

# CARDINAL CADENCE

THE MAGAZINE OF LAMAR UNIVERSITY

VOL. 46, NO. 2 | SUMMER 2018





| FROM THE **PRESIDENT** |



Where LU has come to mean different things to different people across our community but all agree it is a resonating message of pride in our university and our people. This issue of Cadence brings together many of the stories of the faculty, staff, students and alumni who make up our diverse population and help us form one cohesive unit. From new college leaders advancing academic programs to alumni and students making their mark in the world at large, the Lamar University family is ever evolving yet always firm in its Southeast Texas roots. I often say in my remarks at speaking engagements, such as those at alumni luncheons and student banquets to community gatherings and advisory board meetings, that our university is truly about the people and this is what makes us great. Cadence offers a snippet into the lives of a few of these individuals who are representative of our culture.

Lamar University alumni live and work all over the world with this issue featuring two who both happen to live in the Dallas area. Hyattye Simmons is retired from Dallas Area Rapid Transit but far from actually acting as if he were retired, serving as general counsel for many non-profits and mentoring students and young lawyers on the side. Miguel Solis is a trustee for the Dallas Independent School District and has a passion for public service as well as education. His time at LU shaped the course of not only his career but also his involvement in helping Latinos through the Latino Center for Leadership Development, which he co-founded.

Additionally, we pride ourselves on our faculty who go above and beyond the normal call of duty. Many alumni I talk to mention, first and foremost, the impact one or more of their professors had on them that lasted far beyond their time at LU. Ashwini Kucknoor, associate professor of biology, is one of these instructors who seeks out undergraduates to partner with for her many research projects. This provides the opportunity for students to pursue their interests in a unique way—benefiting the community while often making a tangible difference. Amy Smith, director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement and associate professor of English and Modern Languages, took New Faculty Orientation and the Provost's Kick-Off as well as other initiatives and transformed them into activities and programs to prepare not only new faculty but all staff and faculty for the upcoming academic term and throughout the year.

Students all over our campus are finding their niche as well as a home here at Lamar University. For two students, this is undoubtedly true as they took advantage of a program called the Chauncy Glover Project that helped them go to college after being homeless during high school. Both Elie Germain and Quinten Haynes are doing well at LU and I, personally, am so glad they are here. Aziz Shaaban is another undergraduate student featured in this issue who knew coming into college that he wanted to be a doctor. He also has discovered how rewarding giving back to your community can be through the many experiences he has had volunteering, such as during Hurricane Harvey.

It has been a difficult year where we were forced to rise above our circumstances through the hurricane, an ice storm affecting the first days of the spring semester and a straight-line wind event on the day of our open house for prospective students last April. We also had to overcome losing LU's first lady and my wife, Nancy Evans. In this issue of Cadence, there is a short article detailing the many ways she impacted our university. We had many plans for the university and I will continue to strive to fulfill these going forward.

Sincerely,

**Kenneth R. Evans**, President



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| ON THE **COVER** |

From left, Assistant Professor Bianca Easterly, University Professor and Chair Hsing-Wei Chu, President Ken Evans, communication media major Hannah Hudgins, accounting major Darien Phillips and alumnus Brian Hurtado '99.

Photo by Daniel McLemore

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As the community rallied in the wake of Hurricane Harvey's devastation in Southeast Texas, our staff, faculty, students, alumni and friends came together like never before in the university's history. Everyone went above and beyond to help each other, developing a pride in being part of something larger than themselves. This attitude created what many in the area called "Texas Strong" as part of a resiliency built upon shared experiences. Like any organization, LU is more than just the sum of its parts and nowhere is that more evident than when our LU community comes together.

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**WE ARE LU**



## WE ARE LU: *A catalyst for change*

by Jennifer Wyse

*“Wisdom is like wealth, you can't take it with you when you die, so why not leave some of it behind to enrich the next generation.”*

Hyattye Simmons '79 instills this idea into the advice he shares with the students and professionals he mentors. “Regardless of where we are, we all have a certain wisdom of life that we can pass on to the next generation. We can't force them to take it, but we can make ourselves available to be there and offer it to whomever wants to receive it. I believe that will make the next generation that much better at being successful.”

Hyattye Simmons wasn't born in Texas, but in good Texas fashion he says, “my mother got me here as fast as she could.” He was the first African-American male valedictorian to graduate Burkeville High School in 1977. Two weeks after graduation his mother signed him up for summer school at Lamar University. He credits LU as “the bridge that helped him prepare for the outside world.” He completed his B.S. in government in two and a half years, taking huge course loads, up to 21 hours a semester. He attributes two major building blocks at Lamar University to helping pave the way for him to become the attorney he is today. The first was the LU speech program which gave Simmons the tools he needed to get rid of a career-limiting stutter. The second was his mentor, Jim Love, in the Criminal Justice Program. Love, who retired as associate professor in 2007 and is a current adjunct professor, steered him in the direction of the University of Texas law school, where he graduated UT law in 1984 and was able to keep the promise of becoming a lawyer, which he made to his late brother.



Simmons was appointed general counsel to the Texas Secretary of State at the age of 26. After serving the State of Texas, Simmons moved to Dallas County and served as assistant city attorney for the City of Dallas for one year, then began a 24-year career at Dallas Area Rapid Transit. He retired from DART in 2012 at 53, but he did not retire from law. He quotes a mentor, “when you come to an organization, come with a mission plan, fill that plan and then move on, there are other things for you to do.” So feeling as though he had accomplished everything he could and more at DART, it was time for him to move on and do some of the things that he wanted to do.

He began mentoring students and other lawyers as well as community outreach as general counsel for non-profit organizations. Simmons currently serves as general counsel for several non-profit organizations, including serving as general counsel for InfraGard National Members Alliance, the organization which oversees a national information sharing program (InfraGard) between the FBI and private sector with the goal of increasing protection of the nation's critical infrastructure. Simmons previously served as the first general counsel for the North Texas chapter of InfraGard.

In 2017, Simmons received the LU Distinguished Alumni Award, sharing the evening with three other incredible alumni. Simmons' mentorship of LU students who were at risk and helping to keep them on the path to graduation, earned him the prestigious award. “There are a lot of distractions, especially for minority students,” he said. He teaches his students, “You have no control over how others behave; you have control over how you behave. By conducting yourself to be the best you can be every day, you might be able to change other people's lives. You can't force the individuals; those individuals need to make that change on their own. As a mentor, you can be a catalyst for that change.” Simmons accepted students who had a thirst for knowledge and a desire to learn. He describes mentoring “like parenting, you don't expect anything back. You don't expect praise or a reward, You do it simply because you really love to do it, and that in and of itself is where you experience the reward.”

“I've been fortunate with the students that I have mentored, and they have been very appreciative of the help I've given them along the way,” Simmons said. One important lesson he instills in his students is to learn patience. “In life, there will always be painful failures and set-backs, but remember to take the pain with the celebration,” he tells his students. “If you can learn patience, then hopefully with the grace of God you can get to the goals and dreams of your life.”

While describing his relationship with past mentees, Simmons references the movie, Good Will Hunting. He describes the scene when Ben Affleck and Matt Damon discuss Damon's brilliance and how Affleck hopes that one day he will drive by Damon's home to find Damon gone. Simmons relates to this scene and knows that if he doesn't hear from his students, that means they've learned what they needed from him and have moved on. “As they become more and more successful in their career, their need to contact me diminishes, and that is fine,” he said. “They have grown and can go out on their own; they have grown their own wings to fly.”



# MAKING THE POSSIBLE ACHIEVABLE

by Haley Strahan

Associate Professor of Biology Ashwini Kucknoor is very busy and a stellar example of the We Are LU spirit. On any given day, you might find her lecturing a class in the biology building, conducting experiments on a tropical pathogen, composing a paper for an academic journal, or mentoring a promising graduate student as he sets his sights on the highest rungs of scientific education. One might wonder how she manages such a myriad of tasks, and in conversation with her, one word comes up often: “balance.” Kucknoor is a believer in the importance of finding balance, and she credits Lamar University with providing an environment that allows her to flourish.

Kucknoor joined the Lamar University faculty in 2010. Originally from India, she obtained her Ph.D. at the University of Calgary, before accepting a position with Washington State University. While Washington State provided ample opportunity to focus on her research projects, Kucknoor desired greater and more meaningful interaction with students. “There were so many students at the graduate level that I didn’t really get to know any of them,” she explains. This led her to consider moving to a school affording more interaction, and Lamar University fit the bill.

Right away, Kucknoor observed that the environment provides rich opportunities for increased mentorship. “At LU, we professors get to teach at the

undergraduate and graduate levels,” she says. “This allows me to develop relationships with my students that last for years. It is wonderful to be able to touch and influence them at the very beginning of their college years, and then see them blossom through their career.”

Committed to fostering diversity in the sciences, Kucknoor is enthusiastic about working with a population that includes many first-generation college students. “It is so rewarding to get these students who may have never even considered a career in science, may not know that such a thing is even possible,

climates and accounts for many deaths annually. “The mechanisms of the two pathogens are similar,” Kucknoor explains. “Basically, I am doing research into how they affect the human immune response.”

If all of this seems rather complicated and technical, Kucknoor doesn’t let that deter her from inviting students to participate in her work. If an undergraduate takes Kucknoor’s microbiology or genetics class and shows interest and aptitude for the subject, she happily includes them. “I talk about my work in class a lot,” she notes. “I want to inspire students to want to

**“I make time for students. I give a listening ear. I tell them what is possible. And I can do so much of that at LU.”**

*—Ashwini Kucknoor*

and then telling them what is out there for them, what they have the potential to be,” she explains. “This is one of the most fulfilling things about my job here, and something that you don’t get to experience as often in bigger schools.”

Of course, Kucknoor still spends a great deal of time on her research. Currently, she focuses on two pathogens, trichomonas vaginalis, a sexually transmitted pathogen that can make its host susceptible to cervical cancer and HIV, and leishmania amazonensis, a pathogen that affects individuals in subtropical

learn more.” Students who begin researching with her at the early stages of their college career can spend years under her tutelage and are eventually encouraged to pursue their own research projects in her laboratory. “They have the liberty to come up with their own project, and I am there to mentor them in their research,” she explains.

Kucknoor is an active member of the American Association of Microbiology, and she frequently encourages her students to attend conferences where they can present their research projects. “If I have

a student who has shown dedication to their work, I will try to find opportunities for them to present,” she says. “Lamar University has been very well-represented by our students at conferences in recent years.” She also works to find research grants and scholarship opportunities for the students she mentors.

Kucknoor is passionate about teaching her students to use their skills to become involved in the community. She periodically takes students to elementary school campuses and other organizations, where they teach the basics of handwashing, good hygiene practices and stress the importance of receiving the flu vaccine. She also directs the Jefferson County Beachwatch Program, in which students monitor Sea Rim and McFaddin Beach every week for bacterial counts.

So yes, Ashwini Kucknoor is busy. But she is busy doing what she loves—researching, teaching and, above all, mentoring. Signs of her success are evident in the curious students who spend time in her laboratory, the many research papers she has published and in the former students who have gone on to medical school or to pursue their doctorate in biology. One former student is currently studying at Yale as a result of her encouragement. “I think of myself as a motivator,” Kucknoor says. “I make time for students. I give a listening ear. I tell them what is possible. And I can do so much of that at LU.”



At the start of the new academic year, newly-hired faculty are invited to participate in a two-day New Faculty Orientation to acquaint them with various policies and procedures at Lamar University and how faculty, staff and students exhibit the We Are LU character. Amy Smith, director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement coordinates with administrators and various departments across campus, including President Evans and departments such as Human Resources, to introduce essential introductory information to help new faculty transition as smoothly as possible so they can be effective in their new jobs.

“We welcome new faculty into our campus community, which is a really important part of developing and uniting as a community,” said Smith, who is an associate professor of English and modern languages. “Part of this is by sharing specifics about our university, its history, challenges, strengths and policies they need to know, and about our student body, who may be different from other students new faculty have taught before.”

Another important beginning of the school year event is the Provost’s Kick Off, a day-long teaching and learning conference engaging new and current faculty in conversations about LU and its students, Smith said.

“We also discuss best practices in teaching, and we support faculty in understanding how to set a productive and realistic research agenda to succeed on the tenure track,” she said.



The New Faculty Orientation at the beginning of the year is supplemented by optional participation in the Support and Mentoring to Advance Research and Teaching or SMART program. In addition to creating a community among new faculty, Smith says SMART also helps faculty members succeed in their new positions and navigate campus life at Lamar University.

“When I was starting at LU, we had a traditional one-day orientation, which was helpful in understanding university offices and policies,” she said. “But I remember feeling a bit overwhelmed by all the new information I learned at the beginning. By having a year-long program, we can answer questions as they come up during the year and

reinforce important information as it is needed.”

Initiatives like New Faculty Orientations and SMART offer a support channel and source of community for new faculty members familiarizing themselves with their new university and establishing a foundation for their success in the classroom and in their scholarship.



## CREATIVE ACTIVITY, RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

This past August, the Provost’s Kick-Off featured a showcase of Creative Activity, Research and Scholarship from each academic department at Lamar University to celebrate the work of faculty across the university, said Amy Smith, director of CTLE.

This new initiative brought together departmental displays including journal articles, films, CDs, poster presentations, inventions, in addition to a book table hosted by the library featuring books published by LU faculty within the last five years. Along with the visual displays, there were performances from the Departments of Music and Theatre and Dance in which the brass

quintet and the chair perform along with a dance student to open the showcase, Smith said.

Smith and CTLE created the CARS showcase to build community across campus and expose colleagues to activity happening outside of their own department.

“I wanted us to have an avenue to recognize the amazing things that our colleagues do every day at LU,” she said. “Too often we spend all of our time focused on our own individual work, our writing, our teaching, and we don’t realize the vibrant intellectual community that we’re really part of.”

## | ATHLETICS NEWS |



### LU Soccer Wraps Up Historic Season

Playing in front of their biggest home crowd ever, the Lamar University Cardinals came up with their biggest win ever, a 4-1 drubbing of the archrival McNeese Cowgirls to claim the Southland Conference regular-season championship for the first time in the 11-year history of the program.

The victory handed the Cardinals a near perfect 15-3-1 (.816) overall record and a 10-1-0 Southland (.909) mark. The season marked one of the best single-season turnarounds in the nation as the Cardinals recorded a worst-to-first campaign, landing Big Red the No. 1 overall seed in the conference tournament—it was their first conference tournament appearance since 2012.

The Cardinals had six players named to the all-conference team, the most LU

representatives in the program history. Less than two weeks later, the Cardinals steamrolled their way through the Southland tournament to advance to the NCAA Championships—also for the first time in the past 11 years of the program. The Red and White finished the year with an 18-4-1 overall record. The Cardinals faced No. 6 overall seed Texas A&M in the opening round dropping a heartbreaking 1-0 decision to the Aggies.

Along the way, the Cardinals recorded 10 shutouts and had a season-long 12-game win streak heading into the NCAA Championships. The Cardinals also recorded a five-game undefeated streak during the middle of the year.



The LU soccer team was recognized by the league after its unprecedented worst-to-first run to the Southland title. After the season, six Cardinals were recognized on the all-conference teams including four first-team selections. Junior Kelso Peskin was named SLC Newcomer of the Year, and Steve Holeman was named league coach of the year.



### LU men take 1st, women place 2nd at SLC cross country

October 27, 2017, will go down as one of the greatest days in program history, and in the rivalry with McNeese. Not only did Lamar University record their first Southland title in soccer on that day (defeating McNeese), but the men’s cross country team, led by individual champion, Jamie Crowe, won its fifth-straight league title on the morning of the Oct. 27. Big Red defeated McNeese in one of the closest races in league history after a tie-breaker led to head-to-head finishes of the top five runners from each school. LU won four of the five to win the title. “We had perfect execution of our race strategy today,” said LU Coach Tony Houchin, who was named the conference’s men’s cross country coach of the year. For good measure, the women’s cross country team finished second in their race edging out rival McNeese. “Georgia Tuckfield had the best race of her career, and Katy Whiteoak was named freshman of the year,” Houchin said.





# AFTER HOMELESSNESS:

## *Hope & place*

by Daniel Pemberton

**A** little over a year ago, freshmen Quinton Haynes and Elie Germain did not think they would be attending college. Now, having overcome homelessness and poverty, the two are part of the diverse tapestry that make up the Lamar University student body. While challenges are not completely over as the two adjust to college life and orient their lives toward continuing success, the work ethic of these two students reminds us what it is to be a Cardinal, and why We Are LU.

"I'm really enjoying my time at LU and how friendly people are. I already have my own little friend group," said Haynes, "My junior year [of high school] I had a 3.1 GPA, so I was steadily rising up, but my family became homeless, and for six months I was not in school. So I was going from hotel to hotel; it was rough having to worry about where you're gonna lay your head or what you are going to eat—if you could even eat that day."

Although Haynes had landed in a precarious position, he began to attend a new school and continue his education. It was there that he encountered Chauncy Glover, the founder of the Chauncy Glover Project, at a speaking engagement Glover gave at the school. It was not long before Haynes was accepted to the program.

The Houston-based program aims to help young, underprivileged African-American and Hispanic men prepare

for higher education and meet their goals. Founded after Houston ABC 13 News anchor Chauncy Glover witnessed a young man die on the streets of Detroit, the program has helped send more than 100 young men attend universities across the nation. Glover's project boasts "an extensive, hands-on mentoring program, created to groom inner city teenage boys into upstanding and accomplished gentlemen" by focusing on education, self-empowerment, financial responsibility, etiquette, college readiness and more. It prioritizes students who Glover believes show potential in pursuing their education but are in need of an extra push, be it financial or motivational, to get into a university.

Germain, another graduate of the Chauncy Glover project, is pursuing a degree in civil engineering, with his long-term goals including graduating and getting a job at an engineering firm. Until then, he enjoys working at the campus bookstore and participating in basketball intramurals. Outside of class, he has already joined organizations, including the Society of Black Engineers.

As for Haynes, he spends most of his time also getting involved and hitting the books, not shying away from any of what LU has to offer him. His original plan for his education was to enter nursing, a skill set that would allow him to take care of his younger sister who suffered from spinal difficulties that left her unable to walk. When she passed away earlier this year, he felt that was no longer his purpose. Instead, after being involved with the media through interviews for the CGP, he believes he has stumbled across his passion and is working toward a degree in communication with an emphasis in broadcasting.

"I'm more of a creative person, whether it's in music or the sports I play or just in writing. So this is something I actually enjoy doing. If I took this for my actual career, I know that I would be great in it. Not just because of my personality, how I carry myself, the way that I speak or my education level, but



**ELIE  
GERMAIN**

**“ I have been getting involved in more extracurriculars. It is hard because I am a freshman and am still learning, but that is what it is all about. ”**



**QUINTEN  
HAYNES**

**“ Looking back, I would tell myself that when you really feel like you just can't take it anymore, just keep pushing. ”**





because if you do something you love, then you know that you will succeed no matter what,” Haynes said.

Haynes auditioned for LUTV and is now the weatherman for the program.

“I am not gonna lie, the weatherman position has been fun but demanding. Having to balance school, researching and practicing to get better in front of the camera is a lot to deal with. When it gets done, it’s all worth it,” said Haynes. “Being in front of the camera is easy. It just becomes hard when you have to meet an expectation people have for you. I am not going to say it is not reachable; it is just a hard mountain to climb.”

As for Germain, he continues to excel in his studies as well as getting involved outside of the classroom.

“I have been getting involved in more extracurriculars. It is hard because I am a freshman and am still learning, but that is what it is all about,” said Germain, “Most of my classes are pretty easy at this level, except chemistry. It’s so hard. I’m glad to have tutorials for that course.”

Although the two work hard, they agree that they are still able to find time to take a break and relax.

“There is always something going on here at LU. Like with the recent Halloween movie nights and door decorating contest, I am the only non-decorated door in my hall and feel like the odd man out. There is always something new going on or some kind of new activity,” said Haynes.

The two also agree that finding the time to play video games is essential.

“I was independent before I came here so time management isn’t too big an issue. I can’t play video games as much anymore because I have so much homework,” said Germain, “I try to knock everything out in the day so the last few hours of the night I can play video games.”

Throughout the past year, Germain and Haynes can see that much has changed.

“Looking back, I would tell myself that when you really feel like you just can’t take it anymore, just keep pushing,” Haynes said, “because pressure makes diamonds, and you either give up or you just survive through it. Luckily I took the driving route, so I considered myself very lucky and very blessed to actually have the opportunity to be here.”

As for Germain, “If I could say something to myself a year ago, it would be you did it. You’re going to college.”

In the few months they have been at Lamar University, both Quinton Haynes and Elie Germain have already distinguished themselves in class and on campus, setting themselves up for successful college careers. The Chauncy Glover Project helped provide a jumpstart to the rest of their lives, but the work and dedication it took to get to where they are today is all their own.

| COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: **FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION** |



**Politics, media and storytelling with filmmaker Martin Gerner**

The Department of Communication co-sponsored a three-day interdisciplinary seminar on politics, media and storytelling. The seminar offered a fresh eye on storytelling and news making through various media formats—film, journalism/photo-journalism and radio broadcast. International expert, **Martin Gerner**, has traveled to many war zones of the world, is an award-winning film director and news correspondent based in Germany.

Gerner has spent more than a decade in Afghanistan working to build independent Afghan media and helping reshape Afghan journalism, filmmaking and theater through independent projects. He is a senior editor and former presenter with the popular radio morning show *Informationen am Morgen* on Deutschlandfunk, Germany’s leading radio program that meets BBC quality standards. Gerner is currently a freelance correspondent for the German broadcasting consortium, the Union of National Broadcasters and for national print media.

His teaching builds on his long-time experience from the field in Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Iran, Yemen and Israel among others. Some of Gerner’s photographic work was recognized as best shots of the year at Kolga International Photo Tiflis/Georgia (2015) and exhibited as part of the European Month of Photography in Berlin (2016).

In 2015, he co-founded the second Afghan Students’ Theater Festival in Kabul, the only event of its kind in Afghanistan.

**Deaf activist Nyle DiMarco presents Academic Lecture**

The Lamar University Academic Lecture Series, hosted by the College of Fine Arts and Communication, invited model, actor and deaf activist **Nyle DiMarco**, winner of Dancing with the Stars and America’s Next Top Model, to campus last fall.

Born into a multigenerational deaf family, DiMarco is an honorary spokesperson for Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids and founder of the Nyle DiMarco Foundation, which works to improve the lives of deaf people around the world. DiMarco was also a creative collaborator on The ASL App, created by native deaf signers to teach conversational American Sign Language.

With a passion for language, literacy and advocacy within the deaf community and beyond, DiMarco shared his barrier-breaking story as a deaf man who has risen above stereotypes in a 40-minute speech titled, "Living Out Loud." Believing that his deafness is "an asset rather than a limitation," he builds a bridge between deaf and hearing worlds by shining a light on not only the struggles but also the triumphs of deaf culture. DiMarco showed audience members that with a sense of community, commitment to goals and belief in yourself, they can accomplish anything.



**Music receives Simmons gift of educational materials**

The Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music accepted a donation of educational materials from **President Emeritus James M. Simmons**. The large number of books and other materials, collected during a more than 40-year career in higher education, were distributed in the department for educational purposes and reference.

“Some of the historic children’s piano methods will be used by faculty for comparison to modern teaching method while instructing music education students,” said **Brian Shook**, department chair.

The collection ranges broadly in the spectrum of music, including conducting texts, music histories, music biographies, theory, counterpoint and composition, but also includes books on Texas history, art, art theory, photography, finance and business.

“An informed musician is a better musician. Reading about a variety of topics creates a more informed mind that can apply itself to greater musical and artistic feats,” Shook said. “Likewise, the student who learns about finance and business will have a better understanding of how to apply and market the discipline. The Texas history books help inform the students of where they come from and thus give them a more grounded view of their cultural heritage as musicians.”

“We highly value Dr. Simmons’ regard and continued contributions to and interest in the music department,” Shook said. “It is a special privilege to have his support.”

► **Students awarded grants**  
The college awarded four students undergraduate research grants: **Blair Dykes** and **Shelby Hare**, speech and hearing sciences; **Hannah Hudgins**, communication and media; and **Maria Stumatis**, speech and hearing sciences.

► **Department adds resource**  
Autism College Connect, sponsored by the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, is a group dedicated to providing support and building relationships that help LU students with autism overcome obstacles in college life.

► **Theatre and Dance present Mauritius**  
The Department of Theatre and Dance presented *Mauritius* by acclaimed playwright **Theresa Rebeck** and directed by guest director **Carolyn Johnson**, in the Studio Theatre. In the play, audience members learned stamp collecting is far riskier than you think.



# DEAN LYNN MAURER

by Krista Salter

Ask the new dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Lynn Maurer, what brought her here, and she'll tell you, "This is my type of university."

The research-heavy model utilized to educate students across the university's disciplines and the emphasis on student success practiced by everyone is what makes the motto "We Are LU" ring loud and clear to Maurer.

"The biggest priority for me is student success," Maurer said. "Helping them be successful while they're students by serving them while they're here and getting them to completion and graduation is very important to me."

As the new dean, Maurer said her focus will be working with the heads of the departments to empower the faculty, who in turn empower the students.

"I'm dedicated to the idea of inclusive excellence in the diversity of education, by recognizing varying financial needs and helping students at-risk academically," Maurer said.

The new dean said LU's underserved population is much like that of her previous colleges, where she spent time as dean and chief research officer of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies at Indiana State University and associate dean of the Graduate School and chair of the Political Science Department at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Her research in political science and her teaching areas focus on European politics, including women in international politics, and Spanish politics since their transition to democracy—something she said she witnessed firsthand while earning a bachelor of arts in Spain.

Maurer said she wants to encourage faculty to keep in touch with students

regarding their GPA and help them receive tutoring in an effort to promote heightened student success.

"I'd like to start focusing on student success even more, possibly with programs designed to deal with things like lifestyle, how to interview at jobs, write résumés, and how to balance student life and studies," Maurer said.

"This is the type of place that, for me, I can be most effective," she said. "I'd like to be able to create a college that is strong and promotes the university and works well with the community. We see most of the general education students come through our doors as well, so we need to be able to serve that population effectively."

Maurer explained the importance of community involvement in the college, since LU prepares students for their future professions.

"Students work through experiential learning of any type in this community, and we can prepare our students best by having them go from graduation to becoming seamlessly involved," she said of her hopes for students of the college.

Maurer said being involved in the community herself can in turn help the faculty get their students involved—



she recently became a member of the Spindletop Rotary Club, saying volunteer work is important to her and her family. She never misses an opportunity to visit a museum, or any place she can represent the college while supporting the community.

"The college has so much potential," Maurer said. "I hope I can help move it forward."

“I'd like to start focusing on student success even more, possibly with programs designed to deal with things like lifestyle, how to interview at jobs, write résumés, and how to balance student life and studies.”

—Lynn Maurer

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: ARTS & SCIENCES |

**Center for History and Culture presents 'Singing the Dream'**  
LU's Center for History and Culture presented "Singing the Dream: Cajun and Prison Music of Southeast Texas and Louisiana" with author and scholar **Kevin Fontenot** and **Caroline Gnagy**, an author, musician and scholar, last fall. The lecture explored the life and career of **Cleoma Breaux Falcon**, who, along with her then fiancé **Joe Falcon**, recorded the first Cajun record in 1928.

Fontenot is an author and scholar of the American South, focusing on the history of country and Cajun music. He holds degrees from Louisiana College and Tulane University, is a member of the Southern Historical Association, the Louisiana Historical Association, and a frequent speaker at the International Country Music Conference. Gnagy is a musician, author, and independent scholar based in Austin.



**Chemistry and Biochem Department receives grant**  
The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry received a three-year, \$120,000 research grant from the Welch Foundation. "The principal objectives of the grant are to foster enhanced research activities and productivity within the department while at the same time offering enriched educational opportunities for the students," said **Xiangyang Lei**, assistant professor of organic chemistry. The Welch Foundation is one of the United States' largest private funding sources for chemical research.



### Students excel at moot court

Two moot court teams from LU competed last October at the University of Texas-Arlington Moot Court Tournament and received several individual and team awards. The tournament marked the first time a LU team placed in the Top 10 in moot court competition.

The two LU teams (one comprised of Vidor senior **Robert Root** and Beaumont senior **Siara Dodds**, the other of Nederland senior **Ryan Sherer** and Bridge City junior **Emily Lawrence**) advanced to the tournament elimination rounds, ranking 8th and 13th out of 24, respectively. Dodds was ranked 12th best overall speaker missing the top ten threshold by half a point.

"I'm proud of how much the Lamar Moot Court team has progressed year after year, and I hope it continues to do so. Robert Root and I were a team and placing in the Top 10 definitely sent a surge of pride through me," said Dodds. **Craig Tahaney**, instructor of political science, sponsored and coached the teams.

Moot court is a competition in which undergraduate students engage in simulated legal argument before a hypothetical appellate court reviewing a fictitious case. Students draw on a limited number of actual appellate court decisions to support their arguments in a three-round competition structure.

On the heels of the UT competition, the teams took three Top Speaker awards and advanced to the Quarterfinals at the Texas A&M Law School Regional Moot Court Tournament. The tournament marked the first time LU has participated in a regional, national-qualifying moot court tournament. "Lamar continued its impressive record against extremely tough moot court teams," Tahaney said.

Universities represented at the tournament included Howard Payne University, University of North Texas, University of Texas-Arlington, University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Texas A&M University, Baylor, Texas Christian University, University of the Ozarks, Sam Houston State University, and the United States Air Force Academy. A total of 31 teams and 62 students participated in the regional tournament.

The LU teams and individual members received several notable tournament accolades. Lamar University had the most students make the Top 15 best overall speakers of the universities in the event. Receiving gavels for their accomplishments were Siara Dodds, a senior political science major from Beaumont who ranked third overall; Emily Lawrence, a junior political science major from Orange who ranked fifth overall; and **Francisco Alvarez**, a senior corporate communications major with a minor in political science from Port Arthur who ranked sixth overall.

Both Lamar teams advanced to elimination rounds and, after preliminaries, the team of Alvarez and Robert Root, a senior political science major from Vidor, were the No. 8 seeded team of the tournament and the team of Dodds and Lawrence were the No. 12 seeded team. Alvarez and Root defeated a team from Texas A&M University to advance to the quarterfinal round and lost in a very close match (2-1 decision) to the No. 1 seeded team from Texas A&M University. Dodds and Lawrence defeated the No. 5 seeded team from University of Texas-Arlington to advance to the quarterfinal round then fell to No. 4 seeded team from Howard Payne University. The Howard Payne team advanced to win the tournament.

► **LU senior nets American Mathematical Society scholarship**  
Warren senior mathematics major **Destiny Allain** received the annual Trjitzinsky Award from the American Mathematical Society in the amount of \$3,000. Allain is one of only seven students in the country to receive this scholarship this year and the first LU recipient.

► **Endowment to help biology students**  
The newly established Jean R. Bost Scholarship in Biology will support students pursuing a career in teaching biology. **Mary Jean Rogers Bost '59** graduated from Lamar State College of Technology with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education. She taught high school in Beaumont for 28 years.

► **Team places in Top 20**  
Team Discovery Channel placed 19th out of 75 teams at the Association on Computing Machinery South Central Regional Programming Contest at Louisiana State University last fall, outperforming all teams from University of Oklahoma, Baylor University and LSU, among others.



# A quiet night, *interrupted*

by Madison Franco

**T**o some, community is simply a place or an idea, but to LUPD Dispatcher Susan DuBois, it is a commitment. Community means coming together in times of hardship, supporting each other through struggles and being there when it matters the most, a commitment expressed through the motto We Are LU.

In the early morning of April 14, 2018, just hours before prospective students would arrive for Cardinal View—the university’s most attended prospect visit day—our community came together once again. A storm tore through the campus at around 3 a.m. with winds moving at least 50 mph, leaving major damage in its wake. Most people on campus were asleep in dorms, completely unaware of the destruction happening around them, while Susan DuBois stood calm in the face of disaster.

“It’s a community,” DuBois said. “Lamar University has its own little city. I saw people coming out of the woodwork just to help. I think that’s what makes the university strong...when people are down, they just come together.”

Normally, according to DuBois, 3 a.m. is a slow period in the night shift. She usually spends the quiet time on paperwork. There were no tornado warnings or any indications that would have made her think this night would be any different.

When the lights went out in the police station, she tried to turn on the generator. Then the bell on the front door rang, and she assumed someone had entered the lobby. Later, she would realize it was just the forceful wind pulling the door open.

“Is there anyone out there? Can I help you? Can I help you?” DuBois asked. “About the third time I said that, the doors flew open, and the roof just...Poof.”

Just like that, the roof of the station came off, and the full impact of the storm was raining down inside the station. DuBois, still uncertain about what had happened, hid under a desk to avoid falling debris.

“I honestly thought that somebody had opened those doors and threw a bomb. That’s what it sounded like,” she said.

DuBois stood up, saw sky outside and knew it had been a tornado. With the generator not working, the station had no power, which meant the dispatch radio was down. She wasted no time and used a handheld radio to alert the rest of the officers.

“I told [the other officers], ‘We have no roof at the P.D.,’ to which they came back with, ‘10-9?’ which means repeat. So, I said it again, and within two minutes, I had two officers

standing at the front door. They literally had to fight to get into that front lobby because all of the ceiling tiles and beams had just fallen down.”

The other officers tore through the rubble to reach DuBois, worried that what was left of the ceiling would soon collapse. Even though the building was falling down around them, DuBois was focused on fulfilling her duty as a dispatcher. Before doing anything else, she covered all of the dispatch equipment and computers in plastic bags to protect them from the rain. Then, she took a list of all the maintenance personnel working on campus that night to call and alert them of the wind storm.

“They said, ‘Mrs. DuBois, you need to leave!’ and I said, ‘No, I have to stay with dispatch.’ I must have been in shock, I guess,” she said.

Maybe DuBois was in shock, or maybe she was just doing what she does best: helping. It comes as no surprise that someone who drives a two-hour commute to and from her job every day would go the extra mile in a time of need.

“I think it’s a love of being able to assist people, to help people. We’ve all been in those spots where you think to yourself, ‘I wish there was someone out there who could just talk me through this.’ Being that person gives you a feel-good. Your heart just goes out. It’s a really great feeling.”

DuBois worked in county dispatch for years before retiring, and then she came out of retirement to work with LUPD. But her LU roots run much deeper than her dispatch work. Decades ago, she knew the university when it was still just a small local college.

“I worked here 40 years ago, when [LU] was a very tiny, tiny university. It is so expanded and so much bigger, and it’s amazing to see how much it’s grown. To come back 40 years later, explore the different places and see all the new buildings. It’s just a breath of fresh air. LU is growing, and I’d love to see it continue.”

Thanks to DuBois’s quick thinking, the equipment in the police station was safe from the storm. Nobody was injured in the wind event, and the Cardinal View event went on later that day as planned.

Despite wind events, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods, Lamar University will always stand strong. Our community perseveres, thanks to the love and dedication of passionate people like Susan DuBois.



“ When I rode around, I saw all this damage and it’s like it just took a swath and went straight through this area... That morning we had a large group coming to campus, and it was very important that we looked our best. Everybody pitched in, it was wonderful. ”

—Susan DuBois





# DEAN DAN FRENCH

by Krista Salter

For one of Lamar University’s brand new deans, Dan French ’73, the meaning of “We Are LU” goes completely full circle.

Before his career in university administration, French graduated with an undergraduate degree in economics from the very college he now oversees—the College of Business.

“I always wanted to come back to my alma mater,” French, a Beaumont native, explained. “But, I never thought it would happen. It means a lot to be back because I feel I’m able to serve LU and Southeast Texas, and I never had that opportunity like this before.”

French said the students he’s met since he’s been on the job have the same eagerness for their education that he recalls when he was a student at LU.

“I’m excited about it,” he said.

“The students are excited about their education; they’re wanting to be part of the LU team. I’ve been really fulfilled seeing what the university has accomplished in the past and knowing what it can do in the future.”

Since he began July 1, French said he’s spent a great deal of time learning and listening, meeting the faculty of the college, supporters and alumni and hopes to be able to call everyone by name before too long.

During his career, French spent time as department chair of the business schools at TCU Fort Worth, New Mexico State University and the University of Missouri, eventually becoming the director of the Real Estate Institute there.

“LU prepared me very well for graduate school and after,” French said, “to compete with other people out there that came from even bigger and more prestigious universities.”

He added, “I always look back on my career and think about how I got this great education here.”

As an alumnus himself, French said looking forward for the college, he wants

to continue to work with alumni, donors and supporters to build on the successes of the programs in place and support students and faculty.

He said following the strong leadership of the college during the last decade, growing and moving into other areas where “we have strengths” will prove important.

“One of the natural strengths of the area has always been the petroleum and energy industry,” he said. “If we can leverage those in our business areas, we should continue to commit resources to that.”

French spoke highly of the opportunities for future entrepreneurs at LU—whether it’s with the entrepreneurship program or accessing the many other college resources. The Center for Innovation Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, French said, is one of the ways the college works with the entire university and community, to encourage local entrepreneurship—developing products and learning to take them to market.

“We love bringing alumni back as speakers,” French said, referencing the Michael Wienert Entrepreneurship

Lecture Series and the ExxonMobil Executive in Residence Speaker Series. “Bringing in speakers to excite students and motivate them by showing them success stories out of Lamar University lets them know the hard work that’s involved but also the rewards that are there.”

Now that French is “back home” at his alma mater, “We Are LU” rings true for the future of the College of Business as he works to bring alumni and current students alike full circle to encourage success for all.



## College of Business team recognized in the Top 5 fundraisers

College of Business faculty, staff and students routinely participate in projects to improve the community. **Delvin Seawright**, assistant professor of accounting, demonstrated a spirit of service as he chose to advocate for a cause close to his heart. Seawright spearheaded the College of Business team in the Gift of Life Julie Richardson Procter Walk of Survivorship last fall. Organizers recognized Team LU College of Business as a Top 5 Fundraising Team and presented members with an art piece that now hangs in the College of Business.

“The Julie Rogers Gift of Life is close to my heart because of the profound, positive and measurable impact the organization and its founder have had (and continue to have) on countless individuals living in Southeast Texas.” said Seawright, who earned second place in individual fundraising efforts for \$949.00 in donations.

## Colón honored as “Young CPA of the Year”

The Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants honored **Ricardo Colón**, assistant professor of accounting, with the organization’s 2017 Young CPA of the Year Award. The award recognizes a CPA under 40 years old for his or her contributions to the accounting profession and the community. The society honored Colón at its Annual Meeting of Members in Colorado Springs. Award criteria include professional achievement, significant accomplishments within a local chapter, community involvement and dedication to the accounting profession through participation in professional activities.

## Wilson funds new retention and success initiative

A college-based Office of Student Retention and Success will soon offer even more help to College of Business students. As freshmen and sophomores, students will meet weekly for business skills training, general professional development and short-term team projects. As juniors and seniors, student teams will work on longer-term projects, including faculty research projects, business plans, strategic plans or new product/service plans. The initiative creates a Cardinal Coach retention manager staff position to counsel at-risk students, primarily at the freshman level, conduct research on retention in the College of Business and coordinate with College of Business faculty and University Advising Center advisors.

Secondarily, the initiative introduces the Transformational Scholars Program. Built in conjunction with the College of Business Cardinal Communities, it will provide financial assistance, based primarily on financial need and in lieu of outside employment, and unique career preparation opportunities to program participants. The Transformational Scholars Program is made possible by generous gifts from **Herman ’63 and Bobbie Wilson**. Herman Wilson serves on the College of Business Board of Advisors.



## Construction management students help Harvey-stricken families

In Hurricane Harvey’s wake, new construction found itself at the top of our community’s mind. While the floodwater damage forced those affected to acquire construction knowledge rapidly in order to start rebuilding, students in the Reese Construction Management Program prepared to learn on-site in a new form of classroom: their neighbors’ homes.

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County, and funded by the Rotary Club of Beaumont, a range of volunteers ages 15 to 80 joined LU freshman-level construction management students during the course of two days in rebuilding a home damaged by the storm and helping to build a new home.

**Mahdi Safa**, assistant professor of construction management, served as the project manager. He worked alongside Habitat for Humanity Executive Director **Miriam Morgan** and president of Rotary Club, **Tim Sudela ’85**, for many weeks leading up to last fall’s work dates.

Bringing together education and service is a critical component of the Reese Construction Management Program, explained Safa. “In one project, the students learn so much: service to their community, how to work in a team, and how to network—the types of soft skills that are necessary to be competitive in today’s workforce.”

The students also found many opportunities to learn from the examples of experts, such as **Chuck Mason ’72**, president of Mason Construction and member of the program’s advisory council, and **Patrick Ramb**, construction manager for Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County.”

► **BP Energy CEO shares experience**  
The College of Business hosted **Orlando Alvarez ’87**, president and CEO of BP Energy, as part of its ExxonMobil Executive in Residence Program last October. Alvarez, is based in Houston and is also a member of the BP America Board, which oversees the companies’ activities in the U.S.

► **Winston Guillory**  
The ExxonMobil Executive in Residence Program hosted **Winston Guillory ’81**, managing director of Belisarius Capital, a private investment firm. Prior to his current post, the LU alumnus served as CEO of GeoSentric Oyj, a NASDAQ company based in Helsinki, Finland.

► **Pat Parsons**  
The College of Business inducted Pat Parsons ’71 into the its Hall of Fame last fall. **Melody ’71 and Pat Parsons** are longtime strong supporters of LU’s College of Business. They established the Pat and Melody Parsons Innovation Fund in Business in 2014.





**School Counseling Program awarded \$1.9 million grant**  
The Bureau of Health Workforce Education, of the Health Resources and Services Administration, recently awarded the School Counseling Program a \$1.9 million grant for training school counselors. The grant will establish the program IMPaCT: Integrative Mentoring Partnerships and Crisis Teams to increase the number of highly trained behavioral health specialists in local schools and agencies who can provide services to those who have a recognized behavioral health disorder or who are at risk of developing one. **Rebecca Weinbaum**, associate professor and chair of counseling and special populations, said, "IMPaCT will provide real-world experiences beyond the school setting for counselors-in-training to build community networks with peer mentors for addressing suicide prevention, crisis and grief, substance abuse and emotional factors associated with crisis work." **Dean Robert Spina** added, "This grant will enable the college to further enhance the preparation of our school counseling graduates while meeting critical needs in our schools and communities. I am excited for the students who will participate in this new initiative and grateful to Dr. Weinbaum for her leadership in developing the proposal."



**American Education Week**  
The College of Education and Human Development celebrated American Education Week last fall as an opportunity to recognize the importance of public education and honor individuals who are making a difference by ensuring every child receives a quality education. The college welcomed guest speaker, **H.D. Chambers '86**, superintendent of Stafford School District. He earned his bachelor's degree from LU and is a proud alumnus who has dedicated his career to education. City of Beaumont Mayor **Becky Ames** attended and proclaimed Nov. 13-17, 2017, as American Education Week in Beaumont. **Pres. Ken Evans** received the proclamation and shared a few words in honor of the occasion.



**60/30 marks anniversaries**  
In 2019, the College of Education and Human Development will celebrate the 60th anniversary of its initial establishment and the 30th anniversary of the addition of the human development academic programs. As we celebrate the past, we plan towards our future growth and success. Check out a new video produced this past summer about the future of the college and read about the recently completed strategic plan at [lamar.edu/education](http://lamar.edu/education).

**Titus earns community service award**  
**Freddie Titus**, assistant professor of Teacher Education, was honored as Lamar University's 2017 Julie & Ben Rogers Community Service Award recipient. The Rogers family established the award in 1979 to encourage Lamar University faculty and staff to volunteer their service and talents to the community. After graduating with a B.S. in mathematics in 1983, Titus worked as a teaching assistant and quickly realized teaching was his calling. He completed a second bachelor's degree, this one in industrial engineering, in 1986.  
Titus focuses on being an "ambassador for mankind" and took a different path when he discovered the joy of serving others instead of self. He has brought that approach to his teaching and service beyond the campus. "I really enjoyed working with people," he said. "I love it when the light goes on with people when they learn something new. I love being a part of that experience." His volunteer work includes service to numerous church-related organizations such as the Beaumont Ministers Association, which he served as a guest clinician for its annual citywide revival services.



► **Students to advise dean**  
The college recently announced the formation of the inaugural Student Advisory Council to the Dean under the direction of **Teresa Simpson**, special assistant to the dean. The seven-member council comprises successful student leaders in each major.

► **Hernandez earns award**  
The Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance recognized **Barbara Michiels Hernandez**, professor of health and kinesiology, with its 2017 Texas Honor Award. The honor highlights her teaching excellence, outstanding administrative achievement and research contributions.

► **Eckart honored**  
**Senior M.J. Eckart**, of Flower Mound, earned the title Southland Conference Women's Soccer Student-Athlete of the Year for her performance as midfielder and 4.0 GPA in exercise science—making Cardinal women's soccer history.



**DEAN ARNE ALMQUIST** *by Krista Salter*

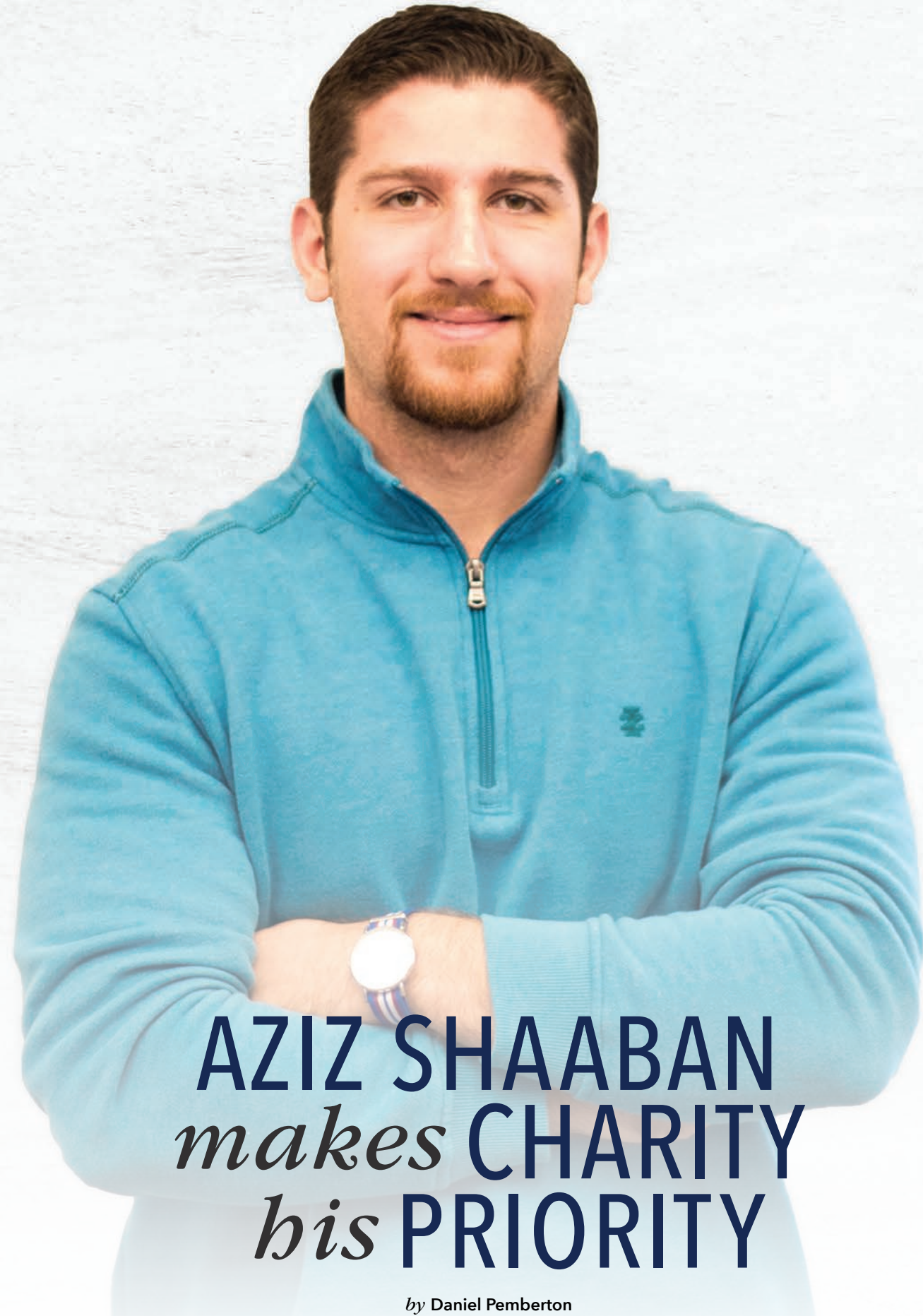
It's not easy to find someone as excited about libraries as Arne Almquist, the new dean of Mary and John Gray Library.  
For him, the library at LU is more than a holder of books—it's a world of information, a treasure trove of knowledge and endless possibilities accessible right at the fingertips of LU students. It's how the motto "We Are LU" becomes global—directly from campus.  
"In the past, the only way to get access to the vast amount of information that's out there would be to go to a major university," Almquist said. "We're able to use the technology of today to provide the quality of experience with the fast retrieval of information for all students."  
Almquist said he enjoys building the model of a 21st Century library—something he did in his position as

dean of Northern Kentucky University's library system—off of research and reputation, utilizing very high-tech resources and incorporating all the aspects of a university library into a synergistic system.  
What made his work revolutionary in Kentucky, Almquist said, was facilitating the transition from the idea that the library is the "big box of books on campus" to using the library to impart information to others by accessing all of its resources—books, computers, the Internet and, specifically, its people.  
"I'm an information scientist," Almquist said. "I'm interested in how people access information, and then how we can make people better users of that information."  
He continued, "As information specialists, we learn how to ask a system

for information and how to look at that information and distinguish if it's trustworthy, quality information, and we organize data so that we can make sense of it, turning the data into relevant information."  
Almquist said if the library can transform the way people look at information, then LU students can become more competitive graduates who are also lifelong learners.  
The new dean said one of the ways to improve the library is transform it from the "geographical and academic heart of LU's campus" to a synergistic space where information and ideas flow freely, making it the "intellectual heart" of LU.  
"The Mary & John Gray Library can affect student achievement and retention," Almquist explained. "The inside has been well-used for years, but renovating it to make it a comfortable place

built for the way students study today will make what's inside even more iconic than its outside."  
The self-described bibliophile said when he's at home, he can be found building his own personal library with his wife, who he met in his early days studying at the University at Buffalo.  
The pair enjoy reading together, traveling and collecting antique phones—most of which ring—and fountain pens, as well as going for drives in their Miata.  
"She was a librarian first," Almquist said of his wife with a grin. "And, she was my accompanist; she played piano. I was going to start my doctorate in music, but after spending time in the library, I realized that was the business I wanted to get into."





# AZIZ SHAABAN *makes* CHARITY *his* PRIORITY

by Daniel Pemberton

Aziz Shaaban is a biology major with a concentration in pre-med...also a minor in chemistry... and another minor in business. Currently in his junior year, Shaaban's extensive interests are only matched by his focus on helping those around him, whether on campus or in the community. His efforts remind us that charity and altruism are cornerstones of the Cardinal character, and why we are LU.

"I applied to four schools: Lamar University, University of Texas, Baylor University and Washington University-St. Louis," Shaaban said, "but my top choice has always been LU. It is close to home and has a very competitive medical school acceptance rate. The reason I considered Baylor and Washington University is because they offer programs that allow you to go straight into their medical school after you finish. But after thinking on it, I found Lamar University to be the best choice for me."

From a young age, Shaaban has known that medicine is his calling, growing up around his father's medical practice and observing the life of a doctor.

"Since the age of six, I have had an affinity for medicine. I grew up in a circle of medical professionals and always enjoyed it," said Shaaban. "It was because of this early experience that I began shadowing in high school and it only solidified my passion."

When Shaaban began studying at LU, he found another passion, which is research, in medicine and related science.

"As a freshman, I knew I wanted to do research during my college career to get a feel for how the process is played out," said Shaaban, "I asked my professors if I could visit their labs and help. Through this, I became involved in the cancer and parasitology labs. Through my work in the parasite lab, I came across this idea that we can use parasites in the water to measure water quality."

"This line of research interested me because water is a necessity, and if there is any way to better understand the quality of water then we should be pursuing it," he said.

Along with research, Shaaban also spends much of his time volunteering for his community, on and off campus. "The summer before I came to LU, I worked at the Medical Center of Southeast Texas. During my freshman year, I learned about the Arc of Greater Beaumont so I have been working with them for the past few years," said Shaaban. "I am also involved in the Lamar University Green Squad, where I started a new initiative collecting litter on the grounds of campus bi-weekly. I also volunteer with the Honors Student Association. Every semester we do many different projects including a beach clean-up day."

Shaaban considers this his most important volunteer work where he helped his community during and after Hurricane Harvey in the summer of 2017.

"That was a major volunteering experience. During and after the hurricane, I tried to help out my community as much as possible," said Shaaban. "Whether in Port Arthur, Beaumont, Orange or anywhere that needed help. We would go out in boats to deliver food and to help people out of their flooded homes or apartments."

Shaaban did not let the start of classes get in the way of his volunteer work. He played a role in Harvey Heroes, a partnership between Lamar University and local non-profit organizations, where students earned course credit for public service.

"We went from house to house, taking out all the damaged furniture, tearing down walls and digging up carpet. It was incredibly sad to see such a great community have to suffer such a terrible tragedy, but I learned a lot from it," said Shaaban. "If we do not stand together, we would not get anything done. It takes much more than one person to make a change, and I think what Lamar University did with the Harvey Heroes initiative is very important."

"It is when these tragedies happen that you see we really are not that divided

at all. People from every state, cultural background and ethnicity came together to help each other. As a community, we worked this problem out together," said Shaaban.

When speaking about his love of charity and volunteer work, Shaaban said, "It has always been a part of me. I have always had the desire to help people out. It obviously grew a lot in high school and much more over the course of my college career. I am grateful for having that desire to give back and help out where I can."

Shaaban sees a bright future for himself, influenced by his time at LU. He'll take the MCAT and plans to graduate in 2020 from LU.

"I am thinking about getting my JD with my MD degree, but that is not set in stone yet. I then hope to work in the medical profession as long as I can. That is the dream," said Shaaban. "I have been thinking about going into otolaryngology (ears, nose and throat). It is a great field that affects everyone, so I would be able to provide the most service to as many communities as possible."

Although Shaaban came to LU knowing more or less what he was looking for out of his education, there are still aspects of his time here that surprise him.

"I am shocked at the quality of friendships I have developed here. I was really scared I would not fit in with other students on campus, but throughout my college career I have made so many memories and friendships that I would have never thought possible," said Shaaban. "At LU, there is a closely knit community and many friendships to be made."

**"It is when these tragedies happen that you see we really are not that divided at all."**

—Aziz Shaaban



# We Are LU: A DALLAS EDITION

by Casey Ford



*Working at ‘the nexus of policy, politics, and education,’ Solis cherishes his diverse Southeast Texas, Cardinal heritage.*

**A**t one point in his youth, Miguel Solis ’08 never wanted much to do with professional education. He had watched his late father, Stephen ’67, a public school teacher, struggle with the day-to-day issues of low pay and administrative woes, and Solis thought those struggles defined the profession. He wanted to pursue a career in law. While studying as an undergraduate at LU and directly after graduation, Solis worked on the Obama presidential campaign and was invited to join the prestigious corps of Teach for America. Though he completed his B.A. in history with a political science minor and went on to earn his M.Ed. at Harvard, his time as an Obama staffer and TFA corps member, lessons from his father, and the advice and example of key faculty at Lamar University had altered the course of his life and profession.

Solis currently serves as District 8 trustee for Dallas Independent School District, the second-largest city school system in Texas and the fifth-largest city system in the nation. As an undergraduate intern, Solis had opportunities to observe policymakers’ work on fixes for entrenched, problematic issues, and today, that experience has translated to his own work with the White House on policy change—for example, a policy that has become part of state law which eliminates the practice of out-of-school suspension for pre-kindergarten through second grade. Part of Solis’ mission as trustee involves helping his district find resources to combat behavior problems, and in this way, his has become a cynosure for school districts across the nation, signaling other educational administrators that it is possible to engage thoughtfully and effectively with the federal government.

In 2015, Solis co-founded the Latino Center for Leadership Development with Jorge Baldor and Rebecca Acuna. Solis says the work of the Latino center is “at the nexus of policy, politics and education.” He currently serves as president of this national organization that trains millennials, a majority of whom are Latino, who want to pursue positions of public power, including elected and official public positions, but who may lack the knowledge and/or the resources to do so. The center meets an insistent and long-neglected demand for a successful model in preparing Latinos to lead by identifying and ensuring their success. To date, eight fellows of the center have been elected or appointed to public office in Texas, including Dallas regional officials, one mayor pro tem, two Dallas ISD Trustees and two members of the Texas House of Representatives.

These numbers are beyond remarkable considering that only two percent of elected officials in the nation are Latino. Solis accedes that it doesn’t necessarily “take Latinos to govern Latinos,” but Latino leadership does offer a “lens of empathy” not accessible to governing bodies where their representation is low or nonexistent. Solis says, “America’s future and prospects are directly tied to the Latino population—the fastest and largest growing in the state and nation. That growth presents challenges and opportunities. An America that maximizes the opportunities

while minimizing the challenges will be a lodestar of a diverse and thriving democracy after which the rest of the world can model itself.”

The value of diversity in any given community is something Solis says he learned early as a Southeast Texas resident and student. He credits the region as being “diverse and culturally rich, far more than it might seem at a glance. It prepared me, and it can prepare others,” he says, “for success in an increasingly diverse state and nation. The Southeast Texas community is hardworking, its people full of grit and determination; growing up there built that ethic in me and also the knowledge that no true reward is merely given but must be earned.”

Solis and wife Jacqueline are from Port Arthur and Groves, respectively, and they have an extraordinary daughter named Olivia. The Solis family has been a focus in Dallas headlines this year, sharing Olivia’s journey through congenital heart defect and transplant. By her three-month birthday, she had undergone five surgeries, including an eight-hour open-heart procedure and a 10-hour transplant, and there will be more surgeries to come. Currently, she is nine months old and doing well since her transplant in May. Though she’s a Dallas resident, Olivia exemplifies the “grit and determination” of her Southeast Texas roots, Solis said.

Solis’ daughter inspires him to create resources for children like Olivia so that they do not miss out on educational tools and opportunities during their formative years. He and his wife are fundraisers for the Heart Center at Children’s Medical Center of Dallas; their work helps families who are living through the entire transplant experience to cope financially and emotionally. Together, the Solises wrote a children’s book called Olivia’s New Heart (OliviasBook.com), and all proceeds from book sales benefit the Heart Center at CMC Dallas. To date, sales have raised more than \$20,000.

Solis never stops. In his roles as educational administrator, policymaker and father, he continually pursues opportunities to support and mentor others personally, professionally and politically. He credits his compassionate heart to his father, who taught him that “a job and a title will not matter in the end, but a person’s value lies in the legacy he leaves of improving the lives of other people.” He also credits his time at Lamar University, remembering especially [history professors emeriti] Ralph A. Wooster and Adrian Anderson, for teaching him his own worth and the power of educators to impact lives. Solis says, “Education is the great equalizer, carrying people past the barriers—both real and perceived—of socioeconomics and cultural difference.”

He says, “There are certain ‘tipping point’ moments in our lives—my decision to apply to Lamar University was one of those—that lead to opportunities and experiences we cannot imagine. I am forever grateful and indebted to the Cardinal community.”





# RESOLVE AND RESILIENCE: *sustaining recovery*

by Daniel Pemberton

**H**urricane Harvey left a trail of destruction throughout the Southeast Texas region, affecting many Lamar University students. For some of these students, the beginning of the fall 2017 semester was their last priority as they worked to put their lives back together in the wake of a historic natural disaster. They lost laptops, transportation and, in some cases, their homes. The LU administration knew they needed a way to help students left without a means to continue their education, so they created the Cardinal Emergency Fund.

“We were determining how to help students, and we had many donors who called us wondering what they could do to help, so we started the fund,” said Brenda Nichols, vice provost for the university and one of the key figures in organizing LU’s response to the storm.

“This is an effort of resilience,” said Nichols, “After the storm, we also started the Harvey Heroes program. Many students

volunteered because they just felt it was the right thing to do. Talking to students afterward, they all felt they had made a positive impact.

“We had helped people clean up their homes through Harvey Heroes, but wanted a way to help them financially. Alumni were contacting us, asking what they could do and they helped build the fund. We went from having nothing to give our students to \$300,000,” said Nichols, “It was all about us giving back and supporting each other.”

In its early stages, the Cardinal Emergency Fund was first used to identify and help students in extreme need. Students who would not have been able to continue attending LU without some kind of aid were the first to receive assistance.

“We had some students I remember in particular, from mid-county, who lost everything. They were living in a ground floor apartment which flooded; their car flooded as well. We used

the fund to move them into the dorms as well as give them a reduced price on their meals so they could eat,” Nichols said.

“Others just didn’t have a place to go. We rented a shuttle bus for a group of students from Houston to get them here and moved them into the dorms as well. But many times it meant helping in small ways, helping students get books, laptops—comparatively smaller things that would help them return to their studies as smoothly as possible.”

It has been more than a year since Harvey, yet many Southeast Texas residents are still rebuilding their homes, and many people are still not completely recovered financially and emotionally. For these reasons, the Cardinal Emergency Fund still exists today.

“There are many problems people have that are an indirect result of the storm,” Nichols said. “We have spent most of the money we initially brought in. I am currently writing a grant request to see if I can’t help to get some of that money into a foundation so we can continue to help students who are still struggling.”

The ways in which the storm impacted the region is seen today in where money from the fund goes.

“We have the book scholarship and dorm scholarships for those who have nowhere else to stay,” Nichols said. “The use of our on-campus mental health services is up 60 percent. People dealing with depression, anxiety and PTSD-like symptoms. Many people are still working through the trauma of what happened and need support.”

One of the ways in which Lamar University is looking to address this need is through a program named LU Strong, which will incorporate the currently active LU Care Team, to provide a holistic way to approach student challenges.

“One of the things that we are trying to do is show that LU is not just concerned with its students’ academic success, but about their growth as individuals,” Nichols said. “If we get the funding from the Department of Education, the LU Care Team will have a full-time social worker to help connect students with the aid they need.

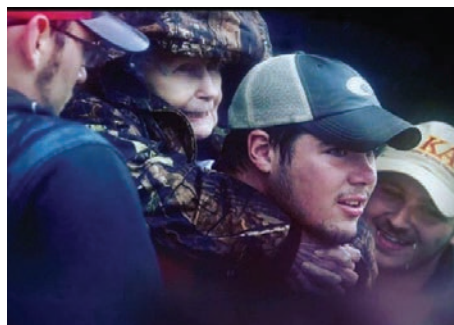
“Harvey was a very different kind of storm. The trauma from it is much worse than others we have seen hit this area. In the past, once people were allowed to return to their homes after storms, everything seemed to just pop back into place. With Harvey, the recovery has been much different and much slower.”

The one thing that is for certain is that the mark Harvey left on the region continues to reverberate. But thanks to faculty members like Nichols, LU continues to reach out and respond to the needs of students. Students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends of LU can also aid in the process by donating directly to the Cardinal Emergency Fund at [lamar.edu/give](http://lamar.edu/give). Times of great tragedy bring people together in a spirit of mutual recovery and aid. But the work of volunteers, Nichols and the LU Care Team reminds us that such work is most effective when it is sustained, long after the tragedy has passed. It is this commitment to the well-being of our community and the support of our fellow students that shows us what it is to be a cardinal. It is only through supporting each other that we thrive as a whole, because together We Are LU.



**“ Harvey was a very different kind of storm. The trauma from it is much worse than others we have seen hit this area. In the past, once people were allowed to return to their homes after storms, everything seemed to just pop back into place. With Harvey, the recovery has been much different and much slower. ”**

—Brenda Nichols





# BHAVANI SIMON'S OWN ENVIRONMENT TAKES SHAPE

by Krista Salter

## Anywhere she goes, Bhavani Simon creates her own environment.

It is no different at Lamar University, where she can always be found in one of her “spots,”—like “Bhavani’s table” outside the dean’s office at the College of Engineering, or, predictably, the middle seat in the front row of any class she takes—where her classmates and family alike gravitate towards her. She adds her own unique story to all those that make up the motto We Are LU.

“I’m a very busy person,” she said with a tired smile on a Friday afternoon after a long week at work as a mechanical engineer in Beaumont.

The 43-year-old Lamar University student, mother and wife spends her weekdays this semester solving problems at Exxon-Mobil’s refinery, she said, focused solely on fixed equipment—pipes, tanks, vessels and drums—and making sure they are operating smoothly.

“My job is fixing problems,” Bhavani said. “Every day, I’m fascinated at what I get to do.”

But Bhavani’s fascination for her everyday life does not end with the mechanical engineering job she’s involved with thanks to Lamar University’s cooperative education program this semester.

Highly involved in campus life, Bhavani sits as project manager for LU’s Student Engineering Council, responsible for handling the mechanics of events like homecoming, career fairs and building the council’s float for the homecoming parade.

She’s also the vice president of LU’s chapter of the American Society of Heating and Refrigeration Engineers and treasurer of the Tau Beta Pi engineering society.

When she returns to taking courses on campus after her co-op, chances are she and her 21-year-old son, Ryne Walter, will end up taking some of the same classes with her, as both are pursuing degrees in mechanical engineering.

“I feel very spoiled to be on campus with my kids,” she said with a grin. “We’re very autonomous, but they know where to find me. And, it makes me happy when they seek me out in my spots, but it’s totally fine if they don’t.”

Bhavani said when her children were born, there was “not even a little thought” that she’d be sharing her university

experience with them, adding that last year her 23-year-old daughter was also on campus. Next year, her 17-year-old son, a soon-to-be high school graduate, will come to LU, also in the mechanical engineering program.

“It has been an interesting experience so far,” Ryne said. “I think it gives both of us a few advantages. For example, we don’t have to worry about finding competent study partners. We’re both hard-working and, more or less, on the same intellectual level so it is easy for us to work together and help each other understand the course material.”

Associate professor Paul Dawkins remembered having Bhavani and Ryne in both Calculus I and II at the same time.

“I recall them being very good students and hard workers,” Dawkins said. “They did sit next to each other, and I would imagine that both being in the same class at the same time probably helped with studying and learning. Both came by the office for help on the homework and had made serious attempts at problems.”

Although Bhavani told Ryne that they could take separate classes when they started at Lamar University, she’s proud they can successfully manage to pursue their degree by accenting each other’s strengths.

“I do believe LU,” Ryne said, “is suited to a family-oriented environment. The faculty and staff are delighted when they find out about our relationship, and the students have been accepting as well.”

But an engineering degree wasn’t always in the cards for Bhavani, who spent most of the last 20-some-odd years “wrenching on bikes” as a mechanic at family-owned Kickstand Bike Shop in Beaumont.

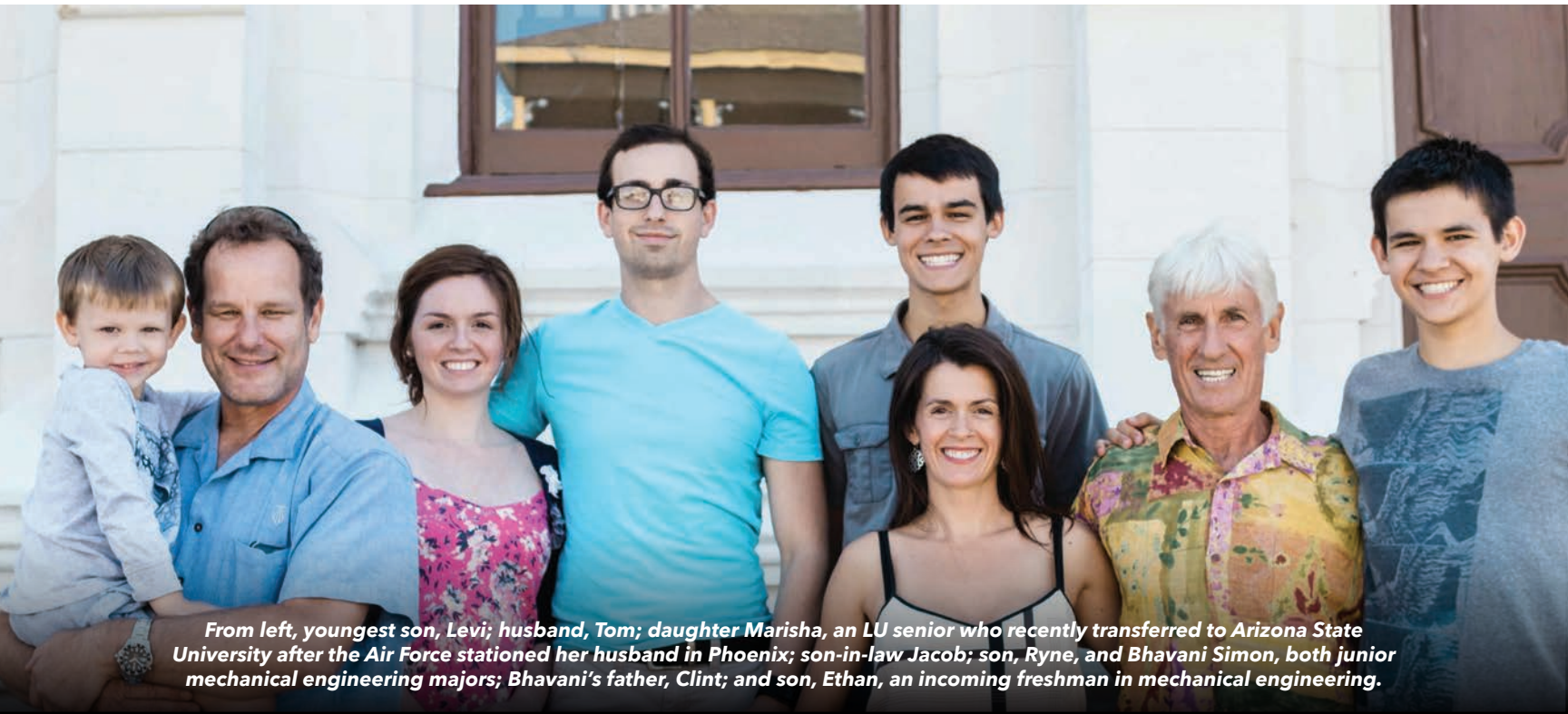
Perhaps, she said, that’s where her interest for fixing things herself flourished.

A few years ago when things were quiet at the bike shop, Bhavani’s husband dared her to apply to Lamar University. She said she didn’t anticipate being accepted at her age, but she was.

She began in LU’s business program, pursuing courses that would ultimately help with the family business. Until, she said, her husband suggested she take classes that interested her and fit into her narrative.

“I didn’t think I was smart enough,” Bhavani said as she reminisced about her decision to apply to the mechanical engineering program. “I looked at it and thought, ‘Well, I’ve always like working on stuff, and I’ve always been very capable.’”





From left, youngest son, Levi; husband, Tom; daughter Marisha, an LU senior who recently transferred to Arizona State University after the Air Force stationed her husband in Phoenix; son-in-law Jacob; son, Ryne, and Bhavani Simon, both junior mechanical engineering majors; Bhavani's father, Clint; and son, Ethan, an incoming freshman in mechanical engineering.

And so, the mother of four, after some extra math classes, found herself thriving in LU's mechanical engineering program, with Ryne gaining acceptance shortly after.

"I have come to understand and appreciate her work ethic and her desire to provide herself and her family with a good life," Ryne said of his mother, who he calls by name on campus. "I admire her attempts to avoid middle-aged stagnation. In pursuing a degree, she is improving her socioeconomic status and developing her character in a way that is not possible for many people her age."

Bhavani said attending LU in her 40s hasn't been as difficult as some might imagine.

"I've been really impressed with not only the courses here but also with the students," Bhavani said. "I don't see them as young, and they don't see me as old. Every class I have, I build a team of people."

Bhavani described group text messages, emails and apps that she utilizes to keep in touch with students in her study groups. When stuck on part of a problem, she is known to snap a photo and send it out asking for help, and the same is said to be true of the members of her groups.

"It's a very serious field," Bhavani said. "So, the classes are very serious. As long as you take it that way and are doing your best to get it done, that's what employers will see: someone who's working hard and who wants to be a part of their team."

"There's no way that as an individual I can do all of this on my own," she added about the groups she studies with. "I'm actively involved in every class, and I get involved in

organizations and student life. Maybe it's because I have children the same age as these students, and I don't see them as children anymore; they're grown, and so are these students."

She described treating her time at LU as her "job," arriving around 7 a.m., getting to "Bhavani's table" by the dean's office to complete coursework and attending classes until she leaves around 4:30 p.m. to head home.

When Bhavani gets home for the day, she's in "mom mode," making sure her family comes together around the table each and every night for dinner. It's something, she said, that's very important to her despite everyone's crazy lives.

"We get to that point in the day where we all eat and talk,"

she described. "We go over our schedules and what's coming up for the next day, and get a chance to all be together."

And, so, on any given weekday, you can find Bhavani being "typically non-traditional."

She may be found

contemplating a leaking pipe on LU's campus, running through all the possibilities of "why," when most people would just walk by it. She could be solving equipment problems at Exxon-Mobil as a real-life mechanical engineer through her co-op. She could be found in one of her many study 'spots' with "her group" of students or possibly Ryne, or found wrenching on bikes at her family business.

No matter where you find her, Bhavani is sure to be spending time actively present in the environment she has created for herself—"living her best life."

“My job is fixing problems. Every day, I’m fascinated at what I get to do.”

—Bhavani Simon

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: **ENGINEERING** |



### Riverbank Erosion Study Continues

Continued efforts from both civil and industrial engineering faculty have entered the second phase of a wake wash study of local waterways after receiving \$99,000 in funding from the Sabine Neches Navigation District.

The researchers will study the relationship between the movement of vessels and the impacts of the waves they generate on the banks of the region's waterways. Once completed, Interim Dean Victor Zaloom and faculty colleagues Qin Qian, Mein Jao and Xing Wu, along with Keh-Han Wang, a civil engineering professor from University of Houston, plan to present their findings and solutions to effectively mitigate the problem.

In the first phase, the team identified specific erosion spots. "Erosion causes loss of land but more important, much of the material that results from riverbank erosion ends up in the deep draft ship navigation channel, reducing the depth of the channel," Zaloom said.

Phase II will be devoted to evaluating and recommending wave attenuation remedies that should result in less erosion and reduce the need to dredge the material from the channel.



### Research experience creates opportunities for local teachers

LU's Research Experience for Teachers program, funded by a National Science Foundation grant, brought together 12 local high school STEM teachers June 11 to July 20 to research advanced design and manufacturing.

The six-week program, open to all high school teachers in the STEM disciplines in Texas' Region 4 and 5 schools, seeks to advance educators' knowledge of concepts in such areas as 3D printing, LED modeling and manufacturing, smart structure design, computational fluid dynamics simulation and robotics as a means of enriching high school curriculums and meeting foundational standards set by 2013's Texas House Bill 5. These standards required enhanced STEM content in high school curricula as a prerequisite for graduation, detailed in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standard

In the mornings, teachers attended daily workshops to expand their knowledge of topics in advanced design and manufacturing before embarking on applicable research projects in the afternoons. Six LU professors, assisted by student research assistants across the engineering disciplines, mentored two teachers on projects. The six engineering mentors, **Weihang Zhu, Xuejun Fan, Nicholas Brake, Xinyu Liu, Xianchang Li** and **Jenny Zhou**, each led one week of workshops as well.

The group participated in excursions to local and regional companies including Sage Automation, Schlumberger, Forterra and BASF, and worked with Lamar University curriculum specialist **Dorothy Sisk**, professor of teacher education, on applying their experience to lesson plans.

Participants also met for weekly Brown Bag teacher seminars to share their experiences and discuss curricula, organized by master teacher **Robert Barham** of Porter High School, New Caney Independent School District. Six months after the conclusion of the program, the six mentors visited mentees' classrooms to see the lesson plans being implemented. The teachers also presented their refined curricula at an on-campus conference and submitted their standards-aligned plans to teachengineering.org for other K-12 educators to access. The program assessment is led by assessment specialist **Julia Yoo**, associate professor of teacher education at LU. Participants receive a total of \$2,800 upon completion of the program.

The Research Experience for Teachers Site program is made possible through a grant from the National Science Foundation valued at \$545,380. During the three-year period, which began in 2017, LU offers an intensive six-week summer research program to a total of 36 regional STEM high school teachers.

► **Tokgoz named Air Force fellow**  
**Cagatay Tokgoz**, assistant professor of electrical engineering, was named Summer Faculty Fellow for the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory where he assisted with the development of efficient asymptotic techniques and solutions in computational electromagnetics via antenna placement for aircraft.

► **Engineering & Sciences Receive Grant**  
The National Science Foundation has awarded LU a \$395,805 grant for the acquisition of a nanoindenter, a high-tech instrument that measures small volumes of mechanical properties. The nanoindenter encourages interdisciplinary collaborations and expands fundamental research activities between departments and enhances undergraduate research.

► **New summer camp kicks off**  
Continuing outreach initiatives have led to the creation of a new summer program for high school seniors, Lamar Introduction To Engineering–Senior. The program saw more than 80 students visit for a week of exploring various engineering disciplines via lab visits, research demonstrations and hands-on activities.



## STUDENTS ADVANCE ART APPRECIATION IN RUSSIA

Lamar University students kicked off their summer in 2017 exploring world-renowned art and architecture in Saint Petersburg, Russia, while earning course credit for ARTS 1301, a core curriculum requirement.

“With art and architecture, there’s just no substitute for seeing a real painting or walking through an actual building,” said Richard Gachot, associate professor of art and design and instructor for the study abroad course.

The program introduced students to the artistic and cultural history of Saint Petersburg, the capital of the Russian Empire, known for its rich art, architecture and literature. The “Venice of the North” was built by Peter the Great who opened up Russia to the western world, modernizing every aspect of Russian life.

“I want to expose my students to the best examples of art and architecture, and in that sense, Saint Petersburg is this wonderful jewel box of culture where you can walk almost any street and see fantastic buildings, ranging from the baroque to the contemporary,” Gachot said. Gachot prepared students for the trip by assigning individual research projects and holding on-campus course orientation days that introduced them to Russian language and culture. He says that he was surprised by the students’ deep interest in Russia despite their diverse backgrounds and majors.

“I never anticipated how much I’d like this,” said Mackenzie Hudson, a Lumberton psychology and pre-med student. “I loved walking around the city and hearing about the different architecture movements including Baroque, Neoclassical, Style Moderne and Soviet. Also, we saw the church where all the Czars of Russia are buried. That was a pretty fascinating and unique experience,” she said.

Students witnessed architecture through the ages at several sites: the Log Cabin of Peter the Great and the Menshikov Palace; the Peter and Paul Fortress; Peterhof (the Russian Versailles); the Winter Palace, the Romanov royal residence; the country estate of Catherine I in Tsarskoye Selo, housing the famous Amber Room; and more. The program also included guided tours of major art museums such as the Hermitage, the Russian Museum, as well as Russian Orthodox churches including the Kazan Cathedral, St. Isaac’s Cathedral and the Church on Spilled Blood.

### Surls commissioned to create sculpture

LU commissioned Texas-native artist James Surls to create the newest outdoor art addition to bring inspiration and beauty to the campus, a sculpture titled “Blooming.”

“Everyone can be inspired by art,” said Kim Steinhagen, Public Art Committee co-chair, “It is one of those things that enriches our lives the more we are exposed to it, and it beautifies the campus. We love the landscaping on campus, and art is just another part of that.”

Surls is a nature-inspired modernist artist, known for his carved sculptures and bronze and steel works. His work has been featured in many galleries around the world, including the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, as well as in Canada, China, France, Mexico, and other countries.

Surls made a personal trip to Beaumont to create his design. He built the 11-by-8-foot piece in stainless steel and bronze. LU purchased the piece with one percent of the state-funded building construction budget designated for art.



### CICE hosts international conference

Ten nations were represented at the second International Workshop on Offshore Geologic CO2 Storage held June 19-20, 2017, at LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship.

The workshop, hosted by Lamar University and University of Texas Geosciences, included sessions on finding offshore storage, monitoring, environmental and overburden monitoring, offshore assessment and more. In addition to sharing scientific papers and posters, more than 60 scientists from around the world presented the latest information on CO2 geologic storage.

In addition to more than 20 U.S. organizations, attendees included organizations from the United Kingdom, Japan, Scotland, Mexico, Netherlands, Australia, Norway, China, South Africa and Taiwan.

### Students gain insight from engineering studies in Spain

Thirteen students in the College of Engineering traveled to Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain, recently to study contemporary global issues in engineering management under the leadership of University Professor Jerry Lin.

Students earned three course credit hours, as well as a management certificate from the Escola Tècnica Superior d’Enginyeria Química. Students gained experience in completing the sort of activities they might be sent abroad for on a job assignment. During the course, students were assigned a case that required them to work in teams, incorporating the knowledge they gained from theoretical sessions and technical visits throughout the trip into unique solutions for the projects.

Carlos Caballero, senior mechanical engineering and physics major, says the industry visits were a terrific component to the course. “I particularly enjoyed the visit to the Port of Tarragona, where we learned about their logistics and expansion projects, and to the Institute for Applied Automotive Research where they’re doing groundbreaking work in automobile safety,” he said.



### AtmoSpark nets Texas Rural Challenge

AtmoSpark, the brainchild of Tejus Mane ‘17, a master of engineering science in chemical engineering alumnus, came away with the top prize in the 2017 Texas Student Challenge in the business plan competition at the Texas Rural Challenge in Waco.

“We are an atmospheric water generation company developing technology to bring fresh water to rural

and urban communities and hard-to-reach areas such as offshore platforms, for disaster relief and in maritime,” Mane said.

The Texas Rural Challenge win is the group’s third No. 1 finish in three months. AtmoSpark took the top prize at the Big Idea Challenge at LU and in the Texas State University Business Plan competition.

Selected as one of five finalists among 17 applications, Mane and alumnus Matthew Bukovsky, who earned a BBA in marketing in 2015 and an MBA in 2018, represented the AtmoSpark team in the challenge. Their efforts were supported by the other two members of the AtmoSpark team: Aniket Khade, a Ph.D. student in chemical engineering, and Damiola Runsewe, a master’s student in chemical engineering.

### Industrial engineers support mariner safety

Faculty researchers in industrial engineering have joined with the American Bureau of Shipping in creating the Mariner Safety Research Initiative to support maritime safety internationally. The collaborative effort of Brian Craig, professor and chair of the Department of Industrial Engineering; James Curry, associate professor, and Weihang Zhu, associate professor, includes international maritime industry partners.

The MSRI includes two primary components: an international database of more than 120,000 maritime injury or close call reports from more than 31 data sources and a novel Safety Culture/Leading Safety Indicators Assessment Strategy for the maritime industry. These records represent more than 2,100 vessels and 50,000 mariners worldwide.

Several international shipping companies have used this tool to identify areas of excellence and recommendations for improvement. The overall goal of the MSRI is to improve mariner safety through shared data findings and providing safety-related documents in a useable context.

### Hillin featured famous female flyers

Associate professor of English Sarah Hillin’s lecture, “Flashpoints of Flight: the Enduring Rhetorical Legacy of 20th Century Women Aviators” was the result of a decade of research through letters, speeches, news stories and articles to shed light on the rhetorical legacy of early female aviators who promoted their craft and the involvement of other minorities in the field.

Lamar University selected Hillin, a faculty member since 2006, as the 2017 Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. She is the 31st recipient of the honor, one of the highest accorded a Lamar University faculty member.



### LU partners with UT in DOE grant to explore carbon dioxide storage

Lamar University and the University of Texas are partners in a \$4 million grant from the Department of Energy to explore new technologies for offshore geologic carbon dioxide storage. LU will receive approximately \$150,000 in funding for its portion of the project spread across the colleges of engineering and business.

This award was one of only two given nationally by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Fossil Energy to receive federal funding to assess offshore geologic storage of carbon dioxide and technology development in the Gulf of Mexico. It is the result of work that the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship pioneered late last year in collaboration with the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology for CO2 Storage technology in Southeast Texas, said CICE director Paul Latiolais.

Joining with UT researchers in developing the grant were LU’s Daniel Chen, professor of chemical engineering; Tracy Benson, associate professor of chemical engineering; and Mahdi Safa, assistant professor of construction management.

Offshore geologic storage involves capturing CO2 from a stationary emissions source, transporting the captured CO2 to an offshore site, and injecting it into a geologic formation deep beneath the seabed, where it remains safely stored and isolated from the ocean water.

## REAUD BECOMES SOUTHEAST TEXAS LEGENDS SCHOLARSHIP HONOREE

Distinguished Alumnus Wayne Reaud ’71 was named the sixteenth Southeast Texas Legend Scholarship honoree at a news conference held Nov. 9, 2017, in the lobby of the Wayne A Reaud Administration Building.

The Beaumont Foundation began Southeast Texas Legends Scholarships at LU in 2007 to honor those who blazed a trail across Southeast Texas by providing endowed scholarships for bright youth who need financial help to achieve their potential. There are now 16 named scholarships, each honoring a regional leader and each established with a \$100,000 endowment.

Joining in remarks were businessman and philanthropist Jon Huntsman Sr., founder and executive chairman of Huntsman Corp., President Ken Evans, and nationally recognized trial lawyer Gilbert I. “Buddy” Low. Juan Zabala ’07, vice president for university advancement, and John Adolph, pastor of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Beaumont, also participated in the program.

Reaud founded the firm of Reaud, Morgan & Quinn, and is known throughout the legal community as a champion of working men and women. He received his law degree from Texas Tech University in 1974.

Reaud has been a generous benefactor to LU. His numerous ties to the university include the Wayne A. Reaud Administration Building, the prestigious Reaud Honors College and a decade of service as a Lamar Regent (1985 to 1995). He established the Albert E. and Gena Reaud Scholarship and, through the Beaumont Foundation of America, endowed the Southeast Texas Legends Scholarships. He is a generous supporter of KVLU Public Radio, the Judge Joe J. Fisher Distinguished Lecture Series and Cardinal Athletics.

► **McNair scholar visits Brookhaven National Lab**  
James Drachenberg, assistant professor of physics, traveled to Brookhaven National Lab for the STAR Collaboration Meeting. STAR is a high-energy nuclear physics experiment composed of 61 institutions from 13 countries. Then-student and McNair Scholar Suzanne Wheeler ‘18 also attended, the first LU student to receive a guest appointment at BNL.

► **LU ranked in Top Ten for economic mobility**  
LU was seventh on the national list for economic mobility among online programs in a study of 2,273 colleges, one of only 25 to rank on both the comprehensive list as well as the list of 2018 Most Affordable Online Colleges for Student Economic Mobility, according to SR Education Group, a leading research publisher founded in 2004.

► **Online MPH program ranked No. 3**  
The master’s in public health program recently ranked No. 3 in the U.S. in a review of schools across the nation by AffordableColleges.com. LU’s program, which stood out in both quality and affordability, specializes in health disparities in a 42-credit-hour program that is exclusively online and includes a six-hour capstone experience.

► **NSF grant enhances high-performance computing**  
LU improves its ability to conduct leading-edge research and educational activities through a hybrid CPU/GPU high-performance computing cluster thanks to a \$516,000 National Science Foundation Major Research Instrumentation grant. Jing Zhang, assistant professor of computer science, served as principal investigator for the collaborative project.





We hope you enjoy reading about former classmates. If you have news to share—a position announcement, milestone, achievement, wedding, baby—or know the whereabouts of a lost alumnus, we want to hear from you.

SEND US YOUR NEWS:

Cardinal Cadence  
P.O. Box 10011  
Beaumont, TX 77710  
e-mail [alumni@lamar.edu](mailto:alumni@lamar.edu)  
or call (409) 880-8921

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60s

Best Lawyers in America recognized Distinguished Alumnus **David J. Beck** '61, B.S. government, '12, honorary doctorate, in its 2018 ranking on the nation's top legal talent, naming him a 2018 Best Lawyer in America, along with 13 attorneys in the firm he cofounded and of which he is a partner, Beck Redden.

**Jack Randorff** '65 B.S. physics, earned his doctorate in physics in 1970 and is principal consultant for Randorff and Associates Inc. He and his wife, **Pamela (Downey)** '66, B.S. biology, live in Norman, Okla.

70s

**Paula Sherman** '70, B.S. elementary education, serves on the Kelly Alumni Association Board. She lives in Beaumont.

**Thomas Jones** '71, B.A. economics, is sales director of Buckalew Chevrolet. He lives in Conroe.

**Emrick Jagneaux** '73, B.S. health and physical education, is head baseball coach at Parkview Baptist School in Baton Rouge. He lives in Conroe with his wife, Cheryl.

**Pamela (Temple) Thrasher** '74, B.S. elementary education, teaches fourth grade at Buna Elementary School. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Charles.

**Coqueuse Williams** '74, B.A. sociology, is director of the parish social ministry of Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas and serves on the Kelly Alumni Association Board. She lives in Beaumont.



**Kiran Desai** '76, M.E. engineering, is a project manager for Environmental Unlimited Inc. and lives in Edinburg with his wife, Mina.

**Bill Dixon** '77, B.S. secondary education, is municipal judge of Bridge City. He and his wife, **Mary (Stubbs) Dixon** '81, M.Ed. special education, live in Bridge City.

**Rev. Albert Moses Jr.** '78, B.S. music-vocals, and his wife, Charlotte, traveled to Kenya on a mission trip, which inspired them to adopt a child from Kenya. The couple lives in Port Arthur, where Albert manages a non-profit organization for at-risk youth.

80s

**Dr. Alan Coleman** '80, B.S. biology, received the Certificate for International Volunteer Service from the American Dental Association in 2017, one of only fifty-seven dentists to receive the award. To qualify, dentists must document 14 days of international service in a 24-month period. In 2009, Dr. Coleman and his wife, **Julie (DuBois)** '80, B.G.S. liberal arts, founded Hands for God Ministry. Since then, they have provided free dentistry in Haiti, Kenya, Honduras and Guatemala. Dr. Coleman is now focusing his service in Texas, with the Texas Mission of Mercy clinics across the state. The couple lives in Beaumont for 34 years, where he and his Julie reside.

**Kandy Daniel** '80, B.B.A. accounting, is the City of Port Arthur's assistant finance director over budgeting. She lives in Beaumont.



**Barbara (Bobbitt) Huval** '80, M.A. English, retired as chair of liberal arts after 35 years of service to Lamar State College-Port Arthur. She lives in Port Arthur.

**Col. Mark Losack** '80, B.S. health education, earned his medical degree and is a chiropractor with the Army at Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, Wash. He and his wife, Anne, live in Lakewood, Wash.

**Matt Burnett** '81, B.S. health and physical education, works as a defensive line coach at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School and lives in Orange with his wife **Lindy (Williamson)** '77 A.A.S. dental hygiene.

**Don Clayton** '81, B.S. health and physical education, was inducted into the Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor at the Balfour Hall of Honor Banquet. He was also inducted into the Greater Houston Football Coaches Association Hall of Honor, the University of Wyoming Hall of Fame and the Katy School District Hall of Honor. He lives in Katy.

**Cyndi (Adcock) Crews** '82, B.S. mathematics, owns the Abilita office in Southeast Texas and is a communications information technology consultant with 20 years of telecommunications management experience. She lives in Lumberton with her husband, **David** '86, B.S. computer science.

**Michael McEachern** '82, B.B.A. personnel administration, earned a master's in healthcare administration and is founder and president of High Performance Solutions Group. He and his wife, Linda, live in Willis.



**Charles Sherman** '82, B.S. environmental science, is a project manager for Waste Management. He lives in Port Arthur with his wife, Robin.

**Leta Walton** '82, B.S. electrical engineering, is now a senior instrument and electrical engineer for Hargrove Engineers and Constructors. She lives in Mobile, Ala., with her husband, Peter Haring.

**William Dixon** '84, B.S. electrical engineering, has retired from his career as an engineer. He most recently worked for Lockheed Martin. He lives in Camden, Del., with his wife Wanda.

**Lynae (Ashcraft) Sanford** '85, B.S. speech, '00, M.S. theatre, is managing director of Orange's Luther Theater. She and her husband, **Jerry** '87, B.S. kinesiology, who is an assistant professor biology at Lamar State College-Orange, live in Orange.

**David Crews** '86, B.S. computer science, retired after working for ExxonMobil for more than 25 years. He lives in Lumberton with his wife, **Cyndi (Adcock)** '82, B.S. mathematics.

**Harold Munlin** '87, B.S. industrial engineering, has started working as a senior staff industrial engineer at Bell Helicopter. He lives in Mansfield with his wife, **Melody Munlin** '87, B.B.A. general business.

**Kathy (Wilson) Smith** '87, B.M. music education, is a band director in Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She lives in Orange with her husband, Edward.

90s

**Sharon Smith** '90, B.S. elementary education, teaches in the Beaumont school district, where she lives with her husband, James.

**Adina (Ward) Josey** '92, B.S. home economics-interior design, is senior planner and floodplain administrator for the City of Beaumont. She and her husband, Blaine, live in Beaumont.

**Kurt Gore** '95, B.S. sociology, earned his doctorate in sociology and is manager of the statistics and demographics section of the Texas Legislative Council. His wife, **Jennifer (Massie)** '98, B.S. civil engineering, is a supervising engineer for the city of Austin, where they live.

**Jennifer (Legnon) McCauley** '95, B.A. English, earned a master's degree in library and information science, and is the librarian at John B. Connally High School. She lives in Austin.

**Susanne (Vickanair) Thames** '95, B.A. English, teaches seventh grade language arts teacher at Groves Middle School. She and her husband, **Ben** '99, B.S. industrial technology, live in Groves.

**Billy Brennan** '96, B.S. computer science, is a data software specialist for Richard Design Services. He lives in Nederland.

**Cheri (Osberg) Kelly** '97, B.B.A. office administration, now owns and operates her own business, C&C Air Services, LLC. She lives in Vidor with her husband, Calvin.



**Patricia LaForge** '97, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, has retired from her career. She lives in Galveston.

**Ward Willis** '97, B.S. health education, is a cyber operations officer for the Air Force. He lives in Springfield, Va., with his wife, Dawn.

**Melissa (Moore) Davis** '99, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches eighth grade in Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She lives in Orange with her husband, **Charles** '92, B.B.A. accounting, who recently took on a position with Moncla's Investments.

00s

**Calvin Carter** '00, B.F.A. studio art, lives in Port Neches with his wife, Ashley. He teaches art at Port Neches-Groves High School and received the 2016-2017 Spotlight on Excellence award from PNG school district.

**Anna (Sanchez) Castro** '01, B.S. kinesiology, is head volleyball coach for Harlandale High School. She lives in San Antonio with her husband, Jessie.

**Betty (Moore) McCauley** '01, B.S. earth science, has retired. She lives in Baytown with her husband, Stephen.

**Mohammed Muslim** '01, M.S. computer science, '04, M.S. environmental engineering, is a senior application analyst for the City of Minneapolis. He lives in St. Paul, Minn.

**Staci Migues** '02, B.B.A. accounting, B.B.A. finance, moved

**LU Alumni Night at Painting at the Pub**—LU alumni and friends gathered at the Clifton Steamboat Museum Complex at O'Hearn's Pub for an evening of painting, food and fun.

1. Rebekah Drummond '16, '17 and Matthew Hunt '17
2. Sisters Mauren (Wiggins) Winchell '73 and Carol (Wiggins) Hearn '81

**Class of 1967 Reunion**—Lamar State College of Technology graduates of the Class of 1967 gathered Saturday, Sept. 30, 2017, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their graduation.

3. Judy (Walker) Linsley '67, Louise (Markley) Wynne '67, Mary Ann Parker, Janey (Nosek) Phelan '67, Sharon (Wolda) Ebling '67 and Judi Smith '70
4. Ann (McCarty) Antoine '67 and Roy Christoffel '67

to Houston in 2012 to further her career and earned her C.P.A. in 2015. She is an accounting manager for G&A Partners.

**Meredith (Edmonds) Brawner** '03, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, '14, M. Ed. administration, is assistant principal at Bridge City Intermediate School. She and her husband, Jonathan, live in Port Neches.

**Christy (Wright) Justice** '03, B.S. nursing, has taken a job as a nurse manager with Houston Methodist Hospital. She lives in Missouri City, with her husband, Richard.

**Grace Megnet** '03, M.A. visual arts, '04, M.F.A., '17, M.A. English, lives in Beaumont and is the owner of Megnet Galleries. She has won three first place non-fiction awards in the annual Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers



| CLASS NOTES |

Competition. Her art is displayed in Spain and the Swiss Embassy in Madrid.

**Bobby Smith** '03, B.B.A. accounting, is accounting/finance manager for his own branch of Supreme Lending. He lives in Dallas with his wife, Carolyn.

**Bobby Solis** '03, B.B.A. general business – advertising, is a manager of materials and services for Rangeland Energy in Sugar Land. He lives in Missouri City.

**Marisa (McEwin) Gilley** '04, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches at the Early Childhood School in Lumberton school district. She lives in Buna with her spouse, Charles.

**Everlina (Spikes) Lee** '04, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, has retired from her job as an administrative assistant in the LU Department of Earth and Space Sciences. She will be greatly missed by the entire department. She lives in Beaumont.

**Paul Lemoine** '04, B.S. criminal justice, is chief of police for the City of Port Neches, where he lives.

**Shielonda Mikle** '04, B.S. family and consumer sciences, is a career development counselor. She lives in Spring.

After 11 years and 289 tournaments, **Chris Stroud** '04, B.B.A. management information systems, earned his first PGA TOUR win at the Barracuda Championship 2017 in Reno. He and his wife, Tiffany, live in Spring.

**Krissie Day** '05, B.A. theatre, has started a new job as a stage manager at Texas A&M University in College Station. She lives in College Station.

**Shannon Holmes** '05, Ed.D. educational leadership, is executive director of the Association of Professional Educators. Previously, he served as superintendent for Hardin Jefferson school district, which had the only Region 5 school administrator's board to be named a Texas Association of School Administrators “honor board” since 2005. He and his wife, **Melissa (Baker)** '95, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, live in Sour Lake.

**Jacob Pfaff** '05, M.S. kinesiology, is an athletic trainer at Central High School. He lives in Beaumont.

**Lauri Arnold-Calder** '06, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, '11, M.Ed. educational technology leadership,

is program director for computer networking and troubleshooting technology at Lamar Institute of Technology. She and her partner **Kandi** '94, B.G.S. general studies, live in Sour Lake.

**Mellie (Proctor) Bevilacqua** '06, B.B.A. finance, is executive director of the Foundation for Southeast Texas and serves on Kelly Alumni Association Board. She and her husband, **Sam** '03, B.B.A. finance, owner of Bevilacqua Construction, live in Beaumont.

**Marcus Henslee** '06, B.B.A. human resource management, has begun working as a project coordinator for ISC Constructors, LLC. He lives in Lumberton with his wife, **Kathryn (Gibbons)** '09, B.B.A. marketing.

**Brittany (Broussard) Robinson** '06, B.G.S. general studies, teaches in the Hamshire-Fannett school district. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Brett.

**Mike Bombek** '07, B.G.S. general studies, '13, M.Ed. administration, is both a teacher and a coach at Northside School District's Jefferson Middle School. He lives in Castroville with his wife, Danielle.

**Jared Byrd** '07, B.B.A. finance, is assistant vice president of lending for Five Point Credit Union. He and his wife, **Marylyn (Gibbs)** '08, B.B.A. accounting, '09, M.B.A. business administration, live in Beaumont.

The American Institute of Chemicals recognized **Chaitanya Gottimukkala** '08, M.E.S. chemical engineering, for his contributions to process safety as an outstanding young professional in its inaugural roster of “35 Under 35 Award” recipients. He is a senior risk engineer at RISKbytes Inc. in Houston, where he lives.

**Trang Tran** '08, B.B.A. marketing, has accepted a position as a senior financial advisor and investment representative with BBVA Compass Bank. She lives in Port Arthur.

**Brian Roberson** '09, B.S. communication, '10, M.Ed. education technology leadership, is dean of instruction and assistant principal at Navarro Middle School in Houston, where he and his wife, Jocquelyn, live.

**Sharon (Kellett) Schultze** '09, M.Ed. administration, is an assistant principal in Fort Worth school district. She lives in Arlington.

**Krystal Smith** '09, B.G.S. general studies, now works as a regional talent acquisition specialist for The Service Companies. She lives in Orange.

**Bao Tran** '09, B.S. biology, is a chiropractor. He lives in Austin with his wife, Oanh.

**Tiffany West** '09, B.B.A. human resource management, works for Cardtronics as a compensation and benefits specialist. She lives in Magnolia.

**Marcus Ebow** '10, M.Ed. administration, is head basketball coach at Goose Creek Memorial High School in Baytown, where he lives.

**Merideth Abbott** '11, A.A.S. nursing, '13 B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse with Houston Methodist The Woodlands Hospital. She lives in Conroe.

**Amber (Alexander) Clark** '11, B.G.S. general studies, is a member of the Lamar University Alumni Advisory Board. She is operations manager of parks and recreation for the City of Beaumont's Best Years Center. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Gregory.

**Deandre Dixon** '11, B.G.S. general studies, married Henrietta Walker '08, B.S. exercise science and fitness management. The couple lives in Houston, where Deandre is a firefighter and EMT for the city.

**Thaddeaus Green** '11, B.S. communication, earned a master's degree in city/urban community and regional planning in 2016. He is a Capital City Fellow for the Department of General Services in Washington, D.C., where he lives.

**Crystal (Majdalani) King** '11, family and consumer sciences-fashion retailing and merchandising, serves on the Kelly Alumni Association Board. She and her husband, **Logan** '12, B.B.A. finance, who is a financial consultant with Merrill Lynch, live in Beaumont.

**ReNita Antoine** '12, B.S. criminal justice, received the Leadership Achievement Award at the Cooley Law School Honors Convocation. She lives in Irving.

**Clarke Baker** '12, M.B.A. business administration, is a business development analyst for Merrill Lynch & Co. and serves on the Kelly Alumni Association Board. He and his wife, **Katie (O-Neill)** '11, M.S. family and consumer sciences, who is director of child nutrition

for Lumberton school district, live in Beaumont.

After playing for the Phoenix Suns in 2017 and the New Orleans Pelicans early this year, **Michael James** '12, B.G.S. general studies, now plays for Olimpia Milano, an LBA Italian professional basketball team based in Milan, Italy.

**Henry Rauschenberger** '12, M.Ed. administration, earned his law degree in 2017. He and his wife **Abby** '06, B.S. communication, live in Baton Rouge, La.

**Nicole (Mazzola) Renner** '12, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, is now working for Hamshire-Fannett school district teaching science and social studies. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, **Wesley** '09, B.G.S. general studies, who works for Performance Contractors.

**Elliot Abbey** '13, B.B.A. business administration, works as a tribe real estate officer for the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas. He lives in Livingston with his wife, Emma.

**Operium (Jackson) Baldwin** '13, M.Ed. educational administration, is an instructional coach in Crosby school district, where she lives with her husband, Alex.

**Ryan Barnett** '13, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a project engineer for Mitsubishi Cement Corp. in Lucerne Valley, Calif. He and his wife, Traci, live in Big Bear Lake, Calif.

**James Foutz** '13, B.B.A. management information systems, is marketing and conservation manager for the city of Georgetown, where he lives.

**Jason Garza** '13, M.Ed. educational administration, is football coach and teaches mathematics at Cypress Ranch High School. He and his wife, Megan, live in Cypress.

**Ronald Hebert III** '13, M.S. kinesiology, has taken on a position as an athletic trainer and instructor in East Chambers school district. He and his wife, Maria, live in Orange.

**Cynthia (Speights) Ince** '13, M.Ed. school counseling, is a licensed professional counselor in special education across multiple school districts for Sabine County Shared Services. She and her husband, Tom, live in Leander.

**Bryan Kenney** '13, M.Ed., educational administration, is head wrestling coach and teaches social

studies at Plano East High School. He and his wife, Laura, live in Rowlett.

**Samon (Tahir) Rasul** '13, B.B.A. human resource management, '15, M.B.A. business administration, is a program coordinator for the University of Maryland's online M.B.A. program. She lives in Jessup, Md., with her husband Hammad.

**Shaneka (Guidry) Richardson** '13, B.S.W. social work, is now working as a CPS CVS specialist for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Adrian.

**Mary Shelley** '13, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, has is assistant director of recreational sports at San Jacinto College's central campus. She lives in Houston.

**Lisa Topping** '13, B.S. psychology, '15, M.S. applied psychology, is an occupational psychologist for Right 2 Write. She lives in Leyland, United Kingdom.

**Christopher Ward** '13, B.S. psychology, is an environmental analyst with the LNVA North Regional Treatment Plant. He lives in Lumberton with his wife, Tracy.

**James Wright** '13, B.B.A finance, is vice president of First Financial Bank in Orange, where he lives with his wife, Jennifer.

**Tanya (Parks) Avera** '14, B.G.S. general studies, now works for CVS Health as a field colleague trainer. She lives in Silsbee with her husband, Jimmie.

**Joyce Blain** '14, M.A. English, teaches in the Hamshire-Fannett school district. She lives in Beaumont.

**Lyann Castillo** '14, B.S. civil engineering, is a project engineer for Bowman Consulting Group. She lives in Austin.

**Stephen Chapman** '14, Ed.D. educational leadership, is coordinator of student and community engagement in Forney school district. He lives in Seagoville with his wife, Elizabeth.

**Will Cockerill** '14, M. Ed. administration, is athletic director and head football coach at Carrizo Springs High School. He lives in Carrizo Springs with his wife, Gloria.

**Casey Dean** '14, B.S. mathematics, B.S. computer science, '15, M.S. mathematics, is a software developer with Goldman, Sachs & Co. He lives in Garland.

**Ryan Dollinger** '14, B.S.W. social work, earned a master's degree in public administration in 2014 and is a social worker for Curo Health Services. He and his wife, Amber, had a son, John Daniel, Sept. 5, 2017. They live in Beaumont.

**Michelle (Sheppard) Green** '14, B.S. chemistry, teaches biology and pre-AP biology at Lumberton High School. She and her husband, Joseph “Vance,” live in Lumberton.

**Lacey (Walker) Padgett** '14 Ed.D. educational leadership, is the director of teaching, learning, and curriculum in Ennis school district. She lives in Seagoville with her husband, Bruce.

**Natalie Rhodes** '14, B.S. dance, is an admissions representative in Lamar University's recruitment division. She lives in Port Neches.

**Jessica (Reddington) Stout** '14, B.S. industrial technology, works for Richard Design Services as a controls systems engineer. She lives in Vidor with her husband, Charles.

**Shannon (Abernathy) Bush** '15, M.Ed. teacher leadership, has taken on multiple roles at Gary school district's Junior High School including ELA teacher and cheer coach. She lives in Gary with her husband, John.

**Robert Daniel** '15, B.S. chemical engineering, is instrumental and controls engineer for Coastal Automation Services. He lives in Beaumont.

**Lovette (Martin) Davis** '15, M.Ed. administration, teaches at Central High School in the Beaumont school district. The couple lives in Beaumont.

**Gladys Garcia** '15, M.S. speech-language pathology, is a speech language pathologist for Victoria school district. She lives in Victoria with her husband, **Sean Murphy** '15, B.S. chemical engineering.

**Britni Jackson** '15, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches kindergarten at William B. Travis Elementary School in Port Arthur, where she lives.



**National Coffee Day**—*The Office of Alumni Affairs treated students to coffee on National Coffee Day.*  
**1.** Jasmine (Morris) Johnson '16

**Evans Reception**—*Mr. and Mrs. Randy Best hosted a reception at their home in Dallas honoring Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Evans.*  
**2.** Rebecca Meadows '82, Pam (McKee) Durall '72, Shannon (Copeland) Figueroa '02, '03, 07 and Briana (Gattis) Baker '11, '13

**Persuasion and Negotiation in the Workplace**—*LU partnered with the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce for a professional development event. College of Business faculty taught the audience techniques on using persuasion in the workplace and tips on negotiation.*  
**3.** Paul Howell '12, '16 and Chad Mason





**LU Alumni Past Presidents' Luncheon**—Former presidents of the Lamar University Alumni Association and Alumni Advisory Board gathered for a luncheon with President Ken Evans. Back row from left, Gilbert Adams '64, Bert Rogers '56, Jake Tortorice '76, Doug Matthews '74, LU President Ken Evans, Bud Leonard '50, '53, '76, Clayton Lau '69, Tony Landry '94, Frank Messina '71, Trent Devenzio '90, and Vice President of University Advancement Juan Zabala '07. Front row from left, Paula (Tate) O'Neal '69, '79, Laurie (House) Ritchel '85, Carol (Patteson) Hebert '89, '90, Ellen (Walker) Rienstra '62, '80, Alumni Director Shannon (Copeland) Figueroa '02, '03, '07, and Jimmy Booker '55, '56.

**Andrew McMullin** '15, B.B.A. general business, now works in Houston, Texas, for the Houston Astros Foundation. He lives in Friendswood with his wife, **Jasmine (Castillo)** '12, B.S. family and consumer sciences.

**Sean Murphy** '15, B.S. chemical engineering, is an operating engineer with Invista. He is married to **Gladys Garcia** '13, B.S. communication disorders, '15, M.S. speech-language pathology. The couple lives in Victoria.

**Stuart Musick** '15, Ed.D. educational leadership, is superintendent of Navasota school district, where he and his wife, Lauren, live.

**Kayla Comeaux** '16, B.B.A. accounting, and **Dalton Holly** '16, B.B.A. management, were married on the island of Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos Islands. Both Kayla and Dalton are LU Reaud Honors College alumni.

**Tina (Ortiz) Crochet** '16, B.B.A. accounting, is a financial analyst for

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. She lives in Groves.

**Erica Edgerly** '16, B.S. family and consumer sciences-fashion retailing and merchandising, owns Merle Norman and Milli Kids Boutique in Orange, where she lives.

**Jason Hatton** '16, B.S. computer science, B.S. mathematics, '17, M.S. mathematics, recently joined the tech firm WiPro in Dallas, working in data analytics. He lives in Fort Worth.

**Franchelle Hill** '16, B.S. communication, is head track coach and teaches English language arts at Stafford High School. Her fiancé, **Trevon Davis** '15, B.S. criminal justice, a probation officer for Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, proposed to Franchelle by teaming with his fellow Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity brothers to remake Guy's 1990 rhythm and blues hit "Let's Chill," and the video went viral. They live in Houston.

**Sam Nacol** '16, B.B.A. general business, married Rebecca "Becca" Collins Aug. 12, 2017. They live in Beaumont.

**Ebubekir Orsun** '16, Ed.D. educational leadership, is principal of Albuquerque School of Excellence. He lives in Albuquerque, N.M., with his wife, Secil.

**Taryn Petty** '16, B.B.A. management, '16, B.B.A. entrepreneurship, is office administrator at Social Solutions and assistant manager of Cinemark in Beaumont, where she lives.

**Taylor Stockton** '16, B.B.A. accounting, '17, M.S. accounting, is an accountant and audit assistant with Deloitte Services in Houston. She lives in Pearland.

**Brooke Tait** '16, B.G.S. general studies, is a senior student admissions assistant for Lamar University. She lives in Port Arthur.

**Jena Walker** '16, M.Ed. administration, lives in Wimberley and teaches at Fuentes Elementary School.

**Stacey Berryman** '17, B.S. criminal justice, is a police officer for Cypress-Fairbanks school district. She lives in Houston.

**Naelyn (Mills) Carruth** '17, B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse for Moore Regional Hospital. She and her husband, Bryant, live in Fort Bragg, N.C.

**Hannah Ferguson** '17, B.S. family and consumer sciences-fashion retailing and merchandising, married **Wayne Stanley** '15, B.S. mechanical engineering, Aug. 12, 2017. They live in Lumberton.

**Macy Hamilton** '17, B.S. speech and hearing science, married Eric Truncali '17, B.B.A. management information systems. They recently gave birth to a baby boy, Cohen, and live in Orange.



by Caitlin Duerler

Working alongside the Office of Alumni Affairs, the Dishman Art Museum held their second annual alumni show this past summer. For the inaugural show, director Dennis Kiel organized an exhibit featuring illustrious alumni in the museum's permanent collection including artists Paul Manes and John Alexander. The 10 artists for this year's alumni exhibition titled After School Special, however, were chosen from around 40 applicants by juror and former Dishman director Lynne Lokensgard.

The art on display featured small bodies of work from art department alumni who graduated in the past five decades. While determining the lineup for the show, Lokensgard focused on the work in front of her rather than reading artist statements and vitas. She looked for work that displayed "exquisite craftsmanship" in addition to how the artist has been shaped by her colleagues in the art department.

"During the 39 years I was an art historian at LU, I was impressed with the quality of my colleagues' teaching," she said. "I learned so much from them and all they have done for their students so I wanted to see the proof in this show. When reviewing applicants, I was looking for what did the art department teach them, what did they do when they

went out into the world and how have they continued to improve as artists."

Many of the artists in the show are former students of Lokensgard, and she continues to follow their work and stay in contact with them because of the sense of the community hewed while artmaking in Southeast Texas.

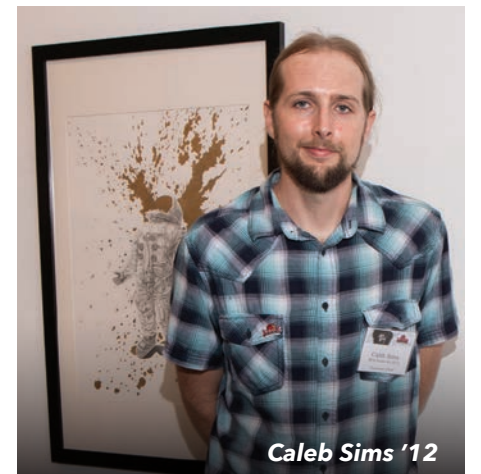
"Those of us who are interested in the arts in the area tend to cluster together and give each other moral support, and I think that is what makes us a special community."

Works ranged from two-dimensional paintings, drawing and photography to three-dimensional sculpted and mixed-media works using materials as diverse as teeth and home-crafted paper to bronze.

The alumni of the art department featured in the show included photographer Eric Adams and mixed-media artist Sunni Forcier, both class of 2015; painter Amy (Tolbert) Faggard, class of 1994 and 2013; mixed-media artist Caleb Sims, class of 2012; photographer Megan (Crosby) Badger, class of 2010; mixed-media artist Justin Varner, class of 2005; photographer Valerie Yaklin-Brown, class of 1992 and 1997; painter Ken Mazzu, class of 1992; sculptor Amy Richard, class of 1984 and sculptor David Iles, class of 1973.



Amy Richard '84



Caleb Sims '12



Amy Faggard '94, '13



David Iles '73





**LU Alumni Homecoming Tailgate Party**—Alumni gathered at the Montagne Center for a party before the homecoming football game last November.

- 1. Shelby Whitehead '17, Katie Deaton '18, Jerrilynn Miller '02 and Ricky Hollier
- 2. Kris Reynolds '16, '17 and Rebecca Jean Reynolds '83

**Golden Circle Luncheon**—LU welcomed back to campus alumni from the Classes of 1924-1967 and during the Golden Circle Luncheon at the Lamar University Event Center.

- 3. Dan '65 and Jan (Caldwell) Hallmark '76, '83
- 4. Dot (Tudor) Morrison '59, '90, Betty Pratt and Roy Pratt '61, '69
- 5. Daniel Clark '64 and Hazel Baily



## Gilligan becomes ABCA Hall of Famer



The American Baseball Coaches Association inducted former baseball head coach Jim Gilligan '69 into its Hall of Fame this past January. Induction into the ABCA Hall of Fame is the highest honor bestowed by the organization, which was founded in 1945. The Hall of Fame began in 1966. Fellow inductees included Ed Blankmeyer, St. John's; Hill Denson, Belhaven; Don Freeman, Prairie High School (Wash.); Tim Hill, Sr., State College of Florida; Bobby Howard, Columbus High School (Ga.); Andy Lopez, Arizona; Stan Luketich, Desert Vista High School (Ariz.); Pat McMahon, New York Yankees; Frank Permuy, Gaither High School (Florida); John Schaly, Ashland.

For the better part of 39 years, Gilligan—a former pitching ace for LU from 1967-68—was the face of LU baseball. He began his coaching career as a graduate assistant under Bill Vincent in 1970 after a brief stint in Detroit's Class-A affiliate in New York.

In 1972, he took his first head coaching job and led Western New Mexico to a 10-10 record. After one year, his alma mater came calling; he answered and took over as head coach in 1973. Other than a brief stint as a professional club coach from 1987-1991, he was the skipper until his 2016 retirement.

With his first win of the 2015 season, he accomplished something that only 18 coaches in the history of the NCAA did before him, attain 1,300 career wins. That win came in a 7-6 victory over New Mexico State, and by the end of the season Gilligan claimed 1,320 wins. His career record stands at 1,355-894-1, which stands at 13th all-time in wins in NCAA history, and all but two of LU's 12 conference championships were won under Gilligan's tutelage.

In his final year, he downed College World Series finalist Arizona 13-5 on the backs of two grand slams in the contest. Just two days later, he guided an eight-run comeback and victory over fifth-

ranked powerhouse LSU. His final year had him with a 35-19 record including a staggering 15-game win streak.

Counting his playing and graduate assistant days, the 2012 Distinguished Alumnus faithfully served LU for more than 40 years and saw nearly every Cardinal win. As a head coach, he has accounted for an astounding 30 30-win seasons, eight 40-win seasons and one 50-win season. His 1981 squad set a school record for wins in a season at 54.

The six-time league coach of the year considers one of his greatest accomplishments, prior to this one, to be his induction into the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame in 2004. He went in alongside Houston Astro greats Jeff Bagwell and Craig Biggio and Rangers' Kenny Rogers. He was also inducted into the Southland Conference Hall of Honor, and joined eight of LU's best, J.B. Higgins, F.L. McDonald, Billy Tubbs, Belle Mead, Sonny Jolly, Katrinka Jo Crawford, Paul Zeek and Chris Stroud.



**Alumni Community Service**—LU alumni and current students volunteered at Nutrition & Services for Seniors to prepare for an upcoming event and also perform some lawn maintenance and organization of their store room.



## Former National Champion hired to lead LU Athletics

by James Dixon

When Marco Born took over as director of athletics in April, becoming a part of We Are LU culture, his arrival in Beaumont came by way of a circuitous route. A native of Germany, Born studied in California during high school as an aspiring tennis student-athlete. His success on the court earned him a scholarship to play tennis at Middle Tennessee State.

“Coming to the U.S. gave me the opportunity to get an education while playing the sport I loved, which I couldn’t do back home,” said Born. “I went to high school in California and knew that I liked it here in the U.S. I’m not sure at that time that I knew I would stay permanently, but I knew I wanted to get my degree and eventually a master’s degree.”

There is a prominent NCAA ad which states that “there are more than 400,000 student-athletes and almost all of them go pro in something other than sports.” The living embodiment of that ad, Born was a standout on the tennis court at Middle Tennessee. He received All-America honors on his way to the 2007 doubles national title.

“I think somewhere along the way at Middle [Tennessee], I realized I was near the end of my playing career,” said Born. “It became very important for me to get my ‘ducks in a row’ for the rest of my life.

“That is important to me when I speak with our athletes. I remind them there is nothing wrong with aspiring to go pro, but make sure you have your academics in order to pursue a career in something other than sports,” added Born.

Born arrived in Beaumont following a four-year stint at Louisiana Tech, where he served the final year as executive associate athletics director. He oversaw

while overall fundraising revenue to the department increased by 252 percent under his watch.

Born also oversaw ticket sales for the second- and fourth-largest crowds in Joe Aillet Stadium against Southern University (27,905) and Louisiana-Lafayette (26,910). Overall revenue to the ticketing department increased by 58 percent in his final two years in Ruston.

Born came to Ruston from his alma mater, where he served as associate athletics director. During his time on the senior administrative staff, Born handled all the internal and external duties with oversight of marketing, ticketing, Aspire and Learfield partners. He served on Middle Tennessee’s senior staff for five years and was heavily involved in the school’s transition to Conference USA. He also oversaw the \$11 million renovation to the Murphy Center and a \$1.4 million turf replacement at Floyd Stadium.

A 2017 Middle Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame inductee, Born earned his bachelor’s degree in business administration from Middle Tennessee in 2007 and his master’s in sports management in 2009. He is married to the former Emily Vest, a former Division I tennis player at Middle Tennessee. The couple has a five-year-old daughter named Scarlett Elizabeth.



Chad Powell '07 and son Hudson with Marco Born, right

external operations, including ticketing and marketing, while serving as the liaison with LA Tech Sports Properties and Aspire. Under his direction, the Louisiana Tech athletic program saw unprecedented fundraising growth and is now supported by the largest donor base in school history. Overall revenue to the department increased by 148 percent

## In Memoriam

Nancy Evans  
1949-2018



Nancy Evans, First Lady of Lamar University, touched everyone in the LU community and beyond with her generous spirit and her passion for art, sustainability and the environment. The mark she left on LU will live on in the many activities and programs she created during her past five years at the university.

Many of Evans’ projects focused on beautification needs across campus. She is responsible for numerous bicycle rack additions as well as updated gardens, where she utilized her skill as a master gardener. It was not unusual to see her out weeding a garden in the Quad or near the Mary and John Gray Library when she was out on a walk and saw it needed to be done. Evans also would pick up any trash on these same walks and deposit in a nearby trashcan bearing a sign she conceived about keeping the university beautiful.

Through her formation of LU’s Public Art Committee, she worked to transform buildings and open spaces on campus with various paintings and sculptures among many others. Additionally, Evans fostered constructive dialogue on differing issues through the founding of a program called Cardinal Conversations in her home. Her legacy will also be remembered through the Women and Philanthropy program she created. This unique offering at LU was a way to bring women together and learn more about how to give, manage their money and become more involved in their communities.

President Evans will continue to work towards their shared vision for Lamar University as the community keeps her memory alive through the many interests she invested herself in throughout campus.





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# From rushing to graduate to hating to leave: *Langham discovers We Are LU spirit*

by Hannah Carlson



*After Hurricane Harvey, marketing major Davey Langham's dedication to LU changed drastically and defined his idea of We Are LU. The support he*

*received from staff during his time of need encouraged him to become more involved on campus. He has since become an LU Ambassador and joined the American Marketing Association student organization.*

*"After the hurricane, my house was three or four feet under water. And LU did a thing where they had staff call around to ask students if they were okay," Langham said. "I don't know exactly who it was, but she asked me if I was okay. I said, 'Yeah, I'm doing fine, everything's okay.' But she could tell that I wasn't okay. So she pressed on and was like, 'Hey, we're all in this together. We're all Cardinals. We're here to help. Talk to me; tell me what's going on.' So we spent about thirty minutes on the phone. It was really nice to have somebody to talk to in that moment. And that is when I realized I wanted to be more involved. That's what really turned it around for me here at LU."*

*Before the hurricane, Langham had plans to graduate as early as possible, staying*

*unnoticed and not participating. After the hurricane, he applied and was accepted as an LU Ambassador, joined AMA and has plans to participate in more organizations on campus. "Now that I'm more involved with things, I don't want to graduate because I don't want to leave!" he laughed.*

*Langham, a Lumberton native, mentioned that although their home was flooded and located near a creek, his parents wanted to rebuild on the same land. "I thought it was a horrible idea because I know it's going to happen again. So I put together a powerpoint and presented it to them about why we should move versus rebuild. I actually convinced them to move. We live in Silsbee now—not by a creek."*

*One of the unique aspects of LU that Langham is proud of is how the professors and instructors care about the individual student. "They actually care," he said. "They're not here just to collect the check, teach a class, move on to the next group of students. They really care, and I don't think that's something that you would get anywhere else."*

*"Prof. Escamilla [a business instructor] and I are super close, and he sends me emails to this day. He knew when I got a new job at Chick-fil-a and sent me an email saying, 'congrats on getting the new job, how's it going?' Prof. Seawright [an*

*accounting professor] sent me an email once the ambassador list came out saying, 'Hey, I saw that you're an ambassador, that's really cool! I knew you could do it, great job!'"*

*As an ambassador for LU, Langham attests that a person cannot get through their years attending LU without someone encouraging them and inviting them to be involved in something or attend an event.*

*"The phrase 'We are LU' actually means a lot because it plays back to when the hurricane hit and having someone reach out and say, 'We are here.' We are all here together. Everybody is here to help, and I've seen that countless times, whether it be a new student walking around lost, and you'll see five or six people flock to them saying, 'Hey! Where do you need to go? What can we help you with?' You see it when it's the first couple of weeks of class when everyone was handing out breakfast or coffee just to let students know 'hey, it's early. We all get it. It's tough. It's the beginning of the year, but we can do it.' The mentality is 'let's get through it together.' It really touches me honestly."*

*Langham is a business management intern at Chick-fil-a. After graduation, he hopes to attend the company's leadership development program, which would either put him on track to get his own store or prepare him to join the corporate office in a marketing position.*

To learn more about making a difference in the lives of LU students, please contact Lamar University Advancement.  
(409) 880-8422 • [development@lamar.edu](mailto:development@lamar.edu) • [legacy.lamar.edu](http://legacy.lamar.edu)