

RAIDER REVIEW



MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2016 ■ VOL. 2 NO. 3

A League OF HIS OWN

Kaleb King is the first Blue Raider baseball player ever to receive MTSU's highest academic scholarship



From biology to bluegrass

Maddie Denton

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ON THE COVER



Kaleb King is the first Blue Raider baseball player ever to receive MTSU's highest academic scholarship

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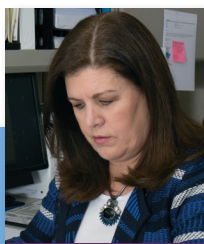
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Chris Massaro

From the Desk of the A.D.

I've served as director of athletics at MTSU for more than a decade now, and sadly, even to this day, the media attempting to minimize our University and our athletics program remains an all-too-common occurrence.

That was certainly the case once again this past January when Fox Sports radio host Colin Cowherd went on a rant in his national broadcast in response to a caller's comment that paying student-athletes would have severe implications for athletic programs like Middle Tennessee. Cowherd unnecessarily bashed our program, saying we should not exist and going so far as to compare it to "Central Trucking State University."

In the aftermath of that tirade (yes, I tweeted a terse response to Cowherd, which garnered national attention), we here at MTSU had a little good-natured fun at his expense that included a pie-in-the-face exhibition in the middle of a basketball game (and no, I'm not going to apologize for that).

I don't like the division that has developed between the so-called "Power 5" conferences (read SEC, Big 10, and the like) and the "Group of 5" conferences like Conference USA in collegiate athletics. First and foremost, just because a school resides in a "power" conference does not necessarily make it a "power" school. I can cite many examples of this but will stop short of calling out particular institutions. Suffice it to say that we go toe-to-toe with them athletically week after week and year after year (MT 90, Michigan State 81). Those programs can certainly vouch for our competitiveness on the fields of play.

The most important thing to do is buy tickets and attend our games. Nothing drives the mistaken perception that no one cares about MTSU more than spotty attendance. Talk to your friends and fellow alums about the Blue Raiders and get them to come to the games. The last four

years, our basketball teams have had a home-court winning percentage of 84%. Both made the NCAA tournament this spring. Football also has done remarkably well, losing only one home C-USA game since we joined the league and winning 11 straight conference home games. Our other sports have been great too—so jump in and join the fun.

What can be done to change this perception? The next step is to

Put on your blue, talk about us every chance you get, and buy tickets to our games.

double down on our passion and not let people like Cowherd be allowed to spread his erroneous opinions (hence, my tweet) about MT Athletics. Scream about MTSU every chance you get, especially on social media. Make sure you mention us on Facebook (Blue Raider Athletics), Twitter (@MTAthletics), Instagram (MTAthletics), Snapchat (MT_Athletics), Pinterest, etc., as frequently as you

can. If you go to a game or if we have a big win, brag about it on social media and ask others to join in on the fun. Additionally, follow MT athletics under one of the aforementioned social media outlets. This is a terrific way for us to communicate with you and also for you to provide the feedback we need about what we're doing right, or more importantly, what we need to correct.

Third, be active with our local and regional media. Call sports talk shows and demand to be heard. Force the hosts to talk about MTSU and discuss how we might win a conference championship. Let *The Tennessean* and other local news outlets know that you want more coverage of MT Athletics in their mediums. If they believe the audience is there, they will cover us more.

At no time in our history has it been more important for you to put on your blue, talk about us every chance you get on social media, and buy tickets to attend our games. Besides, it is fun to prove people wrong!

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of *Raider Review* as there are lots of stories about personalities in the program for us to brag about. And, as always, I thank you for your support of Middle Tennessee athletics and for helping our student-athletes' dreams come true. **RR**

Chris Massaro
Director of Athletics



A League

OF HIS OWN

Kaleb King is the first Blue Raider baseball player ever to receive MTSU's highest academic scholarship

by Tony Stinnett

As a decorated high school athlete, earning an opportunity to play baseball at the collegiate level was important to Middle Tennessee junior Kaleb King.

More important, according to King, was the opportunity to achieve a quality education.

While a student at the prestigious St. Louis University High School in Missouri, King studied in what might best be described as a culture of academic achievement. In fact, it was a place where achieving excellence in the classroom was a much higher priority than playing a sport well enough to earn an opportunity at the college level, even among the school's athletes.



"My high school is very competitive, so getting an opportunity to study at a great university was very important to me," King said.

Given that background, King is deserving of some bragging rights as it relates to both academics and athletics. That's because King made history when he became the first Middle Tennessee baseball player to be awarded a Buchanan Fellowship at the University. Named in honor of Nobel Prize-winning alumnus Dr. James M. Buchanan, the Buchanan Fellowship is the highest award given to an entering freshman at MTSU.

King was also one of only five out-of-state students to be selected for the Buchanan scholarship program, which is limited to 20 students per year. Buchanan Fellows receive a host of special benefits, including a full tuition waiver guaranteed for four years. At a minimum, applicants must have a high school GPA greater than or equal to 3.5 and a composite ACT greater than or equal to 29 (King scored a 32).

The 6-foot-2 junior outfielder, who majors in finance and aspires to be a financial planner or advisor, said he has been able to achieve all of his academic and athletic goals while at Middle Tennessee.

"I came to MTSU for the academic opportunity," King said, "because getting this opportunity was important and getting a quality education at a good place was important. On top of that, playing in Conference USA and playing on the stage with some of the best players in the country—what more could you ask for?"

King looks back fondly on the day he was informed he was included in the very select group of students to be chosen for a Buchanan Fellowship in MTSU's Honors College.

"It was very exciting," King recalled. "Being an athlete, you have competitiveness in your nature. Sometimes people overlook that in the classroom. I am very competitive in the classroom, too. To be able to come in and say I did something that only five kids in my class in the entire country could do is both humbling and rewarding.

"It was rewarding because all of the things I did in high school paid off. All the things I did at night to get ahead paid off. Sometimes what you do in the classroom goes unnoticed as far as how hard you worked or the sacrifices you made to accomplish that."

Excelling academically and athletically were important goals for King personally, but he also wanted to shine for his parents, Greg and Jill King.

"My parents paid a lot of money for me to go to (a private) high school," King said. "I wanted to pay them back by working hard and performing well in the classroom. Obviously, you would love to play baseball forever, but you don't always control that. You have

to have something to pursue when baseball is gone. My investment is in my education."

King's dad, who as a young ballplayer himself was considered a major league prospect, played a year at the University of Missouri–St. Louis under current MT baseball coach Jim McGuire. McGuire said he saw the tremendous talent the younger King possessed during his recruitment period. But McGuire said he also knew that academics was a higher priority than baseball for King, and firmly believed that MTSU had what the King family as a whole was seeking in regard to both athletics and academics.

"In recruiting Kaleb, it became very clear early on that it was not just a baseball situation, or just academics," McGuire said. "They wanted the best of both. Baseball was there, but the academic match had to be there too, and we felt it was. We believed we had a great deal to offer at Middle Tennessee.

"Once Kaleb met with (Honors College Dean) John Vile and got acquainted with the Honors College and what we have here, that's where the match happened."

Since finding a home at Middle Tennessee, King has flourished both on the field and in the Honors College,

a fact that may seem remarkable to some considering the amount of class time King misses in the spring during the baseball season. Baseball players have some of the busiest athletic road schedules, especially in springtime. Practice is from 2 p.m. to 4:30 or 5 p.m. on non-game days, followed by weight training. Although Monday is the NCAA-required off day, most players work out individually. The squad usually travels every other weekend, missing Thursday and Friday classes.

McGuire is not surprised by King's success.

"Kaleb is a very hard worker and has great time management skills," McGuire said. "He knows what he has to do to budget his time in the classroom and on the field to be in the lineup and play. It says a great deal about his character and his work ethic."

King's college years haven't been exclusively comprised of playing Blue Raider baseball and excelling in Honors courses. For instance, King spent one recent summer playing baseball in a Midwest summer league, a season highlighted by a July 4 walk-off hit at his home stadium where the Hollywood blockbuster *A League of Their Own* was filmed.

For many student-athletes, the competitive drive that makes them successful on their chosen field of play can also make them successful in the classroom. King is living proof that high achievers in athletics can and do translate the work ethic, discipline, and competitive intensity it takes to succeed in sports into their fields of study as well. **RR**

[Editor's Note: Carol Stuart contributed to this report.]

**Baseball was
there, but the
academic match
had to be there,
too, and we
felt it was.**



From biology to bluegrass, senior golfer **Maddie Denton's** drive extends well beyond the links

by Eric Beovich

NOT FIDDLIN' AROUND

Juggling college athletics and academics is no easy task. Blue Raider senior golfer Maddie Denton has been doing just that as a biology student at Middle Tennessee for the past four years. What sets Denton even further apart, though, is her high-level participation in another passion—playing the fiddle—a talent that has carried her all the way to the stage of the iconic Grand Ole Opry. Most recently, Denton won the title of 2016 Old-Time Fiddlers State Champion.



True Blue Triple Threat

Born and raised in Murfreesboro, Denton attributes her strong influences in science, music, and golf to her father, Greg Denton, a career biologist and recreational musician and golfer.

Music, though, was arguably her first influence.

"When I was little, I remember music always being around me," Denton said. "My parents would always play music in front of me, and we would always have music in the car wherever we went. So it's been a part of my life for a long time."

Denton was following in the footsteps of her grandfather and her mother when she first picked up a fiddle at the age of five. As she continued to work at the fiddle and progress in her ability with the instrument, it led her and her family on trips all over the country where Denton could play in fiddle competitions. On such trips, Denton said her family always made time to take smaller excursions aimed at piquing her interest in science as well.

"I've been to 46 different states and we've traveled everywhere; and even though a lot of those trips were for music, my parents always made sure to do more," Denton said. "When we went to Idaho for the National Oldtime Fiddlers Contest and Festival, for instance, we also went to Yellowstone National Park. I've been to so many state and national parks that I can't even count them all!"

It was around the age of seven that Denton became interested in golf. She remembers becoming curious about the sport because her father would play on the weekends. Soon she had her own set of clubs and began taking lessons at Old Fort Golf Club in Murfreesboro.

In yet another interesting tie between her two talents, Denton's golf swing coach, Johnny Warren, happens to be a Grammy Award-winning fiddle player with the band The Earls of Leicester (as well as the son of Paul Warren, a member of the original Flatt and Scruggs band).

"It's so cool to get to learn from Johnny because sometimes I won't understand everything about golf that he's saying, but he can relate it to music and the fiddle and it just clicks," Denton said.

Not So Par for the Course

In 2007, Denton experienced the opportunity of a lifetime when she was invited to play the Grand Ole Opry.

"My grandfather always wanted me to play on the Opry," Denton said. "He watched the Opry and listened to it on the radio and he always said, 'Maddie, one of these days you're going to be on the Opry.'"

In March, Maddie was crowned the 2016 Old-Time Fiddlers State Champion.

Before her grandfather passed away, Denton's fiddle teacher arranged for Denton to join Opry staple Mike Snider on the Opry stage, realizing her grandfather's wish of seeing her play there.

Playing collegiate golf was also one of Denton's dreams that came true. The former Siegel High School star was an important contributor to the MT women's team not only as the program transitioned into big-time Conference USA play over the past few seasons, but as it won a conference championship

and represented C-USA at the NCAA tournament.

Only a couple of months now remain in Denton's Middle Tennessee golf career. She is making the most of her senior season, posting a 74.1 stroke average in the fall and earning a couple of Top 10 finishes as well as a C-USA Golfer of the Week honor.

Despite her individual success, Denton spoke more highly of her teammates than her own accomplishments.

"Every single one of them are like my sisters and I would do anything for them," Denton said. "I'm an only child, so now I kind of know what it's like to have sisters. . . . Getting to travel and bond with the girls, shoot under par as a team, and break all these records as a team, it has just been such a fun ride."

The Future's So Bright

When her time at Middle Tennessee does come to an end, Denton will have three professional tracks she can consider pursuing, although she believes she has a pretty firm idea which direction her future is headed.

"In a perfect world, I would love to play fiddle for a living," Denton said. "That would be a dream come true. But not everybody gets to be Alison Krauss or somebody like that. I would love to play on the LPGA Tour, too, but I just don't know if that's in the cards."

"That's why I [majored in] biology. I'm not exactly sure yet what I want to do, but there are always opportunities for scientists."

No matter which of Denton's long-held passions becomes her professional pursuit, she said she will always remember her time as a Blue Raider golfer.

"Playing college golf at MTSU has been one of the most amazing experiences, and I will absolutely never forget it," Denton said. "I would not trade what I've had here—my teammates, my coach, our conference championship, any of it—for anything." **RR**



Putting FOR Dough

Four MT golf alums are on the fast track to earning a PGA Tour card

by Drew Ruble

I imagine playing your next round of golf on a world-class course like Pebble Beach or Doral while being flanked by admiring spectators and television cameras capturing your every move, and accompanied by a playing partner the likes of global phenomenon Jordan Spieth or future hall of famer Phil Mickelson. Based on their

ongoing ascension in the sport of professional golf, four recent Blue Raider golfers are inching ever closer to making that otherwise surreal scenario a reality.

This year, former Middle Tennessee golfers Kent Bulle, Rick Cochran, Jason Millard, and Chas Narramore each earned permanent playing status on the Web.com Tour, professional golf's version of the minor leagues. They did so by playing well enough in the

pro circuit's long-standing Qualifying School (or Q School) to get the permanent invite.

Now each golfer is virtually a Web.com Tour victory away—or even just a few good consecutive finishes earning significant prize money away—from elevating to PGA Tour status. All Web.com players finishing in the top 25 at the end of the developmental tour's 18-tournament annual schedule

BULLE QUICK HITS

Which player on the PGA Tour do you think your game resembles?

(Tennessee Tech grad) Scott Stallings. We both hit it a pretty good ways, and try to overpower some golf courses. I like the way he plays—real aggressive—and has had a lot of success out there.

Whose game do you admire and wish you could mimic?

Jordan Spieth, Rickie Fowler, Dustin Johnson. Fearless guys that go at flags and roll it in.

Who is your dream foursome?

Comedian Ron White, I hear he likes golf. Obviously Tiger Woods, Bill Murray, Tom Watson, and Cedric the Entertainer. Can I have five?

What are your thoughts about the Web.com Tour hosting an event this year at the Nashville Golf and Athletic Club June 13–19?

It's fun to have an event in your backyard, staying home instead of traveling the way we travel, and to have all the people come out to watch us that have watched us grow up playing and playing in college. It's also fun to show off Nashville now that I live here, because I want guys on the Web.com Tour to see the city and play some golf and see what it's got to offer.



COCHRAN QUICK HITS

earn PGA Tour memberships for the next season. Most current PGA players today boast a Web.com pedigree.

With its fresh wave of young superstars like Spieth, the PGA Tour is experiencing a post-Tiger Woods era renaissance these days. Now it's just a matter of time before one or more MT golfers join that youth movement on the PGA Tour. *Raider Review* recently visited with Bulle, Cochran, Millard, and Narramore to get their perspective on life as pro golfers and their reflections on their time at MTSU.

Strong like Bulle

Kent Bulle gets a kick out of watching PGA Tour golf telecasts on Sundays and seeing recent Web.com tour graduates like Patton Kizzire and Harold Varner III playing well and grabbing air time.

"It's fun to see those guys doing well but also knowing these are guys

Who makes up your dream foursome?

Jack Nicklaus, Larry Bird, and Rickie Fowler.

Which PGA Tour player's game do you most admire?

Fred Couples. He's got that long, free-flowing swing. His demeanor is real laid back. Not a whole lot ruffles his feathers.

If you weren't a professional golfer, what would you want to be doing?

Professional fisherman.



you've played with," Bulle said. "You know that you're just a week or two away from being right there with them. It's fun now being just one step away from where you've been trying to get to your entire life."

What in Bulle's opinion is the difference between the PGA Tour players and the Web.com players?

"Confidence," he said, "100 percent. Everybody playing the Web.com Tour and having any success at all is good enough to compete on the PGA Tour

level. It's just getting into a comfort zone where you are comfortable with the grandstands being up, with people, with the travel, and once you get comfortable there and let your game take over, I think you can probably move right up and succeed."

Bulle fondly reflects on his time at MTSU and said he remains best friends with all three other Blue Raiders now playing on the Web.com Tour.

"We were all in Rick's wedding and in Chas' wedding," he said. "I would

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never change having been here for the world. And it's fun still being a part of things here at MTSU."

Leader in the Clubhouse

Rick Cochran actually earned permanent status on the Web.com Tour last year, a year earlier than his fellow Blue Raiders. He played in all 25 events last year, earning five top 10 finishes, six top 25 finishes, and finishing 52nd on the money list.

But in reality, Cochran was even closer to making it to the PGA Tour this year than those impressive numbers suggest. One event in particular, he said, well elucidates the thin line between playing on the PGA Tour and playing on the Web.com Tour.

"Last year I had the lead in a tourney in Louisiana, and I did not handle the pressure real well and finished fourth," Cochran said. "That cost me \$70,000 in prize money. Well, I would have been on (the PGA) Tour if I had won that. So it's really about taking advantage of when you're playing well. You can't waste opportunities like I had in Louisiana. Really, two swings there and I'm on the PGA Tour this year."

Cochran agrees with Bulle that seeing Web.com graduates playing on the PGA Tour creates momentum and positive energy, not resentment.

"When you see them have success up there and you know how your game stacks up with theirs, it definitely kind of eases your mind versus wondering if you're good enough," Cochran said.

"You know you're good enough. It's just a matter of waiting for your time."

Cochran's fondest memories as a Blue Raider golfer include winning tournaments and having fun doing it. "We had a great team," he said. "The thing I take from it is just how much fun it was when we were kicking everybody's a--!"

If Cochran's last name rings a bell in the minds of golf fans, it should. His uncle, Russ Cochran, was a longtime PGA Tour pro who currently plays on the Champions Tour.

"When people asked me growing up what I wanted to be and I said a pro golfer, I never thought it wasn't possible because I saw it first hand through him," Cochran said. "I assumed I could do it because he did it."

Managing the Course

The one golfer in the Blue Raider pro foursome who actually played an event on the PGA Tour is **Jason Millard**, who qualified for the Honda Classic in Florida last March. He did so via a Monday qualifying event that highlights that event each year. Millard played well but missed the weekend cut by two shots.

Millard was paired at the Honda Classic with then Web.com Tour player, now current PGA Tour player Jamie Lovemark. Like his fellow Blue Raiders, he sees the ascension of Web.com players to PGA Tour status as great motivation.

"They've made it. So you learn from them and take that to your game,"

Millard said. "Getting full Web.com status means I'm one step closer to the overall dream that I've played golf my whole life for."

Millard believes experience is the key to making that next step.

"It's taken me learning about getting near the lead, learning the courses, playing the same courses multiple times, learning how to travel, when to practice and when not to practice—just overall learning how to play professional golf," he said.

Making it to nationals his freshman year (and finishing 15th) and winning the conference his sophomore year remain Millard's fondest MTSU memories.

"Those are the two best because you have a team involved," he said. "That's what college golf is really all about."

As for his best MTSU memory that is not golf-related, Millard simply stated "graduating."

"School is really tough with playing golf and traveling," he said. "It's not easy even though I wasn't a Chemistry major or anything. You put in a lot of hours with the school work."

The Big Breakthrough

The source of **Chas Narramore's** confidence in getting to the next level of professional golf is hard to argue. It's his memory of beating many of the players now playing on the PGA Tour.

"Seeing those guys playing at the next level, it's actually not frustrating at all," he said. "In fact, it's really positive, because they are playing well and we've beat them."

In Narramore's estimation, two words explain the difference between the golfers playing at the Web.com Tour level and those playing at the PGA Tour level: Short game.

MILLARD QUICK HITS

Which tour player's game do you admire?

Louis Oosthuizen. I love his golf swing. We're about the same height. And we play the same clubs.

Who makes up your dream foursome?

My dad and my grandpa, both of whom have passed away, and probably Tiger Woods.



NARRAMORE QUICK HITS



Which tour player's game does your game resemble?

I'm a short hitter, more straight, so maybe Zach Johnson. Now, I'm not quite up to his elite putting skills yet but hope to get to that!

What's your dream foursome?

My brother, for sure, then probably [former coach and current MT assistant athletics director] Whit Turnbow and Rick [Cochran].

"Chipping and putting and getting a couple balls up and down here and there in situations where other players don't—that's the difference," Narramore said. "We're all essentially hitting it the same both distance-wise and accuracy-wise, but it's all about whoever makes the putts. And you see that every week on the Web.com Tour and the PGA Tour. The guys making the putts are winning."

Narramore's fondest Blue Raider golf memory was a trip the team made to the West Coast to compete in the Callaway match-play event in California.

"That was probably the most fun tourney we played in," he recalled. "Obviously playing in the national championship was great, and getting through regionals and winning the conference our senior year, that was awesome too. But we had so much fun that week in California. It really sticks out. And, obviously, we won, which makes it a lot more enjoyable."

Off the course, Narramore stresses the camaraderie of that Blue Raider squad as the best aspect of his college experience.

"We hung out every night. We'd go out bowling, and were obviously very competitive with each other," he said. "We're still best friends to this day, including Craig Smith, who was with us too. We still talk to him once or twice a week. Even though he doesn't play professionally, we call him an elite amateur. He's still a great player, and I know that for a fact because I've played with him quite a bit in the summer when I'm in town. So just having this band of brothers is what I got from MTSU." **RR**

Giving Back

The inaugural **Franklin American Mortgage Moore/Turnbow Cup** at the Grove Club Golf Course in College Grove on March 7, 2016, featured all four former Blue Raider golfers turned Web.com Tour players. Also in attendance were numerous celebrities, including country music superstars Vince Gill, Joe Don Rooney and Jay DeMarcus of the band Rascal Flatts, and Randy Houser, as well as figure skater Scott Hamilton and comedian Henry Cho.

Former MT head coaches Johnny Moore and Whit Turnbow also attended the fundraising event, which benefitted the MT golf program, which is now led by coach and

former PGA player **Brennan Webb**. The current MT golf team was also in attendance. With a 12-under score of 60, the team of Ramsey Hassan, Mike Webb, Phillip Pettit, and Brent Long won the inaugural event.



Blueprint FOR Success

by Keith Ryan Cartwright

FORMER BLUE RAIDER
SPRINTER AND
NATIONAL CHAMPION

MARDY SCALES

BECOMES THE FIRST
HEAD TRACK COACH AT
NEARBY CUMBERLAND
UNIVERSITY



photos were provided by
Cumberland Media Relations

Dean Hayes is arguably the most respected men's and women's collegiate track and field coach in the country. Over the years, the members of his Middle Tennessee teams have become family to him. That's precisely why Hayes didn't hesitate to call Ron Pavan, director of athletics at Cumberland University, and recommend the school hire former Blue Raiders sprinter Mardy Scales as the first track coach in the school's history.

Hayes' phone call led to a meeting between Pavan and Scales. The two bonded instantly.

"He's a good man, and as soon as I stepped on the campus it felt like I was home again," Scales said of Pavan and of his first visit to Cumberland.

In fact, Pavan and Scales had such a great conversation that Scales' phone rang while he was driving home to Franklin—a mere 30 minutes after their meeting ended. It was Pavan, whom Scales today considers a father figure.

"Mardy, you're a real good guy," Scales said he recalls Pavan stating on his end of the line. "We really like you, and we would like to offer you the job."



Scales said the feeling of hearing those words was comparable to winning a national championship—a feeling he actually knows from capturing the 2003 NCAA 100-meter title during his days at MT.

“It felt like a dream come true,” Scales added. “It felt like the sun was shining on me at that time. I’m finally getting to do something I wanted to do my whole life. . . . It felt really special.”

A Protégé with the Bona Fides

Scales, who was inducted into the Blue Raider Hall of Fame in the fall of 2015, has a stellar athletic resumé.

- He was a seven-time Sun Belt Conference champion.
- He was a seven-time NCAA All-American.
- As previously mentioned, he was a 2003 national champion in the 100-meter dash (10.25 seconds).
- In 2003, he set Sun Belt championship records in the 100 and 200 meters.
- In 2003, he was also Pan American Games silver medalist in the 100.
- He was named Sun Belt Conference Male Athlete of the Year in 2004.
- He went on to run track professionally from 2004 through 2009.
- In 2005, he became a member of the U.S. Track and Field World Championship Team.

“Every day on the track, I always killed myself out there. I stayed longer and worked harder in the weight room,” Scales said. “I always did extra, and I always wanted more.”

Scales unabashedly describes himself as a leader ready for the head coaching position he has now.

He and his staff of coaches—which includes another former Hayes’ runner, Linnie Yarborough—are

already busy creating a program and recruiting an entire team that will begin competing for the first time during the 2016–17 indoor and outdoor seasons. According to Scales, Pavan set a goal of fielding a team of 20 women and 20 men.

“I’m trying to give kids the chance to succeed on the track and in the books,” Scales said. “This is something I love to do. I love helping kids and I love helping people.”

Though he’s working extremely hard right now on the task at hand at Cumberland, Scales said it doesn’t feel like a job to him. Ultimately, he’s glad to have the opportunity, and he considers it the appropriate next chapter in his life spent in the world of track and field.

Looking Back

Scales said he recently visited his childhood home where his father opened a trunk filled with memorabilia and awards collected from throughout Scales’ competitive career.

“When he brought that out, it brought back so many memories,” Scales said. “It wasn’t surreal, but it was a weird feeling. . . . I really accomplished a lot running track and field, and I owe it to my parents and Dean Hayes. They always pushed me.”

Now, as a head coach himself, it is Scales doing the pushing. The Franklin native, who helped prepare himself for the Cumberland opportunity by serving a year as head track coach at his high school alma mater Centennial, said he’s focused on the 40 opportunities he is now able to provide to young men and women in terms of achieving a college education.

And he said he is constantly reminded of the fact that had it not been for the opportunity Hayes gave him all those years ago at MT, he might not even have been able to attend college himself due to its high cost.

Scales originally wanted to play collegiate football, but at 5-foot-7 and weighing a mere 140 pounds, he was too undersized coming out of high school to do so. Hayes was the only NCAA Division I coach to offer Scales a full scholarship to participate in track.

Had it not been for Hayes and the offer at Middle Tennessee, Scales said he most likely would have wound up working in construction due to the fact that he likes building things and is “real handy” working with his hands. Instead, Hayes gave Scales the athletic and academic opportunity of a lifetime by seeing his potential and investing in him.

Looking Ahead

Hayes’ phone call to Cumberland AD Pavan arguably has provided a similar boost for Scales 15 years later. Now as a head coach of a college program, Scales plans to make the opportunity last a lifetime.

“My whole life, I was always the underdog,” Scales said. “But my heart was always bigger than everybody else.”

“Every opportunity I got, I tried to make the best of my ability and succeed at being the best that I can.”

He is doing just that in his new role at Cumberland. And like Hayes, he plans to make members of his team feel like family.

“I just want to give kids the opportunity to come to school and get a degree—and to do something better than where they came from,” Scales summed up.

With his heart and mind perfectly aligned, and his MT experience firmly rooted in his day-to-day decision-making, Scales possesses the perfect blueprint for success as both a coach and mentor at Cumberland University. **RR**



A VIEW TO A KILL

by Tony Abati

New Blue Raider volleyball coach **Dan Ahiers** brings both great energy and an impressive resume to his new job



The recent search for a new Blue Raider volleyball coach—the first search in more than a dozen years—didn't require the MT Athletics program to look too far from home. Dan Ahiers comes to Murfreesboro from Jefferson City, where he led the Carson-Newman University Eagles to a 56–15 record in his two seasons there. The Eagles also made their mark in the South Atlantic Conference, going 38–6 during Ahiers' tenure, which included back-to-back NCAA Division II tournament appearances and a slew of school records along the way.

California Dreamin'

But East Tennessee is not where Ahiers' story begins. A West Coast native who grew up all along the Pacific Rim, Ahiers was the child of military parents. His father, Mitch, was a 28-year veteran of the Marine Corps who rose to the rank of lieutenant. His mother, Shauna, who also served in the Marines for more than two decades, rose to the rank of major.

Ahiers was actually born in Okinawa, Japan, but grew up in Hawaii, and affectionately calls San Diego

his hometown. He fell in love with volleyball at an early age, playing throughout high school and on club teams, and later earning a spot on the Northern Arizona University men's team.

Ahiers eventually earned his degree at Cal State–Monterey Bay, where he met then-assistant coach Sarah Bernson (who is today at American University). Ahiers credits Bernson for introducing him to coaching and getting him interested in the profession.

"I worked some camps with her, and I really caught the coaching bug at that point," Ahiers said. "She was a great influence and taught me a lot, so I credit her with why I got into coaching."

Ahiers then made the move into coaching high school. Not long after that, however, is when he got the chance of a lifetime through meeting volleyball hall of famer Kathy Gregory.

A Stellar Apprenticeship

As a player, Gregory could be favorably compared to modern-day Olympic volleyball players Misty May-Treanor or Kerri Walsh. Gregory participated as a team member of the U.S. Pan American and World Games and was the captain for the San Diego Breakers of the International Volleyball Association. She was named a U.S. Volleyball Association All-Star 15 times and won the MVP award four times. On the beach, the woman dubbed "Queen of the Beach" won Women's Beach Player of the Year five times during 1976–1983 and won the World Beach Championship twice.

As a coach, Gregory could be compared to legendary University of Tennessee women's basketball coach Pat Summitt in terms of her roles in building not just a program but a sport. Gregory led the University of California–Santa Barbara to 882 wins, fifth-most in NCAA Division I history at the time of her retirement. Her teams also made five trips to the regional semifinals, reached two regional finals appearances, and earned 27 trips to the NCAA tournament in her 38-year career. The first 26 of those trips were also the first 26 NCAA Women's Volleyball Tournaments.

Ahiers had the opportunity to spend three seasons working for Gregory and the Gauchos program early in his coaching career.

"Kathy is a very demanding coach—one of the most demanding coaches I've ever been around," Ahiers said, reflecting on his experience at UCSB. "I thought I had a good work ethic when I went to work for her, but she taught me what a good work ethic is."



With such an impressive track record MT Athletics' staff is thrilled to have Ahiers on board

In fact, Gregory was so demanding that when Ahiers was offered the chance to join her program, she told him that if he could not get to Santa Barbara within three days, she would look for a new assistant. Ahiers smartly packed up everything he needed to make the transition and got there in two days.

While at UCSB, Ahiers helped develop and produce five All-Americans and 10 all-conference selections as the Gauchos went 51–42 overall and 30–20 in the Big West Conference.

Moving on Up

With that world-class experience in tow, Ahiers then departed Southern California for the Pacific Northwest, landing an assistant coaching position at Seattle University in 2013. There, as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator, Ahiers helped guide the Redhawks to a 9–7 record in the Western Athletic Conference.

His next great opportunity presented itself in 2014 as Ahiers was able to become a head coach for the first time, taking the helm at Carson–Newman. In his first season, he led his Eagles to a 27–7 record that included a win over No. 7 Wingate on the road. That win still ranks as the highest-ranked team Carson–Newman has ever defeated on the volleyball court. The Eagles qualified for the NCAA DII tournament as a sixth seed and even upset third-seeded South Carolina–Aiken 3–0 in the first round of the tournament that year.

In 2015 it was more of the same for Carson–Newman, which finished the season 29–8 under Ahiers' guidance. Qualifying as a fourth seed in the NCAA tournament this time, Ahiers' squad advanced all the way to the Southeast Regional championship game, where the Eagles defeated Lenoir–Rhyne 3–1 to avenge their loss in the conference semifinals. It was the first time in Eagle history that a volleyball team won its region and advanced to the national quarterfinals. Ahiers became the fastest coach in Carson–Newman history to reach 50 victories, accomplishing the feat in just 72 matches.

With such an impressive track record already under his belt, it's no wonder MT Athletics' staff is thrilled to have Ahiers on board at MTSU.

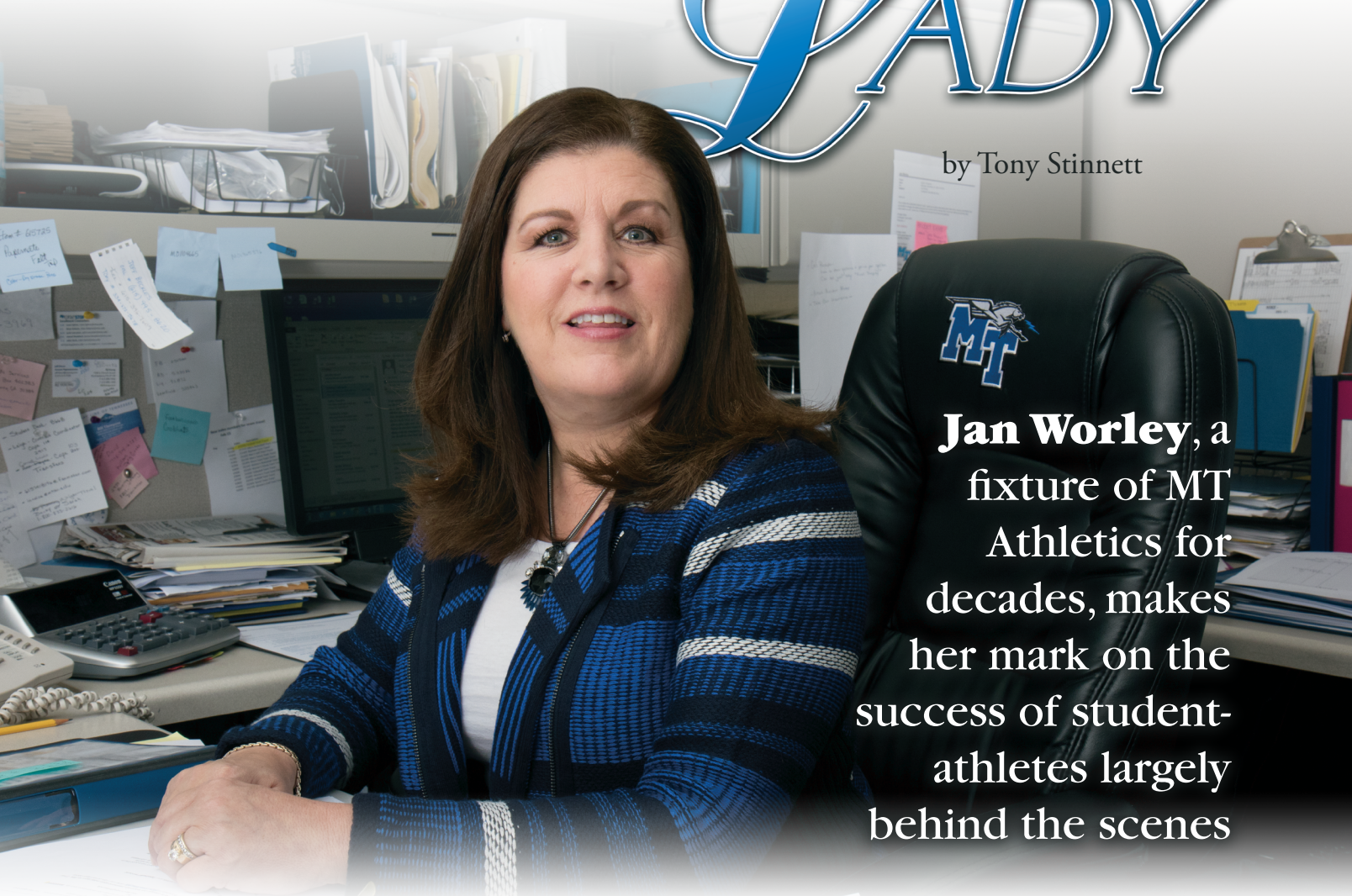
"It is an exciting time for Middle Tennessee volleyball," said Diane Turnham, senior women's administrator for MT Athletics. "Excitement is contagious, and you can't be in a room with Coach Ahiers for five minutes and not be excited. His energy, knowledge, and dedication to the sport are invigorating.

"I look forward to working with him and his staff, and I know our team and fans will respond to his competitive spirit and his appetite for success on a national level. He emerged as the leader from a very impressive pool of candidates with very successful resumés. But I truly believe he is the best fit for our program at this time. The future is bright with him at the helm." **RR**



true BLUE LADY

by Tony Stinnett



Jan Worley, a fixture of MT Athletics for decades, makes her mark on the success of student-athletes largely behind the scenes

Middle Tennessee State University's "True Blue" motto fits Jan Worley to a T.

Worley's tremendous loyalty and commitment to her alma mater as a member of its athletics department is the personal quality that MT coaches point to first and foremost when describing the high-ranking executive aide.

Gridiron Gatekeeper

During her 26 years in the Blue Raider Athletics Department, Worley's responsibilities have been varied in nature and vast in scope. The one constant responsibility through the years, though, has been her administrative work for the MT football program.

"I was fortunate to have some really good [assistants], but I never had one

like Jan," said Boots Donnelly, former Blue Raider football coach and athletics director. "Jan was very loyal and remains very loyal. She is as loyal to the current staff as she was to me, and that's a sign of a great character individual."

Worley has in fact worked in her current capacity for three different head football coaches—Donnelly, Andy McCollum, and current head coach Rick Stockstill, who said it

would be “hard to imagine Middle Tennessee football without her.”

“Jan is the lifeblood of this football department,” Stockstill said. “She is invaluable. She is always positive, she always has a smile, and her work ethic is second to none. She is here on weekends and summers—she’s just very selfless. She loves Middle Tennessee and this football program. She makes my job and other coaches’ jobs very easy. I have great respect and appreciation for Jan and what she does.”

Rising Tides

Blue Raider football was still competing in Division I-AA as a member of the Ohio Valley Conference when Worley started working in the athletics department in 1990. Back then, her responsibilities included not just football but also baseball and track and field. In addition to Donnelly, McCollum, and Stockstill, Worley also has worked with head baseball coach Steve Peterson and legendary track coach Dean Hayes.

“I have been fortunate to work with some good people,” Worley said. “Coach Donnelly, Coach McCollum, and Coach Stockstill couldn’t be more different, but I couldn’t love any of them any more than I do. They were all great.

“Working with Coach Pete and Coach Hayes was also wonderful. All three of my sports won conference championships in my first year.

“You build a lot of relationships. You get attached. I still talk to (assistant coaches) Ed Bunio, Alex Robins, Tom Fiveash, and Floyd Walker. I feel like I know people all over the country!”

Coaches aren’t all that has changed through the years. The level of play and the demands and responsibilities under Worley’s control have also increased as Blue Raider athletics has

climbed the collegiate athletics food chain, first by elevating to Division I-A and more recently by moving to Conference USA.

Worley was in place for the transition from I-AA football to I-A football in 1999, which also included a new head coach for the first time in 20-plus years in McCollum.

Coach Rick Stockstill said it would be “hard to imagine Middle Tennessee football without her.”

“It really doesn’t seem that long ago that we have evolved from packing lunches for the players and coaches to eat along the way to the game to planning dinners with more players and more coaches,” Worley said. “We were in the OVC, and that’s a huge difference jumping to the Sun Belt. We went from hopping on a bus and making a short trip to Austin Peay, Tennessee Tech, Murray State, to flying and making long trips.”

The switch from the Sun Belt Conference to Conference USA ratcheted up the level of work even a notch higher. The key for Worley has always been planning well in advance and staying in good communication with coaches.

“I will start on game setup right after signing day. That’s when I start

contacting hotels,” Worley said. “I try to contact five in each city. . . . Then we start lining up flight trips. Once we pick a hotel, I will stay in touch once every three weeks to keep that contact.”

Athletics Icon

Longevity, loyalty, and love of job are the personal qualities that those people who have worked with Worley admire most and reference most repeatedly. Donnelly adds another vital characteristic—trust.

“I was very fortunate when we employed Jan as our football secretary,” Donnelly said. “One thing I was looking for was a person who kept everything in-house, that would not go out and talk about anything that would go on in the football office. In all of the time I worked with Jan, she was very, very loyal, extremely conscientious of what her job was, and very protective of what the football program was all about.”

Nearly three decades into her Blue Raider career, Worley serves as a human embodiment of what it means to be “True Blue.” **RR**





VIEW
FROM
THE

PRESSBOX



The Voice of the Blue Raiders

BLUE
RAIDERS
ARE

EVERYWHERE!

One of the real treats that comes with (a) having been around for quite a while and (b) traveling with several of our teams as they compete locally, regionally, and nationally is that pretty much anywhere you go you'll hear somebody say, "Go Blue Raiders!" or "Let's Go Blue!"

Many times, it's someone I've never met, and one of our teams just happens to be playing in their area of the country. Other times, it may be one or more former Blue Raiders who once wore the uniform and still have that pride in their University.

Either way, it's a good lesson to those of us around Blue Raider Athletics on a daily basis that the connection to our alumni and former student-athletes is so very important to them. I'm humbled many times when someone walks up and tells me they may live hundreds of miles from campus, but our radio broadcasts and videos on the website are their link to something that means so much to them.

On a recent trip with men's basketball to Charlotte and Old Dominion, that point was really driven home. The connections started before our trip

even got very far off campus. It began in the TSA screening area of Nashville International Airport when I heard a very familiar voice behind me—former assistant football coach and radio analyst Preston O'Neal. He was on his way to visit family in Oklahoma, but took some time to catch up with me and with Coach Kermit Davis.

Their dedication and excitement is contagious and helps remind us to never take that for granted.

With Preston on his way to his gate, it was only a few minutes later when the plane we were about to board unloaded and, lo and behold, here come a couple of more Blue Raiders. Former MTSU women's basketball star Joanne Aluka-White and previous media relations rep Travis Woods were actually on their way to Murfreesboro with the Charlotte women's team but still took time to catch up with old friends.

Once in Charlotte, word came that two Blue Raiders who were involved in what I consider Middle Tennessee's greatest sports achievement would be at the game. Lucious "Buck" Hailey and Rick Campbell, two of the five starters that beat Kentucky in the 1982 NCAA Mideast Regional, were there. That was my freshman year at MTSU, and those guys, along with Pancakes Perry, Chris Harris, and the incomparable Jerry Beck, provided me with memories I'll never let go. They were there because THEIR Blue Raiders were in town!

I get nightly emails from former quarterback Brad Zeitner and his young son Bennett. They live in Columbus, Ohio, but never miss a broadcast. Bennett is widely known as the biggest Blue Raider fan in Buckeye Country.

The point is that all of these folks are simply examples of proud Blue Raiders that we may see every day in Murfreesboro or once in a lifetime in some far-flung destination. Their dedication and excitement is contagious and helps remind us to never take that for granted. This year, Blue Raider squads have played from Nassau to Anchorage and New York to L.A., and all points in between. The one common denominator we always find is there are Blue Raiders everywhere! **RR**



by Cody Jackson, Compliance
Coordinator

DEFINITION OF A BOOSTER



Supporters of a university's athletic programs are known as boosters throughout the collegiate athletic world. Without the support of our boosters, MT Athletics programs would never be able to reach their full potential. However, as a booster, there are certain parameters to your support.

Although "booster" can tend to be a catchall term for a supporter of a university's athletics programs, the NCAA defines a booster much more thoroughly. A booster is not just anyone that provides monetary donations to an athletics team or program, but is any individual that is a member of an organization that promotes MT Athletics (such as the BRAA), assists in recruiting prospects to come to MTSU, provides benefits such as jobs or occasional meals to MT student-athletes, purchases season tickets, or has in any way whatsoever promoted MT athletics. Once an individual becomes a booster of MT athletics, they hold on to that status for life.

Recently at the University of Missouri, two men's basketball boosters were charged with supplying monetary and electronic gifts to a few student-athletes. Missouri vacated all of the wins from the season in which this occurred and disassociated the boosters involved from supporting Missouri— one for two years and one for life. This is an extreme instance, but the NCAA and MTSU must take these types of issues seriously in order to protect our student-athletes.

Remember, as a booster, you maintain that status for life. Boosters are bound by NCAA, Conference USA and MTSU rules. As a result, boosters are responsible for notifying the MT Compliance Office of any potential rules violations. Even if a violation is unintentional, it may affect the eligibility of a student-athlete. Again, we appreciate your support greatly, and if a question ever arises, please remember to always ask before you act. **RR**

As a booster, the NCAA prohibits certain activities for those that support MT athletics. You may NOT:

- Provide any extra benefits to current or prospective student-athletes, their families, or their friends. This includes meals, transportation, clothes, loans, tickets, etc.
- Contact prospective student-athletes or their parents for the purpose of recruiting.
- Pay a current or prospective student-athlete to appear at an event or speaking engagement.
- Employ student-athletes unless:
 - ◆ The employment has been approved by the MT Compliance Office,
 - ◆ The student-athlete is only paid for work performed, and
 - ◆ The student-athlete is paid consistent with the going rate for his/her services.



Blue Raider Athletic Association



Keith McCluney
Associate Athletic
Director/Development

WHY DO WE NEED MORE?



Why should I give to Middle Tennessee Athletics? Why should I give MORE to Middle Tennessee Athletics? Why should I encourage my friends to give to Middle Tennessee Athletics? The answers to all of those questions lie within our athletic complex.

Right outside the door of our BRAA offices, I see our newly renovated Murphy Center, a place where our men's and women's basketball teams give their all every time they run up the ramp onto the new playing surface. I see a place where MT legends like Ebony Rowe, Alysha Clark, Anne Marie Lanning, LaRon Dendy, Shawn Jones, and many others became great players and established a foundation of excellence for our current student-athletes that inspires them to greatness every time they step on the court. I walk over to Floyd Stadium and I see a place where MT legends like Wes Counts, Clint Marks, Erik Walden, Benny Cunningham, Sammy Seamster, and many other gridiron greats set the standard of toughness and grit for every player that runs out onto that field. I see student-athletes past and present that were and are being molded by their athletic and educational experiences during their formative years at this University. Middle Tennessee is a place where our coaches, administrators, and staff are working countless hours to mold

our current student-athletes and help them become great—to be champions and leaders.

While there are many memories at these two iconic facilities on our campus, I know there are many more to be made. I have a strong desire for our University consistently to be mentioned as championship contenders in all of our sports. To do this, it takes a tremendous commitment of resources and support from our donors, alumni, and the community. That commitment of resources will make it possible for us to significantly upgrade our facilities and recruit the best student-athletes to represent our University. It's going to take a united effort by all who love this program and want to see it move to the next level. That united effort will pay dividends on the field, in the classroom, and in the community as our student-athletes represent us all in a way that makes us proud to be Blue Raiders.

So how do we **Make Middle Better**? We ask that you continue to support the Blue Raider Athletic Association and embrace our 110% campaign to grow our #DRIVE365 annual fund. The BRAA has placed an increased emphasis on growing our #DRIVE365 annual fund to a level that will allow us to keep pace with the changing landscape of college athletics. As competition for championships grows, as tuition rises and pending NCAA legislation looms, it is incumbent upon us to make sure that we provide our coaches the necessary resources to

package Middle Tennessee as THE destination for top tier student-athletes and develop those student-athletes into champions. We must have a stronger commitment to making their intercollegiate athletic experience a FIRST CLASS one! We have the ability to do that and experience sustained success. It is within our reach as an organization, a program, and a community!

The next step for the BRAA is to continue to build our organization through referrals. Referring friends to the BRAA is simple and achieves many goals. On a personal level, it allows you to better connect with friends and fellow Blue Raiders as well as getting them involved with the sports that we all love. It also allows the BRAA to reach more alumni, parents, and recent graduates in the community and keep them involved as we collectively push toward our goals.

How can you help? Increasing your donation, participating in the 110% campaign, and referring friends are vital to the continued success of the BRAA and Middle Tennessee athletics. I ask that you join me and the other BRAA members, and do all you can for this wonderful place that means so much to so many of us in this community. Please help us to continue to provide the vehicle that will prepare our current student-athletes to have a tremendous impact on the world and make it better for others. Let's all do what we can to **Make Middle Better. RR**

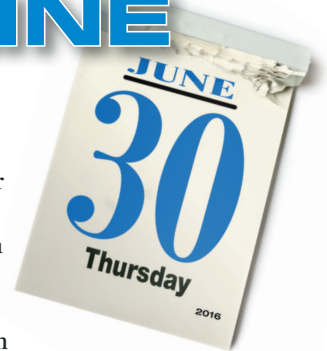
CONFERENCE USA BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS

Make plans to travel with the Blue Raiders to the softball and baseball conference tournaments. The softball conference tournament will be May 11–14 in Denton, Texas, and the baseball conference tournament takes place May 25–29 in Hattiesburg, Miss. Support your Blue Raiders as they compete to take home the Conference USA championship!



BRAA DONATION DEADLINE

The 2016–17 BRAA membership deadline is Thursday, June 30. Be sure to make your gift by the deadline so you receive all of your benefits on time! Call the BRAA office at (615) 898-2210, or mail in your renewal information. You can also make your gift online 24/7 by visiting goblueraiders.com and clicking on the “Donate” tab.



Keep up with the Blue Raider Athletic Association and connect with other members on Facebook and Twitter!



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[@MT_BRAA](https://twitter.com/MT_BRAA)



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- Nashville Scene Magazine’s “Best Public Golf Course”
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Blue Raider Athletic Association



2016 Football Signing Day

Coach Tyrone Nix

The BRAA's annual Football Signing Day celebration took place on Feb. 3 in the Emmett and Rose Kennon Sports Hall of Fame. Coach Stockstill and his staff were on hand to break down each incoming player from the 2016 signing class. Fans were able to get the first look at each signee,

gain insight on each recruit, and learn about the expected impact that each incoming player will have on the Middle Tennessee football program directly from the coaching staff. This year's celebration also featured the



Don and Carolyn Midgett

championship Blue Raider cheer squad and included several silent auction and raffle items.



Head Football Coach Rick Stockstill

Thank you to Jim and Beverly Calder!

Thank you to the Calders for their generous donation to the College of Education and the BRAA.



Beverly Calder, Lucie Burchfield, Keith McCluney, Lana Seivers, and Dr. Jim Calder

2016 Groundhog Day Luncheon



The 43rd annual Groundhog Day Luncheon was held on Feb. 2 inside Murphy Center. Head coach Jim McGuire and the Middle Tennessee baseball team hosted the event that officially kicks off the 2016 baseball season. Former Blue Raider and current professional baseball player Michael McKenry was this year's guest speaker. The popular luncheon featured the traditional menu of ham hocks, white beans, tomato salad, green onions, cornbread, chocolate cake, and ice cream.

Head Baseball Coach Jim McGuire



Dick Palmer and Head Baseball Coach Jim McGuire

2016 BLUE RAIDER FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Football season will be here before you know it!
Here is the first look at the 2016 schedule.

September 3	ALABAMA A&M	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
September 10	AT VANDERBILT	Nashville, Tenn
September 17	AT BOWLING GREEN	Bowling Green, Ohio
September 24	LOUISIANA TECH	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
October 1	AT NORTH TEXAS	Denton, Texas
October 15	WESTERN KENTUCKY	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
October 22	AT MISSOURI	Columbia, Mo.
October 29	AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL	Miami, Fla.
November 5	TEXAS SAN ANTONIO	Murfreesboro, Tenn.
November 12	AT MARSHALL	Huntington, W.V.
November 19	AT UNC CHARLOTTE	Charlotte, N.C.
November 26	FLORIDA ATLANTIC	Murfreesboro, Tenn.

BLUE RAIDER FAN PHOTOS

Wayne Groce with newborn granddaughter, Rosemary Frances Groce



Charles Sterle, age 2, and Julia Sterle, one week old





Blue Raider Athletic Association

BRAA Basketball Dinners

Thursday, February 11 was the first of two BRAA dinners during basketball season. BRAA members were invited to a special dinner before the women's basketball game vs. Louisiana Tech.



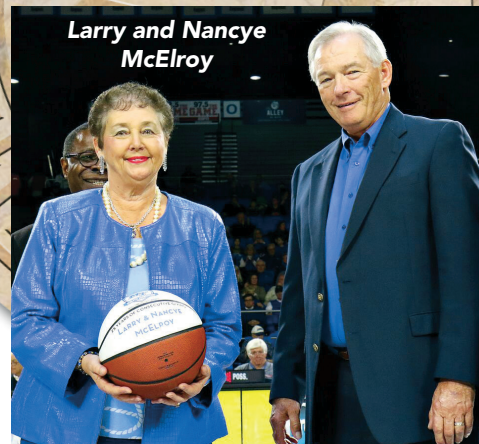
Thursday, February 25 was the second BRAA dinner held before the men's basketball game vs. Western Kentucky.

BRAA 25-Year Recognition

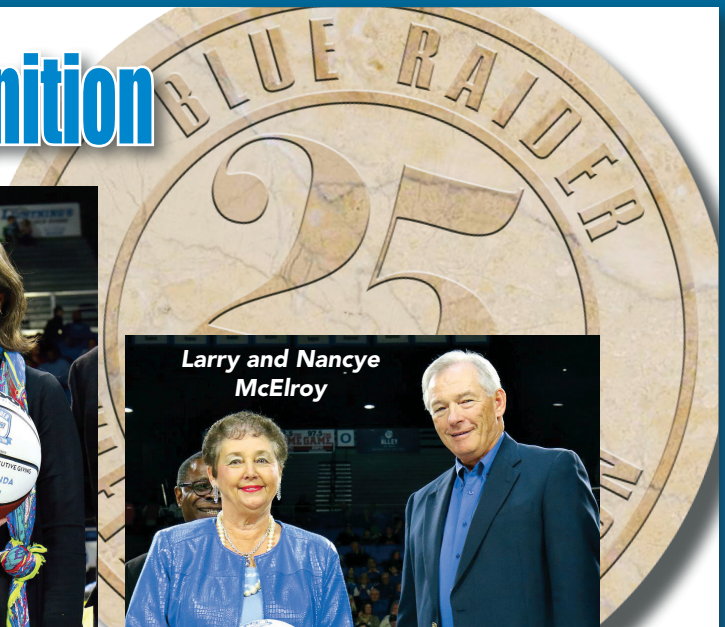
The BRAA annually recognizes our 25th consecutive-year donors in an on-court ceremony during a basketball game. This year we honored Joe and Mary Evans, Larry and Nancye McElroy, Ben and Brenda McFarlin, and Roy and Margrey Thompson at a ceremony during the Western Kentucky game on February 25.



Ben and Brenda McFarlin



Larry and Nancye McElroy



Donor SPOTLIGHT



Casey Rainey

- MTSU Alum
- Year Graduated: 2002
- Consecutive Years Giving to the BRAA: 5
- Currently Resides: Murfreesboro



Q. What caused you to become a fan of MTSU?

A. I graduated in 2002 but moved to Nashville for work. When I moved my business to Murfreesboro in 2004, I began to get involved with MTSU athletics.

Q. When did you attend your first Blue Raider game?

A. 2001

Q. What are your favorite MTSU sports?

A. Football, basketball, baseball, and golf

Q. What is your best memory of MTSU athletics?

A. Traveling to Georgia Tech to see our Blue Raiders dominate the Yellow Jackets in 2012!

Q. What is the farthest distance you have traveled to see the Blue Raiders play?

A. Not sure the exact distance but probably a tie between Purdue University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the GoDaddy Bowl in Mobile, Ala.

Q. How did you first get involved with the Blue Raider Athletic Association?

A. I was recruited by my good friends Brian Hercules and Meagan Flippin.

Q. My favorite place to eat is:

A. The Boulevard for lunch and the Parthenon Grille for dinner.

Q. My favorite hobby is:

A. Golf . . . I'm addicted

Q. My favorite TV show is:

A. Gotham . . . I'm a superhero junkie

Q. Tell us about your most memorable trip:

A. Maui with my wife in 2013 . . . unbelievable scenery! Pebble Beach, Calif., to play the famous golf course was a close second!

Q. Why do you encourage others to join the BRAA?

A. MTSU athletics is such a great asset for our community for family entertainment and a great way for our University to gain national exposure. I encourage others to join the BRAA to keep growing the impact MTSU athletics has for my alma mater. **BR**



RAIDERS IN



Photo by
St. Louis Rams

Football

Benny Cunningham (2009-12)	NFL	Los Angeles Rams
Rod Issac (2007-10)	AFL	Orlando Predators
Jeremy Kellem (2007-10)	AFL	Arizona Rattlers
Logan Kilgore (2010-2013)	CFL	Toronto Argonauts
Jamari Lattimore (2008-10)	NFL	New York Jets
Keon Raymond (2004-05)	CFL	Toronto Argonauts
Sammy Seamster (2009-13)	NFL	Buffalo Bills
Jimmy Staten (2010-13)	NFL	Kansas City Chiefs
Erik Walden (2004-07)	NFL	Indianapolis Colts
Josh Walker (2010-13)	NFL	Green Bay Packers



Photo by Indianapolis Colts



Photo by MLB

Baseball

Hunter Adkins (2010-2012)	Independent	Lake Erie
Matt Blackham (2014)	A	New York Mets
Bryce Brentz (2008-2010)	AAA	Boston Red Sox
Zac Curtis (2013-2014)	A	Arizona Diamondbacks
Nathan Foriest (2012-2015)	Rookie	San Diego Padres
Jonathan Frebis (2012-2015)	Rookie	Chicago White Sox
Andy Haines	MLB	Chicago Cubs Minor League
		Hitting Instructor
Ronnie Jebavy (2015)	A	San Francisco Giants
Michael McKenry (2004-2006)	MLB	Texas Rangers
Paul Mittura (2010-2014)	Independent	Frontier Greys
Kenneth Roberts (2007-2010)	MLB	Philadelphia Phillies
Heath Slatton (2013-2015)	Rookie	San Francisco Giants
Ryan Stephens (2011-14)	A	Colorado Rockies

Women's Soccer

Shan Jones (2008-11)	Long Island Rough Riders
Vanessa Mueggler (2007-10)	Ottawa Fury
Lisa Marie Woods (2004)	Adelaide (Australia)



Photo by Craig Mitchelldyer/
Hillsboro Hops

THE PROS



Photo by Seattle Storm

Men's Basketball

K.C. Anuna (2008-11)	Nigeria
Tim Blue (2006-07)	Olympique Antibes
Raymond Cintron (2012-13)	Puerto Rico
Michael Cuffee (2004-05)	Germany
LaRon Dendy (2012)	France
Jani Hiltunen (2000-01)	Finland
Neiko Hunter (2012-14)	Italy
Jason Jones (2010-13)	Bolivia
Shawn Jones (2010-14)	Spain
Marcos Knight (2011-13)	Germany
Bruce Massey (2012-13)	NBA D-League
Steve Thomas (2005)	Venezuela
James Washington (2009-11)	Sweden



Photo by Dave Eggen/
NBAE via Getty Images

Women's Basketball

Alysha Clark (2009-10)	WNBA	Seattle Storm
Chrissy Givens (2004-07)	Euro	CS Municipal Targoviste
Cheyenne Parker (2014-15)	WNBA	Chicago Sky

Men's Tennis

John Peers (2008-10)	ATP Doubles #7
Andreas Siljeström (2004-07)	ATP Doubles #98



Photo by Getty Images

Track and Field

Noah Akwu	Nigeria
Ann Dudley	US
Stanley Gbagbeke	Nigeria
Cordairo Golden	US
Emmanuel Tugumisirize	Uganda



Photo by Bob Donnan, USA Today

Men's Golf

Kent Bulle (2006-10)	Web.com Tour
Rick Cochran (2005-09)	Web.com Tour
Hunter Green (2009-12)	Swing Thought Tour
Jason Millard (2008-11)	Web.com Tour
Chase Narramore (2005-09)	Web.com Tour





UPCOMING EVENTS



APRIL 2016

- 26** Softball at Belmont, Nashville
- 27** Baseball at Tennessee Tech, Cookeville
- 27** Men's Golf: C-USA Championship, Texarkana, Ark.
- 28-30** Track & Field/Cross Country, at Penn Relays, Philadelphia
- 29** Baseball vs. Marshall, Murfreesboro
- 30** Baseball vs. Marshall, Murfreesboro
- 30** Softball vs. Charlotte (DH), Murfreesboro
- 30** Track & Field/Cross Country, at Bellarmine Invitational, Louisville, Ky.

MAY 2016

- 1** Baseball vs. Marshall, Murfreesboro
- 1** Softball vs. Charlotte, Murfreesboro
- 5-7** Women's Golf at NCAA Regionals, Site TBD
- 6** Baseball at Louisiana Tech, Ruston, La.
- 7** Baseball at Louisiana Tech, Ruston, La.
- 7** Softball at Florida International (DH), Miami
- 8** Baseball at Louisiana Tech, Ruston, La.
- 8** Softball at Florida International, Miami
- 10** Baseball at Austin Peay, Clarksville
- 11-14** Softball at C-USA Tournament, Denton, Texas
- 12-15** Track & Field/Cross Country at C-USA Championships, Murfreesboro
- 13** Baseball at Old Dominion, Norfolk, Va.
- 13-15** Men's Tennis at NCAA Regionals, Site TBD
- 14** Baseball at Old Dominion, Norfolk, Va.
- 15** Baseball at Old Dominion, Norfolk, Va.
- 17** Baseball at Belmont, Nashville
- 19** Baseball vs. Texas-San Antonio, Murfreesboro

MAY 2016

- 20** Baseball vs. Texas-San Antonio, Murfreesboro
- 21** Baseball vs. Texas-San Antonio, Murfreesboro
- 25-29** Baseball at C-USA Championship, Hattiesburg, Miss.
- 26-28** Track & Field/Cross Country at NCAA Regional, Jacksonville, Fla.

JUNE 2016

- 8-11** Track & Field/Cross Country at NCAA Championships, Eugene, Ore.
- 30** BRAA Donation Deadline



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