly Parsons ’71 endowed the Pal and Melody Parsons Innovation Fund in Business to support teaching, research, ser- vice and professional development activities in the College of Business. Pal is a 30-year veteran of the bank- ing industry and one of the drivers behind the idea of what is now one of the largest locally owned financial institutions in the region, CommunityBank of Texas.

Karen Brownlee ’57 and Glenn Smith ’67 endowed the Juanita Brownlee Memorial Scholarship for Mathematics teachers in memory of Karen’s mother, Juanita, to help her many years as a math teacher. The scholarship was established in the College of Arts and Sciences. Brownlee ’63, ’73, earned a bachelor’s degree in home economics and a master’s degree in education. She authored the textbook Tangram Geometry in Metric.

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Cardinal Caden

Elaine and Thomas Cameron established the Elaine and Thomas Cameron endowed scholarship, devoted herself to her three sons. Catholic, she never remarried and after 23 years of marriage. A devout Maggie, was unexpectedly widowed and through a planned gift from the estate of Jessie Mae Moss. The scholarship recognizes her father’s dedication to his community and family, and it is named in honor of his parents John and Ruth W. Honea. Dr. Honea has been a member of the board of trustees for 25 years. Avid boaters, the Cadenurons were active in the Lake Charles chapter of the United States Power Squadrons. They met while attending Port Arthur College.

The Herrme “Boots” Hermitz Scholarship in Nursing and the Besse Hermitz Memorial Scholarship in Education are endowed scholarships created through a planned gift from the estate of Alan R. Hermitz. Allee Ann McVeety Hermitz ’70, Allee earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting and is a member of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity. He is president of Allee Hermitz & Co., CPA. Allee earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education, she is a member of Alpha Delta Pi Sorority and taught for 18 years. A planned gift from the estate of Ronald D.65, ’73, and Charlotte (Cupit) Graves -45 has created the endowed Ronald and Charlotte Graves Memorial Scholarship. Ronald Graves received scholarship assistance for books, tuition and fees for the entirety of his undergraduate career at Lamar University. The scholarships want to afford students the same level of educational fulfillment Ronald experienced, and Charlotte also greatly benefitted from her studies at LU.

A planned gift from the estate of Samuel Gerard Bonura will enhance the Margaret Bonura Memorial and Gerard Bonura Scholarship in Nursing, an endowed scholarship. Gerard Bonura ’77 established the Scholarship in memory of his mother. In 1965, Margaret, affectionately called Maggie, was unexpectedly widowed after 23 years of marriage. A devout Cathole, she never remarried and devoted herself to her three sons.

Elaine and Thomas Cameron established the Elaine and Thomas Cameron Scholarship Fund to benefit Lamar University students. A planned gift from the Elaine Cameron’s estate created this endowed scholarship. Thomas was plant superintendent for Tennessee Gas Transmission Co. for 25 years. Avid booters, the Camurons were active in the Lake Charles chapter of the United States Power Squadrons. They met while attending Port Arthur College.

A planned gift from the estate of Larry W. Lawson -67 has established the Larry W. Lawson Research Fund in Electrical Engineering. Attending Lamar from 1963 through 1967, Lawson was elected a cheerleader, played trumpet with the jazz and marching bands and performed throughout Southeast Texas. He grew up in Bridge City, where he learned to play piano at age five, wrote music and copyrighted his first songs at 13. Lawson founded eCardio Diagnostics in 2004. Today, eCardio is the leading arrhythmia-monitoring company in the U.S.

A planned gift from the estate of Ronald D.65, ’73, and Charlotte (Cupit) Graves -45 has created the endowed Ronald and Charlotte Graves Memorial Scholarship. Ronald Graves received scholarship assistance for books, tuition and fees for the entirety of his undergraduate career at Lamar University. The scholarships want to afford students the same level of educational fulfillment Ronald experienced, and Charlotte also greatly benefitted from her studies at LU.

Dr. John Mark Honea Jr. ’69, ’75, has created the John Mark Honea Jr. Scholarship in Education, an endowed scholarship created through a planned gift from his estate. Dr. Honea earned a bachelor’s degree in government and a master’s degree in secondary education. In recognition of his service as director of basketball operations for LU, the weight room in the Montagne Center is named in honor of his parents John H. and Ruth W. Honea. Dr. Honea has had a strong relationship with LU for many years.

To begin your own endowment or to add a gift to an existing endowment, please contact the Lamar University Foundation at (409) 880-2717.
President’s Circle

Oct. 10 marked a milestone in Lamar University history—the inaugural year of the President’s Circle. President Ken Evans honored more than 157 founding members of the prestigious group during a dinner in the University Reception Center, thanking them for their loyal and forward-looking support. These special alumni and friends of LU have dedicated—and continue to generously give—time and treasure to scholarships, endowments and more with the aim of extending a helping hand to our students. Each of them keenly recognize what a fundamental difference an education can make to quality of life—and LU, with gratitude, recognizes them as President’s Circle members who are helping students meet their goals and fulfill their dreams.
SCOTT DEPPE, director of bands, conducts the 56-member Wind Ensemble this past spring as part of the Lamarissimo! Concert Series at the Julie Rogers Theatre. The group is one of only four bands invited to perform before the Texas Music Educators Association’s 2015 Clinic and Convention in February.

ANTON IN SHOW BUSINESS PRODUCTION
Traci VanLaw of Winnie, foreground; Shelby Dryden, Vidor, left; and Lexi McDonald, Austin, right, are shown during Jane Martin’s Anton in Show Business, a satirical look into the world of theatre as three women pursue their dream of performing a play by Anton Chekhov in Texas. Instructor Brian LeTraunik directed the production, which opened the 2014-2015 season.

CARDINAL WALK OF HONOR
During the brick dedication ceremony Nov. 1 in the Blackdog, many alumni and friends photographed their engraved pavers among the many bricks laid in honor and in memory of almost 1,000 Cardinals to pave the Cardinal Walk of Honor.

WIND ENSEMBLE CONCERT
Scott Deppe, director of bands, conducts the 56-member Wind Ensemble this past spring as part of the Lamarissimo! Concert Series at the Julie Rogers Theatre. The group is one of only four bands invited to perform before the Texas Music Educators Association’s 2015 Clinic and Convention in February.

CONCERT IN THE PARK
The Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music held its second annual old-fashioned Concert in the Park this past April on the Plummer Building grounds. Lamar’s Wind Ensemble and Concert Band performed selections from Disney’s “Frozen” and “The Lion King,” the inverters to Hunter Bartha’s suite “Sedona Winds” and many other light classics, jazz and pop selections.

SERGIO DE LA CRUZ, director of bands, leads the Wind Ensemble at the 2014 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic and Convention.

OCTOBER GROUNDBREAKING
President Ken Evans and Athletics Director Jason Henderson joined in breaking ground for the new $30 million softball stadium, scheduled for completion spring 2015. The natural-grass facility will have field lighting, bullpens, dugouts, an enclosed hitting area, an electronic scoreboard and a press box.

VETERANS DAY
President Ken Evans, center, along with classmates, faculty, veterans and students, honored the nation’s veterans for their service and sacrifice. Evans presided over the ceremony.

MARIO TRUJILLO, left, and JASON AVERITT, right, members of the LU Veterans Organization, 23rd Cardinal Command, distributed pavers during the Brick Dedication Ceremony Nov. 1 at the Blackdog. The pavers honor and remember the lives of over 1,000 Cardinals, with more than 400 new bricks being added annually.
Cardinal Caden

Lamar University conferred 683 degrees during the Aug. 16 commencement ceremonies, keynoted by Texas State University System regent and San Antonio-based entrepreneur, Charlie Amato.

Students from more than 60 countries, faculty and staff enjoyed foods and performances representing cultures from around the world during International Cultural Festival Nov. 7.

Distinguished Alumnus and sports broadcaster Bill Macatee ’78 delivered the commencement address May 18 before 1,655 graduation candidates. Macatee has anchored network coverage of the Olympics, covered 24 Masters golf tournaments, 24 US Open Tennis Championships and has called 16 years of NFL play-by-play for CBS Sports, among many other sports and network broadcasts he has anchored.

LITERARY FESTIVAL

The Lamar University College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of English and Modern Languages hosted 14 writers from around the country to talk with faculty, staff, students and the community about writing and publishing during the annual Literary Festival Nov. 13-14.

ELEUMSYNARY PRODUCTION

Sydney Haggard, Friendswood, TX, and Daniel Williams, Beaumont, perform a scene from LU Theatre’s production of Lee Blessing’s Eleemosynary. Directed by Department Chair Deena Conley, the production ran in early November in the Studio Theatre.

CARDINAL SWAP

President Ken Evans attended morning classes as a student while applied mathematics major Madison Trevino took over LU presidential duties during the April 17 Cardinal Swap, an outreach program of the LU Rotary Club.

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL

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On Captopril [Read Broussard ’97] knew she wanted to be a physician, but she found her special passion for medicine from a personal experience. When she was pregnant with her first child, she gained 70 pounds. From the education and effort she put into weight loss and health management, she said she is able to establish and manage a successful business while still providing quality therapy to her patients, which is the most important aspect of what they do. “We have patients who say they’ve seen more progress in eight hours in our weight loss clinics than they have in their eight-hour workday.” Bates said. “My biggest accomplishment would be helping to change the quality of life for a lot of children here in Port Lavaca. Since it’s a small town, we actually know a lot of the par- ents and encourage them and see the difference in these kids. It’s miraculous. It really is.” —BD

Passion for patients

CRISTY BROSSAUD

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Never stop growing

DESMOND BERTRAND

Desmond Bertrand ’10, ’14, has a love for education and an entrepreneurial spirit that manifests itself in helping others. Born in Mamou, La., Bertrand was raised in Houston where he excelled in school. He was accepted at the High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, one of the top magnet schools in Houston. After graduating in 2003, he began his college career at Lamar University in New Orleans where he quickly advanced to team leader after transferring to a Houston campus. He sharpened his ability to be motivated, educated and nurtured in a way that will change their lives for the better.”

His passion for entrepreneurship began at the retailer Target in New Orleans, where he continued a family legacy since it was his paternal grandmother who was founder and curator of the museum. While there, he gained experience in nonprofit management, marketing, gift shop management, inventory, accounting and other facets of operating a not-for-profit business.

Bertrand has begun a career as a professional educator at Lone Star College as an advisor in marketing in the college of education. He also in the early stages of developing his second business venture, 4.0 Consulting Services, which is a consulting business that assists business owners in beginning their own entrepreneu- rial journey.

“You’ve always been passionate about education, giving back and making a difference in the world,” he said. “I think it’s important to leave a positive mark on those around you and your community.”

In his spare time, he writes poetry, songs and short stories. He has three grandchildren he loves as his own. Jaden, eight, Eric, seven; and Kalb, six.—LA
WYATT CAGLE

Wyatt Cagle ’93 is CEO and owner of CGL Studios, a production and post-production house in Houston making commercials, reality television, as well as feature film and video films. He also is a member of the team of SW Productions, which focuses on TV film and commercial work.

Cagle holds a bachelor’s degree in communication in which he focused on film and television production. His first professional work came in 1990 and after graduating from Lamar when he had the opportunity to produce a travel documentary in Warsaw, Poland. After returning to Texas, he began doing post-production work as an apprentice, then assistant editor, in Houston at a film specializing in high-end commercial work, as well as some music videos. He served as an assistant editor for four years in his first year.

Soon he moved on to other Houston companies, but, in 2005, he was hired by an Austin-based company to direct and edit high-concept corporate videos. There, he worked for clients like HP, ITM, Texas Instruments and Apple, but “decided to go a different way because I found myself not wanting to do corporate videos the rest of my life.”

After putting his things in storage—“your office desk in a 10lb-10 room”—he hit the road working movie sets as an assistant director and editor for 10 nights a year for a year gaining experience and making connections. The most significant connection he made that year was with April Marchant, an assistant wardrobe director who would become his wife three years later. The two have a 15-month-old son.

Soon, he received a call from Greg Schein- man, whom he had worked with in Houston, with an offer to partner in a line of DVDs for children. Together they created TeamBaby Entertainment, which was later acquired by Michael Eisner after he left Disney. “We became the first to produce branded entertainment,” Cagle said. “It started with the company a couple of years and helped grow it to a couple million dollars.” But after another acquisition, he decided to part ways and signed with Scheinman again in a venture to produce “a show that we had talked about doing years earlier,” Cagle said. “We thought it would be cool to interview entrepreneurs, artists, sports people, cool people that would be interesting subjects—just spend the day with them and do a day in the life. We had some money, time and a bunch of gear, so we did that and it ended up that PBS picked it up for two seasons.”

The show ran in 15 markets. Meanwhile, Cagle continued to grow his business, editing clerkies and agency commercials.

“I ventured up doing a lot of television com- mercials for larger companies, as well as some national and international commercials,” Cagle said. Currently, most of his business is on post-production on high-end production for large com- mercial work, representing brands like Walmart, United Airlines, Dr Pepper and Miller Lite.

One key to the work is flexibility and availabil- ity. “I’m an editor that they can call to work at different facilities under their umbrella,” he said. Cagle will often join a film production in New York, edit the commercial there and then return to Houston to be with his family.

Cagle enjoys staying connected with the communication department at LU where he has been a guest lecturer. “It is always a great thrill to be able to bring in the latest gear and show students,” he said. “Knowing the directorial, the theoretical, the breakdown of film, my education from Lamar has been invaluable.” —BGS

FRED VERNON

When Fred Vernon ’12, ’13, started his trucking company in his Cardinal Village dorm room in 2012, he knew Lamar University’s accounting education would drive his success.

“Everybody who is considering a major should consider accounting,” the CEO and founder of Houston-based KLV Ventures recommended. “Ac- counting is the language of business.”

The young entrepreneur earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration and a master’s degree in accounting in 2012. He earned an MBA with an accounting concentration in 2013. After graduating, Vernon worked as a valuation analyst with ProxwaterhouseCoopers until last April when he decided to focus all his efforts on his growing trucking company.

KLV Ventures currently has nine trucks and 50 employees and works as a contractor with FedEx Corp. as well as hauling freight for other companies. Vernon eventually wants to be in the position of transporting oil to refineries. Projected revenues for 2014 are $700,000 to $1 million and for 2015 are $1.5 million, he said.

The Port Arthur native, the first in his family

When a door is opened, run through it

When he’s not focused on where to take his company next, Vernon harbors a preference for non-fiction reading, gaming and historical docu- mentaries. He also exercises regularly and wants to learn to play the piano. “It’s the best instrument to express your mood,” he believes.

As for the trucking company he started in his dorm room, the accountant-turned-CEO aims to grow revenues to $130 million and take KLV Ven- tures public within the next 10 years. “I want KLV Ventures to be branded as a premier transporta- tion company,” he said.—CC

JOHN SOENNING

Education engineers bright future

While attending Lamar University, valedicto- rian of the May 2000 graduating class Johann “John” Soennig discovered his passion—acting.

“When I toured the campus, I took an ac- cessment test that pointed me to the chemical engineering field,” Soennig said, “Later on, my professors helped me realize my passion. After completing the required classes with the Dow Chemical Co., I knew that chemical engi- neering was absolutely the right path for me.”

After earning his bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering, Soennig accepted a job with BP where he worked as a profession- al engineer and a technical supervisor.

“Before I graduated, a team of BP engineers conducted recruiting interviews of Lamar students,” he said. “I interviewed and was offered a job. While working there, I be- came the lead for the Lamar recruiting board out of our Houston office. We were exposed to the top students, often identifying talents in the process. I discovered that about a quarter of BP engineers are from Lamar. There is a lot of skill and young energy among the Lamar graduates at BP.”

Living in League City with his wife and two young daughters, whom he credits for his motivation, Soennig now works as a director of operations for Plains All American Pipeline, a company involved in transporting and storing fuels.

“When a former BP manager asked me if I would be interested in coming in with him to work for Plains Pipeline, I agreed,” he said. “Because of his genuine character, I decided to take the leap. In this new position, I have worked hands-on alongside professors and attends alumni events. The Port Arthur native, the first in his family

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Dr. Elizabeth (Georgia) Thomas ’80, began her love for medicine at a young age growing up in Houston that she wanted to be a lawyer. She decided to become a physician when she was 19 years old. “I distinctly remember at the age of 18 having a shadowing experience at Texas Children’s Hospital that led Thomas to become a pediatrician. ‘That is what I want to do!’ she said. ‘The gentle way this particular physician spoke to the child, examined him, and developed a diagnosis and treatment plan appeared amazing to me.’”

While Thomas was a student at the University of Houston, she was elected 1977-1978 President of the University Student Council. After graduation, she worked as a registered nurse in Houston for a couple of years before applying and being accepted into medical school at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth. “It was the shadowing experience at Texas Children’s hospital that led Thomas to become a pediatrician. ‘She enjoys the opportunity to build relationships with children and their families that last for years. She plays a vital role in helping them make crucial decisions that can influence their lives, whether it is in regard to food choices or how to prevent bullying.’”

Thomas is currently the owner and CEO of Enocare, a business that provides seniors, children, and adults with the best health care possible. She is also involved in multiple charitable organizations and is a member of the Texas Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse, a non-profit organization that works to provide support and encouragement to children who need it.

TINA BUNNELL

Bunnell runs the numbers

For Tina Bunnell, crunching numbers comes naturally. Now the director of finance for the City of San Angelo, Bunnell graduated from the College of Business at TAMU-CC in 1990. She said she has always had a strong appreciation for math, having grown up in a family where math was the most important subject. Bunnell’s education and experiences have prepared her well for her current role as a financial manager.

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Thomas moved away from home after being accepted into the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth. She completed her junior and senior years of high school along with her first two years of college simultaneously. Her mother’s experience as a registered pediatric nurse helped Thomas decide to pursue a nursing degree in college. In addition to her nursing curriculum coursework, she completed a pre-requisite course in psychology for medical school with the intention of applying at some point. “God was in the center of my life through nursing school, and I know that it was only through Him that I completed that competitive program,” she said. “It was a challenging time, but I allowed it to be a step into the world of medicine.”

She worked as a registered nurse in Houston for a couple of years before applying and being accepted into medical school at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth. “It was the shadowing experience at Texas Children’s hospital that led Thomas to become a pediatrician. ‘That is what I want to do!’” said Thomas. “She enjoys the opportunity to build relationships with children and their families that last for years. She plays a vital role in helping them make crucial decisions that can influence their lives, whether it is in regard to food choices or how to prevent bullying.”

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Rebekah Maxwell ’11 started her marketing consulting business as a small side project in the summer of 2013 to help a few Southwest Texas farmers market business owners she had met find ways to use social media effectively for their businesses. After a little more than a year, however, she decided to flip her work priorities. Her marketing consulting company, eStep, is now her full-time job, and she cut back to part-time hours in her position as director of the In Pursuit of Ethics program for the BBB.

Since turning more of her time and energy to eStep, Maxwell, 26, has picked up new clients and new assignments. One of her focuses is developing and implementing social media plans as part of a comprehensive marketing strategy. Maxwell began developing her expertise in social media for businesses as part of her studies and dissertation work for a master’s degree in international marketing from University of Stirling in Scotland, which she completed in 2012 in a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship.

“One thing that’s fun with social media is it’s always changing, which is challenging and frustrating sometimes, but there’s always something new coming out or a platform being developed that could be useful in a year or two,” Maxwell said. “A lot of business owners don’t have the time or energy or don’t want to learn about social media for their businesses, but they know it’s important. I like being able to educate them and show them how they can improve something for their business that can be beneficial for them to bring in new customers or help with public relations aspects of their business.”

Maxwell also has an educational role in her work for the BBB, which she joined two years ago. As In Pursuit of Ethics director, Maxwell conducts programs on ethics and ethical decision making to middle school, high school and college students and related workshops for businesses.

In addition to her professional commitments, Maxwell is active in the community as a member of U of L Alumni Board, and of the Young Professionals of Southeast Texas. She has also remained involved in Rotary, an interest that began as an U student when she was a member of the campus chapter of Rotaract and part of an international service trip to Belize. While a graduate student in Scotland, Maxwell became involved in a community Rotaract Club in Glasgow. After returning to Southeast Texas, she worked with other U alumni to form a community chapter of the club to provide another outlet for service on the local and international levels.

As to what the future holds, Maxwell said she hopes for continued growth. “I would love to see eStep grow and get to the point where I could do full-time job in Southeast Texas. I plan to continue to try to make a positive impact in the community”—BG

Rebecca Burleson ’11, 12, arrived in Malawi in March and will serve there in the Peace Corps until May 2016 as a community health advisor at a rural health clinic in the village of Kasinya. There, her primary project areas include malaria prevention outreach, water and sanitation hygiene, and female empowerment.

“I also do a lot of other projects with existing groups in my area,” she said. “Most of this work is nutrition education and cooking demonstrations.” Nutrition is her specialty, but she’s learning to adapt her knowledge to the culture and challenges of life in Malawi.

A Beamont native, she earned both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in dietetics from Lamar and completed a dietetic internship at U of L as well. She then worked as a clinical dietitian at Texas Specialty Hospital and Westlake Specialty Hospital before beginning her Peace Corps training.

“I’ve already felt very privileged to grow up in America with so many opportunities, education among them,” Burleson said. “Peace Corps was a chance for me to share these opportunities, through my knowledge and skills, with others who have been less fortunate. While my views on the world and development work have definitely evolved this year, I still return to this original sentiment; it’s my constant motivation.”

Today, Burleson is one of 130 Peace Corps Volunteers serving in the country that is about the size of Pennsylvania and home to more than 16 million. Peace Corps volunteers often serve in villages where modern conveniences such as running water, refrigeration and electricity are scarce. Although this presents difficulties, it also propels the volunteers to focus on basic needs and to experience a simpler life.

“Knowledge of a Peace Corps volunteer can include a sense of adventure, patience and resilience,” Burleson explains. But the most travel is on simple mud roads—all you can see are other travelers and other community members to begin using their mosquito nets every night,” she said.

Although English is widely spoken in Malawi, she is learning to speak Chichewa and Chontwa and learning to read and write. “I also took some language lessons to help me learn the language,” she said. “I try to learn every word I can because the language enriches the experience and makes her a more effective volunteer, she said.

Burleson also has worked as a counselor for Camp GLID, a girls’ empowerment camp in Malawi. “I have met some young girls that fill me with hope for the future of Malawi,” she said. “These girls were such an inspiration to me. They’ve faced violence, every type of abuse you can imagine, as well as living in a culture that believes they are good for nothing but grease and serving men, babies, and yet here they are, fully prepared to change their future and that of their country”—BKS

When he began his civil engineering studies more than a decade ago, Yancy Scott ’01 imagined himself as a future bridge designer. Since graduating, however, Scott, 35, has been able to put his engineering knowledge and credibility to work in a much wider array of projects large and small in both the public and private sectors.

As assistant county engineer for Waller County since 2008, Scott has had a hand in helping the small county in the booming Houston metropolitan area avoid some of the problems Waller County borders Harris County to the east, Montgomery County to the north and Fort Bend County to the south.

“We’re getting all that growth and trying to figure out how to put the county in the best position to receive it. Figure out how the county grows to sustainably,” Scott said. Along the way, Scott is helping the county to develop and implement plans to accommodate growth, while also complying with floodplain requirements, using his background as a certified floodplain manager.

Transportation planning is a critical need in the greater Houston area, and Scott is heavily involved in that issue as chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Houston-Galveston Area, which serves a 13-county area.

As his career has progressed, Scott has enjoyed watching the planning he helped in previous jobs assignments come to fruition as tangible projects constructed in the Houston area. His first job after graduating from U was with MWH Global, an international engineering company that had contracts with the City of Houston to improve wastewater treatment plants and distribution systems. After identifying problems in the system and proposing solutions for a few years, he moved into the company’s construction division and worked on a water purification plant in Lake Houston that now meets the water needs of much of Harris County. Then, after obtaining his professional engineering license, he moved on to a smaller firm where projects included the design an elementary school and of several rail lines for the Metropolitan Transit Authority. Seeing those lines being constructed in the area around Northside Mall and Texas Southern University has been gratifying, Scott said.

Outside his work, Scott volunteers as a Texas prisons and enjoys spending time with his family. His wife, Lalitka (Ganesh) ’03, received her nursing degree from U, and they have two children, daughter Yana, 7, and son Yancy II, 5, nicknamed Deuce.

Scott is not sure what will come next for him. “I just want to continue growing as an engineer and helping in whatever capacity I can,” he said. “Lamar gave me a good springboard for that.”—BG
Compassion is universal

Helping tiny babies and nervous parents is rewarding work for Jennifer (Mikel) Landreneau ’11, a registered nurse at the neonatal intensive care unit of Christus hospital—St. Elizabeth in Beaumont.

Growing up in Sweeny, Landreneau thought she wanted to be a dancer. But when she changed her plan to nursing, she knew Lamar University’s program had an excellent reputation. “The nursing school became my second family,” she said. “The faculty became my mentors and counselors. I don’t know if you would get that at any other university, the way the professionals still want me to succeed and are still supporting me even though I’m not a student anymore.”

Landreneau has been in her current role in the neonatal intensive care unit of Christus Hospital-St. Elizabeth since 2014. She is also involved in the Nightingale Experience project manager, with offering support and helping her stay focused during and post-school.

While at UL, Landreneau had a unique opportunity. She was the recipient of a David J. Beck Fellowship, which, in addition to providing scholarship funds, grants recipients $10,000 per year for a project to further their educational experience.

“Through the fellowship, I was fortunate to go to Hosea, Ghana, in Africa for six weeks,” Landreneau said. “I served as a medical volunteer/intern at the hospital in Hosea, where I saw how the medical field can be so different around the world, but how some diseases are the same no matter where you go. Seeing children sick solely from malnourishment made me realize I took even the smallest necessities of life for granted.”

The opportunity had a lasting impact and influences how she approaches her daily job.

“The fellowship experience helped me professionally by making me more culturally sensitive,” she said. “Being thrown into a totally different country on a different continent can be a little unnerving at first. Whenever I am taking care of patients and families from a different country or culture than what I’m used to, I remember how I felt at first being in a strange place surrounded by people I didn’t know. I learned empathy for those situations. I saw that compassion for your patients and their families is universal. I would not have traded my experience for anything in the world. It has taught me to be afraid to take risks, to be confident in the woman that I am and to be accepting of others’ beliefs and values.”

Outside of the hospital, Landreneau and her husband, Craig ’14, enjoy running and traveling. “I love the symmetry of math, so that ruled out engineering. I took an accounting class my senior year in high school and, as nerdy as it sounds, I found that I loved the symmetry of debits and credits.” Accounting fit her personality of wanting things in balance and made sense to her. “Now, I know accounting is as much more than debits and credits and math,” she said, “but it is what originally sparked my interest and made me choose accounting as my degree.”

Lamar University provided Landreneau with a great education, she contends, but even more importantly, the university’s Accounting Department faculty maintained strong relationships with potential employers both in Beaumont and in Houston. “Through those relationships and the networking opportunities Lamar provided through various organizations and events, I was able to obtain an internship and ultimately a full-time job after graduation,” she said. “The connection that Lamar actively maintains with the local community and potential employers of their students is invaluable.”

Landreneau served on the Alumni Advisory Board and is currently on the Accounting Advisory Board. “I stay in contact with a lot of Lamar alumni,” she said. “I am very passionate about Lamar.”

The accounting graduate’s passion includes giving back to the university. “I was fortunate to receive a full academic scholarship to Lamar,” Landreneau said. “I am mindful that I was only able to receive such a great education because of other people’s generosity, so it is important to me to pass that on to others.” Because of that, she made a planned gift to establish an accounting scholarship and became the youngest member of Lamar’s Legacy Society. “I encourage all UL alumni and friends of Lamar to consider how they might be able to help future generations of students as well,” she said.

Although high finance is a major part of her life, the single financial professional likes to read, play piano and watch movies to relax. She also enjoys going places. “I like to travel,” Landreneau said. “And I like to eat out. I enjoy the many fabulous restaurants in Houston.”—CC

Financial planning professional Charlotte Jungen ’93 believes she developed her money sense from her stay-at-home mom and her working dad who had to stretch their pennies to raise their three children in Bridge City.

Jungen earned her bachelor’s degree in accounting and is a client service manager with Goldman Financial Corp. in Houston where she helps people with money management and financial planning. She’s a certified public accountant and a certified financial planner. “I started off doing traditional CPA work like taxes and accounting,” she explained, “but transitioned to financial services.”

She credits her seventh-grade math teacher for sparking her interest in number crunching. “Once I got to high school, I figured if I enjoyed math, I needed to either be an accountant or an engineer,” she remembered. “I hated science, so that ruled out engineering. I took an accounting class my senior year in high school and, as nerdy as it sounds, I found that I loved the symmetry of debits and credits.” Accounting fit her personality of wanting things in balance and made sense to her. “Now, of course, I know accounting is as much more than debits and credits and math,” she said, “but it is what originally sparked my interest and made me choose accounting as my degree.”

Lamar University provided Jungen with a great education, she contends, but even more importantly, the university’s Accounting Department faculty maintained strong relationships with potential employers both in Beaumont and in Houston. “Through those relationships and the networking opportunities Lamar provided through various organizations and events, I was able to obtain an internship and ultimately a full-time job after graduation,” she said. “The connection that Lamar actively maintains with the local community and potential employers of their students is invaluable.”

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In any relationship, it’s important to have good chemistry. For Brian Hurtado ’99, that meant pursuing a bachelor of science degree in chemistry at Lamar University.

The Sugar Land native has two older brothers—both graduated from UL and encouraged him to check out the university. “I always enjoyed math and science,” Hurtado said. But it was the positive relationships he had with his professors that encouraged him to pursue a future in the field. “When I took chemistry at Lamar, I enjoyed how it was taught, and the professors were top notch,” he said. “They kept me wanting to learn more, which drove me to get a degree in chemistry.”

Hurtado, an operations manager for surfac- tes and strip production units at Hunts- man Corp. in Port Neches, says his time at UL confirmed his career plans. “A chemistry major is a chemist and a leader. He sees results and makes changes,” says president of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity in 1997. His leadership skills made him popular with the student body, and he was elected Student Gov- ernment Association president for the 1996-1999 academic year. Serving as president for those two organizations was a highlight of his time at UL, he confirmed.

In 1998, as SGA president, Hurtado inter- viewed university president presi- dential candidates includ- ing James Simmons, then dean of the College of Fine Arts and Commu- nication and the interim executive director of University Advancement. Of course, Simmons was the favorite choice. “I was a unique opportunity for a student,” Hurtado remembered.

But wasn’t all business for the chemis- try major and student leader. He also enjoyed student social activities such as homecoming events, and, in 1998, Homecoming King was added to his list of titles. “It was an overwhelming experience,” he said of the opportuni- ties he had at Lamar University. “They were my glory days.”

Brian Hurtado ’99

Good Chemistry

The chemist steps involved with UL by going to alumni and sports events. He previously served on the Alumni Advisory Board. He also helps to recruit UL graduates to Huntsman. “No day at work,” he said of himself and his wife, Tanda (Tooke) ’97, who is also an UL graduate.

Lamar University is a great school with small classes and excellent professors, Hurtado emphasized. He also encourag- es students to take advantage of the plentiful opportunities made available through UL the way he did. “You get out of it what you put into it,” he said.

Hurtado lives in Fannett and enjoys spending time with his family, which includes his 4-year-old son, Braiden, and his 2-year-old daughter, Presley. “If I’m not playing golf,” he said, “I’m with my family.”—CC
From Nigeria to Norway to New Jersey, Livonia Mitchell ’07 says she created her own path. “What you choose to do with your potential and your drive determines your success and future path,” Mitchell said. “It’s what you do where you go that counts.” At La Sierra, I learned the importance of multi-tasking, process improvement and time management. Those skills are applicable to everything in life and work, no matter what your job title is.

After earning her bachelor of science in industrial engineering from LMU in 2007, Mitchell obtained a master’s degree in industrial and systems engineering from Rutgers in 2011. “I only knew I would go into engineering a couple of months before graduating high school,” Mitchell said. “My AP Calculus teacher told me an industrial engineer was an interesting career. After looking into industrial engineering in one of La Sierra’s career fairs, I was impressed by the flexibility and versatility the career offered. When I knew which major I wanted to pursue, La Sierra became my obvious choice.”

Previously, Mitchell has worked as a field maintenance engineer in the United Kingdom and Nigeria, a drilling and measurements field engineer in Mexico and a process engineer in California. She has also worked in Norway, Australia and Malaysia. Currently, she is an ITouch engineer at Schieffer Company Limited. One of the world’s biggest oilfield service companies, she works in Princeton Junction, New Jersey, as a liaison between experts and field operations, providing technical support, facilitating collaboration between groups, coordinating field tools and identifying areas for improvement in training and product design. “Process improvement is the fundamental definition of an industrial engineer’s job,” Mitchell said. “You learn how to look at the entire picture and how each element fits into it. Afterwards, you take steps to make it better based on time, cost and impact.”

Mitchell’s success has inspired family members to follow her path. “Both my sister and cousin are planning to pursue industrial engineering careers at LMU,” Mitchell said. “By witnessing my professional achievements, my sister and cousin are encouraged at what awaits them after college. It is rewarding that my foundation at La Sierra is an inspiration to my loved ones.”

Mitchell serves on LMU’s Advisory Council for Industrial Engineering. “My role in the council is to give feedback about what I would like to see from La Sierra regarding the industrial engineering field,” Mitchell said. “I use my experiences as a basis to recommend which courses students should be proficient in to be successful in their future profession.”

“Southwest Texas is huge for oil and gas, so a university right in the middle of the action was perfect,” Mitchell said. “At La Sierra, my professors came from a diverse set of career backgrounds with industry expertise that proved invaluable when discussing future opportunities.” Mitchell said LMU set her on a higher plane for success. “La Sierra has the same values and same impact as larger schools,” she said. “I graduated with zero debt and had no financial concerns holding me back. Because of La Sierra, I entered my field prepared for the jobs I have experienced.” – KT
Flying high

An electronics engineer and project manager at NASA Johnson Space Center, Jason Dugas ’01 is responsible for planning, design, development and testing of high-reliability power electronics for the International Space Station and other NASA programs. One such project that Dugas heads is the International Space Station Power Inverter project that converts the DC power used on the station to AC power that found its home in our homes.

“Today, we are working on getting those systems qualified for human space flight.”

After beginning his undergraduate education at another university, “I didn’t feel like I was being successful enough,” Dugas said. “So I looked at Lamar’.

Almost overnight, I saw success,” Dugas said. “It was a race of development— the change in environment, the professors and the whole culture at Lamar was more suited towards engineering education.”

Today, Dugas serves on the Earth and Space Sciences Advisory Board and on the Electrical Engineering Industrial Advisory Board. He is an experienced flight test engineer, advocate for them wherever I can,” he said. “I still have a big spot in my heart for the school—BKS

Still, his career has been defined by an interest in space. “He really convinced me that was being successful enough,” Dugas said.

“Almost overnight, I saw success.”

Davis encourages everyone

“An inspired athlete, Davis’ favorite memories of his time at Lamar involve the camaraderie of the athletic department,” he said. He graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration in 2013, and is looking forward to finishing his MBA in Technology Management in 2015, when they hope to take Davis Dynasty Designs to the next level.

Davis’ vision for the family-led business is a one-stop shop business model for styling and image consulting services through fashion blogging, closed organization, personal shopping, personal dressing and custom and designer. Her business model also includes health and wellness consulting through fitness training, customized meal planning and healthy lifestyle alternative.

In the spirit of building her own family dynasty, Davis contributes to an educational fund for her two nephews. She says her desire is to encourage others to adopt the concept of building their own dynasty while supporting confident lifestyles through fashion, styling and wellness.—LA

A stroke of good fortune

A talented tennis player, Chris Stroud ’03 had no contact with his alma mater until 2007. “I had no idea that Lamar had a tennis program under the guidance of Jim Jordan, professor of applied management in the College of Business and Earth and Space Sciences, whom he credits with reawakening his childhood interest in space. “He really convinced me that I could do this,” Dugas said. “The last year of my degree, I decided I would like to work for NASA.”

Remarkably, despite having no formal contacts and on the heels of a series of hiring freezes, “the stars lined up,” and he was offered a position in 2001 during an overabundance of flight windows.

After working several years as a NASA staff engineer, Dugas won a fellowship to earn his master’s degree at the University of Houston–Main Campus. “It was close to the Space Center and had the hardware focus that made sense to me,” he said. “I moved to Houston, it was in the no uncertain terms.”

Dugas earned his master’s in 2009. Since that time, he has seen his work shift gradually from engineering to project management. “First it was small technology development projects and moved on later to more space flight hardware project management.” Dugas said, “I am also doing some larger-scale technology development.” One of those projects is the development of light-weight wiring in spacecraft power systems that reduces weight by 20 to 30 percent. “We are working on getting those systems qualified for human space flight.”

Davis began a long-term connection to Lamar University when he pursued his business career. “I’ve been very fortunate in the last 10 years to build on some of the relationships from Lamar,” he said. “It’s in my nature to help people. I get a lot of satisfaction from helping clients navigate their financial issues and establish planning.” He has been the most fortunate in the last 10 years to build on some of the relationships from Lamar.” He has been a steady progression of leadership roles since he graduated, including serving on the advisory board and on the heels of a series of hiring freezes, “the stars lined up,” and he was offered a position in 2001 during an overabundance of flight windows.

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Planning well can lead to poetic results

D‘JUANA DAVILIER

Ever since her first job at age 16, D‘Juan Davilier 05, 07, has had a knack for attracting the right kind of attention for growing her business. During high school and while working on her bachelor’s degree in social work at LU, she moved easily from one administrative role to the next, with prospective employers noticing her work ethic and offering new opportunities. After graduation, her boss and her alma mater urged her to go to graduate school in business. She took that advice. Today, she matched the perfect job for her.

Davilier, 23, has been transportation manager for the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission since 2006. While the accountants she works with at the commission learned a full-time staff position, applied for it and got the job. "It’s a family atmosphere here. It’s nice to be in an environment where people really care about what we do," she said.

As transportation manager, Davilier oversees the South East Texas Transit program, which provides low-cost ride sharing for residents of Jefferson, Hardin and Orange counties. "I see the fact that I am able to utilize only one of my degrees. I’m helping provide a service that is necessary and is some people’s lifetime. But in addition to the social work aspect, I handle the accounting and management of this service, ensuring that contractors are following all federal and state guidelines," she said. "This is still service to a lot of people because they have no other means of transportation, either.

In 2013, the federally funded program provided approximately 63,000 one-way trips. Many of the participants are seniors citizens, low income or have disabilities, but the service is available to all as long as rides originate in a rural area of one of the three counties.

Davilier is proud of the work she does, but counts her greatest achievement since graduation as her role when one of her friends died. "I’m getting a lot of requests to see how cultures and people outside of our area behave and what they think," she said. "It’s really eye opening for me. Some people have a small mentality of the world. My biggest accomplishment is opening my mind to the fact that the world is much bigger than Beaumont."

Her time at LU, where she first encountered diverse people from varied cultures, began with her decision to take a class in her major. During high school, she was a classmate in the NBA program study to plan trips and have the confidence to travel alone. She also appreciated the expertise and effort her professors showed. "They expected the best for every student and worked with me to make sure you could do your best," she said.

Outside work and travel, Davilier volunteers and serves on the board of the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, by delivering Meals on Wheels at least one day a month, at Red Alder Place Church, where she serves as Sunday School superintendent, teaches Sunday School and is secretary of the building committee. She also writes poetry and enjoys participating in poetry events whenever she can — BG

Taking control of his career

RENE RODRIGUEZ

Rodriguez graduated. “He was strict but passionate about his students learning,” he recalled.

LU offers a more personal touch, Rodriguez said, adding that professors at the university are available. He believes Lamar University’s engineering college is “first-class” and produces graduates who help run the industries in Southeast Texas and beyond.

The most important point that the engineering faculty taught him was that you have to take advantage of opportunities and take charge of your future. “You have to take control of your own career and your own success,” he said. Professors encouraged students to pursue internships, which could be steppingstones to job opportunities. Rodriguez gained confidence at LU through his education and interaction with other professionals.

As a junior, he recalls, he had a tough year taking a heavy course load and working part time. When he made it to his senior year, he knew he was almost finished with his coursework and took 12 hours in the fall semester and nine hours in the spring semester. He could finally take some time to relax and used it by playing tennis between classes at the Lamar Student Center. “I had fun at Lamar,” he remembered.

Rodriguez is married to Nina Tirgo, a 2006 LU alumna, and they have a son, Evan, 5, and a daughter, Layla, 3. He recently took up coaching soccer for the boys’ team at Lamar. “I enjoy seeing them grow and improve every day,” he said.

Playing for Lamar is important to Rodriguez, and he keeps in touch with his professors. “They helped me make sense of the world out of the hard core classes,” he said. “They taught me that the world is such a great place.”

Playing with the Lamar University Dance team as a communication major may take admitting dance classes in circus arts, her desire to merge her passions with her career landed her at one of the most up-and-coming performing arts centers in the nation. The A2T Performing Arts Center in Dallas.

It’s different every day because we’re constantly presenting a new show. As an icon as show one, I could be doing comedy on one another one. I could be doing comedy one way and ballet the next,” she said. “During my last semester of college, actually my senior year at LU, I was very engaged in performing. By viewing the construction cameras they had online, and (just know in the back of my mind) I ended up there some day.”

As the marketplace and promotions manager, King’s favorite accomplishments are helping her students land internships and shows because of her passion for musical theatre. From the traditional productions like Peer and Phantom of the Opera to world premieres of the latest and greatest musicals like Mamma and The Blue Man Group, “you just get to see the latest, greatest innovators bringing things to New York,” she said.

Just before graduating with honors from LU, King worked for the Southwest Texas Arts Council auditing the arts organization dedicated to supporting other arts- and humanities-related organizations in Southeast Texas.

An unexpected expert

ALISA FRYAR

She passed some of her linguistic and literary knowledge on to her students in Oklahoma City, but Fryar still remembers the most important lessons she learned from those earlier days. "Being a student in a liberal arts education is heavy lifting. They educate the most students. Universities like Lamar and Lamar are the backbone of higher education," Fryar said. "They are doing the heavy lifting. They educate the most students. They even educate the most graduate students, which a lot of people don’t realize.”

As an associate professor of political science at the University of Oklahoma, Alisa (Hicklin) Fryar 02 has had the opportunity to be engaged in conversations at both the state and national level on issues related to affordability and success in higher education.

In her research, Fryar examines college graduation rates and “ways in which policies can be helpful or hinder efforts to improve affordability for college students.” She was recently called to speak before the state commissioners of higher education at their leadership meeting. "It was a little surprising at first because it wasn’t exactly what I expected to be an expert,” she said. “Just that kind of sneak’s up on you.”

For Fryar, who served a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in 2006, has research interests in higher education policy, representation, public service, management, and minority politics and policy. She was recently invited to be a part of a project of American Enterprise Institute on community colleges, universities, that is, public regional institutions like Lamar University. "It’s an obvious reason, I am very passionate about the topic,” she said. "It was such a great experience.”

When Fryar was a student at Lamar, she remember most, but for her students, it seems completely incomprehensible.”

"If [students] are teaching undergraduates and graduate courses, and supervising master’s thesis and love being part of a university,” she said. “They are such great places to be, and I really enjoy getting to learn and work with students.” In particular, Fryar finds satisfaction in getting students engaged in projects and helping them learn about opportunities in local government and non-profit organizations. To that end, she is working on a proposal to expand the university’s course offerings in non-profit education and training.

"A lot of our students are interested in the non-profit community,” she said. "And nonprofit organizations are looking for people who have the skills they need to be successful.” She has served as a faculty mentor for the Oklahoma Group, a student-run, student-lead organization that does free consulting for nonprofit organizations. "Students can do so much more than they think,” she said. "—KS

A dream realized

COURTNEY KING

Since her early days growing up in Beaumont, Courtney King 05 always had a distinct love for the arts. Whether it was performing with the Lamar University Dance team as a communication major or taking adult dance classes in circus arts, her desire to merge her passions with her career landed her at one of the most up-and-coming performing arts centers in the nation. The A2T Performing Arts Center in Dallas. "It’s different every day because we’re constantly presenting a new show. As an icon as show one, I could be doing comedy on one another one. I could be doing comedy one way and ballet the next,” she said. “During my last semester of college, actually my senior year at LU, I was very engaged in performing. By viewing the construction cameras they had online, and (just know in the back of my mind) I ended up there some day.”

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Just before graduating with honors from LU, King worked for the Southwest Texas Arts Council auditing the arts organization dedicated to supporting other arts- and humanities-related organizations in Southeast Texas.

Her passion for LU was evident while she was an undergraduate student. She was the Lamar Student Association and homemaking queen. On the night she was crowned, she was busy on the basketball court serving as Big 12’s LU mascot. “My student doesn’t just care about LU,” she said. “I get hands-on learning experience that extends beyond the classroom with people who really know that particular industry.” —DM

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Composer lives for the music

“Every day is something different,” said senior scientist Cherie Oubre. Oubre ’93 “Sometimes you get bogged down in the day-to-day operations, but then you step back and think, ‘I get to help people go into space.’”

Oubre is employed by Wyle, a leading professional, scientific and technical services provider that takes crew time or requires a lot of human resources. Her research focused on evaluating microbes associated with a model organism. She earned her Ph.D. in microbiology in 2005.

“Instead of moving, Oubre sought work in Texas where her husband, Cullen, could continue his teaching career. However, with the closure of Brooks AFB, the position was moved to Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio. Instead of moving, Oubre sought work in Texas where her husband, Cullen, could continue his teaching career. Her mother, Barbara Morgan, who earned an LU communications degree in 1998 and now works at Wyle, said, “I have wanted to capture and recreate that response.”

Love entered Lamar University on a trumpet scholarship and earned an additional music scholarship after his first year. He played in various student and college ensembles. In his junior year, he earned a spot on the Phi Mu Alpha Honor Psectal playing Franz Liszt’s “Un Sospiro.” He also was a member of the Gamma Zeta chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, an honorary band fraternity.

Love later received a Fulbright scholar’s degree in composition from the University of Houston Moores School of Music in 2010 and doctor of musical arts in composition from the University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music in 2014. He is most proud that his music seems to have a primal emotional response,” he said. “Ever since then, I have wanted to capture and recreate that response.”

Cullen Ornelas, were all exceedingly encouraging influence also. To relocate. We don’t want to hire an employee when you don’t know what you need on what you need on what you need. It isarremonstrous, but it is not a reason to give up. It just means that you need to focus on what you need to focus on what you need.

Love now regularly composes and performs as Leatha Hallmark, the composer’s alter ego. She is the two-time winner of the P. M. S. Blackwell Competition, the winner of the John Swain Memorial Prize for Wind Ensemble Composition, a finalist in the Third Annual Frank Ticheli Composition Contest and winner of Best Original Score at Houston’s 2010 4-Hour Film Festival, the revolver for the New York Youth Symphony’s First Music Composition Competition. Artist James Turrell recently commissioned a work from Love to accompany his Austin SkySpace: “His art and mission, ‘a string presentation of the sublime, mirrors what I strive for in my work,’” Love said. “I have no regular commissions and only as much as I am able to get, as well as the music that is published. Love lives it because he has a very special responsibility, privilege and challenge to create something new and unique that expresses emotions and thoughts that are very personal to me.”

Love lives in Austin with his fiancé, Amelia Cisney, and his dog Amy. He enjoys riding his bike around the city, collecting and analyzing photography and reading as many books as possible.—MP
There’s a niche for everything

Search affiliator farm or muffler men and Beaumont will appear in the top results, two of the many Southeast Texas tourist themes Stephanie (Dollar) Molina ’00 keeps her eye on as director of marketing for the Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau. Beaumont’s two muffler men, larger-than-life advertising sculptures, are popular roadside attractions, in addition to Gator County’s affiliator and the town’s 15 largest hydrant in downtown Beaumont. “There are people that travel all over the world to view muffler men,” she said. “We have two of them there and get a lot of hits from that. We have an eclectic mix.” That eclecticism keeps Molina’s job interesting. Each day brings a new challenge, but she applies what she learned through participation in the LU chapter of the American Advertising Federation as a business major with her natural artistic talent and skills honed by her work first as an intern and then later as an employee with advertising agency BBDO. She was “fascinated by psychology and sociology,” but her heart crested at art. When she discovered that a business degree’s advertising communication track combined business, psychology and art, “i’m going to love this industry.” More recently, her team completed market research for developing Cattail Marsh, including construction of boardwalks, birding lines and directional signage, as part of a master plan to promote Beaumont as the hub of a regional birding destination. “It’s a huge market, and the economic impact that market leaves on an area is substantial. Beaumont is strategically placed to benefit a great deal. It is perfectly positioned to be the overnight stay for birding visitors.” With a myriad of associations looking for meeting destinations, the bureau sales team stays busy looking business. Molina stays in to develop a theme for the event and helps design the promotional materials and strategies—whether it’s creating a visual brand for the National Baton Twirlers Scholarship and was chosen for the Donald F. & Mildred Topp Otterhund Scholarship Award program in her sophomore year. “I grew up in North Texas,” she said. “I had never heard of Lamar until I started looking for chemical engineering programs. I saw it and thought a chemical engineer, Gulf Coast school that was right in the heart of the chemical industry would be a great match. Certainly the chemistry, science and industry ties of the faculty were a big plus as well. I participated in a co-op with Lyondell when I turned 19, had great experiences with all of my teachers, and I love Lamar.”

Molina worked for Lyondell, now LyondellBasell, and its predecessor companies after graduating until 2012. He began working as a chemical engineer on production units and planning assignments and later became a manager for laboratories, engineers and manufacturing operations groups. He transitioned to his current position in management as an asset director for DCP Midstream in 2012, responsible for natural gas processing plants, storage facilities and pipelines in Texas and Louisiana. “I’m making decisions on safety, environmentality, costs, doing everything to optimize the business,” he said.

“There’s no boring day. You always try to improve some area.” While working for LyondellBasell, Graham received multiple awards for championing community involvement. He has also been involved with many project teams which were recognized for operational excellence. Graham lives in Cattaghe with his wife and two daughters. In his spare time, he works as an engineering duty officer for the U.S. Navy. He enjoys traveling, hiking, playing sports and listening to music.—MP
When Nicole (Wadden) Lewis ’03 began her undergraduate studies, she was uncertain of what direction to follow.

“Originally, I began at Stephen F. Austin State University, and I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do,” Lewis said. “One of my family members was a Lamar alumnus, and she connected me to a family law dean who helped me solidify my career pursuits. With the benefit of smaller classroom sizes and a closer proximity of the upperclassman and the industries that were pertinent to my major, I knew Lamar was the right fit for me.”

While working toward her chemical engineering degree, Lewis completed four co-op terms with LyondellBasell Industries, a chemical company.

“The co-op experience allowed me to connect book smart to the real world,” Lewis said. “During this process, I was able to see the realities of the job and the industries. One of the LyondellBasell recruiters, also an LU alumna, became a mentor of mine. He was passionate about his work, and he taught me fundamental tips such as how to plan and prioritize tasks. I use that today.”

After graduation, Lewis earned her M.B.A. from the University of Texas at Tyler and accepted a job at LyondellBasell where she would eventually take on the roles of project manager, production engineer and foreign trade zone engineer.

“Coming to work straight out of college, I was appreciative of how well co-op prepared me for a full-time job,” Lewis said. “In my career, I have worked in capital projects, engineering roles, supply chain roles and international compliance. Throughout my various jobs, I have implemented the basic skills I learned at Lamar, setting a foundation for the rest of my career.”

Currently, Lewis works as a plant manager at Atkión Solutions in Houston where she oversees all manufacturing processes as well as customer demand.

“Part of my job as plant manager is to ensure safety and make sure we are being efficient, environmentally friendly and meeting customer demands,” Lewis said. “Also, one of the important factors of my job is creating goals and career development plans for employees. How I was developed while at Lamar has been an inspiration for how I developed others.”

Lewis has continued her involvement with the university by helping recruit LU students and support the Society of Women Engineers.

“Lamar set the foundation for my career by teaching me I needed to work hard and help me transfer this work ethic to my professional career,” Lewis said. “My professors served as incredible mentors, challenging me to be successful and giving me the chance to show my potential. My participation in university organizations and co-op taught me the importance of perseverance and facilitated a smooth transition to the work force. The skills I learned at Lamar have played a tremendous role in my professional success today.”

CODY DISHON

Residuated at young age, Cody Dishon ’09 had a vision and a plan, complementing the College of Business Faculty on their helpfulness and recalls particularly enjoying James Slattery’s finance class because of the practical applications to real-world and Jeff Dyson’s entrepreneurship coursework. Today, he uses those business skills in a real estate venture, Dishon Investments, where he shares his father’s law degree from South Texas College of Law in 2012. He now has a busy caseload and mentors current law students. Still, Dishon said, “I love the work ethic and distinguishes you from others.”

Dishon, who clerked in Houston while earning his law degree, encourages current students to gain practical experience in the field or industry field to their degrees while still in school.

“Impetiencely open up doors, demonstrate your work ethic and distinguish you from other applicants,” he said. “It’s important to know what you want to do and then you can develop a roadmap. Research and find something you’re passionate about. It can take hard work, dedication and sacrifices, but Lamar University will put you in a position to succeed. You just have to put in the work.”—CPR
Working hard to achieve her goals is nothing new for Julie Rodriguez ‘08, as it comes as no surprise that she has successfully navigated a variety of assignments at ExxonMobil Corp. Rodriguez, 32, started with ExxonMobil as an intern, and has held appointments as a co-op, student while pursuing her mechanical engineering and mathematics degree. After graduation, she moved on to a position as a reliability engineer at the ExxonMobil in five rotations, and expanded into the junior high school. “I’m proud of being a part of ExxonMobil’s recruiting team for Lamar University, which allows her to return to campus during career fairs and interview current students for employment opportunities with her company. “I’m in the chemical engineering program at Lamar Cardinal. I want to help the university continue to be successful in any way I can whether by recruiting students or placing students in internships. “I’m not a non-traditional student, being a first generation college student, and there are students at Lamar that have the same challenges. I find great satisfaction in helping students.” Rodriguez came to the U.S. from Mexico at age 15 for a summer vacation. Her mother decided she should stay and she ended up completing high school and learning English while living with a foster family. After high school, she worked two full-time jobs for three years to save money for college before starting a few classes at night. Eventually, she was able to reduce her work schedule and become a full-time student.

Rodriguez enjoys giving back to her community. Until recently, she served as the Junior Achievement coordinator between ExxonMobil Mont Belvieu Plastics Plant and Barber’s Hill High School, working with more than 20 volunteers and multiple teachers to educate students on economics, investments and production. During her tenure, the program almost doubled in volunteer participation and expanded into the junior high school. “While I’m in the classroom, I get to talk to them about my job,” Rodriguez said, noting that she hopes those encounters help students to start thinking about their own career goals. When asked where she sees herself in the future, Rodriguez, currently pursuing an M.B.A., said she has worked on a few projects in college and during her career. However, life experiences have taught her that she must be flexible in modifying that plan depending on circumstances. “Whatever I’m doing, it will be something that I enjoy; otherwise I’m not going to be doing it,” she said. “I like to continue to have the opportunity to influence people. As long as I continue to grow, I’ll end up where I’m supposed to be.”

Behind the scene

MEGAN ROMERO

Megan (Barrett) Romero ’11 has loved theatre since she was very young, developing her interest first in high school theatre at Westbrook in Beaumont and then at the collegiate level at LU as a theatre major. She later earned a master’s degree in stage management from the California Institute of the Arts.

Romero’s favorite production to work as stage manager for Austin’s Zach Theatre was Gospel of Colonus, a gospel version of Sophocles’ tragedy, Oedipus at Colonus. “It was absolutely breathtaking and had a tremendous cast,” she said.

Her most recent production was a one-hour children’s play, A Fair with Mary and Said. By the time the production’s run ended, more than 15,000 students from the Austin area saw the show. “I’m so excited that I got to make the magic happen behind the scenes for them,” Romero said.

According to Romero, several parts at LU, including a few seminars as a Lamar University Ambassador, one of an elite group of students who represent LU at events and in the community, “neither helped me to refine my communication skills and interact with donors and people within the community,” she said. “I’ve been able to take what I learned from that experience and apply some of that knowledge to the work I do now.”

Romero enjoys the size of LU. “All of my professors knew me by name, and that was a huge plus,” she said. She made the most of classroom and production opportunities, gaining experience with stage management, acting and the technical trades of the industry as well.

Romero’s favorite professor was assistant professor and director of technical theatre Jeff Wios, who died early this year. “He was the most influential person in my career, and he was actually the person who led me to become a stage manager,” she said. “I was so blessed to be able to have him as one of my mentors.”

Roberts anticipates the day she reaches her long-term goals: to receive her equity share from the Actors’ Equity Association and eventually become a teacher in higher education. “I definitely want to teach stage management on a collegiate level and look forward to those days,” she said. —OMM

At National Instruments, Kerenen Cotton ’98 believes he has found the right match for his equal interests in computer hardware and software. Putting his double major in electrical engineering and computer science to work as a senior software group manager, he credits Lamar University’s College of Engineering and his co-op experience while a student with preparing him for the “real world.”

“Lamar had and continues to have a very good engineering program,” he said. “While at Lamar, I was chief of these skills in theatre because we are a non-profit organization.”

Cotton decided on LU after attending a spring open house. The double major then available in electrical engineering and computer science appealed to him and he was able to secure a full scholarship. Being from Vidor, Lamar University also offered the options to live away from home without being far away from home. “When I think of Lamar, I think of some of the excellent professors I had,” he said. “One in particular, Mr. Carlin, was tough in class, but very helpful outside of class and made sure we were well-prepared for our future careers.”

Based in Austin, National Instruments’ hardware and software is used by scientists and engineers in automated test and measurement systems, enabling them to more efficiently develop the products they are producing. One of N.I.’s core products is LabVIEW software. Cotton started at the company in the Engineering Leadership Program in 1998. Soon after, he joined the LabVIEW software development team as a software engineer. Within a few years he began managing a portion of that team. “Now I work with less code, but supervise the project management of several products produced by the team. Some LabVIEW customers and applications include LEGO Mindstorms products, the world’s largest particle accelerator and research involving EU wireless technology.

Cotton returns to campus frequently as both a recruiter for LU and as a member of the Electrical Engineering Advisory Board, providing input on industry trends and feedback to the faculty. When he interacts with current students, he always encourages them to take advantage of the co-op experience. He also encourages the electrical engineering majors to do more programming and the computer science majors to learn more about hardware.

Through his work, Cotton and his family have taken some international trips to places such as Australis and France, but they also like to hit the road for cross-country road trips. The next stop is Disney World later this year. Cotton married his high school sweetheart, Eden. They have four children—Coralee, 10; Lincoln, 7; Laurenne, 5; and Witten, approaching his first birthday. Cotton spends most of his free time being an involved dad—coaching soccer and football teams, leading Sunday School at church and working on a long list of fix-up projects around the house.

“After working at a company with engineers from dozens of universities around the world, I definitely feel the education I received at Lamar University was every bit as good as, if not better, than anywhere else,” he said.—CPR
BRANDAN STILL

After an early run on a three-mile trail in Memorial Park with his wife Jena (Venti) ’06, attorney Brandan Still ’06 completes his morning run and walks through the downtown Houston doors of Simpson Thacher & Bartlett law firm, happy to be returning home.

The son of LU alumni Marilyn (Adams) Still ’79, teacher and current LU doctoral student, and Randy Still ’80, engineer, he grew up in Beaumont, Harvard law followed on the heels of LU graduation. So while there exists a firm place in the alumni of nationally known Tannehill and Gray firm headquartered in Boston, Still spent his first year of practice in Boston working with CAPLA/Community Action Program Legal Services, as an attorney dealing with issues ranging from federal grant law to employment law in the administration of community service block grants. In October 2010, he joined the New York offices of Tannehill and Gray where, until this past February when he accepted a position with another international firm, New York-based Simpson Thacher & Bartlett. This one afforded him the opportunity to help build a newly established Houston office back home in Texas and be closer to family.

Still represents mostly private equity firms investing in oil and gas exploration, helping guide those deals and serving clients in the investing in oil and gas exploration, helping guide those deals and serving clients in the

It’s exciting to be a part of something that’s growing,” Still said. “We have a unique blend of expertise because we have been doing private equity work so long that’s been a practice area, and in Houston we’ve developed an energy expertise to go along with that.”

Still’s love of the law cemented early when he began thinking about a career and participated in a high school mock trial.

“Growing up in the Beaumont area, I knew a lot of attorneys and I’ve learned they’re really great people, and they were protecting people’s rights,” he said. “I thought that was something fascinating and honorable profession to be a part of.”

With the encouragement of his parents, he decided to attend LU after speaking with faculty.

“Really good things were happening at the business school. That, indeed, turned out be the case.” He took several classes at UL to complete his economics degree with “some very, very good professors,” but his Honors Program experience as a freshman at LU stands out as notable.

“I keep a journal about everything that touched my senses, from all the wonderfully different smells to the diversity of the people, she said. “I go back and read the journal from time to time and am reminded of the wonderful people of Nepal.”

Glouver spent six weeks in Nepal on a medical mission trip through the Baptist Student Union that summer between her junior and senior years. Alongside other students, she accompanied the Baptist Student Union to India and Nepal. She ministered to children and learned about their culture and had an opportunity to work with Nepal Health Care, a mobile medical clinic.

In 2009 in Memphis, Tennessee, where they lived for five years. She worked at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis for Pediatric Residency where she served as chief resident from 2010-2013. During that year, she enjoyed being involved in hospital committee work, teaching, scheduling, helping those in need and helping to read map future visions for the program.

Glouver is now a neonatal hospitalist in the neonatal intensive care unit at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. She works with neonatal babies and their parents and late preterm infants who require a short NICU stay to get the best start in life. She particularly enjoys teaching the families of her patients as well as budding pediatricians and medical students. Glouver remains involved in academic medical conferences, her love of research and managerial roles that complement the clinical care she gives. She and Mark have two daughters, Gemma and Juniper—LA

continues a unique blend of experience as a freshman at LU, stands out as notable.

“The view from his office window is of Minute Maid Park. “I’m glad to be home near my Astros and to be able to catch a Lamar game more often than I’ve been able to.” He said. His office relocates next year from the 14th floor to the 50th floor. For Still, that’s as good as moving forward, which he believes is the key to success. He just hopes he keeps his ballpoint view. —CH

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I owe Lamar so much. Anything I can do to return the favor, return the support that I’ve had. I would certainly be willing to do.”

—DAN HALLMARK ’85

T he College of Business recently inducted successful banker and dedicated community patron Dan Hallmark ’66 into the college’s Hall of Fame.

The tribute recognizes alumni who have excelled in business and is the highest accolade possible for graduates of Lamar University’s College of Business. Members of the Hall of Fame serve as outstanding role models for current and future students, said Dean Enrique “Henry” Venta. “Dan Hallmark is an individual worthy of this recognition,” said Venta. “In addition to having accomplished much in the banking world, he is involved in community and professional organizations and has played a long-term, significant role in the history of the university.”

If not for Lamar University, Hallmark believes he never would have found a successful career in banking. He has worked over the years to return the favor. “I guess almost from the day I graduated, I’ve been contributing back to Lamar, said Hallmark, who earned a B.B.A. in management. “I owe Lamar so much. Anything I can do to return the favor, return the support that I’ve had, I would certainly be willing to do.”

Hallmark paid for his education with a scholarship from American National Bank and a loan from First Security National Bank, both attained with the help of Lamar administration.

All in all, he had no interest in banking as a career until his senior year when Dean J.D. Landes urged him to interview for a management training program at American National Bank. Out of respect for Landes, Hallmark met with bank leaders. He decided banking sounded interesting after all.

“I worked for the bank in that same building for 38 years, through many name changes,” Hallmark said. “Dan Hallmark is an individual worthy of this recognition.”

He worked for the bank in that same building for 38 years, through many name changes,” Hallmark said. “Dan Hallmark is an individual worthy of this recognition.”

Hallmark spent the majority of his career at Texas Commerce Bankshares. He eventually retired from FT Morgan Chase as chairman and chief executive officer of the Southeast Texas region and then from HItel Inc National Bank as regional president.

A 2002 Distinguished Alumnus and past president of the Lamar University Alumni Association, Hallmark has worked to strengthen Lamar programs as well. He served as a Texas State Senator for 10 years and was a key factor in creating additional residence halls for Lamar University. He is a member and past chair of the Board of Directors of Advisors and created the Dan S. Hallmark Endowment in Business to provide the dean with a discretionary fund for scholarships, salary supplements and other purposes.—BKS
University posts record enrollment

Official figures for the fall 2014 semester taken on the 20th class day show the highest enrollment in Lamar University’s history. Record headcount was set with 14,889 students, up 6.1 percent over last fall. Credit hours are also up, totaling 140,626, up 4.07 percent, the second most in LU’s history (second only to Fall 2010). In large measure, the growth was a result of sharp jumps in international students, graduate engineering enrollments, and online graduate education students.

This fall saw increases in new first-time-in-college freshmen (up 1.2 percent over last fall), transfer students (up 32.8 percent), and graduate students (up 119.1 percent). The total of non-Texas resident students, including international students, grew 56.1 percent, and those from other states grew 6.8 percent. The numbers of Hispanics students increased 24.5 percent, Asian Americans increased 5.2 percent, multiracial students increased 22.9 percent, and international students increased 57.3 percent.

The Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Lamar University 11th among public doctoral institutions in its “Fastest-Growing Colleges, 2001-12,” based upon an increase of 45.8 percent.

Math Department provides free tutoring

The Department of Mathematics is providing free math tutoring for students in grades K-12 each Wednesday evening from 6-7 p.m. at the R.C. Miller Library in Beaumont. The program began Sept. 3 and currently serves approximately 180 students per week.

“I am getting calls from other libraries in southeast Texas to begin similar programs,” said Kumer Das, associate professor of mathematics. Beaumont ISD recognized student volunteers with an award presented during the district’s Nov. 17 board meeting. There are 20 LU faculty members and students who regularly help with the clinic, but any individual with pertinent math skills is welcome to volunteer. Volunteers are needed for the growing number of students and may contact Das at kumer.das@lamar.edu or (409) 880-7947.

Choreographer Judith Jamison visits campus

Judith Jamison, artistic director emeritus of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, spoke to a large campus audience Nov. 10 as part of Lamar University’s Academic Lecture Series. American dancer and choreographer Jamison is an icon in the performing arts world. In her decades at the helm of one of the most respected dance companies in the country, she has taken the company to unprecedented heights and received numerous honors, including an Emmy Award, an American Choreography Award, the Kennedy Center Honors and a National Medal of Arts.

MBA students win first place at GAME conference

Four members of the Lamar University Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF) placed first in one category of the Student Managed Portfolio Competition at the annual Global Asset Management Education (GAME) conference. The 2014 GAME conference, which hosted more than 1,000 students from universities in the U.S. and abroad, was held at Quinnipiac University in New York City.

The four students who participated were: Katherine Brockett of Geelong, Australia; Sijie Sun of Hehehot, China; Thomas David of Lumberton; and Clayton Owen of Port Arthur. Since January 2009, the Lamar University SMIF has nearly doubled an original allocation of $250,000 on behalf of the Lamar Foundation, said Tommy Thompson, LU associate professor of economics and finance. “MBA students in two classes conduct security analysis and make purchase and sale recommendations,” he said. The students were awarded first place in graduate-level growth funds, the fourth consecutive year in which Lamar students have won first place in a graduate-level category.

Marching band selected for UIL exhibition honor

LU’s marching band, the Showcase of Southeast Texas, performed by invitation at the exhibition band at the University Interscholastic League’s Area F Conference 6A marching contest Oct. 25 in Galena Park, a first-time honor for LU. The band is comprised of 156 students from around 40 different majors and majors throughout the university. They performed “Country Show,” which included “The Devil Went Down to Georgia,” “Till in a Hurry,” and “Ring of Fire.”
On Campus

LU cracks Top 10 for upwardly mobile grade without debt

The latest Social Mobility Index published by CollegeNET ranks Lamar University in the Top 10 percent of universities in the nation. Lamar University was listed 49 out of 539 universities in the nation on the index.

According to the website, “The SMI rankings are meant to highlight schools that do the best job of helping disadvantaged, talented students graduate with the ability to start a career free of debt. Two criteria determine the SMI rankings: tuition, percentage of the student body from low-income households, graduation rate, salaries of grads once they start working, and the size of each school's endowment.”

“This methodology points out the importance of keeping higher education accessible and affordable, while providing high-quality programs that prepare our graduates for rewarding careers,” said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost.

“Lamar University continues to be accessible to many first-generation students and students from lower-income families and, as such, is vital to creating opportunities that enrich lives,” said CollegeNET listing is not the first time LU has been recognized for its return on investment. In a similar study in 2013, PayScale Inc. ranked LU as a top school for return on investment. In a similar study in 2013, PayScale Inc. ranked LU as a top school for return on investment. In a similar study in 2013, PayScale Inc. ranked LU as a top school for return on investment. In a similar study in 2013, PayScale Inc. ranked LU as a top school for return on investment.

More students will study abroad

Lamar University has joined the Institute of International Education Generation Study Abroad initiative. Although the campaign seeks to double the number of students studying abroad by the end of the decade, Palis aims to double the number of LU students studying abroad by the end of 2016. The initiative also is focused on increasing the diversity of the students who study abroad, ensuring quality and removing barriers to participation.

Currently, fewer than 10 percent of 2.6 million U.S. college students study abroad at some point in their academic career. LU’s goal is to ensure that students from all backgrounds and in all fields of study have the opportunity to gain this important experience. Palis intends to remove barriers to participation. His plans include advising and workshops about nationally competitive and campus study abroad scholarships, fund-raising and grant writing for future scholarship funds, better visibility for study abroad on campus, and a greater diversity in academic coursework offered within programs. For 2015, new study abroad initiatives are being planned in criminal justice, theater, hospitality administration, psychology and geography, among other areas, to enhance existing LU programs in art, health sciences, business, biology and Spanish. More information is available by visiting lamar.edu/studyabroad.

LU appoints first Study Abroad director

After an extensive national search, Lamar University has appointed Jeffrey Palis as the university’s first director of study abroad. Palis has served in a variety of positions related to his new role at Lamar: interim director of international studies and administrative coordinator of study abroad and exchange programs at Georgia Southern University, a trade assistant intern at the American Chamber of Commerce in Vienna, Austria, and the internship coordinator at the College of Business at Old Dominion University.

“Tuition, percentage of the student body from low-income households, graduation rate, salaries of grads once they start working, and the size of each school’s endowment.”

It has experience designing, marketing, leading and evaluating study abroad programs, creating legal and risk management guidelines, and developing and coordinating exchange programs.

As the principal investigator of a U.S. Department of Education grant, he coordinated student exchanges in Canada and Mexico, and he has professional experience in many of the world’s cities, including Beijing, London and Paris. He has led study abroad programs in Poland, the Czech Republic and Latvia (which he visited as a Fulbright Scholar while finishing his dissertation). In addition, Palis has done professional work in numerous other countries, including Bonn-Hertogovina, Bratislava, Ireland and Japan.

Palis holds a doctorate in curriculum studies with a concentration in international education from Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Ga. He holds a master’s in international studies with concentrations in international trade and German from East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C., and a bachelor’s in geography with a minor in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Awards and recognition

Cardinal Caden

The Social Mobility Ranking can be found at www.socialmobilityindex.org.

On Campus

LU to select student commencement speakers

At each December and May university commencement ceremony, a selected representative of the student body will deliver a commencement address to the graduating class. The university adopted the new practice last spring with commencement with December 2014 commencement. Penny Finch ’13, who earned a Master of Education degree in school counseling, delivered the inaugural address Dec. 13 in the Montagne Center. The privilege is recognized with a $500 honorarium.

To be eligible to deliver the student commencement address, the applicant must meet certain requirements and complete an application, both available at http://faculty.staff.lamar.edu/academic-affairs/forms/index.html. The nomination committee, appointed by President Kenneth Evans, reviews finalists’ applications, judges auditions, interviews candidates and makes a recommendation to the provost, who makes the final selection.

The deadline for May application is March 2.
Cardinal Caden and Nandita Berry visit campus

Lamar University students and faculty welcomed Texas Secretary of State Nandita Berry to campus Aug. 29. Berry met with faculty member Sara Gubala, a political science instructor, to discuss the practices LU has instituted to educate students about voter registration and the election process while encouraging students to exercise their right to vote.

Secretary Berry is the first Indian-American to hold the office. She is the chief protocol for state and international matters. In Texas, she continued in his role as chief executive officer for administration and executive director of the Lamar University Foundation.

Hall of Honor welcomes 2014 class

Legendary coach Pat Foster, pitching ace David Smith and Olympian Yamelis Ortiz were inducted into the LU athletics Hall of Honor during the regular-season finale against Incarnate Word in the Montagne Center Nov. 15.

“Chasing Quicksilver: From an Emperor’s Tomb to the Global Environment” was the topic of his lecture in the University Theatre. Lin is the 28th recipient of the honor—one of the highest accorded a Lamar faculty member. He has been a member of the faculty since 1999.

“Joining gives Lamar faculty and students the ability to get involved with research at a lower cost, which enables us to be more competitive for research grants,” said Paul Nicoletto, chair of the biology department.

The lecture presented a historical overview on the relationship between human activities and mercury distribution in the environment,” Lin said. He detailed the discovery and industrial use of mercury, the release of mercury into the environment and its associated impacts.

“An ancient China, mercury was thought to be a medicine that prolonged life,” Lin said. “The first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, was allegedly killed in 210 BC by continuously taking mercury pills as an attempt to gain eternal life.” Lin was named the University Scholar and 2012 University Scholar and Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar. He was the recipient of the Chi-Epsilon, the civil engineering honor society, James M. Robbins Excellence in Teaching Award in 2008. His areas of expertise include fate and transport of atmospheric mercury, water and wastewater engineering and air quality assessment. He is a principal investigator for 55 environmental research projects in excess of $5.5 million.

Lin is a world-renowned researcher in environmental mercury. His work in the chemistry and modeling of atmospheric mercury provides important insights to the fate and transport of mercury in the global environment. The kinetic and mechanistic parameters of mercury reactions he proposed are widely implemented in regional and global atmospheric models. His critical analysis on the scientific uncertainties of mercury models has led to new efforts in bridging the knowledge gap.

Chasing Quicksilver Jerry Lin 2014 Distinguished Faculty Lecturer

Lamar University honored Jerry Lin, professor of environmental engineering, as Distinguished Faculty Lecturer for 2014. “Chasing Quicksilver: From an Emperor’s Tomb to the Global Environment” was the topic of his lecture in the University Theatre. Lin is the 28th recipient of the honor—one of the highest accorded a Lamar faculty member. He has been a member of the faculty since 1999.

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“An ancient China, mercury was thought to be a medicine that prolonged life,” Lin said. “The first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, was allegedly killed in 210 BC by continuously taking mercury pills as an attempt to gain eternal life.” Lin was named the University Scholar and 2012 University Scholar and Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar. He was the recipient of the Chi-Epsilon, the civil engineering honor society, James M. Robbins Excellence in Teaching Award in 2008. His areas of expertise include fate and transport of atmospheric mercury, water and wastewater engineering and air quality assessment. He is a principal investigator for 55 environmental research projects in excess of $5.5 million.

Lin is a world-renowned researcher in environmental mercury. His work in the chemistry and modeling of atmospheric mercury provides important insights to the fate and transport of mercury in the global environment. The kinetic and mechanistic parameters of mercury reactions he proposed are widely implemented in regional and global atmospheric models. His critical analysis on the scientific uncertainties of mercury models has led to new efforts in bridging the knowledge gap.

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McNeil appointed VP for Division of Student Engagement

A nationwide search identified Vicki McNeil as the top choice for vice president of the division of student engagement. McNeil began her tenure with Lamar June 16 after serving as associate vice chancellor for student affairs for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her resume includes experience in recruitment, crisis response and budget management of more than $40 million.

Prior to her service in North Carolina, she was vice president for student affairs at Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah, Georgia, and also served for 18 years as associate vice president for student affairs at Loyola University in New Orleans. Her background and experience includes directing the evacuation of Loyola students to Baton Rouge prior to Hurricane Katrina making landfall in 2005.

"Loyola had never evacuated in the face of a hurricane and we had made the decision to stay put during Hurricane Katrina," McNeil said. "We expected a Category 2-3 hurricane, but when Katrina spun up to a Category 5 storm we quickly made the decision to go. We spent two nights at a Baptist church in Baton Rouge with more than 200 students...quite an experience."

McNeil is originally a native of Pawnee, Oklahoma, and attended Oklahoma State University. She earned the bachelor of music education degree in voice and piano in 1977 and is an accomplished pianist. She earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in education with an emphasis in music in 1978, and her doctorate in student personnel administration with an emphasis in leadership, career counseling and development in 1981 from Oklahoma State University.

"I'm so excited to be here in Beaumont and at Lamar," she said. "Lamar has changed so much in such a short time, and I believe the opportunity to engage in such an innovative project for my first year at Lamar represents an opportunity to work with our students to help them grow and excel."

LU offers computer game development course

The Department of Computer Science is offering a new course, Introduction to Computer Game Development, designed for students interested in learning more about the game development industry. The course is required as part of a new computer science game development concentration, which began this fall.

"The computer game industry is the fastest-growing segment of the entertainment market and an excellent field for career advancement," said Timothy Roden, associate professor of computer science. "The course surveys important topics such as the history of electronic games, player motivation, elements of games, the development process, team composition and roles, programming, art, audio and marketing. Roden said that the course is open to any major interested in learning more about the game development industry. No programming knowledge is necessary.

Statistical researcher discusses reliability of literature claims

Stanley Young, assistant director for biostatistics at the National Institute of Statistical Sciences in Research Triangle Park, NC, visited campus last spring to discuss the reliability of claims coming from human medical observational studies. Many of these studies only replicate 10-20 percent of the time, whereas randomized clinical trials replicate more than 80 percent of the time. Young discussed the problematic relationship between randomized clinical trials and observational studies.

According to Young, variable E was widely reported to protect against heart attacks. He presented randomized clinical trials failed to replicate the claims. Likewise, similar claims were made concerning individuals with a so-called type A personality having a greater predisposition for heart attacks. The claim failed to replicate in two separate studies.

Young discussed how technical changes, managerial changes, funding agencies and journal editors can repair this broken process. Journal editors can repair this broken process.

Jerry Bradley named 2014 Piper Professor

Jerry Bradley joins an elite group of educators as a 2014 Piper Professor in recognition of his dedication to the teaching profession and his outstanding academic and scholarly achievements.

Bradley, university professor of English and modem languages, is one of 10 faculty members in Texas to be honored this year by the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation—and the 13th Lamar faculty member to receive the honor since the program began in 1958.

President Kenneth Evans presented Bradley with the 55,000 honorarium, certificate of merit and gold commemorative pin that accompany the honor.

Bradley is the first Lamar University faculty member to be honored as a Piper Professor since 2011, when the foundation recognized James Westgate, university professor of English. The Piper Foundation presents the awards annually to professors for superior teaching at the college level, making its selection based on nominations submitted by colleges and universities.

Fregia keynotes ExxonMobil Executive-in-Residence program

Paul Fregia ’81, Lu 2009 Distinguished Alumnus and founder of Grandma Maud’s Inc., was keynote speaker Sept. 23 for the Lu College of Business ExxonMobil Executive-in-Residence program. Fregia carried a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Lamar University and an MBA from Purdue University. He loved the food his maternal grandmother Maud served from her kitchen, and, in 1994 he began Grandma Maud’s Inc. as a tribute to her memory and in response to the increasing popularity of southern-style comfort food.

His extensive experience in both entrepreneurial and corporate management includes tenure as a vice president for one of McDonald’s national suppliers for more than 10 years and management positions with Continental Corp., Containor Corp. and Hewlett-Packard.

While at Lamar, he helped establish a chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers that would give minority students an opportunity to study together. Since then his student activism has helped many students succeed. “I would not be who I am today without the skills ingrained in me at Lamar,” he said.

Student sweep

At the recent Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers Student Contest, students from the Department of English and Modern Languages mainly swept the top awards in the Undergraduate Fiction Competition. Sklyer Williams, an English major from Groves, won first place, while Nathalia Lassonde, an English major from Bridge City, won second place. In Graduate Fiction, Chelsea Becker, an English graduate student from Beaumont, took first place, and in the Undergraduate Poetry competition Ashley Sheehy, a lib- eral arts student in the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities from Ruskett, placed first.
The grant will also provide funding for Kucknoor to hire a graduate student and four undergraduate students and finance the students’ presentations at the research at conferences. The grant was one of 11 successful proposals of 256 submissions. Universities represented included Baylor College of Medicine, Rice University, Texas Tech University, the University of Texas at Arlington, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas at Dallas, the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and the University of Houston.

“The outcome from this research will help the field of T. foetus pathogenesis and the cattle farming industry,” Kucknoor said. “They new information gained will also help the field of Trichomonas vaginalis, the human STD causing pathogen as well.”

Engineering student helps develop TXDOT device

Encouraging students to participate in faculty research and innovation is a hallmark at LU. This semester, Mackey participated in a co-op with Valero and the current team will be incorporating the printed circuit board that he designed over the summer into a proof-of-principle prototype of the permitter device that should be ready by the end of the spring semester.

On Campus

Microbiology professor receives NHARP research grant

Avinash Kucknoor, assistant professor of microbiology, received an $85,000 Norman Hackerman Advanced Research Program Grant for the 2014-2015 academic year to study Trichomonas foetus, a sexually transmitted disease that causes trichomoniasis in cattle. The disease causes abortion, as well as numerous reproductive diseases in females.

“Given the swift competition and tight funding situation, receiving this grant is very rewarding,” Kucknoor said. “I feel awesome. I am also happy for Lamar and the biology department in particular.”

“Regardless of control methods, T. foetus infections still run rampant where natural breeding, as opposed to artificial insemination, is allowed,” Kucknoor said. “However, reports suggest that artificial insemination is not completely foolproof in prevention. This project will look into a new group of proteins called chroomboids proteins and their role in T. foetus pathogenesis, with the long-term goal of using these proteins as a therapeutic target.”

Entertainer, educator celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, Jesus “Chuy” Negrete presented “A Celebration of Hispanic History and Culture through Storytelling and Music” Oct. 1 before a crowd of 250 in the Science Auditorium. A nationally recognized entertainer and educator, Negrete is the founder of the Mexican Cultural Institute.

“He incorporates storytelling in a performance presented in both English and Spanish,” said Venicia Monroe, liaison to the president on University Multicultural Enhancement. Incorporating songs, slides and images of Mexican labor in the U.S. to portray his viewpoint of Mexican history, Negrete discussed the history of Mexican-Latino experiences ranging from pre-Columbian times to present.

Online MSN ranked No. 4 nationally for veterans

U.S. News & World Report ranked the online graduate nursing program fourth for the nation specifically for veterans.

“This designation puts us three others recently where the magazine has noted the quality of our online Master of Science in Nursing program,” said Paula Nichols, executive director of distance learning. The JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing program was tapped No. 2 overall in 2013 and placed in the Top 20 in 2012 and 2014 by U.S. News & World Report.

The university itself was recognized as a “military-friendly” school and included in the 2014 Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities” released by the Military Advanced Education magazine.

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EDA innovation grant to strengthen economy

Lamar University is one of 13 universities awarded a grant in a national competition to advance and strengthen regional economies. LU will use the $120,590 grant to accelerate student learning, encourage innovation among faculty and students, and support fast-growing economic sectors through technology development and entrepreneurship.

The Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce provided the funding for the University Center Economic Development Program Competition. A total of $2.5 million in grants was awarded to support stimulus focused on advancing regional commercialization efforts, entrepreneurship and a high-skilled regional workforce.

Paul Latolais, director of the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship at Lamar University, said: “The grant from the EDA helps the university’s role in creating and sustaining a healthy and growing economy in Southeast Texas.”

EDA-funded University centers provide business solutions and technical assistance to public and private-sector organizations and conduct other activities with the goal of enhancing regional economic development.

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Huntsman becomes 11th Fisher Lecturer

P hilanthropist, industrialist and author Jon M. Huntsman visited Lamar University this past spring and spoke on the topic: “We are not put here to fail,” becoming the 11th guest in the Judge Joe J. Fisher Distinguished Lecture Series.

“We were delighted to have Mr. Huntsman as our guest,” said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost and chair of the Judge Joe J. Fisher Distinguished Lecture Series committee. “Known worldwide as a leader in industry, his phenomenal business success is matched by his equally incredible generosity. On every level, his is an inspiring story.”

The series was created in 1986 to honor Judge Fisher’s many contributions to Southeast Texas and Lamar University. The people of the community established the series to benefit LU students and to honor the longtime federal judge who died June 19, 2000.

Past lecturers in the Fisher series are former President Gerald Ford, Larry McMurtry, Vladimir Sakhavos, Stephen Jay Gould, Anda Ellerbee, Antonin Scalia, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., former Prime Minister Shimon Peres, James Watson, and former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Huntsman is founder and executive chairman of The Huntsman Corporation, a global manufacturer and marketer of specialty chemicals.

Forty years ago, he began a small entrepreneurial plastics packing business. Originally known for pioneering innovations in packaging and, later, for rapid and integrated growth in petrochemicals, the company has grown to manufacture in packaging and, later, for rapid and integrated growth in petrochemicals. Originally known for pioneering innovations in packaging and, later, for rapid and integrated growth in petrochemicals, the company has grown to manufacture

Huntsman and his wife, Karen, founded the Huntsman Cancer Institute in 1995 to accelerate the work of curing cancer through human genetics. The institute is now one of the country’s major cancer centers dedicated to finding a cure. The combined facility features leading edge research laboratories and a state-of-the-art hospital treating cancer patients.

A recently announced $100 million expansion will double the laboratory space and create the Primary Children’s and Families’ Cancer Research Center, which will focus exclusively on inherited and childhood cancers. —BKS

“Known worldwide as a leader in industry, his phenomenal business success is matched by his equally incredible generosity. On every level, his is an inspiring story.”

—KEVIN SMITH, SENIOR ASSOCIATE PROVOST

Marketing major, alumnus release biometric app

M art Bukovicky, a senior business marketing major, and Charles Teel ’11 have launched LockBoxDSB, an application for iOS devices, with help from LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship.

LockBoxDSB, available now in Apple’s app store, is a document and file storage application that uses biometric data to provide a higher level of security for files stored on the Internet. The “DSB” stands for Documents Stored Biometrically. The app works with Touch ID, the fingerprint recognition feature designed and released by Apple Inc. and currently available on the iPhone 5s, iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus.

Touch ID is heavily integrated into the Apple operating system on these devices and allows users to unlock the device, as well as make purchases in the various Apple digital media stores by touching the sapphire fingerprint sensor. LockBoxDSB taps into the power of Touch ID to safely store information on the Internet, Bukovicky said.

“LockBoxDSB uses Amazon servers off-site and is encrypted with the biometric fingerprint that you have to have in order to access the information,” he said. “The app utilizes a major feature that Apple brought out for developers in this last development kit.” He expects Touch ID to also be available in new versions of the iPad and other products Apple may release in the future.

Bukovicky conceived the idea of always having access to important documents without having to lose his wallet, or remembering complicated and ever-changing passwords. He joined with Teel, who earned an LU MBA in 2011 with a concentration in entrepreneurship, to create the app. Teel is owner and founder of Pocket Watch LLC, a developer of mobile software for business and home users.

Bukovicky and Teel worked with LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship in developing the app and business plan. “Having access to resources and expertise has been a tremendous help,” Bukovicky said. “There is no doubt the CICE has helped us more forward much more quickly than we could have otherwise.” —BKS
Exercising science and pre-med major Kollin Kahler of Waco and Keeley Townley-Smith, a Lumberton physics and electrical engineering major, were selected as 2014 recipients of the David J. Beck Fellowship. Only two fellows are named each year, making the award one of the most highly competitive and prestigious honors for undergraduate students at Lamar University. Key to their selection as fellows were their proposed summer projects, a requirement specific to the rigorous Beck Fellowship application process.

Ireland welcomed Kahler

Kahler chose to study advances in rehabilitative surgery and therapy for sports injuries at the Sports Surgery Clinic in Dublin, Ireland, after an Internet search of “the best sports medicine clinics in Europe.” Kahler learned best practices and techniques from leading researchers and physicians. He chose the clinic not only because of its prominence but also because there was no language barrier, although Irish slang did take some getting used to, he said.

“In Ireland, I participated in everything pertaining to sports medicine,” Kahler said. He shadowed several physicians and observed more than 60 surgeries. The invaluable opportunity helped him gain perspective on physician consulting, physiotherapy, strength and conditioning, biomechanical analysis and magnetic resonance imaging, he said. While at the clinic, Kahler concentrated on biomechanics and the aims of rehabilitation techniques to repair athletic groin injuries and tears in the anterior cruciate ligament. Being able to get an all-around experience with research and surgeries was a perfect fit for his future goal of attending medical school.

“The experience confirmed my passion for medicine and provided me the experience of a lifetime,” he said. “I was able to gain a unique perspective on medicine and acquire knowledge from the finest surgeons in Europe and the world’s leading researchers and physicians in the area of groin injury.”

Townley-Smith worked at atomic level

Townley-Smith completed an 11-week internship at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Md., with its atomic spectroscopy group. The group compiles wavelengths, energy levels and transition probabilities that support numerous applications in industry and the scientific community.

Townley-Smith joined the group to study light emitted by atoms to better understand their dynamics on a quantum level. Some of the most important work of the group is the maintenance of the online Atomic Spectral Database that provides information about the energy structure of the elements. Scientists worldwide use these structures, which have applications in industry and astronomy. The scientists in the group try to engineer new types of atomic systems and discover their properties. They also study plasmas, which are increasingly useful in the nuclear fusion process for cleaner energy.

“It’s amazing just to be able to go and do this type of research with scientists of such high caliber,” Townley-Smith said. “Lamar University has provided me countless opportunities to do research as an undergraduate and participate in several conferences.”

Beck Fellows receive full academic scholarships covering all tuition, books, fees and on-campus room and board. Additionally, each fellow receives up to $10,000 in funding for a summer project, which may entail research, an internship or international study.

First awarded in 2009, the fellowships are made possible by a generous gift from prominent attorney and LU Distinguished Alumnus David J. Beck ’61, founding partner of Beck Redden LLP in Houston. The David J. Beck Fellowships reward outstanding academic achievement in any discipline and allow top students to further challenge themselves with unique opportunities for undergraduate research and creative study.
Reading has always opened doors for me to new worlds and experiences, but this took on new meaning for me when I travelled to London, England this past summer. I participated in the British Studies Program offered by the University of Southern Mississippi with the help and guidance of the Lamar University Study Abroad Office.

I've wanted to go to England since I was a little girl. England's history, culture and literary legacy have always fascinated me. My love of literature began early. When I was younger, my father would take my sister and me to Waldenbooks every weekend. We could each pick out one book, and it was such a treat.

My passion for reading and interest in British literary history and culture made majoring in English an easy choice. I love learning not just about the literature but also about the cultural and historical contexts that inform the texts. Victorian literature in particular has become a passion. The period saw many dynamic changes due to the effects of industrialization, urbanization and imperialism, and it's fascinating to me to examine how this is reflected in Victorian culture. I'm currently looking more deeply into Victorian studies with my honors thesis. I'm writing about Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poems "Ulysses" and "The Lotos-Eaters" and examining how the character of Odysseus is presented in the poems. Odysseus seems to have transformed into a Victorian hero rather than a Greek one, and I hope to examine why this change has occurred and how a Victorian background alters the character.

My travels have benefited me greatly in helping me to understand the Victorian mindset. It was my interest in Victorian literature that ultimately led me to the British Studies Program. When I began looking for ways to expand my honors thesis research and my knowledge base, I was intrigued by the concept of studying abroad. One day, I visited Lamar's study abroad website and discovered the British Studies Program. I was elated to find that it offers a course in Victorian studies. Although USM was the host school, LU is in the consortium group, so I was eligible to attend.

The application process was a little more extensive, but that wasn't a problem for me. Lamar's study abroad office was very helpful throughout the process of completing all of the necessary paperwork. Despite the extra steps, everything went smoothly. Ultimately, studying abroad in London was the trip of a lifetime. I was able to do so many things in the course of the month that I've always wanted to do, like visit Platform 9 ¾ at King's Cross Station from the "Harry Potter" series and travel to Stonehenge.

The trip was more amazing for me because of my love of literature. I visited the former homes of John Keats, the Brontë sisters and Charles Dickens. I saw many wonderful plays, including Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and a performance of "Julius Caesar" at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. I visited Canterbury Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and the British Library.

My class in London was based at the Waterloo campus of King's College London. The location was perfect. We were just around the corner from Waterloo Station, and we were on the south bank of the River Thames, within a few minutes' walk of anywhere we wanted to go.

It was in the heart of London that the city's Victorian roots were laid bare. It was especially fascinating being able to read and analyze the course texts while I was staying in the city. Suddenly, I could visualize the places the characters had been—I had been there myself. It really brought the stories to life in ways I never would have imagined.

While I was abroad, I also had the opportunity to travel to Edinburgh, Scotland, and Dublin, Ireland. In Edinburgh, I sampled haggis, climbed a mountain called "Arthur's Seat," visited Edinburgh Castle and took a literary tour of the city. In Dublin, I visited Trinity College, took a James Joyce walking tour and saw Oscar Wilde's birthplace. My only regret is that I didn't have more time to explore each city.

My experiences abroad will be a great help to me as I move forward with my honors thesis. This trip has illuminated Victorian culture for me and given me an entirely new perspective on the era. I'm looking forward to applying all that I've learned to my analysis of Tennyson's poems.

**English major explores British literary legacy**

by Molly Porter

Molly Porter is an English major at Lamar University, pursuing a career in writing and literature. She recently returned from a study abroad trip to London, where she explored the city's literary history and gained a deeper understanding of Victorian culture. Her experiences have inspired her to continue her research and development as a writer.
The Lamar University Office of Alumni Affairs proudly presents these four outstanding men and women as the 2014 Distinguished Alumni. Their dedication to their professions, service to their communities and loyalty to their alma mater epitomizes the Lamar University spirit.

David E. Bernsen

73 is a trial attorney who has represented clients in multiple types of litigation for nearly 40 years. He is the founder of The Bernsen Law Firm and became the first Southwest Texan and first LU graduate to serve on the Texas Highway Commission (now TDOT), with his appointment by Gov. Ann Richards in 1991. Bernsen earned a bachelor’s degree in management from Lamar University in 1973 and his law degree from St. Mary’s University School of Law in 1976.
- established hurricane evacuation notices along the Texas Gulf Coast
- served in the Texas Senate—the first LU graduate to do so—representing District 4
- named “Legislator of the Year” by Keep Texas Beautiful and the Sierra Club
- selected to the Cardinal Hall of Honor in 1984, the first baseball player so honored
- founder of the Lamar University Baseball Players Association
- Citizen of the Year awards: City of Beaumont, Neches River Festival and Bolivar Peninsula Chamber of Commerce

"Lamar University was instrumental in my life because I received a good education and also learned teamwork skills. I had the good fortune to be Student Government Association president while John Gray was the university president. My interactions with him had a profound effect on my life and career, and I’m humbled to be so recognized by an institution that means so much to me."

George A. Dishman Jr.

49 is a lifelong resident of Beaumont with deep ties to the community and to Lamar University. He graduated from LU in 1949 with an associate of arts degree and later earned a bachelor of business administration from Texas A&M in 1952. In that same year, he married his wife, JoAnne (Judy).
- served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Air Force, stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany
- co-founded Prudential Drilling Co.; served as president from 1976 until 1980
- served on the board of directors for First Security National Bank, InterFirst Bank Houston, Port Neches Bancshares, and Community Bank and was a 25-year board member of Conn Appliances Inc.
- elected to the Beaumont City Council for a two-year term in 1972
- appointed to the Lamar University Board of Regents in 1982 for one six-year term
- created an endowment for the LU nursing department, known today as the JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing

"Looking back, I think earning my degree at Lamar was really the starting point for me," Dishman said. "Furthering my education gave me the foundation for my success, and it created in me a desire for lifelong learning, something I’m very grateful for."

Roosevelt Petry Jr.

'76, ’96, earned an associate’s degree in drafting and a bachelor’s degree in industrial technology from Lamar University. A few years later, he founded GP Industrial Contractors Inc., a company specializing in building refineries and petrochemical plants. The company’s services include piping, steel fabrication, engineering, project management, CAD, field services, maintenance, janitorial, hole watch/fire watch, warehousing, labor and carpentry.
- taught AutoCAD, surveying and drafting as an LU instructor
- received the Top 50 Black Professionals & Entrepreneurs Award
- received the Outstanding Texan Award from the Texas Legislative Black Caucus
- received the President’s Award from Lamar State College-Port Arthur
- honored by the State of Texas House of Representatives in recognition of his many contributions to local communities
- hosts the Roosevelt Petry Jr. Business Hour radio program on KSAP 107.1
- serves the community on numerous boards, committees and commissions

"Being selected as a Distinguished Alumnus gives me a glorious memory of a very proud and happy time in my life, a memory I am sure to reflect upon for years to come. I will do my best to represent Lamar University according to the standards this award represents."

Sandra French Clark

'76 is an attorney in Beaumont and Houston, as well as a shareholder and member of the Management Committee of MehaffyWeber PC. She earned a master’s degree in English from Lamar University and her law degree from The University of Houston Law Center, where she was a member of Law Review and Phi Delta Phi legal fraternity. She joined MehaffyWeber in 1980.
- repeatedly recognized by her peers in Best Lawyers in America for the last 15 years
- recognized in Texas Monthly Magazine as a Super Lawyer for ten consecutive years
- named a Top 50 Female Super Lawyer in the State of Texas and in the Top 100 Attorneys in the Houston area
- received the President’s Citation from the State Bar of Texas
- served on the Lamar Foundation Board, the advisory council for Fine Arts and Communication, Friends of the Arts and as a former chair of Le Grand Bal
- endowed the Sandra French Clark Scholarship in Choral Music at LU

"In the 70s, Lamar was well known for its science and engineering programs, but I found a somewhat hidden treasure there in the English department. The professors were inspiring and first class and challenged the students in the master’s program beyond what I would have ever expected."

Lamar University was instrumental to my life because I received a good education and also learned teamwork skills. I had the good fortune to be Student Government Association president while John Gray was the university president. My interactions with him had a profound effect on my life and career, and I’m humbled to be so recognized by an institution that means so much to me.

"Being selected as a Distinguished Alumnus gives me a glorious memory of a very proud and happy time in my life, a memory I am sure to reflect upon for years to come. I will do my best to represent Lamar University according to the standards this award represents."
We hope you enjoy reading about former classmates. If you have news to share—a position announcement, milestone, achievement, wedding, baby—or know the whereabouts of a lost alumnus, we want to hear from you.

Send us your news:
Cardinal Cadence, PO Box 10011, Beaumont, TX 77710
e-mail alumni@lamar.edu or call (409) 880-8921

30s

Julian (Paul) Baker ’72, B.S. elementary education, retired after a 35-year career in education and lives in Latozine.

Natalie Connelly ’70, B.A. accounting, retired and lives in Kristinose, Fla., with his wife, Styl.

Glora (Channing) Russell ’72, B.S. elementary education, ’84, M.Ed. elementary education, is a retired educator from the Corona Christo school district. She and her husband, James, live in J配上 Valley, Calif.

Gibert Atkinson Jr. ’74, B.S. government, earned a law degree and is an attorney for the Law Offices of Gilbert T. Atkinson in Beaumont, when he lives with his wife, Vanya.

Karla (Wright) Barnett ’74, B.A. English, is a retired educator and lives in Kerrville.

Jane (Melton) Barnett ’70, B.A. English, is a retired educator and lives in McGregor with her husband, Ellis.

Dick Boyd ’74, B.A. history, retired from his career as teacher and coach and lives in Fort Worth, Colo., with his wife, Gigi.

Jeanne (Wright) Cofield ’74, B.A. marketing, is executive director for Lakes Area Hospice in Jasper, where she lives.

Robert Couch ’74, B.A. civil engineering, and his wife, Carolyn McGowen ’73, B.S. home economics, are retired and live in Richmond.

Jenny Curry ’74, B.A. marketing, retired as a professional golfer and lives in Beaumont, Texas, with her wife, Sandy.

Junior Expert ’74, B.S. electrical engineering, earned a master’s degree from the University of Texas and retired as a general manager for IBM. He lives in Luling.

H. Stephen Garcia Jr. ’74, B.S. industrial engineering, earned a master’s degree from the University of Chicago and is director of the University of Houston. He is in president of H.S. Grace & Co. in Houston. He lives in Houston.

Anna Hobbs ’74, B.A. management, earned a law degree from South Texas College of Law in Katy and works in his career as a trial lawyer.

Tom Marshakoff ’74, B.A. political science, earned a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas and is in private practice with his wife, Meiko.

Theodore Phillips ’74, B.S. physical sciences, earned a master’s degree in education from Texas State University–San Marcos. He retired and lives in Henderson.

James Roza ’74, B.S. mechanical engineering, earned a master’s degree in business. He retired and lives in Japan with his wife, Masako.

Ronald Tower ’74, B.A. accounting, retired and lives in Houston with his wife, Cheryl.

Bill Haynes ’74, B.A. management, retired as a tax analyst from Exxon and lives in Goose Creek, Texas, with his wife, Kathy.

Jeanette (Hirsch) Benson ’74, B.A. English, lives in Kingsford with her husband, William.

Vicki (Brown) Lynch ’74, B.A. biology, earned a master’s degree in psychology and counseling from Columbia Pacific University. She lives in Pensacola, Fla., with her husband, Patrick.

Jan McGrew ’74, B.S. physical education, retired after a 43-year career as a coach and administrator. He lives in Decibbes with his wife, Paula.

Tom Mountainback ’74, B.A. political science, earned a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas and lives in Carrollton with his wife, Monty. She lives in Houston.

John Phillips ’74, B.S. physical sciences, earned a master’s degree in education from Texas State University–San Marcos. He retired and lives in Hawthorne.

Wally Watson ’74, B.S. chemical engineering, is executive director working for Wind Law Climate Sciences. He lives in Fort Worth.

Bill Hopkins ’74, B.A. management, retired as a tax analyst from Exxon and lives in Goose Creek, Texas, with his wife, Kathy.

Robert Schrimsher ’71, B.S. chemistry, ’73, M.S. biology, is director of strategic drilling technology for Wintershall Dea.

Linda (Concienne) Lynch ’74, B.B.A. management, its Distinguished Public Service Award. He lives in Beaumont.

Doug Simpson ’71, B.S. biology, ’75, M.S. biology, is director of faculty and administration office for Corpus Christi Medical. He lives in Broadway, Calif.

Mike DeRose ’72, B.S. accounting, is president of California Nativity Inc. and lives in Rancho Rdale, Calif.

Gary Bernstein ’71, B.B.A. marketing, retired from W.R. Grace and lives in Bryan with his wife, Linda Schleifer ’71, B.S. health and physical education.

Sandy Reesor ’72, B.A. chemical engineering, retired from the School of Engineering at the University of Houston. She lives in Richmond.

The Texas Center of Professional Excellence awards Helen Enniss ’73, B.B.A. accounting, its Distinguished Public Service Award. He lives in Richmond.

Nutmeg (Dorothy) Seney ’74, B.A. curricu-

lum studies, published a textbook for special education teachers. The Critical Components for Success in the Special Education Classroom. He lives in Round-

wood with his wife, Pam, ’73, B.B.A. curricu-

lum studies.

Margaret (Norris) Accahah ’71, B.S. home economics, earned a master’s degree from Stephen F. Austin State University and teaches in the German school district. He lives in Temple.

Doug Evans ’74, B.S. physical education, earned a master’s degree from Texas Southern University. He married and lives in Canyon Lake with his wife, Jane (Frank-

heit) ’77, certif. secondary science.

Sandy Reesor ’71, B.S. mathematics, earned a master’s degree in education from Texas Southern University. She married and lives in Goose Creek school district. She lives in Houston.

Robert Schrimsher ’71, B.S. chemistry, earned a master’s degree in education from the University of Florida. She lives in Delphi Springs, Mo.

Ann Latimer ’74, B.A. English, is a retired secretary from the University of Kansas and lives in Inverness, Texas, with her husband, Darrell. She lives in Kingwood. She is retired as a tax analyst from Exxon and lives in Goose Creek, Texas.

Casey Brown ’74, B.A. accounting, retired and lives in Katy, with his wife, Marla. He lives in Fort Worth.

Homero Whiterock ’74, B.S. government, earned a master’s degree in public administration from Cornell University and retired as director of personnel at the city of Fras-

90s
Doug Evans ’78, certif. chief executive officer, works at Denver High schools. He lives in Fort Worth.

Wally Watson ’74, B.S. chemical engineering, is executive director for Wintershall Dea.

Glen Little ’74, B.A. education, is head of school for The Briarwood School in Houston. He married his wife, Jeanette (Hirsch) Benson ’74, B.A. English, and teaches in the Garrison school district.

Doug Simpson ’71, B.S. biology, ’75, M.S. biology, is chief executive officer, director, and president of Corpus Christi Medical. He lives in Broadview, Calif.

Mike DeRose ’72, B.A. accounting, is president of California Nativity Inc. and lives in Rancho Rdale, Calif.

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lum studies.
Alumni shared good sounds, good food and good times as they listened to Jimmy Simmons & Friends featuring Sharon Montgomery during Jazz Night at Rao’s on Dowlen in Beaumont July 24.

Jazz Night Alumni gathered for a pre-game reception Feb. 1 in the Cardinal Club Room before the tip-off between the Cards and Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

Alumni Night @ the Basketball Game Alumni gathered for a pre-game reception Feb. 1 in the Cardinal Club Room before the tip-off between the Cards and Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

Gary Phillips ’73, B.A. general business, is procurement manager for Chevron USA. He lives in Houston with his wife, Sandra.

Ronald Rice ’73, B.A. accounting, is current auditor for Galveston County, where he lives with his wife, Deborah (Reynolds) ’83, B.S. office administration.

Denny Evans ’74, B.S. biology, is a staff chemist for Motiva Enterprises. He lives in Groves with his wife, Linda.

Bruce (Purcell) Gordon ’74, B.B.A. office administration, retired from East Chambers school district and lives in Whorse with his wife, Lynda.

Charles Jehlen Jr. ’77, B.A. history, ’87, M.A. history, is completing his 37th year in public education and is principal of Central Middle School in Nederland. He is president-elect of the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals. He works for KBTV Fox 4 as the play-by-play telecaster for Lamar University football and baseball and telecasts high school football with Sheffield Productions for the Friday Night Experience. He lives in Groves with his wife, Sheri.

Fannie Turner ’77, B.S. communication, ’94, M.S. audiology/speech-language pathology, is an audiologist for Northeast Texas Hearing in Paris, where she lives.

Gary Phillips ’73, B.A. general business, is procurement manager for Chevron USA. He lives in Houston with his wife, Sandra.

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Homecoming 2014

Alumni, students, friends and community members wore their red during Homecoming Week Oct. 27-Nov. 1 in celebration of the ties that bind. On Oct. 14, Mayor Becky Ames proclaimed Nov. 1, 2014, “Lamar University Homecoming Day,” leading up to the week-long celebration. An 11 a.m. parade of student organization floats, corvettes ferrying LU luminaries, high school bands and LU’s own award-winning band, the Showcase of Southeast Texas, waved to onlookers as the prelude to tailgating before the Cardinals hosted the Huskies of Houston Baptist University on the W.S. “Bud” Leonard field Nov. 1.
Humane Society Project

Pet-loving alumni volunteered to walk dogs and play with cats Oct. 18 at the Humane Society of Southeast Texas as part of a community service project sponsored by the Office of Alumni Affairs.

1. Tony Landry ’94
2. Christopher ’13 and Tracy Ward
3. Karla ’14
4. and Shaeann Houston
5. Sara Kelley ’95
6. Rebekah Maxwel 11
7. Sherr (Kend) Outrage ’01, ’03

2014 Homecoming Tailgate

LI vs. Houston Baptist was the backing Nov. 1 for the Alumni Tailgate Party.

1. Charlo’ton Jonbanks ’97 and Jose Maldonado ’01
2. Linda (Embo) Lebanc ’76, left, with Lillie (Gilford) ’71 and Ken Lloyd ’73
3. Roger Dimick ’76, ’91, ’02, left, with Judy Hammond ’72, ’82, and Becky Zikes
4. From left, Angal, Julianne, Avani, Nathan and Raja Srinivas ’05
5. Roger, ’10 and Mandi (Altamirano) ’79, 72, ’12, left, with Brandon ’06, Jena (Verrill) Still ’06
6. Ryan ’11 and Lindsey (Street) Prasek ’10, left, with Manley (Anderson) ’10 and Garrett Street ’10
7. Leroy and Margaret (Pugh) Rustic ’64, ’75
8. The Stakeholders from left: Ted ’91, ’10, ’04, Margaret (Dowex) ’74, ’73, Hall, Wilks and Nicholas
Saturday Morning at the Umphrey Center

During Saturday Morning at the Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center June 21, alumni experienced a number of workout opportunities, from cardio equipment and a yoga session to the indoor track and bouldering, before enjoying fruity smoothies.

1. Ronnie Turner ’17
2. Michelle (Castillo) Beller ’14 and Karen Mercoux
3. Butch Hardin ’99 and Rachel Clifford ’10
4. Paul Rich ’74
5. Vernon ’89, ’94, and Jennifer (Cintra) Durden ’10

Golden Circle Luncheon

More than 170 graduates from the years 1934 through 1984 enjoyed a Golden Circle luncheon Sept. 20.


Class Notes

manager for Baker Hughes. He lives in Houston with his wife, Amy (Dallas) ’90, B.S. exercise science and human management. ’62, B.A. nursing, she works for Christus St. Elizabeth Beaumont.

Butch Hardin ’99, B.B.A. business administration, earned a law degree from Howard University and is deputy general counsel for the Texas Industrial Group. He lives in Orange with his wife, Veronica.

Craig Moore ’85, B.S. mechanical engineering, earned a master’s degree in alternative education for the Silsbee school district, where she lives.}

Sacramento State, is a school nurse in the Dallas school district. She lives in Frisco.

A.A.S. nursing, is a school nurse in the Dallas school district. She lives in Frisco.

A.A.S. nursing, is an upward mobility nursing instructor for Lamar State College-Orange.

Connie Simon, A.A.S. nursing, is a school nurse in the Dallas school district. She lives in Frisco.

Gary Marie ’97, B.A. sociology, earned a master’s degree in education and management and is a coordinator in the Department of Secondary Education at Alvin College. She lives in Sugar-Spinner’s Kick File.

John Curtin ’83, B.A. business administration, earned a doctorate degree from the University of Houston. He is superintendent of the Port Neches School district. He and his wife, Tanya, live in Port Neches.

Brandon Blum ’03, B.S. electrical engineering, earned a master’s degree in alternative education for the Silsbee school district, where she lives.

Ray Williams Outstanding Leadership Award. She lives in Pearland.

Gooden Boyett ’80, B.A. English, ’99, M.Ed. school administration, is director of alternative education for the Silsbee school district, where she lives.

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Dallas alumni gathered in the Chaparal Ballroom of the Sheraton Dallas Hotel March 13 to catch up with fellow classmates in the Dallas area.

1. Beth Yelewton ’04 and Josh Daspit ’04 1
2. Bart Simmons ’78, ’79, left, and his wife, Nancy 1
3. left, Cindy Barnes and Joyce Johnson (Johnson) Scott ’72 1
4. Wasiim Kuder ‘03, left, Cindy Barnes and Joyce Johnson (Johnson) Scott ’72 1
5. Peter Cash ‘06, center, and his wife, Ann 2
6. Ilene (Smith) Hebert ’81 1
7. Mary Aubry 1
8. Dwayne Champagne 1
9. Evonne (Smith) Hebert ’81 1
10. Lloyd ’77 and Adrienne (Smith) Hebert ’81 1

Craft Beer Tasting

At the inaugural Lamar University Alumni Craft Beer Pairings March 28, eight craft beers flowed to the music of Mad Moofle & the Hatters while alumni sampled pairings along with carefully chosen cheeses and sweets in the University Reception Center on the eighth floor of the Mary and John Gray Library.

1. Wayne Margolis, left, President Ken Evans and Susan (Hendrie) Margolis 79 1
2. Allison (Eduardo) Breso 85 and Lou Lennard ’18 1
3. Randa (Hook) ’97, ’12, and Brian Hartung 79 1
4. Lloyd ’77 and Adrienne (Smith) Hebert ’81 1
5. Tammy and Tod Booker, 81, left, with, Post Oak (Stroud) ’91, 1
6. Carley Babich 1

Prashanth Srinivasan 84, M.S. mechanical engineering, is a sciences specialist for Grundfos Cyclomax of New York. He lives in Plaistow, N.H.

Jean-Pierre cherry 97, B.S. business, is senior analyst, HSBC in New York. He is an EHR applications specialist for The Homeless Health Network and lives in New York.

Tyson Hampton 77, B.B.A. marketing, earned a law degree from Texas Southern University with magna cum laude honors. He served as a judge for law school slow pitch softball and has joined Steak Lead Group as an associate attorney. He lives in Houston with his wife, Joanne (Bennett) ’87.

Daniel Pickert 77, B.G.S. general studies, is a science teacher in the West Hardin school district. He lives in Wharton with his wife, April.

Stephanie, Sonicle Wave 87 1

Mark Shinn 75, B.B.A. applied arts and sciences, is owner of Southeast Texas’s first and only family game show, Family Knows Best. The show has aired for two seasons on Fox 4. He lives in Beaumont.

Jessem Cumber 72, B.B.A. computer science 1

B.S. business, a science for Epic in Waco, W.T., where he lives with his wife, Crystal (Welles) 97, B.A. computer and information sciences. She also works for Epic as an interface analyst.

Scott Whitman 86, B.B.A. human resource management, is a sales representative for DirectToPharmaceuticals. He lives in Houston.

Jason Kowalski 83, B.S. science, is an academic specialist for Epic in Waco, W.T., where he lives with his wife, Eileen (Kowalski) 87, B.A. computer science. He works for Epic as an interface analyst.

Trent University is a director of commercial operations for Highlight Living in Toronto.

Royo Carter ’94, B.A. American studies, was selected to be included in the publication Worldwide Who’s Who in Hispanic American Professionals. He is a cognitive training wife at John Van Cochrane Middle School and serves on staff at Church of the Holy Cross in Elmhurst. She lives in Beaverton.

Laura M. Page 97, B.S. communication, is a supply chain specialist for Clarient. He lives in Brownsville.

Joyce Scala 80, B.S. political science, ’73, Ed.D. educational administration, teacher and counselor at Grove Creek Middle School in Raynham, where he lives.

Dr. Jason Flores ’97, B.S. social work, ’97, D.Ed. educational administration, served as director of counseling at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston and is a professor in psychology from the University of Phoenix in 2014. He is active in the University of Phoenix_SHADER. He has tied his way, (Belgian), ’83, B.A. psychology, lives in Rio Rancho, N.M.

Cheribay Goddard 89, M.E. civil engineering, is a design engineer at 3D Engineering. He lives in Houston with his wife, Arusha Company.

Kevin Main ’96, B.B.A. finance, is a senior treasurer manager for Five Companies. He lives in New Bern with his wife, Annette.

Jacie Bunge 98, B.S. education, ’01, B.B.A. human resource management, is a substitute teacher for the West Hardin school district, where he lives.

Joseph Haeggquist 84, B.S. education, is a science teacher in the West Hardin school district. She lives in Spring with her husband, Jason.

Kimberly (Brown) Slaton 86, B.A. applied arts and sciences, is an athletic director for Lamar University and lives in Beaumont with her husband, Vincent.

B. B. and K. J. Jacobs 87, B.S. education, teaches third grade in the Conroe school district. She lives in Spring with her husband, Jason.

Patrick Evans and Susan (Hendrie) Margolis 79 1


Dr. Ryan Rasey 85, B.S. electrical engineering, is a full professor for CPS Energy in San Antonio. He lives in Houston with his wife, Alisa (Rogers) 1906.

Andrea (White) Henry 97, B.S. communication, is an assistant professor of Communication. She lives in Cypress.

Judy (Cowan) Brodeur 81, B.S. psychology, is a litigation attorney for Kane & Redlin P.C. in San Antonio, where she lives.

Suresh Gudavalli 01, M.E. civil engineering, ’01, B.S. electrical engineering, is senior engineer for American Bureau of Shipping. He lives in Humble.

Kari Kimble 11, B.S. psychology, is a correctional nurse working at John L. McCarty 93, left, Cindy Barnes and Joyce Johnson (Johnson) Scott ’72 1

Brian Flowen 00, B.S. psychology, is a correctional nurse working at John L. McCarty 93, left, Cindy Barnes and Joyce Johnson (Johnson) Scott ’72 1


Onn Nghiem 99, B.S. criminal justice, has a master’s degree in liberal studies, earned a master’s degree in behavioral psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2011. He lives in New Iberia with his wife, Archana Gottipati.

Megan Anderson 96, B.B.A. finance, is a chief financial officer at cyclepath. He lives in Irving with his wife, Jennifer, and family.

Jared C. Hampton 94, B.S. kinesiology, ’13, B.S. health promotion, is a fitness coordinator at the Texas Department of State Health Services. She lives in Seagoville with her husband, Brian.

Robert Breso 85, B.B.A. business, is a nurse with Texas Health and lives in Pineland with her husband, James.

Wesley Mahon 82, B.B.A. management information systems, is a nurse for Texas Health and lives in Pineland with her husband, James.

Will Sennette 95, B.S. education, is a substitute teacher for the West Hardin school district, where he lives.


Suresh Gudavalli 01, M.E. civil engineering, ’01, B.S. electrical engineering, is a full professor for CPS Energy in San Antonio. He lives in Houston with his wife, Alisa (Rogers) 1906.

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Kari Kimble 11, B.S. psychology, is a correctional nurse working at John L. McCarty 93, left, Cindy Barnes and Joyce Johnson (Johnson) Scott ’72 1


Onn Nghiem 99, B.S. criminal justice, has a master’s degree in liberal studies, earned a master’s degree in behavioral psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2011. He lives in New Iberia with his wife, Archana Gottipati.

Sharon DeSilva 11, M.E. civil engineering, 99, B.S. electrical engineering, is a full professor for CPS Energy in San Antonio. He lives in Houston with his wife, Alisa (Rogers) 1906.

Andrea (White) Henry 97, B.S. communication, is an assistant professor of Communication. She lives in Cypress.

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CO64
Reunion
More than 90 Class of 1964 alumni attended the reunion Sept. 20.

2. Stephen Grace ’94, left, and Claudia Stanley ’64
3. From left, Ellen (Guskin) King ’64, Michael Ann (Awos) Crawford ’64, Linda (Hendries) Krescik ’64, Susan (Terry) McLendon ’64, Anna Lee (Dunn) Hadix ’64, Bob McLendon ’64
4. Reina ’94 and Anna Lee (Dunn) Hadix ’64
5. Margaret (Hygh) Bostic ’64, ’75
6. President Ken Evans, left, with Carolyn (Hovis) ‘94, ’75, and Bo Crawford ‘93

Baseball Tailgate
Alumni enjoyed tailg, lunch and more at the April 11 Alumni Baseball Tailgate before watching the Cardinals take on New Orleans at Vincent-Beck Stadium.

1. President Ken Evans, left, and David Benson ’73
2. Carlin Krueger ’10, left, and Christi Grunder ’10
3. Cloud ’66, ‘72, and Alice Silver
4. Daniel ’10 and Karen (Gare) Martinez ’11, left, with Victoria Martinez
5. Sherron ’70, ’11, and Stephanie (Dollah) Molina ’10, with Gahi, center, and Myah Molina 6. From left, Melinda McGivern, Okia McGivern, guest Alex, Grant McGivern, guest Bryon, Jacob McGivern and Glenn McGivern ’83

ClassNotes
Josh Shewmaker ’16, B.B.A. electrical engineering, is a project engineer for Chevron Phillips Chemical, where he lives with his wife, Lauren ’15, B.S. environmental studies.

Auneet Wright ’18, B.S. industrial engineering, is managing a project for GE. He lives in Orange.

Brenda Wheeler ’16, B.A. graphic design, is a graphic designer for Cracci. He lives in Tomball with his wife, Jaclyn.

Raul (Cordial) Dobi ’94, B.S. computer science, is a front-end web developer for Chamorro Stevens. She and her husband, Oscar, live in Pharr.

Chuljai (Briana) Evans ’98, B.A. AAS offered arts and sciences, is a bilingual teacher at Lamar University. She lives in Brownwood.

Michelle (Baum) Courmier ’99, B.S. general studies, ’11, M.A. history, teaches in the Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She lives in Vidor.

Dusty Baxter ’09, M.Ed. administration, is president of Crestwood High School in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Beaumont.

Priscilla (Quinonez) Michel ’99, M.A. educational administration, is superintendent of the Ysleta school district, where she lives. She lives in El Paso.

Brian Dishon ’11, M.A. educational leadership, is assistant principal in the Crane school district, where he lives.

Dustin Baxter ’09, M.Ed. administration, teaches in the Ysleta school district. He lives in Beaumont.

Jeff Morra ’11, B.S. electrical engineering, works for Denso as an electrical engineer. He lives in Katy, Texas.

Jeffrey Wright ’11, B.S. criminal justice, is lead caregiver specialist for Alien Health in Beaumont, where he lives.

Kim (Bennett) Secor ’11, B.S. educational leadership, is a great project director for Galveston College. She and her husband, Darrell ’11, B.S. educational leadership, live in League City. He is an associate professor at Galveston College.

Jenny Smith ’76, B.S. family and consumer sciences, earned a master’s degree in library sciences from the University of St. Thomas. She works for Exxon Montegue and lives in Houston with her husband, Miltun Robert.

Marell Stewart ’15, M.S. school administration, is principal of Gateway Junior High School in the Greater Brookshire school district. She lives in Brookshire with her husband, John.

Robert Martinez ’14, Eng.D. electrical engineering, is a reliability engineer for Ingersoll Rand. He lives in Hope Mills, N.C.

Jared Benavides ’06, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Houston with her husband, Joseph.

Jared Benavides ’06, M.Ed. administration, is a sales representative for Gator’s Distributors. He lives in Brownsville.

Karen Porter ’12, B.S. electrical engineering, is an embedded systems engineer at Digital Instruments. He lives in Round Rock.

Jennifer Holew ’12, B.S. business administration, is a junior executive at Smith Middle School in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Spring Valley with his wife, Sony (Silfverski).’11, M.B.A. administration. She teaches at Trinity Elementary in the same district.

Jordan Chompski ’72, B.S. family and consumer sciences-fashion retailing, is an independent beauty consultant for Mary Kay in Beaumont, where she lives.

Jeff Guelker ’12, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal in the Cran school district, where he lives.

Kelly Evans ’92, B.S. communication, is a junior counselor for Lamar University and lives in Beaumont.

Jerry Boyd ’12, M.A. education, is a sales representative for Gator’s Distributors. He lives in Brownsville.


Susan (Collier) Meeks ’98, B.S. consumer sciences-fashion retailing, is an assistant principal at Smith Middle School in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Houston with her husband, Dominic Barone.

Sherry (Whit) Hendley ’12, B.S. business administration, is principal at Pleasant Grove Elementary in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Katy with her husband, Brian.

Sherry (Whit) Hendley ’12, B.S. business administration, is principal at Prater Intermediate School in the Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Conroe.

Dyan (Agee) Crawford ’64, Linda (Henriksen) Kmiecik ’64, Margaret (Hygh) Bostic ’64, and Carolyn (Dunn) Haddox ’64, Sept. 20.

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Evans, left, with Carolyn (Hovis) ‘94, ’75, and Bo Crawford ‘93, 73

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Evans, left, with Carolyn (Hovis) ‘94, ’75, and Bo Crawford ‘93, 73
Students from across campus gathered to thank generous alumni and friends who have made donations to Lamar University during the first-ever “Thank a Donor Day” Sept. 18. Staff and student volunteers wore “Gratitude Crew” t-shirts, and the phrase, “There is no LU without U,” coined by one student became the popular sentiment written by many on thank you cards and posted on social media.

In a day packed with fun, laughter and friendship, students showed their appreciation to those who have helped make LU such a wonderful place to learn. In addition to written thank you notes, students posted their thanks on social media, filmed their own testimonials and more. If you visit campus, see if you can catch sight of a Thank a Donor Day t-shirt worn by this year’s participants. We hope you might experience a little of the excitement of that day through these photos and quotes.

“First and foremost, I’d like to say “Thank you.” I may never meet you, laugh with you or share any real memory with you, but I’m grateful for your contributions to the University. It’s selfless acts like yours that make me proud to be alive and just honored to know there are people like you out there. It’s because of you that I am able to pursue my dreams at such a wonderful university.” – Tyler

“I just wanted to personally thank you for everything you’ve done for Lamar. I moved all the way from Portland, OR, to come study at this university, and without people like you my experience wouldn’t be nearly as amazing. Your donations mean so much, so thank you!”
Your Lamar Cheerleader – Emmalee

“Your donations help change the lives of all the students on campus. Next year, I will earn my bachelor’s degree which will help create a bright future not only for me, but for my son as well. I love Lamar because it feels like its own world, where I am safe. Your help is doing more than you could ever imagine. Thank you!” – Meagan

“As a Cardinal both proud and true, I would like to take this moment to thank you. For all that you give and all that you do, I am forever grateful to you.” – Skylar

“Thank you so much for your support of Lamar! I am a student in the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities Program. Not only do I get to start college at 16, but my tuition is covered by a scholarship. I know that this would not be possible without support from generous donors like you.” – Sydney

“Thank you for donating to Lamar. I have a full academic scholarship. I know that without this scholarship you provided, I would not be in college. You have literally changed my life. Thank you!” – Leela
Support Lamar University’s Annual Giving Campaign today

More than 14,800 students benefit from annual giving gifts

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83% of LU students rely on some type of financial assistance

All donations...no matter the size...are important

Your support matters. We are so grateful for your continued commitment.

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PO Box 11500, Beaumont, TX 77710
(409) 880-8422

Give online at lamar.edu/give