Areté

[excellence • virtue]

UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | FALL 2018



A DIVERSE APPROACH

MTSU's Honors College boasts a rising percentage of minority students

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

HONOR | COMMITMENT | INTEGRITY | DISCIPLINE | FAITH | CURIOSITY | CHARACTER | CREATIVITY | Vol. 44 No. 2

FALL 2018

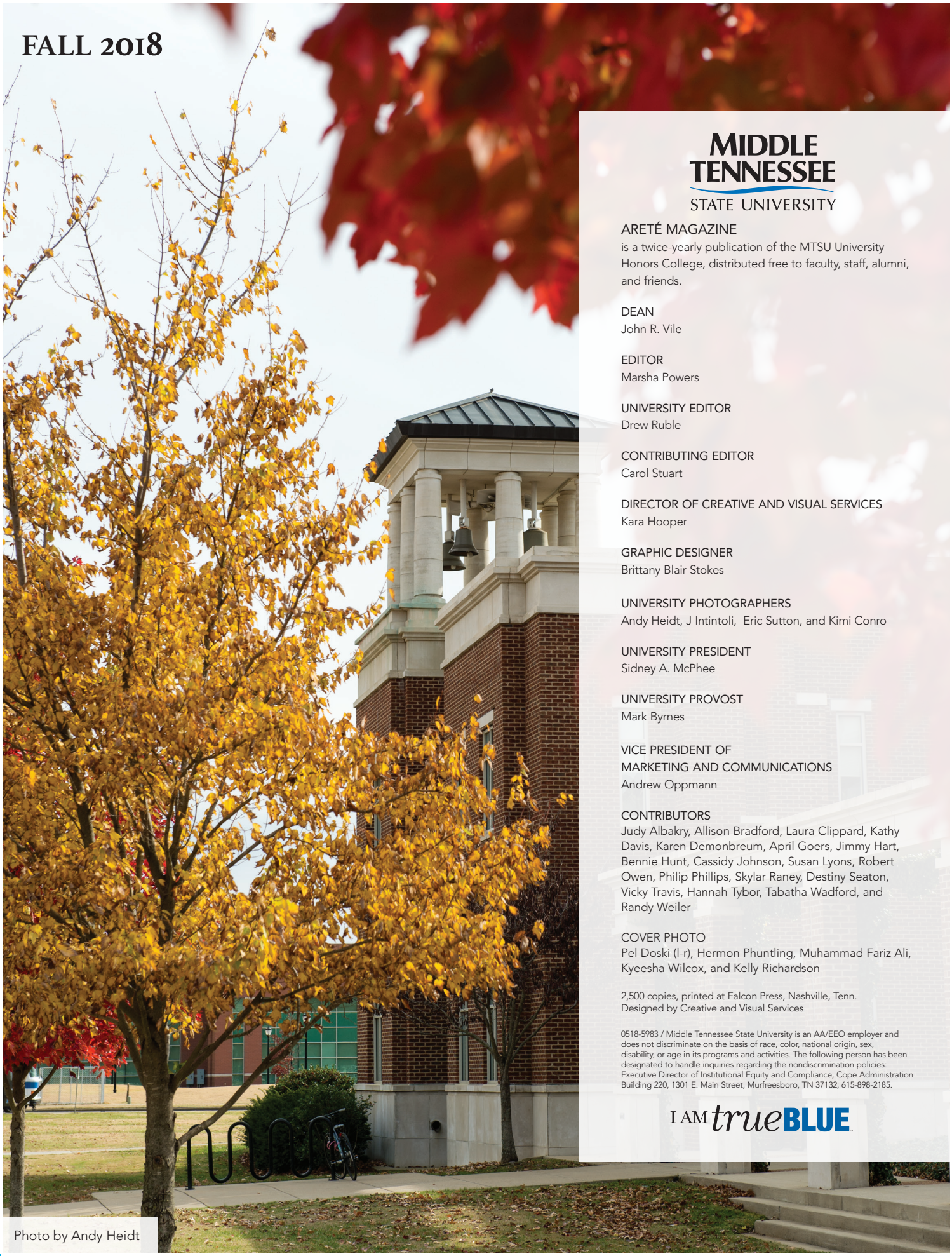


Photo by Andy Heidt

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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I AM trueBLUE







5 Students

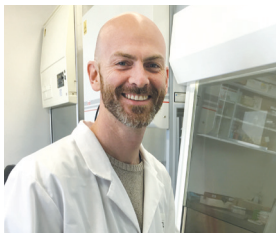






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Honors College broadens students' academic horizons with help of professors like Kaylene Gebert

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK Virtue of gratitude



In my column in the last issue of this magazine, I directed attention to its new name—*Areté*—and our intention, by using it, of highlighting both excellence and virtue. I noted that our building proudly displays eight virtues that we encourage our students to emulate.

This issue highlights achievements of a diverse group of students who have won Fulbright Scholarships, our first Udall Scholarship, Gilman Scholarships, Research Experiences for Undergraduates, and other awards. At least three students won multiple scholarships, forcing them to choose between them.

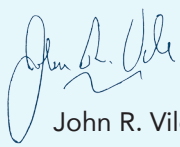
In addition to these national and international scholarships, the Honors College is able to award other scholarships through the generosity of its Board of Visitors and other contributors. These go to acknowledge special achievements and to support passport fees and study abroad, attendance at scholarly conferences and competitions, and other worthy endeavors.

> "I want our donors to know that, in addition to their other virtues, many of our students display the virtue of gratitude."

I want our donors to know that, in addition to their other virtues, many of our students display the virtue of gratitude. We seek to promote such gratitude by encouraging scholarship recipients to send letters to donors. One particularly impressed me. This year's recipient of the Michael Martinelli Award not only made a special effort to find out about the namesake of this award (one of my former students who died in a tragic accident), but also drew a sketch of Michael that she included in her thank you note. Of course, not everyone has this student's keen artistic eye, but I have had many make a special point to tell us how important their scholarships have been to the continuation of their studies.

Our Honors students show their gratitude in other ways as well. It is very common for students who write Honors theses to acknowledge the special role that family members and Honors faculty and staff have played in their lives. Students participate with our Omicron Delta Kappa circle in visits to Adams Place to help senior citizens with technology issues. Others joined a recent event sponsored by Phi Kappa Phi to raise money to fight cancer. Again this year, one of our students received the statewide Harold J. Love Community Service Award for work that he has done with medical missions. Some of our Honors alumni serve on our Board of Visitors, contribute money, and attend Honors events.

Having now passed my 10th year as Honors dean, I would like to express my own gratitude for being in a position where I can help to serve "Tennessee's best." This has truly been an honor and a privilege. Although it is common to bemoan the shortcomings of "today's generation," it is a continuing joy to see how our students contradict this stereotype. I am convinced that they will continue to pay their own privileges forward, not simply for personal gain but also for the Honors College, MTSU, and the public good.



John R. Vile

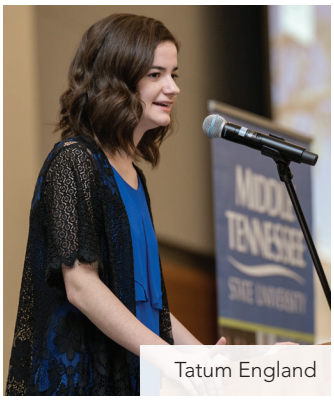
areté

noun (ahr-i-**tey**)

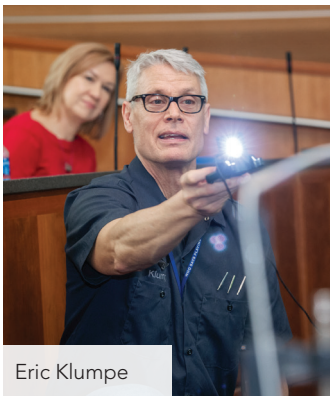
the aggregate of qualities, as valor and virtue, making up good character



Tamika Mitchell, University College



Tatum England



Eric Klumpe



Emily Yttri, Jones College of Business

OPEN INVITATION

Presidents Day event attracts high-achieving prospective students

More than 250 high school and transfer students and their families attended the Honors College Presidents Day open house in February. The daylong event helped prospective students learn more about the Honors College by offering educational and fun events, Honors staff member Laura Clippard said.

Attendees were able to meet people who could answer questions and show them the campus and its academic departments while also talking with current Honors students, financial aid and scholarship staff, and academic advisors. "We had many Honors students volunteer so students could speak directly with them about their experiences," Clippard said.

For prospective students, MTSU's Honors College provides the academic excellence and nurturing environment of a small, select, private liberal arts college within the setting of a major university. It also provides expert faculty, unique curricular and extracurricular experiences, and *Collage*, an award-winning arts and literary magazine.

Admissions joined the Honors College in hosting the event. All of the University's colleges, Housing and Residential Life, and the MTSU Parent and Family Association shared information with the visitors.

The open house included tours (Walker Library, Aerospace air traffic control, and Recording Industry facilities), a "mad science" demonstration with Physics Professor Eric Klumpe, and Mock Trial demonstrations. It also included an option to attend the spring Honors Lecture Series.



Dean John R. Vile



Dean John R. Vile greets guests.



MEET THE 2018 BUCHANAN FELLOWS

This fall, 20 freshmen joined the elite group of students accepted into the Buchanan Fellowship Program, the highest academic honor bestowed upon entering freshmen at MTSU. The scholarship program is named in honor of Dr. James M. Buchanan, an MTSU alumnus and Nobel Prize winner. Collectively, the students represent the states of Ohio, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee and average a 33.5 ACT score and 3.968 high school GPA.

Jessika Leann Benson is from Murfreesboro and is a graduate of Homelife Academy. An Animal Science major, she is the daughter of Jason Benson and Sue Benson.

Mark Douglas Blackmon, a graduate of Central Magnet School, is the son of Marsha Thompson and Doug Blackmon of Murfreesboro. His major is Family and Consumer Studies.

Catheryn Amber Bolick attended Stewarts Creek High School. The daughter of Kelly Bolick, she is majoring in Biology and Music.

Miquellie Brucine Bonner graduated from Mount Juliet High School. She is the daughter of Michelle Bonner and is a Forensic Science major.

Alyssa Paige Chaney, from Pleasant Plain, Ohio, attended Goshen High School and is the daughter of Ryan and Jeanne Chaney. She is majoring in Animal Science.

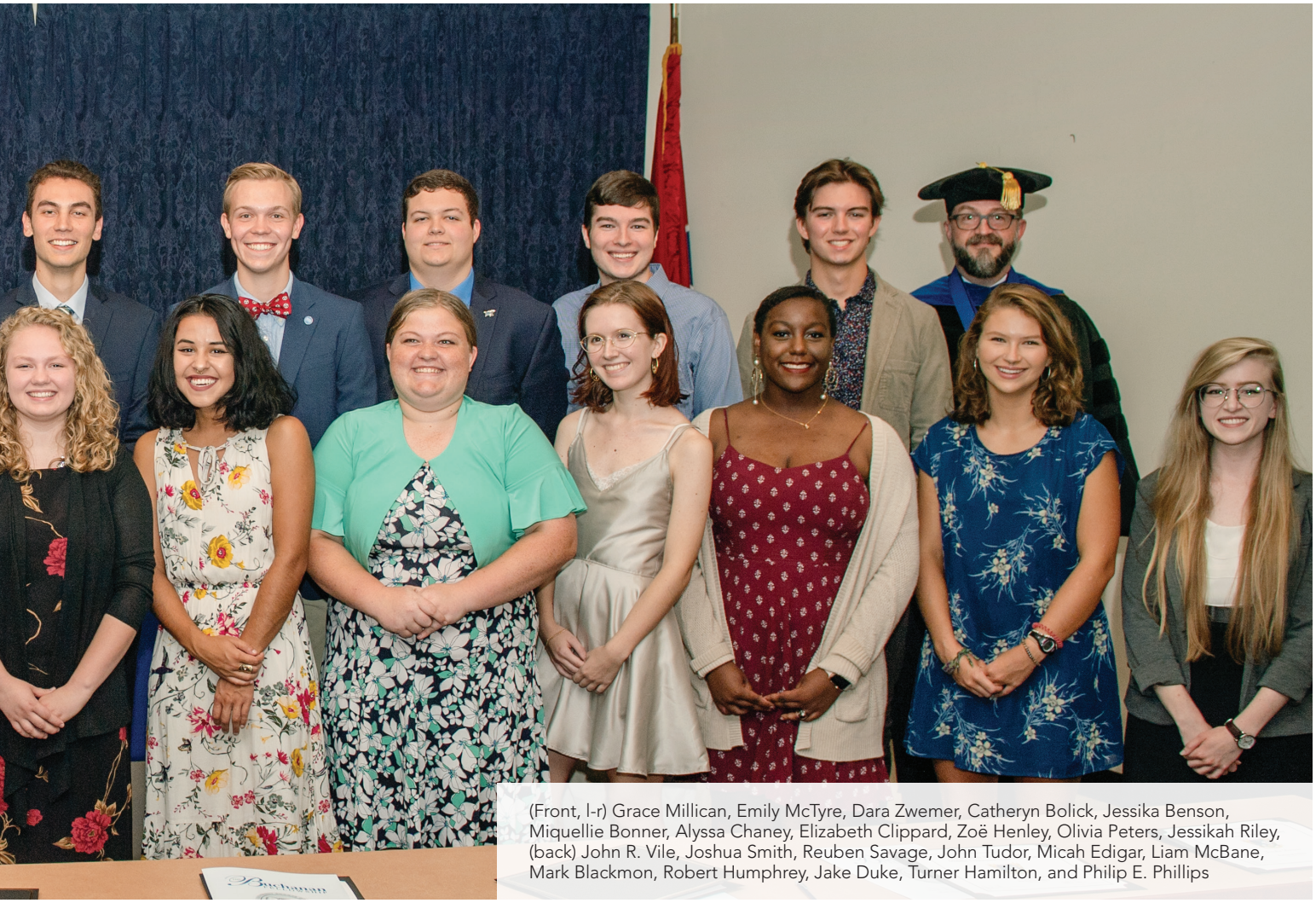
Elizabeth Ann Clippard, who is from Murfreesboro, graduated from Oakland High School. Her major is Biology, and she is the daughter of Laura and Steven Clippard.

Jake Alan Duke, the son of John and Joleana Duke, is from Unionville and attended Eagleville High School. He is majoring in Plant and Soil Science.

Micah Samuel Ediger attended North Gwinnett High School in Suwanee, Georgia. An Audio Production major, he is the son of Chris and Andrea Ediger.

Jared Gregory Frazier is from Spring Hill and graduated from Independence High School. He is the son of Diana and Gregory Frazier, and his academic focus is Basic and Applied Science.

Turner Allen Bruce Hamilton, the son of Elizabeth Hamilton and Mark Hamilton, is a graduate of Vestavia



(Front, l-r) Grace Millican, Emily McTyre, Dara Zwemer, Catheryn Bolick, Jessika Benson, Miquellie Bonner, Alyssa Chaney, Elizabeth Clippard, Zoë Henley, Olivia Peters, Jessikah Riley, (back) John R. Vile, Joshua Smith, Reuben Savage, John Tudor, Micah Edigar, Liam McBane, Mark Blackmon, Robert Humphrey, Jake Duke, Turner Hamilton, and Philip E. Phillips

Hills High School in Alabama. He is studying Music.

Zoë Denae Henley attended White Station High School in Memphis. She is majoring in Anthropology and is the daughter of Charlsy and Elbert Henley.

Robert Bryant Humphrey graduated from Warren County High School in McMinnville. He is a Science (Pre-Med) major and the son of Gloria and Dale Humphrey.

Liam Bruce McBane is a homeschooler from Lilburn, Georgia. He is the son of Cheryl McBane and Lachlan McBane and is majoring in Music.

Grace Elizabeth Millican, who is from Mufreesboro, attended Siegel High School and is the daughter of Jodi and Matt Millican. She is majoring in Biochemistry.

Olivia Marie Peters, a graduate of L&N STEM Academy in Knoxville, is the daughter of Diane Peters and Todd Peters. Her academic focus is Basic and Applied Science.

Jessikah Danielle Riley, the daughter of Marta Riley and Larry Riley, is from Murfreesboro. A graduate of Riverdale High School, she plans to major in Biology

Reuben Elijah Savage is from Murfreesboro and attended Central Magnet School. He is the son of Ryan Savage, and his academic focus is Education.

Joshua Michael Smith, a graduate of Morristown Hamblen High School, is the son of Kim Smith and Stephen Smith. He is majoring in Music.

John David Tudor of Hendersonville is a graduate of Aaron Academy. He is the son of Jill and Jeff Tutor and is a Physics major.

Dara Uriel Zwemer of Murfreesboro is the daughter of Jessica Duncan and Rodger Zwemer. She is a graduate of Oakland High School and is majoring in Psychology.

PKP HOLDS SPRING INITIATION CEREMONY



Beverly Warner and Benjamin Kulas

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (PKP) initiated 20 Honors students into its MTSU chapter April 10 and recognized 12 current members of the Honors faculty as influential faculty designated by the student initiates.

Dianna Z. Rust, Phi Kappa Phi Chapter #246 president, presented member certificates and awards. **David J. Urban**, dean of the Jennings A. Jones College of Business, was keynote speaker for the ceremony, which took place in the Student Union Ballroom.

Phi Kappa Phi encourages and recognizes superior scholarship in all academic disciplines. Junior initiates must rank in the top 7.5 percent of their class. Seniors must rank in the top 10 percent of their class.



Ken Paulson and Roque Marcelo



Saeed Foroudastan and Robert Owen

Honors Student PKP Initiates

Basic and Applied Sciences

Isabella Barnett
Brianna Bauman
Jonathan Ciecka
Devyn Hayes
Robert Owen
Sydney Smith
Beverly Warner

Behavioral and Health Sciences

Samantha Eisenberg
Andrew Heim
Whitney Ingle
Jon-Thomas Neely
Stacey Yabko Misra

Liberal Arts

Hannah Giles
Seth Jones
Sarah Wilfong Joblin

Media and Entertainment

Cassidy Johnson
Brady Lundt
Roque Marcelo
Destiny Seaton

Jones College of Business

Matthew Cureton



Barbara Turnage and Stacey Yabko Misra



David J. Urban



Benjamin Kulas

Influential Honors Faculty

Sanjay Asthana
Yuan-Ling Chao
Paul Fischer
Kaylene Gebert
Nancy Goldberg
Charles Higgins
Eric Klumpe
Preston MacDougall
Patrick McCarthy
Ryan Otter
Karen Petersen
Stephen Wright
Jan Zijlstra



Beverly Warner (left), Sydney Smith, and Devyn Hayes are inaugurated into Phi Kappa Phi.



Ken Paulson and Alexis Carter



Samuel Musili



Kristen Cunningham



Robert Owen

HONORS SWEEP

Students from Honors College capture campus, state awards

Each spring, the Honors College anticipates the announcement of MTSU's Campus Award winners, knowing that hardworking overachievers are excellent candidates for the awards. This year, every campus award recipient and MTSU's statewide community service winner were Honors students. In addition, MTSU had an Honors faculty winner for a state community service award.

Fellowships coordinator Laura Clippard described this year's winners as having "high energy, a drive to learn, and a commitment to their community." Winners are:

- **Katiana N. Nicholson,** President's Award
- **Kirsten D. Cunningham,** Provost's Award
- **Alex M. Knight,** Community Service Award
- **Samuel M. Musili,** Robert C. LaLance Jr. Achievement Award
- **Robert L. Owen,** Harold Love Outstanding Community Service Award (student)
- **Dean John R. Vile,** Harold Love Outstanding Community Service Award (faculty)

Nicholson (May graduate in Music Education), Musili (Political Science major), and Vile (Political Science professor) are products of the College of Liberal Arts. Cunningham (Biology and Chemistry), Knight (Biology degree in May), and Owen (Biology major) represent the College of Basic and Applied Sciences.

"I want to do my professors proud," Nicholson said. "I couldn't have done it without those who helped me every step of the way. I am honored and happy to be selected to represent the class of 2018 and to receive the President's Award."

> "I believe that you should do things out of the kindness of your heart without expecting praise from anyone."

Clippard described Nicholson as having "a strong passion for academics, as well as a desire to mentor music students." Nicholson has a "pay-it-forward" mentality, which she believes contributed to her selection for the award and which is evident by her many summers serving as a music counselor for Governor's School and assisting with high school band camps. An Honors Buchanan Fellow with outstanding instrumental and vocal music skills, she expressed great pride and excitement at the prospect of going straight into teaching after graduation this spring.

For Cunningham, the Provost's Award is a validation of her efforts: "It's nice to be recognized and appreciated." A single mom, she has previously won a Barry Goldwater Scholarship and has since continued to challenge herself; she completed a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows Program at the

Scripps Research Institute this year. Cunningham also has three publications, has presented at international conferences, and has maintained a 4.0 GPA.

One glance at Knight's resume reveals his commitment to community service. Originally from Uzbekistan, he began volunteering in his sophomore year at Hendersonville High School. He said his first volunteer experience at a nursing home "pushed me into health care and helped me choose my path and my career." Since 2012, Knight has volunteered hundreds of hours at senior living facilities, in addition to hours with the MTSU Science Olympiad, Expanding Your Horizons, Christmas4kids, Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital, Nashville Rock and Roll Marathon, medical missions, Paws and Palms, and Operation Christmas Child.

> "I couldn't have done it without those who helped me every step of the way."

Musili says he was surprised and honored to be nominated for the Lalance award. "I believe that you should do things out of the kindness of your heart without expecting praise from anyone," he said. The Nairobi, Kenya, native has been in middle Tennessee 13 years and is a first-generation college student. While at MTSU, he has studied abroad twice, interned in Washington, D.C., and completed an Honors thesis while giving back to the campus and community.

"My mom bought a house through the Habitat for Humanity program about a decade ago, and it made such a difference in my life. I wanted to do the same for others," Musili said.

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission selected five faculty/staff members statewide and five students to receive a Harold Love Outstanding Community Service Award. MTSU's two conferees, Owen and Vile, attended an April reception in Nashville honoring winners.

Owen, an Honors Transfer Fellow, said he was "humbled to be honored in the name of the late state Rep. Harold Love Sr., whose compassion and sacrificial generosity greatly inspire me." Owen has participated in medical mission trips to serve leprosy victims in rural Kenya and aided Syrian and Iraqi war refugees in Beirut, Lebanon. This summer, he and his wife served in impoverished areas of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, and volunteered with Remote Area Medical and Saint Thomas Health medical missions in rural Tennessee. He also has started youth programs and is a volunteer minister.

Vile sees himself "as but one of many of the students, faculty, and staff at MTSU who seek not only to serve the campus but also the community of which we are a part." He has had the opportunity to give back as a political scientist commenting on public matters to local civic groups and to the media. His numerous books on the Constitution and recent books on the U.S. flag and the Declaration of Independence provide many opportunities for public presentations. A resident of middle Tennessee for 29 years, Vile, inspired by his parents who served as missionaries, and in the church, has been active in church work.



Alex Knight



Katiana Nicholson



John R. Vile

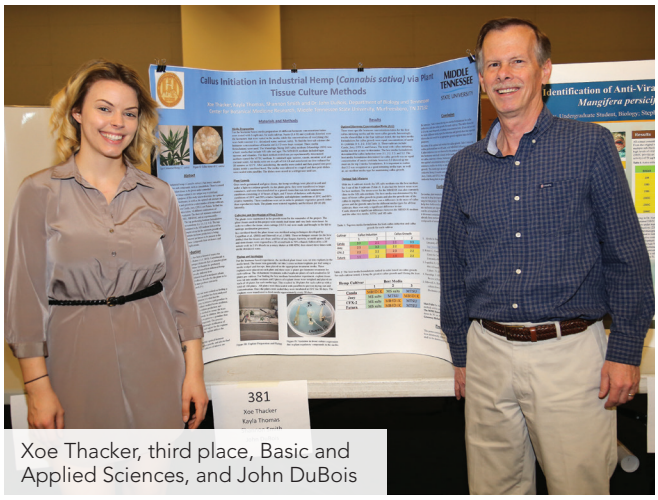
2018 SCHOLARS WEEK EXPO



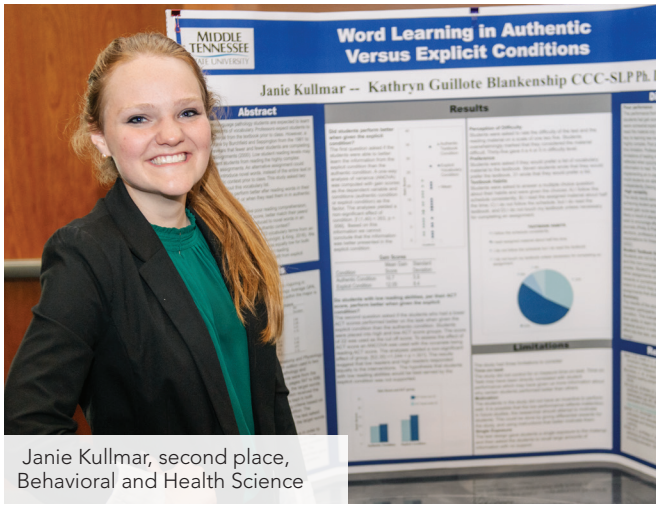
President Sidney A. McPhee and Mahmuda Akter



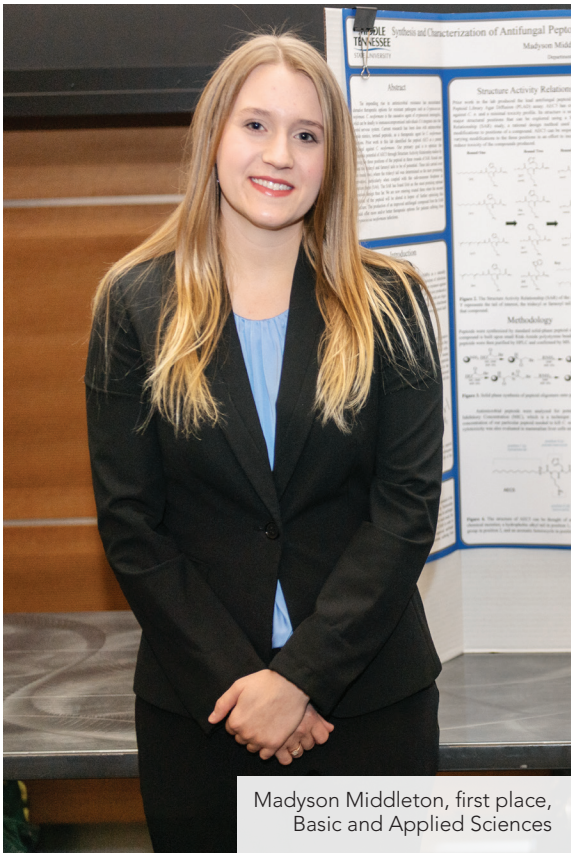
Kyeesha Wilcox, third place, Liberal Arts



Xoe Thacker, third place, Basic and Applied Sciences, and John DuBois



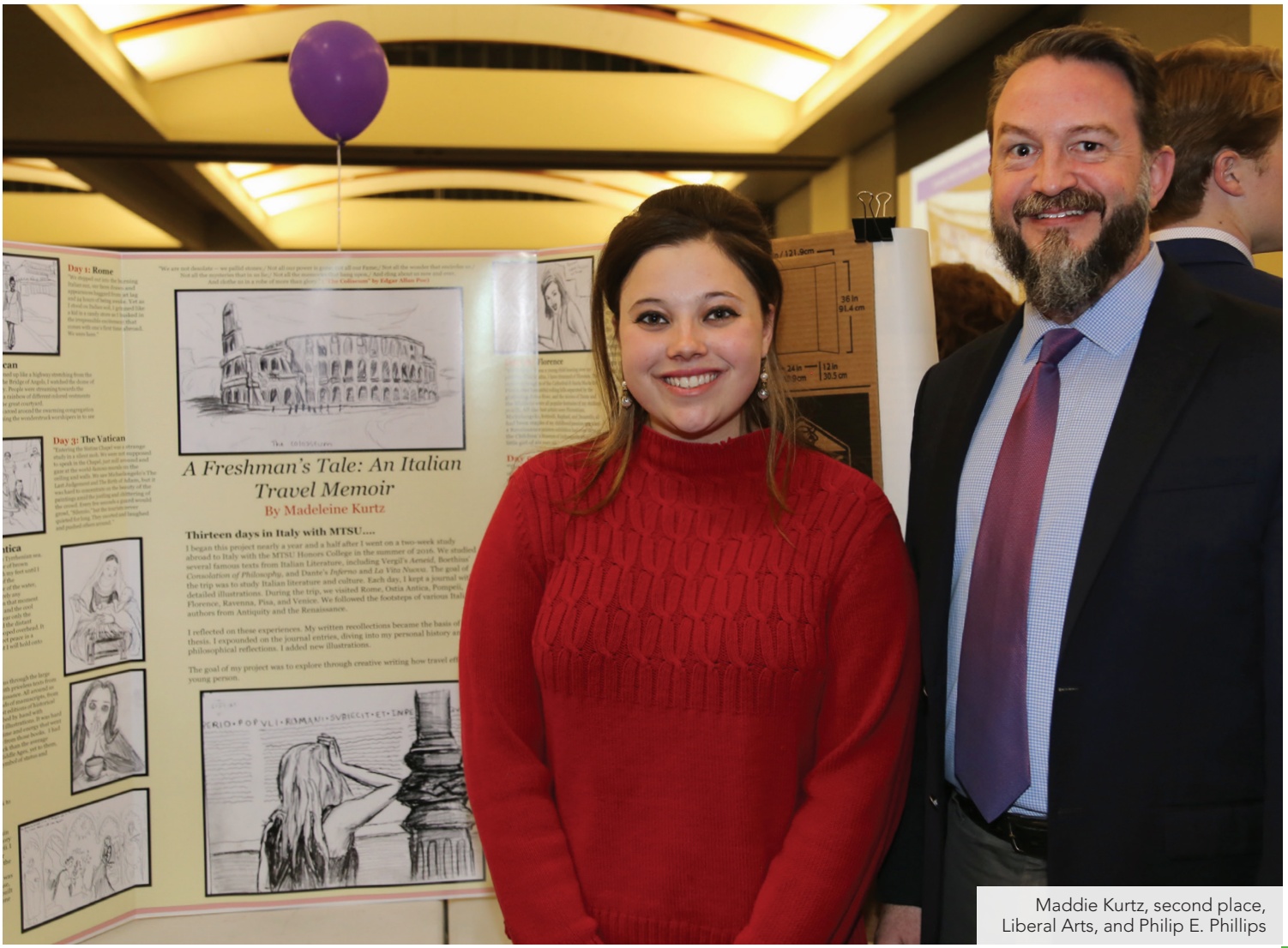
Janie Kullmar, second place, Behavioral and Health Science



Madyson Middleton, first place, Basic and Applied Sciences



Muhammad Fariz Ali



Maddie Kurtz, second place, Liberal Arts, and Philip E. Phillips



Alyssa Smith



Hermon Phuntling



Brittney Johnson

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AROUND THE WORLD

Fellowships Office efforts lead to student success nationally and internationally



Samuel Remedios



Leia Green

Olympic soccer gold medalist Mia Hamm and Honors College Dean John R. Vile agree on at least one thing: "Success breeds success."

MTSU has gained and maintained a reputation for producing students with high academic achievement, outstanding research skills, and a drive to succeed and has seen numerous students receive national and international recognition in recent years. The 2017–18 academic year was no exception. Sixteen MTSU students were awarded some of the most distinguished scholarships and grants available to undergraduates, including two Fulbright U.S. Student awards and the University's first Fulbright U.K. Summer Institute opportunities.

The 2017–18 winners from MTSU were willing to risk failure for the opportunity of success. However, several of these hardworking and dedicated applicants faced an unexpected dilemma, according to Fellowships coordinator Laura Clippard.

"We encourage students to apply for many national opportunities. Occasionally, they develop a 'good problem,' meaning they receive more than one offer for great opportunities that conflict with each other," she said. "For example, **Destiny Seaton** was offered both the Udall Scholarship and the Critical Language Scholarship and had to choose. She decided on the Udall because of its strong match for her career goals, but both fellowships are rewarding. Honestly, we hope to have more of these good problems."

Seaton, MTSU's first Udall Scholarship winner, is an Honors Transfer Fellow majoring in Journalism. Her goals include earning an M.S. in Communication and traveling to Indonesia to work on her graduate thesis.

In addition to Seaton's tough decision, 2018 Honors graduate **Hermon Phuntling** had to choose between a Fulbright Scholarship and the Peace Corps (*see related article on page 36*), and **Kirsten Cunningham** selected a Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) with Scripps over a summer research opportunity in Germany.

The Peace Corps offered a health extension worker position to Phuntling, a Global Studies major, who traveled to Benin, West Africa, where he hopes to "bridge gaps of existing health disparities among community members by managing projects and programs."

Cunningham, a Biology and Chemistry major, previously won a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship. Her current award, an REU with Scripps, allowed her to study the interface between chemistry and biology. Her future plans involve earning a Ph.D. in biomedical research and eventually becoming a professor.

Each award provided recipients the opportunity to travel, study, perform research, learn languages, and/or improve their cultural and social knowledge.

This year's Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship winners from MTSU traveled to Japan, Chile, Austria, Brazil, and Spain. **Cheyenne Rainey**, a Photography major, studied at Reitaku University in Japan. **Brittney Johnson**, a double-major in Global Studies and Spanish who hopes to one day work as a foreign service officer, traveled to Santiago, Chile. A Music Performance major, **Logan Barrett** ventured to Vienna to study classical music. **Alyssa Smith**, majoring in Sociology, had a hands-on study abroad experience in Brazil. **Yanett Torres**, an Advertising major, participated in an international marketing course in Barcelona, Spain.

Jocelyn Mercado, a senior Political Science major, attended the PPIA Public Service Weekend at the University of Colorado, and **Imani Williams**, a recent Honors graduate who majored in Journalism, took part in Carnegie Mellon University's Public Service Weekend in Washington, D.C. Both women hope their experiences will further their career goals.

Pel Doski, a 2018 Honors graduate with a B.S. in Biology, was awarded a Fulbright to South Korea. She traveled to the country with the intention of becoming more fluent in Korean, which she spent the past seven years teaching herself, and for the experience of teaching English to middle and high school students. Her long-term goal is to become a professor.

> "Occasionally, they develop a 'good problem,' meaning they receive more than one offer for great opportunities that conflict with each other."

Fulbright recipient **Leia Green**, a Spanish major, journeyed to Argentina. A former traveler to Costa Rica, Spain, and Colombia, she hopes the Fulbright experience will help her reach her goal of becoming a U.S. ambassador.


Destiny Seaton


Emily McTyre


Logan Barrett


Joshua Brinegar


Cheyenne Rainey


Kelsey Keith


Brooke Fitzwater


Jocelyn Mercado


Pel Doski


Imani Williams


Kristen Cunningham


Yanett Torres

Buchanan Fellow **Joshua Brinegar**, majoring in Concrete Industry Management, was awarded an REU at Tennessee Tech University to study energy conservation. He hopes eventually to attain an M.S. in Geology and work to restore areas affected by natural disasters or pursue a doctorate and teach.

Brooke Fitzwater, a recent Honors graduate with a degree in Biology, received a Marine Conservation Grant from the Women Divers Hall of Fame. She plans to earn a doctorate in Marine Biology and to conduct research on animal behavior in a marine setting.

“Are you afraid of the odds? Apply.”

The 2017–18 international recognitions included not one, but two Fulbright U.K. Summer Institute participants, **Emily McIntyre** and **Kelsey Keith** (see related article on page 28). McIntyre, a sophomore Video and Film Production major, took classes in film and video at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. Keith, a sophomore Buchanan Fellow majoring in English, traveled to the University of Bristol to study arts and politics, specifically concerning cultural awareness and the arts.

In addition, **Samuel Remedios**, a junior majoring in Computer Science, was named as a Barry Goldwater Honorable Mention. He plans to earn a Ph.D. and become a professor or a professional researcher.

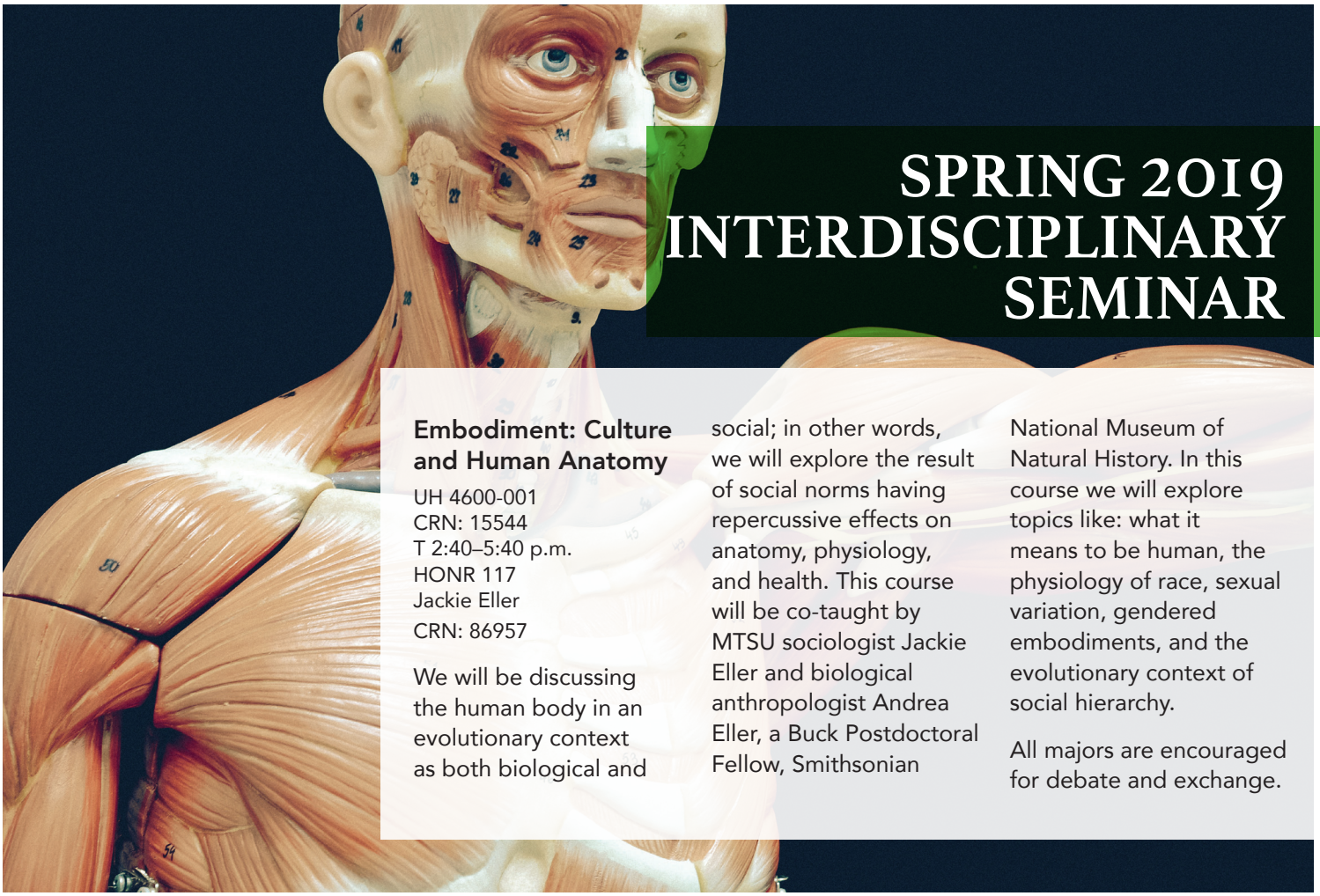
“Winning a national or an international award, gives validation by sources outside our University that our students are comparable to great students at other institutions,” said Vile, the Honors College dean. “It speaks highly of the quality of our students.”

Vile advises students, particularly freshmen and sophomores, to apply for an MTSU Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity (URECA) grant or an REU or to study abroad because “once you get one of those on your transcript, then that gives you further credibility—again, outside recognition—for another award.”

Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips suggested that well-written narratives, high GRE scores, community service, and participation in challenging coursework contribute to a student’s chance at fellowship success.

“So, are you afraid of the odds? Apply,” Vile said. “Do you think someone else is more qualified? Apply. Do you doubt your own talents and abilities? Apply.”

In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, “It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.”



SPRING 2019 INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR

Embodiment: Culture and Human Anatomy

UH 4600-001
CRN: 15544
T 2:40–5:40 p.m.
HONR 117
Jackie Eller
CRN: 86957

We will be discussing the human body in an evolutionary context as both biological and social; in other words, we will explore the result of social norms having repercussive effects on anatomy, physiology, and health. This course will be co-taught by MTSU sociologist Jackie Eller and biological anthropologist Andrea Eller, a Buck Postdoctoral Fellow, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. In this course we will explore topics like: what it means to be human, the physiology of race, sexual variation, gendered embodiments, and the evolutionary context of social hierarchy.

All majors are encouraged for debate and exchange.



VISITING ARTIST SEMINAR

Stephen Barnum (left), Nathan Wahl, Jacob Smith, Madeleine Gebacz, Olivia Powell, and Fred Arroyo

SPRING 2018 THESES DEFENDED



Bassam Aboona
Physics
"Toward Microscopic Equations of State for Core-Collapse Supernovae from Chiral Effective Field Theory"
Jeremy Holt, advisor



Samantha Diane Addis
Geology
"A Window to the Past: An Artistic Reconstruction of Miocene Tennessee"
Tammy Melton, advisor



Muhammad Osama Ali
Biology
"Synthesis of Highly Polar Pyridinium Liquid Crystals Derived from the [*closo*-B_{12}]$^{2-}$ and [*closo*-$B_{10}H_{10}$]$^{2-}$ anions"
Andrienne Friedli, advisor



Holly Aslinger
Anthropology and Music
"An Archaeobotanical Analysis of Site 40DV7"
Andrew Wyatt, advisor



Rookery Sarah Baruch
Computer Science
"Studying up on Study Abroad: Design and Development of an MT Travel Blog"
Medha S. Sarkar, advisor



Emily Brackett
Biology
"Thanatomicrobiome Signatures in Drug Overdoes Cases"
Frank C. Bailey, advisor



Ben Burton
Physics
"Design, Fabrication, and Testing of the Photonic Crystal-Based Biosensor Design"
William M. Robertson, advisor



Jonathan Butler
German
"Vengeance is Mine: A Translation"
Michael Rice, advisor



Stephanie Carpenter
Psychology
"Are Educational Trajectories Influenced by Childhood and Adolescent Experiences of Bullying?"
Ariana Postlethwait, advisor



Rebecca Clippard
Spanish and Japanese
"Ellen Wants Purple Ramen: Creative Storytelling to Increase Japanese Fluency"
Shelley Thomas, advisor



Evan Conley
Biology
"God Save Sage: Self-Exploration Through Hip-Hop"
James P. Oliver, advisor



Caitlin Couch
Marketing
"Communication and Connection: Helping G.I.R.L.S. Ranch Recruit and Retain Volunteers"
Andrea L. Phillips, advisor



Maia Council
History
"*Into the White Cold Again:* A Novel"
Mark E. Doyle, advisor



Noah Delk
International Relations and German
"European Political Economy: Which Factors Make Some Member States of the European Union More Economically Competitive Than Others?"
Karen K. Petersen, advisor



Pel S. Doski
Biology
"The Effect of Host Gender on the Glucuronoxylomannan Capsule of *Cryptococcus neoformans*"
Erin E. McClelland, advisor



Jason Fleischmann
Political Science
"The Root Causes of Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa: Contradictions and Trends"
David E. Carleton, advisor



Kenneth Goit
Mathematics
"The Worth of NFL Free Agent Quarterbacks"
Michael A. Roach, advisor



Miranda Hahn
Anthropology
"Interpretation of Haplogroup H in an Enslaved Individual"
Shannon Hodge, advisor



Andrew Heim
Psychology
"Ambiguous and Unambiguous Stimuli Validation for Use in Conformity Experiments"
Jon A. Frederick, advisor



Devin Skye Irish
Political Science
"Resolutions and Recidivism: The Case for Debate Programs in Federal and State Prisons"
Patrick G. Richey, advisor



Austin Jones
Recording Industry
"A Study in Small Room Acoustics for the Purpose of Recording"
Michael L. Hanson, advisor



Hannah Kanyuh
Nursing
"A Comparison of Perceived Stress in Nursing Students and Students of Other Majors"
Amanda J. Flagg, advisor



Daniel Knickerbocker
Philosophy and Japanese
"An Analysis of Normative Language"
Ronald J. Bombardi, advisor



Alex Knight
Biology
"The Fischer Indole Synthesis"
Scott T. Handy, advisor



Madeleine Kurtz
English
"A Freshman's Tale: An Italian Travel Memoir"
Philip E. Phillips, advisor



Jeffrey LaPorte
Anthropology
"Magic in the Making: An Exploration of the Role of Magic and Materiality in the Construction of Religious Legitimacy Among the Neo-Pagans of Middle and East Tennessee"
Ida Fadzillah Leggett, advisor



Aliyah Lyons
Visual Communication
"Post-Education Abroad Perspectives of a Young Black Woman"
Leslie G. Haines, advisor



Margaret McPheeters

Animation

"*On the Run:* A New Paradigm for Representation in Children's Media"

Allie Sultan, advisor



Jacob Miller

Audio Production

"An Implementation of the Equipment and Techniques Used by The Beatles at Abbey Road during the 1960s"

Cossette R. Collier, advisor



Meghan Miller

Integrated Studies

"Immanuel: A Creative Interpretation of the Gospels"

Joan McRae, advisor



Tiffany R. Miller

International Relations and Spanish

"A Battle for the Mind: The Use of 'Reacting to the Past' in the Academically At-Risk Classroom"

Dawn McCormack, advisor



Lauren Morris

Psychology

"Effects of Mortality Salience on Religiosity and Transphobia"

John T. Pennington, advisor



Andrew Conner Moss

Biology

"Assay of Novel Belactosin A/ Carfilzomib Hybrid as Proteasome Inhibitors"

Norma K. Dunlap, advisor



Samuel Musili

Political Science

"Immigrant Educational Attainment in the United States: Difference by Age at Immigration, Place of Origin, and Race"

Foster K. Amey, advisor



Macie Mussleman

Psychology

"Communication and Negotiation Training for Sorority Women"

Alexander T. Jackson, advisor



Amanda Megan Nadler

Nursing

"Suicide Ideation in College Students: A Review of Predicting Factors, Buffers, and Proposed Interventions"

Kathleen Darby, advisor



Robert Loren Owen

Biology

"Examining the Effects of Manipulating Chaperone-Mediated Autophagy on Stress-Induced Nuclear Granules (SINGs) within the Nuclei of Oocytes of Caenorhabditis elegans"

Lynn Boyd, advisor



Barbara Pafetti

Biology

"Socioeconomic Impact of Implementation of In-State College Tuition for Discouraged Undocumented Students at Middle Tennessee State University"

Laura B. Clark, advisor



Aundrea Paredes

Integrated Studies

"The South and Romance across the Color Line 1840–1870"

Kristine M. McCusker, advisor



Hermon Phuntling

Global Studies and Audiology

"The Perceptions, Accessibility, and Use of PrEP and PEP as an HIV Transmission Inhibitor Tool among MSM College Students"

Brian P. Hinote, advisor



Madison Pitts

Studio Art

"*The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*: A Video Installation Work"

Allie Sultan, advisor



Kelly Richardson
Political Science
"If God Is for Us, Who Can Be Against Us": An Analysis of the Black Church, Political Engagement, and Black College Students"
Sekou M. Franklin, advisor



Cayman Seagraves
Finance
"Academic Tenure and Housing Choice"
Stuart J. Fowler, advisor



Sydney Smith
Physics and Philosophy
"A New Approach to Research Communication: Sharing Results Through Stories"
Preston McDougall, advisor



Kayla Lynn Thomas
Biology
"Determination of Optimal Mineral Nutrient Levels in Tissue Culture Media for Callus Production of Industrial Hemp (*Cannabis sativa*)"
Dianna Rust, advisor



Joshua Tilton
English
"Objectifying Innocence"
Gaylord Brewer, advisor



Sophie Toms
Early Childhood Education
"A Study of the Relationship Between General Education Teachers and the Parents of Children with Disabilities in an Inclusive Classroom"
Seok Jeng Lim, advisor



Hannah Tybor
Public Relations
"Love Makes a Family: A Collection of Adoption Stories"
Tricia M. Farwell, advisor



Rachel Vincent
International Relations
"The Rise of Right-Wing Populism through Memes in the 2016 Presidential Election"
Robb A. McDaniel, advisor



Sarah E. Wester
Criminal Justice Administration
"The Mentally Ill Within the Criminal Justice System: An Analysis Examining Techniques Developed Within Criminal Justice to Adapt to the Growing Mentally Ill Population"
Elizabeth Quinn, advisor



Kyeesha M. Wilcox
Global Studies
"Assessing Type 2 Diabetes Risk Perception Among College Students and Creating Health Education Tools Using the Health Belief Model"
Bethany Wrye, advisor



Anthony LaVonne Williams II
Recording Industry
"Music with A Theme: An Academic Approach to Building a Concept Album, a Creative Project"
Misty Jones, advisor



Emma K. Williams
Recording Industry
"Reimagining Social Commentary Music of World War II America"
Kristine M. McCusker, advisor



Abigail K. Young
Nursing
"The Shot College Students Don't Like—The Flu Vaccine: Will Information Persuade Students to Become Vaccinated?"
Barbara W. Lancaster, advisor



Justin Tyler Young
Agribusiness
"Continental European Beef Breeds: Their Use and Impact on the United States Beef Industry"
Jessica G. Carter, advisor



MEET THE 2018 TRANSFER FELLOWS

(Front, l-r) Laneece Hurd, Lisa Hardie, Sandra Flavin, Montgomery Barreto, Caitlynn Ellis, Aleana Boudle, Sabrina Washington, Britney Brown, (back) Anuradha Nugawela, Lillian Beck, Audrey Creel, Landon Johnson, Elliott Bright, Molly McCarthy, and Anthony Weatherford

Thirty-one new students, representing five states and 20 cities in Tennessee, joined the elite group of students accepted into the Transfer Fellowship Program, the highest academic honor bestowed upon students transferring to MTSU from other institutions.

Kaleb Askren is a transfer student from Motlow State Community College and is majoring in Computer Science.

Montgomery Barreto, from Volunteer State Community College, is seeking a degree in Accounting.

Lillian Beck, a transfer from Columbia State Community College, is studying Speech-Language Pathology and Audology.

Aleana Boudle, an Animal Science major, transferred from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, Georgia.

Elliot Bright, a Columbia State transfer, is studying English.

Ashley Brooks is a Biochemistry major who transferred from Columbia State.

Britney Brown, a Motlow State transfer student, is pursuing a degree in Animal Science.

Katherine Carter, a transfer student from East Tennessee State University, is majoring in Interactive Media.

Audrey Creel, who previously studied at Liberty University and the College of William and Mary, is majoring in History.

Anthony Czelusniak is a Journalism major who attended Motlow State.

Rachel Eccles, a Science major, transferred from Walters State Community College.

Caitlyn Ellis is a Global Studies and Human Geography major from Volunteer State.

Sandra Flavin, a Theatre major, transferred from Nashville State Community College.

Lisa Hardie, a Motlow State transfer, is studying Psychology.

Laneece Hurd is from Prince George's Community College in Maryland and is studying Nutrition and Food Science.



(Front, l-r) Rachel Eccles, Kaylee Lindgren, Tre'yana Ogilvie, Morgan Marshall, Katherine Carter, Tia Shutes, (second row) John McKeon, Ekaterina Valuiskaya, Angela Womack, Laura MacLean, Ashley Brooks, (back) Frank Merlock, Anthony Czelusniak, Kaleb Askren, Samir Qattea, and David Zoz

Landon Johnson transferred from Volunteer State and is seeking a degree in Psychology.

Kaylee Lindgren, a Social Work major, attended Walters State and Carson-Newman University.

Laura MacLean, who previously attended the University of Calgary, is majoring in Information Systems.

Morgan Marshall, a former student at Tennessee Wesleyan University, is studying Theatre.

Molly McCarthy is seeking a degree in Anthropology. She transferred from the University of Tennessee–Chattanooga.

John McKeon, an Animation major, attended Roane State Community College and Tennessee Technological University.

Frank Merlock studied at the College of Lake County in Grayslake, Illinois, and is majoring in Finance.

Anuradha Nugawela, an Information Systems major, is a former student at Volunteer State.

Tre'yana Ogilvie, who attended Columbia State, is studying English.

Samir Qattea, a Mechatronics Engineering major, is a transfer student from Motlow State.

Tia Shutes, a former student at Nashville State and Pellissippi State Community College, is seeking a degree in Biology.

Ekaterina Valuiskaya, who is studying Business Administration, transferred from Southwest Tennessee Community College.

Sabrina Washington is a former student at Southwest Tennessee and is seeking a degree in Journalism.

Anthony Weatherford attended Nashville State and is majoring in Marketing.

Angela Womack, who attended Motlow State, is pursuing a degree in Social Work.

David Zoz, a Construction Management major, transferred from Illinois Central College.



ODK CIRCLE WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

ODK initiates and officers

The MTSU circle of Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) initiated 14 students and one faculty member, **Cheryl B. Torsney,** in its spring initiation ceremony March 20. Torsney, vice provost for faculty affairs, also served as speaker for the event.

Kimberly Warren, 2018 ODK vice president, administered the initiate oath to Torsney and to student initiates.

Sophomore **Malina Langham** was recognized as an ODK squire and will be initiated into full membership as a junior.

The ODK Circle of MTSU accepts applications from juniors, seniors, and graduate students who maintain a 3.5 GPA and who are involved in leadership and service roles on campus and in the community. ODK, founded in 1914, was the first college honor society of a national scope to give recognition and honor for meritorious leadership and service in extracurricular activities and to encourage development of general campus citizenship.



Isabella Barnett

New Initiates

Isabella C. Barnett
James C. Becker
Danielle R. Bonner
Ally Cherry
Merna A. Ghobrial
Graham R. Gosselin
Anastasia C. Hanes
Cassidy M. Johnson
Aaron R. Kelly
Madyson P. Middleton
Jon-Thomas Neely
Cameron B. Oldham
Kayla L. Thomas
Beverly G. Warner



Cheryl Torsney



John R. Vile and Jon-Thomas Neely



ODK CONVENTION IN NASHVILLE

Destiny Seaton, Casey Brinegar, John Vile, Nathan Wahl, Marsha Powers, Roque Mercado, and Tammy Nunez



Jonathan Ciecka

Omicron Delta Kappa circle members **Destiny Seaton, Casey Brinegar, John R. Vile, Nathan Wahl, Marsha Powers, Roqué Marcelo, Tammy Nunez, Susan Lyons, Philip E. Phillips, Beverly Warner, Benjamin Kulas,** and **Jonathan Ciecka** participated in the ODK 50th Biennial Convention and Leadership Conference May 31–June 3 at Belmont University in Nashville.

Jonathan Ciecka, the official MTSU ODK circle convention delegate, represented the University at the Circle Showcase.



MTSU ODK circle members (l-r) John R. Vile, Jonathan Ciecka, Benjamin Kulas, Beverly Warner, and Philip E. Phillips attend the Circle Showcase of posters at the convention.

TRUE BLUE LEADERSHIP DAY

Speakers bring interactive lessons for ODK special event



Jason Kuhn



Aaron Kelly and Steve Tybor



Elliott Ozment



Colby Jubenville



Lindy Boots

Leaders from business, law, military, academia, athletics, and the nonprofit sector focused on leadership qualities in talks with MTSU students, faculty, and staff at the Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) True Blue Leadership Day April 6.

Colby B. Jubenville, special assistant to the dean for the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, spoke on "Developing the Relational Leader Inside of You." He was followed by **Lindy Boots**, human resources manager for Becton, Dickinson and Co. She revealed "What an HR Manager Wants You to Know About Interviewing."

MTSU alumnus **Elliott Ozment,** an attorney at Ozment Law, shared "Elements of the Leadership of Abraham Lincoln." **Steve Tybor**, president and executive director of the nonprofit Eight Days of Hope and father of Honors Buchanan Fellow Hannah Tybor, discussed "Non-Profit Leadership: The Simple Idea of Serving."

Jason Kuhn, an MTSU alumnus and a former Blue Raider baseball player, talked about "The Fundamentals of Winning." Kuhn is a leadership consultant for Stonewall Solutions and a former Navy Seal.

The ODK True Blue Leadership Day highlights the core values of the True Blue Pledge by educating participants about multiple aspects of leadership. Approximately 80 students and faculty members participated in the annual event. ODK is a national honor society that emphasizes both academics and leadership.

FOLLOWING THE LEADERS

Students sharpen skills at annual MTSU summer institute



Institute of Leadership Excellence participants

Twenty-five promising students from across the University participated in the eighth annual Institute of Leadership Excellence, an interdisciplinary, total-immersion experience in leadership and leadership development.

Led by Jones College of Business professors **Deana Raffo, Earl Thomas, and David Foote**, the institute's carefully designed sequence of lectures, discussions, activities, and reflective exercises focused on developing students' understanding of and ability to apply critical leadership principles and skills.

Participants heard from accomplished leaders about how they developed their own leadership abilities and what leadership means to them as they apply it in their own fields of endeavor. The institute also included a wide range of experiences, from group ice-breakers and team-building to classroom lectures, interactive topic discussions, focus group activities, and team projects.

Students also enjoyed furnished lunches during the one-week 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. class. Lunch sponsors included First Tennessee Bank; Pinnacle Financial Partners, Bill Jones, executive vice president; MTSU's Jones College of Business; Greater Nashville Realtors, Jarron Springer, CEO; and Exit Realty, Bob Lamb, principal broker/owner.

Held each year during the first week of the May term, the institute is open to all undergraduate students who have completed 45 credit hours and who have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, and/or receive the nomination of a faculty member.



Bryce Bivens and Casey Brinegar



Casey Brinegar (l-r), Ally Cherry, Drake VanKohn, and Fallon Endsley



Earl Thomas (l-r), Deana Raffo, Noah Fryman, and David Foote



BRIGHTEST OF THE 'BRIGHT

Duo first from MTSU chosen for Fulbright U.K. institute

Kelsey Keith (6th from left) and fellow UK Fulbright students

Emily McTyre and **Kelsey Keith** both traveled to the United Kingdom this summer as MTSU's first winners of the U.K. Fulbright Program.

The Fulbright U.S. Student program, a prestigious award in and of itself, offers undergraduate and graduate students the chance to travel to locations abroad and participate in research, study, and teaching opportunities. However, the Fulbright U.K. Summer Institute program is more competitive; any student in the nation with a 3.7 GPA and at least two years of undergraduate study remaining may apply. In 2017, only 59 students nationwide were offered awards.

McTyre, a sophomore pursuing a degree in Video and Film Production, studied at the University of Birmingham for three weeks taking classes related to her major. The trip was also a personal one for her.

"My family has roots in Scotland and England, and I've grown up in the Presbyterian church—my father is a pastor," she said. "So, throughout my childhood we've had very close ties with those cultural roots, and to go is very exciting."

McTyre applied for the Fulbright U.K. Summer Institute without any expectations. She worked with Laura Clippard, the National Fellowships Coordinator for MTSU, and not long after submitting her application, McTyre was offered an interview and then the award itself.

Though the application and interview process are intimidating, McTyre credits the Honors College and its staff with setting her mind at ease. "It was a wonderful base to come to whenever I had questions," she said. "Everyone was very hopeful for me."

Keith, MTSU's other Fulbright U.K. Summer Institute recipient, is a sophomore Buchanan Fellow majoring in English. She traveled to the University of Bristol where she studied a mix of arts and activism for four weeks, taking classes with nine other Fulbright students as well as students from the university itself.

Keith has always wanted to be a songwriter and performer but is using her time at MTSU to explore other interests and options. She said she was most excited about looking at the world from a new perspective. "I think it's a very interesting time to look at America from outside. I was excited to gain some perspective," she said.

McTyre and Keith have some advice for students who are interested in applying but are intimidated by the odds. "Don't think about the odds. If you put forth the effort, you have nothing to lose except for maybe a little time," Keith said. McTyre urged students to start searching for opportunities through the Honors College and "just do it."

> "I think it's a very interesting time to look at America from outside. I was excited to gain some perspective."



Emily McTyre (left) and fellow UK Fulbright student



Kelsey Keith



Emily McTyre in London



Emily McTyre (center) and fellow UK Fulbright students



Kelsey Keith (center) and fellow UK Fulbright students

AWAKENING FROM MY AMERICAN BUBBLE

Thailand study abroad trip reveals culture of honor

***By Robert L. Owen**, an Honors Transfer Fellow majoring in Biology*



Ayutthaya ruins

"The word Buddhism is from the word *bodhi*, which means to 'wake up.' . . . Right now, we are sleeping," Monk Rung Whit said. Our Honors in Thailand study abroad trip began with this quotation, which came from an interview with Whit at a Monk Chat hosted by Mahamakut Buddhist University—and yes, this trip did wake us up. We awoke from our normal routines, our American bubble, and our unknown lenses and filters. This trip was truly an adventure and life-changing experience.

The January trip consisted of 14 days filled with fun, culture, history, and memories. We were based primarily in Chiang Mai and Bangkok but took trips to other towns and cities. Some highlights of our daily excursions included magnificent 700-year old temple ruins, caring for and playing with elephants at an elephant sanctuary, an amazing culinary school cooking class, a Muay Thai kickboxing class, the floating market, the Grand Palace, high tea at the restored 1879 Mandarin Oriental Hotel, sobering visits to a couple of World War II memorials, and a day at the beach on an island in the Gulf of Thailand. The food was amazing, the markets were labyrinthine, and an hour-long foot massage was only $6! With the preparation of pre-trip and on-trip assigned readings, our excellent tour guides, and the wisdom and knowledge from our faculty leader, Philip E. Phillips, we were able to embrace the immersive depths of Thai culture and history.

> "The word Buddhism is from the word *bodhi*, which means to 'wake up.' . . . Right now, we are sleeping."

On our last day of study, we had the emotion-provoking privilege of visiting two World War II memorials and museums in Kanchanaburi and on the River Kwai. In 1942, the invading Empire of Japan forced over 61,000 Allied (U.K., Dutch, Australian, and American) prisoners of war to dig and construct a railroad known as the Burma-Siam Railway, or the "Death Railway," which ran from central Thailand into neighboring Myanmar. Approximately 12,000 of these

soldiers, along with about 90,000 civilians, died in the effort. We were moved to silence over the gravestones as the heroic soldiers' stories were told. I was gripped while reading a letter written by an officer and addressed to the widow of one of the soldiers that recounted his courage and friendship. One cemetery had more than 7,000 gravestones of soldiers as young as 19 years old. Our visit helped wake us up to the realities of humanity and of war and to our responsibility to honor the legacy of these soldiers.

A final word about waking up: I never knew that the word "Orientalism," if used incorrectly, can have a racist overtone and carry with it generations of tarnished history. Starting as early as the 18th century, the term "Orientalism" includes the West's scope of dominance, restructuring, and authority over this geographical area. The West had used and consumed Southeast Asia (the better term) for its industry, tourism, and guilty pleasure, and it often became the privileged tourist's badge of elite societal opulence. The West forced its own culture upon the Orient and condescendingly viewed the uniqueness of the Orient only in terms of how it compared to itself (the West). One of the greatest moments of lucid "awakened-ness" for me was how Dr. Phillips challenged us to take the posture of humility and see Thailand for what it truly was and is—and not only for what it looks like when compared to America or to my own life. For me, humility allowed me to wake up, and what I awoke to was a culture of honor—honor for parents, teachers, kings, monks, and religion. This culture of honor impacted my worldview and instilled in me a deep sense of respect for Thailand that I never knew possible.



Tour guide at Chiang Mai market



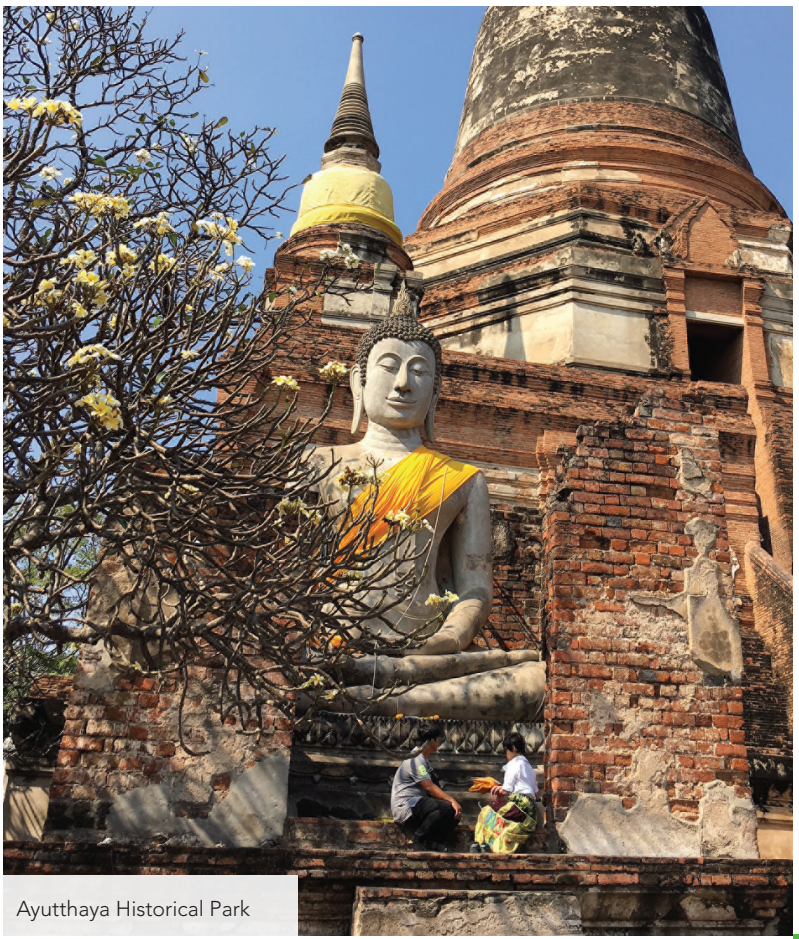
Tuk-tuks



Kanta Elephant Sanctuary



Doi Suthep Temple



Ayutthaya Historical Park



"I have studied abroad twice before, but I have never been so immersed into an entirely different culture as I was on the Honors in Thailand trip. We visited many magnificent temples, UNESCO World Heritage sites in Ayutthaya, and a historic teak house in Chiang Mai. We experienced a Thai cooking class, a Muay Thai boxing class, a train ride to Hellfire Pass in Kanchanaburi, night markets, and a warm beach day in Pattaya. One of the highlights of the trip, however, was our visit to the Kantu Elephant Sanctuary in Chiang Mai. To be able to interact with one of the world's most intelligent creatures was truly amazing. We were able to feed and bathe them, while also learning about the plight of elephants in the tourism and logging industries. It was a fun and impactful way to contribute to the preservation of these gentle giants. This trip gave me a new level of independence, a greater appreciation of Asian culture, a better understanding of those different from me, and a better understanding of myself."

—Skylar Raney



"The entire study abroad trip to Thailand was inspiring and educational, but as a veteran, the war-related activities and readings were of paramount importance. In preparation for the course we read *Bridge over the River Kwai*, and while in Thailand, we walked on the 'Bridge at the River Kwai' itself. The book, while fiction, is inspired by the very real hardships of POWs during WWII. The author, Pierre Boulle, served during the war and was a Japanese POW. The Allied prisoners of war working on the railway were prone to dysentery, cholera, physical abuses, and emaciation, in addition to long hours of hard labor. At the Kanchanaburi war museum, there is a wall covered with railroad spikes—each one represents 500 dead. It is hard to describe how powerful that wall is when you realize there is simply not enough space for each soldier to be represented by his own spike."

—Tabatha Wadford



"The decision to go to Thailand was nothing short of internal confliction. I have dreamed of Thailand since I was young—but would being in a new country with different customs, people, and languages be too much for me? I have struggled with Generalized Anxiety Disorder since I was a baby, and in the back of mind, no matter the experience, remain the imprint of two words: 'I CAN'T.' After signing up, I vacillated between pure excitement and uncontainable fear. I knew it would be the experience of a lifetime, yet I looked for reasons not to go. Thailand taught me many lessons—especially how important it is to be thankful for everyday things like drinking water, real toilets, unlimited toilet paper, and edible ice! Thailand taught me to be thankful for the intangibles—the joy of being alive, the ability to go to school and chase my biggest dreams, the ability to love and be loved in return. Thailand taught me what it is to be truly alive—to feel truly alive. Most importantly, Thailand taught me I am not my anxiety. I am not limited in my experiences because of my anxiety. Thailand showed me one day, at the top of a mountain as I overlooked the country that was changing my life, that 'I CAN.' "

—Allison Bradford



Debate team members Skye Irish (l-r), Steven Barhorst, Joshua Hendricks, Alex Fingeroot, Jordan Nickell, Katelyn Brooks, and Joshua Tilton pose with some of the team's top individual, regional, and national awards from their highly successful 2017–18 season.

RECORD HAUL FOR MTSU DEBATE

Honors students **Skye Irish, Joshua Tilton,** and **Christopher Cowherd** were among 2017–18 members of MTSU Debate, the most successful team in the organization's 107-year history. The 25-member team is coached by Communication Studies professors Patrick Richey and Natonya Listach. The group traveled to tournaments in Tennessee, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and other locations, winning over 140 individual and team awards.

At the International Public Debate Association's national tournament, MTSU Debate won five national titles, including First-Place Varsity Champion, First-Place Team IPDA Speaker, and First-Place Team IPDA Champions Season-Long. The team has hosted debates with the *Irish Times* National Champions and for the League of Women Voters.



Debaters Skye Irish (l-r), Alex Fingeroot, Joshua Tilton, and Stephen Barhorst display plaques after winning second place in the Tennessee Speech and Debate Society Volunteer Classic.



University President Sidney A. McPhee (r) and Provost Mark Byrnes, third from left, congratulate the MTSU Debate Team and Coach Patrick Richey.



Alex Fingeroot (l) and Skye Irish tour Washington, D.C., after participating in the Lafayette Debates in April.



A DIVERSE APPROACH

MTSU's Honors College boasts a rising percentage of minority students

By Vicky Travis

MTSU's 2018 spring and summer commencements saw 66 Honors College students graduate and complete a thesis. Of that group, 39 percent belonged to a minority group.

Numbers of enrolled Honors College students in minority groups have risen steadily in the last few years from 11.8 percent in Fall 2015 to 21.1 percent in Fall 2017.

"Success breeds success," Honors College Dean John R. Vile said. "I like to think that we create an environment in Honors that welcomes everyone."

"Focusing on these students is important to our college's success," Honors College advisor Judy Albakry added. "They are not only vital members of our community, but their examples help recruit and encourage their peers to finish our program as well.

"I want all students who are interested in our Honors College to know that there is a place for them within our community, opportunities to support their goals, and even more so, that our college needs their involvement and voice to ensure the continued strength of our program."

Here are the stories of five such outstanding Honors graduates.



"I like to think that we create an environment in Honors that welcomes everyone."

Hermon Phuntling, clockwise from top, Barbara Pafetti, Kyeesha Wilcox, Pel Doski, Muhammad Fariz Ali, Kayla Thomas, Kelly Richardson, and Joshua Williams.

HERMON PHUNTLING



Hermon Phuntling and his family moved to the United States as refugees from Burma when he was just 3 years old, eventually settling in Knoxville. He holds respect for his culture, which his parents keep alive at home.

"If they hadn't emphasized it, I would have lost it," Phuntling said about his fluency in Chin, their Burmese tribe's language. Through his courses and travels, he also learned French and some Swahili.

Offered a Fulbright and a Peace Corps position, he chose the Peace Corps. Starting this fall, Phuntling will live for two years in a rural community in Benin, West Africa, where he can use his French while helping with health initiatives. In his free time, he plans to raise chickens, grow a garden, and study for the MCAT for his eventual goal of medical school.

As a Global Studies major and a Science minor, Phuntling studied abroad in Tanzania and Thailand. He did research in Uganda and visited Haiti and Kazakhstan. While on the Thailand trip, he also visited family in Burma, speaking their language with ease—and an American accent.

"They knew I was American from the get-go," he laughed. "But they accepted me as family."

Growing up, Phuntling experienced some subtle racism. "I suppressed my identity for a long time," he said. "Here at MTSU, my perspective on culture changed." He credits the diversity of the campus and study abroad opportunities he learned about in the Honors College. "And I realized how much I did not know about global affairs."

He started out studying broadcast journalism, but Phuntling changed his major to Global Studies as a sophomore after realizing how much it meant to him to help his Burmese community navigate health appointments. Within Global Studies, he would knit together a balance of science and cultural studies courses.

Long involved in the Student Government Association (SGA), he eventually became vice president of marketing. He's been an MTSU tour guide and was president of Humans in Crisis, which fights human trafficking.

"I'm not out to change the world all at once," Phuntling said about his Peace Corps assignment. "I'll take it step-by-step, doing little changes as I can which will contribute to the whole picture of change."



KELLY RICHARDSON

Kelly Richardson's original plan was to go to law school after she interned with a female African-American lawyer in her hometown of Memphis.

"I was going to be just like her," Richardson said. "I'm interested in policy and everything that would suggest law school, but it turns out I don't want to be lawyer."

Instead, Richardson's interests turned toward international policy matters. Her first Political Science course was an Honors class taught by Robb McDaniel. "He's such an awesome professor," she said. "If I teach, I would base my pedagogy around what he does, how he engages the class."

Through her Honors College mentors, especially Laura Clippard, she learned about the Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) program. During her sophomore year, Richardson went to the PPIA national conference on public service, where she was mentored by minority Ph.D. students.

"I was just enamored with them, hearing their discussions," she said. "I was super-excited, it was so interesting, and we formed a bond."

After that experience, Richardson's focus became finding out more about where this field of study could lead.

This fall, Richardson starts her doctoral program in Political Science at the University of Florida. Her goal is to become a Political Science professor and write books.

"I don't think I would have reached where I am today if it were not for the Honors College and its hands-on classes, professors, and all these 'moms' up here who care about me," she said. "I did the work, but I wouldn't have known about the PPIA program and I wouldn't have studied abroad had [Clippard] not suggested it."

Her study abroad experience in Cape Town, South Africa, was intense.

"I've seen poverty firsthand in Memphis, but this was on a whole other level," she said. "These people who looked just like me were outcast."

At MTSU, Richardson got involved in the Black Student Union (BSU), eventually becoming president. Along with the time and energy that job entailed, she held a full-time internship at a public affairs firm in downtown Nashville while carrying a full course load during her senior year.

"As BSU president, I've been able to tell students about opportunities and tell them I'm just another kid from Memphis," she said. "Become a world citizen, not just a Murfreesboro citizen. Make your time here in Murfreesboro worth it."

KYEESHA WILCOX



For all four years of her undergraduate education at MTSU, Kyeesha Wilcox commuted to campus from her family's home in Smyrna, where she worked part-time at McDonald's.

Throughout her Honors College career, Wilcox said she applied lessons from her MTSU Global Studies courses, helping multicultural co-workers navigate the workplace. She also was on the MTSU Debate Team and in the Band of Blue during her freshman year. Wilcox has studied abroad in Toronto, Canada. During her senior year, she also worked in the School of Music office.

"Global Studies allows you to be flexible," she said. "With three different tracks, it's a matter of what interests you the most or what courses can apply to what you're trying to do."

But from her first Honors class in freshman-level writing, she determined that she loved the emphasis on research. "This is great," Wilcox remembers. "This is what I want to do."

This summer, the MTSU Global Studies graduate started research at Michigan State University (MSU) in pursuit of a master's in Medical Geography.

"It's a nice connection of both geography and medical, looking at health issues from a spatial standpoint," she said. The fairly new field uses geographical information systems (GIS) to gather data to map out prevalence of diseases or conditions.

Wilcox earned a graduate scholarship from MSU's Geography Department, which offered graduate scholarships to three African-American women—a first for the department.

"All three of us are doing different things within geography," she said.

Her graduate research will focus on the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes in certain areas and work to figure out what about that place might be contributing to it.

It's personal. Many in her family have Type 2 diabetes. Wilcox said the cause isn't completely environmental, but she knows lifestyle plays a big role.



FARIZ ALI

Fariz Ali knows it's not luck that got him to where he is heading today. It's taking advantage of his opportunities.

In August, Ali started medical school in Memphis at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, his first choice of the 14 med schools where he applied.

"Honors College is the perfect way to take opportunities," he said. "The best part of these classes is that effort pays off. Go in with a free mind, interact with the professor, have conversations, and even after you move on, you have someone you can go to."

Born in Pakistan, Ali and his family moved to Canada when he was 6 years old and then relocated to Murfreesboro about 10 years ago.

He chose Biology as his major, but enjoys studying Computer Science, too. After he took an Honors genetics course, it all came together. "I was able to pick it up really well, so I switched my concentration from Physiology to Genetics and Biotechnology, which has some computer science involved," Ali said. Since 2015, he also has been an undergrad research assistant.

Ali's thesis work will be published in an immunology journal, he said. The work evolved a strain of a fungus to see how it interacts in the human body: "We wanted to see if we could do it in a lab and to an extent, we got it to work."

Honors College also always provided that place to grow socially and academically, Ali said.

"They knew me really well in the small class setting," he said. "Connections have lasted with the students and the professors."

In fact, some of his classmates in Honors Biology II are going to med school with him.

"The professors in the Biology Department were always very supportive," he said. "I have amazing mentors. Without them, I wouldn't be where I am."



KAYLA THOMAS

Kayla Thomas has known that she wanted to be a pediatrician since elementary school because of her own doctor in Memphis. As a college student, she shadowed him and became even more convinced.

"He has great patient rapport and patient retention," she said of the doctor who now sees the kids of the kids he has treated. "That is the type of doctor I want to be."

Graduating with a major in Biology and minor in Chemistry, Thomas began her journey to becoming that doctor at Meharry Medical School this summer.

"I'm so excited. I cried when I got that email," she said. "Yes, I called screaming to my mom that I got in."

After four years of med school, then four more years in a residency program, she hopes to treat underserved populations in inner cities. "Being a black woman, I know the issues that plague my community," Thomas said.

Along with high blood pressure and diabetes, she learned about patients choosing between health care and groceries during the 150 hours of job shadowing with her pediatrician and a family doctor.

"Health care is amazing, but there are flaws," she said, adding that she might be able to advocate on the policy side of it as well. "Can I bridge that gap?"

History says she can. While an Honors student on the MTSU campus, Thomas was involved in the Student National Medical Association, Black Student Union, and NAACP. She is a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, Gamma Beta Phi, and the National Society of Leadership and Success. Thomas worked at the MT One Stop help desk and in the Biology Department office.

More than anything, she said, the smaller class sizes offered to Honors students made a difference to her studies and success, especially in classes like Organic Chemistry.

"It has been a great experience," Thomas said. "These are the best classes I have taken, and the Honors professors are great. They do care about their students excelling."

Her advice to new students is to "take the leap" into Honors. "Be confident and take that first step," she said.

True Blue! A

LOWER-DIVISION CERTIFICATES EARNED

Eighty-two Honors students completed 18 or more Honors hours and received Lower-Division Certificates of Achievement from the University Honors College this spring. The students represent a variety of majors. Students who complete the lower-division certificates only need 11 additional hours, including thesis-related classes, to graduate with an Honors degree.

BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCES

Aerospace
Michael W. Gravalec
Natalie Perez
Priscilla Mikuni Poon

Biochemistry
Mishgan Afzali
Hannah E. Guthrie
Holli L. Kerns
Mehraeil M. Zaki

Biology
Chase S. Burton
Madonna Ghobrial
Chase M. Hahn
Anastasia Hanes
Abby Katherine Hutchins
Cameron Nicholas Maddux
Emily Katherine Oppmann
Jiwoo Park
Payal Daxa Patel
Bethany M. Poff
Ross David Thomas

Chemistry
Beth Pait Anderson
Nathan Hunter Smith

Computer Science
Christian Allen Barnes
Nibraas A. Khan

Concrete Industry Management
Joshua Gordon Brinegar

Mathematics
Hector Noel Hernandez

Mechatronics Engineering
Brianna Lynn Bauman
Hayim Enrique Juarez Del Moral
Dirk Ryan Sims

Plant and Soil Science
Brendan A. Mitchell-Fostyk

Physics
Isaac Robert Shirk

Physics and **Computer Science**
Tyler A. Galligani

BEHAVIORAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Criminal Justice Administration
Phillip C. Seals

Exercise Science
Risharra E'Joi Williams

Industrial/Organizational Psychology
Arielle S. Brooks

Nutrition and Food Science
Olyvia G. Norton

Psychology
Autumn L. Bourque
Holly Lynne Poindexter
Maria C. Rodriguez
Robyn Michelle Sessler
Jordyn B. Starks
Megan Elise Tudor

Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
Kaylee P. Skipper

JONES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Business Administration
Carson Elizabeth Floyd
Ashley D. Johnson
Andrew P. Kelley

Finance
Joaquin J. Salcedo San Martin

Marketing
Ally Nicole Cherry
Fallon Endsley

LIBERAL ARTS

Anthropology
Ella L. Colbert

English
George S. Boktor
Kayleigh A. Capps
Alexis L. Cummins
Addison Winter Gentry
Kelsey Grace Keith

Foreign Languages, Global Studies and Cultural Geography, English
Rachel Elizabeth Reece

Foreign Languages and **English**
Abigail F. Williams

Global Studies and Human Geography
Hermon Phuntling

History
Carma R. Sharp

History and **Anthropology**
Hannah N. Morgan

International Relations
Elisabeth Foreman

Music
Austin Patrick Ford

Political Science and **Foreign Language**
Catherine Clare Farone

Theatre
Kaitlynn Leigh Newcomb

MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

Audio Production
Christian M. Alfaro
Aron M. Devereaux
Miranda Leigh Hall

Mass Communication
Kayla N. Ashburn
Emily Erin Butch
Elizabeth Hoffecker

Journalism
Corvette Delanie McDonald

Recording Industry
Olivia G. Clifton
Anna Catherine Levine
Grant Fenn Waldron
Megan Elise Westcott
Beverly L. Wilkinson

Video and Film Production
Rebecca A. King
Emily McTyre

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Academic Focus
Sarah Elizabeth Jones
Hunter P. Winters

Professional Studies
Emily D. Webb

MULTIPLE COLLEGES

Art and **Psychology**
Katrina J. Scott

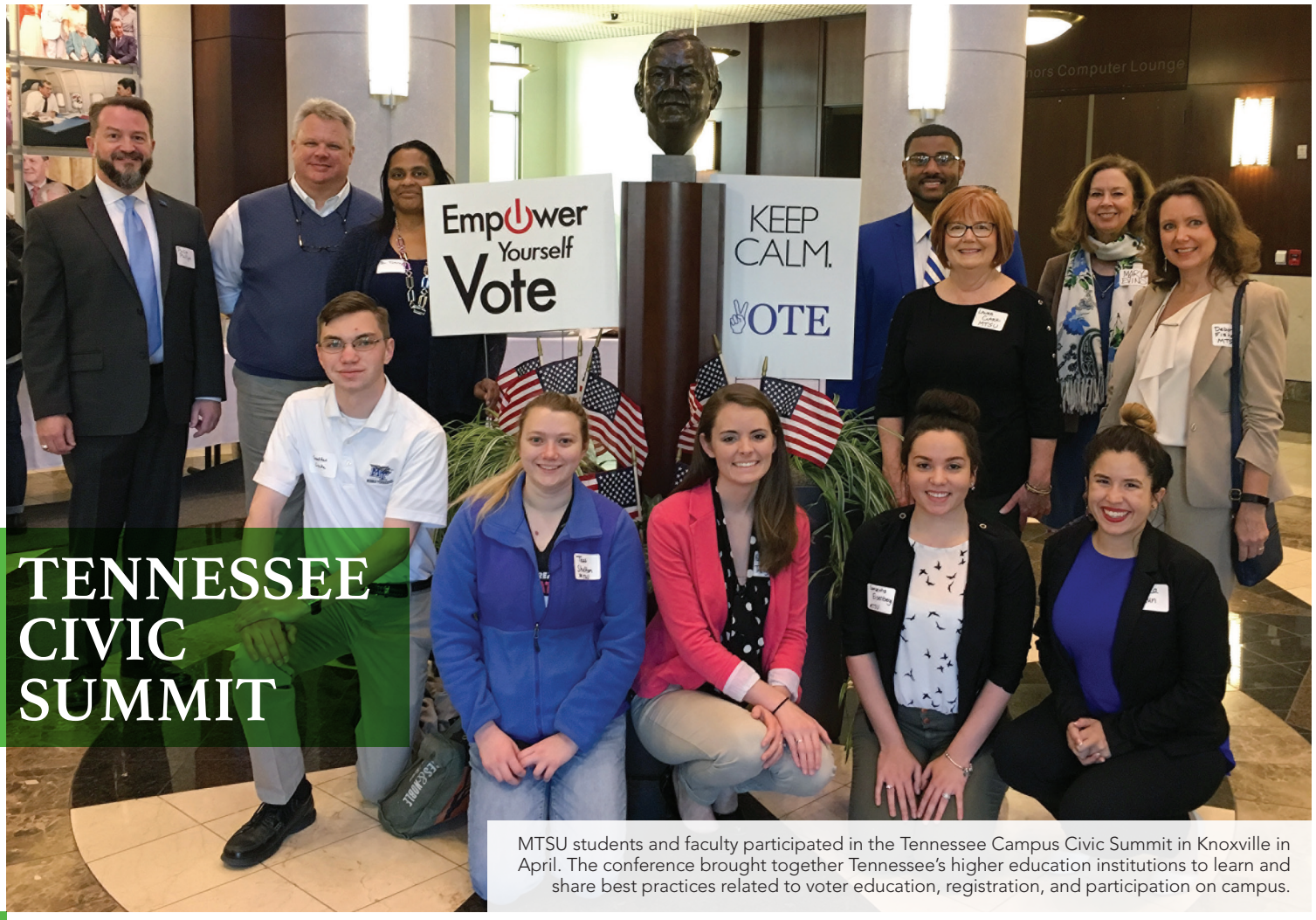
Biology and **Foreign Languages**
Chadwick A. Daugherty

Business Administration and **Foreign Languages**
Malina Rose Langham



SPEAKER ON RWANDA

Humanitarian aid worker Carl Wilkins shared stories with Honors students about his experiences as the last American in Rwanda during the genocide in 1994. Wilkins risked his life to save hundreds of others by bringing food, water, and medicine to trapped orphans while soldiers and civilians armed with machetes and assault rifles blocked streets.



TENNESSEE CIVIC SUMMIT

MTSU students and faculty participated in the Tennessee Campus Civic Summit in Knoxville in April. The conference brought together Tennessee's higher education institutions to learn and share best practices related to voter education, registration, and participation on campus.

HALL OF FAME VISIT



Joseph Morgan's Honors music class paid a visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame in the spring.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION AWARDS

"Collage" honors expand to add audio and video recipients

Members of the Spring 2018 staff of *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression* pictured at the final editing meeting are (l-r): front, Kimi Conro, Rebecca Clippard, and Veronika Gajdosova; second row, Aleah Grenier, Bae Dedicatoria, and Pel Doski; third row, Angele Latham, Kaylee Schilling, Destiny Seaton, Hannah Tybor, and Emma Cryar; and back, Jake Garrette, Nathan Wahl, A.J. Knoch, Abigail Williams, Jordyn Starks, and Kayleah Bradley. Not pictured: Margaret Sanders, Grace Hollowell, Briyana Dyer, and Katrina Scott.

With the addition of audio and video entries in the spring, the *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression* staff selected seven students as recipients of the spring 2018 Creative Expression Awards for their top-ranked submissions to *Collage*.

The staff selected by secret ballot the literary work of **Emily Garrett** and **Joshua Tilton** for Martha Hixon Creative Expression Awards and the visual work of **Christopher Banyai** and **Stephanie Van Horn** for Lon Nuell Creative Expression Awards.

In addition to these traditional categories, audio and video files now can be viewed on the **mtsu.edu/collage** website.

Staff members voted to award the first video Creative Expression Award to **BingNan Li** for *2017 'Boro International Festival*. **Dillon Matheny** and **Alex Parham** received the first audio award for *Haze*.

Each semester the *Collage* staff participates in a blind grading process to select approximately 60 pieces for publication from around 400 submissions. The University Honors College awards $50 prizes to outstanding submissions from each of six areas: prose, poetry, art, photography, video, and audio.

Literature winners receive the Martha Hixon Creative Expression Awards, named in honor of the English professor and long-time supporter of *Collage* and the Honors College. Visual arts winners are given the Lon Nuell Creative Expression Award, named in memory of the much-respected MTSU art professor.



Light Meets Chalk by Stephanie Van Horn



Prose

Emily Garrett, an English major, won the award for her short story, "My Sister's Angel," which she read at *Collage's* 50th anniversary celebration in April.



Poetry

Joshua Perry Tilton, an English major who writes poetry and fiction, won for "Veteran," a poem inspired, he says, by unfortunate experiences on the Moscow Metro.



Audio

Co-winners of the audio award for *Haze*, **Dillon Matheny** and **Alex Parham** are Audio Production majors.



Art

Christopher Banyai, who is majoring in Studio Art and concentrates on works in illustration, won a Creative Expression Award for his painting *Lost* (pictured above). He spends his days reading, drawing, and studying comics and mythology.



Photography

Stephanie Van Horn, a Photography and Organizational Communication major, received an award for her photo, *Light Meets Chalk*. "My inspiration for many photos, but especially this particular one, can be found in the trainers at Complete Training," she said. A student of the movement of light across surfaces, she recently began combining light with elements such as the human form and chalk.



Video

BingNan Li, an exchange student from China, won the video award for her film *2017 'Boro International Festival*. Li is inspired by the diverse cultural environment in the United States. She said the diverse U.S. culture "is like starting a drawing on an empty paper rather than a painted piece. The empty space on this paper allows me to imagine wider, bigger, and farther."



John R. Vile

FABULOUS 50TH

"Collage" showcases five decades of history and student perspectives

In 1968, the United States was rocked by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy as the Vietnam War was "mired in stalemate" and proponents of the American civil rights movement continued their struggle. Deemed "the year that shattered America" by *Smithsonian Magazine*, 1968 was awash with strife and violence, providing a climate ripe for introspection and rife with topics on which to reflect.

MTSU's *Collage* magazine was birthed during that era of dissension, providing a student platform alongside the *Sidelines* newspaper. Early editions of *Collage* often reflected the times with poems by students who dreaded the arrival of a draft notice or feared dying for the freedom of others when few cared for the rights of African-Americans.

However, early editions also reveal lighter topics: a 1974 article on the Chattanooga Choo-Choo, an arts column on the career of singer Roberta Flack in 1972, features on wood-carving and making molasses in 1973, and a 1976 entry titled "Who Says Cats Hate Baths?"

In retrospect, *Collage* has reflected the times—and more importantly, the thoughts and creative expression of its contributors—throughout the five decades of its existence. In most editions, student writers grapple with lost love, reminisce about childhood and family memories, celebrate the beauty of nature, recount stories of student life, examine current issues, and occasionally deal with heavier topics such as suicide, cutting, and abuse.

In 2004, when *Collage* seemed destined for termination due to University budget cuts, the Honors College had the opportunity to take the reins of the publication. Amy Jones Gray (Foster), the final *Collage* editor-in-chief under MTSU Student Publications, assisted in setting up an office in the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building and began a new era of *Collage*, with the added subtitle: *A Journal of Creative Expression.*

> "'Collage' has reflected the times (and)...the thoughts and creative expression of its contributors."



Emily Garrett



Mark Jarman, Philip E. Phillips, and MTSU president Sidney A. McPhee



Passion by Candace Yancey



Dillon Matheny (left) and Alex Parham, contributors of the award-winning audio Haze



Jackie Heigle (l-r), Kimi Conro, and Jonathan Trundle

Twenty-seven magazines later, *Collage* is still being published and is celebrating its 50th year on campus. This April, the Honors College hosted an anniversary celebration in the Miller Education Center Atrium on Bell Street with special guests President Sidney A. McPhee, Provost Mark Byrnes, and Honors Board of Visitors members Don and Hanna Witherspoon.

The program's keynote speaker, Mark Jarman, an award-winning poet and Centennial Professor of English at Vanderbilt University, shared verse from his most recent book, *The Heronry*. Former editor Gray returned to share her remembrances of *Collage*, and Spring 2018 creative director Kimi Conro revealed the future of *Collage*, including the addition of video and audio submissions.

Rebecca Clippard, 2018 editor-in-chief, announced Creative Expression Awards for seven *Collage* contributors *(see page 44)*. Published writers StarShield Lortie, Emma Williams, Emily Garrett, Elizabeth Keller, and Leah Bailey presented their poetry, stories, and songs.

"The Honors College has been proud to continue and to celebrate a publication that pre-dates it, but provides a remarkably suitable outlet for works from students and a variety of media," said Honors Dean John R. Vile, emcee for the celebration. "The event not only celebrated the last 50 years but unveiled new opportunities for individuals who are submitting audio and video productions."



AN ADOPTION JOURNEY

Thesis research leads adoptee to discovery of birth mother

By Bennie Davis

Hannah (left), Elise, Charmaine, Emma, Steve, Zachary, and Stephen Tybor

"I've always grown up with great respect for my birth mother. I've always thought of her as a superhero."

Hannah Tybor, a junior at MTSU, may seem like your average student. She has a wonderful smile, a bright personality, and is instantly likeable. She is a daughter, a sister, and a friend. She enjoys Netflix, a good mystery book, and hanging out with her buddies. Her backstory, however, is anything but ordinary.

Tybor is adopted. Originally from New York and raised in Mississippi, she had been curious about her birth parents from a young age. As a Buchanan Fellow, which is the most prestigious academic scholarship given to incoming freshmen at MTSU, Tybor was required to write a thesis. She knew that this would be the perfect opportunity to explore the past she knew little about.

"I wrote a collection of stories from each of my family members' perspectives on adoption, and it focuses on their being adopted and what led up to it, and then how they feel about adoption today," Tybor said. "I also studied the effects of a few key adoption or adoptee-related issues called the primal wound, reactive attachment disorder, dual identities, and searching."

Tybor explained that adoption has always been of interest to her since all of the children in her family are adopted, but she is the only member who usually enjoys discussing the issue. "I thought what better way to talk about adoption than talk about my own family because, within the five of us, we have biological siblings, we have international adoption, domestic adoption, and then we have child adoption [and] infant adoption or newborn adoption."

Adoption Story is Always Unique

Not only has she shared her story at the Honors Lecture Series, but Tybor also has been encouraged by Philip E. Phillips, Honors College associate dean, to expand the research portion of her project and publish it in *Scientia et Humanitas*. She also may publish a collection of stories once her younger sisters are older.

Tybor explained that she wrote her thesis with the intention of helping others affected by adoption."Most literature that's written about adoption focuses almost from a third-party perspective, like adoptees are being analyzed," she said. ". . . The authors, of course, deduce their own opinions from what the adoptees have to say as the vast majority and apply it to less as a whole."

She continued by saying that though generalizations are something necessary to educate the public on these issues, each adoption story is unique because of a variety of factors—such as how they were raised in their adoptive home, the age at which they were adopted, and how much they remember.

Tybor expressed her belief that the stories would help remove the generalities that permeate throughout

adoption literature, which often glaze over the finer details of adoptee backgrounds.

Working on the project also gave Tybor the opportunity to find her biological family, despite the fact that her adoption was closed. "What that means is you can't access your birth records no matter what. [It] doesn't matter if it's life or death," she noted. Though the process is intended to protect the parents, Tybor expressed her opinion that adoption is not as stigmatized as it used to be and that children who are adopted should have the opportunity to seek their families.

"Because of closed records, we don't get to know our history, we don't get to know our family, and we don't get to know medical problems," she said about adoptee rights in the U.S.

Piecing Together the Past

Tybor made the decision to search for her birth family using an ancestry website. Three weeks later, she received information about her third cousins, whom she immediately contacted to inquire about her mother. After several failed attempts and dead ends, her birth mother reached out to her.

Tybor's thesis ends with the text message from her birth mother because of the emotional process she had to undertake. "I don't think people realize that a search is that important to an adoptee," she said.

Despite the frustrations, obstacles, and doubts, Tybor says that she discovered a lot about herself and her family during the search process. "I just wanted to know," she said. "Whether or not the search would've ended poorly, I think I would've been content just knowing."

Though Tybor's birth mother does not yet want to meet in person, Tybor said she accepts and respects those wishes but still holds hope that one day they can meet and become acquainted. She explained that because she did not walk into her Honors thesis project with any goals or desires, it gave her more of an opportunity to appreciate the experience.

Pick a Passion, Not a Project

As far as writing the actual thesis is concerned, Tybor encourages any student intimidated by the potentially daunting task saying, "Don't be afraid. It's really not that scary." She says, "Take something you're passionate about, and it won't feel like a project at all."

Tybor warns, however, that self-motivation is essential. "You really have to motivate yourself because when you have these deadlines you're the only one that's going to enforce them," she said. Tybor also encourages students to set up their class schedules in a way so that they have a set time to work on their thesis: "Write something, even if it's bad."

When asked about her experience with the thesis writing process she said, "I think on a more personal level, I learned about my family in ways that I had never known before." Now Tybor and her family have a "written product that they can look back on" to see how far they have come and what has remained the same.

During her search, Tybor came across this quotation: "Nobody craves a blood relationship more than somebody who's been denied it their whole life." Through this project, she seems to have found the peace and closure she had been looking for her entire life.

> "I don't think people realize that a search is that important to an adoptee."



Hannah Tybor (center) with her Dad, Steve, and brothers Zachary (left) and Stephen.



Emma, Hannah, and Elise Tybor



Hannah Tybor and family



Charmaine, Elise, Emma, Hannah, and Steve Tybor



Hannah Tybor and her sisters





CIRQUE DU SHOW-STOPPER

Vegas visit for class gives glimpse behind the scenes

By Cassidy Johnson, *a junior Buchanan Fellow*

This May, I traveled to Las Vegas along with classmates from The Design and Technology of Cirque du Soleil class and professors Darren Levin, Chris Haseleu, and Virginia Donnell. Although not an Honors course, I completed a contract to receive Honors credit for this class, which has been one of the most worthwhile experiences I have had during my time at MTSU.

While in Las Vegas, where Cirque's resident shows are stationed, we had the opportunity to go on four backstage tours and to see five shows. We met with several professionals in the field of media and entertainment and asked questions about what their jobs entail and what we can do to be successful in the industry. We also learned about the many different roles within a large production company like Cirque. Our backstage tours gave us special access to the behind-the-scenes inner workings of the shows; we saw costume shops, athletic training rooms for performers, audio and projection booths, and even the platform nine stories above the stage.

The trip wasn't all work, of course. We had free time to explore Las Vegas, which in and of itself is an entertainment machine. I walked through most of the hotels on the strip and got to see the gardens at Bellagio, the flamingos at Flamingo, the crystal chandeliers at Cosmopolitan, and many other stunning sights. What impacted me most were the interactions I had with Cirque staff, especially an interview I did with Kim Scott, the company manager of *Ka*, as an Honors assignment for my Media Management major. One of the big takeaways from the interview was how important it is to present oneself professionally.

> "I learned that being oneself is very important."

While in Las Vegas, we interacted with many people who are well-known and have connections in the industry, which allowed for unique networking opportunities. I learned that being oneself is very important; the whole industry is built upon the foundations of effective communication among people with all sorts of different roles and backgrounds.

One can be the best at what she does, but if she cannot manage herself in a professional manner as well, it doesn't matter. I learned that to make it in the media and entertainment industry one must be a versatile, well-rounded individual who is willing to take on challenges and any sort of environment. The professional skills I learned from talking to staff and the technical skills I learned from the tours and shows were invaluable.



Bob Gerard and Angele Latham



Sara Bell and Jacob Wilder



Philip E. Phillips and Beatriz Dedicatoria



Kalene Gebert (l-r), Skye Irish, Brooke Fitzwater, Emily Oppmann, Alexia Grogan, Delanie McDonald, Destiny Seaton, and Rebecca Clippard



Paul W. Martin, III, Sarah Wilfong Joblin, Robert Owen, Roqué Marcelo, Matthew Cureton, Jackson Cole, Rebecca Clippard, Jake Garrette, and Hannah Tybor.

HONORS COLLEGE 2017–18 ANNUAL AWARDS

Outstanding Honors Faculty Award

Nate Callender (Aerospace)

Exemplary Faculty Service Award

Kaylene Gebert (Communication Studies)

Bart McCash Scholarship

Beatriz Dedicatoria
(English/Video and Film Production)

McCash Founders Award Scholarship

Megan Loveless (Recording Industry)

Ingram-Montgomery Research Scholarship

Rebecca Clippard (Foreign Language)
Roqué Marcelo (Video and Film Production)
Kaitlynne Hamlet (Information Systems)
Robert Owen (Biology)

Hannah/Harris Study Abroad Scholarship

Jeffrey Allen (Philosophy/International Relations)

Marilyn M. and Philip M. Mathis Research Award

Muhammad O. Ali (Chemistry)
Natalie Foulks (Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology)
Jack Lasseter (Chemistry)
Alicia McGuire (Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology)
Conner Moss (Biology)

Michael Martinelli Memorial Scholarship

Beverly Warner (Physics)

Lawrence R. Good Scholarship

Elizabeth Kobeck (Psychology)

First Tennessee Study Abroad Scholarship

Angele Latham (Journalism)

Honors College Outstanding Public Service Award

Alex Knight (Biology)

Academic Achievement Scholarship

Jasmin Laurel (Biology)
Alexa Norsby (English)
Destiny Seaton (Journalism)

Paul W. Martin Scholarship

Rebecca Clippard (Foreign Language)
Jackson Cole (Physics)
Matthew Cureton (Management)
Jake Garrette (Aerospace)
Sarah Wilfong Joblin (Music)
Roqué Marcelo (Video and Film Production)
Myranda Uselton (Chemistry)
Robert Owen (Biology)
Hannah Tybor (Journalism)
Abigail Williams (Foreign Language)

Gordon and Sara Bell Native American Studies Scholarship

Jacob Wilder (Journalism)

Outstanding First-Year Student

Emily Oppmann (Biology)

Outstanding Sophomore

Alexia Grogan (Accounting)
Delanie McDonald (Journalism)

Outstanding Junior

Destiny Seaton (Journalism)
Abigail Williams (Foreign Language)

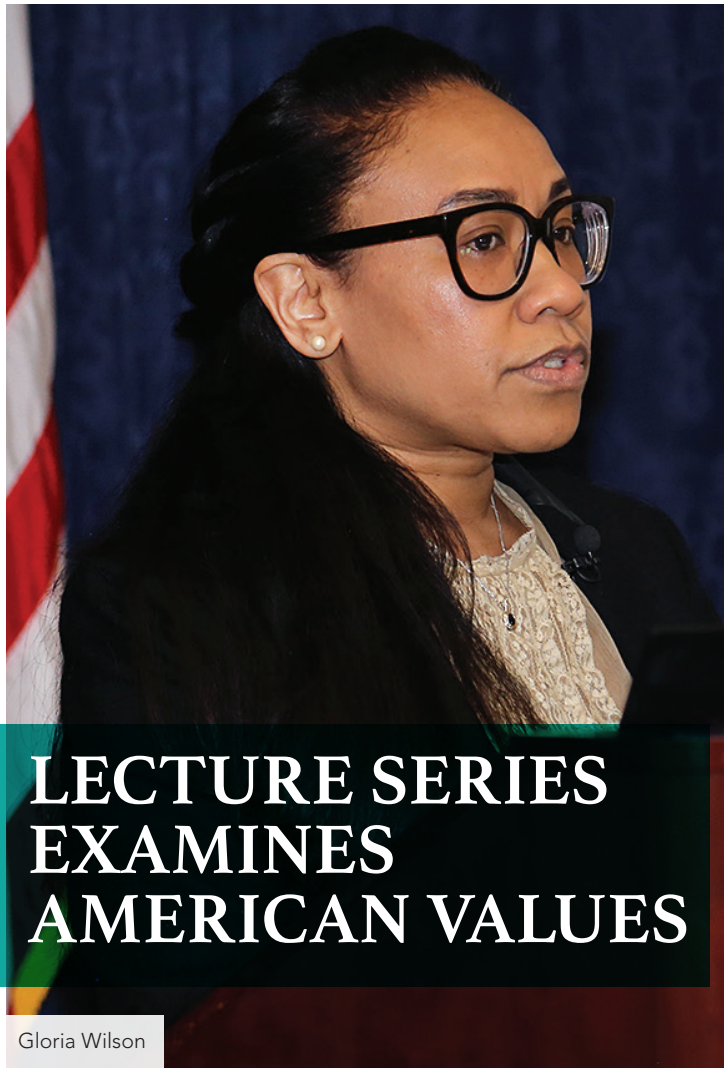
Outstanding Senior

Rebecca Clippard (Foreign Language)
Brooke Fitzwater (Biology)
Skye Irish (Political Science)

Ralph and Elizabeth Gwaltney Centennial Scholarship

Molly Scott (Engineering Technology)

LECTURE SERIES EXAMINES AMERICAN VALUES



Gloria Wilson



Kasar Abdulla



Steve Joiner



John R. Vile

The Spring 2018 Honors Lecture Series explored topics related to "American Values" and included speakers from Vanderbilt, Lipscomb, MTSU, the Southern Environmental Law Center, and Valor Collegiate Academies.

The series opened Jan. 22 with an introduction by Honors Associate Dean **Philip E. Phillips**. **Mary Evins** (History) presented the first lecture of the series the following week on "American Values: Immutable and Adapting."

Steve Joiner, dean of Lipscomb University's College of Leadership and Public Service, led off February's lectures with "Civil Discourse, Finding Common Ground, and the Value of Difficult Conversations." MTSU's **Sekou Franklin** (Political Science and International Relations) spoke on "African Americans, Democratic Participation, and the Civil Rights Movement's Citizenship Education Program" the next week. **Derek Griffith**, from the Vanderbilt University Center for Medicine, Health, and Society, and MTSU's **Gloria Wilson** (Art and Design) co-presented "'Lest We Forget' the Heterogeneity of Blackness: The Art of Pursuing Health Equity in Post-Black America."

March lectures were "'Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor, Your Huddled Masses Yearning to Be Free': America's Very First Core Value" by **Kasar Abdulla**, chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer at Valor Collegiate Academies; "American Values and the Declaration of Independence" by Honors Dean **John R. Vile**; and "Refining American Values in the World Spotlight: The Intersection Between Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy" by **Amy Sayward** (History).

Anne Passino, staff attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center, lectured on "From Common Sense to Protecting the Commons: The Value of Environmental Stewardship" April 16. Other April class sessions included a presentation by **Laura Clippard** on fellowships and scholarships, as well as Honors theses presentations by Buchanan Fellow **Hannah Tybor** and Honors Transfer Fellow **Robert Owen**.



Amy Sayward



Anne Passino



Sekou Franklin



Marisa Richmond



Philip E. Phillips



Mary Evins



Derek Griffith

About the Honors Lecture Series

The lecture series, a 1-hour course credit under UH 3000, consists of a series of weekly, hour-long lectures designed to stimulate thought and broaden students' knowledge in a variety of disciplines. The course may be repeated for up to 3 hours of credit, and at least 1 hour of UH 3000 is required to graduate with University Honors.

For more information about the Honors Lecture Series, please email **philip.phillips@mtsu.edu**.





A FOND FAREWELL

Honors College broadens students' academic horizons with help from professors like Kaylene Gebert

By Bennie Davis

As children, we all seem to believe that our teachers live at school. And why not? We only see them during the day, and they even decorate their classrooms, bring comfy pillows and blankets, litter their desks with pictures of their families, and hide away stashes of food in their closets and drawers. As we mature, those thoughts become more realistic and we instead wonder what our teachers do in their spare time. For many students, it is difficult to imagine that their educators are average people with basic needs. Spotting one's math or English teacher walking down a grocery store aisle causes surprise and slight awkwardness. They represent a separate life—one that it seems should be restricted to 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, and never on holidays. Relationships with teachers, however, change once entering the world of higher education.

In Professor Kaylene Gebert's office, students could find a parallel between what is observed as young children to what filled her cozy corner office in the Martin Honors building. She proudly displayed pictures of her children and grandchildren, often had an apple sitting on her desk, played classical music in the background, and exhibited the many awards she earned throughout her career.

> "Stay thirsty for knowledge, my friends."

Gebert, who retired from MTSU in July, earned a B.A. in Speech/Drama and English from Hanover College and an M.A. in Theatre Production with minors in Public Address and Film from Cornell University before focusing on educating others. Her first assignments included teaching high school and community college classes until she returned to school, completing a Ph.D. from Indiana University in Contemporary Communication with minors in Victorian Studies and Drama Theory in 1980. She has described herself with a chuckle as "basically an 18th-century British historian."

Her career took off quickly when she began teaching at Louisiana State University, where in addition to being a faculty member Gebert served in administrative positions, such as running the Developmental

Education and Student Support Services programs. After nine years at LSU, Gebert accepted roles as a dean at a Chicago university, as a staff member with the Tennessee Board of Regents, and as a provost in North Alabama.

At the encouragement of friends, she applied for the provost position at MTSU in 2003. "I applied in March. Nothing happened. I threw the stuff away over the summer," she said. In fact, Gebert did not receive word about her application until winter of that same year when MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee called and asked if she was interested in the position of provost and executive vice president of MTSU.

After six years in administration at the University, she made the decision to step down and continue at MTSU as a professor in the newly-formed department now called Communication Studies. As a professor and resident Honors faculty member, Gebert said she had more opportunities to enjoy her favorite part about teaching: interacting with students. In addition to Communication courses, she taught the Honors Transfer Fellows research seminar every two years.

> "The students have an opportunity to specialize—to study something that they are interested in and get help to do it."

Gebert, most recently vice president of MTSU's Phi Kappa Phi honor society chapter, stayed involved in the activities and organizations of the Honors College—an institution for which she has nothing but praise. "It's a wonderful opportunity to meet a lot of different students and faculty from a variety of disciplines," she said. The faculty and staff are always ready and willing to help, it is a great place to study, and there are a number of resources available to students interested in broadening their social and academic horizons, she added. As for the Honors theses, which students must complete in order to graduate from the Honors College, the topics are wide-ranging and interest-piquing. The students "have an opportunity to specialize—to study something that they are interested in and get help to do it," Gebert said.

Outside of the ivy-covered columns of the Honors College and the bustling campus of MTSU, a regular day for Gebert included taking walks with her golden retriever Sammy, who is just 3 years old and is in agility training. She also enjoys gardening, cooking, reading (particularly biographies), and spending time with her two horses, Zingy and Molly, and 15-year old cat, CC. Gebert, who is moving back to Louisiana near family, also listens to classical music and Louisiana folk music.

Gebert, once a girl from conservative, faith-focused Fort Wayne, Indiana, has accomplished many things in her career as a student, educator, administrator, wife, mother, and grandmother. Although it is unlikely that she will ever be featured in a beer ad, one could have imagined her advising students, with a slight smile on her face and a mysterious look in her eye, "Stay thirsty for knowledge, my friends."



Kaylene Gebert (l-r), John R. Vile, and Philip E. Phillips



Rich Rhoda (l-r), Kaylene Gebert, Judith Iriarte-Gross, Jennifer Hill, Bud Fischer, and Greg Van Patten





HONORS COUNCIL MEETING

Professor Tony Eff receives an engraved gavel commemorating his term as 2017–18 Honors Council chair from Honors Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips (l) and Honors Dean John R. Vile.



PSYCHOLOGY GUESTS

Secretary Cindy Howell (l), executive aide Cotonya Malone, and graduate program secretary Karen Nunley (not pictured) were guests in Room 117 of the Martin Honors Building this summer while repairs were made to Psychology Department offices in Jones Hall. Their presence led to occasional visits from Psychology students, faculty, and administrators, such as Greg Schmidt, former Honors associate dean.



FROM HONORS TO THE LAB TO THE CLASSROOM

Professor and researcher recalls impact of undergrad experience

By Hannah Tybor, *a senior Buchanan Fellow studying Public Relations*



The Honors College at MTSU often influences the lives of its students far beyond what they can imagine. For one 1998 graduate, the impact still affects him today.

Eric Freundt, Ph.D., spends his days as a professor at the University of Tampa, teaching students who are passionate about science and encouraging them academically, technically, and personally. "I think what I enjoy most is the ability to mentor students through the process of discovery," said Freundt, who earned a B.S. in Biology. He knows firsthand the lasting effects of this type of mentorship, since he received it as an MTSU undergrad. The dedication of the professors and the depth of the knowledge he gained showed Freundt that his future could be more than he anticipated.

> "I don't think I would have gone into my career had I not joined the Honors College."

He remembers his first encounter with the Honors College during freshman orientation, where he heard then-Honors Dean John Paul Montgomery speak about the advantages of joining the program. He could not help thinking to himself that the Honors College filled every expectation that he had of academic growth in college. "The Honors College seemed like a perfect opportunity to get more access to the professors, to go deeper into subjects, to get opportunities to do independent research, including ultimately the thesis research," Freundt said. During his time on campus, Freundt was heavily involved with research, and through his experiences in the lab, he developed a passion for it. He enjoyed creating his own experiments and learning from the outcomes. This newly developed passion aided Freundt when he started his thesis journey with Biology Professor Stephen Wright

"I don't think I would have gone into my career had I not joined the Honors College," Freundt said. "I don't think I would have been competitive in the graduate schools I was eventually admitted to had I not been involved in that research."

Freundt, who received a $5,000 Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship Award in 2003, was accepted into a Ph.D. program at Oxford University in England as a part of the Oxford and U.S. National Institutes of Health partnership program. For this Ph.D. research, he studied the SARS virus, focusing specifically on the question of what makes the virus so different from its relative, the common cold, and so harmful to people. "I really like big ideas though, more than the details. I like to understand why things are the way they are and how," Freundt said.

Upon the completion of his Ph.D., Freundt went to Stanford University for his post-doctoral fellowship. It was there that he started researching the disease multiple sclerosis (MS). Today, Freundt studies MS in his laboratory at the University of Tampa and has several ongoing experiments with the virus.

"I think what drives me is finding things that are unique about this virus and what it does to cells," he said. "If I could just get lucky and have my dream, I would discover fundamental pathways that not only this virus uses but that many viruses use that relate to how they cause disease." If he is able to discover these pathways, Freundt hopes that drugs would be developed to block or limit the suffering that MS and other viruses cause.



SOCIAL MISSION OF MEDICINE

Alumnus Daniel H. Gouger focuses on public health, policy, and education

A 2012 Honors graduate with majors in Biochemistry and Spanish, Daniel H. Gouger, M.D., is currently a resident physician in the Department of Anesthesiology at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center. Gouger, the first physician in his family and an aspiring medical educator and writer, served as the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Education and Advocacy Fellow in Washington, D.C., prior to his residency.

As the AMSA Fellow, Gouger worked with institutions of higher education across the country in advising and programming development for medical trainees, physicians, and faculty. He also led the association's initiatives in legislative affairs and government relations alongside other national nonprofits on policy areas ranging from higher education funding and the opioid epidemic, to community and global health, immigration, and sex and gender-based medicine. Prior to his AMSA fellowship, he was AMSA's national chair of medical education. Founded in 1950, AMSA is the oldest and largest independent association of physicians-in-training in the United States committed to representing the concerns of physicians-in-training in areas such as health policy, public health, and higher education.

Gouger is an alumnus of East Tennessee State University (ETSU) Quillen College of Medicine, where he has frequently been a guest instructor. He holds a graduate specialization from ETSU in Spanish healthcare interpretation and translation and frequently works in Latino health. Throughout his clinical training, he served on committees for medical education curriculum review. Gouger also was on the board of directors for multiple years for a 501(c)3 clinic in Tennessee specializing in holistic and evidence-based treatment of opioid-addicted pregnant women.

Between MTSU and medical school, Gouger received a Fulbright Research Fellowship in Spain, which he completed in Barcelona. He worked in both medicinal chemistry research and in immigrant outreach and cross-cultural education programming for the Office of the U.S. Consulate General.

During his undergraduate days at MTSU, Gouger completed minors in Biology, Business Administration, and Leadership Studies and was an Honors College laboratory teaching assistant and worked at the MTSU Career Development Center, Student Athlete Enhancement Center, and Office of Education Abroad. He was recognized by the vice provost for international affairs as the student who had done the most to personify a "global student citizen."

Gouger's current interests lie in advancing the social mission of medicine through health justice and public policy, leadership and professional development, and adult learning in medical education.

In Memoriam: Loretta Maxine Gebert



Loretta Maxine Walchle Gebert passed away peacefully Feb. 26, 2018, at home in Murfreesboro. She was born Nov. 22, 1922, in Berne, Indiana and was proceeded in death in 2002 by her beloved husband of 60 years, Richard Earl Gebert.

Mrs. Gebert is survived by her two children, recently retired Honors professor Kaylene Gebert and Kenton Gebert, both of Murfreesboro; one surviving sister, Carol Rohrabaugh of Northbrook, Illinois; three grandsons, Brandon Long, Christopher Gebert, and Taylor Gebert; and eight great-grandchildren, Trent, Brandt, Taylor, Cleo, Farrah, Isabelle, Gabriella, and Sophia.

Raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana, she met her husband at Salem United Church of Christ and worked for the Fort Wayne Community Schools for 17 years.

After her husband's retirement from General Electric after 45 years, the Geberts spent time traveling internationally and visiting their children and grandchildren. They also enjoyed their home in Fort Wayne; a lake residence in Angola, Indiana; and a winter residence in Port Charlotte, Florida.

Following the death of her husband, Mrs. Gebert moved to Murfreesboro and joined the First Presbyterian Church. She was a member of numerous church groups and the Murfreesboro Women's Club.

CLASS NOTES
Students

Muhammad Osama Ali (Chemistry) was first author on an article, "Highly Quadrupolar Derivatives of the [closo-B10H10]2- anion: Investigation of Liquid Crystalline Polymorphism in an Homologous Series of 1,10-bis (4-alkoxypyridinium) Zwitterions," recently published in the *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*.

Shivan Berwari (Biology) received the President of the Year Award at the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership Annual Awards Banquet in April. He served as president of the MTSU Red Cross student organization.

Brooke Fitzwater (Biology) was awarded the Undergraduate Scholarship in Marine Conservation grant from the Women Divers' Hall of Fame for her research in Chile.

Jacob Hendrixson (Mechatronics Engineering) received a summer internship with the mechanical design and engineering department at Animax Designs in Nashville.



Elizabeth Keller (Aerospace), pictured above, and fellow flight instructor Harry Arcamuzi entered a Textron Aviation national competition in the spring which resulted in MTSU's selection to receive the loan of a new Cessna Skyhawk 172 for use in the spring and summer for recruiting new students and promoting MTSU's Aerospace program. Keller also competed in the all-women Air Race Classic in June with fellow Professional Pilot student Madison Taylor.

Elise Stein (Journalism) was crowned Miss Volunteer 2018 at a pageant held in Lexington, Tennessee in January and competed for the title of Miss Tennessee in June. Her platform, Move to Stand, is devoted to anti-bullying. She was selected as a nominee for the Governor's Volunteer Star award in 2016 and was an ambassador for the International Bullying Prevention Association in 2017.

Lesley Sweeton (English) placed third in the regional Southern Literary Festival Undergraduate Writing Contest last winter with her creative nonfiction piece, "The Women Who Made Me: Beulah." The award-winning selection was an excerpt from her Honors thesis.

SPRING 2018
Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity Awards

Brooke Fitzwater
Biology

Hannah Hall
Biology

Marilin Kelley
Mathematical Sciences

Stacey Yabko Misra
Psychology

Myranda Uselton
Chemistry

Clinton Warren
Biology

Kyeesha Wilcox
Global Studies and Human Geography

Madeline McDonald
Animal Science

Sarah Wilfong Joblin
Music

Kirsten Cunningham (Biology and Chemistry) was named winner of the Outstanding Nontraditional Student Award at MTSU's annual awards ceremony.



Earl Thomas (l-r), Deana Raffo, Kirsten Cunningham, and David Foote



CLASS NOTES
Alumni and Friends

Saraf Chowdhury (Biology, '16) is attending the University of Tennessee School of Pharmacy.

Saraf Chowdhury (l) and Kaylene Gebert



Bassam Aboona (Physics, '18), pictured above, is pursuing a Ph.D. in Nuclear or Particle Physics at Texas A & M where he was awarded a prestigious diversity scholarship."

Muhammad Fariz Ali (Biology, '18) is attending the University of Tennessee Health Science Center's College of Medicine in Memphis.

Muhammad Osama Ali (Chemistry, '18) is seeking a master's with a Health Care Informatics concentration at MTSU.

Emilie Aslinger (Foreign Languages, '14) is an academic advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences for the Sociology and Economics departments at the University of Tennessee.

Reece Boyd (Computer Science, '17) is working as a software engineer for Capitol One in Plano, Texas.

Kayleah Bradley (Biochemistry, '18) is conducting research at Vanderbilt University and applying to medical schools.

Dani Westerman Bryson (Political Science, '09) and her husband Spencer welcomed their second son, Haddon, last Dec. 27. They also have a 3-year-old son, Roger. Bryson is assistant district attorney for Stewart County in Tennessee.

Caitlin Couch (Marketing, '18) is pursuing a Master of Business Administration at MTSU.

Zachary Dresch (Recording Industry, '15) is pursuing a Master of Business Administration at MTSU.

Paige Fairrow-Davis (Exercise Science, '18) was accepted to five medical schools and chose to attend the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

Samantha Farish (Political Science, '14) graduated from the George Washington University Law School in May.

Natalie Foulks (Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, '18) is attending East

Tennessee State University to pursue a master's degree in Speech Pathology.

Emma Fredrick (Psychology, '12) completed her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology last August at East Tennessee State University. Her dissertation, "Development and Validation of the Bisexual Micro Aggressions Scale," was supported by two grants: Bisexual Foundation Scholarship Award and ETSU School of Graduate Studies Research Grant. She is currently a visiting assistant professor in the Psychology Department at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York.



Kenneth Goit (Actuarial Science, '18), pictured above, is working as an underwriting assistant at Greenwich Transportation Underwriters in Brentwood.

Jasmine "Jaz" Gray (Mass Communication, '10) accepted a three-year fellowship offer from the University of North Carolina to work on a Ph.D. in Mass Communication beginning in August. She plans to examine the ways in which those with chronic, rare illnesses use storytelling/media positively to impact their health identity, wellbeing, and sense of community. She also was accepted into a Ph.D. program at the University of Houston but selected UNC.

Eric Guyes (Physics, '13) has been conducting research in the novel capacitive deionization (CDI) process for water desalination since February 2017 in the Electrochemical Energy and Water Laboratory at Technion–Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel, where he is pursuing a Ph.D. in water desalination and treatment technologies. He was previously a Fulbright student researcher at Technion from September 2013 to July 2014.

Miranda Hahn (Anthropology, '18) is studying for a master's in Anthropology with a concentration in Biological Anthropology at the University of Southern Mississippi, where her studies are fully funded with a tuition waiver and a stipend.

Chelsea Harmon (Chemistry, '16), a graduate student at the University of Utah, won the National Science Foundation Fellowship, an award of $34,000 per year plus an allowance of $12,000. She is engaged to marry fellow Buchanan alum Trevor Smith (Organizational Communication, '16).

Andrew Heim (Psychology, '18) is attending graduate school at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

Alissa Ruggle Hershberger (Science and Foreign Language, '13) earned a B.S. in Nursing from Loyala University in Chicago in December.



Sam Hulsey (Foreign Language and Global Studies, '16), pictured above, is working in Huaraz in the Ancash region of Peru as field producer for a documentary film project focusing on the social impacts of climate change in the Cordillera Blanca mountain range. He has been living and working in Peru since May 2016 and plans to stay through the fall of 2019.

Erin Gardner Ingram (Mass Communication, '17) is working as event and marketing manager at Faith Family Medical Center in Nashville.

Hannah Kanyuh (Nursing, '18) has accepted a job as a registered nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the University of Kentucky Children's Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky.

Alex Knight (Biology, '18) is working as a care partner for the Trauma Unit at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and applying to medical schools.

Rayne Leonard (B.S., Biochemistry, '13; M.S., Biology, '15) is a genomics research scientist and project manager leading the genomics and bioinformatics program at Insight Genetics Inc. in Nashville.



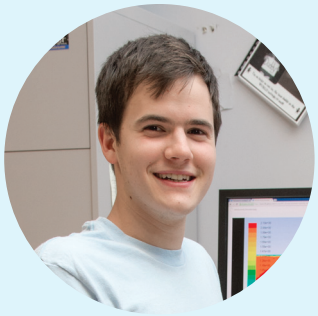
Tandra Martin (International Relations, '16), pictured above, was promoted last November to director of postsecondary coordination and alignment for the Tennessee Department of Education.

Kayla McCrary (International Relations, '16), who is seeking a Master of Science in International

Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London, was selected deputy editor-in-chief of the International Association for Political Science Students' academic blog, "A Different View," in January.

Tiffany Miller (International Relations and Foreign Language, '18) traveled to Ecuador following graduation to earn a CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) with the goal of living and teaching abroad.

Sam Mitchell (Chemistry, '12) graduated from East Tennessee State University with a B.S. in Nursing in December.



Nick Myhre (Aerospace, Physics, and Mathematics, '16), pictured above, is pursuing a Ph.D. from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He was accepted as a doctoral student after completing undergraduate requirements at MTSU.

Hannah Owens (English, '17), is pursuing a master's degree at the University of Chicago.

Haley Pimental (B.S., Chemistry, '12; M.S., Biology, '15) is a senior quality control specialist for the Brown-Forman Corp. at the Jack Daniel Distillery bottling lab.

Barbara Pafetti Popwell (Management, '18) is pursuing a professional career with Intellisource in Nashville.

Jodie Stowell Potts (Biology, '06) is working as a veterinarian in northern Virginia.



Dylan Phillips
Photo by Anthony Ferrell

Dylan "nobigdyl."Phillips (Recording Industry, '13) signed with Capitol Christian Music Group in the spring.

Kelly Richardson (Political Science, '18) is seeking a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Florida.

Jennifer Lynn Rideout (Ph.D., English, '18) won the 2018 *Scientia et Humanitas* Dean's Distinguished Essay Award for her paper, "The Russian Influenza as Extended Metaphor in Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*."

Lauren Rigsby (Physics, '13) is a medical physicist for Provision Healthcare in Nashville.



Cayman Seagraves (Finance, '18), pictured above, was one of three students chosen for a five-year Ph.D. program in Finance at Florida State University. He began the program in June and is receiving a tuition waiver and a $25,000-per-year stipend.

Emily S. Smith (Biology, '15) received an M.S. in Biology at MTSU in May.

Leslie Sweeton (English) married Kyler Kominos in June and is teaching this fall at LaVergne High School.

Virginia Vile Tehrani (Political Science, '02) was hired as an associate attorney with Anderson and Quinn in Rockville, Maryland last October. She was admitted to the Washington, D.C., bar in February after being previously admitted to the bar in Virginia and Maryland.

Joanne Tan (Biology, '16) received a doctorate in Physical Therapy from Tennessee State University in May.

Kayla Thomas (Biology, '18) is attending Meharry Medical College School of Medicine in Nashville.



Madison Tracy (Mass Communication, '17), pictured above, earned a master's degree at Lipscomb University in the College of Leadership and Public Service.

Rachel Vincent (International Relations and Foreign Language, '18) is studying Political Science in graduate school at the University of Tennessee.



Leland Waite (B.S., Aerospace, '13; M.S., Aviation Administration, '16), pictured above, is working as a pilot for Delta Airlines.

Kelsey Wells (Mass Communication, '13) was hired this spring as production manager for MTSU's Creative and Visual Services.



Trevor Wiemann (Finance, '15), pictured above, earned an M.S. in Information Systems at MTSU in December.

Kyeesha Wilcox (Global Studies, '18) is studying for a master's in Medical Geography at Michigan State University, where she will be a graduate assistant.



Emma Williams (Recording Industry, '18), pictured above, is interning with Station West, a recording studio in Nashville, to help start its touring and publishing departments.

Justin Young (Agribusiness) is working as a manager for H&R Agripower, an agricultural company.



CLASS NOTES
Faculty and Staff

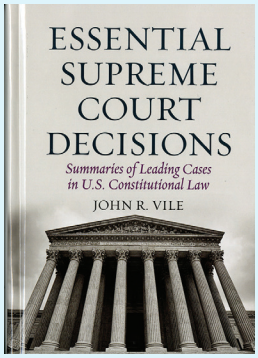
Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips during Constitution Day

Philip E. Phillips (Honors College), associate dean, chaired the program committee of the International Poe and Hawthorne Conference June 21–24 in Kyoto, Japan. Co-sponsored by the Poe Studies Association, Nathaniel Hawthorne Association, Poe Society of Japan, and Hawthorne Society of Japan, the conference attracted 165 participants from more than 15 different countries. Phillips, a past president of the Poe Studies Association, recently was appointed to the advisory board of *The Edgar Allan Poe Review*. He also serves on the Diversity Committee and the Research Committee of the National Collegiate Honors Council and on the national Fellowship Committee of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.



Drew Sieg (former Honors faculty in Biology), pictured above, has accepted a faculty position at Truman State in Kirksville, Missouri.

John R. Vile (Honors College), dean, has published *Governmental Responses to Natural Disasters in the U.S.: A Documentary History* for Talbolt Publishers. He also has published the 17th edition of *Essential Supreme Court Decisions: Summaries of Leading Cases in U.S. Constitutional Law* for Rowman & Littlefield. Vile substantially rewrote this book for the 50th Anniversary edition in 2004. This is the third edition that he has revised, updated, and published since then.



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