

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA MAGAZINE



**FOR ALUMNI AND  
FRIENDS OF UNA**  
SPRING 2018 • VOLUME 26  
NUMBER 1

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**FOR ALUMNI AND  
FRIENDS OF UNA**  
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NUMBER 1





WENDELL W. GUNN  
UNIVERSITY COMMONS

The University of North Alabama honors alumnus Wendell W. Gunn '65 by naming the Commons building, the Wendell W. Gunn University Commons. Gunn was the first African-American student to enroll in Florence State College (now the University of North Alabama).

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

SPRING 2018 • VOLUME 26 • No. 1 • FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF UNA **MAGAZINE**

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Kenneth D. Kitts

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Kenneth D. Kitts

the financial and historical dimensions of state underfunding at UNA. On a per-student basis, we receive *millions less in annual state funding* compared with other public universities in Alabama. The reasons behind this inequity are as varied as they are complex. I encourage all those who love UNA to become familiar with this issue. We must link arms and commit to a multi-year effort to close the gap that exists between UNA and our sister institutions in Alabama. It is a question of fairness – and our future depends on improving our fortunes in Montgomery.

At UNA, we never lose sight of the fact that our core mission is to educate students, and with that in mind the news from Academic Affairs could not be more exciting. We are in the process of establishing a new School of the Arts, which will be housed under the College of Arts and Sciences. The emergence of this new unit will enhance our ability to attract high-achieving students who seek arts-based programs and will open the door to new grant opportunities. It also will allow us to engage community stakeholders with an interest in the visual and performing arts.

Additionally, the UNA Honors program is now an Honors College! Our successful and vibrant Honors Program possesses the infrastructure, leadership, and enrollment that one would expect in an Honors College, so this transition is appropriate and timely. Moving to an Honors College designation will provide a recruiting advantage, set the stage for a significant expansion of the program, and enhance our ability to provide more opportunities for our Honors students.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of *University of North Alabama Magazine*. It's a busy time of the year at UNA, and we have many exciting developments and news items to share with you.

One pending announcement should serve as a point of pride for all who wear the purple and gold: we have reached our campaign goal well ahead of schedule! As of this date, our Office of Advancement has received over \$36 million in donor support and gifts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our team of advancement professionals and volunteers for the years of hard work that made this campaign a success. But the most important word of thanks goes to you, the alumni and friends of this historic and wonderful institution. Your gifts, your vision, and your love for UNA have helped us reach this fundraising milestone.

Elsewhere, our search for equity in funding from the state remains a work in progress. Project 208, an initiative that remains near and dear to my heart, is the subject of a feature story on page 4 of the magazine. There you will discover

# WE MADE IT!



## CAMPAIGN UPDATE



Dr. Deborah Shaw '82

The UNA family answered the call – the call to give, and history was made with an all-time high of \$36.6 million being raised

for the Build the Pride comprehensive campaign, which concluded April 21. What a fantastic achievement!

Thank you for believing in our mission and that your gift can make a real difference. Your contributions have led to new initiatives at the University, increased scholarships for students, new and renovated building projects, and funding faculty programs and research. What you have given UNA has allowed us to broaden our horizons and increase our capabilities to do great things.

Does every gift, no matter how small, really matter? You bet it does. Our donor numbers have increased, as well as the money raised, and that is just as important to us. Feeling the support of the UNA family matters to all of us. It gives us assurance that you trust us, and this trust only leads us to want to work harder for excellence – for our college, for our students, for YOU.

Here are a few of our accomplishments during the Build the Pride Campaign, made possible due to generous donors:

- Seventy new student scholarships (44 endowed)
- Eleven additional scholarships (supplements to endowments)
- One named academic college
- Two named academic buildings
- One named academic department
- One named academic center
- Ten planned gifts received totaling over \$7.3 million
- Fourteen planned gifts (unrealized) totaling over \$3.6 million
- 28 new funds established to support academic and student programs
- Six new funds established to support athletic programs
- Two endowed professorships at \$250,000 each
- Two new Speaker Series; one new Visiting Artist Series.

Yes, your gift matters. We are grateful beyond measure. As this campaign ends, we will continue to be philanthropic and raise funds for UNA. Thank you again for your generosity in helping us reach our goals, hopes, and dreams. The dreams only get bigger as our confidence grows in making our University the absolute best it can be.

Roar Lions!

**Debbie Shaw '82**

Vice President for Advancement &  
Executive Director UNA Foundation

You can read about both of these changes on page 18.

In closing, I would like to commend three of our existing academic programs for noteworthy accomplishments. For starters, a recent report in the *Birmingham Business Journal* confirms that, for the second year in a row, the MBA program operated by the UNA College of Business has the highest enrollment in the state. The enrollment growth in that program is complimentary to the qualitative enhancement that came with AACSB accreditation in 2016. Second, this year marked the first release of K-12 school report cards by the Alabama Department of Education. Topping the list in the Shoals region is UNA's own Kilby Laboratory School, which operates as an extension of our College of Education and Human Sciences, with a score of 99 and an overall grade of "A." Finally, our ROTC program recently celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an important part of our academic profile and campus life. Lion Battalion has been instrumental in launching the careers of hundreds of officers in the U.S. military.

In closing, Dena and I thank you for your continuing friendship and support. We are honored to join with you in celebrating these milestones and looking ahead to even greater things at the University of North Alabama.

It's our time to Roar!  
Ken Kitts

# PROJECT 208



## WHEN IT COMES TO STATE FUNDING . . . **FAIR is FAIR**

They say, “distance makes the heart grow fonder,” and in some instances, that sentiment is true. However, in the case of the University of North Alabama, it seems distance can be a disadvantage when it comes to state funding.

Two hundred and eight miles separate UNA from Montgomery. Over time, that separation from the center of political power in Alabama has translated into a lower level of state support—thus, Project 208 was born.

“At heart, Project 208 is about the fairness in funding we need to continue to do great things at UNA,” said University President, Dr. Ken Kitts.

Nationwide funding for higher education declined with the 2008 economic recession, and Alabama’s public institutions were no exception to resource cuts. However, the University’s battle to gain equitable state funding began long before then.

Since moving under state control in the late 1800s, UNA has received consistently less state funding than Alabama public universities of similar size. Previous university presidents highlighted the issue, lobbied for more funding, and pursued change, but the inequity remained and grew over time.

Kitts arrived at UNA in 2015 and went through two budgetary cycles that underscored to him the large differences in funding between universities in Alabama. Last year, he identified key research questions and asked for more data to help him better understand the dimensions of the problem for UNA.

He enlisted help from his executive staff and the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment (OIRPA) to find out just how far behind UNA stood compared to other universities.

OIRPA Interim Director Dr. Molly Vaughn said she and her staff gathered information from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), and from there, assembled the data into a concise, shareable infographic.

Kitts said officials had long suspected UNA was underfunded, but that seeing the numbers presented so clearly came as a shock. The infographic (page 5-6) became the “smoking gun” that mobilized his team to act.

When comparing all 14 public four-year institutions in Alabama, UNA receives the least amount of annual funding per in-state Full-time Equivalent (FTE) student, placing it \$23.8 million below the median. That same data shows that UNA is \$8.2 million behind the school in next-to-last place, according to ACHE data assembled by OIRPA.



*continued on page 7*

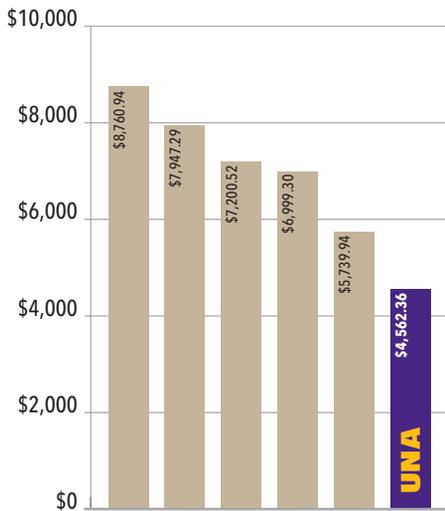
# ALABAMA STATE FUNDING COMPARISON BY UNIVERSITY

## Fall 2016 • All Students

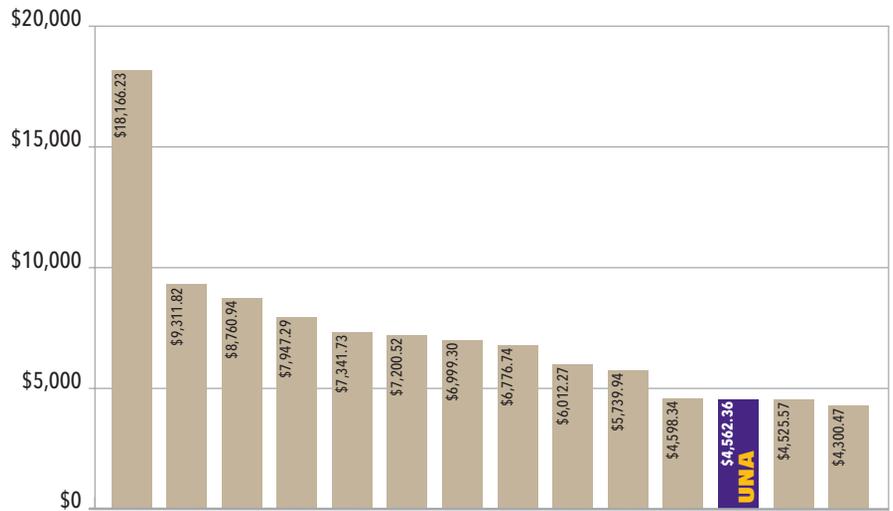
**UNA** Total Funding Per Full-time Student Equivalent (FTE) is 12 Out of 14

**UNA** Funding Per FTE is 33.8% Below Median • **UNA** Funding Per FTE is \$14.4 Million Below the Median

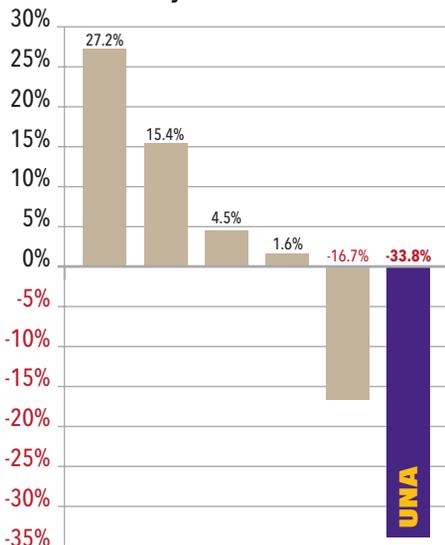
**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
Similarly Sized Institutions



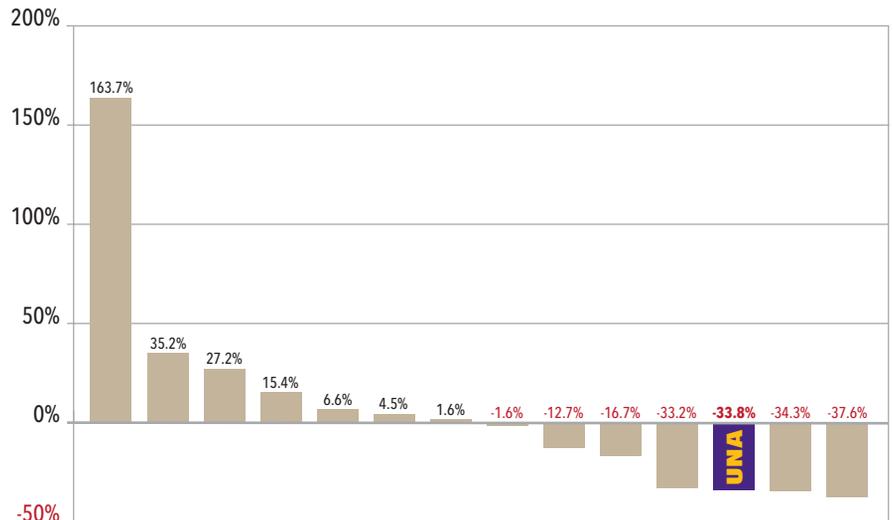
**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
All Public 4-Year Institutions



**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
PERCENT FROM MEDIAN  
Similarly Sized Institutions



**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
PERCENT FROM MEDIAN  
All Public 4-Year Institutions



Data provided by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE)

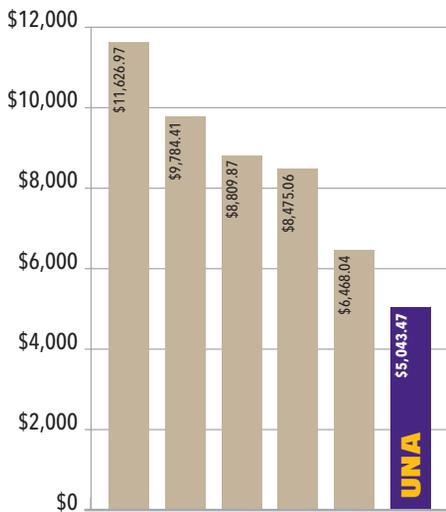
# ALABAMA STATE FUNDING COMPARISON BY UNIVERSITY

## Fall 2016 • In-State Students

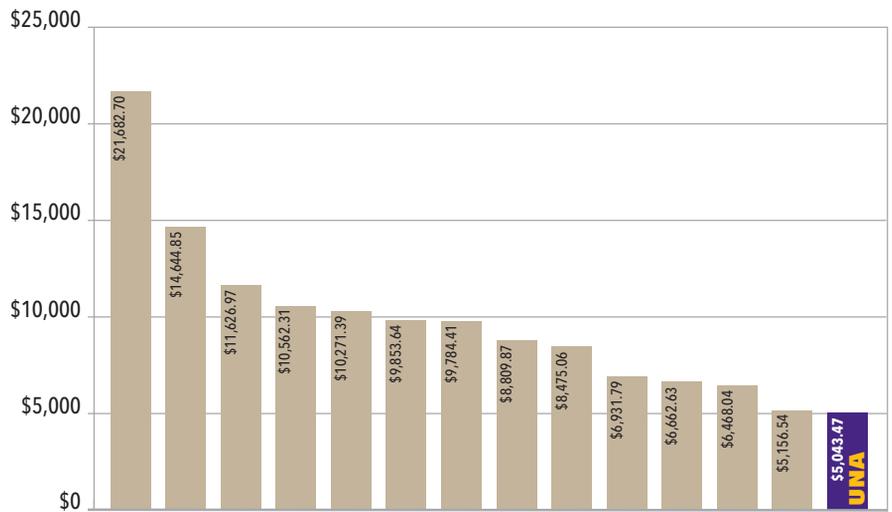
**UNA** Total Funding Per Full-time Student Equivalent (FTE) is 14 Out of 14

**UNA** Funding Per FTE is 45.8% Below Median • **UNA** Funding Per FTE is \$23.8 Million Below the Median

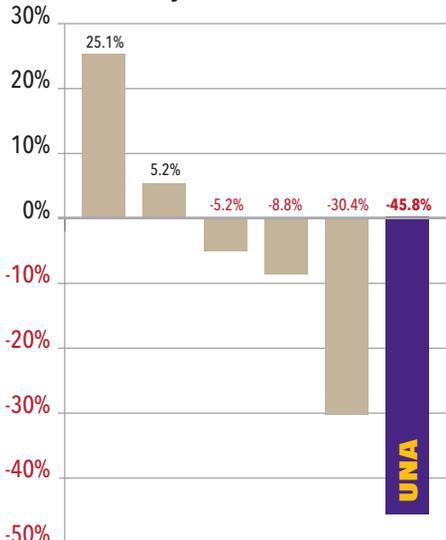
**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
Similarly Sized Institutions



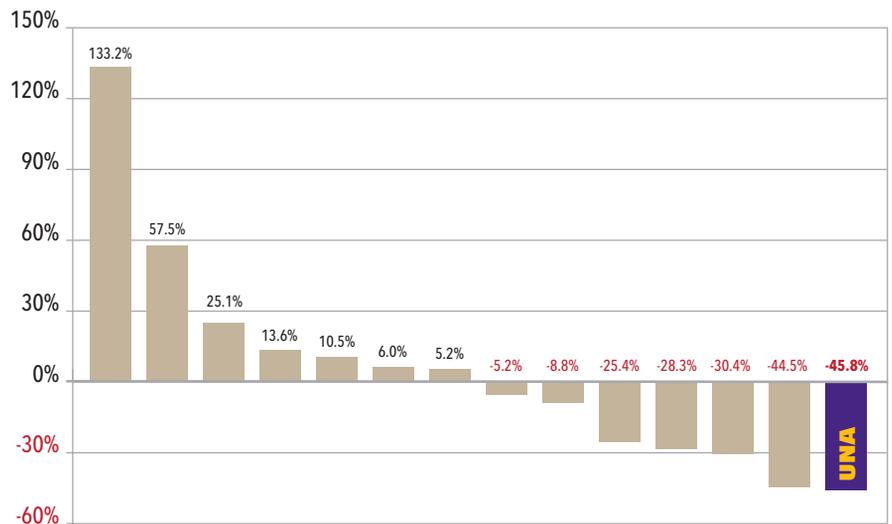
**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
All Public 4-Year Institutions



**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
PERCENT FROM MEDIAN  
Similarly Sized Institutions



**FUNDING PER FTE STUDENT**  
PERCENT FROM MEDIAN  
All Public 4-Year Institutions



Data provided by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE)

*"We've accepted it in the past, but we're beyond that now... I think this University has been mistreated long enough."*

– President Robert Guillot, 1975

These results gave rise to Project 208.

"We have a huge problem on our hands—one that is threatening to the future of this institution if we don't turn it around," Kitts said. "Over the long haul, no institution can be expected to compete and thrive on a playing field that is so uneven."

With this data ready to share, Kitts said he presented the findings to the Foundation Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees, and their reaction was the same as his: shock and dismay. From that point, conversations began to focus on understanding the reasons behind the funding inequity and on identifying long-term solutions for a problem that has been decades in the making.

Kitts and his staff identified key reasons for the imbalance in state funding. For starters, they honed in on the University's distance from Montgomery.

"I think our geography, the fact that we are farther away from Montgomery than any of those other 13 schools, is part of the problem," Kitts said. "UNA has been out of sight, out of mind for too long, and this has given rise to a political isolation that is as real as our geographic remoteness." Other state universities are located in much closer proximity to Montgomery, which eases access and allows for a constant face-to-face dialogue between institutional and state officials about funding needs.

Second is the University's location in a border county. Draw a circle 50 miles out from the UNA campus, and it becomes clear that a large portion of UNA's service territory falls in Mississippi and Tennessee. There are no Alabama Senate or House districts to the north or west of Lauderdale County. As a practical matter, this means that the size of UNA's legislative delegation is small and reduces the University's influence in Montgomery.

Kitts is quick to point out that this is an issue of numbers, not desire. "Our local representatives and senators have been great to help UNA," he said. "They are dialed in to Project 208 and doing everything in their power to help us."

Third, UNA lacks sufficient alumni representation in the state legislature. Some large universities have over thirty alumni serving in the House or Senate with regional schools

having proportionately fewer representatives. UNA currently has only two elected state lawmakers from the alumni ranks.



**PRESIDENT WILLIAM CALE**  
(2005-2014)

*"My university has not fared as well as I would like, and I hope that will be adjusted by the Legislature."*



**PRESIDENT ROBERT POTTS**  
(1990-2004)

*"We are now nearing the line where quality will be sacrificed if additional funding for UNA is not forthcoming."*



**PRESIDENT ROBERT GUILLOT**  
(1972-1989)

*"We're still not getting the type of funding from Montgomery we should be getting compared to other regional universities."*



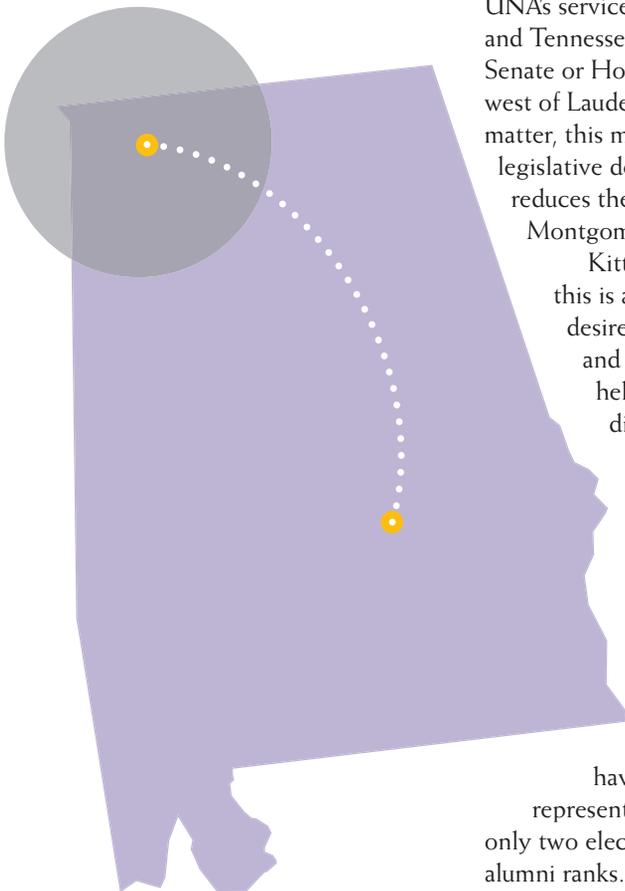
**PRESIDENT BERT NORTON**  
(1948-1972)

*"The State of Alabama should do something to put institutions of higher education on a stable basis."*



**PRESIDENT HENRY WILLINGHAM**  
(1913-1937)

*"The institution has done its best with the small amount of money appropriated for it. The number of teachers that it trains each year equals the average for teacher-training institutions of the University. Its income, however, is equal to that of the lowest fourth of the institutions."*





*"We're doing great things now," Kitts said. "Think about what we could do at UNA if we were funded at a fair level."*

Fourth, there are no Shoals-area representatives on the two key Education Trust Fund committees in the legislature, one in the House of Representatives and the other in the Senate. According to Kitts, these two committees play a crucial role in shaping higher education funding decisions in Montgomery.

These are formidable obstacles which, taken together, led Kitts to create Project 208 to give focus to the need for a long-term, strategic plan to ensure that UNA receives its fair share of taxpayer funds.

"When you're \$23 million in the hole – and that's \$23 million each year, every year – you're not going to get that much of an adjustment overnight," Kitts said. "That's not how Montgomery works."

So, to climb out of that hole, the administrative staff identified a few key strategies. The first strategy is a clear description of the problem.

Dr. Ross Alexander, vice president for academic affairs and provost, said UNA has experienced hardship in gaining equitable state funding in the past.

"Our budget is about \$100 million," he said. "We get about \$28 million of that amount from the state, so in essence, if we were funded at the median level, our state funding would double."

Communicating this issue to lawmakers in Montgomery, as well as alumni and stakeholders is a vital second step in achieving Project 208's goals.

Kitts said sharing the infographic and research on UNA's inequity is important, and he has been meeting with lawmakers, calling and meeting with alumni, and working hard to stay on the radar of those with the influence to change UNA's fortunes. He works closely with a governmental relations firm in Montgomery that provides expertise and guidance during the legislative process.

# UNA'S GROWING LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Number of **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS** with specialized accreditation: **16**

Vibrant, growing **Health, Physical Education, and Recreation** program: **37% growth** over the past 5 years

UNA **Nursing NCLEX** passage rate of **97.5%** is the highest in the state; state average 90.8%; national average 88.4%

New, fast-growing **ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY** program: Grown by **215%** in one year.  
Two options now available: **Electro-Mechanical and Chemical**

Large, highly-ranked, **AACSB-accredited MBA** program: **#1 in the 10 Best Online Executive MBA Programs** by *Online Course Report*; **#17 in the world for online MBA Programs** - *CEO Magazine*; **A Tier One program** in overall delivery - *CEO Magazine*

Kitts' current focus is on the budget for FY 19, which is currently under discussion in Montgomery. "It is important that we get them to listen this year," Kitts said. "A victory now, no matter how small, can create positive momentum for the future of Project 208."

In the long run, equality in state funding would allow UNA to offer more competitive scholarships, update facilities, and support faculty and staff with the resources they need to serve students. An increase in state dollars would also help limit future tuition increases, Kitts said.

Provost Alexander said this push for adequate funding is important for the entire Shoals area.

"There was a report just last year from our Center for Innovation and Economic Development which concluded that UNA has a \$316 million dollar per year economic impact on the Shoals," Alexander said. "We are a huge economic driver in this region. Any additional funding that we get only expands that footprint."

While the focus of Project 208 is on regular and recurring state dollars, the University is casting its net broadly in search of greater public support. Last year, UNA officials applied for and received \$5 million in the form of a local, non-recurring grant from the Shoals Economic Development Authority (SEDA). UNA received another

one-time contribution from the Governor's office totaling \$3 million. Both of these awards are tied to specific projects that assist with workforce development and regional economic development.

Alexander said a significant part of this new funding is allocated to assist with Harrison Hall, the future home of Anderson College of Nursing. Another portion will provide for the addition in Fall 2018 of a chemical engineering option in the Department of Engineering Technology. The program in Engineering Technology

has already attracted 65 student majors in only its second year of operation.

This departmental growth is just one aspect of UNA's growing list of accomplishments. For example, the Anderson College of Nursing recently posted the

highest National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) pass rate in the state. The College of Business is home to the largest Masters in Business Administration (MBA) program in Alabama. And in Athletics, the Lions continue to build on a championship tradition even as coaches and student-athletes prepare for the transition to the Division I ranks in the fall of 2018.

Kitts is quick to point out that this record of success flows from the talent and hard work of UNA's faculty, staff, and students. "We're doing great things now," Kitts said. "Think about what we could do at UNA if we were funded at a fair level."

Alexander agrees. "Imagine what we could do with equitable funding, where our brag points would almost be too many to remember, and we could facilitate even more and further expansion and growth and opportunities for students," he said.

Kitts' background as a professor of political science is useful in dealing with this complex issue.

"We have the right president who can advocate for UNA—mobilizing our alumni, lobbying the legislators on these key committees, and spending a lot of time in front of those decision makers in Montgomery," Alexander said.

Kitts said he wants all those who care about UNA to realize the depth of his concern on this issue and to understand that it will take many years of hard work to bring the University alongside its peers when it comes to funding.

"I see it as my job to take care of politics and external relationships for UNA so that our faculty and staff can do what they do well," Kitts said. "They make great things happen for our students, and they deserve to have access to the same resources as every other university in the state. It is a simple question of fairness."

UNA HAS A  
**\$316**  
MILLION DOLLAR PER YEAR  
**ECONOMIC IMPACT  
ON THE SHOALS**



City and University officials gather at Lion Drive for the street sign unveiling.

## UNA and City of Florence Add **PURPLE PRIDE** to Campus **STREET SIGNS**

The street signs around the University of North Alabama now have a little more school pride thanks to a recent partnership with the City of Florence. The two entities worked together to change the city street signs around campus from the standard green to UNA purple and white.

An official unveiling of the new signs took place Oct. 4 at 4:30 p.m., at the Intersection of Lion Drive and Pine Street.

University officials, along with members of the Student Government Association worked with various city officials to make the dream of purple street signs a reality.

"This project is a wonderful indicator of our community's support for UNA," said Dr. Ken Kitts, university president.

"The new purple street signs serve as a constant reminder that this is 'Lion Country,' and they will be a source of pride for our students and alumni for years to come."

Kitts said prospective students notice little touches like this as they consider making the Shoals their home, and he thanked officials from the City of Florence and the Student Government Association for their leadership in this collaborative effort.

Around twenty standard street signs were replaced with the new UNA purple signs. Additionally, the overhead street signs on Court Street were also replaced with purple signs from Tennessee Street to Tuscaloosa Street.

# Two Students Competing for Prestigious FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

For the second time in school history, the University of North Alabama has two students competing as semi-finalists for the Fulbright U.S. Student Scholarship Program.

This year marks UNA's second foray into applying for the Fulbright program, which has been a focused effort by Dr. Matt Price, UNA's director of Premiere National and International Awards.

"UNA has had four semi-finalists in the last two years," Price said, "and 14 applicants total, with five coming this year. So if you're looking at the numbers, 30 percent have become finalists. That's phenomenal," he said.

Senior Alexandria Buttgerreit and graduate student Elisa Coker are representing the University as semifinalists; and while both share that similarity, with the exception of UNA and Price, their paths to this point were relatively different.

Buttgerreit is majoring in commercial Spanish with a minor in French, global studies and marketing and communication technology. Coker is earning a master's in education; she wants to teach English as a second language or work in the ESL field.

And while it's clear that Price's involvement with the process has helped produce more applicants, there seems to be another common denominator that the semi-finalists share.

Travel abroad.

Buttgerreit said her passion for language and travel started at a young age.

"I remember at a young age I would pretend to speak Spanish and then I'd try to teach my siblings Spanish. And I just found that I really enjoyed languages and the idea of travel. Then the summer before my senior year in high school, I visited France for the first time," she said. "I just fell in love with the people and traveling. Ever since then I've loved it."

For Coker, the situation was similar.

"In 2012, I spent over two months in Niger, West Africa, with the International Mission Board and my home church in Birmingham, the Church at Brook Hills," Coker said.

"That was the hardest and best summer of my life. It was of course a third-world nation with the highest infant mortality rate in the world. So there was the language barrier and the cultural shock, but that really solidified that I knew I could use ESL to reach the nations," she said.

Price said he believes their experiences abroad helped Buttgerreit and Coker stand out among the crowd. And that's just one way he's helped guide them.



As a non-traditional student, Coker said she was a little hesitant to apply because she had some confidence issues.

"I'm so thankful for Dr. Price," Coker said, "because he walks you through it step by step and makes it less daunting."

In the case of Buttgerreit, Price's influence helped guide her toward which country might be the best fit.

"I got an email from Dr. Price about the Fulbright Scholarship, and I was a little hesitant because there were so many countries to choose from," said Buttgerreit. "I had some other options for scholarship work, but I thought I could maybe use the Fulbright program to perfect my Spanish? So Dr. Price suggested trying out for Spain," she said.

The goal for both students is to teach English abroad. As mentioned, Buttgerreit applied to Spain, while Coker has decided

on rural Malaysia. Neither will know the decision until later this spring.

For those considering it, Coker has one thing to say:

"I would definitely encourage them to do it," Coker said. "I think the process of writing your essay builds those writing skills, but it also enhances specific items that maybe you didn't think were important for your resume. But just the opportunity to go and explore and learn about different cultures and different groups makes it worth it," she said.

Buttgerreit echoed the same sentiment:

"I encourage students to go for something like this. I think expectations and fear of failure, I'm learning, are probably two of the biggest things that stop students from doing something," she said. "You don't know how much time you have in life, so be careful and plan, but also don't be afraid to go for something. The worst you can be told is no. You won't regret the experiences you go through to get there."

According to Fulbright online, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program is the largest U.S. exchange program offering opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide.

The program currently awards approximately 1,900 grants annually in all fields of study, and operates in more than 140 countries worldwide. Fulbright U.S. student alumni populate a range of professions and include ambassadors, members of Congress, judges, heads of corporations, university presidents, journalists, artists, professors, and teachers.

## HSHD Department Hosts SHOALS DESIGNER SHOWCASE

The University's Connie D. McKinney Department of Human Sciences, Hospitality, and Design hosted the Shoals Designer Showcase in October at Singin' River Live.

The showcase consisted of a fashion show featuring apparel by local designers Billy Reid, Natalie Chanin, and the late Marigail Mathis. In addition, student work was also shown, as the event was led by UNA Merchandising students.

"As instructors, we're lucky that Florence and the Shoals have such dynamic fashion talent," said Laura McKee, an instructor in the Department of Human Sciences, Hospitality, and Design. "So we try to maximize the impact that can have on our students and we thought this fashion show was a great way to do that. It gave our students a chance to see how shows are put together, and they also got to show off their work alongside these talented designers," she said.

The event featured hors d'oeuvres served by the university culinary department during each intermission. A silent auction was held before and during the show featuring items from local businesses.



### University Hosts Town Hall Meeting on **OPIOID** and **ADDICTION AWARENESS**

The University was the setting for a town hall meeting to raise awareness on opioid addiction in the state of Alabama, and to foster discussions on recovery and solutions. State Representative Johnny Mack Morrow teamed up with UNA to host the meeting in September on campus.

Governor Kay Ivey signed Executive Order 708 August 8, 2017, creating the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council as a response to the drug-overdose epidemic related to opioid abuse in the nation. Alabama is no stranger to the epidemic, with the state seeing a recent increase in the overdose-death rate. Additionally, the use of prescription opioids is linked to the use of heroin, and nearly 30,000 Alabamians over the age of 17 are estimated to be addicted to prescription painkillers or heroin.

Gov. Ivey established the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council to study the state's current crisis, while also identifying a focused set of strategies to reduce the number of deaths.

State Attorney General Steve Marshall participated on the panel, along with the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health Lynn Beshear, Acting State Health Officer Scott Harris, State Senator Tim Melson, CEO of Riverbend Center for Mental Health Bryan Libell, and Chair of UNA's Counselor Education Department Quinn Pearson. UNA President Dr. Ken Kitts provided opening remarks.





Fall Commencement Features Marshall Space Flight Center's  
**JONATHAN PETTUS**

**Jonathan Pettus '87**, associate director of the Marshall Space Flight Center and University of North Alabama alumnus, was the featured commencement speaker at the University's fall graduation ceremonies.

As the associate director of Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), Pettus is responsible for leading the institutional operations of one of NASA's largest field installations, with approximately 6,000 civil service and contract personnel, an annual budget of approximately \$2.5 billion, 4.5 million square feet of infrastructure, and a broad spectrum of human spaceflight, science and technology development.

Pettus previously served as MSFC's Chief Information Officer and was responsible for leading the delivery and operations of information technology solutions to enable Marshall's programs and mission, including the center's computing infrastructure, communications networks and software systems. He was also responsible for the computing, software, and telecommunications services that supported the International Space Station, the Space Shuttle Program, and the development of the new Space Launch System.

Among his many achievements, Pettus has represented NASA to Congress, the White House, and the Office of Management and Budget on matters related to NASA's Information Technology. He also served on the United States Chief Information Officer Council that guides the IT strategy and infrastructure of the Federal Government.

Pettus has also received numerous awards and special recognitions, including a Distinguished Presidential Rank award given by the President to the top one percent of government executives in the nation. The Distinguished Presidential Rank is the highest award a U.S. Federal Government executive can receive.

Pettus and his wife Angela live in Athens, along with their two children, Jackson and Alyssa.



Jonathan and Angela Pettus at their graduation in 1987.



University of NORTH ALABAMA  
**CROWNS** *Another* **MISS UNA**

A bevy of contestants took to the stage once again for the University of North Alabama 2018 Miss UNA Scholarship Pageant.

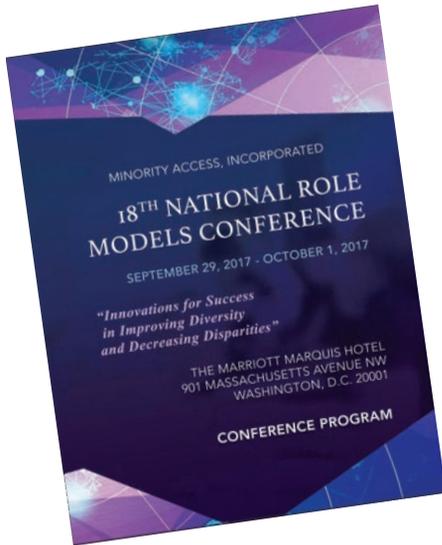
Nine contestants sought the title this year, but Haley Gilbertson was officially crowned Miss UNA at the 44<sup>th</sup> annual event.

Gilbertson will now go on to compete in the Miss Alabama pageant.

The women were judged on their talent, pre-pageant interview, evening wear, lifestyle and fitness in swimwear, and on-stage question.

The event in Norton Auditorium was hosted by the former Miss UNA Victoria Roose and the current Miss Alabama Jessica Procter.

## University of NORTH ALABAMA STREAMLINES ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP PROCESS *with* ACADEMICWORKS



### University of NORTH ALABAMA RECOGNIZED AS INSTITUTION COMMITTED TO DIVERSITY

Officials with Minority Access announced that the University of North Alabama has once again been recognized as an institution committed to diversity for 2017.

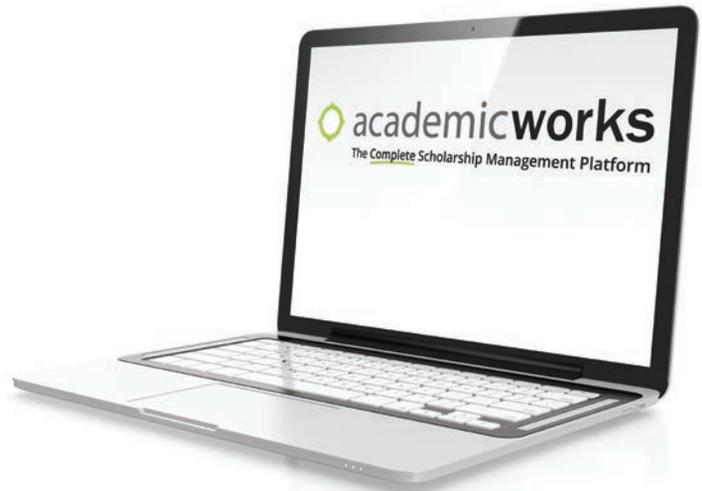
This marks the second year in a row that the University has been recognized; UNA received the same honor in 2016.

UNA received formal recognition during the 18th National Role Models Conference in October in Washington, D.C. The conference addresses issues of diversity and disparities in the U.S.

The University's Attorney, Amber Fite-Morgan, said she believes UNA was chosen for the award because diversity is at the core of the University's mission.

"The University is committed to building an inclusive and diverse environment," said Fite-Morgan. "Each student, faculty and staff member has the right to inclusion, respect and a voice in the UNA community."

According to Minority Access, the National Role Models Conference was initiated in 2000, with one goal being the linking of federal agencies with institutions that they support. Over 250 colleges, universities and other institutions have been represented at the conferences.



The Office of Student Financial Services announced that they have rolled out a new scholarship management system from AcademicWorks.

Academic Works, which went live in December, will allow students to be considered for all of the endowed scholarships available at the University.

According to Shauna James, director of Student Financial Services, students will simply fill out one general application for all endowed scholarships.

"The new system will automatically download information from our Banner system," James said. "Using that information, students will answer a few questions and the system will then pull up a list of all the scholarships that student is qualified for," she said.

Students must be admitted to UNA first before they will be able to use AcademicWorks.

In addition to providing more scholarship opportunities, the system will save time for both the student and faculty members.

"In the past, 800-900 students would apply," James said. "We would then print the applications, sort them by hand into the different departments and then hand deliver the applications to the various departments for review and selection."

James said that now the scholarship committees will be able to review and select the applications online. The same process will apply to the students, who will receive an online notification allowing them to review and accept the various scholarships they're qualified for online.

"This will eliminate thousands of paper copies and it should speed up the process," she said.

Additionally, the system will allow for more stewardship, as students will be able to submit a "thank you" letter directly to their donors through the system.

"The online capabilities offer so much," James said. "Providing donors with acknowledgement is imperative to ensure we continue to receive endowed scholarships. Additionally, we think we'll see a large increase in scholarship applicants due to how user-friendly the system is for our students," she said.

James said that the University currently offers over 250 different endowed scholarships, each with a different requirement.

"That's why we're encouraging everyone to use it; you never know what scholarship you might be eligible for," she said.

# University of NORTH ALABAMA CHEM CAR PLACES THIRD *in* INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

The University's Chem-E-Car beat out scores of international competition to place third overall in the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) 19th Annual Chem-E-Car Competition.

The collegiate event features cars ranging in size from shoeboxes to fire hydrants powered by alternative fuels. The competition highlights the important role chemical engineers have played in the creation of today's existing fuels and the role they'll play in future development.

The cars were created using a wide array of materials and fueling methods. Teams qualified by placing at various regional competitions throughout the year. One hour before the competition, the students are told the amount of water their cars must carry and the distance the cars must travel. The students must then quickly calculate the appropriate chemical reaction.

UNA's team, which is housed in the Engineering Technology program, placed third overall with a car powered by electricity, making it environmentally friendly.

Dr. Peter Rim, director and department chair for Engineering Technology, said the third-place finish is another impressive victory for the team, who are in their first year of participating in the Chem-E-Car Competition.

"We knew, due to extensive practice sessions, the team was prepared to do well," Rim said. "However, to maintain the poise and success the team demonstrated when matched against leading engineering schools like Cornell, Nebraska, Texas A&M, Maryland, Virginia Tech, and Georgia Tech, was remarkable."

Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember of Indonesia took home the \$2,000 first prize sponsored by Chevron, with a pressurized car that used oxygen, created as the result of a decomposition reaction of hydrogen peroxide and ferric chloride.

The University of California, Irvine, took home second place using a fuel source that consisted of hydrogen gas produced using solid magnesium and hydrochloric acid, which was then fed into a 20-watt hydrogen fuel cell to power the car.

This year, there were several international teams representing Greece, Hong Kong, India, China, South Korea, Indonesia, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, and Colombia.



*Dr. Peter Rim, Heath Bell, Alexia Sales, Joseph Cole, Caleb Beck and AIChE Staff Member*



## PRESIDENTIAL MENTORS ACADEMY

*Hosts Celebration in  
Honor of 20-Year Milestone at UNA*

The Presidential Mentors Academy (PMA) at the University celebrated "A Night of Class and Elegance, Celebrating 20 Years of Success," at the Radisson in Sheffield.

This fall 2017 marked the 20-year anniversary of the PMA at UNA. Established in 1997, the program is designed to help underrepresented students, both financially and by providing mentoring.

Dr. Ernestine Davis, professor emerita of nursing at UNA, has served as the director of the Presidential Mentors Academy since its inception.

"PMA looks for opportunities to create a positive image of the college environment," said Davis. "And it fosters an appreciation of cultural differences, while also increasing the number of underrepresented minority students in various majors."

Davis said students in the program at the University have a 90 percent success rate and most maintain a 3.0 GPA or better. Many continue on to get their master's degree as well, she added.

"We were anxious to celebrate this milestone," Davis said. "It's been a long journey to get to this point, so we wanted to celebrate and spread the word about the PMA program and the benefits it brings to students and the campus."



## Anderson College of Nursing HOSTS FIRST WHITE COAT CEREMONY

The University of North Alabama Anderson College of Nursing was one of two schools in Alabama to receive funding to host a White Coat ceremony.

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation (APGF) and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) announced that 50 schools of nursing across the nation were selected to receive funding to host White Coat ceremonies.

"This was our first White Coat ceremony," said Dr. Vicki Pierce, dean of the Anderson College of Nursing. "The grant is from our accrediting body and it is nice to be recognized," she said.

According to Clarissa Hall, assistant professor of Nursing, a White Coat ceremony for nurses is a formal ceremony for those entering into nursing school to ignite enthusiasm for patient-centered care, while instilling a greater respect for the nursing profession.

"It is a symbolic passing of the torch to the future of nursing and welcomes students into the nursing program," said Hall. "The Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony for Nursing project was made possible with a grant from the Arnold P. Gold Foundation to support the Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony for Nursing," she said.

In nursing, a White Coat ceremony typically consists of the recitation of an oath, an address by an eminent role model, and a reception for students and invited guests. Students also are given a specially designed pin that serves as a visual reminder of their oath and commitment to providing high quality care.

Though medical schools have conducted White Coat ceremonies for more than 20 years, the APGF-AACN initiative marks the first time a coordinated effort has been developed to offer similar events at nursing schools.

UNA's Anderson College of Nursing and Spring Hill University were the only Alabama schools to make the list.

## University Teams Up with EnviroSpark to Bring TESLA CHARGING STATIONS to CAMPUS



Officials with the University of North Alabama, Tesla, and EnviroSpark have teamed up to bring four EV Chargers to campus. The chargers make campus an electrical oasis in a charging desert, so to speak.

"UNA is always looking for opportunities to enhance the quality of life in the Shoals area and provide added value for our students," said President Ken Kitts. "It is critical that we stay on top of the latest trends in technology and hospitality. The addition of EV chargers to the university campus is one more way we can make our community an attractive place to learn, work, and play."

Tesla agreed to provide the charging stations at no cost, which included four Tesla stations and two universal plug stations, located at two different locations on campus. Additionally, the company provided \$3,000 toward the installation cost at each location. However, this might not have happened had famed designer Billy Reid not stepped in.

"We were thrilled to bring Tesla Motor Vehicles to the Shoals for this year's Shindig," said Reid. "And we are extremely appreciative of the work UNA provided in helping implement the permanent charging stations for not only Tesla vehicles but all electric vehicles. These innovative partnerships demonstrate the continued forward thinking and the commitment of all involved toward progress in our community."

Rob Carnegie, president of Florence/Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, said they are pleased to see the addition.

"Today's traveler has high expectations. Meeting their needs through hospitality services and amenities makes a statement as to how a destination is moving with trends in the industry," Carnegie said. "The introduction of a charging station for Florence is an example of this service-oriented philosophy and we applaud Drs. Ken Kitts and Santanu Borah, and their team at the University of North Alabama for making these improvements to keep Florence competitive in the destination marketplace."

Florence Mayor Steve Holt echoed those sentiments, saying that he's very pleased that "Florence will be plugged in and connected now and in the future."

"As electric vehicles increase in demand and popularity, it is important for communities to have charging facilities available and accessible to the owners and operators of these unique autos," Holt said.

In addition president of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce, Caitlin Holland, said projects like this represent the unique community of industrious and innovative people that make up the Shoals.

"We strive to make our community one that builds upon its storied past in order to create a prosperous future," Holland said. "To achieve that goal, we must always look to the future—the future of industry, education, healthcare, and transportation. The availability of charging facilities for the rapidly expanding electric vehicle market would be a step in that important direction."



UNA board of trustee president pro-temp Marty Abroms '81 presents Dr. Gunn '65 with the naming proclamation for Wendell W. Gunn University Commons.

## University of NORTH ALABAMA HONORS ALUMNUS *with* BUILDING NAME



Members of the University of North Alabama Board of Trustees recently decided to honor an alumnus by naming a building on campus after him.

The University Commons will now be known as the Wendell W. Gunn University Commons in honor of **Wendell Wilkie Gunn '65**.

Gunn holds the distinction as being the first African-American student to enroll at the University of North Alabama under its predecessor name of Florence State College. After graduation, Gunn had a prestigious career with many personal and professional achievements in science, finance, and politics, and as an independent business owner.

According to the resolution, "Gunn epitomizes the traits of perseverance and integrity that cross social, racial, and cultural backgrounds and that the

University desires for all students as a means to academic and future success."

A naming ceremony celebrating the new building took place in front of the newly named Gunn University Commons Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Administrators from UNA, members of the Board of Trustees and the public attended the event.

In addition to the naming ceremony, Gunn was also the guest of honor for UNA's annual "Light the Fountain Ceremony." The University tradition welcomes the coming of spring by lighting the iconic Harrison Fountain on campus.

# UNAfication

## ACROSS CAMPUS

Old Programs, New Names, and New Directions

As an alumnus of the University of North Alabama, you are well aware of the high academic and cultural standards to which our students are held. The University has always provided a platform for students to be exposed to and engaged in a community that promotes their growth as scholars, while simultaneously stimulating a love of the arts.

Two recent projects have been approved by the Board of Trustees and are moving forward throughout the Spring 2018 semester: a new School of the Arts that consists of the Departments of Music, Art, and Theater will be housed within the College of Arts and Sciences; an all-new Honors College will take the place of the existing Honors Program that has been growing steadily since 2005. President Kitts gave his approval that the Honors College moniker could be used beginning in January 2018 as

part of the changeover process, and the establishment of the School of the Arts is underway as well.

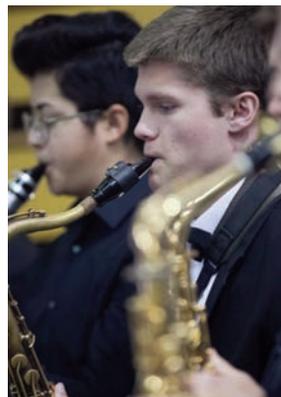
Dr. Vince Brewton, the director of the new Honors College as well as the previous Honors Program, is leading the transition from an interdisciplinary program to a fully autonomous college. The move is a natural progression for the University, and the infrastructure that has been laid over the Honors Program's tenure is perfectly suited to handle its new life—a new life that is far more than a simple name change.

The new identity as a college will come with an increase in an already-impressive lineup of scholarship opportunities for students, both financial and research-based. One major change

of the transition “will be in terms of the requirements for active students,” Brewton said. “We are in the process of creating several options or ‘pathways’ for participating in Honors at UNA. So students will be able to choose a tailored pathway that closely mirrors their needs and expectations.”

The Honors staff consists of three members, with one person being dedicated full time to Honors. The team gathers daily for meetings about the college, which reinforces just how committed they are to the college's success. “Going forward,” said Brewton, “the director's position may become full time in Honors, and the assistant director position may increase the time committed to Honors as well.” A major point of pride for the staff is that they have done all this without having significant budget impact. “We pride ourselves on running a lean





operation and always have. In the short term, we will be devoting 100% of new resources to scholarships and experiential learning opportunities for our students," Brewton said.

The college will remain located in Lafayette Hall as it has been, and maintaining such a central location will be a boon for not only for student and faculty involvement, but also for visibility of the program for visitors. The current location has "offices, common spaces, programming and residential areas" for Honor students, and it is well-trafficked by existing UNA students who aren't yet a part of the college, but are looking to become part of it. However, as the Honors College continues to expand, the need for more space will undoubtedly arise. Dr. Brewton said that a move to a newly renovated LaGrange Hall is being contemplated for sometime in the next two to three years. That move is merely a discussion at this point, but even having it is indicative of the college's expected upward mobility.

Recruitment into the college will also increase, the administration says. The Honors program was bursting at the seams: over 320 Honors students are enrolled for the Spring 2018 semester.

Becoming the Honors College is the first step in establishing the base capable of handling an even greater influx of new students.

Becoming a self-contained college will also give a greater opportunity for recruitment and marketing of the program, and the Honors staff will begin to move into areas outside of the Shoals. Immediate targets are Huntsville and Birmingham, as well as riding the wave coming with UNA's move to Division I to areas surrounding Nashville and Atlanta. The goal is to roughly double the current number of Honors students to at least 600 within five years.

Previously, recruitment had been almost entirely outside of UNA itself, and that is still going to be a major focus. However, the move to a full college at the University will also open up more time "to be more attentive to small populations of great students [already attending UNA] who can add discipline-specific strength and diversity of all kinds to the Honors College." Brewton said, "We know there are very talented students at UNA who do not participate in Honors," and they are definitely going to get more attention from the college than was possible during its life as the Honors

Program. This focus on recruiting existing UNA students will also help overall university retention, as Honors students at UNA have a completion rate 50 percent higher than the national average among even other Honors students.

The students who are a part of the Honors College can have a vastly different experience depending on their majors and circumstances. Dr. Brewton said that there is no "normal" for Honors students, but the college helps cater to each student's individual needs. For example, a sophomore would have a much different day-to-day than a senior. He explained, "A sophomore might live upstairs on one of our residential floors, be taking one of our Honors forum courses at night, working a part-time job both for the financial support and the real world experience we emphasize, while a senior is likely to be participating in an internship or other experiential learning project" to help with post-grad success.

For Honors student Zoey Yi, her experience has been uniquely transformative. For her, it's not the coursework or extra time that challenges her—it's the other students. "Diverse ideas and concepts are thrown around and are more complex than (and some



are contradictory to) my own. However, the entire meaning of such thinking is to ultimately do just that: think. From our own thoughts and the diverse thoughts of others, we can continue to grow and challenge each other by pushing ourselves to think greater."

The kind of experience that Zoey had as a part of the Honors Program is the foundation on which the college is going to build, and they don't want that to end at graduation. Since the Honors Program's inception, the staff has made a point to track students after graduation. Facebook has opened avenues of tracking post-grads as people, not just statistics. That kind of tracking gives the Honors staff a chance to provide real post-grad support, and because of that, "94% of [Honors] graduates are working in their fields or are in graduate school" within a year of leaving UNA, and those graduates send opportunities back for current students in the College. In addition, some of the newer benefits that come along with Honors participation are new stackable scholarships, additional internship opportunities, commencement and transcript recognition, and as Dr. Brewton puts it, "one very cool medallion."

In the end, the exceptional students at UNA are the reason the University has worked so hard to grow the Honors Program over the past decade, and they are just as excited as the faculty and staff about the growing opportunities they will have. Brody Knight, a GIS major in the Honors College, said his time at UNA "has been exponentially impacted in a positive way by all the Honors Program has to offer," and he revealed his excitement about seeing "more incoming students [who can] receive the same opportunities and be a part of a special place" just as he has. Madi Winkler also appreciates the community within the program, saying that some of her best times "have come from social interactions with my peers. I've made the most amazing friends during my time at UNA," and that those are lifelong bonds because those "fellow Honors students that have turned into family."

There is no greater aim in higher education than to foster exemplary students like these to become exemplary citizens, and it appears by all accounts that the Honors College faculty and

staff are succeeding at doing so. Brewton affirmed, "That's our mission – community, purpose and post-graduate success."

That mission is not limited to just the Honors College, either. The College of Arts and Sciences has an equally ambitious project beginning this semester: a unification of the art, theater, and music departments into a new School of the Arts. There has always been tremendous support for the fine arts offerings at UNA, both from on campus and off, so a cohesive grouping of the three departments will fortify an already solid area of the University.

## School of the ARTS



The decision to unify the departments will not impede any of the academic majors. They will continue to function independently as they always have with their internal administration unchanged; however, the School of the Arts will considerably enhance each arts-based program's community involvement, outreach, marketing, and recruitment. Dr. Ross Alexander, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, who has been a major player in both the School of the Arts and the Honors College coming to fruition, said that the new school will help to "attract students seeking arts-based programs and also strategically engage the community and donors supporting these types of programs and events." The Shoals has a near-unparalleled history with the arts, and this new school will embrace that and call upon the rich arts and music heritage, culture, and tradition of the Shoals to illuminate even further the talent and excellence that these departments encourage.

As the School of the Arts moves forward under the direction of executive director Dr. Terrence Brown, chair of the UNA Music Department, the increase in efficiency will be seen immediately. A new communications coordinator has already begun utilizing resources to increase broader awareness of the culture these programs bring to the Shoals, and Dr. Alexander said, "Programs, units, faculty, and departments from all UNA colleges will be encouraged to affiliate with the School of the Arts as they deem



appropriate in the future." Even a detail such as having a single point-of-contact for the three departments will greatly affect the number of interdisciplinary collaborations that are possible.

Unifying into a School of the Arts is an incredibly visible and prestigious way to highlight student work and to show the greater area how these students enrich the core of the University itself. Roughly 140,000 people attended exhibitions or performances in 2016, and the administration anticipates being able to grow the included departments as a unified brand under the umbrella of the School of the Arts. In increasing the number of patrons at events, this

new venture will increase revenue to the University, which in turn will expand the number and quality of arts events UNA can bring to the Shoals community.

The School of the Arts will require additional funding for faculty taking on additional responsibilities, new additions to the administrative staff, and for travel in broadened recruitment efforts. But because the departments within the School of the Arts are healthy, strong, and growing already, President Kitts and the Board of Trustees recognized how a new unified office will be able to streamline existing marketing and outreach. By doing so, the better prospective students can be reached and the community engaged and enriched.

With the creation of these two programs, UNA stands poised to show our commitment as the academic and cultural touchstone of the community. More importantly, the University is committed to enriching the lives of students in every way possible. These are not simply name changes: the names are important for bringing awareness to the University, however, the reasons that underlie the changes should be lauded. Any time a university program outgrows its previous bounds, it is a cause for celebration. But when four independent areas do so simultaneously, it signals that the people running them and participating in them are the best and most talented you could ask for.



# EXCERPTS *from the* ARCHIVES

The methods, styles, and focus may have changed over the years, but the fine arts have always been considered a major part of the educational experience at what is now UNA. From the collections of the UNA Archives, here's a peek at the fine arts curriculum over the years:



A group presents scenes from Shakespeare in Wesleyan Hall (date unknown).



Men's Glee Club, 1914. Director, Gabriella Knight. Originally open to any male student, by 1919 membership was by audition. In the mid-1920s, a Girls' Glee Club was started.



Programs from Declamation and Annual Literary Society Contests. T.S. Stribling, a 1903 graduate of the State Normal College who would receive the 1932 Pulitzer Prize for Literature, won his Declamation Contest and his medal is seen here.



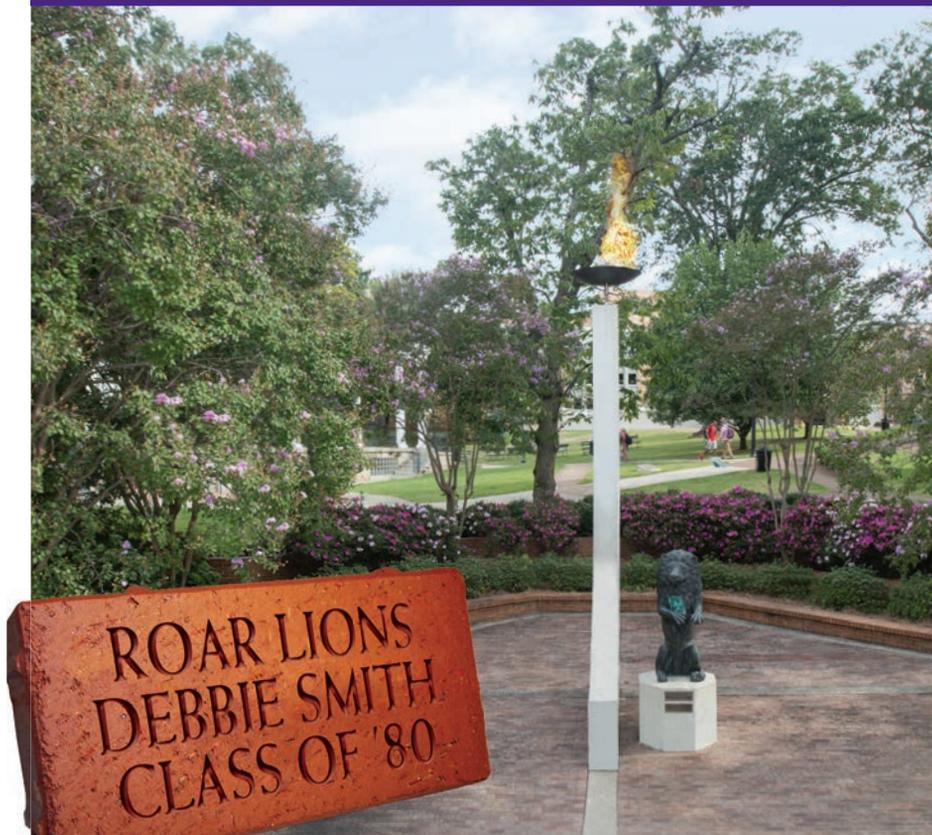
Interpretive Movement and Dance. *The Moth and the Flame*, Florence State Normal School, 1928.



Art Classes, 1953-54, with Hilda Mitchell, Instructor in Art.

# LION TRACKS

LEAVE YOUR TRACKS ON A LIVING TRADITION



The University of North Alabama has made great impressions on the lives of many alumni and friends of the University. Now, you have the opportunity to leave a permanent mark on campus with an engraved brick. Help further the mission of UNA with your contribution.

Bricks are laid in one of two primary locations, the Victory Flame Garden and The Commons walkway. Each marker can feature the graduate's name, year of graduation, specific major or extracurricular activity (fraternity or sorority affiliation, football or other sport, band, SGA, etc.). The cost of each 4-by-8-inch brick is \$100, which includes three lines of text at a maximum of 20 characters per row. All proceeds from brick orders will benefit the 1830 Fund, which supports immediate campus needs.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to commemorate and celebrate your personal contribution to the rich tradition of excellence that has flourished and thrived at UNA since 1830. Your gift is 100 percent tax deductible.

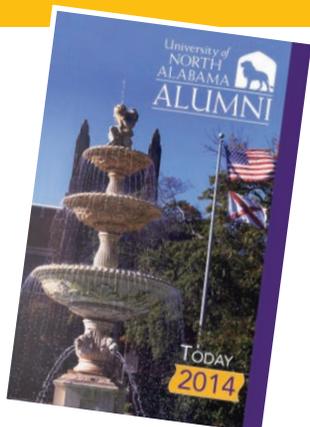
*Give a gift that stands the test of time!*

**PERFECT FOR:**

**Graduation • Birthdays • Holidays**

**CONTACT**

Office of Alumni Relations • UNA Box 5075 • Florence, AL 35632-0001 • 256.765.5080



## It's time to update our Alumni Directory!

The UNA Alumni Association is partnering with Publishing Concepts, L.P. (PCI) to complete this project. A representative will be contacting you soon to update your alumni information so you can stay informed about UNA!

# UNA Online

## Version 1.0



It's a rainy day in Florence, but the sun is shining through the clouds. Students walk to class carrying their umbrellas, squeezing their books against their chests and pulling their jackets tight. Inside Stevens Hall, the forecast is looking different. Hopeful.

Donna Lefort, dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences, crosses her legs as she introduces Associate Dean Beth Sewell and coordinator for Graduate Enrollment and Support Jennifer Murray. The three joke lightheartedly, eager to discuss their latest endeavor: promoting online programming within the college.

The College of Education and Human Sciences is the last of the colleges to dive headfirst into a university partnership with Collegis, a higher education consulting agency. The agency began handling university online marketing through the College of Business in 2014. Since then, Collegis has helped each of the other three colleges strengthen their online presence, finishing with the College of Education and Human Sciences in March.

"I think there's a big difference in just putting a class online and putting a good class online," Lefort said. "We don't want anyone to have a different outcome or experience. They may access it differently, but the outcome should be the same quality."

Most of the college's recruiting has been done in-system, going to local schools and partnering to form various initiatives.

"We've pretty well exhausted our local educator population, which is a great thing," Lefort said. "What we're not really skilled to do is promote that beyond our traditional service area. We know [Collegis'] work will be quality and it will help us by freeing us up to do the things we do better, which is teaching instead of marketing."

When Collegis first partnered with the College of Business to advertise the Masters of Business Administration, enrollment increased significantly in a short period of time.

"UNA has had 135 percent growth in MBA new enrollment from 2013 to 2017," said Managing Director of Enrollment Growth Management at Collegis Bob King. "It is the largest in the state of Alabama, which is a phenomenal accomplishment. We were able to very successfully make that the school [of] choice in the area by simply bringing more awareness around the program and the value proposition of the program."

Collegis' marketing strategy generally focuses on pay-per-click advertising and search engine optimization as well as improving student experience on websites. Their success with enrollment within the College of Business is being

applied similarly to the other colleges, like the Anderson College of Nursing, which recently relaunched its website.

Reconfiguring the website for more student interaction has already yielded results, said Dean Vicki Pierce. The new website redirects from an ad for UNA. Potential students are asked for some basic contact information, which is forwarded to college administrators.

"Our goal is to contact them as quickly as possible and give them information about the programs," Pierce said.

Getting in touch with potential students is so vital, the college employs a part-time student recruitment relationship specialist, Allison Caddell.

"The very first day, Allison had 16 brand new hits," Pierce said. "They clicked on the link and there was interest and she's contacted them."

The College of Business also created a position, director of strategic engagement, which is held by Janyce Fadden. Fadden led a virtual stream mapping (VSM) program that lasted three days almost four years ago.

"I remember I said to her, 'Why do we need three days,'" said Dean of the College of Business Greg Carnes. "That's a lot of time, particularly for that many staff, and she said, 'You'll see.'"

The process involved a team of about seven staff members mapping out the steps potential students go through in applying — everything from applying to graduation. By taking the time to walk through this process, the team is able to identify issues in the process that may be deterring students.

"We identified those barriers and that really laid a foundation for us to improve the student experience," Carnes said. "About a year ago we did a two-day VSM and we identified 25 items that we could make improvement in. We actually just did another one two weeks ago for a day-and-a-half and we identified 50 items. It's that culture of continual improvement — the focus is on making the student experience better."

Online programming itself is making the student experience better, particularly for those with irregular schedules.

"You'll find that your online student is average age 31 or 32 and they're either current professionals or aspiring professionals," said Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Ross Alexander, "which is why we've got to have



*"We've pretty well exhausted our local educator population, which is a great thing."*

— Dr. Donna Lefort,  
Dean of the College of Education and  
Human Sciences



*"I see no negative aspect of online education. It's another source of providing quality education to people who might not otherwise be able to come to school."*

— Dr. Vicki Pierce,  
Dean of the Anderson College of Nursing



*"We're providing a very high quality graduate business education at a very affordable price in a convenient way for today's business professional."*

— Dr. Greg Carnes,  
Dean of the College of Business



graduate and undergraduate degree options that will benefit them. As a rule, our online programs are asynchronous, which is what one would expect for the growth we want to have."

Alexander said it wouldn't be unrealistic to reach for the online population to be half that of the on-campus population. With a typical physical reach of 200 miles, that goal could be attained by gaining the attention of more current professionals seeking part-time schoolwork to further their value to employers.

"We're providing a very high quality graduate business education at a very affordable price in a convenient way for today's business professional," Carnes said. "We do offer classes face-to-face on campus so if someone is close enough to campus and would like to do some on campus, some online, they can do the hybrid program."

With fifteen online programs to choose from, students in every college have the opportunity to earn degrees, from Nursing RN to BSN to Education Specialist. And as more success booms online, that leaves more opportunities for potential growth.

"We have two initiatives," King said. "One, similar to the MBA, take some of the programs that are already online and work to make them bigger. Our secondary effort is new program opportunities. Really, the overall objective is to make the online program one of the biggest and best in the Southeast. I think the school is very much prepared for that."

The growth is not simply a goal for being the biggest and best, though. It's essential to the financial infrastructure of the campus.

"We have a beautiful, traditional campus and we're very proud of that. We

don't want to change the culture for the traditional student body," Alexander said. "However, we need to grow to generate additional revenue and to supplement what we have here."

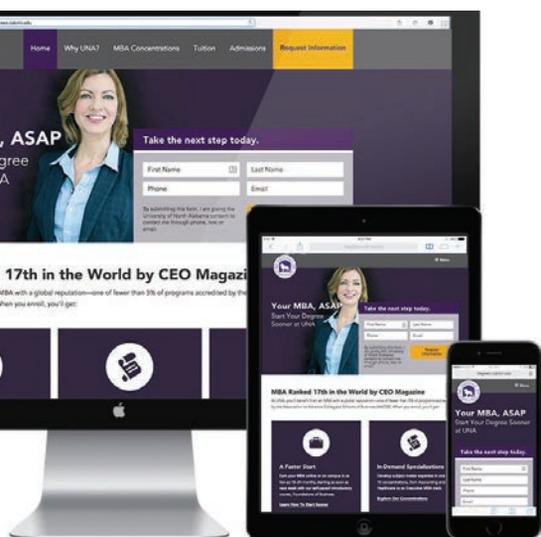
"We're kind of landlocked here. We can't build a bunch of new academic buildings or residence halls. It's very difficult to do. It's very expensive. So how do you grow? Well, you grow in ways where you don't have to expand the footprint on campus — that's online."

Enrollment yields revenue, which yields more programs offered back to the community, both online and on-campus, Pierce said.

"I see no negative aspect of online education," she said. "It's another source of providing quality education to people who might not otherwise be able to come to school. Time is not an issue when you have online education. If you have a desire to earn a degree, you can get it."

The demand for online education is ever-growing. Over 30 percent of all higher education students take online classes, according to a study by U.S. News & World Report—and the convenience is ideal in more than theory, it's a request.

"What's interesting is that we found once we put coursework online, our



program enrollment went through the roof," Lefort said. "The people we serve—principals, superintendents—are quick to tell us that they really prefer comprehensive initial certification programs that we provide, but they also appreciate the flexibility of the online programs for their certified teachers who want to go on and get their masters. It really is based on their specific interests and needs."

Catering to those needs also take finances into account, assuring students they are getting the most value for the dollars they are spending for each online program.

UNA's MBA was ranked No. 1 by OnlineCourseReport, and at \$17,000 is one of the most affordable.

"Even with the affordability, that's a lot of money for people," Carnes said. "So I do feel a responsibility that we need to deliver as much value to that student as we can."

In nursing, the interests and needs are focused toward management, and the RN to MSN track allows students to double up on courses, ultimately saving them money. Nurses with their associate's degree currently earning their bachelor's are able to take nine credit hours that will also be applied if they choose to get their master's, Pierce said.

"When they earn their master's, they don't have to repeat those courses," she said. "So they get double credit for it and it saves them a lot of money."

And for nursing in particular, the online program alleviates some of the stress a large clinical program can take on.

"Because we don't have to worry about clinical placement, there is no cap on our enrollment," Pierce said. "In the nursing program here at UNA, we can only take so many students into the hospital. Say the hospital can have 200 patients — well, you just can't take 500 students to take care of 200 people.

"For these people, they're already nurses, they're already in a hospital, most of them are working. So we don't have to worry about that. Plus, they're online — they may be in Birmingham, they may be in Memphis, they may be in Nashville."

No matter where students are, though, they can expect nothing less than what the university is already known for: high quality education.

"The same level of quality that one has come to expect from UNA over its 188-year history and

*"We have a beautiful, traditional campus and we're very proud of that. We don't want to change the culture for the traditional student body. However, we need to grow to generate additional revenue and to supplement what we have here."*

— Dr. Ross Alexander,  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
and Provost



what a UNA degree means during that time is the same level of quality, whether that degree is face-to-face or online," Alexander said.

And finding new ways to excel is something faculty and staff are always working toward.

"As teachers we want to make sure the product that is out there is of the highest quality," Lefort said. "It's what teachers do."

"Higher education is a tough market for many schools and the fact that UNA is growing is really a testament to the vision of the leadership, to the board," King said. "There are very, very few schools that are actually growing today. So I have a lot of respect and admiration for the vision and leadership of UNA to be one of those schools that's really separated itself in the market."

While nursing and education await the results of online marketing to bolster their program enrollment, the College of Business, only a few steps ahead, proves

online education is a constantly growing process — both in numbers and in maturity.

"I think we definitely can become a program that has more than 1,000 MBA students," Carnes said. "So we are looking to grow the program, but we're only going to do that as we also provide the resources to maintain the quality. To grow just to add more students but then lower the student experience—that won't be a recipe for long-term success."

Carnes leans back, presses his elbows into the arms of his chair and folds his hands. A twinkle in his eye, he asks a simple question.

"Ready to enroll?"



# ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTS FARRIS, MAUCK, POMEROY AND SURBAUGH AS CLASS OF 2017

The University of North Alabama Athletic Hall of Fame inducted its twenty-eighth class as part of Homecoming 2017.

The UNA Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2017 included football All-Americans Blake Farris and Jeff Surbaugh, women's basketball standout Becky Mauck Gentry, and men's golf All-American Billy Pomeroy.

The 2017 induction brings the total number of inductees into the UNA Athletic Hall of Fame to 130.

**Blake Farris** • Football 2002-05, Assistant Football Coach 2007-Present

A four-year letterman and starter for UNA football teams from 2002-05, Farris holds the school record for most interceptions in a season as a player and has coached the North Alabama defensive secondary for the last 10 years, helping lead the Lions to nine playoff appearances.

A Jasper native, Farris made 172 career tackles and picked off 16 passes, which he returned for 287 yards.

As a senior he helped lead UNA to an 11-3 record and into the semifinal round of the Division II playoffs. He was selected first-team All-Gulf South Conference, first-team Daktronics All-South Region, second-team Football Gazette All-South Region, first-team All-American by Daktronics, Football Gazette, D2Football.com and Dopke.com, and he played in the Cactus Bowl Division II All-Star Game. He tied a GSC record for interceptions in a season with 10 and broke the school record for a season. He finished ninth in Division II in interceptions and 10th in passes defended. He was named National Defensive Player of the Week by Football Gazette. He was UNA's co-Male Athlete of the Year for 2005-06.



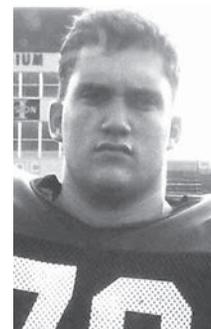
Blake Farris '07



Beck Mauck '00



Billy Pomeroy '76



Jeff Surbaugh '93

In 2004 he was a second-team All-GSC selection and a third-team Football Gazette All-South Region pick. He made 39 total tackles and had three interceptions for 51 yards. He started all season as a sophomore in 2003 and made 48 tackles with two interceptions. The Lions went 13-1 that season, winning a GSC title and advancing to the semifinals of the Division II playoffs. He played in ten games with four starts as a freshman and made 36 tackles with one interception.

Following his playing career at UNA he signed a free agent contract with the Cleveland Browns. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration from UNA in 2007 and was chosen for UNA's Football Team of the Decade for 2000-2009.

For two seasons he worked as a graduate assistant on the UNA coaching staff and worked a year prior to that as a student assistant. He then served as a restricted earnings coach in 2010 and 2011, working with the cornerbacks. In his 10 seasons as a coach at UNA, Farris has been a part of nine NCAA Playoff teams and five Gulf South Conference Championship teams.

**Becky Mauck** (Gentry) • Basketball 1997-00

Mauck, a Savannah, Tennessee, native, was a member of the North Alabama women's basketball team from 1997-00 and is the only player in the history of the UNA program to rank in the top ten in career points, rebounds, assists, and steals.

The 1997 Gulf South Conference Freshman of the Year, Mauck led the NCAA Division II in both three-point field goal percentage (56.3) and free throw percentage (87.9) as a sophomore in 1998. She earned GSC Player of the Week honors for Jan. 20, 1998, first-team All-Gulf South Conference and second-team Daktronics All-South Region honors in 1998. She was also an Academic All-GSC selection in 2000.

As a senior, she helped lead the Lions to a 21-7 record and UNA won the GSC East Division Championship.

In her four seasons at UNA, Mauck started in 97 of her 104 career games. She still ranks as UNA's sixth all-time leading scorer with 1,179 points and is sixth in career rebounds (613), fourth in career steals (160), 10th in career assists (160) and third in career free throw percentage (81.2). She made a remarkable 277 of 341 career free throw attempts.

Mauck still holds the UNA records for three-point field goal percentage in

a season at 56.2 in 1997-98 and career three-point field goal percentage at 45.7 (134 of 293).

Mauck received a bachelor's degree in physical education/exercise science from UNA. She went on to earn a master's degree in exercise physiology from Ball State University as well as a master's in surgical physicians assistant from Alabama-Birmingham in 2008.

A resident of Evansville, Indiana, Mauck has worked as a physician's assistant with the Heart Group since 2009, assisting with heart and lung surgeries.

She and her husband Jimmy Gentry have one son.

### **Billy Pomeroy • Golf 1973-76**

Pomeroy was a four-year letterman in golf with the Lions from 1973-76 and was UNA's No. 1 golfer from 1974-76.

The Opryland Invitational Collegiate champion in 1974 and 1975, Pomeroy was team MVP in 1975 and earned first-team All-Gulf South Conference honors in 1976 with a 226 for three rounds in the GSC Tournament. He then became the first Lion golfer to earn a spot in the NCAA Division II National Championship Tournament, qualifying as an individual. He competed at Youngstown, Ohio, where he shot a 308 to finish 27th overall. He received second-team All-American honors for his performance, becoming the first UNA golfer to earn All-American acclaim.

Pomeroy graduated from UNA in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science degree in human resources management/personnel administration.

After graduation he was employed for 20 years with United Companies Financial Corporation in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, serving as a vice president in Mortgage Lending and Support, Accounting and later as purchasing director. He later worked in and around golf in Fairhope, Alabama; Eatonton, Georgia; and Atlanta, Georgia. He retired after eight years in human resources at LaSalle General Hospital.

Pomeroy has two sons, Billy, Jr., who is the golf professional at Northwood Golf Club in Meridian, Mississippi, and Keith, who is a commercial sales representative for Ferguson Enterprises in Huntsville.

### **Jeff Surbaugh • Football 1990-93**

A four-year letterman and three-year starter on North Alabama football teams from 1990-93, Jeff Surbaugh helped lead UNA to three NCAA Division II Playoff appearances in his four seasons at the school and a combined 32-14-1 record.

After playing his first two seasons on the defensive line, Surbaugh moved to the offensive line as a junior in 1992 and started there in 1992 and 1993.

Surbaugh had a strong freshman season at defensive end in 1990, earning Gulf South Conference Defensive Player of the Week honors for his efforts against Tennessee-Martin. He finished the season with 24 tackles, two tackles for loss and two and a half quarterback sacks for 15 yards. He started at defensive end again as a sophomore in 1991 and made 51 tackles. He had two tackles for loss, caused three fumbles, and recovered two, and added a pass break-up.

In 1992 he started all 12 games as UNA went 7-4-1 and advanced to the quarterfinals of the Division II Playoffs with a new triple-option offense.

As a senior he was selected firstteam AllAmerican by the NCAA Division II Sports Information Directors and the Football Gazette in 1993, was a secondteam pick by the Associated Press

and a thirdteam selection by C.M. Frank. He was also chosen firstteam AllGulf South Conference and AllSouth Region and later selected to play in the inaugural Snow Bowl NCAA Division II AllStar Game.

A native of New Martinsville, West Virginia, Surbaugh helped lead the way for a UNA offense that powered to more than 70 school records in 1993. The Lions went 140, winning the GSC and NCAA Division II National Championships. UNA rushed for 5,196 yards, averaged 371.1 yards rushing per game and 481.0 total yards per game to set UNA and GSC records. The team's 63 rushing touchdowns were 20 more than any team in GSC history and the Lions averaged 7.0 yards per play for the entire season.

Surbaugh was selected for the 50th Anniversary UNA Football Team for 1949-98 and was named to Gulf South Conference Team of the 1990s.

A 1993 UNA graduate with a degree in marketing, Surbaugh currently resides in Hickory, North Carolina, with his wife Melissa and they have three sons, Nathan, Jacob and Noah. He works in product development and sales with Tailored Foam, Inc.



*Jeff Surbaugh '93, Blake Farris '05, Beck Mauck Gentry '00 and Billy Pomeroy '76*



## 2017-18 CORPORATE PARTNER LIST

### SERVICES

Adidas  
All-State Signs  
Anytime Fitness  
Bama Concrete  
Barrett Graphics  
Big Bee Steel  
Bohannon Services  
Cintas  
*Courier Journal*  
Dixie Signs  
First Class Charters  
Florence Utilities  
Framing by Bonnie  
Grades First  
Hibu  
Home Depot  
Martin's Clothing  
Murk's Pest Control  
North Alabama Gas District  
North American Lighting  
Oakley Equipment  
PBS Services  
Printers & Stationers, Inc. (PSI)  
Robert Smith/Attorney  
Robert Trent Jones  
Shoals Distributing  
Shoals MPE, LLC.  
*TimesDaily*  
TNT Fireworks  
Total Nutrition  
TVA Power  
United Rentals  
University Bookstore  
XMC  
Weichert Realtors  
Workout Anytime

### MEDICAL

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama  
Davis Clinic  
ECM Hospital  
Garrett Chiropractic  
Helen Keller Hospital  
Milner Rushing Drugs  
North Alabama Bone and Joint Clinic  
Renaissance Eye Care

### AUTOMOTIVE

Bentley Chevrolet  
Landers McLarty - Frank Williams  
Ray Miller Buick-GMC  
Simpson's Collision Repair  
Southeast Ford

### HOTEL

Comfort Inn and Suites  
Hampton Inn and Suites (Downtown)  
Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa  
Radisson Hotel  
Residence Inn by Marriott

### RESTAURANTS/GROCERY

306 BBQ  
Bojangles'  
Buffalo Wild Wings  
Chartwell's  
Coca-Cola  
Domino's Pizza  
Five Guys Burgers and Fries  
Garden Gate Cafe  
Heavenly Ham  
Jimmy John's  
Legend's Steakhouse  
Lenny's Sub Shop  
LiL Steve's  
Olive Garden  
Ricaton's  
Rosie's Cantina  
Steak-N-Stuff  
Texas Roadhouse

### FINANCIAL

CB&S Bank  
First Metro  
Hunter Benefits Group Inc.  
Lyons HR  
Listerhill Credit Union  
Progress Bank  
Raymond James  
TVA Community Credit Union  
State Farm:  
Agent Bill Alexander  
Agent Steve Pierce

# UNA'S DIVISION I SCHEDULES FALLING INTO PLACE

As the University of North Alabama looks ahead to its first year as a Division I institution in 2018-19, the Lions' athletic schedules are falling into place.

The UNA football team will be an independent in 2018 before joining the Big South Conference for the 2019 season. UNA's 2018 football schedule includes contests against six-time FCS national champion North Dakota State and 2017 FCS playoff participant Southern Utah, while also renewing a rivalry with Alabama A&M.

Going forward, UNA's 2019 schedule includes a trip to face perennial FCS power Montana in addition to a home contest with Alabama A&M and a seven-game Big South schedule that begins on October 12 at Hampton. The Lions' first Big South home game will be on October 19 against Charleston Southern.

Since announcing the move to the FCS, UNA has also signed a contract to face a Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) opponent. The Lions will play at Memphis on October 1, 2022. It will be the first time UNA has faced an FBS school since the Lions downed Louisiana-Lafayette 48-42 in four overtimes in 1997.

UNA's 2018 women's soccer schedule includes matches against Vanderbilt, Alabama-Birmingham, Jacksonville State, Tennessee Tech, and Abilene Christian, with several other Division I matches scheduled but awaiting signed contracts. The Lions will play their ASUN home opener on October 5 against Jacksonville University.

In volleyball, the Lions will play at the Tiger Invitational, hosted by Memphis, on Sept. 7-8, 2018.

In baseball, the Lions' 2019 schedule includes three Southeastern Conference opponents in Alabama, Auburn and Ole Miss. UNA will also renew rivalries with Troy, Samford, Memphis, and Tennessee-Martin, in addition to a full ASUN schedule that features home series with Stetson, New Jersey Tech, and North Florida.



## UNA ATHLETICS ADDING WOMEN'S GOLF and BEACH VOLLEYBALL



The University of North Alabama is changing its NCAA sports offerings at the school, with UNA discontinuing its women's indoor and outdoor track programs at the conclusion of the 2018 spring semester and adding women's golf and beach volleyball beginning with the 2018-19 academic year.

UNA has competed in women's indoor and outdoor track since 2013. The addition of women's golf and beach volleyball will keep UNA's sports sponsorship at 14 teams.

"We feel the addition of women's golf and beach volleyball will allow us to be more competitive at the Division I level than we would have been in women's indoor and outdoor track," said UNA Athletic Director Mark Linder. "Women's golf meets a regional interest for graduating high school seniors in our area. We have a very strong golfing community and we expect our women's golf program to flourish. Beach volleyball is an emerging NCAA sport that has gained a lot of interest and popularity in recent years. With the success of our volleyball program and its popularity, we feel we can have a competitive and successful beach program as well."

UNA assistant golf coach Neil Self will transition to coordinator of women's golf to begin the recruitment of student-athletes for 2018-19. Current UNA women's volleyball coach Bob White will also coach the Lions' beach volleyball team.



# IT'S TIME TO ROCK AND ROAR 2018 HOMECOMING October 12-13

## Friday, October 12

**Alumni Awards Banquet**  
5:30-7:30 p.m. • GUC Banquet Halls

## Saturday, October 13

**Homecoming Parade**  
11:00 a.m. • Downtown Florence

**Tailgating**  
Spirit Hill & Spirit Quad  
3:00-5:30 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence

**Lion Walk**  
4:00 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence

**Pre-Game Show**  
5:20 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence

**UNA vs. Mississippi College**  
6:00 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence



## UNA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Aaron Irons '99 President  
Raleigh Green '10 Treasurer  
Derrick Chatman '08 President Elect  
Gale Satchel '06 Club Advisor  
Bishop Alexander '09 Vice President  
Pat Roden '77 Faculty Advisor  
Tosha-Paige Brewer '13 2nd Vice President  
Michelle Eubanks '96 Past President  
Christa Raney '97 Secretary  
Haley Brink '08 Alumni Director

## UNA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gloria Aday '70  
Bucky Beaver '64  
Andy Betterton '75  
Robbie Burdine '12  
Pat Burney '88  
Anna Wilson Burnley '97  
Stephanie Coleman '82  
Ryan '01 & Lisa '00 Clayton  
Mary Leigh Gillespie '96  
Clayton Grider '08  
Jordan Graham '14  
Chase Hagood '04  
Jan Hannah '89  
Will Hodges '10  
Jan Ingle '85  
Savannah Liles '11  
Eric Kirkman '97 & '00  
Justin McGill '12  
Jean McIntyre '65  
Ana Fuller Pannell '06  
Rod Sheppard '98, '04, & '07  
Larry Softley '89 & '08  
Katherine Fowler Stone '02 & '04  
Linda Vaughan '70

## UNA ALUMNI CLUB LEADERS ALABAMA

Birmingham • Chris Burrell '02  
Shoals Area • Elaine Witt '76  
Shoals Area • Larry Softley '89  
Decatur/Morgan County • Zac '02 & Laura '03 Richardson  
Huntsville • Laurentis Barnett '03  
Mountain Lakes • Stan Mannon '85  
Tuscaloosa • Jim Page '01

### GEORGIA

Atlanta • Carnette Johnson '83

### MISSISSIPPI

Central Mississippi • Kathy Fletcher '74  
Tupelo Area • Keith Henley '89  
East Central Mississippi • Mike Thorn '82

### TENNESSEE

Memphis • Coleman Barron '14  
Nashville • Jamie Ellis '08

### BAND ASSOCIATION

Jeff McCrary '83

### GEOGRAPHY

Jessie Baker '12

### SOCIAL WORK

Stacy Lee '01

### BLACK ALUMNI

Nikki Durr '00

## message from the ALUMNI PRESIDENT



Aaron R. Irons '99

Dear Alumni and Friends,

"What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us." Shoals area native Helen Keller said this, and it resonates with me as it pertains to my love for the University of North Alabama.

For this was the place where we flourished in our pursuit of knowledge and personal development, made lifelong friendships and memories. Our UNA experience bonds us all together creating a deep love for the University and our time spent there.

As the city of Florence prepares to celebrate its bicentennial, there will be many festivities and opportunities for you to come back to the Shoals area and visit your University home. I encourage all of our alumni and friends to "make time to take time"—to come home and stay connected with our University,

whether it is getting involved in your local area club, attending a UNA athletic event, or participating in one of the numerous events on campus such as Homecoming, Alumni Summit, or UNA Derby Day. It can be something as simple as updating your current contact information, visiting the website, or following us on social media.

Our University is experiencing wonderful growth and expansion in everything from enrollment to degree programs, from residence halls to the Mitchell Burford Science and Technology building, from the new Harrison Hall to Division I athletics. Not to be overlooked is the UNA Campaign exceeding the \$35 million-dollar goal and the record setting annual UNA Day of Giving, raising well over \$100,000. And what about those new purple UNA street signs on campus and around downtown Florence? Your alumni association is doing great things as well from Lions Under the Lights to the Jack Karnes Memorial Homecoming Golf Tournament, from UNA stadium cups to the newly formed Shoals Area Alumni Club.

However, I am disheartened when I read about our University's lack of state funding in comparison to our fellow public state universities. UNA falls at or near the bottom in funding per student when compared to both similarly sized institutions and all public four-year institutions within the state.

As alumni, we recognize just how special our University is, the quality of education provided, and how deserving our students are of more equitable state funding. I ask all alumni and friends to show our support for the University of North Alabama and President Kitts' mission to rectify this disparity by becoming aware of this issue, talking about it around town, and stressing the need for equitable funding for UNA to our local officials and state representatives. Roaring together as Lions, our voices will be heard all the way in Montgomery.

Roar Lions!

**Aaron R. Irons '99**

2017-2018 Alumni Association President



# ALUMNI PRIDE



Susan Adams '80 and Angie Pickens '86



Connie Gilley '81, Jennifer Simmons '82, Jamey Congleton '80 and Angela Horison-Collier '80



Wendy Beye and Robert Holder



Nic Smith and Erin Hill

## Lions Under the Lights



Danette Kennedy '02, Tara Talmage, Sheena Burgreen and Chris Burgreen



Joe McKinney, Joel Anderson '15 and Genia McKinney '83

## Alumni Summit



Linda Vaughan '70 and Savannah Liles '11



Mike Byers '79 and Patty Byers '80



Derrick Chatman '08 and Mary Leigh Gillespie '96



# ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

## Judy Hood

"Get involved. Embrace your passion. Wherever you go, go with all your heart and soul." This is the advice that **Judy Hood '78** would like for every freshman entering UNA to take with them. It's well-crafted advice and has worked very well for her.

Judy entered the University just a few weeks after graduating from nearby Sheffield High School. The Summer Theatre Program at UNA excited her and she couldn't wait to get started. She wanted to become an effective communicator and public speaking was high on the list of skills she wanted to develop. For the past 35 years she has put those skills to good use.

Former leadership positions held by Judy include work at *The TimesDaily*, the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, Eliza Coffee Memorial Hospital, and the International Paper Company. Now she has concentrated her communications efforts by forming Judy Hood Consulting, an agency supporting tourism as it relates to the local music industry.

After retiring from International Paper in 2012, Judy had plans to write a book about her husband, legendary Muscle Shoals Sound bassist David Hood. Judy said, "Then the Muscle Shoals documentary came out and I quickly realized the universe had other plans for me. Since then I have worked with Alabama State Tourism, the Chamber of Commerce, and local and regional music industry leaders to maximize the public relations and economic development aspects of that."

Judy believes that the guidance and support provided by mentors at UNA literally

set the course for her career. She particularly remembers Director of Publications Doris Kelso as a powerful influence. Mrs. Kelso encouraged Judy to write for the college newspaper and helped her develop her skills until she was eventually named editor.

As a member of *The FlorAla* staff, Judy feels she was part of a dream team that included critically acclaimed photographer Nick Nichols and syndicated political cartoonist Clay Bennett. She thinks she became a better writer by simply surrounding herself with a high level of talent. It's where she learned to "up her game."

Judy has recently upped her game by organizing the Swampette Tours as a spin-off of her tourism efforts. These fun and interactive tours are about the music and magic that made this area the Hit Recording Capital of the World. She has led thousands of people on group tours through Fame Recording Studio, Legendary 3614 Jackson Highway, and the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. She is particularly proud that forty percent of the people on the tours are from outside of the United States.

Judy has been instrumental in making the impact of Muscle Shoals music, both domestically and internationally, astounding. And to think, it all started here at UNA.

The Alumni of the Year Award is given annually to alumni of the University who have utilized their degrees earned at the University and made great inroads and successes in their subsequent professions.



## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



**Weldon Cole '60** has achieved a lot in one lifetime and for over six decades our institution has played an important role in it. Weldon arrived at the then Florence State University in 1957, after serving his country in the United States Army. He came to Florence by following Delores, his Addison High School sweetheart, who was by then his new bride.

Weldon registered to study accounting and received his degree in three years with the highest GPA in that curriculum. Even as a newlywed, he found time to be an active undergraduate serving as editor of the *Lion Gridiron* and as the business manager of *The FlorAla*. He was elected to *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*, the Florence State Hall of Fame, and received the *Turris Fidelis Award*, the highest honor awarded to a graduating senior.

After his graduation from Florence State, Weldon continued his studies at the University of Alabama and received an MBA in 1961. He then immediately started a career at Price Waterhouse in New York, later becoming President of Beloit Corporation and then Senior Vice

President of Albany International. After retiring in 2000, Weldon and Delores returned to Alabama ready to become active with both of his alma maters.

Weldon has held supportive roles on the President's Cabinet and the UNA Foundation Board, and was named Alumni of the Year in 2008. The Coles are very generous supporters of the Honors College at UNA and have established a testamentary gift for its continued support.

"Weldon has a remarkable commitment to giving back," said UNA Honors College Director Vince Brewton. "His gift to the Honors Program is a beautiful illustration of alumni trust in the direction of the University. I have never met anyone more devoted to making the world a better place for others rather than himself."

*The Lifetime Achievement Award was created in 1997 to recognize and honor those, like Weldon Cole, who have left lasting impressions on our campus. Lifetime Achievement Award winners are recognized by having a brick placed in a permanent location in the Alumni Victory Garden in their honor.*

## FRIEND OF THE UNIVERSITY



History Professor **Dr. Jeffrey Bibbee** makes history every day, or at least he makes it come to life for his students. He first stepped foot on UNA's campus in 2008 after completing his Ph.D. in history at the University of London. Since then, he has committed himself to research, teaching, and service to the University. He was honored in 2014 by being the recipient of the Lawrence J. Nelson Excellence in Teaching Award and then again in 2016 with the President's Diversity Award.

As chair of the UNA Department of History and director of the UNA Centre for British Studies, Jeff shares his enthusiasm for UNA by representing the University nationally and at conferences in England, Spain, Portugal, France, and Canada. He has led campus and community committees on issues such as campus safety, Title IX, campus diversity, and accreditation issues. As a faculty leader, he has taken nearly 100 students to England as part of the London Campus Program.

In 2017, as a way to give back to his chosen field of study and in admiration of the University, Jeff and his family established the Bibbee Family Endowed Scholarship. This generous gift was created to honor his grandmother.

*Friends of the University are in a class by themselves. The award honors those who promote the mission of the institution by their donation of time, resources, and energy. Their work is a labor of love. They are patrons, silently seeking to select deserving causes and special interests where they can share their expertise and talents.*

## EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR



First generation college graduate **Lorri Glover '90** knows her history. In 1990 she graduated from UNA with a Bachelor of Science degree but that was just the beginning of her scholarly path. Upon graduation she earned a Master of Arts from Clemson University in 1992 and a Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky in 1996.

Lorri attributes her love for history and scholarly research to a class taught by the late Dr. Larry Nelson. The class was History of Civil War Reconstruction and it was the beginning of her illustrious career.

Since 2009, Lorri has served as a professor in the Department of History at Saint Louis University. In addition, she holds the John Francis Bannon Endowed Chair and was named the Lindsey Young Professor of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Lorri's many publications include encyclopedia contributions, book reviews in several journals, and five books on colonial, post-revolutionary, and 19<sup>th</sup> century American history. Additional awards include the 2007 Jefferson Prize of Outstanding Scholarship and Service at UT, the 2006 Cunningham Award for Outstanding Teacher in the UT College of Arts and Sciences, the 2006 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the 2002 Outstanding Junior Female Faculty Member, the 2001 David and Kathryn White Teaching Award, and the 2001 College of Arts and Sciences Public Service Award.

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*The Educator of the Year award is most appropriate as the University has a long-standing reputation as an outstanding institution for teacher education and administration. The University was originally a state normal school, becoming a state teachers college and ultimately a fine institute of Higher Education.*



When **Lisa Stooksberry '87** toured Kilby School last fall during homecoming week, she felt right at home. As an undergraduate, she had interned at Kilby before starting her career in education.

Lisa has dedicated her life to teaching, and after spending time in the classroom she now serves as an advocate for teachers on a national level. She previously held the position of senior vice president for standards and assessment at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Working at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, she led partnership efforts among teacher preparation programs and organizations such as the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity at Stanford University.

Lisa was recently appointed as the new deputy executive director of the National Assessment Governing Board. Here she will support the governing board's congressional mandate to set policy for the Nation's Report Card, also known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

## FACULTY / STAFF SERVICE



**Renee Vandiver** really loves UNA. This campus has been her home through her days as an undergraduate and now – almost thirty years later – she serves as the executive assistant to the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Renee keeps strong ties with her collegiate sorority, Zeta Tau Alpha. In 2005 she was awarded the ZTA Certificate of Merit, in 2003 she was named the UNA Greek Advisor of the Year, and also in 2003 she received the Zeta Tau Alpha Outstanding Service Award for Alabama and Mississippi.

In her current role in the provost's office, Renee provides support to the Office of Academic Affairs, the Council of Academic Deans, and the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committees of the Board of Trustees.

Her good work has not gone unrecognized. In 2016 Renee received the UNA Outstanding Service Award and had been named a member of Wellington Who's Who Among Executive and Professional Women.

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*The Faculty and Staff Alumni Service Award is presented to successful alumni among peers on this campus. These award winners possess far-reaching, long-term involvement and influence with students, organizations, and colleagues at the University. It is given each year to alumni of the University serving as a UNA employee who has contributed greatly to the advancement of the community, the University, or both through volunteer efforts or philanthropic endeavors.*

# HOME COMING AWARDS 2017

## COMMUNITY SERVICE



**Patrick Johnson '99** is committed to making a difference in his community and at his alma mater. Volunteerism and giving back is a big part of who he is.

Focusing on UNA, Patrick has served as the Morgan County Alumni Club president from 2010-2016. During his tenure, he implemented "The Freshmen Send-Off," a program that introduces future Lions to their local alumni.

He also aids in mock interviews with students from the College of Business, and particularly the Steele Center for Professional Selling.

Through his State Farm office in Decatur, Patrick sponsors the Special Needs Rodeo, Decatur-Morgan County Homebuilders Association Home and Garden Shows, the local Point Mallard Ducks hockey team, and the Morgan County Realtors Association.

Patrick currently holds the position of chair of the Board of Directors for the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce and recently served as the Decatur Kiwanis Club's 2015-2016 President. He takes great pride in his involvement with the Decatur City School System.

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*The Community Service Award recognizes model citizens for service to their community. They are citizens who have given long-term involvement professionally and as volunteers to the community in which they reside. Already applauded locally, we take great pride in thanking them from the University of North Alabama.*

## POLITICAL SERVICE



Being the first female judge in Lawrence County's history is no small feat and **Angela Terry '94** takes this honor seriously. Appointed by then Governor Bob Riley in 2009, her responsibilities cover two courts, the District Court and the Juvenile Court.

After graduating from UNA with a bachelor's degree in political science, she enrolled at Cumberland School of Law while serving as a clerk for Lawrence County Circuit Court Judge Philip Reich. Upon graduation she became a partner of Malcom and Terry, P.C., in Moulton.

Angela received the 2017 Lawrence County Modern Woodman Hometown Hero Award for Public Service and was named chair of the 2017-18 Alabama State Bar Task Force on Foster Care. In addition she was the chair of Lawrence County Children's Policy Council. Angela serves on the Hospice of Valley Board of Directors; is a member of UNA's College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Council, the Moulton Emmaus Cluster, the District Judges Association, and the Juvenile Judges Association, and belongs to the State Bar of Alabama.

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*The Political Service award is given each year to an alum who has contributed greatly to society within the realm of local, state, or national governance.*

## MILITARY SERVICE



After an illustrious military career, **Major Dwayne Williams '83** was assigned to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. in July of 2001. Two short months later he became a casualty of the 9/11 attacks on the building. As one of our nation's heroes, he leaves behind a legacy of joy, pride, love, faithfulness, and integrity.

A native of Jacksonville, Dwayne attended UNA on a football scholarship. He excelled as an athlete and graduated with a degree in marketing. Shortly after his graduation he joined the Army and served as an enlisted soldier for four years before attending Officer Candidate School. In February of 1988, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Adjutant General Corps after graduating as a Distinguished Military Graduate.

Dwayne's military education included the Basic Airborne course, Jungle Warfare School, Ranger School, Adjutant General's Corps Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, Combined Arms and Services Staff School, and the Army Command and General Staff College. He served in the Persian Gulf War prior to his assignment at the Pentagon.

Dwayne is survived by his wife Tammy Cooper, son Tyler, and his daughter, Kelsie. Buildings have been dedicated in his honor in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and Ft. Jackson, South Carolina.

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*The Military Service Awards recognize the best of the best. These are the men and women from our armed services who have chosen careers dedicated to the service of our country and to the protection of each one of us. We are proud to bestow this honor posthumously to Major Dwayne Williams.*

## PROMISING ALUMNI



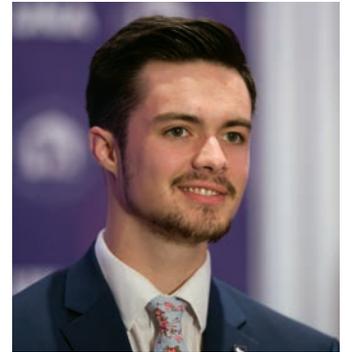
**Chloe Allen** is a senior pursuing a degree in mass communications. She is involved in various organizations including the Honors College, Active Minds, I Am That Girl, and the Honors Student Organization.



**Jocelyn Barnes** is a communications major involved in the LaGrange Society and LionCom. She is the 2016 Miss UNA scholarship recipient, head SOAR counselor of 2016, and an Undergraduate Service Award recipient.



**Jonathan Barnett** is a secondary education major serving as the Student Government Association Freshman Forum advisor. He has been involved in the LaGrange Society and is currently involved in the Hispanic Culture Organization and Black Student Alliance. Jonathan also received the 2017 Undergraduate Service Award.



**Jordan Cooper** is a senior pursuing a degree in professional marketing. He serves as SGA judicial clerk, is a resident advisor, and a member of Lambda Sigma Phi Fraternity. Jordan received the 2017 Undergraduate Service Award, SGA Senator of the Year for two consecutive years, and is in the Beta Gamma Sigma National Business Honor Society.



**Hugo Dante Jr.**, a chemistry major, is currently serving as the Student Government Association president. He is a Foundation for Economic Education campus ambassador, and is involved in the Honors College, Young Americans for Freedom, and Order of Omega Honor Society. Hugo is a former Pride of Dixie band member and was on the 2016 Homecoming Court.



**Jose Figueroa-Cifuentes** is a criminal justice major and the vice president of the University Program Council. He is vice president of Delta Chi Fraternity, a LaGrange Society Ambassador, and former president of the Hispanic Culture Organization. Jose has been honored as Greek Man of the Year, is a recipient of the Undergraduate Service Award and President's Diversity Award, and was on the 2016 Homecoming Court.



**Bella Martinez** is a senior majoring in computer science and serves as LaGrange Society co-captain. She is involved in the Honors Program, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, and Phi Mu. Bella has served as the Student Government Association chief of staff, a SOAR Counselor, and a Pride of Dixie band member.



**Victoria Roose** is the 2017 Miss UNA scholarship recipient and is currently pursuing a secondary education degree in music. She is drum major for the Pride of Dixie Marching Band, member of the UNA Studio Jazz Band, Wind Ensemble, and Symphonic Band. Victoria is secretary of the Pride of Dixie Student Organization, a member of Tau Beta Sigma, and a former SOAR Counselor.

*UNA faculty and staff nominate seniors excelling in leadership, scholastics, character, service, and potential to receive the Promising Alumni Award. We are proud of their service to the University and we believe they will be outstanding alumni leaders in the future.*

# UNA PROFESSOR REACHES CHILDHOOD GOAL OF BECOMING NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER

For many people growing up, *National Geographic Magazine* was a view to another world, a catalog of amazing shots of faraway places that for most who turned the pages would remain just that, a faraway place that would never be explored.

And while some would say that there is nothing left to explore, **Dr. Lisa Keys-Mathews '85** thinks there are plenty of new things to be discovered and plenty of people to do it.

"The explorers of tomorrow are sitting in these classes right now. Students have the potential and curiosity and creativity; we just have to mine it," she said.

Keys-Mathews, who currently serves as a professor of geography and as the director of the Quality Enhancement Program at UNA, said she was eight when her mother (**Vicky Keys, UNA '70, '78**) took her abroad for the first time, venturing south of the border into Mexico with a high school Spanish club.

"It was life changing for me; there was an earthquake," Keys-Mathews said. "And now my research area is environmental hazards and disasters, so it clearly had an effect on me."

Keys-Mathews's research on environmental disasters and hazards has led her to study an earthquake in Peru, a tsunami in Indonesia, a tornado in Alabama, and Hurricane Katrina on the U.S. Gulf Coast. Her passion to teach geography has taken her from the Philippines, where she taught teachers geography and geospatial technologies, to Costa Rica where she conducted urban fieldwork with college students, to Cuba where she traveled with geography and history teachers, and to China

where she traveled with martial artists visiting the roots of their art.

More recently Keys-Mathews found out that she is one of the newest members of the exclusive group of NatGeo Explorers, and she has received a \$30,000 grant to bring her vision to reality. So what exactly is that vision?

"My project is to bring other NatGeo Explorers into the classrooms," she said.

Keys-Mathews said that most NatGeo explorers are not educators, but they do try to work with students in the classroom. Some ways include things like Google Hangouts or other remote meeting setups, but that doesn't cut it for her.

"My ultimate goal is to help students and teachers get excited about the world around them through the work, science, research, and activism of NatGeo Explorers. I don't want to just get explorers into the classroom through video interaction, although that is totally awesome. I want to get the science, research, conservation, and activism of NatGeo Explorers into classroom lessons, so that when teachers teach required science, history, geography,

ecology, or journalism standards—those concepts required by the state courses of study—they are teaching the actual work that is going on right now with NatGeo Explorers," Keys-Mathews said.

The majority of the \$30,000 grant will go to teacher-mentors to develop K-12 lesson plans, test them in different classrooms, and then provide them to teachers through professional development and website delivery. Keys-Mathews said she is currently assembling a team of teachers, representing





*"One of the top locations on my visit list has always been Machu Picchu which I was able to visit in 2005 after my research in Moquegua, Peru. When I rounded the corner to view the site in this picture, tears came to my eyes. The view was just like I had seen in my textbooks and it was amazing to me that I was able to visit."*

different disciplines, who will first create a matrix of the different explorers and their topics; then the teachers and Keys-Mathews will determine how they can fit the explorers into the different lesson plans. An initial focus group meeting is in the works.

"The idea is to provide teachers with advanced content knowledge and then lessons developed by the teacher mentors. This way the teachers who are new to these topics feel comfortable teaching them, and then we can bring the explorers into the classroom," she said.



*"My dissertation research was on using satellite imagery and GIS analysis to study environmental disasters particularly related to earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis. I was able to study and visit two locations post-disaster: New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and Arequipa and Moquegua, Peru after an 8.4 earthquake. Flavia Rey de Castro '06 is pictured next to me, third from the left."*

In October, Keys-Mathews joined 26 other explorers in Washington, D.C., for a ScienceTelling boot camp at National Geographic Society headquarters.

"What I learned at the ScienceTelling boot camp is that my audience is not just teachers but also students, parents, and their communities. Teachers are the gate keepers to students' learning," she said, "and teachers are also the heroes of my story



*"As a part of my NatGeo Explorers grant I consider myself an ambassador for STEAM, STEM, and kids in science. This year I was proud to participate in Weeden Elementary School's 'Geek Glam' which allowed over 120 girls to participate in science-related activities and then to get their glam on with makeup provided by UNA's Phi Mu sorority. Julie Cox Mann '00 organized the event."*

because they want their students to learn and they are willing to learn more, in order to teach their students more, in order to teach cutting-edge subjects that students will not get any other way, except through them. "

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Keys-Mathews is her newest title: she became an explorer who spreads the word about other explorers; an explorer of explorers.

"My true passion is building curiosity and creativity in students," she said. "Children are born curious. By the nature of our education system, sometimes we test the creativity and curiosity out of them. But there will be explorers that come out of this—the next inventor, the person who discovers a cure for cancer, or the person who helps the world save an endangered species is sitting in a classroom right now. It is my job, and the job of parents, teachers, family members, and NatGeo Explorers to help these students find their passion."

But the changes that exploration brings need not be on a large scale—exploration enriches the individual life as well.



*"One part of what I see as my educational mission is to help students understand other cultures and environments. One way to do this is through study abroad opportunities. Allison Newton '03 was a part of a study abroad I co-led in 2008. The students and I collected urban land use data in San Jose' then went to the rainforest to get into the more natural part of Costa Rica."*

Keys-Mathews said, "Whether you're exploring during the family vacation or it's your life's endeavor, exploration is still life changing."



*Vicky Keys '70 & '78 and Dr. Lisa Keys-Mathews '85 in Morocco.*



# CLASS NOTES

## YEARS UNIDENTIFIED

**Lorri Haynes** was selected as Teacher of the Year by Athens City Schools in 2017. She has served as a counselor for 19 years, teaching students from kindergarten to twelfth grade. She received her Master of Arts in Education from UNA.

**Michi Meko** was selected to present his exhibition "Kazuko" in the Cress Gallery of Art at the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga. He is the Spring 2018 Diane Marek Visiting Artist. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting.

**Matt Plunkett** has been named the new Cullman High School football coach. He has previously worked as offensive coordinator, recruiting coordinator, wide receiver coach, tight end coach, and offensive line coach at collegiate and high school levels. He attended UNA and served as a student assistant coach while attending school.

**Lisa Settlemires** has been promoted to assistant vice president of the CB&S Bank's Board of Directors. While Settlemires was pursuing a bachelor's in business management, she began working at CB&S as a teller. She currently serves as a sales leader at her local branch.

## FACULTY & STAFF

**Walt Aldridge '78** was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2017. He has worked on over 200 records as a staff engineer at FAME and also independently in Nashville, Tennessee. He currently teaches at UNA.

## 1970s

**Sonceria Ann Bishop-Berry '78** was hired by Doug Jones as transitional advisor. She has previously worked for Howell Heflin as well as other senators. She has also served as deputy chief of staff to Senator Patrick Leahy.

## 1980s

**Marilynn Lott '83** has been hired as Randolph County Economic Development Authority's executive director. Previously, she served as the marketing director at Jackson County Economic Development for over ten years.

**John Mothershed '85** was inducted into the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame. He has served at Deshler High School as head football coach and athletic director. He has previously served as president of the Alabama High School Athletic Directors & Coaches Association.

**Jonathan Quinn Pettus '87** was a 2017 inductee into the Florence Walk of Honor. Pettus serves as associate director of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville.

**Cindy Davis-Bryant '88** was appointed to president and CEO of Eliada Homes, becoming Eliada's first woman president and CEO. Eliada provides children of all ages with positive development programming. Cindy previously worked for Family Preservation Services of North Carolina.

**Col. Laura Dawson '88** was the guest speaker at the 2018 Washington NJROTC Military Ball. She serves at West Point, New York, as deputy commander of Clinical Services for the Keller Army Community Hospital.

## 1990s

**Mike Elkins '90** was a spotlight of Business Alabama's Movers and Shapers. Elkins is currently serving as the president of Unclaimed Baggage Center in Scottsboro.

**Robert Bruce Scott '90** presented his new work, Two Met a Four and They Had Six, with friend and collaborator Landry Butler in Blend Studio, located in Nashville.

**Chris Carothers '91** was a spotlight in Business Alabama's Movers and Shapers segment. He serves the Citizens Bank in Winfield, as president, chief operations officer, and as vice chair of the board.

**Kevin Wieseman '91** has been announced as the principal of Florence Middle School. Wieseman has had a career of 25 years in Huntsville Schools.

**Carol A. Jent '92 and '97** was announced as the new Woodard Elementary assistant principal. Jent's education experience includes six years of serving as an assistant principal, and around 20 years of classroom experience.

**Captain Robert Malone '92** was recently featured in the news for his aid to troops through his medical experience. Malone began his

training in the ROTC at UNA. He finished his career in the U.S. Army at Fort Stewart as Captain in Nurse Corps.

**Ernie Flurry '94** has been appointed to president of one of the largest global buyers and suppliers of used automotive parts, ACE/MCI Commodities. He has over 22 years of experience in manufacturing and procurement.

**Nikki Mann '94** was hired as the new Florence Falcons Education Foundation director. She has experience serving on foundation boards in both Scottsboro and Muscle Shoals.

**Veronica Bayles '97 and '16** has been hired as G.W. Trenholm Primary School's new principal. Bayles has acquired much teaching experience in her career in various roles.

**Matt Cooper '97** is executive Vice President and chief business development officer of CB&S Bank in Russellville. Cooper also is a member of UNA's Executive Business Council.

**Sidney Hearn '97** has been hired as the band director and music teacher of Lawrence County High School. He also has previously served as band director at Marion University in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**Dennis James '98** retired from Madison City Schools after serving 28 years in education. James most recently served as MCS Director of Student Services. Previously, he served as a math teacher and coach, assistant principal, and principal.

**Kelly Easter '99** was announced as a new third grade teacher at US Jones. Easter has 18 years of teaching experience.

**Kristi Steel '99** was announced as senior director of Domestic Violence Services for YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee. Currently, Steel is a supervisor of Weaver Domestic Violence Center in Tennessee, along with other responsibilities including shelter and community counseling and transitional living programs.

## 2000s

**Celynn Ballard '00** has been named as District Elementary Teacher of the Year for Madison City Schools. Ballard currently teaches second grade at Mills Creek Elementary School.

**Nick Burrows '00** has served as executive vice president and general manager of Metalworking Solutions for the past five years and was recently promoted to president.

**Emilee Chappell '01** was announced by the National Kitchen and Bath Association as vice chair of the 2018 Board of Directors. Chappell serves as the director of Marketing for TOTO Americas, overseeing the overall marketing strategies of TOTO USA Inc.

**Alan Torres '02** served as senior associate of Diversified Trust's Nashville office and was recently promoted to vice president.

**Greg Brewer '05** was inducted into the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame. He began his career as an official, served as AHSAA's Director of Officials, and served as an assistant director for a period of time.

**Whitney Dean '07** is a member of the folk-pop duo, the Sweepings, which just released a new EP, *Sleepwalking*. Previously, Dean has toured and written music with **John Paul White '01**.

**Sheena Murphy '08** was voted Teacher of the Year at Myrtle Attendance Center. Murphy teaches 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade math.

**Jonathan Bailey '09** has been hired as assistant principal at Discovery Middle School in Madison. Bailey has 10 years of experience in teaching at middle schools as well as some experience in high school education.

**Chris Lund '09** currently works as events and marketing coordinator for the Madison Chamber of Commerce.

## 2010s

**Dr. Lee Witt '11** joined the Gilreath Dental Associates practice in Marietta, Georgia, in June.

**David Baldwin '12** is a cast member of the off-Broadway play *Charm*, inspired by the life story of Miss Gloria Allen.

**Jacob Schuetze '12** was named as manager of the audit department of Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain, PC. He previously served as an internal auditor of LBMC.

**Adam Hoekenschnieder '14** joined the civil litigation firm Carr Allison and has been appointed to the Medicare Compliance Group at the firm.

**Maggie Mitchell '14** has been hired as the tour agent of singer **John Paul White '01**.

**Cain Sutton '14** has been hired by Demopolis City Schools as a social science teacher.

**Casey Childers '15** has taken on the role of brand and creative coordinator of AristoMedia in Nashville.

**Brian Sims '16** has been hired as the new assistant band director at James Clemens High School.

**Rachel Wammack '16** has signed a long-term recording deal with Sony Music Nashville under the RCA Nashville imprint. Wammack was first discovered by Sony Music Nashville in Muscle Shoals, her hometown.

**Forrest Knight '17** earned one of his first professional golfing victories during the final round of the Alabama Open. On the tournament's last day, Knight shot a course-record 61.



**Travel with the Lions!**  
[una.edu/alumni/travel](http://una.edu/alumni/travel)



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# QA



Rachel Gandy '14 recently took over as the director of Finance and Political Outreach for Congresswoman Terri Sewell. We decided to ask a few questions about her career so far.

## RACHEL GANDY '14

Director of Finance and Political Outreach for Congresswoman Terri Sewell

### What was your major?

Human Resource Management; Minor in Spanish

### Hometown?

Tuskegee, Alabama

### What do you do now?

I am the director of Finance and Political Outreach.

### How was the transition from the Governor's office to Congress?

The transition was actually really hard, because the capital was home. I started my career there, I met so many people, and honestly I knew my role inside and out. It is very difficult leaving a position you know like the back of your hand and going to something completely different.

### What was your role in Minority Affairs?

I was executive assistant and public information officer.

### Finance director and campaign fund manager seems like a pretty important role, how do you handle the stress?

The key is balance. I am in a place in my life where it is time to focus. Marriage and children are definitely a goal, however because that has not happened for me yet, I need to focus on my career. In order to make it to the top, you have to be different, give that extra 10%, and hold steady to your faith. That means staying late, getting to work early, looking over some work at home. Going that extra mile. However, I also find I have to have friend time. Every Thursday, I meet up with some of my good

girlfriends and we watch *Scandal* and *How to Get Away with Murder*. We drink wine and talk about our problems. Meeting up with those ladies is what keeps me balanced, and in every young professional's life there needs to be balance.

### How does your major from UNA help?

Before attending UNA, I knew I wanted to be a human resource generalist. However, I also knew that my major was versatile. I could use HR in any profession. I learned that in every workplace you have to know how to deal with people, manage conflict, and also be business minded. Even though I am not necessarily using my degree, trust me, it has helped.

### What is a great memory you have from UNA?

One of the best memories I have at UNA is just my average day. I would wake up in Rivers (when I was an RA) and walk across campus saying hey to everybody. My best friend Indigo stayed down the hall, and we would go have breakfast. Walking across the bridge together and someone yelling from the bridge, "Hey, Auntie!" (that used to be my nickname). I used to work in Student Engagement with Ms. Juliette [Butler], Ms. Tammy [Jacques], Tyler [Thompson], and Bethany [Green], and I would talk and laugh with them about my college problems. There used to be an A&W grill in the GUC and I would go talk to Ms. Betsy (who is deceased now) and laugh with her. I remember sitting in the SGA Office laughing with Ralph Akalonu who was like a big brother to me. I miss all of this because those moments helped shaped me into I am—a person who cares about her colleagues. UNA fostered the perfect environment for me, which has taken my career so far. I really do love my UNA; sometimes I wish I could go back.



# ALUMNI PRIDE



Larry Softley '89, Elaine Softley '88, Bill Vaughan, and Linda Vaughan '70



Haley Brink '08, Pam Edwards '65, Jeff Edwards '64



Jennifer Carter and Justin Carter '03



Jordan Graham '14, Debbie Shaw '82, and Kristen Schober



## UNA Community Reflects on Passing of Long-time Friend **BILLY DON ANDERSON**

The University and the Shoals community lost a good friend with the passing of **Billy Don Anderson '62** in 2017.

Anderson graduated from the University in 1962 with a B.S. degree in accounting and economics and earned the coveted Turris Fidelis award in 1962. In 1977, Anderson was selected as the UNA Alumnus of the Year.

Anderson also has the distinction of serving the longest tenure as a member of the University Board of Trustees, serving from 1979 - 2012. He also served three terms as Board President Pro Tempore.

Former UNA Student Government President Brad Botes said Anderson served on the UNA Board of Trustees when he was SGA President.

"I hadn't seen him in over 30 years when we met at a dinner at UNA last year," said Botes. "He remembered me immediately and recalled a *Flor-Ala* [school newspaper] cartoon that had depicted the two of us in 1982. He said that he had saved the cartoon for all those years and then sent it to me with a nice note the next week. I will cherish that cartoon, the note, and my memories of this great man always," he said.

A native of Athens, Anderson was a three-year varsity athlete in football for the Lions from

1959-61. Along with the numerous accolades Anderson received on the field, he was also named to the 50th Anniversary UNA Football Team for 1949-98.

He would go on to work in the banking industry, culminating in his position as the president of Union Planters Bank. In addition, Anderson was also elected Mayor of Sheffield, and served one term.

Former UNA President Dr. Robert Potts said Anderson was a member of the Board of Trustees during his entire career at UNA, which spanned more than 14 years.

"He was the epitome of an excellent trustee," Potts said. "He was dedicated above all to the best interest of the institution, hardworking, loyal and very sensitive to the differences between university policy formulation and implementation of those policies by the administration, faculty and staff of the University," he said.

Potts said that most of all, Anderson was a genuine person who loved UNA with all of his heart.

"It was a privilege to serve under his leadership. He will be sorely missed, not only by his wonderful family, but by all of us who called him our friend," Potts said.



# IN MEMORY

## YEARS UNIDENTIFIED

### Virginia Adams

July 23, 1925 – December 15, 2017

### Martha Bonds

March 9, 1948 – November 1, 2017

### James Villard Balch

October 12, 1936 – January 25, 2018

### Ellen Crutchley

June 20, 1950 – January 8, 2018

### Gwendolyn Buckner Goodson

August 25, 2017

### Stacey Grisham

June 28, 1971 – February 21, 2018

### Margaret Johnston Douglass Hightower

February 10, 1934 – July 14, 2017

### Cassie R. Hollis

April 3, 1993 – October 29, 2017

### Josie Gay Kelley

October 24, 1943 – September 28, 2017

### Donald H. Maddox

August 1945 – December 2, 2017

### Caroline Gray Trabue

January 15, 1914 – January 16, 2018

### John D. Seay

April 2, 1953 – August 21, 2017

### James Lawson Spruiell

June 26, 1956 – November 19, 2017

### Robert J. Wilburn

July 20, 1944 – November 3, 2017

### Larry Joe Young

January 26, 1951 – December 5, 2017

### Barbara White

September 20, 1937 – December 15, 2017

## FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY

### Rick Hall

January 31, 1932 – January 2, 2018

### Howard E. Humphrey

May 23, 1934 – November 7, 2017

### Ann Huckaba

July 7, 2017 – October 12, 2017

### John K. Kalama

April 6, 1938 – December 10, 2017

### James H. McIntosh

1932 – October 19, 2017

### Dr. David C. Mussleman, Jr.

March 4, 1930 – February 9, 2018

### Lacy E. Smith

December 1, 1935 – September 13, 2017

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### Dr. Lelon O. Davidson

September 6, 1940 – November 6, 2017

### Norma Ferguson

September 11, 1930 – July 27, 2017

## 1940s

### Raymond A. Azbell '40

April 12, 1920 – December 6, 2017

### Alice R. Coleman '45

November 10, 1919 – December 28, 2017

### Mary Evelyn Moomaw '46

February 28, 1925 – December 16, 2017

### Barbara McGill '48

June 12, 1924 – October 21, 2017

### Floy B. Strange '49

September 26, 1935 – December 22, 2017

## 1950s

### Curtis Ikard '50

July 18, 1928 – February 4, 2018

### John William Roden '50

December 6, 1924 – October 6, 2017

### Ophelia Fulton '51

October 25, 1930 – October 8, 2017

### James W. Hamner '51

April 16, 1929 – September 24, 2017

### Leon McCrary '51

October 11, 1923 – October 23, 2017

### Eunice Trimm '51

June 19, 1912 – January 2, 2018

### Margaret Virginia Lisby Melville '53

August 29, 1929 – January 3, 2017

### Elise Crowson '54

1832 – December 28, 2017

### Dorla D. Queen '54

December 3, 2017

### Bobby Neal Wade '56

January 24, 1931 – December 14, 2017

### Charles R. Gober '57

June 3, 1928 – December 11, 2017

### Elbert Mack Norton '57

August 4, 2017 – September 11, 2017

### James D. Dabbs '58

March 15, 1936 – December 26, 2017

### Ernest Edward Haygood '58

November 12, 1931 – November 6, 2017

### Charles H. Jackson '58

July 10, 1936 – February 12, 2018

### Edgar Mitchell '58

December 1, 1924 – October 13, 2017

### Troy B. Welch '59

February 27, 1931 – January 17, 2018

### Norma Burns '59

April 10, 1937 – September 9, 2017

### Ben Blount Peete '59

August 9, 2017

## 1960s

### LTC. (R) George A. Ingleright '61

August 13, 1939 – December 29, 2017

### Christine J. Kinnear '61

October 21, 1940 – February 1, 2018

### Janet C. Bell '62

January 25, 2018 – January 27, 2018

### Asbury S. Jones '62

February 14, 1941 – February 23, 2018

### Robert Harold Jackson Sr. '63

August 2, 1940 – January 16, 2018

### Milton Wayne Brown '64

November 5, 1942 – November 14, 2017

### Mary Elizabeth Pierce Malone '65

December 16, 1943 – November 16, 2017

### Wayland Moore '65

October 3, 1939 – November 17, 2017

### Tommy Jones '66

July 2, 1942 – September 4, 2017

### Stuart Furman '67

February 3, 2017 – September 20, 2017

### Martha Stephens '67

August 29, 2017

### Danny K. Gobbell '69

January 20, 1947 – August 5, 2017

## 1970s

### Dr. James Reed '70

February 10, 1942 – July 9, 2017

### Larry Smelley '73

December 8, 1940 – September 12, 2017

### Robert Adair '74

January 16, 1947 – August 17, 2017

### David Bruce Gargis '74

March 18, 1947 – August 31, 2017

### Jerry Newell Howard '78

1949 – November 5, 2017

### Connie Williams Hester '79

September 13, 1952 – November 7, 2017

### Susan Hunnicutt '79

August 19, 1941 – November 18, 2017

## 1980s

### Barbara D. Hillman '80

May 28, 1958 – December 14, 2017

### Lyndel Keith Rhodes '88

August 28, 2018 – January 31, 2018

## 1990s

### Virginia Curtis '90

May 6, 1944 – September 17, 2017

### Rodney T. Nelson '91

May 25, 1966 – November 28, 2017

### Christopher B. Perry '93

June 19, 1968 – January 17, 2018

### Angelia Lynette Mance-Wright '94

February 23, 1971 – June 27, 2017

### Aaron Cale Manley '96

March 28, 1973 – November 16, 2017

## 2010s

### Jason Roy Bates '10

April 29, 1988 – January 5, 2018

### Jackson S. Newton '17

January 16, 1997 – September 16, 2017

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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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| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic Events        | <input type="checkbox"/> Board Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruit Students            | <input type="checkbox"/> Reunions  |

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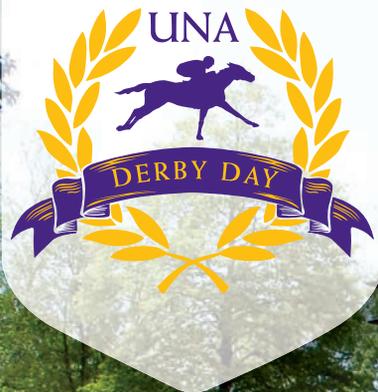


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