

UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2023

Areté

[excellence • virtue]

A SERVANT LEADER

Marsha Powers retires after
excellence in Honors career

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.



SPRING 2023

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

I AM *true*
BLUE

ARETÉ MAGAZINE

is a publication of the MTSU University Honors College, distributed free to faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

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This issue of Areté is dedicated to Marsha Powers.

DEAN

John R. Vile

EDITOR EMERITA

Marsha Powers

EDITOR

Robin E. Lee

SENIOR UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Drew Ruble

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

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CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Nancy Broden

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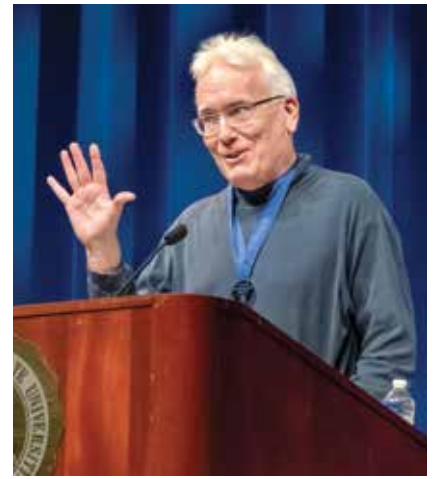
Rachel Booher, Miranda Elliott, Gina Fann, Lillian Hickman,
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Vile, Stephanie Wagner, Clark Wilson

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Marsha Powers, by Robin E. Lee

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In June 2022, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published an article by Professors Howard Gardner and Wendy Fischman of the Harvard Graduate School of Education titled "Colleges Are Missing the Point of College." In attempting to ascertain the reason that so many college students were insufficiently engaged in academic activities, they observed that many students surveyed did not "see value in what they are learning, nor did they understand why they take classes in different fields or read books that do not seem directly related to their major."

The professors concluded that many students are "more concerned with the pursuit of earning than the process of learning" and "don't appreciate the expertise of their faculty [or] value what these scholars do." Many have a more transactional approach to higher education than a transformational approach.

In their efforts to explain this phenomenon, the authors noted that many high schools and family members "did little . . . to educate them about the purpose of college." Moreover, a lot of college promotional materials devote far more attention to "dining halls, recreation centers, comfortable dormitories," and off-campus internships than to the "intellectual mission of college."

At the MTSU Honors College, we attempt to keep our intellectual mission paramount. We are certainly proud of our state-of-the-art facilities and our hands-on approach to advising, but we just as firmly identify ourselves with rigorous academic programs that are enhanced through smaller, more interactive classes and cocurricular and extracurricular activities. We want to

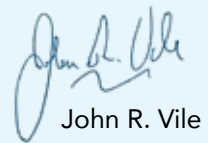
prepare our students not only for future graduate and professional study but also for satisfying careers. We believe that a liberal arts education is the best way to prepare graduates for whatever their educational and career goals may be.

We pride ourselves on the knowledge and commitment of our faculty and staff members and do our best to integrate the knowledge that students gain in General Education courses with those in their majors and minors. We are especially interested in assisting students with gaining skills in foreign languages and cultures that will help them.

“Our students must be prepared for responsible citizenship and public service.”

We believe that an Honors degree is valuable not simply as a passport to future careers, but as a validation that students have an appreciation for the wider world of knowledge. As a Political Science professor, I am especially concerned that our students must be prepared for responsible citizenship and public service.

We continue to value readers and contributors who share in our transformational mission.



John R. Vile

areté

noun (ahr-i-tey)

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



CHILLIN' AT ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Sarah Kamaridinova (l-r), Karmina Ghobrial, Ashley Lira-Rivera, Rand Hasan, Meirola Endraws, and Sofia Botros



Savannah Martin (l) and Fatamah Feron



Bennie Thompson Sr.




Andrew England (l-r), Hursha Kondee, and Sunya Aghili



Campus friends enjoying treats too





MICROBES, POLYPORES, AND BEYOND

Goldwater winner Yaseen Ginnab journeys into the depths of untapped research

By Rachel Booher, an Honors Transfer Fellow majoring in Japanese and English

Photos by Andy Heidt

Yaseen Ginnab keeps himself active by going to the gym, hiking throughout the many local trails, and rock-climbing. As someone who aspires to pursue a career in forest ecology, the MTSU Honors student said he enjoys being in the forest, and it makes sense that he would feel most comfortable surrounded by the nature he studies.

In the realm of science and discovery, the senior Biology/Psychology double-major is a trailblazer, an intuitive mind, and a leader unearthing untapped research.

As a child, Ginnab was always interested in science, even going so far as to take apart his toys to see how they worked. When he got his first microscope and then entered high school, he fell in love with biology and chemistry. These passions became a life, and he carried his thirst for knowledge into college.

Ginnab entered MTSU in 2019, but research had not been part of the big picture until he took a general biology class with Professor Frank Bailey during his freshman year.

"I often stayed after class just to ask him things in more detail, and eventually, toward the end of the semester, he asked me if I had ever considered going into research," Ginnab said.

Bailey, now his mentor, is the main reason Ginnab became involved in research and, eventually, the Honors College.

CONSERVATION EFFORTS

One of Ginnab's first big ventures was the internship he received with the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (NSF REU) in the summer of 2021. He traveled to Central Michigan University's biological station on Beaver Island in Lake Michigan and conducted a project titled "Lake Michigan's Microbial Community's Potential for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH) Degradation." In simpler terms, there is a pipeline beneath Lake Michigan that could burst in the future. Although most of the oil could be removed, residual amounts would be left to the native bacteria to degrade.

"While the simpler molecules are degraded quickly, complex molecules [PAHs] remain in the environment for much longer," Ginnab explained. Even though he was only able to participate in this project for six weeks, Ginnab found that "all six water samples' bacterial communities adapted to the presence of crude oil to degrade PAHs within seven days of exposure." This is an incredible accomplishment, and good news for Lake Michigan.

Ginnab has participated in three different research projects at MTSU. This included helping Professors

Ryan Otter and Bailey in a joint lab during fall 2021 in a research venture funded by the National Resources Conservation Service/U.S. Department of Agriculture to "implement an advanced water monitoring system in the Red River watershed in northern Tennessee."

"Once a month, a team of two must take a day trip to manually download data from each of these data probes," Ginnab said.

Secondly, Daniel Knorp, a graduate student in Jeffrey Walck's lab in spring 2021 and 2022, has been conducting research on pollinator behaviors of the flower *Astragalus bibullatus*, commonly called Pyne's ground plum. Ginnab assisted Knorp by observing and recording the process of pollination, including nectar collection and pollen grooming.

In the third MTSU project, Jessica Landaverde, a graduate student in Otter's lab during the 2021–22 academic year, has been looking at the bioaccumulation of methylmercury in trophic levels by assessing the amount that is found in small water insects and the spiders that eat them. Ginnab has helped Landaverde with her field samplings of these creatures.

The commonality is that every project he assisted with involves conservation, solidifying his goals for a future career in forest ecology.





“The experiences here [at MTSU] have been priceless. . . . There are so many resources here!”

A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE

Ginnab also has received several awards linked with the Honors College. He is a recipient of the Outstanding Third Year Student Award, an Undergraduate Research Experience Creative Activity (URECA) grant at MTSU, and the extremely prestigious Goldwater Scholarship, as well as a second internship with Fulbright Canada MITACS Globalink Research.

Ginnab was enticed to become an Honors student by the opportunity to write a thesis and the prospect of performing deeper research on subjects yet to be explored. And, of course, we can't forget about early registration. His thesis, directed by Bailey, will be titled "Analyzing the Ability of *Astragalus tennesseensis* to Accumulate Selenium." It focuses entirely on the *Astragalus tennesseensis* (Tennessee milkvetch), a flowering plant that is almost exclusively native to middle Tennessee. The *Astragalus* genus has some fascinating abilities, with several species of this genus being able to hyperaccumulate selenium from the soil.

"There are currently no studies looking at *Astragalus tennesseensis* and selenium accumulation, which is why I wanted to research this topic," Ginnab said. He explained that selenium is a key micronutrient, but in high quantities, it is toxic to both animals and

humans. His main goal is to determine if the plant can accumulate selenium.

At the beginning of summer 2022, Ginnab traveled to Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he performed research involving polypores, a type of shelf or bracket fungi, that can parasitize living trees or decompose dead trees.

Ginnab is contemplating a future in academia—for the research, of course—and intends to pursue a master's and a Ph.D. in Biology, conducting even more research that focuses on forest ecology and conservation.

"The experiences here [at MTSU] have been priceless, and all the professors have been amazing. There are so many resources here!"

For 2022, Ginnab was selected as the only national scholar for the Scholars for Conservation Leadership Program, which provides a one-year fellowship with a Land Trust after graduation, a housing allowance, a \$50,000 salary, and more opportunities to make connections. He will then pursue a Biology master's in Ecology and Evolution at the University of Colorado—Colorado Springs.

Ginnab has a bright future ahead of him. Wherever he ends up, there is one thing for certain—he is sure to pay it forward to others as a mentor and encourager. **A**



Bonnie (Walker) Boley



Kirsten (Cunningham) Bowland

IDENTIFIABLE SUCCESS STORIES

Fellowships Office aids student achievement for two decades

By **Miranda Elliott**, a *History graduate student*,
and **Elizabeth Polson**, a *Psychology major*

A brainchild of former Honors Dean **Phillip M. Mathis**, the Undergraduate Fellowships Office (UFO) has served students at MTSU for nearly 20 years. Mathis, dean from 2004 to 2008, noticed that students needed assistance with national and international scholarship and fellowship funding applications and subsequently founded the UFO.

Graduate school is one of the many benefits of these scholarship opportunities, which can lead students into future successful careers. MTSU alumnus **Daniel Gouger**, who graduated in 2012 with a B.S. in Biochemistry and a B.A. in Foreign Language (Spanish), received a Fulbright Research Grant to Spain, where he completed research in medicinal chemistry. His path is an excellent example of an exemplary career obtainable by a former student who passed through the UFO more than 10 years ago.

After the completion of his Fulbright, Gouger went on to earn a Doctor of Medicine and specialization in Spanish Healthcare Interpretation and Translation at East Tennessee State University in 2017. By 2018, he finished his post-doc in Medical Education and Health Policy. He did not stop there, however, and completed subspecialty training in Anesthesiology at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2022.

Gouger currently works as a hybrid faculty/fellow at Johns Hopkins Hospital and School of Medicine in



Anna Yacovone



Daniel Gouger

Neuroanesthesiology and Neurocritical Care. Gouger says his experience at MTSU, working with the UFO, and his Fulbright opportunity all served as important assets to his professional development.

"Being a Fulbright Fellow in Spain was a career-altering experience for me in three major ways: 1) Doing research in medicinal chemistry helped me with a scientific knowledge foundation for being a neuroanesthesiologist and intensivist; 2) I cultivated a passion for teaching, curriculum, and instruction in medical education, as well as working with populations of intersectional identities and understanding the implications of health disparities; and 3) As a former student who worked with the MTSU Undergraduate Fellowships Office and who also was a peer career advisor with the MTSU Career Development Center, to this day as an educator, I still draw from those experiences," he said.

Located in the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building, the UFO assists in procuring successful funding opportunities for students of all backgrounds on campus. By offering mentoring, workshops, and more, the office is there every step of the way to aid with fellowship applications.

AVAILABLE TO ALL

Laura Clippard, who leads the office today, took over the position in 2008 from Michelle Arnold, chosen by Mathis as the first UFO coordinator.

"The UFO has really impacted a wide variety of students," Clippard said. "These opportunities are available for all majors and really connect to professional opportunities. The decision to start the Fellowships Office was outstanding."

The UFO focuses on many scholarship options that encourage our campus community to study, teach, and research around the world and is always looking for more to add to its repertoire. Some of the scholarships have a specific audience in mind, with many that are aimed at students with scientific backgrounds and provide funding for international and national research, such as the National Science Foundation's Research Experience for Undergraduates (NSF REU) and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst Research Internships (DAAD RISE).

Others offer opportunities for students to create cross-cultural connections with international communities, such as Fulbright, the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), the Japan Exchange and Teaching program (JET), and the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship.



Pel Doski, Fulbright recipient

The UFO has had major success in supporting students who have applied for these scholarships:

- **73 students since 2010 have received the Gilman**, a financial need-based scholarship that provides funding for students to study abroad.
- **13 students since 2009 have earned the CLS**, a summer intensive scholarship that offers an opportunity to study one of 14 selected critical languages around the world.
- **31 students have won Fulbright scholarships**, some as English teaching assistants, others as researchers; still others participate in Fulbright summer-intensive programs—all of which place the students in ambassador roles for the United States while abroad.
- **8 winners and 9 honorable mentions have been recognized by the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship** for outstanding STEM and research students.

Although these numbers reflect a fragment of how the UFO impacts students, these opportunities benefit students' professional development in ways they utilize long after their time at MTSU.

While each of these opportunities is open to students from diverse backgrounds, they all have one main goal: to give students a chance to experience something new.

BRIDGES ABROAD

A huge portion of these scholarships emphasize the importance of creating international connections. The CLS, for example, has given students like **Bonnie (Walker) Boley** an opportunity to further their career aspirations and to continue their international impact. She currently works in Chattanooga with Bridge Refugee Services as a case manager for immigrants arriving in the United States.

"I was honored to be selected for the Critical Language Scholarship and spend three months in Baku, Azerbaijan, studying the Turkish language," Boley said. "This has been helpful for my current job, as many of my refugee clients come through Turkey before arriving in the U.S."

“A huge portion of these scholarships emphasize the importance of creating international connections.”

Students have not only carried on their transnational perspectives here at home; they have used these ideas to go live and work abroad, continuing their mission as global ambassadors.

Anna Yacovone, who graduated from MTSU in 2011, is currently working abroad in South Korea for the University of Utah's Asia Campus as an international programs coordinator. She traveled abroad with Fulbright as an English teaching assistant in Laos and said the program helped her achieve her passion of working with international audiences.

"Living in Laos and learning from my students helped me unlearn cultural biases that I had grown up with, while also giving me the opportunity to fall in love with a place so closely intertwined—unbeknownst to many Americans—with U.S. history."

These experiences not only have provided these global relationships but also have presented new opportunities for learning and understanding.

EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD

While international connections provide significant benefits to MTSU students who receive these scholarships, STEM students who attend research

abroad programs use their training to gain fieldwork experience.

Current MTSU student **Yaseen Ginnab**, a Goldwater Scholarship recipient, said his Fulbright Canada-MITACS Globalink Research Internship "helped confirm my interests in fieldwork and conservation." He plans to continue this research path in graduate school like other students who have taken a similar path (see *related article on page 6*).

Kirsten (Cunningham) Bowland, who is currently attending Johns Hopkins University for her Ph.D. and received the Goldwater Scholarship, completed an NSF REU in 2018 and affirms the benefits of such programs.

"I made powerful connections who wrote me letters of reference for graduate school, and I contributed to an article that will be published soon in *Nature Structure and Molecular Biology*," she said.

The UFO continues to help students gain these scholarship opportunities to assist in their future careers and intellectual development. The mission that was created almost two decades ago still stands and perseveres today because of the valiant efforts of Clippard and the students who have successfully pursued fellowships at MTSU.

GROWING IN CONFIDENCE

Students reflect positively on their fellowship experiences and working with the UFO by acknowledging how beneficial these programs are to their personal growth.

"After completing a year abroad, I came back with maturity and confidence," said **Pel Doski**, a past Fulbright recipient. "I truly believe the success I've seen in my life is a direct result of my confidence and personal autonomy."

The UFO is here to help all students gain this same confidence in their abilities and supply new experiences that many would not have been able to pursue without this funding. The office, with finalists for the Rhodes Scholarship, the Marshall Scholarship, and the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, continues to look toward helping students be successful with such prestigious scholarships.

With so many scholarships to choose from, it can be overwhelming for students. **Rebecca Clippard**, a fourth-year JET recipient and previous Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Scholarship recipient, states it best when she advises, "If you aren't sure about what fellowship would be a good fit for you, the Honors College's Undergraduate Fellowships Office is a good place to start."

If you are interested in any study abroad scholarships, the UFO is here to help.



Fall 2022 ODK members



John R. Vile and Rashieq Cockerham



Slayton Sanders (l) and Sarah Kamaridinova

ODK HOLDS FALL CEREMONY

MTSU's circle of Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) added 22 students and a faculty initiate to its membership during an Oct. 27 event.

Dean **Leah Lyons** from the College of Liberal Arts, an Honors College alumna, was the faculty initiate at the ceremony in the Martin Honors Building.

ODK circle president **Catheryn Bolick**, vice president **MaKayla Sloop**, and secretary **Marzea Akter** planned and conducted the evening event. Honors Dean **John R. Vile** addressed the initiates about the value of ODK in promoting both scholarship and participation in extracurricular activities and public service.

ODK, a national leadership honor society founded in 1914, recognizes and encourages superior leadership and exemplary character.



Vile and CLA Dean Leah Lyons

.....✈️ FOUR 10-HOUR PLANE RIDES ✈️.....✈️ IN TWO MONTHS

Trips to Germany and Israel
taught lessons in navigating life

By Lillian Hickman, an Honors Transfer Fellow studying
Music Business with a Jewish and Holocaust Studies minor



Lillian Hickman in Germany



Hickman under an ancient aqueduct in Caesarea

As a senior, I decided to spend my last summer at MTSU studying abroad. As of May 2022, I had never been on a plane or out of the South, so naturally, I decided to travel to Germany for five weeks and then Israel for almost two weeks. While this may have not been the brightest decision, I have always been one to jump right into new experiences!

Before I could get out of the country, I had to figure out the logistics. I was fortunate to have Matthew Hibdon, strategic communications manager for the College of Liberal Arts and an experienced traveler, to help me understand airlines and how best I could go between Germany and Israel. Once I knew how to get a ticket, I thought I was completely prepared for this wild adventure.

I was dropped off at the Nashville airport May 31 and left to navigate my next two flights on my own. It turns out that flying is just hours and hours of waiting. Though the waiting was unexpected, navigating the German public transportation system was significantly more difficult. Both were new and fun, though.

After leaving Nashville, I landed in Newark and waited for my next flight. Then I landed in London and waited for my next flight. Finally, I landed in Hamburg and waited for my bus. Once I got from Hamburg to

the tiny town of Lüneburg and met my host family, I went right to sleep.

Germany was an experience I never could have prepared for or expected. My favorite part was how much cardio I was doing! My host family gave me a bike, and I rode it everywhere. I biked for 30 minutes every day to class and then around town meeting up with friends.

“ Their ecofriendly mentality inspired me to put more thought and effort into my own actions. ”

The most difficult part of my stay in Germany was acclimating to the recycling system. Their ecofriendly mentality inspired me to put more thought and effort into my own actions surrounding recycling. This enlightening experience led me to want to learn so much more about myself and about our world.

I met many amazing people, which made leaving Germany difficult, but it is comforting to know I can return in the future for a longer visit. My new friends traveled to Hamburg with me to see me off, and I was devastated to leave them. However, once I got on the plane, I was relieved to be going back to my family. That was the longest I had ever spent away from them, and it was nice to return to them. The flights back felt like they were significantly shorter, and I enjoyed them since I knew what I was doing.

After a week back in the U.S., I was ready to be back on a plane. After only a few days, I was repacking my suitcase to accommodate the hot weather of Israel. Navigating the trip to Israel was a bit more relaxing since I went with an MTSU group and didn't have to jump in headfirst and figure everything out on my own.

This trip really was about educating us about the politics and culture of modern Israel. Taking away the stress of traveling helped me focus on learning, which

was probably one of my favorite things about my trip to Israel. Thankfully, there were only two plane rides, and once we touched down in Israel, it was a short bus ride to our hotel.

Israel surprised me every day. When we woke up each day to get ready for more traveling and exploring, I had to continuously remind myself that I was in Israel. It was surprising to learn how close everything is there. We were able to move easily from one side of the nation-state to the other and covered a lot of ground in 12 days. The food was very different from Germany, and I couldn't have asked for a better summer of diverse food.

Even though my summer of traveling was tiring, it was one of the most memorable times in my life. I couldn't have done it without the scholarships and instructional help I received from MTSU. I look forward to going back to Germany and Israel in the future. [A](#)



Exploring an ancient Roman aqueduct at Caesarea



New Buchanan Fellows and Honors faculty pose with Honors College Dean John R. Vile (l) and Honors Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips (r) following their September inauguration.

BUCHANAN FELLOWS CHALLENGED AT INAUGURATION

Study abroad funding is doubled

Professor **Michael Federici** spoke at the 2022 Buchanan Fellowship inauguration on how a broad knowledge of the humanities can help one live a good life.

Challenging those in attendance, the Political Science and International Affairs faculty member also discussed the importance of self-knowledge and self-control.

During the Sept. 9 event, Honors College Dean **John R. Vile** announced that the amount of funding for any current or future active Buchanan Fellows to study abroad will be doubled from \$2,500 to \$5,000. Twenty freshmen representing five states were inaugurated into the Buchanan Fellowship at the ceremony at the Tom H. Jackson Building.

Buchanan Fellow and musician **Antonio Dodson**, an Economics and Accounting major, played his violin

prior to a welcome from Buchanan Fellows **Annalise Dodson** and **Casey Epting**. Associate Dean **Philip E. Phillips** led the recitation of the Honors Creed.

The Buchanan Fellowship, awarded by the University Honors College, is named in honor of alumnus James M. Buchanan (class of 1940), recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences. The fellowship is the highest academic award given to an entering freshman at MTSU.

To compete for a Buchanan Fellowship, applicants must apply for undergraduate admission to MTSU by Dec. 1 of the year before full enrollment. They also must have a high school GPA of 3.5 and a composite ACT score of 30, provide an official transcript, and write an essay.



HALLOWEEN HIGH JINKS AT ESCAPE ROOM

Pooh, Eeyore, and friends



Front, Victoria Dickerson (l) and Rada Ryan; back (l-r), Hailey Jones, Isaac Puckett, and Ethan Montgomery



Rahma Seid (center) with a mad scientist and a crossing guard



Cousin Itt and friends



John Stanley (l) and Caleb Snell



Transfer Fellow inauguration at the Tom H. Jackson Building

TRANSFER FELLOWS TAKE NEXT STEPS ON THEIR JOURNEYS

Honors College advisor **Judy Albakry**, who is completing a Doctor of Education degree from MTSU, encouraged new Transfer Fellows with stories from her own academic journey and challenged them to “think about the pivotal moments that have shaped your academic journey so far.”

“Keep them as an image to remind you why you have chosen this path and why it matters,” she said.

The Honors College inaugurated 30 new Transfer Fellows from Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee in the Sept. 23 ceremony at MTSU’s Tom Jackson Building. Returning Transfer Fellows **Johari Hamilton** and **Aaron Jollay** welcomed the 2022 class, and Honors alumna **Kelsey Wells** played fiddle tunes prior to the inauguration.

“Find your support team. Look to your family, friends, classmates, professors, and/or staff—be open to letting them know when you are struggling, and don’t be afraid to ask for help,” Albakry added. “Know that these are your cheerleaders who will help you reach your goals when your inner motivation runs low, and they are waiting to celebrate with you.”

“Finally, be that support for others now and for the next cohort of students who follow you.”

These students have varied majors from Audio Production, Biology, and Communication to Concrete Industry Management, Music, and Psychology. They come from different backgrounds and bring different life experiences to the table. The shared experience among all of these individuals is hard work, Albakry said.

The Transfer Fellowship, modeled after the Buchanan Fellowship for top incoming freshmen, offers similar opportunities to 30 transfer students to become engaged and participate in the Honors program.

To be considered for the Transfer Fellowship, students must have a 3.5 GPA and are required to have completed 60 hours of coursework from any college or university before transferring to MTSU. The application deadline is Feb. 15.

Transfer Fellows who qualify for in-state tuition are granted \$3,500 per semester for up to four semesters. Three Fellowships available for transfer students from out of state or foreign countries grant \$7,000 per semester for up to four semesters.

FALL 2022 THESES DEFENDED



Ivy Adams

"Airmail with Ivy: Aviation, Education, and Preservation"
Aerospace
Paul Craig, thesis director



Micaela Anderson

"Movement Through a Lyrical Lens: A Collection of Prose, Poems, and Photography"
English Literature and Culture/French
Marion Hollings, thesis director



Brady Armstrong

"The Complete Restoration of a Wurlitzer Model 206 Electric Piano"
Audio Production
Alton Dellinger, thesis director



Fady Barsoum

"Quantitative GC-MS Determination of Benzene and Toluene in the Ambient Air of Shelby County, Tennessee"
Biochemistry
Ngee Chong, thesis director



Rebecca Bartlett

"Shade Society: Web Comic"
Animation
Richard Lewis, thesis director



Russell Biesada

"Metamorphoses of Mothra in the Kaiju Genre"
Aerospace
Joan McRae, thesis director



Haley Bobo

"Radical Feminism Does Not Pay"
Political Science (Pre-law)
Michael Federici, thesis director



Catheryn Amber Bolick

"Evaluating Parkin-Dependent Changes in RNA Expression During Periods of Mitochondrial Stress Induced by Depolarizing Agents"
Music/Biology
David Nelson, thesis director



Victoria Brown

"The Six Senses: Analyzing Triggers Within Women's Jails in Middle Tennessee and How Trauma-Informed Care Can Alleviate Retraumatization"
Psychology
Elizabeth Wright, thesis director



Haley Burt

"Sex Trafficking and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Women Haunted by the Past"
Psychology
Mitzie Forrest, thesis director



Kaleb Cardwell

"Student Loan Debt: The Value of Different College Majors"
Finance
Sean Salter, thesis director



Diana Castro

"Inheritance"
Psychology
Marion Hollings, thesis director



Dale Clifford

"The Effects of Background Music on Standardized Testing"
Psychology
Cyrille Magne, thesis director



Nicholas Dennison

"The Effect of Globalization on Happiness"

Actuarial Science

Anthon Eff, thesis director



Danny Harp

"Commemorations on the Landscape: Two Black Women Who Changed Country Music"

History

Martha Norkunas, thesis director



Kelsey Dillard

"Examination of the PahZ1 product distribution to create a better substrate for downstream proteases"

Biochemistry

Justin Miller, thesis director



Weitao Jin

"Professional Pilot Student Survival Guide for MTSU Aerospace Program"

Aerospace

Peter Neff, thesis director



Luciano Donati

"A Detailed Description of Corrupt Events in Argentina's History: The Role of Corruption in Argentine Politics, 1966 to 2022"

Business Administration

Ennio Piano, thesis director



Rebecca Jones

"Studying Differences in Computer Self-Efficacy Amongst Business Majors"

Information Systems

Amy Harris, thesis director



Bailey Eshleman

"The Effect of Single-Stranded DNA Binding on Catalytic Activity in the PahZ1 Family"

Biochemistry

Justin Miller, thesis director



Elizabeth Joan Kowalczyk

"Investigating the Inhibition of Herpes Simplex Virus-1 by Ginsenoside 20(S)-Rg3"

Forensic Science

Stephen Wright, thesis director



Aura Ganster

"Nutritional Analysis of Chinese and Taiwanese Cuisine: An Educational Cookbook"

Nutrition and Food Science (Dietetics)

Elizabeth Smith, thesis director



Dominic Marcoaldi

"Dogmatism, Negotiation, and Wittgensteinian Therapy"

Philosophy

Mary Magada-Ward, thesis director



Jonathan Garretson

"The Broad Concept of Inevitability: A Video Game Soundtrack from the Ground Up"

Audio Production

Joseph Akins, thesis director



Fallon Paige Marshall

"The Effect of a Supplement Containing Amino Acids on Hoof Growth in Horses"

Animal Science/Science

Rhonda Hoffman, thesis director



Gabrielle Harder

"The effect of dietary corn particle size on broiler chicken growth, development, and productivity"

Science/Animal Science

Kevin Downs, thesis director



JoyAnna McDonald

"The Inequality of Music Income Distribution"

Music Business

Tammy Donham, thesis director



Michael McGee

"Driver retention in the Southeast region Less Than Truck load trucking industry: A qualitative analysis"
Supply Chain Management
Thomas Morgan, thesis director



Karolin Abouelyamin Shalaby

"Investigating the Effects of Instructor Facilitation on Student Engagement in a POGIL-Based General Chemistry Class"
Biology
Gregory Rushton, thesis director



Robert Mephram

"The Efficacy of Modern Basketball Analytics in College Basketball Predictive Win-Probability Algorithms"
Data Science/Business Administration
Ramchandra Rimal, thesis director



Aubrey Stagner

"A Phenomenological Study of Spanish-English Bilingual Long-Term English Learners in Middle Tennessee"
Spanish (Licensure)
Janna McClain, thesis director



Greta Muller

"Pionir: An Illustrated Novella Inspired by the Historical Pioneering Heritage of a Family from Transylvania"
Visual Arts
Houston Fryer, thesis director



Abigail Swanson

"Targeting Gen Z Using Instagram and TikTok Marketing"
Accounting
Raj Srivastava, thesis director



Ann Petty

"Middle Tennessee Sexual and Reproductive Health Providers' Knowledge, Care, and Support for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Individuals"
Biology (Microbiology)
Natalie Hoskins, thesis director



Owen Tadych

"The Production Techniques of Two House Music Subgenres Used in Theory and Practice"
Audio Production/Spanish
Joseph Akins, thesis director



Connor Prim

"Musicianship Explored Through Mahler's Fifth Symphony"
Music Education
Michael Arndt, thesis director



Michael Tonos

"The Recording and Manipulation of Natural Sounds into a Musical Work"
Audio Production
Michael Fleming, thesis director



Verina Rezk

"GC-MS Analysis of Acetone, Methyl Isobutyl Ketone, and Methyl Ethyl Ketone in Ambient Air Samples from Shelby County"
Biochemistry
Ngee Chong, thesis director



Emaline Tremayne

"Teen Pregnancy and Its Association with Education Completion and Depression"
Psychology
Bethany Wrye, thesis director



Sarah Roberts

"The Impact of Caregiver-Child Relationships During Development on the Coming out Process, Perceived Support, and Mental Health in Sexual Minority Adults"
Social Work
Ariana Postlethwait, thesis director



Sophia Watts

"In Their Opposition There is Also Reflection: The Major Arcana Manifesting in Poetry"
Communication
Amie Whittemore, thesis director



Sesaleigh Whitaker

"Vengeance is Mine: The Appearance of Revenge in Modern South Korean Cinema"
Visual Arts
Philip Phillips, thesis director



Amanda Wilson

"The Relationship Between Fruit and Vegetable Intake and Resilience of College-Aged Students with Histories of Childhood Maltreatment"
Psychology
Ciera Schoonover, thesis director



Natalie Caroline Young

"The Nurse's Role in the care of neonates diagnosed with Neonatal Respiratory Distress Syndrome using an Individualized Family-Centered Care Approach"
Nursing
Amanda Flagg, thesis director



Sylvia Zakher

"Investigating English Learners Engagement and Challenges in a Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) Based General Chemistry Classroom"
Biochemistry
Gregory Rushton, thesis director



Amanda M. Zehr

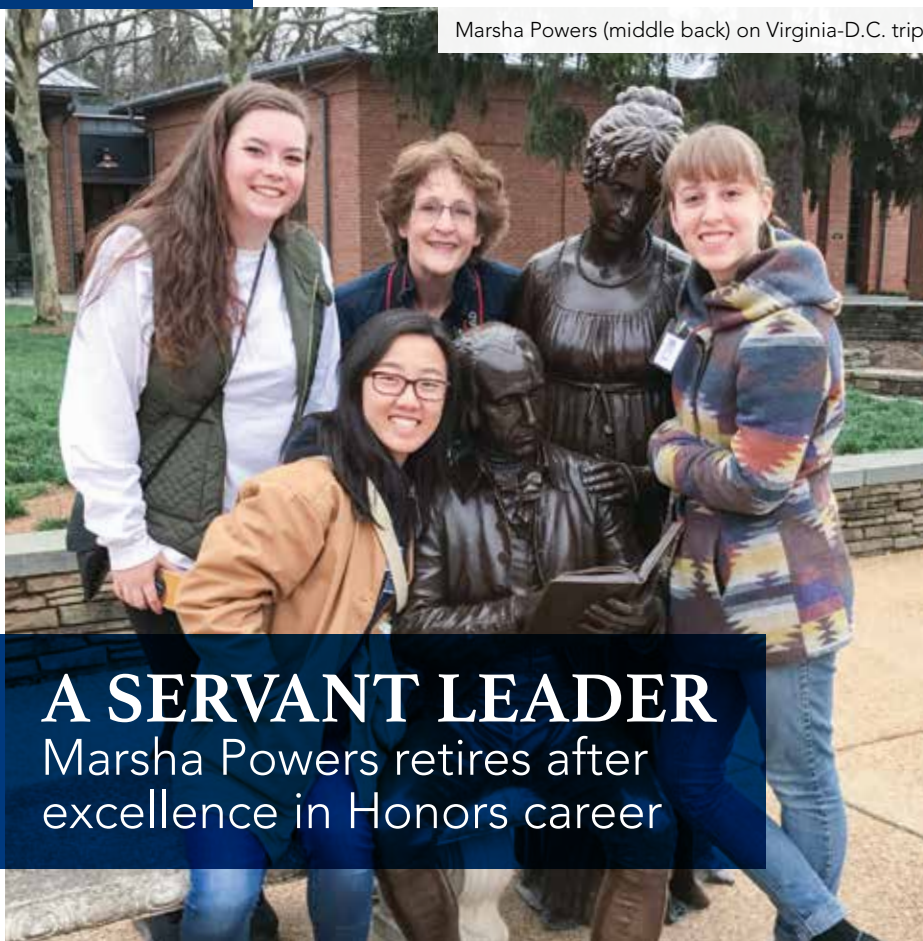
"A Series of Character-Education Lesson Plans Based on Biblical Characteristics"
Elementary Education
Dianna Rust, thesis director



SCIENTIA ET HUMANITAS STAFF

The 2022–23 staff of *Scientia et Humanitas*, seen at the December meeting, consists of (l–r): front, Kera Reynolds, editor-in-chief Aubrey Keller, and Angela Benninghoff; and, back, faculty advisor Philip E. Phillips, Parvez Rahaman, Kat Kolby, Samira Grayson, Elizabeth Polson, and advisor Marsha Powers. Lis Sodl is not pictured.

Marsha Powers (middle back) on Virginia-D.C. trip



A SERVANT LEADER

Marsha Powers retires after excellence in Honors career



2017 Honors staff



Dean John R. Vile (l), Powers, and Philip E. Phillips

The beginning of 2023 marks an important transition in the history of the Honors College as **Marsha Powers** retires as the college's publications coordinator and a strategic communication specialist is hired to take her duties and other responsibilities.

Hired by Dean John Paul Montgomery, Powers has worked in the Honors building longer than any other current staff member. A Mississippi native, she earned a bachelor's degree in Communication with an English minor from Mississippi College after completing an associate degree at Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi. Her experience in publications dates to her high school and college newspaper staff experiences and her role as editor-in-chief of the yearbook at Mississippi College.

Between college and her career at MTSU, Powers married her husband of 42 years, Mark, and worked for a commercial photographer, a newspaper, and Lifeway Christian Stores in Houston and Murfreesboro in addition to spending several years as a stay-at-home mom to daughter Amy, a 2009 Honors College graduate. She has subsequently taken and directed the photographs of hundreds of Honors students, including Amy, as the bells were rung to celebrate the completion of their theses.

Shortly after Powers was hired by MTSU, the University publication *Collage*—established in 1968

and previously housed in the Student Publications Office—was moved to the Honors College. The college published its first issue in spring 2005, and by 2007 *Collage* had received its first ever national recognition with a Silver Crown Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. Since then, the publication has received five other such awards and three Gold Crown Awards that now line the walls of the *Collage* office. Far more important than the awards are the scores of student editors with whom Powers has worked and established relationships.

During her tenure, the Honors magazine, variously known as the *Honors Edition*, *Honors Magazine*, and *Areté*, has experienced a similar progression toward excellence. Like *Collage*, it is typically printed twice a year and has won several recognitions from the National Collegiate Honors Council in competitions with other Honors magazines. These include three first-place awards, three second-place awards, and one third-place award.

Powers gained a reputation for excellence in her work. Consequently, in 2010 the Biology Department asked the Honors College to oversee its online publication *Scientia* as well. It was renamed *Scientia et Humanitas*, converted to a print version, and has been consistently published since 2011 under the leadership of Powers and Honors Associate Dean **Philip E. Phillips**.

Unlike the stereotypical portrayal of newspaper editors who chomp on cigars, bellow out commands, and pour criticisms on staff writers, Powers established herself as a patient mentor, especially with her dedicated work on *Collage*.

“Far more important than the awards are the scores of student editors with whom Powers has worked and established relationships.”

Students who benefitted from her tutelage acknowledge the impact she has had on their lives.

- Even though it has been more than 10 years since **Jennifer Tipton** worked on *Collage*, she recalled the “exceptional level of mentorship and guidance” that she received, including “the kind corrections Marsha shared with me.” Tipton noted that Powers treated her as an equal and “made each person feel so valuable, regularly and openly expressing genuine gratitude.”
- **Rebecca Clippard**, an MTSU Honors graduate who now teaches English in Japan, noted that Powers was “the first person at the Honors College who welcomed me and made me feel at home.” She also described Powers as one of her most inspiring mentors and as a friend who enjoyed chatting with her. Clippard said that Powers encouraged her not only to assume the job of editor-in-chief of *Collage* but also to study abroad.
- **Hannah Tybor Fletcher**, an MTSU Honors graduate who earned her degree in Journalism in 2019, considers Powers as much a friend as a mentor. She “truly cared about my life as a student, about seeing me succeed, and cheering me on,” Fletcher said.

- **Nathan Wahl**, a nontraditional student and MTSU employee who graduated from the Honors College and subsequently earned a master’s degree, has high praise for Powers’ photographic skills. He mentioned the patience that she showed in meetings with the *Collage* staff and noted that “she made me a better student.” Playing on words, Nathan observed that students will be truly “blue” that Powers has retired.
- **Kelsey Keith**, a 2021 graduate in English and Foreign Languages who now works for the National Park Service, observed that Powers “is the epitome of the person who believes in you before you have learned to believe in yourself.” Keith noted that “there is a huge community of people who would drop anything if she needed help. She is so loved.”

Powers’ colleagues feel the same way. Called a consummate “team player” by Dean **John R. Vile** and Phillips, Powers brought special honor to the Honors College when she was named MTSU Administrative Employee of the Year in 2011. She also is a member and supporter of Omicron Delta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies. Powers served on the PKP Executive Committee and received the PKP Distinguished Service Award.

“It has been a privilege and pleasure to work with talented students and an Honors staff dedicated to the success of each student,” Powers said recently. “I am grateful to have been a part of the Honors family.”

Nineteen years at MTSU represent not simply the passage of time but lives touched. A woman of faith, Powers has exhibited kindness, faithfulness, and humility while remaining focused on her family, her students, and others. She has consistently embodied servant leadership in her own quiet way that exemplified character, commitment, and excellence, and her students and fellow staff members all hope that she will have a long, happy, and well-earned retirement that includes many hours with her favorite little learner, her 3-year-old granddaughter, Olivia Shaw.

—Dean John R. Vile

LEE JOINS HONORS STAFF

Robin Lee has joined MTSU’s Honors College as the new strategic communication specialist. She is an award-winning writer and editor with nearly two decades of experience in the public affairs, crisis communication, and government relations industries. Lee graduated from Kent State University with a Master of Arts in Journalism Mass Communication. Prior to MTSU, she served as a public affairs specialist with the Air National Guard and as a writer for Motlow State Community College.





CREATIVITY REWARDED

Six earn Expression Awards
for *Collage* student work

Fall 2022 *Collage* staff meeting (l-r): front, Angela Benninghoff, Brynlee Wolfe, Hannah Antrican, Becky Carter, Rachelle Laurel, Charlotte Daigle, and Emma Jones; middle, Ella Richardson, Elizabeth Polson, Chelsey Brown, Rylee Campbell, Alexandria Neef, and Micaela Anderson (editor-in-chief); and back, Souvapha Kaewbunyard, Haley Roberts, Joey Harris, Timothy Wales, and Madalynn Whitten

With the addition of an award for best song lyric in the fall, the *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression* staff selected six students as recipients of the fall 2022 Creative Expression Awards for their top-ranked submissions to *Collage*.

The staff selected by secret ballot the literary work of **Cassie Sistoso** and **Jai Wilson** for Martha Hixon Creative Expression Awards and the visual work of **Jillian DeGrie** and **Becky Carter** for Lon Nuell Creative Expression Awards. In addition to these traditional categories, **Sierra Hart** and **Sofia Lynch** were honored for video and song lyrics, respectively.

Each semester the *Collage* staff participates in a blind grading process to select approximately 60 pieces for publication from around 350 submissions. The University Honors College awards \$75 prizes to top-rated prose, poetry, art, and photography, named in honor of Hixon, an English professor who is a longtime supporter of *Collage* and the Honors College, and in memory of Nuell, a much-respected art professor at MTSU. Awards may also be given for outstanding video, audio, and song lyrics if sufficient submissions are received.

View issues at mtsu.edu/collage



Derealization by Jillian DeGrie



The Livic Tree by Sierra Hart



Art

***Derealization* (painting)**
Jillian DeGrie
Art (Studio)



Prose

"Liege"
Jai Wilson
English (Writing)

Photography

Held at Bay
Becky Carter
Journalism



Song Lyrics

"Gettysburg"
Sofia Lynch
Recording Industry
(Commercial Songwriting)



Poetry

"Psalm 121"
Cassie Sistros
Recording Industry
(Commercial Songwriting)



Video

The Livic Tree
Sierra Hart
Animation



Held at Bay by Becky Carter



AND THE WINNER IS... MTSU

ADP leads victory in
voter registration contest

By Stephanie Wagner

Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett
with (l-r) Elaf Alkazzaz, Kayla Jenkins, Mary
Evins, Jada Powell, Stevie Naumcheff,
Victoria Grigsby, and Laura Clark

The tireless work of Honors resident faculty member **Mary A. Evins** and her team of student and community volunteers has once again registered a success.

MTSU earned its second win as the top four-year public university in Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett's College Voter Registration Competition. A professor of History, Evins serves as coordinator of the University's chapter of the American Democracy Project (ADP), which is housed in the Martin Honors Building.

"Consistency, commitment, perseverance, drive, and unwavering dedication got us this win," Evins said.

The competition, which ran the full month of September, required competitors not only to register the largest number of students to vote but also to launch and manage a creative and unique social media campaign with good engagement, which the secretary's office tracked.

"ADP students, with help from the Student Government Association on Tuesdays, were register-to-vote tabling out on campus not just through the month of September but every day for seven solid weeks, from the first day of class through the last day of Tennessee voter registration before fall break," Evins said.

"We also worked hard to post MTSU student photos to social media with both the MTSU and secretary office's voting hashtags."

MTSU volunteers registered 343 students to vote during the month of the competition.

Hargett extended his congratulations to the True Blue campus for its robust efforts. This is the second time

MTSU has won as the top four-year public university in the statewide competition.

"Congratulations to all the dedicated Middle Tennessee State University leaders who registered their fellow students and once again earned the top spot in the competition," Hargett said. "Now more Blue Raiders are ready to cast a ballot and participate in our electoral process."

Evins emphasized that for MTSU—which also holds voter registration during CUSTOMS orientation—the mission of registering students to vote extends beyond a single month or event.

"MTSU's objective is serious, larger, and more purposeful," she said. "Our true achievement objective is to improve upon our own voting record: to better ourselves, to be sure that all MTSU students are registered to vote and registered where she/he/they can get to the polls and vote. We want to elevate our University's student voting numbers."

Evins added that voting is democracy and that student voting is the lesson of democracy in action.

"Supporting engaged citizen-scholars is one of MTSU's primary goals," she said. "To do everything we can to proactively encourage our students to become the engaged citizens they must be in our participatory democracy is, of course, what we do."

"So, voter registration is important to MTSU, but it's just a first step. Informed voting is the objective."





Riley Madej

“HEAR YE, HEAR YE”

Students and faculty read from the Constitution on Sept. 17 at the Martin Honors Building during MTSU's Constitution Day and Week activities.



Hannah Wells



Kaleia Branch



Dawson Barrett



Autumn McCleskey



PKP ADDS 73 NEW MEMBERS

2022–23 MTSU Phi Kappa Phi chapter officers

Seventy-three students, faculty, and staff were initiated into MTSU's chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (PKP) at the fall ceremony.

Chapter president **David Foote**, a professor of Management, led the Nov. 18 ceremony, which recognized 32 faculty and staff designated as influential by the student initiates.

Founded in 1897, PKP recognizes and promotes excellence in all academic disciplines and engages the community of scholars in service to others.



Honors Transfer Fellow Michael McGee and wife Jennifer McGee, a graduate student



College of Media and Entertainment Dean Beverly Keel (l) and Johari Hamilton

In Memoriam: John Tudor

The Honors College sadly notes the passing of **John David Tudor**, a member of the 2018 class of Buchanan Fellows. Born Feb. 28, 2000, in Marietta, Georgia, Tudor died on Aug. 28, 2022, in Murfreesboro.

He is remembered as a kind soul who loved conversation and laughter, brought joy to his family, and enhanced the Honors College with his thought-provoking questions. His life was celebrated in a service Sept. 3 at Murfreesboro Funeral Home.

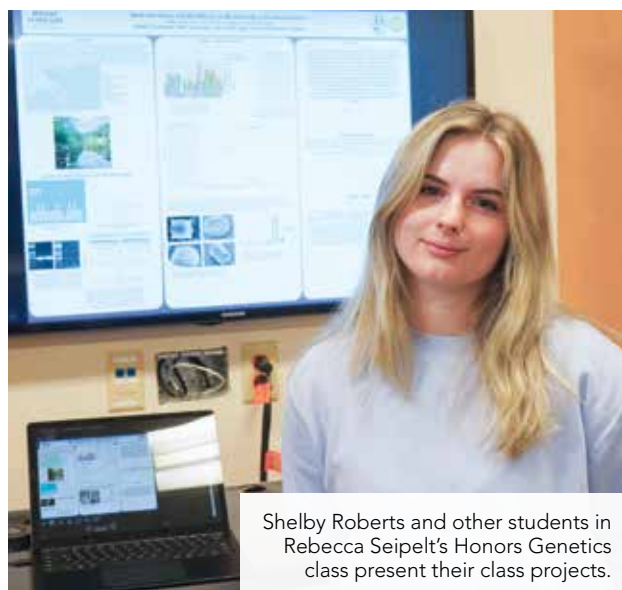
Tudor is survived by his parents, Jeff and Jill Tudor; his sisters, Megan Wells (Jason) and Anna Tudor; his fiancée, Kelsey Ellis; grandmothers, Nancy Sappington and Jennifer Whitson (Bobby); and aunts and uncles, Jeff Sappington, John Sappington (Donna), and Tracie Crabtree (Miles).





AMBASSADORS SPONSOR KAYAKING EVENT

Trinity Henderson and Emaa Elrayah



Shelby Roberts and other students in Rebecca Seipelt's Honors Genetics class present their class projects.

Karmina Ghobrial



GENE AND HEARD



Matthew Johnson

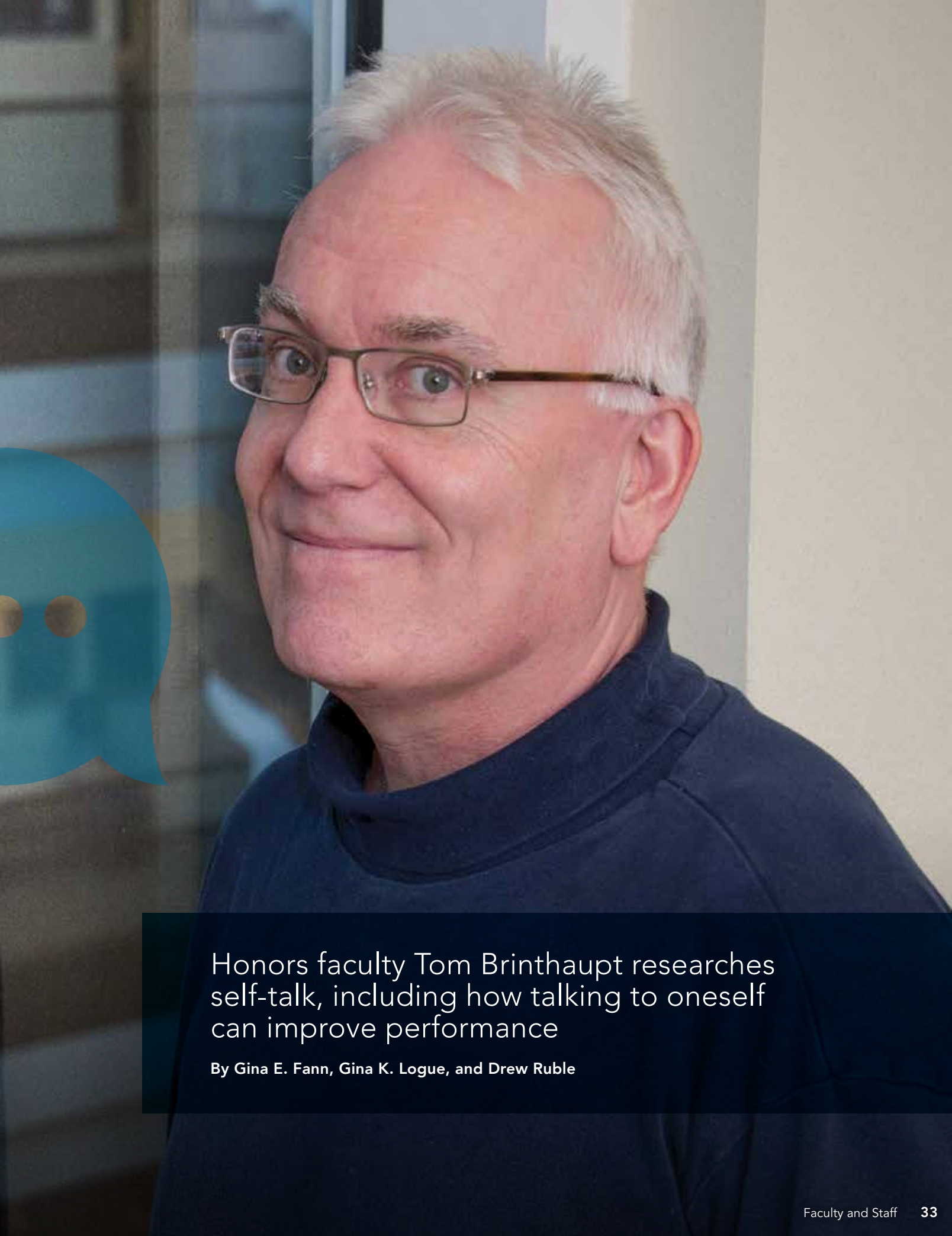


Rand Hasan



LISTENING TO YOUR

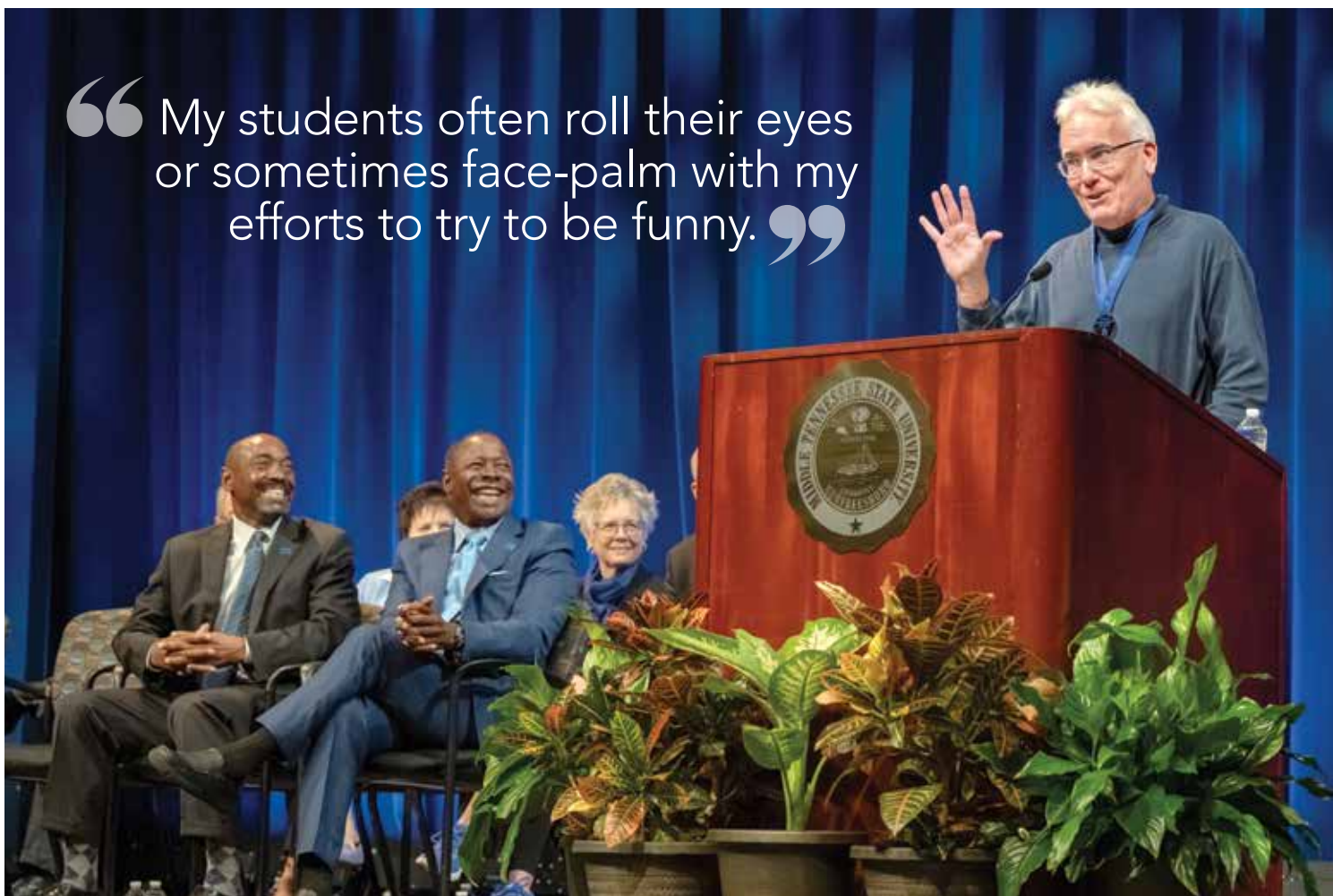
INNER
VOICE



Honors faculty Tom Brinthaup researches self-talk, including how talking to oneself can improve performance

By Gina E. Fann, Gina K. Logue, and Drew Ruble

“My students often roll their eyes or sometimes face-palm with my efforts to try to be funny.”



Tom Brinthaup, who's spent 32 years in MTSU's Department of Psychology and is an Honors faculty member, specializes in "self-talk," or the internal conversations we have with ourselves.

An internationally recognized expert on the phenomenon, Brinthaup says it doesn't mean you are mentally ill if you talk to yourself, either alone or in public.

Quite by contrast, Brinthaup maintains there are many situations in which self-talk can be beneficial, including trying to remember something or make a decision, expressing emotions, finding a solution to a problem, facing a new challenge, or competing athletically.

Psychologists like Brinthaup define it as a tool of thought, a way of helping organize one's ideas.

"The same areas of the brain light up when we talk internally as when we talk externally," Brinthaup said. "There's speech recognition and speech production functions in both of those. It's very similar to normal conversation, but it's internalized."

He and other researchers have been delving into why people talk to themselves for some time.

PEERING INSIDE

Children as young as 2 or 3 years old talk to themselves, to stuffed animals and toys, or to imaginary play-mates as part of normal human development, the professor noted.

Additionally, if you study kids learning to read, they almost all have to read out loud first before it becomes internalized.

But a truer form of self-talk, according to Brinthaup, is self-directed speech, where a person is actively referring to themselves or motivating themselves.

"One example could be an athlete preparing psychologically for a big contest and talking to himself or herself," Brinthaup said. "Saying, 'You can do this. You've trained for it all your life,' and so forth and so on."

Such self-talk, Brinthaup said, is associated with enhanced performance.

"We published a paper once with a graduate student of mine who looked at distance runners," he said. "She studied them after they had competed in a race . . . asking them if they had experienced flow, and whether they had also experienced instructional or motivational self-talk."

"We thought that motivational talk would be more likely to be associated with flow, and in fact we found a positive relationship between motivational self-talk and flow experience, but a negative relationship between flow and instructional self-talk like 'I'm not doing this right' or 'I need to do this better.'"

"That will take you out of flow."

Much of the self-talk that takes place among non-athletes, Brinthaup said, falls into the category of "sub-vocalizing" or "whispering" for self-regulatory purposes, which occurs mainly to keep oneself on track.

"So, for instance, if you don't have a to-do list written down, you may just be reminding yourself in your head that, for instance, Tom is coming over at 10 and Kay is coming at 11, and you've got to get this and that ready," he explained.

This type of self-regulatory self-talk also allows people to set goals for themselves, as well as monitor progress and results.

All things considered, conversing with ourselves likely played a crucial role in the human evolutionary process, providing distinct survival advantages that allowed us to better protect ourselves.

In the final analysis, Brinthaup said, self-talk reinforces a strong sense of self through the ability to talk out our thoughts.

"It is reinforcing positive feelings about yourself, your own ego, because it gives you a feeling of competence that stems from the fact that you can be organized and thoughtful and that you are capable of critical thinking skills," Brinthaup said.

The field of narrative psychology focused on the development of self and identity is in fact closely tied to self-talk.

According to Brinthaup, "The story that I tell myself as I develop—especially in adolescence—is where we're really starting to form our sense of self."

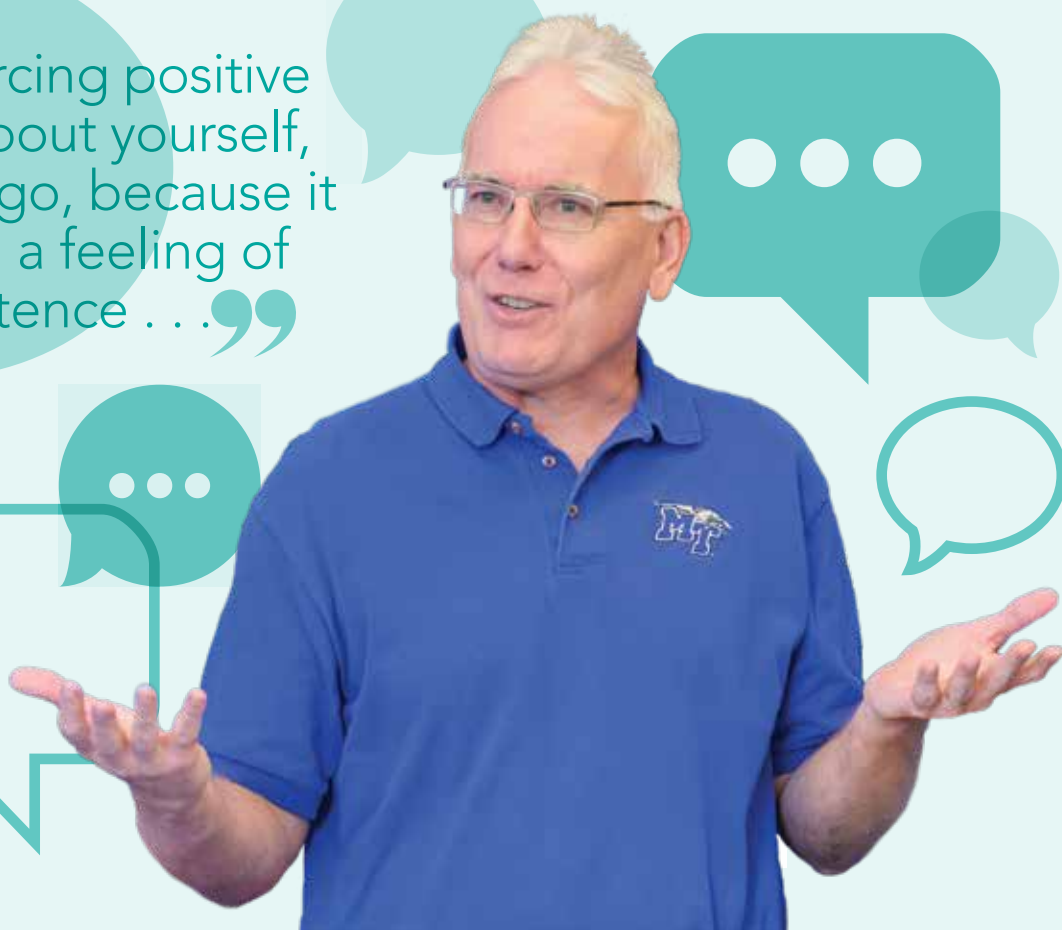
GETTING HIS DUE

The self-talk going through Brinthaup's mind was clear on his face as he walked among his applauding colleagues last August in Tucker Theatre to accept the University's highest teaching honor: the 2022 MTSU Foundation's Career Achievement Award.

"This is great, but whew, it's embarrassing," he said once he reached the podium.

University President Sidney A. McPhee and alumnus Ronald Roberts, the MTSU Foundation president,

"It is reinforcing positive feelings about yourself, your own ego, because it gives you a feeling of competence . . ."





presented Brinthaup with his award at the Fall Faculty Meeting, held as each new academic year begins.

Brinthaup has taught at MTSU since 1990, leading undergraduate and graduate courses in personality psychology and research methods as well as his department's seminar on psychology careers. He also has mentored more than 100 students from high school to doctoral levels and supervised more than 170 student research presentations.

Since 2010, Brinthaup also has served as director of faculty development for MTSU's Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center, which brings faculty together for workshops and other professional development to help them better guide students.

At the award ceremony, Brinthaup peppered his brief speech of thanks with jokes and self-deprecating wit, to the audience's delight. He said he's realized that being in front of a classroom affords plenty of opportunities to use humor to ease communications.

"Maybe to call attention to myself as a kid or to stand out in a large family, I was a class clown in elementary school, and that got me into a fair bit of trouble," Brinthaup said, "but when I reversed the tables and became a teacher in front of the class, it

actually turned out to be fairly effective for me . . . or at least I like to think that. My students often roll their eyes or sometimes face-palm with my efforts to try to be funny."

Brinthaup, who thanked those students alongside his mentors, colleagues, and family for their continuing support, had earned numerous on- and off-campus awards for his work in the past, including two of the MTSU Foundation's Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Awards and a Distinguished Research Award.

In receiving this career achievement award, his mind was focused clearly on students.

"Those of you whom I've worked closely with over the years know that I maintain that being a professor is a helping profession," he said. "Whether that's our teaching, our research, our service—all of those involve us helping others. And at some point, I started to think of my job that way . . . and it created a different mindset in me.

"I've come to assume that it's actually my responsibility to help others—to help students, to work with colleagues, to collaborate. My realization was that's what people in helping professions do." **A**

In Memoriam: Maria K. Bachman

Honors faculty member **Maria K. Bachman**, who was the immediate past president of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Chapter 246, passed away Nov. 20, 2022, at age 58. Bachman was professor of English at MTSU and co-editor of the *Victorians Institute Journal*. She also served as chair of English at MTSU from 2014 to 2018.

A member of the board of trustees for the Dickens Society, Bachman published six books and numerous critical articles on Victorian and Edwardian literature and culture. She earned degrees from George Washington University (B.A.), George Mason University (M.A.), and the University of Tennessee (Ph.D.).

Bachman was the recipient of numerous teaching awards, including a PKP Influential Faculty Award for her superior teaching and mentorship at MTSU in spring 2021. She also earned the Carnegie Foundation's South Carolina Professor of the Year, top honors at Coastal Carolina University, and Alumna of the Year Award at George Mason University.

"She was one of my favorite teachers. It was because of her encouragement that I have pursued writing new

styles, including my tribute to Sherlock Holmes," said Rachel Booher, an English and Japanese double-major at MTSU.

". . . I have never forgotten, and will never forget, how much she inspired me."

Described by family and friends as inspiring, generous, and equipped with a sharp-witted sense of humor, Bachman was a nature lover with passions for reading, teaching, and mentoring.

"She contributed significantly to our Honors community by teaching Honors classes on Crime and Detective Fiction, the Honors Research Seminar, and Honors interdisciplinary seminars Back to the Future: Time Traveling Across the Disciplines and Your Brain on Books: Reading Fiction and the Sciences of the Mind," Honors Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips said. "She was a true scholar, a dedicated teacher, a strong and compassionate person, and a good friend."

Bachman is survived by spouse Karman Gossett and brothers Christopher Bachman and Daniel Bachman.



In Memoriam: Sarah Follis Barlow



Sarah Follis Barlow, a Biology professor emerita and former Honors faculty member, passed away Oct. 4, 2022, at age 84. She was a proud alumna of Central High School, MTSU, and Vanderbilt and enjoyed sharing her love of learning and discovery with her students. Barlow taught at MTSU from 1979 to 2003.

Barlow loved her students and encouraged them to think critically. She cherished her role as counselor and mentor to young lives and instilled curiosity and reverence for science to many before retiring in her late 70s.

She was an avid fan of MTSU athletics and bands and was a drummer since high school. Barlow also was a longtime member of First United Methodist Church.

She is survived by her husband of 62 years, Ed Barlow; daughter Beth Wright (Aubrey); son Ed Barlow Jr. (Kelly); and other family members.

In Memoriam: Frank Ginanni

Francis Ralph "Frank" Ginanni, former chair of the English Department, died Sept. 19, 2022, in Murfreesboro following a struggle with Alzheimer's disease. He worked for MTSU from Sept. 1, 1964, until his retirement July 5, 1994.

Born Oct. 3, 1931, Ginanni was raised in Pennsylvania, served in the U.S. Navy, and moved to California with his family around 1950. San Francisco was the home of his heart, and he worked for some years at Eastman Kodak while finishing his undergraduate degree at San Jose State University. A knee injury in a football game against Cal Poly caused him to change his major from Physical Education to English.

After completing his master's at the University of Virginia, Ginanni and wife Mary Belle joined the MTSU faculty in 1964. At the urging of chair Richard Peck, he went to Auburn University for a Ph.D., then returned to MTSU. Ginanni was active in the Murfreesboro Little Theatre, was an avid golfer, and loved to travel and cook.

Survivors include daughters Kathryn and Claudia and daughter-in-law Heather Levi.



BOARD OF VISITORS RECEIVES HONORS UPDATE AND TOUR

Front (l-r), Philip E. Phillips, Kaylene Gebert, Debra Hopkins, June McCash, Faye Johnson, Shelley Thomas, and John R. Vile; back, Brian Walsh, Don Midgett, Paul Martin Jr., Gordon Bell, Mark Hall, and Vincent Windrow

After two years of virtual meetings, members of the Honors Board of Visitors returned to the campus on Oct. 14, the Friday before MTSU's Homecoming, for its annual meeting.

Faye Johnson, Brian Walsh, and Shelley Thomas were accepted as new members, while **Mark Hall** and **Vincent Windrow** returned to a board on which they had previously served. Other board members in attendance included **Gordon Bell, Kaylene Gebert, Debra Hopkins, Paul Martin Jr., June McCash, and Don Midgett.**

In his State of the College address, Dean **John R. Vile** highlighted the increases in student thesis writers over the past few years, the prestigious graduate schools to which students have been accepted, the success of both the Buchanan Fellows and Honors Transfer Fellows programs, and other ongoing programs within the Honors College.

Buchanan Fellows graduate **Collin McDonald**, who is now an MTSU assistant professor of Aerospace, detailed the impact that the program has had on his life. Six current students, in turn, shared their own positive experiences with the Honors College: **Dimend Little** (International Relations), **Ross Sibley**

(Biochemistry), **Micaela Anderson** (English and French), **Johari Hamilton** (Journalism), **Elizabeth Kowalczyk** (Forensic Science), and **Carter Elliott** (Recording Industry). Elliott supplemented his remarks by playing guitar and singing a soulful song that he had written. These students joined board members, Honors staff, and resident faculty members for lunch.

Paul Wydra of the University Foundation presented financial needs of the Honors College, which center largely on money for scholarship support for study abroad and away programs, increased printing costs connected to college publications, and needed support for Transfer Fellows.

The business meeting primarily consisted of brainstorming about how to tie the Honors 50th anniversary celebrations in 2023–24 to fundraising efforts on behalf of college goals.

After the business meeting, board members took a tour of MTSU's Academic Classroom Building led by Barbara Turnage, interim dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences. During the tour, members met with the respective chairs of the Social Work, Criminal Justice Administration, and Psychology programs.



Ceremony honors alumna's appointment as federal judge

The Honorable **Katherine A. Crytzer**, an MTSU Honors alumna who is now a federal judge, spiced her own serious remarks at her ceremonial investiture about her deep commitment both to law and to public service with a quotation from Dolly Parton.

"President Andrew Jackson, who—like me—adopted Tennessee as his home, is purported to have said 'One man with courage makes a majority,'" Crytzer said. "Or, as another famous Tennessean, and native east Tennessean—Dolly Parton—put it, 'You'll never do a whole lot unless you're brave enough to try.'

"Whether you attribute the sentiment to President Jackson or Dolly, it rings true. When I walk into this hallowed courthouse every day to serve my community and country, I have the courage of my convictions. I intend to 'do a whole lot' on behalf of the court and in service to my country."

The comment was well received at the Sept. 30 ceremony, which was attended by judges and other legal luminaries as well as Honors Dean **John R. Vile** and his wife, Linda.

A graduate of Farragut High School in Knoxville, Crytzer is only the second woman in history to hold the judgeship of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. Her investiture in Knoxville occurred on the same day that Ketanji Brown Jackson went through a similar ceremony at the U.S. Supreme Court.

"I was pleased to see that the Honorable Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti mentioned Judge Crytzer's education at MTSU—and the MTSU football team's win over the University of Miami—in his opening remarks," said Vile, who also was introduced.

A 2006 MTSU graduate, Crytzer took one of Vile's classes in constitutional law, competed on the Mock Trial team that he coached, and earned a Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship. Crytzer attended the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University and clerked for Judge Raymond W. Gruender of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit in St. Louis. She then joined the D.C. office of Kirkland & Ellis, where she met and married fellow attorney Joe Oliveri.

In 2014 Crytzer became an assistant U.S. attorney in Lexington, Kentucky, and later vetted judicial appointments as chief of staff for the Office of Legal Policy in the U.S. Department of Justice. Appointed by President Donald Trump, she was sworn in as a federal judge in December 2020, although her investiture ceremony was postponed due to COVID-19.

Also on hand for the investiture was Honors graduate Gretchen Jenkins, who previously worked in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and now works with Bank of America in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"There were times during the ceremony when I found myself both beaming with pride and close to tears," Vile said.

CLASS NOTES

Students

Honors students **Laurny Ashby** (blue Honors T-shirt) and **Landry Dupree**, right, were among 15 MTSU students and other local volunteers who started the process of building a new house for Murfreesboro residents Arionna "Ari" Robinson, an MTSU alumna, and husband Eduardo "Eddie" Alcocer. The Habitat build took place on the Student Union Commons in September.



Hunter Brady (Biochemistry), pictured above, has been accepted to the DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine at Lincoln Memorial University for medical school. He will start in July.

Eli Certain (Social Work), an Honors Transfer Fellow, participated in an online Debate tournament with schools in New York in the fall. First Speaker at the Big Apple Tournament and Open Division Champion and Third Speaker at the NEAT Tournament, Certain won a later tournament in the Junior Varsity division. He also was recently awarded a \$3,000 Scholarship from the Tennessee Trucking Association.

Aubrey Keller (M.A., English), the 2022–23 editor-in-chief of *Scientia et Humanitas*, was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Lavery Travel Award in Film Studies and Popular Culture. The grant went toward her travel expenses to present the paper "Does My Transness Threaten You? Negative Responses to Transgender Activists' Self-Representation on YouTube," at the National Women's Studies Association 2022 conference in Minneapolis in November.

CLASS NOTES

Faculty and Staff

Anne Anderson (Finance) has five recent publications: "Law of One Price Violation in Parent-Subsidiary Relations" (with Benjamin Jansen), *Critical Finance Review*, 2022; "Can Regulation Enhancing the Shareholder Franchise Increase Firm Value?" (with Nandu Nayar), *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, 2022; "Treasury Triples and the Efficiency of the U.S. Treasury Marketplace" (with Richard J. Kish), *International Journal of Monetary Economics and Finance*, 2021; "Accounting for the Impact of Sustainability and Net Present Value on Stakeholders" (with David H. Myers), *Journal of Accounting and Finance*, 2021; and "The Crowdfunding Down Payment Option" (with Richard J. Kish), *Journal of Housing Research*, 2021.

Sanjay Asthana (Journalism and Strategic Media) received a U.S. Scholar Fulbright Award to conduct research on environment and climate change in India from March 1 through Sept. 8, 2022. His project, "The Dialectic of Environment and Political Ecology," explored the role of state institutions, governmental agencies, private corporations, and public organizations engaged with environment and climate change mitigation through pragmatic policies, governance, and innovating uses of technologies. As part of the Fulbright Award, Asthana made presentations on the intertwined genealogies of free speech and press freedom with a focus on Britain, America, and India. Asthana also recently wrote a book chapter, "Sovereignty, Power, and Agency in Neoliberal Configurations of Media and Governance in the Global South,"

in *Media Governance: A Cosmopolitan Critique* (Palgrave Macmillan).



Emily Baran (History) published her second book in 2022, *To Make a Village Soviet: Jehovah's Witnesses and the Transformation of a Postwar Ukrainian*

Borderland (McGill-Queen's University Press).

Larry Burriss (Journalism and Strategic Media) published "Slouching Toward Nuclear War: Coorientation and NATO Exercise Able Archer 83" in *The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs*. His paper "Sentience and Sapience in the One Ring: The Reality of Tolkien's Master Ring" also was accepted for publication in *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*.

James Chaney (Human Geography) had an article titled "An Emerging Reactive Ethnicity Among Latinxs in Tennessee" published last spring in the *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*. It was part of a larger research project on Latin American communities in Tennessee. Chaney also presented papers discussing aspects of his research project at two international conferences. "Reactive Ethnicity and a Call to Activism among Latinxs in Tennessee" was presented virtually for the American Association of Geographers Annual Conference in New York, and "An Emerging Reactive Ethnicity Among 1.5 and Second-Generation Latinxs in Tennessee" was presented virtually at the 15th annual Global Studies Conference in Athens, Greece. In 2021 he was invited by the Department of Geography at the University of Tennessee to speak on Tennessee's Latinx community.



Roberta Chevrette (Communication Studies), pictured above, recently published "Queering Colonialisms and Empire" in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Queer Studies and Communication*. In May 2022, she gave a presentation at the International Communication

Association Annual Conference in Paris titled "Humanizing Black Lives through Protest: Developing Anti-Racist Agencies through Embodied Rhetorical Witnessing," based on interviews with organizers and attendees of the 2020 protests.



Eric Detweiler (English), who was tenured and promoted to associate professor in 2022, also had a new book, *Responsible Pedagogy: Moving Beyond Authority and Mastery in Higher Education*, published by Penn State University Press in October.

Laura Dubek

(English) contributed an essay, "How Sweet the Sound: Celie's Survival Story as Broadway Musical," to *Critical Insights: The Color Purple* (Salem Press, 2022). She was a guest editor and contributor to *College Literature*, volume 49, number 3. Her essay, cowritten with MTSU colleague Ellen Butler Donovan, is titled "Children, Too, Sing America: Ending Apartheid in and of Children's Literature" and published in summer 2020 by Johns Hopkins University Press.



John Dubois (Biology) had a research article accepted for publication in *Agricultural Sciences* in December 2022. Authors of the article, "Cloning successive generations of industrial

hemp (*Cannabis sativa*) to assess cannabinoid profiles," are Honors student Cassandra Perrone ('22), Paul Kline (Chemistry), and DuBois.

Tricia Farwell (Journalism) has four recent publications. She was first author on "Do Better with SMART+IE Objectives: A classroom activity developing critical thinking skills in relation to DEI for communication campaigns," published in *Advertising & Society Quarterly*. She also co-authored "Exploring Scholarly Productivity, Supports, and Challenges of Multinational Women Graduate Students During a Global Pandemic," *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*; "Set your soul on fire": A feminist-informed co-constructed autoethnography of sixteen multidiscipline, multicultural, and multilingual globally located academic women exploring gendered academic productivity during COVID-19," *American Journal of Qualitative Research*; and "Part of something larger than myself: Lessons learned from a multidisciplinary, multicultural, and multilingual international research team of academic women," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. In addition, students in her Interactive Advertising and Social Media course were awarded a certificate of merit at the PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) Nashville Parthenon Awards.

Stacy Fields (Elementary and Special Education) co-authored "Exploring



Nate Callender (Aerospace), left, recently provided tours of the MTSU Aerospace Technology Laboratory to a contingent from the 101st Airborne after the Aerospace Department signed a memorandum of understanding with the 101st Airborne's EagleWerx located at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. In addition, Callender presented the results of a research project that produced an improved propeller configuration for the U.S. Army's Raven B fixed-wing drone. The new configuration reduces the propeller's noise and increases its available thrust. The 101st Airborne plans to conduct flight trials of the new propeller configuration on the Raven B.

the role of knowledge in predicting reading and listening comprehension in fifth grade students," published in *Learning and Individual Differences* in August 2022.

Amanda Flagg (Nursing) has two recent articles. She was first author on "A Collaborative Service to the Community: A COVID Vaccine Clinic Provided by a Mid-State University," published in *Open Journal of Nursing*, and co-authored "Findings of Cardiac Patients' Understanding of Discharge Instructions during Initial Hospitalizations: A Retrospective Descriptive Study," published in 2022.



Matt Foglia (Recording Industry), pictured above, has been providing the sound mix for TV shows including *The Osbournes Want to Believe* (featuring Ozzy Osbourne) and *Paranormal Caught on Camera* for Travel Channel and *Road Wars*, *Christmas Wars*, and *Customer Wars* for A&E. Foglia also recently celebrated his 15th year as editor of the sound for picture industry's *CAS Quarterly* magazine.

Andrea Georgiou (Aerospace) has been promoted to professor.



Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand (Religious Studies) edited *Teaching Critical Religious Studies: Pedagogy and Critique in the Classroom* in 2022.

Carla Hatfield (University Studies) has been promoted to senior instructor.

Brian Hinote (Student Success) has been working in the Office of the Provost since February 2022 overseeing technologies supporting faculty and student success. He has made multiple presentations, including "Leveraging Technology and Vendors to Promote Student Success" (with Richard Sluder) and

"How do we draw the circle wider to include more students in student success?" (with Vincent Windrow), both at Skyhawk Retention Summit, University of Tennessee–Martin. Hinote has had three recent publications: "Reimagining Data Analytics Strategies to Drive Student and Institutional Success" in *A Radical Vision for Student Success: Reimagining Higher Education from the First Year of College Through Graduation*; "Health Professions and Occupations" in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Medical Sociology* (with Jason Wasserman); and "Learning About Liberty: Facilitating First Amendment Engagement Among American University Students."

Sisavanh Houghton (Art and Design) had numerous shows, lectures, workshops, awards, and teaching opportunities in 2022. Last summer she had paintings in exhibitions at the Knoxville Museum of Art and Arrowmont Gallery in Gatlinburg. She has a sculpture in an international group exhibition at Thessaloniki Municipal Gallery in Greece. She had solo shows at Bagwell Gallery, Pellissippi State Community College in Knoxville, and University Art Gallery at The University of the South–Sewanee. She was a juror for the gallery District Arts show "Food for Thought" in Frederick, Maryland; taught a watercolor workshop at Arrowmont School of Art and Design; and took MTSU students to Italy, where she taught a watercolor workshop. Houghton gave artist lectures at Asurion in Nashville and for Rutherford Art Alliance in addition to a workshop demo on collage and mixed media and artist lecture to students at Chattanooga State Community College. She received the MTSU Distinguished Creative Activity Award and was awarded a \$2,000 South Arts Individual Artist Career Opportunity Grant last summer.

Judith Iriarte-Gross (Chemistry), recipient of a 2022 STEM Excellence Award for excellence in STEM advocacy, recently reviewed "Ethics of University Administration: How to End a Chemistry Program at an HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution) in Five Easy Steps" for the American

Chemical Society Symposium Series "International Ethics in Chemistry: Developing Common Values Across Cultures."

Rebekka King

(Philosophy and Religious Studies) edited two books in 2022, *Key Categories in the Study of Religion: Contexts and Critiques* and *Representing Religion in Film: A Critical Introduction*. She also wrote two book chapters: "Imagining an Ethnic Ecumene: Evangelical Landscapes as Gentile, Jewish, and Native in the American South" in *Landscapes of Christianity: Destination, Temporality, Transformation* and "Intercepted Dispatches: A Speculative History of the Future of Religious Studies" in *On the Subject of Religion: Charting the Fault Lines of a Field of Study*. In addition, King won the Outstanding Honors Faculty Award.



Michael Linton (Music) had his *Nunc dimittis* for organ, choir, and percussion, composed in memory of Queen Elizabeth II, premiere at Nashville's First Presbyterian Church on Sept. 18.



Ashleigh McKinzie (Sociology and Anthropology), pictured above, received a 2022 Outstanding Teaching Award at the annual Fall Faculty Meeting.

Phil Oliver (Philosophy) presented "Promoting Happiness, Demoting Authority: Richard Rorty's Pragmatic Turn Revisited" Feb. 25 at the American Philosophical Association's Central Division Meeting of the William James Society at the Palmer House in Chicago. On Feb. 26 at the APA's Central Division Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of

American Philosophy, he presented "Pragmatism and the Pursuit of Hope and Happiness." Oliver delivered the first lecture of the Fall Honors Lecture Series Aug. 30 on "Aristotle, Friendship, and the Pursuit of Happiness." He also has taken on the job of advisor for the minor in American Studies.

Philip E. Phillips (Associate Dean, Honors College) attended the 47th Phi Kappa Phi Biennial Convention on Aug. 4–6 in Orlando, where he was elected to serve on the Phi Kappa Phi National Board of Directors for the 2022–24 biennium. He served on the board previously in 2018–20. Phillips is a past president of MTSU Chapter 246 of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, a past member of the national PKP Fellowship Committee, and a past member of the national PKP Innovation Award Jury.

DeAnne Priddis (Communication Studies), who was tenured and promoted to associate professor, has two recent publications. She was first author on "Practice what We Preach: National Communication Association Members Define Effective Conference Presentations and Provide Suggestions for their Improvement" in *Texas Speech Communication Journal* and co-wrote a chapter, "New Roles,

New Problems," in *Casing Conflict Communication* in 2022.



Ben Stickle (Criminal Justice Administration), pictured above, has numerous recent publications including peer-reviewed journal articles, a book, technical reports, and practitioner articles. In 2022, he published *Field Studies in Environmental Criminology* (London: Routledge). His recent peer-reviewed journal publications include "The Sharing Economy: a Disruptive Innovation to the Criminal Justice System" in *Victims & Offenders*; "Conservation Officer Perceptions of Stress Associated with Traditional Policing Duties" in *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*; "Marijuana Enforcement Since Drug Policy Reform: An Exploration of Officer Discretion in Six States" in *American Journal of Criminal Justice*; and "Human Trafficking Awareness and Reporting: Insights from Tennessee

Police Websites and Social Media" in *Policing: An International Journal*.

Chandra Story (Health and Human Performance), who was promoted to professor in June, is board president for the Middle Tennessee Fund for Women and Girls and a member of the Tennessee Office of Minority Health's Health Disparities Task Force. Story and several colleagues were recently awarded a grant to research "Building Community Capacity to Address Mental Illness in the Context of COVID-19." Story has numerous recent publications and presentations, including "Exploration of Emotional Social Support Predicts Food Insecurity Among College Students" in *Journal of American College Health*; "Public Health in the Rockies: Is there an increase in Type II diabetes among American Indian and Alaskan Natives?" for Colorado Public Health Association, Denver; and "Support and Advocacy for Black Mothers: Increasing Breast Feeding Rates Through Midwife and Doula Services," at CityMatCH Conference, New Orleans.

Suzanne Sutherland (History) has a new book, *The Rise of the Military Entrepreneur*, published by Cornell University Press.



Gina K. Logue, an MTSU alumna with 20 years' experience in broadcast journalism prior to working at the University, received a Distinguished Service Award from Honors Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips and Dean John R. Vile on her retirement from News and Media Relations. The award was presented in appreciation of her "faithful efforts in promoting, publicizing, and supporting the Honors College and the MTSU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi."



Xiaowei Shi (Communication Studies), pictured at right, published *Unquestioned Ease: Confronting Automaticity in Everyday Communication* with Rowman and Littlefield in September. She wrote the book with Steve Mortenson.



John R. Vile's (Dean, Honors College) latest book, *The Bald Eagle and Its Legacy: An Encyclopedia of a High-Flying American Icon in U.S. History:*

Nature, Law, and Culture (William S. Hein & Co., 2022), was published in the fall. Also in the fall, Vile appeared on Open Line (NewsChannel 5+), on Channel 4 News, and on WGNS Radio; was interviewed on *Inside Politics* with Pat Nolan; talked with Alaraby Television; was interviewed by Guy Rathbun of Public Radio Exchange, Jill Terreri Ramos of PolitiFact, and Tara Merginer of the Christian Broadcasting Network; and was quoted in *The New York Times*.

He has published recent articles in *The Daily Progress* (Charlottesville, Virginia), *Baltimore Sun*, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, *New York Daily News*, *Christian Post*, *The Tennessean*, *Savannah Now*, *Justia*, and the *Murfreesboro Daily News Journal*.

Brandon Wallace (Sociology and Anthropology) published "Understanding the Experiences of Food Insecurity in Older Adult Households" in the *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* and "Getting Ahead: Examining the Intergenerational Benefits of Participating in a College Service-Learning Program" in the *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*. "Internet use as a moderator of

the relationship between age and depression: implications for older adults" was accepted for publication by the *Journal of Applied Gerontology*.



Louis Woods (History), pictured above, has been promoted to professor. Woods became MTSU's first Presidential Fellow for Social Justice and Equality in 2021.

CLASS NOTES

Alumni and Friends

Taylor A. Barnes (Physics and Chemistry, '09) currently works as team lead at the Molecular Sciences Software Institute at Virginia Tech.



Jacob Basham (Mathematics and Science, '13), pictured above, and Ashley Whitlow welcomed a son, Camden Halum Basham, in October. The couple also has a daughter, Paisley, born in 2014.

Elizabeth Clippard (Plant and Soil Science, '22) was awarded the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and is currently enrolled in the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. She will in graduate in 2025 with a master's in Forest Resources Management.



Dylan "Nobigdyl." Phillips (Recording Industry, '13), pictured with wife **Chelsea** ('13), was nominated for two 2022 Dove Awards, Rap Song of the Year and Rap Album of the Year.



Isabella Morrissey

(Interdisciplinary Media, '21), former Honors Transfer Fellow, is working for Wang Vision Institute as outreach assistant.



Saraf Chowdhury (Biology, '16), pictured above, an Honors Transfer Fellow who studied Pharmacy at the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, married Shaiyad Shabbi in October.

Christopher Cowherd (Political Science, '20) started law school at Belmont University in August.

Bronwyn Graves (Economics, '17) has been named assistant professor of Economics at Linfield University in Oregon and began working at Linfield in July after defending her dissertation at MTSU in June. Daniel J. Smith, director of MTSU's Political Economy Research Institute, served as her dissertation advisor.

Joseph Kennedy (International Relations and Spanish, '16) began a new role as associate corporate counsel at GEODIS Logistics LLC in June.

Rayne (Leonard) Lawrence (Biochemistry, '13; Genetics, '15) started a new position last summer as senior field applications scientist at Illumina in Nashville.

Liam McBane (Music, Piano Pedagogy, '21), who married his wife, Allison, in December 2021,

lived in Columbia, South Carolina, several months before moving to Breckenridge, Colorado for the summer. In Breckenridge, he was assistant production manager for the National Repertory Orchestra, a major orchestral summer festival that brings on eight full-time summer staff each June. In September he started a permanent position as artistic assistant for the San Diego Symphony. He is responsible for fulfilling all the logistics of its contracts with visiting guest artists as well as being assistant to the music director.

Tiffany Miller (International Relations and Spanish, '18) earned an M.B.A. in Data Management/Warehousing and Database Administration from the University of Tennessee–Chattanooga in May and started a position as a program analyst for the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, D.C., in August.

Sam Mitchell (Chemistry, '12) is working at Ballard Health in Kingsport. He and wife Allie welcomed son Silas Ridley Mitchell on Nov. 1 and also have a daughter, Nora.

Ashlin (Murphy) Murphy (Political Science, '21) married her husband, Jack, in June and is currently working in the office of Student Organizations as a graduate assistant while she pursues a master's degree in Strategic Leadership at MTSU.

Katie Nicholson (Music, '18) was named director of bands at Columbia Central High School last summer.

Emily Oppmann (Biology, '21) graduates in April with a master's in Genetic Counseling from the University of Alabama–Birmingham and will join Inova Fairfax Hospital in greater Washington, D.C., as an oncology genetic counselor. She completed clinical rotations at Saint Thomas Health (Nashville), Children's Mercy Hospital (Kansas City, Missouri), and the UAB hospital system.

Kap Paul (Chemistry, '22) is enrolled in pharmacy school at Belmont University, where she has a full scholarship for the first year.

Haley (Pimental) Reese (Chemistry, '12; Biology, '15) is working as an environmental compliance specialist at Akima and is pursuing her master's in Environmental Engineering through Southern Methodist University.



Kelly Richardson (Political Science, '18), pictured above, now in her fifth year of working on a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Florida, expects to get her degree in 2024. As an undergraduate at MTSU, she successfully applied through the Undergraduate Fellowships Office to the Junior Summer Institution on Public Policy and International Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

Courtney Rodman (Global Studies and Organizational Communication, '14) was promoted to associate principal examiner, FinTech at FINRA, in June.

Cheyenne (Plott) Shepherd (Organizational Communication and Spanish, '15) married Andrew Shepherd Sept. 5, 2022, at Grace Valley Farm. She is deputy director of donor communications at the Leadership Institute in Arlington, Virginia.

Sydney Smith (Physics and Philosophy, '18) moved to Dumfries, Virginia, last summer and began a new job at the American Chemical Society in Washington, D.C., as assistant editor of chemical and engineering news.

Ruben Tavakalov (Chemistry, '12), who has been in the Navy since 2014, was named secretary of the Navy Council of Review Boards last summer. He attended Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2019–20, is a licensed commercial airline pilot, and is pursuing an M.B.A. at Carnegie Mellon University.



Davis Thompson (Political Science and Government, '15), pictured above, began a new position in June as a communications manager, ads policy, at Google in New York.

Joshua Tilton (English, '18) earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in 2021 in Creative Writing (poetry) at the

University of Memphis, where he was managing editor of the *Pinch* literary journal. He married Aubrey Neely Aug. 13.

Nate Tilton (Aerospace, '16), assistant chief flight instructor at MTSU, and wife Morgan welcomed a daughter, Corrie Lou, Aug. 24. Corrie has a big brother, Isaac.

Amanda (Leachman) Uhls (Biology, '16) and husband Cory welcomed a daughter, Madelyn Michelle, in November. The Uhlses live in Nashville, where Amanda works as a lead public health laboratory scientist at the Tennessee Department of Health.

Sara Beth (Gideon) Urban (History and Political Science, '11; Public History, '13) started a new position last year as chief executive officer at HospitalityTN.

Nathan Wahl (Communications, '21) earned his M.A. in Liberal Arts at MTSU in May 2022.

Jason Wasilewski (Business Administration, '22), a master's candidate at the University of Tennessee, is a graduate teaching assistant at the UT Center for Career Development and Academic Exploration.



Kyeesha Wilcox (Global Studies and Cultural Geography, '18), pictured above, received a master's degree in Geography from Michigan State University in 2020 and is completing a Digital Graphic Design diploma at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) in Murfreesboro. In early 2022, she entered a pin design contest through TCAT and SkillsUSA, presented a PowerPoint about the pin's design elements and meaning, and won the Gold Medal/State Championship in Chattanooga. She represented Tennessee for nationals in Atlanta, where her pin design won second place for the college division. Since February 2022 she has been working with Queens Public Library remotely creating web maps and working with data and has been freelancing in cartography/GIS since late 2021.



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