

The Magazine of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

vol. 3, no. 1

# —OUTCOMES—

## EN VOGUE

For MTSU fashion students, the timing of the growth of their industry in Nashville couldn't be any better

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY



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# MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY.

## COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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## THE HEART OF STUDENT SUCCESS

I NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPACT THAT faculty behaviors and interactions with students have on the academic experience. At MTSU, where more than 70 percent of our students are first-generation college attendees, our faculty members often find themselves greatly relied upon for their advice, encouragement, direction, and honest feedback.

One look at the memorial guestbook of the late Dennis Powell, the longtime professor in our Criminal Justice Administration (CJA) program, exemplifies just how much he impacted the academic experience of his students while on campus and their lives after MTSU. When I spoke with CJA alumna Lynda Williams (who is profiled in this magazine) during her most recent campus visit, she got emotional sharing how Powell and Lance Selva had contributed mightily to her meteoric ascent within the ranks of the U.S. Secret Service. Nothing seemed to mean more to her, honestly, than her visit with Powell the spring before his death. As she shared with me a photograph of the two of them together during that trip, she reassured me that I could call on her for anything, because she felt she owed him everything. I found myself wishing that every student could know a Dennis Powell.

The Criminal Justice Department and MTSU suffered a great loss in Powell, but he will never be forgotten by alums like Lynda, the countless law enforcement and legal professionals that he taught and counseled, or the current students who took his courses. I am so pleased that other individuals like Lynda, along with Dennis' widow, Bonnie, and other friends of the college have launched the Dennis Powell Scholarship Committee to further ensure that his legacy lives on at MTSU.

That new scholarship establishment, along with our newest program initiatives, is coming to fruition at a time when the philanthropic goals of our supporters perfectly align with our efforts to prepare our students to successfully pursue their professional and advanced educational dreams. As a psychologist, I can attest that success is about having what you most need in order to get what you most want. The members of Powell's scholarship committee know that we will have more students that start out like Dennis, lacking in so much, but that with much-needed financial and personal support for their education, they too can experience a limitless future.

I thank all the members of the Dennis Powell Scholarship Committee, along with other prominent donors to the college like John Floyd and Pam Wright (each of whom is also profiled in this magazine), who have seen the value in what we can accomplish with their support. In these pages, I am pleased to share just how much the commitment of our donors and the partnership with our community is contributing to "new and better" outcomes for the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences and beyond! •



Dean Terry Whiteside



# Not So *Run of the Mill*



photos: Andy Heidt

## Spinal cord injury research goes underwater at MTSU

from staff reports

**M**TSU'S EXERCISE SCIENCE EXPERTS HAVE WORKED wonders with people who suffer from incomplete spinal cord injuries (SCI). The National Institutes of Health recently provided them a \$388,894 grant to perform a comprehensive study that could change how health professions treat these patients, who retain some sensation or motor function at the lowest segment of the spinal cord. University scientists are studying the impact of underwater treadmill training on the lives of partially paralyzed individuals. Both the study and the funding are unusual for a university not connected to a medical college or teaching hospital.

Recent data collected from the study demonstrates improvements in lower-extremity strength, balance, walking speed, aerobic fitness, and daily step activity in persons with cerebral palsy (CP) and SCI. Study participants have also perceived positive changes in physical function associated with greater hope and less fear, improved quality of life, a better self-image, and a sense of becoming more "normal."

The former site of Middle Tennessee Medical Center is the proposed new home of the Aquatic Therapy and Rehabilitation Center, a state-of-the-art research and





therapy facility on the campus of MTSU. Plans include additional underwater treadmills and an indoor therapy pool along with educational, testing, training, and clinical spaces. This expansion would support multiple clinical programs and trials to accommodate many more individuals who are looking for hope and would also support the study, research, and training of the next generation of exercise science innovators.

The long-term objective is not only to expand the use of underwater treadmill therapy to a variety of populations with impaired mobility (e.g., CP, SCI, Parkinson's disease, stroke, traumatic brain injury, muscular dystrophy, obesity, and aging), but also to develop practical ways of extending this water-based therapy into clinical public settings such as community fitness centers and outpatient clinics. This new facility would provide MTSU researchers with the capacity to expand access to other researchers and partner with other academic, medical, and research institutions to develop whole-life strategies that will improve health and quality of life for the physically impaired. Utilizing limited space and equipment, remarkable strides have been made by a small team of faculty and their research assistants at MTSU to improve walking ability, health conditions, and quality

of life for study participants. The success of these efforts generates hope for millions of people worldwide paralyzed by spinal cord injury, especially if program expansion can be achieved.

Financial support provided to the MTSU Aquatic Therapy and Rehabilitation Center in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences will fund cutting-edge research to improve the health and daily physical function of persons with disabling conditions living in Tennessee, the United States, and throughout the world. Support for this program will also ensure the growth of advancing research programs, student-learning initiatives, and the development of treatment interventions. Naming opportunities exist that can enable individuals or organizations to make this effort part of a philanthropic legacy with gifts designated for:

- relocation and renovation of laboratory spaces
- purchase of equipment and supplies
- expansion of the research team and faculty
- scholarships and research assistantships for students
- special speaker and program presentations

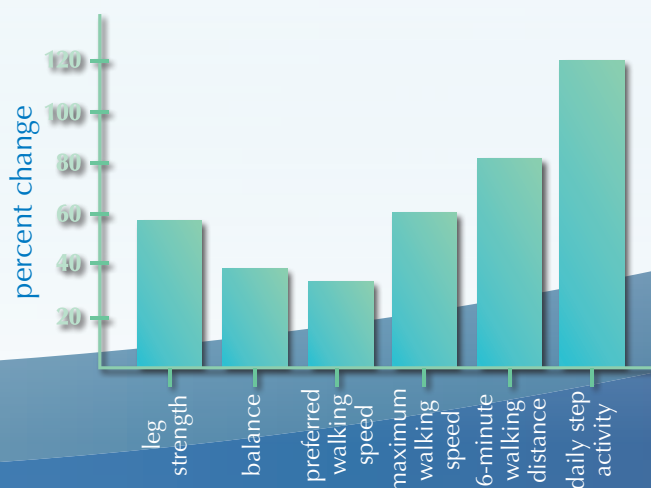
True Blue! ●

Future home of the Aquatic Therapy and Rehabilitation Center



The success of these efforts generates hope for millions of people worldwide paralyzed by spinal cord injury.

Changes in strength, balance, and walking performance following underwater treadmill training in adults with spinal cord injury





# NEWS

from across the six  
helping disciplines  
that comprise the  
College of Behavioral  
and Health Sciences

## All Identities

An executive with a national health care firm whose personal journey includes gender reassignment delivered the keynote address at MTSU's 2016 LGBT+ College Conference, April 7–9. Renee McLaughlin spoke under the conference theme of “All Identities.”

McLaughlin is a senior medical director with Cigna who is responsible for developing and implementing the clinical integration model for the company's delivery system alliance initiatives. Prior to joining Cigna, McLaughlin was a practicing general and vascular surgeon in a single-specialty practice. She also served as a major in the United States Army during the first Gulf War.

MT Lambda at MTSU partnered with the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences to host the 2016 LGBT+ College Conference. MT Lambda is an all-inclusive LGBT+ student organization at MTSU and is the oldest organization of its kind in the state. Students from more than 30 other colleges and universities, along with corporate and community leaders around the region, convened to participate in open and honest dialogue on diversity and inclusion issues that impact students and their futures. The conference is a combination of research presentations, strategy sessions, and lectures with topics pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students and their allies.

“Our goal is to get all the schools together and share tips and strategies to make their campuses more welcoming places,” said William Langston, a professor of Psychology and faculty advisor to MTSU's student LGBT+ organization Lambda.

Topics this year included breaking down barriers among identity groups, stemming the tide of LGBT+ youth homelessness, and creating a culture of respect in the workplace.

“A corporate culture that embraces gender equality is critical to attracting and retaining talented individuals,” said conference advisory board co-chair Greg Cason, who

is senior buyer for Nissan North America. Nissan is a corporate sponsor of the conference.

Conference advisory board co-chair Ron Snitker of Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis LLP delivered the official opening address Friday, April 8, in the Student Union.

“Historically, laws have helped move along workplace norms that may be embedded in our American business culture,” Snitker said. “We are already seeing laws popping up in various states to help close the gender equity gap.”

A community diversity conversation took place earlier in the year at the offices of Waller Law. Panelists included Jacky Akbari (Council on Workforce Innovation and the National Organization for Workforce Diversity), Michael McDaniel (The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee), Pam Sheffer (Just Us at Oasis Center), and Jeffrey Webster (Nissan North America).

*Additional conference support came from Deloitte; Cracker Barrel; the MTSU Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance; Dell; the United States Secret Service; the Distinguished Lecture Fund; MTSU's National Women's History Month Committee; the June Anderson Center for Women and Nontraditional Students; the Department of Psychology; MTSU Intercultural and Diversity Affairs, and student activity fees.*





## Getting a Grip

Jason Gulley, a master's student studying Leisure and Sport Management, traveled to Las Vegas

in March to represent the state of Tennessee in the U.S. Arm Wrestling Championship (WAL—World Arm Wrestling League), an event that was televised on ESPN.

Gulley serves as the executive director of the Tennessee Arm Wrestling Association and has spearheaded increased membership for the organization and increased interest in the region among professionals and amateurs alike. Gulley is a former Blue Raider football lineman, two-time U.S. combat veteran in Iraq, and entrepreneur.



## In Memoriam

Ashton Martin Thomas, 24, of Smyrna, died Sept. 28, 2014, after injuries he sustained in an automobile accident. Thomas graduated from Smyrna High School in 2008, Motlow State Community College in 2010, and from MTSU in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration. He was an active member in the Tennessee Air National Guard and was employed as a youth instructor with the North Rutherford YMCA. He was buried with military honors. In his honor, Thomas' parents created the True Blue A1C Ashton Thomas Forever 24 Endowed Scholarship Fund in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences. Contact Bea Perdue (615-898-2417 or Bea.Perdue@mtsu.edu) for more information.

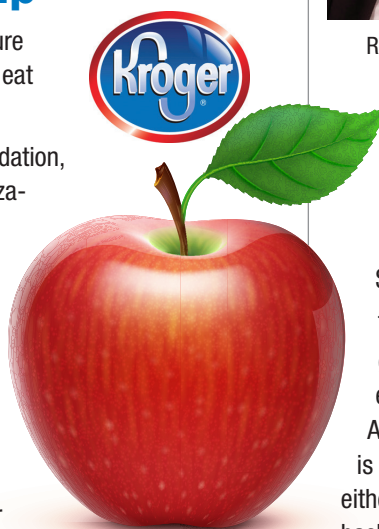


## Healthy Partnership

MTSU students are working to ensure Americans can fulfill their desire to eat healthier meals.

The Produce for Better Health Foundation, a Delaware-based nonprofit organization, gave MTSU's Nutrition and Food Science program a grant of nearly \$1,500 to help MTSU students and alumni enlighten the public about fruits and vegetables.

In partnership with the Kroger supermarket on Lascassas Pike in Murfreesboro, training began earlier this year for four seniors and two



alums who are interns with National Health-Care Corporation. The trainees conducted daytime and nighttime tours of Kroger's produce department to introduce participants to a variety of produce from fresh to frozen to canned to dried.

The effort was spearheaded by Lisa Sheehan-Smith, a professor of Nutrition and Food Science and a registered dietitian. The 197 tour participants learned how to choose fruits and vegetables economically, how to read labels, how to eat produce in season, and how to prepare it properly.

Kroger spokeswoman Melissa Eads said the store was happy to support MTSU in this effort. "We have a good relationship with MTSU and are always looking for ways to support it whenever we can," Eads said.

The data collected through the spring semester will go into a report to be submitted to the Produce for Better Health Foundation in June 2016.



## Social Boost



Rebecca Smith

A partnership forged just a few years back between MTSU and two other universities is paying off by providing the labor market with even more highly qualified social workers.

The Council on Social Work Education issued initial accreditation for the Mid-TN Collaborative Master of Social Work Program administered by MTSU, Tennessee State University, and Austin Peay State University back in 2013.

Rebecca Smith, outgoing chair of the MTSU Department of Social Work, said the three-institution collaboration for a master's degree in Social Work was the first of its kind in the nation. "The sharing of resources helps to provide education to a wider range and network of students," Smith said.

The demand for advanced generalist social workers is greater than ever with recent immigration, changes in the economic system, and implementation of the Patient and Affordable Health Care Act. The master's degree program is designed for the working professional; all classes are either at night or online. MTSU has the largest undergraduate bachelor's degree program for Social Work in the state.



## Good Psychology



Beverly Burke, an associate professor in MTSU's nationally recognized Industrial/Organizational Psychology program and honorary chair of the I/O program's Centennial fundraising campaign, has announced her retirement. Burke has over 25 years of experience in teaching, research, and consulting within the field of I/O psychology and has coordinated student research trips to Cuba for the past several years.

Burke recently served as the primary investigator for a local community assessment project, a joint endeavor between United Way, the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, and MTSU's Center for Organizational and Human Resources Effectiveness (COHRE). That effort comprised a comprehensive effort to pinpoint Rutherford County's most pressing needs and concerns to guide leaders in targeting areas to improve residents' quality of life.

## With Honors



Last fall, Nausheen Qureshi, a Nutrition and Food Science major, Buchanan fellow, Pakistani native, and student ambassador, traveled to Chicago to attend and present at the 2016 National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). NCHS is the professional association of undergraduate honors programs and colleges, honors directors and deans, and honors faculty, staff, and students.

Qureshi was the first MTSU Honors student to present a poster at the conference. Qureshi's presentation was based on her Honors thesis, "Rising from the Depths of Despair: The Healing Arts of Lady Philosophy in Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*."

## Caught in the Act

The ways in which law enforcement agencies are using social media is the expertise of Lee Wade, an assistant professor of Criminal Justice. With an MTSU colleague, Joshua Harris, Wade conducted a study that he presented at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences' annual meeting in Philadelphia in February 2014. The study examined two city police



Lee Wade

departments in Georgia, a special police unit in a Tennessee municipality, and a county sheriff's department in Tennessee. The number of posts, likes, shares, and comments on each agency's Facebook page and the types of information posted were documented.

Findings were overwhelmingly positive. According to Wade, the quantitative findings indicated that law enforcement agencies solve approximately 10–15 percent of their "unsolvable" cases, or cases with no leads, by using social media. "By soliciting tips from the public on Facebook with multiple comments, law enforcement could double their chances of solving an otherwise unsolvable property case," Wade said. "If law enforcement utilized a video with high quality resolution on Facebook with multiple comments, they are five times more likely to identify and arrest a suspect."



photo: Andy Heidt

## Healthy Ranking

NurseJournal.org, a social community website providing educational resources for nurses and health care professionals, recently ranked the best nursing schools in each region of the United States. A total of 1,189 schools were measured according to 20 metrics in five categories: quality, affordability, convenience, satisfaction, and value. MTSU ranked 15th overall in the eastern region, followed by Vanderbilt at No. 389 and the University of Tennessee–Knoxville at No. 401.

## On Patrol

As part of a five-year partnership with the Tennessee Highway Patrol, MTSU's Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE) recently created a new method of determining which Tennessee Highway Patrol sergeants and lieutenants were best suited to move up in the ranks. To



Mark Frame



develop the new processes, COHRE's Industrial/Organizational Psychology consultants and project associates under the supervision of Mark Frame, an associate professor of Psychology and COHRE senior consultant, spoke with 110 captains, lieutenants, and sergeants to find out how they responded in various situations and circumstances on the job.

"We think that this promotional practice and instrument will help us identify and promote more effective leaders and improve our agency," said Col. Tracy Trott, leader of the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

"We look forward to the next four years of our contract and our association with MTSU," Kerri Balthrop, human resources director for the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security, said her department was "tremendously impressed" by the MTSU/COHRE collaboration. "This will appraise each applicant's knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies for future leadership opportunities within our organization," she said.



## On the Beat

MTSU and the Metro-Nashville Police Department Training Division recently reached an agreement that gives officers greater incentive to get their



college degrees. Metro-Nashville officers who have been through the department's 5½-month training academy can now potentially receive 36 to 40 credits toward a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies through University College and the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

About 160 officers a year go through the academy, and Metro officers can get up to a 6 percent pay raise for getting a degree. Officers have the option of completing their degrees on campus, online, or through satellite classes held throughout the region.

This new initiative has received much attention from media as a great example of MTSU's work to expand offerings for people who might not otherwise complete a degree but have a wealth of experience. MTSU plans to pursue similar partnerships in support of Gov. Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative, which seeks to have 55 percent of Tennesseans with a degree or certificate by 2025.

## The Science of Sports

by Jimmy Hart



MTSU's College of Behavioral and Health Sciences signed the five-year memorandum of understanding with Ulsan Sports Science Secondary School, a new middle and high school in South Korea dedicated to the education and training of aspiring professional athletes, as well as students interested in other sports-related careers such as physical education instructors, sports management, and more. MTSU's Department of Health and Human Performance (HHP) developed the cooperative relationship with Ulsan, and CBHS Dean Terry Whiteside and Ulsan Principal Jae-o Jung finalized the memorandum, which urges academic, research, and cultural exchange related to sports education and science. Whiteside said the renewable agreement stemmed from some HHP faculty members having previous ties to Ulsan, as well as a visit to South Korea by Scott Colclough, associate dean in the college. "This is the type of agreement I've looked forward to for years," Whiteside said.

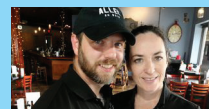
The partnership will also leverage program initiatives of MTSU's Collaborative Learning and Leadership Institute, which is a partnership between CBHS and Murfreesboro City Schools that focuses on exposing youth to multiple learning opportunities and providing MTSU students with experiential learning and research opportunities.

## WELCOME

### NEW ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



John Floyd, founder and owner, Ole South Properties



Shawn Hackinson, owner, The Alley on Main (pictured here with his wife Kristi)



Jan Maddox, director of business operations, Deloitte Services LLP



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## Not So Leisurely Pursuit

by Gina K. Logue

Leisure, Sport, and Tourism Studies associate professor Joey Gray is passionate about teaching. Consider that when Gray became pregnant with twins and complications arose, she declined maternity leave. "I was on bedrest for about a month. I sent my grad assistant into the classroom with a video camera, and I taught via Skype," Gray said.

Gray teaches sport courses, event planning courses, doctoral courses, and provides professional development for doctoral students. She admits, though, that she savors working with undergraduates. "They're challenging, but they're like new, shiny souls, you know that you can shape and help guide," she said.

Gray grew up in Smithville, North Carolina, and anticipated majoring in equine science in college. However, she changed her major at Averett University in Danville, Virginia, to Sports Management in preparation for a career as a softball and volleyball coach, obtaining a bachelor's degree in 1996. She earned her master's degree in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management from North Carolina State University in 2000 and her doctorate in Leisure Behavior from Indiana University in 2006.

Gray's discipline requires both individualized attention to students and experiential learning. In her event planning class, students learn the rigors of logistics and teamwork as they design and execute such activities as a three-on-three basketball tournament and a cardboard boat race.

You won't hear crickets chirping in Gray's classes, either. Discussions are lively and uninhibited by distracted students playing around on social media. And if you're caught using your cellphone in Gray's class, you are required to write a five-page paper on cellphone use and leisure.

Gray's devotion to teaching is so comprehensive that her appreciative students reward her with their full attention. She even created and implemented her own marketing plan for the Leisure, Sport, and Tourism Studies program in 2014. The slogan is "Do what you love."

Joey Gray obviously is one educator who does precisely that.

NEWS continued on page 23

photo: J. Intintoli



JT Farmer, Tara Fleming, Connor Fite, Joey Gray, Requavius Macon, and Takyra Wright



# 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 we recently learned 10 things that readers may not know about this longtime Blue Raider.



His 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 said. 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 youth 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 said. 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 said. "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 said, 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 said. He never appeared in a movie again. "I guess my movie career peaked at a young age as well," he said.

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 said, "because

we knew Castro could reach us with nuclear weapons." The celebration didn't last long. Whiteside said 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 said. "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 legendary football coach. Whiteside said 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 world championship.

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 Science, 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 said, "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. "My job is to protect the institution," Whiteside said. 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. 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. *USA Today* recently singled out MTSU in the NCAA tournament for having a 100 percent graduation rate for both the men's and women's basketball teams. "I'm very proud about being just a part of that," Whiteside said. 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 said. "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 said. "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 said. "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!" •



# SECRET SUCCESS

by Allison Gorman

Criminal Justice graduate Lynda Williams is the third-highest ranking African-American woman in the U.S. Secret Service

**A**FTER 28 YEARS IN THE U.S. SECRET SERVICE, Lynda Williams doesn't have to wear sensible shoes to work. She prefers stilettos.

But every September when the United Nations General Assembly convenes in New York, it's all hands on deck for the Secret Service, which is responsible for protecting the event and the world leaders who converge there—and it's back to lace-ups for Williams.

"I must admit that as an executive, I'm not running behind a limo anymore," she said. "But at any given stage, I can still do protection."

In September 2015, Williams worked protective detail for the president of Sri Lanka, and a photo of her striding purposefully beside him made front-page news in the island nation. The next day, when the Sri Lankan policemen traveling with their president kept smiling at her, she thought, "it must be my red lipstick—until the sole English-speaking policeman explained, 'Ma'am, you're a celebrity in our country ... You're a tough lady.'"

Williams chuckles at the characterization. "I'm all girlie-girlie. I can't run a 75-pound armored shield through a door. But I can go in with a shotgun. You have to recognize your strengths."

Maybe that policeman recognized a strength she didn't. It takes a different kind of tough for a woman—a minority and single parent, at that—to work her way to the top of the federal government's most elite law enforcement agency. Today Williams is the third-highest ranking African-American woman in the Secret Service, and only the third in its 150-year history to reach retirement eligibility with a full complement of 25 years.

She hasn't retired yet, but is already focused on her replacement. Last year, she returned to MTSU to

encourage Criminal Justice students to dream big. If she could achieve her dreams, she said, they can, too.

## Making it Happen

As a Criminal Justice major in the early 1980s, Williams originally dreamed of being an FBI agent. She knew she didn't fit the typical demographic, and she didn't care. After an FBI recruiter visited one of her junior-level classes, she was sold.

She had three things going for her. The first was a family background in law enforcement: Her father's business, Shields Patrol, was the first African-American-owned security firm in Memphis. The second was tenacity: "I'm the kind of person who doesn't take no for an answer," she said. The third was encouragement from faculty like Lance Selva and the late Dennis Powell. "They never let me think that just because I was African-American or because I was a woman, or even because I was overweight, I couldn't do this," she said.

The barrier Williams didn't expect was the FBI's requirement of three years' work experience. So after graduating, she moved to Augusta, Georgia,



In September 2015, Williams worked protective detail for the president of Sri Lanka



photos: J. Intintoli



**It takes a different kind of tough for a woman to work her way to the top of the federal government's most elite law enforcement agency.**



and joined the sheriff's department. She still remembers a dig from a former classmate who saw her in her deputy's uniform: "You went to school for four years to become a cop?"

"No," Williams replied, "but I have a plan. You have to crawl before you walk."

And you have to walk before you run—something Williams knew she'd have to do in the FBI. Her "cute-fat" self wasn't going to cut it.

"Things I can control, I try to mitigate," she said. "I wasn't going to let weight deter me from reaching my goal." She began walking, and then running, in preparation for her big break.

It came to Augusta in the person of a Secret Service recruiter. Williams applied, and on Jan. 28, 1988, after 13 months of bureaucracy and background checks, she reported for training as an officer in the Secret Service Uniformed Division.

### **Rising Ranks**

The Uniformed Division is what most people envision when they think Secret Service: suits and sunglasses (and sensible shoes, of course). Those roughly 1,300 officers are charged with protecting the White House and other federal properties, as well as certain embassies and staff in the Washington area.

But the Secret Service also has 3,200 special agents in 150 U.S. field offices and overseas, plus 2,000 civilian personnel. They do protective duty too, but they also investigate crimes affecting the nation's financial infrastructure, like credit card fraud. In fact, the Secret Service was established in 1865 expressly to combat counterfeiting, which was rampant after the Civil War. It wasn't until the 1901 assassination of President William McKinley that the agency took on its dual roles of investigation and protection.

For such big responsibilities, the Secret Service is very small. "The FBI has more agents in Washington, D.C., than we have worldwide," Williams said.

She rose through those select ranks quickly, becoming a special agent and, through a

series of promotions and lateral moves, hitting professional and political milestones along the way.

She was on protective detail for the Clinton White House, working inaugural balls as well as campaign advances for then-presidential candidate Al Gore; became the first African-American female manager of the Washington field office; traveled the country as the Secret Service's national recruiter; used a federal partnership with Johns Hopkins University to earn a master's degree in Management; and served as U.S. attaché to Pretoria, South Africa, where she worked protection for the World Cup and enjoyed rest and relaxation in London, Madrid, and Barcelona ("the best assignment of my life," she said).

She returned to Washington as special agent in charge of congressional affairs, then head of recruiting, then head of development and training. Last May, when she was appointed to her current position—deputy assistant director of the Secret Service's Office of Human Resources—she was 52, and she'd been eligible to retire for two years. She'd just been too busy to do it.

### **Making the Sacrifice**

Williams first returned to her alma mater at the behest of Selva, addressing several Criminal Justice classes and encouraging students to follow their dreams. "I was so excited when I had the opportunity to come back to Middle Tennessee State, because there are ordinary people who enter this profession but just don't know how to," she said.

Yet she's candid about the sacrifices that come with such a high-flying career. As a member of Gore's protective detail, she missed much of her daughter Raelyn's infancy—their communications often limited to a brief call (sometimes from Air Force Two) at bedtime. She vividly recalls landing at Andrews Air Force Base at midnight, buying groceries on the way home, pulling a sleeping Raelyn onto her lap to braid her hair, ironing two weeks' worth of Raelyn's clothes, and finally climbing into bed with her husband, only to get back on a plane at 8 a.m.

**"The FBI has more agents in Washington, D.C., than we have worldwide."**





best lecture hall at MTSU, because I love to talk and tell stories. But I also like to encourage people and say, 'You can do this. God uses ordinary people.' ”

Given this tough lady's successes to date, the potential results are sure to be extraordinary.



She also recalls her second day of work in the Richmond, Virginia, field office: Sept. 11, 2001. Her husband—an officer in the Uniformed Division—was stuck two hours away in the nation's capital, Raelyn was in daycare halfway between them, and all the phone lines were jammed. “All I could think about was, ‘I’ve got to get to my child,’ ” she said.

Her constant travel put a serious strain on her marriage, which ended when Raelyn was 5. After that, Williams raised Raelyn as a single parent, supported by a strong network of family and friends.

“This career is not for everybody,” she said. “You have to have a passion about it, because you stand to miss birthdays, holidays, anniversaries. ... We have so many women that start on this journey but don't complete it.”

She must have done something right. Raelyn “is as normal as a child can be,” Williams reports. Now a freshman on full scholarship at the University of Richmond, Raelyn is proud of what her mother has accomplished. But years ago, if someone had asked Raelyn if she wanted to be a Secret Service agent like Mommy, Williams says with a laugh, “If she could cuss, she would tell you, ‘Hell no.’ ”

## Giving Back

When Williams does retire, she said it will be to Middle Tennessee, where her career “started as a dream.” Of course, she already has a new dream—teaching as an adjunct at MTSU—where no sensible shoes are required.

“I’ll have on my pencil skirt and my stilettos,” she said. “I’ll sit on my desk, and I’ll have the

## Two of a Kind

Lynda Williams loves her stilettos; Dennis Powell loved his cowboy boots.

“He was like something out of Miami Vice,” Williams said. “He wore these super-tight Sassoon blue jeans and polo shirts, and he had blond hair down to his shoulders and mirrored shades and cowboy boots.”

That was the '80s; styles come and go. But for 36 years as a Criminal Justice professor, until his death last September at the age of 68, Powell never changed his unique rapport with students.

“He was real; you could talk to him,” Williams said. “He was, of course, a retired cop, and he would tell real-life stories. I was in awe.”

For Williams, Powell was not just a teacher, but inspiration: proof that excellence can come in an unexpected package. Current students found that to be the case as well.

“He was a man that cared about education, and he was willing to work with you as long as you were willing to work with him,” MTSU Criminal Justice student Jord'n Bay said in a *Sidelines* article at the time of Powell's death. “He also really supported community by making students interact with each other and encouraging group discussion.”

Williams is a member of the committee which, along with Powell's widow, Bonnie, has established a scholarship to honor the Chicago native and Marine Corps Vietnam War veteran. Contact Bea Perdue (615-898-2417 or [Bea.Perdue@mtsu.edu](mailto:Bea.Perdue@mtsu.edu)) for more information.



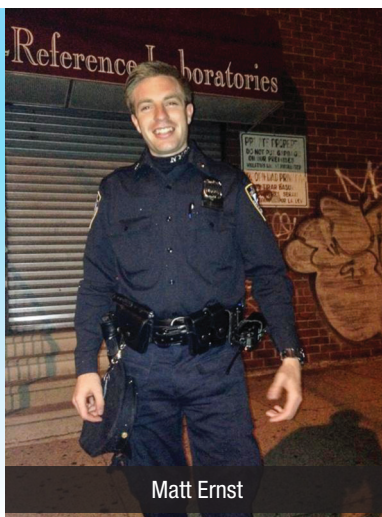


## PROTECT AND SERVE

Arguably the greatest proof of the quality and value of a college or department is the success of its graduates—both recent and those deeper in to their careers. Based on Lynda Williams' success, as well as the success of others selected below, MTSU students are clearly receiving a world-class education in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.



Jason Locke



Matt Ernst



Melinda Rigsby

When **Jason Locke** began his law enforcement career as a uniformed patrol officer, he worked the midnight shift while taking day classes at MTSU, eventually receiving two degrees. Locke was later hired by the TBI as a special agent/criminal investigator. After more than a decade rising through the TBI ranks, Locke was appointed in March to his current position as TBI deputy director, directing and overseeing the TBI Criminal Investigation Division, with oversight of 1,200–1,500 criminal investigations at any given time. He also serves on the executive committee of TBI/Department of Safety and Homeland Security Fusion Center and has oversight of the entire bureau in the director's absence.

Fourth-generation MTSU alum **Dana Clegg** first went to work for the Tennessee Department of Children Services (DCS) in 2000. She supervised the Regional Absconder Program from 2008 to 2015. (The Absconder Program deals mostly with runaway minors). In March 2015, she resumed a full caseload for Family Support Services. She is also a current member of a Human Trafficking Task Force. "Every person I've built connections with through the Methamphetamine and Pharmaceutical Task Force, TBI, Human Trafficking, FBI, local gang units, law enforcement, the courts, TEMA, etc., I can trace almost all of them back to a class, or they are a person I met through Greek Life at MTSU," Clegg said.

**Matthew "Matt" Ernst** graduated from MTSU and entered the Police Academy for the New York Police Department along with 1,200 other officers. In December 2013, he graduated from the academy with the Mayor's Award for Highest Overall Average and was assigned to the 115th Precinct located in Queens. Ernst left the NYPD in January 2015 for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), which is part of the Department of Justice, achieving the highest overall academic average during the Special Agent Basic Training Program. Today he is stationed with the ATF in Knoxville.

**Melinda Rigsby** was sworn in in December 2012 as a new magistrate at Davidson County Juvenile Court, where she presides over juvenile delinquent cases as well as cases involving neglected and abused children. Prior to her appointment to the bench, she was a prosecutor in the Davidson County district attorney's office for 17 years. She is known and well-regarded for her extensive community partnership efforts to get young people out of the system and into a life that offers opportunities for education, career, and personal well-being. •

I AM *true* **BLUE**



For up-and-coming MTSU Apparel Design and Fashion Merchandising students, the timing of the growth of their industry in Nashville couldn't be any better

# ENVOGUE

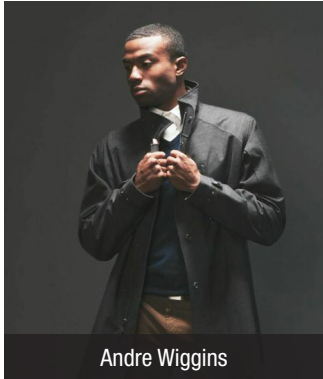
by Vicky Travis

photo: Darby Campbell



People tend to think of New York and Los Angeles as fashion capitals, and for good reason. But it's time to add Nashville to that short list. Over the past decade, Music City has become home to a vibrant, internationally recognized fashion scene full of independent boutiques, fresh designers, and, importantly, the infrastructure to support it.





Andre Wiggins

CityLab recently ranked Nashville fourth in the U.S. in terms of the numbers of fashion designers, their earnings, and industry activity—trailing just New York, Los Angeles, and Columbus, Ohio (home to the corporate headquarters of several retail giants). As far back as 2012, CityLab stats revealed 282 fashion designers operating from Nashville, a number that has grown considerably and is sure to expand even more in the next few years.

As recently explored in an article in *The Tennessean*, national publications including *Women's Wear Daily* have recently touted Nashville's fashion industry. *Forbes Travel Guide* cited fashion as one of the top five reasons that Nashville "is on fire."

"Nashville has the potential to be a powerhouse," said Andre Wiggins, a Fashion Merchandising senior at MTSU. "I want to be a part of that growth."

Wiggins, who also models, has seen the growth firsthand during Nashville Fashion Week, held each April since 2011. Within a few years, the once-small event now intrigues fashion industry moguls nationwide, who fly in from New York and Los Angeles to see it.

"Why go to New York and L.A., when I can stay here and be part of something from the beginning?" said Fashion Merchandising junior Stephaney Drake, who also participates in the student chapter of the Nashville Fashion Alliance (NFA) trade organization, which launched in 2015. "At a COAST show in October, I was registering students for NFA and meeting all kinds of people who flew in just to come to it and to see what's here."

"Nashville understands creative industry," summed up Rick Cottle, assistant professor in Textiles, Merchandising, and Design at MTSU. "And just like Nashville has songwriting as a business, it knows that fashion has to have infrastructure to support it."



Rick Cottle



Logan McCage, left, and Stephaney Drake

## GETTING IN STYLE

As the only public university in Tennessee offering an Apparel Design program, MTSU professors see unlimited opportunities for Textiles, Merchandising, and Design (TXMD) students.

Other public universities offer Fashion Merchandising, but MTSU offers both disciplines in its TXMD major.

"Because of the NFA, there are broad opportunities for MTSU alumni," Cottle said. "MTSU students were easy to feed into big producers like Belk, Under Armour, and VF Imagewear. But now, NFA opens up a whole new pipeline to small design firms."

"MTSU is an underrated asset," said Van Tucker, the alliance's CEO. "People need to know about it."

MTSU had the good fortune of becoming an academic partner for Nashville Fashion Week in 2015 and 2016—an opportunity not lost on Apparel Design student Logan McCage. McCage worked back of house in the managed chaos of the event, learning some life lessons along with upping her design standards.

"I learned about being patient, taking orders, and about using every experience," she said.

And after seeing the clothing of professional designers up close, she said she holds her clothing to that standard. McCage, like many Apparel Design students, is minoring in Entrepreneurship.

"They loved our students," said Cottle, who consistently heard high praise from designers about MTSU students' work ethic and attitude.

About 175 students are in the TXMD department.

"MTSU has the potential to double this program," added Cottle, who along with other faculty, such as Lauren Rudd, is an outspoken advocate for the department. "We have the faculty—all of us are doctorate-level and



experts in our fields. . . . And we have an industry out here. . . . Now to connect all the dots.”

One of the NFA’s objectives is to encourage more high school students to think about pursuing careers in fashion, Tucker said. (Some area high schools, namely Ravenwood High School in Williamson County, boast fashion programs that churn out advanced fashion students.)

It’s often Cottle’s job to convince the fathers of prospective fashion students during college visits.

leaders donated and were asked to model for the shoot.

That go-getter attitude led to a job for Drake as a student liaison with the NFA.

Wiggins also exhibits the drive needed to be successful in the field of fashion. After earning a Management and Marketing degree in Ohio and serving in the Army for three years, Wiggins found a home in MTSU’s fashion program.

“Most men don’t think about how to dress correctly, especially in urban areas,” Wiggins said. “My dream is to have an influence on men’s fashion.”

## “PEOPLE ALWAYS BUY CLOTHES. THERE ARE ALWAYS JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN APPAREL.”

“Ninety-nine percent of parents, especially dads, ask, ‘How is my kid going to make a living?’ ” he said. He points to a statistic that apparel ranks second to food in world consumer goods.

“People always buy clothes. There are always job opportunities in apparel,” Cottle said.

Students learn early on that those opportunities come from networking, something Cottle and other professors emphasize early on. Now, NFA gives students a structured place to network with professional offerings just for students. And MTSU students can connect with design students at private colleges such as O’More College of Design, Nossi College of Art, and Belmont University.

### ON THE RUNWAY

In summer 2015, Drake worked with other students to create a photo shoot for their portfolios. They invited Marcia Masulla, founder of Nashville Fashion Week, and NFA’s Tucker to a catered, professional event.

“I want to be an innovator,” Drake said. “Nobody told us to do this photo shoot, but we got 11 models, had it catered, and paid for it by selling custom jewelry.” Local business

His work ethic and attitude already have an influence on Cottle and Rudd. In between modeling gigs in Nashville, Atlanta, and Miami, Wiggins fits in school and emails every week to contacts seeking a meeting or offering to help with events.

Wiggins dropped by Cottle’s office in early December before heading off to take a final. After months of dogged networking, he had been invited for a meeting about an internship.

Students like Wiggins “are why we get up to come to work,” Cottle beamed. “What keeps me awake at night is kids like him—hungry and talented—who don’t know we’re here.”

“I just need a toe in the door,” Wiggins said. “It doesn’t matter where I start. I will show my work ethic. I want to do this for the rest of my life.”



Andre Wiggins



## RED, WHITE, AND TRUE BLUE



A group of area quilters, including MTSU students, gathered at the University in February 2016 to do their part to add a bit of comfort for active military personnel and veterans.

For National Quilts of Valor Sew Day, University employee Janice Lewis, a quilter herself, spearheaded a drive to bring 20 to 30 people to campus to complete roughly 20 quilt tops.

Also attending the event were MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee and retired Lt. Gen. Keith Huber, senior adviser for veterans and leadership initiatives.

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing quilts as a small show of gratitude for their valor and sacrifice.

Lewis and Department of Human Sciences staff and faculty reached out to students to sew or volunteer their help, too, as part of the University's experiential learning program.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

It's about fashion, fabric, and one of the most fantastic days in a couple's life. For the fifth year, the MTSU Department of Human Sciences and Oaklands Mansion partnered in presenting "Wedding Dresses through the Decades." The exhibit in January 2016 at the mansion showcased a diversity of styles representing the changing tastes and mores of American society.

"The Textiles, Merchandising, and Design program at MTSU maintains a 750-plus piece collection of historic garments, and we had four of our wedding gowns on display," said Teresa King, a professor in the Human Sciences Department. Those four gowns were from the years 1860, 1891, 1900, and 1912. Overall, the display included wedding dresses from 1947 through today.

In a related matter, the Principles of Interior Design class visited Hylabrook Antiques, applying elements and principles and the design process on site to develop the layout and installation of a booth. The concept coincided with the wedding dress partnership with Oaklands Mansion. Students created a space where a bride would change and get ready for her wedding as well as prepare to travel for the honeymoon.



**afr-Haute COUTURE**  
**RUNWAY SHOW**  
APRIL 16, 2016  
@ 5 P.M.  
LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER  
ROOM 221  
**PRESENTED BY:**  
MTSU TXMD  
TEXTILES MERCHANDISING  
AND DESIGN PROGRAM  
STUDENT: \$10  
GENERAL: \$25  
VIP: \$50  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MTRUNWAYSHOW16](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MTRUNWAYSHOW16)



## HANDS-ON LEARNING

Tomorrow's clothing designers annually display the fashions of the future in the MTSU Textiles, Merchandising, and Design Runway Show each April. The show is a prelude to the annual Middle Tennessee Fashion Week at MTSU sponsored by the student organization Fashion and Design Students (FADS).

The theme of the 2016 event was African couture, with fashions for men and women running the gamut of numerous royal, tribal, and contemporary styles indicative of how people all over the continent dress.

Students take charge of every aspect of preparation, including stage and production, modeling, promotion, merchandise, and finance. Scholarship prizes are awarded for top designs. In addition, senior students create special five-garment collections and submit them to a separate panel of judges. The winner receives design time from Omega Apparel of Nashville to take an original garment through from concept to production. •

See examples on the cover and page 19.

Janice Lewis retired from MTSU in May, 2016.



## Model Program

The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) recently visited the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences to hear from advising manager Brelinda Johnson on how advisors are successfully implementing iPASS (integrated Planning and Advising for Student Success). With funding provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, iPASS grants are intended to promote and enhance the ability of leading institutions to graduate more students. In September 2015, EDUCAUSE announced 24 recipients of iPASS grants. MTSU was selected to receive \$225,000 over the next three years to fund a portion of the SSC Campus and DegreeWorks initiatives. Institutions had to be invited in order to make application for the highly competitive grants.

MTSU was one of just five institutions that APLU chose to profile and create video instruction that can be utilized by other institutions. In August 2015, MTSU was identified as one of five finalists nationwide for the prestigious and highly competitive 2015 Project Degree Completion Award from the APLU. The award recognizes high-performing institutions for exemplary student success initiatives to improve retention and degree completion.

True Blue! •

MTSU was one of just five institutions that APLU chose to profile and create video instruction that can be utilized by other institutions.



# Careers in Helping Others



## TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY



# STUDENTS FIRST

Two recent gifts enable the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences to give more than lip service to the quest for student success

by Allison Gorman, Gina K. Logue, and Drew Ruble

## THE WRIGHT STUFF



photo: J. Intintoli

Pam Wright

**T**WO MAJOR FINANCIAL GIFTS PROVIDED IN the past year promise to transform the lives of students studying behavioral and health sciences at MTSU.

The gifts, one from alumna **Pamela Wright**, arguably the most successful female entrepreneur in the state of Tennessee, and the other from real estate developer John Floyd, which was facilitated by Health and Human Performance professor **Colby Jubenville**, each focus on student success—both inside and outside the classroom.

Here's a closer look.

Alumna Pam Wright ('73) jumpstarted the college careers of 11 MTSU students when she announced a \$100,000 donation to the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences in October 2015. The money will fund the Wright Travel Leadership Scholarship Program, an endeavor designed to motivate students through strategic coaching, formal mentoring opportunities, and pathways to scholarship money upon completion of specific criteria. Recipients will also participate in personal development sessions that will include leadership, networking, and honing interpersonal skills.

Wright graduated from MTSU with a degree in Psychology, later working in the field of social work, and eventually making a life-altering decision to form her own travel agency, Wright Travel, which is today Tennessee's largest travel agency. In making the gift to MTSU, Wright encouraged students to follow their professional passion.



“Find the thing that makes you want to go to your career every day, not to go just to a job that you don’t particularly enjoy going to,” Wright said.

“This makes me so excited for my future, actually,” said Smatha Denby, a Criminal Justice Administration major from Tullahoma. “I look forward to helping people and giving back, and I’m really grateful for the opportunity to advance in leadership.”

In addition to Denby, the 2015–16 Wright Travel Scholars, their majors, and Tennessee hometowns are:

- Mary Grace Farone, Nutrition and Food Science Dietetics, Murfreesboro\*
- Tia Pride, Psychology, Antioch\*
- Cambre Godwin, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism Studies, Hampshire
- Brittany Harris, Social Work, Murfreesboro
- Faith Metcalf, Child Development and Family Studies, Memphis\*
- Kamaria Cross, Social Work, Memphis
- Sheena Collins, Pre-Nursing, Memphis
- Erica Brown, Community and Public Health, Memphis
- Ashley Feltner, Pre-Nursing, Manchester
- Alexia Moore, Textile, Merchandising, and Design, Cordova

*\* Awarded Wright Travel Scholarship for 2016–17 Academic Year*

## Participating Wright Scholars must meet the following requirements to be eligible to apply for the scholarships:

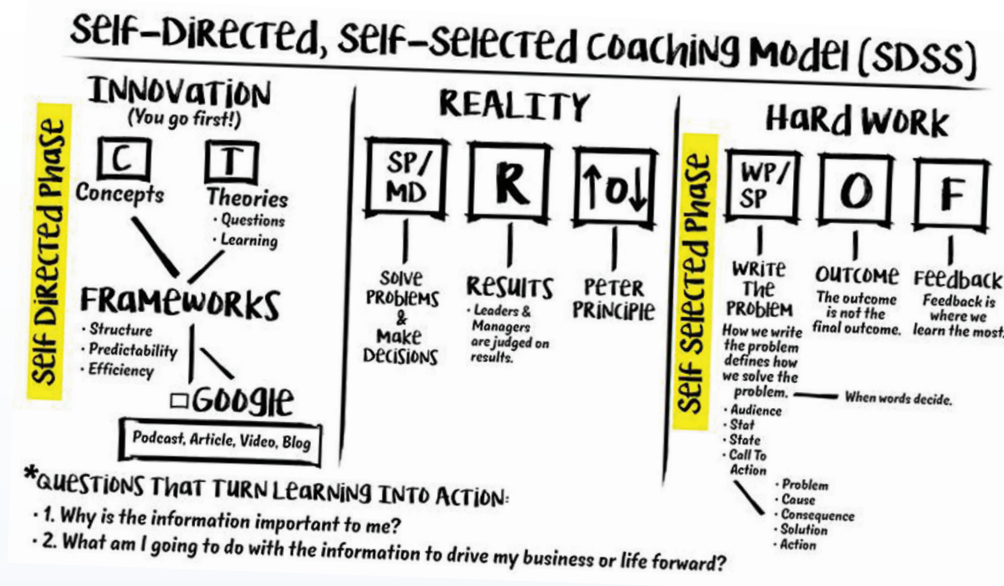
- a minimum GPA of 2.5
- completion of personal development workshops
- a personal strategic plan developed and on file with the college’s student success officer
- a recommendation from a faculty member or professional mentor
- active involvement in a community or campus service project



photo: Andy Heidt



“When students step into the new CBHS Center for Student Success and Coaching, they’ll know it means business”



The college’s student success officer, Jubenville has a clear message for the students he gets to work with who are studying in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences.

“I’m going to do everything in the world in my power to save you if you fall out of this boat, but if you do, you’d better become an active participant in your own rescue,” said Jubenville, the man appointed by Dean Terry Whiteside to fill that role.

Jubenville has been getting the best from his students since he began building the Leisure and Sport Management master’s in 2001. Its graduates now occupy front-office positions in top-tier franchises like the Houston Astros, Tennessee Titans, and Talladega Motor Speedway, as well as crucial industry organizations such as the Nashville Sports Council.

All those success stories caught the attention of Whiteside, who now offers Jubenville’s special brand of one-on-one mentoring college-wide. The Center for Student Success and Coaching, to be located in Alumni Memorial Gym, is now the official space for Jubenville to do what he’s been doing unofficially for the last 15 years.

When students step into the new CBHS Center for Student Success and Coaching, they’ll know it means business, Jubenville said. From its oversized whiteboard to its logoed carpet, the space will reflect the corporate America where CBHS grads hope to land.



## MAN WITH A PLAN



Colby Jubenville

photo: Andy Heidt



“I’m going to do everything in the world in my power to save you if you fall out of this boat, but if you do, you’d better become an active participant in your own rescue”

Through individual, peer, and group coaching sessions, the center will help students make the leap from college to career by focusing on four areas:

#### **Academic skills and critical thinking**

Students will learn Jubenville’s self-directed, self-selected coaching model to learn to effectively solve problems and make decisions, just as they will be expected to do on the job.

#### **Emotional intelligence**

Studies have shown that the ability to identify and manage your own and others’ emotions is the strongest predictor of workplace performance.

#### **Personal branding**

Using materials from “Me: How to Sell Who You Are, What You Do and Why You Matter to the World,” students will create a personal brand for a competitive edge.

#### **Career development**

In partnership with the MTSU Career Development Center, students can complete personality/career assessments, develop their résumés, train for interviews, and take advantage of new technologies like CareerShift and Career Clustering.

Jubenville practices what he preaches. He has built an impressive professional network, become a sought-after speaker and consultant, authored books, and racked up high-profile honors like the *Nashville Business Journal*’s 40 Under 40 award and the Nashville Emerging Leaders Impact Award. Along the way, he’s met some key people that are drivers of the middle Tennessee economy. One of those drivers—the aforementioned Floyd—Jubenville coached through the economic downturn and helped launch the Center for Student Success and Coaching at MTSU. Additional major gifts are in the works that will bolster the new center’s size and scope.

From an on-campus perspective, it’s fair to say that the center will showcase what it has done that no other college can match. But the center also promises to be a solid competitive advantage for all MTSU students when it comes to both student recruitment and retention.

## **Credit Where Credit is Due**

Brelinda Johnson, advising manager in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, works with students on a daily basis who lack management skills regarding their financial health.

As a part of a scholarship program and in an effort to fill this need, Johnson, with the support of her CBHS advising team, extended their student support services to the area of managing credit in order to ensure student success both now and in the future.

Bea Perdue, CBHS development officer, provided Johnson with a close contact she had at Wells Fargo to get the program started. Last fall, Wells Fargo representatives came to campus to conduct a credit workshop for CBHS students.

The Wells Fargo logo is displayed in yellow, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a red rectangular background.

“Our college is here to assist students become better citizens,” Johnson said. “We want to assist our students to develop skills that will aid them both in the classroom and in life.”

Many student approaching graduation and eyeing their first professional jobs don’t realize that prospective employers commonly conduct a credit check as part of the interview process to better size up a candidate’s qualifications and character. The workshop discussed credit scoring, credit cards, and budgeting. According to Johnson, students felt it was beneficial and asked great questions.

It’s just another example of CBHS putting its money where its mouth is regarding student success! ●









# A Healthy **APPROACH**

Two College of Behavioral and Health Sciences graduates bring hope and dignity to those too often forgotten in the shadows

by Patsy B. Weiler

**E**LDER CARE AND AUTISM.

What do they share in common? Usually, not a lot in the consciousness of the general public. The issues often are seen as affecting opposite ends of the age spectrum. Autism is perceived as a disorder associated mainly with children, while elder care is a spotlight that only shines on senior adults.

A closer look, however, reveals shared ground. Research shows both groups have rapidly growing populations in the United States, each with complex and specific needs, but often forgotten as nameless faces in intractable circumstances.

Fortunately, two determined MTSU alums, **Barbara Boyett** (1975) and **Meredith Martin** (2003), have a vision for the members of these diverse and changing communities. Daily, they tirelessly champion cultural and individual change on behalf of those they serve.



## A Determined Duo



Boyett is the CEO of Avondale House in Houston, a facility that provides children and adults significantly affected with autism the education and training needed to develop to their fullest potential. The nonprofit agency includes a school serving 70 students ages 3 to 22; a residential program with 18 individuals 16 to 44 years old; and an adult day program for 25 people, ages 22 and older. A Nashville native, Boyett is celebrating her 30th anniversary this year at Avondale House, where she oversees 82 employees.

For the last six years, Martin has been the education coordinator for The Eden Alternative, a global nonprofit organization whose purpose is to improve the well-being of elders and their care partners by transforming where they live, whether it be in an institutional or private-home setting. Although the organization's main office is in Rochester, New York, Martin is based in Murfreesboro. She wears many work-related hats and coordinates a variety of educational events across the country including 15 to 20 training classes each month, online webinars, and a biannual international conference. Her efforts support and provide tools to educate and assist in the creation of progressive environments built on relationships to combat the three major issues which, Martin says, affect the elder population: loneliness, helplessness, and boredom.

A 2011 report in the *Wall Street Journal*, based on figures from the latest U.S. Census report, revealed that senior citizens have become the largest and fastest-growing demographic of the American populace, increasing 15.1 percent between 2000 and 2010 to 40.3 million people. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics projects aging services to grow faster than other occupations through 2018.

Likewise, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identify around 1 in 68 American children as on the autism spectrum—a tenfold increase in prevalence in 40 years. Boys are four to five

times more likely to be diagnosed

with the complex developmental disorder, which is characterized in varying degrees by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, and repetitive behaviors.

While society may overlook or even be fearful about the professional worlds occupied by both Boyett and Martin, they dispel these notions with education and community involvement. Those individuals in their care are not going to stop aging or being autistic, and both women are key players in organizations passionate about specific, person-directed initiatives that affirm and celebrate the dignity of each individual, their caregivers, and families.

### True Blue Inspiration

"Many nursing homes were created about 50 years ago with the majority being built and run like hospitals with a focus on illness and dependency," Martin said. "The emphasis was on quality of care and not on quality of life. The Eden Alternative is working to transform this institutional approach. If we are living, we are aging. No matter how old we are or what challenges we live with, life is about continuing to grow. Our philosophy is to fit the care to the person, rather than demanding the person change to fit the care, by helping create elder-centered, vibrant, life-affirming environments where each person matters and contributes."

Facing her own apprehensions about nursing homes as a college student directly impacted Martin's decisions about her future.



"I was fearful of the nursing home environment. One of my courses at MTSU, Aging Health and Development, pushed me into it. I was forever changed," she said. "I was in awe of the transformative nature of the Eden Alternative philosophy and decided to pursue an internship at an Eden registry member in the Murfreesboro area, which led to full-time employment when I graduated.

"As we face the reality of a health care system that is ill-prepared to meet the needs of a growing aging population, improving the quality of care is a responsibility we all must share. It is what inspired me to enter my profession and dedicate my career to changing the face of elder care."

## A Tireless Advocate

As a young woman earning her master's degree in Clinical Psychology at MTSU, Boyett smiles at the memory of commuting from Nashville.

"I spent a great deal of time on Murfreesboro Road in my light blue VW Bug, working full time on the evening shift at Central State Psychiatric Hospital (now Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute), or in the MTSU library," she said. "It was during the times of editing and rewriting my thesis that I learned an ability to persevere is a critical component of survival and success."

During her employment at Central State, she was a behavior technician in the Motivating Community, which was the only unit in the hospital utilizing the theories of operant conditioning developed by Harvard psychology professor B.F. Skinner, often considered one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century.

"The favored label for those teaching strategies and training techniques, which bring about meaningful and positive change in behavior, is now Applied Behavior Analysis, and we continue to base our work with our children and young adults on these principles," Boyett said.

As an example of this concept, Boyett shared the case of two young men who have been at Avondale since they were children. Both came with significant behavioral challenges. Today, with varied levels of supervision, they are able to successfully work.

The offerings at Avondale House, Boyett said, put emphasis on what their program participants can do rather than focus on their disability.

"Many of our parents have told us we are the first program to see their child's strengths and to offer

positive feedback regarding their development," Boyett said. "We also recognize the value of teaching and learning in natural settings ... which is essential to their success in their homes and communities."

Boyett is tireless in her efforts to raise awareness of the needs of those with autism who, after turning 22, age out of education offerings mandated by law.

"It is important to remember children with autism become adults with autism, and many will need lifelong support," she said. "Families are left with few options and limited resources to meet the adult's needs. Too often they remain at home, losing the skills learned while in school.

"I hope in the next five to 10 years we see increased assistance for these individuals from supported living options to supported employment opportunities."

## Making a Difference

The efforts of both women are shaking the awareness paradigm for those often forgotten in the shadows and bringing them into the light of importance and significance.

### The Future of Care

MTSU student Brianna Carroll's life goal is to be an art therapist, a trained professional who uses art media as a form of cathartic expression for people experiencing illness, trauma, and mental health issues ranging from post-traumatic stress disorder to Alzheimer's disease.

Although Tennessee does not offer a program certified by the American Art Therapy Association, Carroll remained resolute. She chose to attend MTSU and earn a degree in Psychology with minors in Art and Mental Health Services.

Carroll's world was expanded further when she traveled to France as a participant in the University's Education Abroad Program during the summer of 2015. She also visited Saint Anne Hospital for Psychiatry and Neurosciences in Paris, home to the Expressive Arts Therapy Center, a cutting-edge research and treatment facility.

"It was a huge leap for someone who had never traveled before," Carroll said. "My time in France really provided some deeper insight into the history and importance of art therapy, particularly as a means to enrich the lives of people."

With her special blend of creative talent and her interest in the mental health profession, Carroll is poised to make a difference in the lives of others just the way she intends it. •





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