Students, dedicated faculty and transformative alumni are changing the world for the better. Advanced and unique teaching practices in and outside the classroom spark far-reaching innovation through the synergies of our students and alumni.

We are one community. We are LU.
Anthony George, ‘88 found himself waiting at the end of a long dirt road in the Louisiana delta, waiting for his skiff to come in. Soon, he would be plying the waterways aboard the titans of transport—tugboats and their mammoth barges—while a problem weighed on him as heavily as the cargo they moved—how to eke out more efficiency? Then the idea struck him—a solution straight out of one of his Lamar University physics classes. In that eureka moment was born George’s second company, one that spawned an enterprise that is growing exponentially and spans the globe.

From an early age, Anthony George approached life with an entrepreneurial edge and the independent spirit to be his own boss. His parents had successful professional careers, and instilled in George a drive for both success and freedom from routine schedules. He was inspired by a friend’s father, a very successful entrepreneur who recommended that he “go to college, get good work experience, then go out on your own,” George said. “I saw in his lifestyle the freedom he had and was very impressed by that.”

In being an entrepreneur, he saw “the opportunity to create something from nothing, to try my own ideas, [and] to not be limited in my creativity,” George said. Fueled by this passion, he “dabbled horribly in real estate and a few other things” before heeding his mother’s advice to “get a degree to have something to fall back on.”

He began his time at LU majoring in electrical engineering and computer science. “I recognized even then that personal computers were going to matter,” he said of a time when a Honeywell mainframe and VAX system were in use; however, four years into the two degrees, while holding demanding jobs outside of school, he sought to parlay those experiences into a degree in physics with the help of Joe Pizzo, distinguished professor emeritus and then physics department chair. “I remember going to see Dr. Pizzo and he lined out a two-year plan for me,” George said. “He wanted to know if I was a ‘physics head’ and if I wanted to teach. I told him I wanted to get out and start my own company. He helped arrange a plan so I could finish my degree. I owe him a debt of gratitude.”

George graduated in 1988 with a degree in physics and a double minor in electrical engineering and computer science.

During his last three years at LU, George worked part-time for Emerson Automation Solutions of Austin, here he learned about distributive control systems, a newly developed computer technology for running manufacturing processes and facilities. When he graduated, he quickly received multiple job offers based not only on his degree but also on his work experience.
We used equations that I learned under Dr. Pizzo that I would not have understood had I not changed my major to physics. I look back on that and think how fortuitous that decision was.

—Anthony George

He accepted a position with the control systems group for Petronia Engineering in Beaumont, and just three months later an offer came to join Temple-Inland in Evadale where they had similar systems deployed.

"I had no idea that the first company I was going to build would be related to my career," he said. "I just was out thinking about the right people is paramount to his visibility into marine operations. "Fueltrax determines how hard the vessel is working," George said. "We use equations that I learned under Dr. Pizzo that I would not have understood had I not changed my major to physics. I look back on that and think how fortuitous that decision was."

"I probably have a Ph.D. in my nose into anything." George said. "I look around and presented us with the fuel-saving efficiencies and clear environmental conditions." George said. "I'm having so much fun growing the business. It has been the shining light on the hill for me since I was 18." George said. "I'm a huge proponent of the CICE," Anthony George said. "Though busy growing Fueltrax and Nautical Control Solutions, Anthony George also finds great reward in working with young entrepreneurs through Lamar University's Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship and other avenues, where he can "take some of my hard-earned experience to coach other entrepreneurs, helping them to get there faster than I took." Anthony George serves on several boards related to entrepreneurship, including the board of LU's CICE and the Woodlands chapter of The Entrepreneurs' Organization, a global network for entrepreneurs providing peer-to-peer learning, experiences and connections to experts, with more than 11,000 members in 153 chapters in 48 countries.

"When I started out, I was a physics major with a great idea, but no business experience. I started making mistakes. Fortunately, the engineering was good enough to cover some of my mistakes. I could have teamed up with (fellow LU alumnus) Van Wilson day one, or gone to the CICE and got a mentor to provide me with the resources to get out and get started earlier. I could have had the support of the largest oil companies in the world," George said. "This is a once in a lifetime event—having a niche specialty, which was opened by the continued development of our product with the support of the largest oil companies in the world."
We hold each other accountable,” Innovation, according to Simpson, stems from the desire to improve and prosper, principles as common in the sports world as in the tech or business worlds. As the single largest student employer on campus, Simpson believes many of his staff leave having learned valuable lessons.

“Recreational sports does have a positive effect on student recruitment, as well as social integration, retention and satisfaction,” he explains. “Many students have gone on to advanced degrees as well as very successful careers. They stay in contact with me and are proud alumni.”

As a former state finalist in the 800-meter run representing his hometown of La Marque and later as a student athlete at LU and record-holder in the Sunbelts Conference, Simpson understands the role of competition and sportsmanship in driving improvement and change. In a major initiative undertaken in the early 2000s, Simpson played a pivotal role in the planning and development of the multi-sport Shelia Umphrey Recreational Sports Center. “Our plan was to establish programming for not only our student athletes who considered themselves business or pre-professional, but also to those students who had other interests such as rock-climbing, billiards, foosball, indoor hockey and golf,” Simpson said.

He credits relationships made as a student athlete for instilling in him a mindset that keep our students engaged and active participants in sports and wellness,” Simpson said.
Rather than a carefree pastime, enjoying the aroma of coffee over café style food with a loved one can be a daunting task when that person suffers from dementia. Natalie Sfeir, 2016 Beck Fellowship recipient, has researched an innovative solution to the difficult outings for those with dementia and their family. It’s called a Memory Café.

“I want to be an advocate for those who can’t work to do things on their own,” the speech and hearing science major said. “The café is something that you can’t find in this area, so this would really stand out, and I believe that it will really help the community.”

The idea for the Memory Café came into fruition when Sfeir received the David J. Beck Fellowship in November of 2016, and she has been working on it ever since, traveling across the world from Dublin and Donegal, Ireland, to Liverpool and London, England, along with visiting Roseville, Minn., for research purposes.

“The cafés originated in the Netherlands, then the idea spread throughout Europe, including Ireland and England, before being replicated in the United States,” Sfeir said. “A lot of what I got to see was hands on and experience based.”

I went to a few memory cafes in each place. They have adult day centers, where people with dementia will go to spend the day and do different things that will help develop the brain,” she said.

While there, she also worked with the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, trained at the House of Memories in Liverpool.

“The House of Memories trains you how to communicate with people that have dementia, and they did a lot of theatre to portray the life of a person who goes through this daily,” Sfeir said.

“I also learned about new dementia-related technology and initiatives that helped by my research progress.”

During her time in Roseville, she said things were a little different from her experiences in Europe.

“It was a small town, so I got to meet with the city manager and see what they are doing to set the city apart and how they have their own team that specializes in dementia care,” Sfeir said.

As she brings her research to Southeast Texas, she has high hopes for the café.

“I really hope that it will be sustainable for the community in the sense that this isn’t just a research project, but that it will bring a sense of camaraderie so that people have a safe place to go in the area,” Sfeir said.

“We aren’t a huge city, but we aren’t a small town either, so to have something like this could really be life changing.”

The café is meant to be a judgment-free zone for all customers who enter. Aside from just a place to grab a cup of coffee and a croissant, Sfeir says the café also will have guest speakers to talk about things such as memory care.

“When you walk through the doors, the people helping you will be trained on how to communicate with people who suffer from dementia,” she said.

Sfeir says they welcome all employees to have things on their own.

“I want to be an advocate for those who can’t work to do things on their own.”

—Natalie Sfeir

“I noticed in my research that people would sit and wonder where to bring their loved ones with dementia,” she said.

“ar_histories book is where we try to augment memories, so these books tell the story of your life, starting from when you were little, then talking about your kids and the family, and it’s used to help reminisce,” she said.

To promote the cafe’s availability, Sfeir said she has created Facebook social events, been published in the Beaumont Enterprise, pinned bulletins and used a mailing list and word of mouth. The goal for the cafe is to have it open twice a month as a fun outing that is a little bit different to do, she said.

“I noticed in my research that people would sit and wonder where to bring their loved ones with dementia,” Sfeir said. “The cafe is meant to be informative, and my hope is that this will create a sense of family, and community, for all of those who come.”
In 2013, only a year after he joined Lamar University’s Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, Dr. Nandhu Radhakrishnan helped the department establish the innovative Voice Lab and Vocation Clinic. While in the lab, he works with various instruments and computer software to analyze clients’ vocal folds in images and videos obtained via endoscopy to observe vocal patterns. The lab and clinic also serve as a hands-on classroom for students and embodies the tenets of the university’s strategic planning in research, training and teaching.

“We teach through training budding speech pathologists on how to use the equipment and based on what we find, how we can diagnose patients with voice disorders,” Radhakrishnan said. “For research, I use my clinic population or music population of singers and record them and see how their voice changes across time or if they have a problem, how we can fix it.”

Radhakrishnan has contributed his expertise in mentoring and teaching the next generation of speech language pathologists. In addition to teaching in the department as an assistant professor of communication science and disorders, he works with patients and clients whose voices may be weakened or damaged from an array of disorders.

“Generally, our lab sees any patient with a voice problem and that can range from laryngitis, which is a basic illness, all the way to paralysis of the vocal fold, which can occur in a patient who has had a stroke,” Radhakrishnan said. “A growing problem in vocal disorders in acid reflux; it is becoming more common and normal.”

One recent undergraduate research project he supervised investigated the discrepancy of subjects’ self-report of their vocal health. In the project, all the patients reported no vocal problems and that their voice was normal. Through using tools to measure patients’ vocal effort, clinicians’ perception of voice, acoustic analysis and laryngostroboscopic examinations, Radhakrishnan and his undergraduate mentee were able to determine that 55 percent of the subjects who participated in the study had some sort of vocal abnormality.

Besides treating voice problems, disorders and conditions, the lab also facilitates the growing field of vocology, or enhancing one’s voice, which developed from voice therapy. “In the past, it was referred to as voice therapy because we would treat a patient and get them close to normal and send them back to work,” said Radhakrishnan. “For example, if you have a teacher whose voice is weak, we would work to get her back to normal and in the classroom.

In vocology, we still do therapy but go beyond to work to make their voice stronger so that they can meet the demands in their profession.”

“Another success story from our vocology lab is working with a pastor who couldn’t finish a sermon and after completing therapy could finish his services and not experience pain in his throat anymore,” said Radhakrishnan.

Additionally, voice enhancement may include accent reduction to help professionals speak more clearly in American English or help them train others to speak more clearly in another language. “In our lab, we provide our clients who want to enhance their voice for personal or professional reasons, Radhakrishnan lends his expertise to help others and instill a call to the profession in his students.

“One of our clients is pretty happy with her voice change already and is continuing to complete the therapy,” he said. “She has mentioned that previously when she would go through a drive-through, she would be referred to as ‘sir’ and now she is hearing ‘ma’am.’ It is a huge change for her emotionally.”

Outside of the lab, Radhakrishnan has provided his expertise to the community at various workshops and events to inform others of the importance of vocal health. “The university is committed to service through vocal hygiene programs for the community and to teach them what they should and should not to do to conserve their voice,” he said.

Radhakrishnan aims in all the varying aspects of his field to help others find and use their voice to garner professional success and personal confidence. “As humans, we are social animals and in order to be social, we have to talk,” he said. “In the current state of life, you have to talk or speak to stand out in your field or to earn a living. Research has shown that if voice is affected, speech is going to be affected and that can affect personal, social and professional levels of life. From the perspective of speech pathology, having a healthy voice can help one to excel in their field and add to their quality of life.”

Whether he is working with young clients or old, those affected by a pre-existing condition or a recently developed node of the vocal fold or clients who want to enhance their voice for personal or professional reasons, Radhakrishnan lends his expertise to help others and instill a call to the profession in his students.

“From the perspective of speech pathology, having a healthy voice can help one to excel in their field and add to their quality of life.”

Dr. Nandhu Radhakrishnan

by Caitlin Duerler
**COLLEGE SNAPSHOT:** **FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION**

**A**s computer science University Professor Jianguang Liu brainstormed ways to increase freshman success, she knew it would require collaborative and innovative thinking. Liu is the Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar and is a 15-year fellowship faculty member with a doctorate in computer science and engineering. Selected as a 2017 Texas State University Systems Chancellor’s Faculty Fellow, Liu’s fellowship proposal, titled First Year Success, includes a study of LU’s first-year programs focused on student success and developing original strategies to improve freshman retention rates.

“First year is kind of tough because you just graduated from high school, and then college is different from high school expectations,” Liu said. “You have to be on your own. There are academic issues such as determining if students are college ready as well as encouraging engagement and getting involved in student activities.

“I started exploring our campus—what kind of services and support we can offer—so we can help students academically and enrich their college experience. The goal is to provide motivation so that they can finish their degree in four years.”

First Year Success strategies involve raising the student transition from high school to college, providing academic support through mentoring and tutoring, and enhancing student engagement with peer connectivity and offering career opportunities.

“In the spring, we invited a group from Little Cypress Mauriceville to visit us,” Liu said. “Our students can share their experiences and talk about how to apply to college. We have different departments visit with them, and they can ask questions. We’re reaching out to help them in their pre-college preparation. Then when they’re accepted, we encourage them to get advised as soon as possible, so orientation and participation in activities like freshman convocation.”

After studying data in the spring and summer and visiting with other offices to create collaborative efforts, Liu, along with other faculty, developed a small-scale pilot program focused on Computer Science and Chemistry Cardinal Communities, First Year Success, to test the proposed retention strategies. “We meet every week—we’re reaching out to help them in their pre-college preparation. Then when they’re accepted, we encourage them to get advised as soon as possible, so orientation and participation in activities like freshman convocation.”

Liu uses creative and research success strategies to inspire student success.

**Voice students take first**

During the annual Greater Cities of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (GACTS) auditions last spring, the University of Houston, voice students from the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music captured six of the twelve college and professional division categories, including the Mary Morgan Moore principal professor of music at Lamar University, has edited a new book of writings by famed composer John Philip Sousa. Published through GIA Publications, *A Sousa Reader: Essays, Interviews, and Clippings*, gathers works by Sousa, The March King, and his contemporaries to give us a greater understanding of this iconic figure.

Proksch worked with Sousa’s great-grandson, John Philip Sousa IV, to obtain copyright releases on Sousa’s writings that are included in the book. Sousa IV also wrote the forward for the volume. After conceiving the idea for the book, Proksch spent a great deal of time in the Sousa Archive at the University of Illinois, identifying, transcribing, and editing the writings that he thought most worthy of being included in the collection.

In addition to Sousa, Proksch’s research centers on the reception and “revival” of Haydn’s music in the early twentieth century. Viennese Classicism and the history of the trumpet. In 2015, he published *Behind the Music*, a book about the composer.

Proksch publishes ‘A Sousa Reader’

Bobby Sanabria headliners weekend

Proksch is a former student of the Department of Music, as well as a noted expert on the history and culture of Afro-Cuban music.” said Melinda Condit, associate professor of music and director of jazz at LU.

Sanabria lectured on the history of the clave, the rhythmic basis for Afro-Cuban music, and conducted two Latin percussion workshops.

Proksch also hosts a music history show, Behind the Music, on 91.3 KVLU Public Radio, which airs Sundays at noon.

**Bobby Sanabria**

Sanabria, seven-time Grammy-nominated drummer and percussionist, performed at last spring’s Lamar University Percussion and Jazz Weekend Hosted by the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music, the festival featured workshops, symposium, and master classes, concluding with a gala concert featuring Sanabria in the University Theatre. The Cardinal Jazz Orchestra and percussion ensembles performed with the musician.

“Bobby Sanabria is one of the most dynamic performers I’ve ever seen, as well as being a noted expert on the history and culture of Afro-Cuban music,” said Melinda Condit, associate professor of music and director of jazz at LU. Sanabria lectured on the history of the clave, the rhythmic basis for Afro-Cuban music, and conducted two Latin percussion workshops.

**Cardinal Cadence**

**FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION**

**FACULTY PROFILE:** **JANE LIU**

**Fine Arts & Communications**

**Cardinal Cadence**

**SPRING 2018**

**Liu Uses Creativity & Research to Inspire Success**

**by Kara Timbrellak**

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**Liu uses creative and research success strategies to inspire student success.**
AmeriCommerce: welcome home!

by Casey Ford

In 2005, just three years after graduating with his B.B.A. in management information systems from Lamar University, AmeriCommerce CEO and co-owner Ed Sturrock and his partners took their company national, and they did it without a dime of investor funding. Completely bootstrapped into fluidity, by his own description, he and his partners called themselves “the masters of breakeven,” but they had created a company that would rapidly take them to all the places they’d dreamed of going.

The Vidor native and natural entrepreneur was never one to dream small. Sturrock began cutting his teeth on industrial software applications during college while working for the local plants. He built software for several Houston companies, even commuting there for a time. His family’s business, Beaumont-based Jubs Points, provided the ideal platform for Sturrock to implement his developing shopping cart software that increased their online sales so exponentially that they eclipsed local sales two- to threefold.

They are doing it all from the top of Edison Plaza, with an amazing view of the Neches River, in downtown Beaumont.

That slow, steady growth caught the eye of would-be buyers like MasterCard and others who came knocking. And for all its success, Sturrock says, “there came a point where AmeriCommerce hit a peak in terms of what we could do, from that bootstrap perspective, and we needed either a strategic partner with an existing customer set or investment funds to help us fundamentally evolve the products and build a new customer base.” So in 2014, Capital One acquired AmeriCommerce.

By the time of their acquisition, AmeriCommerce had recruited more than 30 people, most of them LU graduates. Sturrock says their clients included “the big ones you tell people about,” including Yo-yo, Coca-Cola, Dell and the Discovery Channel program “Whale Wars,” but their primary client was the mid-market merchant, “the ones that sell, say, doorknobs and the like.” Those clients were the bread and butter of AmeriCommerce because they could effectively manage multiple stores on one platform through the diverse capabilities of a flexible e-commerce software.

Capital One took that existing software and merged AmeriCommerce into their national commerce business, which included a card reader application similar to Square and their online and brick-and-mortar credit card terminals. The AmeriCommerce team spent the first year of the acquisition learning the ropes of a vast international corporation and how to attach to small business customers inside such a big machine.

Today they have come to more fully understand their identity as a company and merchant entrepreneurs. What it is that they do well, they are not a mass-market, overly simplified product for everyone, but they are tailored to grow strong and complex mid-market merchants. This clarity, and a serendipitous chain of events, has meant that as of this year, Sturrock has announced that they are buying AmeriCommerce. They are doing it all from the top of Edison Plaza, with an amazing view of the Neches River, in downtown Beaumont.

Sturrock says the move is “a result of a growing sense of awareness of our ideal customers.” These last few years with Capital One has been a focus on fine-tuning their customer base, which felt like a backward step, even amidst so much growth and forward momentum. The expansion took Sturrock away from his family and took AmeriCommerce away from their merchants. Of course, Capital One must focus on what brings the highest mass-market potential and revenue, but for Sturrock and his team, focusing on the customers that are the backbone of the company, “the ones who is harder to find and needs more attention. Buying back the company will give them back their agility, which they had lost due to navigating multiple strategies and target customers. They’re getting back to basics, on their own terms and in a big way.

They are doing it all from the top of Edison Plaza, with an amazing view of the Neches River, in downtown Beaumont.

AmeriCommerce will stay in the building and close to home, which suits Sturrock fine, as his family and personal life are here in Southeast Texas. By staying in local, they are able to continue to meet their customers’ needs and to substantially invest in the community. Additionally, the office itself looks like a set from the 1980 film “Big,” if it were built on an atmospheric pirate ship. Sturrock advises entrepreneurs to “never lose your inner kid.” One step inside his offices proves he’s walking that walk. The team, 80 percent of whom are Lamar University graduates, comes to work casual and comfortable yet poised with precision to addressing the pressing daily issues of an international e-commerce clientele.

New recruits from Lamar University enter this innovative company either as part of the merchant success team where they are immersed into the product and the e-commerce industry, or they enter as developers right out of the computer science program. They sit down for team lunches, and they collaborate in committees with names like Team Glass, which works continuously toward transparency; Team Atmosphere, which works on office space design and Team Iron Chef, which decides how to feed everyone. Sturrock expresses immeasurable gratitude to the Lamar University community for people like Paul Latoias, director of LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, “he always has ten irons in the fire, being a startup guy at his core,” and for professor and computer science department chair Stefan Andrei, who “prepares computer science students with such compassion and integrity.” (Sturrock has stolen more than his share of Andrei’s teaching assistants.) He enjoys serving on the CICE board, influencing entrepreneurship programs and having exposure to the life sciences and chemical work happening on campus.

He says he was a “slacker” in college, but nothing could be further from the truth. Sturrock was already starting companies as an undergraduate and dreaming up entrepreneurial technological innovations. He spent his time as a student learning about focus and aligning his daily tasks to accomplish big goals and dreams. Lamar University afforded Ed Sturrock the opportunity to build the kind of company for which he always wanted to work.

True entrepreneurs aren’t driven by money or acquisition; they’re driven by dreams, and Sturrock has realized his. He has said, “I dream in features that solve problems and manifest about the day we have 100 developers on staff. Shaping commerce is my passion; it’s the video game I can’t put down, and merchant success is how I keep score.” The innovative ideas he tinkered with in college have grown into an enormously successful company and an immeasurable asset to Southeast Texas and Lamar University.

Shaping commerce is my passion; it’s the video game I can’t put down, and merchant success is how I keep score. —Ed Sturrock ‘02
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH

Dean Vesta wins Beta Gamma Sigma Dean of the Year

Enrique (Henry) B. Vesta, Dean of Lamar University’s College of Business since 2002, was recently honored as “Dean of the Year” by Beta Gamma Sigma, the international honor society serving students and particularly officers for the chapter states. “The chapter recognizes Dean Vesta as the highest and most prestigious honor that Beta Gamma Sigma confers upon college deans,” said Regina Rogers, dean of the College of Business. “He embodies all the attributes of a leader and exemplifies those principles in his work with our students and the community.”

Vesta is highly involved in philanthropy and serves as chair of the Salvation Army National Advisory Board. At the conclusion of her presentation, she was presented with a gift from the local chapter of the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

New department chair announced

David Turner, associate professor and chair of the Accounting and Assessment of Accreditation and Quality Assurance, has been named professor and new department chair for Neos Marketing and the McFadden in the new department chair of the Accounting and Business Law Department.

Student participates in semester exchange in France

Key-Alma Waddill, M.B.A. student and president of LU’s College of Business Student Advisory Council, participated in the College of Business semester exchange program. The program gives students an opportunity to study abroad for an entire semester at École Supérieure de Commerce de Rennes, an accredited business school in Rennes, France, just two hours away from Paris. Students from 22 different countries participated in the experience last spring.

Turer saw several benefits to her time abroad, including sharpening her foreign language skills, establishing a global network and gaining confidence from her unique interactions. When addressing the benefits of study abroad, Turner said, “It’s great to go to school and work and on intensive group projects with people from different countries not only making fun learning but also redefining your teammates’ strategies.”

When she was not studying she was seeing the sights. Some of her stops included the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre-Dame Cathedral and the Louvre.

College of Business Hosted executive vice president and chief brand officer of the Dallas Cowboys

The College of Business welcomed Charlotte James Anderson, EVP and chief brand officer of the Dallas Cowboys and president of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders, as the spring 2017 Academic Lecture. The students were invited to a private reception allowing them to meet Anderson and ask questions. Concluding the reception was an open lecture titled, “How Passion, Innovation and Leadership Shaped the Star.”

“Anderson was the perfect choice for the College of Business because she is more than just a powerful businesswoman; she is a philanthropist and a true visionary,” said Kaysee Smith, marketing coordinator for the College of Business. “Her spirit for service and passion for business is exactly what we hope to inspire in our students and the community.”

Anderson is heavily involved in philanthropy and serves as chair of the Salvation Army National Advisory Board. At the conclusion of her presentation, she was presented with a gift from the local area chapter of the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

M.B.A. student awarded Texas Business Hall of Fame scholarship

M.B.A. student Eric Bradshaw was chosen from a pool of applicants to become the Texas Business Hall of Fame Ben J. Rogers scholarship. This $16,500 scholarship was endowed by Regina Rogers in loving memory of her father Ben J. Rogers.

Russ Waddill returns to LU

Former College of Business student and current director of entrepreneurial studies at Neos Marketing, Russ Waddill, visited campus last spring to speak to his classmates. His presentation was titled “Marketing at the Speed of News.” The event illustrated the changing fast pace of marketing and the evolution of consumer preferences.

Goffney addresses college commencement

LeTanya Goffney, Lufkin ISD superintendent, served as the May 2017 commencement speaker with 7,500 graduates present at the ceremony. Among them was her husband, Joseph Goffney, who graduated with his master of education in educational administration. Goffney proudly presented the degree to her husband as she crossed the stage after focusing her remarks on adding value to those around you.
Students study engineering management in Spain

Thirteen engineering management students spent two weeks in Taragona, Spain, as part of a new program to study contemporary issues in engineering management. Under the leadership of Dr. Jerry Lin, professor and senior director of graduate programs in the College of Engineering, the team experienced life in another country at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, where students discovered what it’s like to be an engineer who regularly works abroad.

During the course, students were assigned a case requiring them to think like team members and technical visits on the trip to discover unique solutions for their projects. Their work was presented on the final day in Taragona. “For our project, we had to take two countries—Spain and another of our choice—and perform a market analysis to see which would be better to first, produce in, and second, sell in,” said senior mechanical engineering major Nasim Abdelwahab. “We had to control costs, take conclusions from the data, then defend our findings for our final. It was interesting because not all of us had experience with this kind of work.”

In addition to their academic studies, students were able to experience the culture of Spain. Students took excursions to various Roman ruins, learning about engineering innovations dating back thousands of years. The group visited the local industry such as the Institute for Applied Automotive Research to learn about groundbreaking research happening in automotive safety. “Combining project teams with international students has provided an in-depth learning experience,” said Lin. “It’s a part of engineering, giving students the opportunity to improve their technical skills,” Lin said.

Colleges and universities around Texas.

Students are given the opportunity to explore and pursue their interests, look together through the year designing, creating and perfecting their projects. “Senior design projects have become a point of pride for engineering students across the country,” said Dean Srinivasa Palaník, “Students use their achievements to enhance their resumes and create interesting talking points for employers. We hope to continue the trend of producing top-quality students through hands-on opportunities such as those provided by the Senior Design Symposium.”

Mechanical engineers compete at Google

In a collaboration between Shell and Google, four senior mechanical engineering students were chosen to participate in the Hack-a-Truck design competition in Mountain View, Calif., at the Google Garage. LU students were grouped with students from Cedarville University to design and create a food truck, inside and out, that was both innovative and energy-efficient.

“This was a rare treat for our students to participate,” said Ken Aung, professor of mechanical engineering and adviser. Students were not allowed to receive help from their advisors, but were mentored by Cameron Davies, owner and president of Cruising Kitchens, celebrity chef Ludo Fefevre, Jaime Moreno and Jose Luis Marin-Garcia of Mordern, a consulting firm that excels in areas of service and digital design.

“Oar was a amazing experience and a breath of fresh air that allowed us to get out of the classroom and laboratory,” said team member Austin Amendez. “We were able to come up to something that really matters and walk away with awards for Best Engineering Design and Best Energy Calculation.”

Wy honored for project 

Kung Wu, assistant professor of civil engineering, was honored by TxDOT and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials for his research on traffic mitigation in the Houston area.

EEs score big

Texas Tech students Lukas Morehva, Mitchell Davis and Jesse Wells won first place in the Texas Design Challenge finishing second place overall. They also garnered best oral and presentation awards among teams from more than a dozen universities around Texas.

x Xiang receives Xiang Xiang, assistant professor of industrial engineering, received a $279,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study factors in capital investment industries that may threaten lives and property, and recovery for making beverage, fuel and industrial ethano. A team of five judges from the College of Engineering faculty deemed the applications.

team’s project the most creative and useful in regard to real-world applications.

The Senior Design Symposium saw 44 projects across all five engineering disciplines compete for departmental recognition and the prize of grand champion. Projects ranged in scope from crude expansions for local industry to machines for extended space missions. “There are so many great projects this year; I am humbled by the judges who chose our project,” Murdock said.

With funding from various industry partners and the College of Engineering, students are given the opportunity to explore and pursue their interests, look together through the year designing, creating and perfecting their projects. “Senior design projects have become a point of pride for engineering students across the country,” said Dean Srinivasa Palaník, “Students use their achievements to enhance their resumes and create interesting talking points for employers. We hope to continue the trend of producing top-quality students through hands-on opportunities such as those provided by the Senior Design Symposium.”

Colleges and universities around Texas.

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Mechanical engineers compete at Google

In a collaboration between Shell and Google, four senior mechanical engineering students were chosen to participate in the Hack-a-Truck design competition in Mountain View, Calif., at the Google Garage. LU students were grouped with students from Cedarville University to design and create a food truck, inside and out, that was both innovative and energy-efficient.

“This was a rare treat for our students to participate,” said Ken Aung, professor of mechanical engineering and adviser. Students were not allowed to receive help from their advisors, but were mentored by Cameron Davies, owner and president of Cruising Kitchens, celebrity chef Ludo Fefevre, Jaime Moreno and Jose Luis Marin-Garcia of Mordern, a consulting firm that excels in areas of service and digital design.

“Oar was a amazing experience and a breath of fresh air that allowed us to get out of the classroom and laboratory,” said team member Austin Amendez. “We were able to come up to something that really matters and walk away with awards for Best Engineering Design and Best Energy Calculation.”

Wy honored for project 

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EEs score big

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T he Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. has selected Larry Lawson, founder and CEO, HeartCoR Solutions, to join its prestigious ranks. The nonprofit educational organization honors the achievements of outstanding individuals and encourages youth to pursue their dreams through higher education.

Lawson joins 11 other esteemed business, civic, and cultural leaders from across the U.S. in receiving 2018 honors. For more than 70 years, the Horatio Alger Award has been annually bestowed upon admired leaders who have succeeded despite facing adversities, and who have remained committed to higher education and charitable efforts in their local communities.

Lawson lives this commitment through his unflagging allegiance to LU, sharing his success in numerous ways. He is a founding member of the Legacy Society and also serves on a number of boards at LU, including the Foundation Board of Trustees and the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship Advisory Board. Additionally, he recently was the featured speaker at the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for LU’s faculty in engineering and business. In recognition of Lawson’s extensive support and passion for LU, the university awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2012.

Born to working-class Texan parents, Lawson is the youngest child of three and was diagnosed with polio at age six. His family sought a second opinion, and was diagnosed with polio at age six. Consequently, he was confined to a wheelchair her entire life. Lawson has received numerous awards, including election into the Texas Medical Center’s Accelerator program, and GOONE Society of Texas, an organization that provides funding and mentorship to startup companies in life science, energy and emerging technologies. He also has donated to entrepreneurship centers and facilities for the disabled, in memory of his sister, who had spina bifida and was confined to a wheelchair for her entire life. Lawson has received numerous accolades, including election into the Gulf Coast Music Hall of Fame for his tenure with The Clique, Ernst & Young’s Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2009 and Houston Technology Center’s Lifetime Achievement Award in Health Sciences in 2017.

“As a child, I was fortunate to have parents who believed in me and encouraged me to pursue my dreams, despite the serious physical challenges I faced,” said Lawson, upon acceptance of his most recent award. Understanding that many students don’t have this same type of support system to build them up, it is an honor and privilege for me to be a change agent in their lives. I am grateful that the Horatio Alger Association has welcomed me into this special organization so that I may continue to provide hope and opportunity to those who deserve it most.” Through its members, Horatio Alger Association aims to educate young people about the limitless opportunities afforded to them by the free-enterprise system. Like association members, Horatio Alger Scholars have faced significant adversities, but have also displayed unmatched resilience in overcoming challenges. Lawson and the member class of 2018 were formally inducted into the association April 5-7, 2018, during the 71st Horatio Alger Award Induction Ceremonies in Washington, D.C.

Lawson’s passion for encouraging young people and preparing the next generation of entrepreneurs has contributed to his interest in a variety of LU initiatives. These innovative educational objectives involve more experiential learning, cross-disciplinary partnerships and collaborations with industry. Lawson has been at the heart of conversations addressing entrepreneurship education at LU.

**KEEPING THE HEART OF INNOVATION BEATING**

**HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION NAMES LU ALUMNUS LARRY LAWSON ’12 TO ITS MEMBER CLASS OF 2018**

**LU PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE**

**FOUNDING MEMBER, LU PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE**

**TRUSTEE, LU FOUNDATION**

**FOUNDER AND CEO, HEARTCOR SOLUTIONS**

**ERNST & YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR HEALTH SCIENCES**


**LU LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBER**

**FOUNDER, LARRY W. LAWSON RESEARCH FUND IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING**

**TRUSTEE, LU FOUNDATION**
Several students are engaged in "real-world" work at LU’s Center for Innovation. Commercialization and Entrepreneurship thanks to a partnership with world-renowned pop musician Sudha Kheterpal and her vision for a device to harness the sun’s energy while engaging the power of music and education. Entrepreneurship isn’t new to the British Indian percussionist who has been the heartbeat of electronic and pop bands for more than 20 years. Her music resume includes work with internationally known electronics and pop musicians like the Spice Girls, Faithless, Dido and others. "I was very humbled to play in front of hundreds of thousands of people quite regularly internationally," she said. "I'd often wonder if the energy of the crowd could be harnessed and used for anything else such as for a social good."

A few years ago, her understanding of the genuine need for renewable energy and potential of using energy created from music, gave rise to her founding Shake Your Power, an organization that seeks to bring clean energy to places in the world without electricity. "There was one occasion at anelectronica gig I was performing at where the crowd stomped their feet so hard in time with the music that they appeared to cause an earthquake. It was really the pivotal moment when I thought 'I've got to look into this. Can we do anything with this energy?'"

It was around this time when she was introduced to Diana Simpson Hernandez, now head of industrial design and strategy at Shake Your Power. She also was the founder of Designers for Humanity, a platform for designers seeking to tackle some of the most pressing environmental issues today. "She’s a great voice in product design and development and has won us several awards," says Kheterpal. When they met, they talked about the idea to "create an instrument that uses the kinetic energy in playing it for electricity."

Out of this initial conversation came the SPARK device and a Kickstarter campaign that provided crowd funding enabling a trip to Kenya to test the prototype. "It was then that we saw an incredible need not only for electricity for light but also for mobile phone charging," she said. "In Kenya, three quarters of the population lives without electricity and just as many have a mobile phone."

Beyond the immediate need to charge mobile phones, Kheterpal recognized that "the biggest impact of what we were doing would be through education. By showing young people how to put their own mini SPARK together, they could really learn to understand such things as entrepreneurship, renewable energy and STEM—science, technology, engineering and math."

"All of that was being done through this lovely medium of music," Kheterpal said. "We found a real connector for young people."

Fast forward to working with Lamar University to develop the SolarMC as an exciting educational tool for young people whereby individuals can build their own solar mobile phone chargers. The proof-of-concept is complete, and Shake Your Power is exploring, with the help of LU’s electrical engineering students, decisions on how it will be put together, inclusive of the cost of components and whether to use a printed circuit board or breadboard-style perfboard. The device will include a solar panel, charger, connection for cellular phone and a speaker case to amplify the sound.

"With the device, the user would be able to charge their phones and enhance the ability to listen to music," she said. "We’re looking at some of these ideas with electrical engineering students here at LU, and also focusing on the marketing aspects."

"As a college student, one rarely has the opportunity to work on an assignment that offers such real-world experience while also advocating for social good," Biffle said. "The marketing team I am very grateful to have had the privilege to play a part in something that has the potential to make such a positive impact on so many lives.

Kheterpal sees potential for the device to bring the world closer together by pairing schools in building the devices and developing interchange between schools. For example, a science class in Port Arthur could be paired with a school in rural Mexico, both building the SolarMC. There could be a widening of learning outcomes as students learn about life in other places and how we can solve real-world problems together through innovation.

"You can create music with your phone with applications like Garage Band," she said. "We’d like to encourage refugee camps to set up a music challenge for the best tune to come out of a camp, to share with a twin school, perhaps in Texas, as a way to add to global understanding and a fun way to get into STEM."

"There are lots of interesting things that we’re exploring, and certainly being here at LU with the students has been really great for us," Kheterpal said.
AtmoSpark Water Generation, a new technology developed by Tejus Mane, a master’s student in chemical engineering at Lamar University, recently received a National Science Foundation Innovation Corps grant for $50,000 to facilitate a customer discovery tour to explore new applications and new markets while the team continues to refine its patent-pending technology.

Mane, CEO of AtmoSpark, and co-founder Aniket Khade, a Ph.D. student in chemical engineering at LU, submitted the grant proposal with the help of LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship, the Office of Sponsored Research, and Jerry Lin, senior director of graduate programs, University Professor and Ann Die-Hasselman Faculty Scholar at LU.

Matthew Bukovicky, an M.B.A. student in leadership, joins Mane and Khade on the team, along with Damilola Runsewe, a master’s student in chemical engineering, who is soon leaving to pursue a Ph.D. at Texas State University.

AtmoSpark uses an innovative electro-condensation technology that has shown a significant increase in water extraction from the air.

Originally envisioned as a solution to water shortages in developing countries, the technology holds promise as a way to address potable water needs in several novel markets. This expansion came about last summer during the 12-week Owl Spark program at Rice University, where the student team participated in a concentrated exploration of potential customer segments.

“The big learning moment or pivot point was when we learned that while non-governmental organizations would like such a product, to them there was too much liability in technology at such an early stage,” Mane said.

Instead, they discovered strong potential markets for the water-generation technology in the ‘cruising community’ of live-aboard sailboats, motorsailers and small yachts, and among RVers around the nation in motorhomes, fifth wheels or travel trailers.

“There are a lot of potential customers who are looking for better water,” he said. They may be cruisers who want to “stay on the hook” longer without having to go into marinas to refill water tanks, or install and maintain desalination systems at considerable expense. Additionally, they could be Rivers who want to have fresh water while traveling, or “boon docking,” away from power and water sources for long periods of time.

Given the significant numbers of cruisers along the Gulf Coast and beyond, Mane sees a significant potential market. Later, AtmoSpark’s technology may find application in larger vessels or on offshore oil rigs. “We believe our product will be more cost-effective than current technology, but there is a big cycle to go thorough in proving our process to these kinds of customers through field testing, pilot phases and so on,” Mane said. “That would be extremely difficult financially for a start-up.”

Beyond the sailing and RV markets, Mane sees a potential market in sustainable housing and pilot testing is planned in Puerto Rico and the Netherlands. He also envisions one could work with the Department of Defense for scalable solar-powered units to give the military greater freedom of movement by providing sustainable water. The technology could also serve in times of disaster relief, potentially through FEMA, non-governmental organizations or other relief organizations.

The I-Corps seven-week discovery tour began Jan. 16 with a workshop in Seattle where they received training in customer discovery and continued through March 2. Mane, Khade and Mark Hardness, a mentor the team met at Owlspark who has experience in industrial water use and recovery and governmental regulations, are traveling around the U.S. under the grant.

In addition to the recent NSF grant, AtmoSpark has won the top prize in three recent competitions: the 2017 Texas Rural Challenge, the Big Idea Challenge at LU and the Texas State University Business Plan competition.

The team is refining the product at LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship. They have both office and laboratory space. Both are vital as the team works on business models and ‘next steps’ as it prepares for the next Rice Business Plan competition and continues to test and refine its design with new prototypes.

As for the spark that lead to AtmoSpark, Mane first had the idea while attending the Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship graduate class taught by David Cocke, the Jack M. Gill Endowed Chair of Chemical Engineering and associate director of the CICE. The class changed his professional trajectory, Mane said, to a future in entrepreneurship.

“Dr. Cocke's class at the CICE was the major reason we were able to start this project and are now able to bring it to a state that we are able to get NSF funding for customer discovery and other outside funding as well,” Mane said. “The CICE has been a huge support for us, and we are excited to also engage with the NSF and LU’s College of Engineering during this phase.”
More than 500 students stayed in the LU residence halls throughout the storm. The City of Beaumont lost its water supply, and drinking water as well as bathroom facilities became an issue. With the rain continuing for five days, LU students had time on their hands. Some of the local students had already begun to volunteer with their church or community groups.

**HARVEY Heroes was born**

Lamar University students completed more than 1,000 hours of volunteer work through Harvey Heroes.

**THE NUMBERS**

- 294 student volunteers signed up
- 112 student volunteers completed 40 or more hours Volunteer Areas
- Salvation Army and Red Cross—distribution and shelter
- Humans Society—rescue animals
- Habitat for Humanity, local churches and homes—pulling up carpet and cutting sheetrock
- Schools—distribution and shelter
- SETX Food Bank, Red Cross, Meals on Wheels and HEB—a food and water armada

**FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS REBOUND**

Like millions of other Texans, Lamar University students faced mandatory evacuation, loss of electricity, non-potable water, recovery costs and the loss of personal possessions. All had to work to get back to campus. Some of the local staff members had already begun to volunteer with their church or community groups.

**Nursing faculty feted for research excellence**

Nine faculty members in the Jean Anne Dishman School of Nursing received the Texas Organization for Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Education Excellence in Research Award for their research analyzing the effects of mindfulness meditation on anxiety levels in undergraduate nursing students. “I think this shows the excellent work that the Lamar University Division School of Nursing faculty is doing,” said Cynthia Stinson, chair of the school. “We have a reputation of winning research and state awards.” The new funding was further enhanced when LU’s reputation of excellence was confirmed for excellence by the Community for Accredited Online Schools, AccreditedOnlineSchools.org. In addition, College Choice recently ranked the master’s degree program as the second-most affordable online nursing master’s degree program.

**Noel awarded physics national internship**

Zachery Noel, a senior physics major from Baytown, was one of 12 recipients from a nationwide pool of applicants for the 2017 internship with the Society of Physics Students and the National Institute of Standards and Technology last summer. “This is much more meaningful than just gaining 50 work experience,” said Noel. “Science is about sharing ideas and working together. It’s about learning firsthand how the scientific community bridges gaps and comes together to support mutual goals and achievements.”

Noel worked closely with directly with the national office of the SPS to develop Science Outreach Catalyst Kits “to provide SPS chapters with innovative outreach presentations” as well as with the NIST Summer Intern Program to develop hands-on activities. Noel also visited with SPS scientists who educate teachers that are non-scientists. Noel plans to attend graduate school and earn a Ph.D. He is considering a future in academia or research.

**Bradley, Parker earn accolades**

Jerry Bradley, professor of English and modern languages, and graduate student Salena Parker, took home awards at 84th Conference of College Teachers of English and the Texas College English Association recently at Tarrant County Community College College Northeast. The association awarded Bradley best presentation based on the conference theme of Texas Heritage for his poetry reading, Approaching the Coast of Arizona. Bradley also received an award for best creative writing from the conference for his reading of Alive in Captivity after the Flood, which was selected for inclusion in an Austin Poetry Festival anthology. Parker won the L.D. Hendricks Award, the top graduate student prize, for her paper A Fine Song of Family Scented Tears: An Analysis of Science Narratives in Joyce’s Ulysses, and her research was published in the CCTE Studies journal this past fall. Previously, her research was accepted for publication by the International James Joyce Society.

**Emergency response**

The storm came ashore and then wandered back out into the Gulf.

**Harvey made landfall in the Beaumont/ Houston area.**

Harvey brought record rains—60.58” in one week just south of campus.

**The storm continued to cause havoc for area businesses.**

**Students were invited to move in to the dorms early in order to avoid the rain weather reports estimated.**

**Innovation**

**College Snapshot: ARTS & SCIENCES**

**Nursing professor leads visit to Brazil**

Marlene Schmierer, professor and advisor of the Department of Social Work and Community Services, recently led a delegation of students, students and program faculty to Brazil to visit with business, government and educational organizations.

**Jerry Bradley is born**

Jerry Bradley, professor of English and modern languages, was born in the Lone Star College of Houston. His research was published in the CCTE Studies journal this past fall. Previously, his research was accepted for publication by the International James Joyce Society.

**Bradley, Parker earn accolades**

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Best takes
EDUCATION INNOVATIONS around the globe

by Beth Gallaspy

RANDY BEST ’67 recognized early on that adult learners want a different style of higher education than traditional college students. An innovative approach to meeting the goals and needs of this growing market of students has been the key to success for his company, Academic Partnerships, and for the partner schools he works with worldwide, including Lamar University.

“We call it the Lamar model,” Best said. “What we’re introducing in seven great universities in South Africa and universities elsewhere is the Lamar model, unchanged with no modifications, because it worked so well. Usually you don’t get it right the first time, but we fortunately did in that it met the need of this category of student, this mature, working adult.”

Best’s Dallas-based company began working with LU more than a decade ago to create online versions of selected degree programs still taught by LU faculty and to recruit working professionals to enroll in as students in those programs. One innovation, Best said, was simply identifying the need for such programs and committing resources to meet that need.

“I think we recognized a bit early that college graduates, because of changes in the job market, because of new skill requirements in the jobs they already held and the chance for advancement, would someday return to the university,” Best said. “In the past, one degree was good for life, but that was not true in the network-based economy and fast-changing 21st century.”

By working with affordable, public universities like LU, Academic Partnerships was able to effectively market programs to students looking to develop additional expertise and earn an advanced credential at a relatively low cost without accumulating huge debt. Additionally, Best’s company focused marketing and recruitment efforts through employers rather than just trying to reach potential students directly. For graduate degrees in education, they worked through school districts. For advanced nursing degrees and RN to BSN programs, they worked through hospitals. Those efforts proved a major asset both for Academic Partnerships and for Lamar University.

“LU was an early mover and dominated the market in Texas for master’s degrees in education and is still growing and expanding after 10 years,” —Randy Best ’67

While traditional college students might be able to dedicate semester after semester to completing a degree program, adult learners often balance school with other commitments. “They take three courses then have to lay out a course because of something going on in their job or life or their family,” Best said. “We developed a thing called a carousel that allows them to just hop back on after laying out a course. It may be for the summer when they have children out of school, or they’re going on a vacation. So maybe they’ll lay off two courses and just hop back on where they got off. That was just revolutionary. It really made this whole thing possible. Prior to that when you stepped out you dropped out.”

The innovative approach worked so well at Lamar University that it quickly spread to other institutions. Academic Partnerships now serves 52 public universities in the United States. Sister companies also are working with seven South African universities and one in the United Kingdom, with other U.K. universities in the planning stages to come online. Best also is in talks with universities in Morocco and is constantly evaluating opportunities to expand into other markets. Before developing the “Lamar model,” Best made his first forays into higher education in Latin America, working with universities in multiple countries, including Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Argentina and Mexico. His sister company in Latin America, Ilumno, now serves more than 500,000 students on 75 campuses.

In addition to expanding into new markets, Best’s company is continuing to develop innovative ways to better serve partner universities by shouldering more of the load in a scalable way of enrolling large numbers of students with multiple start dates per year. “We’re studying how to be more supportive and more helpful and also how we can increase our mentoring and support of enrolled students who have full lives and families and jobs,” Best said. “The second thing we want to do differently is to help take our partner universities here in the United States abroad and help them be active in huge markets overseas where there’s tremendous demand and little to any access to U.S. higher education.”

As technology infrastructure and mobile access continues to improve around the world, more and more tech-savvy adult students are seeking out expanded higher education options.

Best’s Academic Partnerships and the universities he works with, including Lamar University, keep growing, changing and innovating to meet the demand.
Lamar University announced the inaugural recipients of the College of Engineering Faculty Fellowship Program, awards made possible through the generosity of five alumni last spring. Eleven faculty members were recognized and received the title of fellow in an afternoon program March 22 at the Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship.

“These faculty fellowships recognize and support the innovative endeavors of outstanding members of the College of Engineering faculty,” said Sinnova Palani, dean of the college. “We are grateful to our alumni who have made these fellowships possible throughout the university. Their support and interest in building and sustaining a culture of innovation at Lamar University is outstanding.”

Ten fellowships were possible thanks to funding from five alumni donors: Anthony George ’98, CEO of Nautical Control Solutions and founder and president of Control Dynamics International; successful scientist, technology entrepreneur, venture capitalist, educator and philanthropist Jack Giff ’58, Distinguished Alumnus, endowed chair in mechanical engineering; Andi Biddle ’93, ‘94, procurement manager for ExxonMobil who has established a faculty development and innovation fund within the college. Each of the 10 fellows receives a stipend of $10,000 per year for three years. Giff fellows Tao Wei, assistant professor of chemical engineering, and Rafael Tedesco, professor of chemical engineering; Norwood fellows Ramesh Guduru, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, and Xing Wu, assistant professor of civil engineering; mechanical engineering, and Quin Qian, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering; Riddle fellows Qinghuang Liu, professor of chemical engineering, and Guan Qian, associate professor of chemical engineering; George Fellows Ayse Beyazgur and Hassan Zareiezadeh, both assistant professors of electrical and computer science, making him the fourth LU student to earn the most prestigious undergraduate award given in the sciences. The scholarship is awarded to about 300 college sophomores and juniors nationwide based on merit.

Science and Tech-Building rises

The new $83,000-square-foot Science and Technology Building broke ground last May with an expected completion goal of November 2018. It will be the first new entirely academic building to be added to the LU campus in more than four decades. “This building is long overdue, and the Texas State University System is very happy to facilitate that,” said TUSC Regents Bill Scott. The new Science and Technology Building is sited to take advantage of a future pedestrian corridor planned for Cunningham Street and new campus entry off Bulls Creek Drive. This prominent location will be highly visible as Lamar University continues to grow. “As much as we celebrate building it, our purpose is for us to recruit better students, to recruit better faculty, to, in turn, transform our programs, and to be more competitive in career and graduate program placement,” said LU President Ken Evans. “At the end of the day, science and technology will increasingly play an evermore important role in the evolution of our economy and our ability to solve the pressing problems of present and future generations.”

LU noted as a ‘Rising Star’ in UK study

Times Higher Education and World University Rankings identified Lamar University as one of 20 universities worldwide and one of just nine nationally that could “challenge the elite universities” and become globally renowned by 2030. A study conducted by Freetal, a strategy consulting firm in Great Britain that works with some of the world’s most outstanding universities, research organizations and civil society groups, identified a “Class of 2030” that consisted of an emerging group of “challenger” universities that are quickly rising in the world rankings and “have an opportunity to become globally renowned in the next 10 to 20 years.”

York secures Goldwater Scholarship

The Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program bestowed its distinguished scholarship on Chris York, a senior double major in mathematics and computer science, making him the fourth LU student to earn the most prestigious undergraduate award given in the sciences. The scholarship is awarded to about 300 college sophomores and juniors nationwide based on merit.

CHC to focus on Civil War and 1930s Beaumont

During its inaugural year beginning in 2017, the CHC Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast hosted numerous events from “Culinary Traditions of Southeast Texas and Louisiana,” “Laborers: The Ship that Changed History” and “Oil and Water: Economic Linchpins of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast” to “The Golden Triangle and the Great War.” “Singing the Dream: Cajun and Spanish Music” and “Jojin Phillips Souza Bequests Meetougas Magnolia Petroleum Band,” the center’s presentations commemorate the region’s rich history, art, literature, music and cuisine. Community takes center stage April 23 when Center Fellow Marilyn Hayes presents “1950s Beaumont Voices,” a multimedia program with costumed actors presenting essays enhanced with radio, movie clips, music and pictures.

Participation doubles at undergrad expo

LU’s Fourth Annual Undergraduate Research Expo, held April 21, surpassed its expected growth with a major leap in attendance, the number of presentations and in student involvement in comparison to the 2016 event. “The annual undergraduate research Expo has become a proud tradition at Lamar University,” said Carolyn C. Collison, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research. “As a university, we are at the leading edge of undergraduate research in Texas.” The 2017 Expo included 128 presentations by 250 LU students mentored by 88 faculty members representing 28 academic departments. “This research expo was an incredible experience for me,” said Humberto Jimenez, a senior double major in advertising and Spanish from Beaumont. “It really opened my mind to what all I can do with my education.”

Daniel recognized by Council of Undergraduate Research

Jennifer Daniel, associate professor of mathematics, received a 2017 Faculty Mentoring Award from the Council of Undergraduate Research, a national organization representing more than 900 colleges and universities, to honor her success in directing students in undergraduate research. “As a mentor, she is unparalleled,” said Alex Marken ’12, Daniel’s former student. “Most notably, she instills in her students invaluable tools for lifelong learning and success.”

LU gains special USDA status

The USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture has designated LU as a Land-Grant College of Agriculture. These colleges provide important translational research and outreach benefits, while developing a highly skilled workforce for the agricultural, food and natural resource industries. This designation opens up new possibilities and opportunities for external funding with the USDA.

Science camp selects LU as one of 10

The ExxonMobil Foundation and Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr., the first African-American astronaut, announced that LU will be chosen to walk in space, selected LU as one of 10 sites nationwide to host the 2017 ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp. The two-week residential all-expense-paid camps for aspiring innovators, scientists and engineers are held on college campuses across the country for middle-school students.

Library Press author earns Bush award

A piece of history came home when Kirt Herring of CTG Kirt Herring & Co. is presented the Gladys City as envisioned by entrepreneur Patolla Higgins to Lamar University, home of the Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum. Higgins used the map, which printed in 1992, to sell lots that helped finance the first drilling effort at Spindletop Hill. That effort, and several subsequent efforts, failed. While Higgins’ vision as presented in the map was never realized, he is credited with recognizing the potential for oil and starting the process that changed history on January 10, 1901, when the Lucas Gusher blew.

“It’s a reason, it’s real,” said Distinguished Alumna Ellen Benaia ’52, ’50 who accepted the map on the university’s behalf.

With ancestral ties to Beaumont, Herring has returned to his hometown to help tell the story. The map, which he donated in honor of the late Judge James D. Nichols, former mayor of Beaumont, and Dr. Thomas A. Lombardo, Beaumont cardiovascular specialist, is in remarkably good condition. The late Michel T. Hallouix, geologist, petroleum engineer, wildcatter and author, encouraged Herring to donate the map to LU because of the university’s unique tie to Spindletop.

A piece of history came home when Kirt Herring of CTG Kirt Herring & Co. is presented the Gladys City as envisioned by entrepreneur Patolla Higgins to Lamar University, home of the Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum. Higgins used the map, which printed in 1992, to sell lots that helped finance the first drilling effort at Spindletop Hill. That effort, and several subsequent efforts, failed. While Higgins’ vision as presented in the map was never realized, he is credited with recognizing the potential for oil and starting the process that changed history on January 10, 1901, when the Lucas Gusher blew. “It’s a reason, it’s real,” said Distinguished Alumna Ellen Benaia ’52, ’50 who accepted the map on the university’s behalf.

With ancestral ties to Beaumont, Herring has returned to his hometown to help tell the story. The map, which he donated in honor of the late Judge James D. Nichols, former mayor of Beaumont, and Dr. Thomas A. Lombardo, Beaumont cardiovascular specialist, is in remarkably good condition. The late Michel T. Hallouix, geologist, petroleum engineer, wildcatter and author, encouraged Herring to donate the map to LU because of the university’s unique tie to Spindletop.
Send Us Your News: Cardinal Cadence P.O. Box 10117 Beaumont, TX 77710 e-mail alumnilamar@lamar.edu or call (409) 880-8821

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

You & LU A Lifelong relationship. The Office of Alumni Affairs is here to help. Update your information so we can keep you up-to-date on what’s happening at LU, invite you to special events and make sure you get the perks of being an alumnus.

Lamar/alumni

50s

Thomas “Tom” Bell ’58, B.S. chemical engineering, retired from tu-Berrogas Inc. as vice president of manufacturing jobs. During his time at LU, he was awarded the 1958 L. R. Pothier Award his senior year and won the first local AICHE Chapter Scholarship. Bell is the father of Thomas, Brandon, Thad, Thad, Tesa, Thant and Tom Jr. He and his wife, Thalia “Tina” , live in Clarkdale, Ariz.

50s

David J. Beck ’51, B.S. government, 13-year service in government, was selected for inclusion in the inaugural 500 U.S. Hall of Fame in the Deans’ Resolution – Leader of the Century category in April 2017. Beck is co-founder and partner for Redkin LLP and has been for 15 years. Beck Redkin LLP also has maintained in Band 1 ranking in the annual Chambers USA for 2017. Beck and his wife, Judy, live in Portland, Texas.

James Robbins ’66, B.B.A. marketing, retired as CEO of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board after 15 years and returned to Texas. He and his wife, Milly, live in Argyle, and Robbins is working as a food industry consultant on sales and marketing projects, along with a private equity firm as an advisor and marketing projects, along with a private equity firm as an advisor and marketing projects. He also maintains a hobby farm in Rockwall.

Elda Buchanan ’57, B.A. Sociology, taught in Fulton County for 20 years before moving to Atlanta, Ga., where she worked for several years as a market researcher before retiring. She lives in Atlanta.

Dr. Samuel “Sam” Low ’57, B.S. biology, began his career as a marine biology professor in 1979, he is associate dean/professor emeritus for the University of North Texas College of Dentistry. He and his wife, Toon, live in Ft. Worth, Fla.

Lynn Morningstar ’57, B.B.A. accounting, M.B.A. business administration, retired as a comptroller, auditor, assistant controller, and tax manager for Memorial Hermann Healthcare System. He and his wife, Bernda, live in Sugar Land.

Kenneth Baird ’58, B.S. geology, retired from the oil and gas industry in 2013 after working for several major and independent oil and gas companies in Texas and California as an exploration and production geophysicist and a geophysical engineer. He is enjoying retirement on Greenbriar Drive in Beaumont and is and foot and soul along with driving and owning vintage Jaguar and classic cars from his collection.

70s

Jose Bertin ’71, B.S. elementary education, retired from teaching after 38 years. He is a part-time assistant professor at Lamar University and South Florida Sand Sharks baseball who is an assistant living facility in Brandon, Fla. He and his wife, JILL, live in Tampa, Fla.

Dawson Lovett ’71, B.B.A. marketing, wrote a book entitled Rescued! The Amazing Story of Gertie Agouti and the children’s book is written for both adults and children and takes place on the Caribbean Island of Montserrat. It tells the true story of resilience, compassion and acceptance of others. His book is featured in a program in South Dakota to encourage elementary students to read by publishing books with positive themes. Lovett lives in Rockwall.

The Golden Triangle Business Roundtable named Dennis Isaac ’73, B.A. secondary education, as executive director of the chamber. Isaac has served as a safety, health and environmental manager for Duke Energy. Works, after spending 22 years at the company. He and his wife, Kimberly ’84, B.S. applied arts and sciences, live in Beaumont.

Joe Tortorich ’73, B.M. business administration, is the president/owner and president of Daiki Deli, which opened in 1995. He is also a managing partner for Estate Assets LLC, president and director of Daiki Deli Management Inc., owner of Newk’s Honey Bakers, as well as secretary and president of Daiki Deli Management Inc. He and his wife, Shelley, live in Beaumont.

Jimmy Cheek ’72, M.S. counseling and development, stepped down earlier this year, the seventh chancellor of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in February 2017. He completed eight years as chancellor and transferred to the University of Arkansas and distinguished professor of educational leadership and policy beginning last October. He and his wife, Delores, live in Knoxville.

Ann (Hill) Daniels ’73, B.S. elementary education, M.Ed special education, retired from Van Buren Elementary as a counselor. She and her husband, Fred, live in Houston.

Lu C. Berry Crain Jr. ’77, B.B.A. management, retired from Federal Grp. Avera, last May, after more than 35 years of service with the Lamar University ROTC detachment in December 1977. He served on active duty for 25 years in the U.S. and Europe and was deployed to Saudi Arabia for the Gulf War. He retired from active duty in June 2001 and, shortly after, he and his wife, Joann, who is a human resources, he returned to work for the ODF as a civilian in 2005. He and his wife, Denise, sold their house to travel around North America in an RV.

Kenneth Levinas ’78, B.S. electrical engineering, retired for 10 years of service with Port Neches-Groves school district at the Abigetiveton Center. Levinas is also a pastor for Triangle Baptist Church in Nederland, where he and wife, Tina, live.

Robert Cantor ’74, B.S. industrial engineering, was a project engineer for Portneches. He lives in Rockwall.

Kathleen “Kathy” (Dean) Hayes ’76, B.B.A. office administration, was a program manager at Port Neches-Groves High School. She worked 25 years for Port Neches-Groves as an assistant to the director of administration. She and her husband, Paul, live in Port Neches.

Mark Russo ’79, B.A. English, retired from teaching at Neches-Groves High School. Russo served for 38 years. He and his wife, Tina, live in Port Neches.

Eldridge Ravey ’78, B.B.A. English, retired from teaching at Neches-Groves High School. Russo served for 38 years. He and his wife, Tina, live in Port Neches.

Janis (Doyle) Ryan ’79, B.A. English, retired from teaching at Neches-Groves High School. She and her husband, John, live in Port Neches.

Joann Rachal ’04, B.B.A. criminal justice, ‘16, M.Ed. clinical mental health counseling – AP, is an intervention specialist for Foster Middle School. She lives in Tyler.

Barbara Damuth ’82, B.S. elementary education, retired from Tid Elementary, where she was a third-grade teacher, last May. She lives in Groves.

Gayle (Dunsmuir) Lemon ’82, B.S. elementary education, retired from Van Buren last May. She and her husband, Douglas, live in Groves. Jackie (Dude) Biddle ’82, B.S. counseling, retired in 2008 as a school counselor in Groves. She and her husband, Karl, live in Groves.

Lori (Kube) Hallbert ’83, B.S. elementary education, is a first-grade teacher for Ridgepoint Elementary School. She and her husband, Karl, live in Groves.

Rose Star College-North Harris earned (Ellen) Rawls ’81, B.S. psychology/mathematics, is president of college & Susan Roche ’81, B.S. psychology, is director of quality improvement. He and his wife, Shelia, live in Groves.

Leavins is also a pastor for Triangle Baptist Church in Nederland, where he and wife, Tina, live.

Diana Marlene Turnell ’80, B.S. music–chemistry, is a music teacher at Lamar University. She and her husband, Karl, live in Groves.

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Secret Series: The things they won’t tell you about how to achieve success in the workplace—LU Ambassadors Thanh Tsan, Kayla Clifton, Caroline Nwandu, and Marcus Rodgers are pictured with Amy Tarver ’99, executive director of Leadership Excellence Award with the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce to put on a professional development series: The things they won’t tell you about how to achieve success in the workplace—LU Ambassadors Thanh Tsan, Kayla Clifton, Caroline Nwandu, and Marcus Rodgers are pictured with Amy Tarver ’99, executive director of Leadership Excellence Award with the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce.

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1. Secret to Unleashing the Power of LinkedIn—Diana Marlene Rawls ’81, B.S. psychology/mathematics, is president of college & Susan Roche ’81, B.S. psychology, is director of quality improvement. He and his wife, Shelia, live in Groves.

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1. Lamar University Grad Fair—The Office of Alumni Affairs helped welcome new students into the alma mater family last spring. Graduating students received tassel toppers and participated in a t-shirt exchange benefiting Some Lamar University Grad Fair.

2. Richard Valley ’70 concentrates as he paints his canvas. Daigrepont School honored secondary education, live in Bryan.

3. Daigrepont School in May 2017. He and his wife, Julie, live in Bryan. Nancy (Adams) ’88, B.B.A. accounting, is a staff accountant for Baptist Wood Group. He and his wife, Catherine, live in Dallas.

4. The Refinery Source in Beaumont, a fifth-grade teacher for Groves Elementary School. She and her husband, Allan, live in Groves.

5. Mallory (Hebert) Maunder ’08, B.A. elementary education, is a front-line teacher for Lamar University after 10 years of service. She teaches seventh- and eighth-grade girls basketball and volleyball. She and her husband, Nathan Moye ’97, B.S. political science, is a teacher and coach for Finis school district. He and his husband, Terrance, live in Bryan.

6. Anthony Holmes ’91, B.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is manager of talent services for IDEXX (Texas Dow Employees Credit Union). He and his wife, Jessica (Sherman) ’97, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, live in Corpus Christi.


8. Linda (Hill) ’89, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, was selected Outstanding Principal for the year. She and her husband, James, live in Houston. He and his wife, Keri, live in Cypress.

9. Angela Pittman ’91, B.S. management, is the executive director for the teaching and learning center at Lamar Institute of Technology. She and her husband, Daniel, ’95, B.A. business administration, live in Beaumont.

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11. Mallory (Hebert) Maunder ’08, B.A. accounting, is a staff accountant for Baptist Wood Group. He and his wife, Catherine, live in Dallas.
Alumni Between the Basketball Games Reception—Alumni and friends gathered for a reception between the men and women’s basketball games last February.

1. Jeff Lawless ’12 pictured with his two sons, Jake and Josh.
2. Jason Henderson and Chris Bates ’08, LU alumni board president-elect, present the game ball.

National Have A Brownie Day—The Offices of Alumni Affairs and Marketing Communications treated students to brownies in honor of National Have A Brownie Day last February.

1. Alumni programming intern Bri Graffagnino ’16 and alumni coordinator Evie Clifton in Houston. She lives in Nederland.

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product engineer for NIBE in Del Rio, where he lives.

Da'Rel Haynes ’15, B.B.A. management information systems, and DeShonna Harris, current LU student majoring in theatre and dance, welcomed their son on April 30, 2017. Haynes lives in Spring.

Heath Parker ’15, M.Ed. administration-AP, is director of operations for Pampa school district. He and his wife, Christy, live in Pampa.

Breanna Ross ’15, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, is a first-grade teacher for East Chambers school district. In March 2017, Ross was named Rookie Teacher of the Year at Booker T. Washington Elementary as a first-grade teacher. She lives Beaumont.

Memorial Ninth Grade Academy named Emerald Vaughn ’15, M.Ed. teacher leadership, as Campus Teacher of the Year. She lives in Beaumont.

Kelsey Young ’15, B.S. kinesiology, earned a master’s degree in sports management in May 2017. She is the development specialist for the Lamar University Athletic Department and lives in Beaumont.

Sean Milligan ’16, Ed.D. educational leadership, is principal for Johnson Sixth-Grade Campus. He lives in Azle.

Kristeen Reynolds ’16, B.B.A. accounting, earned a M.S. in accounting from LU in May 2017. She lives in Fort Worth.

Victoria “Tori” Shelton ’16, B.B.A. finance and economics, is a consultant for Essentia Advisory Partners in Houston, where she lives.

Distinguished Alumni Awards—The Office of Alumni Affairs named four graduates Distinguished Alumni for 2017, noting their dedication to their profession, service to their communities and loyalty to their alma mater epitomizing the Lamar University spirit. Nominated by their peers and selected for the honor by the Distinguished Alumni Awards committee, recipients are: Rocky Dickens, Hank Thomas, Dennis Peavy and a member of the class of 1973, Charles E. “Chuck” Marler Jr. of Beaumont, class of 1972, Jorge I. Quijano of Panama, classes of 1973 and 1974, and Hyattye O. Simmons of Dallas, class of 1979. This is the first time in Lamar University’s history to present the Distinguished Alumni Award to a couple.

England’s Castles, Cottages & Countryside
July 5–15
Participants on this trip will visit two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Canterbury Cathedral and Blenheim Palace, as well as Leeds Castle, The White Cliffs of Dover and Dover Castle. Classic Cotswolds towns and the Changing of the Guard at Windsor Castle are also on the agenda. St. George’s Chapel is on the list as well—the site of many royal weddings and funerals.

Canadian Rockies
August 16–24
Experience the vistas of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of The Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks—the most magical sights of Banff National Park, Jasper’s Dark Sky Preserve and planetarium, the breathtaking Columbia Icefield and floating on the Athabasca River. A talk from a retired member of the Mounties is an added bonus!

Amalfi Coast
Sept 11–19
A wonderful option to experience the southern coast of Italy, this trip includes seven nights in Vietri sul Mare, Italy, allowing for a more thorough exploration of this area. Four UNESCO World Heritage sites are included—the archaeological sites of Paestum, Pompeii and Herculaneum and the Historic Center of Naples.
Barbecue honors vets
LU Veterans Affairs and the Disability Resource Center hosted the Second Annual Veterans Appreciation barbecue last spring to honor our veterans for their sacrifices and raise funds that were contributed to Heroes on the Water, a charity organization that works with disabled veterans. The $1,426 contribution help the organization take veterans on a kayak-fishing trip. For more information about Heroes on the Water visit heroesonthewater.org.

Jane Liu named 2017 University Professor
Professor of computer science Jiangjiang (Jane) Liu captured LU’s 2017 University Professor and Ann Die-Hasselmo Faculty Scholar title, receiving it during a ceremony last April in the University Event Center. The honor is the university’s most prestigious faculty award. Recipients’ colleagues select the awardees, recognizing academic stature, achievements and leadership.

Gill Scholars explore Silicon Valley
Ten graduate students recently traveled to Silicon Valley as Gill Scholars to participate in Ignite!, a three-day, immersive entrepreneurial experience. The group visited start-ups, high-tech firms and venture capital firms to learn from successful innovators who discussed their entrepreneurial journeys.

Le Grand Bal raises funds
For the 42nd year, the Friends of the Arts presented Le Grand Bal: LU in Black and White, a gala evening of art, fine dining, dancing and entertainment last March to raise scholarship funds for fine arts programs at LU. The 2017 event honored Melody and Pat Parsons, longtime LU advocates and champions of the arts and celebrated the work of alumna and internationally known painter Paul Manes.

LU recognizes four outstanding faculty
Lamar University honored four faculty members with 2017 University Merit Award in recognition of superior teaching, scholarship and service to the university during a ceremony last April in the University Event Center: Ali Beheshti, assistant professor of mechanical engineering; Perumalreddy Chandrasekaran, assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry; Mahdi Safa, assistant professor of construction management; and Xing Wu, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering.

Dance Team explores artistry of color
The LU Dance Team wowed the audience during its annual spring show, “True Colors,” at the Jefferson Theater last May.
Chris Bates  '08 became the youngest person, the first African American and the first Jefferson County official to receive the Constable of the Year Award for the State of Texas at the 73rd Annual Justice of the Peace and Constables Association Conference. The award is given to constables who interact well with their community and are members of the JPCA, the largest association of elected officials in Texas.

Originally a music major, his inspiration for a career in law enforcement came from a conversation with an officer at a football game. Bates followed up by completing the Police Academy at Lamar Institute of Technology concurrently with continuing his studies online at LU, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in general studies.

Through budget cuts and changes in supervision, he held a variety of positions at the beginning of his career. Those role changes broadened his experience but also got him thinking about a more stable path to ensure he could adequately provide for his growing family.

While always interested in politics, Bates had never imagined himself as a constable, but his search for a more permanent job led him to the office. “I always thought [my office] would be through city council, but then the constable announced that he was retiring,” Bates said. “After lots of prayer, talking to my mom about it, talking it over with my family, I decided to run. I filed for office and started campaigning like a crazy man.”

His efforts proved successful, and when he was sworn in at 27 years old, he became the youngest constable in Texas (the second youngest in state history) and the first African American constable to be elected from Precinct 2.

Since taking office five years ago, Bates has become more involved than ever in the community. He engages youth through public speaking at youth empowerment and leadership conferences and is a minister of music at his church; he adopted a highway through TxDOT; he is on the advisory board for the Salvation Army, where he started an annual ‘Christmas with the Constable’ food and toy drive; he created a scholarship for local youth who want to pursue a career in criminal justice; and he volunteers to mentor criminal justice students.

“I want to encourage students to see law enforcement in a positive light, to help them financially with the $500 scholarship, and to mentor them to be a positive and productive leader in the community,” Bates said.

Through the Police Academy, Bates was led to a career as a constable. His ties to Lamar University are stronger than ever. He began serving as the Lamar University Alumni Advisory Board president-elect this fall.

Bates continues his involvement at Lamar University by not only serving on the Alumni Advisory Board but also by being involved as a mentor to collegiate members of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, and serving on the search committee for the new dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“I’m blessed to have people who trust me and believe in me enough to let me be in this position, to do the great things I’ve been able to do with the position since 2013,” he said.