

CARDINAL CADENCE

THE MAGAZINE OF LAMAR UNIVERSITY

VOL. 47, NO. 2 | WINTER 2019



SCHOLARSHIPS

| FROM THE **PRESIDENT** |



When you hear the word “scholarship” many things may come to mind. A gift to Lamar University from an alumnus in the name of a beloved teacher or family member. The overall quality of the learning enterprise at an institution of higher education. Monetary help in order to live on campus, study abroad or even play sports as a student-athlete. However you consider it, scholarship involves academics and the assistance of our university’s supporters in a concrete, tangible way giving students opportunities at LU. The articles in this issue of Cadence center on this topic through our students, alumni, faculty and staff.

The introduction to this magazine features brief synopses of LU’s first and second endowed scholarship as well as the largest and second-largest scholarships in the history of our institution.

The difference in how these scholarships came into being is remarkable all these years ago. It also is striking the various stories that are documented here—how people decided to give a scholarship, why they created what they did, who the scholarship is named for and what a student accomplished while receiving this support or an alumnus after graduating on scholarship.

Of the numerous scholarships at LU, a few highlighted here include the Smith-Hutson Scholarship Program, which has assisted 126 students so far and is going strong. The Steinhagen Global Fellows Program that to date, has allowed 40 business students to study abroad. Another is the Larry and Cynthia Norwood Chemical Engineering Scholarship, which has seen 100 recipients of this award with 39 just this semester. We look forward to witnessing all of these scholarships continuing to help so many more students in the years to come.

Some alumni chose to pay it forward and create scholarships as they were originally recipients as students. Randy Sampson did just this as did Victor Zaloom. Others give through their Cardinal Club memberships to support student athletic scholarships so these students have opportunities such as they had when attending LU. Additionally, alumni such as David Beck search out unique ways to give back to the university. Through the Beck Fellows Program, he has accomplished this, and additionally with the new Beck Teaching Excellence Award.

A few young alumni who benefitted greatly from scholarships share their stories. Carlos Caballero was mentored and befriended by the family who created a scholarship he received—the Alicia Christine Bonura Memorial Regents Scholarship in Engineering. Chelsea Boling, a computer science and mathematics graduate and McNair Scholar, now works for Disney. LU student-athlete Marianonieta Gutierrez Soto came from Venezuela to the U.S. on a tennis scholarship and never left as she now is an assistant professor of civil engineering at the University of Kentucky. Hayley Rodriguez earned “Rookie of the Year” at the elementary school where she teaches third grade after working her way through LU with the help of the Lucy S. Turner Memorial Scholarship and the Vivian Liddell Scholarship.

Other articles of interest in this issue of Cadence, include Larry Rose and his wife, Helen, and their desire to give back not only to business students but to hard-working performers - dance majors as well. Additionally, the Cardinal Emergency Fund is still to this day helping so many of our students who were affected by Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and then Tropical Depression Imelda just a couple of months ago. A few of the hundreds of students assisted through this fund detail their ordeals, and the difference this fund made to their education. Our faculty profile, Marleen Swerdlow, created a scholarship with her son in memory of her husband, Robert Swerdlow, also a well-respected faculty member in the College of Business, and our staff profile features Rebekah Maxwell, the new director in LU’s Office of Scholarships.

Thank you for your continued support of our university and enjoy the Q&A with Big Red and Lu near the end of the issue.

With Cardinal Pride,

Kenneth R. Evans, President



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Since LU’s first decade, loyal Cardinals and dedicated friends of Lamar University have established scholarships that have made the life-changing difference between an education and subsequent opportunity or none...for thousands of students. New alumni and donors who realize how pivotal educational experiences can be continue to create new study opportunities for new students, carrying on a strong and proud tradition of funding scholarships to enable scholarship. We at LU are grateful for the opportunities they’re providing and explore a few of their stories in this issue.



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J.B. Morris

J.B. Morris Memorial Scholarship

first endowed scholarship • 1953

The first-ever scholarship established at LU, according to records, is the Joe Ed Morris Memorial Scholarship, named for its creator in 1953 and open to any major. A regent for the Lamar University System from 1951-1970, Joe Morris served as chairman of the board for 16 of those years and was named chairman emeritus. A long-time Beaumont attorney, Morris died in 1982. He served as attorney for the cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur, the Beaumont and South Park school districts, the Port of Beaumont and South Park Junior College since its inception in 1923 as the forerunner of Lamar University. He was responsible for drawing up the measure for the election to create the Union Junior College District and to issue \$850,000 in bonds for purchase of the school's site and buildings. He later wrote the bill the Texas Legislature passed in the late 1940s to change the school from a two-year community college to the four-year Lamar State College of Technology. He served in the U.S. Army Artillery during World War I. Morris Hall residence hall was named in his honor in 1958.

Mildred Bland & Harry Lucas

Mildred Bland Lucas and Harry Lucas Memorial Scholarship

second endowed scholarship • 1955

Mildred and Harry Lucas Sr. were active in business and civic endeavors, particularly in the oil industry. The community and Lamar University have benefited from the Lucas family philanthropy for decades. After the death of her husband, Harry, in 1955, Mildred Lucas established the second scholarship at LU, the Mildred Bland Lucas and Harry Lucas Memorial Scholarship. When she passed away in 1991, Harry Lucas Jr. increased the endowment and changed the name to the Harry and Mildred Bland Lucas Memorial Endowed Scholarship.

Orange Memorial Hospital

Orange Memorial Hospital Corporation Scholarship

largest endowed scholarship at LU

The Orange Memorial Hospital board of directors established this scholarship when the board voted to dissolve its corporation, which had formed in the 1950s to manage local hospital operations and later changed focus to support ambulance service and provide scholarships. In 2013, the board gifted \$2.5 million of its assets to the Lamar University Foundation to provide scholarships to students from Orange County who are majoring in health-related fields. Alumni Benjamin Thacker '88 and Bob Walker '57 serve on the board of the corporation and were instrumental in establishing this scholarship.

Jerry Rudd

Jerry Rudd Memorial Scholarship

second-largest endowment scholarship at LU

Jerry Rudd '56, B.B.A. general business, '71, M.B.A. business administration, believed the education he received at LU contributed significantly to his successful career and consequently, the native Texan and 1950 graduate of Port Neches-Groves High School chose to designate the Lamar University Foundation as one of the beneficiaries of his estate. He established the Jerry Rudd Memorial Scholarship, which supports dozens of students each year. Following high school graduation, he served two years in the U.S. Army with an overseas assignment in the Korean War. After receiving a business degree from Lamar University, he began a 32-year career with Mobil Chemical Co., retiring in 1991 as assistant controller, International Planning Supply and Distribution, Petrochemical Division.

| COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: BUSINESS |



Marketing students make their mark
This past spring, **Komal Karani**, associate professor of marketing and management, along with several of her marketing students, teamed up with local and eco-friendly business, Beau-tanicals. The team had the opportunity to experience life on the family-owned farm while brainstorming marketing strategies. "So, the student team had to come up with creative marketing ideas which did not cost much and still got the message across. They even personally created a promotional video for the business," Karani said. "Students in my entrepreneurship class did a great job analyzing the business model and coming up with a set of recommendations." Through developing a student marketing team, she was able to establish a unique marketing plan for Beau-tanicals as well as connect students with real-world project engagement. She described the experience as a win-win for both LU students as well as the business owners.

Hope after Harvey
Following the devastation wrought by Hurricane Harvey, professor of management and marketing, **Henry Venta**, received a \$441,000 grant from the Economic Development Agency to help fund the study of effective disaster recovery in the region. Through his research, Venta hopes to discover the efforts that prove most successful for community recovery. Co-investigators for the project are **James Slaydon**, associate professor of management; **Gevorg Sargsyan**, instructor of economics and finance; and **Ricardo Colon**, chair and professor of accounting and business law.

College hosts inaugural Spring Honors Awards

The College of Business held its first-ever Spring Honors Awards Annual Luncheon April 17. This event recognizes students who achieved outstanding academic accomplishments and involvement in the College of Business. The event also celebrates faculty and staff who displayed exceptional dedication reaching milestones of 5 to 40 years of service. Those recognized for their years of dedicated service were **Jeff Dyson**, professor of management and marketing, for 10 years of service; **Alicen Flosi**, instructor of management information systems and director of sustainability, and **Phyllis Johnson**, accounting programs coordinator, for 20 years of service; **Marleen Swerdlow**, professor of accounting and business law and director of the general business program, for 35 years of service; and **Larry Allen**, professor and chair of economics and finance, for 40 years of service.



Student honors included the following: the Aaron Rose Award to economics and finance major, **Madison Marino**; the Ben J. Rogers Outstanding Business Student Award to **Krystle Riley Delcambre** and **Kendra Coleman**; the Texas Business Hall of Fame Scholarship to **Madison Apshire**; the Financial Executive International Scholarship to **Diana Turcios**; the TSCPA Accounting Excellence Award to MSA senior, **Alexander Defrancis**; the Dean's Awards for Excellence was awarded to **Jonathon Moore**, **Ryan Malone**, **Syed Ali**, **Tori Smith**, **Luis F. Rodriguez Salinas**, **Lindsey Fontenot** and **John Ellis**; the Carter Innovation Fund Study Abroad Scholarship to **Alexander Exum**, **Jackson Dolce**, **Kara Ficken**, **Robert Salazar-Diaz**, **Casey Smith**, **Farouk El-Houbi**, **Bailey Thompson**, **Garrison Spring**, **Nicole Kyles-Burton** and **Yessenia Loera Romo**; and the Janie Nelson Steinhagen and Mark Steinhagen Global Fellows Study Abroad Scholarship to **Lindsey Fontenot**, **Reid Johnson**, **Lindsay McManus** and **Bra'ah Hamdan**.



► **New study abroad trip to Spain**
The College of Business launched its new study abroad program in Alicante, Spain. Students had the opportunity to take in the sights, sounds and flavors of the Valencia region while taking interdisciplinary seminars to learn the skills necessary to be successful in today's global workforce.



► **NABA members nab scholarships**
The Houston Metropolitan Chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants Inc. hosted its 47th annual scholarships and awards gala this past spring. The group chose accounting majors and LU chapter members **Yasmine Johnson** and **Mariah McCoy** to receive the 2019 NABA Houston Metropolitan Chapter Scholarship.

► **Whistleblower recounts battle**
The College of Business welcomed **Anthony "Tony" Menendez**, best known as the "accountant who beat Halliburton," to campus last spring. He recounted his decade-long legal battle with the multinational corporation and how his reputation as a corporate whistleblower has affected his life.

FINDING PURPOSE *in mentorship*

by Shelbe Rodriguez



Marleen Swerdlow had a plan: graduate from law school, move away from home and build her career at a prestigious law firm. But for this College of Business professor, she says landing at Lamar University was nothing short of fate.

Just out of law school, the Tyler native found herself in Beaumont working a one-year clerkship that eventually turned into two. During her second year, she met her late husband, Robert Swerdlow, a marketing professor in LU's College of Business. Three years after the pair married, Swerdlow joined Robert at the university teaching business law. "After I graduated from law school, I would have never thought that I would be teaching at a university," she said. "It's funny how things work out."

Between them both, Swerdlow says that they've likely taught thousands of students, but there's one student in particular who stands out above the rest—Todd Hoffman. Hoffman graduated from LU in 1988 with his B.B.A. in accounting and is a partner and consultant for Guidehouse. During his undergrad study, he had taken his first marketing class with Robert and a few business law classes with Swerdlow. Over time, the pair became mentors and role models for Hoffman, even after he had graduated from the university.

"They were my professors, but they were also my mentors, and we became really great friends during the last 30 plus years," Hoffman said. "When I struggled with making decisions on jobs, career changes and just things in life, those were the two people that I called."

After Robert's untimely passing in 2003, Swerdlow and her son Matthew endowed the Dr. Robert A. Swerdlow Memorial

Scholarship in Marketing in his honor. "Robert was interim dean several times in the College of Business, and he loved LU, so it was just natural that we would direct money to the university."

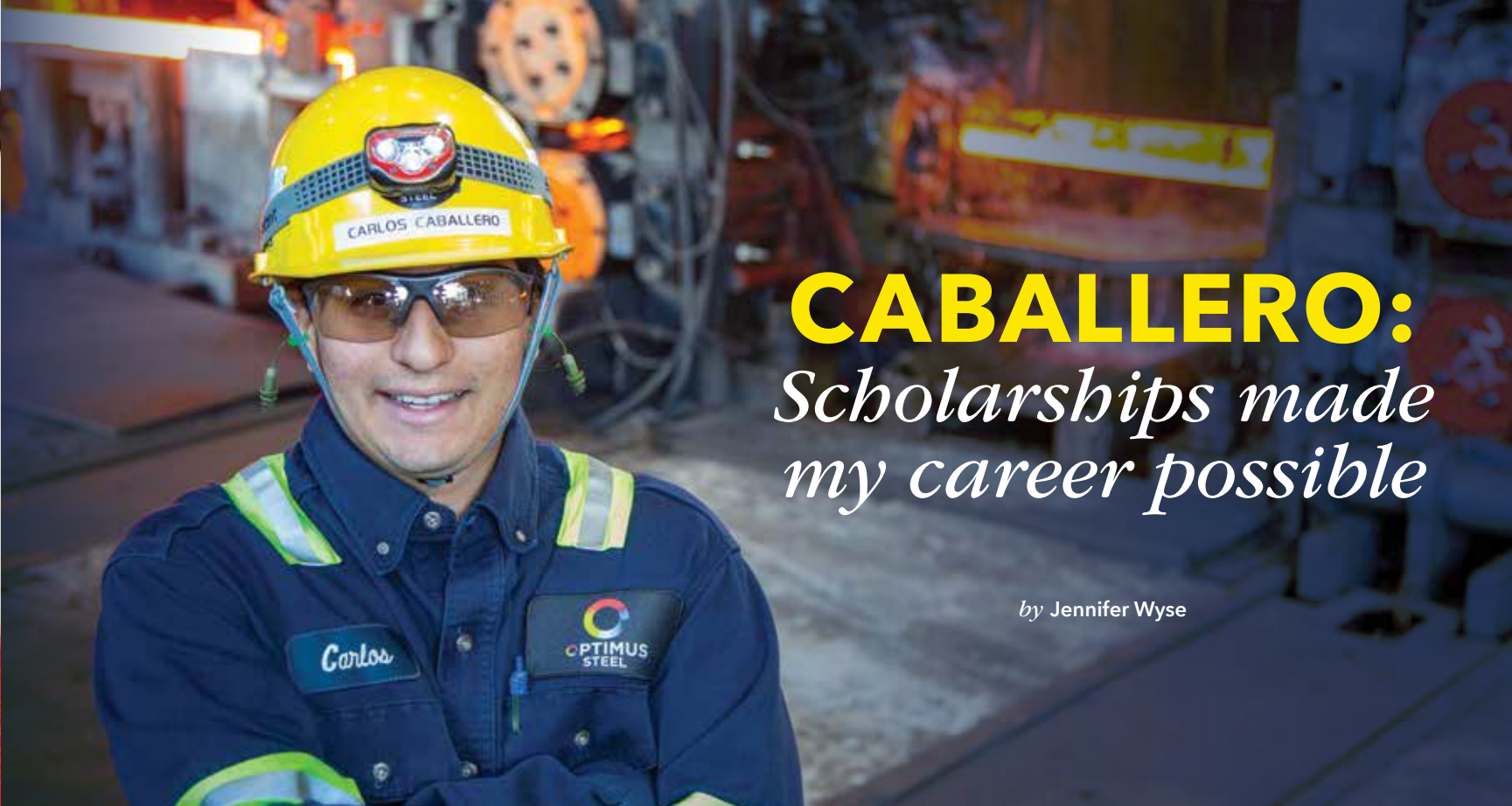
In 2017, Hoffman and his wife, Jennifer endowed the Todd and Jennifer Hoffman Scholarship in Business in honor of Robert and Marleen Swerdlow. "I'm simply honoring and celebrating what they've done to help me," Hoffman said. "They were very impactful in my life and through our scholarship, I want to give that same mentorship that was given to me."

During her tenure, Swerdlow has continued to be a mentor and advisor for her students. She's served on 135 university committees to date and been named director of both the campus General Business Program and the B.B.A. online business program. Now known for her massive cardinal figurine collection in her office and often regarded as "the lady in red" by students, Swerdlow reflects on her 35-year career at the university.

"You know, I don't do the things that I do for plaques or for awards because that's not the point of it," she said. "You've got to have a reason to get up in the morning. Lamar University is that reason, and coming here to help the students is really my main purpose."

"You've got to have a reason to get up in the morning. Lamar University is that reason, and coming here to help the students is really my main purpose."

—Marleen Swerdlow



CABALLERO: *Scholarships made my career possible*

by Jennifer Wyse

"Simply put, the scholarships allowed my career to happen," said Carlos Caballero '18, '19. "They allowed me to be on campus and focus on my studies. That wouldn't have happened without the generosity of my scholarship donors." Caballero graduated magna cum laude with a B.S. in mechanical engineering and received his second bachelor's a year later in physics. He works for Optimus Steel as a process engineer.

While at LU, Caballero received numerous awards and was involved in the McNair Scholars Program. He became a global sensation when his "Walking on Water" video about the behavior of non-Newtonian fluid went viral, garnering more than 40 million views. He presented the experiment at New Student Orientations and Cardinal Views, and he even appeared on the TV show Pickler and Ben in Nashville, Tenn.

Caballero received several scholarships including the Alicia Christine Bonura Memorial Regents Scholarship in Engineering. Josh Bonura, Alicia's brother, says his parents Mike and JoAnne Bonura started the scholarship after Alicia passed. "It really is just about giving back to LU and giving back in my sister's name. She wanted

to be an engineer," Bonura said. Alicia was planning to study mechanical engineering at Texas A&M University in fall 2006 before she and a teammate tragically died in a bus accident on the way to a soccer playoff match. "She would want to look back and know she is helping students reach their dream of becoming an engineer," he said.

Bonura, who works at ExxonMobil, said "the ExxonMobil matching program is a huge benefit, it helps supplement my contributions and maximize the benefit I can give to the students." Caballero met the Bonura family his first year at LU and from there built a mentorship with Mike Bonura. The Bonura family even attended his graduation ceremony and the graduation party at his home. They formed a unique bond and continue to stay in touch.

Josh Bonura has met several scholarship recipients.

"One thing that really stood out is that the scholarships allowed the students to fully focus on going to school without

the stress of working a job," he said. Being involved at LU is important, and I really don't think many of them would have the ability to be involved in student organizations if they didn't have the scholarships."

Caballero credits his scholarships for his involvement in student organizations. He served as vice president of the Honors Student Association, homecoming coordinator for three years and a founding father of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. "Without the scholarships, I would not have been able to devote so much time to give back to the university." While reflecting on his experience as a recipient, Caballero said, "Their investment is put to good use. The donors invest not only in the students but also in the university and the community. It's a way to pay it forward and give back."



"It really is just about giving back to LU and giving back in my sister's name. She wanted to be an engineer."

—Josh Bonura

WORLD VIEWS GIVE FRESH PERSPECTIVES

by Shelly Vitanza

The Janie Nelson Steinhagen and Mark Steinhagen Global Fellows Endowment in the College of Business, established in 2011, has allowed 40 business students to study in Spain, China, Costa Rica and Panama.

The fellowship was established for students to study and observe global businesses in foreign countries and witness economic, cultural and political forces impacting the way business is conducted worldwide.

“We have a global economy, and this is an opportunity for some of our outstanding graduate students to make some trips and contacts and see and do some things that they normally wouldn’t get to do. We’re pleased to be able to be a part of it,” said Mark Steinhagen, a long-time community and business leader and former Lamar University regent. “We have always supported local activities, and there’s nothing more important in Southeast Texas than LU.”

Bra’ah Hamdan, a management information system major who is pursuing

a business concentration in industrial engineering, traveled to Costa Rica and Panama during spring break 2019. The fifth-year senior, who also is pursuing her M.B.A. (December 2020), considers herself culturally fluent. She is a seasoned traveler and even spent some of her formative years living abroad; however, she sought an immersive program to enhance her global business knowledge and marketability.

“As a business major, it’s important to be culturally conscious, to respect other peoples’ culture,” said Hamdan. “You cannot do that unless you have experience. You can read about it, but that’s never as accurate as first-hand.”

Students studying abroad participate in a variety of curriculum-related activities as well as social and cultural events. In Costa Rica, Hamdan toured a coffee bean factory, went ziplining and lived with a host family. Her experiences allowed her to compare the Costa Rican economy, cultural traditions and lifestyle to that of the U.S.

“Their economy is so different because it stems from tourism. They have a lot of pride and passion in their work and value their things more than some do,” said Hamdan. “Their recycling is a good example. There is no trash on the streets. I was surprised to learn Costa Rica

sets records in waste reduction and recycling.”

The value of living with a family surpassed all expectations, Hamdan said. “They were very kind and generous to have a stranger in the house, and it was nice to interact with them; it really made the program meaningful for me to understand their different perspectives,” she said.

Cade Johnson, a 2019 graduate of Lamar University with a bachelor’s degree in biology and exercise science, will attend McGovern Medical School (UT Health) after receiving his M.B.A. from LU in May 2020. He traveled for 11 days to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan as a Steinhagen Global Fellow. He says his experience abroad will make him an empathic physician.

“Being immersed in a completely different culture was really impactful and allowed me to see how different it would be moving to another country and how hard it would be for me to adjust,” said Johnson. “Now I think about the reverse side of people moving here and the struggles they must have day-to-day; being mindful of

that will allow me to better treat international patients.”

While in Asia, the students toured a Crocs manufacturing facility, met with Invest Hong Kong officials, where they learned about Hong Kong’s one-page simple tax code for everyone, and ate at traditional Asian restaurants where food is served family style.

“I liked the emphasis on family and being part of a society overall,” said Johnson. “The whole experience really gave me a different perspective on the world. I was excited to have received the Steinhagen Global Fellowship and to go on this particular trip. It expanded my world view and helped me understand why things are different in various countries.”



| STAFF PROFILE: **REBEKAH MAXWELL** |

Scholarships OPEN WORLD OF new opportunities

by Kara Timberlake '16

For Rebekah Maxwell '11, the experience of receiving scholarships not only affected the trajectory of her life but also now helps in her current position as director of Lamar University Office of Scholarships.

“I think it changed my life,” she said. “Those scholarships that I received allowed me to spend time on campus and be involved in student organizations. I was a part of the Honors Program [now the Reaud Honors College] and was able to spend time with other high-achieving students. I have a more fulfilling life because of that.”

While attending LU from 2007 to 2011, working toward a Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a concentration in retail management, Maxwell received multiple scholarships, including but not limited to the M.M. & C.A. Stead Jr. Scholarship, Tom F. and Ann D. Jones Scholarship, Wilfred H. Long Jr. and Catherine Long Regent Scholarship, McMaster Honors Scholarship and Texas 4-H Youth Development Richard Wallrath Scholarship.

“It’s a peace of mind,” she said. “It allows you to focus on your studies compared to possibly working full-time to pay for school. It allows you to focus on really keeping those grades up.”

After graduating, Maxwell pursued a Master of Science in international marketing from the University of Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland, a feat made possible by a scholarship.

“When I went to the University of Strathclyde, I was sponsored by the Beaumont Rotary Club of District 5910, and I was a Rotary International

Ambassadorial Scholar,” Maxwell said. “As a student, being on a scholarship, not only for my bachelor’s degree but also for my master’s degree, lets you breathe that sigh of relief that you have some security in knowing where your funding is coming from for school.”

Without the aid of a scholarship, Maxwell would not have studied abroad for her graduate degree, a life-altering decision, she said.

“That particular scholarship was a major contributor to what my life is now,” she said. “You can go back to my scholarships when I was getting my undergraduate degree, and if I didn’t have those and was unable

to get my undergraduate degree, then I wouldn’t have been eligible to get my master’s. It’s this domino effect of what scholarships can do for your life.

“Going abroad and developing all those soft skills in the meantime—talking to people from other cultures and traveling—have had a major impact on my life. Also, I made such wonderful connections. Eight years later, I’m still in contact with the friends I made during my time abroad.”

Maxwell said that her experience as a scholarship recipient helps her relate to students as well as donors.

“I let donors know about the impact not only on the student’s education right now but how it’s impacting their entire life. It’s an investment.”

—Rebekah Maxwell



“I’ve seen both sides now,” she said. “I tell students all of the time that I was a student just like them when I came to LU. I let donors know about the impact not only on the student’s education right now but how it’s impacting their entire life. It’s an investment.”

With more than 670 scholarship opportunities available, Maxwell tells students to be persistent.

“Apply every single year, continue to look for scholarships you are eligible for and keep your grades up,” she said. “You may be surprised by what opportunities come your way.”

Smith-Hutson Scholarship

opens doors for students with promise

by Lauren Carbaugh '17



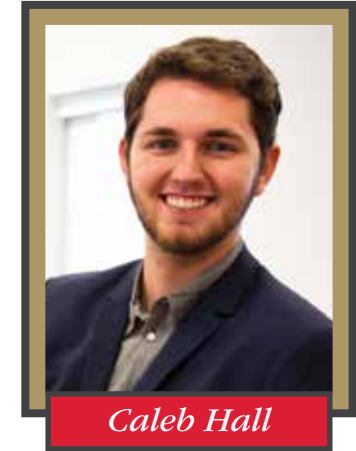
Dawn Wesneski and Robert and Sylvia Hutson



Sydni Doiron



Katie Shroff '17



Caleb Hall

With a disabled father and a mother who worked as a janitor, attending a four-year university wasn't a guarantee for LU alumna Katie Shroff '17—but it was a dream. Like so many other prospective students, financial assistance played a huge role in deciding whether or not Shroff would be able to pursue her goals. She dreamed of becoming the first in her family to graduate from a university, but feared the financial burden that would be placed on her parents' shoulders and the likelihood of living in debt for years. Fortunately for Shroff, her dream was made possible through the Smith-Hutson Scholarship.

"I was looking for any type of assistance where I could get an education," Shroff recalled. "I had a really great counselor in high school who helped me find all of the different scholarships that I qualified for, and one of those was the Smith-Hutson Scholarship." The possibility of living close to home while working towards an education immediately drew her towards LU, and receiving the scholarship opened a door that might have otherwise remained closed.

The Smith-Hutson Scholarship Program originated at Sam Houston State University in 1996 and was designed to offer much-needed financial assistance for those pursuing a major in business. The program eventually found its way to Lamar University in 2012, and in 2014, was amended to assist students studying under any major. "Smith" is an anonymous donor who provides the scholarship's funding; meanwhile, Hutson works with his wife, Sylvia, and assistant, Dawn, to conduct interviews, attend events and serve as the face of the program. So far, 126 LU students have received and maintained the scholarship.

"Really, it opened so many doors for me," Shroff explained. "It gave me the opportunity to figure out what my dream job was." With a desire to apply her creative capabilities in a business setting, she pursued a major in advertising communications. In 2017, she became the first university graduate in her family, and even landed her dream job as a marketing communications manager. "I definitely give all the props to the Smith-Hutson...I cannot rave enough about the opportunities that I've received because of the scholarship."

Following in Shroff's footsteps are students Caleb Hall and Sydni Doiron. Like Shroff, both students are attending LU under

the Smith-Hutson scholarship with the goal of becoming the first in their families to graduate from a four-year university. "Receiving the Smith-Hutson scholarship was, by far, the happiest moment I can recall," described Caleb, who is a current biology major and hopes to eventually become an optometrist. "It has allowed me the opportunity to save money and prepare myself to move onto graduate school...I will always be grateful for what the Smith-Hutson Scholarship has done for me."

The two students and alumna also share the opinion that some of the greatest benefits of the scholarship program are the connections and friends they've made along the way. "I have gained so many friends that now feel like family," shared Sydni, currently a junior with a dream of owning her own bridal boutique. "The community through the Smith-Hutson foundation has been here for me while continuing to push me to be my best."

And as the students learn, grow and mature, the Hutsons are there every step of the way. The couple makes an effort to be involved firsthand in interviews, events and ceremonies at every opportunity, supporting the students as a family member would. "They're amazing, amazing people and have made an impact on a lot of lives," Shroff said. "I always told my parents that the Hutsons were like second grandparents because they cared so much about each of the recipients." Hutson confirmed his investment by sharing how much he enjoys seeing the students grow and evolve. "The most rewarding part of [the program] is seeing them from the interview to graduation, and the transition that they make. The difference that four years of education makes is just unbelievable."

Katie, Sydni and Caleb each recalled how overwhelming it was to search and apply for different scholarships, knowing that they could make or break their college experience—but they all agree that it was worth it. "I was taking care of myself completely, so I knew that college would be very hard for me to achieve without scholarships," Sydni confirmed. When asked if she had any advice for current high school students in similar circumstances, she added, "I know the process is long, but the education and family you will receive makes all of it worth the end result."

One Good Turn...

THREE SCHOLARSHIPS BEAR WRITERLY ETHOS OF REMEMBRANCE, RECIPROCITY

by Casey Ford '13, '15



Jim Sanderson, Randy Sampson, R.S. "Sam" Gwynn

Hyman Asher "H.A." Perlstein was born in Lithuania, came to the United States at age 15 and arrived in Beaumont in 1889. He married Miriam Gordon in 1893, and they had three surviving daughters: Lillian Perlstein Selber, Eleanor Perlstein Weinbaum and Juliet Perlstein Simon. Perlstein was an entrepreneur and early developer of downtown Beaumont who was loved and respected for his generosity, a trait he passed down to his daughters and their children.

Perlstein's daughter, Eleanor Perlstein Weinbaum, a beloved member of the Beaumont community, was a poet and also wrote a memoir entitled *Shalom, America: The Perlstein Success Story*. She also was an ardent supporter of Lamar University. Her son, Charles Weinbaum—H.A.'s grandson—now a dynamic 93-year-old Beaumont businessman, has made it his priority to continue his family's spirit of philanthropy, especially where LU is concerned. Years ago, Weinbaum established two scholarships in the Department of English and Modern Languages—the Eleanor Perlstein Weinbaum Memorial Scholarship in English and Foreign Language and the Gloria Weinbaum Annually Funded Literary Scholarship—to honor his mother and wife. Weinbaum described his wife, Gloria, as having "a beautiful mind" and being a "classic writer whose friends raved about her style, even in the prose of something as simple as a thank-you note."

Many LU students have benefitted from the Perlstein and Weinbaum families' generosity, including alumnus Randy Sampson, who today is an LU scholarship donor, but who was first a student and recipient of the Eleanor Perlstein Weinbaum award. Sampson attended LU as a non-traditional student who decided to pursue higher education while continuing to work for ExxonMobil. Changes in his personal life created a need for an emotional outlet, so he focused on creative writing as a graduate student of English. Sampson credits two faculty members in the Department of English and Modern Languages—R.S. "Sam" Gwynn and Jim Sanderson—for

helping him to grow as a writer and for expanding his thinking and his creative community.

LU afforded Sampson the opportunity to become a poet. He said that his technical expertise and education landed him in a successful and enjoyable career but that creatively, he needed "something else." Sampson studied creative writing with Sanderson and Gwynn, who invited Sampson to attend the prestigious West Chester Poetry Conference in Pennsylvania, an opportunity he capitalized on for three consecutive years. Sampson wrote for and edited *Pulse*, LU's literary magazine, and participated in numerous other literary activities, all while working at the big plant next door and raising his family.

Asked about what being a scholarship recipient meant to him, Sampson remembers only gratitude. A full-time working professional, spouse and parent

"I wanted to create something that would endure and at the same time honor the men who inspired me as a writer."

—Randy Sampson

of five children, he was glad to have the extra money, and he recalls a distinct pride and a sense of validation in being recognized for his creative writing ability. He hoped to express to the Weinbaums how thankful he had always been for the award that helped and encouraged him and would continue doing so for many other students.

Capitalizing on an ExxonMobil initiative to encourage giving, in which the foundation was then matching scholarship donations 3 to 1, Sampson set up the R.S. Gwynn Scholarship in Creative Writing in 2006. He reported that the endowment has since tripled in size because of wise investments by the university, and today, that scholarship has been renamed the R.S. Gwynn and Jim Sanderson Scholarship in Creative Writing.

Sampson said that he established the award to honor his teachers, to

pay forward the generosity of the Weinbaums and to positively impact the lives of future creative writers at Lamar University. "I wanted to create something that would endure and at the same time honor the men who inspired me as a writer," he said.

Today, the Department of English and Modern Languages boasts a faculty that includes numerous published and prolific creative writers, and each semester, several of their students benefit from the donations of Randy Sampson and Charles Weinbaum. In fact, the author of this article was herself a beneficiary of the R.S. Gwynn Award in 2015. It seems important to mention that all students who receive this award are also benefitting from the philanthropy of the ExxonMobil Foundation, which supports the scholarly work of students in every college in the university. Lamar University alumni and our community partners prove each year that generosity is reciprocal—one good turn does not only deserve another but naturally inspires and creates other good "turns." Weinbaum, echoing Sampson's desire for leaving a legacy, said he hopes and intends that his children will continue their family's history of financial support for the university, which he believes is "one of Beaumont's greatest assets, if not the greatest." We certainly agree, and we wholeheartedly thank Randy Sampson and Charles Weinbaum for creating scholarships that honor Beaumont's literary past and ensure the future of language and literature scholars at Lamar University.



Charles Weinbaum



Boone named interim associate dean
Rebecca Boone, professor of history, has been named interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She serves as a link between 13 departments and university administration. Her role includes working with curriculum, space and facilities management, student affairs, assessment, retention, strategic planning and recruitment.

In 2018, Boone published her third book, *Real Lives in the Sixteenth Century: A Global Perspective* (Routledge, 2018). She is now general editor of a series of five volumes based on the book also published by Routledge, *Real Lives in Global Perspective*. This year, she was awarded a grant from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Andrew Mellon Foundation to develop an online module for the Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative.

Students who take Boone’s classes can expect humorous and unusual anecdotes in her lectures. She works to communicate how much her discipline really means on a personal level in a way students can relate.

“My favorite aspect of the job is problem-solving to help students. I also like having a bird’s eye view of the university that allows me to see how the various parts of this institution function together to create knowledge,” she says. “There are so many people at LU doing different jobs, but they are all working for the same goal—to open up the world to our students.”

Student Regent Appointment

Gov. Greg Abbott appointed **Katey McCall**, junior political science major and legal studies minor, to serve as student regent on the Texas State University System Board of Regents. This is only the second time in Lamar University’s history that a student from the university will serve in the position. McCall is among 10 student regents across the state of Texas appointed to serve in different university systems. She applied for the position in January, and after many letters of recommendation and interviews, Gov. Abbott called to confirm her appointment at the end of May. “This position is important to me because I want to go into politics later in life. I want to represent people in these capacities, help people navigate our government and help them get their ideas and needs addressed through policies and programs,” McCall said. “On the board, I hope to just really present student concerns and represent their needs. I really hope to protect their needs.” McCall will attend quarterly meetings of the Texas State University System Board of Regents as a non-voting member. In preparation for the appointment, she’ll attend two training sessions: a general training session and a training that is more specific to her position as student regent.



Past Purgatory, a Distant Paradise
Dan Williams

Literary Press Receives Award

The Lamar University Literary Press publishes literary fiction, original poetry and creative nonfiction right here in Beaumont. *Past Purgatory, a Distant Paradise*, a poetry collection published by the Literary Press, won the Texas Philosophical Society Poetry Award for 2018. **Dan Williams**, author of the book and professor at Texas Christian University, worked closely with Press director **Jerry Craven**; Associate Editor **Theresa Ener**, instructor of English and modern languages; and Editor-in-Chief **Katie Hoerth**, assistant professor of English and modern languages, to publish the collection of poems. “Jerry encouraged Dan to put the book together and submit it, edited the book and designed the cover. Theresa and I nominated the book for the award together. She found the contest, and I decided that Dan’s book would be perfect for it because it has a kind of philosophical depth to it. It’s a very lyric and meditative book,” Hoerth said. The Lamar University Literary Press is one of the world’s smallest university presses yet operates with the latest in book production technology and distribution. *Past Purgatory, a Distant Paradise* may be purchased from Amazon, Powells.com, BarnesandNoble.com and Abebooks.com.

► **Service learning inspires**
Seven nursing majors and two faculty members set up rural clinics last May in the Dominican Republic. Nursing students were immersed in a different culture and the Dominican Republic healthcare system, which was an eye-opening experience. This was the first trip LU has sponsored during which students worked in the field testing and diagnosing patients.

► **Changing the equation**
The Computer Science Department hosted an all-girls coding and programming camp last February. The one-day camp provided challenging, hands-on experiences and innovative concepts that introduced problem-solving and analytical skills. The girls who attended learned about cybersecurity concepts and career opportunities.

► **Drone-mounted imaging**
Physics Chair **Philip Cole** and physics major **Alek Hutson** briefed **Congressman Randy Weber** in Washington, D.C., about current physics projects, including optical detection of methane leaks through drone-mounted infrared imaging of pipelines, funded through LU’s Center for Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship.



Women’s basketball marks historic achievement

In March, the Lamar University women’s basketball team defeated rival McNeese 81-68 to lock up their second-straight Southland Conference Regular-Season Championship. Although it was a repeat performance, it also was a first in program history. It marked the first time Big Red had won the Southland Conference title in back-to-back seasons, and the Cardinals did so in near perfect fashion.

The Cardinals rolled through the 2018-19 campaign posting a 24-7 (.774) overall record and a near perfect 17-1 (.944) mark in Southland Conference play. During the two-year stretch, the Cardinals won 34 conference games with only two setbacks. The season was so impressive that LU was awarded an opening-round home game in the Postseason WNIT against South Alabama, which was the second consecutive season the Cards advanced to the WNIT. The Cardinals now have the

third-highest total of regular-season titles in Southland Conference history.

There were numerous high points along the way that provided cherished memories for all LU fans. An early indicator of just how talented the Cardinals have been came a year ago at No. 17 Texas A&M. The Cardinals traveled to College Station in November 2018 to take on the heavily favored Aggies and proceeded to pull off the most stunning upset in program history, if not Southland Conference history, by defeating Texas A&M, 74-68. The victory eventually propelled LU into the Mid-Major Top 25 poll where it remained into March.

Last February, the Cardinals traveled to Houston Baptist and defeated the Huskies, 97-49, but the final score wasn’t the headline. Senior Chastadie Barrs recorded 10 steals in the contest, but it was a steal she recorded with 3:35 remaining in the

second quarter that went down in the NCAA record books. That theft was the 625th of her career, making Barrs the NCAA all-time steals leader. Barrs would go on to be named Honorable Mention All-American.

Prior to All-American honors being handed out, the Southland Conference bestowed recognition on several Cardinal players, including Barrs and fellow senior Moe Kinard. Both Barrs and Kinard hit the 1,000-point plateau during their Red and White careers, and both were named first-team all-conference. In addition to the first-team honor, Barrs was named the Southland Conference Defensive Player of the Year for the fourth consecutive season. Barrs is the first player in Southland Conference history to earn the award as a freshman and to earn it in all four seasons of her collegiate career.



Softball Adds Honorary Member Abigail Arias

Prior to a game in mid-March, the Lamar University softball team held a special signing-day ceremony for a courageous young girl. In March, the Honorary Texas Ranger and member of the Freeport Police Force, Abigail Arias, was signed to a letter of intent, becoming an honorary member of the LU softball team.

Arias was diagnosed with kidney cancer (Wilms Tumor) in 2017 as a four-year-old. She battled for seven months as she fought and beat it. The worst news came just a few months later, however, when she was diagnosed with the same cancer for a second time. This time, doctors said there was nothing they could do.


During a Christmas event in December when Abigail and Freeport Police Chief Garivey met, she told him she wanted to be a police officer when she grew up to fight the “bad guys,” which she also calls the cancer inside of her.

On Feb. 7, she was sworn in as an honorary member of the Freeport Police Department badge #758, and, most recently, she was named an honorary member of the Texas Rangers. She continued to be an inspiration to all whom she meets with her incredible smile and spirit as she continued to fight her cancer.

Arias, who threw out the first pitch at the Cardinals’ game also served as the bat girl. She wore number 758, her Freeport Police Officer Badge number and will be the only Cardinal to ever don the jersey 758. Besides becoming a police officer, Arias also had dreams of being a collegiate softball player. Despite her courageous fight, Arias passed away in November.



DATA SPEAK

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BOLING'S JOURNEY FROM LU TO DISNEY

by Krista Salter



SUCCESS NURTURES *opportunity*

by Krista Salter

When Chelsea Boling '15 was accepted to the McNair Scholars Program during her final two years at LU, going to work for Disney was only in her wildest dreams.

The computer science and mathematics graduate said if it weren't for the resources and funds the program gave her to pursue her studies, she wouldn't be where she is now, a software engineer at Disney.

The program targets college juniors and seniors who are first-generation and low-income students, or who are from a group underrepresented at the doctoral level. It provides access to technological resources and faculty support as well as funds for conferences and research.

"When I received the McNair scholarship during my junior year at LU, it was a great time to get into research," Boling said. "Instead of going for a traditional internship, I went into research for a year studying data mining.

"Students use those funds in various ways, and I ended up going to several conferences," Boling explained. "I used my resources by going to different places to learn how to do better research."

Boling describes the year she spent data mining as worth it, since she taught herself skills she still uses today. The 2015 graduate also attributes much of

her success to her training as a math tutor at LU. "Everything I learned at Lamar University definitely helps when talking to internal Disney employees or vendors," she explained. "I have to present what went wrong and how I fixed it. I train people who don't always have programming skills, and being patient while teaching people new skills is such a good feeling."

Boling said her first job out of LU was in Baton Rouge developing applications

**"The professors
I worked with
were so friendly
and helpful, and
there's a lot of
resources for
people like me."**

—Chelsea Boling

for information technology giant IBM. After realizing she wanted to get her career path back on track towards software development, Boling headed for California—and Disney.

The last two years have been spent gearing up for the release of streaming service Disney+, production engineering and acquiring more skills in software

development. "It's been pretty busy," she said, adding that she's excited to be part of something so big.

Boling said her time spent doing research during her time in the McNair Scholars Program helped her get her foot in the door, now and in the future. "It's such a nice piece to have on my resume," Boling said. "It shows I know what I'm talking about during interviews, and then I get to bring my expertise on board.

"Everything I do now at Disney is because of all the skills I have acquired," she said. "The skills I have because of the research I did at LU is transferable wherever I go."

Boling said before she got into LU, she always knew she was destined for the technology industry. "A lot of people were there (at LU) to encourage women and minorities to join the industry," she said. "I believe the opportunities for people to get into technology are just endless. The professors I worked with were so friendly and helpful, and there's a lot of resources for people like me."

Lastly, Boling spoke of her alma mater fondly: "That's the advantage of going to a smaller school like Lamar University. You get to know your professors, your classmates, your community, and the resources and opportunities, like I had, never end."

Being given the opportunity to use financial assistance during graduate school made a make-or-break impact on Victor Zaloom's career path.

That, and faculty at the University of Houston who believed in Zaloom, can ultimately be attributed to his success today.

Now chair of the Department of Industrial Engineering at LU, Zaloom recognized the importance of financial assistance and wanted to reciprocate by creating opportunities similar to those he was given as a student. He established two scholarships in an effort to propel qualified students to success, as someone had done for him years ago. As a bonus, in recognition of his leadership inside and outside the classroom, others were named for him.

"I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't get my doctoral degree, and (the financial assistance) made it possible," Zaloom said. "I felt like since they provided me with such a great opportunity I wanted to give back in the same way."

The Victor Zaloom Scholarship in Engineering has awarded 12 recipients since 2007. Established by the Industrial Engineering Council of Lamar University to honor Zaloom's dedication to engineering at LU, the scholarship is open for all undergraduates in the College of Engineering, with preference given to freshmen and industrial engineering majors.

The American Society for Quality established the Victor Zaloom Leadership in Quality Endowed Scholarship to promote education in the quality sciences, encouraging future careers in the quality profession. The scholarship is open to industrial engineering majors and has helped 16 recipients since it was created in 2002.

After losing his daughter Shar Zaloom McCabe '89, an LU College of Business graduate, to leukemia when she was just 39, Zaloom decided to create a scholarship in the College of Business in her honor, with the hopes that the recipient goes on to have a successful career as his daughter did. "I think she would very much appreciate that her name will live on and be recognized under that scholarship," Zaloom said. "It's giving opportunities to students who choose to go on in business. All the scholarships, and getting to know their recipients, is such a rewarding experience," he added.

Zaloom served as the department chair of the industrial engineering department at LU from 1981 until 2014, when he began to serve as interim dean of the College of Engineering before returning to his position as chair this year.

He said he found his passion for teaching after he had finished his master's degree and was working for Lockheed Martin in Dallas when he was unexpectedly asked to teach a night course in industrial engineering at Texas Christian University. Though he had never taught before, teaching that first course made Zaloom realize he'd uncovered a passion and wanted to teach for the rest of his career rather than working in the field. It was then that Zaloom began to pursue his doctorate, which was financially supported by the University of Houston.

Today, Zaloom also has a scholarship in industrial engineering at the University of Houston, and another through the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers. "I've raised around \$500,000 in scholarship funds because I feel like if I can give back, I should," he explained.

"I think the main impact is to show the student recipients that somebody cares enough about their success to donate funds towards their education," Zaloom said. "They can have a better university experience this way, and I hope that someday in the future they can give back themselves."

Born and raised in Venezuela, Marianтониeta Gutierrez Soto '10 left her family and came to LU at age 17 on a tennis scholarship. As an international student, she could not take out student loans or work a job, constraints that were relieved, fortunately, through scholarships. “I really wouldn’t be here today without the scholarships,” Gutierrez Soto said. “LU gave me the opportunity to pursue my dreams in tennis and civil engineering.”

She made the most of that opportunity. Gutierrez Soto graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in civil engineering from Lamar University before continuing her education at The Ohio State University, earning her master’s and Ph.D. in civil engineering. Today, she is an assistant professor of civil engineering at University of Kentucky and director of the Multidisciplinary Smart Structures Knowledge Research Lab. Innovative smart structures integrate sensors, controllers,

Gutierrez Soto was not only a student athlete, she was involved in several student organizations on campus during her time at LU. One of these was when she worked with other students to restart the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. She is now the faculty adviser at the University of Kentucky and served as the faculty chair of the national convention in 2018. She credits the student organizations and national conferences to furthering her education in graduate school. “At the time, everyone was focused on going to school and getting a job, student organizations help us open our eyes to a larger picture of what we could do with our degrees and how we could research our field further.” The scholarships she received—the Rodney K. Bogan Memorial Scholarship, Dr. Luther A. Beale Memorial Scholarship, Susan M. Morgan Scholarship and the David Bernsen Endowed Scholarship, all in civil engineering, along with the Tony Paine Memorial

Dreams achieved

by Jennifer Wyse

devices and other elements, or smart materials, into a system that can adapt to environmental changes in real-time. “I feel very passionate about protecting the built environment subjected to natural disasters,” Gutierrez Soto said. “When I was at LU we had Hurricane Ike, and this is something I take very personally. We focus our research to find ways to be prepared before a natural disaster and how to recuperate after. That is the motivation behind my research.”

As a senior at LU, Gutierrez Soto began learning about how smart structures can prevent damages and also help people recover more effectively after a disaster. “I wanted to know what technology we can use to make the world more resilient,” she said. She assessed the damage in Rockport from Hurricane Harvey and did virtual assessments for both Hurricane Michael and Hurricane Dorian. She focuses on what can be done through technology to limit the damage for future natural disasters and the impact natural disasters have on a community.

Scholarship in Engineering and the Clark and Hazel Phippen Scholarship in Women’s Tennis—were the reason she could become involved in those enriching activities outside the classroom.

She described the love she has for the LU College of Engineering and says they became a small family. “I remember my professor’s passion for making our education the best that it could be. We had field trips to learn more about what we were studying. I became a professor because of the professors at LU. They were so devoted to the education, and it showed. I wanted to be like them; they were very supportive and encouraging. I am grateful for that opportunity.”

Gutierrez Soto added one last thing, “When donating, any amount is appreciated, a \$100 can make a big difference, especially for international students who cannot work. Nothing is too small. You really are making a big difference to a student.”

| COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: **ENGINEERING** |



New Dean Announced
LU named **Brian Craig** dean of the College of Engineering this past June. A faculty member since 2001, Craig served as professor and chair of the Department of Industrial Engineering in the years before his appointment. Under his direction, the Department of Industrial Engineering grew in numbers, both in students and faculty, and rolled out successful and highly ranked online degree plan options. Craig helped establish the Center for Advances in Port Management and is director of the Maritime Safety Research Initiative, which fosters collaboration between Lamar University and the maritime industry. Recently, he also led the effort to establish the new Lamar University/Emerson Center for Operations Excellence. Named a 2014 University Scholar, the most prestigious research honor bestowed on a faculty member, Craig has contributed to research topics in human factors, ergonomics and safety engineering. A two-time recipient of the University Research Enhancement Grant, he also is a Lamar University Merit Award winner. Craig has taken the helm of the College of Engineering with a focus on student recruitment, research innovation and industry outreach.



LU helps local educators sharpen STEM skills
The College of Engineering held the third Annual Research Experience for Teachers program this summer. The National Science Foundation funded the six-week course for the purpose of educating local teachers in new technology, allowing them to bring their knowledge and skills into the classroom and share with other educators. Research topics covered all disciplines of engineering and included subjects like 3D design and printing; laser engraving and micro-machining; VR/AR; LED modeling, simulation and manufacturing; design and manufacturing for smart structure; computational fluid dynamics simulation in industrial applications; and synthesis and manufacturing of robotics. Participating teachers assembled a 3D printer, which they were able to take back to their classroom for use in their curriculum. For the final phase, teachers created lesson plans based on the information they have learned for submission to teachengineering.org for consideration. All submissions are peer-reviewed, and approved teachers receive a \$1,800 grant. Several members of College of Engineering faculty worked with the teachers during the course of the program with the ultimate goal of improving STEM education for the next generation of students.

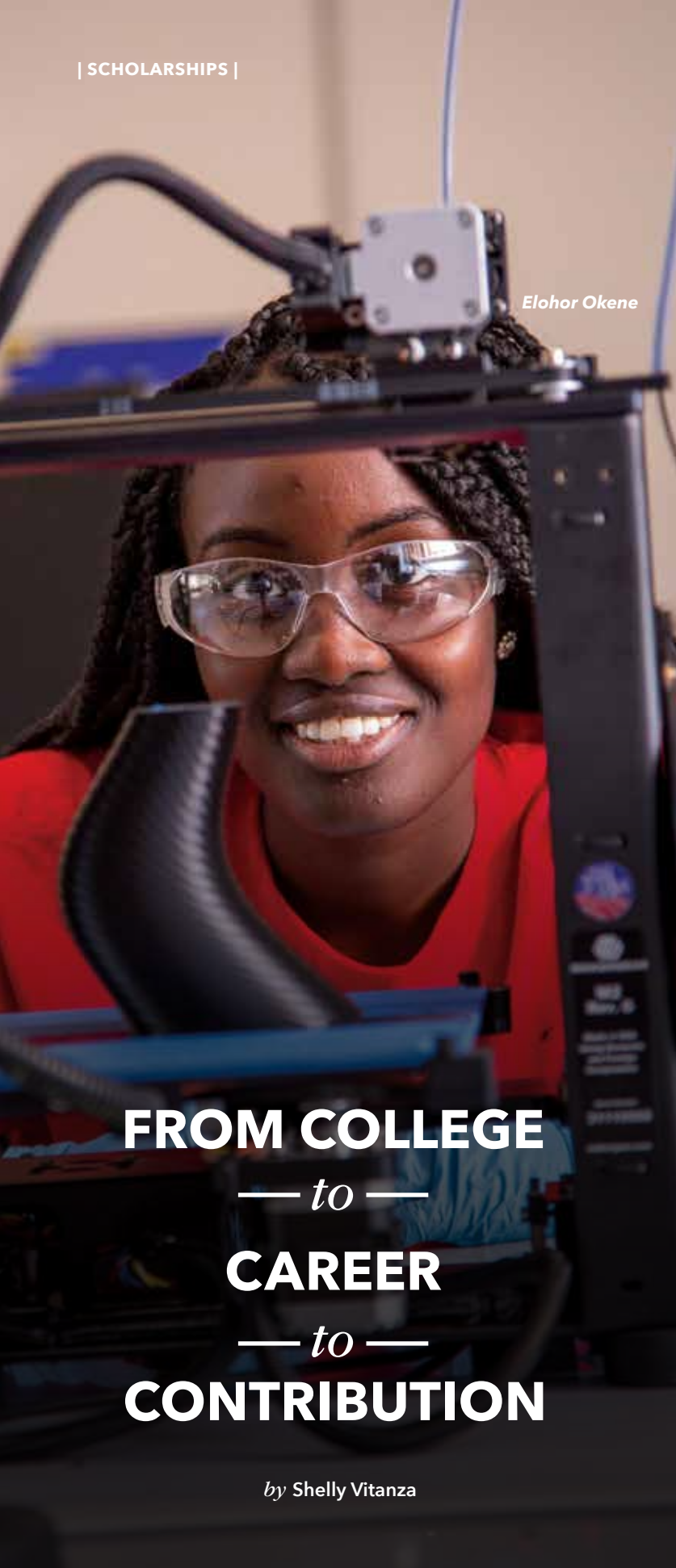


Summer camp engineered for fun
The College of Engineering hosted two summer day camps for students entering seventh through 12th grades. A total of 65 visited campus to learn about the various engineering disciplines from current students and faculty. Seventh- and eighth-graders who attended LITE Camp participated in hands-on activities moderated by student engineering organizations and visited the NASA Johnson Space Center, thanks to contributions from ExxonMobil, Motiva, BASF and Total. High schoolers attended Project Engineer, a robotics-based camp that incorporated other engineering disciplines into a final challenge, made possible by sponsorship from Chevron Phillips.

► **Fan honored**
Xuejan Fan, professor of mechanical engineering, was elevated to Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Fellow. This prestigious distinction is awarded to only a tenth of 1% of professional members worldwide who meet the standard of extraordinary accomplishments in the institute’s fields of interest.

► **Lou named fellow**
Helen Lou, professor of chemical engineering, was named a fellow with the American Institute of Engineers. The distinction is bestowed on those members of AIChE who are an important resource to the organization, providing experience-based guidance to leadership and members, and who contribute to the activities of organization.

► **Benson awarded patent**
Tracy Benson, professor of chemical engineering, along with his collaborative team, was recently awarded a patent for “Hydrothermal synthesis of alkali promoted MOS2-based catalyst.” The catalyst produces medium-chain alcohols through cost-effective reactions.



Elohok Okene

Larry Norwood '73 credits his 39-year engineering career to the foundation he received as a chemical engineering major at Lamar University. As a result, he and his wife, Cynthia (Smesny) Norwood '72, created the Larry and Cynthia Norwood Chemical Engineering Scholarship.

Since the Austin couple endowed the scholarship with \$1 million in 2012, there have been close to 100 recipients of the scholarship. This semester 39 chemical engineering students are Norwood Scholars.

"We wanted to give something back to the university and to add some scholarships that hopefully will help undergraduate and graduate students pursue a career in chemical engineering, have successful careers and be really great contributors to our society," said Norwood, who began his own career with Lubrizol in 1973 as a co-op student and retired as vice president of operations in May 2012.

Chemical engineering senior Elohok Okene has worked her way through college. Since her freshman year, she has held varying jobs and is currently a resident assistant on campus, while maintaining a high GPA in order to qualify for scholarships. Her 3.6 GPA earned her the Larry and Cynthia Norwood Chemical Engineering Scholarship.

"When I received the scholarship it honestly meant a lot," said Okene, who was born in Nigeria but raised in Houston. "Every scholarship that I have received helps with that financial burden so I don't have to work so hard while being a full-time student."

In addition to work and school, Okene has held numerous leadership positions on campus and is a member of Alpha Chi Omega and the Student Government Association. She has served as an orientation leader and is an LU Ambassador. She also has taken advantage of LU's relationship with industry and completed several internships and cooperative work programs.

"I have one job offer that I received before starting my senior year," said Okene. "It's an amazing offer, and even though I'm undecided, having it before the school year started was a blessing."

Another Norwood Scholar, Colton Broussard, had an early job offer. Motiva in Port Arthur offered him a process engineering position prior to his May 2019 graduation. The chemical engineering major was a three-time recipient of the Larry and Cynthia Norwood Chemical Engineering Scholarship.

"I worked my freshman year but then took some time off work and really focused on school when I got the scholarship," said Broussard. "If I had not gotten the scholarship, I would have needed to work straight through college even in those rougher times, like my junior year, but instead I was able to direct my time off toward my school work."

While at LU, Broussard, a Nederland native who chose LU for its engineering school and partnerships with industry, attended every scholarship dinner and recalls the Norwoods fondly. "They were easy to talk to, definitely supportive and seemed to really enjoy giving the scholarship to students. I was always glad I went and had the opportunity to meet and thank them."

| COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION |



Collage fundraiser held to benefit music students
The Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music presented the second annual Collage concert to benefit music students. The Feb. 26 event raised more than \$15,000.

The evening featured the department's finest large ensembles, small chamber groups and a variety of student and faculty performers. Both students and faculty performed in a quick-paced and seamless concert that highlighted the variety of talent Lamar University has to offer. All proceeds from the event benefit music students directly in the form of scholarships and other program enhancements.

The 2020 Collage fundraising concert will be held March 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the University Theatre. Tickets may be purchased online at lamar.edu/collage.



Communication and media students benefit from new media lab

Students in the Department of Communication and Media now have access to a state-of-the-art media innovation lab, which serves as a classroom, collaborative space and studio for students. The renovation also created editing labs and suites for podcast, audio and video production.

The media lab was made possible through the Lamar University Media Alliance, a partnership with the City of Beaumont and Spectrum. The mission of LUMA is to provide students real-life opportunities in content creation, management and curation for and through LUMA's media entities.



Le Grand Bal 2019 raises record-breaking amount to support fine arts

The Lamar University Friends of the Arts announced a record year for Le Grand Bal, raising more than \$132,000 for the fine arts programs in the College of Fine Arts and Communication. **Rusty Chimeno '87** and **Dean Terrebonne '11** co-chaired the event, held Saturday, March 30. Incorporating a theme of "New Orleans Inspires LU," the committee created an evening of Southern elegance with a twist of the Crescent City.

Kicking off the festivities was a silent art auction at the Dishman Art Museum with a White Linen Night theme,

based on the annual event held every year in the Arts District in New Orleans. Patrons then sashayed to the Setzer Student Center for a social, followed by a Commander's Palace-style dinner celebration. No trip to New Orleans would be complete without a visit to the French Quarter, so in celebration of the beloved Vieux Carré, guests danced the night away to sounds from Still Cruisin'.

"For many years, Rusty and I have enjoyed the White Linen Night event in New Orleans, and our favorite restaurant is Commander's Palace. We wanted to share these experiences with patrons of this event and introduce a less formal attire, but not casual—thus, changing up the dress code this year to Southern elegance," said Terrebonne. "We thought it was a perfect fit with the art portion of the evening at the Dishman. It was our desire to raise as much funding as possible to benefit the fine arts students and provide an enjoyable and memorable evening for all who were able to join us."

Each year, Le Grand Bal committee members select an artist honoree, as well as honorees recognized for their contributions to the arts. This year's contributing honorees were **Sandy and Joseph Fertitta '72**, and the featured guest artist nominee was musician **Gary Weldon '74**. As longtime contributors to the fine arts in the Beaumont area, the Fertittas share their many talents to help make the community a better place. Weldon, an accomplished musician and sought-after performer on trumpet and harmonica, earned a bachelor's degree in music from Lamar University.

Speech and Hearing Sciences partners with Beaumont Community Players

The Speech and Hearing Sciences Department, partnered with Beaumont Community Players, to host interACT, a program that allows children with atypical language and social development skills to take part in a theatrical production.

"InterACT was derived from the idea that theater and acting promote social interaction and perspective talking skills," said **Karen Saar**, clinical supervisor, instructor and head of Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Services at LU. "We run this inclusion group for children of all ability levels. Several children are diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome or other primary diagnoses that affect their development. In our program, you see kids begin to put themselves in other people's shoes through acting, through being given a space to play and pretend."

Lamar University's Speech-Language Pathology Program is one of very few in the field creating and using a connection with a local arts organization. **Monica Harn**, professor and chair and a creator of interACT, said often healthcare looks for interdisciplinary partnerships and doesn't consider collaborations with the arts. "We found that it is very rare. The arts offer so many opportunities that can lead to effective changes in the lives of kids facing these challenges."



► **Theatre and dance Two Stepping to Taiwan**
Dance students from the Department of Theatre & Dance visited Tainan University of Technology in Taiwan as part of the Study Abroad program. The dancers spent 20 days learning traditional Taiwanese dances, while being immersed in the culture.

► **Deaf studies students advocate in Saudi Arabia**
Deaf studies majors **Bader Alomary** and **Abdul Alofi** met with Saudi Arabian educators and **Tariq Al-Rays**, a LU deaf studies and deaf education alumnus who works for the Tatweer Education Holding to initiate a program to train deaf teachers in Saudi Arabian Sign Language for better deaf accessibility and opportunities in the Saudi Arabian education system.

► **Art students take field trip**
Art and honors art appreciation students and faculty visited the Houston Museum of Fine Arts where they were able to see a van Gogh exhibition, Sally Mann photography exhibition and select galleries in the permanent collection. While there, they heard from **Ken Mazzu '92** with the Glassell School of Art and toured the art in their new building. The trip concluded with a tour of the Menil Collection.



THE Rose REPORT

by J.T. Robertson

In March 2011, Larry Rose '65 had a heart attack. For all intents and purposes, he died. The doctors prepared his wife and family and asked them to say their goodbyes. But Rose, evermore the fighter, came back. A man who has lived his life with gusto, promised himself he would do more, give more.

"I went to the other side, and I came back as a different person. I've often wondered why I came back, and I realize that I came back to help people," pondered Rose.

With a fresh outlook on life, Rose, who was no stranger to giving and helping students at Lamar University, decided to contribute more to students at LU. Rose, who since 1973 has funded the Aaron and Pearl Rose Business Scholarship, awarded to a top business student each year in memory of his father and mother, decided to assist dance students along their journey. Rose established two awards for dance majors, Best Contemporary Dancer and Best Technical Dancer, and funded financial awards for members of the Lamar University Dance Team.

"Through my orthodontic practice, my patients would ask me to come to their dance performances and recitals. While watching them, my wife, Helen, and I started to notice these performers had the same characteristics that make a business graduate successful—perseverance, dedication, a team mentality, intelligence," said Rose. "This led Helen and me to see about offering a dance award."

This past spring semester, two dance majors were awarded this newly created honor, Mia Paul of Houston for Outstanding Contemporary Dancer and Haley White of Beaumont for Outstanding Technical Dancer. Margan Ferguson received the award for the LU Dance Team.

"Being the first recipient of the Helen and Larry Rose Scholarship was an honor and a genuine surprise. I received the award at the end of preparation bootcamp during our team dinner, and it was truly a special moment," said Ferguson. "This scholarship took care of all of my books and supplies need for this semester, and I'm extremely grateful. I have been a member of the Lamar University Dance Team for four years, and the program is very near and dear to me. I appreciate Dr. and Mrs. Rose recognizing us and seeing fit to contribute to the program in such a way."

Rose, a self-described spiritual man, firmly believes that everything happens for a greater reason. To understand Rose's reason, the story begins many years ago on a path that led him to the man he is today. This journey from LU, dental and orthodontic school before becoming Muhammad Ali's ring-side dentist to obtaining a patent for an orthodontic tool and then a stint as a sponsored race car driver, goes all the way back to 1957 when Rose entered a yo-yo contest.

"When I was in high school, my dad thought I needed to get a job, so I quit the track team and went to work sacking

groceries. During this time, I decided to partake in the Duncan Yo-Yo Contest at the Gaylynn Theatre. I discovered I had a talent and became a yo-yo champion," recalled Rose. "I took a good opportunity I had with my job but found a way to make it better by becoming a champion. I've lived by this same rule my entire life."

As Rose's high school and yo-yo years came to an end, it was time to think about college. Rose was set to attend the University of Texas, but because his dad needed his college savings to start a business, Rose chose to stay home and attend Lamar University. This transformative college experience set him on the path that would lead him to dental school and beyond.

"When I left LU to attend dental school at the University of St. Louis, I was surrounded by classmates who had attended prestigious institutions. They had spent their summers working for dentists, and their dental knowledge was way ahead of mine. My knowledge stopped at the fact that I knew how to spell tooth! But my education that I received at Lamar University held up and gave me a competitive edge," said Rose.

After dental school, Rose joined the Army as an officer for two years and then set up his general dentistry practice in Houston. After two years of practice, he decided to attend orthodontic school. In true Rose fashion, he took this opportunity to find something good and make it better. While learning wire bending in one of his classes, he decided he could make a better and more useful plier in order to accomplish a complex wire bonding

procedure. He drew out his idea and began working on prototypes of his new plier. In 1977, his design was approved for a patent, and the plier is called the Rose Torquing Plier, which sells worldwide.

Along the way, he met and became Muhammad Ali's ringside dentist. While traveling across the U.S. with the boxer, he learned several important lessons.

"Ali once told me, 'Friends don't keep score.' He also shared something else that has always stuck with me, 'He who tastes the wine of success will always know success, and he who tastes the wine of failure will always know failure. Live your life so you can always taste the wine of success,'" recalled Rose. "I always go back to this when I'm making a decision. This has helped me try to always set myself up for success."

As if his life wasn't already considered a success by any standards, Rose decided to explore the race car circuit, and in the 1980s he became a sponsored race car driver. Again, he followed his life mantra and made his good life more exciting.

Now Rose lives life by taking something good and making it better for others. "My hope is to inspire others who can to give back as well. It's heartwarming to help students along the way, and I wish them to always have the taste of success!" he said.

"Ali once told me, 'He who tastes the wine of success will always know success, and he who tastes the wine of failure will always know failure. Live your life so you can always taste the wine of success. '"

—Larry Rose '65



Scholarships WIDENED HER REACH

by Kristina Scott

experience also provided ways to form relationships and connections to different schools and school districts. She offered advice on what others can do to be more prepared when they step into their own classroom for the first time. “Try to get as much experience inside the classroom as you can and

seek out guidance, attend professional development as much as you can, take the internship seriously and try different grade levels,” she said.

At LU, Rodriguez received the Lucy S. Turner Memorial Scholarship



Since she discovered her love for teaching, she has always been drawn to working with

younger children. She feels she can relate to them more because she likes “how curious they are and how they love to learn,” she said.

Rodriguez’s time at LU helped prepare her because the intern hours gave her real-world experience. “Being in the classroom and seeing everything, the different types of students and home life, taught me different styles of teaching,” she said. The intern

be more involved on campus. As she began her second year at LU, Rodriguez joined the dance team and stayed on until she graduated as head officer. It was through the dance team that she met and built relationships with other future teachers, with one becoming her best friend. Rodriguez also helped her fellow classmates as a resident assistant in the residence halls. Upon graduation, she chose to continue her education and earned her master’s degree in teacher leadership at LU.

When she received the Rookie of the Year award, she wasn’t expecting it. “It all came at a surprising time,” Rodriguez said. “It meant so much to me and showed that the administrators saw how much I was working.” At the time she received the honor, she had recently started teaching third grade and was tutoring students, working hard to help the students grow and be the best they could be. She was elated by the recognition.

Advice Rodriguez followed that may inspire future teachers is to “build relationships with other teachers and always aim to better yourself. Every year, students are different, and there are always new and improved methods you can use to better their experience.”

and the Vivian Liddell Scholarship, both of which allowed her to be financially stable so she could focus more on earning her bachelor’s in interdisciplinary studies. The scholarships had a huge impact on her educational journey and allowed her to take summer and winter classes to stay on track to graduate in four years. They also helped her have time to branch out and

Lakeview Elementary in Port Arthur singled out alumna Hayley Rodriguez ’15, ’18, as the school’s Rookie of the Year for her stellar work as a science teacher in the school’s third grade wing. Ever since she was a child, Rodriguez knew she wanted to teach, and today what she enjoys most about her profession is “seeing the kids coming in, not even knowing how to write their name, and then leaving, having grown,” she said.

With the help of two scholarships, the magna cum laude graduate and Alpha Delta Pi sorority member became a “lifelong learner” whose greatest joy is seeing the sparks in the eyes of students as they learn.

| COLLEGE SNAPSHOT: EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT |



Fullan advocates education for all

The college was proud to host **Michael Fullan**, former dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and professor emeritus of the University of Toronto, on campus for an informative workshop. The prolific, award-winning author, speaker and educational consultant advises policymakers and leaders in helping educators achieve the moral purpose of all children having the opportunity to learn. In the two-hour workshop, Fullan spoke on focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, deepening learning and securing accountability.



Judge Giblin addresses college commencement

The Honorable Keith F. Giblin, U.S. magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Texas, delivered an inspiring keynote during the May 2019 commencement ceremony. Graduates and guests alike were encouraged by his humble words, which focused on believing in others even when they do not believe in themselves. He received a standing ovation from those in the room, a first for commencements hosted by the college.



60/30 anniversary party success

The College of Education and Human Development held a 60/30 anniversary party Feb. 1 attended by more than 250 faculty and former faculty, staff, alumni and friends. The celebration marked the college’s 60th year since its founding in 1959 and its 30th year since incorporating the disciplines of health, kinesiology, nutrition, hospitality and human services, and adding “Human Development” to its name in 1989. The historic event included the inaugural presentation of two new awards, the Ruth Olcott Faculty Award, awarded to **Kaye Shelton**, professor of educational leadership, and the Lena Mae Francis Staff Award, awarded to **Dimples Jones**, director for certification and testing. The recognition of key educators and staff represents an important aspect of the college mission, as does honoring its past leaders. The anniversary falls during a time in which the college looks to the future with the launch of its new strategic plan—the first one for the college—focused on diversity and multicultural competence, innovation, economic development, quality, success and equity.



► **Nutrition and athletes partner**
Nutrition students are learning what it really takes to fuel an athlete thanks to a recent partnership between the LU nutrition and dietetics program and the athletics division. Nutrition students get hands-on experience and a realistic simulation of the professional communication dynamics they might encounter in the future.



► **Launch of the college alumni network**
Created in May 2019, the College of Education and Human Development Alumni Network strives to enhance and develop strong alumni connections. The goal of this initiative is to reconnect with alumni and provide new ways to partner together. To join, visit lamar.edu/educated.



► **Counseling residency unites online learners**
More than 200 online counseling students visit campus each semester and summer for a week-long residency required for their degree programs. Many students who have met online through their course work are glad to meet face to face during this week for cooperative study and role play.

STUDENT-ATHLETES: ENJOYING THE STATE OF PLAY

by Sierra Kondos

Receiving an athletic scholarship to compete at the college level is the ultimate goal for many student-athletes. The Cardinal Club Scholarship enables Lamar University to attract the top and brightest student athletes and make it financially possible for them to earn their diplomas while adding meaningful and exciting educational experiences to expand their horizons.

“Most alumni are giving back to their university and/or sport to help future student athletes receive the same benefits they received,” said James Patton, president of the Cardinal Club Board. “Most of the students that are on scholarship are very appreciative and hard working. It takes a lot off their plate not having to work full time to pay for classes, study and go through practice and games, which is like having two jobs anyway.”

Tennis player Sebastian Santibanez is a 2019 recipient. “It has meant a lot to me as I come all the way from Santiago, Chile, a country that is over ten hours away by flying and where the cost of living, and cost of education, are completely different as compared to America,” Santibanez said.

He said the cost of living in South America and tuition are much lower than in the states. “My dream was always to come here and play college tennis,” he said.” So, without the help from the Cardinal Club, this would be almost impossible for me. I would have needed to find a job or other economic help to be able to cover all the cost difference that comes from studying here in the states compared to studying in Chile.”

Santibanez said that he has been playing tennis since he was five years old. “My dad played professional tennis, and my brother tried to also play professional,” he said. “So, tennis has been in my life since I was born. I fell in love with tennis the first time I hit a ball to be honest. I remember being seven years old and waking up my dad at 7 a.m., so we could go to the tennis club and spend the whole day there.”

Santibanez said that his main reason for attending a university in the U.S. was for the opportunity to become a student athlete.

“In Chile, I could be studying in a great school, but I could never be playing tennis at the same time,” he said. “When I had the option of studying in Chile or coming here, I knew I wanted to come here because I really wanted to keep being an athlete and keep playing the sport that I love. “I graduated with a double major in economics and finance, and I am finishing my M.B.A. in financial management this coming May.”



Basketball player and 2019 Cardinal Club Scholarship recipient, Rikiah Cowart, said that she is happy that she's been given an award that recognizes her academic abilities. “I didn't really like basketball until my junior year of high school,” the senior criminal justice major said. “That's when I started to gain recognition and be productive. I fell in love with basketball over the course of that season because I was just starting to see what I could really do at a higher level than in middle or elementary school.”

Cowart credits her parents for encouraging her to see the bigger picture of her future in basketball and traveled from Lauderhill, Fla., to pursue her dreams.

“My first two years of college were tough because of adjusting to the pace, adjusting to classes and having to be so far away from home. I didn't realize how much I would miss my family. This season is so much better because of Coach Aqua. It feels like it's easier to breathe and just play. My course work is getting hard, but thanks to the support of the Cardinal Club, I am planning on graduating this spring.”

Patton said that most of the student athletes receive a scholarship offer from the coaches. “They do have a chance to meet supporters throughout the year at banquets, games and team events and have always been thankful for the support,” he said. “I have been a big supporter of Lamar University even before I became a Cardinal. I came to games with family and friends while growing up.”

Patton said he has a vision of Lamar University being the destination spot for many great events like sports, concerts, recitals, plays, art shows and lectures.

“There are things going on at Lamar University for all types of cultural tastes. I have been bleeding red even before I realized that I bled red. I want Beaumont and the surrounding areas to take pride in our university and what we have to offer.”

| LU NEWS |

2019 UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR NAMED



Lamar University named Kendrick Aung, professor of mechanical engineering, as the 2019 University Professor, recognizing his superior teaching, scholarship and service to the university.

During his 18-year tenure at LU, Aung has taught a wide variety of mechanical engineering courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He co-directs the mechanical engineering senior design projects, teaches the senior capstone design courses and guides capstone design teams. Under his direction, more than 50 teams have successfully competed in engineering design contests across the country.

Aung has received significant teaching grants, several Presidential Faculty Fellowships for teaching and innovation and the Dr. Anita Riddle Excellence in Engineering Teaching Fellowship. Aung has supervised four doctoral engineering students and 28 graduate students in engineering science. He has published more than 90 peer-reviewed papers and made nearly 50 presentations at conferences and expositions. He has mentored two McNair Scholars and has been faculty advisor to the Lamar Association of Mechanical Engineering Student Chapter, Lamar American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers Chapter and Pi Tau Sigma honors society of mechanical engineers. He is also Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology accredited and is the accreditation coordinator for the Department of Mechanical Engineering, working for many years mentoring faculty members on continuously improving the department.



Fan awarded endowment

Xuejun Fan, professor of mechanical engineering, has been awarded the inaugural Mary Ann and Lawrence E. Faust Endowed Professorship in Engineering in recognition of his outstanding research in multi-physics and multi-scale modeling and characterization of heterogeneous electronic systems. “Dr. Fan is a highly respected and accomplished scholar who brings international research recognition to the College of Engineering and Lamar University,” said Victor Zaloom, chair and professor, College of Engineering. “His research spans broad areas and crosses many disciplines.”

The Mary Ann and Lawrence E. Faust Endowed Professorship in Engineering was established in 2017 by a bequest from Mary Ann Faust '61. Faust received her business degree at LU and her law degree from the University of Houston Thurgood Marshall College of Law.

Dockens honored as faculty mentor

The Office of Undergraduate Research bestowed the 2019 Faculty Mentor Award upon Ashley Dockens, assistant professor of speech and hearing sciences, for her mentorship of numerous undergraduate McNair Scholars, Beck Fellows, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows and Office of Undergraduate Research scholarship recipients. These students go on to mentor other students through Cardinal Community, LU Ambassadors, Student Government, the National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association, Student Academy of Audiology and through the Future Leaders of Audiology Student Association.

Forret named fellow

Provost James Marquart announced that faculty members selected Jeff Forret, professor of history, as 2019-2021 Distinguished Faculty Research Fellow. Forret was chosen through a rigorous review process of elected faculty members representing each of LU's colleges. A total of nine candidates were considered. Marquart said Forret's proven and internationally recognized track record of scholarly productivity coupled with his clearly defined and ambitious research plans that include works in-progress extending into 2022 have made a significant, positive influence on Lamar University.

Forret is a social historian specializing in southern history. Forret's current work in progress, “Slave Ships to Freedom,” documents four cases in which the British government freed American slaves shipwrecked in British colonial Atlantic colonies.

Haselbach named Engineer of the Year

The Texas Society of Professional Engineers, Sabine Chapter, has named chair and professor of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, Liv Haselbach, “Engineer of the Year” based on experience, published works, involvement in the community and professional organizations. “I was quite humbled by this honor, as it typically goes to a practicing engineer,” said Haselbach. “My faculty and I have worked hard in the couple of years since I have been here at LU to reach out to the current and future engineering community in southeast Texas.

Azios receives prestigious Tavistock Trust award

Jamie Azios, assistant professor of speech and hearing sciences, has received the Tavistock Trust for Aphasia Distinguished Scholar Award, which recognizes excellence in research and mentoring to meet the needs of people living with aphasia, the inability to access language. “The key to recovery lies in the ability of people with aphasia to engage in appropriate and successful interactions, (re)construct positive identities and sustain meaningful social relationships with others,” said Azios. “Through the Aphasia Conversation Lab, in the Speech and Hearing Sciences Clinic, we offer weekly therapy sessions that focus on improving life participation, including a book club, conversation groups and a technology group that helps people with aphasia better access the Internet and smart phones.”



Bahrim distinguished for mentoring

The Council of Undergraduate Research Physics and Astronomy Division awarded Cristian Bahrim, professor of physics, its 2019 Faculty Mentor Award. The division bestows the national award each year to recognize and honor mentors who have devoted a significant amount of time to mentoring students participating in undergraduate research. Bonnie Ruten, a physics major said, “Dr. Bahrim goes above and beyond to make sure that students are receiving the right information that they need to be successful. He's just a great example of someone who loves what he does.”

FIRST LADY NANCY EVANS REMEMBERED

As a master gardener and artist, the late First Lady Nancy Evans envisioned LU students surrounded by beauty as they pursued their dreams of a college education. To that end, Evans, who passed away in June 2018, spearheaded the LU Public Art Committee to secure sculpture, paintings and other works of art in a variety of media for display in interior and exterior settings on campus. She also worked with others to beautify the landscape and create a new, expanded site for the South Park Community Garden.

In recognition of her efforts and in remembrance of all she accomplished to make Lamar University's campus a more beautiful place, the Student Government Association dedicated a bench in her memory at the John Gray Pond last spring. Students, faculty, staff and administration gathered for the unveiling of the memorial bench, which was installed adjacent to the John Gray Center, one of Evans' favorite spaces on campus.

Student Government Association President Madison Marino said, "It was not uncommon to see Mrs. Evans working tirelessly to beautify the garden by the Mary and John Gray Library," said Marino. "She would also be spotted all around campus tending to flower beds, pulling weeds, and helping to make improvements to the landscaping so that students could enjoy a beautiful campus and be proud of their school. The campus was truly her canvas."

A fountain by Rockport sculptor Jesus Moroles, an artist who the Evanses met, is to be installed across from the bench. Rob Clark and Jerry Thacker donated the fountain in Mrs. Evans' memory.

A South Park Community Garden planter and archway was dedicated to Evans May 8. She had worked with LU gardeners and South Park neighbors to start the garden to increase the accessibility of fruits and vegetables to the community as well as provide education on nutrition and food preparation, offer opportunities for fellowship and to establish a sustainable local food system.

The garden, created in 2016 and located on the northwest corner of Jimmy Simmons Blvd. and Vermont St. in Beaumont, is a project of the Greater South Park Community Partnership, an organization of civic, business, education, social and spiritual leaders, as well as city officials and elected representatives, who work to revitalize South Park neighborhoods.

Volunteers, LU students and community members maintain the 25-bed garden, and vegetables are donated to the Southeast Texas Food Bank, Some Other Place and to those working the garden.

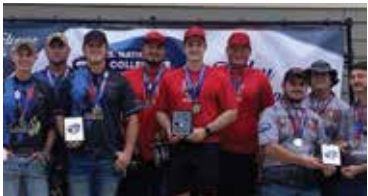


ExxonMobil presents \$147,450 employee gift match to LU

LU received a gift of \$147,450 from the ExxonMobil Foundation in May as a part of the company's Educational Matching Gift Program. The grant is the result of a three-to-one match of contributions donated in the previous year by company employees, retirees and surviving spouses. "Large numbers of LU alumni contribute to the success of ExxonMobil through their work. We are delighted that they, and ExxonMobil are supporting the excellence in our programming that has contributed to LU's outstanding student success," said Pres. Ken Evans.

Certification demonstrates highest standards

LU Success, the university's academic coaching program, was awarded College Reading and Learning Association certification, demonstrating that LU sets the highest standards for its mentors and tutors and for ensuring they are well-trained to assist other students. "Certification required an in-depth application process and it's a great recognition for our program because our student workers and the students we serve are affiliated with a nationally recognized academic support program," said Rachel Hoover, director of STAR Services. The program offers appointment-based and walk-in tutoring for undergraduate students, academic coaching services, peer and professional mentoring through Cardinal Communities, forums for sharing expertise and advice, and peer-assisted study sessions.



LU collegiate archers win national championship

The Lamar University Collegiate Archers, an archery sport club sponsored by the Department of Recreational Sports, won first place at the USA Archery National Collegiate Outdoor Championships May 16-19 in Dublin, Ohio. The LU men's barebow team including

Cody Sahualla, Shawn Blair and Alan Sexton were named national champions after competing against 60 schools from across the nation. The three-man team won a 5-3 match against Georgia Institute of Technology to secure the championship.

Overall Lamar University archers came in 19th against more than 500 total archers. Cody Sahualla placed 6th in men's individual barebow division and was awarded All-Around Archer of the Year. Kylie Bradley placed 24th in the women's bowhunter division; Sherry Banditrat placed top 15 individually in the women's barebow division; Alan Sexton placed top 30 individually in men's barebow; and All-American Shawn Blair placed 33rd in men's barebow.

Spina selected for prestigious position

Robert Spina, dean of the College of Education and Human Development, will serve on the Deans Council for the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate, a group of more than 100 colleges/schools that work together to examine doctoral programs in education.

McAllen Student Service Center opens

Lamar University is pleased to announce the grand opening of its Student Service Center in McAllen, 2802 West Expressway 83. Designed to serve anyone considering enrolling in college, from graduating high school students through working adults, the center welcomes Valley residents to learn about higher education opportunities in-person, directly from experts. "We feel that providing a convenient location where prospective students and their parents can speak with our bilingual advisors, get their admission questions answered by specialists and discover the right degree program for them is an innovative step toward assisting often first generation students and their families find the right degree program and college experience," said Pres. Ken Evans.



Legend loses, then finds championship ring

Nearly three decades after losing his Southland Conference championship ring, LU record-setting track athlete, Jackie Harris, was reunited with a memento of his athletic success. Harris, a two-time All-American who attended LU from 1979 to 1984 and both played football and competed in track and field, said he is thankful it was found. "This ring brings back a

lot of memories. I'm feeling speechless. I never thought I would see it again," says Harris. "When they called me up and told me they found my ring, I thought they were joking. It reminds me of the teamwork at Lamar and the guys I ran with. I still talk to my coach; I'll call him to tell him that I have my ring back."

Francisco Gudino, a local construction worker, found the ring four years ago while working on leveling a house in Beaumont's west end. Gudino and his wife, Alicia, cleaned the ring and have been looking for "Jackie," the name inscribed in the ring, since that time. The Gudinos and Harris hugged at the reunion and vowed to keep in touch.

The ring represents Harris' participation on the Southland Conference Championship Track and Field Team in 1980. Although Harris also lettered in football while attending LU, he set records in track, and his 400-meter dash record at LU has not be broken.

"He was an exceptional athlete. He was talented and gifted but he also worked hard," said Head Track Coach Trey Clark. "There are still stories about Jackie Harris. He set a high standard, and I want our athletes to understand we still hold to that same standard."

"LU Strong" receives \$1.15 million grant from Rebuild Texas Fund and Qatar Harvey Fund

A \$1,154,116 grant from the Rebuild Texas Fund and the Qatar Harvey Fund Scholarship Program, both of which were created after Hurricane Harvey to aid in the long-term recovery of southeast Texas, established the LU Strong Program to support students affected by the storm.

The program will provide centralized services for students struggling to recover from the impact of Hurricane Harvey, including counseling support and referrals for on and off-campus mental health services, emergency grants and scholarships to ensure students continue their academic pursuits, connections to social service supports, and resilience training and support for recovering and meeting future disasters. To apply for LU Strong services or to refer a student, visit lamar.edu/lustrong, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @LUStrongProgram.



LAMAR UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES PROJECTS FOR ITS NEW SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BUILDING

Lamar University has announced the launch of collaborative projects using facilities in the newly completed Science and Technology building. The interdisciplinary research approach combines student and faculty talent from departments across campus.

Computer science and industrial engineering team members will model and help design the instruments and infrastructure support needed to adapt to the explosive development of the ability of devices to communicate with each other, which opens great possibilities for automation, remote monitoring, smart vehicles, health connectivity, and forensic and cyber security solutions.

Team members from the College of Engineering and College of Arts and Sciences will collaborate on floodwater and coastal land natural remediation solutions, novel detection methods of contaminants and processes and methods for the reuse of dredged soil for environmental and agricultural purposes.

Researchers from the departments of biology and chemical engineering and the school of nursing will explore how to provide rural healthcare to an aging population through remote disease detection and self-assessment, tele-health, and robotic control medical devices and systems.

A team from the departments of theatre and dance, industrial engineering, teacher education, and civil and environmental engineering, will investigate the development of education techniques featuring hands-on approaches, object and computer interactions, 3D printing and virtual reality classrooms.

► **LU breaks top ten**
LU ranked seventh in the Online Schools Report for best online entrepreneurship degrees based on the quality of the program determined by student engagement, faculty credentials, student-to-faculty ratio, graduation rates and faculty experience and training. The B.B.A. in entrepreneurship provides essential foundational business skills in accounting, finance, management and analysis.

► **Cardinals give back**
More than 300 students, faculty, staff and alumni volunteered April 13 by participating in a day of community service projects around the Southeast Texas called The Big Event, the largest one-day, student-run service project in the nation. Students tackled day-long projects set up through nonprofits ranging from building a fence and mulching a playground to spring cleaning a museum and painting.

► **Port management now available online**
The American Association of Port Authorities has developed a new online professional certificate program in conjunction with LU's Center for Advancement in Port Management for working professionals. The industry-recognized port certificate provides fundamental knowledge of the port industry.

► **LU saved \$20 million in energy**
LU reached a \$20 million energy savings milestone as a result of its energy efficiency project with energy and sustainability expert, Schneider Electric. The 15-year partnership with the company yielded \$21,276,086 in energy savings by reducing campus-wide utility consumption.

HARVEY & IMELDA DELIVER A ONE-TWO PUNCH

by Daniel Houston



Cali Davis, Nicole Kyles-Burton, Morgan Martin

In one of the most damaging hurricanes to make landfall in Texas since the '70s, Hurricane Harvey indicated a turn for the worse for many in Southeast Texas. Affecting more than 13 million people, while totaling millions of vehicles and damaging or destroying nearly 135,000 homes, Hurricane Harvey caused approximately \$125 billion in damages.

While it was thought that the worst was over for those afflicted by Harvey, another disaster would not be far behind, Tropical Depression Imelda. Causing more than \$2 billion in damages, Imelda not only affected thousands of families, but reset the cycle of recovery for people who had already been affected by Harvey.

Cali Davis, an undergraduate nursing student from Vidor in her final semester of nursing school, heard about Harvey while on a weekend vacation.

"My first thought was complete worry," said Cali. "I knew my father was out of town also, so this left my mom and my two younger sisters in town on their own with no other form of family support."

Harvey would proceed to flood the vast majority of her hometown and 90% of her neighborhood, accumulating more than four feet inside her home.

Cali and the rest of her family were transported to Lufkin, in conditions akin to being a refugee. Locals cooked them warm meals and donated clothing and toiletries.

"It wasn't until this experience that I realized how victimized my family and I truly were," she recalled. After this began the emotionally straining process of gutting the home she and her siblings grew up in. "I stayed in contact as much as I could with my unaffected peers and professors to stay in the loop with the plan for my courses, but my mind was definitely elsewhere," she said.

A couple of months after Hurricane Harvey, Cali saw flyers for LU's assistance programs, and upon seeing it again through her LU Connect page online, she decided to take her chances and see what the Cardinal Emergency Fund had to offer. "It helped me immensely and in more ways than I will ever be able to repay or express my appreciation," said Cali. "Primarily, it allowed me to assess my own feelings regarding the adversities I went through and also connected me with resources. The fund also assisted me to reinforce my focus on my courses instead of the fees associated with my education."

On Harvey's heels, more than a thousand members of the Cardinal family were affected by Tropical Depression Imelda.

Most of these were students, who would find themselves challenged with homelessness, transportation issues, health issues and more, on top of the stressors of university life. It is for these situations that Lamar University first established the Cardinal Emergency Fund, a fund that remains active and attentive to the needs of a disaster survivor.

Morgan Martin, a pre-med biology major from Mauriceville, had been through several hurricanes in the past prior to Hurricane Harvey, so he didn't think much of it. "Our yard is in a low-lying area, so it floods easily, but it's never reached the house before, so it didn't concern me that much," said Martin.

That month had already been heavy for him and his family—he had just turned 18 and was excited for college; his brother, a star linebacker, tore his ACL; and their incapacitated grandmother had recently moved in.

It was 7 p.m. when the flooding began, in the middle of dinner preparation when the entire family began receiving back-to-back emergency notifications on their phones. Their cats were acting strange, and they began checking outside. "We were getting nervous," said Martin. "We were waiting for the rain to let up, because if it stopped, we'd be fine, but it kept rising and rising."

At around 8 p.m., they packed up everything they could, took their pets and left to stay with family in Louisiana. Three days later, they'd receive pictures of their home, now flooded with three feet of water, losing all of their furniture, clothes, children's toys, and all of Morgan's books, the hardest blow for him.

One of the strangest experiences Morgan and his family had to come to terms with was the turned tables, from donor to recipient. "We were usually the people that gave," said Martin. "We would give donations to church and stuff like that, and then we were on the receiving end of that. So it was very humbling for us, a good kind of humbling."

The hardest thing for Morgan was no longer having a home. "We had the shell of a home, but we didn't have a home. All of the stuff that made it a home was gone." Morgan and his family found themselves still struggling to pay off the fees revolving around his home being rebuilt, which is when he was introduced to the Cardinal Emergency Fund. "They were able to

give me a substantial amount, enough to cover my first year of college tuition-free," said Martin. "They were very generous, and they were able to alleviate the things my father would have had to pay otherwise."

Their troubles wouldn't be over yet, as it wouldn't be too long before Imelda arrived to undo everything Morgan's family

had worked so hard to recover. "I woke up [around 4 a.m.], and I checked my phone to see what time it was. I had a text from my mom and a message from my sister telling me that our house had flooded again," said Martin.

He'd hoped for only two inches, which unfortunately happened to be two feet, rendering the house unlivable for perhaps another year. Morgan was once again able to utilize the Cardinal Emergency Fund to mitigate the disaster. "They covered not only the leftover tuition from this semester, but for next semester as well," said Martin.

"We started the Cardinal Emergency Fund after Hurricane Harvey," said Brenda Nichols, vice provost for digital learning who oversees the Cardinal Emergency Fund. "We had a lot of donors that had given to the university for other things that reached out and said, 'What can we do to help?'"

According to data collected from Imelda survey submissions, those affected by Imelda had the most concerns about housing—a direct consequence of the disaster destroying more than 300 homes. Transportation, health issues and tuition were also focal points of aid requests.

Nicole Kyles-Burton, an MBA student with a bachelor's in sociology and psychology from Beaumont remembers packing a suitcase in case of evacuation, thinking, "If it continues to rain, I can pack, and I can leave the next day," said Nicole. "The next day didn't come."

That night, her home would accumulate 45 inches of water while she slept. By the time her sister called to make sure she was alright at 3 a.m., it was already level with the third step of her staircase. The mother of three was not rattled, until it became clear that the water was continuing to rise. "Then, I hear a pop, the electricity goes off, and I smell smoke—that's when I lose it," said Nicole. "The water's still rising, we have no electricity, how are we gonna get out of here?"

In order to catch the attention of the Cajun Navy that were operating around the neighborhood, she wrote 'Please Help' signs and placed them in the windows. Fortunately, she was successful, and was able to escape off the second-floor balcony. "I guess it just happened so soon. We're just starting to rebuild from Harvey. It was just traumatizing because it was again," said Nicole. "The things we could save from Harvey, the pictures, the furniture, couldn't be saved from Imelda. Everything was lost."

After reaching relative safety, Nicole attributes a large part of her recuperation process to the Cardinal Emergency Fund, noting the simplicity and immediacy of the process. "LU reacted so quickly. It was a saving grace to receive the email that said, 'Don't worry about your classes. If you need shelter, fill out this form. It took that worry off my plate because I knew that they would give me time and options,'" said Nicole.

"The Cardinal Emergency Fund can be anything from food emergencies to things like computers or tablets," Nichols said. "It can help with dorms and meals on campus. It's sad to say that we learned a bit after Harvey, so by the time Imelda came, [the fund] was up the next day."

The Cardinal Emergency Fund has been a life preserver for the people that needed it, with a goal of helping as many students as possible based on their amount of need. "We'd like to continue to build it," said Nichols, "So we are looking at ways to continue to help the students using it so it's there for them."





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

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50s

Jeff Jones '58, B.S. sociology, retired from serving as managing partner at Tyler Piano and Organ Co. and he lives in Coppel.

60s

Bob Peterman '60, B.S. geology, is director of Southeastern Oil & Gas Producers Limited. He and his wife, Jackie, live in Dallas.

Tamara Kaupp '63, B.A. English, '64, M.A. English, also holds an M.Ed., retired from her position as a department chair at San Jacinto Community College. She and her husband, Henry, live in Pearland.

The Texas Board of Criminal Justice Chairman Dale Wainwright and TDCJ Executive Director Bryan Collier presented **Glenn Smith** '67, B.A. government, '70, M.A. government, who holds a doctorate in education, with the Governor's 2018 Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Award during a ceremony held in Austin. His granddaughter, **Marly (Smith) Nicholson** '18, earned a B.S. in graphic design with a minor in communication from LU. On July 4, 2018, he officiated Marly and her husband's (**Dillon** '18, B.A. modern languages) wedding. Glenn's family has an almost 80-year history with Lamar University, and his uncle, Will L. Smith, helped to pass financial appropriations for the university and introduced legislation that renamed the school from Lamar State College of Technology to Lamar University. Glenn's wife, **Karen (Brownlee) Smith** '67, B.A. French, who holds an M.A. in Spanish and a doctorate in education, is a retired teacher.

Thomas Van Devender '68, B.S. biology, earned an M.S. in zoology and a Ph.D. in geochronology, is the director of biodiversity programs at Greater Good, a charity devoted to improving health and well-being of people, pets and the planet. He previously served as senior research scientist at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum for more than 25 years. He and his wife, Ana, live in Tucson, Ariz.

Paula (Tate) O'Neal '69, B.A. government, '79, M.Ed. in counseling and development, was honored as the Press Club of Southeast Texas' 2018 Newsmaker

of the Year for her work as the executive director of Beaumont's Some Other Place, an organization that serves to meet the needs of impoverished residents of Beaumont and Southeast Texas. She and her husband, Jay, live in Beaumont.

70s

Pauline (Colburn) Hargrove '70, B.S. elementary education, '08, Ed.D. educational leadership, retired from her position as Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district superintendent. She and her husband, Ricky, live in Orange.

Becky (Dickson) Mason '71, B.S. elementary education, was selected as rotary district governor elect for the Rotary Club of Beaumont. She and her husband **Chuck** '72, B.S. in biology, were honored as Lamar University 2017 distinguished alumni for their service to the community and their alma mater. They live in Beaumont.

Dave Taylor Jr. '71, B.B.A. general business, is retired and lives in Port Neches with his wife, **Jo Nell (Powell)** '71, B.S. elementary education.

Robert Boettger '72, B.S. electrical engineering, retired from CenterPoint Energy in Houston as a senior consulting engineer after 43 years. He and his wife, Alice, live in New Braunfels.

Delores Black '74, B.S. music, received the 2017 TSUS Regents' Staff Award for her contributions to the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music, the College of Fine Arts and Communication and the Lamar University community. She retired in 2018 after serving as a member of the LU staff for 43 years. She lives in Vidor.

Randy Streetman '74, B.B.A. accounting, is a CPA for his own firm, Randy Streetman CPA. He lives in Houston.

Jennifer (Langston) Martin '75, B.S. home economics, '80, M.S. home economics, earned a Ph.D. in consumer sciences and is executive vice provost at Texas Woman's University. Her husband, **Robert "Bobby"** '72, B.B.A. management, also holds a Ph.D. and is director of the Leadership Development Department for the Dallas Baptist Association. They live in Plano.

Debbie (King) Montgomery '77, B.S. music-instrumental, also has a certificate in occupational therapy, lives in the Los Angeles, Calif., area with her husband, Sol Celender, and is following her dream of performing at Me, Myself, & I Productions. She has a CD out on iTunes, has done acting and standup comedy in Burbank and continues to take classes while working as a therapist in a nursing home. Debbie has shot two pilots for television and was on an OWN network game show. She has two grandkids in Houston, whom she visits with each year.

Ed Tanner '77, B.A. political science, also holds a law degree and is a general staff counsel for the Jefferson County Criminal Courts. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, Daphne.

Terry (Swann) Turpin '77, B.A. history, is a retired school teacher. Her husband, **Michael** '79, B.S. music, who holds a master in music education and a Ph.D. training and development, is the vice president of instruction at Kilgore College. They live in Longview.

Tom Henry '78, B.S. chemical engineering, is senior manager of refinery turnarounds at Total Petrochemicals and Refining in Port Arthur. He and his wife, Rebecca, live in Orange.

Robin (Childress) Smith '78, B.S. elementary education, retired from elementary school teaching after 30 years, her last 18 years being at Port Neches Elementary School. She and her husband, **Larry** '76, associate of applied science, '93, B.S. political science, live in Bullard.

Michael Truncale '78, B.B.A. economics, who holds an M.B.A. and a law degree, is serving as a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas. President Trump nominated him for the role, and the U.S. Senate confirmed him on May 14, 2019. Judge Truncale previously served as a senior partner at Orgain, Bell & Tucker, L.L.P. for 34 years, has previously served as a Texas State University System regent and currently serves on the Prepaid Higher Education Tuition Board, appointed by Gov. Abbott for a term set to expire in 2021. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, Denise.

80s

Jackie (Graffagnino) Conley '81, B.S. elementary education, is a junior high history teacher and Social Studies Department head at St. Anne Catholic School. She and her husband, Kenneth '92, associate of applied science in instrumentation technology, live in Beaumont.

The Rotary Club of Beaumont honored **Steve Lucas** '82, B.B.A. finance, with the T. Kelsey Lamb Business Ethics Award. He is the executive vice president of Post Oak Bank. He and his wife, Robin, live in Beaumont.

Gerald Garcia '83, B.S. electrical engineering, is a senior silicon engineer at Nano Global. He and his wife, Maureen, live in Austin.

Donnie Gonzales '83, B.B.A. accounting, is executive vice president and chief financial officer of Gonzales Electrical Systems. He and his wife, Deanna, live in Beaumont.

Leann Mullinax '84, M.S. industrial/organizational psychology, is a human resources consultant at The Nax and lives in Lyman, S.C.

Darwin Myers '84, B.S. civil engineering, is the director of engineering for the City of Corsicana, where he lives with his wife, Donna.

Gwen Whitehead '84, B.A. English, '86, M.A. English, holds a Ph.D. in English, and is vice president of Lamar State College-Orange. She lives in Orange.

Jeffrey Ruddy '85, B.S. electrical engineering, holds an M.S. in industrial engineering and is an engineering manager at Luck Companies in Manakin-Sabot, Va. He lives in Glen Allen, Va. with his wife, Cameron.

Larry Scoggin '85, B.S. psychology, is a senior security architect at NorthState Technology Solutions in High Point, N.C. He lives with his wife, Alice, in Huntersville, N.C.

Doneane Beckcom '86, B.A. music education, '09, M.Ed. administration, also earned a law degree and was recognized as an Outstanding Mediator for 2017 by the Dispute Resolution Center of Jefferson County. She and her husband, Charles, live in Port Arthur.

Susan (Ahlgrim) Ellis '86, B.S. secondary education, '08, M.Ed. in secondary education, received a STEM grant from Huntsman in May 2018, along with Katherine Whitney '97, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, '09, M.Ed. in secondary education, to purchase a classroom kit of ozobots and waterbotics kits for her classroom. She teaches science at Central Middle School in Nederland school district and is a distance learning adjunct instructor in the LU Earth and Space Science Department. She lives in Orange.

Stacey (Skidmore) Brister '87, B.S. elementary education, is the superintendent of Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district. She and her husband, Larry, live in Orange.

Daniella Irlle '87, B.S. kinesiology, is director of athletics at Knox College in Galesburg, Ill., where she lives with her wife, Kristen.

Laurence Williams '87, B.S. physical education, B.S. communication, is the head boys basketball coach at Monsignor Kelly High School. His wife, **Kim (Mallett)** '77, B.S. special education, is a retired drama teacher, having taught at Nederland High School. The couple lives in Beaumont.

Steve La Brutta '88, B.S. health education, also holds a master's degree in kinesiology and is associate director of development and alumni relations at St. Edward's University. He lives in Austin.

James Arnett Jr. '89, B.S. secondary education, '01, M.Ed. educational leadership, is the principal at Groves Middle School in Port Neches-Groves school district. He and his wife, **Rhonda (Kuebodeaux)** '85, associate of applied science in nursing, live in Bridge City.

Dennis Astley '89, B.S. electrical engineering, is principal engineer of outage coordination at Mid Continent Independent System Operator. He and his wife, **Tammy (Burr)** '90, B.S. secondary education, live in Benton, Ark.

Rebecca Cawley '89, B.F.A. graphic design, also holds an M.S. in project management and is a graphic design teacher at Wagner High School in San Antonio. She lives in New Braunfels.

Sazali Hamzah '89, B.S. chemical engineering, is president and CEO of the Petronas Chemical Group-Berhad entity of PETRONAS, a Malaysian oil and gas company. Hamzah was interviewed by CEO

Magazine for their Feb. 2018 edition. He lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sandra (Gooch) Rye '89, B.S. elementary education, is a teacher at Oak Forest Elementary School in the Vidor school district, where she lives with her husband, Jack.

Wenden Sanders '89, B.M. music education, is director of the Houston school district's K-12 Fine Arts Department. In March 2018, he was honored at the American Festival for the Arts Beyond Music Luncheon, celebrating Music in Our Schools Month. He lives in Houston.

90s

Holly Borel '90, B.S. psychology, '00, M.B.A., was named CEO of Spindletop Center after more than 30 years of experience in community mental health and a demonstrated commitment to improving the lives of individuals diagnosed with severe mental illness and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Holly lives in Beaumont.

Kristeen (Nichols) Davis '90, B.S. elementary education, is a special education campus coordinator at Northside school district and lives in San Antonio with her husband, John.

Hollie (Coulter) Erickson '90, B.S. elementary education, '12, M.Ed. administration, is a teacher at Ross Sterling Middle School of Humble school district. She lives in Kingwood with her husband, **John** '90, B.S. criminal justice.

Carmen Jordan '90, B.B.A. finance, is the executive vice president and regional group manager of Origin Bank's Houston lending team and lives in Sugar Land.

Mary Ellen (Fontenot) vonNetzer '90, B.B.A. marketing, is retired from her position as co-owner of Vertu Enterprises and she lives in Beaumont.

Bo A. Brown '91, B.S. speech, is vice president and market manager at Cumulus Broadcasting and lives in Houston with his wife, Jill.

Sheila Lofton '91, B.S. kinesiology, is a teacher and head cross country coach at B.F. Terry High School of Lamar Consolidated school district and she lives in Richmond.

Robert M. Pritchett '91, B.S. mechanical engineering, is an engineer at LyondellBasell in Houston, where he lives.

Kellie (Dale) Rogers '91, B.A. English, '18, M.Ed. school counseling, is a reading specialist and education consultant at Smarter by the Hour, which she owns. She and her husband, Frank, live in Winnie.

Robert Currie '92, B.S. medical technology, also holds an M.B.A. and a J.D. and is retired from working as a locomotive engineer for Patriot Rail Corp. He and his wife, **Ruth (Ward)** '84, associate of applied science in nursing, live in Crystal Beach.

Charles R. Davis '92, B.B.A. accounting, is a delivery driver for Moncla's Investments. His wife, **Melissa (Moore)** '99, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches eighth grade at Mauriceville Middle School in Little Cypress-Mauriceville school district, is a member of the Texas Classroom Teachers Association Directors Council and is the District 5 Coordinating Council director. They live in Orange.

Steven Nelson '92, B.A. history, '09, M.Ed. administration, is a history teacher at Nederland High School and was named Nederland school district's Secondary Teacher of the Year for 2018. His wife, **Amy (Westbrook)** '91, B.S. elementary education, teaches second grade at Highland Park Elementary in Nederland school district, where the couple lives.

Lionel Jackson '93, B.S. sociology, is a chaplain for the Department of Veterans Affairs and lives in Pineville, La.

Shawn Oubre '93, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, '02, M.P.A. public administration, holds a Ph.D. in public policy and public administration, and is city manager of the City of Orange. He and his wife, Roxanne, live in Orange.

George Navarro '94, B.S. criminal justice, holds an M.S. in criminal justice leadership and management and is a criminal justice instructor at Port Neches-Groves High School. He lives in Bridge City with his wife, Sandra, and their children.

Janna Nunez-Gussman '94, B.S. biology, earned a doctorate in dermatology from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Medical School, and is a dermatologist at Janna K. Nunez-Gussman, M.D. P.A. in Beaumont. She lives in Beaumont with her son, Enrique.



Alumnus selected as Texas Rising Star

For the fifth year, LU graduate and trial lawyer Ronnie Turner Jr. has been named to the 2019 Texas Rising Stars list of top young attorneys. Turner, who graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and a minor in political science, represents plaintiffs in personal injury cases for Provost Umphrey Law Firm. While attending LU, Turner served as student body president and vice president. He was vice chair of the Student Advisory Board to the Texas State University System Board of Regents. He was also a member of Order of Omega Honors Fraternity.

Ginger Beeler '95, B.S. mathematics, is a math teacher at Silsbee High School and she lives in Saratoga.

Christi (Weber) Silcox '95, B.A. psychology, M.Ed. school administration, is the assistant principal of Henderson Middle School in Hardin-Jefferson school district. She and her husband, Rusty '93, live in Winnie, and they have three adult children, Jace, Dylan and Kelli Anne.

Caralee (McDonald) Thompson '95, B.S. communication, is executive director of Leadership Beaumont for the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, and her husband, **David** '07, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, works for A&E Equipment. They live in Beaumont.

Jennifer (Bensky) Birdsong '96, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, holds an M.A. in teaching and

is director of advanced learning and development at FlightSafety International. She and her husband, Jim, live in Denton.

Kim (Merchant) Collier '96, B.S.W. social work, also holds an M.Ed., is a special education teacher at Bridgeland High School in Cypress Fairbanks school district. She and her husband, Chuck, live in Cypress.

Terry Rogers '96, B.B.A. human resource management, is a human resource director at Flint Hills Resources in Port Arthur. He and his wife, Kristina, live in Beaumont.

Trevor Mann '98, B.S. civil engineering, is a project manager at Schaumburg & Polk and lives in Beaumont.

Kevin Schexnaider '98, B.S. kinesiology, '10, M.Ed. school administration, is principal of Ridgewood Elementary in Port

Neches-Groves school district. He has worked for 18 years as a teacher, coach and administrator. He and his wife, Cortnie, live in Port Neches with their two children.

Lin Ellis II '99, B.A. history, '14, M.Ed. administration, is athletic director and a coach at Spurger High School. His wife, **Jamie (Vanlangendonck)** '02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, '14, M.Ed. administration, is in her 13th year of teaching second grade at Fairmont Elementary in Deer Park school district.

Cullen Oubre '99, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches fourth grade at Odyssey Academy Galveston. His wife, Cherie (Morgan) '99, B.S. biology, also holds a Ph.D. in microbiology and is a deputy element scientist at NASA Johnson Space Center. They live in League City.

Gina (Blinkenberg) Tilker '99, B.B.A. marketing, works as the endowment services coordinator at the University of Texas at Arlington and lives in Arlington with her husband, Mark.

00s

Chris Johnson '00, B.S. kinesiology, is the associate head coach of women's track and field at the University of Arkansas. In 2018, Chris won the National Women's Track and Field Assistant Coach of the Year Award. He and his wife, Gigi, live in Fayetteville, Ark.

Reuben Johnston '00, B.S. electrical engineering and B.S. computer science, earned master's and doctorate degrees in systems engineering, and is a researcher at Johns Hopkins University in the Applied Physics Laboratory and a lecturer at the Johns Hopkins University Information Security Institute. He lives in Kingsville, Md. with his wife, Meghan.

Amber (Armand) Royer '00, B.A. English, debuted her first science fiction novel, a comic space opera titled Free Chocolate in June 2018. The Barnes & Noble Science Fiction and Fantasy Blog named the book one of its "25 Sci-Fi & Fantasy Debuts to Watch for in 2018." She and her husband, Jacob, live in Richardson.

Lisa (Warner) Sterling '00, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, '04, M.Ed. educational leadership, is

an instructional coach at Dowling Elementary School in Port Arthur school district and lives in Port Neches with her husband, Bobby, and their children.

Tricia (Jones) Times '00, B.S. criminal justice, '04, M.Ed. special education, '16, Ph.D. educational leadership, principal of Point Alternative Center in Goose Creek school district in Baytown. She and her husband, Kevin, live in Mont Belvieu.

Brenda (Bowling) Bedair '01, B.B.A. accounting, retired from Lamar State College-Orange in March 2018 as director of accounting. She and her husband, Mike, live in Orangefield.

Hayley (Atkins) Reeves '01, B.G.S. general studies, '04, M.Ed. elementary education, is an assistant principal at St. Anne's Catholic School. Her husband, Eric '01, B.B.A. marketing, is an assistant manager at Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Port Arthur, and they live in Port Neches.

Stormy (Markham) Thibodeaux '01, B.S. mathematics, holds an M.Ed. and is the coordinator of mathematics for grades K-12 of Barbers Hill school district. Her husband, Robert '16, M.Ed. administration, is an English teacher and golf coach at Robert E. Lee High School in Goose Creek school district. They live in Old River Winfree.

Linda (Seay) Allen '02, B.B.A. management information systems, is vice president-senior accountant at the Community Bank of Texas in Beaumont. She and her husband, Jeff, live in Hamshire.

Allen Deshazo '02, B.S. kinesiology, is head football coach at Bridge City High School. He and his wife, **Jamie (Minner)** '08, B.G.S. general studies, live in Bridge City.

The Southeast Texas Coaches Association honored **Cody Knight** '02, B.S. kinesiology, as the Boys Cross Country Coach of the Year for 2017 at a banquet held at the MCM Elegante in Beaumont. Cody is a coach and teacher at Barbers Hill High School in Mont Belvieu, and he lives in Dayton.

Danielle (Howell) Mitchell '02, B.S. kinesiology, '05, M.S. kinesiology, '12, M.Ed. counseling, is a counselor at Lumberton High School. Her husband **Joshua** '07, B.G.S. general studies, is the boys' basketball coach and a teacher at Lumberton High School. They live in Lumberton.

Richard Murphy '02, B.S. geology, is a geologist at Acme Brick Co. in Denton. He and his wife, **Shana (Evans)** '99, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, live in Denton.

Kara (Hammonds) Smith '02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, is a teacher at Highland Park Elementary in Nederland school district and her husband, **Colt Smith** '04, B.S. kinesiology, is an engineer at Iron Mountain, located in Boston, Mass. They live in Nederland.

Amber (Kimura) Ambrose '03, B.S. communication, is the founder and CEO of Ambrose McDowell Communications in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Lennie.

Rajesh Malla '03, M.S. environmental engineering, is a supervising engineer for the City of Houston and lives in Cypress with his wife, Puja.

Leslie (DuBose) White '03, B.G.S. general studies, also holds an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction, and is a national account manager for Frozen Food Express. She lives in Kaufman with her husband, Jeremy.

Mindy (Grayson) '04, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, and **Xavier Chapa** '03, B.S. industrial engineering, welcomed their second child, Lucy Ann, on January 16, 2018. Mindy is assistant principal at Spring Creek Elementary School in College Station school district, and Xavier is a sales specialist in resiliency services for IBM Corp. The family lives in College Station.

Teri (Bayless) Hawthorne '04, B.A. English, is executive director of Arc of Greater Beaumont. She and her husband, Chad, live in Lumberton.

Brandy (Harrington) Henley '04, B.S. psychology and B.S. biology, is a forensic scientist at the Jefferson County Regional Crime Laboratory for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. She and her husband, Johnathon, have a daughter, Sullivan, and they live in Beaumont.

Welsey Linder '04, chemical engineering, also holds an M.B.A., and is a senior project engineer at Jacobs Engineering Group. He lives in Houston with his wife, Lisa.

Wesley Mahon '04, B.B.A. management information systems, also holds an M.S. information technology, is a special agent-digital forensic examiner for the U.S. Army. He and his wife Rachel live in Woodbridge, VA.

Lawren (Samaha) McDermand '04, B.B.A. finance, '13, M.Ed. school administration, and her husband, Robert, had their second son, Reid, in June 2018. He joins his big brother, Robert. Lawren is principal of Mount Enterprise Elementary School, and Robert is the assistant athletic director at Stephen F. Austin State University. They live in Nacogdoches.

Wilda Hill Provo '04, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, has a master's degree in human resources management, and is a human resources generalist at Payvhex in Houston. She lives in Beaumont.

Russell Tipton Jr. '04, B.M. music, '06, M.M. music education, '10, M.Ed. school administration, is the associate director of bands at Texas A&M University. He and his wife, Lindsey (Maciel) '06, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies, live in College Station.

Beth (Yelverton) Whitley '04, B.B.A. marketing, is the assistant director of honors programs at Texas Woman's University. She and her husband, Christian, were married February 26, 2018 and live in Denton.

Brandy (Smith) Antill '05, M.Ed. school administration, is principal at AIM Center High School in Vidor school district. She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Nelson.

Kristen (Kelsey) Barton '05, B.S. communication, is the owner of Prescotts: Dance, Cheer, Active Apparel & Clothing and also has been the drill team director for 14 years and cheer coach for six years at Brazoswood High School. She lives in Richwood with her husband, Jason.

Charlotte Coffman '05, B.S. communication, '11, M.Ed. administration, is an education specialist for Region 4 Education Service Center. She lives in Austin with her husband, Andrew.

Kristin (Mattingly) Ferguson '05, B.B.A. finance and accounting, is a controller for the accounting division of the City of Beaumont. She was a 2017 Rising Star honoree by the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants, which recognizes CPAs under 40 years old who have shown innovative leadership qualities within their profession and community. Kristin and her husband, Jason '02, B.B.A. human resource management, live in Lumberton with their son, Kason.



Alumni Between-the-Games Basketball Tailgate—Jan. 5

1. Alumni board member Phyllis (McAfee) Thibodeaux '00, '06, presents the game ball with the help of her kids.

118th Anniversary of Lucas Gusher Alumni Community Service Event—Jan. 1

2. Tiffany Williams-Parker '11, Shannon (Copeland) Figueroa '02, '03, '07, Johnnie (Criton) Durden '00, Antoinette (Espritt) Mays '07, '12, '16, Evie Clifton and Cade Johnson '19

Art of Social Media Etiquette Professional Development Workshop—Jan. 31

• *This professional development series is an ongoing partnership between the Office of Alumni Affairs, MBA program, Career and Professional Development Center, and Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce.*

3. Speaker Lance LaRue '02



Lee Posey '05, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a turnaround manager for LyondellBasell Industries in Houston. He and his wife, Yana, live in League City.

Shana (Sellers) Runnels '05, B.S. criminal justice, '11, M.S. applied criminology, is the director of the Criminal Justice Program at Lamar State College-Orange and lives in Beaumont with her husband, Eric.

Kevin Sensat '05, B.G.S. general studies, and his wife **Kim (Nguyen)** '01, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, opened the restaurant Southern Charm in Orange with Kevin's mother, Terry Hamilton, who formerly owned Tuffy's in Mauriceville and Catfish Kitchen in Beaumont.

Whitney (Evans) Williamson '05, B.S. communication, also holds an M.Ed. in educational leadership, and teaches at Pleasant Hill Elementary in Leander school district. She lives in Leander with her husband, Tyler, and their two daughters, Carsyn and Hadley.

Amy Blount '06, B.S. communication disorders, '08, M.S. speech-language pathology, is a speech-language pathologist at Helena Park Elementary School in Nederland where she was awarded Teacher of the Year 2017. She was nominated by her school for the Beaumont Foundation of America's 2018 Wayne A. Reaud Excellence in Education Award.

Carolyn Cross '06, B.S. communication, holds a master's degree in speech communication and an M.Ed., and is a professor of speech communication at Houston Community College. She lives in Houston.

Stevon Fluitt '06, B.S. criminal justice, is a police officer for the Houston Police Department and lives in Houston.

Amy (Paveto) Haden '06, B.G.S. general studies, works in public and government affairs at ExxonMobil. She lives in Kirbyville with her husband, William.

Kyle Helmke '06, B.B.A. management, is a collision manager at Group 1 Automotive in Stafford and lives in Richmond with his wife, **Lacey (Adams)** '07, B.S. nursing. While he was a student at LU, Kyle helped start CARE (Campus Animal Rescue and Education) and still has two dogs he rescued at the time.

Erin (Toney) Bedair '07, A.A.S. nursing, is a nurse at Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas. She was recognized as a recipient of the Baptist Way Award for creating an electronic report that notifies the Infection Prevention Department of patients who present to the ER with animal bites, ensuring that the Health Department is notified for appropriate actions to be taken to prevent or treat rabies post-exposure. Her husband, **Jason** '99, B.S. nursing, is vice president of clinical services at Altus Emergency. They live in Lumberton.

Jared Byrd '07, B.B.A. finance, attended the Southwest CUNA Management School for credit union management, and is assistant vice president of lending at 5Point Credit Union. His wife, **Marylyn (Gibbs)** '08, B.B.A. accounting, is an internal auditor for Lamar components of the Texas State University System. They live in Nederland.

Shaston Marks '07, B.S. kinesiology, is a teacher in Aldine school district, and he lives in Houston.

Adrienne (Kasko) Parks '07, B.A. history, is a teacher at Warren High School, where she lives with her husband, Christopher.

David Pickett '07, B.G.S. general studies, '18, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, is a life science teacher and instructional technology specialist at Tarkington High School. He and his wife, Gloria, live in Thicket.

David Pool '07, B.B.A. management information systems, is the owner of Mid County Farm & Feed Supply and co-owner at The Avenue Coffee & Café and Neches Brewing Co. in Port Neches. His fiancée, **Carrie Chesson** '13, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, is a teacher at Hamshire-Fannett Elementary School. They live in Port Neches.

Ashley Spicer-Runnels '07, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies, '13, Ed.D. educational leadership, and her husband **Chris** '07, B.B.A. finance, welcomed their son Ryan to in April 2018. Ashley is assistant vice provost for academic affairs at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. The family lives in Cibolo.

Nick Cioci '08, B.S. communication, is assistant registrar at Lamar University after previously working at Lamar Institute of Technology in various roles. He and his wife, Sarah, and their daughter, Blakely, live in Lumberton.

Randy Edwards '08, B.B.A. marketing, and his wife **Brieann (Fiorenza)** '12, B.S. nursing,

welcomed their daughter, Annie James, on February 1, 2018. Randy is a marketing manager for 2-Row Distributing at Del Papa Distributing Co. The family lives in Galveston.

Zachary Gresham '08, B.A. history, holds an M.A. in arts leadership and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction in art education. He is the program manager of Arts in Medicine at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is also an adjunct lecturer at the Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts at The University of Houston. Zachary lives in Houston.

Melanie Lanuza '08, B.S. graphic design, B.S. communication, is a creative designer at the Broussard's Print Shop Division of Broussard's Mortuary. She lives in Beaumont with her partner, **Nick Vikos** '07, B.F.A. art and graphic design.

Bhavikkumar Patel '08, M.E. electrical engineering, is a senior software engineer at Qualcomm Technologies who lives in San Diego, Calif.

Jose L. Perales III '08, B.A. Spanish, '13, M.Ed. in school administration, is dean of students for Aurora Public Schools in Aurora, Colo., where he lives with his wife, **Kristen (Jordan)** '08, B.G.S. general studies.

Tony Sarda '08, B.B.A. finance and economics, and his wife, **Sophie (Wilmore)** '10, B.B.A. marketing, welcomed their daughter Josephine Grace on April 9, 2018. Tony is director of recruitment at Lamar University and Sophie is associate vice president, underwriting officer at Green Bank. They live in Pearland.

Edgar Thompson '08, B.B.A. management information systems, is an IT specialist for the Jefferson County District Attorney's office, and he lives in Beaumont.

Aaron Wells '08, B.S. family and consumer sciences-hospitality administration, is a senior controller at Protect America in Austin, and he lives in Buda with his wife, Corinne.

Meredith (Hemmenway) Akers '09, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Rennell Elementary School in Cypress-Fairbanks school district. Her husband, **Joseph** '09, M.Ed. in administration, is a fine arts teacher at Cypress Springs High School. They live in Cypress.

Jane Apodaca '09, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Skipcha Elementary School in Killeen school district. She lives in Salado.

Robert Balentine '09, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Bransom Elementary School Academy of the Arts in Burleson school district, and he lives in Mansfield.

Jacqueline (Vargas) Childs '09, B.S. biology and B.S. psychology, holds a B.S. in nursing and a master's degree in family practice/nursing. She is an NBII nurse practitioner at the National Brain Injury Institute and her husband, **Garry** '09, B.B.A. general business-entrepreneurship, teaches in the Pearland school district. They live in Pearland.

Janella F. Dedo '09, B.S. biology, works as an administration associate in the University of Texas Department of Marketing and lives in Austin with her husband, Evan.

Lisa (Doucet) Gray '09, M.P.A. public administration, is a unit supervisor at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, and she lives in Houston.

Stacy E. Hall '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, holds an M.Ed. in educational leadership and is an assistant principal at Angleton Junior High School. She lives in Angleton.

Caitlin (Kruger) Hardegree '09, B.A. communications and B.S. political science, is manager of grants, development and marketing at Sixty and Better Inc. in Fort Worth. She and her husband, Jacob, live in Keller.

Ivy Cervera '09, B.A. American Sign Language, is a senior pension specialist at Fidelity Investments and lives in Keller.

Lindsey Moore '09, B.S. communications, is a complaints and resolutions specialist at Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health and lives in Denison.

Meghan Scurria '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, '18, M.Ed. in teacher leadership, teaches third grade at Barbers Hill Elementary South School. She lives in Mont Belvieu.

Bao Tran '09, B.S. biology, who also holds a doctor of chiropractic, is a chiropractor at TexStar Chiropractic Clinic. He and his wife, Oanh, live in Austin.

Howell Wright '09, D.Ed. in educational leadership, is an adjunct professor at Lamar University. He and his wife,

Dorothy (Love) '89, B.S. secondary education, '00, M.Ed. school administration, live in Burkeville.

10s

Holly (Mendoza) Domino '10, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, and her husband, **Brian** '11, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, welcomed a son, Crocket Allen, on January 14, 2018. The family lives in Baytown.

Jamie Due '10, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is director of accounting at Lamar State College-Orange. She has a son named Rhett, and they live in Nederland.

Justin Griffith -10, is director of engineering at Heath Software. He married Katherine Harris in June 2018, and they live in Leander.

Brian Gustin '10, B.S. electrical engineering, is a process control engineer at Phillips66 in Mont Belvieu, and he lives in Baytown.

Marta Tafolla '10, M.Ed. administration, is a teacher at B. Garza Middle School in Weslaco school district. She and her husband, Juan, live in Weslaco.

Heath Wright '10, M.Ed. administration, was named principal of Sweetwater Middle School in 2018. He lives in Abilene.

Paul Broussard '11, B.B.A. management information systems, who holds an M.B.A., is an IT project manager at Raytheon. He and his wife, Ashley, live in McKinney with their children.

A Dinner & Conversation—*Students have dinner and a little conversation with successful alumni in their chosen field of study on March 4.*

1. Pre-law students hosted by Paul Scheurich '82 and Craig Tahaney, instructor of political science and Pre-law Society advisor

Student Government Association Alumni Reunion—*March 30*

2. Lance Broussard '97, Kincaid Broussard, Braxton Hurtado and Brian Hurtado '99

The Big Event—*The Big Event is the largest student-run, one-day service project in the nation. This year's event took place at Beaumont's Dream Center, Hope Clinic and the Beaumont Heritage Society's French Museum. Alumni partnered with students at their respective volunteer locations on April 13.*

3. Dream Center alumni Linda Seay Allen '02 with volunteers

Austin-area Alumni Gathering—*May 1 at the home of Bill '58 and Mary (Greer) Mitchell '58 in Dripping Springs*

4. John Bello-Ogunu VP Diversity & Inclusion, and Patricia Adams '70 (Distinguished Alumna 2001)

Amber (Alexander) Clark '11, B.G.S. general studies, holds an M.Ed. in educational leadership, and is outreach coordinator for the City of Beaumont Best Years Center in the Event Facilities Department. She and her husband, Gregory, live in Beaumont with their daughter, Abigail.

Robert Godinez '11, B.S. civil engineering, M.S. civil and environmental engineering, is a



Distinguished Alumni Awards— *The Lamar University Office of Alumni Affairs bestowed the highest possible honor on four alumni last February, naming them as Distinguished Alumni for 2019 and noting that their dedication to their professions, service to their communities and loyalty to their alma mater epitomizes the Lamar University spirit. Nominated by their peers and selected for the honor by the Distinguished Alumni Awards committee comprised of Alumni Advisory Board members, the awardees are Joseph D. “Joe” Deshotel ’74, Beaumont; Anthony George ’88, a resident of The Woodlands; Susan (Conn) McCurry ’82, Beaumont; and Robert J. “Bob” Wortham ’66, also of Beaumont.*

geotechnical engineer at Tetra Tech. He and his wife, Jessica, live in Midland.

Samantha Myers ’11, B.S.W. social work, has a master’s degree in social work and is a service coordinator and case manager for Texas Children’s Health Plan. She lives in Houston.

Alan Peterson ’11, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a maintenance engineer at KMCO and lives in Deer Park.

Amie (Kendrick) Sonnier ’11, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is an environmental administrative assistant at Flint Hill Resources in Port Arthur. Her youngest son is a current junior at LU, and they live in Port Neches.

Amber (Jamison) King ’12, M.Ed. school counseling, is assistant principal at Dr. E.R. Richter Elementary School in Dayton ISD and lives in Dayton.

Brett Leyendecker ’12, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a

mechanical reliability engineer for Invista and lives in Port Neches.

Madison (Davis) Morrison ’12, B.A. history, earned her law degree and married her husband, Lane, on Feb. 24, 2018. They live in Birmingham, Ala.

Sarah (Wion) Windham ’12, B.S. electrical engineering, is a senior instrumentation engineer for Huntsman and lives in Orange with her husband, James.

Elliot Abbey ’13, B.B.A. general business, is the Tribal Real Estate manager for Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, and he lives in Livingston with his wife, Emma.

Kimberly (Horn) Adams ’13, B.A. English, is a planning specialist for FEMA and lives in Pflugerville.

Margaret Alfred ’13, B.B.A. accounting, graduated from Thurgood Marshall School of Law. She lives in Beaumont. Tiffany Ballard ’13, B.S. communication disorders, ’17, Au.D. audiology, is an audiologist

at Allergy and ENT in Houston and she lives in Katy.

Michael W. Boyd Jr. ’13, B.S. mathematics, and his wife, Janaye, welcomed their third son, Charlie Bryan, on March 27, 2018. They live in Port Neches.

Rachel (Matthews) Colvin ’13, B.A. American Sign Language, is a job placement specialist at Empowered Hands & Kirby Placement and lives in Silsbee with her husband, T.J.

Judith Correa ’13, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a manufacturing engineer at Evergreen Packaging in Pine Bluff, Ark., where she lives.

Adrian Culton ’13, B.B.A. management, received his graduate certificate in human resource management and then subsequently his M.B.A., both from the University of Houston-Downtown. He is a human resources assistant at Amazon and lives with his wife, Alexxis, and their son, Adrian Alexander Culton Jr., in Nashville, Tenn.

Candice (Montgomery) ’13, B.S. industrial engineering, and **Garret Duhon** ’13, B.S. civil engineering, were married on January 27, 2018. Candice is a budget & reporting analyst for Freeport LNG Development, and Garret is a project manager for Manhard Consulting. They live in Houston.

Paul Johnson ’13, M.Ed. school counseling, teaches in Galena Park school district and lives in Houston with his wife, Vicki.

Alden Lewis ’13, M.S. kinesiology, is the head basketball coach at Memorial High School in Port Arthur school district and lives in Missouri City.

Travon McNeal ’13, B.B.A. finance, is a postman at the U.S. Postal Service in Orange, where he lives. **Darius Miller** ’13, B.S. construction management, and **Enger (King)** ’13, B.S. communication, were married in January 2017 and welcomed their son, Mason King, in February 2018. The family lives in Beaumont.

Jessie Morehead ’13, B.S. communication, ’17, M.Ed. administration, is an ISS monitor at North Shore Senior High School in Galena Park school district. He and his wife, **Kristina (Luckett)** ’13, B.S.W. social work, have a son named Jackson, and they live in Missouri City.

Samon (Tahir) Rasul ’13, B.B.A. human resource management, ’15, M.B.A., is the M.B.A. Program coordinator for the University of Maryland Online and lives in Jessup, Md. with her husband, Hammad.

Shaneka (Guidry) Richardson ’13, B.S.W. social work, is a CPS CVS specialist for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. She and her husband, Adrian, live in Beaumont.

Will Robbins ’13, B.A. political science, is an administrator at Earth Analytical Sciences. He served as the 2018 State Republican Executive Committee Caucus Chair at the 2018 Republican State Convention and was elected secretary of the SREC, a term that began in 2018 and will run through 2020. Will lives in Beaumont.

Kayleigh Romero ’13, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, ’17, M.Ed. educational technology leadership, teaches eighth grade math at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Port Arthur school district and lives in Beaumont.

Hollye Usery ’13, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Bowie Elementary School in Corsicana school district. She and her husband, Michael, live in Corsicana.

Ronald Watkins ’13, is principal of Denton school district’s Lester Davis School and lives in Denton with his wife, Katy.

Angela Akah ’14, B.S. health education, received her doctorate of physical therapy from Florida A&M University in 2018 and lives in Missouri City.

Wesley Arnold ’14, B.G.S. general studies, married his wife, Catherine, on March 3, 2018, and they live in Lewisville.

Briana Blacknell ’14, B.A. psychology, received her master’s degree in social work from the University of Houston, and she lives in Baytown.

Steve Chapman ’14, D.Ed. educational leadership, is the

district coordinator for Forney school district and he lives in Combine with his wife, Elizabeth.

Ryan Dollinger ’14, B.S.W. social work, holds master’s degrees in social work and public administration, and served on the state Nomination and Leadership Identification Committee for the National Association of Social Workers, Texas, from July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019. He is a licensed master social worker at Curo Health Services and lives in Beaumont with his wife, Amber.

Jacqueline Harris ’14, B.A. American Sign Language, is the executive assistant to the CEO of Trinity Hardwood Flooring and lives in Rowlett.

Laura Hernandez ’14, B.S. civil engineering, is an engineer at UniversalPegasus International in Houston. She lives in Liberty.

Jarrold Herrington ’14, B.S. criminal justice, is head boys basketball coach at Evadale High School and lives in Buna.

Eritrea (Griffith) Jean-Felix ’14, B.S. biology, married her husband, Jerry, in May 2018. She is an educator in the Houston school district, where they live.

Rolando Lerma ’14, B.S. criminal justice, is a special agent for the Department of Homeland Security and lives in Edinburg.

Shishir Mahmood ’14, M.E. mechanical engineering, is a resident radial aerospace engineer at The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. in Danville, Va., where he lives.

James Nobles ’14, B.A. English, and his wife, Angela, have a son, Wilder, and they live in Houston. Javon Prophet ’14, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, received his Ph.D. in pharmacy from Texas Southern University and lives in Houston.

Paul Rizk ’14, B.S. chemical engineering and B.S. physics, earned his medical degree from UT Southwestern Medical School. He is currently a resident at The University of Florida Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation. He and his significant other, Fantine Gap, live in Gainesville, Fla.

Charne Rutherford ’14, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, graduated from Florida A&M University pharmacy school in 2018.

Pramit Sinha ’14, M.S. computer science, is a software engineer at Choice Hotels in Phoenix, Ariz., where he lives with his wife, Shruti.

Lindsey Sorrell ’14, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, ’16, M.S. speech-language pathology, is a speech-language pathologist at 212 Therapy in Beaumont, and she lives in Lumberton.

Brittni Thompson ’14, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, gave birth to twins in March 2018. She teaches fourth grade at Kipp Zenith Academy and lives in Houston.

Tressa (Leger) Wells ’14, B.S. sociology, ’18, M.Ed. clinical mental health counseling, is a waiver program coordinator at Spindletop Center and lives in Beaumont with her husband, Gabriel.

Jake Wheeler ’14, B.S. political science, earned his law degree from Texas A&M-Commerce, is an attorney at Horka & Wheeler Attorneys at Law and lives in Kountze.

Carissa (Hill) ’15, B.S. communication, ’18, M.Ed. administration, and **Chadwick Allen**, ’14, B.G.S. general studies, married on January 21, 2018. On August 4, 2018, Carissa was featured in an episode of the TLC show ‘Four Weddings.’ They welcomed their first child in January 2019. Carissa is a girls track and field coach at Stafford Middle School. The Allen family lives in Coldspring.

Ellis Bardin ’15, B.S.W. social work, who holds a master’s degree in social work, and his wife, Kaitlin, have a son, Ellis Charles. The Bardin family lives in Katy.

Robin (Hathorne) Barela ’15, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, ’18, M.Ed. in school counseling, is a teacher at Blackburn Elementary in Forney school district, where she lives with her husband, Brian.

Christopher Burdette ’15, B.S. kinesiology, is a teacher at East Chambers Elementary School. He and **Robyn (Winkle)** ’16, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, married in June 2018. Robyn is an academic advisor at Lamar State College Orange, and they live in Winnie.

Shannon Bush ’15, M.Ed. teacher leadership, is a junior high school teacher and cheer coach in Gary school district, where she lives with her husband, Eric.

Kelsi Caicedo ’15, B.B.A. human resource management, received her M.B.A. from Prairie View A&M University. She works as a human resource coordinator at HMSHost in Spring, where she lives.

Brittany Carpenter ’15 B.B.A. finance, is a credit analyst at Origin Bank and lives in Houston.

Marques Collins ’15, M.Ed. administration, is principal of Kashmere Gardens Elementary School in the Houston school district. He and his wife, Carolyn ’13, M.Ed. administration, live in Houston.

Kevin Domingue ’15, B.S. industrial technology, is the South Texas operations manager for Titan Quality Power Services. He and his wife, Phyllis, live in Spring.

Brennan Doty ’15, B.B.A. management information systems, and **Hailey (Lofton)** ’15, B.S. speech and hearing sciences, were married on January 26, 2018, in Austin, where they live.

J.P. Johnson ’15, M.Ed. administration, was named principal of Corsicana Middle School. He and his wife, Amy, live in Corsicana.

Shelly Lee ’15, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, published her second book, The Sheldra Series: An Unknown Love-Book One. The book is the first of a series. Shelly is an administrative associate for Lamar University Office of University Advancement and lives in Beaumont.

Micah Mitchell ’15, B.S. industrial technology, is a systems engineer for Lockheed Martin and lives in Fort Worth with his wife, Whitney.

Sean Murphy ’15, B.S. chemical engineering, is a process engineer at Invista. His wife, **Gladys Garcia** ’13, B.S. communication disorders, ’15, M.S. speech-language pathology, is a speech-language pathologist for Victoria school district. They live in Victoria.

Charity Ogbeide ’15, B.S. communication, earned his law degree from Howard University School of Law. He works as a privacy and data protection associate at Promontory Financial Group in New York, N.Y.

Pranay Peddireddy ’15, M.S. computer science, is a programmer analyst at Softnice Inc. in Phoenix, Ariz., and he and his wife, Kavyasree, live in Phoenix.

| CLASS NOTES |

Keyton Porras '15, B.B.A. accounting and finance, married Alicia Hufstetler on March 24, 2018. The couple lives in Port Neches.

Taylor Poyner '15, B.S. nursing, is a research nurse at Baylor Scott & White Research Institute and lives in Dallas.

Juan Rodriguez '15, B.S. communication, is a multi-media journalist at KVUE in Austin, the

LU Alumni Baseball Tailgate—*On March 29 Graduates and their guests enjoyed picnic BBQ with snow cones, free LU swag, face painting and fun!*

1. Lisa (Warner) Sterling '00, '04; Bobby Sterling; Julie (Mooneyham) Guidry '07; Andrew Guidry and current student Emily Sterling

2. Debbie Maxwell, Rebekah Maxwell '11 and LU Alumni Board Past President Tony Landry '94

New Ambassador Welcome and Senior Recognition —*Pres. Ken Evans hosts ambassadors for food, Sub Zero, games, recognition and awards on April 29*

3. Tran Nguyen, Marilyn Beard, Govin Kaggal, President Evans, Thanh Tsan '19, LaKeitha Morris, associate professor of the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department Madison Hamby and Ashley Towers

Dallas Fort Worth-area Alumni Gathering—*May 9 at the home of Randy '67 and Nancy Best in Dallas*

4. Alpha Delta Pi alumni Rebecca Meadows '82, Chelsea Barnard '12 Beck Fellow 2012, Pam McKee Durrall '72, and Shannon Copeland Figueroa '02, '03, '07

sister station of 12News, where he previously worked.

Colt Schmidtke '15, B.S. political science, and **Kate (Hammons)** '14, B.A. political science, married on January 6, 2018. Colt is a law clerk at the U.S. Department of the Interior, and Kate is the director of campaign activities at HBW Resources. They live in Washington, D.C.

Brett Smith '15, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal at La Grande High School in La Grande, Ore., where he lives with his wife, Kristen.

Grant Crawford '16, B.S. communications, is a reporter for the Tahlequah Daily Press in Tahlequah, Okla., where he lives. The city is the home and capital of the Cherokee Nation, which has more than 355,000 citizens and is the main beat he covers. He credits his time at LU and roles with the University Press for his current success.

Brianna Graffagnino '16, B.S. family and consumer sciences-family studies, is a teacher at Little Cypress Junior High School. As an alumna, she was awarded the Zeta Lady award for the Xi Gamma District of Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity two years after being awarded the same award for Province XI Gamma as a student. Brianna lives in Orange.

Alan Gruenstein '16, B.S. civil engineering, is a civil designer for Topographic Land Surveyors in Fort Worth. He and his wife, Perla, live in Fort Worth.

Meredith Hicks '16, B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse at Baptist

Hospitals of Southeast Texas, and she lives in Groves.

Sharmin Jahan '16, M.B.A., is a marketing specialist at Canon Solutions America. She and her husband Tahsin Mujib '16, M.S.A. in accounting, live in Stamford, Conn.

Kristie Kelley '16, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is principal at Dr. E.R. Richter Elementary School in Dayton school district, where she lives.

Carey Kitts '16, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal in his home district less than a year after graduating from LU. He and his wife, Sheila, live in Abilene.

Matthew McBride '16, M.B.A., is a project manager for Enterprise Precast Concrete of Texas and lives in Waxahachie.

Meridith Meyer '16, M.Ed. administration, is an ESL implementation specialist for Fort Worth school district, where she lives.

Brent Nicholson '16, B.G.S. general studies, is director of football operations at Abilene Christian University and lives in Lake Dallas.

Gina M. Ozuna '16, M.Ed. school counseling, is a school counselor for Austin school district and lives in Converse.

Amanda Prince '16, B.F.A. graphic design, is the social media manager for Americom Marketing in Beaumont and lives in Groves.

LaTasha Richard '16, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, is a scheduler at Translation and

Interpretation Network and lives in Dallas.

Meagan Thierheimer '16, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, holds an M.S. in library science, and is a special education teacher's aide at Bridge City High School.

Vanessa VanDomelen '16, M.S.N. nursing education, is an adjunct nursing faculty member at George Fox University and lives in Newberg, Ore.

Alex White '16, B.S. computer science, is a systems and applications programmer for MobilOil Credit Union, and he lives in Beaumont.

Anavella Williams '16, B.S. family and consumer sciences, welcomed a baby boy, Eli, on May 3, 2018, and they live in Dallas.

Oscar Camarillo '17, B.S. criminal justice, graduated from the State Trooper Academy in 2018 after 24 weeks of rigorous training. He works as a state trooper in Beaumont.

Brittany Combs '17, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches 7th grade math at Copperas Cove Junior High School. Her husband, Tyler '17, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, works at HEB in Copperas Cove where the couple lives.

Jamarcus Corks '17, B.S. communication-broadcasting, works in the Office of Financial Aid at Lamar University and lives in Beaumont.

Brittany (Lopez) Cozad '17, B.A. American Sign Language, teaches ASL at Port Neches-Groves High

School and lives in Nederland with her husband, Jesse.

Summer Dennis '17, B.S. exercise science and fitness management, and her partner Dominique Forrest, welcomed their daughter, Skylar Paige, in May 2018. The family lives in Beaumont along with Skylar's big brother, Kendrick.

Ahmod Gehlot '17, M.S. computer science, is a software developer at Honeywell International and lives in Atlanta, Ga.

Sammy Islam '17, B.B.A. management information systems and accounting, is an auditor for the Texas Lottery Commission and lives in San Antonio.

Carmen (Castillo) Lopez '17, M.Ed. administration, is a teacher at H.G. Isbill Junior High in McGregor school district. She and her husband, Raphael, live in McGregor.

Dana McBee '17, M.Ed. administration, teaches at Eagle Nest Middle School of Cimarron Municipal Schools in Cimarron, N.M. She lives in Eagle Nest with her husband, Daron.

Trent Setliff '17, M.Ed. administration, teaches and coach at Springtown High School and lives in Weatherford with his wife, Catie.

Katie (Loftin) Shroff '17, B.B.A. advertising communication, is a marketing communications manager at Yes to Youth - Montgomery County Youth Services. She lives in Spring with her husband, Michael.

Michelle (London) Terry '17, M.Ed. school counseling, is a teacher at

Savannah Lakes Elementary of Alvin school district. She and her husband, William, live in Rosharon.

Crystal Torres '17, M.Ed. administration, works as a special education and early childhood instructional coach and administrator for Dallas school district. She lives in Arlington.

Quinton Womble '17, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, is a flooring contractor for Womble Flooring. His wife, **Amber (Kuether)** '15, M.Ed. administration, teaches at Fossil Hill Middle School in Keller school district. They live in Azle.

Kelly August '18, M.Ed. special education, is a teacher at Washington Marion High School in Calcasieu Parish Public Schools in Lake Charles, La., where she lives.

Bryce Angell '18, B.S. computer science, is a software/systems developer at Reynolds and Reynolds in Houston, and he lives in Katy with his wife, Ashley.

Frank Dixon III '18, B.S. criminal justice, is assistant chief of police for the City of Austin, where he lives with his wife, Angela.

Katie Doughty '18, M.Ed. school counseling, is an associate principal of instruction and guidance for Grapeland school district and lives in Grapeland with her husband, Blake.

Lacey (De Bretagne) Johnson '18, B.S. corporate communication, is a technical recruiter for Apex Systems. She and **Jordan** '17, B.S. electrical engineering, were married in Spring 2019. Jordan works for LCRA as an associate engineer, and the couple lives in Glen Allen, Va.



Alumnus named
“Young Engineer of the Year”

The Texas Society of Professional Engineers, Sabine Chapter, has named alumnus Keith Zotzky '11, “Young Engineer of the Year.” Zotzky, a professional engineer, who works as a staff engineer for Arceneaux Wilson & Cole LLC, a civil engineering firm located in Port Arthur, is responsible for drainage designs, land development, and water and sewer design as well as pipeline designs. Zotzky says he comes from a long line of “Aggie engineers,” but decided LU was a better fit for him. “I was supposed to be an Aggie, wanted to be an Aggie, but the smaller class size and the more hands-on and face-to-face instruction was a better fit for me and my personality.”





Q&A with

BIG RED & LU

Big Red and Lu are the hardest working birds in the business...at every game cheering the Cardinals, lighting up little faces and making the crowd roar, all while being two of the most influential LU ambassadors on campus and off. For their dedication, they receive high fives wherever they go—and a scholarship—because these super Cardinals are also earning degrees and are as highly valued by LU as our student-athletes, dance team, cheer team and members of the Showcase of Southeast Texas. The pair took a breather to answer a few questions.



Q: What's your major?

A: I'm an education major, EC-6 Generalist. I hope to teach the younger grade levels, kindergarten through third grade.

Q: Where's your roost?

A: Big Red's nest is located in the Montagne Center, inside of the score board where he has a TV and a microwave.

Q: How did you feel when you got the news of the scholarship?

A: I felt super excited when I got the news. I could not wait to start my collegiate mascot career!

Q: What has the scholarship meant to you?

A: The scholarship has allowed me to attend college and for me to further my education and has let me continue doing what I loved! My time as mascot has given me many different and amazing experiences I would never have had. It has also allowed me to live this secret life here at LU, which is pretty cool.

Q: Favorite mascot moment?

A: I have two favorites, the first was performing at Texas A&M Kyle Field for a football game back in September, and my second is traveling to Cedar Falls, Iowa, for the first FCS playoff game in LU history.

Q: Where's your favorite perch?

A: Big Red's favorite place to perch is on top of the highest tree in the quad.

Q: What's your favorite peck?

A: Big Red's favorite snack is gummy worms, or sunflower seeds!

Q: Favorite song?

A: Big Red's favorite song is a tie between 'The Bird is the Word' and 'Shake Your Tail Feather.'

Q: What do you enjoy watching?

A: Big Red loves watching himself on the big screen.

Q: Favorite color?

A: My favorite color is red, because Big Red is always confident.

Q: Favorite motto?

A: "Just Wing It"

Q: What are your nicknames?

A: A few nicknames Big Red likes to go by, Big R, Red or The Big Bird in Charge.



Q: What's your major?

A: Accounting and marketing

Q: Where's your roost?

A: Montagne Center downstairs where Lu has her own personal suite.

Q: How did you feel when you got the news of the scholarship?

A: I was excited to have the opportunity to spend more time with Big Red and the students of Lamar University, while cheering on our wonderful athletes!

Q: What has the scholarship meant to you?

A: The scholarship allows me to continue doing what I love and assists me in being the first person from my family to graduate college (which is my biggest goal). I have also met life-long friends and made memories I will cherish forever. Having this scholarship has allowed me to further my education and continue being the mascot which is my absolute passion. It has allowed me to make connections with people I never would have without doing this.

Q: Favorite mascot moment?

A: Always being able to show off my dance moves on the big screen and blaming everything I do on Big Red. Also, watching women's basketball dominate every season and being a part of their historical winning streak at Lamar University.

Q: Where's your favorite perch?

A: In my bird bath with my Starbucks frap next to me and hanging out in my nest to binge watch my favorite Netflix shows. Or getting a nice workout in at our wonderful rec center.

Q: What's your favorite peck?

A: I love, love, love gummy bears, sour worms and what girl doesn't love chocolate?!

Q: Favorite song?

A: 'Bird Is The Word,' 'I Believe I Can Fly' and 'Three Little Birds.'

Q: What are your nicknames?

A: Lu, Lady Red, Miss Big Red, Beautiful, Princess and Sweetheart. (Okay, so I may have made those last three up, but they should be a thing.)

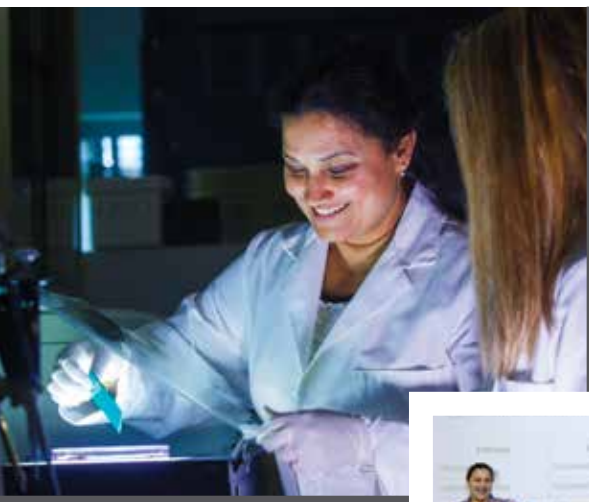


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CLASS TAKEOVER

by Shelly Vitanza

KUCKNOOR RECEIVES FIRST-EVER BECK TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

"Honestly, a big shout out to my student, Carlo Vanz, who nominated me without my knowledge, as he was leaving LU to pursue his Ph.D. in immunology and microbiology at University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio," said Kucknoor. "Due to my summer teaching assignment and lack of time, I almost didn't turn in my application, but decided to give it a try because I did not want to disappoint Carlo."



teaching techniques, by taking a personal interest in students' struggles and successes, and by going that extra mile at times, in the best interest of the students," said Kucknoor.

Through a generous gift to the Lamar University Foundation, Houston attorney David J. Beck established the award. Each year, a recipient of the award will receive \$25,000 and will retain the title of Beck Teaching Excellence Award recipient throughout her or his academic career.

President Evans explains, "Mr. Beck is a great friend of our university. Since 2009 he has inspired and enabled the highest level of scholarship and research through the David J. Beck Fellowships given each year to two outstanding undergraduate students. His most recent unique offering of support is dedicated to recognizing the foundation of the university, our faculty," Evans said. "Mr. Beck's generous gift supports the very best in teaching at Lamar University and will have a lasting impact on our faculty and student success."

"My heartfelt gratitude to Mr. David J. Beck for his generosity and his support to promote faculty excellence," said Kucknoor. "I consider myself both honored and humbled to be the one out of the 73 amazing colleagues. This award to me is yet another milestone that will keep me going ahead on the same path with the same amount of zeal and passion."

It's the kind of classroom interruption any faculty member

would be happy to accommodate and Ashwini Kucknoor, associate professor of biology, was no exception, although, as the award attests, she is exceptional. Kucknoor is Lamar University's first recipient of the David J. Beck Teaching Excellence Award. President Ken Evans interrupted one of Kucknoor's classes to announce her selection for the distinction and present her with a \$25,000 check.

"I was shell-shocked and overwhelmed, especially the way it all went down with Dr. Evans walking into my class," said Kucknoor, who has been at LU since 2010.

Kucknoor was one of 73 nominations submitted by students, faculty and administration for the award. Of those 73 nominees, 25 faculty members completed the application process. A selection committee interviews the candidates to determine who best represents "the pinnacle of teaching excellence and whose academic performance brings acclaim to LU."

Kucknoor, who earned her Ph.D. in molecular microbiology from the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada, came to LU from Washington State University where she was an assistant professor of research in the School of Molecular Biosciences. Prior to her work at WSU, Kucknoor completed postdoctoral research in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. In June of this year, Kucknoor was one of 22 attendees nationwide to take part in a week-long workshop on DNA barcoding aimed at enhancing student learning by adapting course-based undergraduate research experiences in teaching undergraduate biology courses.

"My professional goal is to reach as many students as I can by adopting most, if not all of the proven styles/strategies out there, by constantly updating my