February was an unusually snowy month for northern Alabama and UNA. This aerial view of a snowy University of North Alabama campus made it all the way to Good Morning America. Thanks again to our student, Will Comer, for taking the photo.
In November 2014 the Board of Trustees named Dr. Kenneth Kitts, Provost at the University of North Carolina Pembroke, as the 20th President of the University of North Alabama. Since that announcement, the campus has been preparing for his arrival in late March. We are excited about his leadership and confident he will continue the legacy of accomplishments created by Dr. William Cale over the previous ten years. On behalf of the campus, but also our alumni, donors, and friends of UNA, we extend a Lion Pride welcome to Dr. Kitts, his wife Dena, and their two boys.

Although the University paused in the fall to participate in the selection of its next president, the activity level at UNA remains high. The various departments across campus continue to do great work and make major strides in support of UNA and our wonderful student body.

The construction of new facilities at UNA continues to progress well—the most recent overall grade point average for UNA athletes was the highest since 2006 and is further tribute to our student success efforts. In 2014 the UNA Foundation achieved a significant benchmark. The total amount donations exceeded $5.6 million. This is the largest annual campaign amount given in UNA history. Thanks to the advancement team and to the campus community for the initiative that laid the groundwork for such success, but special thanks to the donors, big and small, who contributed. Our entire campus is touched by this accomplishment. The almost 7,000 UNA students are the wonderful benefactors of that wonderful generosity.

We continue to make the strides necessary to make UNA an exceptional regional university. Thanks to the faculty and staff for their tireless efforts toward that end. Our pledge is to create an enduring academic legacy for our students that will ensure their success and make our alumni proud of this great university.

John Thornell
The construction fence is finally down. The chain-link barricade that has encased the UNA science and technology building for nearly two years was removed as completion of the building enters the final phase — moving in.

The academic building sits on a hill between Kilby Laboratory School and Flowers Hall. It’s across Pine Street from the main campus.

It looks mostly complete when viewed from its yellow brick exterior. Landscaping and some final brickwork still is needed. Inside, workers are dispersed on the five floors of the massive structure checking items off a preliminary punch list.

Floor tiles are marked with black Xs to indicate they are damaged and need to be replaced.

A service elevator was packed with boxes of furniture to be assembled and placed in offices, classrooms, and common areas. An elevator lobby on the fourth floor was packed with assembled benches waiting to be placed throughout the 160,000-square-foot building.

The directional signs on the first four floors are in place, and name plates are going up on faculty offices. Hallway bulletin boards are hanging on decorative tiled backings. Other wall art is still waiting to be put in place.

While construction has been ongoing for nearly two years, the total birth of this particular building has been almost a decade in the making. The discussion and fundraising for a building to move the university’s science departments away from the out-of-date Floyd Science Building started as many as eight years ago by some accounts. The question was often asked if this building would ever be a reality.

It will be a full reality in August. The science departments have started boxing up materials to get ready to move this spring. The departmental moves could start in April, but most certainly will happen in May when spring classes are over.

Physics will move in first, followed by chemistry and then biology, said Chris Maynard, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The building has 40 classrooms and laboratories. Many of the labs will be teaching laboratories to increase classroom space. There are two large auditorium-style classrooms and a large computer lab on each floor. There are 42 faculty offices and 15 designated research rooms. The research rooms, for faculty and student research, are a big deal, Maynard said. Such space is nonexistent in Floyd Science Building, he said. As a result, research is done in the same space as teaching.

It is going to be a complete 180,” said Carmen Burkhalter, dean of the College of Arts and Science, about the difference in teaching and learning in this new space. Each desk and lab table has a data port for computers, and wireless Internet is available throughout.

Functionally, the new structure is built specifically for science teaching and learning. The building is pressurized to keep contaminated air contained and vented through the roof of the building. Floyd lacks the ability to offer that isolation.

Small items, such as beakers, and chemicals will be inventoried and moved. New microscopes have been purchased in the past two years and will continue to be used, but much of the equipment will be new. That gives students an academic advantage coming out of UNA, Burkhalter said.

“They are waiting to be put in place,” she said. “It will allow our students to learn on and work with equipment they are most likely to see and be exposed to in the private sector.

“Our students will come out of UNA with a degree and not be at a disadvantage in any way. Their knowledge base and experience will be on level with any research institution.”

Compliments of TimesDaily
Emerald City UNA
By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

Emeralds, rubies and diamonds all fetch a hefty price from their names alone. But what if I could tell you exactly where your emerald came from and what type of rock was involved—would you pay more? Yes, according to Dr. Brian Thompson. Thompson currently serves as a professor of physics at the University of North Alabama and his specialty is light and optics. Now, you’re probably wondering what that has to do with gems and you’d be right—it really doesn’t apply to all gems yet—but it does apply to...emeralds.

As mentioned Thompson specializes in light and optics, but more specifically he deals with the interaction of light with matter, which is a very important key to his recent research. “So you can shine, for example, violet, blue, or green light on different minerals and see them glow red. This is something that you can do with emerald. It’s one of these materials, if you have a bright enough light source and you shine that light on them, they’ll glow red. Of course emeralds look green under normal lighting, but if you shine enough high energy light on them they’ll definitely glow red,” he said.

Now it’s important to point out that emeralds can be made synthetically, and, of course, they’re also found naturally. Thompson said that the problem lies in the fact that synthetic and natural emeralds are difficult to distinguish between the two because of the fact that they’re chemically the same.

“They’re the same material. The synthetics are the same chemistry as the natural, so when people buy an emerald, the natural emeralds are going to command a higher price. But how do you determine if you have a natural or a synthetic emerald? So that’s kind of where we were starting from when we started this work, maybe we can add to the number of known methods that are used to distinguish between natural and synthetic emeralds,” Thompson said.

Using a green laser, Thompson found that all emeralds, synthetic or natural, will glow red if you shine a bright enough light on them. Using that as a basis, he determined that while all emeralds may glow red when a green laser is focused on them, if you look at the spectrum they produce, the energy at which one bright line occurs can differ for synthetic emeralds and naturally occurring emeralds.

“What we can do is we can sort of identify the geology—not exactly where it came from in the world, but we can basically sort them into one type of geology or another, and people know what kind of emeralds come from the different types of geology,” he said.

Thompson said his research would not have been possible without help and support from major gem-testing labs, in particular the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) and American Gemological Laboratories (AGL). Normally, any expensive gem is sent off to such a gem lab for testing to find out everything about it, and so these labs have provided Thompson with emeralds of known origin for testing.

“So what is Thompson’s hope? “I think this research is adding to what we can learn and understand about emeralds,” he said. “In time it may even become a standard measurement for all emeralds in gem labs.”

Thompson said he’s going to continue his research with gems and his current research on emeralds was recently published in the Journal of Gemology.

Rachel Wammack was crowned Miss UNA 2015 in January’s Winter Wonderland-themed pageant. As well as going home with the crown, Wammack was chosen as the winner of the talent portion for her rendition of “Somewhere over the Rainbow” for which she sang and played the mandolin.

Wammack has had minimal pageant experience,-competing once in high school and again in last year’s Miss UNA pageant where she did not place. Her goal this year was just to place. “[Winning] was incredible shocking,” she said.

Wammack beat out thirteen other contestants for the title which is a preliminary for the Miss Alabama pageant and includes a full tuition scholarship for two semesters.

Wammack is a junior creative writing major and Muscle Shoals native who is actively involved in the community, particularly through her music. She has written and recorded two albums, the most recent of which is titled “Lavender.”

Wammack uses her music to support her platform, which is an organization that supplies vitamins and minerals to children in at-risk populations. Many of the children have a vitamin-A deficiency and could go blind at a very young age.

Portions from each sale of her record go to the organization, and she will be traveling to Ethiopia in October to help distribute vitamins and share her music.

But before that she will be competing for Miss Alabama in June, and insists that she’s not anxious about whether or not she’ll get the crown.

“I haven’t dreamed all my life about being Miss Alabama,” she said, “I’ve always dreamed about being the best Rachael Wammack I can be.”

And even if she doesn’t win the pageant she’ll still be a winner.

“Most of all I’m just really proud to be Miss UNA,” she said.

Meredith Hamner of Killen was first runner up, followed by Alexis Aday of Leighton as second runner up, and Jocelyn Barnes of Florence as third runner up.

Jocelyn Barnes also won the People’s Choice Award, Joyanne Baker won Miss Congeniality, and Ruby Villalobos won the University Bookstore Outstanding Service Award.

Rachel Wammack
Wins Miss UNA 2015
By Ashley Gabaldon, Student Writer
Harry and Beth Smith always knew that their connection with the University of North Alabama was special. Harry graduated from Florence State College (FSC) in 1964 with a degree in accounting while Beth Smith earned her first degree in 1969 from Florence State University. Soon after Beth’s graduation, the Smiths watched the college add the two-story residence hall for men, the two-story residence hall for women, the Lurleen Burns Wallace Fine Arts Center, Lafayette and LaGrange Halls, the new Floyd Hall Science Building, the Planetarium/Observatory, Bennett Infirmary and apartments for married students. Beth also received her master's degree in 1981 from Florence State University.

The Smiths spent many happy and successful years in the Shoals area where they raised their daughter, Leslie Smith Jones, who continued the Smith Family legacy and graduated in 1985 from the institution that was renamed the University of North Alabama (UNA) in 1974. Harry and Beth continued their close relationship with the university while establishing Harry’s career, and were often on the UNA campus attending events and serving on committees and boards.

During his service as a member of the UNA Foundation Board, Harry’s close personal relationship with then President Robert L. Potts deepened and he was pleased that Robert and Irene Potts decided to keep their home and roots in Florence, even as Robert’s career took them to North Dakota and Arkansas.

Harry continued to serve as a Foundation Board Director under the presidency of Dr. William G. Cale, Jr. and was able to witness firsthand the emergent professional and personal relationship between the former university president and the current president. Robert Potts served on the Foundation Board alongside Harry under President Bill Cale’s leadership and Harry continued to watch the working relationship and respect between the two leaders flourish.

That experience made such a lasting impression on Harry that he and Beth decided to honor the two legends by establishing an endowed scholarship bearing their names that will benefit the Honors Program at UNA. The Smiths’ enthusiasm for the project prompted long-time UNA friend and donor Ann Huckaba to also contribute to the scholarship to honor Robert L. Potts’ presidential legacy.

The Smiths believe that having two former presidents retiring in the same community and maintaining their cordial and respectful relationship while serving as valuable resources to the university community makes UNA an even more special place to call their alma mater.

The William G. Cale, Jr., and Robert L. Potts Presidential Scholarship

Honoring Our Rich Legacy of Leadership

By Judith T. Jackson, Assistant Vice President for Advancement Services

On February 16, President Chunsheng Zhang announced that UNA would be the recipient of a $23,000 grant to help fund the school’s new innovative study abroad program in Peru. This announcement came after the U.S. Department of State, Partners of the Americas, and NAFSA: Association of International Educators announced seven new winners of 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund grants for study abroad.

100,000 Strong in the Americas is President Obama’s signature education initiative in the Western Hemisphere. The goal of the program is to increase the number of U.S. students studying in the Western Hemisphere to 100,000, and the number of Western Hemisphere students studying in the United States to 100,000 by the year 2020. Organizers hope the program enhances hemispheric competitiveness, increases prosperity, and better prepares a globally aware workforce.

The current competition, which focuses on promoting health and nutrition in the Western Hemisphere by identifying solutions to help prevent and reduce obesity, is being sponsored by The Coca-Cola Foundation. The recipients, including UNA, will conduct research on combating obesity linked behavior through physical activity and nutritional education, examining health beliefs and practices that contribute to greater risk of obesity, using technology and other innovative means to maximize cultural awareness and education.

Honors Program at UNA. The Smiths’ enthusiasm for the project prompted long-time UNA friend and donor Ann Huckaba to also contribute to the scholarship to honor Robert L. Potts’ presidential legacy.

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Dr. Chunsheng Zhang, senator Vice Provost for International Affairs at UNA, said he’s thrilled that UNA won this prestigious grant. “This grant goes together with other financial contributions by UNA supporters will allow 30 students to participate in the Exercise and Nutritional Science study abroad in Peru in the summer of 2019,” said Zhang. Staff members from Peru will participate in the Global Studies Certificate Program at UNA in fall 2018.”

UNA will be partnering with the Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola in Peru to focus on the impact of physical activity and proper nutrition in combating obesity linked with negative behavioral choices.

“This is a result of true team effort and partnership with a strong spirit of collaboration and persistence. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sodexo UNA for providing a private corporate partner matching fund, the UNA Office of Diversity for providing a matching fund to encourage applications by students of color, and UNA Advancement Office for providing the lions share of the matching fund,” said Zhang. “I also want to thank my grant writing team members, Dr. Tanya Blackstone and Dr. Craig Christy, for their knowledge of, expertise in, and dedication to writing, reviewing, and winning the grant. This is the third time we have tried to get SEEDS to UNA, but I am pleased that the persistence of our students and the support of our partners finally paid off.”

UNA students studying exercise science, nutrition, culinary arts, and other health-related fields are eligible to apply for the special scholarship. Individual scholarships will range from $1,400 to $2,500 based on financial need and academic merit.

By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

UNA Wins 100,000 Strong Grant for Study Abroad

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UNA Wins 100,000 Strong Grant for Study Abroad

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Years of hard work culminated with the signing of an endowed scholarship on the University of North Alabama campus. Past and present members of the Student Government Association as well as officials with UNA were on hand for the signing which made the Student Government Endowed Scholarship official.

UNA will begin awarding the scholarship in the fall of 2015.

Laura Giles ’14, former SGA president, said the idea behind the scholarship actually started five years ago. “We started this quite a few years ago by Cory Hamilton ’11 and the fact that we actually finished early makes us really happy. We’re also thankful that Vice President Shields was with us,” she said.

Giles said the scholarship is a way to show UNA students that the SCA cares and wants them to succeed. However, it might not have happened as quickly had David Shields, vice president of Student Affairs, not stepped in.

This Scholarship combines two things: the endowed scholarship SGA started and a Student leadership development scholarship that had been dormant. So I approached Laura and said why don’t we combine these scholarships, it will enable the SGA to finish their scholarship project early and it will also create a larger pool of funds to use,” Shields said.

Shields said they’re currently refining the criteria, but once that’s complete the scholarship will be available for undergraduate students at UNA. Interested students will have to fill out an application like they would for any other scholarship and the recipient will be selected by a committee.

Kerri Ann Gentry, SGA president, said she’s heard about this since she was a freshman and is glad it’s finally going to really see the start of it. “I saw a lot of people work really hard on it. What people really realize is that this is an SGA issue because this is a student issue; scholarships and funding—those are student issues. But I really have to congratulate Laura Gales because she saw it through. I can’t wait until we can award it,” Gers said.

Dr. John Thurnell, UNA Interim President, echoed Gers’ remarks and said he’s proud of what the SGA and Student Affairs accomplished. “One of the most significant outcomes of the economic downturn was how important scholarships became as a part of the campus climate. Students find that they are doing a balancing act just to get by. I think the SGA recognizing the importance of scholarships and then to step out there and take a leadership role, really shows the work they do on behalf of the students at UNA. So we’re very proud,” Thurnell said.
Alumni of the Year
Anne Clem Whitaker

Anne Clem Whitaker ‘89 is well known in the medical marketing community as the successful, driven Chief Executive Officer of Synta, a biopharmaceutical company focused on enhancing the lives of patients, including those suffering from cancer and chronic inflammatory diseases. In the UNA community, Whitaker is known as a leader, who in her four years at the university served in many roles across campus.

Upon graduating from the university with her degree in chemistry (major) and business administration (minor), Anne began her career as a leadership consultant for Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority where she traveled to more than 30 states in one year. Her first two professional assignments were for Delta Communications as a sales representative, and Oak Ridge Institute as a researcher. From there, she joined the Upjohn Company as a metabolic disease specialist in 1991 before her transition to GlaxoSmithKline in 1992. With GlaxoSmithKline, Anne held several leadership positions in the commercial organization. In 2007, she became Vice President of Critical and Supportive Care, a new business unit she was charged with building for GSK.

From there, Anne made a major career decision and accepted a position as Senior Vice President of Leadership and Organization Development. She and her family moved to London, England, to allow her to pursue the major assignment, and again her hard work landed her another appointment. In 2009, Anne became Senior Vice President and Business Unit Head, Cardiovascular, Metabolic, and Urology at GlaxoSmithKline.

In this position, Anne held full responsibility for leading, developing, and managing strategic performance of the CVMD business.

Anne was then appointed to her position as President at Sanofi in 2011. In 2014, Anne made some major career advancements, making her one of the most influential professionals in her field. First, Anne was appointed to both the Board of Directors of Cree (a publicly technology company) and the Department of Commerce Manufacturing Council, where she is the only bio pharma sector representative on the 30-member council.

In her biggest career appointment to date, in 2014 Anne accepted the position as Director and Chief Executive Officer of Synta. In March 2015, Anne graced the cover of Medical Marketing & Media, a magazine that has been serving healthcare marketers industry since 1966. The article praises Whitaker’s innovative and fresh approach to her industry, saying her hiring on as CEO at Synta ‘proved to be the ideal hire.’

The article goes on to report that her leadership and team building abilities are unsurpassed, stating directly that she “inspires great loyalty.” Anne, in the March 2015 article, describes her initial hesitation at the large offer from Synta, but recounted her realization that the opportunity fit her field of expertise presented an exciting opportunity.

“Getting to build a company with an amazing near-term commercial asset is a good fit for my experience,” Whitaker said in the MMM article.

In her parting words in the article summarizing her successful career, Whitaker closes out with MMM in these words: “It’s really nice to be able to concentrate and focus on the things you can make a real impact on.”

Anne Whitaker currently serves on an array of boards and committees pertaining to the betterment of her industry. She serves as Vice Chairman and Member of Executive Committee on the National Pharmaceutical Council. Since 2013, she has served as Director, Member of Governance & Nominations Committee and Member of Compensation Committee for Cree, Inc., a publicly traded LED, lighting and semiconductor products company. Despite her demanding schedule, Anne has taken the time to give back to her community by serving as co-chair of the organization Women in Healthcare and Life Sciences (WHLS). This non-profit research institute hopes to help young women advance in the healthcare and life sciences industry through mentorship and development.

Under her review, this organization joined Centers for Healthcare Innovation to launch The Science Runway, a platform dedicated to streamlining the role models in the healthcare industry to inspire the next generation to join the healthcare and life sciences industries. While Whitaker was the president of Sanofi, she oversaw all pharmaceutical and consumer healthcare operations within North America. She was also a member of the Global Leadership Team, Global Commercial Operations Committee, and the U.S. Regional Management Committee.

Anne is a first generation college graduate who takes pride in her Southern upbringing and in her education from the University. Sanofi’s Senior Specialty Sales Representative David Armstrong spoke of Anne and her representation of the University of North Alabama, saying: “This UNA graduate’s accomplishments are second to none. She didn’t just break the glass ceiling for women in the Pharmaceutical Industry, she shattered it. She paved the path for young women and men executives through hard work and in believing anything is possible.”

Armstrong went on to say, “I honestly believe every UNA student would benefit from knowing Anne. UNA should be proud of her accomplishments, just as I know she is proud of her degree from the University of North Alabama.”

One group on campus is especially proud of Anne’s accomplishments. Sorority members and alumni of Alpha Gamma Delta hosted several events in Anne’s honor during her time in the Shoals area last October. Anna was invited to be a special guest at their Parent’s Weekend Event. The morning of the Homecoming parade, a brunch was hosted in Anne’s honor, allowing her to meet the current undergraduate members of the sorority. Several alumni and new members were in attendance as well.

Susie Morris Ray (‘85), Alpha Gamma Delta alumni and current chapter advisor, remembers Anne’s involvement while she was a collegiate member of the sorority. “I did know Anne personally in her college years. I was chapter advisor then as well, and she was chapter president her senior year,” Susie said.

Anne also took the time to meet members as individuals, which Susie said had a lasting impact on the chapter members. “I think Anne winning Alumni of the Year shows our women that anything can happen if you work hard. She reached out to so many of the girls while she was here, offering to help as much as she could when she could. We spoke to our senior members about networking and I think that as they listened to conversations Anne had, they realized how important networking is.”

Anne Whitaker participated in several other chapter events during her visit, including a tour of Alpha Gamma Delta’s facilities on campus and spending time at the tailgate before the Homecoming game. It is clear that Anne’s strive to teach young women reaches back to her roots at UNA, starting with the group of young women whom she was so close to during her time here.

Having been featured in one of the most prominent publications in her field, and after being named Alumni of the Year for the University for 2014, Anne was willing to answer a few of our questions concerning her life and career. Well into her new job as CEO, and just out of a job as President at Sanofi, Whitaker discussed her career, her family, and what’s next.
It is my understanding you were very involved at UNA. Which Student Organizations were you most involved in?

What did you learn from them?

I was a SOAR (Student Orientation and Registration) counselor for three summers. I was the Head of the SOAR counselors my senior year. During this experience I learned how to work as a team with the other SOAR counselors, coach and counsel new students, build trusting relationships quickly with new students, and run an organization for a summer. I was in the sorority Alpha Gamma Delta and I was very involved in the Pan-Hellenic Council. I served in several leadership roles including serving as the President. This was a great experience to strengthen my leadership skills. Often times the sororities didn’t all agree, so I learned how to negotiate through challenging situations and come to terms that all parties could live with. I was a little sister for Sigma Chi for three years, but I switched to Pi Kappa Alpha Little Sister for my senior year after I met my husband junior year. I served in Student Government as a Senator for a couple of years, played lots of intramural sports and even acted in a couple of plays. Overall, I was really busy in college and this helped me prepare for the life I have led as an executive and working mom!

What is the scope of your travel with your company?

How often and how far do you tend to travel?

With my current role, I have global responsibilities as the Chief Executive Officer. Our product has trials going on at 200 sites across Europe, Middle East and North America. In this role, I travel mostly in the U.S. with some European and Asia travel about once a quarter. In my previous role as the head of North America for Sanofi, I traveled to Paris, France, on average every four to six weeks. In three years in the role, I went to Paris 38 times. Needless to say, I am happy to not have to travel as often now. In my 26 years since graduating from UNA, I have visited all but five States in the U.S., all of the provinces of Canada, 19 countries in Europe, as well as several cities in China, Japan, Singapore, and Australia each a few times. I also have travelled to nine of the island countries for fun with my family!

I have read throughout several letters of recommendation about your involvement regarding your sorority, Alpha Gamma Delta. What leaderships did you hold within your chapter while on campus?

How did traveling and mentoring young women shape your experiences and work to become a Chief Executive Officer?

While I was in Alpha Gam at UNA I served as my pledge class president, head of Rush, vice president and president. I went on to travel across the U.S. as a leadership consultant for Alpha Gam. This experience as a consultant and the leadership roles in Alpha Gam were great experiences and served as great training for my career in leadership.

Can you tell me a bit about your husband, Trampas, and your lives together here at UNA?

How did UNA shape you both and prepare you for a life of success?

My husband, Trampas, is originally from Florence. We met on a Friday afternoon at a local hang out place that most of the Greeks went to on Fridays. Most people thought we would never make it as a couple since we are quite the opposites. I was focused on my academics and organizations, he was focused on soccer and having fun! He’s always been very laid back and easy going. I am a typical ‘type A’ controlling type! But, they say opposites attract and in our case, that must be true. I think we have always balanced each other out and that’s why we have been married for 24 years next week.
Christy Jordan ‘02 appears in many ways to be the average Southern lady. She is a Huntsville, native, wife, and mother of two, who balances her family with a rewarding career. But Jordan’s job is anything but average.

Jordan began her impressive career by accident after she posted a recipe for banana pudding online. The next day it was the website’s front-page recipe, so she decided to post another which was even more popular than the first. After that, she began blogging and now has her own website SouthernPlate.com, which receives over 30 million page views a month.

Jordan has also authored two highly successful cookbooks, ‘Southern Plate: Classic Comfort Food that Makes Everyone Feel like Family’ in 2010 and ‘Come Home to Supper: Over 200 Casseroles, Skillets, and Sides (Desserts, Too) to Feed Your Family with Love’ in 2013.

First off, I have awesome parents and consequently, had an amazing childhood. Although there were difficult times most of my childhood, my parents kept their focus on the good in our lives and the joy of being together. Looking back on my dad working three jobs just to be able to afford groceries and Mama cooking everything from scratch in addition to selling crafts and such on the side for a little extra money, with all of us sitting around the dinner table each night, it kind of feels like a modern day Ingalls family from ‘Little House on The Prairie’!

That experience is what brought to my own family. My number one dream in life was to get married and be a mama, having a family of my own. All of those dreams came true and I recognize that each and every day. Getting to see my children grow up and learning new things about them as their personalities and interests develop is one of the most rewarding and fun parts of my life now. It is hard not to be inspired by that.

You are an accomplished chef, blogger, and author, but you keep your family first.

How do you balance these two parts of your life?

You’ve said before that the success you’ve found through your cooking and recipes is nothing compared to the happiness you have with your family. How do they inspire you?

What makes Jordan resonate so strongly with her fans is her approachable and humble way of writing which makes chefs of all skill-levels feel comfortable with her recipes and secure in their skills. She turns down the title of ‘chef’ and instead prefers to be called ‘home cook.’

Despite all of her success, Jordan remains deeply humble. Her website’s biography states, “I want you to know right up front that I’m nobody special, but come from some awfully good people.”

There is no doubt that Jordan will continue to follow her passion in the years to come. She is currently keeping a strong, active social media presence through her website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Jordan also has a brand new cookbook in the works.

But most of all she is continuing to raise her beautiful family in the place that she calls home.

What do you have any guilty pleasures that help keep you sane?

Reading! I love to read. I don’t have near enough time for it because I am working on my third book right now but as soon as I turn this manuscript in, I plan on going back to my usual schedule of going to bed one hour early to read. I have recently purchased hardback copies of all of the great classics that I’ve wanted to, but had never taken time to, read. They are sitting in a stack on my nightstand just waiting on me to join them! I have declared this the year of the book for me as I’m consciously trying to leave the digital books behind and purchase honest-to-goodness books again. There is something about holding a book and knowing there is a possibility of your children and grandchildren someday holding and reading that very same book. The reality of it, the history, the integrity of those words on paper being so readily passed down to others seems to call to us with an urging to slow down and not be so quick to take up the new way of things when there is so much wisdom in the old.

You’re working on a new cookbook. What types of recipes and stories can your fans be looking forward to?

This cookbook is going to include collaborations, mostly my recipes but also some of my reader’s recipes and stories as well. We all have such wonderful histories and people in our lives so I was excited to be able to offer readers a chance to send in their stories of loved ones along with cherished recipes to include as well. Aside from that, I am really focusing on

ALUMNI OF THE YEAR
SHARES SOUTHERN PLATE

By Ashley Gabaldon, Student Writer

Christy Jordan ’02

Alumni of the Year

Shares Southern Plate

Christy Jordan ’02 appears in many ways to be the average Southern lady. She is a Huntsville, native, wife, and mother of two, who balances her family with a rewarding career. But Jordan’s job is anything but average.

Jordan began her impressive career by accident after she posted a recipe for banana pudding online. The next day it was the website’s front-page recipe, so she decided to post another which was even more popular than the first. After that, she began blogging and now has her own website SouthernPlate.com, which receives over 30 million page views a month.

Jordan has also authored two highly successful cookbooks, ‘Southern Plate: Classic Comfort Food that Makes Everyone Feel like Family’ in 2010 and ‘Come Home to Supper: Over 200 Casseroles, Skillets, and Sides (Desserts, Too) to Feed Your Family with Love’ in 2013.

First off, I have awesome parents and consequently, had an amazing childhood. Although there were difficult times most of my childhood, my parents kept their focus on the good in our lives and the joy of being together. Looking back on my dad working three jobs just to be able to afford groceries and Mama cooking everything from scratch in addition to selling crafts and such on the side for a little extra money, with all of us sitting around the dinner table each night, it kind of feels like a modern day Ingalls family from ‘Little House on The Prairie’!

That experience is what brought to my own family. My number one dream in life was to get married and be a mama, having a family of my own. All of those dreams came true and I recognize that each and every day. Getting to see my children grow up and learning new things about them as their personalities and interests develop is one of the most rewarding and fun parts of my life now. It is hard not to be inspired by that.

You are an accomplished chef, blogger, and author, but you keep your family first.

How do you balance these two parts of your life?

You’ve said before that the success you’ve found through your cooking and recipes is nothing compared to the happiness you have with your family. How do they inspire you?

What makes Jordan resonate so strongly with her fans is her approachable and humble way of writing which makes chefs of all skill-levels feel comfortable with her recipes and secure in their skills. She turns down the title of ‘chef’ and instead prefers to be called ‘home cook.’

Despite all of her success, Jordan remains deeply humble. Her website’s biography states, “I want you to know right up front that I’m nobody special, but come from some awfully good people.”

There is no doubt that Jordan will continue to follow her passion in the years to come. She is currently keeping a strong, active social media presence through her website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Jordan also has a brand new cookbook in the works.

But most of all she is continuing to raise her beautiful family in the place that she calls home.

What do you have any guilty pleasures that help keep you sane?

Reading! I love to read. I don’t have near enough time for it because I am working on my third book right now but as soon as I turn this manuscript in, I plan on going back to my usual schedule of going to bed one hour early to read. I have recently purchased hardback copies of all of the great classics that I’ve wanted to, but had never taken time to, read. They are sitting in a stack on my nightstand just waiting on me to join them! I have declared this the year of the book for me as I’m consciously trying to leave the digital books behind and purchase honest-to-goodness books again. There is something about holding a book and knowing there is a possibility of your children and grandchildren someday holding and reading that very same book. The reality of it, the history, the integrity of those words on paper being so readily passed down to others seems to call to us with an urging to slow down and not be so quick to take up the new way of things when there is so much wisdom in the old.

You’re working on a new cookbook. What types of recipes and stories can your fans be looking forward to?

This cookbook is going to include collaborations, mostly my recipes but also some of my reader’s recipes and stories as well. We all have such wonderful histories and people in our lives so I was excited to be able to offer readers a chance to send in their stories of loved ones along with cherished recipes to include as well. Aside from that, I am really focusing on
opening our eyes to the joy in our lives in this book. Many of my stories and little sidebars will be centered on that. What type of book is it? Well, I can’t tell you that just yet but I promise it’s going to be the best book I can write!

What other new projects do you have in the works, and can you tell me a little bit about them?

The past few months have been so focused on writing my book that I haven’t had time to focus on much else. I continue to do speaking engagements, television appearances, and my work as contributing editor of “Taste Of The South,” and new opportunities seem to spring up overnight so I can’t tell you what I might be doing tomorrow. Once I turn my book in I want to get back to producing the best recipes, helpful tips and tricks posts, and conversations I can with folks over on SouthernPlate.com.

I am also entertaining the thought of producing a YouTube series which would consist of weekly shows and be divided up into seasons like a regular television show later this summer. I still receive emails and phone calls from production companies about possible network opportunities but have yet to be presented with one that is a family friendly environment and with a family friendly network but if it is meant to be, it will happen.

You served as a judge on GSN’s show “Beat the Chefs.” What was that experience like?

It was a lot of hard work but very rewarding and enjoyable hard work. I loved the challenge of the long work days and getting to prove myself at something I’d never done before. The people I worked with were so dedicated and hardworking but they had the best attitudes! It was an honor to get to work with such an amazing crew of folks.

I did my best not to ever make anyone wait on me so I got on set an hour earlier than I needed to each day. I would go straight to makeup and it was funny because, being from Alabama, I naturally “put my face on” before taking one step into the outside world. The makeup girls kept telling me every day “You don’t have to come camera ready. We can do all of that here, just sleep in a bit and let us handle it.”

I didn’t really understand what they were talking about at first but after a few days and more surprise at me being what they called ‘camera ready’ I finally told them, “Okay look, I’m from Alabama. This is not camera ready, this is just every day. Now if you want, I can do a little less makeup before I come here. I have to do base, concealer, blush, eye shadow, eyeliner, eyebrow liner, mascara, and lipstick, but I don’t mind leaving off the lip liner if you’d rather I wear less to the studio.”

We had a different celebrity judge for each show. After Diane Ladd sat beside me in the makeup chairs one day, herself a Deep South belle from Mississippi, they understood that it wasn’t just a Christy thing, it was a Southern thing.

Have you found that living in Alabama places limitations on the amount of success you can have within your field?

When it comes to television, absolutely and without a doubt; when it comes to raising a family, the advantage is all mine. I love being from Alabama and I don’t think of it as a limitation on my career. I think it all started when the time came for both of my kids to start school and my heart began to feel a longing to live closer to home. Television producers approached me about doing television appearances for the magazine “Taste of the South” approached me about being contributing editor so I left “Southern Living” and went with them for less travel and more of an opportunity to share my heart with people through a monthly column. Television producers approached me about TV shows, appearances and such. It has continued to spiral from there.

Why did all of this happen? Some folks may have other reasons but I know it was because I said “God, put me in the game. Give me a chance.” And that is still what I do every day. Just get out there and do the best I can to honor Him and help others see the joy right before their very eyes. My only plans for the future are keeping that up. Where God takes that is anybody’s guess, but I am grateful no matter where the road leads. Because at the end of the day, it always brings me back home.

I am so proud to come from a place where teachers actually know their students, take time to talk with them, get to know what is going on with their lives and take a personal interest in their success. I can’t tell you how many times I sat in Jane Wilson’s office and talked about the struggles of keeping up my studies while caring for my family (which included a newborn at the time). She went beyond being just a teacher and became a mentor and friend, I still consider her to be both today. The faculty at UNA doesn’t just teach students, they inspire and encourage them.

What other new projects do you have in the works, and can you tell me a little bit about them?

I have no idea! If you had asked me what my plans were ten years ago I probably would have said to continue with my monthly family newsletter and raise good kids. I never dreamed that monthly newsletter would become a blog with over 30 million page views a month or that I’d be on national television shows, author bestselling books, and travel around the country and even world.

It all started when the time came for both of my kids to start school and my heart began to feel a longing. I think sometimes God puts longings on your heart for things He wants to give you.

One day I said ‘God, if You just gave me a chance, I know I could be good at something.’ A month later I started SouthernPlate.com and that first month it received over 30,000 page views. Each month after that it doubled. At the end of the first year, it was 18 million and at the end of the second, 48 million. From there, that became the number each month and I had Harper Collins approach me about a book and ‘Southern Living’ approach me about doing television appearances for the magazine. “Taste of the South” approached me about being contributing editor so I left ‘Southern Living’ and went with them for less travel and more of an opportunity to share my heart with people through a monthly column. Television producers approached me about TV shows, appearances and such. It has continued to spiral from there.

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Have you found that living in Alabama places limitations on the amount of success you can have within your field?

When it comes to television, absolutely and without a doubt; when it comes to raising a family, the advantage is all mine. I’ve done several television shows in LA and as soon as the cameras stopped rolling their talent person would come say something like ‘You were great! We’d love to have you back regularly. Are you local?’ Once I mention Alabama there is something like “You were great! We’d love to have you back regularly. Are you local?” Once I mention Alabama there is
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

This past year, the University and its Alumni chose to honor President William Cale, Jr., as the Lifetime Achievement Award Winner. President Cale came to the university almost ten years ago with his wife, Blanche Cale. When Cale took office in 2005, expectations were high for what he would contribute to this university. He far exceeded those expectations, calling on his experience from Penn State-Altoona, Lamar University, and Indiana University of Pennsylvania, to lead UNA.

Cale said, “Looking back on 10 years, we have really strengthened UNA academically. We’ve done it by the way we’ve recruited faculty. We’ve done it by the way we reward faculty for their scholarship and teaching, and by the programs that we have added and continue to add.”

Among his contributions to this University, Cale has supported several programs including seven graduate degree programs, five baccalaureate and two program track concentrations, the university writing center, and the university degree programs, five baccalaureate and two program track concentrations. He retired in 2010 from the UNA Board of Trustees where he served as Chairman from 2001-2002. He was also a Continuing Education Instructor for the Alabama Department of Revenue on Taxation.

During his career he officiated for five sports on the collegiate level, including football, basketball, baseball, softball and, volleyball. He also served as President of the High School Football, Baseball, and Basketball Local Associations, and President of the SEC Football Officials Association. He retired in 2010 from the SEC Football Official Full Crew where he served as SEC Crew chief in 2004 and 2005.

His community involvement includes serving as President of the Wilson-Dam League, Safeplace Board Member, American Heart Association, Downtown Kowans Club President, United Way Trustee, NCAA Division II Championship Committee, American Legion Member, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes Board Chairman.

Haddock and his wife, Linda Haddock, have two married sons and three grandchildren. They attend Cross Point Church in Florence, where he serves as a Deacon.

FRIEND OF THE UNIVERSITY

Mayor Mickey Haddock was elected Mayor of the City of Florence, Ala., in August 2012. He began his political career when he was elected Lauderdale County Licensed Commissioners in 1992 and was re-elected and served again in 1998, 2004, and 2010. Previously, he was employed as a fire fighter in the Florence Fire Department and retired from the Alabama National Guard after 34 years of service. His professional activities include being a member of the Alabama Tax Administrators Association, serving as President in 2001-2002. He was also a Continuing Education Instructor for the Alabama Department of Revenue on Taxation.

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Although Dr. Barry Morris retired from his 34-year career as a Professor and Chairman of the Economics and Finance Departments at the University of North Alabama in 2008, he continues to serve the University and the community well into his retirement.

Dr. Morris wanted the opportunity to give back to students while doing what he loved to do, and therefore before leaving the university, he agreed to teach for an academic year and have his salary donated to a permanent endowed scholarship fund. In doing this he became an Izbell Scholar and encouraged many of his peers at the institution to do the same.

Since his retirement, he has had many successes both within and outside the University. He served as the University Foundation Director of Planned Giving, and was elected to represent District 4 in the City of Florence in 2008. Morris also serves as the Chairman of the Planning Committee and a member of the Finance Committee, as well as the City of Florence Utilities Committee.

Morris’s service to both the UNA and Florence Community are evident in his years of work in both areas. He and his wife, Suzanne, have three sons, Scott, David, and Dean, and are members of the First Christian Church of Florence.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Dr. Sheri Maples Wirschusen (’78) has dedicated her life to educating students and ensuring they have every opportunity to begin college with a firm foundation for success.

After receiving her undergraduate degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry at the University of North Alabama, she continued her education at the University of Alabama, receiving a Master of Science Degree concentrating in Cancer Biochemistry.

Dr. Wirschusen’s career as a Research Support Specialist began at Cornell University in New York, where she worked in Biochemistry, as well as Molecular and Cell Biology.

In 2009, Dr. Wirschusen received her Doctorate of Philosophy from Louisiana State University. After serving in several research roles, she took on the position of Director of Retention in the Office of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Wirschusen has served as the Co-Director of BIOS (Biology Intensive Orientation for Students), a Biology boot camp for incoming freshmen, which has been so successful, it serves as a model for other prominent Universities. Wirschusen combined her background in education and research in order to effectively study the positive effects a program like BIOS has on young college students. She continues to live out her passion for serving students seeking an education in her role as a Graduate Research Affiliate Member, Director of Undergraduate Research Education, NIH Program Coordinator, and Program Manager for First Year Student Success.

Dr. Wirschusen currently resides in Baton Rouge, La., and serves as an adjunct professor at Louisiana State University.

While Dr. Gale D. Satchel’s career emphasizes her passion for educating students, her service to the community provides students with a means of support to succeed in their educations.

Dr. Satchel began her career in Education at Jacksonville State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree. She received her Master of Science Degree from the University of Wisconsin, where she began her service to students as an Admissions Counselor, later transitioning to the role of Academic Counselor. She received her Ed.S. in Administration from the University of North Alabama in 2006, after returning to Alabama to work as a guidance counselor at Lawrence County High School. She has served as an Academic Counselor at Northwest Shoals Community College, Interim Director for Deshler Career/Technical Center, and a guidance counselor at Desdier High School. She received her Doctor of Education degree in Administration from Nova Southeastern University.

Satchel currently operates professionally as Director of Federal Programs, Academic Competitions, and Pre-K Administrator for Colbert County Schools, where she facilitates the efficient use of funding for children to receive the best education possible through various government programs.

During her time with Colbert County Schools, Dr. Satchel has been instrumental in securing new pre-k programs, raising funds for academic competitions, securing speakers for professional development programs, and reviving the reading program for the Leighton Public Library.

In addition to her roles in the workplace, she also serves as a Board Member with the Quality Assurance (QA) Committee at the Colbert County Department of Human Resources, and serves on Executive Committees for the American Cancer Society and the Healing Place. Satchel currently resides in Sheffield, Ala., with her husband, Michael Satchel, and their two children.

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When it comes to service and community involvement, Dr. Gillespie and Pamela Browning Edwards ’65 have had innumerable successes in their endeavors. Red Bay in Alabama is the current recipient of their dreams and passion. Fabianke was the project director for the Smithsonian Institution’s Museum on Main Street exhibit entitled “The Way We Worked.” It was held in Red Bay from September 14-October 25 in 2013. Mrs. Fabianke was recognized for her selfless dedication to this project and as one who embodies the American spirit of community.

She is the originator/creator of the CHOREOGENETICS program, a specialized fitness program established in 1976 in Huntsville City Schools to help children become more actively involved in physical fitness through creative programs and approaches. The program was implemented nationally through the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

She received her bachelor’s degree in Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance/History from Houston Baptist University in Houston, Texas. After several jobs as a physical fitness educator in the Houston area, as well as a position on the Texas Governor’s Commission on Physical Fitness to incorporate Aerobic Dance into public school systems, she moved to Alabama and received her Elementary Physical Education Specialist Qualification from the University of Alabama at Huntsville in 1976. Mrs. Fabianke received her Master of Arts Education: Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance from UNA.

During her time in Alabama, she has served on multiple service committees, councils, and boards to help serve and better the community of Red Bay, where she still lives today.

Jeff ’64 and Pamela Browning Edwards ’65 are examples of service and community involvement both during and after their time at Florence State, now the University of North Alabama.

During his enrollment here, Jeff served as Circle K President, President of Inter- Presidents’ Council, Lect-II Mascot, and was honored as Mr. Florence State and as the Turris Fidelis Award winner.

Pamela served as a member of the Pride of Dixie Band, ROTC Drill Team Sponsor, and a Member of the Inter-President’s Council in her time here.

Both Jeff and Pamela are active in serving their church, community, and the University of North Alabama. Jeff serves as a Deacon at Green Valley Baptist Church, served as a member of the UNA Alumni Board and the UNA Planned Giving Advisory Council, and is a current member of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

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During her time in Alabama, she has served on multiple service committees, councils, and boards to help serve and better the community of Red Bay, where she still lives today.
PROMISING ALUMNI

Dillon Green - a senior from Florence majoring in Foreign Languages. He has served as a Resident Advisor, is involved in the Honors Program, and has participated in SOAR, UPC, and LaGrange Society. He holds membership in Phi Kappa Phi and was a member of Homecoming Court 2012.

Charles W. Brown '65 graduated from Florence State College. Upon graduation as a Distinguished Military Graduate, he accepted a Regular Army Commission. While serving as platoon leader with Company K, 2nd Battalion, he was deployed from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, to the Republic of South Vietnam. During this tour in 1966 he was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor, Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. Brown served as the lead officer in developing a psychological warfare campaign using the "Art of Spades" as a calling card against the Viet Cong. The story of Lt. Brown's success in the campaign was reported on the June 14, 1966 issue of the Congressional Record. In 2007, the story was published again in the Vietnam magazine, giving details of the campaign and its effectiveness.

After a one-year tour with the 18th Airborne Corps at Ft. Bragg, N.C., in 1968, Brown transferred to the 6th Special Forces Group and attended the Defense Language Institute in Washington, D.C., to train in the Spanish language for six months. He led a Mobile Training Team to the Nicaraguan Military Academy in Managua, Nicaragua, for training in urban military tactics. In 1970, Lt. Brown transferred to the 8th Special Forces Group in Huntsville, Ala., and served with the Alabama National Guard for five years as A-Team and B-Team Intelligence and Operations Officer. Five years later, he was transferred to the US Army Reserves and assigned to the Lauderdale County Civil Defense Office as an advisor in Emergency Management. He retired as Lieutenant Colonel in 1993 with 26 years of service and received Meritorious Service Award.

He is married to Nancy Ann Clemmons Brown; they have two children and four grandchildren.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul K. Haverstick, Jr. '96 received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Communication from the University of North Alabama. He began his service as a platoon leader in Fort Stewart, Georgia, where he was selected ahead of his peers to be a training officer for an Air Defense Artillery Battalion. His leadership led him to Fort Campbell, Ky., where he was deployed to command an Avenger-Stinger battery during the invasion of Iraq. During his deployment, he was responsible for the health and welfare of 95 personnel who successfully coordinated and carried out missions to secure a major intersection in Baghdad.

After Iraq, he returned to the United States and was stationed in Fort Polk, La., where he served as Observer and Controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center, responsible for the coaching, teaching, and mentoring of 20 platoons and one artillery battery. Lt. Col. Haverstick was imperative in the training and selecting of units for short notice deployment, while also training over 6,000 participants in course of action study. He was once again sent overseas, this time to Kabul, Afghanistan, to serve as Public Affairs planner for combined Forces Command – Afghanistan Public Affairs Directorate. Here, he was responsible for plans and operations in CFC-A which consisted of over 18,000 personnel and 22 coalition partners in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He returned to serve as Director of Current Operations at Arlington, Va. For the U.S. Army Media Center, leading to his transfer to Mannheim, Germany, as Director of Operations for a joint-service broadcasting organization by providing timely and targeted news.

He is married to Ann Clymonts Brown and has two children.
I bring you greetings on behalf of the UNA Alumni Association. We want you to stay connected with UNA and join an Alumni Club. We have over 54 Alumni clubs reaching from Florence, to China, and if there is not one in your area, start one! The Office of Alumni Relations offers forms and can readily assist you with the process. I urge you to stay involved with the place that helped build your foundation and stay connected. Being involved is not always about giving money, sometimes it is about giving of your time, and/or suggesting this University to a prospective student.

You may wonder, what does the Alumni Association do? Our mission is to locate, recognize, and recruit alumni, provide for job placement for our students and alumni, and provide scholarships for our students. The alumni association is your networking group to stay in touch with the University.

There are some very exciting things happening at UNA, such as the new Science and Technology Building and the new dormitories that will be opening in the fall of 2015. Please join us and other alumni and/or students at the 25th Anniversary Alumni Leadership Summit at the university. You will have the opportunity to attend networking sessions that will educate you about exciting changes to the campus. We encourage you to take the lead in your local alumni clubs. During the Summit, there will be events planned for all ages (including Little Lions Day Camp activities).

Once you have conquered your dreams and you have reached a big milestone, tell them where you are from, remember your mascot; it is not a duck, elephant, tiger, bear, or even an eagle—it is a lion, and the last time I checked the lion is the King of the Jungle! Be proud to wear the purple and gold—that’s Lion Pride! I encourage you to do the following:

• Update your Alumni information in the UNA OnLion Community
• Follow UNA on Twitter
• Identify yourself with the University of North Alabama LinkedIn
• Attend university events (athletic, social, reunions, etc.)
• “Like” Alumni pages on Facebook, both the association page and your local club page
• Visit the UNA Alumni office at the Science and Technology Building and the new dormitories that will be opening in the fall of 2015.

So college days swiftly pass and the recollection slowly fades away—but make the UNA Alumni Association a part of your lifelong commitment in giving of your time and resources back to your alma mater. May God bless each of you, your families, and this university.

Thank You,
Larry Softley, ’89 and ’08
UNA Alumni Association President 2014-2015
Excerpts from press release from the Horatio Alger Association:

WASHINGTON, D.C. • December 4, 2014

Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., a nonprofit educational organization honoring the achievements of outstanding individuals and encouraging youth to pursue their dreams through higher education, announced that Charles C. Anderson Jr., chairman emeritus, Anderson Companies, has been selected for membership in the prestigious organization. Mr. Anderson joins eleven other accomplished business and civic leaders from across North America in receiving this honor in 2015. Since its establishment in 1947, the Horatio Alger Award is annually bestowed upon renowned leaders who have succeeded, despite facing adversity, and who are committed to both philanthropy and higher education.

Mr. Anderson was born in Florence, Ala., to hard-working, middle-class parents. His father built a newsstand made from piano boxes and sold newspapers to support his family, eventually becoming successful enough to move the stand into a small storefront. Mr. Anderson grew up learning his father’s business and after graduating from the University of North Alabama with a marketing degree, he entered the family business full-time. The company continued to experience success and quickly expanded to wider distribution beyond the single storefront. In addition to presenting its annual award, the Horatio Alger Association administers one of the largest privately-funded scholarship programs for students in the United States and Canada. These students, like the Members, have faced significant adversities, but have persevered and are determined to overcome life’s challenges. Scholarships are wholly funded through private donations from Members, Life Partners and friends, and since 1984, the Association has provided more than $100 million to promising students in need.

In accepting this honor, Mr. Anderson commented, “I am very grateful to be selected for this prestigious award and I am deeply humbled to join such an extraordinary list of Horatio Alger Association Members. To be welcomed into an Association that supports the pursuit of education, which I feel so strongly about, is a wonderful opportunity. I look forward to supporting this vital mission of the Association and helping outstanding and deserving students to pursue their own American Dreams.”

UNA Alum Charles Anderson Receives Horatio Alger Award

Entrepreneur, philanthropist and University of North Alabama alumnus Charles C. Anderson, Sr.’56, is a recipient of the 2015 Horatio Alger Award. These annual awards from the Horatio Alger Association recognize exceptional leaders who have a commitment to philanthropy and higher education, and who have overcome significant personal challenges to achieve success. Anderson joins an esteemed group of just over 200 living members.

Dr. Dan Hendricks, UNA vice president for advancement, said that Anderson is a shining example of what a graduate of UNA can become with hard work and determination. “We are so proud of Mr. Anderson and his accomplishments. He has always been a great ambassador, friend and supporter of this institution, and we know his achievements will continue to bring recognition to Alabama, the Shoals and of course, the University of North Alabama.”

Anderson is a graduate of UNA who can become with hard work and determination. “We are so proud of Mr. Anderson and his accomplishments. He has always been a great ambassador, friend and supporter of this institution, and we know his achievements will continue to bring recognition to Alabama, the Shoals and of course, the University of North Alabama.”
I landed in Tokyo yesterday after a 14-hour flight from Atlanta. Woke up this morning in my one-bedroom apartment, rolled over, and grabbed my iPhone. It was the end of the work day in America. I opened Twitter and looked up the trending topics to see if I’d missed any big news. I noticed #SAEhatesme was trending. I got that sick feeling in the pit of my stomach that I get when fraternity guys are in the news again for doing something awful. I didn’t know the story but SAE (short for Sigma Alpha Epsilon) is at the center of the freestore. Seems like fraternity men lately have had a knack for making old fraternity men like me cringe in shame. I clicked on the first link I found and watched a bus full of University of Oklahoma fraternity guys singing a racist chant. I just put my phone down. I was sick.

I’m here in Tokyo doing the tourist thing for a few days, then head for a week of business. My friend from college, Hiroyuki Yamamoto (’07), met me at the airport. I’ve known Hiro since 2003, but this is my first time visiting him in his country. We planned to hang out in Tokyo on my first night here so he had everything planned out. He took off from work and traveled 400 miles to Tokyo to help get this chain Alabamian safely from the airport into downtown Tokyo. He bought my $25 train ticket into the city even though I offered to pay for his. When we got off the train he quickly snatched my 50-pound bag away from me, insisting he carry it for me through the subway and city streets. He said, "You’re my guest, Brett," and we walked through the city, talking about my life in America. He asked me what my favorite part of my time in America was. I liked the work day in America. I rolled over, and grabbed my phone down. I was sick.

For those of us who know Hiro, this isn’t really surprising. Hiro was and is my fraternity brother he went to the fall of 2003, our chapter of Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) at the University of North Alabama pledged three guys from Japan—Junya, Taka, and Hiro. This was pretty unusual for a mostly white, Southern fraternity in Alabama, but we all loved the guys during the recruitment process. The chapter embraced them quickly, but it was Hiro that seemed to be everywhere—every party, every football game, every road trip, every spring break, every golf outing, every charity event, every ski trip to Colorado, every Homecoming event.

Pretty much everywhere, Hiro was just another brother and every guy in the chapter loved him. And Hiro loved it too. He was the star of our prime-time Second Sing one year. He learned to water ski, and he loved it. He asked if he could ski in a Superbowl costume. Of course, we said yes. Then he asked if he could ski in a pirate costume, then an Elvis costume. He took tons of pictures of course. And he loved sending them back to his family in Japan. Hiro was a very good brother.

Then in 2007, when Hiro graduated, we all made the hour drive to the airport in Huntsville to see him off. His plan was always to go to school in America, then move back to Japan for work. I wish you could have seen 20 fraternity guys in their khaki shorts, boat shoes, and fraternity t-shirts trying not to cry (and mostly failing) in that airport, saying their goodbyes. It was something else. I got dressed this morning and launched out into the streets of Tokyo looking for breakfast. I was still thinking about that SAE video, still bothered. I opened Twitter and saw a post from my friend Sam Safterfield. Sam’s an undergrad at ATO at LUNA. His post was short, simple, and poignant. All it said was “To know man as...” I knew exactly what Sam meant.

That phrase is an excerpt from the ATO creed. ATO was founded by three young cadets at the Virginia Military Institute exactly 150 years ago. They started the fraternity to reunite a nation deeply divided after the Civil War. They crafted the ATO Creed, a sort of mission statement for the fraternity. Part of that statement says, “To know no North, no South, no East, no West, is to know man as...” It’s a plea to just accept men for who they are, ignoring the things that make them different, and recognizing that spark of humanity that makes them the same. It’s always been really beautiful to me. And it meant a lot that Sam thought to post it on a day when, once again, fraternity guys are on the front page of national news sites for acting like jackasses. I’ve been involved in the fraternal movement for nearly 15 years, and it’s been one of the richest experiences of my life. I served as chapter president as an undergrad, and it was the greatest leadership tutorial I’ve ever had. My fraternity brothers gave me a vault of incredible college memories, and I still count those guys as my closest friends to this day. I graduated ten years ago, so my Facebook feed is now filled with aging fraternity guys getting married and fuzzing their newborns. I’m currently on the national Board of Directors for Alpha Tau Omega. I sit around that board table with a lot of white-haird alumna board members—men who are legends in business and life. They’re some of the best men I know, and they give me hope for the fraternity system.

Wynn Smiley, ATO’s unbelievable CEO, gives me hope for the Greek system as well. Guys like Sam and all the other undergrads in the Theta Eta chapter of ATO at LUNA give me hope too. They are a constant force for good in the Florence community. There are a lot of us working really hard to right the ship—casting off the stereotypes, educating our brothers, and getting back to our fraternal roots which are actually quite noble. Some days I have hope, and other days, like today, it’s harder than school around the country. This year, Brett’s malibu team is traveling to six different countries to produce a series of character-building short films that 1.1 million American students will view next year.

I’m writing this to let everyone know that this 30-something white frat guy thinks those guys in Oklahoma were wrong.

That’s not why I’m better off for having welcomed guys like Hiro into our chapter. I hope other chapters will do the same in the future. “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Love and Respect,
Brett Trapp ’05
University of North Alabama

P.S. I’m dedicating this article to Hiro and all my diverse ATO brothers from my time at LUNA. In their honor, I’m wearing a white hat today while I’m in Tokyo. It’s small and mostly insignificant. But I just want to remind them that I’m proud of them, I love them, they are accepted, and they belong.

This article was written by UNA graduate, Brett Trapp (’05). Brett was a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity while at the university, serving as its chapter president twice. He was also selected as a Promising Alumni and was awarded the Turris Fidelis award. Brett currently lives in Atlanta, Ga., where he is the Executive Vice President of Client Experience for the Brookstone Fox Run. Brett hosts fitness-based fundraisers at 5-10 elementary schools around the country. This year, Brett’s malibu team is traveling to six different countries to produce a series of character-building short films that 1.1 million American students will view next year.

This article originally appeared on Facebook as a response to the national coverage of racist actions shown by some fraternity men at the University of Oklahoma. We are reprinting it here with his permission.
Wes and Tera Wages are the owners and operators of Armosa Studios. The couple were contacted by the creators of World Domination Summit, and have become an integral part of the conference. Tera Wages said, "We jumped into the World Domination Summit on the inaugural year, back in 2011. The leaders had seen our recent travel videos and wanted us to come do the photos and videos for the event. This coming year will be our fifth year documenting the event, and we have become a part of the core team for planning." Tera describes the event as an inspiring, passionate experience in which those who attend leave motivated to live fuller, more enriching lives. "World Domination Summit brings together people who are dreamers, living unconventionally, or just living remarkable lives exactly where they are planted," Wages said of the Portland, Ore.-originated event, which typically lasts four days each July.

Currently, Bethany is working towards making her non-profit dreams come to life with the help of her non-profit coach and her supporters from World Domination Summit. She also says her support from the community at WDS didn't end after the plane ride home. "Weekly, I receive encouraging messages from people that I never met face to face, but they saw the video of the program I'm starting and felt the need to reach out. After being pulled on stage and given the tools to make a huge dream come true, I gained about 3,000 cheerleaders who are genuinely supporting me throughout the process," she said.

However, the majority of her work will start with some fine details. "Moving forward with the travel program, I am in the process of completing the documentation to ensure that I am recognized as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization."

Overall, Bethany credits the World Domination experience as the main reason she found her purpose in life—to help educate young women in a profound way. "I plan to take the experiences and lessons that I learn from traveling with Carpe Diem to put together successful programs that can soon be opened up to recruit participants. The beauty of a program such as this is that I will continue to have the opportunity to travel and network with organizations and individuals across the globe to ensure that we are offering the best learning experiences possible for these women."

Katie Todd (‘10) received her degree in Communications from the university in 2010. Since then, Katie has worked as a sales representative for Dell, and has served as the Assistant Director of Admissions for the Art Institute of Tennessee in Nashville. This past year, Katie felt led to pursue a very different element in education: this time, her job would take her all the way to East Asia for a six-month job teaching English to students.

Katie said her experience in the Department of Communications at the university has influenced her experiences overseas far more than she can explain. "I would not necessarily say that it was a factor in my decision to serve internationally, but it has helped tremendously in being an effective communicator," Katie said.

Currently, Katie is serving in a U.S. Organization which allows her to teach English in five different universities in Taiwan. "I primarily teach English Bible classes, but also family life education. I meet during the week with students and just build relationships with them. I think that's awesome and support it 100%." Katie said her ultimate goal is to build relationships with those she teaches, and that her experiences in East Asia have been influenced exponentially by the friendships she has built overseas.

When asked about travel abroad and its effect on students in a higher education setting, Katie enthusiastically supports the idea. "I did not study abroad while at UNA. I'm so thankful I have been able to experience it. I did my contract with my company and stay longer. She will continue to have the opportunity to recruit participants. The beauty of a program such as this is that I will continue to have the opportunity to travel and network with organizations and individuals across the globe to ensure that we are offering the best learning experiences possible for these women."

Katie has enjoyed her time in East Asia so much, she chose to extend her contract with her company and stay longer. She will continue to teach English in various universities, and says of her experience so far, "I came here and literally fell in love with this city and people. I was originally only staying here for six months, but after much prayer I felt that there was need for me to extend my time to another six months. I'm so thankful I have been able to experience it."
This fall, the University Honors Program at UNA is throwing a party … and you are invited!

Honors @ 10

It’s been ten years since the Honors Program at UNA was founded, but a true campus-wide Honors Program was a long time coming. It began in the 1980s with a dream shared by the late Professor Emeritus Tom Osborne, but it wasn’t until 2005 that newly installed President William G. Cale, Jr., created the Honors Program as his first major executive action. “It was both an exhilarating and anxious moment,” said Dr. Vince Brewton, founding Director of the Honors Program. “We had no curriculum, no building, no staff, no endowment, and no students,” he remembers. “Thanks to the leadership of Presidents Cale, Thornell, and Vice President Calhoun, today we have all those things and are on an incredibly solid foundation.”

The Honors Program brought its first class to campus that fall – thirty students who were following a dream of their own and laid the foundation for the University Honors Program. They built it.

Katie Gurley ’09 was a member of the first Honors class in 2005. Now a media buyer at an advertising agency in Birmingham, Katie reflects: “As a media professional, getting out of my comfort zone and getting to know people on a personal level is something that is vital to my career. The Program really taught me how to do that. And I cannot even express how important it was and is to me to be able to call on the members and professors associated with the Program.”

“The current curriculum of the Honors Program begins with the end in mind. “Our focus is on making sure our graduates will be successful five years out by emphasizing intellectual and professional development in ways that don’t become dated,” said Dr. Brewton. “It’s a process, but over time, we’ve put in place a curriculum that includes civic engagement through service, experiential learning, research, and experience with other cultures.” As over 90% of Honors Program graduates are working full time or pursuing graduate work in their fields, the process seems to be paying off.

While in the Honors Program, Kaitlin Ashley Roland ’13 won a national honors award for her research into literacy pedagogy conducted at Kilby School. Today she is a teacher in the Madison City Schools. About the Program’s impact on her career, she says: “Towards the end of my college experience, I applied to one job, and I was offered that job just days after I graduated college. I truly believe that my research and experience in the Honors Program at UNA made my résumé stand out. Each day, I am able to apply the skills and knowledge gained through my time as an Honors student at UNA.”

Charles Anderson ’06

The honors Program provides a positive competitive environment that fostered the development of skills needed to thrive in the professional world.

College of Nursing and Honors graduate Allyson Hilliard ’12 is an RN and Case Manager at Vanderbilt Hospital. The Honors Program was pivotal in her choice of career: “I chose a Nursing major after attending a truly inspirational Honors presentation. The program is small enough that familiar faces follow and motivate you throughout your college years, yet it provides enough diversity to act as a fantastic source of networking.”

This fall the Honors Program will celebrate its 10th anniversary as it brings in a record-breaking class. The HP is throwing a party – and they want you to be there.

Dr. Melissa Driskell: “We are very excited to begin offering innovative science courses in 2015-2016 that will be taught in the new science building.”

“Life is competitive,” says Ethan Cagle ’12, who is pursuing a Ph.D. in chemistry. “No matter your choice of career, you will always have to compete to succeed. The Honors Program provided a positive competitive environment that fostered the development of skills needed to thrive in the professional world.”

College of Business and 2010 Honors Program graduate Raleigh Green ’10 works in credit analysis in the Shouls and remembers the Honors Program as crucial to his college choice: “When I received my acceptance package from the Honors Program, I began to reconsider UNA as a top choice. It was a chance to challenge myself as well as make my mark on something new and evolving at the university.”

Her senior Miracle Osborne, pursuing a career in international development after a semester in Spain, agrees: “I can confidently say that the UNA Honors Program was definitely what made me choose UNA.”

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Dr. Melissa Driskell: “We are very excited to begin offering innovative science courses in 2015-2016 that will be taught in the new science building.”
University of North Alabama junior Chloe Richards of Cornwall, England, was selected as the 2014 Daktronics Division II Women’s Soccer National Player of the Year in voting by the division’s sports information directors. Richards led the NCAA Division II with 26 goals scored this season and 57 total points. She helped lead UNA to a 14-4-1 record and into the Division II South Region Tournament. She was also selected first-team All-Gulf South Conference, GSC Player of the Year, first-team Daktronics All-South Region, Daktronics South Region Player of the Year, first-team NSCAA All-South Region, first-team Daktronics All-American Daktronics Division II Women’s Soccer National Player of the Year. Richards becomes the second UNA women’s soccer player to earn the Daktronics National Player of the Year honors, joining former Lion Chloe Roberts ’13 who was selected 2011 in her three seasons at UNA. Richards has now scored 41 goals and added 12 assists. She already ranks as the fourth leading scorer in school history.

University of North Alabama junior wide receiver Lee Mayhall of Jackson, Tenn., was named to the 2014 Capital One Academic All-America® Division II football team as selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). Only 24 players from the 168 Division II schools were named first-team Academic All-America® and Mayhall, who has a 4.0 cumulative grade point average in Industrial Hygiene, is one of just two student-athletes on the first-team with a 4.0 GPA. Despite missing the last two games of the 2014 season due to injury, Mayhall caught 25 passes for 287 yards in 2014 and averaged 11.5 yards per reception. He was also the holder on all field goal and extra-point attempts and was selected second-team All-Gulf South Conference by the league’s head coaches.
The UNA Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2014 included the women's basketball program's all-time leading scorer Amber Deline, baseball All-American Cliff Lord, two-time All-GSC football lineman Hamp Moore, volleyball All-American Yana Ninova Johnson, men's basketball three-point phenom Barry "Buck" Williams and men's golf All-American Jason Vaughn.

Deline, a Hackettburg, Ala., native, was a four-time All-Gulf South Conference selection, earning first-team honors in 2000, 2001 and 2003 and second-team honors in 2002. The GSC Freshman of the Year in 2000 and a member of the Division II Bulletin All-American Freshman team, she went on to become UNA's all-time leading scorer with 1,622 points in 108 career games. Deline also ranks as UNA's all-time leading rebounder with 756, which is 82 more than any other player in school history. She led the Lions in rebounding four straight seasons with 192 in 2000, 208 in 2001, 170 in 2002 and 186 in 2003. She was UNA's leading scorer in 2000 (488), 2001 (423) and 2003 (375).

She finished her career with a 50.4 field goal percentage, hitting 548 of 1,087 shot attempts. She also made 476 of 674 career free throw attempts for a 70.6 percentage and added 127 career steals, 230 assists and 43 blocked shots.

Deline led UNA to a combined 67-41 record during her career and was also a second-team All-Region and All-South Region pick in 2000. Following her playing career, Deline worked as a graduate assistant women's basketball coach at Montevallo (2003-06) while earning her Master's degree. She then worked for two seasons as an assistant coach at Samford University.

Set to begin her first season as head women's basketball coach at James Clemens High School in Madison, Deline led Osceola High School to back-to-back Class 4A State Championships in 2013 and 2014 with a combined 65-10 record over the two-year period. She also led the Red Knights to a Northeast Regional runner-up finish in 2010 and to the sub-regional round in 2011.

Lord, a Montgomery, Ala., native, was a two-time first-team All-Gulf South Conference pitcher on UNA baseball teams in 1998 and 1999. He was chosen All-GSC as a relief pitcher in 1998 and as a starting pitcher in 1999. He finished second in the NCAA Division II in earned run average as a junior in 1998 at 1.62. He posted a perfect 4-0 record with 44 strikeouts in 41 appearances that season. He allowed just nine earned runs in 50.0 innings, struck out 56 batters and held opponents to .188 batting average. He was named first-team all-region and third-team all-American by the American Baseball Coaches Association.

He also earned a GSC Pitcher of the Week in 1998 after allowing no runs, striking out 11 batters and pitching 9 2/3 innings in four games. Lord started 15 games as a senior in 1999 and posted a 9-3 record to help lead the Lions to an appearance in the Division II World Series after winning the South Region Championship and the Gulf South Conference Championship. He struck out 74 batters and allowed 95 hits in 101.2 innings on the mound. He threw five complete games and posted one shutout.

The Lions finished the 1999 season with a 45-12 record and UNA had a combined 83-24 record in Lord's two years on the squad.

A 1999 UNA graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems, Lord has worked in telecommunications and as a software developer and currently resides with his family in Franklin, Tenn., where he is employed by Germann and Associates as head of the installation department.

Moore, a native of Albertville, Ala., was a leader on the offensive line for the Lions from 1978-81 and earned first-team All-Gulf South Conference honors as both a junior and senior.

As a starter in 1980 he helped lead UNA to a 10-2 record that included winning the school's first GSC football championship and the Lions' first berth in the NCAA Division II Football Playoffs. UNA won its opening round game against Virginia Union before falling in the semifinal round to Eastern Illinois.

Moore was again a starter as a senior in 1981 and helped lead the Lions to an 8-2 finish as UNA narrowly missed a second straight playoff appearance. He was selected as a permanent team captain following the 1981 season in addition earning the team Most Valuable Offensive Lineman award and the team's Scholar-Award.

A three-time Academic All-GSC selection in 1979, 1980 and 1981, Moore helped lead UNA to a combined 31-11-1 record over his four seasons on the Lions' offensive line.

Moore graduated with honors from UNA in 1982 and became UNA's first recipient of an NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarship. He went on to earn his Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Alabama Birmingham in 1986. He was then commissioned in the United States Navy where he served three years as an optometrist before he returned to practice in the Shoals in 1989. He is currently the owner of Tomoki Eyecare in Florence and has also served on the UNA Sports Medicine Staff.

Moore was named to the UNA Team of the Decade from 1979-88 and the 50th Anniversary UNA Football Team for 1949-48. He was previously inducted into the Marshall County Sports Hall of Fame in 2006.

Ninova, from Viden, Bulgaria, was a four-year starter on UNA volleyball teams from 2000-03 and earned All-American honors as both a junior and senior. She helped lead UNA to a combined 135-19 record during her career that included three GSC South Conference championships (2000, 2001, 2002), four straight NCAA Tournament appearances (2000-03), two Division II Regional Championships (2000, 2003) and the school's first NCAA Division II National Championship in a women's sport with a volleyball title in 2003.

She was a four-time All-Gulf South Conference and four-time All-South Central Region selection and was a third-team American Volleyball Coaches Association All-American selection in 2002 and an AVCA and Daktronics first-team All-American pick in 2003. Ninova ranked 12th in the nation in kills in 2003 with 4.82 per match and was...
second nationally as a senior in 2003 with 6.12. She also ranked 10th nationally in hitting percentage as a senior at .411.

Nitova received her Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) Economics, Finance from UNA in 2004. She then served as an assistant volleyball coach the University of South Alabama from 2007-2011. In 2011 she made the transition to a graduate assistant position at South Alabama while earning her Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) degree, which she completed in 2013.

Today she is head of marketing at TradingPub, a financial services company in Mobile.

Vaughn, a native of Decatur, Ala., was a four-year letterman on UNA golf teams from 2000-03 and was a two-time All-American selection.

Vaughn helped lead the Lions to three NCAA Division II National Tournament appearances and finished as the individual runner-up in the 2002 championships. He earned All-Gulf South Conference honors in 2002 and All-South Region honors in 2003. He earned second-team All-American honors in 2002 and a third-team spot in 2003.

Vaughn finished in the top twenty in all three of his NCAA Tournament appearances. He tied for 20th as a freshman in 2000, was runner-up in 2002 and finished 19th in 2003.

He was chosen as UNA’s Male Student-Athlete of the Year in 2002. Vaughn has earned two degrees from UNA, with a Bachelor’s degree in Fitness Management and a Master’s degree in Exercise Science. He is also a graduate of the PGA of America Management Program.

He worked for four years as Assistant Golf Professional at the Robert Trent Jones of the Shoals courses and then two years as Head Golf Professional at Westlawn Middle School in Tuscaloosa.

HILL TROPHY PRESENTATION CONTINUES DESPITE MOVE OF CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

The Harlon Hill Trophy was presented for the 29th time in the Shoals on January 9, 2015, to the NCAA Division II College Football Player of the Year, despite the move of the NCAA Division II Football Championship Game away from the area.

The trophy, named for 1955 UNA alum and former Lion football All-American Harlon Hill, was presented at a ceremony attended by 150 at the Guillot University Center on campus to quarterback Jason Vander Laan of Ferris State University.

The initial Hill Trophy was also presented on campus in 1986 in the old Student Union Building. Jerry Hill ’81, Harlon’s son, also a UNA graduate and former Lion football player, was on hand to speak and joined numerous other Hill family members at the presentation.

Hill Trophy Award Committee Chairman Jeff Hodges ’82 said the plan is to continue to present the Hill Trophy in the Shoals each January to honor the premier player in Division II and to honor Harlon’s legacy. This year’s event was supported by numerous members of UNA’s faculty and staff as well as support from several area civic clubs.

WILLINGHAM RETIRES AFTER 11-YEAR MAJOR LEAGUE CAREER

After 11 seasons in the Major Leagues, former University of North Alabama baseball All-American Josh Willingham announced his retirement following the 2014 season.

In all Willingham played in 1,147 Major League games with five different teams. He spent the 2004-08 seasons with the Florida Marlins, then played 2009-10 with the Washington Nationals, 2011 with the Oakland A’s, 2012-13 with the Minnesota Twins and split his final season between the Twins and the Kansas City Royals.

Willingham’s career numbers include 195 home runs, 632 runs batted in, 426 extra-base hits and a .253 batting average. His career on base percentage is an impressive .358 as he was hit-by-pitch 112 times and drew 553 walks.

Willingham is one of five former Lions to reach the Major Leagues and enjoyed, by far, the longest career. His awards include being named National League Player of the Week with the Washington Nationals in 2009, American League Player of the Week with the Minnesota Twins in 2012 and American League Silver Slugger in the outfields in 2012 while playing for the Twins.

Josh Willingham
Sergio Romo

Willingham, playing in his 11th season in the Major Leagues, participated in his first post-season action. In his first career post-season at bat on September 30, he delivered a huge pinch-hit single in the bottom of the ninth inning, helping the Royals tie a one-game playoff with the Oakland Athletics and send it to extra innings. They eventually defeated the A’s 9-8 in twelve innings and followed wins in the American League Divisional Series and AL Championship Series to advance to the World Series. In all, Willingham was one-for-four in his post season at bat.

Romo made two appearances in the 2014 World Series and pitched 2.1 scoreless innings, allowing just two hits with four strikeouts. Willingham was a three-year starter at UNA from 1998-2000 and earned All-American and Academic All-American® honors with the Lions. Romo pitched at UNA in 2004 and was named first-team All-Gulf South Conference after posting a 1.40 ERA in 57 innings pitched.

The Giants claimed the World Series with a dramatic 3-2 win in Game 7 and Romo earned his third World Series ring (2010, 2012, 2014). He is in his seventh season with the Giants.
Mary Strehl graduated from the University of North Alabama with a Bachelor’s degree in art before pursuing a career in graphic design. She began a job with Pytik Design Associates in Pittsburgh, doing graphic design for non-profits. She has taught at Springdale Junior-Senior High and is currently serving as a math and Latin teacher for National Network Digital Schools. She never truly lost touch with her desire to be an artist. Ms. Strehl currently has a one woman art show feature in her current place of residence, where seventeen pieces of her work are on display.

Shelley Hamblin serves as a cancer navigator for the North Mississippi Medical Center. Hamblin began her career as a licensed practical nurse on the oncology floor, and became a registered nurse, receiving degrees from both Northeast Mississippi Community College and the University of North Alabama. She spent 17 years as a nurse in surgery, where she cared for breast cancer patients. Now, she will serve as a motivator and liaison in her role as a cancer navigator, walking cancer patients through the process of being available for counsel and comfort whenever she may be needed.

Jeana Hendrix was chosen as assistant general counsel of the Tennessee Administrative Office of Courts (AOC). Her duties include preparing fiscal notes, preparing judicial publications, and providing fiscal and financial services based in Tennessee. She received her bachelor’s degree in Marketing and Management from UNA. Meanwhile, Mr. Hendrix is CPA certified, Fraud Examiner Certified, and is certified in Financial Forensics. Currently he resides in Hermitage, Tenn., with his wife and two children.

J.D. Manders ’92 deployed to Iraq in 2004 as part of the U.S. Army National Guard. He currently works as a technical writer and a research historian for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He has deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the U.S. Army National Guard and currently serves as an officer in the 115th Signal Battalion, headquartered in Florence, Ala. His daughters, Sarah and Lily, were seven and three when he deployed to Iraq.

When he was deployed, his children were suffering from separation anxiety, they were having nightmares, sleepwalking, and often crying for no reason. To help them overcome their grief at his absence, Manders wrote a fairy tale, ‘The Fairy Child,’ and sent it home to them a chapter at a time. His wife would read it to them each night. He has recently published the story. The book is available online.

Kendal Butler ‘94 graduated from the 2014 Leadership Kentucky class. Each year the organization brings together a select group of professionals that possess a broad variety of leadership abilities, career accomplishment and volunteer activities to gain insight into complex issues facing the state. Butler is the Media and Publications Manager for the Asphalt Institute headquartered in Lexington, Ky., and is the editor of Asphalt magazine.

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Mary Franklin (’98) was named chief nursing officer at Biloxi Regional Medical Center. Franklin has more than 20 years of experience in nursing, receiving her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of North Alabama, and continuing her education with a Master of Science degree in Nursing from Samford University.

Chad Green (’06) received his bachelor’s degree in Commercial Music with a minor in Business. Green currently resides in Spring Hill, Tenn., and works for Daywind Music as Senior Creative Director.

Casey McClure (’00) received a bachelor’s degree in Business, Computer Information Systems. McClure currently resides in Nashville, Tenn., and works for HCA as Director of Information Security Operations.

Tim Thorne (’00) was recently named President and CEO of ABF Freight Systems, Inc. Mr. Thorne joined ABF Freight in 1990 after serving as a captain in the U.S. Army. He managed several branches including Florence and Dothan, Ala.; Nashville, Tenn.; and Carlisle, Pa. Until 2013 he was Regional Vice President of Operations based in the Salt Lake City, Utah, area. Thorne received his Master of Business Administration.

Merideth Albright (’03) received her BBA in Accounting in 2003 from Una. Albright resides in Nashville, Tenn., with her husband, Daniel. She works as a Senior Accountant for Asurion.

Adam Letson (’05) received a reward from the State of Alabama Employees’ Suggestion Incentive Program for his initiative in creating computer macros, or shortcuts, to automate office workflow. Letson is a Senior Medicaid Eligibility Specialist for the Florence District Office.

Craig A. Wright (’05) received his Bachelor’s degree in Economics. While attending the University of North Alabama, he was involved in Kappa Sigma Fraternity, LaGrange Society, and SGA Senate. Wright currently resides in Nashville, Tenn., and is a Loan Officer for First Community Mortgage after starting his career with SunTrust Investment Services.

Jarrod Randall (’08) graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Accounting with a Spanish minor. Randall currently resides in Nashville, Tenn., and works as an Audit Senior Specialist for Cigna.

Capt. Landon P. Cassels (’09) recently received command of Bravo Company, 526th Battalion, Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) gurdon from fellow UNA Alumnus Lt. Col. Timothy R. McDonald Cassels deployed with the unit in February and has served in multiple positions within the unit in Afghanistan.

Joe Jordan (’09) received his Marketing degree from the University of North Alabama and is currently Vice President of Partner Services for Accelerent in Nashville, Tenn.

Eric J. Connolly (’10) graduated in August from Florida State University with a doctorate in criminology and criminal justice. In his dissertation, he focused on estimating the interaction between genetic factors and neighborhood environments in the development of anti-social behavior from childhood to adolescence. He received a bachelor’s degree in West Virginia University and his master’s degree from the University of North Alabama.

Andrea Hendrickson (’10) received her BBA in Accounting and while enrolled at UNA was involved in Mu Sigma.

Kelly Richardson (’10) received her MBA in Accounting. Richardson was involved with Zeta Tau Alpha while enrolled at the University. She currently works as a Settlement Accounting Supervisor for Comdata in Nashville, Tenn.

Elizabeth Brewer (’11) received her bachelor’s degree in Accounting. She resides in Franklin, Tenn., and works as a Staff Accountant for Pro Management.

Steven Clark (’11) resides in Nashville, Tenn., where he works for The Art Institute as a Career Services Advisor. Mr. Clark graduated with a degree in Entertainment Industry Management with a minor in Business Administration.

Patricia Hutchinson (’11) is currently a Sales Manager and Customer Relations Representative for Action Security Systems in Nashville, Tenn. Hutchinson received his bachelor’s degree in Accounting and Business Management.

Mary Parker Johnson (’11) graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Public Communication. Johnson currently resides in Homrgette, Tenn., with her husband, Dr. Michael, where she works as a Recruiter in Business Development for Snell.

Emma Cooper Blasigame (’12) and her husband are the new owners and operators of Advanced Micro Services in Sheffield, Ala. The business is a staple for local computer sales and services. The couple have been managing the business since October 2014.

Kodi Chandler (’12) is currently working for WME Entertainment in Nashville, Tenn., as an assistant. Chandler received his bachelor’s degree in Entertainment Industry and Communications with a minor in Business Administration. While at UNA he was involved in Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, SGA Senate, PRIDE, and MEISA.

Sara Frederick (’12) graduated with an MBA in Marketing and Healthcare Management. Frederick currently resides in Nashville, Tenn., and works as a Senior Auditor for Tax Management Associates, Inc. She is also a member of the Young Jacksonian Society and is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Melanie Smith (’12) is an Analyst for Kraft CPAs in Nashville, Tenn. She graduated with a bachelor’s in Finance and Economics, minor in Accounting and French. During her time at UNA she served as a member of Delta Mu Delta and Phi Beta Lambda. She is also a member of CABLE Nashville, the largest network of professional women in Tennessee, and serves on their Finance Committee. Ms. Smith also serves as a tutor for the Nashville Literacy Council and assists both native and non-native English speakers in learning English.

Grace Ann Oaks (’13) received a degree in Mass Communications concentrating in Broadcast Journalism. She resides in Nashville, Tenn., working for Chick-fil-A, Inc. Ms. Oaks says she loves working for the company, as it allows her to travel and has provided her with many opportunities.

Jaime Minor (’13) is currently working as a staffing manager where she recruits Human Resources and Administrative Support Professionals. She enjoys living in Nashville, Tenn., and spends her spare time golfing and staying active. Ms. Minor received her bachelor’s degree in Communications.

Rachel Witt (’13) is working for Quorum Health Services as an Executive Administrator.
**In Memory**

**Faculty, Staff and Friends of the University**

**Royal E. Knight** was professor and chairman of accounting and business law at the University of North Alabama in Florence. He was the first professor hired with a doctorate in accounting.

**Terry N. Skinner** was an accomplished songwriter, producer, and musician, and was a dedicated member of the First United Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa.

**Alex M. Sloan** began the golf team at the university in 1957 while working as the professional at the Florence County Club. Mr. Sloan began the golf team as a service to the university and paid for all travel expenses out of his own pocket. He remained coach at Florence State for the next 15 years, and in 1960 began working as the professional at the Turtle Point Yacht and Country Club, where he served for the next 33 years until his retirement in December of 1993.

**Dr. Victoria Wood Huley** served as the distinguished chair of the Early Education Department at the University. She began her career at UNA in 2008 and had been an educator since 1974. During her time at UNA she was very active in special education and the College of Education and Human Sciences, including work with Camp Courage, Impact 80, and EXCEL Together. Her career also included teaching positions in West Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Decatur City School Systems.

**Bobbie D. Hester** was a Veteran of the United States Air Force where he served during the Korean War. He retired from Reynolds Metals after 30 years of service as a mason. Hester was a member of the UNA Sportsman’s Club.

**YEARS UNIDENTIFIED**

**Wildor “Tink” Cheney** attended both Coffee High School and Florence State Teacher’s College. He graduated from Citadel Military College and then began his career with Lauderdale Abstract Company and the Home Builders Association before establishing his commercial real estate business. He has served as a member of the Alabama Real Estate Appraisers Board, the Florence Planning Commission, and the Civil Service Board. He also served on the board of directors for Habitat for Humanity and Montreux Apartments.

**Donald L. Vann** founded Vann Oil Company in 1960. He was the first Exxon distributor in Alabama and the youngest distributor ever in the corporation. As president and CEO, Mr. Vann engineered the development of Vann Oil Company into a successful chain of Exxon Food Marts. He was also the founder and president of V.V. Trucking Company and A.V. Supply Company. Between business ventures, he served as a real estate agent for Nesse Realty.

**Rosa N. Miller** received her degree from Florence State Teachers College before pursuing her career teaching business education in public schools and working in her husband’s public accounting practice.

**Terri Lynn Simmons** received her Master’s Degree in Counseling from the University of North Alabama. She was a licensed professional counselor and worked with patients in Tuscaloosa.

**Ralph Lee Irvin, Sr.** attended Florence State and was in car sales in the Birmingham area for 45 years.

**Susan Parker Reed** had a long, successful career with AT&T. Reed held a position as Director – IT Account Manager, and was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

**Joe William “Billy” Corbin, Jr.** worked for his family company, Decatur Refrigeration, before acquiring his contracting license and starting a business in Destin, Fla., to build custom homes.

**Patty Loraine Spencer Zopf** was a registered nurse in Alabama, Indiana, Tennessee, and Kentucky during her 35-year career. During her career, she worked as a nurse at Helen Keller Hospital in Sheffield, Ala.

**Maria Gayle Daniel** worked as a grade three elementary teacher at Roosevelt Elementary from 1992 until her retirement in June 2010.

**Catherine Honey Miller** taught at Riverton Elementary School for two years. Miller was active in her community and church as a Sunday school teacher, committee member, Deacon, Pilot Club of Huntsville member, and helped to start the Project Share program with Huntsville Utilities. Mrs. Miller retired at the age of 83, and continued to serve her community after her retirement.

**Alvin Braly** was a committed educator in the Florence and Lauderdale County School Systems, beginning at Rogers High School in Greenhill, and continuing at Gilbert Elementary in Florence, where he taught sixth grade and later served as principal until 1980.

**Michelle Lindley** pursued a career as a computer consultant.

**André G. Rhodes** managed a pizza shop for 24 years and sang in several local choirs including Muscle Shoals Music Mass Choir.

**Dorothy C. Gaines** worked at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

**William H. “Pete” Watkins** attended the university before beginning his career with Tesla as a senior reactor operator.

**Pauline Gravlee Women’s Golf Tournament**

**Friday, May 15, 2015**

Blackberry Trail Florence, AL

http://alumni.una.edu/womensgolf

**Una Magazine 2015 spring**
IN MEMORY

Paul Revere O’Mary (’52) served in the Army for over 32 years, and was a graduate of all three of the Army’s selective service schools: The Command and General Staff College, Armed Forces Staff College, and the Army War College. He ended his military service as a Professor of Military Science at the University of Alabama, building the volunteer ROTC program. Colonel O’Mary served as a key Development Officer in that institution’s first major capital campaign while concurrently teaching classes in Human Resource Management at that institution’s College of Commerce and Business Administration. Colonel O’Mary contributed to the University in many areas, in particular his role in establishing the Paul and Jane O’Mary Endowed Scholarship.

Donald R. Burroughs (’53) served in the U.S. Army and was accepted to flight school in San Marcos, Texas. He served for 20 years, which included two tours in Vietnam, before his retirement and went on to be successful in real estate, opening one of the first Century 21 offices in San Antonio.

Fred Aldridge (’54) joined the U.S. Army, where he served until 1956. After his deployment as a 2nd Lieutenant in Korea, Fred returned home to Huntsville, Ala., where he and his wife began a career in real estate and property development.

James “Jim” Mattox Jr. (’54) continued his education at Samford University School of Pharmacy. He was a United States Army Veteran, serving during the Korean conflict. Mr. Mattox was a pharmacist for Pfeiffer’s Drugs in Pensacola.

William T. Wynne (’54) was commissioned into the U.S. Army. He served in Korea as an escort officer with the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces. He was a past member of the Alabama Concert Band. Mr. Wynne was a retired architect of Bar, Tune, Wynne Architects.

Charles D. “Charlie” Gooch (’55) served in the Military Police training. Gooch then attended Michigan State University to earn a master’s degree in Police Administration. His career took him to Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, before being assigned to Okinawa, where he served as Operations Officer for the Military Police.

John L. Moseley (’55) married Shirley Cheyne, of Yakima, Wash. He enlisted in the Naval Reserve at age 17 and was soon selected for the Reserve Officer Corps. He retired from the Navy after a total of 26 years of service having reached the rank of commander. In addition to his military service, he worked for Reynolds Metals Company for 40 years as a metallurgist.

Joseph O. Breaux, Jr. (’56) completed two years of medical school at the University of Tennessee at Memphis and was employed in a number of medical labs before transitioning to real estate as his line of work in his later years.

Dorris Ophelia Shelton Chitwood (’56 and ’60) was chosen by the Civitans as Lawrence County Educator of the Year in 1963, and she was the first teacher in Lawrence County who taught Advanced Placement classes. She taught for 40 years before her retirement.

James Earl Hurst (’55) served as a bank examiner with the State of Alabama Banking Department for three years before accepting a position as head bookkeeper with Gobble-Fite Lumber Company in Decatur. Hurst has served as President of the Greater Fite, and was among the 12 founding directors of the First American Bank of Decatur. He was named honorary member of the Delta Mu Delta international business honor society recognizing academic excellence.

Dr. Billy Ray Hicks (’58) continued his education at the University of Alabama (M.A.) and the University of Mississippi. He taught history and political science at Mississippi College from 1963 until his retirement in 1997. He served his country in the Army from 1954 to 1956.

Paul Hubbert (’59) worked in the fingerprinting division for the FBI in Washington, D.C., before attending Mississippi College. He then accepted a teaching position at Buckhorn High School in Columbus. In 1969, Dr. Hubbert received his M.S. in 1962 and EdD. in School Administration and Finance in 1964 from the University of Alabama. For three years, he served as Business Manager of Tuscaloosa County Schools before moving to Troy to serve as Superintendent of Troy City Schools. In 1969, he became Executive Secretary/Treasurer of the Alabama Education Association, an organization system for 34 years before his retirement.

Willa J. Cagle (’60) retired after many years serving as Special Education Coordinator for Lauderdale County Schools. She had also taught in the Athens, Lexington, and Lauderdale County school systems as an English and Social Studies teacher.

Dr. Franklin Gabby Jr. (’61) served as a veteran of the U.S. Army in the Korean War. He also served as an Army airborne Ranger. Bill Shelton (’61) passed away in 2000, and posthumously received the Distinguished Community Sports Journalist award on September 12, 2014, from Auburn University for his inspirational and impressive body of work. Mr. Shelton served as a sports editor for the Cullman Times.

Albert T. Beggs (’62) served in the United States Navy. Beggs coached and taught science classes in the Lauderdale County school system for 30 years before his retirement.

Charles R. McMillan (’72) pursued his MBA at Boston University. He retired from the Department of the Army in 2006 where he served as division chief directorate of Resources and Management, Combined Arms Supports Command at Fort Lee, Va.

Donald W. Bowlin (’73) was a certified public accountant with his practice since 1976. Richard B. Thompson (’73) was a graduate of the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. He served as assistant chief of the Florence Police Department for three years and as chief of police for ten years. Throughout his career he started several police programs for the bettering of the Florence community and received multiple awards, including Outstanding Young Law Enforcement Officer and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

Glenn Whitaker, Jr. (’73) attended the University of Tennessee before serving as a soldier in Vietnam. He completed his degree at Florence State University after his military service. Mr. Whitaker spent his career in insurance sales and became the district manager for Farm Bureau Insurance for Northwest Alabama based in Florence, and spent his free time golfing, hunting, and fishing.

Dorothy J. Charles (’80) attended the university later in life and received her Social Work license in the state of Alabama where she volunteered her services to Safe Place, ECM Hospitals, and church activities.

Eugenia B. Stewart (’81) served 30 years as an insurance adjustor. Jerry Wyllie (’83) taught at Lexington High School for several years and then pursued his dream of living life as an artist.

Rebecca Jones (’89) retired from her long standing 30-year career from TVA in Chattanooga, Tenn.

J. Dane Perry (’69) attended Birmingham School of Law. Perry was an attorney with Daniel E. Boone and Associates in Florence, Ala., where he worked closely with both the civil and criminal court systems.

Jamie K. Green (’97) was an avid cyclist who was employed at Teledyne Brown Engineering.

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ALUMNI INFORMATION UPDATE

Name (include maiden name if applicable) .................................................................
Graduation Year(s) and Major(s) ..............................................................................
Address ....................................................................................................................
City .......................................................... State ............................................ Zip ................................
Home telephone ............................................................. E-mail address ......................
Business telephone ............................................................. Position ............................

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University of North Alabama

FRONT PORCH STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

May 15 & 16, 2015

Reverend Robert P. Jones
Bill Lepp
Three on a String

Kevin Kling
Bobby Horton and Dolores Hydock
Donald Davis
Walt Aldridge

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Performance Center, UNA Campus
Tickets for Daytime Storytelling (all-day) • $10 adult • students free

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. • Norton Auditorium • Nighttime FREE Admission

For more information or to buy tickets visit www.una.edu/storytelling or call 256.765.4297
Saturday, the second of May • 3:00 until 6:00 p.m.
On the lawn of Coby Hall • University of NORTH ALABAMA

For more information visit una.edu/derbyday • Questions? Call 256-765-5188
Reserved seating — $100 per person