

# CARDINAL CADENCE

THE MAGAZINE OF LAMAR UNIVERSITY

VOL. 47, NO. 1 | SUMMER 2019



**VIBRANT AND VITAL:**  
*The Economic Engine of  
Southeast Texas and Beyond*



| FROM THE **PRESIDENT** |



Lamar University is proud of the impact we have within our community of Southeast Texas and beyond. We are a socio-economic hub for our largely industrial-based area not only with the thousands of career-ready graduates we produce each year but also for the research our faculty and students do that is timely and often locally-focused. LU also contributes greatly to the arts within the region through the College of Fine Arts and Communication and the Center for the History and Culture. This issue of Cadence concentrates on everything from healthcare, banking and retail to restaurants and culture, along with faculty, staff and students who influence and connect LU to the rest of our region, state, country and global community.

The university's new 83,000-square-foot Science and Technology Building, our first fully academic-focused facility built on campus in almost five decades, opened in April. It consists of seven instructional and 14 research labs, a large project instruction room, and a maker's space where students can fabricate ideas they develop into product prototypes. The building will begin by housing four interdisciplinary research teams covering topics such as natural remediation solutions, rural healthcare, automated device development and technologically advanced education techniques. It also features art representative of the state of Texas, particularly within the sciences and technology space.


Within healthcare, LU has numerous programs supporting this burgeoning industry, such as our pre-med curriculum; the Joanne Gay Dishman School of Nursing, one of our most highly sought-after majors at the university; and our audiology and deaf studies programs which are among the top in the country, as well as the work we are doing in speech and hearing sciences in addressing pressing issues through research and clinical offerings in our community. One of the articles in this issue of Cadence focuses on healthcare in Southeast Texas, and one showcases some of our students accepted into an innovative and highly selective program called the Joint Admission Medical Program.

In addition to the exceptional work we do in the healthcare arena, LU has a long legacy of preparing some of the best engineers in the state of Texas. This also is true of bankers, restaurateurs, business owners and more as our alumni often cite their practical-based learning at LU as preparing them better than their competitors in the job market. Along with a short article on this hands-on learning approach within the College of Engineering, this issue also features a few of these highly successful graduates, including Pat Parsons, Tony Nguyen and the Walters brothers – Aaron, Brent and Clint.

The cultural offerings are exemplary year-round through the many museums, art shows and festivals as well as the Symphony of Southeast Texas, but the events held during the holidays, such as LU's annual Messiah concert, are some of my personal favorites. We are proud of the art exhibited at our campus' Dishman Art Museum and the area's historical legacy on display at our Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Museum. Additionally, LU's new Center for History and Culture has held numerous programs since its inception in 2017 and during the past year created three center fellow positions. Each of these faculty represent a different area of study and have conducted impactful research involving our community's history.

I hope you are enjoying your summer, and thank you for taking a moment to learn more of what is currently going on at your university.

Sincerely,



**Kenneth R. Evans**, President



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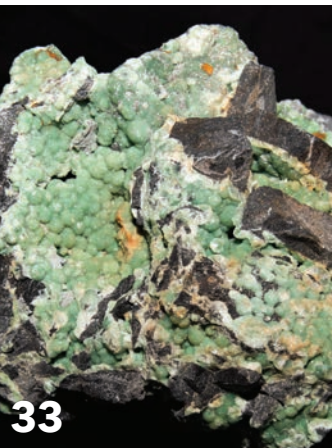
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**VIBRANT AND VITAL:**  
*The Economic Engine of Southeast Texas and Beyond*

*Through a rigorous curriculum, enriching extracurricular programs and abundant undergraduate research opportunities, as well as internships and externships organized and managed by an attentive faculty, students are career and grad school ready upon graduation—ready to compete, ready to contribute, ready to succeed early. Our alumni affirm that preparedness, while employers recognize and value it. The socio-economic influence of Lamar University—through its preparation of talented employees, visionary entrepreneurs and skilled professionals—is vital, far reaching, incalculable and indispensable.*



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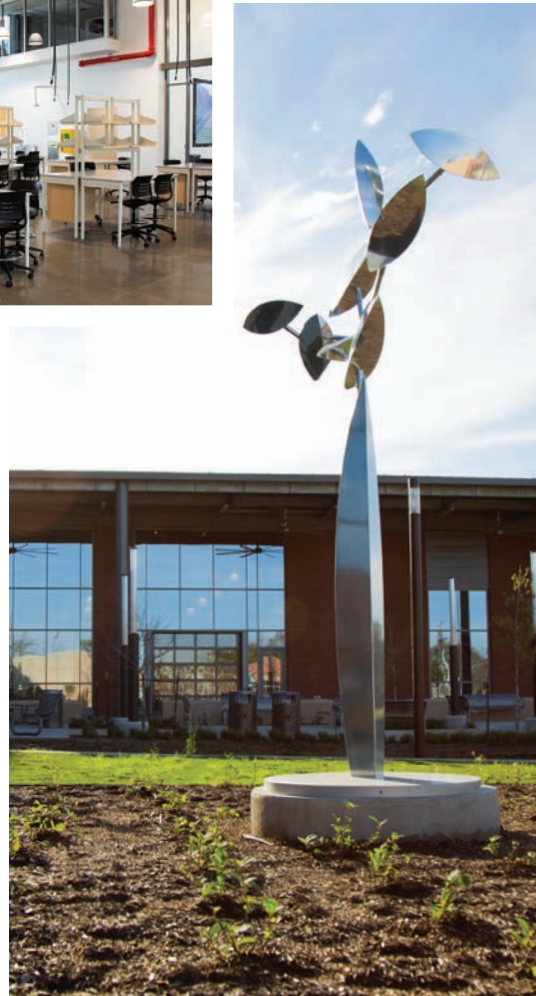
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# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BUILDING WOWS AT GRAND OPENING

by Daniel Pemberton



This past April, Lamar University opened the first fully academic building to its campus in 40 years. The 83,000-square foot building has been long awaited since construction began in May 2017.

“Lamar University is a diverse research institution,” said President Ken Evans. “Part of the university’s mission is to provide the means and opportunity to the university community for game-changing research, which this building is intended, in part, to facilitate.”

The building includes seven instructional labs, 14 research labs and a large project instruction room upstairs that overlooks a greenhouse. Among these facilities is a “makerspace,” housing 3D printers and drill presses, where student and faculty researchers can bring their projects, designs and products to life.

The facility will incubate four research projects by faculty across the campus. These projects investigate solutions to global challenges such as environmental damage from floodwater, coastal degradation, rural healthcare, the development of infrastructure for the technology of tomorrow, and educational techniques to meet the demands of our technologically connected society.

The building also contains spaces where students can relax, including a lounge, patio, several breakout rooms and a self-serve, micro-market. Additionally featured throughout the building are breathtaking pieces of art inspired by the beauty and biodiversity of the Southeast Texas region.



## Walking on Water Goes Viral

For years, **Ajit Patki** has taught fluid mechanics. Every year, for extra credit, Patki encourages students to participate and demonstrate the properties of a non-Newtonian fluid and make it fun and exciting. Rising to the challenge, students have maintained a project that involves using a mixture of cornstarch and water inside a platform—giving someone the ability to walk on water.

“I’ve been looking forward for this extra credit project for some time now after seeing a video on YouTube as a freshman,” said **Lucas Gobel**, a junior mechanical engineering student. The video he references was made three years ago and has garnered more than two million views on YouTube. The video became an even bigger viral sensation as many social media stars began sharing another video that contained the original LU-curated content, increasing views to 40 million in a few short weeks.

“With the success of the project and videos, some of us had the great idea to capitalize off the success of Walk on Water,” says Gobel. “We began to float the idea of bringing this project to the masses, so we built a reusable platform.” The group has been actively involved with various recruitment activities around LU and intends to use it to spread interest in STEM. “We’ve had so much fun with Walk on Water. It is great to be able to get involved and inspire young minds to get interested in engineering, but at the very least, let them be part of something that has become such a huge sensation,” said Gobel.



## Civil Engineers Compete Nationally

The LU student chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers saved some of their focus on succeeding in their Mechanics of Solids course for competing regionally and nationally in the American Society of Civil Engineers Steel Bridge Competition.

Competing teams are required to design a 1:10 scale model bridge prior to competition when teams must work together to construct their bridges under tight constraints followed by an intense stress test. The extraordinary task requires diligent attention to every single detail, all while working as a team. “I am a firm believer that multiple people working together and collaborating can develop a better solution than one person on their own,” said **Hayden Rice**, steel bridge captain and a senior civil engineering major from Lake Jackson.

The LU team first competed in the Texas-Mexico Regional Competition in Bryan, where they finished third overall against teams from all over the region. With the honor came an invitation to the national competition at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana where the team was awarded second place for display. “I’m truly grateful to have been a part of this team again my senior year,” said building team member and senior **Reid Johnson**. “It is all still a little surreal to me. I’m just so proud of all the effort we put in and the performance at competition.”



## SAE Mini Baja Wins Senior Design and Competes in Oregon

Senior Design is the culmination of the undergraduate engineering experience. It challenges students to practice what they have learned during their time as a student. One team in particular is given the extraordinary task of designing and building an all-terrain vehicle capable of withstanding the most rugged ground.

Ten mechanical engineering students were brave enough to tackle the task of not only building a vehicle and representing LU in competition but also finishing their degree. “It became almost a daily struggle to maintain plans for the project while finding the time to study for tests,” said **Jennifer Hoang**, co-captain of the team. “This project not only gave us insight into what it is like to be an engineer but also taught us how to function as a team and work within the confines of being limited on most resources so we really had to think outside the box on a lot of things,” said **Mason Simmons**, co-captain.

LU has competed in the Society of Automotive Engineers Mini Baja competition for more than a decade now, each year giving a new team the opportunity to test their skills. The 2018 competition was held in Portland, Ore., where more than 100 universities from North America converged to compete in several off-road competitions. The team passed all spec tests (something 1 in 4 did not do), and while they did not win the competition, they were able to compete in every competition category.

In its third year, the Senior Design Symposium saw more than 40 teams compete for best project. The SAE Mini Baja won best project within the Mechanical Engineering Department and eventually took home top prize. “Finishing first in the Senior Design Symposium became the icing on the cake for what turned out to be one of the most difficult, yet fulfilling years as an engineering student,” Hoang said.

► **LU Engineering Ranked 20th**  
The College of Engineering continues to excel. Bestvalueschools.com ranked LU as #20 on their list of top engineering schools in the nation.

► **Research Enhancement Grants Awarded**  
LU awarded 14 Research Enhancement Grants to seven faculty: **Hassan Zargarzadeh, Ping He, Berna Tokgoz, Xiaofan He, Chun-Wei Yao, Qin Qian and Kendrick Aung.**

► **Study Abroad Visits India**  
Students focused on engineering management during a first-of-its-kind spring break study abroad trip to India’s Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University.



The Department of English and Modern Languages is a cultural hub adapting to the needs of all kinds of university students, not just department majors, with innovative, interdisciplinary and international course offerings and extra-curriculars.

### INNOVATIVE

EML offers a variety of traditional and online dual credit classes, courses tailored for high school students to receive both high school and college credit. Today, the department offers online courses in composition, sophomore literature, philosophy, upper-level writing and literature courses, graduate rhetoric and literature courses, and introductory language courses to a wide variety of students.

### INTERDISCIPLINARY

*The Lamar Journal of the Humanities*, housed in EML, is a peer-reviewed journal publishing academic articles from scholars around the world in multiple facets of the humanities and social sciences. Also so housed in EML are *The Review of Texas Books*, an online book review journal, and Center for Philosophical Studies.

### INTERNATIONAL

English, French and Spanish faculty have organized trips abroad taking students to Japan, Spain, France and Québec. Modern language student organizations have provided both students and the Southeast Texas community opportunities to practice their language skills and learn about new cultures.

“One reason someone may major in creative writing or foreign languages might be because it is fun but also because they can experience themselves growing smarter.”

—Jim Sanderson

# CONTENT *converts*

by Caitlin Duerler

Humanities are the courses where you work on yourself and figure out where you belong in the world,” says Jim Sanderson, department chair of English and modern languages and professor of creative writing and literature. His 30-year tenure of teaching and directing writing programs at Lamar University, in addition to his career as a fiction writer, has helped hundreds of students find their calling through the study of writing, literature, languages and philosophy.

Literature and writing are where Sanderson found his calling, teaching and publishing novels, essay collections, short story collections and textbooks on writing. His creative writing works, novels and stories set in a contemporary Western landscape with hard-boiled detective and reckless outlaw types are hard to pin down to a genre, however.

“I have an essay called ‘Getting Hyphens’—the more hyphens you have the better you are, and it is other people that give you these hyphens. For example, I’ve been called a ‘darkly-comic-literary-Texas-mystery writer,’” he says. “One year, my novel won a contest for Best Southwestern Rural Fiction, and I became a cowboy. When the press published this novel, the editor called it a ‘mystery’ and I became a mystery writer. I have also been called a ‘Texas’ writer, and someone else said I write ‘grit lit.’”

“More correctly, what I am is a traditional American realist because the realists took on social issues, so I think that the mystery genre, the hard-bitten, private eye, noir-ish mysteries in America have been the place where American literary realism has gone to hide or die.”

Two of his earlier novels, *El Camino del Real* from 1998 and *La Mordida* from 2002 have received recent attention by Brash Books, an America crime story publication whose editors republished Sanderson’s works in 2016 and 2018 respectfully. Even with a full schedule balancing administrative duties and teaching, Sanderson always is writing and is currently working on his next novel. Additionally, one of his courses this fall is a novel writing class.

Sanderson’s engagement with multiple facets of the humanities enables him to lead a diverse department of English, French, Spanish and philosophy students with courses that not only enrich their individual lives but also their professional futures.

“We don’t have majors; we have converts,” he says. “Students get here and then they see something that they like in the department. One reason someone may major in creative writing or foreign languages might be because it is fun but also because they can experience themselves growing smarter.”

In the past, Sanderson says, most students would go on to become teachers in the community. Today, many students still continue on to teaching jobs but also find employment in other fields such as editing, publishing, web design, mid-level management, non-profit administration and even the Peace Corps.

“Today, students studying English, French, Spanish or philosophy are not only learning content from their respective areas but also the skills of critical thinking and communication,”

he says. “These skills make our students great employees, and our graduates get jobs by being adaptable and applying what they learned from reading John Milton to the real world and developing and practicing these skills.”

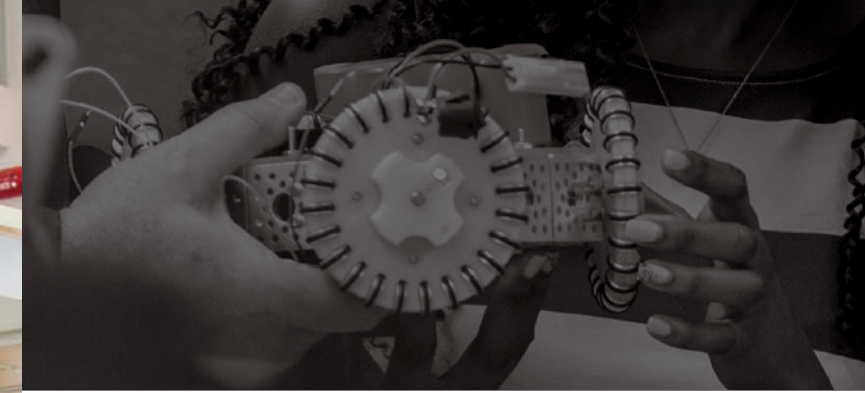
While his specialty within the department is fiction, writing at LU does not include just fiction and poetry, Sanderson says. Under his leadership, the department has developed classes that meet different student needs such as professional writing for students in fields as diverse as engineering, psychology and health. Also, in the past ten years, the department has developed a variety of popular rhetoric courses and an ethics and literature course for business majors.

Another important project spearheaded by Sanderson and of other faculty members is the successful Lamar University Literary Press—the only academic press in the country solely devoted to literary works—which has continued to sustain itself in a time where other academic presses in the state have been facing difficulties.

Sanderson’s love of storytelling, educating others and the humanities have been important guiding principles since childhood, he says.

“My father always said that I should go to college because ‘they’ can’t take it away from you,” he says. “There is something in that statement that says that, despite whoever opposes you, you have something that can’t be taken away. In the humanities, we provide this defense against ‘they.’”





# IMAGINE IT. DESIGN IT. BUILD IT. IMPROVE IT.

## INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS VALUE WORK-READY GRADUATES *by Shelly Vitanza*

**A** recent study concludes Lamar University's economic impact on the Southeast Texas community is more than \$263 million a year. LU's most significant contributing factor to the local economy is the consistent supply of work-ready individuals to local businesses. For nearly a century, Lamar University has promoted the overall economic health, sustainability and stability of the region by providing a qualified workforce.

While each of LU's degree programs produce quality candidates in specific fields by incorporating didactic as well as applied learning, LU's distinction as a work-ready educator is exemplified by the College of Engineering's commitment to an "operations-focused" approach to teaching.

"Some universities focus on teaching their students for positions in research at graduate schools, other research organizations or design positions," said Victor Zaloom, interim dean of engineering. "We do teach design, but our primary focus is design for more

efficient operations because that is what our alumni and employers of our graduates say is needed most."

LU's engineering curriculum is tailored for local industry while also meeting the requirements of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Engineering Accreditation of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.

As a result of the close working relationship between industry and educators, LU offers a robust co-operative work program. Julie Rodriguez graduated from LU in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and Mathematics. She participated in LU's co-op program working at ExxonMobil throughout her college career and was offered a job at the multinational oil and gas corporation before she graduated.

"I was a nontraditional student who graduated from high school, worked several years to save money so I could attend college and then chose to attend LU because it was affordable and

because the College of Engineering had a co-op work program," said Rodriguez, who currently works for ExxonMobil in Spring as the company's global marketing excellence advisor.

LU graduates with experience from co-ops also are extremely important to BASF, says Greg Masica, vice president and site manager. The company, with two facilities in the Golden Triangle area, recruits Lamar University students from all engineering degree programs.

"LU students are often seeking employment in this region, and LU grads receive a solid education," said Masica, who is also a member of the College of Engineering Advisory Council. "Many have had intern or co-op opportunities that provide them valuable work experience prior to graduation."

Another distinction that helps prepare students for the real world of engineering is regular interaction with practicing engineers. Zaloom says the College of Engineering diligently and purposefully networks with alumni and employers to gain insight about

their needs and trends in the industry. Faculty and department chairs interact with company representatives at the college's career fairs, and an "industrial partnership" between companies and the university sponsors multiple short courses each year on topics of interest to the companies. These activities give faculty and students the opportunity to better understand the most relevant challenges in the industry.

"These interactions are a major strength of LU's Engineering College and one reason why our graduates are highly sought by local industry. Industry knows that our graduates are ready to produce results for them right away," said Zaloom.

Rodriguez volunteers as an ExxonMobil recruiter at Lamar University and is a member of the LU Mechanical Engineering Advisory Council. Advisory groups for every engineering discipline, each comprising alumni and employers, meet each semester to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of graduates, which then directs curriculum. "I enjoy giving back and like the idea of giving

someone an opportunity like I was given," said Rodriguez.

BASF believes in giving back to the local communities and encourages employees to serve as advisors and ambassadors for Lamar University, according to Masica. "Our hope is that we can share critical feedback about the curriculum that will ready students for careers in the petrochemicals industry," he said. "Our employees attend career fairs at LU and assist student organizations with résumé-building activities. We also participate in training workshops hosted by LU where BASF employees serve as panelists to address questions by LU professors and area teachers."

Zaloom says operation-focused teaching also includes skills beyond calculations and formulas. "We work very hard with alumni and employers to ensure students learn the technical, teamwork, communication and other skills necessary for a practicing engineer," said Zaloom.

Rodriguez says she's grateful for these additional skills gained at LU because in

her current capacity, the technical skills are not as critical as the softer skills of engineering.

"At LU, I learned how to solve problems and to work in teams," said Rodriguez. "During our engineering design project, we engineered, designed and manufactured a project over the course of a year. During that interaction, we not only used the fundamentals of engineering but put into practice all of the other things—team work, problem solving, economic assessment and gave a presentation to peers and industry. That is simulating, on a small scale, what your career is like."

Rodriguez says an added benefit of attending LU she had not expected was receiving a "private-like experience for the price of a public institution."

"I was able to interact with professors. If I had gone to a big school, I might not have had that. That's important because it enhances the education that you get," said Rodriguez. "It's a value asset that other schools don't have."





Aziz Shaaban, Yves Kenfack, Tran Nguyen and Yen Vu

# JAMP PROGRAM

*provides path to*

# MEDICAL SCHOOL

by Daniel Pemberton

Lamar University has long been a first step for students pursuing a career in medicine. The College of Arts and Sciences' many pre-professional healthcare concentrations and the Joanne Gay Dishman School of Nursing are two of the most comprehensive and acclaimed programs the university offers. LU contributes to advances in medicine and healthcare for the Southeast Texas community and beyond by developing talented students who go on to serve their region, state, country and international community.

Exemplifying this mindset of service are Tran Nguyen, Aziz Shaaban, Yen Vu and Yves Kenfack, all of whom have been accepted to the Joint Admission Medical Program. JAMP is designed to support qualified but economically disadvantaged students pursuing an education in medicine. Providing financial and academic support, access to resources and guaranteed admission to one of nine partnered medical schools in Texas,

the program coordinates with these nine schools as well as 66 public and private four-year undergraduate institutions throughout the state, including Lamar University.

"LU has more students participating in the JAMP program than any other time since the university has become a member," said Joe Nordgren, acting associate provost and JAMP faculty director. "JAMP provides everything from scholarships and MCAT preparation to summer internships, all of which are essential to success in any medical program. We are incredibly proud of our students who have been accepted."

Tran Nguyen, a junior from Houston, made the decision to apply to the JAMP program in high school.

"I found out about the program in my high school pharmacy technician class when a representative of JAMP came in to speak," said Nguyen. "By the end of the presentation, I had made up my mind. They provided an internship that allowed

me to have preceptorships, anatomy and physiology classes, and lectures that help me grow as a person."

Aziz Shaaban is a junior from Nederland who has been convinced of his future in the medical field since the age of six. He learned of the JAMP program the summer before attending LU, and says that although the program has helped him an enormous amount, it is his time at Lamar University that gave him the tools to succeed in his career.

"Lamar University has prepared me for my future career in medicine through all the medical exposure I was able to get in my time here. Plus, all of the volunteering and leadership opportunities that LU has given me will refine me as an applicant and make me a stronger job candidate," said Shaaban. "Coming to LU, I did not expect to have all the opportunities that I am fortunate to have...I would have never thought I would find the openings for research, volunteering, medical exposure and leadership that the university offers until I started my college career here."

Shaaban said he is most thankful for the volunteer opportunities which have helped him to further develop an ethic of service for his community. He plans to further embrace this mindset throughout his career with a planned stint with Doctors Without Borders after medical school and eventually to attend law school and serve in the Texas Legislature.

Yen Vu, a sophomore from Port Neches, said he was introduced to the program by another "JAMPer" and approached Nordgren as soon as he could to get involved. Vu said Lamar University has impressed him with its competitive academics and undergraduate research program.

"I was lucky enough to be part of Dr. Terry's research lab over the summer. These professors are also good mentors who will tell you what you need to improve upon or what to expect for the future," Vu said. "I would like to graduate top of my class in med school, start my own practice and be the most well-known internist in my area. I am grateful for this opportunity, and I cannot wait to serve the community one day. That is all I could ever ask for."

Senior Yves Kenfack came to LU from Allen, Texas. He said that medical school has always been in his sights but he had begun to consider changing his degree to nursing because his dad thought it would be a better fit. Then he discovered the JAMP program.

The program has connected Kenfack to funding, multiple internships across the state and test preparation. However, he explains that while JAMP provided him with educational resources that make him a better applicant, it is LU that has helped to make him a more open person.

"I have gone from someone who for the most part kept to himself to being able to communicate with a vast, diverse group of individuals. The sense of community at Lamar University made me feel at home away from home... [and] is something I will hold near and dear to my heart for the rest of my life."

All four of these accomplished students display what a student at LU can achieve in their academic life. Their experiences are also examples of the love of community and passion for giving back that LU instills in its students long after they graduate.

## JAMP

**F**ounded in 2003, the Joint Admission Medical Program was created by the Texas Legislature to provide economically disadvantaged students with a pathway to a career in medicine. Funded through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the program provides its highly qualified entrants with internships, scholarships, MCAT preparation, mentoring and guaranteed admittance to one of the nine partnered medical schools as well as funding to attend. JAMP connects students from its 66 four-year undergraduate member schools to nine prestigious medical programs across the state of Texas. These schools include Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Tech Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso, Texas Tech Health Sciences Center School of Medicine, Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Medical School, UT School of Medicine at San Antonio, UT Medical Branch at Galveston, UT Southwestern Medical Center and University of North Texas Health Science Center. Further information about the program can be found at [texasjamp.org](http://texasjamp.org) and about LU's pre-professional programs at [lamar.edu](http://lamar.edu).



**"I was lucky enough to be part of Dr. Terry's research lab over the summer. These professors are also good mentors who will tell you what you need to improve upon or what to expect for the future."**

—Yen Vu



# CYCLICAL STRENGTH

**FROM SEARCHING STUDENT TO SUCCESSFUL BANKER TO  
THOUGHTFUL PHILANTHROPIST AND DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS**

by Krista Salter

One of the wonderful things about being the functioning socio-economic engine that is Lamar University includes being privy to the successes of born-or-bred Southeast Texans.

Proof that if you start here, you can finish here lies in the story of Pat Parsons '71.

Looking back, Parsons laughed when he thought about the time soon after he graduated LU, referring to them as the “old days” and admitting he had no idea what he was going to do.

Now, in 2019, Parsons can say he did well as one of the original five founders of CommunityBank of Texas. Today, he sits as vice chairman of the board, but has done everything from leading the helm to getting the bank on a national stage in the stock market.

“It’s still a wonderful thing for Beaumont,” Parsons said. “We’re still headquartered in Beaumont, and our board of directors is predominantly from Beaumont.

“At the time we began, we felt that if Beaumont wants to

be all it can be, it needed to have a locally owned bank,” Parsons said. “We can take care of requirements for small businesses but also handle very large locally owned businesses.”

Parsons added, “We lend money to people in the community who make a living taking care of our plants and their workers.”

CommunityBank has seen exceptional growth since it was founded. Parsons and his team started buying banks throughout Southeast Texas and the eastern edge

of Houston and opening new branches, eventually growing in size and assets.

In 2017, the bank went public and ended up with around 200 local people who own stock in CommunityBank of Texas, Parsons said.

“I’m proud of it,” he said.

“One of the principal things we can do is helping the community,” Parsons said. “We take their money and pay them interest for it, and relend it into this community to build and invest in the future.”

“We help everyone,” he explained, “from the snowcone stand on the side of the road to the large, locally owned businesses.

A locally owned bank is important, according to Parsons, because banking is a person-to-person business and vital to the socioeconomic growth of a community.

“We employ over 500 local people,” Parsons said. “That’s important to me. We’re proud to provide meaningful, well-paying jobs to 500 people.”

“We’re from here, and our kids grew up here,” he said. “The future of the Golden Triangle is critical to the success of CommunityBank, and vice versa.”

Considering Parsons has been inducted into LU’s College of Business Hall of Fame, it’s humorous now that he had no clue what he wanted to do. After receiving his degree in accounting from Lamar University, he went on to receive his MBA in Houston before returning home.

“I got a very good education in accounting at LU,” Parsons explained. “You’re exposed to things, and develop an idea of what you want to do, but you never really know.

“During the courses I took, I decided I liked the idea of being a banker and working with people, building communities and reinforcing the future,” he said. “Lamar and my education there was an excellent foundation for me to build upon.”

After all this time, Parsons has continually found ways to give back to the university. Aside from his Hall of Fame recognition, the Lamar University named Parsons a

distinguished alumnus. He is a founding member of Lamar University President’s Circle and serves as the treasurer of the Lamar University Foundation.

Now, Parsons is bringing his successes back to LU with an internship and training program meant to entice graduates into banking.

“We see the start of this apprentice program, meant to feed into a training program, as a way to bring young people into banking,” Parsons said. “There are not enough young people having the opportunity to pursue careers in banking because there are no front door training programs like this anymore.”

He added, “We’re looking to attract well-qualified students and show them what banking can be, thereby hopefully attracting the next wave of managers and owners into this bank.” CommunityBank accepted its first student into its Officer Development Program from LU last summer.

Parsons reflected on one lesson he learned in a really tough accounting class at LU and how it has stuck with him until this day. “The first day we were in that class,” Parsons said, “the professor told us to look to our left and right. He said half of us wouldn’t be there at the end of the course, and he was right.

“The takeaway from that is this: life is serious. Keep up with your work, and take advantage of the opportunities in front of you.”

## COMMUNITYBANK OF TEXAS INTERSHIPS AND OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CommunityBank of Texas and Lamar University partnered in 2018 to offer students a unique opportunity to intern in an effort to create well-rounded, experienced future bankers and leaders.

Candidates chosen for the program become familiar with various aspects of banking through rotating departmental training before moving on to the credit department. The program is taught in class and on the job by professionals and bankers, while structured to give interns hands-on experience working alongside the bank’s leaders.

“It is a great way to experience the corporate culture at CommunityBank of Texas, to familiarize yourself with various banking departments and to better position yourself for future employment opportunities,” said Jason Sirkel, executive vice president and regional CEO of corporate banking with CommunityBank.

Recent LU accounting graduate Irqa Masood joined CommunityBank’s Officer Development Program in Houston this past January, while several other top students made it through the interview process.

“(Masood) is a bright, positive and resourceful young lady, and I know she will represent Lamar University well as she progresses through her career with CommunityBank of Texas,” said Sirkel.

Sirkel also stated that Lamar University students interviewed particularly well compared to students from other universities.

Throughout the 10-12 week program, candidates achieve a solid foundation in banking, career development, working relationships with upper management, credit skills and the application of those skills through projects, mock presentations, live deals and continued hands-on experience.





The Latin words Mater Ecclesia, followed by Porta Caeli, flank the entrance of the well-known downtown Beaumont St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica. The meaning—Mother of the Church and Heaven’s Gates, respectively—is as enticing as the notable architecture. But it’s what fills this building during the Christmas season when the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music presents their annual “Messiah” concert, that has captured the heart and soul of the community.

“The selected texts of Handel’s ‘Messiah’ depict a people who are in need of hope, but the composition of this work also had a major impact on the composer’s life. Handel was in the lowest point of his career just before writing his ‘Messiah.’ After the completion and presentation of this amazing masterpiece, it was highly acclaimed, and his life was tremendously changed from hopelessness and discouragement to

joy and excitement for the future,” said James Han, associate professor of choral music education and director of choral activities. Although the work is based on the sacred text, the message of Handel’s ‘Messiah’ is hope, and that is why it is important to all of us and why we want to share this work with our wonderful community.”

The aptly titled Soul of the City Concert Series has provided a cultural mainstay for the community for more than four years. Year after year, as the angelic music from the production fills the backdrop for the “Messiah,” one does indeed feel like they are being transported through the proverbial heaven’s gates.

“Messiah,” from start to finish, is a beautifully unfolding drama. Every bit of it, from the overture and “Comfort ye my People” all the way through “Worthy is the Lamb,” is by itself a piece of exquisite beauty. Every moment drives the story further. Because of the intensity of the performance, the Lamar University choirs diligently prepare from the end of every spring semester throughout the show’s premiere during the Christmas season. Students do not only perfect the immense and highly involved choral parts, but many also prepare solo recitatives and arias as well.

“These days, it is very difficult to find a full concert production of Handel’s

esteemed ‘Messiah’ due to the difficulty of the music and the financial support needed. However, through continuous support from our university, the St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica, the Beaumont community, and our student and faculty member contributions, we have been able to share this message of hope, through music, on an annual basis to a full-house audience of wonderful people,” said Han.

It has been proven that arts and culture make considerable and necessary contributions to the well-being of a community. The cultural contribution of this specific concert cannot necessarily be counted in dollars, but in the fact that each year, in the standing room only venue, patrons come back year after year to experience this oratorio, a sort of currency in its own. Whether it’s a Latin phrase over a door, an Italian opera or the “Messiah,” music is a universal language that has the ability to unite us all, no matter what season.

**Because of the overwhelming support of the community, the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music will present Handel’s “Messiah” again this Christmas season Friday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Soul of the City Concert Series at St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica. Admission is free of charge.**

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION |



**Speech & Hearing Sciences awarded NIH grant**  
**Vinaya Manchaiah**, associate professor and Jo Mayo Endowed

Professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, has been awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health—National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders for \$397,800 to study relief efforts for tinnitus sufferers in the U.S.

In his proposal, Manchaiah will develop a way to offer Cognitive Behavioral Therapy via the internet as a guided self-help program. This iCBT can be customized to meet individual needs both in terms of language and access.

“Tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, affects nearly 50 million people in the U.S.,” Manchaiah said. “Tinnitus is debilitating for many individuals, affecting many aspects of daily life, such as sleep, mood and concentration. Currently, there is no cure for this condition.”



**Deaf studies & deaf education add two designated interpreters**  
The Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education added two new designated interpreters to their growing department: **Barbara Johnson and Chance Sutton**. Together, they bring more than 45 years of academic, community, deafblind, legal, medical and combined interpreting experiences to the department.

Designated interpreters address a critical need in the advancement of deaf professionals in academic, scientific, medical and highly technical fields which often require advanced degrees and specialized linguistic skills. The interpreters are one step towards reducing those barriers of advancement.



planning process, the committee realized the dancers would be visiting the Department of Theatre and Dance during the same time as the bal. This inspired the Asian theme carried throughout the special evening. The performance piece, which included a dragon made up of the dancers, heralded the party goes to the ballroom where they were entertained by the visiting performers from Tainan University of Technology.

The evening’s honoree was **Albert Nolen**, Beaumont realtor, retired educator, newspaper columnist, and well-known supporter of the arts in Southeast Texas. The featured artist was renowned photographer and **Department of Art Professor Keith Carter**.

**University Press has record-setting year**  
The University Press, the student newspaper of Lamar University, set a new record with 76 awards in competitions for work published in 2017.

Every year the newspaper enters in at least four major press club contests—the Press Club of Southeast Texas, Society of Professional Journalists, Houston Press Club and Texas Intercollegiate Press Association. This past year, the student publication won various awards from first place to honorable mention in every single event in categories including news stories, feature stories, photos, layouts and videos.

“To win this number of awards speaks to the quality of the work the students produce, and the hard work they put in,” **Andy Coughlan**, University Press media advisor, said. “The University Press aims to reproduce a professional work environment where students can get hands-on experience that prepares them for a career—whether that is in print news, broadcast, public relations, advertising or any media. I think these awards indicate that this sort of experiential learning pays off.”



► **ACDA conference**  
Theatre and Dance hosted more than 420 participants for the 2018 South-Central Conference of the American College Dance Association. This culturally enriched week promoted multiple styles and genres of dance as it invited participants to celebrate under the anthem “Everybody Cut Loose!”

► **Hyatt named TAEA’s Art Educator of the Year**  
The Texas Art Education Association named **Joanna Hyatt**, assistant professor of art, the 2018 Art Educator of the Year. This award recognizes significant contributions to TAEA and to art education on the state, local and national level. The award ceremony was held November 9, 2018, in McAllen, TX.

► **Collage concert**  
More than 115 student and faculty musicians performed in the University Theatre as the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music presented its inaugural Collage Concert Feb. 1. The fundraiser, which will be an annual event, raised approximately \$3,500 for the department to help fund student needs.



# LU ATHLETE & COMMUNITY ADVOCATE

by Hannah Carlson

**As someone who has been in the game for more than 40 years, Norman Bellard knows a thing or two about the socio-economic climate within the Golden Triangle.**

"We are one of the main socio economic hubs in the city as well as southeast Texas. LU grads support the petrochemical industry, as well as small and large businesses in cities throughout Southeast Texas. We positively affect the economies within the Golden Triangle through the number of students we educate and the number of faculty, staff and senior administrators that we employ."

Beyond the education and training of successful professionals, is the Center for Innovation, Commercialization, Industrialization and Entrepreneurship on Lamar University's campus. "Through the center we offer job training," says Bellard. "With this petrochemical boom and expansion, one of the main concerns we hear from company executives is the need for employable skilled labor ready to go. It's a challenge and one we are meeting to the benefit of southeast Texas residents and employers, so they are not having to go outside the Golden Triangle to secure those employees."

Student athlete, community advocate and family man, Norman Bellard has always had a home at Lamar University. Bellard started his time at LU in 1975 while earning his bachelor's degree in accounting. "The memory I cherish the most is what we were able to accomplish and the successes that we were able to achieve on the basketball team," Bellard said. "We were undefeated at home for a total of six consecutive years, starting in my junior year—a total of 80 home games in a row, which was one of the longest consecutive winning streaks in the nation at the time." This winning

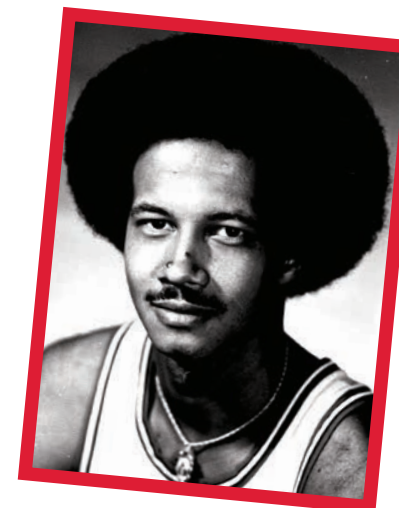
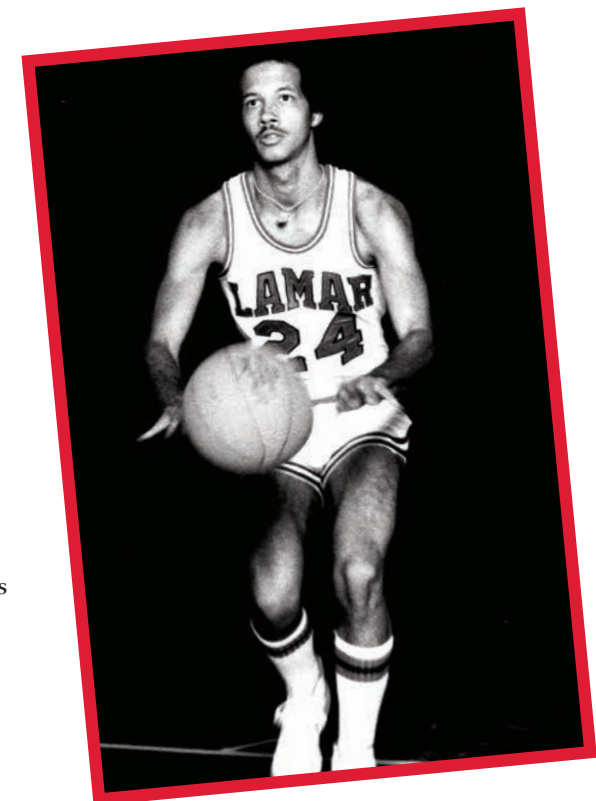
streak was in part a result of the team's Coach Billy Tubbs and his philosophy that if you pass the ball more than three times, it's a stall. "He will never call a stall," Bellard said, "so you shoot the ball." The Cardinals averaged almost 89 points a game and were fifth in the nation in scoring.

Bellard said that while he was a full-time student and athlete, he was able to build life-long friendships with both his teammates and professors, "We were a very close-knit family and until this day we are still a very close-knit family. And when I first got back to Lamar University in 2000, some of those professors that taught me between 1975 and 1979 were still here, and it looked like it was stress free," he jokes. "It looked like they had not aged, so I said well, maybe I need to try it." After a 20-year career as a chief financial officer and regional vice president, Bellard headed back to LU to become the assistant vice president of student affairs in 2000, and in 2015, "President Evans said he needed my help on something," he said. "Being a former athlete, when the coach calls the play, the player runs to play." Currently Bellard is the assistant to the president for community relations, economic development and athletic programs liaison.

When President Evans asked him to help with community relations, Bellard recalls, "Evans said, 'you know a lot of people.' I said, 'Yes, sir.' He said, 'but a lot more people know of you.' It's always been that way because I've been around and involved for 40 plus years." Bellard, founding member of the Greater South

Park Neighborhood Partnership, recently teamed up with community partners and Teresa Simpson, the special assistant to the dean for student success and clinical instructor for educational leadership in the College of Education and Human Development, to create an Innovative Learning Lab for students at Pietzsch-MacArthur Elementary School. The group has plans to create six more in Beaumont elementary schools and one in South Park Middle School.

After his well-remembered athletic career and as a beloved 40-year Beaumont, Bellard continues to make a memorable and meaningful influence at Lamar University and in his surrounding community. "I'm not native to Beaumont, but this is my home."



**"We positively affect the economies within the Golden Triangle through the number of students we educate and the number of faculty, staff and senior administrators that we employ."**

—Norman Bellard



# HOLISTIC EDUCATION

+ + + + + + + + + *heals* + + + + + + + + +

by Jennifer Wyse



Katelyn Meaux, Pre-Med; Emily Street '19, RN—CHRISTUS St. Elizabeth; Garrett Ames '19, RN—CHRISTUS St. Elizabeth; Nicholas Nolen, Pre-Pharmacy

**EMPLOYMENT IN  
HEALTHCARE IS  
PROJECTED TO GROW  
18% FROM 2016 TO 2026,  
ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU  
OF LABOR STATISTICS, AND  
REGISTERED NURSING IS  
THE TOP OCCUPATION FOR  
GROWTH THROUGH 2026.**

Healthcare is the nation's largest employer with 18 million healthcare workers making up nearly 10% of employment in the U.S. This projected growth is intensifying as baby boomers age and the need for healthcare grows. The American Association of College of Nursing calls nursing the country's largest healthcare profession with nearly four million registered nurses nationwide. Lamar University has several programs to address the labor growth in all healthcare professions from pre-professional programs in health sciences and the JoAnne Gay Dishman School of Nursing to the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department and Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education.

**+ NURSING**

Cynthia Stinson '75, '80, chair of the JoAnne Gay Dishman School of Nursing, says, “with both undergraduate and graduate programs, we have approximately 700 students in the nursing school. Applicants come from across the country with some of the most intelligent and brightest minds.” LU has received commendations from the Texas Board of Nursing for outstanding pass rates on the national qualifying exam for nurses for the past five years, scoring 92-97% when the state and national averages have been is 88% or below. “We believe in holistic education with hands-on learning, critical reasoning and clinical judgment,” Stinson said. The students obtain this holistic experience with their laboratory experiences, the simulation lab, practicum experiences and community-based service learning. The High Fidelity Simulation Lab is one of the top simulation labs in the state—a 14-bed simulated hospital with robotics and mannequins that talk and breathe with standardized heart rates. As part of nursing students’ education, people from the community come in as actors with scripts to simulate real-life clinical scenarios.

All of LU’s nursing students also are required to complete 120 hours of community service, called community-based service learning hours. Students work with a coordinator to determine where they are needed in the community, staffing rape and suicide hotlines or working with organizations like Julie Rodgers Gift of Life at local health fairs. Post-graduation surveys indicate that students continue to volunteer in the community after they graduate.

Both students and faculty have won state awards. Senior Hailey Zampini led a student nursing organization to the 2019 Texas Nursing Student Association State Convention and received the Dynamic Kernel Module Support award for testing students to find a match for stem cell donation or bone marrow transplants. “I love nursing school, and I’m very sad to leave in May 2019. It’s a bittersweet moment for sure,” Zampini said. “I can’t brag enough on our faculty and our nursing instructors, they care and they push you to be the very best you can be.” Zampini graduated in May and is working at CHRISTUS Southeast Texas in the medical intensive care unit department.

Most students have a job in hand upon graduation. CHRISTUS Southeast Texas offers a fully accredited residency program from the American Nurse Credentialing Center for new nurses to help make the transition into nursing. Paul Guidroz '91, '01, chief nursing officer at CHRISTUS describes the residency “as an opportunity to spend a full year with a nurse so that we could help them with that transition from student nurse to novice nurse. The whole goal is to make sure that transition is nurtured.”

“It’s a continuing effort to keep up with the amount of nurses needed in healthcare,” says Guidroz, and he calls this wave, “the graying tsunami.” “We have a lot of baby boomers who are all on the verge of retirement. We may hire a new nurse and simultaneously be losing a nurse to retirement after working for 30-35 years. That’s what makes this accredited nursing residency program so important. We want to make sure that the choice of where they want to go to work has been well thought out and we have the type of program that helps nurture them into practice. We are going to continue to

see that nursing shortage well into 2025 and there are only so many new graduates each year.” Other Hospitals in the area, including Baptist Hospital and the Medical Center of Southeast Texas, offer excellent transition programs for new graduates. Nurses graduating from the Dishman School of Nursing are employed all over the world in a variety of areas including, but not limited to, acute care, long-term care, rehabilitation, public health, community health, administration, education, school nursing and research. Many of these graduates have obtained advance degrees.

**+ DEAF STUDIES AND  
DEAF EDUCATION**

LU’s Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education is the third-largest program in the country. The program began in 1975 and now has undergraduate and graduate degrees along with an Ed.D. in deaf studies and deaf education. Students prepare to become American Sign Language teachers and interpreters, teachers of Deaf children from early childhood to secondary levels, professors and administrators. The department has developed partnerships with state schools for the Deaf, mainstreamed programs in the public schools, community colleges, universities and research labs in order to give students a state-of-the-art curriculum and rich intern experiences.

“If you have taken a high school American sign language class, you most likely have met one of our alumni,” said Mary Clark, department chair. We are the only program in the state of Texas that prepares K-12 ASL teachers. High Schools across the state contact us frequently to try to hire one of our ASL teachers, as most of them have already hired one of our former students. This year’s graduate all had jobs prior to graduation. We are proud of our alumni and the work they do as they touch the lives of deaf and hard of hearing people.” Master’s-level students become teachers in ASL/English bilingual deaf education programs, touching the lives of young deaf children and working to help families find services their deaf child needs. In addition, Clark said, “Our doctoral students engage in research to improve the lives of deaf people in terms of education, identity development and language acquisition. They advocate for effective programs for mental health as well as progressive education policies.”

**+ SPEECH AND  
HEARING SCIENCES**

An ongoing shortage of speech-language pathologists and audiologists means that typically 100% of LU graduates find employment within their field and work in a variety of medical, rehabilitation and educational settings, including hospitals, clinics, home health agencies, physician’s offices, nursing homes, schools and early childhood centers.

Students train by working alongside accomplished faculty to treat both children and adults with developmental and acquired disorders in LU’s Speech-Language Pathology Clinic, Voice Lab and Vocology Clinic, and Audiology Clinic while obtaining the skills to prevent, diagnose, monitor and treat communication disorders.



Cathy Butler '80, a speech pathologist at Advanced Pediatric Care says, “We made lifelong friends with students and our professors.” She and Diane Bass '80, an audiologist and owner of Advanced Pediatric Care, both studied together and worked full time in the speech and hearing center.

LU was and is on the leading edge of the field. Bass recalls, “It was the birthplace of the profession. We weren’t even a licensed profession when I started in the field of audiology. It was a brand new profession. Speech pathology had been around a while but was not a graduate-level profession. You could still work with a bachelor’s degree. Through the growth of LU Dr. Peterson and Dr. Moulton elevated the graduate programs in speech pathology and audiology. They added the doctorate.” Bass recalls traveling. “We went all over the country and Mexico for the deaf-ed program. We watched as Dr. Moulton took this program out into the world; he took it to the Gaza Strip and Mainland China.”

**+PRE-PROFESSIONAL**

LU offers nine pre-professional programs in health sciences to help prepare future health professionals for medical school. According to Eileen Burch, pre-professional adviser, more than 400 students study in these programs currently: pre-dental, pre-medical, pre-occupational therapy, pre-optometry, pre-pharmacy, pre-physical therapy, pre-physician assistant, pre-podiatry and pre-veterinary. “Lamar University ranks higher than the state average for acceptance rates into medical school and dental schools,” Burch says. She meets with these students each semester to review medical school requirements and to check on each student’s progress. She encourages, guides and ultimately wants to make sure the students have the correct resources. Burch encourages her students to do their shadowing and observation hours early on so that the students have an opportunity to see what the field is like and to make sure the medical profession is right for them.

# HEALTHCARE ALUMNI



The foundation gained at LU has led alumni to remarkable careers.

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS DR. JACK MONCRIEF '58**—Dialysis Pioneering Award in 1982, performed first life-saving dialysis procedure on a new-born infant, founded the Jack Moncrief Group, owner of Austin Biomedical Inc. He and his wife, Jerry, live in Buda.

Dr. Moncrief, a nephrologist, co-invented continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD), saving countless lives of people without access to hospitals. He calls LU “the springboard that gave me the understanding of what intellectual study, dedication and success is about. The pre-med program at Lamar University was excellent, and my professors prepared me for my experience both in medical school and in continued practice.” Moncrief described LU as “the place I started my career.”

**DR. MARK NICHOLS '78**—World-renowned expert in oral diseases found in compromised immune systems, internationally recognized leader in HIV-specific dentistry, has trained dentists from the U.S., Africa, China, India and South America. He lives in Houston.

Dr. Nichols, a dentist and director of dental services at Avenue 360 Health and Wellness, is a pioneer of dentistry within the Aids/HIV community. He recalls his time at LU, “I felt very well prepared going into dental school. I had to learn how to study and Lamar University was intellectually stimulating for me.”



**DR. JOHN SCOTT '79**—Serves on the board of directors of Elite Physicians Group and Premier Physicians Group, recently served on the Texas Medical Review Board District 3 Review Committee and now serves on the Texas State Board of Physician Assistant Examiners. He and his wife, Loucille, live in Keller.

Anesthesiologist Dr. John Scott is chief marketing officer and chairman of the board at All Care Physicians Group. He encourages current and future pre-medical students to work in the healthcare field and find a doctor to shadow. “That’s how you can really determine if this is what you want to do,” he said. “The classes I took at LU really put me above other students. The big benefit was to have the guidance and friendship of professors, to have that resource and to have someone to believe in you more than anything else—that’s what I got from Lamar University.”

**DR. MARK TOUPS '73**—Began medical information searches at the bedside in the early 1980s, taught at Parkland Hospital, he takes an active interest in LU’s pre-medical students and invited senior pre-medical students to attend the "Festival of Caring," which focused on compassion fatigue experienced by healthcare professionals, provides students with real-world insight into the life of a physician and the role of service to others.

For the last two years, internist Dr. Mark Toups served as vice president of medical affairs for the CHRISTUSHealth Southeast Texas region, which, he said, “has given opportunity for a deeper and richer relationship with LU.” He is now medical director of services of clinical informatics at CHRISTUS and teaches the use of electronic medical records. His own group is a leader in formal shadowing and mentoring opportunities for LU students, and he encourages other local doctors in the medical community to provide them as well. “I believe young people need to be mentored early,” he said. “The school has an excellent reputation, and we are fortunate to have such diversity and depth of talent at Lamar University.”

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: ARTS & SCIENCES |



### Two-week tour traverses time, students visit Texas geologic outcrops

The geology of Texas captivated the attention of nine earth science and geology majors as they spent two weeks exploring and camping in classic geologic outcrops in Central and Trans-Pecos Texas. University Professor Jim Westgate and Julia Zidan '18, teaching assistant, led the capstone course, called Field Geology of Texas.

The first stop was in the heart of Central Texas at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. There the group climbed to the top of the oldest rocks in Texas, a one billion-year-old mass of pink granite known as an exfoliation dome.

The class then headed west to Big Bend National Park in the Chihuahuan Desert where they camped high in the Chisos Mountains to escape the desert heat. The mountains were formed by volcanic activity from about 45 to 30 million years ago.

“The group was amazed while hiking into the bottom of Santa Elena Canyon along the Texas-Mexico border,” said Westgate. “There, the Rio Grande River has carved down 1,500 feet through marine limestones that were buried at the bottom of a 100-million-year-old tropical ocean, which extended from the ancient Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean and is known to geologists as the Cretaceous Interior Seaway.”

From Big Bend, the group traveled to Davis Mountains State Park where they saw the remains of volcanic lava flows some 30 million years old before they continued to Guadalupe Mountains and Carlsbad Caverns National Parks.

### Gift propels LU research into drone-based remote sensing

Department of Earth and Space Sciences has added a remote-sensing program using state-of-the-art drone technology thanks to a \$500,000 gift from former Texaco plant supervisor Ed Hogenson of Port Neches, in honor of his son, Bill Hogenson '75 of Houston, a Lamar University geology graduate and vice president with Zone Oil and Gas LLC.

“This gift from Mr. Hogenson is truly transformative for the department,”

said Professor and Chair Jim Jordan. “Developments in drone technology have increased the opportunity for remote sensing, and are becoming a significant part of future exploration.

“This gift will allow us to engage in technology of the future with Infrared Cameras Inc.,” Jordan said of a partnership between the department and ICI, a manufacturer of state-of-the-art equipment for infrared drone surveying used worldwide by customers like the US Geological Survey and other scientific organizations.

The infrared data will be mapped in the LU Geospatial Center, Jordan said. The mapped data will be a basis for sampling in identified geologically significant areas, and will use precise GPS location of the site and post-sampling analysis including mineral separations and chemical analyses.

Hogenson credits good fortune, frugality and savings through the years for the ability to support the schools that gave his children a great start in their careers. He retired in 1983 from Texaco with more than 29 years of service.

A native of Portland, Oregon, he served in the U.S. Army in 1946-48 in Vienna, Austria after the end of World War II, and was recalled to serve in 1950-51 during the Korean War. He used the G.I. Bill to attend the University of Arkansas, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering before joining Texaco in 1955 as an engineer and later becoming a supervisor of operations, then facility superintendent.

Bill Hogenson graduated from Lamar University in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science in geology, beginning a career that saw him rise through technical and managerial roles of several companies, including Exxon, Aminoil, Phillips Petroleum, Amoco, Maxus Energy and Unocal, before becoming vice president of exploration for Santos USA, a division of Santos Ltd. of Adelaide, Australia.

As his career matured, he had the opportunity to work and live in a variety of foreign locations that spanned the globe. In 2007, he and a portion of the US-based management team of Santos USA created a new company, Zone Energy, where he continues as vice president and general partner today.



► Couch earns Rogers Award P.J. Couch, assistant professor of mathematics, is the 2018 Julie & Ben Rogers Community Service Award recipient, honored for his support of students conducting undergraduate research and his active work with the Texas STEM Conference and Undergraduate Research Expo since 2013.

Couch is associate director and a founding member of the Mathematical Puzzle Program, a program on U.S. campuses and abroad that designs events to help students have fun through learning and using mathematics. For the MaPP High School Challenge, Couch began the Lamar Mathematical Puzzlehunt in 2015 and helped host the MaPP Middle School Challenge allowing LU to host 70 students from five high schools in the Houston and Golden Triangle areas.

Off campus, Couch is a mentor and tutor with the Key Communicators initiative of the Beaumont Independent School District. Program members work with elementary and secondary campuses to mentor students in campus-wide group sessions.

► Duerler receives Phi Kappa Phi award Phi Kappa Phi selected Ismatara Reena, adjunct instructor of biology, and Caitlin Duerler, instructor of French, to receive its “Love of Learning Award” in 2018, making them the first LU recipients.

Renna used the award to present her dissertation on STEM program impact on academic achievement and retention at the Hawaii International Conference on Education this past January.

“I hope my research presentation will ... further establish LU’s and PKP’s graduate students as skillful researchers and scholars,” Renna said.

Duerler used the grant to fund her Spanish class and travel to Mexico City Aug. 6-13. She viewed an exhibition by writer and artist Leonora Carrington at the Museo Arte Moderno, which aided her scholarship on medieval influences in the art and literature of Carrington and supported her master’s studies.

“The college and department have always encouraged their faculty to present their research and represent our university on the national level,” said Duerler.





# HAMZA helps OTHERS heal

by Daniel Pemberton

Each year, Lamar University graduates a class of highly equipped students who will either enter the job market or choose to continue their educations at graduate or professional school. While many will secure jobs or graduate school placement across the U.S., others will choose to work and live in the Southeast Texas region. Regardless of their choice, these students contribute to their chosen community as LU alumni, and in this

way the university has consistently been one of the most powerful economic and cultural engines for the region. LU also is a necessary resource for many academic fields, exporting its talent around the globe. One of LU's best examples is the work of M.K. Hamza, professor of clinical mental health counseling, who joined the faculty in 2003.

As a consulting forensic neuropsychologist and researcher, Hamza is world-renowned for identifying Human Devastation Syndrome while working with young children in Syria. The term describes the collective and complex human trauma symptoms of which millions of Syrian refugees suffer, particularly children and youth. "While displaced populations and refugees continue to suffer the humiliation, agony and pain of ethnic cleansings and wars, children who endure repetitive exposure to traumatic events seem to suffer the deepest of all psychological injuries," Hamza said.

Between 2011 and 2017, there were 198 chemical weapon attacks, including sarin and choline gas. Faced with continual bombardment and starvation, communities shatter, families fracture and children are unable to find footing to cope. Stunning atrocities shock. "One child

witnessed her entire family being killed," Hamza said. "Iranian militants slaughtered her father. Her mom was raped repeatedly until she passed. The next day, the militants took her to school and ridiculed the teachers and teaching. Militants hit her and her classmates, and when a male teacher came to her rescue, they tied two ropes to his neck and kept pulling until he died. A female teacher came to rescue the children, and they took her, poured gas on her and burned her alive."

**"While displaced populations and refugees continue to suffer the humiliation, agony and pain of ethnic cleansings and wars, children who endure repetitive exposure to traumatic events seem to suffer the deepest of all psychological injuries."**

—M.K. Hamza

Hamza describes human devastation syndrome as PTSD on steroids. "Usually in PTSD, you are exposed to a traumatic event and then you have time to cope," he said. "But we are talking about eight years of repeated, systematic, repetitive injuries. Those who receive the most psychological injuries are the children."

Hamza currently chairs the Syrian American Medical Society's Mental Health Committee, which has become one of the most active groups of doctors working in Syria since the advent of the war. Hamza's work in this area makes him among the most accomplished clinicians in the region. LU has been highly supportive of his work, which continues to position the university as an important institution in the field of mental health counseling.

His three children attend or are graduates of Lamar University. The oldest, Ayah Hamza, earned her bachelor's in dietetics and now attends medical school at the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth.

Omar Hamza is a pre-medicine/psychology major and chemistry/biology minor and founder of the Lamar Muslim Association. He is a recipient of the Beck Fellowship, which will fund his research on Human Devastation Syndrome in Jordan. Ali Hamza studies political science with an interest in pursuing law after

graduation. Following in the footsteps of his older sister, Ali is involved in the newly reorganized LU Model UN team.

Their dad was the 2018 LU Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. He spoke of his experiences to open a window of awareness, understanding and commitment to address psychological trauma and injuries so that refugees can find methods to survive, move on and triumph.

## EXPLORING *our past,* ENRICHING *our future*

by Casey Ford

In 2017, Lamar University launched the Center for History and Culture. That first year, the fellows' work celebrated aspects of Southeast Texas musical influences and featured recorded histories of prominent Beaumont figures. This year, the 2018-2019 fellowship projects add new scholarship and creativity to further the center's mission "to support the creation, preservation, and transmission of knowledge about

Southeast Texas." Through their distinctive lenses on art and graphic design, filmmaking and historical-cultural exploration, each fellow is mining the past to cultivate awareness, empathy and inclusiveness among Lamar University and the broader Southeast Texas community that is our home. Each project spins uniquely humanizing and regenerative threads that weave Lamar University into the fabric of the local and global socio-economy.

### 2018-19 CENTER FELLOWS



#### LU RE-ENVISONS BEAUMONT: 3-D VISUALIZATION AS A LEARNING TOOL FOR PUBLIC HISTORY

*Richard Gachot*, associate professor of art and design, in sifting the architectural history of downtown Beaumont, has discovered what seems to have been a "city within a city" that existed when Beaumont was segregated by Jim Crow laws. Initially, he set out to re-visualize lost architecture of the city using Sanborn maps and 3-D computer modeling. In his exploration, Gachot discovered a building on Park and Forsythe that was an African-American theater during segregation. His project has since broadened into a survey of architecture as a manifestation of a completely segregated inner city, in which urban African-Americans created the city in miniature for themselves. Gachot and his students are looking at segregation then and now to break down socioeconomic stereotypes and generate conversation about lost history. Gachot hopes that the future holds the possibility of an African-American history museum and revitalization in that area of downtown.



#### LU REMEMBERS BEAUMONT ON THE WORLD STAGE: BOOM DAYS, A DOCUMENTARY FILM

*Mahmoud Salimi*, assistant professor of film and television, looks back to events of the late 1800s toward the turn of the century to explore the cultural and economic significance of local oil discovery in 1901. His ideas for the project originated from his own experience as "an outsider coming in" to the dichotomy that is Southeast Texas—wealth and poverty in juxtaposition. Salimi finds such contradictions interesting and worthy of close study. Working with LU student researchers and crew members, Boom Days will feature drama and re-enactments, many of which will be shot at Spindletop on the Lamar University campus. Salimi's work on this film evokes his ethos as a storyteller. He encourages his students to notice the stories of the human condition that are all around. He says to them, "Don't write the zombie movies—you are sitting in the middle of history."



#### LU RECLAIMS LOST HISTORY: BEAUMONT LATINA/O ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

*Miguel Chavez*, assistant professor of history, specializes in U.S. and Chicana/o history and his fellowship project captures and reclaims a missing narrative—that of the Latina/o—in Beaumont's recorded history. Latina/o and Mexicana/o people have always been integral players in the socio-economy of Southeast Texas, yet their stories are missing from our recorded histories. Participants in Chavez's research are LU alumni who have been socialized in Beaumont public institutions from elementary school forward. Their oral histories remind us that their families have been here since before oil was discovered; they labored in timber and shipyards and even worked in the service industry, like the father of one of Chavez's subjects, who came to the area in the early 1900s and served the "oil elite" as an attendant at Beaumont's Crosby Hotel. Chavez hopes his work will play a role in increasing Latina/o enrollment at LU and that stories like the Flores' will inspire others to learn about this marginalized segment of our area's history.





AARON



BRENT



CLINT

# WE'RE IN THE *people business*

by Krista Salter

In the early 2000s, three brothers graduated from Lamar University full of entrepreneurial spirit and looking towards the future. Though they didn't realize it then, the lessons they learned at LU—both in life and academics—would afford them much success individually and together down the line.

When it comes down to it, the Walters brothers, Aaron '01, Brent '03 and Clint '04, all agreed that their education at Lamar University played the largest role in their current success. As a family of five siblings, the brothers said they didn't have much growing up.

Staying determined and persevering was part of it, but the brothers said LU gave each of them the tools, resources and connections they needed to lead them to their individual and group successes today.

## Paths to Success

The Walters brothers attribute much of their accomplishment to the professors who guided them, not only academically but also personally. Not often do you find a university so tightknit that graduates keep in touch with the professors who were so influential on the future careers of their students.

Clint said one of the most important things he learned from his professors during

his time at LU was something he collectively refers to as “emotional intelligence,” or connecting with and ultimately helping people, a tool he used during the process of finding his own path and that his brothers adopted.

Maintaining connections to LU, their professors and the lessons they learned proved essential to the Walters brothers as they each started their own careers.

Brent explained that it was management and marketing Professor Brad Mayer, a teacher of his when he studied accounting and finance, who guided him through a decision that would ultimately determine his future just after graduation.

The young graduate, 21 at the time, was offered the chance to buy out the insurance company he had worked for through his college days, and then later, along with his brother Clint, the pair purchased a neighboring laundromat.

Fast forward to today, Brent operates the largest group of AllState insurance agencies in the country, with 12 offices across Southeast Texas and parts of Houston. “During the process of buying that business, I had no idea what I was doing, no clue,” Brent said. “My professors literally helped me with everything, and I couldn't have done it without them helping me. They walked me through everything.

“They contributed to that, LU contributed to that,” he said. “They went above and beyond, and you don't see that elsewhere.”

Clint took a similar path. While he attended LU,

he worked as a part-time teller at a local bank and started his business ventures alongside Brent shortly after graduation when they bought the laundromat together. Eventually, Clint took a job as branch manager of MobilOil Credit Union after working his way up to assistant vice president at the bank where he began career. He said he advanced through the chain of command to where he is today, senior vice president and chief operating officer of MobilOil Credit Union.

Both the twins and their elder brother are a testament as to what can happen when LU nurtures and supports individual growth. Lamar University leads graduates to be successful contributors to their communities. In turn,

*But, Aaron said the thing that excites him most about Altar'd State is that they're a “give-back” company. So far, the organization has built five schools in Peru, while 14 more are currently under construction.*

the community and future LU students continue to benefit from their success and generosity.

## Lessons learned

The Walters brothers said an essential key to their success was learning to apply real-world skills at LU that they then transitioned into their careers.

That's why, when looking back on their days at LU, the brothers remember not only the academic lessons learned but also the genuine life skills and insights Lamar University provided.

“LU taught me how to be a man,” Brent said. “I had to go to school and go to work, and it taught me to be responsible. I'm appreciative of that because I paved my own path and keep going.

“A strategy I have is that I always need to ‘look the role,’ and I became a more persistent person,” he explained. “I learned it's okay to fail, and I try to raise my kids the same way—to fail on something so they can learn how to rise and learn from it. Failing at some things makes you a better person. LU taught me all of that.”

Clint agreed, adding that his college career was essential in providing key experiences.

“One of the major takeaways that's helped in

my career is learning how to network and be resourceful, use teamwork and time management,” he said. “In the business world, we're actually in the people business. You could be the smartest person in the world, but if you don't have the people factor you won't be as successful.”

## A collaborative venture

In 2009, when the Walters brothers had a chance to collaborate they took it and ran. They created the retail fashion boutique, Altar'd State, with Aaron serving as CEO and chairman of the company's board of directors.

Starting out with one storefront, Aaron's brainchild has blossomed to more than 100 retail stores offering women's apparel at malls and shopping centers throughout the country, as well as online.

“I went to LU for a business management degree,” the eldest brother explained. “I'm one of those people who is using my degree because I really am doing that.”

But, Aaron said the thing that excites him most about Altar'd State is that they're a “give-back” company. So far, the organization has built five schools in Peru, while 14 more are currently under construction.

The organization also gives back a large portion of their profits to charities every month—more than \$10 million in total to local and global communities. And, Aaron said they hope to bring a storefront home to Beaumont in the coming years where they can continue to give back to this community.

“The professors I worked with always gave real-life examples, and my experience was outstanding,” Aaron said. “It gave me the foundation and basis to go start my career.

“We're a young, vibrant company, passionate about developing and growing future leaders,” Aaron explained. “It's humbling, and I'm appreciative.”

The brothers have all had a hand in making sure Altar'd State continues to not only run but also build steam. With Clint and Brent on the board, the brothers make decisions about venues of philanthropy and provide support in their areas of expertise.



Brent added, “We’ve always had an entrepreneurial spirit. But Aaron made the right decision, because he killed it!”

“Sometimes we pinch ourselves at how well we’ve done,” Clint added. “The emotional intelligence aspect we gained became one of our core values within Altar’d State. Our give-back component and loving on our customers has enabled us to grow.”

said being involved with the university today is an honor. “As a family of five siblings we really grew up with nothing,” he said. “To be able to get an education here, go out and be successful and then come give back means a lot.”

Clint agreed, saying, “I’m always going to be

rewarding,” Clint added. “It’s an opportunity to give back, because with the personal growth Lamar has given us, we want to be alumni who can give back.

We’re just getting to that stage now.”

“Lamar University helped me understand the people business,” Clint said. “They

G. Weinert Entrepreneurship Lecture Series. Aaron returned to deliver the keynote address during the College of Business commencement in May 2019.

“It’s very humbling,” Aaron said when asked how it felt to know that he and his brothers still impact and stand out at the university. “I never dreamed 20 years ago that I’d be giving the commencement speech at LU,” he said. “I’m looking

## Mobiloil CREDIT UNION



### Full circle

The entrepreneurial spirit alumni leave with magnifies LU’s socioeconomic impact in the community and beyond. More proof lies in the alumni who go out into the working world prepared, and eventually find their way back to the university seasoned and passionate, ready to help prepare the future workforce.

The Walters brothers are a perfect example. Brent



surrounded with helping people, and I like to be in a position where I can give back to the university and community, not only financially but with my personal time, which I like to think matters most.

“To be able to come back to the school of business and tell our story about how LU has helped us is

did an awesome job bringing in people to speak, who had real experience. Then, we all had the chance to go back and speak at LU about our success.”

All three brothers returned to campus last fall to share their experiences in management and entrepreneurship as participants in the Michael

forward to it. Twenty years ago I was in that crowd. It’s so humbling, and I’m so appreciative.”

Clint concluded: “I have no intention of moving out of Beaumont, ever. We will continue to be involved with the community, and Lamar University.”

*stand out. for good.*

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: BUSINESS |



### Vivek Natarajan wins Distinguished Educator Award

**Vivek Natarajan**, associate professor of marketing, sees the three-pronged mission of College of Business faculty members—service, research and teaching—as “mutually reinforcing.” His excellence in all three areas garnered national recognition this year when he was awarded the 2018 Federation of Business Disciplines Distinguished Educator Award by the Association of Collegiate Marketing Educators.

“Good service helps you do good research. Good research helps you in the classroom,” Natarajan said. “Good teaching provides inspiration from the classroom for service through sharing knowledge at professional conferences.”

The Association of Collegiate Marketing Educators, one of 10 professional associations that together form the Federation of Business Disciplines, has been a beneficiary of Natarajan’s service for many years. He served as an officer for five years, including program chair in 2015 and president in the following year. With his service on the board complete, Natarajan said he was honored to be recognized by his peers with the Distinguished Educator award.

“I feel satisfied because it recognizes my work in the classroom, my work as a leader in research, teaching and service,” he said. Natarajan continues his work with the Federation of Business Disciplines and served as general program chair for the organization’s major conference in Houston this past March. “It’s very hard work, but I enjoyed the challenge and the result.”

### Information Systems and Analysis introduces new master of science in MIS

Lamar University’s new Master of Science in Management Information Systems, which began this spring, is a 30-hour STEM program that will take one year to complete for full-time students. The program will be offered entirely online.

“We thought there was a gap here between the programs offered and the student demands that we can fill,” said **Kakoli Bandyopadhyay**, professor and chair of the Department of Information Systems and Analysis. “We will differentiate ourselves from other regional universities in the state by offering a master’s in MIS that is mainly focused on Enterprise Resource Planning.”

Current courses teach the leading business software SAP for enterprise resource planning, which is used throughout the Southeast Texas and Houston region by major employers such as Exxon Mobil, Total, Dupont, Chevron Services and others. “This region has the demand and looks for people with this knowledge,” Bandyopadhyay said. “That way, we have an advantage.”

More than 404,000 customers in more than 180 countries use SAP applications, which means this College of Business program will prepare students to compete for careers around the globe in positions such as data analysts, systems analysts, enterprise resource planning consultants and business intelligence designers.



### Johnny Cupcakes Visits Lamar University

In 2018, the College of Business hosted **Johnny Earle**, founder of Johnny Cupcakes, “The World’s First T-Shirt Bakery,” as part of the Michael Weinert Entrepreneurship Lecture Series. Earle shared the story of how, at the age of 19, he took his t-shirt brand from the trunk of his rusty car to some of the world’s most sought after retail locations.

Johnny Cupcakes has been featured in FORBES, NPR, BusinessWeek, INC Magazine, Wall Street Journal, WIRED, New York Times, The Boston Globe

and Los Angeles Times and seen on MTV, Bloomberg TV, MAKER, Attack Of The Show, The Food Network and WWD. After the lecture, attendees were able to buy an exclusive Johnny Cupcakes Lamar University T-shirt at Johnny’s pop-up shop.

### ► Scholarship honors Swardlows

The LU Foundation announced the newly endowed **Todd ‘88 and Jennifer Hoffman Scholarship in Business** honoring Todd’s mentors **Robert**, who formerly served as the college’s associate dean, and **Marleen Swardlow**, who served as director of both the General Business Program and the BBA online program.

### ► Students Attend G.A.M.E Forum

College of Business students **Chastity Estes** and **Jennifer Hinze** traveled to New York City March 28-30 to the 2019 G.A.M.E. IX Forum. The students, along with **Associate Professor of Finance Chunda Chen** had the opportunity to explore important developments and challenges investment professionals face within global financial markets.

### ► Burns voted Professor of the Year

Beta Gamma Sigma is the international business honor society for AACSB-accredited schools. The membership connotes academic excellence and superior achievement. The society’s inducted students voted **Clare Burns**, MSA director and professor, Outstanding Professor in 2018.



# LU RETIRES SARVER JERSEY

by Cooper Welch

Cardinal Cadence recently sat down with Natalie (Sarver) Smith, who played volleyball for Lamar University from 1999 through 2002 and became the first LU volleyball student-athlete to have her jersey number retired on Oct. 5, 2018. The living legend shared with us some of her favorite memories at LU, advice she'd give to current and future student-athletes, and what it felt like to have her jersey retired.

**Q: What are some of your favorite memories from your time at LU?**

**A:** Coach Barnes signed three freshmen for the 1999 season along with me. I remember reporting to the dorms my freshman year a little nervous to meet everyone and wondering if I would even get to play that year. I spent the next four years on the volleyball court with Ali, Shanda and Shandra. We all loved to compete.

My favorite memory is winning conference in 2001. Our team was stacked that year, and it was Coach Barnes last year at LU. It was such a great season!

Off the court, I remember the team would all pile into a few cars on off days and head to my parent's house for the best home cooked meals! Gumbo was everyone's favorite.

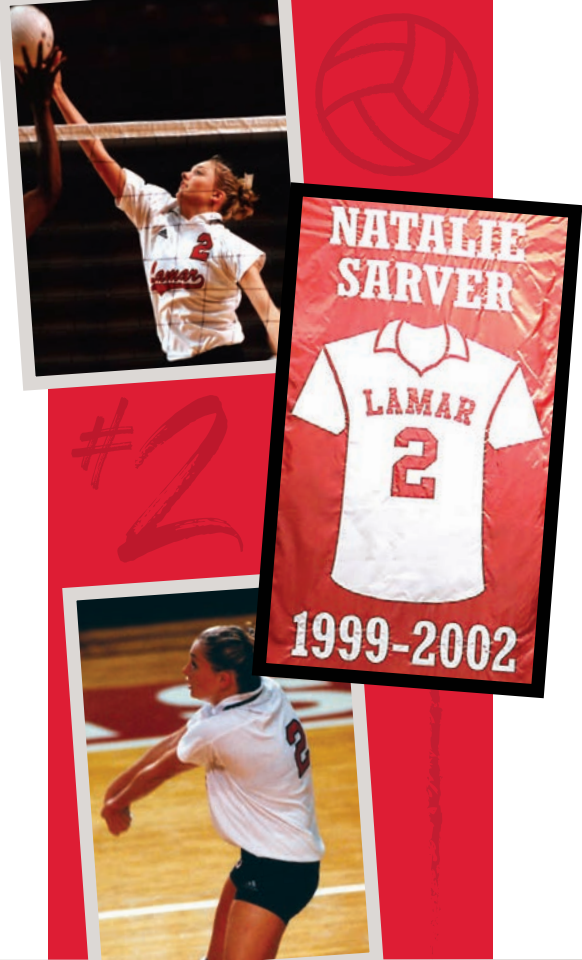
**Q: What advice would you give to current and future volleyball student-athletes?**

**A:** If I had to give advice to current and future student athletes, no matter the sport, it would be to have fun, go to class, work hard, practice hard, learn from each loss and enjoy every win. At the end, you will walk away with only what you've earned, which is hopefully a conference championship, a diploma, some of the greatest memories and so many life lessons.

**Q: What did it mean to you to have your jersey retired by Lamar University this past fall?**

**A:** The retirement of my jersey this past fall means so much to me. This accomplishment is one I share with so many others that made my career at LU amazing. I share this with each of my teammates from 1999-2002, my coaches, my parents, family and supporters. It's a true honor to be the first retiree and I am so proud to represent LU Volleyball!

Smith was named the 2002 Southland Player of the Year and took home the 2002 Babe Zaharias Award. Her contributions in the postseason also were notable, earning her all-tournament honors in 2000 and 2002. She ranks among the best to ever wear an LU uniform in several statistical categories, including second and 10th, respectively, in single-season kills, first and fifth, respectively, in single-season attacks, and third and 10th, respectively, in single-season digs. She holds the Big Red record for career kills with 1,906 and career attacks with 5,053, and the record for digs with 1,613. Additionally, Smith holds the Cardinal record for kills in a game with 34, a number she achieved twice.



## | ATHLETICS NEWS |



### Football makes historic run

On the morning of Nov. 18, in a filled team meeting room of the Dauphin Athletics Complex there was no sound, other than that of the NCAA FCS Selection Show on ESPNU. The intent stares at the video screen located at the front of the room quickly turned into an eruption of cheers, high fives and hugs as the Lamar University players and coaches saw the name "Lamar" appear on the bracket. It was at that very moment that everyone realized they had accomplished something never before done in program history. The 2018 Cardinal football team was the first in school history to advance to the NCAA FCS Championships.

Even more exciting than the reaction of the team when they saw their dreams come true was the path they followed to get there. This was not expected—outside of those within the Cardinals' locker room it was considered an impossibility.

The Cardinals had won a total of five games in the two previous seasons

combined, including just two in 2017. LU entered the 2018 season picked 10th of 11 teams in the preseason poll. The Cardinals opened the year 1-4 overall and 0-3 in Southland Conference play.

All of that seemingly changed in one instant—tied at 21 against Incarnate Word with 12 seconds remaining, UIW lined up for what appeared to be the game-winning field goal. LU had a different game-winner in mind as Lane Taylor knifed through the line to block the kick which was recovered by teammate Caleb Abrom who returned it 66 yards for the score—and the win—as the final horn sounded.

Little did anyone know at the time, but that one moment turned the Cards from the last place team in the league into the team no one wanted to play. The heart-stopping victory sparked a six-game win streak, which included wins over three national ranked opponents and the eventual league co-champion who also ended the season ranked.

The Cardinals finished the regular season with a 7-4 overall record and a 6-3 mark in Southland Conference play. Along the way, the Cardinals recorded one of the nation's longest single-season win streaks as well as one of the largest single-season turnarounds in the country.

Any doubt of advancing was erased amidst pure emotion when their name was called—the wait was over. The Cardinals were headed to Cedar Falls, Iowa, to face Northern Iowa. While the Cardinals were making their first appearance in the FCS playoffs, UNI was a postseason regular advancing to the their 20th playoff appearance. The Cardinals scored on the second play from scrimmage and were in the hunt, but LU came up just short, missing a field goal in the final seconds to fall by 3, 16-13, placing the final note on a historic season.

### Hoy sets rushing record

Despite receiving just three starts on the season, junior quarterback Jordan Hoy was named Southland Newcomer of the Year. The signal caller recorded one of the school's top passing and rushing performances. His 225-yard rushing performance at Stephen F. Austin was a single-game record for a quarterback.

### Crow Wins NCAA Regional Championships

Senior cross country runner Jamie Crowe became the first Cardinal in program history to record an NCAA South Central Region individual title. The Glasgow, Scotland, native clocked a time of 31:36.3—one of the top finishes by a Scottish runner on the Texas A&M course in the past decade—to win the title.

Crowe began to make his move toward the podium at the 6.3k split, reaching that mark in third place with a time of 19:49.8. He reached the first split at 6:15.4, trailing runners from Arkansas, UT Rio Grande Valley, North Texas, Rice and Texas A&M. With the victory, Crowe became the 19th Cardinal to qualify for the NCAA Championships and the sixth in the past six years.

Crowe's finish garnered NCAA All-South Central Region honors and guaranteed him a spot in the NCAA Championships, which took place in Madison, Wis. Crowe would eventually be named USTFCCCA Region Athlete of the Year for his efforts in College Station.

### Runners return to NCAA

Men's cross country wrapped up another strong season led by senior Jamie Crowe and junior Jordan Rowe. The duo went 1-2 at the Southland championships, earned all-region honors and advanced to the NCAA Championships. They became the first Southland runners to compete in the NCAA since 2015.

### Peskin scores

Senior soccer forward Kelso Peskin garnered United States Coaches All-Midwest Region honors in 2018. The two-time first-team All-Southland Conference selection led LU with 26 points on 11 goals and four assists this past year. She scored 18 goals and recorded 15 assists during her LU career.



**T**wo years ago, in December of 2017, a mother and daughter graduated on the exact same day with the exact same degree. Melissa McMillan and daughter Lauren McMillan both received bachelor's degrees in family studies at the College of Education and Human Development.

Their story is truly an inspirational journey of triumph over tragedy. When Lauren was 10 years old, she and Melissa were involved in a life-threatening automobile accident that left Lauren paralyzed from the neck down. Although the wreck forever changed them, neither Lauren nor Melissa was broken in spirit. Instead, they found themselves determined to reach goals that were important to them. While Lauren faced many obstacles, Melissa also had hurdles to

overcome as she wore many different hats, including caregiver and mother to Lauren and her two younger siblings.

After Lauren graduated from Lumberton High School, she and Melissa attended Lamar State College-Port Arthur, and in 2013 the two graduated with associate degrees. In 2014, Lauren and Melissa enrolled at Lamar University. In the fall semester of 2015, the two were hit by another vehicle and Lauren again suffered critical injuries that caused her to be airlifted to a Houston hospital. This forced Lauren and Melissa to withdraw from the university, and it took a year for Lauren to recover before both returned to LU in the fall of 2016.

Their favorite memory while attending LU was getting to take a cooking class together, participating in an internship and creating lifelong friends.

Lauren and Melissa developed friendships with many of the faculty members at LU, remembering how professors shared in their happiness through various successes. "What I remember most is on day one, when we would go into the class, no matter what class, the students, the teachers, they didn't know what to expect with her," Melissa said, referring to Lauren's physical disability. "A lot of the students wouldn't even look at her; nobody would sit next to her. And then by the end of the



semester they were all our friends, and we had made such strong friendships. They would come to our house and do study groups, and I would cook cookies and pizza," Melissa said. "It was just so important to me, for her to have that social aspect of going to college and now having college friendships that will last forever, it's just great. The teachers never told her she couldn't do it. They knew that through her SAT scores, she mentally had it, but physically she didn't."

The two credit LU's Disability Resource Center as being extremely helpful and accommodating. "They went above and beyond for her, helping her with whatever she needed. They're helping anybody with a disability, and it was just such an asset to have. She couldn't have done it without them," Melissa said. The two

also appreciate Katie Wagstaff, who has worked as Lauren's personal nurse for more than 15 years and accompanied her to many classes, as being vital in helping Lauren reach her goals.

When asked about being a non-traditional student and to offer advice for people who have already been out of school for a while and are thinking about returning, Melissa said, "Do it. Do it because you're never too old to learn, and you're never too old to get your degree. There were people older than me in there, and I was very intimidated because I didn't know the math. I was like, 'I'm gonna fail.' Our professor, who was amazing, said, 'No, you aren't.' We would get a dry erase board, and Lauren would go over it and over it with me." Lauren teased her mom saying, "Somehow you made an A."

Since their graduation, Melissa and Lauren have been catching up on all the yearly doctor's appointments they missed while finishing their last year at LU. Melissa said, "By fluke, I got into a cookie business. It's just weird how things come into your life. I give cookie classes teaching people how to decorate. I do it right out of my home; we decorate and sell them for graduations and birthdays." While Melissa is starting her own business, Lauren is considering a return to LU to earn her master's degree in nutrition.

## | COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT |



### Online M.S. in nutrition rolls out

In 2016, in response to inquiries about a graduate degree in nutrition, the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, under the leadership of **Amy Shows**, professor of nutrition and dietetics, and **Jill Killough**, department chair, proposed a new online program—a Master of Science in Nutrition. This 36-hour program proposal became reality when the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the program in May 2018. Rising concerns to combat obesity in children and adults, increasing interest in healthy eating, and an aging population signal growing opportunities in a variety of fields for graduates with expertise in nutrition. The new online degree is designed to meet the expanding need for graduate-level education in the nutrition field, bridging the gaps between formal education and professional practice as it prepares graduates to successfully address challenges in their fields. The courses, developed by Shows, Killough, **Associate Professor Connie Ruiz** and **Professor Jau-Jiin Chen**—all registered dietitian nutritionists and members of the graduate nutrition faculty—reflect evidence-based nutrition guidelines and have a community nutrition focus.



### Classrooms redesigned

After the original education building was completed in 1968 and modest cosmetic updates in the intervening years, the classroom doors reopened last fall to a vibrant, modern learning environment. Through energizing colors, brighter lights and moveable furniture conducive to implementing active learning, the remodel renews the college's commitment to inspire creativity, confidence and collaboration. As faculty work to engage the minds of future educators, the new classroom design aligns with current learning styles and provides a space to use the most effective tools in teaching and learning.



### Strategic plan

The College of Education and Human Development recently completed its five-year strategic plan. With a committee comprised faculty, staff and students from within the college. Members met as a collective group five times, and each committee member served on a task force to identify opportunities and advance recommendations. The committee developed a comprehensive plan, including a new mission statement: The College of Education and Human Development at Lamar University generates a community of collaboration through innovative curricula, scholarship and service learning to inspire our diverse student population and to positively impact their lives and others in Southeast Texas and beyond. The college also committed to the values, including: diversity and

multicultural competence, equity, innovation, community and economic development, and quality. A leadership group drawn from the strategic planning committee will steward implementation of the plan this year and ensure that every student, faculty and staff member as well as our partners in the community understand the benefits of the plan and how they can contribute to the college's success.

► **Provost awards distinguished fellowship** **Mohammad Hamza**, professor of counseling, received the 2018 Distinguished Faculty Research/Creative Activity Fellowship, which supports faculty who have distinguished themselves during their careers.

► **Provost recognizes Singh** **Mamta Singh**, associate professor in teacher education, received the 2018 Distinguished Teaching Faculty Fellowship, which recognizes and rewards faculty who have demonstrated outstanding performance in instruction and creativity in curriculum development.

► **Special education gets high marks** The Master of Teacher Leadership program in the Teacher Education Department provides graduate students the opportunity to take courses in gifted education. **BestColleges.com** recognized this gifted track as one of the best online gifted programs in 2018.



After graduation, Tony Nguyen '01 packed up his dual degrees in biology and chemistry and left LU for ExxonMobil—and not long after that, for medical school in Fort Worth. In North Texas, he had a friend who owned a sushi restaurant, and Nguyen fell in love with this food subculture.

As one of seven children in a poor Vietnamese-American family, Nguyen says he was practically born a foodie. His mother was passionate about food, and out of necessity, she cooked every meal, every day, for her husband and children. She loved her family through her love of food, and her son Tony inherited her passion.

Family is what brought the Port Arthur native back home from med school; his father was ill and needed his children to help run his 35-year-old tax and accounting business. Nguyen and his siblings are first-generation Americans and first-generation college students. Their parents emigrated from Vietnam in 1975 and, starting from absolutely nothing, built a family and a business in Port Arthur. They saved every extra penny—never eating out, never taking the kids to the movies—to buy a house in Nederland so that their children would attend good schools. They put seven children through college without acquiring debt, and they passed their principles and discipline to Nguyen and his siblings. Nguyen says this is the reason that Vietnamese-American business owners in Southeast Texas are successful—they have watched their parents build lives from scratch through sacrifice and hard work. Nguyen credits much of his success as a business owner to his parents and to the time he spent learning accounting from his father. His sister eventually took the reins of the business so that her brother could follow his own entrepreneurial path.

Nguyen wanted to bring sushi to Beaumont in a way it hadn't yet seen. Other sushi restaurants in the area offer fusion cuisine—he jokingly compares it to Tex-Mex—but not necessarily the real

# Playing Koi:

## LU BIO-CHEM ALUM CHOOSES SUSHI

VIETNAMESE SHREWDNESS,  
AMERICAN AMBITION, JAPANESE  
SIMPLICITY EQUAL SUCCESS

by Casey Ford

deal. Nguyen seized his opportunity—a niche in the market that would allow him to share his admiration for Japanese culinary art and a menu that offered more authentic Japanese cuisine with a modern twist. He admits it was a risk. He understands the reality that people in less metropolitan areas aren't statistically as willing to take gastronomic risks—they like what they like, and they want to use forks. He also believes, however, that Southeast Texans should have access to the kinds of culinary anomalies available in Houston or DFW or Austin, and his success as the owner of Koi Japanese Sushi Bar and Lounge in Beaumont has shown that some Southeast Texans are game for foodie adventures.

The food at Koi is not only adventurous, but artistic. Nguyen calls sushi an art form like sculpture, but

instead of appealing to only the visual and tactile senses, as sculpture does, the experience of sushi appeals to all five. To hear Nguyen tell it, the Japanese may be the true progenitors of the truth to materials principle, as it certainly applies to sushi, which epitomizes simplicity and a focus on the finest raw ingredients. The rice is the thing, according to Nguyen, though quality seafood and produce are also paramount. He says people mistakenly confuse *sushi* and *sashimi*—and he invites people to step outside their culinary comfort zones to experience both. Experiencing sushi is about much more than eating—it's a journey from raw ingredients through their preparation and assembly to a naturally aesthetic dish of perfect bites.

Since 2012, Nguyen has offered this experience to the people of Southeast

Texas. Seven years and counting is an impressive lifespan for a restaurant in this area that serves neither chicken fried steak nor burgers. When asked for his advice to other entrepreneurs who may be interested in the restaurant business, Nguyen says this: "know the numbers." He says it does not matter how innovative or desirable a product is, the endeavor will not be successful if its caretakers do not understand from inception what their financial outcomes and obligations will be. Nguyen says that if entrepreneurs "just want to create, that's great," but they need to collaborate with partners they can trust to run the back end—finances, human resources, logistics—and this is especially true in the restaurant business.

Nguyen feels confident that Lamar University is creating entrepreneurs and

other professionals who understand this demand for cross-pollination, and he marvels at the growth of the business programs on campus and online. He says that he is proud to see LU growing past its role as a regional commuter school into an institution that draws in students from far beyond Southeast Texas and that this growth more firmly secures LU as a socioeconomic hub—not only locally but internationally. He sees LU students as highly competitive and talented, and he is proud to bring them onto his staff. Nguyen brags that Joey Chavez '11, LU culinary arts graduate who apprenticed at Spago, worked at the French Laundry in California and was recently nominated as Baltimore's Best Chef, began his highly successful culinary career at Koi. He encourages his student workers to study in their downtime at the restaurant,

and he has had many students who have worked for him throughout their time at LU.

Nguyen's success as a local restaurateur gives credence to the impact that Lamar University alumni have on the cultural, economic and educational diversity and well-being of Southeast Texas. His aesthetic and acumen, his dedication to hiring and supporting students, and his remarkable food are a testament to Nguyen's commitment to making Southeast Texas a beautiful and interesting place to live. His rosewater martinis aren't bad, either.







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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50s

**Andy Green** '54, B.S. civil engineering, who later earned his M.S. in engineering mechanics, was inducted into the Museum of the Gulf Coast Hall of Fame Dec. 17, 2017. He is the chairman and founder of the Green Foundation and lives in Galveston with his wife, Joyce.

60s

**Earl McCaleb** '64, B.S. chemical engineering, is currently retired and lives in Montgomery with his wife, Bonnie.

**Herbert Troy** '65, B.S. physical education, '71, M.S. health and physical education, played catcher for the Houston Colt .45s, who later became the Houston Astros, in the 1960s. He lives in Port Neches with his wife, Bobbie.

**Randy Barlow** '66, B.S. industrial engineering, and **Linda (Tanner) Barlow** '66, B.S. elementary education, were selected as the grand marshals for the 2018 "Union Celebrates America" parade. The Barlow's live in Union, KY.

**Henry Schkade Jr.** '66, B.S. sociology, '75, M.A. liberal arts, is retired and lives in Georgetown.

**Nick Lampson** '68 B.S. secondary education, '74, M.Ed. school administration, published a book, *The Death of Washington's Democracy*. Lampson and his wife, **Susan Lampson** '87 elementary education, '94, M.Ed. special education, lives in Beaumont.

**Robert Nichols** '68, B.S. industrial engineering, was named the 2017-2018 Champion of Transparency by the Texas Press Association for the second time as state senator. The award honors him for diligently providing constituents with access to public meetings, records and notices. Nichols lives in Jacksonville, Fl. with his wife, Donna.

70s

**Keith Carter** '70, B.B.A. management, has spent the last five decades making art of and for East Texas as a world-renowned photographer. He lives in Beaumont.

**Jimmy C. Allen** '73, B.S. accounting, is the executive vice president and chief operating officer of Moody National Bank in Galveston where he lives with his wife, Kathryn.

**Roy Cavarretta** '73, B.S. art, and wife, Blanche, each won first-place awards at the August Lone Star Gourd festival in New Braunfels. They reside in Hallettsville.

**Grace (Silva) Duffy** '73, B.B.A. secretarial science, retired from ExxonMobil Global Services Co. June 1, 2017, as asset contact in ExxonMobil Information Technology in The Woodlands. In October 2018, Grace married Stephen F. Harris of Colorado and was fortunate to have country singer Bobby D. Sawyer perform at the wedding in Katy.

**Joe Jannise** '73, B.B.A. accounting, earned his law degree from Thurgood Marshall School of Law in 1973. He works for the Jefferson Central Appraisal District as a senior appraiser and lives in Beaumont with his wife **Libby (Tatum)** '82, B.B.A. accounting.

**Lee Wheat** '76, B.S. graphic design, has been awarded with the American Advertising Federation Silver Medal. The Silver Medal is the highest award given by the American Advertising Federation—its recipients, locally and nationally, are a "Who's Who" of the industry. Lee and his wife, **Susan (Scroggs)** '76, B.B.A. accounting, live in Houston.

**Dallari Landry** '77, B.S. biology, was recently sworn in as the presiding judge of the San Marcos municipal court. She lives in New Braunfels with her husband, John.

**Karen (Steward) Neild** '77, B.S. elementary education, received a \$945.42 grant from Beaumont Public Schools Foundation Inc. for a test out lab simulator. She currently lives in Beaumont with husband, Tom.

**Joe Young** '79, B.S. industrial engineering, earned his master's in environmental management, and is director of loss control at Farmers Business Insurance. He lives in Round Rock, Ark. with his wife, Rhonda.

80s

**Mel Wright** '81, B.B.A. management, was elected to the board of directors of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries and served the remainder of the vacated position until 2019. Mel is president of Wright's Scrap Metals and lives in Beaumont with his wife, Neysa.

**Terry Welch** '82, B.S. electrical engineering, is president and CEO of Sinclair Group. He enjoyed a successful career with Dow Chemical Co. spanning more than 24 years, serving in several global manufacturing and business leadership roles where he earned a reputation as an outstanding leader. He and his wife, Janelle, live in Houston.

**Donald Hilton** '83, B.S. biology, later earned his medical degree and became a world-renowned neurosurgeon who is an expert on how pornography addiction harms the brain. Hilton lives in San Antonio with his wife, Jana.

**George "Buddy" York** '83, B.S. physical education, has released his book "All I Ever Wanted to Be Was a Soldier."

**Mike Carrabine** '84, B.S. physical education, minor in economics, '85, M.S. physical education and health. He coaches basketball at Rudder High School in Bryan where he lives with his wife **Ginger (Gilfillian)**, '87, B.S. criminal justice.

**William "Bill" Dixon** '84, B.S. electrical engineering, retired from his position as manager at Lockheed Martin. He and his wife, Wanda, currently live in Camden, Del.

**Dave Dial** '86, B.S. mathematics, is assistant track coach at Torrey Pines High School. Dial will be one of the few people who have run 200,000 miles in the spring of 2020. He lives in Groveton.

**Amy (Weber) Gil** '86, B.S. communication disorders, retired in 2017 and lives in Groves with her husband, Russell, '83, B.B.A. marketing, '92, B.S. kinesiology.

**Scott Sheppard** '88, B.M. music education, went on to earn his doctorate in education administration and is now superintendent of Huntsville school district, where he and his wife, Michele (Davis) '92, B.S., interdisciplinary studies, live.

**David Brewer** '89, B.B.A. management, and his wife, **Deanna (Drahos)** '89, B.S. elementary education, own Rock Auto Sales and Rock Builders LLC. They live in Vidor with their two children.

**Wenden Sanders** '89, B.M. music education, earned a master's degree in educational administration and is now director of the Houston school district's K-12 Fine Arts Department after having served as principal of Meyerland Performing and Visual Arts Middle School for six years. He lives in Missouri City.

90s

**Chris Graham** '90, B.S. computer science, was named division commander of the year by Sigma Nu Fraternity when he went above and beyond the call of duty during Hurricane Harvey to ensure the safety and health of their members. Graham is an engineer at ExxonMobil and lives in Huffman with his wife, Amy.

**Evelyn Miralles** '90, B.F.A. graphic design, is a senior principal engineer and lead virtual reality innovator in the astronaut training facility at NASA Johnson Space Center and CACI International. She lives in Houston.

**Elaine (Quebedeaux) Schumacher** '90, B.S. elementary education, received a \$1,192 grant from BPSF Inc. for computer coding and works as the technology coordinator at Fehl-Price Elementary School. She lives in Port Neches with her husband, **Gregory** '92, B.S. computer and information sciences.

**Shannon Keith Copeland** '91, M.M. music education, is the associate band director at West Brook High School in Beaumont. He lives in Lumberton with his wife **Megan (Beckcom)** '78, B.F.A. art, who teaches marketing at West Brook.

**Mollie Bell** '92, B.B.A. general business-law, earned a law degree in 2001 and is chief development officer of Ent Credit Union. She lives in Madison, Wis.

**Ken Mazzu** '92, B.F.A. studio art, earned his M.F.A. and recently exhibited his work, at Foltz Fine Art in Houston during their Texas Aesthetic 2019 exhibition. Mazzu lives in Houston.

**Christine Lambert** '94, B.S. chemical engineering, earned a doctorate in chemical engineering and is technical leader for emission

control within Powertrain Research and Advanced Engineering at the Ford Research and Innovation Center in Dearborn, Mich. She holds 35 U.S. patents and is co-author of more than 70 technical publications in the areas of supported metal catalysts and emission control systems for diesel vehicles. She lives in Dearborn.

**Lane Martin** '94, B.S. criminal justice, graduated from the FBI national academy 220th session, and began serving in Orange, rising in the ranks to become the chief of police. He lives in Orange with his wife, **Samantha (Farwell)** '16, B.S. nursing, and their daughter, **Lauren** '16, B.A. English.

**Shanna (Chance) Burke** '96, B.S. criminal justice, '05, M.B.A. public administration, is executive director of the Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission. She lives in Lumberton.

**Christopher Sharp** '96, B.S. electrical engineering, works as an IT infrastructure leader at Lord Corp. He lives in North Carolina with his wife, Palma.

**Hazel (Scott) King** '98, B.S.W. social work, works as a mental health patients' rights advocacy coordinator and has been in the mental health field for 18 years. She lives in Oakland, Calif., with her husband, John.

**Tracie (Simpson) Mouton** '99, B.S. criminal justice, went on to earn her master's in counseling and is pursuing her doctorate. She teaches math at Cypress Springs High School and lives in Katy.

**Ahmed Rahimi** '99, B.S. mechanical engineering, was the first engineer from Qatar elected to the American Institute of Chemical Engineers ammonia safety committee. He lives in Beaumont.

**Shontta (Elia) Stevens** '99, B.S. communication, is the physical education teacher at Thornton Elementary in the Arlington school district. She and her husband, Roosevelt, live in Arlington.

00s

**Jennifer (McMullen) East** '01, B.S.N. nursing, received the 2017 community service award from Southeast Texas Nurse Practitioners. She lives in Nederland.

**Brandon Allison** '02, B.A. general studies, went on the receive a master's degree in



**LU Alumni Day of Sharing**—*The Office of Alumni Affairs and the Office of Recruitment partnered to host an Alumni Day of Sharing, encouraging alumni to volunteer in their communities last November.*

1. Alumni and students are assembling senior box meals at the Southeast Texas Food Bank.
2. LU Ambassador Edward Doan, Robin Meek '86 and Kim Redmon '93.

**Generations in the Workplace**—*LU partnered with the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce for a professional development event for alumni and area business professionals last July.*

3. Frances Thompson, Southeast Texas Young Professionals Organization member, left, with Carol Bylerly '67.





educational leadership. He is now assistant principal of West Orange Stark Middle School and lives in Beaumont with his wife **Shawntelle (Hillman)** '16, B.B.A. human resource management.

**Julie (Giblin) Gauthier** '02, M.Ed. school administration, is assistant superintendent for administrative services for Port Neches-Groves school district. She and her husband, Blake, live in Port Neches.

**Mike Gonzales** '02 M.Ed. educational leadership, '13, D.Ed. educational leadership, is the Port Neches-Groves school district superintendent. He and his wife, **Dana (Drago)** '93, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, live in Port Neches.

**April (Sterling) Keith** '02, B.B.A. human resource management, is

a human resources manager at Oldcastle. She lives in Port Neches with her husband and daughter.

**Jenny (Thompson) Kaiser** '03, B.S. theatre, is marketing manager at the Nelda C. and H.J. Lutchter Stark Foundation, she lives in Beaumont with her husband, Jimmy.

**Jennifer (Turner) Nichols** '03, B.B.A. accounting, gave birth to a baby girl on June 8, 2017. She earned her law degree in 2006 and is a partner in the firm Orgain, Bell & Tucker L.L.P. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Luke, and three children.

**Mellie (Proctor) Bevilacqua** '06, B.B.A. finance, is the executive director of the Foundation for Southeast Texas. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Sam '03, B.B.A. finance, who owns Bevilacqua Construction.

**Clinton Rawls** '06, B.S. communication, became a full-time instructor of humanities at the Lamar Institute of Technology after working at Lamar University for nearly six years. He lives in Vidor.

**Josh Smith** '06, B.B.A. management, worked for Bill Clark Pest Control for 17 years before becoming the new owner. He lives in Vidor with his wife, Sarah.

**Chasity (Davis) Viator** '06, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, and her husband, Danny, adopted their son, Griffin Jude, Jan. 19, 2018. Chasity is a pastor with Encounter Church, and they live in Port Neches

**Jared Byrd** '07, B.B.A. finance, is assistant vice president of lending at 5 Point Credit Union. He lives in Nederland with his wife, **Marylyn (Gibbs)** '08, B.B.A. accounting, '09, M.B.A. business administration.

**Jona Gilchrist** '07, B.A. instrumental music, works for 5 Star OFS LLC as an accounts receivable manager. She serves as a board member for the Orange Community Players and is active with other local theater companies in the communities surrounding her home, Port Neches.

**Alanna (Smith) Jacobs** '07, B.A. English, teaches at West Brook High School. She lives in Beaumont.

**Amy (Cacioppo) Knott** '07, B.B.A. accounting and B.B.A. human resource management, is senior human resources lead at TOTAL Petrochemicals USA Inc. She lives in Nederland.

**Angela (Odom) Brown** '08, B.B.A. marketing, is a real estate agent for SETX properties. She lives in Port Neches with her husband, **Dylan** '10, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences.

**Bala Chaitanya Gottimukkala** '08, M.E.S. chemical engineering science, received the prestigious American Institute of Chemical Engineers 35 under 35 award. He was recognized as one of 35 outstanding members under the age of 35 who have made significant contributions to the field of chemical engineering and the organization. He lives in Houston.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers named **Hashem Hashemian** '08, Eng.D. electrical engineering, a 2018 Fellow, conferred upon a person with an outstanding record of accomplishments in the IEEE fields of interest. He holds two other doctorates, one in nuclear engineering and applied physics and one in electrical and computer engineering, and is co-founder, president and CEO of Analysis Measurement Services Corp. He and his wife, Nazzy, live in Knoxville.

**Scott Hawk** '08, B.S. kinesiology, and his wife Amber were invited to the Texas State Capitol by Buckner International and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick.

**Celina Oliveira** '08, Au.D. audiology, celebrated the ninth anniversary of her private practice, Oliveira Audiology & Hearing Center, last July. Joining her at the practice is, **Raymundo Charles** '18, Au.D. audiology. Both live in Laredo.

**Jessica (Copeland)** '09, B.B.A. accounting, and **Winston Aldrich** '11, B.S. industrial technology, had a baby Jan. 10, 2018, and named him Kolt William. Jessica is assistant controller for Gulf Coast. They live in Nome.

**Robert Balentine** '09, M.Ed. administration, is principal of the Academy of the Arts at Bransom Elementary School. He lives in Mansfield.

**Courtney King** '09, B.S. corporate communications, is the associate director of marketing with TodayTix in New York City, N.Y. where she lives.

**Laura Terry-Brown** '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, married her husband, Rob, Jan. 3, 2018. She is assistant principal of Ridgeview Middle School in Round Rock school district, where they live.

**Tim Woolley** '09, M.Ed. administration, became principal at Bridge City High School in March 2018. He lives in Orange with his wife, Sally, and their three children.

## 10s

**Mandy (Dowden) Arceneaux** '10, B.S. communications, is the marketing communications manager at Lamar University. She currently lives in Beaumont with her husband **Aron Arceneaux** '09, B.S. communications, who is training and outreach manager for student success technologies at LU.

**Marie Grigsby** '10, M.Ed. educational tech leadership, represents the Texas Association of School Principals as Region 13 Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year. She lives in Salado.

**Troy Jackson** '10, M.Ed. teacher leadership, is a teacher and coach at Episcopal Collegiate School. Jackson lives with his wife, Dionne, in Little Rock, Ark.

**Gerardo Leal** '10, M.Ed. administration, earned his doctorate in education in 2015 and has recently been selected as the new principal of Park Place Elementary School in Houston. He also holds a B.A. in political science and lives in Houston.

**Terry McDonald** '10, M.Ed. administration, has retired after 31 years in education. He lives in Tuscola.

**Heath Wright** '10, M.Ed. administration, took the reigns as principal at Sweetwater Middle School, he lives in Abilene.

**Michael Black** '11, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches seventh grade science at Marshall Middle School. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, Lisa '08, M.Ed. counseling and development.

**Jennifer (Thompson) Burr** '11, M.Ed. education administration, '17, Ed.D, educational leadership, is a secondary English language learner specialist in Richardson school district. Jennifer and her husband, Ben, live in Richardson.

**Lori (Klandrud) Hendy** '11, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches in Temple school district and lives in Salado.

**Adam Jaynes** '11, B.S. nursing and biology, helped rescue between 60-80 people during Hurricane Harvey. He is a family nurse practitioner in occupational medicine and a fishing guide on Sabine Lake. He lives in Orange.

**Alan Kondo** '11, B.S. chemical engineering, works for ExxonMobil as a synthetics manufacturing

**Golden Circle Luncheon**—*Lamar State College of Technology graduates of the classes between 1924 and 1968 gathered for a Golden Circle Luncheon honoring the 50 year+ graduates last October.*

**1.** From left, Johnny '59 and Paula (Russian) Lovoi '68, '93; Susan (Floyd) '87, '94, and Nick Lampson '68, '74. Paula and Nick served on the Class of 1968 Steering Committee.

**2.** Hazel Baily and Daniel Clark '64

**Alumni Party, Neches Brewing Co.**—*Last November, Alumni gathered for an evening of Cardinal friends, food and fun at the Neches Brewing Co. in Port Neches, owned by graduates David Pool '07 and Tyler Blount '07.*

**3.** Alumni Advisory Board members gathered before the party. Back row from left: Board President Chris Bates '08, Past President Tony Landry '94, Lucas Bell -03, director of alumni affairs Shannon (Copeland) Figueroa '02, '03, '07, Phyllis (McAfee) Thibodeaux '00, '06; front row from left: Rene (Slott) Latiolais '04 and Amy (Babineaux) Tarver '99.

**4.** From left, Pinkee (Patel) Harley '09, '10; Devin Harley '10, '11; Marco Born, athletics director; Lucas Bell -03; and Melanie Bell.

improve lead. He lives in Mont Belvieu with his wife, **Ashley (Austin)** '12, B.S. interdisciplinary studies.

**Jacobson Joseph** '12, B.G.S. general studies, '14, M.S. kinesiology, and **Sierra (Whittaker)** '14 B.S. kinesiology, have been married since 2015 and have two children. They live in Pasadena.



**Class of 1968 Reunion**—*Last October, Class of 1968 Lamar State College of Technology graduates gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their graduation.*





**LU Alumni Past Presidents’ Luncheon**—*Past presidents of both the former Lamar University Alumni Association and current Lamar University Alumni Advisory Board: back row from left, Vice president of university advancement Juan Zabala ’07, Trent Devenzio ’90, Dan Hallmark ’65, current board President Chris Bates ’08, Vernon Durden ’04, Carol (Patteson) Hebert ’89, ’90, Paula (Tate) O’Neal ’69, ’79, Frank Messina ’71, Clayton Lau ’69, Gene Fiegelson ’65, and vice president of global diversity, inclusion and intercultural affairs John Bello-Ogunu, front row from left, W.S. “Bud” Leonard ’50, ’53, ’76, Ellen (Walker) Rienstra ’62, ’80, Donean Surratt ’87, President Ken Evans, Tamerla Chavis ’83, Ransom Jones ’88, Jimmy Booker ’55, ’56, and alumni affairs Director Shannon (Copeland) Figueroa ’02, ’03, ’07.*

**Monica Schmidt** ’12, B.S. nursing, is pursuing a doctorate in nursing practice for anesthesia from the University of Pittsburgh’s doctorate of nursing practice program for nursing anesthesia.

**Jasmine Bocard** ’13, B.S. criminal justice, works in the Houston school district and lives in Houston.

**Heather (Daniel) Edgar** ’13, B.A. Spanish, ’17, M.Ed. teacher leadership, and **Dr. Joel Edgar** ’13, B.S. mathematics, who earned his dental degree in 2017, welcomed their first child in December 2017. They live in Houston.

**Jennifer (Burris) Gonzalez** ’13, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Bonham Pre-K. She lives in San Marcos with her husband, Rudy ’15, M.Ed. administration.

**Kevin King** ’13, B.A. English, is the editor of business and special publications at the Examiner Corp. He lives in Vidor.

**James McCarry** ’13, M.Ed. Administration, is advanced placement educator and head soccer coach at Eagle Mountain with Saginaw school district. He and his wife, AnnaBelle, live in Springtown.

**Sisters Melondy Roberson** ’13, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, and **Roszella Roberson-Offord** ’09, B.S. family and consumer sciences, ’15,

M.Ed. educational technology leadership, published *Adriann Takes a Stand*, a children’s book about a second grader facing the challenge of bullying. Roberson is an inclusion teacher at Stephen F. Austin Elementary in Goode Creek school district and lives in Orange. Roberson-Offord is an instructional designer and course developer for Lamar Institute of Technology and lives in Beaumont.

**Eric Rose** ’13, B.A. music education, is head band director at Central Middle School, with 39 band members qualifying for All-Region Band. He lives in Nederland.

**Haley (Baird) Schwarzlose** ’13, B.G.S., received the top performing teacher award from BISD. She works at Guess Elementary teaching third grade ELAR, social studies and ESL. She and her husband, Charles ’11, political science, live in Beaumont.

**Andrew Strange** ’13, B.A. sociology, earned his master’s degree in sociology and works at Lamar University as a college graduation counselor for the Reaud Honors College. He lives in Beaumont.

**Christina Walker** ’13, B.S. communication disorders, earned a master’s in communication sciences and disorders for speech pathology. She created a 501(c) (3) and website for Gr8EightGives.org, a philanthropic movement that combines travel with addressing

the needs of people in local communities. She lives in Beaumont.

**Jonathan Blake** ’14, M.M. music, is band director at Central Middle School. He lives in Groves with his wife, **Amber (Whitten)** ’09, M.Ed. administration.

**Erik Camacho** ’14, B.S. chemistry, ’17, M.B.A. business administration, is a chemist with Arkema Inc. He lives in Beaumont.

**Melissa (Dean) DeSantiago** ’14, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is a teacher in the Amarillo school district, where she lives.

**Katie (Sherman) Doubt** ’14, B.A. general studies, is a supervisor with Southeast Texas ObGyn Associates. She lives in Beaumont with her husband Matthew.

**Lauren Robinson** ’14, psychology, works for the The Harris Center and lives in Houston.

**Elizabeth (Burrell)** ’15, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, married Taylor Dansby in October 2017 and lives in Kingwood.

**Sophia (Gawu)** ’15, B.B.A. management information systems, married Edem Coffie Gagakuma in August 2017. They live in Taylorsville, Utah.

**Christopher Puga** ’15, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Capistrano elementary school and lives in El Paso.

**Macy (Riggs) Tatum** ’15, B.B.A. Management Information Systems, B.B.A. advertising communication, is operations manager at Craftwork Coffee Company. She and her husband, **Blair Tatum** ’16, B.B.A. management information systems, live in Fort Worth with their child.

**Jessieca Brock** ’16, B.B.A. human resources, works and lives in Houston where she is a benefits analyst with Noble Drilling.

**Maegan Collins** ’16, B.S. political science, ’18, M.P.A. public administration, is an instructor of political science at Lamar University. She lives in Nederland.

**Melonee (Hargrave) Fife** ’16, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches kindergarten in the Kountze school district. She lives in Kountze with her husband, Brian.

**Christopher Hagner** ’16, B.S. mathematics, is business intelligence analyst for the Oklahoma City Thunder.

**Paul Martin** ’16, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, married Sarah Miller in September 2017. They live in Port Neches.

**Kristi (Woods) Meeuwse** ’16, Ed.D. educational leadership, is project administrator for a federal school improvement grant in the Charleston County school district, Charleston, S.C., where she lives. **Maci (Reeves)** ’16, B.S. biology, and

**Levi Morris** ’16, B.S. mathematics, married in December 2017. They live in Nederland.

**Mary Alice (Carter) Ned** ’16, B.S. speech and hearing, works as a speech-language pathology assistant and lives in Lake Charles, La. with her husband, Keveran.

**Caitlyn (Champagne) Odom** ’16, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, received the Rookie of the Year award for the 2017-2018 academic year. She teaches third grade and lives with her husband in Gladewater.

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

**Brooke (Crowell) Tanton** ’16, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, ’16, M.S. speech-language pathology, and Stephen Tanton recently married, and live in Lumberton.

**Jeffery Whittaker** ’16, B.S. communication, married Jennifer in October 2017. They live in Beaumont.

**Gentry Wiebusch** ’16, B.S.W. social work, is a resident advocate at Family Services of Southeast Texas. She lives in Sour Lake.

**Connor Allen** ’17, B.S. mechanical engineering, holds the position of project controls 1 with Richard Industrial Group. He lives in Houston.

**Amanda (Parks) Archer** ’17, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Westbury Christian School. She lives in Houston with her husband, Brad.

**Chloe Breaux** ’17, B.S. psychology, teaches third grade at Oak Forest Elementary and lives in Orange.

**Brittany (Sumner) Combs** ’17, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, and **Tyler Combs** ’17, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, married in December 2016. They live in Beaumont.

**Brittany (Lopez) Cozad** ’17, B.A. American Sign Language, teaches ASL at Port neches Groves High School. She lives in Nederland with husband, Jesse.

**Ivone Garcia** ’16, B.B.A. accounting, ’17, M.S. accounting, passed her CPA exam in December 2017. She lives in Winnie.

**Matthew Kelm** ’17, B.S. mechanical engineering, is an ops plan flight controller at the Johnson Space Center. He and **Taryn (LaCour)** ’18, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, became engaged in December 2018. He lives in Deer Park.

**Alisha Khadka** ’17, M.E. civil engineering, is a structural engineer with KATERRA in Seattle, Wash. She lives in Newcastle.

**Sebastian Martin** ’17, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, works in winter sales at Johnstone Supply. He lives in Killeen with his wife, Norma.



**Alpha Chi Omega alumni attended their 60th National Convention last July**

Mary (Gavrellos) Gregory ’83, Norma (Paderas) Hawthorn ’64, Katy (Reeder) Wells ’87, Karen Sharp ’87, Mary Barras -86, Monica (Aguillard) Gibbs ’04, Jane (Murphy) Crenshaw ’03, Andrea (Ogren) Stephenson ’03, ’05, Ashley (Hicks) Thurgood ’11, Aremy (Villalobos) Prater, Stephanie Miranda ’14, Emily (Blanke) Ehrlich ’16, Sara Massey ’16, Aerial Ridley (current LU student), Shaina Escobedo ’18 and McKenzie Davis (current LU Student).

# In Memoriam

## ANDREW JAY JOHNSON III 1933-2019



The Lamar University community honors the life of former history professor and long-time administrator Andrew Jay Johnson III, who died June 2, 2019. Johnson worked at Lamar University for nearly 40 years, having served many roles including interim president from 1984-1985.

Johnson, a native of Beaumont, attended Lamar State College of Technology in 1951 but transferred to The University

of Texas where he received a Bachelor of Arts in History. He went on to receive his Master of Arts in History, a master of arts from the Graduate Library School at The University of Chicago and his doctorate from Indiana University. He returned to Beaumont with his family in 1958 and began what would be a 37-year career at Lamar State College of Technology and then Lamar University. Johnson served a variety of roles under six college presidents and made a significant contribution to the university.

He was the director of library services and initiated a project to reclassify the library collection under the Library of Congress Classification. Under his direction, the library expanded and became the Mary and John Gray Library.

Johnson served Lamar University in a number of leadership positions, including vice president for academic affairs; vice president for administration; vice president for administration and planning; executive associate to the president; vice president for administration, personnel and student services; vice president for student and university affairs, and assistant to the chancellor. In 1984, chancellor of the Lamar University System Bob Kemble named Johnson interim president.

One of the most controversial decisions Johnson made was to hire the first female executive. Johnson hired Maxine Johnston, a former LU classmate of his, even though hiring a woman at that time in such a high-ranking position was unpopular. Johnston later became director of the Mary and John Gray Library.

Johnson also was responsible for organizing LU’s first summer travel program. In the 1970s, he and Dean Brock Brentlinger successfully organized and directed student programs to Rome and London.

Johnson has a legacy of leadership at Lamar University and to the entire Southeast Texas community.





**LU Birdwatching**—The Office of Alumni Affairs partnered with LU Athletics and the Marketing and Communications Office on a “pop-up” opportunity for students to take selfies with Big Red. The students received “good luck” gifts of scantrons and pencils for finals week, along with Big Red gum and Big Red soda.

1. Students pose with Big Red.
2. Big Red wishes students good luck for finals week.

**Homecoming Pre-Game Party**—Alumni celebrated homecoming at the Montagne Center before the LU vs. SFA football game last September.

3. Lila (Creamer) Stevens '01 shows her daughter Margeaux, future cardinal how to show her Cardinal Pride!
4. Brian Roberson '09, '10, with his son Brian III and wife, Jocquelyn.
5. Amanda Prince '16, left, and Marisol Lua-Figueroa '17 volunteer to do face painting.



**Brock Payne** '17, M.Ed educational leadership and administration, is a teacher and coach at Northside school district and lives in San Antonio.

**Chase Pinder** '17, B.S. chemical engineering, and **Caylin Poulter** '17, B.S. corporate communications, married in November 2017. They live in Port Neches.

**Michelle Rosales** '17, B.G.S. general studies, is branch operations specialist for Raymond James & Associates in El Paso where she lives.

**Pamela Sebile** '17, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is works advisor III with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. She lives in Beaumont.

**Derek Slaton** '17, B.B.A. management, is an assistant manager with Walgreens. He lives in Beaumont.

**Reyna (Gomez) Tippetts** '17, M.B.A. business administration, is a division operations specialist for Lone Star College–North Harris. She and her husband, Roscoe, live in Splendora.

**Katie (Loftin)** '17, B.B.A. advertising communication, married Michael Shroff in November 2017, they live in Spring.

**Rebekah Wells** '17, B.S. corporate communications, is an admissions counselor at Lamar University. She lives in Cleveland.

**Frank Dixon** '18, B.S. criminal justice, is police chief of the Denton Police Department. He lives in Flower Mound.

**Rene (Gutierrez)** '18, B.S. family and consumer sciences, and **Esli Pompa** '18, B.S. family and consumer sciences, were married in 2018 and live in Port Arthur.



**LU alumni celebrate anniversaries**—Three Cardinal couples, and longtime friends, celebrated their wedding anniversaries by reuniting to cruise to Alaska.

From left, T. Nelson '66, B.S. electrical engineering, and Jo Cat (Busceme) Bruce '65, B.S. elementary education, married for 51 years; Ronald '66, B.S. biology, '72, M.Ed. secondary education, and Jo Ann (Messick) Studdert '65, B.S. elementary education, married 52 years; and Ray Wright '65, B.S. secondary education, and Vivian (Hodges) '64, married 55 years.

## In Memoriam

### ELVIS LEONARD MASON 1933 – 2018

L U Distinguished Alumnus Elvis L. Mason died Dec. 24, 2018, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease and heart disease, which he faced with his great sense of humor and optimism. Joan Frances Baker Mason, his wife and devoted caregiver, was by his side when he passed away peacefully at home. He was 85 years old.

Born in Vivian, La., Mason rose to the rank of captain in the Army. After being honorably discharged, he earned an undergraduate degree in economics from Lamar University, where he was president of his local fraternity, was elected president of the student body and graduated with honors. Chosen for a Rotary Fellowship to study at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, Mason completed graduate studies in international economics. He graduated from the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University. In 1982, LU awarded him an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

Upon returning from Africa, Mason married Joan Baker in Houston, and they were happily married for 57 years. Mason began his banking career upon accepting an

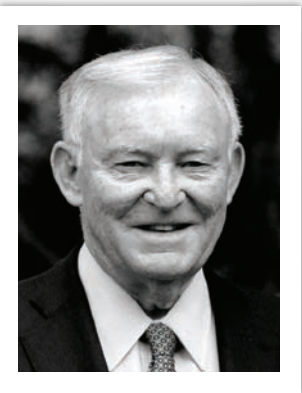
offer in Beaumont to become assistant to the president of 1st Security National Bank, John E. Gray. Gray had been president of Lamar University when Mason was a student there and became a mentor to Mason in his banking career. Mason would later found, and serve as chairman of, the John E. Gray Foundation and the John E. Gray Institute at LU.

In 1974, Mason was named vice chairman of 1st International Bancshares, and the family moved to Dallas. He served as president of 1st

National Bank and, ultimately, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Interfirst Corp., then the largest banking organization in Texas and the nation's 15th-largest commercial banking organization, with 65 subsidiary banks in Texas and total assets of more than \$21 billion. The board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas elected him to represent the Eleventh Federal Reserve District on the Federal Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve System.

Mason helped steward LU as a regent from 1974 to 1978. He served numerous communities through many organizations and civic activities, including serving as honorary chair of “Investing in the Future: The Campaign for Lamar University, the university's first comprehensive campaign which exceeded its original \$100 million goal, achieving an unprecedented \$132 million finish.

The family held a memorial service and celebration of life Feb. 2, 2019, and accepted donations to the Elvis L. Mason Scholarship Lamar University.





TEACHING AWARD & GLOBAL CERTIFICATE PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITY

Gift establishes teaching award

Through a generous gift to the Lamar University Foundation, Houston attorney and Distinguished Alumnus David J. Beck '61 has established the David J. Beck Teaching Excellence Award. Each year, a recipient of the David J. Beck Teaching Excellence Award will receive \$25,000 along with the career honor. "Mr. Beck's most recent unique offering of support extends to the foundation of the university, our faculty," Pres. Ken Evans said. "There is a wonderful alchemy taking place by combining pedagogical prowess, a passion for teaching and genuine interest in student success. Mr. Beck's generous gift supports the very best in teaching at Lamar University and will have a lasting impact on our faculty and student success."

Teaching certificate gaining ground globally

An innovative LU teaching certificate program is proving popular globally as it prepares teachers to effectively use the latest technology. Recently, the first graduates in the United Kingdom, all teachers at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, received their certificates from Steve Molyneux, adjunct professor in educational innovation at LU and CEO of the Tablet Academy, LU's delivery partner in Europe. The "Certificate in Technology Enhanced Teaching" was developed by the LU's Center for Educational Innovation and Digital Learning and the College of Education and Human Development. Successful participants are awarded a non-credit-bearing certificate which can be converted into full Lamar University credits toward an online M.Ed. in Digital Learning and Leading. The program equates to one-sixth of the credits needed for the degree.



Presidential Summer Fellow Emily McCall studies in Kenya

As a junior biology major, Emily McCall of Orangefield traveled to Africa last summer to participate in field research thanks to a Presidential Summer Fellowship. The Fellowship provided a \$10,000 grant to fund her research in Kenya along Lake Victoria's coast on Schistosoma mansoni and S. haematobium, parasitic flatworms estimated to afflict more than 200 million people worldwide according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

McCall, who plans a career in medicine, worked as part of a research team led by renowned parasitologist Eric Loker, distinguished professor of biology at the University of New Mexico, and colleagues from the Kenyan Medical Research Institute. The team worked to locate areas where there were isolated populations of snails to determine the types prevalent near villages where Schistosomiasis infection rates are high.

The snails being collected are a temporary host for both Schistosoma mansoni and S. haematobium. The flatworms can infect people who enter the water to bathe, wash clothes, fish or engage in other activities. "While an infection is easily treated, continual reinfection can lead to serious health issues later in life," McCall said.

"This was my first research trip, so I gained a lot of practical field experience," she said. "I learned how to work with colleagues, how to prepare and perform field work, and how to communicate what we were doing with the local population."

"I am very grateful to Lamar University, the Presidential Summer Fellowship, the Biology Department, and my wonderful project mentor, Dr. H. Randall Yoder (without whom none of this would have been possible—from his inspirational class to his invaluable guidance), for their help in allowing me the chance to travel and help perform this research." McCall is a recipient of the M.L. Lefler Sr. and Bessie Lefler Memorial Scholarship, the McMaster Honors Scholarship and the Orange Memorial Hospital Corporation Scholarship.

Bell returns to Provost Umphrey Stadium

A tradition returned to Lamar University football in fall 2018 as victory bells were re-introduced at Provost Umphrey Stadium. The bells were originally rung 1967 and were in storage since 1990. The bells replaced a cannon (named Big Mac for former university president F.L. McDonald), which was used to celebrate Cardinal scores prior to the 1967 campaign.



"LU athletics wants to celebrate champions in the classroom, champions in the competition arena and champions in life," said director of athletics Marco Born. "Traditions are important in building pride. Resurrecting this age-old tradition of ringing the bell after every LU score encourages and celebrates successes on the field."

The Santa Fe Railroad Co. donated the original bell, weighing approximately 300 pounds, with the engine number stamped on the top. The bells were rung for the first time in more than 30 years Sept. 1 in the 2018 season opener. Members of the 1967 LU Cheer Squad, who first rang the bell, rang it once again prior to the game to signify a passing of the torch to the current student body.

LU engineering ranked best value

LU produces some of the highest-paid engineers in the country—in fact, a diploma from LU often leads to salaries of \$75,000 or more within five years of graduation. Facts like this helped land LU in the 20th spot among the Top 50 Best Value Engineering Schools for 2018 in the nation as reported by BestValueSchools.com

Air Force awards contract

Cagatay Tokgoz, assistant professor in the Phillip M. Drayer Department of Electrical Engineering, won a one-year research contract of \$83,472 from the Air Force Research Laboratory to conduct research in computational electromagnetics. Tokgoz is one of a limited number of researchers in the nation with expertise in high-frequency asymptotic techniques in the field.

Archers win gold

The LU Collegiate Archers won first place at the USA Archery-sponsored US National 3D Collegiate Championships Oct. 28. The LU men's barebow team of Cody Sahualla, Shawn Blair and Jose Wong won first place, beating teams from 31 other universities from across the nation. In team and individual competition, LU came in seventh place overall out of 31 schools and 335 archers.

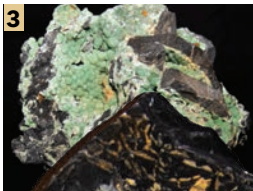
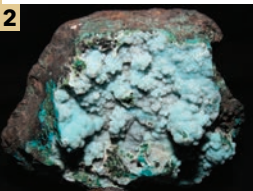
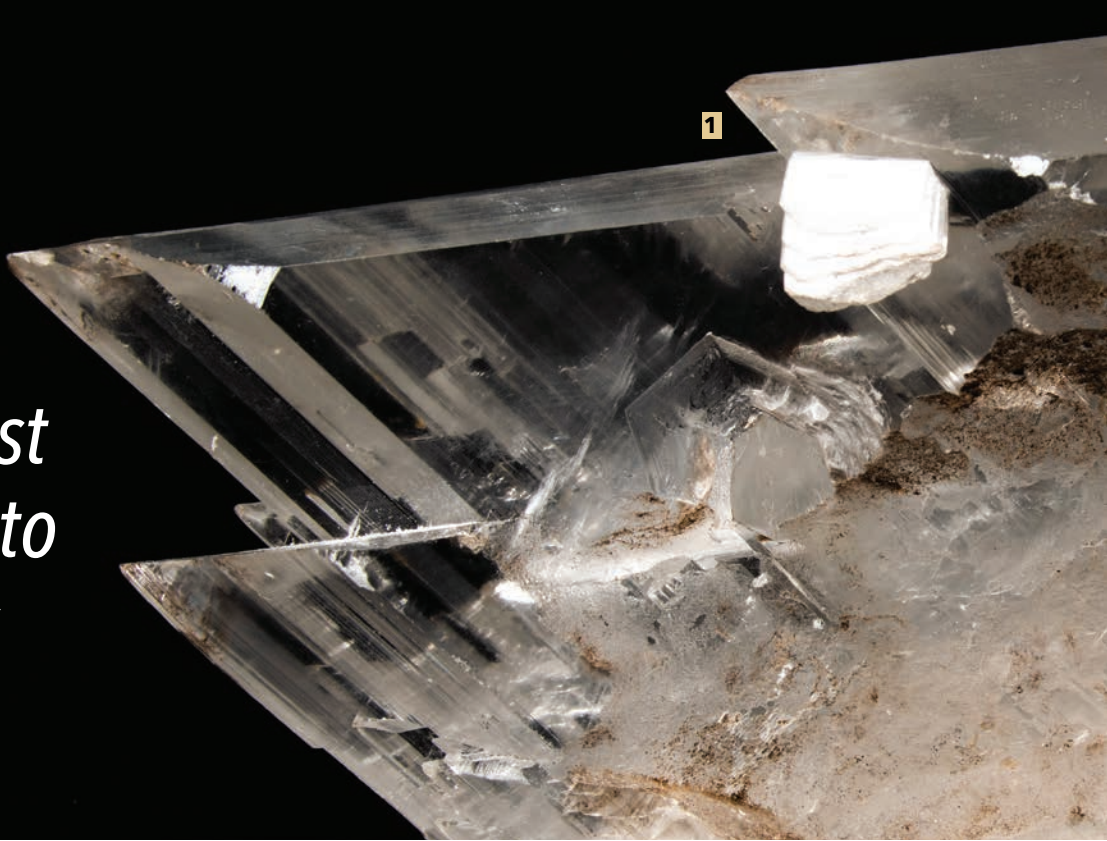
Online graduate programs recognized

College Choice ranked LU's M.Ed. in teacher leadership with a gifted and talented specialization as No. 8 in Most Affordable and in Best Online Master's in Gifted & Talented Education. The M.Ed. in special education ranked No. 15 in Most Affordable Online Master's in Special Education. Online MBA Today placed LU No. 13 overall among nearly 490 online MBA programs available statewide.

MINERAL EXHIBIT:

Unique to LU just as LU is unique to Southeast Texas

by Daniel Pemberton



In the year 1910, miners drained a cave in Nica, Mexico, to find it full of large, selenite crystals. This became known as the Cave of Swords for the massive, white crystals it contains, world renowned for their beauty and size. Although only a few scientists have seen the cave in person, a section of one of its crystals can be found today in the halls of Lamar University's Geology Building.

Jim Jordan, chair of the Earth and Space Sciences Department, said the collection of minerals exhibited in the building are world class.

Among the collection is an international line-up of rare and awe-inspiring specimens.

"We want people to be engaged with the science, but we bring them in with the beauty," Jordan said.

The collection came to be in 2005, while the building was undergoing renovations. Jordan introduced the idea of a mineral exhibit as a way to display or feature some of the department's most impressive minerals. The idea was popular, and with the help of alumnus and Houston Museum of Natural Science supporter Byron Dyer '57 along with museum president Joel Bartsch, who orchestrated the permanent loan of rare and unique specimens, the exhibit was made complete.

When it came to installing the exhibit, faculty and students constructed the cases and designed the placement of the minerals themselves. Among Jordan's personal favorites is a piece of pyrite, notable for its natural cube shape.

"It grows into that shape if given the freedom. It is rare to find them displaying their natural form," Jordan said. "People always ask me if it is real."

1. Gypsum (Selenite), Naica, Chihuahua, Mexico
2. Chrysocolla, Morenci, Arizona
3. Wavelite, Mauldin Mountain, Mt. Ada, Arkansas
4. Pyrite, Navajun, La Rioja, Spain
5. Fluorite with barite and calcite on sphalerite, Elmwood Mine, Carthage, Smith County, Tennessee
6. Okenite, Poona, Maharashtra State, India
7. Azurite on malachite, Morenci, Arizona
8. Marcasite (Sparta dollar), Sparta, Illinois





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MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

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**A**fter 18 months of renovations, university officials unveiled the new Setzer Student Center April 12, 2018. The building, a part of LU's campus since 1969, was completely reorganized, redesigned and rebuilt to meet the needs of the university's students, reimagined to bolster student life and provide resources for the more than 150 student-led organizations on campus.

Every addition to the building was made with students in mind, from the 18 meeting rooms sporting an max occupancy of 13 to 80, to the Student Organization Workroom which gives groups a space to work on projects and store supplies. Office space was also created for the Student Government Association, Event Services, Student Organization Services, the Cardinals Activities Board, New Student and

Leadership Programs, the dean of students, and the vice president of student engagement. These changes transform the center into the hub for student life and organizations on campus. New amenities in the meeting rooms, such as audio-visual enhancements, video conferencing and upgraded wi-fi allow organizations to hold productive meetings as they prepare to make their mark on campus.

The Setzer Student Center is not all about work, the new student lounge is a perfect spot for meeting with friends. From here students can step out onto the veranda, snag a rocking chair and enjoy the weather and a great view of the Quad. On the first floor is a dedicated game room where students can relax and play a video game or compete in a tournament with friends. Nearby is the wellness room, designed as a private

area for nursing mothers or others with special needs. Along with improvements to meeting spaces and student areas, the space also includes many new dining options including Chick-fil-A, Panda Express and Jason's Deli. The Setzer Center Market is the place for students looking to grab a quick bite, while the Barnes & Noble Bookstore is the go-to for LU apparel, textbooks and school supplies.

These additions help the Setzer Student Center uphold its mission to provide programs that enhance personal, social and leadership development to compliment the educational growth of Lamar University students. It serves as the center of campus life and provides a shared home for the university—welcoming students, faculty, alumni, staff, parents and guests.