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Valero to LU
Valero Energy Foundation gives $1 million for engineering student scholarships

Tennis, anyone?
Jennifer ’84 and Greg Thompson dedicate a gift for top-to-bottom renovation, creating the Thompson Family Tennis Center

Score big
Education First Federal Credit Union backs Cardinal athletics with $1 million contribution

THE FACE OF THE CAMPAIGN

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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 Engineering will help accommodate growth in our program, specifically the Ph.D. in chemical engineering. Across campus, Lamar’s many music majors will also enjoy vastly improved accommodations when the renovation of the music building is completed.

The return of football to Lamar’s sports slate has prompted much construction including the renovation of Provost Umphrey Stadium, the Dan F. and Sandra A. Smith Press Box, construction of the new athletic complex and installation of the state-of-the-art playing surface on Bud Leonard Field. Meanwhile, Coach Ray Woodard and the football staff continue signing outstanding recruits, running drills and coaching the Cardinals as they prepare for their first season on the gridiron. Fans are getting ready too, with season ticket sales and reservations for tailgating now under way.

Expansion of Lamar’s dual credit and Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences programs through our distance education division in partnership with Higher Ed Holdings will introduce these excellent opportunities to more than 500,000 Texas high school juniors and seniors as well as more than 680,000 Texans who began but did not complete their college education. On campus and online, these are exciting days at Lamar University.

Alumni and friends of your university have continued to respond to the call to invest in the future of Lamar. The $62 million raised thus far is the dynamic underpinning to students’ daily lives—helping them get the education they need through generous scholarships, supporting the future of Lamar. The $100 million goal are also fashioning a vastly improved academic programs, and offering students research opportunities and experiences otherwise unavailable. Funds raised toward the $100 million goal are also fashioning a vastly improved L...
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 players’ 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’re 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.

“He 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.”


“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 been 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 Carswell 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.

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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 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. Ruth died Dec. 11, 2004.

“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.”

“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 really appreciate this gift from Conn’s.”

The university and the company share a long history in Southeast Texas. Conn’s began in Beaumont in 1986 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 level. We’re excited about the opportunity, and we wanted to be a part of this.”

—BILLY NYLIN ’65

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—BILL NYLIN ’65

Supporting the video room seemed an appropriate gift, Nylin said, considering the products that Conn’s sells. He said he expects the return of football to bring additional positive changes at a university he already has seen change tremendously since his days as a student. When he began his studies in the early 1960s, Lamar had about 5,000 students and first-generation vacuum tube computers, which gave him his first opportunity to learn computer programming.

“It’s a 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.

“Of the degree individuals or the individuals pursuing degrees, by far the vast majority come from Lamar,” Frank said. “They receive a superb 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.

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 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. 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 Mazon ‘79 and Mike Aldredge ‘55, my co-chairs, as well as from the entire campaign cabinet; however, Lamar does a terrific job in Southeast Texas; there’s no question that Lamar is a great place to attend college.”

“The boys were so involved in Boy Scouts that our daughter, Jennifer, wanted to know why we couldn’t also have a Girl Scout troop,” Thompson recalled. “Greg, a Beaumont attorney and Port Arthur native, graduated in 1972 and has been involved in scouting ever since. Their two eldest sons, twins Taylor and Tyler, are Eagle Scouts, and the boys are still active today. Whatever my kids are involved in, they’re involved in, and they add value to our performance and to our success.”

Valero’s support of Lamar University dates to its purchase of the Port Arthur refinery in 2005. Valero has provided co-op and intern positions for Lamar University students and has been a leader in organizing and promoting the university’s events. Lamar 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 petrochemical industry.

“Valero Energy Foundation proudly supports education and is honored to present this gift to Lamar University to establish the Valero Scholarship in Engineering endowment,” said Greg Gentry, vice president and general manager 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 and 16 petrochemical plants in the Midwest with a combined capacity of 780 million gallons per year. Valero also owns and operates seven ethanol plants in the Midwest with a combined capacity of 400 million gallons per year. Valero and its subsidiary, Valero Energy Canada, owns and operates 15 refineries and 10 petrochemical plants in Canada with a combined throughput capacity of approximately 3 million barrels per day and an average distillate capacity of 2.6 million gallons per day.

Valero Energy Corp. also owns and operates the United States’ largest refinery complex in the United States, the Port Arthur Refinery, which has a combined crude capacity of approximately 700,000 barrels per day and a combined distillate capacity of approximately 600,000 barrels per day. Valero also owns and operates the Valero Port Arthur Refinery, which has a combined crude capacity of approximately 400,000 barrels per day and a combined distillate capacity of approximately 300,000 barrels per day.

“The boys are involved in several organizations, including the Boy Scouts of America, and are involved in a number of activities, including tennis, basketball, football, baseball, and track and field. They are also active in several community service organizations, including the Port Arthur United Way and the Lamar University Student Government Association. The boys are very involved in their community and are active in a number of volunteer organizations, including the United Methodist Church and the Lamar University Student Government Association.”

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

Tennis, anyone?

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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 chairmen 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. Many 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. It 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.”

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 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 $165 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.”

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Score big

Education First Federal Credit Union backs Cardinal Athletics with a $1 million contribution

by Brian Sattler
Rodeo ready

Each 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. "The show is basically reinvesting in young Texans as they learn and grow to become the state’s future.—CH

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. The landscapes were breathtaking and peaceful, but the scenic route hardly captured the gravity of the journey. Its ultimate destination: Scholarly research into 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 Alpes 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, 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 and extends out for six months or a year. This one, they grabbed immediately. We got pretty excited.”

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 U’s University 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 Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, while Palmer has obtained grants 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 similarities and patterns that indicate government raids are products of increasing better-organized activity by cultural opponents—moral campaigns to pressure authorities to act... In sum, we do not think these raids are coincidental, random or spontaneous but, rather, are linked across space and time to a common set of variables.”

 Opponents have gotten much more organized internationally,” said Wright.

State investigations or enforcement operations have become more and more paramilitary... It’s bizarre, like they’re attacking terrorist groups. We’re trying to find out why that’s the case.”

Wright departed in late May for Paris, where he met Palmer, a professor at Dawson and Concordia colleges in Montreal, Canada, and a colleague for 25 years who speaks fluent French.

“We took up a frantic pace,” Wright said.

They interviewed Church of Scientology leaders in Paris, where they visited a courtroom where a trial to ban Scientology was under way. Outside the hall of justice, they observed a cavalcade of police cars lined up “In case there was an adverse decision.”

While in Paris, the researchers also interviewed leaders of a Sikh group that had been raided in Belgium just a month before they arrived. In Brussels, they met with human rights organizations, with attorneys who had represented some of these groups in litigation and some non-governmental organizations.

“We drove the distance of France twice. We put 6,000 kilometers on a rental car,” Wright said. “These groups were scattered all over the country, and many of them were in fairly remote areas. So we drove all the way down to the Pyrenees, almost to the Spanish border, to visit one group and spent a couple of days with them to conduct interviews and do some observation.”

Then we went back to Paris, because we had scheduled other interviews, and then we drove back down the eastern side of the country, through the Alps and down toward the coast—to Cannes and Nice. We hit six communities on the way down, including a couple that were way up in the Alps where access was only by gravel roads that were not very well maintained. It was a real adventure in the little Peugeot. We’re not talking about a jeep or a four-wheel drive. It was a little scary.

“Then and now we drove to northern Italy, about an hour north of Milan in the Piedmont Valley, to meet with an organization called Damanhur, which I found to be the most interesting group we visited. It’s a New Age group whose members—mostly women—practice an ecstatic mysticism. They’re into sustainable living—they’re into solar power and use little energy. We got a first-hand tour, and it was breathtaking.

They mined these elaborate temples in a mountainside, and they’re visually stunning. Now it’s become a tourist site. People come to see the temples. It’s really amazing. But they didn’t tell the authorities what they were doing initially and it got them into a little trouble. They were raided twice by the government.”

In April 2008, state police launched a raid on the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (FLDS) near the small West Texas town of Eldorado, seizing 564 children. “This unwanted incursion by the state is just one example of a troubling pattern in recent years,” Wright and Palmer wrote in the prospectus. “In some cases, these dramatic raids have resulted in harmful and even deadly consequences, such as the federal siege of the Branch Davidians outside Waco, Texas, in 1993.

“While we are not suggesting that the phenomenon of the raids differently. “It occurred to us that nobody had ever done a comprehensive study on these raids,” Wright said. “We were surprised how many [there were] when we started documenting them. We had no idea about numbers. I don’t think anybody did.”

A preliminary survey reveals 48 state raids on new or unconventional religious communities in six countries. Eighty-one percent of them occurred in the last 25 years and 77 percent in the last 20 years, Wright said, “suggesting that governments are more willing than in the past to use these tactics as crude forms of investigation or to serve search and arrest warrants.”

Wright has been studying raids on religious communities since the late 1970s. “We have watched these over the years and can see patterns developing. Cases tended to fall apart because the allegations would be inflated or exaggerated. A lot of times, people would have alternative 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 orthodoxy, 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 and self-appointed mouth, it’s like being in a laboratory watching religion being born. I find it absolutely fascinating.”

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 U’s University 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 Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, while Palmer has obtained grants 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 similarities and patterns that indicate government raids are products of increasing better-organized activity by cultural opponents—moral campaigns to. ...
A passion for gifted education

by Louise Wood

From Brazil to Bulgaria, H ungary to Iran, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Netherlands, South Africa, Thailand and Turkey. She speaks Spanish, reads French and can understand Portuguese.

Sisk has returned to her native Washington, D.C., several times in recent years to participate in the activities of the World Council, 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 together students from 10 local schools in a program that helped to identify and support the development of the gifted and talented students.

Sisk has organized several events in her career at Lamar, including a reception for senators and representatives to spotlight gifted education. She arranged for a group of gifted children to attend, promoting one-on-one exchanges with the congressional guests.

Looking to the future, Sisk points to a grant she has written to establish a Virtual Education Center that will address critical issues. English-language learners, special education and gifted education are some of the areas targeted by the grant.

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, which led to Sisk's involvement in starting a school for the gifted in Tehran. When the resolution broke out in the country, the World Council president was put in prison, and Sisk, who was vice president, became its president.

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—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 four-year injury suffered 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 Cavaliers 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 some of the 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. He is interested in such a wide variety of areas it is overwhelming,” said Jack Cooper, 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 Central 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, SafeHaven 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.
### Growth spur 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 will also 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.”

“The impetus for this change is Lamar University’s enrollment growth in general and the expansion of our online degree programs, in particular,” Doblin said. “Approximately 1,100 master’s degrees were awarded to Academic Partnerships students last August and several hundred more finished in time for December commencement.”

“Lamar’s name appears in a national publication and is encouraged to learn that our master’s program attracted more students than other master’s programs in the nation,” said Thomas H. O., 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) 880-8784 or visit dept.lamar.edu/chemicalengineering/.

### 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.

“From left, President James Simmons, Cheryl Christopher, Gary Christopher, Big Red and Beaumont Mayor Becky Ames celebrate the grand reopening of Rolfe Christopher Drive.”

### 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 management, marketing, finance 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. 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.

### 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 Wardy Shipmates, examines the Puritans and their journey to and impact on America. A vacation in Vietnam (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 superhero Violet Parr in The Incredibles. For information on the lecture, call (409) 880-8508.

SARAH VOWELL

### 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, outpacing such institutions as Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford.

“We are pleased to see Lamar’s name appear in a national publication and encouraged to learn that our master’s program attracted more students than other master’s programs in the nation,” said James W. 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.”

1 Lamar University 34
2 Massachusetts Institute of Technology 30
3 University of Southern California 29
4 University of South Florida 27
5 Texas A&M University, Kingsville 25
6 Illinois Institute of Technology 20
7 University of Florida 19
8 Stanford University 18
9 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 17
10 Lehigh University 16


### Wordy Shipmates

At the podium April 6

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Beyond the classroom

As UP editor, Jullie 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 lurni can access the newspaper online at lamaruniversitypress.com. The John 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.

Lamar University has demonstrated significant leadership in integrating social, 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 in the world. Lamar moved up from 85th in the previous ranking to 68th 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.

On campus

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

The B.A. & E.W. Steinheirg 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 Parkinson’s at Lamar (PAL) Program attend sessions at the Speech and Hearing Clinic four days a week and complete daily “home-work” assignments of various vocal exercises.

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

“This is wonderful to talk to people now and know that they can hear me and understand me,” said Long.

“I am so thankful for Dr. Alana for coming out to the Parkinson’s support group and telling us about this program.”

The PAL 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 Long. But now, by offering it at Lamar University’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 alana.kozlowski@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 Reclamation Program has provided quality, used hearing aids to a number of low-income individuals. She is also an active member of Settorna International, a civic organization dedicated to hearing health issues. As a chairperson and member of the Safe Ears Program, Dionne has trained more than 800 children in the Golden Triangle area about the dangers of loud noise and its consequence of noise-induced hearing loss.

Lamar MBA program ranks among elite

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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 George 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 Gwin in J. and Adonia Placette. Gwin, 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... 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. Texas... 

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 Abishranee Kulik, Gina Thomas and Raikia Vengurlekar, Hernandez explored the leprosarium 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 resistance forces, Tadmor, associate professor in the Dan F. Smith 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 (physicsaps.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.

KVLU to tour London and Paris

Lamar University public radio 91.3 KVLU will host a travel tour to London and Paris in conjunction with Collette Vacations Sept. 23-30, 2010. The eight-day tour will begin in London and will feature day tours to some of the city’s most historic sites, including Buckingham Palace, St. Paul’s Cathedral and an optional excursion to Windsor Castle. While in London, the group will also see a theater performance. The tour will then depart for Paris via the Eurostar high speed train. Scheduled sights there are the Notre Dame Cathedral, the Arc de Triomphe, dinner in the Eiffel Tower, a cruise down the Seine, and an optional tour of the Lourve Museum. It is not necessary to be a member of KVLU to participate in the trip.

KVLU is a non-profit radio station licensed to Lamar University and has been in service to the Southeast Texas region for more than 35 years.
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 Satter 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 alumus

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 registered public and non-public offerings.

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 a half 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 as many ways as 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 Le 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 Debe, 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 Dobbin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

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 Ethnicity 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 political philosophy.

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.

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. The first HEH-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 bache-

lor’s degrees, 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 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 bache-

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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, R.N. 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.
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 parked 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 ever 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, Charmoine (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. It 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 same guy he first met nearly 30 years ago: “a kind, gentle, funny, 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 him on a mission trip to Guatemala with charity he started, the Shalom Foundation, which provides educational, nutritional and medical assistance to Guatemalan children and their families. “They’re very caring people,” Moore said. “It’s neat to see these deserving artists reach these great success stories that they have.”

Moore has had plenty of success, too. For the past five years, his company, Moore Entertainment, has partnered with AEG Live to take advantage of the power of an international brand. Recent and upcoming tours handled by his eight-person office include Kelly Clarkson, Jason Aldean, 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 flavor 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 is also 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 of its constituent members, 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, and his trumpet professor, the late Raul Orellas, 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.”

For me, it was absolutely a foundation of how I carried myself through business and being creative,” Moore downsays 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 enlisted 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 into the music business,” 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 Volkswagen delivering concert tickets around Beaumont. It has taken him from the smallest venues to huge ones 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 Gallaspy

We 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 Britney Zenos of Bridge City worked as interns in a hospital in Ho, 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 initial desire to attempt this.”

Mikel applied for the Beck Fellowship last year, for which he was a finalist. Mikel’s interest in international research and his 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,” Mikel 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.”

Jaini quickly found that his colleagues in Shanghai used English to communicate only when necessary. 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 his room 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,” Jaini 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 Jaini 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 that personal development of going face-to-face and coming back with a different viewpoint,” Jaini said. “The actual physical transition of going from here to there—the language, food, people, surroundings—that was the hardest part.”

Mikel, Zenos, and other volunteers in medical outreach

“Already, Zaranza 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. Zarosz 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 contraction, information that could be shared with Belisan government agencies.

The research opportunity should advance Zaranza’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,” Zaranza 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 Zaranza was the best choice among an excellent pool of applicants for this year’s fellowship. "He has the kind of dreams that really buffet this fellowship,” Smith said.
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 Ray ’90 and President James Simmons.

2. Nancy Impagliaヴェレィニ ’71, left, and Elia (Nieto) Ramozzo ’10. ’90

3. Vernon Pierce, Linda Denno, Distinguished Alumnus Joe Domino ’75

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

5. Betty (Lamont) Leaf, Charlene (Matthews) Leonard -55, Claudie Green

6. Jan (Caldwell) 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, patent and trademark, pollution issues, contract disputes and class actions. He was 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 ’09HD 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 Richard, were 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, congratulates three Lamar graduates from her senatorial district after the ceremony. Pictured, from left, are Luis Angel Guillen Jr., Carmelita Cantu, Senator Zaffirini and Cynthia Yvette Casas. The graduates, all of Harro, 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 ’59 recently carried the Olympic torch to begin 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 reiner’s 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) ’59 and her husband, Dean Oney Fitzpatrick, right, welcome Bob Love to a 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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Moving forward


by Brian Sattler

O n the horizon, beyond the hubbub of a flourishing commercial and retail zone with construction springing up all along the highway, several industrial projects valued in the billions of dollars have taken shape—projects realized in part through the incentive of tax abatements Griffith helped negotiate as Jefferson County judge. Those projects generate millions in tax revenue for the county and help blunt the effects of the nation’s recession on the Southeast Texas economy.

Today he directs the synergism of Carl R. Griffith and Associates—a gathering of talent, expertise and experience in a wide array of subjects of importance to business, industry and government. From their Port Arthur location, the associates provide strategic support in governmental affairs, environmental and regulatory affairs, business and economic development, criminal justice, emergency management, homeland security, policy development and grants management across the state and beyond.

Ongoing projects include design, operation, staffing and programming planning for county jails; environmental work with heavy industry, including guidance in the permitting process; advising communities and governments in disaster management planning and response; consulting with commercial and industrial clients on business development matters; working with school districts on environmental issues; and grants management for a number of communities.

Griffith has gone far by staying close to his roots and Southeast Texas values of integrity, dedication and hard work. The fifth-generation Texan grew up in Beaumont’s west end. After graduating Forest Park High School, he moved to Colorado to place his love for the mountains, but, after a year, Southeast Texas’ siren call drew him home.

He sought his first job as police officer at Lamar University and interviewed with then-President John Gray. University and interviewed with then-President John Gray. Griffith was an old friend of my grandfather’s, and they had worked together as kids,” Griffith said. He spent the year working with the programs that I got to go through at the jail.’”

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.’”

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.”

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 rates 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, the project would generate what it cost to build it.

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Increasing racial and ethnic diversity among county employees, especially in management and special roles, makes his list. "One of the things I'm most proud of is changing the complexion of the courthouse," Griffith said. "We just made sure we let our qualified employees advance." Griffith received in 2009 the highest award given by the Beaumont Branch of the NAACP "for Outstanding Dedication and Untiring effort in the Struggle for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunity and Justice under the Law."

In 2005, Griffith pushed hard for the refurbishment of more than 8,000 medically fragile people just before Hurricane Rita made landfall—an effort that undoubtedly spared many lives.

Today, Griffith is most interested in moving forward by helping other communities realize 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. "I've gained considerable experience, including flying through hurricanes. I've been in water from 8 feet deep to more than 10,000 feet."

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

The Petroius tower, originally a Texaco platform rig, was one of the longest and most challenging projects for the Lamar alumni. During the course of a decade, several sub-sea wildcats were drilled prior to the construction of the Petroius compliant tower. The compliant tower is used primarily for water depths from 1,500 to 2,500 feet because it is more capable of withstand great 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.

Another interesting experience for Stark was working on Chevron's Genesis project, which was the world's first drilling and production spar. A spar is a type of drilling platform that floats rather than having an underwater superstructure used in the compliant tower design. The spar is a floating vessel suspended to the mud line by 14 anchor chains around the circumference. Stark likens the spar to an upside-down beer can attached to the ocean floor with all the important facilities on top.

A native of Kirbyville, Stark credits his great engineering program at 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 Renae, 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 old equipment and enjoys off-roading, 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.

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Abbigale Archibold returns to her childhood family, exploring the ties that bind. In 1973, play because I wanted to write something a thriller, but it also has these moments of Desire Under the Elms instructor, directed the drama, which, he finally inspired Murray with a piece of work student to have an anything but happiness. Murray film is yours—and you get final. Be a mainstay. The chapter also honored Waman’s wife, Patte, who has continued to help the organization. New man retired from full-time teaching in 1999 after 37 years on the Lamar faculty ... A Night in Castilla’s Celebrating the Renaissance of Lamar University will be the theme of the Grand Bal 2010, to be hosted by Lamar’s Friends of the Arts March 27. Albert Nolen ’70, ’75 returns as chair of this black-tie event of art, entertainment and fine dining to benefit the College of Fine Arts and Communication. For reservations, call (409) 880-8137 ... Art League Houston honored Lamar’s Keith Carter ’70, Texas artist of the year, at Stryr Southern Nights, the league’s 2009 gala, Oct. 24 at H otel Za Za’s, who holds the Walles Chair in Performing and Visual Arts, shared the spotlight with Kern Kaye and Dr. Robert Card, who are art patrons of the year ... The fall exhibition season at the Dishman Art M useum featured works by 13 art students scheduled to graduate in December Tilled Impressions, the exhibition showcased thesis projects by Maurice Abelman, Delaina Joseph, Byron O’Keen and Kevin Thomas, Beaumont; Dustin Baxter, Lumberton; Mya Bean, Wiergate; Travis Coody, Sour Lake; Michael Cenomot, Nederland; James Roach, Daetett, April Sherman, Fannett; Amanda Talcott, China; and Robyn Voight, Port Neches. The Lamar Civic Orchestra opened its second season Dec. 8 with a concert featuring works by Ferdinand Hérold, Benjamin Britten, Ottorino Respighi and Percy Grainger. The orchestra provides an opportunity for musicians from all walks of life to perform together and, joined by alumni Justin Collazo ’02 of Beaumont, percussion. Nick Rissman, associate professor of composition, is founder and director of the ensemble.
Plays transcend ‘lens of reality’

Lamarismo! A perfect 20

The Lamarism Concert Series opened its 20th Anniversary Season Oct. 6 with Lamar dancers joining the Wind Ensemble and Concert Band for the finale. Mary Henderson, 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 Lamarism Faculty Artists concert Nov. 5. A light-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 Lamarism 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 Hix, Lamar’s new director of choral activities, made his Lamarism 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 Lamarism Jazz Concert March 2 in the Julie Rogers Theatre. The performance event will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the theater lobby featuring hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar. Jazz great Marion 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 Lamarism. 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

Jerry 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.

"Jerry Bradley’s poems—every one—are like big glasses of ice water on an August afternoon in Texas," said Nathan Brown, winner of the 2009 Oklahoma Book Award. "Yet, in the darkness that must accompany honesty, he offers us both the glories and sadness of love, family, Christmas and West Texas."

Bradley is a member of the Texas Institute of Letters and poetry editor of the Concho River Review. ..."Author Jay Cowan shared his impressions of gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson during a program Sept. 24. Cowan is the author of Hunter S. Thompson: An Insider’s View of D.Engaged, Depraved, Drugged-Out Brilliance. He spoke and signed copies of his book at the Dishman Art Museum. "This book provides the most compelling and readable portrait to date of one of America’s most extraordinary personalities,” its publisher, The Lyons Press, wrote, adding that Cowan provides “extraordinary new insights into the legendary writer’s creative and destructive impulses.” Cowan, who was caretaker on Thompson’s ranch, paints a sensitive portrait of a man—once described as America’s “rock star author”—who redeployed participatory journalism and who captured the decadence and depravity of an era. Cowan’s visit was sponsored by the Department of Communication and English and Modern Languages and the College of Fine Arts and Communication ...

Magnetic galaxy

Keith Carter ’70, has published his 11th book, Fireflies, an anthology of more than 30 years of portraits that delve into the mysteries of childhood. The book includes both new work and iconic images selected from all of Carter’s rare and out-of-print volumes. He presents a magnetic gallery of photographs of children and the world they inhabit. While making these images, Carter often asked the children: “Do you have something you would like to be photographed with?” This creative collaboration between photographer and subject has produced images that conjure up stories, dreams and imaginative worlds. Complementing the photographs is an essay in which Carter poetically traces the wellspring of his interest in photographing children to his own childhood experiences in Beaumont. As he recalls days spent exploring woods and creeks, it becomes clear that his art flows from a deep reservoir of sights and sounds imprinted in early childhood.
Lamar baseball in reloading mode

Jim Gilligan borrowed one of legendary University of Texas football coach Darrell Royal’s favorite sayings in assessing the prospects for his 2010 baseball team. “Darrell used to say the definition of a guy who has potential is that he’s a guy who hasn’t done it yet,” said Gilligan.

When Gilligan’s 33rd Lamar squad hit the Vincent Beck Stadium field for its season opener against Maine Feb. 19, it was loaded with guys who have “potential.” With only 16 lettermen on the 35-player squad, there are plenty of opportunities for newcomers to strut their stuff. After all, the Cardinals lost their entire starting infield, their starting catcher and their starting pitcher, while Vidor sophomore V.J. Bunner has the potential to be a back-to-back-to-back-to-back-outstanding outfielder.

As for second base, Hank Link, who is helping this season’s team as a student coach, posted a .369 average as a junior college standout outfielder. Tyler Link from the team starting infield, their starting catcher and their starting pitcher, has potential. With Link, who is helping this season’s team as a student coach, posted a .369 average as a junior college standout outfielder.

As for third base, both Pablo Salinas and Michael De La Rosa have great junior college credentials. Salinas was an All-American his freshman season at Alvin JC, and both of them have good power,” 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. Michael Padgett 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. Bunner has the edge at shortstop. Coaches will be paying close attention, however, to Lake Charles freshman Tyler Theriot, who batted .465 with 14 home runs as a high school senior.

“As for our outfield, both Pablo Salinas and Michael De La Rosa have great junior college credentials. Salinas was an All-American his freshman season at Alvin JC, and both of them have good power,” said Gilligan. Port Neches-Groves’ Eric Harrington, the 2009 SLC Freshman of the Year, joins new athletic complex. Houston Construction of Austin is preparing the ground of W.S. “Bud” Leonard Field for a state-of-the-art, artificial-turf playing surface. The same Mattrix turf is used at the new Dallas Cowboys stadium.

Farther south on campus at the intersection of Cardinal and Rolfe, Christopher drives, crews from Pepper-Lawson Construction of Houston have completed the new soccer field, giving Lady Cardinals soccer athletes a home of their own in the new state-of-the-art Lamar Soccer Complex, which includes a field house. Lamar University Athletics has begun a construction blog and installed a Web cam to help Cardinals fans keep up with projects on campus to improve athletics programs at lamarcards.com.

Construction begins on new LU Athletic Complex

The Cardinal football team faced off in scrimmages this past fall as Coach Ray Woodard 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. Houston Construction of Austin is preparing the ground of W.S. “Bud” Leonard Field for a state-of-the-art, artificial-turf playing surface. The same Mattrix turf is used at the new Dallas Cowboys stadium.

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Baseball locker room gets overhaul

Custom oak lockers greeted team members after winter break. An expanded, 1,600-square-foot facility includes the team room with new leather couches and furniture, two 60-inch flat screen plasma televisions and new chairs for each player at his locker. A large mural of action photos of Cards who have gone on to play in Major League baseball was installed at the clubhouse entrance.
Brow n inducted into UT Hall of Honor

James Brown, Lamar’s quarterbacks coach, was one of seven distinguished and highly decorated former University of Texas student athletes who were inducted into the Longhorns’ Men’s Athletics Hall of Honor on Nov. 20, 2009.

Brown, who established a reputation as a prolific passer and a big game performer over the 1994 through 1997 seasons, finished his Longhorn career holding 30 school records after leading the team to three straight conference championships.

Brown, who still ranks in UT’s Top 5 career-wise in most passing and total offense categories, has played professionally for six seasons in the NFL, Europe and Arena Football Leagues, and he also served as offensive coordinator at Hyde Park Baptist High School from 2003-2005. He joined Coach Ray Woodard’s Lamar staff in 2008 after playing a full pro season with the Cenflex Barracudas.

Looking for the sweet spot

It was a great start to the spring campaign for the men’s tennis team as the Cardinals won two of their first three matches and came away with the Southland Conference’s First Player of the Week for the season.

Lamar claimed wins over Abilene Christian State and Centenary, with the team’s only loss coming to Rice, which was ranked 35th in the nation.

Senior Richard Filkuka was named the SLC Player of the Week after leading Lamar to victory over Centenary with a straight-set win at first singles.

Both the men’s and women’s tennis teams are looking to make some noise in the conference this season. The SLC championships are scheduled for April 23-25 in Corpus Christi. Home matches are played on campus at the Lamar University Thompson Family Tennis Center. Admission is free. For more details and the latest results, visit www.lamarcardinals.com.

Cardinal H all of H on inducts L opez, M C Cordi c, Lundstro m

T hree former Lamar University athletes—famous for tennis, volleyball and track and field—were inducted into the Cardinal Hall of Honor during a banquet on Nov. 23.

Carlos Lopez, who starred in tennis from 1974-1977; Lucy (Wiggins) McCordic, a volleyball standout from 1973-1976; and Jonas Lundstrom, who excelled as a distance runner during the 1988-1989 season, made up the 2009 induction class. They were also recognized during halftime of that night’s Lamar men’s basketball game against Texas State.

Lopez, recruited out of Mexico City by then-Lamar coach Ron Wesbrooks, 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 Wesbrooks, 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—it was extremely unusual. He had a lot of outstanding wins while he was here.”

Lopez won SLC No. 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 Regional 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. She also helped the team post a 40-18-1 record in 1976. The Lady Cards placed seventh in the AIAW national tournament in 1975, and they were ninth in the 1976 national tournament.

Lundstrom, recruited out of Sweden by then-Lamar track and field coach Sonny Jolly, won three championships at the 1989 American South Conference Indoor Track and Field meet, and he also placed fourth in the steeplechase in the N C AA Outdoor Championships to earn All-America honors.

Earlier in the year, he was the ASC indoor champion in the 3,000 meters, and, the next fall, he won the conference’s individual cross country title.

“I was one of our best all-time athletes and a great competitor,” said Jolly. “To win three conference championships in distance events in the same meet is very, very rare.”

“To win three conference championships in distance events in the same meet is very, very rare.”

Lundstrom’s 1989 A S C championships came in the 1,500-meter run (in a time of 3:53.44), the 5,000-meter run (14:58.26) and the 3,000-meter steeplechase (8:55.60).

Running in the high altitude in Provo, Utah, he ran an 8:54.80 for his fourth-place finish in the N C AA Championships, but he set the still-standing Lamar record of 8:33.31 in an earlier regular-season meet.

Cross country takes trophies

The cross country teams dominated the Southland Conference awards ceremony during the 2009 season.

Not only did the Cardinal men capture the championship trophy, their fourth consecutive conference title and record ninth overall, but they also brought home three individual awards.

Meanwhile, the Lady women secured one individual award, meaning Lamar won four of the six individual trophies presented by the Southland Conference.

The individual hardware presentations started with Lamar senior Francis Kasagule, who was named Men’s Athlete of the Year by the conference. Kasagule won the conference race and went on to represent Lamar at the NCAA Championships.

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Kasagule, A himbisibwe and Walkow were also named to the all-conference team. In addition to Kasagule and Ahimbisibwe, the Lamar men had two other runners earn all-conference honors: Jonas H. A rjamalki and D rrew Bram.

After the season, H arjamalki represented Finland at the E uropean Cross Country Championships, where he finished a respectable 60th.

Lamar’s Woodard enters Kilgore College Hall of Fame

Ray Woodard made the Kilgore College football team in the fall of 1980. He earned second-team junior college All-America honors as a defensive tackle and was an honorable mention selection as a sophomore.

“We went undefeated my freshman season, and we were ranked No. 1 in the nation,” said Woodard, now Lamar University’s head football coach. “Looking back after his playing days at Kilgore College, “It was the first championship I had ever been in football.”

Woodard played football at the University of Texas before playing five seasons in the National Football League, including a spot on the Denver Broncos’ 1986 AFC Championship team.

In November last year, Woodard returned to Kilgore and was enshrined in the Kilgore College Hall of Fame. “It was quite an honor to be identified in this manner with the place I love and that has done so much for me,” said Woodard, who later spent eight seasons as Kilgore College’s defensive coordinator under head coach J. M. Miller.

He L amar University women’s basketball team got off to its best-ever start in the Southland Conference this winter.

The Lady Cardinals opened their conference schedule with six consecutive victories to grab a share of possession of first place in the SLC. In mid-February, the Lady Cardinals were 19-5 overall and 9-1 in conference play, having garnered wins over teams from Conference USA, the Sun Belt Conference, the Western Athletic Conference, the Ohio Valley Conference and the SWAC.

Junior guard Jena Plumpie, a transfer from the University of Oklahoma, was among the Top 20 in the nation in assists, steals and 3-point field goals, while junior Trashanna Smith was in the top 20 in blocked shots.

Plumpie, a candidate for All-America honors, received Southland Conference Player of the Week honors twice, while teammates K alis Loyd and Trashanna Smith each received the award once.

But while the individual awards are nice, the Lady Cardinals are more concerned with winning games, something they’re doing on a consistent basis. “We’re really coming together as a team,” Plumpie said. “We’ll do whatever it takes to win.”

And the Lady Cardinals have been winning in convincing fashion, outsourcing their opponents by an average of more than 11 points per game.

The Houghton Center becomes a rocking place on game days as the Lady Cardinals entertain their fans with their up-tempo style of play. “This team can score,” said Coach Larry Tidwell, who registered his 50th career win faster than any other women’s basketball coach in Lamar history.

“We’re a fun team to watch.”

With more than half of the conference schedule remaining, there’s still plenty of basketball to be played before the Southland Conference Tournament takes place in Katy M Arch 9-12.

Check out the latest Cardinals updates and get ticket information at lamarcardinals.com.
C A R D I N A L C A D E N C E  F E B R U A R Y  2 0 1 0 3 8 : 1

Lamar U 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 partnership between Lamar University and the University of Texas at Arlington. Courses are provided at low or no 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 earn full college credit each semester. The program essentially makes it possible for eligible public high school students to earn 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.

“Lamar brings a lot of experience and newly expanded online Bachelor’s in education and teaching. Honorees for 2009 are acknowledged for their work and dedication to education. More information about our online dual credit program can be found at stateu.com, an online partnership between Lamar University and the University of Texas at Arlington. 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. Courses are provided at low or no 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 earn full college credit each semester. The program essentially makes it possible for eligible public high school students to earn a full year of college credits for free.

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class notes

Texas, he is president of West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, W.Va.


[Steve Brown] ‘75, B.A. mathematics, is pastor of Village Parkway Baptist Church in San Antonio, where he lives with his wife, Jane.

[David Blakesley] ‘70, B.S. elementary education, 71-72, Ed.D. education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with his wife, Katrina.

[Michael A. Blakesley] ‘73, B.S. biology, is a speaker in The Woodlands with his wife, Katrina.


[Keith Kebodeaux] ‘78, A.A.S. drafting technology, is executive vice president of Superior Commercial Services in Hearne, where he lives.

[Johnette Collard] ‘78, B.S. education, is vice president of operations at Shore Electric in Houston. She and her husband, Lee, live in Sour Lake.

[Michael Killingsworth] ‘89, B.S. nursing, is a speaker in The Woodlands with his wife, Katrina.


[Donna Schlerandi] ‘78, B.S. elementary education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, A.J.


[Julie Smith] ‘81, B.S. biology, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, Jim. She lives in Sour Lake.

[Estella Rangel] ‘82, B.S. education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, Jim.

[Paul Davis] ‘82, B.S. communication, is national sales director of iKontic Diagnostics. He is a speaker in C. N. C.

[Joan Lundy] ‘82, B.M. music education, ’87, M.M. music education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, A.J.

[LaMarque. He lives in Dickinson with his wife, Lisa.

[Laurie Harris] ‘82, B.S. health and physical education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, A.J.

[Dina (Upchurch) Calver] ‘82, B.S. education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, A.J.

[Todd Landry] ‘82, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a speaker in The Woodlands with his wife, Lisa.

[Louis Falgout ‘80, Karol (Kellam) Gammill ‘67, Gillian Dean ‘72, B.A. music education, ‘89, M.A. music education, have a new daughter, Mia Brynn. They live in Nederland.

[Johnette Collard] ‘78, B.S. education, is a speaker in The Woodlands with her husband, A.J.


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Distinguished in his or her chosen profession or life work

an individual who, in deed and in action, recognizes the

class notes

Department. He lives in Beaumont.

ders, lives in Fort Knox, Ky., with her hus-

of the Y ear from Monsignor Kelly Catholic

He lives in Nederland.

He lives in Beaumont.

He lives in Groves.

in Port Arthur. She lives in Port Neches.

Kimberly Pitts

He lives in Nederland.

Alvina Brown

is a healthcare consultant in northwest Texas for the show.

Richard Howard

They live in Port Neches.

Read All Over, a bookstore in Port Arthur. She lives in Port Neches with her

Gulf Coast business development

ment of college alumni. The awards committee requests nominations

The College of Business Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding achieve-

eligibility requirements

The candidate must be

distinguished in his or her chosen profession or life work

a person of such integrity, stature and demonstrated ability that faculty, staff, students and alumni will take pride and be inspired by his/her recognition

an individual who, in deed and in action, recognizes the importance of his/her education at Lamar and who instills interest and loyalty are evident

an alumnus of either the undergraduate or graduate programs of the College of Business

Please submit a letter or e-mail nomination along with any additional information available regarding the nominee.

All nominations should be mailed by April 1, 2010

College of Business Hall of Fame 

The College of Business Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding achievement of college alumni. The awards committee requests nominations for the most prestigious award presented by the college.

Eligibility Requirements

The candidate must be

a person of such integrity, stature and demonstrated ability that faculty, staff, students and alumni will take pride and be inspired by his/her recognition

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All nominations should be mailed by April 1, 2010
Leena Waghmare married Oct. 17, 2009. She is a senior care project manager for Norit Americas and lives in Hallsville.

Robert Beaver ‘02, B.S. chemical engineering, is the supervisor of global logistics, is process safety engineer for Smith and Forrest in Vidor.

Jared Best married Aug. 8, 2009, in Beaumont. He earned a law degree from St. Leo University. He lives in Port Arthur.

Lindsey (Cauthen) Nunnally lives in Port Neches.

Laura Hunt married May 30, 2009, and lives in Port Arthur. He earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of North Alabama and works as a speech therapist for E.B.S. Pediatrics in Houston. She lives in Vidor.

Jena (Verrill) Strong is a HiOx aeration system specialist for Smith and Forrest in Vidor. She lives in Vidor.

Laura Gibbs, 24, 2009. Amber is an early childhood teacher and coach at Odom Academy. They live in Cypress.

Karen (White) Edwards was married May 30, 2009. She is a teacher and coach at Odom Academy. They live in Beaumont.

Tom Kelly, 22, 1999. He and his wife, Tricia, live in Pearland. She is an economist for HNTB in Baton Rouge.

Michael, live in Pearland. She is an engineer for HNTB in Baton Rouge. She lives in Houston.

Karen (Forston) Lyons married May 30, 2009. She is account manager at Lafayette Surgical Specialty Hospital in Lafayette, La. She lives in Youngsville.

Laurie (House) Ritchel ‘85; Gilbert Adams Jr. ‘69; Banker Phares ‘62; President James Simmons; Standing from left: Board past members: Robert Beaver ‘02, B.S. chemical engineering, is the supervisor of global logistics, is process safety engineer for Smith and Forrest in Vidor. He lives in Vidor.

Lacey Millican ‘04, B.S. family and consumer sciences, is sales manager for Westfalia and lives in Beaumont.

Amber Woodard ‘04, B.A. marketing, ‘09, B.A. exercise science and fitness management, is a franchisee with the Health and Wellness Center in Beaumont. She lives in Vidor.

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

Kaylin Brown ‘03, B.S. electrical engineering, is a senior project engineer for the Delta Utilities Transmission and Distribution Network in Dallas. She lives in Mckinney.

Garrett ‘(Birdly) Clark 15, B.B.A., marketing, is senior and account manager for U.S. Power and Gas. She and her husband, Chris, and two sons, Aaron and Grant, live in Houston. She teaches in the jasper school district, and they live in Jasper.

Jill (Jones) Vincent, M.S. psychology, and lake Helbert ‘04, B.A. management information systems, is the executive director of Florida Coastal School of Medicine. She lives in Plantation, Fla., with her husband, Funk, her father, who has been the chief of the Coast Guard, and their son.

David Harmonic ‘92, B.S. industrial engineering, is program manager for Smith and Forrest in Vidor. He lives in Houston.

Mark Wendel ‘92, B.A. management information systems, is the business manager for the Ironworkers Local 496 in Houston. She earned a bachelor’s degree at Texas Woman’s University in library and information science. She and her husband, Michael, live in Ft. Worth.


Jeremy Best married Aug. 8, 2009, in Beaumont. He earned a law degree from St. Leo University. He lives in Port Arthur.

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Katy (Parmer) Reed ’57, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade at the Primary School in the Jasper school district, where she lives.

Elizabeth (Shelton) Robinson ’17, B.S. chemical engineering, is a process engineer for Flow* In Sugar Land, where she lives with her husband, David, and son.

Jack Turner ’67, B.S. geology, is a geologist at Tidewater Engineering Inc. in Vidalia, where he lives with his wife, Alisa.

Koby Waterford ’38, B.S. finance, is vice president of marketing for the Southwest Texas Financial Education Institute. He lives in Groves.

Lit. Cath Michael Weber ’70, M.P.A. public administration, ’09, B.A. business administration, has served more than 30 years as a career military officer in the Army and Coast Guard. A pilot and maintenance flight test engineer, he has more than 2,300 hours of combined flight time. He is an active duty with the Coast Guard and also serves as a trained mediator with the Jefferson County Dispute Resolution Center. He lives in Beaumont.

Tany Allen ’09, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches physical education and coaches at Jasper Junior High. He lives in Kirbyville.

Kim Ballenger ’15, B.S. general studies, is a teacher and coach in Jacksonville. She lives in Jacksonville.

Keisha Moore ’21, B.S. psychology, is graduation coordinator at Lamar University, where she lives.

Jennifer Waters ’21, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches family and consumer sciences at Jasper High School. She lives in Kibbyville.


Chasity (Panza) Chiles ’18, M.S. industrial and organizational psychology and J.L. Lewis ’06, B.S. general studies, were married Oct. 29, 2020. She is a human resources manager for Genesis Building & Construction Inc., and he works for Gulf Coast Fabricators. They live in Beaumont.

Sally (Dix) Faluca ’04, B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse at Christus St. Mary. She is in Port Arthur, where she lives with her husband, Kent.

Denise Pepilis ’11, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade in Groves-Creek school district in Baytown. She lives in Baytown.

Christopher Richard ’08, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a research engineer at National Oilwell Varco in Conroe, where he lives.

Mary עלysper Schult ’08, B.S. interior design, lives in Victoria, Calif., with her husband, Matthew.

Miquel Sols ’18, B.A. history, joined Teach For America, the national nonprofit of top college graduates who commit to teach for two years at eligible public schools in the U.S. He lives in Beaumont.

Dorothy (Hubert) Sutton ’37, B.A. teacher, teaches at St. John Episcopal School in Alamo, where she lives with her husband, Lloyd.

Emily (Dix) Cobb ’24, B.S. communication, and Brendan White were married Aug. 9, 2020. She works for the Julie Rogers Gift of Life Foundation. They live in Beaumont.

Kristen Algoing ’20, B.A. English, teaches in the Jasper school district. She lives in Jasper.

Jenelle (Anderson) Brown ’20, B.S. nursing, and Keaton Lee ’20, B.S. engineering, were married July 25, 2020. She works as a registered nurse for Christus St. Mary in Port Arthur, and he works as a graduate engineer at Anacore and Gates Consulting Engineering. They live in Beaumont.

Shawn (Benjamin) Brueser ’92, M.D. obstetrics and gynecology, was a resident for 10 months. She is in Port Arthur, and he works as a graduate engineer at Anacore and Gates Consulting Engineering. They live in Beaumont.

Lindon Hightower ’23, B.S. computer science, and Mary Pattison ’23, B.S. psychology, were married Sept. 16, 2020. She is a research assistant at the University of Houston. They live in Friendswood.

Brandon Spano ’20, B.S. marketing, is a job-site manager at Property Management in Conroe, with his wife, Carol (Sharp) ’04, B.B.A. accounting, and Mark Spano, B.A. business. He is in Groves, with his wife, Carol (Sharp) ’04, B.B.A. accounting, and Mark Spano, B.A. business. He is in Groves.

Kasey Rosas ’21, M.F. education administration, is a literacy coordinator for the E.L. Mann Elementary School in Harris. She lives in Friendswood.

Kyla (Parmer) Reed ’57, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, teaches first grade at the Primary School in the Jasper school district, where she lives.

Jenelle (Anderson) Brown ’20, B.S. nursing, and Keaton Lee ’20, B.S. engineering, were married July 25, 2020. She works as a registered nurse for Christus St. Mary in Port Arthur, and he works as a graduate engineer at Anacore and Gates Consulting Engineering. They live in Beaumont.

Shawn (Benjamin) Brueser ’92, M.D. obstetrics and gynecology, was a resident for 10 months. He is in Port Arthur, and she works as a graduate engineer at Anacore and Gates Consulting Engineering. They live in Beaumont.

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*Private tuition based on a 36-hour four-course plan. 

W e w i l l m i s s...
I may 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 took a want ad in a musicians’ trade magazine to turn a waiter into one of “The President’s Own.”

Working at a chain restaurant in Houston, 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 had found success as part of the future. An avid trumpet player for 29 years, Gearhart has found success as part of the most elite musical organization in the country.

Born in Garland, Gearhart moved with his family to Newark, Del., his father’s hometown, where Gearhart was 5. They lived there two years before making the move to Beaumont. At 11, he followed in the footsteps of his older brother, Bryce, who was a trumpet player. “I quickly fell in love with the instrument and took off with it on my own,” said Gearhart.

Later, while attending West Brook High School, Gearhart took private lessons from the late Raul Ornelas. After graduating in 1987, he chose to study with Ornelas at Lamar because, Gearhart said, “He was such 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, the Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band A, the Trumpet Choir, student brass quintets, the Faculty Brass Quintet, the Cardinal Singers backup, Pep Band for the basketball teams, and Big Red Marching Band. As a result, he entered “The President’s Own” with a plethora of styles and skills.

“My experiences (at Lamar) prepared me very well for my career,” said Gearhart. “It made me tailor fit for the Marine Band.”

Most of his colleagues had attended schools such as Eastman and Juilliard, which essentially focus on one aspect of performance. Most of his section mates focused on orchestral trumpet playing and had little symphonic band experience, whereas Lamar prepped students in a variety of musical sectors.

“The Marine Band doesn’t have separate units within the organization for various tasks,” he said. “For instance, we don’t have a dedicated Jazz Band, like the Amy’s D.C. premier band ‘Pershing’s Own.’ We do everything from orchestra concerts to events at the White House.”

Not knowing what endeavors and adventures his future would hold, Gearhart headed to Houston after graduation, 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 mentioned the elite nature of the Marine Band. He said 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.”

Gearhart performed the band’s first official public concert on Aug. 21, 1980. Thomas Jefferson gave the band its name of “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.

“You can’t let the nerves get to you; they 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 76 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.

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

“Young colleagues bring the utmost degree of musical talent and professionalism to the organization,” he said. “We use 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 his hopes to stay longer. After his tenure with the band, he intends to continue performing. “But 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.

“The Marine Band is the most elite musical organization in the country, he has performed at four inaugurations, dating to Bill Clinton’s second inauguration Jan. 20, 1997. “Each inauguration has been an honor to be part of,” he said. “Just like performing at the White House, there are aspects of these events that I get to witness from the inside, which makes them particularly interesting.”

One special inauguration for Gearhart was President Barack Obama’s on Jan. 19, 2009. “I’ve heard roaring audiences of tens of thousands before,” said Gearhart, “but the sound of hundreds of thousands, approaching a million, was a sound that not too many witness. There were so many people; it was a very special day.”

Gearhart travels across the country during the band’s annual fall concert tour, where, along with more than 70 other members, he performs 40 to 45 concerts in 50 to 55 days in October and November. He has also performed lead trumpet for the Marine Jazz Orchestra’s inaugural performance at the Kennedy Center, and he frequently performs concerts with the Marine Chamber Ensembles.

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

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

From the Silsbee petrochemical plant to the Saudi Arabian Mining fortreasure to be close to home. He knew it was time to settle down and marry—she was 19; he was 21. He joined the Navy and didn’t finish a degree. “I was pretty much messing around,” for Lamar in 1965 but, after three years and a few majors, basketball and, in general, just being outdoors.

As a child, he liked hunting, fishing, playing football and Texas, and his family relocated there when he was 5 years old. His father was a chemical engineer, and his mother was a of Phillips Petroleum Co., where both his parents worked.

For Arabian American Development, describes Carter as intelligent, respected and reserved. “The growth and success of the company can be attribut- ed to his management,” Groehringer said. The partner with Gerner Gertz law firm in Beaumont is also Carter’s hunting, fishing and golfing partner on occasion and said that even away from business, Carter has a no-nonsense attitude, but he does have a dry sense of humor. That’s apparent when he’s talking about his family, made up of accountants and business people, including his wife, Judy Carter, his daughters, Nikki (Carter) Smith ’92 and Mandy (Carter) Ternes ’03; and his sons-in-law, Darren R. Smith ’93 and Andy Ternes ’02. He is son, Jeremy, joined the N area. They’re not exactly a wild bunch, he claimed. “We talk about balancing checkbooks, debts and credits,” he joked. “We’re not that boring!” his wife countered.

Carter always had faith in her husband’s ability to be a suc- cess but admitted that when they were young “he was lacking a bit of direction.” Today, she doesn’t hesitate to give him direction in the form of a honey-do list for her Antique Mall of Luberon and Country Lane Antique Mall. If something’s broken, she asks him to fix it, and he says, “I’ll put it on my list.” She describes her husband as a really neat guy who is not easily discouraged. “He stays very positive,” she said. “He’s my best friend.”

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.”

NICK CARTER ’75

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

by Cathleen Cole

Copper, zinc, gold and silver. Arabian American Development also owns about 55 percent of the capital stock of a Nevada mining company, Pioche-Ely Valley Mines Inc.

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 a self-starter.” He is talented in motivating people and instigating action, he said. But he also credits the mentors he’s had along the way who gave him opportunities, includ- ing John Simmons at the Sabine River Authority, Evan “Slats” Wathen at the accounting firm and M arvin “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 educa- tion,” he said. “The quality of instruction was very good.”

It’s a small-town upbringing that has never hindered him in his inter- national 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 has- n’t been a big problem as documents are printed in Arabic and English, and most of the businessmen speak English. The only prob- lem 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 that the cab- ber 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.

Charlie Groehringer ’80, a board member and general counsel for Arabian American Development, describes Carter as intelligent, respected and reserved. “The growth and success of the company can be attribut- ed to his management,” Groehringer said. The partner with Gerner Gertz law firm in Beaumont is also Carter’s hunting, fishing and golfing partner on occasion and said that even away from business, Carter has a no-nonsense attitude, but he does have a dry sense of humor. That’s apparent when he’s talking about his family, made up of accountants and business people, including his wife, Judy Carter, his daughters, Nikki (Carter) Smith ’92 and Mandy (Carter) Ternes ’03; and his sons-in-law, Darren R. Smith ’93 and Andy Ternes ’02. He is son, Jeremy, joined the N area. They’re not exactly a wild bunch, he claimed. “We talk about balancing checkbooks, debts and credits,” he joked. “We’re not that boring!” his wife countered.

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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.”

If his personal goals are in sync with the company’s goals, he wants to be a successful CEO by making the company successful and plans to expand 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.”