Welcome to the Fall 2015 UNA Magazine. This is a time of growth and change at the University of North Alabama, and there are many exciting developments to report. First, however, I would like to begin with a word of thanks for the outpouring of support my family and I have received since arriving at UNA. We are very grateful to be joining such a wonderful campus and community.

As a new president, I am keenly aware of the legacy I have inherited. My predecessors had a vision, worked hard to implement it, and in the process grew an institution of unusual vitality and beauty. The responsibility of ensuring the continuing development of the university now falls to me and my leadership team. Fortunately, we have an outstanding network of alumni, faculty, staff, students, and fellow administrators to guide and assist us in the form of our trustees, alumni, faculty, staff, students, and fellow administrators.

Together, we are thinking creatively about the future of UNA and taking concrete steps that will move this university to the next level of excellence. Three major construction projects have been recently completed or are coming to fruition on campus. The new Science and Technology Building will open for classes this fall. With over 160,000 square feet of space, it stands as the largest capital construction project in the history of UNA. One new residence hall (“Mattielou”) will also open this fall, bringing almost 800 additional beds into the rotation for campus housing. But we’re not ready to pack up the cranes just yet. In early 2016, we anticipate bringing down Floyd Science Building so we can begin work on a new Nursing Building on that site. Funding for this project came together more quickly than we had anticipated through a combination of state support and two large gifts from private donors. These gifts are unprecedented in size for UNA. They speak to the commitment of key stakeholders in the UNA family and highlight the difference that philanthropy can make in the life of our university.

The new Nursing Building, coupled with the Science and Technology Building and new residence halls, will transform the appearance of the north end of campus. That’s important since the beauty and harmony of our campus serve to set us apart in the crowded landscape of higher education. To underscore that point, as I write this message I can see Harrison Fountain across the plaza and hear Leo roaring next door. If there is a more enchanting entrance to a university campus, I haven’t seen it.

Our academic programs continue to thrive. Through the efforts of our committed faculty and staff, we can boast of an updated curriculum and innovative programs of study. In addition to traditional offerings, students at UNA can now consider academic options that include Interior Design, Geo-Spatial Science, and Human-Computer Interaction, just to name a few. Even more impressive is the rate at which our graduates excel on national licensure exams, or go on to complete doctoral degrees from some of the finest universities in the country.

As alumni, you know the difference that this university has made in your own life. Many of you are now giving back to UNA—paying it forward, as the saying goes—by sharing generously of your time, expertise, and resources so that future generations of students can have the same educational opportunity to live and study in this wonderful environment.

Dena and I have tried to get out and meet as many of you as possible during our first months here. We pledge to continue that effort. Through your character, community leadership, and career success, you stand as wonderful ambassadors for this institution. Prospective students need look no further than the ranks of our alumni to see the value of a UNA degree.

When I speak to community groups, I often make the point that great universities need a great story to tell—and UNA has a great story. We’ve been in the business of changing lives now for 185 years. That’s a remarkable record. It’s time that we trumpet our successes as never before and speak with conviction of the transformative difference UNA makes in educating students, supporting the Shoals region, and serving the state of Alabama. In short, it’s our time to ROAR!

Thank you for all you do in support of the University of North Alabama.
**UNA Students Share Their Findings at Research Day 2015**

By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

Students at the University of North Alabama have once again completed another successful Research Day. Research Day gives students the opportunity to present their research either in poster format or orally and then to interact in a professional environment where they are encouraged to discuss their research, both formally and informally. This year was slightly different from years past; it consisted of events spread across three days.

The new feature this year was the Department Research Symposium. Departments are now able to offer discipline-specific research symposia. The goal of the research symposia is to involve students in the disciplinary research process and research discussions with other student researchers and faculty in a more relaxed, round-table discussion environment.

A new edition to the program last year, the Three-Minute Thesis competition, was back this year. The final round of the university-wide competition took place in Norton Auditorium. The Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) is an oral presentation competition that cultivates students’ academic, presentation and research communication skills. The competition supports their capacity to effectively explain their research in three minutes in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. Each presentation is judged based on the content presented, as well as on the students’ presentation skills and ability to explain their research appropriately in a very short amount of time.

For the second consecutive year the University of North Alabama is Cabelas School of the Year. The UNA Bass Fishing team won the award once again beating out Murray State University and Tennessee Tech University to claim the most prestigious title in the sport of college fishing.

“Honestly, winning it two years in a row is an awesome experience,” said UNA Senior and Bass Team President Dawson Lenz. “We can’t do it without our school; the school supports us and from that, we’re able to travel and compete like we do. While we couldn’t do it without our school, we also couldn’t do it without the dedication from our team to compete day in and day out with the main goal of winning the Cabelas School of the Year Title,” he said.

**UNA Bass Team Lands Top Spot Again**

By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

Anglers battled for bragging rights and some serious cash prizes at the University of North Alabama College of Arts and Sciences’ first ever Bass Fishing Tournament on Pickwick Lake. While fishing is always fun, the prizes are usually the draw. The tournament’s first place team took home $500; second place received $300; and $100 went to the third place team. There was also a $100 prize for the biggest fish and door prizes provided by the tournament’s sponsors, Gander Mountain and Gray’s Tackle shop. Barbie Terry, development gift officer for the College of Arts and Sciences, said the event was an opportunity to get more exposure for the college and have some fun, all while raising money for a good cause. “We’re blessed to have the abundance of water and excellent fishing that we have in this area and we thought that a fishing tournament would be a neat idea to raise awareness and support for the college,” she said. “It’s something we’ve never done before, but it just seems like a perfect fit.”

**UNAs College of Arts and Sciences Reels in Support with Bass Fishing Tournament**

By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

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The University of North Alabama and the UNA College of Business hosted Ed Morrison, thought leader and preeminent expert on regional development and civic collaboration, in the Gaullot University Center on campus. Morrison led an interactive talk on the topic of “Strategic Doing” and how it coincides with regional development.

“Strategic Doing,” a process developed by Morrison, enables civic leaders to form collaborations quickly, guiding them toward measurable outcomes, and making adjustments along the way. The process is being used to reinvent and revitalize many regions.

As the global economy continues to change at an unprecedented rate, collaboration between institutions and entities is pivotal in solving key public issues, like ensuring job security and economic success for area residents and families. The University of North Alabama is one of these institutions and spans a very broad region. The mission of the university includes being engaged in the economic well-being of the region. Therefore, UNA is committed to collaborative efforts that will result in solutions that assure the economic success of this mutually shared region of north Alabama, northeast Mississippi and south Tennessee.

“Today’s economic climate is changing faster and faster so it is important for the regional leaders to find collaborative agile strategies that address their opportunities for generating prosperity. The days of going it alone are past. I believe that ‘Strategic Doing’ provides a simple yet multifaceted process that allows engaged leaders the ability to move quickly to successful results,” said Dr. Gregory Carnes, Dean of the College of Business.

Attorneys from the surrounding area came to the University of North Alabama campus to participate in a continuing legal education course hosted by the Northwest Alabama Women’s Legal Association, and UNA benefited in the process.

Attorneys are required to take 12 hours of CLE courses each year in order to keep up with changes in the law. What’s unique about the CLE course held at UNA is that all the proceeds went to UNA’s Mock Trial program. Bassham ’98, attorney and member of Northwest Alabama Women’s Legal Association, said they’re glad to donate the funds to UNA’s Mock Trial program because it’s one of the few in the area.

Bassham along with Judge Angela Terry ’94 and attorneys Laura Terry and Christy Graham are officers for the NAWLA. Bassham said the NAWLA plans on hosting a CLE course each year in order to provide support for the University’s mock trial program. Dr. Carmen Burkhalter, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at UNA, said that plans coincide with the mission of both UNA and the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Law is a discipline in which continuing education is required and if UNA sees itself as a leader in this region, it only makes sense that we offer an event to allow attorneys to get continuing education hours,” Burkhalter said.

In addition, the NAWLA has graciously agreed to donate the proceeds to our mock trial program, which will further prepare students for graduate school or any aspect of life for which education is required and if UNA sees itself as a leader in this region, it only makes sense that we offer an event to allow attorneys to get continuing education hours,” Burkhalter said.

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Thirty-five students representing all four colleges at the University of North Alabama participated in UNA’s 3 Day Startup Feb. 27- March 1. The event, sponsored by Charleston Laboratories, Inc., was a learning-by-doing campus workshop that taught entrepreneurial skills to university students in an extreme hands-on environment. The idea was simple: start a company over the course of three days.

The six companies that were formed over the weekend presented to a panel of business leaders as the final part of the event. Each team gave a five-minute presentation followed by a short Q&A session. The teams each had the task of creating a company name, identifying a problem and presenting their solution to the problem. The teams were as follows:

• Smith Enterprises: A roofing and construction company that improves safety of roof inspections by using drones.
• IT Geex: An on-campus, college budget friendly, tech support business that provides 24/7 access to technical support in the form of real-life assistance from peers.
• Footprints: A social media app/website duo that uses local tour guides, families, and fellow travelers to provide users with an authentic travel experience.
• StartSmart: A website/app that connects high school seniors and current college students with pre-selected mentors from esteemed colleges/programs across the country to navigate the difficult decision of selecting a major by providing counseling sessions.
• T3 Biodynamics: A company focused on amateur athletic excellence that takes performance based simulation and provides real-time feedback to the athlete that can lead to improved results.
• Recruit Group: A company that simplifies the hiring process combining custom testing with resume analysis to select potential applicants for the hiring process with the benefit of reduced time and increased success.

During the weekend, over 20 local business people and faculty attended as mentors to the student-led companies. The students prepared an investment-level pitch and presented to a panel of five industry leaders composed of Joel Anderson, Ryan Baker, Sherri Stout Boyle, Joe Fields and Ron Wicks.

Nationally 3 Day Startup has already conducted 132 events at 60 schools across five continents that launched 70 companies with over $49 million of investment. The goal for 3 Day Startup is to kick start new student-run companies and build entrepreneurial capabilities in students and their university communities.
GETTING TO KNOW
UNA’s NEW FIRST FAMILY

By Bryan Rachal, University Communications

It’s a new day at UNA. There’s excitement on campus as a new First Family has moved into the President’s Home which adjoins Harrison Plaza. Dr. Ken Kitts arrived on campus in March as UNA’s 20th president and was followed shortly afterwards by his wife Dena and their two boys, Colin and Corbin. The family has already begun to establish strong ties both on and off campus, and the community, faculty, and staff are happy they’re here. You rarely see Dr. Kitts at an event without Dena and the boys, and that’s the way they like it. You might call it a package deal for UNA. But
Ken Kitts was born in Waynesville, North Carolina, and lived there until he left for college at Appalachian State. His father was a dentist and his mother was a homemaker. “Waynesville is a small mountain community west of Asheville, right in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains close to Tennessee. It’s a very beautiful area. My father is deceased, but my mother still lives there,” he said. Kitts was the youngest of four children, including two sisters and a brother. His parents were from the Great Depression Era, and his dad was a World War II veteran, so hard work and a sense of pride in the community and country were themes in the Kitts household.

His high school years consisted of typical activities, most of which did not include playing sports. “I love sports as a spectator, but beyond Little League, I didn’t play. I like to joke that I was small and deceptively slow. I love football. I grew up going to the Tennessee games because Knoxville was close and my dad was an alumus of UT.” What Ken did do was play tuba in his high school’s band. As he was just over 5 feet tall as a freshman, he said it was quite the right to see.

After high school, Ken enrolled at Appalachian State University. He knew the school through family connections, but he also liked the fact that Boone, where ASU is located, embraced the university and took pride in its label as a college town. Even though Ken said he had always been interested in government, history and law, he started out as a business major. However, a class during his first semester changed that. “I had taken an American Government class as part of the general education program, and I just loved it. I thought, this is my passion and something I could study for a long time, so I declared political science as my major.”

Ken completed his undergraduate degree and decided to stay on at Appalachian State to earn his masters. He was offered a graduate teaching assistantship, and at the ripe old age of 21 began teaching college courses. “It was a bit awkward,” he said. “I was as young as some of the students I was teaching, and I was very nervous. But that was my first taste of college teaching, and I liked it.”

After earning his masters, Ken was offered a full-time teaching position in South Carolina at Francis Marion University. It was supposed to be a one year assignment, but it turned into a 23-year stay, it’s also where he met his wife, Dena.

The older of two children, Dena Strickland Kitts was born in Columbia, South Carolina. After moving around a few times when Ken was moving upward in the administrative ranks. Dena knew that he was a fast riser. “Being in HR, you can pinpoint administratively who the stars are, and I knew. He became department chair and then was honored as FMU’s Distinguished Professor that same year.” Two months after his 38th birthday, Ken was promoted to associate provost.

After eight years as associate provost, Ken left FMU in 2011 to become provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, a regional university just across the South Carolina border. He stayed there until UNA came calling, and as most Shoals transplants know, it is a call that’s hard to resist.

“I’m grateful to have had these wonderful professional opportunities at key points in my career,” he said. Dena is quick to point out that Ken is very humble. “That’s one quality I admire about him. It’s been wonderful to watch him succeed.”
stood out.”

As they prepared for the move to Alabama, Ken and Dena tried to ensure a smooth transition for their children. “It’s hard to leave family, there’s no question about it,” he said. “I think the ages of our children help. If we had two teenagers, with all the social networks that come with that, it would have been more difficult. We talked openly with them about the move, and both have adapted to their new environment very well,” Ken said.

“By the time the move occurred, we had already been here two or three times, and we had a certain acclimation to the area,” Dena said. “Quite honestly, I thought it would be much more difficult. Everyone has been genuinely nice and supportive, and because of that, the transition has been seamless. It already feels like home,” she said.

Now that the Kitts family has settled in, they are enjoying their new home and being participants in campus life. The prominent location of the President’s Home can present challenges when it comes to raising the children. The front lawn often becomes a playground. It’s not unusual to walk through Harrison Plaza and see Ken, Dena, and the boys throwing football or playing a game of Frisbee. “You do sacrifice some privacy when you’re in this public of a location. So far, it’s been very manageable, though. The people that come up in the yard are just curious about this beautiful house. It’s part of campus,” Ken said.

As we wrapped up the interview, it was clear that the President and First Lady of UNA know how to balance their public roles with their private lives. They were extremely cordial, open, and down to earth. As if to reaffirm the observation, Dena shared a story that really brought it all together.

“We were hosting our first event in our new home, a luncheon for special friends of the university. I was very nervous, trying to make sure everything looked pristine. In the final moments before our guests arrived, I walked into the foyer and happened to glance at the chandelier. Hanging from the crystals was one of the boy’s socks,” she said, laughing. “In that moment, it sort of made everything right again. This is who we are.”
**Presidents who made an impact**

**Reverend Robert Paine**
The institution’s first president was a North Carolina native, Reverend Robert Paine. He was a professor of Moral Science and Belle-Lettres, and also taught Geography and Mineralogy. When Paine left, the school saw a massive dip in enrollment and incoming funds.

**Richard H. Rivers**
Richard H. Rivers was president from 1854-1855. Although he started his career under LaGrange College, soon after the college was relocated to Florence. The school was also renamed Wesleyan University, of which Rivers became the first president. Under Rivers leadership, acceptance to the school required an understanding of English Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, and Greek and Latin Grammar. When the Civil War began in 1861 Rivers resigned.

**Dr. Septimus P. Rice**
Dr. Septimus P. Rice was the first president of the renamed State Normal School. He previously had been a professor when the school was still Wesleyan University and at one point he was the school's only instructor. He taught at the preparatory level as well as the college-level. President Rice resigned in 1881.

**Dr. James Knox Powers**
Dr. James Knox Powers was a State Normal School alumnus. Under Powers’ leadership, the new State Normal College began their first summer school session and built the first female dormitory. Powers received the L.L.D. Degree in 1897 and went on to become president of the University of Alabama.

**Dr. Henry J. Willingham**
Dr. Henry J. Willingham was president from 1913-1938. During this time summer school first became an essential part of the academic year. To accommodate the increasing number of students, two new dorms were built: Florence Hall and Striplin Hall. Under Willingham the school became a four-year degree teachers college. Willingham became President Emeritus when he retired in 1938.

**Dr. James Albert Keller**
Dr. James Albert Keller was the catalyst to the expansion of the college's curriculum. In just his second year Keller was able to offer students degrees in secondary education. Before the end of his time, seven new buildings were established.

**Dr. Ethelbert B. Norton**
Dr. Ethelbert B. Norton focused heavily on curriculum expansion as well. By 1952 the college offered degrees in 15 different fields. Some familiar structures that came to be under Norton are Lafayette and LaGrange Halls, the Planetarium, and Flowers Hall. Norton resigned in 1972 after 24 years as president.

**Robert M. Guillot**
Robert M. Guillot was able to bring the campus enrollment from 3,000 to 5,000 in just five years. Guillot heavily endorsed fraternities and in his time eight were established on campus. In his first year Guillot brought the university’s first live mascot, Leo I, to live on campus. Guillot can also be thanked for much of the initial beautification of the campus. In 1984 Guillot retired after 17 years as president.

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**Dr. William G. Cale**
William Cale served as president for more than nine years. Cale was inaugurated just a few days after UNA celebrated its 175th birthday. Under Cale’s able wing UNA acquired several new bachelor’s and masters degree programs. Cale also oversaw major renovations of many buildings as well as the construction of several facilities, including the Student Commons Building, the George Lindsey Theatre, and the Science and Technology Building.

**Dr. Kenneth D. Kitts**
Although Kenneth Kitts just arrived on campus he already has big plans for the university. Aside from spending time inside the classroom, Kitts also announced the university’s next capital project: a new nursing building. With Kitts as president the future looks bright for the university.
Eric K. O'Neal
Assistant Professor of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, B.S.Ed., 2003, M.S., 2006, Arkansas State University; Ph.D., 2010, The University of Alabama

Dr. O’Neal joined UNA in 2010 upon completion of his doctoral program in Human Performance at the University of Alabama. After originally wanting to be a coach and spending four years of his undergraduate career working for the Arkansas State University football team, Dr. O’Neal’s career pathway altered course when he was offered a graduate teaching assistantship. He was coaxed into completing a thesis and fell in love with academia for the first time after discovering what research really meant.

The quote below has stuck with Dr. O’Neal through the years. He believes his primary mission at UNA is to provide opportunities for success to students who are willing to work hard to better their lives through the academic process. He contends these are often not the students with the best grades in high school or highest ACT scores. Working with students whose desires focus on getting a job and very akin to his original mentoring aspect the favorite part of his job and very akin to his original occupation passion, minus the whistle. His team is the UNA Human Performance Research Group (HPRG). The HPRG is a registered student organization Dr. O’Neal established four years ago and continues to sponsor. The group’s primary focus is to help improve members’ CVs through involvement in research and service with the Special Olympics. Dr. O’Neal has published 18 manuscripts in international level journals since his arrival and has around a dozen more manuscripts currently in review. The majority of these articles include UNA students as co-authors and many have student lead authors, for which he is most proud. Dr. O’Neal’s primary research interests involve hydration and athletic performance.

The highlight of his academic year is when he gets to take HPRG members to the Southeastern American College of Sports Medicine Conference. In his first year at UNA only two students attended. That number has increased to the mid 20s over the last three years and includes four students who have been nominated for research awards. This year 12 different presentations were given by UNA representatives. Probably the greatest testament to the HPRG is that a dozen past members have or are currently completing Ph.D. programs in the Exercise Science field. Most of these alumni continue to attend the conference and interact with current students creating a vast UNA HPRG family tree that continues to grow.

Dr. O’Neal’s wife, Whitney O’Neal, recently accepted a tenure-track position in the UNA Music Department. When not in the lab, Dr. O’Neal spends his time fishing on the Tennessee River, running, or watching UNA athletics with Whitney and their son Cade.

Matthew J. Fitzsimmons
Associate Professor of Philosophy, B.A., 1988, Kentucky Wesleyan College, M.A., 2003, Ph.D., 2004, Vanderbilt University

Early on in Dr. Fitzsimmons’ graduate education, he made a disquieting observation: not all approaches to philosophy are equal. And it appeared to him that his study up to that point had to a great degree emphasized the lesser of these. But a conversation with his graduate advisor, John Lachs, changed everything. Lachs said, “You want to know if philosophy can bake bread. The short answer to that is, ‘Yes, it can.’ The discussion had a profound impact. Dr. Fitzsimmons recalls: “It was revelatory. It harkened back to the original call of philosophy to see past mere appearances, to understand how and why given realities are presented and interpreted in the ways that they are, and to illuminate the means by which these perceptions shape our moral agency. But it also prompted a focus on the struggles and conditions of the present with an emphasis on problem solving and an eye toward bettering future experience, in other words, promoting human flourishing. This led me to a serious study of American Pragmatism, particularly the thought of John Dewey, and helped to develop my interest in classical Greek thought as well as contemporary ethics and social/political philosophy.”

This focus on philosophy’s relevance to everyday life can be found in how Dr. Fitzsimmons approaches teaching. He emphasizes the study of philosophy as much more than merely gaining familiarity with classic thinkers or traditional arguments. He said, “If philosophy was nothing more than the mere memorization of past ideas, it would be as dead as the pages on which it is written.” Rather, he presents philosophy as life-engage. His courses also highlight the importance of shared inquiry for mutual lived experiences. “I think it’s more important to talk with students rather than to them; we cover a variety of controversial topics and, in order to have a meaningful conversation, the classroom must allow for students to explore these ideas freely and openly,” Dr. Fitzsimmons said.

Central to this teaching method is the cultivation of student interest. If students are genuinely interested in the topics covered, then they are likely to be motivated to explore these ideas in a deep and substantial fashion.

Consequently, Dr. Fitzsimmons attempts to relate various philosophical issues to contemporary problems/debates in addition to everyday scenarios students are likely to encounter: “It is my hope that the study of philosophy will be seen by students as borne out of lived experience and will inspire them to see the practice of philosophy as a way of life.”

Dr. Fitzsimmons was born and raised in East Central Illinois. Prior to coming to UNA in 2007, he taught philosophy at Grand Valley State University, Rhodes College, and Vanderbilt University. His wife, Angie, and their three children, Michael, Emma, and Owen live in Killen, Alabama.

“A leader doesn’t treat everyone equally, he or she treats everyone fairly.”

“So long as I live, I live in the light.” – John Lachs, Centennial Professor of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University
Kerry P. Gatlin
Professor of Management, B.B.A., 1969, Southern State College, M.B.A., 1974, Sanford University, Ph.D., 1982, University of Oklahoma

Dr. Kerry Gatlin is Professor of Management and former Dean of the College of Business at the University of North Alabama. Previously he served as Chair of the Department of Management and Marketing and as Director of the University’s Small Business Development Center. He has served on the UNA faculty since 1980. Prior to his career in education, he served as Treasurer and Operations Officer for a Birmingham bank.

In addition to teaching and administrative work, Kerry has maintained an active professional agenda. He has conducted management-training classes for organizations throughout the Southeast. His research and training interests are in the areas of customer service, strategy, decision-making, experiential learning, as well as organization theory and organizational behavior.

Dr. Gatlin has been a member of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce, having served a term on its Board of Directors. He also served on the Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Club of Northwest Alabama and the Shoals Entrepreneurial Center. He also served on the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army. He is past Vice Chairman of the Business and Economics section of the Alabama Academy of Science and served as President of the Alabama Association for Higher Education in Business. Most recently, he was appointed to the Board of Directors of ECM-Regional Care Hospital.

Under Dr. Gatlin’s leadership as Dean of the UNA College of Business, many programs were implemented that continue to be an integral part of the college. In the Department of Economics and Finance, the TVA Investment Challenge was begun, not only to allow students to study investment strategies, but to actually manage a substantial financial portfolio where UNA students frequently outperform professional investors and compare extremely well with investment teams from other universities. Students studying management policy not only study decision making, they compete with teams around the world in making simulation decisions. The senior project classes in the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems allow teams of students to work directly with area non-profit organizations in implementing improvements in their websites and/or information systems.

Dr. Gatlin enjoys working with students, first and foremost. He has always emphasized the importance of, and encouraged participation in, learning and service opportunities. His approach to working with students is very much influenced by the Chinese Proverb, “To hear is to forget; to see is to remember; to do is to understand.” Thanks to the leadership of Dr. Kerry Gatlin, the UNA College of Business continues to reflect those ideals.

Carolyn M. Barske
Assistant Professor of History, B.A. 2002, Sewanee: The University of the South, M.A. 2004, Northeastern University, Ph.D., 2011, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

At an early age Carrie Barske fell in love with the study of history. The daughter of two amateur historians, and the granddaughter of another lover of history and genealogy, it seemed almost inevitable that Dr. Barske would find the study of history fascinating. Her parents took her and her sister to historic sites and museums beginning at an early age, teaching them that the study of history was much more than a list of dates and names. Instead, history was made up of a rich collection of millions of people’s stories. Dr. Barske’s fate seemed sealed when in 7th grade she took her history textbook home for the summer so she could finish the book. “My mother would come upstairs to say goodnight to me and find me reading the textbook. I wanted to know what happened next. We never finished the books in school and I knew there were many more stories to learn.”

This thirst for knowledge followed Dr. Barske through college and then onto graduate school. It was at Northeastern University that she discovered public history. “As far back as I could remember, my parents had taken me to places like Sunbridge Village and Colonial Williamsburg. And I always loved that you could see how history worked, how people actually lived.” When she realized that there was actually a field of study that taught students how to work with communities on preserving and interpreting their history, she was hooked. “I have always wanted to blend my love of history with helping people, and public history provided a perfect way to do that.”

She also learned, however, that a love of history was not enough to become a successful public historian. Because of their unique relationship to communities, public historians are professionals, activists, administrators, mediators, and often tackle tough and painful subjects. Teaching students to navigate the complicated world of public history has been Dr. Barske’s main goal since coming to UNA. She has pushed her students to develop their skills as historians, while also helping shape them as professionals.

“\textit{To hear is to forget, to see is to remember, to do is to understand.}”

She takes them to conference after conference (so much so that her students are playfully known as “Barske’s players” on the Alabama conference circuit), holds workshops on developing CVs and professional portfolios, creates opportunities for students to work directly with the Shoals community, and helps them find jobs and internship opportunities.

Dr. Barske was born in Anchorage, Alaska, and grew up in an 18th century house in Connecticut. She is an avid horsewoman, and won a national title from the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association while she was a student at Sewanee. Dr. Barske has taught at UNA since the fall of 2012.

“It is important that students bring a certain humility, barest reverence to their studies, they are not here to worship what is known, but to question it.” – Jacob Bronowski
Lisa H. Clayton  

Lisa Clayton ’00 & ’02 has been an educator for 15 years. She began her career as a first grade teacher at Webster Elementary School in Muscle Shoals, Ala. It was there that her passion for impacting student learning grew. Lisa has been recognized as a National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certified Teacher. Only 2% of teachers in the nation have currently received this honor and certification.

Lisa is an Associate Professor in the Department of Elementary Education and in her position at UNA teaches courses in early childhood reading and language arts, elementary reading assessment, and early childhood math.

Lisa also supervises field experiences, clinicals, and student interns. She enjoys collaborating with her colleagues in the College of Education and Human Sciences and the Kilby Laboratory School faculty and staff to provide exciting opportunities for preservice teachers in her courses.

Dr. Clayton’s favorite aspect of teaching at the University of North Alabama is her students. She goes above and beyond to give her students opportunities to be successful. As a professor, her goal is to build a professional learning community in each of her courses. Her teaching style focuses on student engagement and providing real world experiences for students.

As a professor, Lisa continues to build partnerships with the local school systems. She developed the “PALs” (Progressing Academic Learners) program with the principal and instructional coach at Weeden Elementary School. This program focuses on increasing reading fluency and comprehension with first grade students. She has been instrumental in providing Alabama Math, Science, and Technology (AMSTI) training and certification to preserve teachers which in turn makes them extremely marketable as they look for a position as a classroom teacher.

Lisa Clayton enjoys speaking at international, national, state, and local conferences on research-based best practices in literacy and mathematics. She was selected to serve on a Regional Planning Team for the Alabama State Department of Education. Lisa has developed the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards candidate support professional development that is offered to classroom teachers in the UNA Inservice Region. She has served on numerous university and College of Education and Human Sciences committees. In addition to providing service to the university and the local schools, another passion of Lisa’s is to mentor parents of children who are deaf or have hearing loss.

Lisa is married to Ryan Clayton and together they have three beautiful little girls. All three girls are following in Lisa’s footsteps by attending the same elementary school as she did. Ella Jane attends Kilby Laboratory School. Isabella and Sophia attend the Kilby Child Development Center.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller
I bring you greetings on behalf of the UNA Alumni Association. There are a lot of exciting things going on on campus and with the Alumni Board and Clubs. For example, the new UNA Science and Technology Building opening the fall of 2015 will offer students new classroom equipment and research opportunities. The new dorms (Matissou and Olive) also opening during the 2015-2016 school year bring a whole new excitement to Residence Hall living. (I am personally excited because my daughter will be moving into the dorms and is in the Freshman Class.) The planning stages are underway for the campaigns for the Music Performing Arts Center and the new Nursing Facility.

There are numerous activities ongoing with the Alumni Association and Clubs. The Madison/Huntsville, Greater Scottsboro, and Decatur/Morgan clubs have had excellent freshman send-off parties, and they have been a huge success. Engaging alumni with incoming freshman and Parents of the Pride promises building closer relationships with our constituents. The UNA Atlanta Alumni Club’s recruitment efforts spread the message of UNA into Georgia and helped bring a new cohort from that state to us. The Alumni Leadership Summit was a huge success: the Summit had a new feature this year featuring our young lions. The Alumni Association greatly appreciated the assistance of the UNA Cheerleaders with the Little Lions Day Camp Activities. The Alumni Executive Board and Alumni Club presidents have a quarterly conference call to discuss ongoing and upcoming activities in each of the Clubs and also the Alumni Association–one venture that we are very excited about is the Young Alumni Lion Leaders (Y’ALL). This group will communicate regularly via social media and will help bridge the gap between our students and our newly graduated (less than 10 years) alumni.

The Alumni Association has several upcoming activities:

- **SEPTEMBER 6** - Pre-game rally for the opening football game vs. Miles College at Legion Field.
- **SEPTEMBER 18** - Lions Under the Lights - Farm-to-Table dinner featuring UNA Alumni Food Stylist Jack White 78.
- **OCTOBER 17** - Homecoming - Numerous Reunions, Parade, Homecoming Banquet, Tent Parties, and Football Game.

Please join and support the University and the Alumni Association. These are exciting times at UNA and there is something to do for everyone. We need your time, support, and resources to help the growth of our STUDENTS and our UNIVERSITY.

Sincerely,

Larry Softley, ’89 and ’08
UNA Alumni Association President 2014-2015

The University of North Alabama's own Cornelia Holland ’62 is somewhat of an expert when it comes to hostas, and she should be since she's been collecting the plants since 1995. Hostas are the number one shade perennial sold in the U.S. Holland recently allowed personnel from the University of Tennessee to collect divisions of her personal garden which included both species and hybrid plants. The plants are now on display as part of the UT Gardens. “The UT Garden provides a venue for the public to enjoy and learn about hostas, and it's also a living laboratory for UT faculty and students,” Holland said.

Hosta is the botanical name of plants commonly known as hostas, plantain lilies (particularly in Britain) and occasionally giboshi (in Japan). The Hosta genus has around 45 different species and an estimated 5,000 different cultivars.

message from the ALUMNI PRESIDENT

Larry Softley, ’89, and ’08
A slice of bread topped with a piece of lettuce and a human mouth, a man with the head and hooves of a goat holding an egg with a smaller, winged goat/human hybrid bursting out, a pig reclining on a sofa; these are all early sculptures by Alabama artist Frank Fleming ’62.

Looking at the body of Fleming’s work you might not expect the artist to have a sunny and inviting disposition, but he certainly does. The 74-year-old Birmingham-based artist has a zest for life and a passion for his craft that comes out naturally through his works as well as his personality.

Fleming draws inspiration from mythology, but his greatest muse is nature. “I get inspiration from my upbringing. I was raised in nature with animals,” he said. And it’s the process of combining the natural and mythological that makes Fleming’s work so captivating and unique.

Critics and writers have tried repeatedly over the years to categorize Fleming’s work with words such as whimsical, fantastical, humorous, surreal, and even dark, and Fleming for his part doesn’t disagree with any of these descriptions. “I would say all of those. At various times, on various pieces, on various bodies, all of those have come to the forefront. I might have done a show that was dark, or an exhibition that was light-hearted,” he said.

Fleming may be better known on UNA’s campus for his famous bronze statue of mascot Leo holding the Book of Knowledge. Fleming himself attended UNA when it was still known as Florence State College and the time he spent there played a huge role in his life. After earning his degree in art at UNA, Fleming worked for both Boeing and NASA for about six years before attending graduate school at the University of Alabama. “I didn’t find a teaching job after getting an MFA, so I went in to producing my own work,” he said.

But he cites his time at UNA as the most important and rewarding portion of his education. It was there that he took an art class that led him to abandon his biology major and find his passion in 3-dimensional creations made of clay and bronze. “I started out drawing and painting, and once I started doing sculpture, I became more intrigued with 3D than 2D,” he said.

Intrigued may not be quite the right word. It is estimated that Fleming has created between 8,000 and 10,000 unique sculptures in his career. And of this multitude it might not be surprising that he can’t choose a favorite, and neither can fans. Fleming has had exhibits and shows across the country for the past half-century and his work appears in museums and private collections around the globe. Fleming most recently traveled to China in 2008 and Italy in 2009 to promote his work.

And though he remains humble about his impressive body of work and world-
Frank Fleming at Birmingham Museum of Art

By Christi Britten, ’03

I first became acquainted with Frank Fleming’s work as a child growing up in Birmingham, Ala., in the mid 80s. “The Storyteller” at the Five Points South intersection in the heart of Southside Birmingham was the first piece of art I ever heard my family talk about—the ram-man seated before a gathering of woodland animals reading a story to his eager audience. I didn’t understand the significance of a ram-man as a five-year-old, but I did know his work was kin to magic and fairy tales.

My mother would take me to Birmingham Botanical Gardens to see his other works placed within bodies of water and among the plants. I knew his name, and how he opened up a cohesive world of wonder in special spots throughout my hometown. When I visited UNA for the first time as a senior in high school, Fleming’s sculpture of the lion was a peaceful omen of assurance.

I discovered more about Frank Fleming as an art student at UNA and learned more about his work. At the time, it was a short drive to a small boutique in Huntsville to purchase a bronze pear, leaf, or some other beautiful object of humility. If I could I would have filled my dorm room with all of them, so I photographed them for a local magazine to convince people their lives would be happier having them strewn about on their coffee tables.

Fleming also worked with young artists and led a workshop at the museum this summer. The purpose of the program is to help develop young artists’ skills. He says that he hopes he is an inspiration to them. And for any student attempting to chase their dreams he has a few words of advice. “Go. Go for it,” he said.

But, as for his future, Fleming is already living the dream. He says that he is now lucky enough to work only when he wants to, which is “most every day,” and he doesn’t try too hard to make plans. “The future will come and take care of itself,” he said.

UNA’s own Fleming bronze can be found at the Amphitheater in the heart of campus.

By Christi Britten, ’03

Jeremy Britten, Frank Fleming ’62 and Christi Britten ’03
FRANK FLEMING
AT BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM OF ART

UNA DERBY DAY
SECOND SUNDAY IN MAY

Stuart Waddell '80, Melinda Sparks '79 and Cathy Miller '83

Robert Clem '60, John '65 and Ann Battcher '65, and JoAnne Clem

Ken & Dena Kitts                  Joe Don & Jill Anderson (seated) with Doris
                                        Warhurst, Verna Brennan, Billy Don '62
                                        and Liz Anderson

Mary Armstrong '85, Tracey Marcu'92 and Maray Daniel

Molly Martin & Carmen Balthaser, Nita & John Thornell

Ward & Debbie Cloak, Mark & John Towell

Robert Clem '62, John '65 and Ann Battcher '65, and JoAnne Clem
Buddy in the Field

By Mari Williams, Student Intern

UNA has been the alma mater of many noteworthy people and Colonel Buddy Brook is no exception. Aside from being a full-time Colonel, father, and husband, Brook has achieved great feats not only overseas but within the campus community as well. In October he will have served a combined 39 years in both active duty and the reserves.

When news broke that the ROTC program might be cut, the realization shook the Brook family. But once the community was assured the program would be spared, Brook and his wife Sharon began brainstorming ways to help the program.

"UNA is why I came to Florence – UNA is why I stayed in Florence," he said. "In the past, I had considered setting up a scholarship program at UNA in honor of my grandfather Sampson Benjamin, a Choctaw Indian who fought in WWI and my Grandmother Lura. They were my inspiration and motivation for the scholarship."

Col. Brook was successful in setting up the scholarship. Each year the American Military Legacy Scholarship is awarded to a prior service military student. In the event that there is no qualifier, the scholarship can be awarded to a police officer returning to school.

"A prior service soldier knows what they're getting into," he said. "We feel like we're getting someone who has already had the training, someone who has a start, it's like someone who's had the desire for years and they know what it's all about. You get a good product there."

Sharon Brook has helped and supported her husband in his scholarship endeavors since the initial stages.

"It's very interesting in young men and women that want to make a career out of the military," she said. "It's been a great life for us and he knows what the military can do in regards to leadership. Your career, your education, everything that revolves around it has so many advantages in a young person's life. It's just very special to him and he wanted to be able to give back to the community and UNA because of the opportunity it has afforded him over the years."

There is also another scholarship under the American Military Legacy Scholarship that will not be awarded until it is fully endowed at $25,000. The Brook family is currently actively fundraising for this scholarship.

Creating the American Military Legacy Scholarship was not Buddy Brook's only accomplishment in recent years. He tells the story of how he successfully created a payroll system for the entire Iraqi Army. In 2004 Brook volunteered to return to service after being in the reserves for many years. As a civilian in the reserves Brook worked in the finance industry and opened up his own insurance agency and mortgage brokering company.

When he arrived in Iraq he believed he would be training Iraqi soldiers, but his commanders had a different plan for him.

"They said to me, 'Well, you heard that the Iraqi army hasn't been getting paid on time and they're walking off the job, not wanting to train, so we have to fix the payroll problem. These people have to get paid and we have to set up a system.'"

Although Brook had never created a government payroll system and did not know how, he wasted no time in preparing for the task.

"I was a little overwhelmed – not a little, a lot. I had a satellite phone so, the first thing I did was call my wife. You'd think you'd call your commander or something, but no, I called my wife. She said you'll figure it out, you'll get it. So, that little bit of confidence helped a lot."

Brook looked for advice thousands of miles away from banks in Florence.

"I contacted Bank Independent and First Metro Bank and asked them if they could provide some information and key things you need to start a financial payroll system for (in this case) the ministry of defense of another country. The information they gave me allowed me to start implementing security and accountability. A boy from a small town in Oklahoma, who graduated with a class of 32, setting up a payroll system for the Iraqi government, and using ideas from local banks. I would have never imagined that."

Even though Sharon Brook was on the other side of the world, she was still there to offer encouragement to her husband.

"He had built a financial career with a couple of businesses that we had by ourselves, so I knew he could do it," she said. "He's well-traveled and very knowledgeable about so many things. So I had a feeling with his financial experience—starting two businesses, running two businesses locally—that he could absolutely get that program up and running, and he did."

After establishing the payroll system for the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, the United States turned the program over to Iraq, and Col. Brook returned to his position as the Detachment Commander and Senior Military Advisor for the Iraqi Army's 9th Infantry Brigade. He has since continued to work with foreign soldiers in various capacities in several countries in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, and as an Advisor to the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense's Religious and Culture Affairs Department.

Over the years, Brook has been awarded many medals for his military service, and though he says all of them are great, the Combat Infantry Badge has been the one he is most proud of.

"It's awarded to infantry soldiers who have served in live fire combat and engaged with the enemy. I'm an infantryman and infantrymen have a special bond. Any soldier that's served with other soldiers has a bond. That bond is not related to race, gender, religion, or anything else—it's related to the common experience of serving together."

Brook will return from overseas in the fall just in time for his 20th wedding anniversary. He is looking forward to spending time with family and camping with his grandchildren.
The Lion, the Raccoon, and Pete Nelson

By Ashley Gabaldon, Student Writer

UNA Alumni Pete Nelson ’99 just may have landed the coolest job there is. Nelson formerly served as UNA mascot Leo the lion and has made a career of his hobby as the NFL mascot T-Rac. Nelson was the mascot for UNA from 1994 until he graduated with a degree in public communication, both of which have served him well as the furry face of the Tennessee Titans. “If it wasn’t so hot and miserable, it would be the most fun job in the world,” he joked.

Nelson was able to secure his role as T-Rac when the Houston Oilers became the Tennessee Titans in 1999. They chose the raccoon as their mascot because it is the state animal of Tennessee and as Nelson puts it, “a guy dressed as a guy isn’t funny.” Nelson is starting his 17th season with the Titans this fall and is responsible for coming up with new, more entertaining, and ever-more dangerous routines. He recalls an incident when he was asked to go on the field on faulty stilts. “I’d never been on stilts in my life!” he laughed, as he recalls the stilts beginning to wobble and the realization that he was about to hit the ground. Fans loved it so much that T-Rac falls off stilts a couple of times a year now. “How I’ve never ended up seriously injured as a mascot, I’ll never know,” he said with a laugh.

“I do a lot of school visits through a partnership with the Tennessee State Parks, the number one State Park system in the nation. We go to schools and urge the children to take care of themselves and our parks. It’s a huge production. We get to go to all these state parks for free. We are in our fifth year with them and the Titans’ caravan.”

Nelson knew he wanted to be a mascot after attending a UNA football game with his father while he was still in high school. He felt that he didn’t have the brains for academics nor the brawn for athletics, but when he saw Leo on the field he knew he’d found his calling. Nelson attended UNA the next fall and his first football game as a student was also his first in the Leo costume. “In college it was really, really fun. It was fun to get in front of the students, fans, and my fraternity brothers and get a laugh, do something crazy,” he recalled.

He remembers his time at UNA fondly thanks in large part to the constant support of his fraternity brothers in Sigma Chi. Nelson said that his brothers were always there to help him pull off a skit, travel with him, and give him new ideas and advice. “There was no better time in my life than as the mascot of the University of North Alabama,” Nelson recalls. His fraternity brothers have remained loyal fans and Nelson has remained in close contact with them as T-Rac.

But Nelson had an even more important support system in his family. He credits his success to his father, beloved UNA history professor Dr. Larry Nelson who passed away in 2014 from glioblastoma brain cancer. “My dad wasn’t a teacher, he was a performer. He was more famous than I ever was, the most popular man in North Alabama,” Nelson remembers. “When I lost him, that was tough.”

Despite his impressive success and massive popularity Nelson remains humble. He believes that each person has his or her own unique calling and he is just fulfilling his with the talent that he has been given. “Me standing in the middle of the field looking at 70,000 people, I thank the Lord. Thank you, Jesus, for this opportunity. What I get to see and do is pretty amazing for an idiot like myself,” he said with a chuckle.

Pete Nelson’s Rules of Being a Mascot

Golden Rule: Don’t be just another guy in a suit.

1. Big Movements – You’re a person, but you’re not, you’re bigger than that.

2. Facial Expressions – Your body will follow what your face does.

3. Pure Energy – The most annoying thing in the world is an annoying mascot.

4. Have Fun – Give them a reason to cheer and they’ll cheer. Own it and let people in on the joke.
Former University of North Alabama volleyball All-Americans Rachel Price Bell and Ronda Price Brinley were inducted in June into the Gulf South Conference Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2015 at a ceremony at the San Destin Golf and Beach Resort.

In just its second year of existence, the GSC Hall of Fame added its latest class of five inductees with UNA’s Price sisters as the only student-athletes honored. There were 10 inductees in the initial class in 2014 that included former UNA football standout Ronald McKinnon and former UNA basketball coach and athletic director, the late Bill Jones.

The GSC Hall of Fame is just the latest honor for the Price sisters. They were inducted into the UNA Athletic Hall of Fame in 2011 and were chosen for the 40th Anniversary NCAA Division II Tribute Team in 2013 as the top female student-athletes from the Gulf South Conference over the 40 years that the league has competed in Division II.

The Price sisters were four-year starters on University of North Alabama volleyball teams from 1996-99 that had a combined 156-22 record. The Lions won four straight Gulf South Conference championships, made four straight NCAA Division II Tournament appearances and won two NCAA regional championships.

Both Rachel and Ronda earned All-Gulf South Conference, All-South Region, All-American and Academic All-America® honors during their playing careers.

Rachel also won the Gulf South Conference Commissioner’s Trophy as the premier female student-athlete in the league in 1999 and 2000. She was also named NCAA Division II Conference Commissioner’s Association National Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 2000. She received an NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarship and earned a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from Purdue University. She is currently employed as a clinical project manager in West Lafayette, Ind.

Ronda was the recipient of the Gulf South Conference Commissioner’s Trophy in 1998 and was the Alabama Sports Writers Association State Small College Athlete of the Year in 1997. She was also awarded an NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarship and graduated from the Indiana University School of Medicine, where she also did her residency. She is employed as an anesthesiologist in Fort Wayne, Ind.

University of North Alabama football receiver Lee Mayhall of Jackson, Tenn., and women’s soccer forward Chloe Richards of Cornwall, England, were among the recipients of the 2015 Gulf South Conference “Top Ten” Awards.

These awards, based on athletic, academic and extracurricular achievement during the 2014-15 academic year, recognize the top five male and top five female student-athletes as the cream of the GSC crop.

The “Top Ten” are selected with the assistance of an advisory committee representing the athletic directors, senior woman administrators, sports information directors, faculty athletic representatives and presidents from randomly selected GSC schools. This committee makes a recommendation to the commissioner, who makes the final decision.

Richards was the 2014 Daktronics Division II National Player of the Year and led the nation in four statistical categories while leading the Lions to a 14-4-1 record and a spot in the Division II National Tournament. She earned All-GSC and Academic All-GSC honors, was GSC Player of the Year and earned five GSC Player of the Week awards. She was also named South Region Player of the Year and was a first-team selection on two All-America teams.

Despite missing part of the 2014 season due to injury, Mayhall ranked among the Lions’ leading receivers and earned All-GSC and Academic All-GSC honors. He was a first-team Academic All-America selection with a 4.00 cumulative GPA in Industrial Hygiene. Last season he helped lead UNA to a 9-2 overall record, a second straight GSC championship, and a spot in the NCAA Division II Playoffs.
UNA will honor the coaches, players and staff members from its 1995 NCAA Division II Football National Championship team on November 14, 2015 at Braly Stadium at the Lions home game against West Alabama. The event will celebrate the 20-year anniversary of UNA winning an unprecedented third consecutive NCAA Division II football title. The 1995 Lions completed a perfect 14-0 season with a 27-7 win over Pittsburg State in the national championship game at Braly Stadium.

Kickoff for the game is set for 1:30 p.m., with on-field recognition of the 1995 team at halftime.

The coaches, players, and staff members from UNA’s 1985 football team that went 12-2 and advanced to the NCAA Division II Championship Game in McAllen, Texas, will be honored on September 12, 2015, at Braly Stadium at the Lions home game against Mississippi College. The event will celebrate the 30-year anniversary of UNA’s first team to reach the Division II title game. The 1985 Lions won the Gulf South Conference Championship and defeated Fort Valley State and Bloomsburg in home playoff games before falling to North Dakota State in the national championship game.

Kickoff for the game is set for 6:00 p.m., with on-field recognition of the 1985 team during the game.

For additional information on either reunion, contact MEGAN LOVELACE at smlovelace@una.edu or 256-765-4615.
Billy Don Anderson ('61) joins five others being inducted as part of the 2015 Limestone County Sports Hall of Fame class. Mr. Anderson served in the Navy for five years after graduating from Athens. He then decided to walk on at Florence State College where he was a three-year starter in 1959-1961.

Jacque Behrens ('65) has written a self-help inspirational type book, From the Outhouse to the World: A Global Tour of the Mind and Soul.

Joel Collum, Jr. ('79) is a CPA with his own firm which primarily serves individuals, small businesses, and not-for-profit organizations. His previous experience is with four smaller CPA firms. He and his wife have been married for 30 years and have four children and three grandchildren.

Myra Miles ('84) Considered one of the top high school administrators in the nation, Miles served as athletic director at Hoover from 2008-2014 after serving one year as interim AD. She also taught and coached at Hoover from 2002-2007. During her tenure the school won more than 20 state championships in 10 different sports. Her first teaching/coaching assignment was at Halesley (1984-88), followed by stops at Brooks (1989-99), St. James (1999-2000) and Coffee (2000-02). She coached volleyball, basketball, and girl’s basketball, and taught physical education during her teaching/coaching career. Her volleyball team at Halesley won the Class 4A state championship in 1987 and finished runner-up in 1985 and 1986, then her softball team won the Class 4A state title at Brooks in 1994. Her career records were 546-201 in softball, 355-152 in volleyball, and 193-124 in basketball – a total of 1,062 prep wins in the three sports. Miles served on the AHSAA Central Board of Control from 2012-14, was president of the AHSADCA (2013-14) and an officer for five years. She has been active in working with special needs students and Special Olympics and helps sponsor a fishing trip for special needs children in Etowah annually. Miles is a graduate of Bradshaw (1979) in Florence and the University of North Alabama (1984). She also attended Freed-Hardeman College.

Jan Ingle ('85) was the recipient of the 2015 Book of Golden Deeds Award. Jan serves as a United Way of Northwest Alabama trustee and actively engages in supporting many local non-profits. In particular, Jan enjoys children-oriented non-profits, as she also serves Mary Ellen’s Circle, a network of women who support the needs of children in foster homes. Jan serves on the UNA Alumni Executive Board.

Mark A. Sanderson ('86) Student Government Association President and Tarris Fidelis Award winner, formerly of Hamilton, Ala., returned to the state of Virginia. Sanderson, a former lawyer and Assistant District Attorney in Colbert County, Ala., retired from the practice of law in 1996. Since 2000, Mark has worked full time in the music entertainment industry as a professional singer, musician, songwriter, and recording artist. An article appeared in a 2002 edition of UNA Magazine about his studio album, “Songs From the Heart.”

Lorraine Perez ('96 & '01) received national recognition in winning the 2015 Outstanding-Buyer Teacher Award, an honor presented by the National Association of Biology Teachers. Perez is a teacher for the Franklin County School System and teaches science at Russellville High School. She was chosen out of more than 50 state nominees as the Alabama Representative. Mrs. Perez has been with the school system for 18 years.

Tracy Doughty ('97) received his undergraduate degree in nursing from the University before pursuing two post graduate degrees from the University of Alabama at Birmingham: a master’s degree in Health Administration in 2007 and a master’s degree in quality and outcomes management in health systems in 2004. Mr. Doughty has served in many roles in the health care field, including Vice President of Emergency & Trauma services and the hospital’s Physician Network. He also served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army. Parks has served in Birmingham since 2001-2007, and is active in many local and regional organizations. Most recently, Mr. Doughty has been promoted to Senior Vice President of Operations at Huntsville Hospital, where he began his career in 1998 as a surgical/trauma nurse.

Ryan A. Moore ('00) recently joined Florence’s People’s Trust Bank as First Vice President of Business and Community Banking. He also currently serves on the board of directors for United Way and is a board member of the UNA Alumni Association.

Matthew Schmitz ('00 & '09) was recently named Vice President of Intrepid, an employee-owned Huntsville-based small business. Mr. Schmitz received both his undergraduate and Master of Business Administration degrees from the University of Alabama. He is Assistant Principal at East Limestone County Teacher of the Year in 2014 and has had several instructional blogs featured by the Alabama Best Practices Center. He and his wife Whitney now reside in Rogersville.

Sonia Robinson ('03 & '10) is an award-winning public relations professional currently serving as Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Appleton Learning. She is part of a nationally recognized team that provides talent management and workforce solutions to P-12 public school districts. She oversees sales, strategy, business development, and public relations. A Huntsville, Ala., native, Robinson joined Crestwood Medical Center upon graduating. She served as Marketing Coordinator for nearly eight years. In 2011, she joined Appleton Learning. During her tenure there, she has spearheaded a successful company rebrand. Robinson is a past President of the North Alabama Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama. She was awarded accreditation in public relations, APR, in June 2011 and just last year was recognized by the Southern Public Relations Federation as a Senior Practitioner, a status that honors veteran public relations practitioners.

Jason Parks ('04) is the founding minister of Refuge Church. Parks has offered invocations for several government assemblies, including Madison City Council, Huntsville City Council, Madison County Commission, and last year for the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Parks currently serves on the Calhoun Community College EMS Advisory Board and as a faculty member for Huntsville Bible College. Mr. Parks graduated from the University of North Alabama in 2004 before receiving his MBA from Liberty University and his master’s in divinity from Rhodesbridge Seminary.

Katrina Brown ('04 & '05) is a civil staff attorney for Birmingham Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers program.

Amy Tucker Clark ('05) is a family medicine physician in Muscle Shoals. She and her husband Greg have just moved back to Florence and are the parents of a daughter, Bella.

Anthony Sparks ('05 & '06) is the executive director at YMCA Youth Center of Greater Birmingham and is a Certified Life Coach. He and his wife Ashley Smith Sparks ('08) live in Hoover and have a son, Aiden. Anthony has written a self-help book, #Better.—7 Keys to Living a Life of Progress, Not Perfection.

Josh Terry ('06) is an anesthesiologist at Keller Hospital.
COLOR RUN

The UNA Color Run is one of the UNA Athletic department’s most anticipated events each Spring. With over 500 participants, this family friendly event provides a 5K and 1 Mile course where runners and walkers are showered with purple and gold color along the way. To register for the UNA Color Run, visit alumni.una.edu/colorrun.

IN MEMORY

David Williamson (’07) is the assistant controller of Foreign Operations Revenue at the Drummond Company. He makes his home in Birmingham and is married to Karen Allen Williamson (’08). They have two sons.

Erin Robertson (’09) graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Arts with an emphasis in Public Relations. She is currently employed by HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology as an Advancement Database Manager and lives in Madison, Ala.

Mason G. Kirkland (’11) is a program analyst who applies over three years of effective planning, contracting, analytical, acquisition, organizational, logistical, monitoring, technical, supervisory, and data research experience to challenging Department of Defense and industry settings. The Grant, Ala., native joined the defense industry in 2012 with QuantiTech Services, Inc., supporting the Missile Defense in Huntsville.

Samuel Thrippen (’11) is a physical education teacher at Alabaster City Schools. He and his wife Lindsay Rogers Thrippen (’12) work at Meadow View Elementary School.

Traci Boutwell (’13) graduate of UNA’s master’s program in Business Administration, is a contract employee for the Aviation and Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Ala., where she is charged with providing graphics and communication support for external publications, employee communications, and social media. She is dual-hatted, working for both the AMCOM Public Affairs Office and the AMCOM Command Initiatives Group.

Meggin Major (’13) received her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. She is currently a travel nurse with Cross Country Travel Corps.

Will Ridley (’13) is the lead recruiter and brand strategist at FireSeeds. He lives in Birmingham, Ala.

NON GRADUATE

Elaine Ballew is executive director of the Madison Chamber of Commerce. She has served more than 17 years as an asset manager for privately and publicly held companies and is a frequent speaker for business leaders and real estate professionals. She is the 2015 president of the Apartment Association of North Alabama and serves on the state board.

Josh Chaney has joined the Naples office of Downing-Frye Realty, Inc. Originally from Florence, Alabama, he moved to Naples, Fla., in 2010. Mr. Chaney has an associate degree in business from the University of North Alabama. Previously, he was a sales manager/general manager for Comcast in Southwest Florida.

FACULTY

Florine K. Rasch of Auburn, Ala., formerly of Florence, passed away July 20, 2015, at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika, Ala. She was a member of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church of Florence, Treasurer of the Salvation Army of Florence, Historical Society Board, Friends of the Library, and Community Bible Study. She began her career in Florence as a chemist with TVA and then taught at the University of North Alabama for 35 years. She retired as the head of the Home Economics Department.

Carolyn Terry (’48) attended Florence State Teachers College. Mrs. Terry was a lifelong educator, teaching in the Lauderdale County and City of Florence School systems. Even in retirement, she remained dedicated to the teaching of life lessons, new ideas, and meeting new people.

Robert McKinley “Bob” Mitchell, Jr. (’49) served proudly in the Eighth Air Force 384th Bomb Group in England, completing over 35 missions as a crew chief and flame gunner on B-17 bombers. His decorations included the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and European Theater Medal with Five Bronze Stars. After the war, Mr. Mitchell completed his education with degrees from the University of North Alabama and Vanderbilt University. His broad career included positions as a high school teacher, Boy Scout Executive, hospital administrator, construction estimator and project manager, and insurance safety engineer. He was active in Veterans’ organizations, an Eagle Scout and scout master, and a squadron commander in the Civil Air Patrol.

William Adolphus "Bill" Godfrey (’58) was drafted out of high school as a pitcher for the Boston Braves and Texas Rangers. Following his baseball career, he served in the Korean War as a medic. After he was discharged from the army, he attended the Florence State Teachers College on an athletic scholarship for football and baseball. At the University, he was a pitcher, halfback, and kicker, and he was chosen co-captain of the football team his senior year. He was inducted into the Winston County Sports Hall of Fame in 2003. He coached for Butler High School in Huntsville before being chosen as the new head-coach at Lee High School. In 1963, he was hired by State Farm as an agent, later became a manager, and retired from State Farm in 1995 after 32 years of dedicated service.

Osborne Holt (’51) served in the U.S. Army from 1945-1947 before returning to Birmingham, Ala. There, he attended Howard College for two years. Mr. Holt and his wife then moved to Florence, Ala., where he enrolled at Florence State Teachers College and received a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting in October of 1951. After graduating, he went on to work for Alabama By-Product Corporation where he was a payroll accountant for 34 years. When Drummond Coal Company purchased ABC, he was offered early retirement and later went to work as staff accountant at Avis Rent-A-Car until 2004.

Ruby Nicholson (’62 & ’67) graduated from Phil Campbell High School before attending Florence State College, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree. She taught fifth grade in Tuscaloosa City School System and obtained her Master’s Degree in Elementary Education from UNA. Dr. Nicholson accepted a Fellowship from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, and with great determination she completed her Doctorate Degree in Elementary Education by the time she was 30 years old. She accepted a position at Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, Ala., where she taught for 28 years. She supervised student teachers, taught masters level graduate classes, and served as an advisor. When she retired, Dr. Nicholson served as the Chairman of the Department of Elementary Education and Early Childhood.

Kenneth Wade Horton (’68 & ’69) from Florence, Ala., graduated from Bradshaw High School before attending the University of Alabama. Mr. Horton attended UNA for his Master’s degree.

Carolyn Cox Warren (’68) graduated from the University of Alabama in 1968 before receiving her Master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Tennessee. She directed a day care in Kalamazoo, Mich. During her career she taught at Central Mississippi Community College, Kansas State University, and Iowa State University. She was a professor of education at John Wood Community College from 1991 until her retirement in 2012.

Paula Mitzner Burrow (’69) attended Florence State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree. She worked 35 years for the Internal Revenue Service and retired in 2004.

YEARS UNIDENTIFIED

Dwight Cooper attended both the College of Lake County and University of North Alabama. He worked for Abbott Laboratories for over 20 years before retiring in 2009.

Betty Stone Keown attended Delta State University and moved to Mobile, Ala., where she worked for the Mobile Chamber of Commerce. After moving to Decatur, she became the first female Moderator for the North Alabama Presbyterian and also served as church treasurer. Mrs. Davidon was also active in the community, including the Junior Service League of Decatur, where she served as President and committee chair.

J. David Sessions attended Delta State University immediately following high school where he was a member of the football team and graduated with
IN MEMORY

Charles E. Carmichael, Jr., served in the Air Force during World War II. Upon his return to Alabama, he attended Florence State Teacher’s College and graduated from the University of Alabama. He practiced law in Tuscaloosa for 66 years, achieving distinction as one of the longest practicing attorneys in the State of Alabama.

Barbara Leigh Simms attended Florence State, and worked for 30 years as a management support assistant for the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center.

Anne Parrish attended Florence State Teachers College and worked at the University of North Carolina Anatomy Department, where she earned a degree in social work. Anne devoted her life to helping troubled adolescent children. She worked at Wright School in Durham for several years and at John Umstead Hospital as a Psychiatric Social Worker for 30 years before retiring. She also worked as a co-therapist in family therapy private practice.

Robbie Nell Tays Link attended Florence State Teachers College before accepting a position with the United States Air Force in Washington, D.C., where she met her husband, John Link, whom she married in 1953. John and Robbie spent most of their life together in the Fort Wayne area in Indiana, where they raised their four children.
ALUMNI INFORMATION UPDATE

Name (include maiden name if applicable) ____________________________________________

Graduation Year(s) and Major(s) ____________________________________________________

Address _________________________________________________________________________

City ________________________________ State __________________________ Zip ___________

Home telephone ____________________________ E-mail address _______________________

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