Join in a Standing Ovation as we honor Jimmy and Susan Simmons
March 2, 2013
Details page 45

Be part of the momentum that is propelling Lamar University forward!

We are experiencing growth like never before. With record-breaking enrollment and new and innovative programs, the possibilities are infinite!

Lamar’s excellence is attracting the highest caliber students, like the ones featured here. They are drawn to the innovation that is a hallmark of Lamar.

The generosity of alumni and friends like you helps Lamar keep this momentum going. Make a difference by giving to the annual fund.

Your support of the annual fund helps make our innovative programs and quality education available to Lamar University students.

Together, we can give our students a future filled with infinite possibilities.

Please send your gift today, or to make an immediate impact, make your gift online at www.lamar.edu/give.

“I give a lot of credit to my mentors here at Lamar for their support and input. They guide us and make us into who we are.”
—Humberto Hernandez, LU senior Biology major

“The classes are small enough that you can have personal relationships with your professors. Getting to know the professors personally helped me to figure out who I am as a person and what I want to do with my life.”
—Christine Zabala, LU senior English & History major

“As a student-athlete, I’ve had to become more disciplined in my studies, and throughout my courses at Lamar, my professors have really pushed me academically. My experience at Lamar has prepared me to succeed in graduate school and other future academic pursuits.”
—Joshua Raglon, recent LU grad, Psychology major

Texas Roots. Infinite Possibilities.

Boomtown Boom: History lives at Spindletop
Layfield—TSUS Foundation honor benefits engineering
An excellent run: Alumni salute Simmons era
From the President

As we round the corner to 2013 and Lamar University’s 90th year, we can look back on 2012 as another great time in our history. We have seen growth on many levels, from record enrollments to a major milestone in the comprehensive campaign, to name but two. Lamar posted record enrollment again this fall, despite raising our entrance requirements. Lamar’s 20th class day headcount was 14,675, up 2 percent over fall 2011. And, by the time this semester ends, even more students will have started and completed online courses bringing the total number of students enrolled at LU during the fall to around 15,000.

Earlier this fall, Lamar’s Investing in the Future comprehensive campaign topped more than $100 million raised thanks to the incredible support of so many alumni and friends, and it continues to grow. We are so thankful to everyone who is making the future of Lamar University better for all.

A few weeks ago I announced that I would be stepping down from the presidency effective in 2013. It had been an extremely difficult decision for Susan and me. We have been a part of Lamar University for more than 42 years – and have grown to love being so much a part of life here. It has been a very, very special time for us both.

Because the legislative session is such an important time for the university, our chancellor, Brian McCall, has asked that I continue to serve until Lamar’s next leader can be on campus. That will take place sometime before the fall semester. I will gladly do so, for there are many exciting things on the horizon. Lamar University is stronger than ever, and even though challenges remain, there is incredible momentum and enthusiasm across the campus.

After taking a leave of absence, I look forward to returning to the faculty of the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music to pursue my first loves—teaching and music.

Morgan Moore
Department of Music

Here. It has been a very, very special time for us both.

We are sure that Lamar University’s greatest days lay ahead.

With Cardinal Pride,

James M. Simmons
President

Lamar University
DeWayne Layfield, TSUS Foundation honored with $2 million LU scholarship

Students in the College of Engineering will benefit from scholarships thanks to the combined generosity of The Beaumont Foundation of America and The Texas State University System Foundation.

The two joined in creating the L. DeWayne Layfield—Texas State University System Foundation Scholarship by contributing $1 million each. The $2 million endowment will provide scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students majoring in engineering. Layfield ’87 is a Beaumont attorney and Lamar graduate.

“We are grateful to the Beaumont Foundation and the TSUS Foundation for their support in establishing the DeWayne Layfield—TSUS Foundation Scholarship,” said President James Simmons when the scholarship was announced. “It’s wonderful that these two foundations have joined in supporting Lamar University.”

“This is, without question, the largest gift the TSUS Foundation has ever given by far and an extraordinary gift for the university,” said regent and TSUS Foundation trustee Kevin Lilly.

“Mr. Layfield has distinguished himself in the practice of law, and we are proud to count him among the outstanding alumni of Lamar University,” Simmons said. “It is fitting that his name will forever be associated with opportunity for countless students as they too realize their own personal dreams through higher education.”

“The dream or hope of exaltation comes from the occasional graduate who becomes a state or national leader. DeWayne Layfield is the dream of exaltation made real at Lamar University as a state and nationally recognized legal professional in the area of complex litigation,” said Beaumont Foundation President Frank Newton.

“Scholarships like the one we announced today are vital,” said Jack Hoppes, dean of the College of Engineering. “Thanks to the Layfield—TSUS Foundation Scholarship, countless young men and women will excel in engineering at Lamar University, graduate and become the leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.”

Larry DeWayne Layfield graduated summa cum laude from Lamar with a degree in chemical engineering. The top male graduate in his class, he enrolled in the University of Texas School of Law, where he was elected to Chancellor, the most prestigious honor society, as well as the Order of the Coif, and served as editor in chief of The Texas Law Review.

Layfield financed his law school education through a combination of summer work and a stipend paid for his service to The Texas Law Review.

After earning his law degree, he immediately began his clerkship with the Honorable Thomas Gibbs Gee, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He later began work on complex environmental and multi-plaintiff chemical exposure litigation for Vinson & Elkins in its Houston office. In 1994, he became senior litigation counsel to Bridgestone/Firestone Inc., a position he held until he began a private practice in 1997.

“Throughout my 40-plus years at Lamar, we have had a large number of exceptionally talented engineering students,” Hopper said. “However, without a doubt, DeWayne Layfield is one of the most scholarly and talented individuals to ever graduate from Lamar. It is very appropriate to have a scholarship endowed in his honor.”

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“The students at Lamar receive skills from the teachers, staff and administration that stand them in good stead to compete with anyone.”

—DeWAYNE LAYFIELD

The Texas State University Foundation was organized in 1977 as a Texas non-profit corporation for charitable and educational purposes. The Beaumont Foundation was organized in 2000 as a Texas non-profit corporation for charitable and educational purposes. The Beaumont Foundation has focused its charitable and social activities on gifts and grants that foster the development of knowledge, advance human welfare, nurture individual creativity, strengthen institutions and contribute to the well-being of the less fortunate in society.
The Restaurant Association in his memory completed funding for the scholarship, which will be available to voice or vocal performance majors.

The Del Papa Distributing Company College Endowment was established to commemorate the company’s 100th year in business. The purpose of the gift is to give back to the communities that have helped in the success of the business. It will be awarded to undergraduates majoring in marketing.

Family, friends, students and colleagues established the Howard Perkins Memorial Scholarship to honor the career of Howard Perkins ’60. Perkins earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Lamar and served as the director of student publications for nearly four decades, inspiring thousands of student journalists at The Student Press. This scholarship will be awarded to the editor of The Student Press each year.

The Dr. Barbara Mathis Vocal Scholarship was awarded from donations from students, colleagues and family in honor of Mathis, former professor of music at Lamar. During her 22-year tenure, she taught studio voice, language dictation, structure and function of the voice, and graduate vocal methods. The scholarship will be available to vocal or vocal performance majors.

Dr. Grace (Davis) England ’51 and husband, Bill England, established the Anna England Crow Memorial Scholarship in Nursing in honor of her sister, Anna England Crow graduated from The Hotel Deu School of Nursing in Beaumont and later attended Lamar. She served at several medical facilities in Beaumont during her nursing career. This is the second scholarship established at Lamar University through England’s generosity.

The Camille Mouton Scholarship was established by the members of the Lamar University Investing in the Future Campaign cabinet to honor the current vice president for university advancement for her tireless and selfless commitment to the success of Lamar’s first comprehensive campaign. Mouton has worked at Lamar University for fifteen years as a dedicated development officer ensuring the financial future of LU. This scholarship will be open to all majors.

The A.J. Leger Memorial Scholarship was established by A.J. Leger’s many friends and family to honor his service and dedication to helping people in our community. Leger, who was a partner in Don’s Seafood and Steakhouse restaurant in Beaumont, was acquainted with many names, including induction into the Texas Restaurant Hall of Fame in 1997. A gift from the Sabine Area Restaurant Association in his memory completed funding for the scholarship, which is open to all Hospitality Administration and Culinary Arts majors.

Cynthia (Hext) Fontenot ’72, ’79, established the R.C. ‘Bobby’ and Ramona Hext Scholarship in memory of her parents. Fontenot earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Lamar. She credits her parents with making her Lamar experience possible and established the endowment to honor their hard work and many sacrifices. The scholarship is open to all majors.

Herman Ortega ’69 has established the Hermann H. Ortega Scholarship in Engineering to benefit engineering majors, with a preference for chemical engineering students. Ortega graduated from Lamar with a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering and an M.A. and is a retired vice president of Honeywell Corp. He serves on the College of Engineering Advisory Council.

The H.A. Butler Memorial Scholar-Athlete Award Inc. established the Coach H.A. Butler Presidential Scholarship in memory of Coach Butler. Known by many as a special coach, teacher, friend, father, husband and gentleman, Coach Butler’s influence on student athletes was tremendous, preparing them for life, family and professional careers.

Patrick and Scott Groben established the Scott and Patricia Groben Scholarship in Chemistry for junior and senior chemistry majors. Patricia (Sherburne) Groben ’69 earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Lamar. Her husband, Scott, graduated from Oregon State University in 1980 with a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering.

Philip ‘81 and Cheryl (Spencer) Fuller ’82 established the Margie Hartfield Fuller Scholarship in Education in recognition of her mother’s dedication to the education of children and young adults. Margie Hartfield Fuller retired from Port Neches-Groves High School in 1984 after 31 years of formal classroom teaching and countless hours of after-school activities. This is the third endowed scholarship the Fullers have established.

Friends and family of Minh-Dang Nguyen established the Minh-Dang Nguyen Memorial Scholarship in Nursing after her untimely death in 2010. A Lamar nursing major, she is remembered for her radiant smile and bubbly personality. She graduated from West Brook High School and had dreams of a career in nursing in Beaumont.

To begin your own endowment or to add a gift to an existing endowment, please contact the Lamar University Foundation at (409) 880-2117.

A passion for music and the visual arts will result in a permanent legacy for Southeast Texas art patrons Mary Jane Garth—a gift that will enrich the lives and cultivate the talents of students at Lamar University. The Mary Jane Garth Regents’ Scholarship has been established in the Lamar University Foundation to benefit undergraduates majoring in music or art at Lamar University.

“I am thrilled to think that I can be part of changing the lives of Lamar students for many years to come,” Garth said. “I have often pondered how I could best support the arts and music at Lamar, and I feel that this scholarship is something that will provide support for deserving students who may become our future leaders.

“This scholarship will enable the university to select and support the most deserving students who otherwise might not be able to continue their education,” said Garth.

Garth was born in Houston, where she attended Rice University. While a student there, she met Tyrell Garth and moved to Beaumont, where the couple raised their children, Terry, Harriet and David. In 1966, Mary Jane moved to Aspen, Colo., where she lived for more than 40 years on the Aspen Valley Ranch, which she owned and managed.

She returned to Beaumont seven years ago, and her entrepreneurial spirit has inspired her to continue to give many volunteer hours to the community, along with her generous charitable support of many deserving organizations. Garth has created a scholarship in honor of her home. She remains actively involved as a trustee for the Symphony of Southeast Texas, as well as the Art Museum of Southeast Texas. In all these roles, she has elevated the level of culture and quality of life in our community.

Morston said one of the things she most admires about Garth is that she became very involved in the community in a short period of time after returning to Beaumont.

“A vibrant cultural environment provides a better quality of life to the community and provides the opportunity to attract new businesses and residents,” Garth said. “Art enriches the lives of people in all communities.”

During her time in Aspen, Garth was actively involved in many business and charitable activities. She became an integral part of the Aspen art community, where she met and actively dealt with young New York artists who were creating a new genre of modern pop art.

“I had a very dear friend who introduced me to some of the up-and-coming young artists and their work. This became the starting point of my love for art,” Garth said.

“My passion for contemporary art began as a collector and evolved into a business as I bought, sold and traded art work. I continue to sell some of my collection by more established artists and to invest in young artists,” Garth said.

Now, the Mary Jane Garth Regents’ Scholarship will turn her passion into a legacy—LIV.
An excellent run
Simmons announces end of an era

by Brian Satter

News that President Simmons plans to resign the presidency spread quickly just as rapidly returned heart-felt comments from alumnae and friends who described LU’s longtime leader as a positive influence, the best cheerleader, a humble man showing great depth of character, and an outstanding leader. The collective assessment of the tenure of his tenure: we needed so much of what he has been able to provide. He leaves Lamar well positioned for the future and prosperous. His are big shoes to fill.

Indeed.
For 13 years—an exceptional period for a university president—Dr. James M. Simmons has led Lamar in an era of dynamic growth. His impressive tenure will reach 14 years, as he will continue to serve as Lamar’s 10th president until a successor is chosen and can assume the top post in 2013. After spending some well-deserved time with family, Simmons plans to return to the faculty of the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music.

Accepting the presidency was not an easy decision, Simmons has said, for few knew better the challenges the university faced when he took office as president on Sept. 1, 1999. His Lamar career had already spanned nearly three decades, so few knew better the heart and soul of the university and the promise that could be realized by tapping into its greatest strength, its people.

At his investiture, Simmons chose a theme—Building Strength through Community—and through that strength drawn from the campus, community, alumni and friends of Lamar he has accomplished far more than anyone could have imagined.

Previously served as dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication and as executive director of university advancement. He began his Lamar career in 1970 as an instructor and director of the marching band. He quickly rose through the ranks, serving as director of bands and as chair of the music department.

A great uniter and friend to all
Simmons took the university from a time of seemingly insurmountable structures to create a culture of excellence that permeates faculty, staff and students.

He brought the campus together. When agendas were at odds, he helped find common ground and created a shared vision that always featured an unwavering focus on doing what was best for the student.

It is clear to see how his musicianship and teaching experience in classrooms, on stage, in the band hall and on the marching field helped shape him. His leadership was robust, but adaptive. His vision focused, but flexible. Decisive, but always inclusive.

Simmons has led Lamar through a period of incredible growth—from 7,810 students in the spring he was selected to become president to 14,676 students this fall, setting numerous records along the way. Even in the wake of two major storms—Hurricanes Ike in 2008 and Rita in 2005—Simmons and his team kept classes and graduation on schedule, restoring the campus after substantial damage as well as adding state-of-the-art facilities.

Simmons implemented a master plan to enhance the campus through landscaping and buildings, most notably the five Cardinal Village residence halls, which today accommodate more than 2,500 students. The dining hall, which opened in spring of 2006, and the Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center, dedicated in spring of 2007, further contributed to campus life. Renovations and expansions of several major academic buildings have been completed, are under way or are in planning. Lamar has also enhanced its athletic facilities, with the crown jewels including Provost Umphrey Stadium and the Daughan Athletic Complex, Vincent-Beck Stadium and McDonald Gym have seen major upgrades, and the LU Soccer Complex opened in 2009.

Simmons knows the importance of private philanthropy. In spring 2008, the university began the public phase of its first comprehensive campaign, “Investing in the Future,” with $45 million raised in an effort that has now surpassed $100 million. Impact of the campaign is far-reaching—its include endowed programs for four named academic departments, gifts to support revival of the Cardinals’ football tradition, establishment of a major student fellowship program and tremendous growth in scholarship and faculty enhancement funds.

Under Simmons leadership the university has made significant strides in academics, with the addition of new master’s and doctoral programs and tremendous growth in scholarship and faculty enhancement funds.

Simmons was the right man for the job when Lamar needed a champion in 1999. He has guided Lamar through one of the brightest periods in its history and has positioned the university for even greater days as it enters its 90th year.

“Jimmy Simmons leaves a university that is much stronger, more resilient and more capable than it was before he became its president.”

—TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM CHANCELLOR BRIAN MCCALL

Honor Simmons: His life and work honored

Pres. Simmons remembered as a mentor, role model, leader

Lamar University in Beaumont has a special place in the heart of President James M. Simmons. The university began the public phase of its first comprehensive campaign, “Investing in the Future,” in spring 2008, with $45 million raised in an effort that has now surpassed $100 million. Impact of the campaign is far-reaching—its includes endowed programs for four named academic departments, gifts to support revival of the Cardinals’ football tradition, establishment of a major student fellowship program and tremendous growth in scholarship and faculty enhancement funds.

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It’s who I am

Call Susan Simmons the first lady of Lamar University. Call her a fearless, tireless leader in campus transformation. Call her a force for change – tangible and intangible – that has shaped Lamar for more than 42 years.

Boldly, she championed a workaround look for the Marbeaux’s eatery in the Setzer Student Center by taking out the ceiling. Louisiana-style architecture at Cardinal Village. Poecho on the dining hall so it looked and felt like home. Just the right red in the Dauphin Athletic Complex. And the exact shade of green on the eye of the Cardinal in the Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center.

Susan (Williams) Simmons ’68, has played a leading role in campus landscaping and building design. “That came from the real estate business,” she said. “You’ve got to have curb appeal, or you’re not going to entice anybody to come inside.”

When Jimmy Simmons announced he would step down as president in 2013, he thanked his family – especially Susan. “They say that behind every man stands a woman,” he said. “Well, Susan doesn’t stand behind me. She stands right beside me. You will never know how much impact she has had on my presidency and what she has done for this university.”

Thinking on her role, Susan says, “The thing I feel best about is the way the campus appears and the way the buildings look – that Lamar now has a real campus feeling.”

Assessing her husband’s accomplishments is a relationship with one another. “There are so many. He’s totally rebuilt this university from the ground up. I mean, we didn’t have suitable dorms. We didn’t have a dining hall, except for an old, undersized cafeteria. We didn’t have a rec sports center at all. We didn’t have an athletic complex. There’s no way to name it.”

In terms of intangibles, Susan points to Simmons’ leadership ability. “It looks like a giant funeral home.” So we went to battle over the campuses, and I finally won. I have a thing for campuses. I love campuses because they invite people in.”

With sleek, clean lines, the use of metallic finishes and surfaces and artful lighting, the dining hall is a campus attraction. One source of pride is the original art gracing its walls. “We had a budget for art, and I told the decorator, ‘Instead of spending money in Dallas or Austin, why don’t you come to the art auction at Le Grand Ball and buy student and faculty artwork.’ And she did. She picked the pieces she liked and bid on them, and the money all came back to Lamar and the artists.”

More student and faculty art adorns Cardinal Village.

“For The Sheila,” we came up with a design based on what was there in the beginning – the steel work and all – I told the designer I wanted Cardinels everywhere, a lot of red, and one day I was there in town and saw she had someone do the Cardinal logo in tile on the floor. It was wonderful.”

Susan’s current project is restoring the garden between the Music Building and Science Auditorium “so it will be a pretty, pretty place for our students to sit and read and study.”

Jimmy Simmons has said many times he considers the students his greatest legacy, and Susan naturally shares that view. “That’s why your investment is,” she said. “If you’re going to invest in something, you’re trying to graduate students who come out of here and contribute to society. That’s the most valuable thing that comes from a university.”

Animated and expressive when recalling the excitement of each of her many projects and life at Lamar in general, she becomes silent, pensive and almost tearful when asked what her many years at Lamar, including those as first lady, have meant to her.

“It means a lot. It means getting emotional.”

Susan’s been 42 years – my entire married life. It’s what our kids are, you know, our relationship with one another is.

“It’s part of your being. All the history.”

Susan Simmons and Lamar University: 42 years and counting.

by Louise Wood

Susan, naturally, shares that sentiment. “That’s how I feel,” she said. “There’s a whole lot more to come.”
James Simmons: A uniquely LU tenure

**Sept. 1, 1999**
James M. Simmons begins tenure as 10th president
- Enrollment: 7,810

**1985-1992**
- Chair, Department of Music and Theatre, LU
- Associate professor/professor of music

**1996**
- Interim executive director of Institutional Advancement

**1999**
- Assistant professor of music
- Owner and manager, Coda Inc. and D.G. Inc.

**1968**
Marries Susan Williams

**1942**
Born March 17

**1960**
Graduates Beavumont High School

**1964**
Graduates Memphis State University

**1968-1970**
- Director of marching band—The Grandest Band in the Land—and instructor/assistant professor of music Lamar University
- 1979 doctorate in education McNeese State University

**1978-1983**
- Assistant professor of music
- Owner and manager, Coda Inc. and D.G. Inc.

**1983-1985**
Director of bands and assistant/associate professor of music, LU

**1990**
Founded Lamarissimo! Concert Series

**2000**
- Campus transformation begins
- Mirabeau’s renovation, landscaping and perimeter enhancement

**2002**
- Cardinal Village Morris Hall built
- Archer Physics building renovated

**2001**
- Spindletop Gladys City Boomtown Centennial Celebration
- Cardinal Village Gentry Hall built
- TMEA landmark concert

**1944**
**How fortunate we all have been to be blessed with Jimmy and the great legacy he has helped foster and grow for Lamar. Jimmy is the first to give credit to others for what has been and is being accomplished. His can-do attitude, vision, leadership, mentoring and devotion have encouraged so many to do so much.** Alan G. Sampson ’88

**1985**
**I am proud to be a LU grad under Dr. Simmons. He will be missed but not forgotten. We should make a statue of him.** Matt Price ’12

**1990**
**I loved Lamar, but Jimmy is the reason I was there in the first place. He was and is one of the most important people in my life.** Mike Krepper ’76

**1992-1999**
Dean, College of Fine Arts and Communication, professor of music

**1996**
**Jimmy Simmons had a tremendous effect on my career. He was a great jazz band teacher in college and a mentor and friend to me since.** Gary Wilden ’74

**1999**
**Dr. Simmons will forever be in my LU memories. Sweet man, fantastic leader.**

**2000**
**He was nothing short of amazing 24/7 it seems.** Donna Gailer ’88

**2001**
**Congratulations on your excellent run as a positive influence on countless students and faculty from your first position as director of bands all the way through to present and probably beyond as an example of leadership and talent.** Howard Hayes ’74

**2000**
**It would be very difficult for anybody in a few words to say what Jimmy’s meant to Lamar. We call him a turnaround specialist. He’s really done a super job at Lamar, and he’s laid the groundwork for continued growth.** Regent Bill Scott ’70

**1990**
**He has done OUTSTANDING things while at the ‘helm’ of Lamar University! Lamar is better than it has ever been.** Paula (Donaldson) Cherrett ’70

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James Simmons: A uniquely LU tenure

2003
- Office of Alumni Affairs est.
- Doctorate in Audiology est.
- Chemistry building renovated
- Social and Behavioral Sciences renovated

**Dr. Simmons is a wonderful president. He came at a very difficult moment. He contributed enormously—unbelievably.** —Valentin Andreev, associate professor of mathematics and former president of Faculty Senate

2004
- Doctorate in Educational Leadership est.
- Cardinal Village Combs Hall built

**“He taught us a lot more than just music. We who experienced Lamar through him agree that his leadership and encouragement helped not only to launch our careers, but our lives as successful teachers, musicians and human beings.”** —Donnie Todd ’79

2005
- Ph.D. Chemical Engineering est.
- Dining Hall built
- Hurricane Rita recovery
- Geology building renovated
- Online education—multiple full degree programs in education—online enrollment reaches 4,100

2006
- B.A. American Sign Language est.
- Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center opens
- Jimmy Simmons & Friends concert
- First named department: JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing
- Southeast Texas Legends Scholarship Program est.
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Administration opens

**“I am so proud of Lamar and the growth and prosperity it’s seen under Dr. Simmons. He’s definitely a strong leader and the University’s best cheerleader.”** —Judy Flannum ’72, ’92

2007
- David J. Beck Fellowship est.
- Phillip M. Drayer Department of Electrical Engineering named
- Cardinal Village Campbell Hall built

**“How often is it found to find a university president who is also completely, totally hip?”** —Sharon Montgomery ’72

2008
- Football, marching band, cheerleading returns to LU
- Basketball: Lady Cardinals advance to NCAA Tournament
- Morgan Luxury Suites built
- Education First Federal Credit Union Scoreboard built
- Steinhauser Global Fellows program est.
- Cardinal Village Monroe Hall built
- LU SACS accreditation reaffirmed

2009
- Provost Umphrey Stadium named
- Dan F. and Sandra A. Smith Press Box named
- Dan F. Smith Department of Chemical Engineering named
- W.S. “But” Leonard Field named
- Ralph Christopher Drive upgraded
- Thompson Family Tennis Center named
- Soccer and Softball Complex built
- Vernon Glass Field of Champions named
- LU named one of “Great Colleges to Work For” by Chronicle of Higher Education

**“Dr. Simmons is an educational leader in the state of Texas and nationally. He leaves a tremendous legacy and a university that is poised for even greater things.”** —Reyn Roberts Salazar

2010
- $100 million topped
- Goal raised to $125 million
- Dauphin Athletic Complex built
- Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music est.
- LU becomes Carnegie Doctoral Research University, one of only 28 public schools in the nation with that designation
- Focal Financial Center est.
- Charles & Eleanor Garrett Engineering Center est.
- Dyer Geosciences Innovation fund est.
- Music Building renovated

2013
- 50th anniversary
- New era begins

**“Very much appreciate Jimmy Simmons as a friend and educator. He was vital to my formative years and continues to be an inspiration.”** —James Marshall ’83

2012
- L. Dewayne Layfield-TSUS Scholarship program est.
- Success initiatives launched
- First online doctorate: Ed.D.
- President James Simmons announces pending resignation
- Enrollment: 14,675

**“Jimmy has more talent in his little toe than the rest of us have in our entire body.”** —Bunny Harris ’60

2011
- $100 million goal announced
- Jimmy Simmons & Friends Encore
- Hurricane Ike recovery

2012
- L. Dewayne Layfield-TSUS Scholarship program est.
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When they started the firm, Alan envisioned growing into a small company with about six employees. After about six months, they hired their first part-time help. A year later, they moved out of their home into leased office space, where they expanded to a staff of six. The firm now employs more than 90 people. Many times over the years, Peggy has reminded him that he far exceeded his initial goal.

“We have a mixture of both engineers and scientists. Being in the environmental field, I feel like it’s extremely important to have both the scientific skills as well as the technical skills to meet our clients’ needs,” Plummer said. Along with experts in chemical testing, the scientific staff at Alan Plummer Associates includes biologists with expertise in aquatic plants. One of the areas in which the firm has become a leader is designing and constructing natural systems or constructed wetlands for wastewater treatment and water reuse. “That’s proven to be an extremely beneficial approach. The natural polishing that goes on in the wetlands is beneficial for cleaning the water. At the same time, it provides habitat for wildlife so that the wetlands have served multiple purposes. These wetlands are frequently used by hunters and birdwatchers.”

Plummer was an early advocate of using such innovative methods as part of developing a sustainable wastewater supply in Texas. About 30 years ago, his firm developed and designed a water reuse project working with the Trinity River Authority and the Dallas County Utility and Reclamation District to provide water for golf courses, landscaping and industrial needs. Now, professionals are studying how to expand water reuse and conservation. Technology from 20 to 30 years ago produced reclaimed water suitable for non-potable uses such as irrigation and industrial needs. Now, professionals are studying how to expand water reuse technologies to cautiously supplement strained drinking water resources, something Plummer sees as the next step. “The treatment technologies have greatly increased over the last 30 years. Also the level of recognition of the value of water has increased. People just took it for granted that it was going to be there, particularly in the East Texas region with heavy rainfall,” Plummer’s leadership in his field has drawn the recognition of his peers. He was an original member of the North Texas Section of the Water Environment Association of Texas and served as president and vice president of the state organization. The group honored him with its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009 and in 2011 established the Alan H. Plummer Environmental Sustainability Award, naming him the first recipient. Plummer is also a longtime leader of the Texas Water Conservation Association, having served as president, a board member and on multiple committees. The association dedicated its 2004 convention to him in recognition of his contributions. He is a past president of the WaterReuse Association of Texas and winner of its award of merit. Plummer shares his knowledge with his alma mater as a member of Lamar’s College of Engineering Advisory Council and previously served on the civil engineering advisory boards for both Lamar and for the University of Texas at Arlington.

Now 71 years old, Plummer has stepped back from his managerial work. He currently serves as chairman emeritus of the board of directors of the employed employees he has founded. Another Lamar engineering alumnus, Alan Tacker ’83, serves as president. “I’m focusing my attention on getting involved in some of the technical aspects of projects and also helping with business development and just being available to some of our clients,” Plummer said. “I’m enjoying being away from some of the administrative aspects of the business.” He’s also enjoying having more time for his family. The Plummer’s daughters, Jamie and Kami, and their families live nearby, allowing the couple to spend time with their grandson and three granddaughters. Alan has been an avid runner for about 30 years, logging three miles a day at 5 a.m. Monday through Thursday and six to eight miles on Saturdays with his running group, the Dawn Patrol. His daughter Jamie and 15-year-old granddaughter Macenzi often join the group. “It’s pretty special to have three generations running together at 5 a.m. We’re really blessed to have them so close.” Plummer also has three half-marathons to his credit. The most recent one, to celebrate his 70th birthday last year, was a family affair with Jamie, three out-of-town relatives and Dawn Patrol members joining him in the run.

Alan and Peggy Plummer credit Lamar not only with providing them a good education, but also with helping them find each other. Additionally, he credits Lamar for providing a good foundational education to his two brothers, Edward Plummer ’67 and Ralph Plummer ’67, which has been critical to their successful careers in sake. Alan and Peggy met when she served as student secretary in the civil engineering department while he was a student. Soon before they started dating, a staff secretary in the department predicted that Peggy and Alan would marry. Back then, social time often meant spending time together at her house after their classes and their part-time jobs at Mobil Chemical. “Both of us were focused on working and schooling.” he said. “I think we were encouraging each other to do what we needed to do to get through school.” That encouragement and partnership have continued for nearly 40 years and has led to success in both business and their personal lives. They move to operate the company they founded together based on the principles of their Christian faith. The logo for Alan Plummer Associates shows “a tree firmly planted by streams of water,” a passage from Psalm 1, from which they took inspiration. That foundation—combined with planning, preparation and appropriate caution—seems to have served them well.

With the flow: From living room to leader

by Beth Gallasy

P reparation, planning and a healthy dose of caution—courtesy of his wife—are at the heart of the career success Alan Plummer ‘64 has enjoyed. The engineering firm he founded in 1978, Alan Plummer Associates Inc. has grown into a leader in environmental engineering and water resource management. The company’s projects have included water and wastewater treatment plants throughout Texas and innovative constructed wetlands and water reuse systems. But when Plummer first broached the subject of starting his own consulting engineering firm, his wife, Peggy (O’By) Plummer ’65, did not embrace the idea. When he brought up the idea again, she agreed they could pray about it. “We did, and some doors opened up that really gave us the confidence that that’s what we should do,” Plummer said. Alan Plummer Associates Inc. opened for business in the living/dining room of their Arlington home. Alan’s engineering department occupied one side with Peggy’s secretarial and administrative department on the other, separated by bookcases.

An English major at Lamar who had experience as a teacher and secretary, Peggy served as the firm’s secretary, bookkeeper and editor for numerous reports. “She made some real contributions in the early years of the company,” Alan Plummer said. “One of the specific principles she emphasized, not being a risk-taker, was she wanted us to be on a cash basis. She initiated that operating principle, and the firm has continued to benefit from that.” She initially agreed to help Alan get the company started for the first six months and return her focus to their family. “I really got in trouble with her when she found out how much it was going to cost to replace her relative to what she’d been paid,” he said.

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Bite-sized goals lead to global-sized firm

A s co-founder and managing principal of MFR, one of the largest accounting and advisory firms in Houston, Roland Rodriguez '74 feels thankful to have attained the success he has and feels compelled to help others succeed.

Rodriguez enjoys working with college students and encourages them to see the bright future ahead and to take the right steps to get where they want to go. “I tell people success is a choice and decisions that you make have consequences,” Rodriguez said. “They have to believe in themselves. This is America, and you can do it. It’s a matter of setting your goals and finding mentors and support to help you accomplish your goals. I definitely come back to ‘If I did it, you can do it.’”

Rodriguez did it by taking the advice he now gives. Goal setting was part of his approach from the time he began his accounting studies at Lamar University. He knew that he wanted to get his degree and become a certified public accountant by age 25, which he accomplished. He knew he wanted to work for a big four international accounting firm. He did that, spending a total of 10 years with KPMG in Houston. Rodriguez now thinks of those 10 years as something of an internship. He began his KPMG career as an auditor, which he now says was not his calling because it provided no outlet for his entrepreneurial instinct. He left KPMG for a private company after five years and set a new goal of becoming a top-level executive. He realized at the time, however, that he had not acquired the experience he needed. He returned to KPMG for five more years to focus on his professional development. Then, he was ready for his next step.

Rodriguez and two colleagues—Gasper Mir and Carolyn Fox—left KPMG and started their own firm in January 1988 with a total of five people, the three partners plus two new hires. At the time, they believed that a Houston accounting firm led by Hispanics or women could fill a niche in the community. “When we started the firm we were going into a recession, which was actually beneficial to us. The economic climate was such that many companies were looking for good value. They were price sensitive,” Rodriguez said. He and his partners had accomplished 40 years of experience with a large international firm and had established strong relationships throughout the Houston area. Within five years, this new firm led by two Hispanic men and a woman had grown into one of the top 25 largest firms in the city, as ranked by the Houston Business Journal.

Last year, the journal recognized MFR, which now employs about 200 people, as the city’s 11th largest firm. Rodriguez also believes his firm to be the largest Hispanic-owned accounting firm in the country. Their business centers on three sectors — audit, tax, and business advisory and consulting.

After getting its start as Mir, Fox & Rodriguez, the firm changed its name to MFR a few years ago to reflect its growth beyond the founders. A multicultural approach that embraces diversity has been important to Rodriguez and his partners from the beginning.

Today, the firm has business around the globe, and employees at the firm speak 14 different languages. “Operating in the global economy is not a luxury, it’s a necessity,” Rodriguez said. “In today’s environment you have to have that mindset. Even small companies now are being impacted directly or indirectly by the global economy. Either they’re trying to export or they’re trying to build international strategic alliances.” As businesses attempt to build those cross-cultural relationships, Rodriguez and his colleagues stand ready to help.

When he moved away from auditing, Rodriguez turned his focus to business consulting and advising. “I’ve always pictured myself as an entrepreneur who happened to be a CPA. That’s not a bad combination,” Rodriguez said. “I’m intrigued by entrepreneurs. It’s been interesting to learn their stories, to hear about how they made it, and to really work with them. Based on what they want to try to accomplish with their business, my job is to help them accomplish that faster and more profitably. We are quite cognizant that their success is our success. We try to build a team relationship with them. As they grow their businesses, there will be more opportunities for us as well.”

During the course of his career, Rodriguez has worked with business leaders at all stages of development, from start-up ventures to companies navigating downturns to established entrepreneurs seeking exit strategies to generate family wealth. Houston has provided the ideal location for that career path, said Rodriguez, who enjoys working with clients “from the barrio to the boardroom.”

“Now, because of Houston’s prominence in key industries and MFR’s reputation in Houston, Rodriguez believes his firm is well positioned for additional growth and success internationally, especially in the healthcare and energy sectors. He and his colleagues have emphasized recruiting professionals with international and national experience in recent years. In the energy industry, MFR’s clients are involved in ventures in China and India and see Brazil promising strong opportunities. In healthcare, Rodriguez and the head of their healthcare practice, a former Houston hospital system CEO, are working with a client in planning to build a new hospital in Colombia.

Other healthcare opportunities are on the horizon in Mexico, the Middle East and China because of the U.S. reputation in healthcare technology, education and delivery of quality services. Rodriguez said MFR has gathered the right people and the right resources to help clients take advantage of those opportunities worldwide. “When you combine the healthcare consulting group with the rest of the firm’s capability of providing accounting, tax, information technology and consulting services along with our bilingual capabilities, you really bring together a powerful combination of services,” Rodriguez said. Working on the strategic direction of the firm and its client relationships has become Rodriguez’s primary professional focus. The firm’s tagline—“People Count”—has served as his guide, recognizing the value of both the clients his company serves and the people who work for MFR.

One advantage of MFR’s international business interests has been the opportunities for travel Rodriguez and his wife, Linda Gonzalez, have enjoyed. For business and pleasure.

Rodriguez has visited Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Turkey and South Africa. “I’ve enjoyed meeting people all over the world and enjoyed learning about different cultures. I’ve also enjoyed seeing how business is conducted in other parts of the world. As I go to different countries, I always try to study economic models and see how people and businesses make money. It’s been a phenomenal experience and to have had the luxury of traveling the way we’ve traveled, of seeing so many interesting places,” he said. There is, however, probably no place that Rodriguez and Gonzalez enjoy traveling to more than their home in Costa Rica. Thanks to today’s technology, he manages to work efficiently answering calls and e-mails from his home there just as easily as from his home or office in Houston. “It’s really a paradise. It’s a great place to spend time with friends and family.”

In addition to spending time with his wife, who recently retired from her own CPA practice, Rodriguez enjoys time with his daughter, who recently completed her M.B.A. at Rice University, where he has served on the Council of Overseers for the Jones Graduate School of Business. His interest in education has also led to serving on the board of the University of St. Thomas as well as MFR mentorship and scholarship programs. Building relationships with Lamar University students also is important to him. Rodriguez spoke to a student group at Lamar this spring and invited the students to visit his Houston office, which they did this fall.

“It’s been a great journey. I’ve been very blessed, and Lamar was obviously a cornerstone to that process,” Rodriguez said. “I’m not chasing the ring anymore. I’ve transitioned to how can I be a coach to make sure other people are successful.”

With his own proven record, he is ready to achieve his new goal of helping others succeed.
Faith Wallace, assistant professor in the Joanne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing, is a well-traveled woman. From her hometown of Cagayan de Oro on the Philippine island of Mindanao, to Austria, to the Caribbean, Wallace has worked and learned in several corners of the globe. Now, with continual advancements in delivering online education, Wallace can teach her own students at Lamar University from abroad using the Blackboard system.

Wallace already had experience teaching online courses, and technology provided a way to continue her work when her 91-year-old mother needed her to come to the Philippines to help with family business. Eileen Carly, chair of the nursing department, suggested Wallace use the online Blackboard system to teach her class from abroad so that she could help her mother sort out family matters, Wallace made time to assist with the disaster efforts in her hometown. She helped set up clinics so that patients could be assessed and diagnosed.

When Wallace arrived in Cagayan de Oro, she discovered that an old classmate, Ramon Nery, a CEO of provincial hospitals, was in charge of organizing relief efforts. He told Wallace the people there needed more than money—they needed the help of someone who knew them. “So I stayed and went to work helping set up clinics,” Wallace said.

Upon her arrival, her first priority was to find an Internet connection. But with devastation from the storm, this was easier said than done. Wallace began searching for Internet cafes where she might get her work done. “The houses weren’t there anymore, especially on the banks of the river,” she said. “There was a small island where there were once houses and people, but it was completely gone.”

While the idea was well conceived, its execution presented a number of challenges. About six weeks before Wallace’s arrival in Cagayan de Oro, the area was hit by a severe tropical storm. Tropical cyclone Washi made landfall between Dec. 15 and 18, 2011. Named Typhoon Sendong by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, the storm killed more than 1,200 people and displaced more than 285,000. Wallace was aware her hometown had been one of the hardest hit by the typhoon. Cagayan de Oro is situated on the Cagayan de Oro River. The already swollen floodplains swallowed many families’ homes during the storm.

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“Computers are not in most homes in the Philippines,” she said. “The cafes are open 24 hours, so teenagers are there at all hours playing games and being noisy. Here you are trying to concentrate, and the minute school lets out the place fills up with students. I had to figure out which cafes to go to at what time of day to get the most work done. I found a cafe in the city, a little further away from my mom’s house, so I had to stay until I finished everything for the day.”

The next obstacle she faced was bandwidth limitations on the island. With fiber-optic lines out, rendering data became very slow, and computers would simply log off if they became bogged down processing information. Simply opening Blackboard, the program used for Lamar’s online courses, became an insurmountable challenge at many of the Internet locations on the island. After three weeks of long nights at the cafes, Wallace finally attained connectivity at her mother’s house.

Being in a different time zone, Wallace had to keep odd hours to be available for her students’ questions and e-mails. The 13-hour gap between Wallace and her students meant that to address questions or concerns regarding an assignment due at 5 p.m. in the U.S., she had to be awake no later than 4 a.m. the following morning in the Philippines.

“If they have questions before the assignment is due, I have to be up early enough to address those issues before they turn their assignments in,” she said. Despite being connected at her mother’s house, the issues with bandwidth persisted. In a classroom setting, questions can be addressed within seconds, but on an island where the entire class can hear both the question and response. But in an online class, this is not always the case.

“The students want to feel like they are being addressed personally,” she said.

With the help of a financial donation sent by Wallace’s church, First United Methodist in Nederland, the clinics were able to serve as many as 300 patients. Having maintained a relationship with the dean of her graduate school program at Liceo de Cagayan University, Wallace was able to give the faculty there an idea of the type of technology and funding needed to provide a similar product to their students.

Despite the challenges she faced, Wallace said teaching an online course from abroad is doable—even in a disaster zone.

“We are spoiled by the technology we have in the States,” she said. “When you get somewhere and it takes more than 30 seconds to load a page, you think, ‘Wait a minute, something must be wrong.’ But it is doable. You have to have patience and just do the work.”

Wallace’s students have little to no knowledge of the lengths she went to in delivering her courses.

“I never announced to the students I was overseas,” she said. “I told them I would be without the Internet for a couple of days so I would answer their e-mails once I had connectivity. When managing an online course, you need to feel like your professor is there for them, so I didn’t tell them I had left the country.”

Through all of the challenges she faced, Wallace maintained her dedication to her studies and her responsibilities as an instructor.

“That is what online faculty does,” she said. “It was a unique situation, but you do the best you can to give your students the best you’re able.”

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“If they have questions before the assignment is due, I have to be up early enough to address those issues before they turn their assignments in,” she said. Despite being connected at her mother’s house, the issues with bandwidth persisted. In a classroom setting, questions can be addressed within seconds, but on an island where the entire class can hear both the question and response. But in an online class, this is not always the case.

“The students want to feel like they are being addressed personally,” she said.

With the help of a financial donation sent by Wallace’s church, First United Methodist in Nederland, the clinics were able to serve as many as 300 patients. Having maintained a relationship with the dean of her graduate school program at Liceo de Cagayan University, Wallace was able to give the faculty there an idea of the type of technology and funding needed to provide a similar product to their students.

Despite the challenges she faced, Wallace said teaching an online course from abroad is doable—even in a disaster zone.

“We are spoiled by the technology we have in the States,” she said. “When you get somewhere and it takes more than 30 seconds to load a page, you think, ‘Wait a minute, something must be wrong.’ But it is doable. You have to have patience and just do the work.”

Wallace’s students have little to no knowledge of the lengths she went to in delivering her courses.

“I never announced to the students I was overseas,” she said. “I told them I would be without the Internet for a couple of days so I would answer their e-mails once I had connectivity. When managing an online course, you need to feel like your professor is there for them, so I didn’t tell them I had left the country.”

Through all of the challenges she faced, Wallace maintained her dedication to her studies and her responsibilities as an instructor.

“That is what online faculty does,” she said. “It was a unique situation, but you do the best you can to give your students the best you’re able.”
1. Freeman King, second from left, a Lamar University deaf education faculty member from 1978-1988, was a special guest at Lamar commencement Aug. 18. He is pictured with Curt Rodfein, SmithMek, chair; Sandra Edwards, RadioPark, Mira., and Dan Parks, Lamar, all of whom earned doctorates in deaf studies/deaf education, and Tony Martin ’79, ’80, chair of Lamar’s Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education. Paris joined the Lamar faculty this fall as an assistant professor.

2. Before commencement ceremonies Aug. 18, Provost Stephen Doblin joins keynote speaker state Senator Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville, a 1968 industrial engineering graduate of Lamar, Regent Bill Scott ’70 and Dean Jack Hopper.

3. Lisa Jackson, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, visited Lamar University Aug. 13 where she learned first hand about a number of university programs focusing on science, technology, engineering and math. Jackson made the university a stop in her travels after hearing about Lamar’s Governor’s School and other efforts in STEM education led by LU faculty members. During the visit, Jackson spoke and was briefed on the Governor’s School, the Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp, STARSTEP program and several others by faculty and students who had participated in those programs.

4. Members of Phi Iota Alpha, the Latinos Fraternal Fraternity, visited managing partner Roland Rodriguez ’74 at the Houston offices of Mir, Fox, Rodriguez P.C., a certified public accounting and advisory firm. Rodriguez is profiled in this issue of Cadence.


6. President Jimmy Simmons honors John B. Stevens Sr. for his many years of volunteer service to LSU public radio.

You may be a University insider and not even know it.

If you have included Lamar University or the Lamar University Foundation in your estate plans, you have already earned membership in the prestigious Legacy Society. I invite you to let us know of your estate plans, so we can begin to recognize your generosity as a member of this society.

Letting us know you have included Lamar in your estate plans is important. It helps us to ensure that your specific objectives are carried out as you wish. Estate gifts support faculty and research, provide scholarships and graduate fellowships, and keep our laboratories and facilities up to date. Make certain we know what you want your gift to do.

I am eager to welcome you into the Lamar University Legacy Society. You will receive invitations to exclusive University events and a Legacy Society pin. Please contact our director of planned giving confidentially at floyd.mcspadden@lamar.edu or call us at (409) 880-7895 and let us know about your estate gift. We would love to have the opportunity to thank you.

Your consideration of Lamar University, our students and our future is remarkable. You are part of a special group of people. Let us treat you like it.

Investing in the Future: The Campaign for Lamar University

“I encourage my fellow graduates to look into creating their own legacy at Lamar.” —JIMMY BOOKER ’55, ’56
Bill Nylin ’65 describes meeting his wife, Libbie (Camped) Nylin ’64, ’65, as “the classic nerd love story.” He saw her sitting in the front row of his Calculus 1 class at Lamar and “dove in right behind her.” Both mathematics majors at a time when few women at Lamar chose that field, Bill and Libbie quickly became friends and study partners in that class and others they took together. The best friends went to Lamar’s “prom” together their senior year and, as Libbie said, “the rest is history.” More than 50 years later, their connection to each other and to Lamar remains strong.

“We had a wonderful time, and student life was really fun then,” said Libbie, who was active in numerous clubs as a student and served as president of Alpha Delta Pi sorority. “I’m close to the women I was sorority sisters with still. Those are lifetime ties to Lamar.”

Their connection to Lamar, however, runs much deeper than their student days. Both Bill and Libbie returned to Lamar as longtime faculty members. Libbie, who earned her master’s in mathematics at Lamar thanks to the encouragement of her professors, taught math for 28 years at what became Lamar Institute of Technology. After receiving her Ph.D. in computer science at Purdue University and teaching at Southern Methodist University, Bill returned to Lamar to create the first computer science department on campus. Previously, Lamar had offered computer classes only through the mathematics and industrial engineering departments. In fact, Bill and Libbie took the first computer class ever taught at Lamar together.

“It was machine-code programming on a vacuum-tube computer,” Bill recalled. “It was the same era as the old Univac 101 they would show on TV in the $64,000 Question in the 1950s.”

“It was enormous,” Libbie added.

Although Bill received his first exposure to computers as a Lamar student, his real interest in the burgeoning field developed after graduation while working for the aerospace company Pratt & Whitney in Florida. “The first thing they did was give me a stack of computer manuals,” he said. He found the work intriguing and decided to pursue a graduate degree at Purdue, which had started the nation’s first computer science department. There, he became close friends with fellow students who had earned bachelor’s degrees from Harvard, Cal Tech, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas State, Purdue and Notre Dame. “My background was as good as every single one of them. That really gave me a great feeling because I knew that my education from Lamar was solid.”

He continued to promote his confidence in the quality of Lamar’s programs to prospective students he encountered as a Lamar faculty member and administrator. “I had just wonderful, smart students,” he said. “He really did have some outstanding students who he’s still close to today.” Libbie added.

When Bill accepted the faculty job at Lamar in 1975, Libbie began teaching in the College of Technical Arts, which later became LIT. Previously she had taught junior high and high school in Florida, Indiana and the Dallas area. “I loved teaching,” she said. “I really liked the students’ personalities and getting to know them. Some of them met success for the first time in math in my classes. That made you feel good.”

Each of the Nylins is quick to praise the other’s abilities and impact on students. The couple honored Libbie’s commitment to her students by creating an endowed scholarship at LIT in her name in 2002. Bill faculty member honored his contributions by surprising him in 2005 with an endowed scholarship in computer science at Lamar University in his name. “It’s a great thing,” Bill said. “I was able to go to college supplemented by scholarships that other people paid for. To be able to give a little bit back and help provide some scholarship funds for other students to make it easier for them to go through is just a wonderful, heartwarming thing to us. We get such nice letters from the students saying what it means to them to be able to have the scholarship funds.”

While Libbie’s career continued in teaching, Bill’s experience with computers led him from the classrooms into other arenas. After teaching and then becoming the first director of computer science at Lamar, he rose through the university’s executive ranks. He served in a variety of roles including director of personnel and computer services, executive vice president of finance and operations, and deputy chancellor of the Lamar University System, before LIT joined the Texas State University System. In 1995, he left Lamar to embark on a new career as president and chief operating officer at Conn’s Appliances. He had previously served on the company’s board of directors and as a consultant. He remained at Conn’s until January of this year, serving in a number of roles during the years including chairman. Nylin’s experience with computers and finance at Lamar proved advantageous when he helped Conn’s implement new sales management and inventory systems for distribution. “The other side that translated well was Conn’s commissioned retail environment, which was competitive,” he said. “In high school and four years of college, I actually paid my way as a commissioned salesman, so I understand the environment. I think the background that I had going through those different areas, each step, even though they appear to be quite different, added to each other to help me.”

In recent years, both Bill and Libbie have taken the step from full-time employment to retirement. Libbie retired from LIT in December 2005. She continued part-time teaching briefly but has since left the classroom behind. Bill stepped down as chairman of Conn’s in 2010 and left the board of directors in January 2012. They now live in the Dallas area, about a 30-minute drive from their daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter and grandson. They have found other interests in retirement, but “that’s the biggest one,” Libbie said. “We get to spend a lot of time with our grandchildren.” Bill said. “This grandparenting business is a wonderful, wonderful job.”

Additionally, they are enjoying traveling, making up for lost time after busy careers in which they never took more than a week of vacation at a time. So far, they have taken the grandchildren on a Disney cruise and had fun on family trips to San Diego, Paris and London. Trips to other countries in Europe and together with old friends from Lamar to California have also added to the nine trips they have planned this year alone.

One thing that has not been part of their retirement agenda is keeping up with all the latest technology. A few years ago when Bill was named distinguished alumnus of Purdue’s computer science department, he gave a talk on five decades of computer history, from vacuum tubes to plasma televisions. He feels privileged to have worked through the first several generations of computers but more recent developments have passed him by. “Nowadays I don’t have to know anything significant with computers. I now have my daughter and son-in-law as special consultants since I’ve been out of it for a while. It was wonderful and exciting, and I loved teaching it and loved doing it, and it has changed so much. It’s been wonderful to see.”

By Beth Gallasy
The accidental psychologist

by Louise Wood

James Esser traded tennis for industrial-organizational psychology and the heartland for the thrill of Cardinal country. Along the way, he turned soccer fanatic and deafened basketball fan while swapping stories, hyper-national European backpacking for intensive, summer-long pilgrimages through Spain. An accidental academic pursuit led him to Lamar University, where he is one of the university’s most honored faculty members.

Among many accolades, Esser is Lamar’s 2012 Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, having stepped to the University Theatre podium Nov. 13 to focus on “Negotiating with Terrorists”—the latest area of research in an impressive and diverse body of scholarly pursuits. He is a University Professor, the highest honor accorded an LU faculty member.

“Psychology was an accident,” Esser said. “Back in the day, all I really cared about was tennis. I didn’t care about academics.”

Home for Esser—back in the day—was Charles City, Iowa, population 10,000. He played basketball in the winter and tennis in the spring. When his father took a job in the Chicago area, Esser was transplanted from a small town to a large suburban school where the tennis team had won the state championship the previous year. “All of a sudden, I wasn’t good enough to make the team,” he said. “I got better quickly and was No. 2 my junior year and then No. 1 during my senior year at Arlington High School in Arlington Heights.”

Esser went to the University of Iowa to play tennis, eventually earning scholarships and a No. 1 ranking in singles and doubles for the Hawkeyes. A headline from a clipping he saved brings back a lot of memories. “Bested with mononucleosis,” the newspaper article begins. “Jim Esser, Iowa’s top singles tennis player, has been stricken with mononucleosis and may be forced to sit out the remainder of the season.” In fact, he returned in three weeks.

Although Esser entered Iowa in the honors program, he didn’t have a major and had no idea what he wanted to do. “When I took my first psychology class, I had already gotten bad enough grades not to be in the honors program.”

He signed up for a special section of an introductory psychology class open only to honors program students or psychology majors. It interested him because it included labs. “Surprisingly, you learned a lot more. And it sounded interesting. I walked into the first class, even though I wasn’t really eligible, and the professor gave me a blank sheet to test out whether we were too many people in the class and he was going to throw everybody out, so you’d be better off as an honors student or a psychology major. So I changed my major to psychology. I liked it enough that I stayed.”

But Esser still had not mapped a career path. “When he was a senior, a professor recommended he attend graduate school and specialize in social psychology. Esser went on to earn a Ph.D. in the field from Indiana University, with minors in math psychology and business. “The business minor got me my job at Lamar,” he said. “I attended a psychology convention where Lamar recruiters were looking for somebody who would fit into the master’s program in industrial-organizational psychology—which specializes in the application of psychology methods to the workplace.”

That was 36 years ago, and, for Esser, the rest is history. “I like what I do,” he said. “I’ve been the face of industrial/ organizational psychology, which makes up half of our graduate program.” He loves his job, he said, first because “I like working with the students on a more individual basis at the graduate level. Second, I’m able to pursue what interests me in research, and that’s always a fun thing.”

An especially fulfilling part of Esser’s job is arranging and supervising practicums. Each semester, teams of graduate students under his supervision provide free industrial/organizational psychology services to local organizations, including cities, counties, hospitals, refineries, the local power company and other for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

Recently, “it’s been mostly non-profit, and that seems to work very well for us because they’re eager for assistance in view of budget challenges. We do things that, I think, are very valuable to them.”

Another high point is following the Seminoles. “One of the things we did that really good bunch of teams. I had great fun being in the right place at the right time, and what goes around comes around because here comes Pat Knight.”

Compared to the Essers’ annual pilgrimages in Spain, Esser said, “Our European forays during ‘college were just a backpack on and go. You get a Eurapass, get off the train, take your backpack to the hotel and leave it there.”

Later, when he and Christine began traveling in Spain, he said: “We would just see the sights. Soon, the trips involved relatives and, eventually, more interesting locales—not just

...
Turning a calling into a career

Quentin Jiles, Houston senior and social work major, was elected Student Government Association president for 2012-2013. Jiles has been president of Lamar’s chapter of the NAACP. He is also a member of the Alpha Kappa Psi Business fraternity and is a student director of student development in the Office of Student Engagement.

When Jiles first came to campus, he really only stuck with my three closest friends,” he said. “But after getting involved in various organizations, I began to meet people at a whole different level. I got to meet people of different backgrounds and with various interests, and it made the whole experience fun.

Jiles said that through this involvement, he has had the opportunity to hear what students think about the university and the quality of their experience. He said that his mission as SGA president is to be a voice for students and to help increase the quality of their college experience.

“I want everybody to feel included, feel like they are getting a quality education and feel like they are having a good time as well,” he said. “I love my school, and I want everybody to take pride in it.”

Jiles said that, above all, his goal is to serve the students and listen to their ideas.

“I will talk to anyone,” he said. “At the end of the day, if your tuition goes up, so does mine. We are on the same level playing field—I am just a voice for you.”

Jiles said after graduation, he plans to pursue a Ph.D. in social work. He plans to put his education to good use through a career as an investigator for Child Protective Services.

“My ultimate goal is to build an agency that can get children adopted out to great homes, and that is something that I feel I will be able to learn through working with CPS,” he said.

“I have always wanted to work with children. When I was in the fifth grade, I saw this girl, who was in the second grade, crying. I asked her why, and she said that her sister wouldn’t give her half of the lunch money that her mother had given her for the lunch line, and split my lunch money with her. After that day, she always sat by me at lunch, so I kind of adopted her as my little sister. I think that was the start of me trying to help people, and it felt good. So why not try to turn that into a career and do something that I really love?”

Jiles said the Department of Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice at Lamar University truly prepared him for his professional future plans.

“They are always bringing in professional people to talk to you,” he said. “They also have volunteer days where you go to different agencies out in the community— one day it may be at Boy’s Haven and the next may be a soup kitchen. It is a good feeling to be in the field doing volunteer work. It gives you an opportunity to give back to the community while you learn about your discipline. You get a chance to go to various places and see how the different social agencies work together for the benefit of the community. My department really helps prepare you for the field.”
The search for the university’s next leader began with President James M. Simmons’ announcement of his pending resignation of the presidency.

In September, Texas State University System Vice Chancellor Perry Moore visited campus to update faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends on the search process and to solicit comments on attributes these constituents sought in the next leader.

Moore announced that the system has engaged R. William Funk & Associates of Dallas to assist in the search process. Funk & Associates (RWILLIAMFUNK.com) is the “premier firm in Texas dedicated to higher education search consulting.” Moore also presented a timeline for the search that should culminate in the announcement of Lamar’s next president in late spring.

President Simmons, the 10th to hold the university’s top post, will remain in his position until the new president takes office. Simmons will then return to the faculty of the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music.

A website (Lamar.edu/PresidentialSearch) has been created to provide information about the position and the search process. The site contains information about Lamar University, the search committee, the search consultant and the job posting. The site will be updated during the process and will include features on the three top candidates when the search committee announces them. The top three candidates will be invited to Lamar for on-site interviews, and those interview times will be posted on the website. Those who attend the on-campus interviews will have opportunity to submit comments, via the site, to the TSUS chancellor.

The final candidate will be selected by the chancellor and presented to the Board of Regents for approval.

**LAMAR UNIVERSITY ADVISORY PRESIDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE**

James Wentzgate, Piper Professor and University Professor of Geology
Amy Shown ’91, Professor of Family and Consumer Sciences
Kay-yan Li, Regents Professor and University Professor of Chemical Engineering
Joan Andreunas, Regents Professor and University Professor of Dual Education
Charles Hawkins ’81, Regents Professor and University Professor of Economics
Veronica Minne, Associate Professor of Social Work and Special Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs
Henry Venta, Professor and Dean of the College of Business

Also joining the committee are several individuals representing other university communities:

Joe Durmis ’76, Former President and CEO of Entergy Texas Inc.; Chief Integration Officer, Entergy Corp., President of the Lamar University Foundation
Greg Thompson, Attorney and Mediator, Co-chair of the Lamar University Board of Regents
Gov. Mike Abbott, Texas Governor
Mike Allison ’91, Retired President/CEO & Chairman of the Board of Pipeline Switters, Co-chair of the Lamar University Board of Regents
Mike helping build the experiment itself and the safety experim ent proposal, a lengthy and detailed analysis required by NASA, as well as in building the experiment itself and the safety experim ent itself and the safety experim ent proposal, a lengthy and detailed analysis required by NASA. All the team members were instrumental in developing the experiment proposal, a lengthy and detailed analysis required by NASA, as well as in building the experiment itself and the safety experim ent proposal, a lengthy and detailed analysis required by NASA.

“Only 14 schools were selected to fly this year, down from many as 96 schools several years ago,” said Jim Jordan, chair of the Board of Regents. “That tells me that this research has some interest to NASA.” —HKS

**TEAM COMPLETES REDUCED GRAVITY FLIGHTS**

“It was nothing like what I expected,” said Aaron Weatherford of his experience with reduced gravity aboard NASA’s Reduced Gravity aircraft.

Weatherford, a senior physics and mathematics major from Orange, is a member of Lamar’s 14th group to fly an experiment in zero-G conditions, and was in the second of two groups of LU students to fly June 13-14 from NASA Johnson Space Center’s Ellington Field south of Houston.

Flying on June 13 were team leader Nicholas Allen, a senior chemical engineering major from Orange, Aleiya Samad, a senior chemical engineering major from Nederland, and Jacob Wright, an electrical engineering and physics major from Beaumont. The following day, Weatherford flew with teammates Kirk Gica, a senior electrical engineering and physics major from Vidor, and Jason Dugas, a 2001 LU alumnus and electrical engineer at NASA, zero-G conditions, and was in the second of two groups of LU students to fly June 13-14 from NASA Johnson Space Center’s Ellington Field south of Houston.

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Lamar University President James Simmons had three words for faculty and staff attending the annual back-to-school convocation Aug. 20: Recruit. Retain. Graduate.

Students were the focus of Simmons’s state-of-the-university message, his last as Lamar president before his retirement in 2013. A capacity audience of more than 500 gathered in the University Theatre for the convocation. Simmons had good news: Fall enrollment has increased from last year, despite greatly enhanced admission requirements. "We’re a little surprised," he said. "We were anticipating a decline because we raised the entrance requirements."

Simmons said he anticipates a challenging legislative session ahead when legislators convene in Austin Jan. 8. But, he said, “Lamar University should be in much better shape than in the past because of the student semester hours we are going to produce this year, which is a ‘couting year,’ (on which state funding is based) and those we produced this summer. We are anticipating entering and existing this legislative session in better shape than we have in the past.”

This will depend on three things, he said: "Our ability to recruit students, because, however you look at it, the state bases the formula on numbers; on our ability to retain students, and on our ability to graduate students because graduation rates are going to become ever more important as we look to the future."

"The legacy of this administration is not the bricks and mortar but the students," he said.

"I have had the honor of shaking hands with literally thousands of students who came to Lamar from all around the world who have walked across our stage (to accept degrees) and gone on to wonderful lives. That is the kind of legacy that most presidents want to leave behind.”

Simmons focuses on students in convocation

Lamar University
President James Simmons

Lamar confers 1,354 degrees

World-renowned Houston trial lawyer David Beck, a Lamar University distinguished alumnus, received the honorary doctor of humane letters May 19, when he also delivered the keynote at Lamar’s spring commencement.

Lamar conferred 1,354 degrees in two ceremonies. Graduates hail from 16 countries, 22 states outside Texas and 276 cities and towns in Texas. Lamar awarded 1,354 degrees to 1,340 graduation candidates—27 for doctorates, in addition to Beck’s honorary degree; 599 for master’s degrees; 704 for bachelor’s degrees, 14 of whom earned two degrees each, and 24 for associate degrees.

The honorary doctorate recognizes Beck’s many contributions to the university, including the prestigious David J. Beck Fellowship, which was made possible by his generous gift to the university’s Investing in the Future Campaign. Beck had previously established the David J. Beck Scholarship in Political Science and has been a longtime supporter of the Lamar Governor’s Honors Program.

The Smith-Houston Scholarship program will become one of the most generous and prolific scholarship programs at LU, with six students beginning on the scholarship this fall in a program that will grow in numbers each year in the College of Business.

Smith-Houston scholars are funded at up to $14,000 per year for a maximum of four years. "The Smith-Houston program is unique in that both financial need and potential for academic success are considered,” said Henry Venta, dean of the college.

The program has been established at Lamar University for incoming freshmen pursuing business degrees. It is funded through an individual donor, who wishes to remain anonymous. All funding is provided through a private family foundation that makes no solicitations for contributions.

"We are grateful to the foundation for their support and their desire to grow the program in substantial ways in the years to come," Venta said. "I feel that the program will have a strong impact in serving an important segment of our students.”

The program was started at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville in 1996. Today, about 70 students are on the scholarship.

"We are excited about expanding the Smith-Houston program to the College of Business at Lamar University and appreciate the warm welcome and assistance provided to us by Dwan Venta and his staff,” said Robert E. Houston, a Houston banker who manages the program. Houston, a 1965 graduate of the Sam Houston College of Business, went on to say, “We have graduated 151 students from the program during the past 16 years at Sam Houston. This program has changed the lives of so many people and we look forward to the same long term success at Lamar University.”

"Smith-Houston has been a major source of financial aid to needy high school students in East Texas for some time,” said Lynn Godkin, professor of management and marketing at Lamar. “Now, Smith-Houston has become a major player in providing financial aid to students of limited financial means in Southeast Texas and greater Houston.”

The scholarship program focuses on graduating high school seniors who have academic potential and are unable to attend college without financial assistance. “Students unable to even consider college, will now be able to earn a B.B.A. degree from Lamar and graduate virtually debt free,” Godkin said.

"Smith-Houston provides ongoing counseling, tutoring where needed, and motivational support to each recipient,” he added. Graduate students and upper-classmen provide the tutoring and are paid for their service by the scholarship program.

"The Smith-Houston scholarship is a significant addition to scholarship portfolios on the campus and a major boost to the scholarships offerings in the College of Business,” Godkin said.

Smith-Houston Scholarship program opens doors to business degrees

Record number of doctoral graduates

A record 27 doctoral students for Lamar from four programs of study graduated May 19—12 graduates from educational leadership, four graduates from chemical engineering, one graduate from engineering, one graduate from deaf studies and deaf education, and nine graduates from audiology pictured here, which is also a record for that program.

On campus
University sets enrollment record

Lamar University has set another all-time enrollment record, according to LU officials. Official figures for the fall 2012 semester taken on the 20th semester, more students will have started and completed online degrees, bringing the total headcount to more than 15,000. The increase in headcount and semester credit hours comes despite an increase in tuition and raised freshman admission requirement, said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost and interim vice president for student engagement.

Lamar has seen an increase in new freshman, from 1,402 last fall to 1,686 today. The number of doctoral students has also grown, up from 262 to 363. The percentage of freshman from the top quartile of their class has grown from 31 percent to 34 percent.

Research targets efficiency with $69,000 Entergy grant

Xianchun Li, associate professor of mechanical engineering, will undertake groundbreaking work in modeling complex power generation systems with an eye to increasing efficiency thanks to a $69,000 grant from Entergy Charitable Foundation.

Li’s work, “Gas Turbine/Steam Turbine Modeling and Optimization,” seeks to refine the performance and efficiency of a combined power system using both gas and steam turbines. The final goal is to maximize the power output or the thermal efficiency while considering the trade-offs in revenue, Li said.

Sallie Rainer, Entergy Texas president and chief executive officer, said, “My predecessor, Joe Domingo, was a vital link in obtaining this grant for the university and for good reason. The project clearly deserves a commitment from our company for the value of the work and because the partnership between Entergy Texas and Lamar is important to the welfare of Southeast Texas as a whole.”

Online M.Ed. achieves ‘Best Buys’

Lamar University’s master of education programs ranked No. 1 among the most affordable master’s degrees offered online in the U.S., according to a national consumer group.

The College of Education and Human Development earned three award badges from GetEducated.com for ranking as a top affordable option among online master’s degrees for teachers and educators.

The GetEducated “Best Online Colleges” data-driven ranking indicates LU’s programs were independently reviewed, compared to its national peers and found to be the “Best Buy” nationwide for teachers and educators for whom college affordability has become a critical issue.

LU’s Master of Education, Master of Educational Leadership and Master of Educational Technology were all ranked No. 1.

Lamar University also ranked as the No. 1 most affordable online education school in the nation at about $6,450 for its online master’s for Texas teachers. The average overall cost for all master’s degrees in the online learning survey was $16,731. Notably absent from the “Best Buy” list were online education degrees from for-profit colleges, most of whom charge consumers higher than average tuition and fee rates, including the University of Phoenix Online, which charges about $18,000 for its online education master’s degree.

“Not only are these programs affordable, but they are also of high quality,” said Vicky Phillips, founder of GetEducated.com. Lamar’s online education programs have a 36% online completion rate, compared to the national average of 27%.

“All of our teachers and educators are committed to providing excellent education to our students,” said Smith. “It’s heartening to see that our ‘Best Buys’ are recognized by the industry.”

FACULTY NOTES

Women and the Texas Revolution, a book by Mary Scherr, associate professor and chair of the Department of History. The book has been nominated for the Liz Carpenter Award from the Texas State Historical Association.

Sallie Rainer, associate professor of chemical engineering, has been selected by Shami Province of China as one of the “Top 100 Talents” for the province’s economic growth. As part of this award program to forge international collaboration and stimulate economic growth, Rainer will receive one million Chinese Yuan (about $160,000) during three years to develop clean coal-related technologies in collaboration with researchers at Shami University.


Clemente Mongsing, visiting assistant professor of health and kinesiology, will receive the 2012 “Inaugrant Entrepreneur Leadership Award” at the Inaugrant Entrepreneurs Summit in recognition of her leadership and an entrepreneurial spirit as a first generation immigrant.

An interdisciplinary research assistant professor—Alberto Marquez, assistant professor of industrial engineering; Weihang Zhu, associate professor of industrial engineering; and Julio Yoo, associate professor of professional pedagogy—has received funding for their project, “Multimedia Learning of Engineering Economics Through Role Play Gamming on a Mobile Platform.”

The $200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation enables them to study the effectiveness of mobile technology in promoting deep and lasting learning. Students and their teachers in Southeast Texas have the opportunity to learn about the latest in energy science thanks to a partnership between LU engineering research assistant professor Tony Pereira and Race professor of mechanical engineering and materials science Enrique Barbero. The two-week workshops in June hosted more than 50 students and a dozen teachers and focused on the future of energy sciences.

Pereira and Race are developing curriculum for teaching energy topics in high schools. Pereira is a researcher in the College of Engineering’s Fuel Cell Research Center and Green Composites Laboratory. The Southeast Texas Chapter of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants (TSCPA) presented its Faculty Research Award April 26 to Frank Padala, assistant professor of accounting, for excellence in research.
Entergy Texas, LU add electric vehicle charging station

Students and employees can now charge electric vehicles for free at a new charging station at the Montague Center. This station joins a similar one installed at Lamar Institute of Technology earlier this year. The Montague Center location is the fifth charging station Entergy has put in place in Texas.

Entergy Texas will collect usage data for research about the chargers’ impact on consumers and the electric grid. The charging stations are capable of providing a full charge to any electric vehicle on the market. They were donated by Entergy and paid for by Entergy shareholders.

Cheerleading team earns seven awards at UCA

The cheerleading team brought home seven awards from the July Universal Cheerleaders Association College Camp in San Marcos. The Lamar team included 19 women, seven men and two mascots who competed against more than 25 teams from different conferences. LU earned first place in cheer, third place in sideline, fifth place in fight song, the Most Collegiate Team Award, the Most Improved Program Award and the Best Game Day Plan Award. The LU mascots also earned first place in their Home Skit, which they prepared before the camp.

Kristyn Henderson, Lamar cheer and mascot coordinator, said the goal of the UCA is to make sure teams are game focused, doing what they are supposed to do for the school and properly representing the school in the community. “They want to get you game ready,” she said, “and want to make sure you always look professional and you are getting the crowd involved.” The team has made more than 100 community appearances this year.

LU tapped military-friendly school

Lamar University was added recently to the 2013 list of military-friendly schools by G.I. Jobs magazine. The military-friendly school designation places Lamar in the top 15 percent of all colleges, universities and trade schools nationwide that have successfully integrated service members into their campus and online offerings. “We are excited to announce that Lamar University is currently reaching out to more military service members than ever before,” said Ashley Sheehan, LU coordinator of military programs.

Financial assistance is open to active service members only. Service members can take advantage of online courses or face-to-face classes offered at Lamar. “When we say ‘active’ we mean Reserve and National Guard as well,” said Sheehan. “As long as they are currently serving in some capacity, they qualify. If they’re getting national assistance, they’re eligible for the discount Lamar has agreed to give them on tuition, which is significant. It makes their education much more affordable.” For more information about military service recruitment contact military@lamar.edu or call (409) 880-2138.

LU ranks among nation’s best

Diverse Issues in Higher Education magazine, for the second consecutive year, has ranked Lamar University No. 1 in the nation for graduating Hispanic students earning master’s degrees in education. The national education magazine, in its June 7 issue, also ranked Lamar among the Top 10 universities nationwide in six additional categories.

The rankings include fifth for total number of minority graduate students in education, fifth for the most Asian-American master’s graduates in physical sciences and ninth in the nation for the most Asian-American master’s graduates in communication disorders. The annual rankings also recognized Lamar as the seventh highest institution for graduating the most African-American master’s degree students in education, ninth for Hispanic master’s graduates in all disciplines and ninth nationwide for Native-American graduate students in education.

“We are very proud of our faculty and staff, whose collective commitment to diversity, a Lamar University core value and a central component of our strategic plan, has once again resulted in national recognition, as well as our designation as one of the most diverse campuses in the country,” said Stephen Doblin, LU provost and vice president for academic affairs. “As a Carnegie Doctoral Research University, Lamar is committed to the participation and success of all our students.”

Diverse Issues in Higher Education is the leading national education magazine devoted to issues concerning minorities in higher education. The annual rankings are the most comprehensive compilation of statistical data identifying the Top 100 four-year universities awarding degrees to minority students. The data are compiled in partnership with researchers at Indiana University and Purdue University.

M.B.A. students travel to Beijing and Shanghai

Seven students in the M.B.A. and master of science in accounting programs traveled to Beijing and Shanghai, China, in May for an 11-day excursion to factories, historical sites and shopping hubs.

Hyundai Motors, Oracle Software Systems, Lenovo Computer Co., the Shanghai Apple store, a food processing company and a state-owned iron and steel company, were some of the tours the students took during their stay in the Orient. Students also met with representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and visited the Shanghai Futures Exchange.

Making the annual trip were Clarke Baker, Grant Owens and Gary Hill of Beaumont; Apryl Lidday of Port Neches, Chris Huebner of St. Louis, Mo.; Lauren Anderson of Port Acres and Fred Vernet of Port Arthur.

This trip marks the fourth year business students have traveled to China. Funding for the trip is provided by the Lamar Study Abroad program and the Jane Nelson Steinhagen and Mark Steinhagen Global Fellows Endowment, a gift to Lamar that provides graduate students and faculty opportunities to gain first-hand knowledge of the global marketplace.

LU, SeoulTech exchange students and faculty

Lamar University and Seoul National University of Science and Technology formally entered a memorandum of understanding for student and faculty exchange and collaborative research Provost Steve Doblin and SeoulTech representative Jin-Hui Lee, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, announced Aug. 2.

Up to five undergraduate or graduate students from each institution can participate for a semester or a full academic year per the agreement, Doblin said.

Shanghai Futures Company, meeting with representatives of the company, were some of the stops during the visit.

Students also took a tour of the Hyundai Motor manufacturing plant in Shanghai. The visit is provided by the Shanghai Study Abroad program, a gift to Lamar for providing benefits to students and faculty traveling to the Orient.
Audiology doctoral students further their study. Jessica Sprat was chosen for a competitive eight-week clinical rotation during summer 2012 at the House Ear Institute, a premier research institute involved in the development of cochlear implants and other implantable hearing devices. Danielle Hummel was selected as a summer research assistant at the University of Southern Illinois, conducting animal research on ototoxicity and tinnitus. Steven Alfred accompanied a group of professional audiologists on a 10-day humanitarian trip to the Dominican Republic, where he helped with hearing aid fittings of donated hearing aids on more than 200 children and adults. Michelle Johnson, a doctoral student in educational psychology, presented a poster at the annual conference of the Texas Association of Bilingual Educators. She also has been invited by Archipelago Learning, a subsidiary of PLATO Learning, to speak at their annual EdTech Conference in Columbus, Ohio, at which she will present her work on the implementation of technology in the classroom to assist English language learners. Jared McCue’s master’s thesis, “Defining Family: Perspectives of Homeless Adults in Southeast Texas,” has been selected as a Student Paper Award. The winning paper was co-authored with her doctoral advisors and is entitled, “Thermodynamic Analysis Based Energy Consumption Minimization for Natural Gas Liquefaction,” and was published in Industrial & Engineering Chemistry Research. Eli Lilly Inc. sponsors this recognition, which includes a plaque and cash award and selects one student each year from among a large number of international nominations. Wang’s doctoral advisors are Ka-Yen Li and Qiang Xu. LU doctoral students have won this award in three of the last eight years. Samuel Chaudhary, a graduate student at the University of Southern Illinois, conducted animal research on ototoxicity and tinnitus.

Lamar earns grant for ASCENT scholarship program

The National Science Foundation has awarded Lamar University $590,000 in funding for the department of mathematics and computer science for their scholarship program, “Addressing the Gulf Coast Region’s Graduation Rate Crisis in Mathematics and Computer Science” (ASCENT). This five-year grant program will provide 24 students majoring in math or computer science with considerable financial and educational support during the completion of their degree, beginning this fall. The program targets students currently enrolled at Lamar with two years left in their math or computer science degree, as well as transfer students who have graduated from a community college entering Lamar’s math or computer science programs. It is part of an initiative to improve the six-year graduation rate among math and computer science majors at Lamar.

Students accepted to the program receive two annual scholarships of up to $10,000 as supplementary income, reducing employment obligations for undergraduates in their last two years. ASCENT scholars will also receive extensive academic support including undergraduate research experience, multi-level mentoring, and post-graduate placement and all students will be a learning community.

LU hosts gO SETX Construction Career Academy

The Texas Workforce Commission Summer Merit Program and Lamar University teamed up with local businesses to bring 40 Golden Triangle students the gO SETX Construction Career Academy. The Texas Workforce Commission funds the program.

“We worked on a little bit of drafting, the basic understanding of how to read blueprints and how to build the frame and subfloor of a house,” he said. “They used real tools to cut everything to scale out and taught the students real-life skills they can use throughout their career.”

“My goal was to teach the students the understanding of how to read blueprints and how to build the frame and subfloor of a house,” he said. “They used real tools to cut everything to scale out and taught the students real-life skills they can use throughout their career.”

Cardinal Cadence 40:2 Fall 2012 | 31
English students place first in writing competition

Two Lamar University English students won first-place awards in the Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers competition. Alaina Bray, Flamerhshire senior, and Ruth Grace Megnet, graduate student from Switzerland, presented their work at the association’s annual conference Sept. 28 at University of Texas Pan-American in Edinburg. Both are students of Jerry Bradley, professor of English and modern languages. Bradley and faculty members Gretchen Johnson and Jim Sandenson also made presentations at the conference.

Colleges and universities from all over Texas nominate student writers for undergraduate and graduate contests in fiction poetry and essay on both levels. “We are Texas universities, and we are determined to bring the best students to the forefront,” said her work in English, a second language for her, is exceptional. “It is one challenge to learn a language, but quite another to learn to write creatively with nuance and allusion,” she said.

Megnet holds a degree in literature, a master’s degree in fine arts and a master’s degree in visual arts from Lamar. She is an assistant professor of art at Lamar State College-Port Arthur. Bray, a former Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities student at Lamar, won first place in the undergraduate fiction category for Dirt, which tells the story of a young woman struggling for identity in her hometown. After graduation, Bray plans to pursue a Ph.D. in English. She said she hopes to teach at the university level and publish her creative works.— AS

Lamar University is joining Lamar State College-Orange Ron E. Lewis Library in The Big Read. A project of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the program is aimed at promoting reading for the pleasure of reading. LSC-O received an $11,200 grant from the NEA to sponsor The Big Read in Orange and Jefferson County communities, focusing on the 1972 book Bless Me Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya.

Catalina Castillo, associate professor of Spanish in the Department of English and Modern Languages, led a discussion on the book Oct. 11 in the Mary and John Gray Library. The discussion focused on Hispanic culture, identity and literary heritage in the United States. Future sessions are planned in spring 2013, also in the library. Jim Sandenson, professor of English, will speak April 4 on “History and Cultures of New Mexican-Americans and Texan Americans.” On April 11, Castillo will lead a conference on “Anaya’s Bless Me Ultima and the Literary Tradition of Hispanics in the U.S.” The department will collaborate with the Gray Library April 25 for a round table on...

Big Read ‘gets people learning’

Bless Me, Ultima

Rudolfo Anaya

President James Simmons received a surprise standing ovation from a band hall full of colleagues—along with red velvet cupcakes with white icing, Big Red sodas, red and white mints and Big Red gum. Region 10 band directors in the Texas Music Educators Association hosted the tribute, which attracted about 200 well-wishers. “It was a grand time,” said Diane Baker ’72, ’86, an organizer of the Aug. 13 salute. “I told the group I’d love to talk a few stories on him, but he had too many on me as well.”

Region 10 members hail from across the region—from Baytown to Orange to Jasper and all the school districts in between, Baker said. The group presented Simmons an Academy gift card and a book/cookie with this inscription: “Dr. James ‘Jimmy’ Simmons. The consummate musician, teacher, director and friend.”
Simmons earns place in Bandmasters Hall of Fame

President James Simmons earned another elite honor with induction into the Phi Beta Mu Texas Bandmasters Hall of Fame. In selecting Simmons to become part of the 2012 class, the international bandmasters fraternity continues its tradition of honoring outstanding Texas band directors whose dedication and devotion to their profession was paramount.

Phi Beta Mu made the presentation July 22 at the Texas Bandmasters Association annual convention in San Antonio.

“This is very significant to me,” Simmons said.“As I stood before a room full of band directors and colleagues whom I had known throughout my career and for whom I have the utmost respect, being recognized in that manner was extremely touching and satisfying.”

An accomplished musician on clarinet, saxophone, and piano, Simmons continues an active performance and conducting career after rising through the ranks as a music educator and administrator to become Lamar’s 10th president. Bill Rose, a friend and colleague for more than 50 years, nominated Simmons for the honor. The two were roommates when Simmons began his college career in 1960; the two were fellow band members and Rose an early mentor.

“He was a very influential band director,” said Rose, retired Netherland High School band director. “His bands at Beaumont High and at Lamar – his marching band, concert bands and jazz bands – all were outstanding. He is widely respected for the success of those groups.”

“President Simmons’ credentials speak for themselves,” said Gary Wells, retired Thomas Jefferson High band director and secretary-treasurer of the Phi Beta Mu Alpha (Texas) chapter. “What does not show up on any resume, he said, is the way Simmons helps talented students overcome obstacles.

Giving examples, Wells said, “Dr. Simmons took them under his wing, gave them the encouragement and resources they needed to succeed and then monitored them until they received their degrees. I believe these are the type stories that never end up in print but, nevertheless, reflect the character and caring of Dr. Simmons.”

Not your grandmother’s quilts at Dishman

For more than 30 years, the biennial Quilt National exhibition has showcased the best and most exciting contemporary arts being created around the world. Selections from the 2011 Quilt National show graced the walls of the Dishman Art Museum Sept. 24-Nov. 16.

Quilt National premiered in 1979 at the Dairy Barn Arts Center in Athens, Ohio, in order to promote quilt-making as an art form and to call attention to the transformations taking place in the world of quilting. Abstraction, variations of geometric design and nature are among prominent themes.

The quilts selected for Quilt National had never been exhibited or published before their premiere showing at the Dairy Barn in May through September of 2011. The Dishman Art Museum was the only Texas venue to feature Quilt National ‘11.

“These quilts range in size from small to quite large and showcase how quiltmaking is a vibrant art form today,” said Megan Young, director of the Dishman. “Contemporary crafting is really taking center stage in today’s art world, and we see craft being thought of as fine art. These are not your grandmother’s quilts.

Quilt National came to Lamar as part of an interdisciplinary view into the world of quilting, presented by the College of Fine Arts and Communication and funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

In addition to the quilt show, the Department of Theatre & Dance collaborated with the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music to present the musical Quiltments Oct. 11-14. Regional and national quilt artists presented a variety of workshops during the run of the exhibition. Launne Rimel, a quilt artist whose works were featured in the show, gave a public talk Oct. 6 to discuss how the integrates digital media into contemporary quiltmaking.

Textile conservator Melanie Sanford spoke at the Dishman Oct. 12 on the care of heritage quilts. The Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum sponsored the talk.

The Dishman also hosted a hands-on quilt workshop Nov. 17, enabling participants to try their hand at quilting and to learn about a variety of quilting styles. The Blockheads Bee of the Golden Triangle Quilt Guild conducted the workshop.
We hope you enjoy reading about former classmates. If you have news to share—a position announcement, milestone, achievement, wedding, baby—or know the whereabouts of a lost alumna, we want to hear from you.

Send us your news:
Write to Cadence, P.O. Box 10011, Beaumont, TX 77710, e-mail alumni@lamar.edu or call (903) 883-6521.

class notes

Dana Lynne Arnold, WWII, B.A., a general studies student, graduated from California State University. She became a certified accountant in 1987 and owns the age of 86. She lives in Portland, OR.

Eldie Lampkin, WWII, B.S., a business administration graduate, advises students for the Style Made-Adkins Golf Co. in Galveston. He lives in La Quinta, Calif., with his wife, Jane.

Emil Milich is president and professional engineer for Dammon Engineering and lives in Slidell, La., with his wife, Maxine.

Sherry (Coffman) Woods graduated from Lamar in 1972, B.B.A. marketing, joined the Lamar University Foundation as a senior development coordinator. She lives in Silsbee.

Bill Dixon earned a law degree from the University of Houston and was appointed to the Jefferson County Bar Association. He lives in Deer Park, Ft. Bend Co., with his wife, Wanda.

Randy Walker is a law student for the объем Глава Education. She lives in New Braunfels, with her husband, Brian.

Angela Joseph III, WWII, B.S. elementary education, has a degree in education to Lamar. She lives in Port Arthur.

Barry Bonnet, WWII, B.S. political science, earned a law degree from Texas Tech University and was awarded the Chick Quana Community Service Award by the Jefferson County Bar Association.

Dieter Schuh, WWII, B.S. computer information systems, is a vice president of the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce and lives in Beaumont. He was appointed as east regional vice president of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce for Southern Benefits Group of Louisiana, as a senior vice president.

Bill Daniel is owner/president of Priority Technology Information Sciences, is president and chief executive officer of the Texas Tech University. He is also an adjunct lecturer for Tarrant Community College at Fort Worth.

Gay Lyn (Wilson) Burke is a student developer for Lamar University. She is from Beaumont. She lives in New Braunfels, with her husband, Charles, who retired from Lamar University after 30 years of service. He served as senior staff systems engineer from ExxonMobil Chemical. She lives in Groves.

Cindy (Wilson) Bratz is a member of the Environmental Trial Lawyers Association for the Environmental Trial Lawyers Association. She lives in Groves.

Sherry (Coffman) Woods graduated from Lamar in 1972, B.B.A. marketing, joined the Lamar University Foundation as a senior development coordinator. She lives in Silsbee.

Rene LeBlanc is assistant professor of natural resources policy and economics at Lamar University and is strategic partner for Priority Technology Information Sciences, is president and chief executive officer of the Texas Tech University. He is also an adjunct lecturer for the Lamar University.

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Museum of Fine Arts Houston

Alumni enjoyed a tour of the Kemington House, calabar with a lecture on the painting within the collection delivered by Donna Meeks, professor or art, in the Glassell School of Art.

1. Ed’66 and Renee Heathcott and George Moore
2. Ronny’72 and Daphne Oldehahn, Julie and Brian Jensen
3. Nancy Brooks Rold 79, Helen 90 and Carole Colber Larue
4. Michael 90, Karen 90 and Kerri Barnhart
5. Mary 90, Susan 91 and Chad Hebert
6. Debra (Hamilton) King
7. Jeff 90, Stacey and John Trammell
8. Patti 90, Jack and Mary Reaves
9. Mary 90, Ronald and Ann Zabala
10. Janice (Benetti) Trammell 85, Susan (William) Simeone 86, Ellen (Walsh) Houser 86, and Craig 96
11. Larry 74 and Sarah Cell and Glimp (Brutus) Luciano’75
12. Mila Hinik 76 and family
13. Jamey Von Talbot 50 and Lisa (Gris) Stone’86
14. Stephen 92 and Dana Haskmann
15. Bruce and Carole (Patiorkis) Wells’79
16. Claudia (Dorns) Proctor’68 and John Scheck’88

She lives in Beaumont with her husband, Gary.

Lockman Cox’69, B.S. securities education

M.A. studies, has been chosen to implement and manage a new energy conservation program for the Little Cypress-Mauritius school district. He lives in Austin.

Doritich Fowler’90, B.A.A. applied arts and sciences, ’90, B.S. criminal justice, is a student-teacher in the Beaumont Police Department. He lives in Beaumont.

Joy Gove Jr. ’90, B.S. computer science, earned master’s and doctoral degrees in defense from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is professor of social justice and director of online religious programs for Westland Baptist University. He lives in Hurricane with his wife, Lucy.

Mike Ford Braden’89, B.A. mechanical engineering, is a contract engineer for Procter Development in Owase, where he lives with his wife, Nita-Sayuri.

Dr. Randy Mansing’89, B.S. biology, earned a medical degree and specialization in zoology from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. He lives in Midland, Miss.

Brian McCloud’89, B.B.A. accounting, is a partner for McCloud Samour Robb and Bosch LLP. He lives in Beaumont with his wife, Melissa.

Drago Cote’89, B.A. art history, is a curator in the magazine office at the Smithsonian Institution and the Smithsonian Institution. He lives in Beaumont.

Jennifer Wallenda’88, M.A. history, is a continuing-paid manager at the Smithsonian Institution and various other institutions. She lives in Beaumont.

90s

Mary Dick’90, B.S. computer science, ’90, B.S. architectural engineering, works for ITT Indus as a systems engineer and lab security in Clinton, N.J. His lives in Berkeley, N.J.

Paul Berenson’90, B.B.A. marketing, works for Comerica Bank South in sales in Kansas, Kans. He lives in Nebraska, La.

Trent Domini’90, B.S. political science, earned his degree from South Texas College of Law and is president of the Jefferson County Bar Association. He lives in Port Arthur.

Sharon (Bueno) Dornav’68, B.S. education, ’73, M.Ed. administration, coaches girls’ basketball at Port Neches-Groves High School. She lives in Beaumont.

Rodney Barston’90, B.S. criminal justice, is a captain with the police department in Little Falls, where he lives.

Jad McMillian’90, B.B.A. business management, is a business development manager for Global Ventures, Walth, Wash. He lives in Kent, Wash.

Danara (Shim) Smith’89, B.S. elementary education, is a pre-kindergarten teacher for the Brookeland school district, where she lives with her husband, John.

Gary Fastich’91, B.S. biology, is superintendent of the Brookland school district, where she lives with her husband, John.

Robert Hobert’91, B.A. marketing, works for General Electric in San Antonio. He lives in Converse with his wife, Jo. Their daughter, Haley, is a Lamar student.

Jeffrey Jackson’92, B.S. business, created Crowden Financial and Rendezvous LLC in Beaumont. He and his wife, Heather (Jeff) ’92, B.B.A. applied arts and science, live in Lumberton.

Nick Lemzy’92, B.S. physics, B.S. mathematics, wrote an article about his participation in the 2012 annual meeting of the American Physical Society Congress in Boston, at which he was an “Outstanding Paper Presenter” award. STAIRSTEP and McNair Scholars programs, funded by the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education, respectively, sponsored Lemzy’s participation. The National Science Society of Physics Students published his article, “The Superposition of Beams.”

Billy Walker’92, B.A. education administration, is a Randolph High school district superintendent and participated in interviews by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee in a sub-committee hearing on “The Impact of Supplementation on Education.” Walker gives a presentation in Washington in July.

Christine Woodland Curtis Elementary in Beaumont. Michelle teaches fourth grade at Sallie Busch L L P. He lives in Beaumont with his partner for McClelland Samuel Fehnel and Miss.

Brent and Carole Ernesteen and Benetta and Jannette and Michael and Marc and Patricia and Rebecca and Kaitlyn and Emily and Elizabeth and Heather and Kendra and Lisa and Margaret, who attended Lamar and are now employed by the Beaumont school district. He lives in Port Arthur.

Brandy’93, B.A. business, works for the United Parcel Service at Asia Pacific regional senior industrial engineering manager.

Ling Tong’93, M.E. engineering science, is a chemical engineer in Ship and Offshore LLC in Irvine, Calif., where she lives with her cats, Riddle’96, and Mimi’98.

JACK RANDORFF ’65, B.S. PHYSICS

PAM (DOWINET) MOSER ’66, B.S. BIOLOGY

We dated for about two years while attending Lamar State College of Technology and then went in different ways. She moved to Norman, Okla., and to many places, finally landing in San Isidro, Tex., to our good efforts at the Lamar Alumni Affairs office, we were put in contact in 2011 after I called regarding her whereabouts. We are now engaged to be married. She’s no match for playing a part in our reunion.

We were chosen to be permanent deacons in the Catholic Church. He lives in Port Neches.

Kelly Baker-Mead ’94, B.S. nursing, a program manager for the Department of Aging and Disability in Colorado City. She lives in Port Arthur.

Amanda Franklin-Doez ’94, B.B.A. accounting, is a program director for Windy Pines in Boerne. She lives in Sunol, Calif.

Krista Sillers-Head ’94, B.S. medical laboratory studies, is an intern in the lab. She lives in Tulsa, Okla.

She lives in Beaumont.

Lisa Waters’90, B.A.S. process engineering technology, was ordained to be a permanent deacon in the Catholic Church. He lives in Port Neches.

Peter Vo’90, M.S. biology, is an assistant professor in health administration from Tulane University International and was awarded one of the University of Texas Regents‘ Outstanding Teacher Awards. He is associate professor and director of the graduate program in diagnostic genetics and the genealogy program in molecular genetic technology at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, where he lives.

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An evening of jazz

Jake Tertocco ’76, owner of Rao’s Bakery and Coffee Café, hosted more than 100 alumni at the Beaumont cafè for food, jazz and jazz, courtesy of Lamar Jazz Band, July 26.

1. Daylen Turner ’07 and Vernon Dunken ’04. 2. Gayle (Michael) Fallon ’81 and Wanda (Bryan) Nicholson ’79. 3. Beverly Davis ’77 and Fred Escaramuz, Dean Tidemone ’71 and Rocky Edmondson. 4. Priscilla (Colson) ’03, Mike and Yvonne Williams ’03, Kent ’09 and Sally (Edils) Pasko ’08, Vanessa (Wilcox) ’07 and Shuan McDowell ’06. 5. Michelle Carpenter ’07 and HVu Phan ’12. 6. Tara (Benson) Cook ’06, Shirley (Benson) Benson ’79 and Bilal (Michael) Turner ’05. 7. John Jenkins ’98, Karen Nichols ’83 and Jay Rueckl ’12. 8. Rob and Lisa (Lockwood) McLain ’70. 9. Scott Edinger and Brandon Goodrich ’06. 10. Kari (Elliott) Carpenter ’07 and Ronnie Platt ’62. 11. Joe and Gretchen (Milgo) Wood ’03. 12. Cherie (McVey) ’70 and Alan Holly ’10. 13. Ken ’82 and Jennifer Parker ’94. 14. Adanna ’00 and Rusty Chimeno ’87, ’11. 15. Katie (Usoff) Kornegay ’00. 16. Component Control for the Apollo, Skylab and Shuttle missions and as a mission control for the Cosmos 1. 17. When I was at Lamar majoring in physics, we were required to also take a year of music theory. I was one of the signers of the bill making Lamar University a four-year university. 18. Adam Purkey ’99, B.M. music, earned a music minor from Wayland Baptist University and is pastor at Highland Baptist Church in Lubbock, where he lives with his wife, Jennifer. 19. Gregory Rubenow ’99, B.G.S. general studies, was reassigned with the Inner Circle Elite Award by Allison Sonpower. The award is for high standards in customer satisfaction, customer retention and profitable business growth. He lives in University.

00s

Saffy Segal ’00, B.S. chemical engineering, science, is product marketing manager for AMIR. She lives in Irvine, Calif.

Cherie Seiler ’01, B.S. science, coaches in the Northeast school district, where she lives.

Michael Curet ’01, B.A. history, earned a master’s degree from the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is assistant pastor with students for the Rice Baptist Church in Houston, Okla. He lives in Tulsa, Okla., with his wife, Rynsa.

Shel (West) Dilling ’01, B.B.A. management major, B.B.A. accounting, has been promoted to troubleshoot- ed by Edgar, Kiker and Cross. She is president of the area chapter of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants and lives in Lakewood.

Henry Saur ’01, B.S. communication, is a group marketing manager for Enterprise Rent-a-car in Houston. His team was awarded the Exemplary Achievement Award for the second year. He lives in Flowerwood.

Sherry Titus ’01, B.S. mathematics, earned a master’s degree in education and statistics from Stephen F. Austin from University. She is an associate professor in the Goode Coeck school district. She is married, Herbert. Her children, Michael and Mary, are part of the Lamar Terrebonne Science Teacher of the year in Beaumont.

Carol (Retail) Dillingham ’02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, was selected to be part of the LAFM Summer Interns at NASA-Johnson Space Center. She teaches at West Orange- Stark Elementary School and lives in University.

David Cole Jr. ’02, B.S. communication, earned her degree from Texas Southern College of Law. He works for Raul Nunez and Baldwin in Houston as an associate attorney focusing on all aspects of the construc- tion process. He lives in University.

Kristie (Shepherd) Baggett ’02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, was selected to be part of the LAFM Summer Interns at NASA-Johnson Space Center. She teaches at West Orange- Stark Elementary School and lives in University.

Anna Pardue ’02, B.S. communication, earned her degree from Lamar University in Beaumont.

Scott (Kam) Bell ’02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, was selected to be part of the LAFM Summer Interns at NASA-Johnson Space Center. She teaches at West Orange- Stark Elementary School and lives in University.

Adam Pardue ’02, B.S. interdisciplinary studies, was selected to be part of the LAFM Summer Interns at NASA-Johnson Space Center. She teaches at West Orange- Stark Elementary School and lives in University.
2013

Cardinal Adventures

TREASURES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
Cape Town, Robben Island, Thembopane Game Preserve, Johannesburg, Rossos Rail journey to Victoria Falls
October 22 - November 5, 2013

NORTHERN SPAIN
Barcelona & San Sebastian also including Penedés, Zaragoza, Bilbao and Pamplona
May 26 - June 4, 2013

JEWELS OF ANTICUITY TRIP
– Caracas to Venice –
cruising the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, Mediterranean and Adriatic seas
Parts of call along the French Riviera, Italy, Albania, Greece and Crete
May 6 - June 8, 2013

Advancement.Lamar.edu/travel-programs

Baseball Alumni Reunion

Alumna from the classes of 1967-1972 gathered for the LU Baseball Alumni reunion in May.

1. Dan Hallett, Lockes Ward ’71, Virginia Maker ’72, Scott Donaldson ’73, Jim Gilligan ’66, 70, Lyndy and Greg Hamp ’70 with Jim on ’70, and Lauren Gilligan ’08, Randy ’44 and Jamie Cooper

Kendall Gibbs ’07, M.S. business administration, is assistant superintendent for the ExxonMobil Beaumont, where he lives.

Cris Bolton ’06, M.S. public relations, is an assemblyline worker for the Port Neches-Groves school district, and he teaches and coaches in the Orangefield school district. They live in Orange.

Hannah Walters ’08, M.E. chemical engineering, is a structural engineer for KS Engineers and lives in Houston.

Jonathon Cherry ’09, B.S. sociology, taught at St. Mary Catholic School in Orange, where he lived with his husband, Martin.

Jennifer (Deaton) Cacipo ’07, B.S. communication, and Chris Godby were married June 30, 2012. They live in a College Station.

Dato (Shirley) Khumalo ’79, B.A., English, enjoys her life in Houston, where she lives with her husband, Justin.

Paul Vitter ’94, M.S. criminal science, is a senior investigator at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

David Fuller ’09, M.E. mechanical engineering, is a fuel engineer for Enterprise Refining. She lives in Houston.

Teresa Maria (Hanks) ’02, B.S. criminal justice, is a police officer for the Beaumont Police Department and lives in Beaumont.

Josh Perez ’06, B.A., accounting, is a civil engineer for SBM Offshore in the Netherlands.

Yatara (Route) Martin ’06, B.B.A. accounting, is an account coordinator for National Pump and Compressor and lives in Beaumont.

Amanda (Fulkerson) Morgen ’09, B.B.A. general studies, is a buyer for Rich’s Distribution Services in Beaumont. She lives in Houston, with her wife, Sara.

Edward Warren ’01, M.E. chemical engineering, is a research analyst for the Department of Veteran Affairs in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he lives.

Mark Keller ’09, M.Ed. administration, is principal at Deaton Hill Elementary School in the La Porte school district, where he lives.

D. Bucky Bowen ’00, M.D. psychiatry, is chair of the psychology department and professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the University of Texas at Houston.

Jenni Chapman ’08, B.A.A.S. applied arts and sciences, teaches in the Andrean Catholic school district. She lives in Orange.

Kate Fitch ’08, B.S. mechanical engineering, is a fuel engineer for Enterprise Refining. She lives in Houston, with her wife, Brooke.

Annette (Henderson) Adams ’02, M.B.A. business administration, is assistant superintendent for Lamar Academy in the Lamar school district. They live in Orange.

Joshua Ruff ’94, M.B.A. business administration, is assistant superintendent for Lamar Academy in the Lamar school district. They live in Orange.

Dana Bell ’04, M.S. health education, works for Technip and lives in Houston.

he accounts for Southwestern University. She lives in Houston.

Nekisha Quinney ’12, M.S. accounting, is a staff accountant for Doherty Financial Credit Union, and they live in Beaumont.

Nikola Demmy ’04, B.S. communication, earned a master’s degree in sports management from Minnesota State University - Moorhead. She is a fan of the Texas Tech Red Raiders.

m enters in Southwestern University. She lives in Houston.

K. B. Brown,’10, Ed.D. educational leadership, is superintendent of the Vidor school district, where he lives in Vidor.

316x629]School of Aeronautic/Astronautics. He will travel between two countries and will design and build a prototype urban automobile for the Chinese and export market. He lives in Dallas, China.

George Whitney ’11, B.S. electrical engineering, is a system analyst for Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Beaumont, where he lives.

Sang Lee ’04, M.E. electrical engineering, is lead safety and loss prevention engineer for SBM Offshore in the Netherlands.

K. B. Brown ’10, Ed.D. educational leadership, is superintendent of the Vidor school district, where he lives in Vidor.

Lynda and Greg Harrop ’70 w ith their daughter, Ashley (Anderson) ’08, M.B.A. human resource management, is an assemblyline worker for the Port Neches-Groves school district, and he teaches and coaches in the Orangefield school district. They live in Orange.

Byron Jones ’10, B.S. political science, is an investigator for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

His hobbies are watching the Texas Tech Red Raiders and doing crossword puzzles.

Narash Bachu ’08, M.E. electrical engineering, is a fuel engineer for Enterprise Refining. She lives in Houston, with her wife, Mair, live in Houston.

Lauren LaFosse ’02, B.A. political science, ’09, B.B.A. business administration, is a senior account executive for Morrow Partners in Houston, where she lives.

William Mallette ’04, M.E. mechanical engineering, is a system analyst for Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Beaumont, where he lives.

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KENTENN H. BAIRD II ‘69, B.S. GEOLOGY
Having worked for a free exploration and production oil and gas companies during my career, I am currently vice president of Buckel Petroleum LLC. I’m semi-retired and live in the outskirts of Kemah. My interests include sailing, hiking and travel.

Rexy Moon ’99, M.Ed. administration, is an associate principal in the Spring Independent school district. She lives in Missouri City.

Joshua Splinter ’12, M.Ed. administration, is an associate principal for Lamar University. He lives in Port Neches.

Joey Alvarado ’11, B.A. social work, is a case manager for the Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission Area Agency on Aging in Beaumont, where she lives.

Sarah Thompson ’11, B.B.A. accounting, is an accountant for ICI Polymeric of North America in China. She lives in Vidor.

Mallory Bourbon ’11, B.B.A. marketing, is an operations scheduler for Cheniere Technologies LP in Pasadena. He lives in Kemah.

Trey Keegan ’11, B.B.A. social work, is a case manager for the Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission Area Agency on Aging in Beaumont, where she lives.

Tatnay Fojhup ’11, M.Ed. administration, teaches in the Lamar University school district and lives in Moosup.

Jenny Blankenship ’03, M.Ed. administration in an assistant principal for the Lamar University school district, where she lives.

Tina Petrie ’03, B.S. food and nutrition, graduated from the Texas Department of Public Safety’s Training Academy in Austin. She lives in Beaumont.

Shael Sobrich ’02, M.Ed. administration, is assistant principal of Spring High School. He lives in Waller.

Tiffany Smith ’02, B.A. social work, is a case manager for the Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission Area Agency on Aging in Beaumont, where she lives.

Amber Layman ’01, B.A. education, is a human resources specialist for the Lamar University in Beaumont. She lives in Vidor.

Robert Ward ’01, B.S. chemistry, died Aug. 31, 2012. His major was chemistry.

Joan Hamacher ’01, M.Ed. administration, is the director of student services for Lamar University. She lives in Vidor.

Michael Hooper ’01, B.A. education, is a human resources specialist for Lamar University. She lives in Vidor.

Lillian Dittmer ’01, B.A. history, died June 15, 2012. Her major was history.


Trudy Ratliff ’99, B.S. education, is an operations scheduler for the Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission Area Agency on Aging in Beaumont, where she lives.

Dorothy Casino ’97, A.A. general studies, died Aug. 15, 2012.

Jeanne Barkell ’97, B.B.A. business administration, died July 31, 2012. Her major was business administration.


Tedd Womble, head of Lamar’s men’s basketball program, died Oct. 7, 2012. Lamar’s leading scorer in each of the past two basketball seasons, died of a heart attack.

Randy Akins ’97, B.S. chemical engineering, is an engineer for Merced Research and Development in Bangalore, India, where he lives. His major was chemical engineering.

Wesley Cawley ’97, B.S. industrial technology, is the general manager of the Southeast Texas Food Bank for delivery to food banks in Southeast Texas during an event organized by the Lamar Alumni Office Oct. 6.

Kenneth H. Baird II ’69, B.S. Geology
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We will miss...
A life of art and education

Distinguished Alumna Dewey Mosby ’63 died Aug. 1 in New York. Before his retirement in 2004, Mosby spent 23 years as the director of the Picker Art Gallery at Colgate University, stewarding the gallery to become one of the premier venues in the art world.

Before his appointment at Colgate, in the village of Hamilton, N.Y., Mosby served as curator of European art at The Detroit Institute of Arts, as assistant professor at the State University of New York in Buffalo and as visiting assistant professor at Harvard.

Born in San Augustine and raised in Orange, Mosby was an art history scholar, specializing in 19th- and 20th-century European art. He authored books and catalogues and organized many important exhibitions, including showcases of the work of Henry Ossawa Tanner at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. In 2004, he organized and served as juror for Lamar’s annual Delomonte Competition.

Mosby’s life included many firsts among Black Americans: First to receive a Ph.D. in art history from Harvard University and the first Black American to be curator of European art at a major American museum.

He also had an interest in teaching. He began his career at Lamar in 1960 and joined the faculty in 1962. In 1966, he was among the first black students to attend Lamar, where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in studio art in 1963. At Lamar, he supervised the growth of the art department from having just one major to 20 majors, including nine graduate students.

From geological discovery to enlightening young minds

Claudia Ludwig’s first thoughts when contemplating her ultimate career path were directed toward the stars as an astronomer. Her career focus eventually shifted from those ninth-grade dreams of studying the heavens to the depths of the ocean. Oceanography was considered a graduate-level degree at that time and required a bachelor’s degree in a related discipline to qualify for the graduate program. Geology was just such a program and would be her path to the ocean.

“I talked to a family friend from Beaumont who wanted to get a doctorate in geology from MIT,” Ludwig said. “He had contacted MIT to find the best undergraduate program that would funnel into their graduate program and was told Lamar was the best. What better recommendation could I have had?”

Arrived with a new career focus and a new major, Ludwig began her coursework in geology at Lamar. The 1966 bachelor’s degree in geology led to her admission to the undergraduate program at Texas A&M where she earned a master’s degree in geological oceanography in 1971. Unfortuantely, the relatively new field of geological oceanography offered few job opportunities in Texas and those limited opportunities ultimately led to most of her geological discoveries on dry land as a petroleum geologist.

Although she spent the bulk of her career exploring for economic reserves of oil and gas on terra firma, she never gave up her passion for the oceans. A SCUBA enthusiast since her college days, Ludwig is an accomplished diver and underwater photographer. She has assembled numerous presentations on underwater marine life that she has delivered to many school and community audiences. As a member of the Houston Underwater Club, she was recognized as Diver of the Year, a service-related award, in 1989 and 2000.

“Since graduation, I turned my unfilled vocation in oceanography into an association of SCUBA and underwater photography” she said. “Most of my dive trips were in the Caribbean Grand Cayman, Cozumel, Honduras, Belize and San Andres. My favorite destination is the Bay Islands of Honduras." Her service activities to the field of geography and Lamar University include giving her time and talents to the Lamar Department of Earth & Space Sciences Advisory Board and as a member of the Houston Geological Society (HGS) since 1974. She has served on many committees for HGS during her 30-year relationship with the organization, earning the President’s Award in 1989, the Distinguished Service Award in 1994, the Honorary Life Member Award in 2003 and the Gerald A. Cooley Award in 2008, the highest award HGS can bestow.

Encouraging high school students to enter the field of geology, she keeps her involved with the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston for many years where she has served as president, vice president and as judge. She shares her knowledge and expertise with the Houston M useum of Natural History in the selection of students for the summer internship program sponsored by the Engineering, Science and Technology Council of Houston, of which she is vice president emeritus. HGS honored Ludwig with The Claudia Petra Ludwig HMNS Summer Internship for her continued long-time participation in ICH and the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston.

Ludwig has some candid advice for Lamar students who desire to enter the field of geology: “Be aware that geology, like engineering, has a spectrum of sub-disciplines and applications,” she said. “Historically, most geology students in the Gulf Coast go into petroleum work. Today, however, there are many more opportunities available to you in the non-petroleum arena for our region.”
Orlando Cervantes named women’s soccer coach

Athletic Director Jason Henderson named Orlando Cervantes as head women’s soccer coach Aug. 16. Cervantes has spent the past two seasons as an assistant coach at Indiana University.

“We look forward to great things to come from Orlando and the women’s soccer program,” Henderson said. It is the first Division I head coaching job for Cervantes, who has been a head coach at NCAA programs Holy Names University and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

“It’s a challenge I’ve been waiting for. I wanted to be a head coach at Division I,” Cervantes said. He becomes the third women’s soccer coach in Lamar history. The Lady Cardinals are coming off their best season ever, posting a 9-2-2 overall record and finishing third in the Southland Conference with a 6-2-1 mark.

Prior to his stint at Indiana, Cervantes was an assistant coach at Cal Poly, where he helped the Mustangs win a Big West Conference championship. His first job as a head coach was at Holy Names University for three seasons. Cervantes led the team to a pair of top three conference finishes in his first two seasons.

Topper Cogan named assistant women’s soccer coach

Cogan comes to Lamar from Southland Conference rival Sam Houston State University, where he served as assistant women’s soccer coach for the past four seasons. He helped Sam Houston qualify for the Southland Conference tournament in three of his four seasons. Cogan played collegiate soccer at Miami of Ohio and Houston Baptist. At Houston Baptist, he set school records for career shutouts, consecutive shutouts and career goals-against average. Cogan earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology with a minor in health from Texas Tech in 2005. In addition to his duties at Lamar, Cogan serves as the head coach of the Texas Strikers, a professional indoor team that will play duties at Lamar, Cogan serves as the head coach of the Texas Strikers, a professional indoor team that will play

Football expands horizons

In 2010, Lamar faced the daunting challenge of fielding a football team for the first time in more than two decades. The challenge continued in 2011 when the Cardinals squared off against a full slate of Southland Conference competition.

Then came the 2012 season when Lamar upped the ante by taking on Football Bowl Subdivision teams for the first time since reestablishing the program. Lamar opened the season at former conference rival University of Louisiana-Lafayette and then travelled to Ohio to take on Hawaii for the first time in school history.

While the two games proved to be tough on the field, the experience gained will not only help the Cardinals this year but in upcoming seasons as they compete against bigger schools.

The trip to Hawaii also allowed most of the players to experience a part of the world that they had never visited and might not otherwise have seen were it not for their association with Lamar football. For many of the players, it was also their first time on an airplane.

In addition to play on the field, the entire team also got a chance to visit Pearl Harbor and see history come to life at the USS Arizona Memorial. Head Coach Ray Woodard stressed the importance of visiting Pearl Harbor on the trip, and the players were able to take away an appreciation for the site.

Jim Gilligan and the Lamar baseball staff are excited about the 2013 season, and with strong summers from Jude Vidrine, Garrett Autrey and Brad Picha, they have reasons to be. The trio turned heads in the Texas League and Valley League, and Perfect Game USA named them among the top prospects in their respective league. Vidrine started for the Victoria Generals in the Texas League, earning a spot and homering twice in the All-Star Game. Both Autrey and Picha competed for the Winchester Royals.

Senior golfer Jude Aimé picked up her third career victory as she took home medalist honors at the ULM Fred Marx Invitational Sept. 25. A two-time, All-Southland Conference selection, Aimé finished with a 2-under-par 214 total at Bayou Desiard Country Club.

Aimé continued her strong play with a tie for second place just one week later as the Lady Cardinals took home the team title at the Bob Hurley Auto ORU Shootout. Lamar won the tournament by 2 strokes over host Oral Roberts as Aime, junior Katelyn McDugal and sophomore Ngii Nga each finished in the Top 10. It is the third tournament victory for Lamar in its last seven events.
Lady Cards hit it out of the park

The return of softball to Lamar University got off to a roaring start as a standing-room only crowd packed Ford Park Sept. 22 as the Lady Cardinals hosted Texas Woman’s University in an exhibition doubleheader.

Lamar, which will play a full schedule this spring as a member of the Southland Conference, earned a tie and a win against Texas Woman’s University in the doubleheader, the first softball games for the Lady Cardinals since Lamar dropped the sport after the 1987 season.

“It was like Christmas in September for me,” Lamar softball Coach Holly Bruder said. “I was so excited to finally be able to coach in a game again. It was a fantastic atmosphere, and I was happy with the way we played.”

The Lamar roster features 19 players from eight states. The Lady Cardinals have 11 freshmen and eight transfers from the junior college ranks.

“We’re definitely a young team,” Bruder said. “But what we lack in experience we make up for in work ethic and enthusiasm. We’re going to keep getting better.”

While plans call for an on-campus softball field in the near future, the Lady Cardinals will play all of this season’s home games at Ford Park, off of Interstate 10 in Beaumont. Bruder and assistant coach Allison Housley spent much of the past spring and summer transforming one of the diamonds into one of the best facilities in the Southland Conference.

Ardent Lamar supporter Rich Courville donated plenty of time and resources to help get the field ready for the opener.

“It was like Christmas in September for me,” Bruder said. “This is a field we can be proud of. Of course, I am looking forward to having our own field on campus. We’re going to do that right.”

The Lady Cardinals are scheduled to play more than 50 games this spring, starting with the season opener on Feb. 9, when UTSA comes to Ford Park for a doubleheader. Lamar will play in-season tournaments at South Alabama, the University of Texas and UT Arlington. In addition to Southland Conference opponents, Lamar will face such non-conference foes as Houston, Louisiana-Monroe and Bucknell.

“We like our schedule,” Bruder said. “We have some big challenges, but I think we will be competitive. We are definitely going to be fun to watch.”

For the most up-to-date news and schedule information, visit lamarcardinals.com.

“LU wins men’s all-sport trophy

With first-place finishes in cross country and golf, Lamar University earned the top spot in the Southland Conference Commissioner’s Cup. Men’s All-Sport standings for its best finish since placing second in 2008.

The Cardinals edged Stephen F. Austin 67.5-65.5 to win the Men’s All-Sport trophy. Combined with the 61.5 points scored by the Lady Cardinals, Lamar finished fourth overall in the Southland Conference Commissioner’s Cup standings.

“We are very proud of the year that all of our student-athletes had,” said Athletics Director Jason Henderson. “We are proud of the work done on the field and especially in the classroom by our student-athletes. It is a great sign of the quality student-athletes, staff, and coaches that we have at Lamar and the support of Dr. Jimmy Simmons and the entire Lamar family for our continued success.”

The Southland Conference All-sports trophies are awarded annually for men’s and women’s competition based on a 12-point system for all conference sports. Point values are 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, pending place of finish. Regular-season standings are used for sports that have a conference tournament. The Commissioner’s Cup is awarded to the university compiling the highest combined total of men’s and women’s all-sports points.

Lamar, which also picked up a third-place finish in men’s basketball, won its league-leading 24th title in men’s golf and its sixth-straight championship in men’s cross country.

The Lady Cardinals were fifth overall in the Women’s All-Sport standings after getting third-place finishes in soccer, cross country and golf for their three highest league finishes.

Lamar will also be able to add points starting next spring when softball officially begins play.
Q: What is your vision for Gladys City?
A. Ultimately, the vision for the museum will need to come from a conversation with our many stakeholders, but, for now, I want us to be the very best we can be. Conservation efforts are a first step. Over the next year, we will be doing much to improve the overall guest experience through better exhibits and programming. In the long term, Gladys City can, and should be, a real asset to Lamar. I can see a day when the museum functions as a living laboratory for Lamar students and faculty across disciplines, including history, the arts, business, consumer science, engineering and education.

Preserving the past
The primary purpose of any museum is stewardship. “Our job is to care for the objects – and, in our case, buildings – so that they may continue to educate and be used by future generations,” said Mark Osborne. “Our goal this year is to improve all aspects of conservation and care.”

First, the museum repurposed the old information center/gift shop into a Conservation Lab, a semi-public space where museum staff can update collections records, perform minor cleaning and repairs of objects and educate guests on conservation efforts and challenges in the museum. In October, as part of this effort, the museum hosted a textile conservator who assessed the condition of more than 100 pieces of clothing, quilts, needlepoint work and more.

“In early 2013, we plan to have a wood conservator on-site to assess all of the wood furnishings in the buildings,” Osborne said. “Likewise, in the spring, we will be installing high-quality window shades in most of the buildings to cut down on the amount of UV light to which the objects are exposed. Another Lucas ‘discovery’
A fortuitous discovery added a whole new dimension to a weekend honoring Capt. Anthony F. Lucas—namesake for the history-changing oil gusher that blew in Jan. 10, 1901, at Spindletop.
During Anthony Lucas Day Sept. 8, Lamar’s Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum celebrated Lucas’ Sept. 9, 1855, birthday with an exhibit of some of his recently discovered correspondence and photos, dating from 1899 to 1910. Lucas was a mining engineer considered to be the father of modern petroleum reservoir engineering.
“These papers had never been seen before by the public,” said Osborne. “It wasn’t until we started reading through them that we came across letterhead showing they were from other historical figures from Spindletop, including the Hamill brothers, who actually did the drilling.”

Q: How has the number of visitors increased?
A. By the end of fiscal year 2012 (August 2012), we counted 8,500 visitors – a 30 percent increase over fiscal year 2011. The increase is, in part, a result of a major increase in special events, advertising, media attention and a general openness, if you will, to be available as a meeting space, especially to Lamar students, faculty and staff.

Q: What are some of the events you have instituted?
A. When I arrived at the museum, I often heard that people didn’t know we were even open. So, with the help of our education coordinator, we put together the monthly Wildcatter Weekends, which centered on a theme, like buttons or cars or kites. This year, the Wildcatter Weekends are more about the Spindletop story. In October, we celebrated the Hamill Brothers, talking with children about setting goals and, like the Hamills, never giving up. Other events include the annual Spindletop Anniversary Celebration in January, which will have a novel twist in 2013; The Boomtown Roundup in April celebrating Beaumont before the oil boom; and Great Outdoors Day in June will get families outdoors, flying kites, playing games and more.

Q: What is the significance of the museum?
A. The discovery of oil at Spindletop on Jan. 10, 1901, truly was epic. Texas emerged as an industrial powerhouse, fueling everything from cars to trains to ships and factories. The story of this industrial powerhouse is, in part, a result of a major increase in special events, advertising, media attention and a general openness, if you will, to be available as a meeting space, especially to Lamar students, faculty and staff.

Q: What are the most important accomplishments since you became director in March 2011?
A. The accomplishment that is most important to me is putting together a community of people who work to make the museum the very best. Besides our paid staff, we have a small, but active, group of volunteers. Plus, we have recruited a museum advisory council, which will begin meeting in November. Then there are friends and advocates in the community like our museum and tourism colleagues who have supported and promoted what we’ve been doing.
The heritage of T.A. Lamb & Son, Printers – founded six years before the Lucas gusher of 1901 – lives on in a new exhibit at Lamar’s Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum.

Thomas K. Lamb Jr., the last president of the family business, preserved a full set of printing and typeset machines in hopes of finding a place to display and educate future generations about a dying trade.

Four years ago, Lamb received support from the university to open a “print shop” in the museum and immediately began working toward that goal. The project received broad support, with contributions from individuals, members of the Lamb family, businesses and local foundations, including the Mamie McFaddin-Ward Heritage Foundation, Foundation for Southeast Texas and the McFaddin-Ward Heritage Foundation, and local foundations, including the Mamie McFaddin-Ward Heritage Foundation, Foundation for Southeast Texas and the McFaddin-Ward Heritage Foundation. The exhibit features two hand-fed Chandler and Price platen jobbing presses, a functional Linotype, two stone composition tables, the extensive engravings collection, as well as a binder, punch, perforator and other machines used in the print shop. The largest and most technologically advanced machine is the Linotype, which would create a casting of a full line of type in lead in a process known as “hot metal” typesetting.

“It is an absolutely amazing machine,” Lamb said. “Otmar Mergenthaler invented it in the 1880s, and the newspapers were quick to snap up Linotype machines because it was so much faster. Thomas Edison is credited with calling the Linotype the eighth wonder of the world.

As printing moved to offset, Lamb said, “You no longer needed all these cases of type and the great time it took to put together a printed piece.

“For future generations it will be important to understand how the evolution of printing occurred.”

—TOM LAMB

Preserving the art of printing.
Spark of invention burns bright
by Brian Sattler

It is an entrepreneurial epicenter—a world-class business with far reaching implications—found in unpretentious buildings that belie the cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art manufacturing within.

Tipton Golias grew up in Galveston, and the family moved to Beaumont in 1956 when he began attending French High School. He graduated in 1959, and thanks to the generosity of well-known Beaumont entrepreneurs and philanthropists, the Rogers family, he began attending Lamar on a chemistry scholarship. “I will always appreciate what the Rogers brothers did for me and for Beaumont,” Golias said.

Golias enrolled in Lamar’s pre-med program as a biology major. He’d married his high school sweetheart and with a growing family was eager to get through college quickly. He attended Lamar full time, worked as a lab technician and evenings at Hotel Dieu, a 175-bed hospital that was the precursor of Beaumont’s Christus St. Elizabeth Hospital, and a 175-bed hospital that was the precursor of Beaumont’s Christus St. Elizabeth Hospital, and was eager to get through college quickly. He had school sweetheart and with a growing family wasn’t ready to take on the responsibilities of married life and had other interests that they thought were better for them, and they probably were.

He named his company Helena Laboratories after his wife, Helen Ann. Not ready to relinquish the security a steady job seemed to provide, it took three discussions before she gave her blessing to Tipton’s desire to start the company. “The first answer was ‘No’, then ‘Maybe’ and finally, ‘Okay, just don’t let the kids starve,’” Golias said.

Before starting his own company in the basement of his Detroit suburb home in 1966.

“I don’t know how I had the entrepreneurial spirit, but I did,” he said. “The company I worked for turned down my ideas. They had other interests that they thought were better for them, and they probably were.”

He named his company Helena Laboratories after his wife, Helen Ann. Not ready to relinquish the security a steady job seemed to provide, it took three discussions before she gave her blessing to Tipton’s desire to start the company. “The first answer was ‘No’, then ‘Maybe’ and finally, ‘Okay, just don’t let the company administration and marketing is housed along with research, production and order fulfillment. Another facility on Washington Boulevard houses equipment manufacturing, electronic development and more research.

“More than half of the company’s $100 million annual business is international,” Golias said. Helena has been awarded the U.S. Secretary of Commerce’s “E” Award for excellence in contribution to the American economy through export operations. Helena has plants in England, Holland, Japan and Australia. The company facilities in England and Japan nearly replicate the Beaumont plant. Helena’s plant in Holland produces machines and supplies for capillary electrophoresis, while its presence in Australia is focused on sales and service. The company is also beginning to supply the Chinese market.

Several product areas drive the company. Foremost is electrophoresis. Helena makes electrophoresis products to identify any disease state where you could see the process in a blood protein such as infectious diseases, liver diseases and some genetic diseases,” Golias said. “Many of these generate blood proteins that we can see that help us to diagnose or monitor the disease.”

Lipid areas are immunofixation that helps diagnose many types of cancers, primarily those related to bone cancer. The process helps physicians diagnose and identify the biological process, which types of cells are malignant, and that determines the treatment.

Another important product is hemoglobin electrophoresis. Hemoglobin S, the type present in sickle cell disease, and Hemoglobin C, a type that does not carry oxygen well, are the most common types of abnormal hemoglobin that may be found by an electrophoretic test. “I developed the products that made sickle cell screening happen,” Golias said. “Before I got involved there wasn’t sickle cell screening.”

Golias is excited about the company’s work in lipoproteins, a promising area for accurately diagnosing the risks of heart disease or stroke by targeting specific lipoprotein cholesterol beyond the commonly known HDL and LDL.

“We have methods that allow laboratories to identify and assay various lipoprotein fractions,” Golias said. “We’re a leader in developing Lp(a) technology. It has taken the last 15 years or more for the medical community to recognize Lp(a) as a major risk factor but they are seeing it now. We are one of the leading companies in developing assays and monitors for Lp(a).”

In 2011, he was presented the coveted Lp(a) Award for specific improvements for lipoprotein electrophoresis methods. He also received the National Van Slyke Award in 2010, the highest award available in the field of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine. An avid runner, Golias has also competed in more than 15 marathons and is a champion bridge player, competing with other champion card players via the Internet.

Golias cites two major reasons for Helena’s success—innovation and efficiency. And, he adds, “We treat our customers like we would like to be treated ourselves.” No stranger to innovation (his name is on 40 of the company’s more than 200 patents), he also recognizes that great ideas “for a product can come from an employee, a research scientist or a customer.”

“Our formula is really simple,” Golias said. “We believe in working hard. We are quick to develop and get a product to market. And, we back up our customers in the field.

“We have a lot of good people,” he said. He is quick to credit Lamar with a role in their excellence. Of around 450 employees in Beaumont, Helena Lab has 52 LSU graduates and many others who have taken courses, are currently enrolled, or have spouses or children at Lamar.

The company is also close to releasing a revolutionary very hand held device that can test a drop of blood for 10 different hemostasis assays. The device is steadily moving through the FDA approval process and the promise is very bright.

What does Golias expect for Helena Lab in the near future?

“We expect to see 50 percent growth or more,” Golias said. “There are very significant things ahead.”
THE ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD’S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS COMMITTEE SELECTED FIVE OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AS RECIPIENTS OF THE PRESTIGIOUS ANNUAL AWARD. THESE FINE CARDINALS WILL BE HONORED DURING A FEBRUARY 22 FESTIVAL. JUDGE WILFORD FLOWERS ’72, ROBERT JONES ’73, JERRY REESE ’66, BILL SCOTT ’70 AND SUSAN WILLIAMS SIMMONS ’68.

Lamar University alumni and friends submitted nominations based on criteria that include notable accomplishments in the nominee’s chosen profession. The honorees also display integrity and character that inspire pride in the university and its alumni and have demonstrated recognition of the importance of Lamar in their careers, deeds and actions. The committee meets in mid-September each year to select the honorees; nominations are accepted year round at Alumni@ Lamar.edu.

JUDGE WILFORD FLOWERS ’72

Wilford Flowers was born in Port Arthur, Texas, and is married to Simone Talma Flowers. He earned his B.B.A. in economics from Lamar University in 1972 and his J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law in 1976. Judge Flowers served as assistant district attorney for Travis County, attorney general for the State of Texas and first assistant county attorney for Travis County. He was in private practice in Austin until Oct. 1, 1987, the date of his appointment as judge of Travis County Court at Law No. 6. As the result of a 1990 elections, Judge Flowers began his first term as judge of the 147th District Court in Travis County on Jan. 1, 1991, serving until his retirement Dec. 31, 2010. He now serves by assignment in Texas as a senior district judge.

In 1986, the Austin Young Lawyer Association named him Outstanding Young Lawyer; in 2009, he received the Outstanding Jurist Award from the Texas Bar Foundation, and in 2011, he received the Distinguished Lawyer Award from the Austin Bar Association.

Throughout his career, Judge Flowers has been involved with numerous activities associated with his profession and the community. Criminal Justice Act Committee, U.S. District Court Western District of Texas; Austin Lawyers Care, vice president 1985-1987, American Inns of Court; Robert Calvert Inn, president 1996-1997; Austin Museum of Art board of trustees; Texas Center for the Judiciary board; life fellow, Texas Bar Foundation and Austin Bar Foundation; Court of Criminal Appeals Rules Advisory Committee member and chairman of the Criminal Justice Legislative Committee-Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas; Lodi Wright Foundation board.

BOB JONES ’73

A native of Port Arthur, Bob Jones graduated in 1973 with a B.S. in civil engineering with the environmental track and later earned his master’s of engineering degrees from UT in Austin. The Texas Water Quality Board hired him in July 1973. Jones advanced at the state, eventually becoming chief engineer of the Construction Grants and Water Quality Planning Division. In 1976, Bob met and married Beth, his wife of 37 years. The couple has two children. Recognizing the opportunity to create a business helping industry and local governments deal with the ever-increasing volume of environmental regulation, Jones left the state in 1982 with another engineer and formed the consulting company, Jones and Neuse. By the early 90s, it was one of the largest independent-owned environmental consulting companies in the state, with more than 280 employees in seven offices, including offices in Louisiana and Mexico.

The company was purchased and merged with another engineering company, RMT. Jones stayed with RMT for two years, and in 1997, Jones and a friend formed another consulting company, JD Consulting. JD Consulting grew to be a preferred provider of environmental services to many Fortune 100 process industries, including most of the big industrials in southeast Texas. In 2007, the London-based international consulting company RPS purchased JD Consulting. Jones stayed with RPS until February 2012. In March, Jones formed RJG Consulting, and began working part-time for some of his long-time industry clients. During the last 20 years, Jones has been active in Boy Scouts, YMCA and Oak Hill Pony Baseball, as well as in numerous other Austin-area organizations. He serves on the College of Engineering Advisory Council, as a trustee of the Lamar University Foundation, and was a member of the Lamar Board of Regents from 1993 until 1996.

JERRY REESE ’66

Jerry Reese is an entrepreneur who started his first business, Collegiate Diamonds, while he was still a student at Lamar University. Reese established Bo-Mar Construction Co. in 1966, the year he graduated from Lamar University with his B.B.A. in economics. He built the company into a hugely successful and diverse business enterprise, selling it in 2007. Reese has been actively involved at Lamar University since his graduation, both as a donor and a volunteer. He currently serves on the following Lamar University boards and committees: Investing In The Future Campaign Cabinet, Lamar University Foundation board of trustees, College of Business Advisory council, Friends of the Arts board, the Reese Construction Management advisory board. He and wife, Sheila, were the Le Grand Bal honorees in 2007 for their work with Friends of the Arts. Reese has also been an active member of his community and has served on the boards of the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, St. Elizabeth Hospital and the Art Museum of Southeast Texas. Reese is also involved in dozens of business, civic and social organizations in this region. In 2007, recognizing the need for market-responsive programs that reflect southeast Texas perspectives, Reese donated the funds to establish the construction management program at Lamar University. The unique nature of this program allows Lamar to provide construction management graduates with the education to compete nationally for careers in the field. The program was developed in response to regional market needs and as a way to further enhance the national reputation of Lamar University. The combination of Reese’s entrepreneurial spirit and his commitment to his alma mater led him to make his timely and generous contribution. The establishment of this program will have a lasting and profound effect on Lamar University: Jerry and Sheila Reese live in Houston. They have three children and 11 grandchildren.

BILL SCOTT ’70

Bill Scott earned his bachelor of science in government at Lamar University in 1970 and has maintained strong ties with L.U. as a member of the Lamar University Investing in the Future Campaign Cabinet, Lamar University Foundation board of trustees and the College of Business board of advisors. In 2010, the governor appointed Scott as a regent for The Texas State University System. In 2008, Scott and his wife, Gay, were recognized by their alma mater as the Le Grand Bal honorees. Beginning with the startup of the railroad construction business in the mid-70s, Scott has for more than 30 years focused his time on identifying, developing, owning and operating marine bulk terminal facilities, serving companies including Shell Oil, Mitsubishi, ExxonMobil, Cenex, LyondellCito Refining, Valero Refining, ConocoPhillips/DVSA (Merry Sweepy, LP), Vakon Materials, Martin Marietta Aggregates and Total Petrochemicals USA Inc. In addition, during the years Scott created 50-50 joint venture companies with Mitsubishi Corp., Cementos Mexicanos and TCP Petroceo for the transportation, handling, purchase and export of solid bulk products to world markets. In 2005, Team Global Solutions sold its bulk terminal handling assets to Kinder Morgan Energy Partners (KMP) and entered into a terminal development agreement between TGS Development LP and KMP to develop new bulk terminal assets along the Gulf Coast. TGS Development has successfully completed several terminal developments since 2005, including a bulk terminal completed in 2010 to serve the Total Refinery in Port Arthur. Scott is active in numerous civic and charitable endeavors, including service as chair of the board for the Jefferson and Orange County Pilot Commission, past-president of the Three Rivers Council Boy Scouts of America and as board member of the Foundation for Southeast Texas, Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas, the Symphony of Southeast Texas and the Texas Energy Museum. He and his wife of 32 years, Gay, have three children and one granddaughter.

SUSAN WILLIAMS SIMMONS ’68

Susan Simmons is a 1968 graduate of Lamar University. She earned a B.S. in elementary education, and after graduation, taught at Lamar Elementary in Beaumont until she founded her own retail operation, The Catt-pillar, a children’s specialty store that she managed for eight years. She then moved on to serve as vice president in charge of decorating and space planning for CODIA, the family construction company owned and operated by her husband, James. For the last 25 years, Simmons has been a highly successfully Realtor. Her most dedicated efforts and greatest impact, however, has been with Lamar University. She has been actively involved in the life of Lamar University since 1970, when her husband accepted his first teaching position at L.U. The list of the areas that have benefited from her involvement and networking is endless. She has served as a tireless ambassador for Lamar University throughout the community and has worked with faculty, students, alumni and friends of L.U. to enhance the impact of Lamar University on students’ lives and the larger community. Simmons has dedicated thousands of hours and used her vast knowledge of decorating and design to ensure that remodeling, construction projects meet exacting standards and that individual project design and layout have the greatest impact and serve to complement the campus as a whole. Her dedicated efforts have literally transformed the face of the University and have helped to create an un-matched university learning and living environment. She and Jimmy have three children and six grandchildren (three more grandchildren due in early 2013).

The Lamar University Distinguished Alumni Awards is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. Tickets for the dinner will be available beginning January 7, 2013, by visiting Lamar.edu/Alumni.