Cardinal Cadence
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Independent spirit means many things to people, but at Lamar University the term demonstrates how people think and feel as they grow, learn and mature into what we assist them in discovering about themselves and their environment. This sense of independence can be found in all of our students as they attend classes, make new friends, have first-time experiences, discover fresh insights and make the last issue. In this issue, the A Texas State of Mind series focuses on Independent Spirit in our students, staff, faculty and alumni.

In this Cadence, we feature our new football coach, who is well into practices and getting ready to start his first season at LU. Mike Schultz came to us from Texas State University, and we are excited to support him and all of our student-athletes this fall. Another staff member profiled in this issue is Wendy Greenidge, assistant professor in clinical mental health counseling, whose independent spirit can be found in her instructional design and delivery. LU’s Department of Theatre and Dance took this same spirit and passion for what they do and formed an exchange with Tianjin University of Technology in China. Additionally, our student profile focuses on sophomore pre-med biology major Omar Hammadi’s independent outlook and his involvement on campus.

Entrepreneurs often display an independent spirit when forming their businesses and that is exactly what many of our alumni have done, with a few featured here. Tyler Blosent and David Pool took their friendship and shared interest in brewing beer to create a company, while Fred Vernon, only 28-years-old, already runs his own FedEx freight business and is seeking ways to help future LU students. Other alumni exhibit this independent spirit and passion for what they do and formed an exchange with Tianjin University of Technology in China. Additionally, our student profile focuses on sophomore pre-med biology major Omar Hammadi’s independent outlook and his involvement on campus.

With an independent spirit,
What started as a love for brewing beer became a business for Tyler Blount ’07 and David Pool ’07.

The two lifelong friends and classmates opened the Neches Brewing Company in the heart of downtown Port Neches Sept. 11. Named after the river that was an important backdrop as they grew up, the brewery claims its place as Southeast Texas’s first brewpub.

For Blount, his first experience with craft beer happened at Lamar University. “I think the first time I had craft beer was probably at LU at Kampus Korner,” he said. “Once you have craft beer, whether it’s Saint Arnold’s or Shiner Bock or another brand, it opens your eyes to a whole new style of beer, better beer.”

His craft beer tasting inspired him and a friend to buy a home brewing kit. “We brewed in my parents’ kitchen, and that batch of beer came out really awful,” he said. “We drank it all. We were just so proud. All in all, it takes like four weeks to make beer, so when it was finally ready, no matter what it tasted like, we were going to drink it.”

Blount and Pool, who have known each other since they were kids, reconnected through brewing. “Dave and I went to school together and were actually in Cub Scouts together,” Blount said. “We met back up through home brewing. Around 2009, I was an insurance agent in Beaumont. When I got off work on the weekends, I brewed beer. Around the same time, Dave and some of our other buddies were also brewing beer in Beaumont.”

After the men realized their shared interest, they decided to collaborate. “I remember taking one of my first successful batches, a pumpkin spiced beer, over to a Halloween party with one of our mutual friends that was brewing with Dave,” Blount said. “Dave told me that we should get together and brew, so that’s what we did almost every weekend. It was just fun making beer and sharing it with our friends.”

For years, they joked about the idea of starting a brewery; however, after creating the Big Floyd Stout, a seasonal beer that Blount calls “the kitchen sink of stouts,” jests about starting a brewery turned into serious ruminations.

Around this time, Blount began rethinking his professional goals. “I remember being at work one day, thinking about my future, and I was like do I really want to sit behind this computer all day and write quotes and sell insurance,” he said. “I wanted a job where I would be excited about getting up and going to work in the morning.”

David Pool, left, and Tyler Blount.
In search of this dream job, Blount thought about his passions. “Brewing beer was fun,” he said. “We’ve always joked about starting a brewery one day, but that became the epiphany that upped our seriousness about running a business, taking it to the next level.”

Partnering together, the two men found their niche: “Dave is the business man,” Blount said. “I formulated the recipes and brewed the beer. Early on, I was doing this by hand. I knew I didn’t want to go anywhere,” he said. He soon decided to drop out. “I was running the job market and decided to drop out. ‘I was running a business, and I quit school because all my friends who had graduated a year before me were out of work. I knew I didn’t want to go anywhere,’” he said. He soon chose to return to school to complete his degree. “It really helped me develop my plan for where I wanted to go in life,” he said. “I wanted to be in business, but I wanted to do my own thing.”

Pool’s business acumen emerged early. As a teenager, he began a lawn mowing business as well as a skateboarding store, and he has had a host of other business experiences as well, including helping run his parents’ Mid County Farm and Feed store.

While attending LU, Pool became discouraged with the job market and decided to drop out. “I was running a business, and I quit school because all my friends who had graduated a year before me were just out of work. I knew I didn’t want to go anywhere,” he said. He soon decided to drop out. “I was running the job market and decided to drop out. ‘I was running a business, and I quit school because all my friends who had graduated a year before me were out of work. I knew I didn’t want to go anywhere,’” he said. He soon chose to return to school to complete his degree. “It really helped me develop my plan for where I wanted to go in life,” he said. “I wanted to be in business, but I wanted to do my own thing.”

Pool said most people don’t pursue their business dreams because they’re scared of failure. “The only way to succeed is to fail first,” he said. “I’ve done it five or six times. Now I’m a part of this, and we’re succeeding. ‘You’ve just got to do it. You control your own destiny. If you care, you succeed. You’ll work harder than you’ve ever worked in your life.”

The first step was creating a business plan and ensuring that a brewery would be feasible, Blount said. “Anytime you start a new business, you don’t know how it’s going to be,” he said. “It’s a huge risk. It’s a pretty strenuous application process to get a brewery started. We had to submit all kinds of paperwork to the government and to the state. ‘They tell you that in three to five years you should be turning a profit in a business, and we’re already profitable. We’ve cut our debt almost in half,” Blount said. Both Blount and Pool earned business degrees from Lamar University in 2007, which they said served as a foundational tool. “We learned how to write business plans, which helped, and LU offers some really good resources,” Blount said. “I think the entrepreneur class is probably the best course as far as the marketing side goes because it inspires someone to go out and do something on their own.”

That independent spirit carried Blount through to 2014, a pivotal year as the company outgrew this spot, which is paying off. “We’ve actually outgrown this spot, which is a good problem to have,” Blount said. “There are future plans of us maybe opening another brewery one day, but that will take several years with a whole new business plan. We’re still baby-stepping it, taking it very slow to get to 2.0.”

The community from the start welcomed the brewery. “We did a crowd-funding campaign and raised almost $40,000,” Blount said. “We got noticed because our crowd-funding went so well. I think that just shows you that people in the area were ready for something like this, which was reassuring for us.”

Although the company is still young, they’re finding ways to give back to the community. The Neches Brewing Company has held events to benefit children and families in need. “We’ve cut our debt almost in half,” Blount said. “We’ve done it five or six times. Now I’m a part of this, and we’re succeeding. ‘You’ve just got to do it. You control your own destiny. If you care, you succeed. You’ll work harder than you’ve ever worked in your life.”

Pool said the brewery is family owned. “There are future plans of us maybe opening another brewery one day, but that will take several years with a whole new business plan. We’re still baby-stepping it, taking it very slow to get to 2.0.”

Pool is teaching a home brewing course at the brewery and hopes to build upon it in the future. “The home brew class is a way to get people interested in the culture,” he said. “The more people understand what goes into a beer, the more people will appreciate it. It’s an educational effort I hope to do bi-monthly or build on it.”

Some recipes take years to perfect. “They determined attitude, which Blount applies to his brewing experiments, also reflects how the co-owners feel about the challenges of business. “Creating something new is always fun,” Blount said. “You keep tweaking it until it works.”
Campus renewal continues on the heels of construction of the new Wayne A. Reaud Administration Building and Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship. State-of-the-art student and instructional spaces provide ample reason for alumni to return to campus during Homecoming Nov. 4 to see how much the campus has improved.

- A complete rebuild of the Setzer Student Center has begun and is expected to be completed in spring of 2018. As a result of the first true renovation since the building’s construction in 1953, the architectural plans include entirely reconfigured spaces filled with natural light for meeting, gathering, catering and working.
- Construction has just begun on the new Science and Technology Building, which will be 78,400 square feet. Completion is expected in fall 2018. Once finished, the building will host multiple groups and classes across disciplines.
- The entrance and lobby remodel of Mary and John Gray Library will accommodate the addition of a ground-level Starbucks.
- Recent improvements to the University Theatre enable a new audio-visual system.
- A major gift from Susan Conn McCurry allowed LU fans to view highlights of court action on a new state-of-the-art scoreboard array, hanging high above Billy and Pat Tubbs Court in the Montagne Center.
- New infrastructure in the Chemical Engineering Unit.

Behind Freddie Gasbarri’s second-place finish, LU claimed four runners in the Top 10. Gasbarri recorded his 8,000-meter career-best mark on a 24:20.1 time and only trailed the individual champion by less than nine seconds.

It was the fifth time in the last 11 seasons that the Cardinals took the team championship without the individual champion. “This was a great team effort. We didn’t rely on a ‘Big Gun’ up front, but the pack running was our strength, and it really came together for us when it mattered most,” said 2016 SLC Men’s Cross Country Coach of the Year Tony Houchin.

LU runners who placed in the Top 10 also landed on the All-Southland Conference team. Gasbarri was joined on the All-SLU squad by teammates Tobias Riker (4th), Stu Ferguson (8th) and Sean Chalmers (10th).

LU Cross Country Wins Southland Title
Lamar University men’s cross country continued its unprecedented run at the 2016 Southland Conference Championships. The Cardinals scored 43 points to claim its fourth-straight title in 11 seasons at the Pecan Acres Park in Nacogdoches, Texas.

The men’s victory notched the third time in program history that LU has won at least four championships in a row and improved the overall count to 15 Southland Conference titles.

Athletics News

Langley scores honors in football
Senior corner Brendan Langley received an invite to play in the 2016 Reese’s Senior Bowl. Langley receives the honor following a season that saw him earn first-team All-Southland Conference honors as a defensive back and punt returner. It also comes during a year that saw all 32 NFL teams make at least one stop in Beaumont during the 2016 season.

A versatile athlete, Langley shaped all three phases of the game for the Cardinals during his two years on campus. Starting his career as a receiver, Langley shifted to the defensive side of the ball midway through the 2015 season. He wasted no time impacting games from the secondary, recording 21 tackles, 11 pass breakups and picking off a pass.

Langley was more than just a threat in secondary as a senior. He also became one of the nation’s top punt returners. He put his big-play ability on display against Incarnate Word University this past season where he returned six punts for 206 yards and two touchdowns, averaging 34.3 yards per return. He shattered the previous single-game mark for punt return yards in a game by nearly 100 yards (118 set by Rondy Colbert in 1973) and was only 35 yards shy of making the school’s career Top-10 list for punt return yards in that game alone. Langley became the first Cardinal to return two punts for scores in the same game.

Multiple All-Americans
Langley brought national recognition to Beaumont by being named to three All-America squads. He wrapped up his senior season on the America Football Coaches Association, Stats FCS and College Sports Madness All-America squads.

Langley was the lynchpin in the league’s top pass defense and was in the nation’s Top 10 in interceptions per game. His six picks on the year tied for second in the country. Twice in the season he was named as the SLC Player of the Week, both as a defensive back and special teams player. Against Southeastern Louisiana, he picked off three passes—tying a school record—and versus Incarnate Word he returned two punts for scores.

The Reese’s Senior Bowl invitee went on to register an interception in four consecutive games. Langley was also among the league leaders in pass deflections.

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Schultz comes to Beaumont looking to install his high-octane style into a Cardinals team that struggled to move the ball in 2016. The Cardinals hope to capitalize on that experience. “When we talk about building a football program,” Schultz said, “you have to understand the area—the Golden Triangle, Houston, Southwest Louisiana and East Texas. We sit in the heart of one of the best recruiting areas in the country.”

A Houston native, Schultz spent 16 seasons as an offensive coordinator. The architect of some of the nation’s high-powered offenses, Schultz most recently spent five seasons under Dennis Franchione at Texas State. He also helped jump start a Texas Christian program that began in the Western Athletic Conference when he arrived and has since become a national power in the Big 12. The Horned Frogs suffered a 1-11 mark in 1997 that turned into a 7-5 record and berth in the Sun Bowl. He and the Frogs would go on to play in nine more bowl games in the final 10 seasons he was there.

When Gary Patterson was named TCU head coach, Schultz stayed on staff as offensive coordinator, and the two built a program that was ranked in the AP and Coaches Top 25 polls in 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2008. In 2005, the Frogs were ranked ninth in the country as the Mountain West and Houston Bowl Champions. He was the mastermind of a dominant offense that lasted for more than a decade.

Schultz’s offense set single-season records for points scored (420) and touchdowns (54) in 2008, the same year he ranked in the nation’s Top 40 in scoring, total and rushing offense. They also led the nation in time of possession.

Schultz has also been credited with helping develop some of the nation’s top talent. He was key in the maturation process of TCU all-time leading rusher LaDainian Tomlinson, who racked up 5,265 rushing yards in his career, but it was when Schultz showed up that he excelled. In 1999, Tomlinson ran for 1,850 yards and topped that his senior season with 2,158—each led the nation in total offense (464.4) and 25th in turnover margin (0.58). His offense ranked 11th in the nation for the best recruiting areas in the country.”

—Coach Mike Schultz

While at Texas State, Schultz was known for developing a fast, up-tempo spread attack that was highly efficient. The 2014 season was his best, with his quarterbacks ranking 10th in the country in completion percentage (65.4) all while his running backs ranked 18th in rushing offense (228.5). The team was 24th in the nation in total offense (464.4) and 25th in turnover margin (0.58). His offense ranked 11th in the nation for the season before.

While the offensive coordinator at Texas State, he worked with D.J. Hall, a two-time All-American on the offensive line. He notched 31 all-conference performers that span two conferences and an independent status, and at TCU he worked with 44 all-conference selections, also spanning three leagues. In all, he’s been a key to 80 all-conference athletes.

During his time on the sidelines, Schultz has coached on both sides of the ball. He began his coaching career at his alma mater and Southland Conference rival Sam Houston State in 1979. He served as recruiting coordinator and coach linebackers in one season and flipped to quarterbacks and receivers the next year. He also was a recruiting coordinator and coached receivers and tight ends at UTEP and Kansas State before joining Fred Akers’ staff at Texas in 1985. Following that year, Schultz was an assistant and defensive coordinator at Westwood High School in Round Rock for four years before joining Franchione’s staff at Texas State in 1999—the first stint at TSU.

At UNM, he helped the Lobos to a WAC Mountain Division Championship and invitation to the Insight.com Bowl, the program’s first bowl berth since 1981. Schultz has been a part of 11 bowl appearances during his career.

After his tenure with the Horned Frogs, he spent time as the offensive coordinator at Big 10 program Illinois and Middle Tennessee State. During his stay at Illinois, he coached a rushing attack that again ranked at the top of the nation’s leaderboards (186th) while MTSU was invited to play in the GoDaddy.com bowl, only the school’s fifth bowl appearance at the time.

Throughout his career, Schultz has worked with quarterbacks, running backs, receivers, tight ends, secondary and linebackers. He recognizes talent and supports the goal of the student and the athlete: “In terms of building this program, the first thing we have to do as coaches is to target young men who are true student-athletes—those young men that are just as successful in the classroom as they are on the field,” Schultz said.

The Cardinals will kick off the 2017 campaign Saturday, Sept. 2 at North Texas. LU returns home the following week to open its home schedule against UT Permian Basin. The game against UTPB will be one of just five home games for 2017.
IN GUATEMALA, an independent spirit HEALS

by Caitlin Duerler

For the past six years, Steve Moore ’78, B.S. communication, has been operating a growing surgery center in Guatemala City, Guatemala, with the support of the charity he founded, The Shalom Foundation. The Steve Moore Surgical Center provides a variety of surgeries to children and teenagers with the help of volunteer surgeons and nurses from the United States. Each year, more teams of surgeons volunteer and the center serves more patients.

“Last year, we operated on 1,086 children in all disciplines of complicated surgeries, and I believe we are on track to increase that number this year,” Moore said. “The strategy is not to grow like a business, but to grow in influence and service to the children.”

During his studies at LU, Moore never imagined that he would one day have a full-fledged, operating center in a foreign country. Rather, he was focused on playing trumpet in the marching and jazz bands as well as planning music events on campus for students.

“Lamar University is a very special place to me,” he said. “My time there studying for my degree and getting involved helped launched my entire life and career. I got involved with student activities on campus and we organized concerts. Then I decided I wanted to get into the concert business and shifted over to mass communications to learn more about marketing and advertising.”

After graduation, Moore went on to work in Houston and around Texas producing and booking bands such as ZZ Top and Stevie Ray Vaughan. His reputation in the concert business led to an opportunity to move to Nashville in 1986 to open the Starville Amphitheater, an opportunity to move to Nashville in 1986 to open the Starville Amphitheater, which eventually led him to change his own concert promotion business. Along with changing jobs, Moore said he started going back to church with his wife at the People’s Church in Franklin, Tenn., which eventually led him to Guatemala.

“Before I went on the mission trip, I wasn’t really interested in doing volunteer work, and I didn’t understand why people would do that and send their kids on missions,” he said. “I had a really naive understanding of what being called to service means. One day, I was sitting there and somebody said, ‘we really need some men to help with constructing this school down in Guatemala,’ and I think God just touched me on the shoulder and said ‘hey, it’s time for you to go.’ I honestly didn’t have a plan, I just went.”

Moore went on his first mission trip to Guatemala City in 1991, and the moment he landed, he knew immediately he wanted to do more than just build a school for the children there.

“My heart just broke for the kids facing hardship, so it made me want to spend the rest of my life doing what I can to help bring a better life to them in different ways,” he said. “People ask me how did I pick Guatemala, and I say, ‘I had no choice in the matter, God picked it for me.’”

Since 1992, The Shalom Foundation, has garnered support from country music stars such as Kenny Chesney and Jennifer Nettles. Funds are used to help send surgical teams to operate on children in need as well as to improve infrastructure, such as building clean water systems, new homes and schools for those living in extreme poverty in Guatemala City.

“The Nashville music community has always been a generous community over the years,” Moore said. “Lots of big artists with famous names have big hearts and give in different ways — it has been humbling to have them support our mission and trust us with the resources they donate. Their generosity is impactful in a lot of ways.

In addition to helping local children access the surgeries they need, the Shalom Foundation has recently turned their attention to addressing malnutrition through the sale of a peanut-based enriched meal supplement called Mani+. “Guatemala has the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in Central America at 56 percent,” Moore said. “It costs the Guatemalan government anywhere between $300-500 million dollars a year in lost economic impact because people can’t work as a result of malnutrition. In effect, this causes physical and mental deficiencies. We want to act as a repository for information and statistics.”

The organization not only helps residents in Guatemala City and performs surgeries, but serves as a resource for other similar surgery centers in South and Central America. With the support of the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, the surgery center is working to collect data for research.

“We are starting a comprehensive research and data initiative with Vanderbilt to store data on patients, of which there is not a lot available,” Moore said. “The doctors on the board of the Shalom Foundation have told us that there is not a lot of data regarding third-world healthcare.”

Moore’s impulse to give to the children of Guatemala sparks a similar response in those who witness it. The Guatemalan

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Moore’s impulse to give to the children of Guatemala sparks a similar response in those who witness it. The Guatemalan
people have been more welcoming to the volunteers who are there to help, and the foundation receives more and more surgical team requests from volunteers across the United States. “The people of Guatemala are starting to recognize that the Americans who are volunteering in Guatemala are there to offer help for their children and in turn are starting to offer help with our mission,” Moore said. “As time you throw a rock in a pond, it is going to have a rippling effect—that’s what happens when people step out of their comfort zone to serve and influence others to serve and choose similar paths to helping others. I think that is what people are called to serve by witnessing what other people are doing and wanting to do something similar themselves.”

While the former Country Music Association board president, chairman and CEO spent decades raising money and awareness to help mothers give birth in the hospital, he said that a full life is not just about receiving gifts like success and health but giving back to others.

“I tell my kids there are three types of people in the world: people who watch things happen, people who make things happen and people standing around wondering what happened,” Moore said. “I think people need to belong to the category of making things happen no matter what their calling. By example and witness, people are drawn to people who are doing things and in turn want to come on board and make their own contribution for whoever is on the receiving end of it. That is what we are hoping to continue to do with the foundation and the surgery center.”

The Shalom Foundation organizes volunteer medical teams to travel to the Steve Moore Surgical Center in Guatemala City to perform different types of operations from cleft palette surgery to gaining experience working as a team to help people who are either on the receiving end of it. That is what we are hoping to continue to do with the foundation and the surgery center.”
### College Snapshot: Education & Human Development

**Hernandez publishes historiography**

The American Journal of Health Studies published Professor Barbara Hernandez’s historiography article, “The Museum of Patients and Staff,” which explores the histories of patients and staff from the last United States leper colony. In the journal’s December 2016 issue, Hernandez, a faculty member in the Health and Kinesiology Department, focused her research on archival material to extend the conversation of previously untold stories to current scholars and students. Hernandez’s research on archival material demonstrated the importance of including diverse voices in the history of medicine.

**Official college crest unveiled**

The faculty and staff of the College of Education and Human Development created and unveiled a new college crest that incorporates imagery reflecting the connection of each department to the college’s goals to innovate, inspire and impact learners and the profession. Every aspect of this crest was designed by university staff, and each department contributes to the College of Education and Human Development’s mission statement.Faculty and staff of the college build relationships and healthy life choices in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, provide world-class instruction in the Department of Educational Leadership, promote healthy living styles in Health and Kinesiology, and form partnerships through mentoring to assist diverse populations in the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services. The new crest will be incorporated into the design of all college programs and will be used to enhance the career training of current and aspiring health professions.

**New Master of Public Health program launched**

The new master’s degree, the Master of Public Health, has been designed to prepare health professionals to reduce the health disparities in Texas and nationally by preparing them to implement effective community-based interventions. The fully online program will enhance the career pathways for current and aspiring health professions.

**Simmons addresses college commencement**

James Simmons served as the president of the university for 14 years, 1999-2013, leading the school into a new era of dynamic growth before returning to the Mary Morgan Department of Music as a professor. During his tenure as president, Simmons earned numerous awards in education, leadership, community service and music, including the Chief Executive Leadership Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, Newsmaker of the Decade from the Press Club of Southeast Texas, and induction into the Texas Bandmasters Hall of Fame. Under his leadership, UH launched its first comprehensive campaign, “Investing in the Future,” which raised over $1.5 billion for the University. Simmons now serves as the president of the Beaumont School District Board of Managers.

**Doctoral students study in the UK**

13 Doctoral students in Educational Leadership studying in the UK. Dr. Teresa Simpson, traveled to the U.K. to study Intercultural Responsiveness with faculty from Hull University, College of Executive Leadership in Education, Ashridge College. Ashridge College is ranked in the top 20 of the world for Global Executive Leadership training. The students participated in a lecture series with Global Leaders and also attended deplying session that enhanced the career of the students.

**Faculty profile: Wendy Greenidge**

Originally from the Caribbean Island of St. Lucia, Wendy Greenidge, assistant professor in clinical mental health counseling, knew at a very young age that she wanted to make a difference. “I distinctly remember the lack of mental health services while growing up on the island,” Greenidge said. She has turned those memories into the driving force behind her personal and professional life.

Greenidge’s independent spirit—and recognition of the same in others—guides her in discovering unique opportunities to creatively tailor a classroom or counseling session to the needs of her students. She is able to decipher what will benefit her students the most while infusing her personality, as well as her cultural interests, into her work. “I want my students to have the skills they need to work with clients from different cultures and recognize that multicultural competence is not a destination; it’s a journey,” she said.

As countries become increasingly diverse, it’s important that future clinical mental counselors are equipped with the tools, strategies and skills they need to work with a multicultural population. Greenidge’s research, published in both domestic and international journals, emphasizes the need to account for cultural variables when treating clients. For instance, while working with immigrants from the Caribbean, she introduces students and clinicians to aspects of the culture that can be incorporated into treatment, such as music or poetry for those who may feel uncomfortable expressing themselves verbally. Then, clinicians shift from a sense of mastery to accountability, which “involves self-reflection of intentional and unintentional patterns of discrimination and engaging in appropriate actions to remedy these,” Greenidge said. “Continuous reflection at the individual, institutional and community levels is crucial to ensure we provide more culturally relevant services to clients.”

There is a strong stigma towards mental health and mental illness that may deter various cultural groups from seeking professional help. These behaviors propelled Greenidge onto her current career path as a counselor and educator, whose profession often participates in community events in order to engage and help others be more comfortable in seeking professional help. Incorporating aspects of a client’s culture into treatment helps it to seem less foreign and increases the likelihood that those who need it will seek it.

One of Greenidge’s greatest sources of pride is the work she is able to do within different communities and recognizing the positive and lasting impact that it has. A chief complaint of hers, however, is that individuals who participate in research studies often do not benefit directly from the results. To address this, Greenidge shares the results of her studies with these communities and consults around modeling these best practices internationally. For instance, she recently accompanied 10 graduate students to St. Lucia, helping them complete their residency by applying the multicultural knowledge they had learned and expanding their repertoire to include West Indian culture. Greenidge also has provided suicide prevention workshops in various island communities throughout her career.

Utilizing her own independent spirit and passion for teaching, Greenidge inspires the same enthusiasm in others to change the status quo of how mental illness is seen and treated.
Robotic hand first step toward rehabilitation system

With a grant from LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, the Department of Industrial Engineering’s assistant professor, both of industrial engineering, started the project using a prosthetic hand created with 3D printing. “It’s an open-source design but required a lot of work,” said Zhu, who has a background in robotics. With an expertise in brain-computer interfaces, it helped program the prosthetic hand to execute commands from the user. “Our ultimate goal is for the limb to have precise and accurate movements and functions,” said Zhu.

The next steps in the project include the incorporation of technology to interpret muscle signals that operate the hand. After which, the team intends to use a helmet capable of collecting signals that operate the hand.

Currently, it costs NASA around $5,000 per pound to send something into space, so weight is crucial. “I knew this was going to be a challenge, but it was a project our group was passionate about,” said team member Chris Stelse. “Currently, astronauts do not clean their clothing. Instead, NASA sends about 1,000 pounds of clothing to be used one or two times before being discarded. If we can reliably sanitize clothing and increase the period they can be worn, then the weight of clothing can be greatly reduced.

Every minute detail. Ultraviolet light can kill bacteria, but we had to run tests to determine which type of light and how many we would need to reach our goals as well as how long the sanitation process would take and how much energy would be used. We also had to design our machine to be lightweight and energy efficient to cut down on any extra costs,” said Stelse.

After several weeks of preparing the design, the team presented in front of a panel of individuals from the TSG and NASA. “We were very nervous about presenting our ideas in the first round of competition. We had no idea what other teams had come up with or how we would be judged on our project, but we placed second among all other projects in the competition, and that gave us a lot of confidence going into the building phase of the competition next semester,” said Stelse.


**Nursing master’s ranks seventh**

Lamar University’s online master of science in nursing administration degree was ranked No. 7 out of the nation’s Top 10 most affordable programs for an online master of science in nursing leadership, nursing management or nursing administration by bestmastersonline.com. “This is a program of study that LU can be proud of. We’re reaching students all over the world with outstanding, dedicated faculty,” said Cindy Stinson, chair and associate professor of the School of Nursing.

LU’s MSN in nursing administration outranked programs from schools accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, a nationally recognized accrediting agency approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education, and ranked by publications like Forbes magazine, The Payscale Review, or US News and World Report.

“We work continually to ensure that our programs provide outstanding education and preparation for graduates to succeed in the nursing field. We’ve been able to keep it affordable and accessible so that even nurses with busy careers can earn a degree online,” Stinson said.

The university’s MSN in nursing administration, accredited by ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing), focuses on patient outcomes and evidence-based care models. The degree is offered online to allow current nurses to develop and sustain their working roles while having some of the finest faculty in the nation.

**Students present research**

Matt Hech, professor of biology, and his teaching assistant, Joseph Lunt, had graduate research students from the past year authored four poster presentations about their research on Lake Sabine Estuary and Gulf Bight Waters off the Gulf Coast at the Gulf Estuarine Research Society meeting. All three master’s Students included biology majors Matthew W Housh, Daelin Goldstule, Kelli Creel, David Bassa, Weston May, Linda Pham, Datem Brown, Tray B. Lorne and Taylor Marshall of Civil Engineering and Modern Languages. The Department of English presented visiting author Morgan Collier.

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As president and CEO of BakerRipley, Alumna Angela Blanchard’s pioneering spirit transforms forgotten or overlooked neighborhoods into inclusive, dynamic communities. Blanchard ’84 approaches underserved communities not by focusing on what’s not working but by building on opportunities for education, for employment, for change from being at a large university because there was the opportunity to know the professors and for the desire for being at a large university because of the friendships I made. Being at LU was a Catholic Cajun family. Most of my childhood, we lived in South Park near Railroad Avenue. After graduating from LU, I moved to Houston for a job.

Q: What are some fond memories from your time at LU?
A: I enjoyed being in Delta Sigma Pi business fraternity because of the friendships I made. Being at LU was a change from being at a large university because there was the opportunity to know the professors and for the professors to know students. I knew about career opportunities for professors who were respected by industry leaders and my connected students to people who were hiring.

Q: What led you to focus on local communities in your career?
A: For all of my working career, I have a passion for work that helps people find their way to opportunities—opportunities for education, for employment, for connection. It has always seemed possible to make things work better for everyone if we were willing to look at how we allocate resources and access to opportunity.

Q: Describe your background.
A: I grew up in Beaumont, the oldest of eight kids in a Catholic Cajun family. Most of my childhood, we lived in South Park near Railroad Avenue. After graduating from LU, I moved to Houston for a job.

Q: How did Houston become your home?
A: I came to Houston for a job in one of the “big eight” accounting firms in 1984. Everyone comes to Houston for a work opportunity. But we all stay because it’s a city with room for you to realize your hopes and dreams. Houston is a high-functioning city, a welcoming place and with pragmatic orientation toward challenges. If you live in Houston, you learn quickly that ‘getting stuff done’ is highly valued here. We love good ideas, but only if you plan to do the work to see ideas materialized. I am in love with the ethnic and cultural diversity of the city and feel fortunate to have been here as the city becomes the most diverse city in the United States. I can visit the world without leaving the city.

Q: What are some challenges diverse communities face?
A: Diversity is an enormous strength in a globalized economy—where our economic future and security is connected to the rest of the world. We are stronger when we have insight into how people who are not like us think, work, love and solve problems. The biggest challenge communities face is believing the worst about people we don’t know. Our disconnected ideas work against doing what comes naturally: welcoming our neighbors, learning about them and from them. At times, I remind people: these are our people, the people of the United States. We don’t have some better group elsewhere more worthy of our interest and investment. We can only be a strong country if we are willing to believe in and invest in all of our people.

Q: What are the building blocks you’ve learned in working with diverse types of groups?
A: We are all connected in our common humanity, and we all have the same hungers: to earn, learn, belong. When we focus on what we have in common and our shared desire for these same hopes, it becomes clear that we’re all in this together. Our shared aspirations should be the start of any conversation. Then we can discuss how we go about achieving these, and while we may differ about how we do it, we can find compromises on how we proceed if we agree on why we must work together. I never demonize any group of people. I am not at all interested in blame because blame is a backwards-looking exercise. There are times when we must shoulder the responsibility of problems we didn’t create and be willing to step up for challenges we may never solve. But that’s leadership, and it’s important.

Q: Tell us how you became involved with Neighborhood Centers—now BakerRipley.
A: When I was working at a public accounting firm, I was invited to be on the board of Neighborhood Centers, and, after serving on the board for a couple of years, I was recruited for a staff position as finance director. My decision to accept was driven by what I saw as a great potential for the agency to grow and have a much greater impact. I wanted to see us financially stable and secure so that we could grow the city.
Q: As an example, how has a community you’ve worked in exhibited an independent spirit?
A: In East Aldine, our inquiries revealed a story about a cohesive community with a clear identity—a community that had been intentionally excluded as Houston annexed more well-off surrounding areas and was left to fend for itself for all municipal services. We heard again and again the stories of neighbors working together, small businesses lending to each other, volunteers providing essential services and successful residents who returned to “give back.”

In the face of uncertainty, people were making it up as they went along, which we found to be an incredible strength. We thought the best thing we could do is enable that improvisation and entrepreneurial energy. We built on their desire to take their small businesses to the next level, designing programs that provide the training and resource connections needed to grow family-owned businesses. Community members spoke about the dwellings, products and services they’ve been able to create, invent and fabricate on their own. Hearing of this existing strength, Chevron and FabLab Foundation have stepped up to build a fabrication laboratory (FAB Lab) as a part of a new economic opportunity center, a three-building, eight-acre site we’re building right now.

Q: Describe Appreciative Community Building.
A: For more than 10 years, BakerRipley has used Appreciative Community Building to remain closely connected with our neighbors and inform our holistic community development approach. It’s a rigorous application of appreciative inquiry principles, which are rooted in lifting up and leveraging strengths as a force for positive change. Through extensive one-on-one interviews and community meetings, we conduct a relentless search for the strengths and aspirations that exist within a community. We believe the leaders we need are already in the community, so part of the search identifies the individuals others turn to when they need guidance or help. By identifying what’s working, and who is already committed to helping the community, strengths and assets form the foundation for plans and investments.

A narrative about how people are broken is not going to help us because you can’t build on broken. People aren’t the problem, they’re the solution. That’s powerful and needed more than ever. Appreciative Community Building doesn’t ignore struggle, injustice or inequality. By marrying appreciative inquiry to asset-base community development, we can study and document what’s working in every community and use these strengths to drive investment.

Learn more about Angela and her work at BakerRipley at angelablanchard.com

Women & Philanthropy
Focusing on community

If you enjoy learning about dynamic women in Southeast Texas and the work they’re doing, one of Lamar University’s newest organizations, Women and Philanthropy, is one you should check out. It focuses on our community and the women in it and is structured to be social as well as educational. The first speaker at the kickoff luncheon last fall, described women’s involvement in philanthropy and the need to know how to manage their family’s finances. Women and Philanthropy’s second speaker in the spring, Angela Blanchard, gave members and guests a whole new way to look at ways to build community within our community.

With American women controlling a little more than half of all the personal wealth in the country and studies indicating more than forty percent of all women are primary breadwinners in their homes, First Lady of Lamar University, Nancy Evans, saw a need to form an organization such as Women and Philanthropy. “This innovative program is structured to bring the women in our community together to learn more from each other and examine topics of particular interest to women,” she said.

Evans also intends for Women and Philanthropy to provide practical advice for the present as well as the future. “More women handle the discretionary spending in families than ever before,” she said. With a large number of women choosing where to allocate spending, particularly in areas such as health, education and charitable organizations, she believes Women and Philanthropy will assist members with skills necessary to make meaningful financial decisions.

Two luncheons are to be held each year, allowing members to hear noted guest speakers as well as briefly learning from the “Minute for Finance” feature during each event. Future speakers include an entrepreneur and nutritionist, Southeast Texas nature conservationist, and discussions of art and legal issues specific to local women and children. By hosting these programs and luncheons on campus in the fall and spring, as well as various exclusive member events throughout the year, Evans’ goal is to inspire alumni and friends, young and old, to engage with the surrounding community. She hopes that members will learn about new ways of investing proactively in their futures and more about how to manage their finances effectively.

To find out more about the upcoming luncheon and speaker on Sept. 28 as well as registration and membership information for Women and Philanthropy, go to lamar.edu/women.
Stepping out of comfort zones is not always the easiest thing to do. The faculty and students of the Department of Theatre and Dance are taking their independent spirit across borders by extending a relationship with Tainan University of Technology in Taiwan.

Golden Wright, department chair and associate professor, along with several students, are working together with the faculty and students at TUT in order to grow in their abilities and experience new styles of dance. In spring 2016, students and faculty from TUT visited the U.S.

“We came up with a plan for them to be here during the week of our spring dance concert,” Wright said. “They brought in four faculty members and, with our faculty, we taught combined classes for both our students and the Taiwanese students during their residency here in the U.S.”

While there, Wright and six LU students performed a different type of piece that employed black light and fluorescent paint. He and one TUT faculty member performed the second piece titled, “The Next Chapter.”

“‘The Next Chapter’ is based on my and my wife’s story,” Wright said. “I sent a video ahead of time, and the TUT faculty member rehearsed it with one of her students while I rehearsed it with one of my students here; then we had two days to rehearse before it was in front of a live audience.”

According to Wright, the goal for the future is to further grow LU’s partnership with Tainan University of Technology and alternate travel to the country every other year. “The first time is always the toughest, but it seems like it gets easier each time,” he said. “We want to continue this rotation to form a lasting friendship between the two universities.”

“I am beyond thankful for the exceptional relationship we have with Tainan University of Technology,” Wright said.

The most common language spoken in Taiwan is Mandarin, with a unique alphabet. “When you displace a few Americans in a culture they aren’t familiar with, it’s crazy to see how dance becomes a universal language,” Wright said.

Katelyn Kirk, a theatre and dance major from Beaumont, said, “Taiwan is like nothing I have ever experienced before. While visiting, I expanded my knowledge of dance, learned about the culture and created unforgettable memories with my fellow classmates and newly acquired, lifelong friends. I am already looking forward to my next study abroad trip.”

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Through the study abroad trip, the LU team had the opportunity to meet the president of TUT along with many others. “This was one of the best experiences I have had in my life, and for most of the students, it was their first time out of the country, so it was quite the experience,” Wright said. “I am beyond thankful for the exceptional relationship we have with Tainan University of Technology.”

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PA native, Cardinal son trucks toward social progress

by Casey Ford

In his 1991 best-seller, Life’s Little Instruction Book, H. Jackson Brown Jr. writes, “Let perseverance be your engine and hope your fuel.” Alumnus Fred Vernon ’13, exemplifies that adage already at only 28 years of age. In the year that he completed his dual MSA-MBA in the College of Business, Vernon’s innate spirit of independence led to running his first business—a FedEx freight fleet that made $370,000 in its first year—and working as a business analyst for PricewaterhouseCoopers. He soon left PwC, abandoning accounting and embracing entrepreneurship completely as his company, KLV Ventures, grew quickly and exponentially to include: a much larger FedEx fleet and ten flatbed 18-wheelers. In its second year, the company nearly doubled its earnings to $670K, and last year, KLV Ventures earned $2.2 million. At its inception, his FedEx business was the smallest in Southeast Texas; currently, it is the second largest and responsible for 25 percent of the freight in the region. On the face of it, Vernon seems to have tapped into that magical equation that sends certain entrepreneurs soaring to the top—a formula that includes wide networks of influence, flawless timing, serendipity—but the truth is that as a young entrepreneur he has harnessed the lessons of real experience, including some really big mistakes, and the wisdom of his parents, teachers and advisors into his own unique brand of creativity, tenacity, civic-mindedness and success.

He’ll tell you that prior to his studies at LU, he never imagined himself as an entrepreneur. Crediting his parents, Fred Sr. and Deanna, with his dogged work ethic, Vernon planned to become an accountant and was on track to becoming quite a successful one, earning a prestigious internship with PricewaterhouseCoopers. During his time as a Cardinal, he benefited from the wisdom of university administrators, faculty, alumni and friends. Vernon especially credits President Jimmy Simmons, Todd Hoffman ’88, Bart Simmons ’78, ’79, and former business faculty member Ann Watkins with key advice that has formed his entrepreneurial vision. They gave him access to a world he would not have otherwise been able to touch and helped groom him for business success by teaching him things he couldn’t learn in the classroom, like the importance of keeping his shoes shined and how to make lasting impressions through conversation.

With those invaluable tools from his mentors and completion of his master’s degrees, Vernon was assured a place at PwC, where he had the potential to become a well-connected, high-earning analyst. But after only a few months, he started getting restless, and the words of a friend began echoing in his mind—some advice to “get a bread route, a Doritos or FedEx route, anything. Don’t let PwC be your sole source of income.” Soon Vernon met Paul Book of Vidor, Texas, who sold him his first two cargo trucks and FedEx routes, and his entrepreneurial endeavors began in earnest. He spent several weeks taking two-hour lunches to interview employees and assemble the various pieces of his project. In the end, Vernon left PwC after only nine months, and he recalled a moment when an executive member of the firm expressed serious disappointment in his decision to leave the firm and further stated that his attempts at entrepreneurship would end in failure. Such was his vision, though, and the strength of his desire to make his own way, that those words didn’t hold Vernon back.

Fueled by the success of his growing FedEx business, he decided to expand into hauling bigger cargo. He acquired two trucks from Charles McDaniel of Amigo Truck LLC to haul jet fuel. Less than six months after kicking off, Vernon experienced his first major failure, and it felt like a big one because so many eyes were on him. He says, “I felt bad. For about 30 minutes. Then I got to work on my next project.” A few weeks later, he got another jet fuel contract.

That job lasted 90 days before he was fired. One of his drivers stole some fuel. Another quit and abandoned his freight at a Houston Whataburger. The fuel was due in Rio Grande City the next morning, so Vernon had to call the owner and explain. The owner said he’d handle it, but that Fred didn’t need to show up for the job again. “I was down for about 24 hours that time;” he says. “But again, I shook it off and started planning next
moves.” He took some time to evaluate what had gone wrong. He identified specific problems that fell into five categories: compliance, staffing, recruitment, maintenance, and margins. In September 2014, a little more than a year after leaving PwC, Vernon connected with Ryder in one meeting that solved most of those problems. He was able to find a driver staffing agency that solved his employment challenges. He hired an experienced dispatcher and was ready to go again, now with five new trucks in his fleet, thanks to JR Blunt, who helped to sponsor a mass orientation for new drivers and staff. No longer working from his own living room, Vernon was back on the road, literally and figuratively.

Now a multi-million-dollar business owner, Vernon is working on a community project in the area that would include a grant to add ten trucks to his fleet and many local jobs. Being able to invest in his community like this, he says, means that failure is not an option. He says that in the midst of those times when he felt like a failure, he rebounded, because his mission is not about making millions—it is about making a better world. His personal faith in God and the expectations of his family and colleagues also keep him motivated.

Vernon wants to use his success to benefit his Southeast Texas neighbors and his hometown, Port Arthur. He hopes to create a scholarship program that would offer five LU and LSC-PA students $1,000 and a laptop as they begin their college education. "I really felt like that's where God happened to put me. I could have been selling brownies, but social progress would still have been the mission.”

As he said to the younger students, “I just transport because that’s where God happened to put me. I could have been selling brownies, but social progress would still have been the mission.”

He is working to understand how he can partner with local leaders to influence ordinances and legislation that improve community health locally. Vernon hopes to open a tuition-free CDL school for flatbed drivers where students will acquire hands-on training and high-level skills as well as life skills about how to manage their personal and financial situations. He sees that latter kind of education as the key to avoiding the mistakes of history.

"Whatever a student may look or seem to be, there are big dreams hidden in all of us, and it takes the right person to uncover them." —Fred Vernon

Vernon asks that the administrators, faculty and alumni of Lamar University continue personally reaching out to students. He said, “I still have coffee with President Simmons. He invested a little time in me, and it made every possible difference in my life. Whatever a student may look or seem to be, there are big dreams hidden in all of us, and it takes the right person to uncover them. If a student with a big dream misses that one important handshake or conversation, the gem may lie undiscovered. You can be the instrument that draws it to the surface.”

To student-entrepreneurs everywhere, Fred Vernon’s story illustrates that you mustn’t allow mistakes—your own or someone else’s—to immobilize you. If that happens, then you are bound to repeat those mistakes. Dare to try something different—something no one’s ever done before, to step out on the edge of the dream, discover your potential for leaning into the unknown and trusting your wings to carry you.

Alumnus joins Hall of Fame

The College of Business inducted five alums into the Lamar University Hall of Fame during a ceremony Sept. 26 in the Lamar University Events Center. The inductees are Arnold Arnold, both his bachelor’s degree in accounting and his M.B.A. from Lamar University. In 1991, after spending 12 years as a bonded public accountant focusing on employee benefit plan valuations, acquisitions, and financial management, Arnold became director of the Small Business Development Center on campus. Arnold added his voice to the board of the new Center for Innovation, Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship. Arnold and his wife established the Gene and Elizabeth Arnold Innovation Fund in Business and the Gene and Elizabeth Arnold Innovation Fund in Audiology as well as supporting the CSOE.

Online MBA program enrollment jumps

MBA program enrollment has grown significantly, in fall 2015, the online MBA was launched, allowing more students to continue their LU education without or when they are close to campus. In spring 2015, prior to the introduction of the online program, 165 students were enrolled. In 2017, showed a 64 percent increase of 252 students. LU’s MBA program has added concentrations in construction project management, auditing, finance, and corporate governance.

Fred Vernon, 2nd from right, with the KLV FedEx team in 2016.
TALH student honored
LU PREPARES NEXT GENERATION
CEO of the Panama Canal Authority and for Advances in Port Management, gave a report Erik Stromberg, executive director of LU’s Center Better Policy,” also toured ports in Beaumont, Port governmental and business leaders in a regional LU hosts TEX-21 meeting
LU hosts TEK meeting
LU Most Court excels at invitational
Three most court teams from LU competed Oct. 21 and 22 in the University of North Texas School of Law’s Invitational Model UN, receiving numerous individual and team awards. Craig Tahayee, instructor of political science, coached the teams.
Senior Danielle Sanders, a first-time competitive most court participant and recipient of the prestigious Leon Jaworski Scholarship to Baylor School of Law, was ranked top 545 to 62, respectively.
Dias earns Fullbright award
The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board selected Kumer Das, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and associate professor of statistics, for a prestigious Fullbright International Education Administrator Scholarship to France and Germany. Awardedees attended a two-week seminar to learn about the French and German educational systems as well as network with other U.S. and international educators. Grantees enhance their ability to serve and encourage international students and prospective study-abroad students.
LU, Siam Technology College collaborate
In a ceremony Sept. 14, President Ken Evans and Poomphol Mongkolwatan, president of Bangkok, Thailand-based Siam Technology College, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to further collaboration for shared academic programs with the intention of offering dual degree programs in digital learning and leadership, business and other academic subjects. LU’s Master of Education in Digital Learning and Leadership is designed to prepare education practitioners from different educational jurisdictions and from all levels to lead digital learning programs, integrate digital resources, and design and develop academic programs and learning domains of the port and maritime industries.
New Center for History and Culture unveiled
Nov 9 was the inaugural program of the newly established Center for History and Culture of Southwest Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast at Lamar University. The center is an interdisciplinary, multi-cultural organization for preserving, promoting and transmitting the knowledge of the region, including the role of the petroleum industry in the region, the state, the nation and the world, said Director Mary Shaw, professor and chair of the Department of History. The center’s inaugural event was a reception, lecture and book signing featuring fellow authors of The Long Shadow: The Lutcher-Stark Lumber Dynasty, Ellen Rienstra and retired Professor Jo Ann Stiles.
LU recognizes undergrad research
Lamar University’s Office of Undergraduate Research recognized 38 students, 31 faculty mentors behind 33 proposals that received funding for the 2016-2017 academic year during a Grant Recipient Award Reception held last fall. The students then presented their research plans to attendees.

LU announces 2017 BECK FELLOWS
Lamar University selected two students as 2017 David J. Beck Fellows as well as two fellows as 2017 Presidential Summer Fellows, all announced at a reception in the University Event Center Nov. 22.
LU announces 2017 Beck Fellows

David J. Beck Fellow Natalia Sfeir
Beaumont, soprano voice and hearing sciences major Research in Liverpool, England
PRESIDENTIAL SUMMER FELLOWS
Felisha Gonzales
Beaumont, soprano voice dance major Research in Casteler, Quebec
John Ellis
Bridge City, computer information systems major Research in All).[unintelligible] Does not print.

The David J. Beck Fellowship covers all school expenses such as tuition, fees, books and on-campus room and board for one year and includes up to $10,000 to purchase a summer project. The Presidential Summer Fellowship grants up to $10,000 for summer research projects to the top finalists in the application for the Beck Fellowship.
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YAH! student honored
The Texas Academy of Human Identification and Forensic Sciences student Trevor Wieland of McAllen has been selected as a National Hispanic Scholar. The College Board’s National Hispanic Recognition Program recognizes approximately 5,000 of the highest-scoring students from a nation consisting of 250,000 high school Hispanic/Latino juniors who took the PSAT/NMSQT.

Itzhak Perlman performs
Itzhak Perlman, internationally celebrated concert violinist, soloist, teacher and conductor, spoke to an attentive standing-room-only audience of 1,000 as the 12th Judge J. Peter Distinguished Lecturer.

Mason gift boosts STEM education
Campus and community leaders gathered on campus Nov. 11 to celebrate a new initiative to improve Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education in Texas and beyond. Thanks to a transformational gift from alumni Chuck ‘72 and Becky Mason ’71 of Beaumont, the largest ever to the College of Education and Development, the Beck Mason Distinguished Faculty Fellowships in Science Education is now established to address the critical shortage of quality science educators in education.

This gift will dramatically expand the field by developing curriculum focused on inquiry-based learning, field-based experience and research activity designed to draw science students into the education field, according to Dean Robert Spina. Finding ways to attract more students with an aptitude for science and to encourage these students to declare majors in education to teach biology, chemistry, or other science fields is another major goal of the initiative.
LU hosted TEK meeting

LU hosts TEK meeting

Elaborate on the research project that Kumer Das, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and associate professor of statistics, participated in.

Kumer Das, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and associate professor of statistics, was selected for a prestigious Fullbright International Education Administrator Scholarship to France and Germany. Awardedees attended a two-week seminar to learn about the French and German educational systems as well as network with other U.S. and international educators. Grantees enhance their ability to serve and encourage international students and prospective study-abroad students.

The project is a partnership between Lamar University and Siam Technology College, which is a private institution in Bangkok, Thailand.

The project is designed to promote collaboration and exchange between the two institutions on topics related to education and research. It aims to support the development of shared academic programs, such as dual degree programs in digital learning and leadership, business and other academic subjects.

The project is also intended to support the enhancement of research and academic productivity at both institutions by enabling port professionals certified in AAPA’s Professional Port Manager (PPM®) program to earn up to six credit hours in the university’s fully online, graduate degree programs in port management. The partnership also aims to increase the opportunity for students to pursue a career in port or related maritime industry management, through Lamar’s new Center for Advances in Port Management.

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The one-year, First-Time-in-College cohort received almost 5.5 points, to 64, per year. Previous freshmen groups and enhanced student support services were important factors in the improvement. LU’s six-year graduation rate also improved over last year and reached the second-highest mark in the last eight years. The university has launched a new student retention organizational structure for next year informed by better data and commanding better retention programming.}

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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 alumna, we want to hear from you.

Dr. John Erwin ’58, B.S. biology, ’60, Ph.D., is a retired physician and senior partner for the Family Diagnostic Medical Center. He served 20 years as a board member for the Hillhouse School District. He is an accomplished public speaker and also provided administrative support in his career. He also served as the mayor of Hillhouse for four years. He and his wife, Mary, live in Hillhouse.

Rodney Leflar ’98, B.S. English, earned master’s and doctoral degrees in education and retired as superintendent of Charleston Independent School District. He and his wife, Nelda (Lefflar) ’98, B.S. speech therapy, live in Atlanta.

Craig ‘60, M.A. English, is a distinguished professor emeritus of English at Lamar University and retired in 2015. He and his wife, Martha, live in Hillhouse.

Donnie Marze Jr., ’98, B.A. business, is a retired engineer. He and his wife, Kathleen Ananda, ’96, B.B.A. business management, is owner of Marze Financial in Arlington. He and his wife, Sandra, live in Orange.

We encourage you to inspire a life-long learning experience by giving children an opportunity to create and explore, and to make sure you get involved in your community. Terry and her husband, Craig, ’60, B.S. music, live in Longview, as do Barbara and their husband, Doug.

Rick Coutin ’71, B.S. mechanical engineering, lives in Hattiesburg.

Byrne Hildreth ’79, B.S., B.S. health and physical education, is state secretary for the Association of Texas Professional Educators. He and his wife, Katy, live in San Antonio.

Joyce (Tohan) James ’79, B.A., received a heroism certificate from National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. She and her husband, John, ’86, B.S. theatre, live in Round Rock.


Roger Carter ’78, B.S. industrial engineering, is a retired project engineer for Potronc. He lives in Humble.

Dr. James “Mike” Fulton ’74, B.S. biology, earned his dental degree in 1988. He retired from Dow Chemical Co. as a research leader. He and his wife, Jerri (Ashley) ’77, B.S. sociology, live in Kennedale. Wash.

Mary Ellen (Jackson) Sims ’75, B.S. secondary education, retired in 2005 as the assistant dean of students after 30 years of service to Sam Houston State University. She and her husband, Jim, live in Humble.

Emmet Jacobo ’75, B.S. computer science, retired from Dow Chemical Co. as a senior information systems project manager. He and his wife, LaVeta (Dad) ’75, A.S. nursing, live in Montgomery.

Deborah (Christie) Davis ’79, B.A. history, M.Ed secondary education, retired with her husband, William 95, A.S. fire protection technology, in Beaumont. They retired from ExxonMobil and they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in July.

Thomas Fain ’81, B.S. secondary education, principal of Nederland Central Middle School. John and NCMS board president, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in July.

Class of 1966 Reunion—Members of the Class of 1966 gathered in the Lamar University Event Center for a special luncheon honoring their place in Lamar’s history.


Julie (Carron) Heiminger 96, B.S. marketing, is a benefit counselor for Benefit Communications. She and her husband, Gregg, live in Franklin.

Domenace (Beecos) Reece ’86, B.M. music, retired from the U.S. Department of Education. She is president of the Lamar University Alumni Association.

Karen Nichols ’80, B.S. speech, earned a master’s degree in literature in 1988. She is an associate professor of library services for Lamar University. She lives in Nederland.

Deborah (Davies) Sargent ’87, B.S. sociology, is a clinical therapist for Deaneary Laboratories. She lives in Fresno, Calif.

Dr. Craig (McKee) McDaniel ’91, B.S. biology, earned his M.D. in 1996 and was recently named vice president and chief medical officer for Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield. She lives in Little Rock, Ark.

Ducks Unlimited awarded its 9th Lifetime achievement award to the local/priivate citizen category. Terrace Broussard, a Jefferson County judge who advocates for restored and conserves the largest coastal marshland in Texas to benefit fish and wildlife populations and people. His wife, Sherry (Booster) ’91, B.A. photography, lives in Port Neches.

William “Bill” Bigby ’92, B.S. industrial engineering, is a licensed general contractor for BBE Construction.All Things Maintenance. He and his wife, Lisa (Menefee) ’93, B.B.A. accounting, live in Winter Park, Fla.

Sarah (Moore) Adams ’94, B.S. music theory and composition, earned a master’s degree in music in 1994. She is an elementary music teacher for Aurora public schools. She and her husband, Kevin, live in Aurora, Colo.

Linda (Franks) Fuller ’93, B.A. business, is vice president and chief medical officer for Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield. She lives in Little Rock.

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Patti (Windhorn) Caldwell ’86, MEd, elementary education, is a retired elementary school teacher from Port Arthur school district. She and her husband, Patrick, live in Beaumont.

Roger Cawles ’88, B.A., English, retired in December as managing editor for Port Arthur News. He and his wife, Celina, live in Groves.


Chris Segler ’94, B.A., law enforcement, ’98 B.S. criminal justice, is a lieutenant with the City of Central Police Department. He and his wife, Debra, live in Groves.

Ber Wilcox III ’88, B.S. computer science, director of Support Global Markets, he lives in Sugar Land.

PETRONAS Chemical Group Berhad in Malaysia promoted

Orange County Sheriff’s Deputy Jimmy LeBlond ’90, B.A. law enforcement, ’91 B.S. criminal justice, and Bridge City Chief of Police Paul Dartle ’94, B.A. law enforcement, were honored at Bridge City High School Night Out an annual community building campaign that promotes healthy community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live.

Charles Sasois Jr. ’90, B.S. biology, is a science and resources manager for the U.S. Department of Interior. He lives in Corpus Christi.

Michael Hammond ’91, B.B.A. finance, is the senior vice president and alternative credit administrator for Commerce Bank in Houston. Michael and his wife, Becky, live in Austin.

Adina (Mard) Jenny ’92, B.S. home economics/interior design, married Blair Jones Nov. 19, 2016. Adina was promoted to senior planner/roofplan administrator for the City of Beaumont. They live in Beaumont.

Mary Magdalena Roberts ’91, B.S. accounting, ’92 B.S. criminology, is a dispatcher for Houston Transit Safe Clear Management. She lives in Houston.

Ying Ding ’92, M.S. computer science, is a senior information systems analyst at Federal Reserve Bank. Ying has published two IBM press books in technology along with numerous technical articles in trade journals. He is a speaker at key international technology conferences. Ying has held senior positions with IBM, Bank of America and Coca-Cola. He lives in New York.

Dorothy (Chesson) Way ’92, B.S. biology, is a medical technologist for Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas. She lives in Orange.

Troy Domingue ’95, B.B.A. accounting, is a certified public accountant and partner with Warthen, Dobbel & Juntz. He lives in Lumberton.

Monté Barrow ’95, B.S. psychology, is the athletic director and head football coach for the Nederland High School Bulldogs. He lives in Nederland with his wife Amber (Reeves) ’98, B.S. family consumer sciences, food and nutrition.

Bridge (Blanchard) Fussier ’91, B.S. political science, earned her law degree in 1998. She is a professor of law for Butler law School. She and her husband, Paul, live in Waco.

Jeffrey Greenway ’99, B.B.A. applied arts and sciences, retired from law enforcement as a constable for Jefferson County. He and his wife, Susan, live in Port Neches.

Michael Day ’94, A.A.S. respiratory therapy, earned a B.S. in respiratory therapy, and is a registered respiratory therapist adult critical care specialist and asthma educator. He works for Tulalip Coastal District, Samaritan Hospital and lives in Bremerton, WA.

Kimberly (Calx) Carpenter ’95, B.S. industrial engineering, is an principal of Southeast Texas’ 40 Business of the Year. She and her husband, Michael and their four children Daedel, Travis, Mary Kathryn, and Joseph run for their son and brother, Jake, who was passed away Jan. 20, 2014, at age 16, of an allergic reaction to food. Daniel and Jake played guitar in the Mission Worship, and now Travis and Mary Kathryn do the same. The family lives in Nederland.

Anita "Art" Simpson ’95, B.A. psychology, ’96 Ed. Mgmt. educational leadership, was awarded "Grow Your Own" scholarship from the Texas School Leadership System. Simpson is the director for educational programs for the Lamar University Division of Student Engagement. She and his wife, Tessa ’10, M.Ed. supervision, 14, Ed.D. educational leadership, live in Beaumont.

Eric Sullivan ’96, B.F. A. graphic design, owns a Sullivan Advertising & Design. He and his wife, Echo, live in Port Neches.

Kimberly "Kim" (Cole) Cox ’98, B.A. interdisciplinary studies, ’97 M.Ed. school administration, is principal of Mauriceville Middle School. She and her husband, Mark, live in Conroe.


Maria (Ceccallo) Gomez ’98, B.S. communication, is pursuing a master's degree in educational leadership for the linguistically diverse learner at University of St. Thomas in Houston. She is a bilingual elementary teacher for Pearlland school district. She and her husband, Anibal, live in Pearland. Peter's graphic design, live in Portland. Polly earned an associate's degree in multimedia, video and animation in 2012 and works as an art director at ConocoPhillips as a webmaster and photographer.

Jeremy Jenkins ’99, B.S. criminal justice, is a service manager for Galax Services. He lives in Cypress.

Richard "Rick" Gibson Jr. ’95, B.S. mathematics, is owner of Academic Educational Services. Gibsons’ daughter, Mary Kathryn, set a new world record as a 10-year-old girl in the 100-meter race at the USA Track and Field meet in New York Jan 5, 2017. She and her brother Travis, Mary Kathryn, Peter and Joseph run for their son and brother, Jake, who was passed away Jan. 20, 2014, at age 16, of an allergic reaction to food. Daniel and Jake played guitar in the Mission Worship, and now Travis and Mary Kathryn do the same. The family lives in Nederland.

Clave Glenn ’95, B.B.A. accounting, earned his law degree in 2007. He is a certified public accountant, as well as vice president and general counsel at Sheraton Downtown Energy Group LLC. He and his wife, Adelle, live in Dallas.

Samantha Skinner ’94, B.S. social work, is a child protective services Foster Care Case Supervisor for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. She lives in Lufkin.

Tammy (Smith) Robin ’91, B.S. criminal justice, is a retired clinic director for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. She and her husband, Mark, live in Loxley, Md.

Marco Villanua ’92, B.B.A. general business, was recognized as one of Southeast Texas’ 40 Business Professionals Under 40 in 2010. He is a marketing channel manager for A&K and lives in Beaumont with his wife, Sarah (Stephenson) ’94, B.A. interdisciplinary studies, ’93 M.Ed. school counseling, and four year old son, Tristan. Sarah is a teacher at Ysleta Middle School.

Daniel Groome ’92, B.S. chemical engineering, earned a doctorate in chemical engineering in 2000 and is a senior process engineer for AkzoNobel. He and his wife, Linda had a baby boy, Ryan Williams Oct. 11, 2016. They live in Pasadena.

Julie (Gibbs) Gauthier ’02, M.Ed. school administration, is the principal of Ridgewood Elementary School in Port Neches. She previously served as a council member for the city of Port Neches and now serves as the 2017-2018 state secretary for the Texas Association of School Business Supervisors. She and her husband, Mark, live in Port Neches.

Willie Broussard ’03, B.S. family and consumer sciences-home economics, is a multilingual M.B.A., in human resources management in 2007. He is a human resources manager for Halliburton in Winter Haven where he lives.

Rachel (Hackett) Cardove ’03, B.A., communication, ’07 Ed.D. counseling and development, is a counselor for Hardin-Jefferson High School. She and her husband, Justin, live in Beaumont.
Alumni Past Presidents’ Lunch | Dec. 6

Former presidents of the Lamar University Alumni Association and Alumni Advisory Board gathered for a luncheon with President Ken Evans and a tour of the new Wayne A. Reaud Building.

Denise (Carrief) Leblanc ’95, B.A. business, was chief financial officer for Spindletop Center. She lives in Groves.

Harith Vadada ’03, M.E. electrical engineering, earned an M.B.A. in 2015 and is senior product manager for Cit Digital. He and his wife, Padma, live in Placitas, Calif.

Melissa (Huy) Conrad ’94, B.S. industrial engineering, is a web and software developer. She earned an A.S. in multimedia design in 2012 and a B.A. in media arts-design in 2015. Conrad is a member of the Houston Section of Industrial Engineers and Society of Women Engineers and supports Amnesty International and Campus Animal Rescue Education. She and her husband, Nathan, live in Mont Belvieu, Calif.


 Roxanne Truhan ’94, B.G.S. general studies, is a case manager for Sherwin-Williams. She lives in Lake Charles, La.


 Angela (Blood) McGuire ’94, B.A. accounting, earned an M.B.A. in 2014 and is an auditor for Texas A&M University. She lives in Port Neches.

 Stephanie (Kendall) Smirnoff ’96, B.A. psychology, earned her master’s in 2014 and is a counselor at Clear Creek Independent School District. She is married to Tim Smirnoff, who is also a school psychologist.

 Soraya Faloude ’96, B.S. communication disorders, B.S. business administration, is a web and software developer. She earned an A.S. in multimedia design in 2012 and a B.A. in media arts-design in 2015. Conrad is a member of the Houston Section of Industrial Engineers and Society of Women Engineers and supports Amnesty International and Campus Animal Rescue Education. She and her husband, Nathan, live in Mont Belvieu, Calif.

 Theodore Herman ’95, B.S. management information systems, is a senior systems engineer for Spring Branch school district. He lives in Houston.

 Shannon Heimsoth ’95, M.Ed educational administration, ’11, Ed.D., educational leadership, is superintendent of Hattie-Jefferson school district. He and his wife, Melissa, have two children.

 Matt Ellis ’97, B.S. psychology, and his wife, Ashley (Frank) Ellis, ’97, B.S. communication disorders, worked together at local medical facilities. They live in Port Neches.

 Jessica (‘Jesi’) Oparah ’97, B.S. nursing, earned her master’s in 2014 and is a registered nurse and works in the neonatal intensive care unit at Beaumont-Hampden Hospital. She and her husband, A.J., live in Port Arthur.

 Deanna (‘Dee’) Goudy ’97, B.S. communication, is a teacher at Coldspring Elementary School and is married with two children.

 David Jones ’98, B.S. business and consumer food and nutrition, is a certified nutritional health care manager for Volunteers of America. He and his wife, Danielle, live in Saratoga, Springs, Utah.

 Scott Hawke ’88, B.S. kinesiology, and his wife, Amber (Baxter) Hawke, ’06, adopted three children in 2014 (Shae, Braxton and Dani) and four more in 2018. (Dane, Brausma and Angi) adding to their two biological children, making a family of nine. They now have a gymnast, Karisakh. Author and speaker, earned a B.A. in Spanish in 2008. Scott and Amber are owners of Half Zero for Kearns and Yogurt in Beaumont, where the family lives.

 Paigeley (Welch) Warner ’98, B.S. immunological studies, M. Ed. school counseling, is an instructor for Texas A&M University in Groves. She and her husband, Trenton, live in Port Neches. James is a reporter for KFDM Channel 6.

 Pinke (Patel) Herley ’99, B.S. business administration, ’04, M.B.A. healthcare administration, is a manager of patient service and consumer services for UT Physicians Community Health and Wellness Center in Beaumont. She and her husband, Devin, a B.S. industrial engineering, ’12, M.B.A. financial management, live in Nederland. They welcomed their son, Jax, in May.


 Christi Grudier ’10, B.S. communication, earned a master’s degree in higher education administration in 2013. She is a regional admissions counselor for Lamar University. She lives in Knoxville, Tenn.

 Samuel Kriegel ’10, B.S. health education, was second in Marine Corps Community College in Washington. D.C. He lives in Colorado Springs, Colo.

 Jeff Moreau ’10, B.S. electrical engineering, is a senior electrical engineer at Van Buren Technical Systems in Beaumont. He lives in Tomball.

 Trenton Wallace ’96, B.A. history, is a high school teacher and coach for Hull-Daisetta school district. He is the head boys basketball coach, as well as varsity football coach and assistant track coach. He and his wife, Sherrit, live in Nederland.

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LAMAR.EDU/HOMECOMING

CARDINAL CADENCE

Kick-off 6 PM
VS. CENTRAL ARKANSAS
LAMAR UNIVERSITY
Pre-registration required.
Montagne Center Concourse • 4–5:30 PM
Dishman Art Museum • 3–4:30 PM

ART EXTRAVAGANZA
Live Music • Free Craft Beer • Food Trucks
Plummer Lawn • 3-5:30 PM

CARDINAL FAN FEST
Classic & Antique Car Show
BIG RED’S RIDE
Bands • Floats • Family Fun
Lamar University Campus • 2 PM

CARDINAL ADVENTURES
20
We are your best guide to the most
memorable fall traditions!

SATURDAY
NOV. 4

HOMECOMING PARADE
Lamar University Campus • 2 PM
Bands • Floats • Family Fun
Community entries welcome!

BIG RED’S RIDE
Spindletop Gladys City Museum • 11 AM-1PM
Classic & Antique Car Show

CARDINAL FAN FEST
Plummer Lawn • 3-5:30 PM
Live Music • Free Craft Beer • Food Trucks

ART EXTRAVAGANZA
Dishman Art Museum • 3-4:30 PM
Family Art Activities • Live Music

ALUMNI PRE-GAME PARTY
Montague Center Concourse • 4-6:30 PM
Pre-registration required.

LAMAR UNIVERSITY VS. CENTRAL ARKANSAS
Kick-off 6 PM

LAMAR.EDU/HOMECOMING

Tiffany (Mason) Aguilar ‘12, B.G.S. general studies, is a teacher at Goose Creek Memorial High School. She and her husband, Nathan, live in Baytown.

Garrett Dubhn ‘13, B.S. civil engineering, is an engineer at AECOM. He and his fiance, Candice (Montgomery) ’13, B.S. industrial engineering, are M.B.A. leadership, live in Houston. Candice is a budget and reporting analyst at Freesport EM and serves on UI’s Industrial Engineering Advisory Council.

Danna Guilory-Motion ’13, M.Ed. school counseling, teaches in Galena Park school district. She and her husband, Myron, live in Humble.

Andrew Strange ‘15, B.A. sociology, earned a master degree in January 2017. He is an advisor for Lamar University Undergraduate Advising Center. He lives in Beaumont.

Krish (Lassagne) Premaux ‘13, B.B.A. finance, is director of finance for the South East Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. She and her husband, Jeremy, live in Nederland.

Mauro Henderson ’13, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a pump improvement engineer for Fluor-Environ Corp. He lives in Liberty.

Casey Edanks ’13, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, is the 1990s operations group senior intelligence officer for the Arkansas Air National Guard. He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Sallisaw, Okla.

Gwendalyn (Gwen) Mummford ’13, B.F.A. studio art, is a junior graphic designer for AIG in Houston, where she also lives.

Karen Brown ’13, M.Ed. administration, is an instructional math coach for Cooper school district. She lives in Conroe.

Miriam (Wyatt) Morgan ’14, B.B.A. political science, is M.B.A. public administration, is executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County Inc. She lives in Beaumont.

Andrew Westbrook ‘14, B.B.A. marketing, married Kristel (Daviller) ’14, B.G.S. general studies. They have one son, Garrett, and live in Port Neches. Andrew is the manager of Market Basket in Port Neches.

Shelby Davidson ’15, Ed.D. educational leadership, received the Chance Memorial Dissertation of the Year award from the National Rural Association, along with the Outstanding Doctoral Student Award. Davidson is principal of Van Middle School in Van and pastor of New Beginning Baptist Church in Edom. She lives in Van.

Jennifer Edwards ’15, M.Ed. school counseling, is a counselor for Crossville Intermediate School. She lives in Friendswood.

Michael Diers ’15, M.Ed. administration, is a teacher and assistant athletic director for Chesterfield County Public Schools. He lives in Midlothian, Va.

Candice Ellis ’15, B.S. psychology, has begun medical school at the University of Texas School of Medicine at San Antonio. She lives in San Antonio.


Curtis Kabali ’15, B.S. criminal justice, is a police officer for Red Oak school district. He and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Milford.

Reutina (Mera) Same ’15, B.S. family and consumer science-family studies, is a career and technical education teacher for Bob Hope School. She and her husband, Andrew, live in Grissom.

Stormi Sinette ’15, B.G.S. general studies, is an administrator for Coca-Cola Refreshments. She lives in Port Arthur.

Nathanial Smith ’15, B.S. industrial technology, is a quality manager for Schlumberger. He lives in Friendswood.

Ryan Holt ’15, B.S. industrial technology, is a production engineer for TechniP/FMC. Ryan has received eight company awards for his performance as a production engineer. From implementing 5S and other LEAN process initiatives, to designing tools to assist in his performance as a production engineer, Ryan has made a positive impact on TechniP/FMC operations, and proudly represents Lamar University as an alumnus. He and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Mont Belvieu.

Varun Alley ’16, M.E. industrial engineering, is a business intelligence software trainer for Quantum Reserches. He lives in Bellevue, Wash.

Angela (Downs) Chonnut ’16, B.B.A. human resource management, is a human resources coordinator for J&K Corp Inc. She lives in Beaumont.

Cruise the Panama Canal January 4–15
Wonders of Peru, featuring an Amazon River Cruise and Machu Picchu June 10–21
England’s Castles, Cottages & Countryside July 5–15
Canadian Rockies August 16–24
Amalfi Coast Sept 11–19

Whether you are planning the trip of a lifetime, a return to a favorite vacation spot, or simply looking for your next adventure, the Lamar University Cardinal Adventures Travel Program is a great place to start your journey.

Visit lamar.ahitravel.com for more information.
New flavors
International students hosted the 5th Annual International Cultural Festival Nov. 19 in the Montagne Center. Attendees enjoyed international dance, dress, music and foods as the capstone to International Education Week with students representing India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, Mexico, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Angola.

Ornaments encourage survivors
Led by Antoinette Mays, sponsor of LU’s chapter of the domestic violence and suicide support group Bruised But Not Broken, students, faculty and staff acknowledged holiday season challenges for victims of crime Dec. 6 by hanging ornaments on the Tree of Angels at the Jefferson County Courthouse.

Academic Lecture Series shines
Capt. Richard Phillips, of the MV Maersk Alabama during its 2009 hijacking by Somali pirates, shared his experiences as the Lamar University Academic Lecturer, hosted by the College of Arts and Sciences Nov. 7 in the University Theater.

Outstanding chapter
The Society of Physics Students national branch bestowed the 2016 Outstanding Chapter Award on LU’s Sigma Pi Sigma chapter, the group’s second time to receive the honor, which resulted from chapter research and hosting a physics conference with the leadership of former chapter president Kesley Townsend-Smith, current president John Pickens, vice president Suzanne Wheeler and treasurer Jamie Stafford.

Sattler honored
Brian Sattler, director of public relations at LU since 1998 and pictured center with President Ken Evans and Regina Rogers, earned the university’s 2016 Julie & Ben Rogers Community Service Award Dec. 6 for his work with the Greater South Park Neighborhoods Partnership; promoting the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship to create jobs and opportunities for Southeast Texans; and long-term service to the Press Club of Southeast Texas, the Orange County Veterans Memorial Committee, Air Force with the Civil Air Patrol and reserve, and hurricane recovery efforts with the Orange First Church of the Nazarene mcn’s ministries.

Sometimes love
Students focused on finals took a break to de-stress and recharge Dec. 7-8 with therapy dogs as part of the Paws 4 Love Therapy Animals Group.

Drumline excels
LU’s Drumline and Percussion Ensemble took second place at the annual Percussive Arts Society’s International Competition Nov. 9-12 in Indianapolis. Staci major Armando Garcia of El Paso won first place in the marching tenor solo competition.

Breaking ground
LU Green Squad and Beta Alpha Psi accounting honor society volunteers, along with groups from St. James United Methodist Church and Jack and Jill of America, broke ground Oct. 8 to build the South Park Community Garden, an initiative of LU and the Greater South Park Neighborhoods Partnership to provide access to gardening space, training and nutritious food for local residents and students.

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Giving for the long haul

Buzz and Cathy Long support LU with scholarship, bequest

by Brian Sattler

“We’ve both been so fortunate in life and career that we decided we needed to pass it on, to pay it forward,” said Wilfred “Buzz” Long Jr. of the scholarship he and his wife, Cathy, have created at Lamar University. They continue to build the scholarship and added provisions for an additional gift as a part of their estate plan through their IRA account.

A 1970 graduate of LU with a BBA in marketing, Buzz served a tour of duty as a Navy air traffic controller before joining Pfizer in 1976. “My success as a businessman I owe to what I learned at Lamar University,” Buzz said. His 33-year career with Pfizer included 27 years in sales and six as a retiree ambassador, representing the company at conventions in the U.S. and Canada. “Any time I had a convention in San Francisco, San Diego, Toronto, New York or Boston, Cathy said ‘You’re not going without me!’”

Cathy, a graduate of the University of Louisiana at Monroe, also is a veteran, having served in the Army. Today, she is semi-retired after a long career as an insurance adjuster with Crawford & Co. She continues to work part time on nationwide toxic tort claims for one major petrochemical company.

“I wanted to honor my father for his service and dedication to LU,” Buzz said. “I told Cathy, ‘Let’s give students an opportunity. Let’s endow a scholarship in the school of business.’ My father held an accounting degree from Lamar.”

The couple created the Wilfred H. Long Jr. and Catherine Long Regent Scholarship in Business, honoring Wilfred H. Long Sr., in the Lamar University Foundation.

They have used Pfizer’s corporate matching gift program to extend their giving to LU. “I felt we were getting a lot more doing it with the corporation contributing also,” he said. “Each year we try to send more, and it has grown exponentially through the years to the point it’s now considered a Regent’s Scholarship.”

“My dad was very, very active at Lamar University,” Buzz said. “At the time of his death, he was president elect of the alumni association, on the homecoming committee and several others. But he never got the chance to enjoy presidency of the alumni association.”

“My whole family graduated from LU,” Buzz said of his mother, father, three sisters and himself. “It was a family thing.”

The couple added additional support for the scholarship through their estate plan. “We struggled a bit to get ourselves through school,” Cathy said of how she and Buzz both worked several jobs during college. “To me, it’s really important to see that somebody else doesn’t have to struggle to get through if we can make it a little better for them.”

Their giving spirit extends beyond LU with the Tri-City Corvette Club where they helped establish the Tri-City Corvette Club Scholarship at LU.

They are longtime members of the Cardinal Club and active supporters of all LU athletic programs. Buzz serves on the club’s board, was its president in 2005 and they are season ticket holders in several sports. The couple’s Corvette is often spotted in the LU Homecoming parade, most recently with Cathy at the wheel providing rides for Representative Dade Phelan and Dean Srinivas Palanki. Through their generous support of LU, they are members of the Lamar University Legacy Society and President’s Circle, and Cathy is a member of the Lamar University Women in Philanthropy.

“It’s a good feeling to go to bed at night knowing that we’ve given someone an opportunity for an education they otherwise would not have had,” Buzz said.

To learn more about making a difference in the lives of LU students like Buzz and Cathy Long have, please contact Lamar University Advancement.

(409) 880-8422 • development@lamar.edu • legacy.lamar.edu