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2010 SCHEDULE

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With Cardinal Pride,

James M. Simmons
President
Lamar University

From the President

All across campus, we see evidence of vibrant changes taking place at our university.

A record number of graduates led us to hold two commencement ceremonies in December. Growing enrollment—we set an all-time record enrollment of 14,054 this spring—has led us to initiate construction of a fifth phase of Cardinal Village. When these new residences open this fall, Lamar will have on-campus student housing for more than 2,500 students.

Lamar is already a top-producer of chemical engineers. The new expansion to Cherry student housing for more than 2,500 students. These new residences open this fall, Lamar will have on-campus student housing for more than 2,500 students.

With Cardinal Pride,

James M. Simmons
President
Lamar University
Coaching Champions

by Beth Gallaspys

H gh expectations defined Vernon Glass. As Lamar University’s head football coach from 1963-1975, Glass challenged his players to do their best every time and to learn from their mistakes when they fell short. That attitude carried through to all aspects of his life.

“He had high expectations for everything,” said Glass’s daughter Diana (Glass) Thibodeaux ’77. “It was not unrealistic expectation; it was doing what you knew to be the best you could do. I think that’s what he brought out in the players, too.”

For Glass and his family—his wife, Marilyn Glass ’65, and their daughters, Thibodeaux, LIndy (Glass) Gohmert ’75 and Patti Glass—the years in Beaumont at Lamar were happy ones, surrounded by administrators, coaches and players who became like family.

“The whole purpose was to make those around him better,” Thibodeaux said. “He truly cared about the players and the other coaches. It was about winning, but it was mostly about the players.”

The respect and affection Glass had for his players was readily reciprocated.

“I had immense and total respect for Coach Glass,” said Bart Simmons ’78, ’79, a three-year letterman as a Cardinals offensive lineman. “He was the best example of a true player’s coach.”

“He related to the players, was at ease around them and talked openly with them. More importantly, he motivated them. We all wanted to play our best for Coach Glass. We wanted to play like champions.”

In recognition of Glass’s legacy, the Cardinals’ football practice field was dedicated this fall as the Coach Vernon Glass Field of Champions. Improvements to the field—including a new covered pavilion—were made possible by a $200,000 gift from Simmons and his wife, Martye (Sculley) Simmons ’78, to Lamar’s Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign.

“We were delighted in the gift and in the memory of all the wonderful things Coach Glass did here at Lamar University,” said Athletic Director Billy Tubbs. “The two became friends when Tubbs was an assistant basketball coach during Glass’s tenure as head football coach.

“She won championships, and we want to get our program back to that level,” Tubbs said. “Naming it the Vernon Glass Field of Champions ties in so well with what we want to do.”

As head football coach for 13 seasons, Glass led the Cardinals to four Southland Conference championship titles—in 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1971. He was a three-year letterman in both football and baseball at Rice, where he captained the 1950 football team and the 1951 baseball team. Later, he quarterbacked Carwell Air Force Base in its National Service Crown win over Fort Jackson.

Glass started his coaching career at Del Mar Junior College, guiding the team to the Junior Rose Bowl and earning honors as Junior College Coach of the Year in 1959 from the Texas Sports Writers Association.

Glass was twice named NCAA College Division Coach of the Year—1970 and 1974. At Lamar, he compiled a career record of 63-68-1.

“Vernon took over a fairly successful program at the NAIA level under coach J.B. Higgins and accepted the challenge of moving up to the NCAA College Division level,” said Joe Lee Smith, who was Lamar’s sports information director when Glass was head coach and Higgins was athletic director. “In his second season, we started a string of three-straight conference championships.”

“Soon after that, we took another big step up when we went to the University Division 1A level. That was a huge step because Vernon then started having a hard time competing on our limited resources.”

Glass, who died in 2005, had an impressive record as a player and coach even before coming to Lamar. He had an All-State high school quarterback in Corpus Christi and played a key role in Rice’s 1949 Southwest Conference championship and Cotton Bowl win over North Carolina. He was a three-year letterman in both football and baseball at Rice, where he captained the 1950 football team and the 1951 baseball team. Later, he quarterbacked Carwell Air Force Base in its National Service Crown win over Fort Jackson.

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—DIANA (GLASS) THIBODEAUX ’77

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Glass started his coaching career at Del Mar Junior College, guiding the team to the Junior Rose Bowl and earning honors as Junior College Coach of the Year in 1959 from the Texas Sports Writers Association.

H e moved on to Baylor University as a backfield coach before taking over the Cardinals program from Higgins.

“If you talk to the guys who played for Vernon and those who worked with him, you’ll find out what an outstanding person he was,” Smith said. “He was dedicated to doing things the right way—as a coach and as a person. He was clearly a class act.”

He also was a gifted storyteller who became a sought after banquet speaker during his days in Beaumont, according to football media guides of the time.

Simmons, a Distinguished Alumnus and member of the College of Business Board of Advisors, often heard Glass say that games were won or lost on the practice field, not in the stadium. “Naming the practice field the Coach Vernon Glass Field of Champions is appropriate and is the best way I know to honor him and all of the players, coaches and many other folks associated with Lamar football whom he inspired during his important tenure as head coach,” Simmons said.

Glass’s family agreed wholeheartedly. “Naming the practice field after our father is the perfect tribute to him. The life-lessons that he taught on the practice field were perseverance—meaning you keep doing it until you get it right—determination—if you get knocked down, you get right back up again—and respect—for success comes when you learn to respect each other and work together. Those were the truths that he believed and lived by,” Thibodeaux said during the dedication ceremony.

Thibodeaux said her father would have been touched and honored by the recognition, especially since it came from one of his players. “He had plenty of honors through the years, but I think this would have meant the most,” she said. “Now there’s a tangible symbol of his legacy.”
A legacy that lives through the lives of students
A wonderful couple and true friends of the arts

For more than 50 years, Rex and Ruth Goode were loyal supporters of Lamar University.

Their love of Lamar, and of the arts, led them to establish planned gifts that today are helping students in the arts at Lamar and a host of arts organizations in Southeast Texas.

“They both had a great love for music and art,” said President James Simmons. “Both were members of the Friends of the Arts and were extremely supportive of the university, attending many events and particularly those in music and the arts.”

“Ruth was an excellent pianist, and Rex was an architect at one time employed by the university,” Simmons said. “In fact, one of our recital halls in the music building was his design.”

Natives of Florida, the couple came to Beaumont in 1953 when Rex accepted a position with a local architectural firm. He began teaching architecture courses at Lamar and later became director of a campus planning and university architect, a position he held from 1975 to 1986 when he retired from the university. Rex was the associate architect of First United Methodist Church, and also designed the Wesley Foundation at Lamar. He was an associate architect for the remodeling of the Julie Rogers Theatre. Rex died Jan. 1, 2009.

Ruth taught piano and theory for 40 years, during which time she was also an accompanist and performer. She regularly attended the annual Van Cliburn Competition in Fort Worth and was a charter member of the Women’s Music Club of Beaumont. She died Dec. 11, 2004.

Simmons’ appreciation of Ruth’s talented touch on the keys extended to how she touched the life of his family. Both his daughter and a son studied piano with her as young children. “I would go to their recitals and see first hand what a wonderful teacher she was,” he said.

Through the terms of their wills, they left $113,000 to the Lamar University Foundation to create scholarships for students in art, music and theater. In addition, they gave funds from their estate to numerous local charities.

“We are most appreciative of Rex and Ruth for leaving this wonderful gift to Lamar University,” said Floyd McSpadden, director of planned giving. “Planned gifts provide for the future of Lamar University as they afford our alumni and friends the ability to balance their charitable interests with their financial needs.” — BKS

Cardinal Cadence
FEBRUARY 2010

Campaign Impact

Investing in the Future
The Campaign for Lamar University

Video vital to victory

We feel like reinstating the football program... and getting the marching band going again will really help the university attract more students and improve enrollment and the university’s position both regionally and at the state and national level. We’re excited about the opportunity, and we wanted to be a part of this.

— Bill Nylin ’65

For a college football program, one vital component of a winning strategy is careful analysis of game and practice video. Thanks to a gift from Conn’s Inc., the Cardinals will have a first-class facility this fall for editing and viewing video of their own plays and those of teams they will face on the gridiron.

In honor of the $150,000 gift, given as part of the university’s Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign, the facility inside the new athletic complex will be known as the Conn’s Video Room.

Players have an easier time improving their play when they can see what they are doing right and what they are doing wrong on the field. Reviewing video also will allow the Cardinals to properly prepare for upcoming games.

“Being able to scout your opponents is one of the real critical points in coaching and winning,” said Athletic Director Billy Tubbs. “We feel like this will help us present a first-class program to our players and our recruits. We truly appreciate this gift from Conn’s.”

The university and the company share a long history in Southeast Texas. Conn’s began in Beaumont in 1890 as a plumbing and heating supply company and later expanded to offer a variety of appliances and electronics at a number of locations. Today, Conn’s is a publicly traded company headquartered in Beaumont with more than 70 stores in three states. Lamar University got its start in 1923 as a junior college a few blocks from the current location. Because of the long-standing relationship, Conn’s wanted to show its support for the university, said Bill Nylin ’65, chairman of the board at Conn’s and a former Lamar University executive vice president and deputy chancellor.

“We feel like reinstating the football program... and getting the marching band going again will really help the university attract more students and improve enrollment and the university’s position both regionally and at the state and national levels.” Nylin said. “Our personal relationship, not just a corporate relationship,” Nylin said. “It goes way back.”

Tim Frank, CEO and president of Conn’s, said he can see the impact of Lamar University simply by walking through the company’s corporate headquarters in Beaumont.

“If the degree individuals or the individuals pursuing degrees, by far the vast majority come from Lamar,” Frank said. “They receive a superior education but are also very well-rounded individuals. We very much appreciate the value that Lamar brings to our workforce. My personal philosophy is an education is not a means to an end. It is of tremendous value in and of itself. The maturity and skills that Lamar brings to these individuals helps them to excel in our environment, which is one of hard work, of a very practical, pragmatic approach to solving problems and helping customers.”

Both Frank and Nylin recognize that universities like Lamar can no longer rely on state funding, tuition and fees alone to support quality educational programs. “You have to have the quality research programs to bring funds in to make a first-class university, and you have to have private and corporate donations to assist that as well. We understand that, and we’re supportive of it,” Nylin said. — BG
Valero to LU: A million for scholarships

Students in Lamar’s College of Engineering will find enhanced scholarship opportunities thanks to a $1 million gift from the Valero Energy Foundation—the charitable arm of Valero Energy Corp. The gift will create an endowment for the purpose of awarding the Valero Scholarship in Engineering. "Our country needs a real scientific approach to many of its issues," said Bill Klesse, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Valero Energy Corp., presented the gift. At the gift announcement, Klesse said, “Engineering really helps young people form their minds, add to society and become real contributors.”

“Valero’s support of Lamar University and its students in the College of Business and College of Engineering is of great benefit to the University,” said President James Simmons. "Although he didn’t graduate from Lamar, he took his first college courses here, so we’re happy to claim him as one of our own.”

“Lamar is wonderful at what it does,” Klesse added. “Our country needs more wonderful institutions such as Lamar University in the field of engineering and, and, since many Valero engineers are Lamar University alumni, we are pleased to help future engineering students achieve their goals.”

Valero has always been a strong supporter of Lamar University, and has added value to our performance and to our success,” Klesse said. “We have many Lamar graduates in our company, and we are very grateful to the men and women of Valero for their support.”

“Valero has been faithful supporter across the board of the many initiatives of the college,” said Jack Hopper, dean of the College of Engineering and executive assistant to the president for economic development and industrial relations. “This contribution specifically for student scholarships, both undergraduate and graduate, is a tremendous boost to our recruiting and retention of outstanding students, and we are very grateful to Lamar and the University for their support.”

“Lamar does a terrific job in Southeast Texas; there’s no question about it,” Klesse said. “We have many Lamar graduates in our company, and they add value to our performance and to our success.”

Valero’s support of Lamar University dates to its purchase of the Portland, Texas facility in 2005. Valero has provided co-op and intern positions for Lamar University students and has been a leader in organizing and developing the college’s industrial engineering curriculum. Valero has also actively served the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce’s committee on advancing new technologies at the university and serves on the Texas Air Research Advisory Board, which provides support for initiatives to promote the value of the university’s research to the petroleum industry.

“The Valero Energy Foundation proudly supports educational and professional development activities that benefit our employees and the Lamar community at the Valero Port Arthur Refinery. It has always been part of Valero’s culture to make a difference in the communities where our employees live and work. Valero recognizes the remarkable contributions of Lamar University in the field of engineering, and, since many Valero engineers are Lamar University alumni, we are pleased to help future engineering students achieve their goals.”

Valero Energy Corp. is a Fortune 500 company based in San Antonio with approximately 22,000 employees and 2008 revenues of $119 billion. The company owns and operates 16 refineries throughout the United States, Canada and the Caribbean with a combined throughput capacity of approximately 3 million barrels per day, making it the largest refiner in North America. Valero also owns and operates seven ethanol plants in the Midwest with a combined capacity of 780 million gallons per year and is one of the nation’s largest retail operators with approximately 5,800 retail and branded wholesale outlets in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean under various brand names, including Valero, Diamond Shamrock, Shamrock, Ultramar and Beacon. — BK S

Tennis, anyone?

Tennis has always been a family affair for Jennifer (Hebert) ’84 and Greg Thompson. Three of the Thompson’s four children played tennis competitively, and Greg has coached tennis as a volunteer for St. Anne Catholic School in Beaumont. Practices and tournaments for the St. Anne tennis team were generally held at the LU courts, so it was a perfect fit for the couple to donate a generous gift to upgrade the tennis facilities for the many students who would use the courts in years to come.

The Beaumont couple has donated $300,000 for improving the LU tennis facilities to the Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign. A total renovation of the tennis building includes a pro shop that will double as a meeting facility as well as improvements to the rest rooms and increased storage area. The Thompson Family Tennis Center will also include a state-of-the-art electronic scoreboard capable of keeping scores remotely for up to six matches at once and new awnings to shade spectator seating.

“The reality for Division I athletics is you must have top-notch facilities to recruit and retain top student-athletes,” said Greg Davis, Lamar’s head coach for men’s tennis. “Jennifer and Greg have now made that possible for the Lamar tennis program. We are certain the Thompson Family Tennis Center will be viewed as one of the top tennis facilities in the state of Texas.”

The Thompsons have always been loyal supporters of Lamar University and staunch believers in service to the community. Greg served as president of the LU Foundation and is co-chair for the $100 million Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign. To date, the campaign for Lamar has raised more than $62 million of its overall goal.

“We have great leadership for the campaign in Elvis Mao ’79 and Mike Aldredge ’55, our co-chairs, as well as from our entire campaign cabinet; however, Lamar has someone who was on the ground in Beaumont and who was on the university campus fairly often. As the Foundation president at the time, I was happy to serve when asked,” Greg said.

Coaching tennis at St. Anne isn’t the only call to service in the church for the couple. Currently president of the diocesan Boy Scouts of America board and a former president of the St. Anne school board, Greg has worked with Catholic schools for many years. The couple co-chaired the Bishop’s Faith Appeal for the Diocese of Beaumont. Their most recent honor from the church was a papal appointment as Knight and Lady of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, an organization initially established by warrior monks in 1099 with the goal of protecting and defending the Holy Land.

Jennifer is the first in her immediate family to graduate from college. She worked her way through school—teaching ballet, tap and jazz dance in Groves, crediting pedagogy and history instructors like Sarah Matherly, H. Ward MacKey and John Carroll for helping her succeed at Lamar. She applies her degree in secondary education and her talents as a substitute teacher for St. Anne.

Greg, a Beaumont attorney and Port Arthur native, graduated in 1979 with an accounting degree from the University of Texas and in 1982 earned his law degree there. As a professional mediator, Greg enjoys the intellectual challenge of bringing together two parties who seemingly can’t resolve their differences to finally agree upon a mutually acceptable solution. In 1995, he earned the M.B.A. from H, but he acknowledged that it was his first college experience at Lamar that set the stage for all his future successes. “My very first college experience was at Lamar University three days after I finished high school. I took an English class with H. Ward Perkins, who was a phenomenal teacher and a wonderful person,” Thompson recalled.

“At that first class I decided that I really wanted to succeed and to a great career.”

Greg’s continued service to Lamar University and his leadership throughout the comprehensive campaign have been exemplary in so many ways,” said President Simmons. “Although he didn’t graduate from Lamar, he took his first college courses here, so we’re happy to claim him as one of our own.”

The Thompsons have a profound love for the Boy and Girl Scouts of America, and Greg earned the Eagle Scout distinction in 1972 and has been involved in scouting ever since. Their two eldest sons, twins Taylor and Tyler, are Eagle Scouts, and the youngest son, Tristan, is currently a Life Scout. Greg served as past president of the Three Rivers Council of the Boy Scouts of America and is a board member for the Southern Region Boy Scouts of America, as well as an at-large member of the national board.

“One of the boys was so involved in Boy Scouts that our daughter, Trevor, came to me years ago and wanted to know why we couldn’t also have a Girl Scout troop,” Jennifer said. “I said, ‘Well, we can!’ and founded Brownie Troop 638, which is still active today. Whatever my kids are involved in, whether it’s drama or church, I put my energies and time into it.” — LA
his fall, Cardinal fans will see the commitment of Education First Federal Credit Union to Lamar University on a grand scale every time they check the stats on the new state-of-the-art scoreboard at Provost Umphrey Stadium. The credit union’s name will be the prominent sponsor named on the scoreboard, a testament to the long-term relationship that has benefited the university community for nearly six decades.

Education First Federal Credit Union has signed on as a major sponsor of Lamar University athletics with a $1 million contribution. That commitment will not only be acknowledged on the scoreboard but also on the marquee outside the Montagne Center, on video boards and in game-day publications.

“This sponsorship will be a tremendous help in bringing football back to Lamar University,” said president James Simmons. “We are very grateful for Education First Federal Credit Union’s support of our athletics programs.”

“Education First has had a long relationship with Lamar University,” said Jimmy Lackey, president of Education First FCU. “Established in 1952, the credit union signed on as its first LU members the next year. In the decades since, both the credit union and university have seen significant growth. Today, the credit union has nine branch locations, more than 32,000 members and more than $265 million in assets. Although it now has a community charter, the bulk of its membership still comes from those serving in education or pursuing higher education.

“When I moved to Beaumont 40 years ago, it was called the Teachers Credit Union and was in what is now the Lamar human resources building,” said Dale Ortego, Regents’ Professor of Chemistry, who is in his 22nd year on the board of directors of the credit union and in his fourth year as chairman. “It was started by a handful of teachers from the Beaumont and South Park school districts. It was helpful to me and to a lot of people. You could get a loan from them at a time when you couldn’t get one from a bank.”

The credit union has had an office at Lamar University since 1979, has been a corporate sponsor of LU athletics since 2004 and has endowed scholarships for students at the university since 1990. “We’ve done a lot through the years to help Lamar,” Ortego said. “When one of our former board chairman died, we created the Tom F. Jones Honors Scholarship in his memory with a large endowment that supports six or seven top-notch honors students every year. We also created an endowed scholarship in memory of Mary Katherine Bell, who taught at Lamar for many years. And, each year, we give scholarships to more than 30 local high school students to attend college. All of them come to Lamar.”

The credit union’s support also takes a hands-on approach when it’s time to welcome newcomers to the campus or to share enthusiasm about the university with the broader community. “The credit union is supportive of many activities that are a part of university life,” said Juan Zabala, executive director of Lamar’s alumni programs. “Education First has been involved with new student move-in since its inception and have been our partner in the Red White & You community campaign for many years.”

New student move-in provides an opportunity for members of the Beaumont community to welcome new students. Education First has been a sponsor of the move-in program since it started and has helped new students and parents to see first hand the community support for Lamar University and for its students. Red White & You is an annual campaign to celebrate the important connection between Lamar University and the region. Education First has participated as a partner in this program for many years, helping to promote the vital relationship between Lamar and the business community.

“The close working relationship between Lamar University and our regional business community is critical to growth and expansion at Lamar and to economic development throughout our region,” Zabala said. “Education First has been one of our university’s most strident supporters and most engaged partners. It truly understands the importance of engaging students and faculty of this institution with the local business community and are committed to expanding economic benefits to all citizens of this region by enhancing this relationship.”

“We are committed to athletics,” Lackey said. “It is an extension of our commitment to higher education; hence our name—Education First. This gift is just another way to support what is going on at the university.”
Rodeo ready

E
ach night of the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Pam (Dugan) Springer ’69 dons her hat and chaps to ride into an arena alive with anticipation. Springer is one of the 18 vice presidents of the volunteer organization, a coveted position and one she has earned over the course of working each rodeo for nearly three decades. Each year, she looks forward to rodeo time. “There is that special group of friends you don’t see any other time,” Springer said.

For many of the 22,000 volunteers, the rodeo becomes a family. Springer met her husband, Jerrol, there in 1987. That meeting began not only a personal love affair still thriving today, but a rodeo connection. One of the events Jerrol invited her to was the calf scramble where he sponsored an entry. “I got to go with him to have a picture made with the little fella who caught it and met his family. It just brought back that this is really what I wanted to do: work with kids. That’s the magical part of the rodeo.” She and Jerrol married in August 1987.

Springer’s first rodeo committee was the international committee. Soon, her interests drew her to join the School Art Committee, and, in 2002, she was selected to head the spin-off School Art Auction Committee. She was elected a director of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and, last year, a vice president. “It is an extreme honor and a form of recognition for those who have spent their time and resources to make a significant contribution to the show,” she said. The money the committee raises funds scholarships for students attending Texas schools. Since 1957, the show has committed more than $140 million in educational support. Today, 2,092 students receive show scholarships and attend 99 different Texas colleges and universities.

“The show is basically reinvigorating in Texas. These students are our future leaders,” Springer said. One of the things she finds most rewarding as a vice president is the opportunity to meet the students after the scholarship presentation ceremonies. “Those kids are not just going to school. They’re making 3.8 grade point averages. They’re involved in extracurricular activities,” she said. “My husband and I are blessed because we have been able to support the auctions as buyers. We get letters from the kids that are incredible—to read what they’re doing and the life experiences they’re having. It gives you a great sense of hope and optimism for the future,” she said.

Springer is only the fifth woman to be elected vice president in the 78-year history of the rodeo, but she just calls her fellow vice president, but it’s interesting how many women come up and say, ‘We wish we could do that, too.” Springer said. “Oxford loved it. This has been a delightful advance toward royalties,” Wright said. “Oxford loved it. This has been a delightful surprise because I have never had the experience of sending off the prospectus the first time when the editor said, ‘We love this. We’ll take it.’ Usually, you have to work it, negotiate it, and then it goes back and forth. We’ll take it. ’ Usually, you have to work it, negotiate it, and then it goes back and forth. Usually, you have to work it. ‘Oxford loved it. This has been a delightful advance toward royalties,” Wright said. 

D Stuart Wright’s body of expertise has focused on high-profile cases like the Branch Davidians and Oklahoma City bombing. Now, he’s expanding decades of research—and tying it together—with a landmark study of government raids on religious communities.

Sects under siege

Stuart Wright stands outside the Hall of Justice in Paris. His ultimate destination: government raids on religious communities. During a month traveling through France, Italy and Belgium to gather material for a new book—his fifth—Lamar University scholar Stuart Wright visited the targeted communities and conducted interviews with the leaders and members who were eyewitnesses to the raids.

From the streets of Paris and Brussels to the most remote parts of the Alps and Pyrenees, he and co-author Susan Palmer recorded 48 raids in six countries. Along the way, they also talked to scholars, officials and leaders of watchdog groups.

Under contract with Oxford University Press, Wright and Palmer are completing what they believe will be the first comprehensive study ever conducted of government raids on religious communities—from Central and West Texas to European locales. Storming Zion: Exploring State Raids on Religious Communities, is scheduled for publication in late 2011.

We have a contract in hand with advances toward royalties,” Wright said. “Oxford loved it. This has been a delightful surprise because I have never had the experience of sending off the prospectus the first time when the editor said, ‘We love this. Well, I’ve never had the experience of sending off the prospectus the first time when the editor said, ‘We love this. We’ll take it.’ Usually, you have to work it, negotiate it, and then it goes back and forth. Usually, you have to work it. ‘Oxford loved it. This has been a delightful advance toward royalties,” Wright said. 

Wright and Palmer have studied new or alternative religious communities for more than 25 years and have published extensively in the field. Their latest project is significant, Wright said, because “it gives validity to an important international research endeavor... I am confident this...”
It occurred to us that nobody had ever done a comprehensive study on these raids . . . We had no idea about numbers. I don’t think anybody did.

**STUART WRIGHT**

Research and Sponsored Programs, having joined the faculty in 1985 after earning a Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut. In 1999, he was recognized as Uiversity Scholar, Lamar’s highest honor for research and scholarly activities, among a long list of academic accolades.

In addition to advances from the publisher, Wright has received a grant from the Canadian government, to support their travel and field work.

“We want to examine these state raids collectively as a distinct type of phenomenon, compare cases across cultures and isolate the key factors giving rise to government raids in order to test our models,” Wright and Palmer wrote in their prospectus. “Moreover, we want to explain why state raids have increased in number or frequency in recent years. We expect to find patterns developing. Cases tended to fall apart because the allegations would be inflated or exaggerated. A lot of times, people would have ulterior motives, and there would be all kinds of other dynamics involved.”

He added, “I think the body of scholarship on new religious movements has grown, particularly in the last 20 years with the advent of some new journals. Conferences I attend now tend to be much more international. We’ve become aware of raids that probably otherwise we wouldn’t know about . . . When we got to the point where my co-author and I were going to look at this, we were already aware that this had a strong international scope and, in fact, France is the most problematic area in all North America and Europe because its laws are very Draconian.”

Wright is working on two books simultaneously: Storming Zion and an edited volume with a co-editor that focuses entirely on the Eldorado incident. He is negotiating with New York University Press on the latter volume.

“As a scholar,” Wright said, “you have to step back and take a much broader view of religion. The breadth of claims people can make is unlimited.”

“I have never been interested in orthodox, mainstream, conventional religion because it seems to me that it becomes routine and ritual. With new religions, or first-generation religions, where you have somebody who is a visionary or a prophet or a guru who self-appointed himself, it’s like being in a laboratory watching religion being born. I find it absolutely fascinating.”

**Other books by Stuart Wright**

Leaving Cults: The Dynamics of Defection (1987)

Home Cell Groups and House Churches: Emerging Alternatives for the Urban Church (1987, with two co-authors)

Armageddon in Waco: Critical Perspectives on the Branch Davidian Conflict (1995)

Patriots, Politics and the Oklahoma City Bombing (2007)
A passion for gifted education

by Louise Wood

From Brazil to Bulgaria, H ungary to H ong Kong and in more than 50 countries, Dorothy Sisk has traveled the world on behalf of gifted children. She has spoken in venues from the little red schoolhouse to the White House. She has shared projects with heads of state and 9-year-olds alike.

“Gifted education is a passion for me because I am convinced that gifted young people and adults have a great deal to offer to our troubled world, and they need assistance in believing in their gifts and talents to do so,” said Sisk, who holds the Conn Chair for Gifted Education. “I have experienced that when the gifted are empowered to live their lives, they enrich not only their lives, but the lives of their families, their communities and, in many cases, the nation and the world.”

Sisk shared her passion with an audience of several hundred November 2, presenting “The Conn Chair: A Faculty Lecture” in the University Union. Her lecture topic paralleled that of her 2009 book, Making Great Kids Greater: Eating the Burden of Being Gifted.

A faculty member since 1989, she is a professor of professional pedagogy in the College of Education and Human Development. She is the author and co-author of nine other books and the author of chapters in two dozen others.

Sisk is an accomplished researcher and prolific author who has spoken all over the world. She has been project director for significant educational initiatives, receiving federal and state grants totaling more than $10 million from 1990 to 2009.

When she accepted the Conn Chair in 1989, Sisk brought a wealth of experience in education for gifted and talented students, ranging from teaching in public schools to service in Washington, D.C., as director of the Office of Gifted and Talented Education and as professor of special education and coordinator of teacher training in gifted education at the University of South Florida.

Sisk was born in Nashville, Tenn., having arrived early while her mother was there on vacation. She grew up in Ohio, where her father worked for an oil company and her mother was “a home-person extremely involved in environmental issues.” She has one son, Jeffrey, a stockbroker in San Diego.

Sisk has earned scores of honors, including the International Research Council Commendation Award, Creative Education Foundation Hall of Fame, Australian Environment Education Association Council Award and Lifetime Achievement Awards from the American Creativity Association and the World Council for Gifted and Talented Students. She has served on editorial boards of the Journal of Creative Behavior, Gifted Education International (guest editor, 2007-2009), Understanding Our Gifts, Illinois Journal of Education and Gifted and Talented International.

Recalling her years in Washington, she held memories of involvement with President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, who took a special interest in gifted education because of their daughter, Amy. “Mrs. Carter would call on a regular basis,” Sisk said. “We arranged for Amy to have intellectual tests and, because I identified school programs for her, I found myself in audience with the first lady.”

George H.W. Bush was vice president during Sisk’s earlier years in Washington, and she credits him with advances in gifted education. On one occasion, he hosted a reception for senators and representatives to spotlight gifted education. She arranged for a group of gifted children to attend, promulgating one-on-one exchanges with the congressional guests.

“I looked around, and everyone had a child talking to them,” said Sisk. “Then VP Vice President George Bush jumped up on a table and began talking about gifted education. It was absolutely amazing. He had done his homework, and the support we received for the Javits bill was a direct result of that.”

The Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act, passed in 1988, is the only federal program dedicated specifically to gifted and talented students.

On the state level, Sisk got to know future President George W. Bush, when he was governor. Working with Laura Bush and her efforts to promote reading, Sisk wrote a grant for a program called “100 Mothers Read.” Tests revealed children participating in the project began reading at well above their age levels. “The achievements of the students were phenomenal, and the involvement of their parents was super too,” Sisk said.

Her international destinations include Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, England, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Netherlands, South Africa, Thailand and Turkey. She speaks Spanish, reads French and can understand Portuguese.

Sisk is a charter member of the World Council for Gifted and Talented, which organized in 1975. The president of the organization, Maj Broomland, was from Iran, which led to Sisk’s involvement in starting a school for the gifted in Tehran. When the revolution broke out in the country, the World Council president was put in prison, and Sisk, who was vice president, became its president.

She and Westgate recently received a $190,000 Teacher Quality Program grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Their Scientist-in-the Schools project brought teachers together with high-potential students on the Lamar campus for special seminars.

“The student achievement level increased dramatically,” Sisk said. “We found that of the 600 kids we worked with over a five-year period, 52 percent were able to qualify for the gifted program. In this program, both teachers and students maximized their talents.”

Looking to the future, Sisk points to a grant she has written to establish a Virtual Center that will address critical issues: English-language learners, special education and gifted programs.

A large part of Sisk’s Lamar experience was her beloved home on the beach at Gilchrist—not only her sanctuary but also the setting for classes and seminars. Hurricane Ike obliterated the house, destroying a lifetime of books, art from all over the world and cherished mementes. “I lost everything,” she said. The weekend before her lecture, she moved into a new home on Pleasure Island.

“What do you do for fun?” I asked. She said, “I learned years and years ago that no matter how tired you are, or how involved you are in something that may be quite arduous, if you crawl between the pages of a book, there are friends waiting for you.”

She considers her work in Bulgaria a “life highlight,” originating with a World Council of Gifted and Talented colleagues, Lexcho Drauchew, who was his country’s chief of gifted people. Sisk conducted training with psychologists and educators in Plovdiv, a city that had maintained architecture and ambience of the 1800s. She became friends with the mayor, as well as with the president of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov, whose daughter had a special interest in gifted education and creativity. In 1979, she took 30 gifted children from the United States to Bulgaria for a “Banner of Peace” convention.

“The kids brought their art, they have experienced that when the gifted are empowered to lives of service, they enrich not only their lives, but the lives of their families, their communities and, in many cases, the nation and the world.”

—DOROTHY SISK
World view

by Larry Acker

I have lived what I consider to be a semi-charmed life and believe it is important to give back to the community and open as many doors for others as possible. It is important to make every day count.

—John Via

I flew 11 hours from D/FW to Sao Paulo, spent four hours in the airport and flew 11 hours back to D/FW," Via said. "My trip report consisted of a review of the wine cart and the in-flight movies for the two flights.”

Via contends the concepts you learn in engineering are not much different from the skills you need as a good manager. You are trying to communicate effectively and solve technical problems, especially at a pharmaceutical company like Alcon, he said. As an occasional adjunct professor at both Texas Christian University and Southern Methodist University, he requires his engineering students to work in teams, make presentations and lead class discussions to learn how to communicate. He believes that if you can't communicate effectively, you will not get the job done, no matter how technically savvy you may be.

But it's not all work, school and travel for the pharmaceutical executive. Via played high school football in Alexandria, Va. A knee injury sustained during his senior year interrupted his college football ambitions, and he started playing rugby during his undergraduate days at the University of Virginia. He still enjoys playing with the Fort Worth Rugby Club, which won five Texas and Western U.S. championships and a national championship in 2000. For the past five years, he has played extensively with the master's-level Virginia Cardinals Rugby Club, playing matches and tournaments across the United States and Europe.

"It's a great game," Via said of rugby. "With rugby, it's all about being a cog in the wheel; it requires a true team effort to be successful."

Always looking for a new challenge, Via set a goal in 2008 to run a marathon and completed his first in October of the same year. He has now completed three full marathons and more than 20 half marathons. Via is an active member of the Susan G. Komen Marathon for the Cure team. His next challenge will be the London Marathon in April 2010.

Via decided to pursue a master's degree in engineering science at Lamar University while he was working for Beaumont's Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. In 1986, Hurricane Juan knocked out all the power to the area while he was working on his master's thesis to complete a computer simulation. He recalls spending what seemed like days on end living at the Goodyear plant, running the simulations needed to complete his degree requirements on time.

"John is an individual with one of the highest energy levels I have ever known. His interests in such a wide variety of areas is overwhelming," said Jack Hopper, dean of Lamar's College of Engineering. "Even when he was a graduate student, I found him to be an exceptional advocate for Lamar. I take great pride in his active participation on our engineering advisory councils."

Among the awards and accolades he has garnered are Control magazine's Engineer of the Year award in 1996. He is a member of the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineering, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and the Parental Drug Association. He serves on the Lamar University College of Engineering Advisory Council, Chemical Engineering Advisory Council and the Chemical Engineering Ph.D. Advisory Board.

Via also serves on the board of directors for several organizations, including the Alcon Foundation, Prevent Blindness, Safetyaven of Tarrant County and the Arts Council of Fort Worth.

"I have lived what I consider to be a semi-charmed life and believe it is important to give back to the community and open as many doors for others as possible. It is important to make every day count."

He and his wife, Julie, make their home in Fort Worth. They have two children, Laura, a college student, and Jason, a high school junior.
Lamar noted as top producer of chemical engineering master’s grads

Lamar University was recently recognized in Chemical & Engineering News magazine for producing the nation’s most master’s degrees in chemical engineering. The honor recognizes the 34 master’s degrees produced by the department between 2007 and 2008, outranking such institutions as Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford.

“We are pleased to see Lamar’s name appear in a national publication and are encouraged to learn that our master’s program attracted more students than other master’s programs in the nation,” said Thomas Ho, chair of the chemical engineering department.

“Our goal for the program has always been to provide our students with the best possible education at Lamar and prepare them to pursue successful careers in chemical engineering. This ranking appears to indicate that we have achieved this goal and our students recognize the value of a chemical engineering degree from Lamar University.”

For more information about the Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering, call (409) 880-8764 or visit dept.lamar.edu/chemicalengineering/

CHEM ENGINEERING GRADUATES
Top 10 producers for 2007-08

Masters Graduates

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at Lamar and the City of Beaumont agreed.

“Lamar’s continuing education programs and the Small Business Development Center have moved to Beaumont’s downtown library. The center provides free, one-on-one consulting and affordable training seminars. Expert consultants help business owners and entrepreneurs work through the challenges of launching a new business, marketing, raising money, financial and operational business issues. Instructors share their real-world, practical business experience in training sessions. The center’s offices are located on the lower level of the Beaumont Public Library. The Division of Continuing Education offices for the Non-Credit, Adult Studies and Community Outreach Programs are now located on the ground floor of the Beaumont Public Library.

Offices move to downtown

Petula Clark sang, “Things’ll be great when you’re downtown.” Lamar and the City of Beaumont agreed. LU’s continuing education programs and the Small Business Development Center have moved to Beaumont’s downtown library. The center provides free, one-on-one consulting and affordable training seminars. Expert consultants help business owners and entrepreneurs work through the challenges of launching a new business, marketing, raising money, financial and operational business issues. Instructors share their real-world, practical business experience in training sessions. The center’s offices are located on the lower level of the Beaumont Public Library. The Division of Continuing Education offices for the Non-Credit, Adult Studies and Community Outreach Programs are now located on the ground floor of the Beaumont Public Library.

Growth spurs commencement second showing

Lamar University is entering a new era, thanks to increasing enrollment and graduating classes too large for a single commencement ceremony. For the first time, Lamar hosted two ceremonies for December commencement. Two ceremonies also will be held Saturday, May 15, 2010.

“This, of course, is a wonderful problem to have, and it is exciting that we are meeting the educational needs of such a broad range of students from throughout Texas and beyond,” said Stephen Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “It is clear that Lamar is the university of choice at both the undergraduate and graduate levels for more and more students every year.”

Landmark drive receives facelift

Lamar University and the community celebrated the reopening of Rolfe Christopher Drive in September—a landmark for the university and a legacy for an ardent supporter of Lamar.

The new thoroughfare, from East Virginia to Florida Avenue and from Florida to Cardinal Drive, creates a safer environment for the mix of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, with curbs, bicycle lanes, wide medians and a number of crosswalks. Lamar officials gathered with city and county leaders for the Sept. 3 ribbon-cutting and dedication of the $8 million project, which also improved drainage around campus. Christopher’s wife, Virginia, rode in a bright-red convertible down the new thoroughfare.

“If there was ever a first family of South Park, it would certainly be the Christophers,” Simmons said. “It is a great day to honor Rolfe Coy Christopher because Rolfe Christopher Drive really symbolizes the relationship that the university has with this community.”

Christopher—a longtime civic leader who served as a city council–man, port commissioner and county commissioner—lived in South Park until his death in 1992 at 73.

“My dad never spent a day in the classroom and earned no degree, but he was a great encourager to every president, every department chair, every teacher, student and athlete he encountered,” said his son, representing the Christopher family at the ceremony. “My dad loved Lamar.”

From left, President James Simmons, Gerald McElvy, president of the ExxonMobil Foundation, left, talks with Regent Michael Truncale before the Dec. 18 commencement ceremony. McElvy delivered the keynote address.

At the podium April 6

The College of Arts and Sciences’ spring Academic Lecture Series will present Sarah Vowell, the New York Times best-selling author of five non-fiction books on American history and culture. She will speak at 7:30 p.m. April 6 in the University Theatre. By examining the connections between the American past and present, Vowell offers personal, often-humorous accounts of everything from presidents and their assassins to colonial religious fanatics, as well as thoughts on American Indians, utopian dreamers, pop music and the odd cranky cartographer. Her most recent book, The Wary Shipmates, examines the Puritans and their journey to and impact on America. A vacation in a vacation (2005) is a road trip to tourist sites devoted to the murders of Presidents Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley. Vowell is a frequent guest on late-night talk shows and is the voice of teen super-hero Violet Parr in the. For information on the lecture, call (409) 880-8508.

SARAH VOEWLL

Landmark drive receives facelift

Growth spurs commencement second showing

Office move to downtown

Lamar noted as top producer of chemical engineering master’s grads
Beyond the classroom

As UP editor, Julie Garcia works to keep Lamar students informed. A senior communication major from Port Neches, Garcia became the 2009-2010 recipient of the Press Club of Southeast Texas Memorial Scholarship. Last summer, she honed her craft while interning at the San Antonio Express-News. A lamar can access the newspaper online at lamaruniversityexpress.com. The Jane Gay Dishman Department of Nursing and Lamar Institute of Technology collaborated to emulate real-life, critical-care situations. The focus was disaster response related to a chlorine spill caused by a vehicle accident. The simulations teach nursing students how to work collaboratively with emergency medical services and respiratory therapy students to gain interdisciplinary experience.

M inaube Scholar Valerie J. Jarecki, a senior computer science and electrical engineering double major from Sour Lake, won a competitive scholarship to participate in the 2009 Grace Hooper Celebration of Women in Computing in Tucson, Ariz. Leading researchers present their current work, and special sessions focus on the role of women in today’s technology fields, including computer science, information technology, research and engineering. Jarecki was one of 331 applicants chosen from a pool of more than 900 for this scholarship.

Finance Association keeps superior tradition alive.

Lamar University Finance Association was named a Financial Management Association International 2008-2009 "superior chapter" for the fourth consecutive year. This is the highest honor a financial management or honor society can attain. Of the more than 200 active student chapters, fewer than 5 percent receive this honor each year.

James Barnes, a geology and history double major from Beaumont, and Jordan Miks, a geology major from Dayton, earned awards at the Sigma Xi International Research Conference in the Woodlands recently. The pair earned a first-place award in geological sciences. Barnes served as a paleontology field assistant three summers on a project conducted by Jim Westgate, professor of earth and space sciences, in the Uinta Basin of northeast Utah studying 42-million-year-old vertebrate fossil remains. Miks was part of the team for two summers and worked a semester preparing the bulk samples to allow microscope analysis for micro-mammal teeth in the LU Paleontology Lab.

Funding for the research has been provided by LU Research Enhancement grants... Rajeev Jain, a senior chemical engineering major from Baytown, won first place in the undergraduate student paper contest sponsored by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Jain was recognized at the AIChE annual meeting in Nashville in November for his entry titled "An Examination of Earth and Space Sciences..."

Lamar MBA program ranks among elite

Lamar University has demonstrated significant leadership in integrating technology, environmental and ethical issues into its MBA program, according to the Aspen Institute’s 2009-2010 edition of Beyond Grey Pinstripes, a biennial survey and alternative ranking of business schools. The school has been ranked among the Top 100 business schools around the world. Lamar moved up from 68th in the previous ranking to 58th in the current edition.

"The Lamar MBA ranking in the Beyond Grey Pinstripes Global 100 is an indication that our growth in numbers is supported by a high quality program," said H enry Venta, dean of the college of business.

While many MBA rankings exist, only one looks beyond reputation and test scores to measure something much more important: how well schools are preparing their students for the environmental, social and ethical complexities of modern-day business. This year, 149 business schools from 24 countries participated in an 18-month effort to map the landscape of teaching and research on issues pertaining to business and society.

Speech and hearing awarded grant to benefit patients with Parkinson’s

The B.A. & E. W. Steinhagen Benevolent Trust, managed by Capital One trustees, awarded an $8,400 grant to the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences Oct. 27. The grant will fund speech therapy services at the clinic to treat patients for the voice changes that often accompany a diagnosis of Parkinson’s disease.

“When Parkinson’s affects someone’s voice, it can become very breathy and quiet. Their words may be slurred and hard to understand,” said Alana Kozlowski, assistant professor and clinician.

Kozlowski uses a specialized program known as Lee Silverman Voice Training to work with patients. “Lee Silverman Voice Training is proven to change speech in patients with Parkinson’s,” said Kozlowski.

“It is an intensive program – physical therapy for the voice.”

Participants in the month-long Lamar U Silverman Voice Program attend sessions at the Speech and Hearing Clinic four days a week and complete daily "home-work" assignments of various vocal exercises.

“It has been marvelous. Simple but effective,” said Pat Long, a former schoolteacher and a patient in the program.

“It’s wonderful to talk to people now and know that they can hear me and understand me. I am so thankful for Dr. Alana for coming out to the Parkinson’s support group and telling us about this program.”

The RAL project was designed so residents in Southeast Texas with Parkinson’s disease could have immediate access to an evidence-based voice program with proven results.

“This treatment was not being done in our area,” said Jocelyn. But now, by offering it at Lamar U’s Speech and Hearing Clinic, we are able to assist our patients and to train our students in this technique. Right now we are training 14 clinicians who will one day graduate and take jobs in the Golden Triangle. They will all be able to provide the Lee Silverman Voice Training.”

The project will run again in June 2010. Anyone interested in participating should contact Kozlowski at (409) 880-8438 or e-mail at alankozlowski@lamar.edu.

Dionne receives Rogers Award

Vickie Dionne received Lamar University’s 2009 Rogers Community Service Award Sept. 23. For Dionne, volunteer work is an inherited trait. “My parents were always involved when I was growing up, so it was very natural for me to be active as well,” said Dionne, assistant professor of audiology.

The Rogers family established the Julie and Ben Rogers Community Service Award in 1979 to encourage Lamar University faculty and staff members to volunteer their services and talents to benefit the community.

Dionne is one of the most experienced audiologists in Southeast Texas. Her efforts with Lion’s Club International’s Hearing Aid Redecration Program has provided quality, used hearing aids to a number of low-income individuals. She is also an active member of Sertoma International, a civic organization dedicated to hearing health issues. As a chairperson and member of the Safe Ears program, Dionne has worked with more than 800 children in the Golden Triangle area about the dangers of loud noise and its consequence of noise-induced hearing loss.

Campus construction continues

Academic programs are benefiting from current construction projects. The Music Building is in the midst of a complete renovation to provide students with a top-notch learning facility. An expansion of the Cherry Engineering Building has begun to house the new Ph.D. program in chemical engineering. And, with all residence halls full, construction of a fifth phase of Cardinal Village on Georgia Street has already begun.
Faculty notes

Professors emeritus named. Regents of The Texas State University System adopted resolutions Nov. 20 honoring veteran faculty members Howell Gin, J.R. and Adonia Placette. Gin, who retired in 2007 after 46 years at Lamar, was designated Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History. Placette, who retired in November 2009 after a 27-year Lamar career, was designated Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Theater... Helen Lou, assistant professor of computer science, has won a prestigious $400,000 National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development award... She is the first Lamar faculty member to receive this national recognition, which acknowledges junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their organizations. ... James Vanderleeuw to serve in Brooks Chair. James Vanderleeuw, professor of political science, has accepted appointment to the Jack Brooks Chair in Government and Public Service. A New Jersey native and a faculty member since 1988, Vanderleeuw is director of Lamar's Center for Public Policy Studies — and will continue to serve in that capacity. "Over the years at Lamar University, Dr. James Vanderleeuw has distinguished himself as a true teacher scholar, frequently involving students — both undergraduates and graduates — in his research projects," said Stephen Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs. He teaches master's courses in public administration, including urban policy, administrative theory and urban economic development. ... Westgate honored by science teachers association. Jim Westgate, university professor of earth and space sciences at Lamar University, has been named the 2009 Skoog Cup winner by the Science Teachers Association of Texas. The Skoog Cup recognizes significant contributions and leadership in the development of quality science education. Winners of the award show a sustained record of advocacy for quality K-12 science education for all students, have contributed to the success of the association and other professional science organizations, and have developed effective programs for pre-service and in-service teachers of science... Wooster accepts editorship. Ralph Wooster, distinguished professor of history emeritus at Lamar University, is editor of the Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record. First issued by the society in 1864, the Record publishes scholarly articles written by professional and lay historians covering the history of Beaumont and Southeast Texas. Along with other historical journals, the Record is published by EBSCO on the Internet, where its articles are available on Websites such as America: History & Life and Texas Research Center.

Hernandez studies landmark leprosarium

Barbara Hernandez, professor of health and kinesiology, recently published an article in the American Journal of Health Studies. Her research, funded by a 2007 University Research Enhancement Grant, focuses on the recreational activities of the patients in the quarantined community at the historic leprosarium located in Carville, La., from 1894 until 1999. Along with graduate students Abhishek Kulkar, Gincy Thomas and Raika Vengueriker, Hernandez explored the landmark that once housed the only functioning Hansen’s Disease (formerly known as leprosy) research and treatment facility in the United States. During their research, the group discovered volumes of information surrounding the disease and unearthed documents dating to the 19th century. “The physicians and the nurses who established a research center there were the first to find any kind of drug that would affect some cure for Hansen’s disease,” Hernandez said.

Researchers build device, make discovery

Lamar University associate professor Rafael Tadmor and a team of students recently found a way to bring what had only been a physics theory to the realm of experimental fact. Their effort, and the device they built to test the theories, will be discussed in a number of leading scientific journals.

For decades, students have learned in introductory physics classes that the friction force—which must be overcome to, say, slide a block down an inclined plane—is the product of a friction coefficient and the force normal to the surface. That relationship has been superceded during the past 50 years by the recognition that the lateral friction is, in fact, proportional to the true contact area. Using a special device that allows complete decoupling of normal and lateral retention forces, Tadmor, associate professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, and his students found a system in which the lateral force decreases—rather than increases— with the normal force in spite of the fact that the contact area increases.

This discovery will appear as “Measurement of lateral adhesion forces at the interface between a liquid drop and a substrate,” in a future issue of Physical Review Letters, published by the American Physical Society. The findings will also be presented on the society’s public website (physics.aps.org) and two publications, Physics Today and Physical Review Focus, aimed for a more general audience. “It is always a significant accomplishment for a research work to be accepted for publication in a premium scientific journal,” said Thomas Ho, chair of the department. “Publication promotes the visibility of Lamar’s research capability and creates a positive image of Lamar’s research quality to the scientific research community.” Physical Review Letters is the world’s foremost physics letters journal, providing rapid publication of short reports of significant fundamental research in all fields of physics.
LU works to help Haiti

Lamar University has encouraged faculty, staff and students to contribute to the ongoing Haiti earthquake relief effort. Requests included baby items such as cloth diapers, baby powder, baby clothes and other baby needs, as well as hygiene products such as bandages, band-aids, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, hand sanitizers and other personal hygiene products.

The Setzer Student Center Office, Room 212 served as the location for donation items, which will be given to M. T. Sinai Baptist Church. Church members will travel to Haiti March 8, 2010.

LU hosts auditing expert alumnus

The College of Business hosted John Christopher, audit partner in the energy practice of KPMG’s Houston office, as the ExxonMobil Executive in Residence Nov. 17.

Christopher, a resident of Kingwood, has more than 12 years of experience in providing audit, assurance and advisory-related services to public and non-public domestic and international clients. He serves as KPMG’s Oilfield Services audit market leader in support of the energy audit sector leader, with primary emphasis on oilfield services, exploration and production sectors of the energy industry and global manufacturing.

Christopher has advised several public entities on initial public offerings and registration statements for equity and debt securities. He serves as the firm’s national instructor of firm-wide training courses. KPMG member firms work with clients in more than 140 countries.


Keith receives honorary doctorate

During commencement ceremonies Aug. 15, the university awarded the honorary doctor of humane letters to Sallye Jones Keith of Beaumont, a philanthropist and civic leader whose contributions to Lamar and the community span more than half a century.

Keith’s history of community involvement and support is legendary—in causes ranging from the fights against cancer and heart disease to the performing and visual arts.

“Sallye is the finest example of love of community,” said Russ Schultz, dean of Lamar’s College of Fine Arts and Communication, where Keith and her late husband established a fellowship more than two decades ago. “Knowing Sallye has been one of the best experiences I have had since arriving in Beaumont. She has a philosophy of always wanting to make things better, and she does this in so many ways. She leads by example. She loves Beaumont, and she loves Lamar.”

In 1986, Keith and her husband, William Carroll Keith Jr., established the Alice Keith Memorial Endowed Fellowship/Scholarship, with recipients known as Keith Scholars. An honorary member of the Friends of the Arts board, she is a longtime supporter of all the arts programs at Lamar, including Lamar Theatre, which honored her with a star on its Wall of Fame, and the Grand Bal, which named her its ‘Sweetheart.’

LU enables supercomputing

Lamar University faculty, staff and students now see a 400 percent increase in connection speeds thanks to the completion of a fiber optic network connection between the campus and Houston.

The connection is possible through Lamar’s participation in the Lonestar Education And Research Network (LEARN), a cooperative effort of 34 universities and research networks to support higher education’s research, teaching, health care, and public service missions.

“It also allows us to take full advantage of our partnership and link to the supercomputing capabilities of TerraGrid,” said Michael C. Obee, associate vice president for information technology. Tapping into TerraGrid requires extremely fast Internet connectivity. Lamar’s faculty will have access to many of the world’s fastest supercomputers to conduct research through TerraGrid, the world’s largest, most comprehensive distributed cyber infrastructure for open scientific research, combining 11 university and governmental sites to create an integrated computational resource.

Current research programs at Lamar in engineering and other disciplines already demand significant computing power. Tapping into TerraGrid will boost these programs and may attract additional research, help Lamar recruit talented faculty and draw funding to the university, said Stephen Dobrin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Dual credit, BAAS expands

Lamar is expanding its dual credit programs to school districts across Texas. Dual credit courses allow high school juniors or seniors to enroll in a college course and receive simultaneous academic credit from both the college and the high school, essentially earning two years of college for free. Participants come from the more than 500,000 students in 11th and 12th grades in Texas.

Lamar is also expanding its offering of the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree entirely online in partnership with Higher Education Holdings. The first H E H -based B.A.A.S. course began Oct. 12. Data from the 2000 census shows there are more than 2 million Texans with some college hours but no bachelor’s degree, and an additional 681,363 with associate degrees. A great number of these Texans could qualify for the online degree-completion program.

These academic partnership online programs complement the online offerings already established at the university where five undergraduate degrees—the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of General Studies, RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology, and the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science—and two graduate programs—the Master of Science in Nursing and Master of Science in Health Promotion—can be earned entirely online.

Emory professor lectures on terrorism

Nicholas Fotion, professor of philosophy at Emory University, spoke Jan. 25 about “The New World Disorder” in a lecture sponsored by the Lamar University Center for Philosophical Studies. Fotion is the author of War and Ethics A New Just War Theory and co-author of Terrorism: The New World Disorder, both published by Continuum in 2008. His research focuses on moral philosophy and philosophy of language.

Co-sponsors of the lecture were the Department of English and Modern Languages, Lamar Honors Program, the Lamar Institute of Technology Department of Public Service and Safety’s Homeland Security Program and the Lamar University American Democracy Program.

Approved by the Lamar University board of regents in 1992, the Center for Philosophical Studies has two principal interests: the publication of a scholarly book series, “Lamar Philosophical Studies,” and the presentation of a scholarly lecture series, “Lamar Philosophical Topics,” said Arthur Stewart, associate professor of philosophy and the center’s director.

Current research programs at Lamar in engineering and other disciplines already demand significant computing power. Tapping into TerraGrid will boost these programs and may attract additional research, help Lamar recruit talented faculty and draw funding to the university, said Stephen Dobrin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.
Music biz

Years ago as a student on the campus activities committee, Steve Moore helped book concerts and speakers. Today, his office handles tours that include music artists Kelly Clarkson, Jason Aldean, Jamey Johnson and Randy Houser.

For me, it was absolutely a foundation of how I carried myself through business and being creative.

—STEVE MOORE '79

Steve Moore '79 can thank his strong work ethic and a fortuitous Blood, Sweat and Tears concert at Lamar University decades ago for launching him in a successful music industry career as a promoter for some of the country's top touring acts and as president of the Country Music Association. A long-time board member for CMA, Moore served as president in 2009 and will be chairman of the board for 2010.

"It was like having another non-paying job and turned out to be quite a job, but it was fun," Moore said by telephone from the Nashville office of Moore Entertainment, his music promotion partnership with AEG Live.

The business side of music had never crossed Moore's mind when he started his studies at Lamar as a trumpet player hoping to become a high school band director. But then came the Blood, Sweat and Tears concert in McDonald Gym on Sept. 11, 1975. Moore didn't have money for a ticket, so he showed up at the equipment-filled truck park outside the gym and asked if he could help. He knew how to work from construction jobs in area refineries, earning money to pay for college. He ended up as crew chief that night, helping unload and set up for the show in exchange for admission. He was hooked.

"That night was really and truly an epiphany for me," said Moore, who grew up about 30 miles from Beaumont in Buna. "I'd only been to one or two concerts at that point in my life. It's just something we didn't know about and didn't have the money for either. When I saw that production, I just knew that's where I needed to be."

The next week, he got an invitation to join the student activities committee on campus and became involved in booking other concerts, speakers and shows. By his senior year, he had created a ticket agency distributing paper tickets for shows at Fair Park Coliseum in Beaumont. After graduating as a communication major, Moore did some music promotions with his friend, mentor and former band director, President James Simmons, before moving to Houston and getting into the rock 'n' roll touring business. He moved from touring to booking and promotions, working with big name acts including ZZ Top, Stevie Ray Vaughan and George Strait. Then in the mid-1980s, Moore and his wife, Charmione (Rafield) Moore '78, moved to Nashville for an opportunity booking rock shows at a new amphitheater. After about eight years, he was ready for something new.

"The rock business back then was tough. I was drunk, crazy people doing crazy things. I felt like I needed a change of pace," Moore said. "In 1992, I had a new baby and quit my job and started promoting country. The people, they were just more real people. I didn't like the rock thing. It got too crazy." The decision, he said, "wasn't about the music. It was just about the business. Fortunately, I have a wide array of taste in music."

Through his work, Moore has enjoyed friendships with many of the most popular names in music. He describes Strait as the "kind, gentle, fun, smart man who just happens to be one of the greatest Texas troubadours of all time." Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn of Brooks & Dunn have been good friends since the start of their music careers. He has worked with Alan Jackson, Kenny Chesney, Reba McEntire and Faith Hill. Jennifer Nettles of Sugarland joined Kenny Chesney, Reba McEntire and Faith Hill. Jennifer Nettles of Sugarland joined Jamey Johnson and Randy Houser. Of course, since he got started the business has changed, with the decline of retail outlets, the advent of digital downloads, the consolidation of radio station ownership, the rise of concerts as the most lucrative part of the business for touring artists and the increased popularity of country music. "Starting a concert company in 2010 would be very tough for any body," he said. "The risks are extremely high, the stakes are high, and the reward is low." Moore has taught at Belmont University in Nashville in the past and had a favorite analogy for his students: "I tell them, if you can take $20,000 in cash and put lighter fluid on it and let it burn and not stomp it out or go crazy, you'd be a good candidate for a promoter because that's going to happen to you sooner or later." Moore has expanded his business options with active investments and development of dialysis clinics and DOLLAR General stores throughout Texas. He also is developing a new entertainment model for Texas music called 1836 Entertainment, which he plans to launch in 2010, to handle recording, distribution, promotion, management and booking. "It's all about making a deal, I love to make deals," he said.

Moore loves to make an impact, too. He fell in love with Guatemala and its people about 10 years ago on a church mission trip. Since then, his Shalom Foundation has built homes and a school in the Central American country and is in the process of building the first pediatric surgery center in Guatemala. He hopes to continue making an impact with the Country Music Association as it addresses copyright protections in the digital age and better serving all its constituent memberships, from artists and songwriters to managers, agents and promoters. In recent years, CMA has started offering health insurance access as a benefit of membership and stressed a volunteer spirit with its "Keep the Music Playing" program, which donates money to Nashville area public schools for music education. "It is close to my heart," Moore said. "I remember when I was in high school, the only thing I really cared about going to school for was playing in the band. If I wasn't in the band, there's no telling what I'd have been doing." Moore also played in Lamar's band and counts Simmons, his trumpet professor, the late Raul Ometas, as important mentors and coaches. "There was just something about the way they treated us and the relationship we had, about doing business and being successful and being professional, always being professional, and doing the right things the right way." Moore said. "For me, it was absolutely a foundation of how I carried myself through business and being creative." Moore downplays his musical ability but said he has started playing trumpet again for fun and in his church. His wife, a Lamar music graduate, has continued to play and teach flute, teaching limited private lessons as she focused on raising their three sons. Their oldest, Remick, is an architect in Nashville. Sterling recently enrolled in the U.S. Marine Corps. Hunter is a senior in high school. "They all played music. I just didn't let them fall into the trap of getting busy," Moore said. "I hoped that they would pursue their own paths, and they have, and it's been good."

His own path has been good as well. It took him from the small town of Buna to a truck full of music gear outside MCDonald Gym to a Volkswagon delivering concert tickets around Beaumont. It is path has taken him to music venues large and small around Texas and across North America. It's allowed him to help children in Guatemala and to pursue his latest hobby, learning to fly. And with other ventures on the horizon, who knows where it might take him next?
Internships expand students’ horizons

by Beth Gallapsy

Two nursing students gained a global perspective on health care this summer through an internship opportunity in Ghana made possible by financial and academic support from Lamar University.

Senior nursing majors Jennifer Mikel of Sweeny and Brittany Zenos of Bridge City worked as interns in a hospital in Hohoe, Ghana, and participated in medical outreach activities in and near the West African village.

“It has taught me a lot about caring for others, but it has also shown me that there is a global patient, that we cannot just care for those in our community, but we need to care about those who are part of the whole world. The world is our patient, and that’s who we need to take care of,” Mikel said.

Mikel and Zenos both cited their work in a nearby orphanage as the most rewarding part of the trip. “It fulfilled the medical aspect, as far as helping take care of them and their health, and the mission aspect of it for me as well—to be able to spend time with them and show them a little attention and care that people out there do care about them,” Zenos said. “We ended up going back about four times just on our own time.”

Mikel was selected in 2008 as Lamar University’s first David J. Beck Fellow, the university’s most prestigious undergraduate award, which provides a full academic scholarship for one year and funding for a summer project proposed as part of the application process. Her six-week stay in Ghana was her fellowship project.

Zenos said she and Mikel had discussed their shared interest in working in Africa before Mikel applied for the Beck Fellowship. After Mikel was named Beck Fellow, Zenos decided to try to make the trip as well. She was able to develop a research project and secure funding for a four-week trip with the help of the Lamar University Honors College Program, the JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing and LU administrators.

After her return, Zenoscompleted a paper on infant mortality and infant feeding patterns, based on research gathered before and during her trip. She hopes to present her research to the campus convention of Sigma Theta Tau nursing honor society.

Mikel said the trip allowed her to implement both nursing care and nursing theory that she had learned at Lamar. “She appreciated the importance of taking situations from the patient’s perspective when she saw mothers of infants who died in or soon after childbirth placed into hospital wards alongside new mothers and their babies,” Zenos said. “She also saw firsthand the dilemmas faced by nurses in Ghana who selectively sterilize equipment because of a lack of necessary supplies.

Along with enhancing their nursing education, spending the summer living with a host family in Ghana exposed Mikel and Zenos to a different landscape and a different culture. “I definitely won’t take for granted what I learn here,” Mikel said. “I know now what it’s like in other places, so I really want to go out and do even more. As a student in a volunteer program, you can’t really do it enough. I can do more as a nurse, I’ll have an open mind to my studies and how it can affect people and more patience in general.”

Beck Fellow Zarzosa studies parasites in Belize

Michael Zarzosa, a junior biology/pre-veterinary medicine major, has been named the second David J. Beck Fellow at Lamar University.

President Jim Simmons announced Zarzosa’s selection for the prestigious undergraduate award at a ceremony on campus in November.

Zarzosa, a Lumberton resident, said two of his professors encouraged him to apply after he joined them in biological field research courses in Belize offered by Lamar this past summer.

“I think it speaks volumes about the relationships that we were able to achieve with the faculty at Lamar,” Zarzosa said. “I think their challenging and prompting is really what started what I initially desired to attempt this.”

Already, Zarzosa is preparing for his own independent research trip to Ambergris Caye, Belize, next summer, which he proposed as his summer project as part of his fellowship application. Zarzosa plans to survey parasites common to domestic dogs and the probability of transfer to humans. He will spend about two months on Ambergris collecting waste samples from various locations and analyzing the quantities of parasite eggs present. He will use that data to estimate the probability of human contract, information that could be shared with Belizean governmental agencies.

The research opportunity should advance Zarzosa’s goal of simultaneously pursuing a doctor of veterinary medicine and Ph.D. in either comparative medicine or public health after he completes his studies at Lamar.

“On a professional level, hopefully this is going to be almost a guarantee into my intended career. That’s pretty powerful,” Zarzosa said. “When I finish, I’ll be able to publish this in professionally reviewed journals.”

Kevin Smith, senior associate provost and chair of the selection committee, said Zarzosa was the best choice among an excellent pool of applicants for this year’s fellowship.

“He has the kind of dreams that really reflect this fellowship,” Smith said.

Zarzosa plans to study parasites in Belize next summer improving his research skills and experience another culture, thanks to financial backing from Lamar’s College of Engineering and Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering.

“I am a senior from Baytown, worked as a researcher at East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai, China, from May to August. He first proposed the trip in his application for LU’s David J. Beck Fellowship last year, for which he was a finalist. “I am interested in international research and the track record as an assistant in the laboratory of associate professor Rafael Tadmor prompted his college and department to find other sources of funding to support the trip. “When I transitioned, the scientific part was pretty easy,” Zarzosa said. “I could apply the things that Dr. Tadmor taught me here like curiosity and questioning and trying new things. Those are things that the people in the Chinese universities don’t get to do. They don’t have that flexibility. So it was almost like I was showing them a different way of looking at things, which is really just an incredible feeling.”

Zarzosa quickly found that his colleagues in Shanghai used English to communicate only whenever. To make friends and become more productive, he needed to learn Mandarin Chinese. In addition to working about 12 hours a day in a laboratory, I stayed up late and got up early in my room on campus to work on his vocabulary.

“My language skills improved enough to where at the very end, I actually went and got a haircut by myself,” Zarzosa said. “It was really scary because you don’t realize it, but they ask you a lot of questions when you get a haircut.”

The research in which Zarzosa took part involved the synthesis and testing of polymer brushes to clean water that contained metal ions. The researchers tested the performance of the brushes in varying temperatures and at varying pressures. One of the most important things I gained from his work in the laboratories was an increased appreciation of the value of hard work and long hours.

The greatest lesson overall, though, came from experiencing a new, unfamiliar culture on his own. “What I’ll take most from it is my personal development of going away far away and coming back with a different view of the world,” Zarzosa said. “I learned both from an intellectual point and from a physical point of view, the actual physical transition of going from here to there—the language, food, people, surroundings—that was as the hard part.”
Distinguished Alumni Awards

1. Alumni Board President-Elect Clayton Lau ’69, from left, joins 2009 Distinguished Alumni Paul Fregia ’81, Larry Beaulieu ’77 and Byron Dyer ’57 with Alumni Board President Jill (Taft) Roy ’90 and President James Simmons.

2. NancyImpson Nold ’79, left, and Ellen (Hallen) Remoza ’70.

3. Vernen Pierce, Linda Dennis, Distinguished Alumnus Joe Domino ’75.

4. Alan Sampson ’68 and Norma (Roddy) ’75.


6. Jan (Cadwell) Hallmark ’76, ’83, Dan Hallmark ’85, Susan (Williams) Simmons ’88.

President James Simmons joins Beaumont attorney Gilbert I. “Buddy” Low at the announcement ceremony of the 14th Southeast Texas Legends Scholarship established by the Beaumont Foundation of America and named to honor Low. The $100,000 endowed scholarship will assist underserved students who attend Lamar University. Low is a partner in the law firm of Orgain, Bell & Tucker and has litigated nearly every type of case including personal injury, antitrust, patents and trademarks, pollution issues, contract disputes and class actions. He is a chairman of the Texas Supreme Court Professional Ethics Committee for more than 25 years and is currently vice-chairman of the Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee.

President James Simmons presents Sallye Keith ’09 HD the honorary doctor of humane letters at summer commencement Aug. 15. Russ Schultz, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, joins them on the podium. Keith is a philanthropist and civic leader whose contributions to Lamar University and the community span more than half a century.

President Simmons congratulates the officers of the Lamar University Ambassadors, who represent LU at a variety of events and activities on campus and in the community.

President Simmons, putting on quite a show here with Lauren Richardson, are among celebrity dancers featured at Celebrity Salsa for Habitat, which benefited Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County.

Senator Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, the keynote speaker at Lamar’s summer commencement Aug. 15 in Beaumont, congratulated three Lamar graduates from her senatorial district after the ceremony. Pictured, from left, are Luis Angel Guillean Jr., Carmelita Cantu, Senator Zaffirini and Cynthia Yvette Casas. The graduates, all of Laredo, earned master’s degrees in school administration. They are among more than a dozen of Zaffirini’s District 21 constituents who received graduate degrees in a new academic partnership.

Eleanor and Distinguished Alumnus Charles Garrett ’58 recently carried the Olympic torch to begin the celebration of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The Garrett leg of the torch run was located in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. The flame for the torch was lit in Greece at the site of the ancient Olympic Games, transferred by runners to Athens where it was placed in a relay lantern and sent to Canada by plane. Of course, the torch’s journey ended with the Opening Ceremony of the games Feb. 12, 2010. Garrett metal detectors have been selected for use at Olympic Games all over the world since 1984 when the detectors were first used at the Los Angeles Olympic Games.

Cheryl (Black) ’50 and her husband, Dean Oney Fitzpatrick, right, welcome Bob Love to dinner in Love’s honor before he was featured in the Academic Lecture Series Oct. 28. A former NBA star with the Chicago Bulls, Love now serves as national spokesperson for the team.

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Griffith has gone far by staying close to his roots and working under Chief Gene Carpenter and Assistant Chief Dale Fontenot and began studies toward an associate’s degree in criminal justice. When he turned 21, he became eligible to work for the sheriff’s office, where he progressed from serving in the jail to patrol duty to serving fugitive warrants. He earned a bachelor’s in criminal justice at Lamar University and returned to earn a master’s in education in counseling and guidance. In 1986, Griffith moved to the district attorney’s office as an investigator, Griffith first grabbed headlines in 1987 when he decided to challenge a sheriff who had served a quarter-century. He seemed something of a boy wonder when, at 33, he defeated his former boss, R.E. “Dick” Culbertson. Griffith became the youngest sheriff elected in a major metropolitan department in Texas, overseeing law enforcement in the 11th largest of 254 counties.

“I haven’t slowed down since,” Griffith said of the energy he threw into the position. “I’m still usually working 60- to 80-hour weeks.” Among his accomplishments was Positive Production, a nationally recognized, innovative rehabilitation program still used today in the Washoe County Jail in Reno, Nev. “The Positive Production program sprang from my experience as acop on the street arresting people but seeing that we weren’t doing anything to change their lives,” Griffith said. “That drove my interest in getting a master’s at Lamar. I still have people come up to me and say, ‘You changed my life through the programs that I got to go through at the jail.’”

After eight years as sheriff, Griffith set his sights higher. When County Judge Richard LeBlanc decided to retire, Griffith committed to the race. “I still have people come up to me and say, ‘You changed my life through the programs that I got to go through at the jail.’”

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“I can still remember the call like it was yesterday,” Griffith said. “Judge LeBlanc said, ‘I wanted to tell you I’m going to resign.’ That was really bad for me because he was a huge supporter of mine. The second thing he said was, ‘I want you to think about running for county judge.’ I had never thought about anything outside of law enforcement. Period. It had never crossed my mind to get into that realm.”

Before the call was through, Griffith committed to the race. “We ran hard, and it was a hard time to run because my mother was dying of cancer,” Griffith said. “Then Gov. (George W.) Bush and Sen. John Whitmire, at the same time all this was happening, asked me to consider taking over the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in fall of 1995. “I knew myself,” Griffith said. “It was going to take me 80 to 100 hours a week just to get my hands around what was going on (at TDCJ). Mom was dying of cancer, and I had a routine where I would go by my parents’ house every morning and make them coffee before I’d go to the courthouse. I didn’t want to miss that time.”

“Little did I know that on Jan. 2, 1996—as I was going to announce my run for county judge—that my father would die that morning of a massive heart attack,” Griffith said. Sheer determination to see her son elected kept Griffith’s mother going, and, although in a wheelchair, she attended Griffith’s post-election victory celebration—Griffith won the 1996 Democratic primary with 73 percent of the vote—on March 12, 1996, before her death four days later. Griffith did not face another serious challenge until 2006 when Ron Walker beat him with 53 percent of the vote.

In looking back on his three decades of work for the county, Griffith could count more than a few accomplishments. Economic development was a major one with more than $10 billion in industrial expansions and new projects under way or about to begin when Griffith left office.
Among the major projects was the not-yet-fully-realized opportunity found in Port Arthur’s Pleasure Island, recipient of significant public infrastructure investments necessary to prepare the way for development. Ford Park is also a project on his list. Intended as a quality-of-life enhancement, Ford Park was begun in response to census data that showed five decades of population decline in the region during a period when the state had grown from 8 million to 22 million.

“From the 1900s to the 1950s, we had grown at the same rate as Houston, but then we stopped investing in public infrastructure that affects the quality of life,” Griffith said. “We needed that piece to enhance the quality of life, to provide a place for our people to go and want to stay in Southeast Texas.”

We said that in the first five years, the project would generate what it cost to build it,” Griffith said. “I saw Judge Walker in a news report say that in the first five years, Ford Park had generated $75 million in the Southeast Texas economy. The park cost $74 million. It is doing much of what I had intended as a quality-of-life enhancement, Ford Park is also a project on his list. Increasing racial and ethnic diversity among county employees, especially in management roles, makes his list. “One of the things I’m most proud of is changing the complexion of the courthouse,” Griffith said. “We needed that piece to prepare the way for development. It was once a rice farm in the late 1920s, and a down-to-earth pursuit that seems a far cry from the challenges of law enforcement, traffic realization their potential. To reach business clients in far-flung destinations across the Lone Star State and to attend the monthly meetings of the Texas Conference of Urban Counties, he flies a Cessna P-210 as an instrument-rated pilot. Having access to on-demand transportation, capable of operating in all but the worst weather, is vital to his business. "It would be extremely hard to keep up my schedule without it," Griffith said.

In his down time, Griffith enjoys down-to-earth pursuits that seem a far cry from the challenges of law enforcement, complex environmental issues or budgetary concerns. As owner of the Griffith Exotic Animal Foundation, I don’t think my career would have taken off," Griffith said.

“I had some great professors at Lamar—people who challenge your mind, get you looking at issues from all sides to help make educated decisions," he said. "From that experience I developed a kind of eclectic approach on how to put things together. I think that is what got us looking at cutting-edge issues as far as how to change inmates and using research to determine what we needed to do to make the county grow.”

Stark said. “You may be on the same drilling rig for a while, or you may change locations, but you’ll definitely find a whole new set of challenges with each new location.”

Stark, a Lamar chemical engineering graduate, began his career with Texaco immediately after graduation and stayed with the company when Chevron purchased it in 2001. As senior drill site manager and drilling engineer, Stark is responsible for designing the prospect well to be drilled using data gathered by the geologists. The geologist furnishes sand pressures, water depth and ocean floor information that determines the type of drilling rig and well to be used, he said. The drilling engineer verifies the geologist’s data and designs the most appropriate type of rig and well for the desired result.

“I’ve worked on every type of rig you can imagine,” Stark said. “I’ve drilled in water from 8 feet deep to more than 10,000 feet.”

The Petronius tower, originally a Texaco platform rig, was one of the longest and most challenging projects for the Lamar alumnus. During the course of a decade, several sub-sea wildcard wells were drilled prior to the construction of the Petronius compliant tower. The compliant tower is used primarily for water depths from 1,500 to 2,500 feet because it is more capable of withstandin wave actions and water depths than standard platform designs. This type of structure is desirable for Gulf of Mexico operations because the structure flexibility component built into the design allows it to survive hurricane force winds. Although the majority of his career has been spent drilling in the waters of the Gulf, he also has been involved in drilling ventures off the coast of Thailand.

“Spending time on the job will give new engineers considering the petroleum industry. "I attended Lamar because it was close to home and had a reputation for having a great engineering program,” he said. “I always wanted to be an engineer and found the best engineering training right here in my backyard.”

Stark gave up field work a couple of years ago after more than 30 years working on the rigs. He now designs wells and drilling programs from his office in Covington, La., opting to spend every evening with his wife, Sandra Rena, a Beaumont native. He prefers coming home each afternoon to the 14-days-on, 14-days-off schedule of most rig workers. He spends his time on dry land refurbishing an old jeep and enjoys off-road, deer hunting and anything that entails getting outdoors to commune with nature. The Covington couple has two married daughters, Crystalynn and Christy. A proud grandfather, Stark has two grandchildren and a grandson born this past Christmas.

Asked what advice he would give to new engineers considering the petroleum industry as a career, Stark said the most important things they should learn are good communication skills and working well with others. “Spending time on the job will give you the specific knowledge you need to do your work, but you will come into contact with many people from different backgrounds, ideas and mindsets, which will require you to be able to understand their point of view and be able to work through any differences,” he said.—LA
Abbigale Archibold returns to her childhood family, exploring the ties that bind. In 1973, she decided to write a play because I wanted to write something as well as stage plays. "I decided to write a play that's as good as this is," Grothe said. "It's dark, and kind of humor that I appreciate," Grothe said. "The plays I've seen in this area are like an opportunity like this with a piece of work that's as good as this is," Grothe said.

Three student-directed one-act plays by the late Texas playwright Horton Foote opened its season this fall with The Walls Don't Lie, an original play by senior theater major Joel Grothe. Grothe, directing the drama, which, he said, is evocative of such American classics as Citizen Kane and a piece of work that's as good as this is," Grothe said. "The plays I've seen in this area are like an opportunity like this with a piece of work that's as good as this is," Grothe said.

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Plays transcend ‘lens of reality’

Lamarismo! A perfect 20

The Lamarismo! Concert Series opened its 20th Anniversary Season Oct. 6 with Lamar dancers joining the Wind Ensemble and Concert Band for the finale. Mary Henderson of Beaumont, top photo, is among dance students adding fascination and flair to the performance. Scott Deppe, director of bands, was on the podium to celebrate the milestone. Travis Fife, center photo, who joined the music faculty last fall as instructor of percussion and director of marching percussion, performs a marimba solo at the Lamarismo! Faculty Artists concert Nov. 5. A most-two dozen members of the Department of Music faculty and their students shared the stage. Baritone Phillip Gay, bottom photo, a vocal performance major from Beaumont, was among featured soloists at the Lamarismo! Holiday Concert. Gay is a recipient of the Richard and Cathy Price Scholarship in Choral Music. The A Cappella Choir and Grand Chorus took center stage for the Dec. 3 event. James Han, Lamar’s new director of choral activities, made his Lamarismo! debut.

Starstruck... and all that jazz

The Magnolia Garden Club will host a special showing of Starstruck — its 2010 Garden Club of America Flower Show — in conjunction with the Lamarismo! Jazz Concert March 2 in the Julie Rogers Theatre. The pre-performance event will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the theater lobby featuring hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar: Jazzy great Marión Evans, a Grammy-winning arranger and orchestrator, will be the special guest at the 7:30 p.m. concert. The reception will be open to holders of season or individual tickets to Lamarismo! Regular flower show hours will be from 2 to 5 p.m. March 2 and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 3 in the theatre. Call (409) 892-5370 for additional information about the show or (409) 880-8144 for additional information about the concert.

Literary Lamar

Jeryn Bradley, professor of English, has authored a book of poetry. The Importance of Elsewhere. Bradley is the author of several books, including his acclaimed first volume, Simple Versions of Disaster.

“Amy’s work was subtly influenced by absurdist playwrights such as Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco,” said director Rebecca Stone Thompson, visiting instructor. “The plays all explore concepts of randomness and chance affecting vital aspects of our lives, from the people with whom we fall in love to the expression “It’s all relative,” took on new meaning in Lamar Theatre’s Nov. 12-17 production of All in the Timing. The six one-act plays by David Ives covered a variety of topics, all touching on themes of time, connection, language and identity.

“The one-act plays by David Ives covered a variety of topics, all touching on themes of time, connection, language and identity. “It’s all relative,” took on new meaning in Lamar Theatre’s Nov. 12-17 production of All in the Timing. The six one-act plays...
Construction begins on new LU Athletic Complex

The Cardinal football team faced off in scrimmages this past fall as Coach Ray Woodward and staff continue to condition the reborn program. Facilities for football and athletics are also taking shape with construction in progress on Provost Umphrey Stadium, the Dan F. and Sandra A. Smith Press Box, the W.S. “Bud” Leonard Field, the Coach Vernon Glass Field of Champions and the new athletic complex. It’s a big, strong, over-the-lights power guy,” said Gilligan. Meade certainly lived up to that billing during the Cardinals’ Fall World Series, banging out 11 hits on 17 at-bats (.647 average) in five games. M. Cat Padget and Clayton Farhat, also junior college transfers, posted fall batting averages of .467 and .353, respectively.

Jude Vidrine, a freshman from Nederland, is vying for everyday duty at second base, while Vidor sophomore V.J. Bunn has the edge at shortstop. Coaches will be paying attention to them last season, so we feel very comfortable with them,” said Gilligan. ”We also have a promising freshman left-hander in Jonathan D’Auzac (from Atascocita).”

Football season tickets on sale now

ike Adams Jr. of Beaumont was the first person in line as the public sale of football season tickets got under way at 7 a.m. Jan. 23. Adams arrived shortly after 5 a.m. Friday at the Montagne Center where more Cardinal fans joined him by the time ticket windows opened. Nearly 300 fans lined up inside and outside the Montagne Center to choose their stadium seats when tickets went on sale for the first time since 1989. The first 100 fans received mini football helmets signed by Head Coach Ray Woodard.

Wheelchair access, status passes, suites and premium seating tickets include a donation to the Cardinal Club that is partially tax deductible. Additionally, two affordable options of $60 or $100 per seat for the six-game package are available without a donation to the Cardinal Club. Telephone orders are taken at (409) 880-1715, and online orders can be made at lamarcardinals.com.
Thompson Family Tennis Center. Admission is free.玩

played on campus at the Lamar University looking to make some noise in the conference this over Centenary with a straight-set win at first singles. Player of the Week after leading Lamar to victory in the conference championship.

It was a great start to the spring campaign for the Coach Ray Woodard's Lamar staff in 2008 after playing professionally for six seasons in the NFL

Baptist High School from 2003-2005. He joined the coaching staff at Lamar in 2008 after playing for six seasons in the NFL

wise in most passing and total offense categories, leading the team to three-straight conference championships.

Lundstrom, recruited out of Colombia by Longhorns' Men's

and blossomed as a freshman. "He had a lot of talent and a great competitive attitude. For a freshman to perform at the level he did—reaching the conference tournament singles finals at No. 1—was extremely unusual. He had a lot of outstanding wins while he was here."

Lopes won SLC N.1 singles championships in his junior and senior seasons. He was also a No. 1 doubles champion both of those seasons, and he reached the No. 1 doubles final as a sophomore in 1975. McCordic, a resident of Sugar Land, played for volleyball coaches Claudia Perry and Rosie Petty during her Lamar career.

She helped lead the 1975 Lady Cardinals to the Texas Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) championship and was on the 1976 team that won the AIAW Southwest Region championship. As a junior, McCordic was named to the 1975 AIAW All-Southwest Region team after helping the Lady Cards to a 54-7-1 record. Those 54 wins still stand as the school record.

They were also recognized during halftime of that night's Lamar men's basketball game against Texas State. Lopes, recruited out of Mexico City by then-Lamar coach Ron Webrowski, won two Southland Conference championships No. 1 singles and two more in No. 1 doubles during a career in which he compiled a 56-32 singles record.

"We recruited really good players out of Mexico that year, and Carlos was probably the second-best known," said Webrowski, who retired as a Lamar faculty member last May. "He came in here, though, and blossomed as a freshman. "He had a lot of talent and a great competitive attitude. For a freshman to perform at the level he did—reaching the conference tournament singles finals at No. 1—was extremely unusual. He had a lot of outstanding wins while he was here."

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040

Laura Brindley '40, cert. general studies, and his wife, Carol, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary May 6, 2009. He earned a law degree from the University of Texas in 1962. They reside in Shoreline, Md. He is an attorney at Watts, Greenberg & Green, Ltd. They live in Beaumont.

Joe Cheovko '40, cert. general studies, retired from Sun Oil after a 35-year career and is in Dallas.

Marilyn Lundby '40, A.A., general studies, is retired and lives in Baytown with her husband, Grover.

Joe Sukut '40, A.A., general studies, is retired from Phillips Petroleum and lives in Lufkin.

Dr. Ray Kon '40, B.S., mechanical engineering, and Mary Kon, his wife, moved to Beaumont from Galveston, and have 11 grandchildren.

Dale Konoy '60, B.B.A. general business, and his wife, Gwendolyn, are retired and live in Port Neches. They have three children and eight grandchildren. Dale earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of Houston in 1965, and Gal established SHCIDE for women, an alliance focused on Single Moms Overcoming Racially Divided Education Empowerment.

Jan Jain '60, cert. elementary education, retired from a 25-year teaching career and lives in Livingston.

Wayne King '60, history, and his wife, Kathleen, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Nov. 21, 2009. They have two children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Bill Nylin '60, B.S. biology, and his wife, Carrie, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary May 6, 2009. He earned a master's degree from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1967, and lives in Groves.

Donna Sobak '68, B.B.A., accounting, is retired in Bridge City with her wife, Gayle.

Pamela Dziger '70, B.S., elementary education, is retired and lives in Jasper.

John Stover '70, B.S. biology, and his wife, Jerry, live in Houston.

Dale Kanoy '70, B.S., mechanical engineering, and Beryl Johnson '49, certif. general studies, '58, B.S. degrees in mathematics.

Ray Mason '71, B.B.A. marketing, is president of Mason Oilfield Service in Crosby. He is married to Charlotte.born, and lives in Lufkin, Coos.

Sheila Horst '72, cert. seminarian science, is a Hispanic ministry associate at PRHC in Houston, where she lives.

Richard Rezzol '73, cert. industrial electricity, is president of Advanced Lighting Electric in Addison. He lives in Dallas.

Uzoma Nwosu '76, B.A. secondary education, lives in Houston with his husband, Robert.

Barbara Saxton-Pike '72, B.S., home economics, earned a master's degree from Stephen F. Austin State University, and retired from a 32-year career in Center school district. She lives in Center with her daughter, Christine.

Karen Hinde '73, B.S. home economics, is an interior designer for Interior Expressions in Aiken, where she lives with her husband, George.

Jane Baker '73, B.B.A. marketing, is an attorney with Bancorp and Wall law firm and city attorney for Nederland, where she lives with his wife, Lynn.

Earlars (Bridge) Breoker '73, B.S. accounting, is a member of the board of directors of the Southeastern chapter of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants. She is a C.P.A. with Charles E. Rod and Assocates in Beaumont, where she lives.

Robert Hading '73, B.S. health and physical education, is retired and lives in Nederland school district. He lives in Victoria.

Gary Rea '73, B.A. English, earned a master's degree in history from Southwestern University and is a retired teacher. He lives in Odessa.

Jules Bok '74, B.S. secondary education, retired from education and lives in Canyon with her husband, Hopper.

Elon (McCor) Thomas '74, B.S. secondary education, was elected secretary of the Mid-Jefferson ISD Board of Trustees and is retired from teaching and lives in Tomball, where she lives with her husband, Jerry.

Robert '84, B.B.A. accounting, and bakery and operator of Night's Uniform Co. in Port Arthur, where he lives.

Jan (Die) Barnett '84, B.S. geology, is president and operator of H2O Water Conditioning in Port Arthur, where he lives.

Barbara (Bridgers) Brookner '84, B.A. economics, is an interior designer for Interior Expressions in Aiken, where she lives.

Pamela (Dugan) Springer '84, B.S. safety management, is a registered nurse and lives in Beaumont with her husband, Darin.

Robert Madding '85, B.S. education, is reelected to the board of the Foundation for Lamar University. He earned a bachelor's degree in education, '70, M.Ed. special education, '70, M.Ed. certification in special education, lives in Houston with his wife, Kathleen.

Wayne King '85, B.B.A. marketing, is president of King Investments in Port Arthur.

Lamar University is expanding opportunities for high school students across the state with the launch of a major online initiative allowing more Texas students to earn college credit at no or low cost before they graduate from high school.

Texas high school students can enroll in an array of college courses offered through stateu.com, an online合作伙伴 with Lamar University, and Lamar U and the University of Texas at Arlington.

Courses are provided at no or low cost to the student with costs covered by the state in most cases. Students may enroll in up to two courses each semester, and can even participate over the summer, with a full slate of free courses available to incoming high school juniors and seniors. The program especially makes it possible for eligible students in participating school districts to earn up to a full year of college credits for free.

“Many of these students will discover that they can meet the challenge of higher education, be inspired to pursue a degree at the college of their choosing, and be better prepared as they move ahead,” said Steve Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Lamar.

This state-funded free college program is available to any Texas public school student enrolled in a district that has signed an agreement to make the online courses available. So far, that includes nearly 300 districts. Students and parents should check with their high school counselors about whether their district’s already is participating.

Any student who qualifies and has access to a computer lab, a laptop or a home computer can take online dual credit courses. Students will be able to participate, dialogue virtually with professors and classmates, and take exams according to their individual schedules.

Lamar U and T A are finalists in the Lamar U and Longview school districts in Texas to participate in the state-funded project. Students can choose courses through stateu.com, Credit earned through the online dual credit program is guaranteed to be accepted at any Texas four-year public institution.

The online dual credit program will help Texas public school districts fulfill a state law requiring them to offer high school students an opportunity to earn college credit before they complete their high school diploma. The program also is available at low-cost to Texas four-year public institutions.

The program expands the online and distance education programs already offered by Lamar, including its master program in education and newly expanded online Bachelor’s in Applied Arts and Sciences, a degree completion program.

“This pilot program uses technology wisely to create access that up to now has been a real challenge for many school districts across the state,” said Paul Chenell, executive director of distance learning. “Lamar brings a lot of experience in delivering distance education to the program, with years of expertise and technology to bring high-quality academic programs to high school.

For more information about the new online dual credit program, visit stateu.com or call (866) 878-8665.

Four alumni were inducted into the Educator Hall of Fame this year. Each student has distinguished themselves in education and teaching. Honorees for 2009 are Joe Chenell '63, left, Sally (McDonald) House '59, 67, Ron Simon '64, center, and Patty (Coad) Anderson '96. The College of Education and H Uman Development hosts the annual Educator Hall of Fame to honor Lamar graduates for their hard work in the classroom. Information is available by contacting Sarah M. Atheny, induction committee chair, at 880-8702.

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Texas. He is president of Wild View School in League City, where he lives.

[48] Julio Roy '90, B.S. elementary education, is principal of Suburban Valley Construction Corp. in Houston, where she lives.

[49] JILL ROY

Alumni Advisory Board

Elected officers of the 2009-2010 Lamar University Alumni Advisory Board are Jill (Roy) Roy '90 of Beaumont; Dennis Mora '89, '94 of Orange; Clayton L. Louis '82 of Lafayette; and Bob (Bennett) Murphy '79 of Port Arthur.

Bob (Bennett) Murphy '79, B.S. Business Administration, is president of Murphy Construction Co., a family-owned and operated company, where he lives.

Earl R. Marr '84, B.S. engineering, is president of Innovia in Orange, where he lives.

Wayne (Pat) Davis '74, B.S. business administration, is president of Theobald, DeMahy & Associates in Orange, where he lives.

Craig Ball '78, B.S. mechanical engineering, is chief financial officer for Shell in Orange, where he lives.

Kevin Roy '88, B.S. business administration, is a partner with Brooks, Applegate and Associates, where he lives.

Bob Collin '78, B.S. business administration, is CEO for TMX Management of Lumberton, where he lives.

Susan Sekula '81, B.S. elementary education, is a counselor for Lamar University Student Health Center, where she lives.

[49] JILL ROY
class notes

90s

Bryan Ess \(90\), B.S., and literature, was honored by the Texas A&M Alumni Foundation for his service to the Texas A&M University-Commerce chapter of the American Writers' Association. He lives in Dublin.

Frank Hargis \(90\), B.A.S. applied arts and social science, is a partner in the law firm of Hargis Hargis & Moffett, where he lives with his wife, Mary. Hargis \(90\), B.S. elementary education, was honored for his service to the Texas A&M University-Commerce chapter of the American Writers' Association. He lives in Dublin.

Laura6 \(90\), B.S. in accounting, received the award for outstanding performance. He heads the finance department and serves as chief resident in obstetrics and gynecology. She lives in Beaumont.

Andrew \(90\), B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches five English classes at St. Rose of Lima School in Jasper, where she lives. Laner \(90\), B.S. veterinary medicine, was named technology coordinator teacher of the year for the Southeast Texas Education Foundation. She lives in Port Neches. Laura \(90\), B.S. interior design, teaches at Royse City Intermediate School in Jasper. She lives in Arvada. Billy Byrd \(90\), M.D. educational leadership, was named the Beaumont Enterprise Coach of the Year. He lives in Jasper.

Kella \(90\), B.B.A. finance, and \(90\), B.S. psychology, is regional vice president at Invesco Aim in Arlington, Va., where he lives. Matt \(90\), B.S. psychology, is regional vice president at Invesco Aim in Arlington, Va., where he lives. Sarah \(90\), B.A. applied arts and social science, is a partner at Hargis Hargis & Moffett, where she lives with her husband, David. She lives in Carthage.

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Alumni Advisory Board past presidents

Standing from left:
President: James Simmons
Bud Leonard ’08, 53, 79
Jenny Bresciani ’86
Ranier Flores ’82
Paul (Tom) O’Neal ’79, 49
Gil Bates ’67
Holly Strat 74
Yvens (Smith) Ritter ’67, 72
Doug Middleton ’74
Bill chiff ’71
Laura (House) Ritch ’73
Helen (Dunshie) Olson 40, 57, 58

Drew University High School basketball coach Dan Riehle ’83. B.S. education, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. He lives in Orange.

Vanya Giubilo ’93. B.S. english, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. He lives in Orange.

Karen (Malone) Herring ’90. B.S. health, fitness and wellness, is an assistant professor and program chair for the Department of Kinesiology. She lives in College Station.

Ann Peretti ’98. B.S. accounting, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. She lives in Orange.

Megan Morgan ’98. B.S. chemistry, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. She lives in Orange.

Edward Carini ’98. B.S. computer science, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. She lives in Orange.

Chad Schaefer ’02, B.S. criminal justice, is a law enforcement officer in a small town near Houston. He lives in La Porte.

Lucy Millam ’04. B.S. family and consumer sciences, is a sales manager for Wolff Bottling Co. in Fort Worth. She lives in Forth Worth.

Amber Woodard ’04, B.B.A. marketing, ’09. B.S. biology, is an exercise science and fitness management major, with a special emphasis in Wellness Center and Business. She lives in Austin.

William Ahl ’03. M.S. dietetics and diet education, is an instructor in the Interpreters Training Program at Lamar University. He lives in Lamar.

Kia Brown ’05. B.S. electrical engineering, is an electrical engineer for the State of Texas. He lives in Fort Worth.

Sairam Eddanapudi ’03, M.Ed. counseling, is a diagnostician at the Mid-County Third Grade Center. He lives in Mandeville.

Amber Ferrell ’03, B.S. chemical engineering, teaches first grade at Few Primary School in Orange. She lives in Port Arthur.

Nicole (Madden) Lewis ’03, B.B.A. accounting, and Bryan Davis ’03, B.S. biology, are in Houston. They live in Houston.

Jenni Gliss ’04, interdisciplinary studies, teaches pre-kindergarten at First Primary School in Jasper. She lives in Woodville.

Laura Hatk ’03, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches in the Hallie-Bucale County school district. She and her husband, Charles, 05, B.S. engineering, live in Hutto.

Paul Fall ’04. B.B.A. management information systems, is a computer support specialist. He lives in Port Neches. He is in his second year of business.

Elizabeth Lepper ’04, B.B.A. business management, married Feb 20, 2009. She teaches at Lamar University. She lives in Orange.

Jared Riehle ’05. B.S. psychology, and Luke Holton ’07, B.G.S. general studies, are the parents of a daughter, Kira, 2, and a son, Gabriel, 8, and live in Orange.

Daniel Middleton ’07, B.S. biology, and Amber Goff ’07, B.S. criminal justice, were married Aug 18, 2009. They live in Nederland.

Sandy Herring ’08. B.S. accounting, is a certified public accountant. She lives in Beaumont.

Linda Cervantes ’85, B.S. health, fitness and wellness, was named the Basketball Enterprise Coach of the Year for the 1993-94 season. She lives in Orange.

Robert Beaver ’02, B.B.A. general business, and Robert Beaver were married May 30, 2009. She is account executive at City Studio, in Mumbai, India, where she lives.

Catherine Booth and the Salvation Army.

Sairam Eddanapudi ’03, M.Ed. counseling, is a diagnostician at the Mid-County Third Grade Center. He lives in Mandeville.

Jenni Gliss ’04, interdisciplinary studies, teaches pre-kindergarten at First Primary School in Jasper. She lives in Woodville.
Zachary Gresham lives in Beaumont.

Ashley (Yentzen) Glenn is a specialist for the Department of Family and Protective Services in Beaumont, where she lives.

Kim Ballenger taught at Jasper Junior High. He lives in Kirbyville.

Tony Allen is a research engineer at National Oilwell Varco in Corpus Christi, where he lives.

Christopher Rich is a mechanical engineer, working at a research facility in Houston. He lives in Houston.

Dustin Cleveland '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade in the Jasper school district. He lives in Jasper.

Now, inspire someone you know to do the same.

Yvonne Simon died June 24, 2009.

Lenna Dauphine education, died June 29, 2009.


Lindon Hightower died June 24, 2009.

Larry (Leroy) Neff died July 4, 2009.

Bobby Whisenant died July 30, 2009.

Dr. J. D. Thompson '47, A.A. general studies, died July 2, 2009.

Dr. John Bynum died July 13, 2009. Contributions to a scholarship in her name were accepted at the Lamar University Foundation. P.O. Box 10011, Beaumont, Texas 77710.

Jerry Gaulding died July 13, 2009.

Dustin Cleveland '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, lives in Jasper. He plans to work in the construction industry.

Dustin Cleveland '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade in the Jasper school district. He lives in Jasper.

 earning technology, died Aug. 5, 2009.


Dustin Cleveland '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade in the Jasper school district. He lives in Jasper.

Dustin Cleveland '09, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, lives in Jasper. He plans to work in the construction industry.

Now, inspire someone you know to do the same.
I have literally taken an Act of Congress in 1798 to establish the United States Marine Band as the most prestigious musical organization in the country, but, 200 years later, it all took a wait and in a musicians’ trade magazine to turn a waiter into one of “The President’s Own.”

Working at a chain restaurant in Houstion, then-recent Lamar music graduate Scott Gearhart ’94 found himself “thoroughly miserable.” It wasn’t until discovering an ad in the International Musician for a trumpet opening in the Marine Band that Gearhart knew what he wanted for his future. An avid trumpet player for 29 years, Gearhart knew he was an influential teacher.

Majoring in music and with hopes for a career in the same industry, he immersed himself in the music program, becoming a part of almost every performing ensemble the university offered: the Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, the Trumpet Choir, student brass quintets, the Faculty Brass Quintet, the Cardinal Singers, the Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band A, the Marine Chamber Ensembles. Gearhart had mentioned the elite nature of the Marine Band. He says the Marine Band has the reputation for being, arguably, the best symphonic band in the world.

“I knew I could fit the Marine Band and that it was the professional career I wanted,” said Gearhart. “The moment I saw that advertisement, I made it my singular goal to win the audition.”

Driven by a desire to join “The President’s Own” in 1801, because it was, and still is, the only musical organization whose main job is to perform for the president of the United States and commandant of the Marine Corps.

Auditions for the Marine Band take place in John Philip Sousa Band Hall at Marine Barracks in Washington. Musicians are auditioned behind a screen to ensure they are selected based solely on performance ability. If selected for the “final round,” musicians are interviewed to ensure they meet mental and physical criteria for enlistment into the Marine Corps, and may obtain security clearance.

“One can’t think; you just do. It’s something you only work to your detriment,” Gearhart said. “You can’t think; you just do. It’s something that still works for me when I play something high profile.”

Of 176 applicants, Gearhart won one of two open positions. He enlisted and, in 1996, made the move to Washington.

Band members do not enter boot camp, picking up shifts as a waiter. Feeling unfulfilled, he began contacting school districts, lining up more than 40 students he would teach as a freelance trumpet teacher.

“I realized that I could, indeed, do something with my trumpet performance degree,” said Gearhart.

A year working for Spring and Katy school districts made Gearhart realize that maybe teaching wasn’t his calling. Then he came across the ad. He recalled that Wayne Dyess, director of jazz studies at Lamar, had been a member of the U.S. Navy Band and had performed a Harry James medley at a Lamarriteal concert in Beaumont, accompanied by the Lamar Jazz Band, an ensemble still near and dear to his heart. “I remember the personal attention and work ethic that I got from my professors at Lamar,” he said, “as well as the light-knit, coordinated effort of working with my fellow students.”

Attributing his success with “The President’s Own” to his education at Lamar and time spent studying with Ornelas, Gearhart said, “I was the first audition I took and turned out being the career I was looking for.”

One aspect that makes the job especially satisfying for Gearhart is the caliber of musicians that he has the opportunity to work alongside.

“My colleagues bring the utmost degree of musical talent and professionalism to the organization,” he said. “When something happens, it happens when it is supposed to happen and how it is supposed to happen, with the most beautiful musical results.”

In seven years, Gearhart will be eligible for retirement, but he hopes to stay longer. After his tenure with the band, he intends to continue performing. “I don’t think, then he and his wife, Vicki, a clarinet player and gunnery sergeant in the Marine Band, share an active life, although their schedules sometimes separate them.”

They live in Alexandria, Va., with two Labrador retrievers and two cats. In what little spare time he has, he enjoys competitive cycling and races as an amateur throughout the year in the Mid-Atlantic area.

In 2002, Gearhart conducted clinics and...
Mining for treasure

From the Silsbee petrochemical plant to the Saudi Arabian mine, Arabian American Development’s CEO Nick Carter is comfortable doing business wherever he is in the world.

by Cathleen Cole

I

lying into Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, for the first time in 1996, Nick Carter ’75 was awed by the vast expanse of desert, the desolate mountainous regions and the camels wandering the dunes. “It’s a good thing they’ve got oil and minerals,” he said of the country.

“It’s a different experience.”

Carter is president and CEO of Arabian American Development Co., which owns and operates Silsbee-based South Hampton Resources, a petrochemical facility. The company is also the developer and investor in a Saudi Arabian mine that is scheduled to start mining in late 2010 for zinc, copper, gold and silver. The publicly traded company had 2008 revenues of $155 million.

Carter was born in Bartlesville, Okla., the former home of Phillips Petroleum Co., where both his parents worked. His father was a chemical engineer, and his mother was a nurse for the company. Phillips had a refinery in Swény, Texas, and his family relocated there when he was 5 years old. As a child, he liked hunting, fishing, playing football and basketball and, in general, just being outdoors. After graduating from Sweeny High School, he headed for Lamar in 1965 but, after three years and a few majors, didn’t finish a degree. “I was pretty much messing around,” he said, adding that his frustrated parents quit paying for his college education. He needed to find direction, and he found it in fellow Lamar student Judy Smith. The two got married—she was 19; he was 21. He joined the Navy and found it in fellow Lamar student Judy Smith. The two got married—she was 19; he was 21. He joined the Navy and found

As for working his way up the corporate ladder, he said, “I think I’ve always had the ability to get things done. I’m self-starter.” He is talent lies in motivating people and instigating action, he said. But he also credits the mentors he’s had along the way who gave him opportunities, including John Simmons at the Sabine River Authority, Evan “Slat” Mallen at the accounting firm and Marvin “Red” Borner, the former owner of South Hampton Resources. “It’s the people behind the person,” he said.

Credit also goes to his alma mater. “I got a very solid education,” he said. “The quality of instruction was very good.”

His small-town upbringing has never hindered him in his international business dealings. After he became president of South Hampton, he immediately had interactions with the new parent company’s Saudi Arabian businessmen. “The language difference hasn’t been a big problem as documents are printed in Arabic and English, and most of the businessmen speak English. The only problem comes when dealing with service workers. Once, he was taking a taxi cab from the company’s office in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to the airport for the trip home to Texas. It seemed to Carter that the cab-driver was driving about 120 miles per hour. “Slow down! Slow down!” he shouted. The driver turned and looked at Carter and yelled back, “I don’t speak English.” He then proceeded at his break-neck speed to the airport. “He scared me to death,” Carter said.

Don’t be afraid to step out. Take a risk, and go where the opportunities are.

—Nick Carter ’75

Carter’s advice to small-town kids with big dreams of success: “Don’t be afraid to step out. Take a risk, and go where the opportunities are.”

His personal goals are in sync with the company’s goals. He wants to be a successful CEO by making the company successful and growing the company’s market base. “It’s a niche company,” he said, adding that he would like to expand into other markets “probably through acquisitions.” That will keep him busy for at least a few more years. “I enjoy my job,” Carter said. “I’m not in a big hurry to retire.”