

# MTSU MAGAZINE

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Summer 2015 Vol. 20 No. 1

## SOLID Leadership

MTSU's Concrete Industry Management Department, the first of its kind, is led by **Heather Brown**, a woman who has defied stereotypes



MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE  
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## True Blue Statues

Before the start of an MTSU baseball game against then-defending national champion Vanderbilt in March 2015, full-sized statues of two pioneers—former coach and athletic director John Stanford and longtime Blue Raider baseball supporter Reese Smith—were unveiled at the stadium’s front entrance.

Chris Massaro, director of athletics, said Stanford and Smith “really helped build our program . . . and allowed us to be able to compete nationally. The look in front of our stadium with the two statues is a great centerpiece to our campus and really showcases our history.”

Smith’s son Steve, a former Blue Raider baseball player, and his wife, Denise, were primary donors to the statues project.

Stanford came to Middle Tennessee in the 1950s after serving with the Air Force. He made his first mark on Blue Raider baseball by becoming an All-OVC selection as a player. He made an even bigger mark as the team’s coach and, eventually, as the University’s director of athletics. After graduation, he played two seasons for the Washington Senators and coached for Shelbyville Central High School and Motlow State Community College. In 1974, he began an 11-year run as coach of the Blue Raiders. Stanford guided Middle Tennessee to a 402–222 record. His teams won six OVC regular season championships and four OVC Tournament championships and made four NCAA appearances. Stanford was named OVC Coach of the Year five times. As athletic director, he worked with donors to improve baseball facilities and scholarships, upgraded the golf program, and advocated for the addition of women’s softball and a dedicated softball field.

Smith, a Nashville native, and his two sons who had played baseball for the Blue Raiders, threw their efforts into lighting the field and building the present stadium. Considered one of the finest collegiate diamonds in the nation, Reese Smith Jr. Field was named in October 1982 and officially dedicated April 12, 1983. MTSU

*[Editor’s Note: MT Athletics contributed this report.]*



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# MTSU MAGAZINE

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# The Sweet Spot

I LIVE IN A FAMILY-FRIENDLY, BUCOLIC, but lively little town in Williamson County that was recently ranked as the fifth “best value” suburb in America by *Business Insider*. Right up the road is Nashville. And as University Editor at MTSU, I work in Murfreesboro. I like to tell people that I live in a place like Andy and Opi’s Mayberry, right next door to one of the trendiest cities in America. Plus, I work in a great college town in one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation—Rutherford County. The best of all worlds, I’d say.

My contention that Murfreesboro is a great college town got a boost in credibility last year when WalletHub.com ranked it 49th nationally out of 280 municipalities on its “Best & Worst College Cities & Towns in America” list. You read that right—Murfreesboro was ranked among the best, higher than Nashville and dozens of other cities and towns across America.

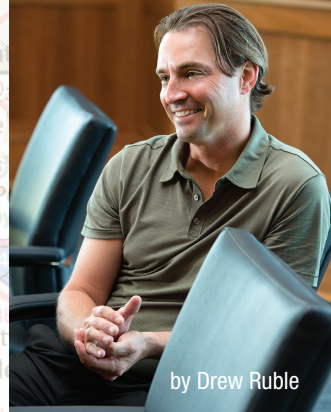
The list showed Murfreesboro as the highest-rated college town in Tennessee. The next closest city was Knoxville (56th) followed by Nashville (89th). Factors such as the quality of higher education, crime rates, and cost of living were used to rank the cities and towns “that promise the best or worst combination of academic, social, and economic atmospheres.” The rankings also measured “wallet wellness” and youth-oriented environments. (WalletHub limited its choice of cities and towns to those with university or college populations of at least 10,000. In a subranking for medium-sized cities with populations between 100,000 and 300,000, Murfreesboro ranked an impressive 11th out of 149 cities, beating

out Wilmington, N.C., Cambridge, Mass., and Madison, Wis., among others.)

WalletHub writer Richard Barnardo wrote that it’s important for prospective students and families to look not only at an institution’s intellectual environment but also at the place students will call home away from home for several years. “Academic success depends on more than just the quality of a program,” Barnardo wrote. “Also important is an area that is safe, affordable, and conducive to personal development through a diversity of cultural and professional experiences.”

When pitching the University to prospective students and partners, it’s not uncommon for MTSU faculty, staff, recruiters, supporters, and alumni to note that Nashville is only about a 30-minute drive from Murfreesboro. That’s certainly something worth emphasizing, but it is by no means necessary. Murfreesboro and MTSU stand on their own by any measurement—including their combined ability to provide the total college experience.

I hope you think, as I do, that each edition of *MTSU Magazine* (this one includes stories ranging from Fulbright Scholars to hit songwriters, pop culture icons, and concrete industry experts) illustrates how being True Blue is a sweet way to live. [MTSU](#)



by Drew Ruble



Murfreesboro and MTSU stand on their own by any measurement—

including their combined ability to provide the total college experience.

I AM *true* **BLUE**



**Kevin Byard - S**  
2014 C-USA  
All-Conference  
First Team

**Josh Chester - OL**  
Rimington Trophy  
Watch List

**Rick Stockstill**  
Head Coach

2015 BLUE RAIDER FOOTBALL  
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SEPTEMBER 5

**CHARLOTTE**  
SEPTEMBER 19  
FAMILY WEEKEND

**VANDERBILT**  
OCTOBER 3  
HOMECOMING

**FIU**  
OCTOBER 17

**MARSHALL**  
NOVEMBER 7  
SALUTE TO VETERANS

**NORTH TEXAS**  
NOVEMBER 21

# A Universal Language

A conversation with  
President Sidney A. McPhee



*MTSU and China's Hangzhou Normal University partnered in 2009 to establish MTSU's Confucius Institute, which works to enhance understanding of Chinese language and culture. Talk about the newest development in that partnership.*

**President McPhee:** MTSU is currently in the midst of the creation of a Chinese music and cultural center on University property. It's the result of a \$1 million grant provided by Hanban Confucius Institute in Beijing, an organization sponsored by China's education ministry that oversees more than 440 institutes in 120 countries.

In collaboration with our sister university, Hangzhou, the new center will promote music as a vital element in education and understanding of Chinese people and culture. It will also become another component of our extremely successful international outreach, which has earned MTSU recognition as a leader in global studies.

At the ceremony to announce the grant and the creation of the center, Hangzhou President Du Wei, a violinist himself, quoted Confucius, who said, "Education primarily starts from poetry and ends with music." I agree wholeheartedly.

This center has the potential to become the hub of local and regional outreach that will enhance the understanding, research, and teaching of Chinese

language, culture, and music through public performances, events at schools, and a website with related resources.

*What are the specifics of the project?*

**President McPhee:** The 3,200-square-foot center, which is expected to open by fall 2016 or earlier, will be in the former Middle Tennessee Medical Center building on Bell Street. The center will showcase selected instruments from many of China's 56 national ethnicities. For instance, at the ceremony announcing the new center, Hangzhou donated the new center's first instrument, a guzheng, which dates back to ancient times and is a 21-stringed instrument that rests on legs much as a steel guitar does and is plucked by a seated musician.

MTSU has hired an ethnomusicologist, an educator who studies music in the context of its culture, to serve as the center's director. Under the auspices of the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Music, the center's leader will develop courses involving Chinese music. There will be active and visible research taking place at the center resulting in presentations and publications that will allow MTSU to develop a national and international reputation in this area.

*Who else deserves credit for this exciting new project, which really constitutes another musical jewel in the Nashville area's musical crown?*

**President McPhee:** Contributions came from MTSU's School of Music and its director Michael Parkinson, as well as the departments of Recording Industry and Electronic Media Communication. In addition, many of the underlying strategies used to develop this center were based on the activities and operational structures employed by our world-class Center for Popular Music, which is recognized as one of the finest repositories of American music and culture in existence.

*Any final thoughts?*

**President McPhee:** This new center perfectly complements our existing treasure trove of musical assets at MTSU. It broadens our musicology efforts into the realm of ethnomusicology and grows our research footprint to include multicultural musical and cultural studies. This will be a destination not only for scholars; it will be yet another attraction that reinforces the greater Nashville area's standing as Music City, USA.

Dr. Du Wei has also already proposed the creation of a Chinese center of American studies on the campus of Hangzhou Normal University in China and is prepared to begin discussions immediately.

*Thank you, Mr. President.* [MTSU](#)

# MidPoints

A look at recent awards, events, and accomplishments at MTSU

compiled by Gina E. Fann, Jimmy Hart, Gina K. Logue, Paula Morton, Drew Ruble, and Randy Weiler



Lt. Gen. Keith M. Huber

## Taking Command

**Lt. Gen. Keith M. Huber**, who recently retired from the U.S. Army after almost 40 years of service, joined MTSU as senior advisor for veterans and leadership initiatives, tasked with examining the University's policies and practices for the recruitment and student success of veterans and their family members. "We are proud that MTSU has been recognized year after year by national publications such as *Military Times* and *G.I. Jobs* magazine as being one of the top universities in the U.S. for veteran education," said President Sidney A. McPhee at the time of Huber's appointment. "But we also recognize that there is much that needs to be done here to better serve this important community."

Huber's military service included most recently command of Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 in Afghanistan. He also served as a company commander, battalion

operations officer, brigade and division operations officer, battalion commander, and director of civil-military affairs with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell.

This spring, Huber ushered in a new practice: honoring graduating veterans with special stoles in a ceremony before commencement. The University also recently announced plans to create a 2,600-square-foot Veterans and Military Center in the heart of campus that will cater to the needs of student veterans, from financial aid to academic advising, with staffers who understand the unique challenges facing veterans, active military personnel and their families. The University partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in 2012 to establish Tennessee's first VetSuccess On Campus office housed within the new space.

## Resting Her Case

**Leigh Stanfield**, a junior from Soddy-Daisy who is concentrating in Communications Studies, won a national title in the novice division at the International Public Debate Association's National Championship Tournament at Boise State University in Idaho in March 2015. Her MTSU Debate teammate **Abigail Barnes**, a sophomore English major from Morristown, took third place in the same category. A special exhibition debate hosted by MTSU in April featured three MTSU debaters and three Irish students who won the 2015 Irish Times Debate Championship.



Leigh Stanfield

## Spanning the Globe

MTSU and **Universidad Andina del Cusco (UAC)**, a private university in Peru, forged a partnership that will allow officials to explore ways to make it easier for students from each institution to study at the other. It is MTSU's 39th international academic partnership (18 countries) and only the second such tie with an institution in South America. Best known for programs in tourism, accounting, and nursing, UAC is close to Machu Picchu, described by *National Geographic* as one of the world's most important archeological sites.



Alejandro Paul Pletickosich Picon and President Sidney A. McPhee

## Ready for Takeoff

**Shanda Carney Fanning** ('99) was one of two pilots killed Aug. 14, 2013, when their United Parcel Service plane crashed in Birmingham, Ala. She was 37. Her best friend, **Whitney Dix** ('99), a pilot, an alumna, and a dispatch manager with Southwest Airlines in Texas, was devastated by Fanning's death. But Dix was determined to keep her memory alive by spearheading a drive to establish a scholarship at their alma mater—the Shanda Carney Fanning Aviation Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship was awarded for the first time earlier this year. Recipients of \$2,500 each were students **Nathan Tilton** and **Dylan Smith**, both Buchanan Fellows: recipients of the highest academic scholarship awarded at MTSU. Anyone interested in supporting the new aviation scholarship can do so



Dylan Smith and Nathan Tilton

online at [www.mtsu.edu/fanningscholarship](http://www.mtsu.edu/fanningscholarship) or by calling Nicole Chitty at (615) 898-5003 or emailing her at [nicole.chitty@mtsu.edu](mailto:nicole.chitty@mtsu.edu)

Shanda Carney Fanning



Left to right, MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee, Tennessee Board of Regents Chancellor John Morgan and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau.

## Water Work

The **Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)** and MTSU announced a partnership to expand opportunities for earning course credit and certifications through TDEC's Fleming Training Center in Murfreesboro, online, and at other statewide locations. "Fleming Training Center offers cutting-edge technology and advanced classes in a variety of water areas," said Bob Martineau, TDEC commissioner. "Having qualified candidates for these jobs is essential for protecting public health and the environment." According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the water supply and sanitation sector is expected to experience an employment growth rate of 45 percent in coming years due to regulations, infrastructure growth, security, and customer demands. "This collaborative effort is a perfect example of the innovation that Tennessee needs in order to meet the Drive to 55," said Mike Krause, executive director of Governor Bill Haslam's initiative to have 55 percent of Tennesseans equipped with a college degree or certificate by 2025.

## Not So Par for the Course

The MTSU **women's golf** team, led by head coach Chris Adams, made school history in May when it traveled to the NCAA West Regional in St. George, Utah. The team won the Conference USA Championship in April and, thus, an automatic bid to the postseason for the first time in its history.



## Bright Ideas

As a student in MTSU's Molecular Biosciences Ph.D. program, **Matthew Wright** of Knoxville mixed his deep knowledge of cells with his growing knowledge about sales to help his team win the 2015 MTSU Business Plan Competition. The winning idea was Salomon's House LLC, a startup whose ambitious mission is to discover disease-curing compounds that it in turn sells to the pharmaceutical industry. The achievement earned team members \$7,500 in seed money to help bring their entrepreneurial idea into reality. Wright teamed with alumnus **Jacob Basham**

('13), a University Honors College graduate from Portland, and alumnus **Eric Vick** ('14) of Bellevue, who graduated last year with a Molecular Biosciences doctorate. Launched last year, the competition is sponsored by the Wright Travel Chair of Entrepreneurship. Any enrolled MTSU student or alumnus may participate in the competition.



*(continued on page 10)*



MTSU hosted an evening Grammy dinner in Malibu with MTSU alums

At the reception to congratulate MTSU alumna Alicia Warwick ('99), executive director of The Recording Academy's Nashville chapter.



Torrance Esmond visited MTSU.



## Painting the Grammys True Blue

Nearly 20 MTSU alumni and faculty have been nominated for Grammy Awards in the last five years. Seven have won Grammys so far, including some repeat recipients, in categories from classical to bluegrass.

In February 2015, one song won Grammy gold for a pair of former MTSU students. "Messengers," cowritten by 2003 music business graduate **Torrance Esmond** and former student **Lecrae Moore** for Moore's latest album, won the award for Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song during the 57th annual Grammy Award ceremonies at Staples Center in Los Angeles. MTSU alumni **Luke Laird** ('01), and **Jaren Johnston** were nominated for Grammys in 2015 in the Best Country Song category.

Just weeks after his Grammy win, Esmond, who's known professionally as "Street Symphony," visited MTSU to talk to students and to establish the Street Symphony Scholarship, a \$750-per-semester award for MTSU Recording Industry students.

For two consecutive years, 2014 and 2015, MTSU has been one of the universities with the highest profile at the Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. The 2015 trip featured three events: a Saturday brunch in downtown Los Angeles that honored alumna **Alicia Warwick** ('99), executive director of the Recording Academy's Nashville chapter (see related story in this issue's Class Notes section); a Saturday evening dinner in Malibu with MTSU alums from the region; and a Sunday pre-Grammys reception with Nashville-based Leadership Music, a program that brings together established leaders in the music business to discuss issues affecting the industry. President Sidney A. McPhee, Dean Ken Paulson of the College of Mass Communication, and Recording Industry Department chair Beverly Keel were front and center for entire event.

"MTSU is a valued partner and friend, and we appreciate its help in staging this great event before the Grammy Awards," said Diane Pearson, president of Leadership Music and an executive with City National Bank. "It means a great deal to



From left Pete Fisher ('87), Erika Nichols, Alicia Warwick ('99), and dean Ken Paulson.

have the University's leadership here today."

Meanwhile, inside Staples Center, MTSU alumnus **Garry Hood** ('77) was serving as head stage manager for the ceremony.

Hood has been head stage manager for more than 1,000 hours of network television specials including Olympic opening and closing ceremonies, presidential inaugurations, the Kennedy Center Honors, Super Bowl halftime shows, and most of the major entertainment awards ceremonies.

Ken Griffey Sr. highlighted MTSU's Baseball in Literature and Culture Conference



## A Walk-off Home Run

Former Cincinnati Reds outfielder **Ken Griffey Sr.** highlighted MTSU's Baseball in Literature and Culture Conference in 2015. Griffey, the father of 13-time All-Star Ken Griffey Jr., is a roving instructor for the Reds. The annual gathering of baseball aficionados and scholars was held at MTSU from 2006 to 2015 but will be moving to Ottawa University in Ottawa, Kansas, next year. During MTSU's time as host, the conference welcomed former major leaguers such as Tommy John, Ferguson Jenkins, and Jim Bouton.

## Holding Serve

A \$6.2 million **indoor tennis court facility** at Old Fort Park officially opened in July. MTSU contributed \$1.8 million to the project and will have dedicated locker room space. The local Christy-Houston Foundation also donated \$500,000 for the project.

## Good Partners

MTSU became a partner in **Blackman High School's** new **Collegiate Academy**, offering college-level courses at the high school this fall and assisting in the development of academic enrichment programs. The agreement allows Blackman juniors and seniors who meet eligibility standards to take up to six hours of MTSU courses at no cost. Credits will count on high school and college transcripts. MTSU will also make certain programs, activities, and resources available to academy students, such as access to its new \$147-million Science Building, education-abroad programs, and campus events and lectures.



In related news, qualified high school juniors and seniors in Rutherford, Williamson, and Bradley counties will be able to take **tuition-free**

## Better by Design

Mechatronics Engineering, one of MTSU newest majors, received a three-year, **\$614,172 grant** from the National Science Foundation for scholarships to help expand the program, which combines mechanical, computer, and electrical engineering, systems integration, and project management. At least 15 incoming freshmen for each of the next three years will receive scholarships of up to \$10,000.

MIDPOINTS



President Sidney A. McPhee, Blackman Principal Leisa Justus, and Don Odom, director of Rutherford County Schools

**online courses** for college credit through MTSU's recently expanded dual-enrollment program. The online offerings range from courses in Aerospace to Recording Industry. The University's expansion in dual enrollment is expected to grow from about 35 students this year to 500 in the fall and bolsters Gov. Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative, which identifies earlier engagement by students as a key advantage for helping grow the state's levels of educational attainment.



Tandra Martin

## The Future's So Fulbright

Two MTSU students were recently awarded Fulbright Scholarships—the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program. **Tandra Martin**, who recently finished a Gilman Grant in Morocco, received a Fulbright to travel to South Africa. **Davis Thompson**, who interned for First Lady Michelle Obama, is going to the Slovak Republic. For six consecutive years, MTSU has had two or more Fulbright winners (a total of 13). MTSU was one of just 108 colleges and universities recognized by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* for producing Fulbright international scholars in 2013, ranked alongside Duke, Harvard, and Yale. (No other Tennessee institution made the list.)

(continued on page 12)

Darin Gordon



Evan Cope



## The Tassel Is Worth the Hassle

More than 2,500 students received MTSU degrees May 9 at commencement ceremonies in Murphy Center. **Evan Cope**, a Murfreesboro attorney and new chair of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, was the guest speaker in the morning. Alumnus **Darin Gordon** ('95), director of healthcare finance and administration for the state of Tennessee, spoke at the afternoon ceremony. More than 2,100 of those receiving degrees were undergraduates.

## So Much Cooler Online

ComputerScienceOnline.org included **MTSU University College's** online degree offerings on its Best Online Computer Science Degrees list for 2015. Factors for making the list included tuition costs, student-teacher ratios, graduation rates, and accreditation. MTSU offers a bachelor's degree in Professional Studies with a concentration in Information Technology that can be earned fully online.

The degree is part of the University's programs for distance and nontraditional students.



## Getting on Board

MTSU signed a first-of-its-kind partnership with Florida's **Montverde Academy**, a premier private boarding school known for its strong international enrollment and 100 percent college placement rate. The pact will allow dual enrollment of Montverde students, most likely through online classes from MTSU. The academy's guidance counselors and MTSU's undergraduate and international studies recruiters will also place students from Montverde on campus at MTSU. Headmaster **Kasey Kesselring** ('97), who received his master's from MTSU and is a former headmaster of Webb School in Bell Buckle, leads Montverde, which educates nearly 1,100 students from pre-K through 12th grade, including more than 350 boarding students between grades 7 through 12 who hail from across the U.S. and 60 countries. It also has made recruitment in China a top priority and has opened an educational center in Shanghai.



## Fully Engaged

MTSU was among just 240 colleges and universities across the country to receive the 2015 **Community Engagement Classification** from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. MTSU is also among 157 of those institutions reclassified for the designation after having first achieved it in either 2006 or 2008. According to Carnegie documents, the classification identifies "campuses that are improving teaching and learning, producing research that makes a difference in communities, and revitalizing their civic and academic missions."

## Southern Fried Expedition

In March 2015, MTSU agriculture professor and alternative fuels researcher **Cliff Ricketts** and a five-member team (which included student **Ben Black**) completed a coast-to-coast drive from Key West to Seattle using nothing but waste chicken fat and used cooking oil from University dining facilities for fuel. The "Southern Fried Fuel" expedition was another career milestone for Ricketts, 66, who in 2014 drove coast to coast in vehicles powered exclusively by sun and water.



Cliff Ricketts



## The Sky's the Limit

**Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS)** are creating thousands of new jobs in many industries and proving to be a major factor in aviation worldwide. That's why MTSU students who earn bachelor's degrees in the Department of Aerospace's new UAS Operations concentration, which started this year, will be a part of a growing business sector expected to produce 70,000 new jobs, starting salaries of \$50,000 or more, and \$13.6 billion for the U.S. economy in the next three to five years. The concentration received Tennessee Board of Regents approval late last year, making MTSU one of only a handful of colleges or universities in the U.S. to offer UAS studies leading to a degree.

## Hands-on Learning

Students from the College of Mass Communication worked at **Bonnaroo** this summer under the second year of MTSU's unique partnership with festival organizers. Utilizing MTSU's \$1.7 million mobile production studio, students captured video performances on the festival's Who Stage. Other students filed stories and videos for area news media outlets. Mass Communication Dean Ken Paulson said, "It's important that we extend our teaching beyond the walls of our college."

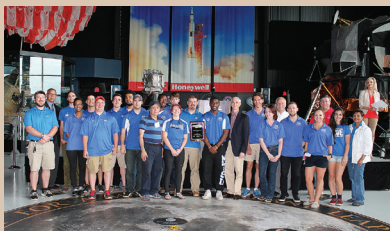


A group of Electronic Media students worked the Who Stage at Bonnaroo while a crew of student journalists covered the music and arts festival.

## Piece by Piece

An MTSU professor's contribution to a new book has helped alter the discussion about the origins of humankind in North America. **Hugh Berryman** is the author of a chapter in *Kennewick Man: The Scientific Investigation of an Ancient American Skeleton*, which was published in late 2014 by Texas A&M University

Press. Berryman, a research professor and forensic anthropologist, was one of 11 top American researchers who collaborated in the 2005–2006 examination of a nearly 9,000-year-old skeleton that forced the scientific community to rethink the history of the peopling of the Americas.



## Moon Shot

The MTSU Experimental Vehicles **lunar rover team** regained its status as best in the nation with a 5-minute-plus finish April 18 at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center half-mile obstacle course in Huntsville, Alabama. The student-built rover nicknamed "The Beast" placed third overall behind Russia and runner-up Germany in the NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge. The event is held annually for university and high school teams to encourage research and development of new technology for future mission planning and crewed space missions. Murfreesboro's Central Magnet School, which relies on MTSU for parts, machining, and advising, placed 11th in the high school division. The Experimental Vehicles **Formula Hybrid** MTSU team later competed for the first time in the Society of Automotive Engineers Collegiate Design Series event held at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, New Hampshire. Judges awarded the team the top presentation with the highest score in the nine-year history of the event.

MTSU



# SOLID

## Leadership

by Katie Porterfield

MTSU's Concrete Industry Management Department, the first of its kind in the U.S. and, perhaps, the world, is led by **HEATHER BROWN**, a woman who has defied stereotypes and carved out a solid reputation in the industry.

**B**ETWEEN 2011 AND 2013, CHINA, WHICH HAS BEEN BUILDING whole cities to accommodate population growth, consumed 6.6 gigatons of concrete—more than the U.S. used in the entire 20th century.

That fact, uncovered by population and energy researcher Vaclav Smil, prompted business magnate Bill Gates to write about it on his blog, which in turn drew worldwide media attention to Smil's analysis. *Forbes* magazine wrote, "Look at what the U.S. built between 1901 and 2000: all those skyscrapers, the Interstate, the Hoover Dam, the list goes on and on, but all that concrete only amounted to 4.5 gigatons."

That's not to say the U.S. isn't still building. Concrete is a \$200 billion industry with 500,000 people employed in a variety of careers working with this "liquid rock."

Though easy to take for granted, concrete has been the cornerstone of engineering for centuries, from the Roman Empire to the development of modern-day skyscrapers. [So how is all of this relevant to MTSU?](#)

Although other MTSU departments tend to grab more headlines, the Concrete Industry Management Department (CIM) may be MTSU's most well known. Throughout the nation, the CIM program is recognized as the first and finest of its kind. The concrete industry helped fashion the program at MTSU nearly two decades ago. It has been the template for every other university program like it in the U.S.

*(continued on page 17)*

*Dr. Heather Brown, chair, Concrete Industry Management (CIM) Department, next to the iconic Horseshoe statue located in The Grove and made by CIM.*



# COME CELEBRATE BLUE RAIDER TRADITION

Friday, October 2, 2015

- 10:00 a.m. The Class of 1965  
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(RSVP required, see below)
- 4:00 p.m. Distinguished Alumni Awards Reception  
(RSVP required, see below)

Saturday,  
October 3, 2015

- 10:30 a.m. **Mixer on Main  
Parade Watching Party**  
(New Location—President's Lawn on the corner  
of East Main and Old Main Campus Entrance)
- 11:00 a.m. **Homecoming Parade**  
(New Route posted on [mtalumni.com](http://mtalumni.com))
- 12:30 p.m. **Tailgate lunch at Mixer on Main**  
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Times and locations  
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OCTOBER 2-3

HOMEcoming

Solid Leadership *(continued from page 14)*

From cutting-edge research, to almost guaranteeing student success and job placement, to the recent rollout of a new executive M.B.A. designed in concert with industry, the CIM program is one of the University's biggest success stories. Adding interest to the mix is that steering the department is a woman who has defied stereotypes and carved out a solid reputation in the national concrete industry.

### A Firm Foundation

As a little girl, Heather Brown was a tomboy. Her specialty? Building. In addition to crafting Lego masterpieces, she also built forts out of snow, wood, and even leaves. So, when she took a test in ninth grade that indicated she was well suited for civil engineering, she bought into the idea. She attended Tennessee Tech University and earned a bachelor's, master's, and doctorate in the subject.

Today, as chair of the CIM Department, Brown does more than just recruit students who think of themselves as master builders (or who may have scored well on one of those career aptitude tests). She also promises to give them chances to find careers in the high-growth, science-driven concrete industry.

"In recent graduating classes, I've had four jobs for every graduate," Brown says. "I've had 200 jobs and 50 kids to take them."

According to Brown, that number will continue to climb as the booming construction industry expands for at least the next five years and perhaps the next decade. But these job openings aren't for laborers who place and finish concrete. Brown's students fill a wide variety of jobs in the industry, from sales or quality control to production management or contracting.

"Our degree was started for the management side of the business," Brown says, using the pitch she delivers to parents of prospective students. "Our industry, which continues to be a partner, dreamt this whole thing up because they realized they were not getting college-educated kids to enter concrete construction and production."

### Cementing a Reputation

MTSU, with its already well-known academic programs such as Recording Industry, Horse Science, Agribusiness/ Agriscience and Aerospace, seemed the perfect fit for a CIM program. In 1995, industry representatives started pushing for the first four-year bachelor's degree dedicated to the development of managers for the concrete industry. They convinced MTSU officials that CIM was a degree that would open doors for students.

"The industry saw a need, and there wasn't a university in the entire country that had a degree focused on concrete

construction," Brown says. "MTSU, unlike many other universities they approached, had open arms and took them in and said, 'We can work together; we can be a partner.'"

Those same industry folks became teachers, turning out the first graduates in 2000. In 2001, Brown, who'd been a research assistant for the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) while pursuing her education, agreed to come aboard as a teacher and researcher.

"It was all about concrete, and that's what I'd primarily worked on during my master's and Ph.D., so it was a passion of mine already," Brown says. "I jumped right in, and I loved it."

In 2006, she became the program director, and in 2011, when CIM became a department in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, she became its chair. Under her leadership and with the continued support of industry executives now known as the National Steering Committee (NSC), the program has since expanded to other universities (California State University–Chico, New Jersey Institute of Technology, and Texas State University) to better serve industry needs beyond the Southeast. The NSC plans eventually to introduce the program at two more U.S. schools and possibly in foreign countries.

*(continued on page 18)*



*This year, 10 CIM students (including Nick Langlois, pictured here) traveled to the Dominican Republic to form and pour concrete prisms used to make artificial reefs, which are intended to help promote marine life near a cruise ship port.*

## A Concrete Advantage

In 2012, MTSU rolled out the first-ever M.B.A. with a concentration in Concrete Industry Management, offered through the Jennings A. Jones College of Business. Executives or managers from across the nation take online courses for 15 months from business faculty who have received training in the industry.

“This was a huge effort because after we started the four schools, we realized there was a whole level of workforce out there . . . already in concrete who needed that degree to move up in their organization,” Brown says.

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“In recent graduating classes, I’ve had four jobs for every graduate,” Brown says. “I’ve had 200 jobs and 50 kids to take them.”

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Comparing it favorably to Belmont University’s music business M.B.A. or Vanderbilt University’s healthcare M.B.A. in the local market, Brown says the first class of eight students graduated from the M.B.A. program in concrete in March 2014. A second group of six students followed last March, and 10 will come online in January 2016.

Those graduates, along with more than 800 from the undergraduate CIM program, continue to work their way up in a field that is hungry for young people. The average age of a manager in the concrete industry, Brown says, is about 57, and when the recession hit in 2008, managers who’d been expected to retire decided to stay on a bit longer to earn more money.

“There’s going to be and has been a big let-go of all of these seasoned professionals, and our guys are just waiting in the wings,” Brown says, adding that at least two MTSU alumni have already reached the vice president level after only 10 years.

CIM alum Nicholas Edwards (’06), director of sales (Eastern U.S.) for Kalyn-Siebert (a company that manufactures custom-engineered transport equipment and trailers), says his experience in the program prepared him for career acceleration and opened doors “beyond description.”

“What folks don’t realize is we are missing an entire generation . . . within the concrete industry,” says Edwards, who is also vice president of the MTSU CIM Patrons Board, a group of local concrete professionals who serve the department and its students with financial, marketing, and mentoring help. “Filling this void with accelerated,

adequately prepared individuals was the very vision the founders of the CIM program conceived.”

## Set in Stone

The future for CIM graduates seems bright, and Brown’s plan is to continue to expand the department with its own concrete building. In addition to giving CIM a separate space, the building would showcase the different ways concrete can be used and be a learning lab for students.

“People don’t realize that concrete can be made to look like anything else,” Brown says.

The proposed new building would look like other red brick buildings on campus from a distance, Brown says. However, the exterior would be concrete sanded and stained to give the appearance of red brick. The inside of the proposed building would feature translucent concrete, a light-transmitting material that allows, among other things, people with windowless offices to feel as though they have windows to the outside because they see shadows and sunlight.

Brown plans to finance the building with industry money. She’s already raised \$2 million and hopes to raise the remaining \$6 million in cash and materials such as steel and rock in time to break ground when the program turns 20 years old next year.

## Breaking the Mold

In the meantime, Brown plans to stay busy recruiting students to help industry benefactors fill all those vacant positions.

“I’m just trying to get more students that want to be around construction and have a passion for this,” she says.



## Hard Evidence

Perhaps some of those will be women looking to follow in Brown's footsteps.

"When I got into concrete, I was the only girl in the room," Brown says.

Today, although the number of females in the industry has grown somewhat, Brown says only 10 percent of her students are women. Such a low percentage reflects the problem of women and girls eschewing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

A 2010 report by the American Association of University Women found that the number of women in science and engineering is growing, but men continue to outnumber women, especially at the upper levels of the professions. It doesn't bode well for research and discovery when half of the human race—for whatever reason—remains outside the arena of science. Nor does it help America fill the STEM jobs that are increasingly available.

Brown would like to see that percentage in her department reach 15 to 20 percent.

"At the end of the day, I can't say, 'Every woman come over to concrete,'" she says, "because you do have to have a certain kind of personality or spunk. You have to have thick skin because it is still very male-dominated and very 'good-old-boy' in nature."

If women are willing to enter that culture, opportunities are there to be had. The industry wants to be more diverse.

"Females are just so different in this world," Brown says. "They are way better at multitasking and diffusing conflicts, and they are really go-getters, so companies who have traditionally hired men get a couple of our girls and say, 'Send us more.' That's good for us, but we still need more to sign up."

One thing is certain: women who decide to give concrete a try at MTSU will have the perfect mentor in Dr. Heather Brown.

### From the Ground Up

It's simply hard to imagine a world without concrete. Often overlooked, though, is that there is an underlying science to concrete and its many uses that must be understood in order to be properly applied.

Given concrete's fundamental role in the built environment, the CIM Department at MTSU will likely continue to benefit the concrete industry as it cements the professional prospects of its graduates. [MTSU](#)

In addition to preparing graduates to work in the high-growth field of concrete management, MTSU's program is a powerhouse in research. Much of the research produced by CIM is done by undergraduate students and in time intervals that match the speed of the ever-evolving concrete industry.

"Essentially, we investigate anything to do with concrete floors, roads, elevated slabs, walls, bridges, columns, etc.," says Dr. Heather Brown, chair of the Concrete Industry Management Department. "We are most concerned with durability, utilizing recycled products, economics, and safety."

College of Basic and Applied Sciences dean Bud Fischer says the program regularly receives grants from TDOT for projects such as gauging the life expectancy of roads and bridges and selecting the correct concrete for transportation projects.

"It's pretty unusual nationally to see students involved in state transportation projects like this," says Fischer. "It allows our students to do hands-on research activity, which is also important for the state." [MTSU](#)

*Dr. Heather Brown, CIM chair, demonstrates pervious concrete, which allows rain to pass through, reducing runoff.*



photo: Andy Heidt



photo: Andy Heidt

# One of MTSU's newest professors aims to keep the memory of a country music legend alive and help students build careers

by Stephanie Stewart-Howard

**C**HARLES "ODIE" BLACKMON ('96), NEWLY APPOINTED coordinator for MTSU's Commercial Songwriting concentration, has thrived as a Nashville songwriter.

A Grammy nominee for Lee Ann Womack's "I May Hate Myself in the Morning" (CMA Single of the Year in 2005), Blackmon has also written hits for country music superstars including George Strait ("She'll Leave You with a Smile") and Gary Allan ("Nothing on but the Radio"), among others. His songs have graced albums that have sold more than 20 million copies.

It should come as no surprise that a top Nashville songsmith like Blackmon treasures

the music of the late George Jones and also understands the contributions the man nicknamed "Possum" made to Nashville and the country music industry.

Blackmon says he's honored that his return to his alma mater led to a project that's burnishing Jones's legacy. With the blessing of Jones's widow, Nancy, Blackmon has partnered with John Allen, CEO at New West Records, an Americana record label in Nashville, to create a George Jones tribute album. And he is making sure MTSU students will be part of the experience.



"George received help from people as he strove to have a country music career, so I am thrilled that we will be able to help young people in the name of George Jones."  
—Nancy Jones

## Planting the Seed

Jones died in 2013 after a six-decade career of songwriting and performing that helped define country music. Shortly thereafter, Nancy Jones funded a scholarship for the Recording Industry Department as a way to keep her late husband's legacy alive and help others.

"George received help from people as he strove to have a country music career, so I am thrilled that we will be able to help young people in the name of George Jones," she said at the time the scholarship was established. "I know he would have loved this."

*(continued on page 22)*

## For a Song *(continued from page 21)*

Jones's donation has been followed by contributions that have increased the George Jones Scholarship Fund to more than \$170,000. The first scholarship recipient was Ashley Doris, one of Blackmon's best students (see sidebar).

The Center for Popular Music has added to its collection of research material and artifacts surrounding Jones's career, and the Recording Industry Department has developed a first-of-its-kind college course on Jones's life and music. Beverly Keel, department chair, says the course will "create opportunities for scholars to offer their analyses and interpretations of his music that can then be shared with scholars internationally."

George Jones had number-one hits from the 1950s through the 1980s including the Grammy-winning "He Stopped Loving Her Today." He received the Recording Academy's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012.

"We want to make sure that students 100 years from now will fall in love with 'He Stopped Loving Her Today,' just as we did, no matter what future technology they may use to listen to traditional country music," Keel says.



photo: Andy Heidt

## Right Place, Right Time

While the George Jones–MTSU connection was being made, Odie Blackmon was interviewing for a position at the University. He thought it would be a dream come true to teach the George Jones class that Keel intended to create. When he came to the job interview, he already had a third of the curriculum planned and told Keel if she hadn't assigned it to any faculty member yet, he'd love to do it. (Blackmon already had teaching experience at Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music.)

Blackmon's lesson plan was a thorough exploration of Jones's life and music, from his birth during the Great Depression

to the influence of that period's music and culture on who he became and what he achieved. "It gives you a sense of who George was, what he came from, and why he felt the way he did and had the demons he did, and it brings into focus the real golden era of his recording," Blackmon says.

Blackmon wanted to do even more to tell the whole George Jones story. He fashioned the idea of a tribute album, and he wanted the project to be something other than contemporary country. He imagined recording Americana artists like Jim Lauderdale, Kacey Musgraves, the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Buddy Miller, Mike Farris, Nikki Lane, Old Crow Medicine Show, and others.

He shared his notion with Stacy Merida, who spearheads MTSU's student-run Match Records. She encouraged him to go to Keel with the idea. The project was greenlighted by Ken Paulson, dean of the College of Mass Communication, and then pitched to John Allan at New West Records in Nashville. Allan loved the idea and a deal was hammered out that leaves room for MTSU to benefit from the proceeds of the eventual record.

The project will be a collection of styles interpreting Jones with an Americana flair. Keel and Nancy Jones wrote letters to prospective artists. "We're in the process of actually finding out who among our wish list of potential artists will participate right now," Blackmon says.

The project should give students a chance to help with publicity and solicit Grammy votes when the time comes. It will also be a teaching tool for accounting and music business classes.

"I have known Odie for a long time from my publishing and A&R background," Allan says. "We have similar sensibilities when it comes to artists and songwriting, so he felt comfortable sharing this idea. We both felt that this can't be a knee-jerk tribute record. The production and arranging must be done right so that it moves George's music forward with an interesting juxtaposition of established artists and rising stars that 'get' the heritage of the catalog but still make the songs their own."

Asked how he feels Jones's music will appeal to audiences today, especially reinterpreted through the Americana genre, Allan says, "George Jones was a master craftsman. His music is timeless, and no matter what genre someone likes, everyone can appreciate his songwriting and talent. George poured his heart and soul into his songs, and his raw emotion and authenticity resonate in an era when these attributes aren't as common as they used to be. I hope this album will act as a fitting tribute to George's music and serve as a reminder of what a force of nature he was."

The project should give students a chance to help with publicity and solicit Grammy votes when the time comes. It will also be a teaching tool for accounting and music business classes.

## Daily Grind

Ramping up MTSU's involvement in all things George Jones isn't the only work Blackmon has been doing.

The winner of Blackmon's Advanced Commercial Songwriting class competition got the chance to trade ideas with hit songwriter Erin Enderlin ('04), a friend of Blackmon's. Opportunities for students to pitch original songs directly to publishers have been created and the relationship with performing rights organization ASCAP has been deepened and expanded.

Concerts headlined by alums including Eric Paslay have raised money to hire new adjunct faculty members who will focus on students interested in genres outside the commercial country realm. Along the way, Blackmon published a textbook: *Music Theory and the Nashville Number System: For Songwriters and Performers*.

His boss, Paulson, who calls MTSU's songwriting program "one of the best in the country" and "a source of great pride for us," likes Blackmon's work. "Odie has taken it to new levels," Paulson says. "His passion for songwriting translates into an extraordinary learning experience for our students."

Blackmon merely says he's always been a creative person, only half joking when he says he could have been a jingle writer or an advertising copywriter. He's added a jingle writing class to this fall's curriculum. "You can make money in any market if you can write jingles for radio and TV," he says.

Blackmon is a natural mentor for aspiring student songwriters. Who better to look up to than a songwriter who had his first cut on MCA Records and who negotiated his first publishing deal while enrolled at MTSU?

These days, Blackmon's efforts, whether directed toward MTSU students or George Jones's legacy, are bringing the University's songwriting program even more welcome attention. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)

Donations to the George Jones Scholarship Fund can be made online at [www.MTSU.edu/georgejones](http://www.MTSU.edu/georgejones) or by calling (615) 898-5595.



MIDDLE of it ALL

Bethany Scott (left) and Nancy Jones (right)

## Gifts That Keep on Giving

Nancy Jones, widow of country music icon George Jones, established a scholarship fund at MTSU in 2013 as a living memorial to the late singer. Mrs. Jones also recently opened a George Jones Museum in downtown Nashville.

Odie Blackmon, a hit songwriter himself and director of MTSU's Commercial Songwriting concentration, gave Jones the résumé of Bethany Scott, a stellar student in a class devoted to the study of George Jones. Scott had told Blackmon of her desire to work at the new museum.

Jones promptly called Scott, and the two met in Murfreesboro for lunch. Before the lunch was over, Jones and her manager had hired Scott. (The museum officially opened in downtown Nashville this past April.)

Scott's father wrote on Facebook, "This means so much to my family. To see that girl . . . meet the Lady who saved the Legend for the last 30 years of his life and to return with her first job in the business she loves was, to say the least, moving. My mother was George Jones's biggest fan; my dad loved Miss Nancy. They are smiling down from above . . . beaming with pride."

Jones says she's very happy "with everything Odie has done with his students," adding that she has since hired several other MTSU students who took Blackmon's class. "We don't even have to train them, they know the story so well," Jones says, adding that she is pleased with the way the scholarship has been overseen "and so proud of Ashley Doris, the first recipient."

Blackmon describes it as "heartwarming" to see that Jones not only gave money to MTSU but also that "she genuinely cares about our students and takes an interest in them."

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Ashley Doris

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# CAMPUS ICON

Ten things you probably don't know about  
one of MTSU's best-known educators

by Drew Ruble



Dr. Terry Whiteside, dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, has been a “man about campus” for no less than 42 years.

Given his high-profile academic, administrative, and athletic roles through the years, the odds are pretty high that Whiteside has had at least some connection to the college experiences of many living alumni.

Because he's spent more than four decades at MTSU, one would think Whiteside must be well known to everyone associated with the University.

But *MTSU Magazine* recently learned 10 things that readers may not know about this longtime Blue Raider.

*continued on page 26*

**H**IS REAL NAME IS HAROLD DEAN, NOT TERRY. Before Harold's birth, there was a popular action-adventure comic strip called "Terry and the Pirates." One of the main characters had a nickname that friends applied to Whiteside's father, a fighter pilot. "Well, I guess my dad was a bit of a hotshot, so they called him Hot Shot Charlie," Whiteside says. In the comic, Charlie's best friend is a younger pilot named Terry Lee. Whiteside's mother told him that before he was born, people would pat her on the tummy and ask, "How is Terry of the Pirates doing?" And the name stuck. When his first-grade teacher called roll the first time and told the youngster that his official name on school paperwork was Harold Dean, he had to go home and check with his mother to make sure it was true! Whiteside was seven when his father died from the aftereffects of his World War II service. The product of a single-parent home, "Terry" was only able to go to college because of his father's G.I. Bill benefits.

In 1956, as an 11-year-old, Whiteside joined the Southwest Miami Boys Club and its under-12 Little League football team. The squad was undefeated that season and played in the Junior Orange Bowl game, and Whiteside got to check out the University of Miami locker room and meet his hero at the time, All-American fullback (and eventual pro) Don Bosseler. He also attended a banquet and sat next to movie star Gabby Hayes, John Wayne's sidekick in many Western films. "From that Junior Orange Bowl game, my athletic career pretty much went downhill, I would say," Whiteside says. He did go on to play high school football and tennis and was on the track team.

Whiteside's uncle was city editor of the *Fort Lauderdale Daily News* and took him to space launches at Cape Canaveral. Whiteside vividly remembers the first one he saw, which left an indelible memory. "As it went up, the whole sky turned orange—you could have read a book on the beach with how bright that was," he says. "My grandmother got up and started running because it looked like it was coming right at us even though it was going out over the ocean."

Through media connections, the same uncle also got Whiteside in as an extra in the hit movie *Where the Boys Are*. He appears in a scene where a car runs a traffic light and almost hits movie star Dolores Hart. "If you know where to look, you can see me," Whiteside says, describing his acting instructions as "just look buff." In addition to Hart (who went on to give Elvis Presley his first on-screen kiss), Whiteside also got to meet megastars of the day George Hamilton, Connie Francis, and Paula Prentiss. "They were all extremely nice," Whiteside says. He never appeared in a movie again. "I guess my movie career peaked at a young age, as well," he says.

Whiteside was a high school football player in Miami at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He vividly remembers the late afternoon he and his fellow classmates were gathered around their car radios listening as news broke that the Russian ships

had turned around. "We all were hollering and cheering," he says, "because we knew Castro could reach us with nuclear weapons." The celebration didn't last long. Whiteside says he and his fellow football players were thinking they would get the day off, but it was not to be. "The coaches came around and said, 'You have 10 minutes to get on the field,'" Whiteside says. "South Florida football has always been serious business!"

Whiteside started his college career at the University of Florida, where his closest friends were his former high school football teammates playing on the 1963 freshman team. On that team was a quarterback named Steve Spurrier—a future Heisman Trophy winner and the now legendary football coach at the University of South Carolina. Whiteside says that after his mother's death, he found a letter he had written to her following his first look at Spurrier on the practice field. "I don't know who this quarterback is," the letter reads, "but he is the best I've ever seen."

Whiteside is known today as dean of one of MTSU's colleges. But at his core, Whiteside is a professor of psychology—and a darn good one. He created the sports psychology class offered at MTSU. (When he was in grad school, sports psychology in America really didn't exist.) Whiteside worked as a sports psychologist with elite professional athletes to sharpen their mental approach—including one of legendary boxing promoter Don King's fighters who fought for the Junior Middleweight championship of world.

There's very little Whiteside hasn't done on the academic/administrative side at MTSU (including being the only two-time Faculty Senate president). The joke used to be that Whiteside was like a Kelly Services administrator—just plug him into a role when you have a short-term need. When President Sidney A. McPhee needed an interim director for the former College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Whiteside fit the bill for about two years. And when that college was split into the College of Education and a separate, new College of Behavioral and Health Sciences (with six departments), McPhee named Whiteside to be its first dean. "It was an incredible honor, really," Whiteside says, "to start a college, well, not from scratch, but, let's say, founded on a shoestring. And we've never had a hiccup."

As faculty-athletic representative at MTSU for the last 14 years, Whiteside has had a hand in hiring every coach at MTSU except track coach Dean Hayes (who has been here 50 years). But there's more to it than just helping to hire coaches. The NCAA mandates faculty oversight of athletics, and that carries a three-fold responsibility: first, to maintain academic integrity (meaning not allowing things to occur like what happened at the University of North Carolina, with fake classes for athletes); second, to maintain the welfare of student-athletes (making sure they get proper nutrition and use safe equipment); and third, perhaps most intriguing, to serve as the NCAA prosecutor when there is a

violation. "It goes through me," Whiteside says. "My job is to protect the institution." In his 14 years in the position, MTSU has been free of major violations. Coach Rick Stockstill has given Whiteside a team ring for each of the bowl games the football team has been to in recent years. (Whiteside is shown here wearing one of those rings.) Even more impressive than his role in on-field victories are Whiteside's efforts to improve the academic achievement and progress of student-athletes. That work, accomplished with the help of others, has been recognized by the NCAA. When the NCAA's Academic Progress Report (APR) first came out about a decade ago, MTSU was dead last on the list in terms of student-athletes staying eligible and moving toward graduation.

Under President McPhee's oversight and with Whiteside as faculty-athletic representative, MTSU climbed from worst in the nation to the model program it is now. Even the NCAA's magazine profiled the University for its turnaround. These

days, when the APR ratings come out, the top 10 programs include names like Stanford, Notre Dame, Vanderbilt, and . . . MTSU. "I'm very proud about being just a part of that," Whiteside says. Many of the methods used to turn around student-athlete academic progress at MTSU are now being used campus-wide as part of the University's *Quest for Student Success*.

Each year, the highest award given to a football player at MTSU goes to someone who has shown excellence in athletics, academics, and community service leadership. It's called the Whiteside Award, named after Terry. "It's hard to express how humble that makes me feel," Whiteside says. "Really, I don't deserve that." When organizers of a prospective annual conference for the LGBT+ community on campus began looking for an academic home (a requirement to host a conference), Whiteside agreed to let his college be the host. "It was an easy decision for me," he says. "I've always been committed to diversity and believe everyone should have the right to love who they want and shouldn't be discriminated against in any way because of anything about them except their own accomplishments and own deeds." At the banquet for the first conference, Whiteside was awarded the Ally Diversity Award, honoring a straight ally or friend of the LGBT+ community.

This year, the award was renamed the Whiteside Award.

"I was really touched by that," Whiteside says.

"I'm probably the only person in the country who has two awards as diverse as these named after him—a football award and an LGBT+ award. Both of them are very humbling!"

MTSU

# Tattoo U

Tattoos have been around for tens of thousands of years, but they still can be an obstacle to entering the professional workforce

by Darby Campbell

“Ink” seems to be everywhere. According to a recent NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* analysis, 21 percent of households included a member with at least one tattoo in 1999, but by 2014 that number had almost doubled to 40 percent.

Based on statistics from a recent Pew Research Center poll, in conjunction with MTSU enrollment statistics, an estimated four out of every 10 MTSU students likely have a tattoo. That’s close to 9,000 students.

When those students graduate, most will be interviewing for jobs—perhaps with readers of this magazine who own businesses. Will having a visible tattoo be a deterrent to their chances of landing work? According to a recent Salary.com survey (see sidebar), the answer is yes.

Around campus and within the broader MTSU community, several recent tattoo-related stories contribute to the discussion of tattoos and their cultural and professional implications.

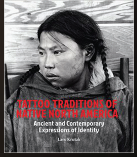
## An Ancient Art Form

The study of the art and sociology of tattooing is alive and well at MTSU.

A class named Anthropology of Tattooing uses the tools of anthropology, archaeology, and ethnography to explore tattoo traditions from dozens of cultures and subcultures across five continents, beginning about 100,000 years ago and continuing through the tattoo renaissance

of the late 20th century. The course is taught by Dr. Aaron Deter-Wolf, an archaeologist of prehistory with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology and principal editor of and contributor to *Drawing with Great Needles*, the first book-length scholarly examination into the history and significance of Native American tattooing in the Eastern Woodlands and Great Plains.





A recent lecture at MTSU by Lars Krutak, known as “the tattoo hunter” for his worldwide travel tracking down vanishing indigenous tattooing traditions, made its own kind of lasting impression on campus. His talk was part of the Anthropologica Lecture Series sponsored by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (in cooperation with the MT Anthropology Society). Krutak discussed how and why tattoos were applied in Borneo and Indonesia, typically as rites of passage when reaching adulthood, for specific spiritual or therapeutic purposes, or as marks of achievement as a warrior.

## Modern World Perspective

But what about in modern life? How far will that tattoo take you? That’s a question Department of Psychology professor Mark Frame and his students explored. Creating a fictional company and placing participants in the role of hiring manager, investigators presented candidates—some with visible tattoos and some without—who were equally qualified. Survey results showed an overwhelming bias against hiring those with tattoos. Frame says that great care was taken to eliminate variables, and he even engaged a tattoo artist to come to his class to demonstrate tattooing (with markers rather than permanent ink). Frame presented some of his findings at a recent convention of the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, D.C., and is working with Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology majors on further studies.

## Military Status

Last year, recent MTSU student and then Kentucky National Guard soldier Adam C. Thorogood filed a lawsuit asking a federal judge to overturn new regulations regarding tattoos in the military.

According to an Associated Press article published in *Military Times*, the Air Force banned tattoos covering more than a quarter of an exposed body part in 2011, the Marine Corps banned sleeve tattoos and those covering the leg below the knee in 2007, and the Navy banned forearm tattoos wider than a hand’s breadth in 2006.

According to various news reports, Thorogood, a sniper with 10 years of active duty already under his belt, and who has 11 tattoos, had hoped to join a U.S. Army special operations unit and become a helicopter pilot. New Army regulations in place at the time, though, barred promotions to warrant officer or commissioning as an officer for soldiers with tattoos below the knee or elbow. Thorogood’s case was eventually dismissed; the regulation didn’t affect him, because the tattoos were grandfathered in and didn’t play a role in his promotion attempt.

In April 2014, however, the Army made several appearance and tattoo policy changes. According to an *Army Times* article, the changes were based on how “society is changing its views of tattoos” and in support of how soldiers felt about the ban. [MTSU](#)

## A CLOSER LOOK AT THE STUDENT BODY

A study from the Pew Research Center estimates 40 percent of people age 18–29 have a tattoo. That means as many as 9,000 MTSU students may have ink.

## PERCEPTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

According to a separate Salary.com survey of 2,700 people:



76% feel tattoos and piercings hurt an applicant’s chances of being hired during a job interview



39% believe employees with tattoos and piercings reflect poorly on their employers



42% feel visible tattoos are always inappropriate at work



4% of those with tattoos report having faced actual discrimination because of their ink

## FUN FACTS

FRIDAY THE  
13

Friday the 13th is the date that the most tattoos are given.



Ancient Egyptian mummies that have been found to have tattoos are almost exclusively female.

5,300  
years old

A 5,300-year-old mummy known as Ötzi the Iceman has been found to have 61 tattoos using advanced imaging techniques.



The generic tattoo designs that are displayed in parlors are called “flash”.





# The **POP** Candy Pioneer

by Allison Gorman

**A**S A JOURNALIST FOR USATODAY.COM, WHITNEY MATHESON HAD THE KIND OF fervent following that could seem kind of creepy. Her readers didn't just follow her online. They followed her.

And she was fine with that.

Drawn by Matheson's lively observations of pop culture and their shared love of the same, those who made up the national audience of her *USA Today* blog, *Pop Candy*, coalesced into a virtual community and at times a physical one, gathering (at her invitation) in New York, San Diego, Austin, or wherever she happened to be on assignment.

"I was always surprised by how many people showed up and super-surprised when readers started holding their own meet-ups across the country without me," she says.

By the time she hit her thirties, Matheson had the kind of passionate readership few journalists cultivate in a lifetime. What began as a personal column and a sideline from her official job with what was then the paper's new dot-com side had grown into an extraordinary collaboration between writer and readers.

"Readers illustrated a comic book we distributed at Comic-Con," Matheson says. "They created logos and promotional material for the blog. They stayed up all night to analyze

(continued on page 32)

**How journalist  
Whitney Matheson  
found herself at  
the forefront of  
New Media**

episodes of *Lost* on our message boards. Heck, when I went on maternity leave, *Pop Candy* readers even filled in for me to ensure the blog kept going.”

When downsizing at *USA Today* ended *Pop Candy*’s 15-year run last year, Ken Paulson, the paper’s former editor and senior vice president of news who is now dean of the College of Mass Communication, hired Matheson as MTSU’s professional journalist-in-residence. For her students, she represents the new face of journalism and how to succeed outside traditional print media.

“She’s still a young woman but was indisputably a pioneer in establishing a new kind of relationship with her audience,” Paulson says. “Her readers were also her sources, collaborators, and friends. It’s a model that builds loyalty, quality, and reach, and it needs to be shared with our students.”

## Opportunity Pings

That model, which is still evolving, was in its infancy in 1999, when Matheson earned her journalism degree from the University of Tennessee. Newspapers weren’t sure where the dot-com train was going, but they knew they’d better jump on or be left behind. So Matheson—who as editor of the *University of Tennessee Daily Beacon* had taken the path of top journalism students, spending far more time in the newsroom than in the classroom—graduated into an opportunity-rich environment. She went to *USA Today* right out of college.

Matheson was charged with updating the paper’s website every night (a task now obsolete, she notes) and writing online news stories and some for print. But her passion was writing about pop culture, so she pitched the idea for a weekly online entertainment column based on a popular one she’d written for the *Beacon*. Her editor said yes, and she ran with it.

“From my perspective, I was just writing about things that I loved that I didn’t see getting a lot of coverage,” she says, “and luckily I had the freedom to experiment with formats and different ways of delivering that.”

Her weekly column led to a daily, less conventional one that ultimately subsumed the original. It kept growing until writing and updating it became her full-time job.

“I called it a blog, but nobody was hyperaware of that term,” she says. “I worked without blogging software at

the time. So I started *USA Today*’s first blog, but it was also one of the first blogs on any major publication’s website.”

## The New Mainstream

Whether or not they knew what to call it, readers responded to *Pop Candy* in discussions of entertainment not considered mainstream or thought to be too pedestrian or edgy for coverage by traditional media. The job took her to events across the country, from South by



**“I’m not teaching them how to be journalists ten years from now. They should consider themselves journalists right now.”**

Southwest to Lebowsky Fest to moustache competitions, with her readers enthusiastically (and sometimes literally) following along.

By the time Matheson had cultivated what would be her groundbreaking readership—Paulson says she was his “top blogger” at *USA Today*—the platform she’d used to achieve success was on the lips of every naysayer predicting the death of journalism. The lament went something like this: “Now everyone with a blog thinks they’re journalists.”

Now Matheson offers an updated, and decidedly positive, spin on that theme to her students at MTSU.

“The great thing about being a journalist right now is that you can go out and make work tonight,” she says. “You can make a podcast and put it on iTunes. You can make a Web series. You can do it on your own—it’s very easy—and you can distribute it. What I try to tell my students is that I’m not teaching them how to be

journalists ten years from now. They should consider themselves journalists right now.”

## Voice Work

That’s not to say that journalism students don’t need to learn the core skills of the trade. One of Paulson’s challenges as dean of the College of Mass Communication has been to restructure its curriculum, and the college itself, to better integrate training in various digital platforms while doubling down on traditional, pen-and-paper values such as responsible, effective writing and thorough research.

New hires like Matheson and multimedia specialist Val Hoepfner, Matheson’s predecessor as journalist-in-residence who now heads the Center for Innovation in Media, are helping build on Paulson’s vision of the college as a forward-looking source of journalism education.

“We have to give our students not just a fundamentally sound education but also instill perceptivity to technology, new ideas, and lifelong learning,” Paulson says.

So in the editing class she taught last spring, Matheson plowed some familiar ground (plenty of reps with the *AP Stylebook*), while in her Reporting on Popular Culture class, she spent a long time discussing voice—a subject verboten in the old-school world of journalism’s “five W’s.”

“That’s something that’s changed dramatically in the last five years, and certainly in the last fifteen,” Matheson says. “It used to be that you had to take your voice out of your writing and be as objective as possible. . . . Publications used to say, ‘We’re looking for a music writer.’ Now they say, ‘We’re looking for a fresh voice.’ It’s because of voice that I was able to build a community [with *Pop Candy*], and it’s the reason I was fine after I got laid off from my job.”

## A New Career Paradigm

Matheson is the model for what her students can expect from a career in modern journalism if they do it right. When *Pop Candy* ended, she landed on her feet because she’d established a strong online presence and professional relationships that led to the chance to freelance for editors she’d wanted to work with for years.

Fairly or not, “I’m a freelancer” used to be considered journalism-speak for “I can’t find a real job.” Now, freelancing is just another viable career route Matheson discusses with her students.

“It’s a very good market for freelancers,” she says. Not only are opportunities for contract journalists abundant, but the ability to work remotely means their potential client base is almost unlimited.

As journalist-in-residence, Matheson continues to freelance for various websites not just to stay professionally relevant, she says, but also to understand the job market her students hope to enter.

“I feel like those things feed into each other,” she says. “I have to stay very active in my field in order to relate to my students and be helpful to them.”

## The New Hiring Grounds

The first thing Matheson tells students is to look for jobs outside the old business model. While there are still opportunities in “legacy media organizations,” she says, they are becoming fewer (as she can attest). Meanwhile, Web-based organizations from Facebook, Google, and Twitter to Vox, Mashable, and BuzzFeed are growing exponentially and are hiring journalists.

“I tell my students there are jobs everywhere, they’re just not in the same places where I was told jobs were 16 years ago,” she says. “I guess you can look in traditional, print-based publications, but the truth is you’re going to find more experimentation and openness, and probably more money, in some other, less traditional places.”

Just as opportunities have increased for journalists, so has the skill set they are expected to have, she adds. Writers must now have basic proficiency in digital video and audio media, subjects now being integrated into the School of Journalism’s curricula.

But the most powerful tool an aspiring journalist can have is initiative, Matheson says.

“One lesson I’m constantly trying to get across is that it’s important not only to make your own work but also to take risks,” she says. “Every success I’ve had has been me going out and just doing something on my own.”

To borrow from another notable writer and risk taker, reports of the death of journalism have been greatly exaggerated. For proof, look at Whitney Matheson, who continues to show students what is possible—and profitable—in the new world of mass communication. [MTSU](#)



# CONTINUING THE QUEST

A progress report on MTSU's efforts to improve retention and graduation

**MTSU's Quest for Student Success** is aimed at ensuring that every student who comes to MTSU with the drive to achieve will get the best instruction from excellent professors and the best guidance from engaged academic advisors who care deeply about academic success.

New data proves that the Quest is paying off. **MTSU achieved increases in persistence** between fall 2014 and spring 2015 semesters with not just new freshmen but all students, undergraduate and graduate. For all colleges, persistence rates are at their **highest level in five years**.

## Key Results



**+2.2%**  
FTFT Freshmen

**+4.5%**  
Transfers

**+2.1%**  
Sophomores

**More students choosing to stay in school . . .**

**↑1.5%**

Increase in overall undergraduate persistence, fall 2014 to spring 2015



**Translates to increased enrollment . . .**

**↑390**

Additional undergraduate students enrolled in spring 2015



**Which brings economic benefit to the University.**

**\$1.5+ MILLION**

Estimated spring tuition and fees revenue

## Taking Notice

MTSU's Quest for Student Success was the subject of an article published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* March 9, 2015.

MTSU's student success efforts (specifically its use of data to identify struggling students) were also cited by the *Washington Post* in June 2015.



## The Impetus

Developing a retention program was the right thing to do for both incoming and existing students.

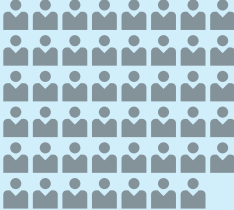
Research shows that the first two years are critical to a university student. A bump in the road, especially at the beginning, can derail the progress of those struggling to stay enrolled.

The Quest complements and reinforces the Complete College Act passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2010, which ties higher education funding to retention and graduation as opposed to enrollment, and Gov. Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative, which seeks to increase the percentage of Tennesseans with postsecondary degrees or certificates to 55 percent.

## Our Approach

**ACTION TAKEN**

**47**  
Additional advisors



Even in a time of reduced state budgets for higher education, MTSU made a major investment in student success by reallocating \$3 million to hire **47 new academic advisors** (more than doubling the previous number). These additional advisors offer students support, guidance, and encouragement to stay on track and graduate on time.


**ACTION TAKEN**

Specialized advising for  
**564**  
at-risk freshmen

A new program called **REBOUND** targeted 564 fall 2014 freshmen who earned less than a 2.0 GPA in their first semester and offered specialized advising and activities. Traditionally, only about 20 percent of these students would return for the fall 2015 semester. Early indicators are positive for persistence rates with this group.


**ACTION TAKEN**

Free tutoring for  
**260**  
classes



In fall 2014, **free tutoring** was offered for more than 140 classes; in spring 2015 free tutoring support was provided for more than 120 classes.


**ACTION TAKEN**

**\$** 

**Finish-Line Scholarship**

The University's new Finish-Line Scholarship **returns tuition increases** incurred during a student's college career if she or he graduates in four years.

**ACTION TAKEN**

**20**   
Courses redesigned

By the end of summer 2015, a total of **20 undergraduate courses will have been redesigned** by faculty, resulting in increased faculty and student engagement, collaboration, and satisfaction. Student success rates have increased markedly in these redesigned courses.

**ACTION TAKEN**

Improved use of **Tech** 

A **sophisticated new software package** the University adopted makes proactive advising a lot easier. College advisors are able to reach out to students who might be having trouble academically as identified through instructors' alerts or the predictive analytics functions of the software.

**ACTION TAKEN**

**↑5** Scholarships

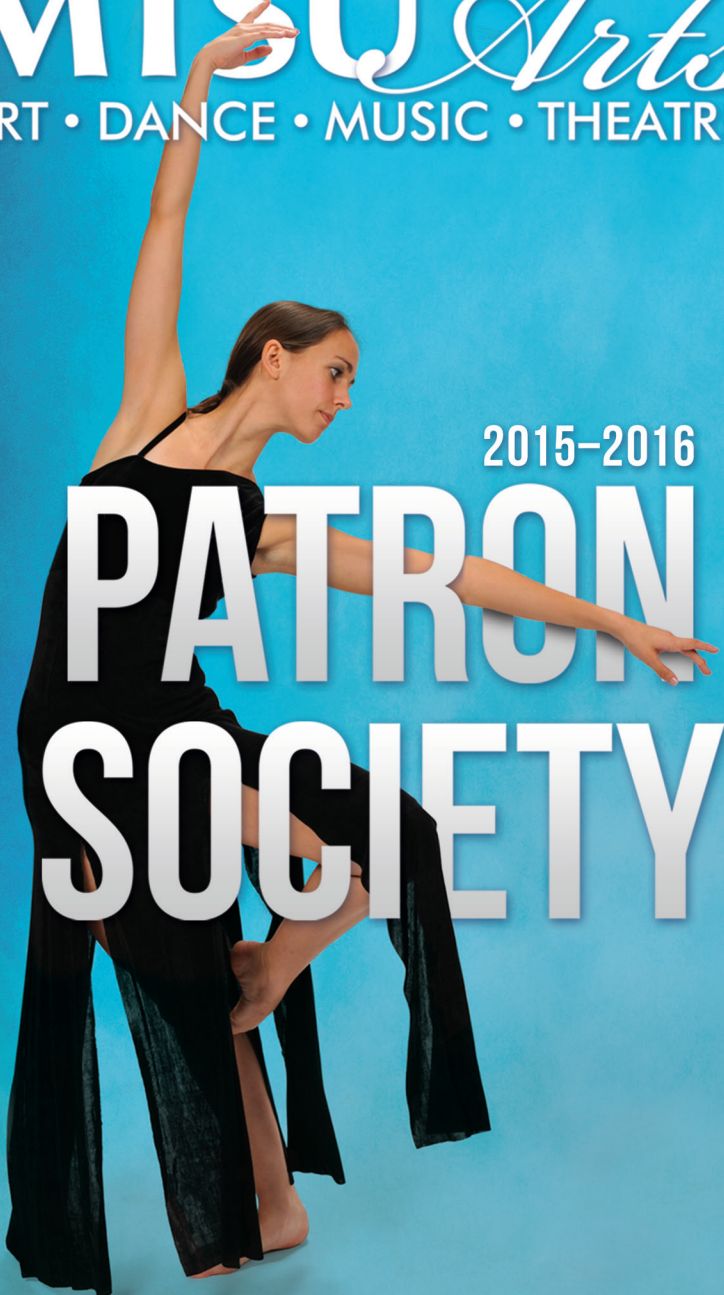
MTSU has expanded eligibility for **five major scholarships**. MTSU

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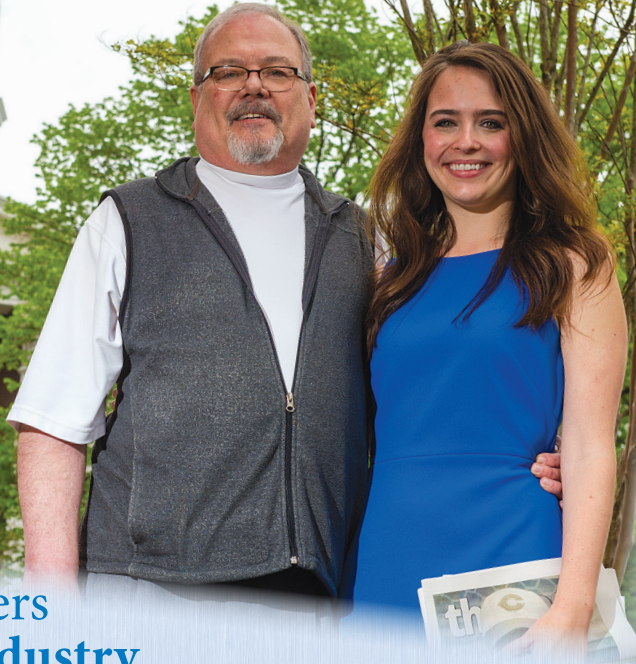
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TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

I AM *true*  
**BLUE**

AA/EEO/disability/vet

# The Town Fryars



## Raiders of Industry

by Drew Ruble

When **Ron Fryar** ('73) was a boy, his father picked up a newspaper route to supplement the family's income and help save for his sons' college tuition. Ron often tagged along with his father, delivering morning and afternoon Chattanooga papers (the Scenic City was a two-newspaper town back then) and collecting payments.

Fryar helped keep Murfreesboro as a two-paper town in his former role as publisher of the *Murfreesboro Post*, Rutherford County's free weekly newspaper. It was yet another chapter in his four-decade career as a newsman—one that included working with his daughter, **Sarah Fryar Cantrell** ('12), on the *Post* staff.

## Proud MTSU grad

Fryar first put his MTSU degree to use as an advertising salesperson with *The Daily News Journal* in Murfreesboro during the mid-'70s. Years later, he became regional vice president over *The DNJ* and several other papers in middle Tennessee. He also served as publisher of *The DNJ* from 1993 to 2004.

"Those were the golden years," Fryar recalls. "Murfreesboro was booming."

Under his leadership, *The DNJ* added color to its pages, expanded news sections, and added more sports reporters to cover MTSU's move to Division I athletics and Nashville's pro sports teams. *The DNJ* also became the first newspaper in Tennessee to put all of its content online daily and the first to institute a pay wall. The publication that had been referred to locally as "The Newsless" or "The Daily Disappointment" was respected again. Under Fryar, *The DNJ's* Sunday paper was named Tennessee's best by the Tennessee Press Association.

Fryar left *The DNJ* in 2005 to start a multistate newspaper company (with others) called American Hometown Publishing. After five years as vice president of operations there, he moved on and bought the *Cannon County Courier* in Woodbury, where he continues to serve as publisher. He joined the *Murfreesboro Post* as publisher in 2010 and served in that role until July 2015 when it was sold to Gallatin-based Main Street Media.

Fryar has the distinction of being the only person ever to serve as director of the Tennessee Press Association, state chair of the National Newspaper Association, and founding member and past director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government.

## All in the Family

Newspapering was a family affair during Fryar's tenure as the *Post's* publisher when Sarah, the second of his four daughters, joined the newspaper as part-time bookkeeper, accountant, and sales executive. For Sarah, working at the *Post* was like reliving her childhood in the newsrooms her father ran.

"The days in the summer growing up when I got to come to work with him at the newspaper were my favorite days," she says. "It's just the same."

Ron says working with Sarah was a highlight of his tenure as publisher. "I'm very proud of her," he says.

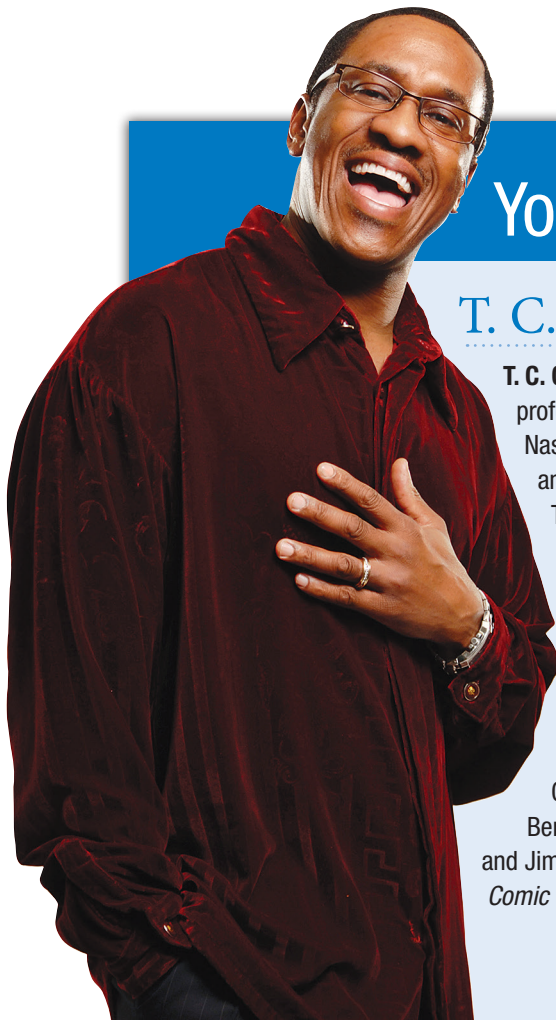
Sarah's MTSU career was highlighted by work both as an on-air television personality and a behind-the-scenes production leader in the Electronic Media Communications Department. A particularly memorable job for her was serving as lead coordinator for the department's coverage and production of the second annual Capital Records Street Party on Lower Broadway in Nashville in 2013, a show that featured country music superstars Alan Jackson, Eric Church, and (MTSU's own) Eric Paslay.

"It was one of the longest television days I have ever been a part of," Sarah says. "But it was so much fun."

Sarah also interned at Athlon Sports Media Nashville during her college days, hosting a weekly Internet spot and a monthly preview of the company's national magazine. Today, Sarah does freelance production work for Tennessee Digital Video (TNDV) on projects as wide-ranging as Fox 17's "Friday Night Rivals" to a world-championship Twinkie-eating competition in Tunica, Mississippi.

Father and daughter are both Paul Harris Fellows in the Murfreesboro Rotary Club, a recognition acknowledging those who contribute or have had contributions made in their name of \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International.

Ron has a place of honor on the Wall of Fame at MTSU's College of Mass Communication and is a founding board member of the Tennessee Journalism Hall of Fame! **True BLUE!** MTSU



## You Do What?

### T. C. Cope

**T. C. Cope** is one of the most recognizable professional comedians working in the Nashville market. He started his career as an opening act for a heavy metal band at The Boro Bar & Grill on Greenland Drive close to campus. In 2011, while touring with comedian Anjelah Johnson (famous for her Bon Qui Qui character), Cope opened for Johnson in front of thousands of people in Murphy Center, mere steps away from where he started his comedy career as an MTSU student. Cope has also worked with (the late) Bernie Mac, DL Hughley, Ralphie May, and Jimmy Fallon and has appeared on BET's *Comic View*. [MTSU](#)

## 1960s

**Jeff Jordan ('67, '76)**, Murfreesboro, has joined the Rutherford County School Board. He is a retired teacher and administrator with Rutherford County School System and is also a retired Rutherford County commissioner.

**Jim Gaines ('69)**, La Jolla, California, was conferred membership in the DeVotie Society of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity. He is the first member of the Tennessee Beta chapter at MTSU to receive this honor. Gaines was also reelected to the board of the La Jolla Professional Men's Society, one of the oldest men's luncheon societies on the west coast.

(continued on page 40)

## True Blue Travelers

Since 1993, MTSU graduates have participated in annual medical missions to **Nicaragua or Mexico**. The latest group, shown here, assisted more than 5,000 people at a free clinic for medical, dental, chiropractic, pharmacy, and optometry needs during a weeklong trip to Nicaragua last year. More than 4,000 prescriptions were filled, and more than 400 bicycles were given new tires, pedals, seats, and brakes. Pictured here in front of an active volcano in Masaya, Nicaragua, last year are (front row) **Sarah Robinson ('13, '14)**, **Dana Jones ('92)**, **Erica Robinson ('13)**, **Don Johnson ('86)**, **Mike Shew ('78, '89)**, (back row) **Walter Chitwood ('78)**, **Jennifer McKnight ('83)**, and **David McKnight ('75)**. [MTSU](#)





## Greg Armstrong

**Greg Armstrong** ('98), a science teacher and cross-country coach at Friendship Christian School (FCS), was a member of the 2015 U.S. National 24-Hour Running Team that competed in the world championship in Turin, Italy, on April 11, 2015. The ultra-marathoner, who has been known to regularly run from the FCS campus in Wilson County to Trousdale County, finished a strong third on the U.S. Men's Team, which earned a fourth-place finish overall. Armstrong logged 141.67 miles in 24 hours to finish 48th overall. Armstrong won first place in the Vol State 500-K (314 miles) in 2014, an event that demanded running through five states. He completed the race in three days, seventeen hours, and forty-eight minutes. Incredibly, he runs these races in Teva sandals. Armstrong says he runs these races to raise awareness of the nonprofit he founded, RUN4WATER, which helps provide clean drinking water around the world. [MTSU](#)



## Colonel Barry Melton

**Col. Barry Melton** ('82), was recently installed as Southeast Region Commander of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). The official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, CAP is a nonprofit organization with 58,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft, which performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions. Members also play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 24,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. Melton was previously vice commander for operations of the Southeast Region from 2011 until this most recent



appointment, and for four years before that was commander of Tennessee Wing. Melton, who earned a bachelor's degree in Recording Industry from MTSU, and who also holds a master's degree in Television Production and Programming and Media Management from Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., is employed by Cleveland-based nursing care leader Life Care Centers of America, where he serves as the director of virtual tour development. CAP and MTSU, which share a lengthy collaborative history, recently agreed to partner in aerospace education for state high school students in the U.S. Air Force auxiliary's cadet program. [MTSU](#)

▶ To submit class notes and pictures, go to [www.MTAlumni.com](http://www.MTAlumni.com), or email [alumni@mtsu.edu](mailto:alumni@mtsu.edu).

## J. B. Baker

**J. B. Baker** ('70), Nashville, was elected president of the board of directors of the Middle Tennessee Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which serves nearly 23,000 youth and adult volunteers throughout middle Tennessee and Fort Campbell, Kentucky.



## 1970s

**Al Allenback**, USAF (ret.), ('73), Mobile, Alabama, was elected to the board of governors of Goodwyn-Mills-Cawood Inc., an engineering and architecture firm with an office in Nashville. Col. Allenback, who holds commercial and private pilot FAA ratings, heads the Airport Planning and Engineering department for the firm.

**Joey Jacobs**, ('75), Brentwood, was inducted into the Nashville Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. He is chair and CEO of Acadia Healthcare, a rapidly growing behavioral health company based in Franklin.

**Charles Gentry Jr.** ('76), Clarksville, is the new chief of administration for the city of Clarksville. Gentry was formerly

public utilities senior director for Clarksville Gas and Water.

**William B. Jakes III** ('79), Old Hickory, became a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in America, during the group's 2015 spring meeting in Key Biscayne, Florida. Jakes is a partner in the Nashville law firm of Howell & Fisher PLLC and has been practicing in Nashville for 32 years.

## 1980s

**J. Shawn Jacobs** ('81), Smithville, was named news director at Zimmer Broadcasting in Cookeville, which includes KISS-FM 98.5, the Country Giant 94.7, WHUB, WPTN, and TV Channel 7. Jacobs was news producer for MTSU's WMOT-FM for 25 years.

**Kina Steed Mallard** ('81), Talbott, was named the 20th

president of Reinhardt University in Waleska, Georgia.

**John Wilson** ('81), Decatur, Georgia, was named associate vice president of International Programs at the University of North Georgia. Wilson has been acting director of North Georgia's Center for Global Engagement for the past three years.

**Tim Dickerson** ('86), Nashville, was appointed director of Nashville's new Domestic Violence Prosecution Unit, Criminal Division, 20th Judicial District, Davidson County.

**Darrell Freeman Sr.** ('87, '90), Nashville, founder and executive chair of Zycron Inc., a Nashville-based company that helps hospitals manage information technology, was inducted into the Nashville Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. Freeman is also a cofounder of

*(continued on page 41)*

Kelly and Cindy Rollins



## Kelly G Rollins

**Kelly G Rollins** ('93), was recently inducted into the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford County's Hall of Fame. Rollins has served on the board of the local organization, which has units located in Murfreesboro, Smyrna, and Shelbyville, serving approximately 2,100 children annually, for the past eight years. In 2009, Rollins was instrumental in securing a \$2 million capital gift from the Christy-Houston Foundation that led to the building of the

Smyrna Unit—now the number-one most attended Club in Tennessee. In all, Rollins has secured more than \$3 million in funding during his stint as a board volunteer.

On the state level, Rollins has served as chairman of the Tennessee Area Council and currently serves on the board of directors for the Boys & Girls Clubs in Tennessee. In 2013, Rollins received the prestigious National Medallion of Honor from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. In 2011, Rollins's employer, UPS, presented him the distinguished President Barack Obama's National Volunteer Service Award for his commitment and service to his community.

Rollins has worked for 28 years at UPS, currently as senior account manager, East Region, Mid South District. Rollins is married to the former **Cindy L. Sullivan** ('86), who, like Rollins, is also a first-generation graduate of MTSU. Rollins's 25 year-old daughter, **Kelli Lee** ('12;'14), has her bachelor's and master's of Education from MTSU and is currently a first-grade teacher at John Pittard Elementary. Rollins's 20-year-old son, **G**, is a sophomore at MTSU and is pursuing a business degree. As regards his volunteer service to MTSU, Rollins has served two terms on the MTSU National Alumni Board and is currently serving in his first term on the MTSU Foundation's Board of Trustees. **True Blue!** [MTSU](#)



Torrance Esmond (left)  
and Alicia Warwick (right)

## Alicia Warwick and Ashley Lamb Ernst

MTSU honored **Alicia Warwick** ('99), executive director of the Recording Academy's Nashville chapter, at an event Feb. 7, 2015, in downtown Los Angeles as part of the University's second annual outreach during the Grammy Awards. Among those in attendance was MTSU alum and songwriter/producer Torrance "Street Symphony" Esmond (pictured here with Warwick), who was an eventual winner at the 57th annual Grammy awards. But Warwick isn't the only MTSU graduate working for the Academy in Nashville. **Ashley Lamb Ernst** ('02), who is pictured at right, is manager of administrative operations for the South Region of the Recording Academy, which includes the Atlanta, Florida, Memphis, and Nashville chapter offices. Ernst is also a past Distinguished Alumni Award winner. **Courtney White** ('05), a project coordinator, and **Virginia (Bailey) Faddy** ('04), a project manager in member services, also work at the Nashville Chapter. **Joseph Langford** ('06), senior project manager of the Grammy Foundation, and **Nate Hertweck** ('04), manager of content production for GRAMMYPro, both work for the Academy in Los Angeles. True Blue! [MTSU](#)



Ashley Lamb Ernst (center) with artist Kip Moore (left) and songwriter Brett James (right)

## 1980s, cont.

Williamson County-based Reliant Bank and cofounder and chair of Pinnacle Construction Partners.

**D. Paige Matthews** ('87), Smyrna, development director for the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, was named 2014 Fundraising Professional of Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Nashville chapter. Her husband, **Mike Matthews** ('97), is a special education teacher and football coach at Independence High School.

**Col. Jeffrey T. Sims** ('87), Signal Mountain, completed a successful brigade command of the 207th Regional Support Group based at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. His command covered five southern states, included 21 units, and accounted for more than 1,700 soldiers. Col. Sims now works for Southern Champion Tray in Chattanooga as director of information technology.

**Jay Mouton** ('89), Jacksonville, Florida, has self-published his latest novel, *Apocalypse Awakening*.

## 1990s

**Gregory Phillipy** ('90, '01), Nashville, was appointed director of the Tennessee Agricultural Museum, overseeing the collection and care of more than 3,500 artifacts and heading the organization's educational and outreach programs.

**Mike Carter** ('92), Gallatin, was appointed General Sessions Judge for the newly created Division III Sumner County General Sessions Court. Carter previously worked as an attorney in Gallatin.

(continued on page 42)



## Keon Raymond

**Keon Raymond** ('07) is entering his eighth professional season as a defensive back with the Calgary Stampeders in the Canadian Football League (CFL), where last year he contributed mightily to a team that won the league's championship, the Grey Cup. Off the field, Raymond is an active representative of the Stampeders and was particularly involved in the Every Yard Counts and Timbits programs. [MTSU](#)



## Samantha Powell and Casey Brown

The MTSU Young Alumni Group (YAG) was founded in 2012 to facilitate networking events, social gatherings, and community service opportunities for alumni ages 35 and younger. Several programs and events (including charity opportunities) are planned and hosted by the YAG in middle Tennessee throughout the year. For a list of events, [visit www.mtalumni.com](http://www.mtalumni.com) or [Like the YAG Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MTYoungAlumni](https://www.facebook.com/MTYoungAlumni). Pictured here are YAG president **Casey Brown**, right, ('08), who works in admissions at MTSU, and past president **Samantha Powell**, left, ('10), an IT project manager (whose daughter, Ellis Elizabeth Powell, is pictured in the Baby Raiders section). [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)

## 1990s, cont.

**Deborah Storey Zawistowski ('93, '07)**, Frankewing, was named Pre-K–4 Teacher of the Year for Lincoln County. She teaches at Unity School.

**Deena Adams Cruz ('96)**, Murfreesboro, was hired as technical clerk with the Blue ID Office of the Information Technology Division at MTSU.

**Robert Dunkerly ('98)**, Richmond, Virginia, is the author of *To the Bitter End: Appomattox, Bennett Place, and the Surrenders of the Confederacy*. He is a park ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park and is involved in historic preservation and research.

**Steven Pharris ('98)**, Smyrna, was elected director-at-large of the 2015 board of directors of the Association of Social Work Boards during the group's annual meeting in Boise, Idaho. Pharris is community-based programs

manager and contracting officer representative with the Department of Veterans Affairs, where he oversees VA programs in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia in areas of child protection, public health, jails/prisons, chronic homelessness, HIV/AIDS, and mental health.

**Jill Napier ('99)**, Gallatin, was named vice president/general manager of MusicPubWorks, a subsidiary of Zaviston Music Group. Napier previously was director of music services, founder, and president of the Nashville chapter of the AIMP, executive vice president of Big Loud Bucks, and vice president

of business affairs at Ten Ten Music Group. She was recently honored by *Nashville Business Journal* with a Women in Music City Award, which recognizes women who are making a creative and economic impact on Nashville's \$9.8 billion music industry.

*(continued on page 43)*

## Lauren Branson

**Lauren (Stephens) Branson ('05)**, was recently named director of public relations at BMI in Nashville, working on the performing rights organization's songwriter-based events, including BMI's Country and Christian Awards shows, BMI number-one parties, the Austin City Limits Festival, LouFest, South by Southwest, and the Key West Songwriter's Festival. Before joining BMI, Branson was lead publicist at Yep Roc Records. [MTSU](http://www.mtsu.edu)



## Laurelei Samuelson

When **Laurelei Samuelson** ('08, '13), graduated from MTSU's Computer Information Systems master's program and found work with Nashville-based HCA, the largest hospital company in the world, she noticed that an important component was absent from MTSU's curriculum—the data analytics and business intelligence piece. Samuelson, now 29 and leading a team that develops business intelligence (BI) solutions for HCA, introduced MTSU to MicroStrategy, a BI vendor used not only by her employer, but also by companies like Facebook, Target, Netflix, and Apple. Fourteen months later, with the help of HCA, MTSU faculty, and MicroStrategy, Samuelson successfully orchestrated a \$1.48 million gift-in-kind of MicroStrategy's enterprise analytics software (licenses and programming materials included) to the Department of Computer Information Systems. The generous donation prompted MTSU to propose a new graduate concentration in Business Intelligence and Analytics. [MTSU](#)



## Kim Myers

**Kim Myers** ('13), was recently named executive director of the Gallatin Area Chamber of Commerce. She recently graduated from the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives Institute, a two-year program in leadership development. An executive with the Gallatin Chamber since 2013, Myers also serves on the Sumner County Tourism Board of Directors and the Gala at Cragfont Committee and is group coordinator for the Young Professionals Group of Gallatin. She also teaches four-year-olds at her church. [MTSU](#)



## Ben Taylor

Referees uphold the integrity of the NBA, the world's premier basketball league, overseeing competition between exceptional athletes and making calls with 95 percent accuracy. How good do you have to be to become one of these guardians of the game? Consider that there are only 62 full-time referees working in the league. And one of those is **Ben Taylor** ('09),

who is in his second season. Taylor spent six years refereeing in the NBA's increasingly popular developmental league (he started doing NBDL games while a junior at MTSU). During his MTSU days, the Cannon County High School grad, now an Orlando resident, was a member of Theta Iota chapter of Sigma Nu fraternity, for which he coordinated many events including the Multiple Sclerosis Society's "Bike to Jack and Back." [MTSU](#)



## 2000s

**Linda Couser Barnette** ('00), Hurst, Texas, is public services librarian at Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, Texas.

**Thomas "Jeff" Mason** ('01), Mt. Juliet, recently published his first poetry anthology, *Whispers in the Wake*. Mason is a systems administrator for the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency.

**Kyle Skillman** ('01), Kansas City, Missouri, is with the law firm Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC. Skillman's practice is concentrated on the representation of colleges and universities and persons dealing with NCAA infractions matters.

**Jason Kuhn** ('03), Hendersonville, is the owner of Stonewall Solutions, a company that uses the principles of the Navy SEALs to help individuals and teams develop a winning culture through teamwork, leadership, communication, failure analysis, and the desire to succeed and win.

**Corinne Gould** ('04), Smyrna, was appointed deputy director of public affairs for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. She is also executive secretary and treasurer of the Tennessee Quarter Horse Association and travels extensively with her horse show announcing business.

**Ann Nored** ('04) and daughter **Amanda Nored Counts** ('07, '10), both of Murfreesboro, were each honored as Teacher of the Year at their respective schools. Ann is the library media specialist at Wilson Central High School, and Amanda is the library media specialist at Hobgood Elementary.

(continued on page 44)

## Sarah Gaume and Tyler Shapard

Two recent graduates of MTSU's Electronic Media Communication (EMC) program played pivotal roles in singer Katy Perry's Superbowl XLIX halftime show in Phoenix in January. Each works for Nashville-based Glow Motion Technologies, the company behind the LED glowing orbs that highlighted Perry's performance. **Tyler Shapard** ('14), was an LED tech, and **Sarah Gaume** ('14), worked as a show prep technician, crew leader, and videographer. Glow Motion CEO Justin Roddick started his collegiate career at MTSU and has lots of praise for the EMC talent coming out of the University. [MTSU](#)



## 2000s, cont.

**Jennifer Bettag** ('05), Murfreesboro, is local director of clinical care for Alive Hospice.

**Nathan Nichols** ('05), Readyville, was appointed Cannon County clerk and master. He previously worked in the Cannon County Circuit Court Clerk's office and was assistant district attorney general for the 16th Judicial District.

**Trish Marzella Mathisen** ('06), Nashville, received the Iris Award from the Nashville Academy of Nutrition in Dietetics for her work in nutrition and support of registered dietitians. She is the creator of [www.nutrisha.com](#), a culinary nutrition education platform that connects nutrition to local and seasonal eating.

**Daniel Couser** ('07), Franklin, is employed by Franklin Mortgage Company in Franklin.

**Tyler Watson** ('07), Cookeville, was promoted to manager of sales and service for the Cookeville service center of Old Dominion Freight Line.

**Brian Bergeron** ('08), Thompson's Station, is an account executive at Eliven, a leading beverage consulting firm for hospital systems.

**Michael Burrows** ('08, '13), Murfreesboro, is CEO and owner of H3O Aquatics, a warm-water therapy facility specializing in aquatic rehab and therapeutic exercise. Burrows, who served in Iraq as executive officer of a surgical team, is particularly interested in helping veterans.

**Wesley B. Lankford** ('09), Brentwood, director of distribution center systems at Genesco, is also an adjunct graduate faculty member in Jennings A. Jones College of Business at MTSU. Formerly with SESAC and Ingram Book Group, Lankford was originally hired at Genesco to oversee warehouse systems at the company's Lebanon site, which supports more than 1,000 retail locations.

**Salaad Nur** ('09), Nashville, joined the Brentwood office of LBMC Technologies as a

senior consultant specializing in Intacct financial software. Originally from East Africa, Nur has lived in the Nashville area for 16 years.

## 2010s

**Alexander Laine** ('11), Lebanon, earned his Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license from the Tennessee State Board of Accountancy. Laine has been part of the credit administration department at First Freedom Bank for two years.

*(continued on page 46)*

## Toks Sokoya

**Toks Sokoya** ('13), is marketing coordinator with the Tennessee Titans. He oversees and manages social marketing campaigns; tests, measures, and tracks all campaigns; coordinates game-day planning and promotions; fulfills and executes sponsorship agreements with radio, TV, and other media; and coordinates and plans off-season events for fans. Sokoya's father is Sesan Kim Sokoya, a professor in the Department of Management and Marketing. [MTSU](#)



# Andrew Cho

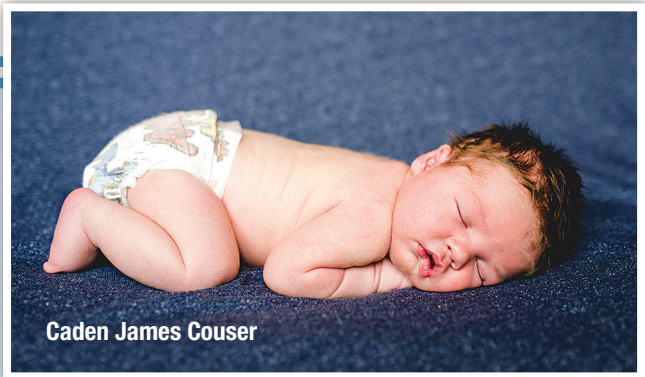
**Andrew Cho** ('14), hoped to complete his final semester of eligibility as a collegiate golfer at MTSU before fulfilling his military service requirement in his native South Korea. But it was not to be. In October 2014, Cho was playing well in a brand-new college golf tournament launched by MT men's golf coach Whit Turnbow called the Intercollegiate at the Grove. As fate would have it, the night before the final round of the tournament, Cho was notified that his request for a postponement of his service requirement had been denied and he would have to leave the U.S. immediately. On the positive side, Cho did graduate and received his degree from MTSU. He now says he hopes to play golf competitively as a pro starting in 2017. MTSU



Austin Lee Easley



Ellis Elizabeth Powell



Caden James Couser

## BABY RAIDERS

**Stella Josephine Agnew**, born March 17, 2015, to Steve and **Patti Agnew ('06)** of Murfreesboro.

**Caden James Couser**, born January 23, 2015, to **Daniel ('07)** and **Mattie Ogden Couser** of Franklin.

**Henry "Hank" Bennett Deml**, born December 11, 2014, to Mark and **Rachel Gossage Deml ('05)** of Murfreesboro.

**Jenna Kate Newsom**, born October 16, 2014, to **Jesse ('05)** and **Natalie Stone Newsom ('05)**, of Fayetteville, North Carolina.

**Ellis Elizabeth Powell**, born August 17, 2014, to **J. J. ('05)** and **Samantha Makin Powell ('10)**, of Thompson's Station.

**Evelyn Grace Sanborn**, born October 26, 2014, to **Preston**

**('11)** and **Rebecca Cook Sanborn ('07, '13)** of Antioch.

**Nora Jane Simpson**, born November 9, 2014, to **Steve ('06)** and **Carla Simpson ('07)** of Nashville.

**Austin Lee Easley**, born October 29, 2013, to **Aron ('09)** and **Mandy Easley ('10)** of Franklin.

**Landon Cutler Wade**, born March 31, 2015, to **Chris ('10)** and **Holly Wade** of Tullahoma.



Nora Jane Simpson



Jenna Kate Newsom



Stella Josephine Agnew



Henry "Hank" Bennett Deml

## 2010s, cont.

**Corey Garner ('12)**, Winchester, joined LPL Financial as a wealth advisor and licensed insurance agent.

**Scott Miller ('12, '14)**, Chattanooga, is a staff accountant for LBMC Technologies at the firm's Chattanooga location. He works with companies in the

manufacturing, not-for-profit, and real estate industries.

**Fadia Patterson ('12)**, Lexington, Kentucky, joined the ABC 36 news team in Lexington. She previously worked as a reporter at the ABC affiliate in western Kentucky. She is involved with the National

Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. She is a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority and the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

**Terry Payne ('13)**, Bon Aqua, joined the network operations division for the Brentwood

office of LBMC Technologies as a technology software developer.

**Sarah Poss ('14)**, Watertown, joined First Freedom Bank as a customer service representative at the bank's Lebanon location. [MTSU](#)

## In Memoriam

### 1930s

**Coe LaJeune McIntire ('39)**, Atlanta, Georgia, February 27, 2015

**Pauline Malone Tramel ('38)**, Nashville, July 23, 2013

### 1940s

**Marion Elmer "Mike" Alford ('41)**, Portsmouth, Virginia, January 16, 2015

**Leon DeLozier ('43)**, Cookeville, January 1, 2015

**George Grau ('46)**, Gulf Shores, Alabama, January 23, 2015

**Frances Knies ('46, '52)**, Winchester, December 13, 2014

**Allita Palyarik ('44)**, Waynesboro, September 26, 2014

**Ruth Boyd Ramsey ('47)**, McMinnville, September 29, 2014

**John "Fred" Scarbrough Jr. ('40)**, Murfreesboro, April 14, 2015

**Annabelle Derden Selph ('42)**, Durham, North Carolina, April 7, 2015

**Margaret Hoover Todd ('44, '60)**, Murfreesboro, February 1, 2015

**Catherine Blankenship Zahn ('41)**, Huntington, Indiana, October 16, 2014

### 1950s

**Howard Alsop ('56, '58)**, Cross Plains, April 14, 2015

**Peggy Faulkner Coleman ('54)**, Smyrna, October 25, 2014

**Homer Coggin ('59, '63)**, Nashville, February 26, 2015

**Thomas Coode ('57, '61)**, Rices Landing, Pennsylvania, March 3, 2015

**Sidney Corban ('56, '58)**, Franklin, February 24, 2015

**Ben Herman ('58, '61)**, Dowelltown, March 15, 2015

**James Kemp ('59)**, Tullahoma, January 4, 2015

**Sara Martin ('57)**, Nashville, January 10, 2015

**Mary Harrison McClary ('52)**, Nashville, February 27, 2015

**Glenn Melson ('59)**, Shelbyville, November 16, 2014

**Francis Reynolds ('56)**, Gallatin, January 22, 2015

**Neuva Sharp Sears ('54)**, Franklin, August 21, 2014

**John Thrower ('59)**, Nashville, August 14, 2014

**L. F. West ('52)**, Ashland City, December 29, 2014

**Robert Wood ('54, '59)**, Lebanon, December 8, 2014

### 1960s

**Howard Barton ('64)**, Rockford, Alabama, April 1, 2015

**Lee Benson ('62)**, Katy, Texas, January 16, 2014

**William Brophy ('65)**, Lakeland, Florida, December 23, 2014

**Margaret Scott Butler ('68, '72)**, Roswell, Georgia, October 9, 2014

**Caroline Callis ('63)**, Nashville, February 8, 2015

**Erwin Cole ('65)**, Murfreesboro, January 13, 2015

**William Crawford ('68)**, Franklin, November 10, 2014

**Sherry Dale ('69)**, Ocoee, Florida, September 27, 2014

**Austin Dejarnatt ('65)**, Fayetteville, October 16, 2014

**Clarence Elkins Jr. ('61)**, Smyrna, March 31, 2015

**John Evans III ('66, '69)**, Lawrenceburg, March 5, 2015

**Alvin Grady ('67)**, Hermantown, Minnesota, January 29, 2015

**James L. Harris Jr. ('68, '86)**, Nashville, November 29, 2014

**Dorothy Hoover ('68)**, Eagleville, January 25, 2015

**Dandridge Hyde ('64)**, Nashville, October 4, 2014

**Clarence Kilgore Jr. ('60)**, Tracy City, January 6, 2015

**Broadus Maples ('65)**, Murfreesboro, February 25, 2015

**James T. McMillen ('68)**, Houston, Texas, April 1, 2015

**Sidney McSwain ('65)**, San Diego, California, January 28, 2015

**James Meriwether Jr. ('66)**, Antioch, September 30, 2014

**Sue Spivey Messick ('63)**, Murfreesboro, December 15, 2014

**Janie Moore ('65, '87)**, Morrison, March 28, 2015

**Linda Patterson ('67, '68)**, Milton, November 3, 2014

**James Reed ('67, '71)**, Madison, August 10, 2014

**Kathryn Brown Sanders ('61, '68)**, Montgomery, Alabama, August 10, 2014

**Nannette Young Senter ('69)**, Florence, South Carolina, February 25, 2014

**Robert Stanfield ('66)**, Antioch, March 12, 2015

**Ivan Walters ('69)**, Santa Fe, December 29, 2014

**Lynn White Jr. ('61)**, Murfreesboro, November 16, 2014

**Larry Williams ('65)**, Benton, March 23, 2015

**William Woody ('64)**, Atlanta, Georgia, January 9, 2015

## 1970s

**Herman Blasing ('77)**, Ely, Minnesota, January 26, 2015

**Jerald Bass ('70, '73)**, Franklin, August 14, 2014

**Patricia Russell Coleman ('70)**, Memphis, December 6, 2014

**Beverly Cooper ('75)**, Chapel Hill, February 10, 2015

**John Csir ('77)**, Erie, Pennsylvania, September 28, 2014

**Wilma Clayton Davis ('77)**, Hohenwald, March 22, 2014

**John Robert Duke Jr. ('77)**, Nashville, April 12, 2015

**Jan Eberle ('75)**, Franklin, August 11, 2014

**Connie Groves Eubanks ('76)**, Palm Bay, Florida, November 17, 2014

**Howard Garner ('77)**, Cary, North Carolina, Dec. 11, 2014

**Billy Grizzard ('73)**, Murfreesboro, November 18, 2014

**Michael Hosey ('72)**, Goodlettsville, June 14, 2014

**John Jarrell ('79)**, Shelbyville, August 3, 2014

**Gary Kerr ('70)**, Herndon, Virginia, January 14, 2015

**Betty Pugh Martin ('73)**, Brentwood, April 11, 2015

**Horace Martin ('75)**, Murfreesboro, November 23, 2014

**Randall Mason ('71)**, Franklin, January 3, 2015

**Dorothy Mullinix ('74)**, Cookeville, February 1, 2015

**Hamilton Mundy III ('76)**, Asheville, North Carolina, February, 24, 2015

**Helen Wolfe Noffsinger ('76)**, Murfreesboro, November 19, 2014

**Karen Boyd Ray ('74)**, Florence, South Carolina, December 23, 2014

**Deborah McKnight Rowlette ('76)**, Murfreesboro, October 21, 2014

**James Smotherman ('72, '75)**, College Grove, April 12, 2015

**Barbara Bowen Snyder ('75)**, Tullahoma, November 24, 2014

**Flora Boydston Thornhill ('72)**, Arab, Alabama, November 5, 2014

**Robert Whitaker ('77)**, Nashville, March 27, 2015

**Dorris Wyatt ('74)**, Clarksville, November 22, 2014

## 1980s

**Patricia Rhudy Cook ('84)**, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, January 6, 2015

**Ginger Christman Daniel ('81)**, Gallatin, March 5, 2015

**William Edwards Jr. ('82)**, Henderson, Kentucky, January 26, 2015

**Cynthia Wright Fagan ('84)**, Woodbine, Maryland, October 27, 2014

**Slater Foy ('83), Bluffton**, South Carolina, January 24, 2015

**Raymond Gray ('83)**, Kelso, February 4, 2015

**Thomas Hovater ('84)**, Murfreesboro, October 11, 2014

**Haran Hunter ('83)**, Orange Beach, Alabama, November 29, 2014

**Joseph Kelly ('89)**, Columbia, February 4, 2015

**Jerry Maxine Lindsay ('81)**, Tullahoma, November 19, 2014

**Jeffrey Loveless ('82)**, Spring Hill, November 7, 2014

**Paul McRee ('81)**, Central City, Kentucky, March 12, 2015

**Heather Murphy ('88)**, Chattanooga, January 19, 2015

**Karen Marshall Musgrove ('86)**, Woodstock, Georgia, October 30, 2014

**Russell Musgrove ('85)**, Woodstock, Georgia, October 30, 2014

**Mohssen Najmi-Naini ('84)**, Nashville, January 12, 2015

**Betsy Pardue Pearse ('81)**, Islamorada, Florida, March 26, 2015

**Thomas Potterfield Jr. ('82)**, Richmond, Virginia, April 25, 2014

**Becky Burns Reed ('83)**, Ada, Ohio, October 22, 2014

**Jan Belew Robinson ('85)**, Knoxville, October 6, 2014

**John "Mike" Rutledge ('80)**, Murfreesboro, January 31, 2015

**Charles Smith ('81)**, Arlington, January 2, 2015

**Ricky Smith ('80)**, Winchester, January 13, 2015

**Joy Spence ('85)**, Murfreesboro, February 17, 2015

**Marilyn Woodard ('80)**, Cheyenne, Wyoming, January 20, 2015

## 1990s

**Kelli Penland Abner ('91)**, Franklin, December 29, 2014

**David Adams ('98)**, Readyville, March 20, 2015

**Melanie Hamilton Baldwin ('93)**, October 5, 2014

**Harold Conatser Jr. ('98)**, Maryville, November 28, 2014

**Christopher Harville ('96)**, Lebanon, September 17, 2014

**Janet Throneberry Hopson ('92)**, Murfreesboro, March 7, 2015

**Eric Jacks ('93)**, Murfreesboro, October 4, 2014.

**Shawn Jennings ('97)**, Manchester, November 3, 2014

**Tonya Maddox Lewis ('95)**, Knoxville, November 4, 2014

**Mark Mays ('92)**, Williamsburg, Virginia, August 28, 2014

**Paul McKelvey ('98)**, Nashville, September 21, 2014

**Jeffrey S. Parker ('97)**, Quincy, Massachusetts, February 12, 2015

**James Reed ('97)**, Murfreesboro, September 22, 2014

**Avis Satterfield ('92)**, Huntsville, Alabama, November 26, 2014

**Alicia Petrilli Shaia ('92)**, Colleyville, Texas, September 30, 2014

**John Stewart ('90)**, Winchester, December 7, 2014

**Paul Stuart ('90)**, Murfreesboro, March 10, 2015

**Kenneth Wetzel ('96, '97, '01)**, Bradyville, November 18, 2014

## 2000s

**Audrey Williams Black ('00, '05, '10)**, Murfreesboro, April 15, 2015

**Jonathan Bufkin ('08)**, Murfreesboro, December 23, 2014

**Amanda Jakes Burks ('03)**, McMinnville, January 21, 2015

**Edith Johnson ('04)**, Murfreesboro, April 4, 2015

**Michael Semich ('01)**, Murfreesboro, October 15, 2014

**Keri England Victory ('06)**, Smyrna, December 9, 2014

**Joanna Miller Whitmire ('01, '04)**, Murfreesboro, November 20, 2014

## 2010s

**Andrew Burns ('12)**, Franklin, January 28, 2015

**Brandy Martin ('11)**, Murfreesboro, December 18, 2014

**Hunter Mitchell ('13)**, Madison, Mississippi, February 6, 2015

**Joshua Salter ('12)**, Tifton, Georgia, October 30, 2014 [MTSU](#)

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