

# OUR TENNESSEE

UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE SYSTEM MAGAZINE

KNOXVILLE | CHATTANOOGA | MARTIN | HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER | INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE | INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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2021











## THE SCENE

*Marshall Prado, assistant professor in the UT Knoxville School of Architecture, works with a KUKA Robotic arm in the College of Architecture and Design Fab Lab.*

PHOTO BY STEVEN BRIDGES  
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE



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*Tabitha Parker, a psychology major from Dover, crosses the commencement stage during one of three fall commencement ceremonies held at UT Martin. PHOTO BY NATHAN MORGAN*

### ON THE COVER

*Illustration by Kiki Kita*

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# OUR TENNESSEE

*Magazine for the alumni, friends and supporters of the University of Tennessee System, including campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga and Martin; the Health Science Center based in Memphis; and the statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service.*

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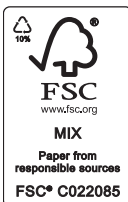
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## A message from the president

To be successful, organizations need four things—a compelling mission that is both inspiring and aspiring; a strategy to get there; great people; and a set of values that define it and its culture. Values should underscore the “why” in what it does and provide guidance day in and day out.

Last year we traveled the state and talked to our alumni, faculty, staff, students and administrators on each campus. We asked them to describe the traits that make UT what it is—and what it should be. We used their feedback to come up with a list of seven values that fit into a memorable acronym: Be One UT.



**B** – Bold and Impactful: Serving the state by tackling grand challenges

**E** – Embrace Diversity: Respecting our individual and organizational uniqueness that makes us stronger

**O** – Optimistic and Visionary: Empowering courageous leadership

**N** – Nimble and Innovative: Inspiring creative and transformational action

**E** – Excel in All We Do: Committing to continuous improvement and outstanding performance

**U** – United and Connected: Collaborating internally and externally for greater collective impact

**T** – Transparent and Trusted: Fostering integrity through openness, accountability and stewardship

Throughout these pages, you will read examples of our alumni, faculty and students exemplifying these values. From confronting and addressing some of the most painful times in our history to aiding our nation during a global pandemic, UT takes bold action to live our values each day.

The UT System has come together to dig deep and redefine our values, to remember our mission of serving every Tennessean and improve life in our great state and far beyond. We remain excited and optimistic about continuing our work to make this the greatest decade in UT history.



Randy Boyd, Knoxville '79



## IN THIS ISSUE

Brokenness comes from living. Broken lives. Broken hearts. Broken souls. But, if we are lucky, we meet people who help mend the broken places, who discover the lost, who scrape back the dirt and beat back the night. They shine light into the shadows.

In the illuminating rays, healing can begin. Hope can be renewed.

The late great songwriter Leonard Cohen wrote in "Anthem," "There's a crack in everything / That's how the light gets in." Cohen said in an interview that where the light gets into the cracks is where the resurrection and the repentance lives. "It is with the confrontation, with the brokenness of things."

We recognize that, in the broken world, soldiers sometimes don't come home and are left in fields far away and that we must confront a dark past of lynching to have a brighter future. UT graduates lead the way in both of those. They also combat the shadows that lead to suicide and fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. They translate the difficult language of medicine into the understandable and native. Surgeons from the UT Health Science Center give of their skills through medical missions but also train doctors and nurses in Honduras, Philippines, Kenya, Zambia and so many more.

In this issue, we celebrate the hope bringers, the night beaters, the light givers.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,  
Thank you so much for the focus on diversity and equity in the recent issue. I know this may not be something that many of my fellow alumni find interesting or valuable, but I think it is an important step for the university to be taking. The only way we begin to take down systems of oppression for people of color, LGBTQ+ and other minoritized groups is to talk about their experiences and ask how we can take down the barriers that have been established. I also really appreciate the article by Robert Fisher at the end of the magazine. While I know why, from an editorial standpoint, it sits at that point, I hope that people flip to the back and fully read it and ponder the questions and points Fisher's article makes.

Again, thank you for the focus of the Winter edition, and I'm loving the *Our Tennessee* name.

Michael Cherry  
Knoxville '09

Dear Editor,  
I love the new format and appreciate the diversity of stories and faces.

Thank you.

Enku Gelaye  
Knoxville '93

Dear Editor,  
I really like the new name; it not only reflects all graduates but all campuses! Thanks for the great change.

Sandra Powell Emond  
Chattanooga '64, '67

Dear Editor,  
I certainly support inclusion of all races in *Our Tennessee*. However, I do not support the exclusion of those many Caucasians from meager backgrounds who also became successful in their chosen field of endeavor. Please note that your articles devote 80 percent

of the stories and pictures to students of color. There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of first-generation Caucasian graduates who are equally qualified for inclusion in *Our Tennessee*. I look forward to a more balanced presentation.

Tom Neal Jr.  
Knoxville '63

Dear Editor,  
Love the new name and the togetherness of the magazine. Thank you for including all Tennessee students and alumni at all campuses. We are Tennessee.

Phyllis Manning  
Knoxville '80

Dear Editor,  
The Scene, a picture of faculty, staff and students kneeling for White Coats for Black Lives demonstration in Memphis (Fall 2020), struck me as just wrong and un-American. As the story unfolds, I find that the reason for this gesture has been proven unworthy. It just proves that academia is out of touch with the real world.

The picture will probably hurt your alumni fundraising in 2020-2021. It will certainly affect my future donations to UT.

All lives matter.

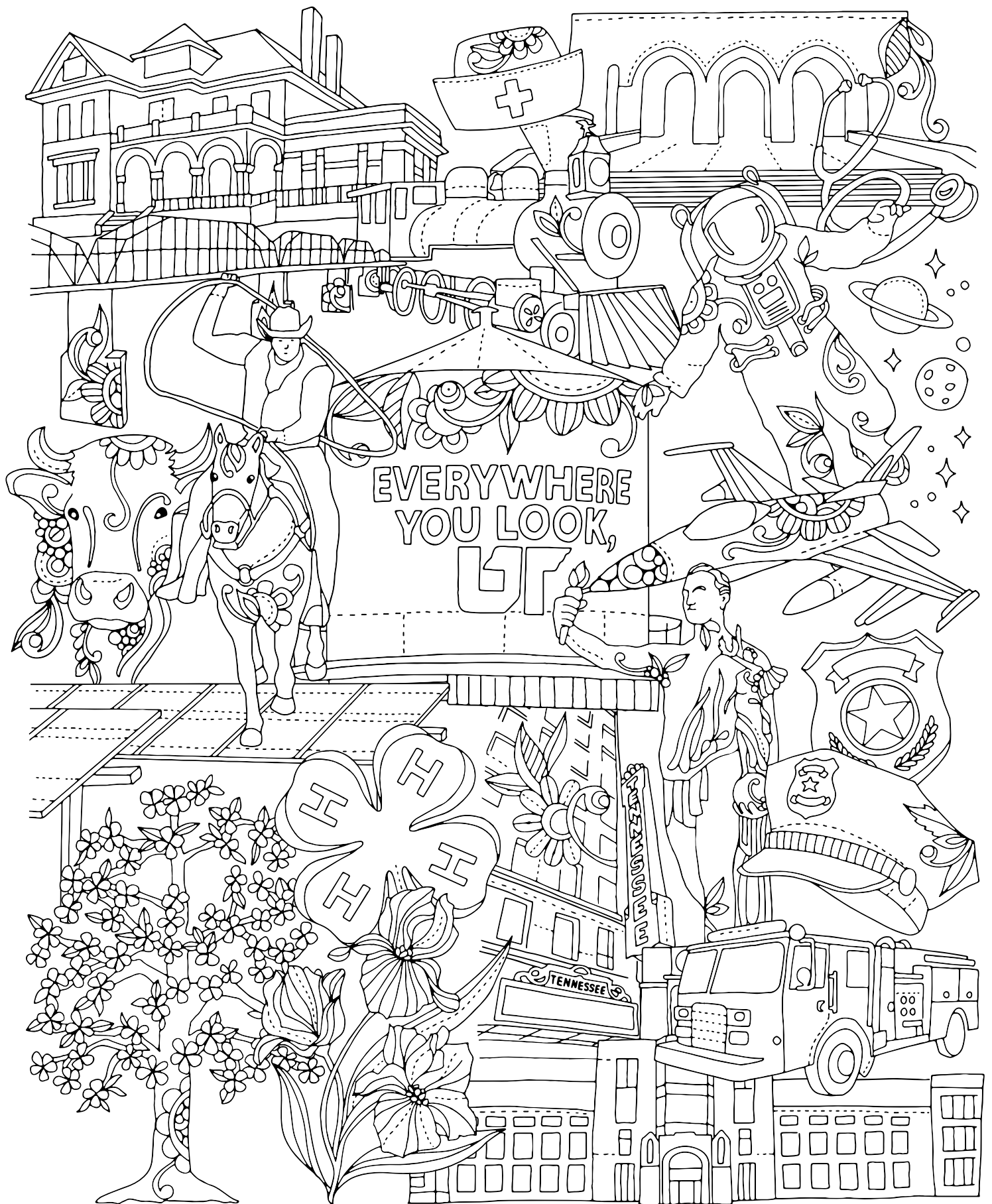
D.W. Frazer  
Martin '70

## CORRECTION

A headline in the Winter 2021 issue had a misspelling. It should have read: "Apoyadora."







Art—even coloring—can help relieve stress. Relax by completing this page and then share your finished work with us on our social media accounts: Twitter and Instagram: @our\_tennessee and Facebook: Our Tennessee. BY VALENTINA HARPER



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# A NATION'S PROMISE

*Knoxville Graduate Works to Bring Service Members Home*

BY DAN CARLINSKY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
THE DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY



**Standing shin-deep in a flooded rice paddy in Vietnam, shoveling and hauling buckets of soil, and screening the contents through quarter-inch wire mesh for hours on end hardly seems like the most pleasant way to spend three weeks. But, to Kyle McCormick, it's just what work should be: satisfying.**

McCormick (Knoxville '15) is a forensic anthropologist with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), the federal government bureau that searches the world for service members who didn't return from war. The DPAA's list of the missing includes more than 1,500 from the Vietnam War, as well as some 7,600 from the Korean War and nearly 72,000 from World War II. Even after 80 years, the hunt goes on.

On his mission in Vietnam, McCormick was pursuing evidence of a plane and its pilot lost in 1972.

The DPAA employs a staff of 600—half civilian, half military—and counts on its roster a variety of specialists, including historians, mountaineers, divers, combat medics, explosive ordnance technicians, life-support equipment specialists, forensic photographers, linguists and anthropologists like McCormick. Teams from the agency perform both preliminary site investigations based on historical research and, when a site is judged promising, follow-up recovery missions that feature full-scale excavation.

McCormick typically spends two to three months a year in the field. On that mission in Vietnam, he was the scientific recovery leader, directing the dig. He calls the site his favorite.

"I was constantly soaking wet, but I loved it," he says. "You're physically and mentally exhausted every day. Since the taxpayers are footing the bill, I want to be as efficient as I can, and I approach the science of the job very seriously, so as the scientific leader I feel a lot of responsibility. But, strange to say, it's relaxing. You're absolutely removed from modern life."

He's gone on other missions to Vietnam as well as stints in the jungles of Laos and the mountains of Guadalcanal, all physically strenuous and requiring super-careful attention as he and the team shovel, scan, sort, sift and scrutinize, calling on their own experience as well as the experience of hired local workers.

"The locals have good eyes," he says. "They can be a great asset. They've been working with that soil their whole lives."





*Kyle McCormick, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) senior recovery expert, goes through his notes during DPAA recovery operations in Ha Tinh province, Vietnam, in 2017. DPAA team members deployed to the area in hopes of locating U.S. service members who went missing during the Vietnam War.*





*U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jordan Moore and Kyle McCormick, both members of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, discuss site teardown after conducting a 45-day excavation in Laos in 2018.*

McCormick came to anthropology almost by accident. Studying computer science in a Michigan community college, he took a class in human evolution and was hooked. “I couldn’t get enough of it,” he recalls. “I wanted to be in a field where I have a passion, and for me that wasn’t computers anymore.”

He swiftly changed direction and studied anthropology for a B.A. at Michigan State, then earned a master’s at Chico State in California and began a doctoral program at Binghamton University in New York. He tells what led him to Tennessee:

“My dissertation advisor at Binghamton was (Professor of Anthropology) Dawnie Steadman. She’s among the best leaders and hardest workers I’ve ever met, someone who really facilitated my growth as a scientist. She moved to Knoxville to become head of the school’s Forensic Anthropology Center. I followed. It cost me time transferring, but it was worth it. The opportunities at UTK for forensic anthropology students—graduate and undergraduate—are unparalleled.”

Before he arrived at Tennessee, McCormick landed a forensic science fellowship for advanced grad students

with a forerunner of the DPAA. It was, he said, “effectively a five-month job interview.” After earning his doctorate in 2015, he signed on as a scientific recovery expert with the agency, newly created in a consolidation of several earlier offices within the Department of Defense. He works out of the agency’s main lab at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii, which calls itself “the largest and most diverse skeletal identification laboratory in the world.”

Steadman, UT Knoxville Chancellor’s Professor in anthropology, said, “The DPAA has an important mission to recover and return to families the remains of those lost in past conflicts. We are proud that so many of our students have joined this mission after graduating from the anthropology department at UTK.”

Like many at the DPAA, McCormick can trace at least some of the job’s appeal to his own family history:

“My grandpa—my mother’s father—fought in World War II. He was an Army first lieutenant with the 9th Armored Division. He was lucky: He came home. He didn’t talk much about the war, but I knew that he was in the Battle of Remagen, when the Allies invaded Germany, March 7, 1945. His service has always been a point of honor for me.

*Kyle McCormick explains how recovery operations are conducted to the family of Edward Weissenback, a recovered Air America crewman, at the DPAA laboratory on Joint Base Pearl-Harbor Hickam, Hawaii, in 2019.*



“My Uncle Tommy—my mother’s brother—  
inherited his service medals. They mean a lot to him,  
but recently, given my profession, he decided to send  
them to me. That was a really big deal. My mother let  
me have a pair of binoculars that, according to family  
tradition, my grandpa took from a captured German  
officer. Now I have them all, plus a book about the  
battle for the bridge at Remagen, on display in my  
office. It’s kind of a little shrine.

“My work is for guys who weren’t as lucky as  
my grandpa.”

The serviceman whose disappearance brought  
McCormick and his team to that rice paddy in Vietnam



*Kyle McCormick, an anthropologist with the Defense POW/MIA  
Accounting Agency, removes soil from a water collection point.*

was a 28-year-old Navy pilot who left an aircraft carrier  
in the Gulf of Tonkin on a night reconnaissance  
mission over North Vietnam in an A-7A; he  
never returned.

McCormick says advances in forensic science and  
technology, including DNA analysis, are helping to  
identify those buried in U.S. military cemeteries as  
unknown, as well as greatly improving recovery work in  
places like Vietnam.

“That crash site was investigated and excavated  
multiple times in the 1990s, without success,” he says.  
“Recovery efforts back then were of limited scope.  
Archaeologists were advisors; we weren’t running the





show. Today an archaeologist runs the excavation. We take a more scientific approach.

“I’m not saying the work done in the early days was bad; it’s that they were inventing the wheel. As an agency, we’ve matured significantly. We return to take a fresh look at a lot of sites that were closed years ago, and it can pay off. This site was one of them.”

Using stakes and string, recovery team members section the ground into squares four meters on a side. They scan with metal detectors, then take shovels to one square at a time and form a bucket line to transfer the soil to a screening station, where it’s carefully sifted in hopes of revealing human remains or other evidence to be sent back to agency labs in the U.S. for analysis.

Excavating to search for human remains is never without problems—working in a rice paddy is especially tough—but sometimes a surprise turns up. McCormick recalls the turning point in the recovery mission in Vietnam:

“In Southeast Asia, there’s a lot of scavenging of metal, so if you’re hoping to come up with part of a wrecked plane, you won’t find big pieces. Maybe something the size of a quarter. You’re not going to find a wing.



*Kyle McCormick examines material evidence discovered while conducting an excavation in Laos in 2018.*

“That day, I was digging during lunch with my team sergeant to make sure we had enough buckets filled for the rest of the team to screen after the break. I remembered that, when I was working at a site in Laos in similar ground conditions, I pulled up a small piece of flight helmet. Just as I was telling my team sergeant



*Kyle McCormick works to straighten a unit wall as part of a DPAA recovery mission Guadalcanal Province, Solomon Islands, in 2016.*

that story, incredibly, I found a piece of helmet.

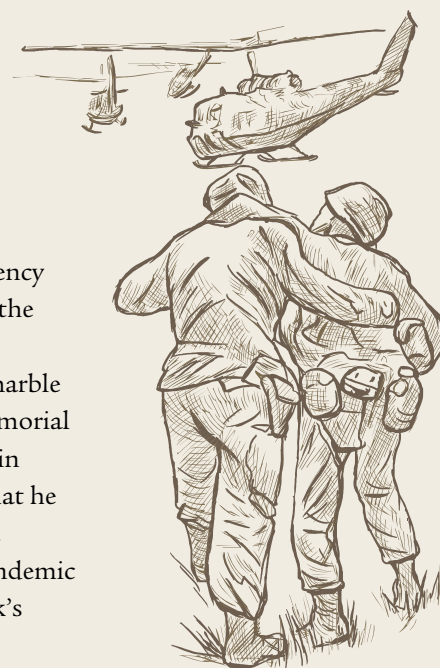
“I said, ‘I can’t believe what just happened! Now let’s have another really unlikely event: Let’s find a tooth.’ In Southeast Asia, the soils are acidic—they eat up bones. We find animal bones all the time, but they’re more recent. After so many years, human bones are pretty much gone. Teeth are more resistant, so a tooth is usually all you’ll find.

“The team came back from lunch, and almost immediately we found a tooth! It was quite a serendipitous day.”

Once recovered material is sent to the States, the case is out of his hands; to avoid bias, anthropologists never work on their own finds. “It’s part of our checks and balances,” McCormick explains. “If I recover a set of remains from the field, I’m not going to do the skeletal analysis in the lab. It’s done blind.”

Months later, the agency placed a rosette next to the pilot’s name among the Vietnam missing on a marble slab at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, indicating that he had been accounted for.

Lately, the global pandemic has blocked McCormick’s







*Kyle McCormick explains how recovery operations are conducted.*

travel. His planned investigation mission to Burma was scrubbed in favor of working from home and in staggered shifts in the lab, four hours at a time to allow for spacing by co-workers. He expects to be back on the road this year.

The DPAA's motto is "Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise," which McCormick explains this way:

"As a country, we made a promise to those who served that we'd never abandon them. Keeping that promise is not always easy, but it was an unimaginable sacrifice they made for this country. It's something we owe them and their families.

"It's a very noble thing I get to be a part of." **T**



*Kyle McCormick discusses a display of different bone replicas to Vietnam War veteran George Sternischa, nephew of U.S. Navy Fireman 1st Class Michael Galajdik, (USS Oklahama), during his tour of DPAA at Joint Base Pearl-Harbor Hickam in 2017.*

## **AFTER DEATH** *By Heather Peters*

The Department of Anthropology launched the forensic anthropology concentration for undergraduate students in 2019 after 34 years of training graduate students. Forensic anthropology focuses on studying the human skeleton to help solve crimes. Now about one quarter of all the department's freshmen express interest in this concentration, in which four undergraduate courses allow students to get direct experience with the Forensic Anthropology Center (FAC).

In 1987, Professor Emeritus Bill Bass established the center, which boasts the two-acre Anthropology Research Facility (ARF), better known as the Body Farm, where scientists use research and training to study body decomposition. The Body Farm is the oldest established facility of its kind.

At the heart of the FAC is its body donation program that culminates in the Bass Donated Skeletal Collection, which is comprised of more than 1,800 individuals and is the largest collection of modern skeletons in the United States. Each donation educates, trains and provides a research resource in the study of what happens to a human body after death. Additionally, the skeletal collection has become an important resource in studying modern Americans. An additional 5,000 registered future donors may add to future progress in the field. The average length of time for a donation to be at the Body Farm is two years.



*Dawnie Wolfe Steadman serves as the director of the Body Farm, which boasts an international reputation.*

FAC forensic anthropologists assist agencies throughout the country and serve as expert witnesses. Time can be an important factor when trying to identify a possible perpetrator and victim. The FAC runs annual training courses for the FBI and has welcomed international groups of investigators from all over the world.

In FAC's longest-running research project, which began in 2014, researchers focus on developing tools for capturing identifiable biometrics (fingerprints, face and iris scans) of deceased people to determine how long after death they can be identified. On another project, experts are teaming with researchers from the UT Institute of Agriculture in a multidisciplinary project to determine whether the nutrients released by a decomposing body might alter the coloration of a tree's leaves enough to aid in a search for a missing person. Additionally, forensic anthropologists are studying how medications in the body impact decomposition rates and developing a protocol by which blunt-force injuries sustained at the time of death can be discriminated from fractures produced by burning.

**For more information about the FAC, visit [fac.utk.edu](http://fac.utk.edu).**



# The Other 6.5 Billion

*UTHSC Addresses Global Health Challenges*

BY PEGGY REISSER | COURTESY PHOTOS

**When surgeon Dr. Denis Foretia was growing up in Cameroon, he loved playing soccer. Every time he played, though, his knees would swell so badly it became difficult to walk.**

“My mom took me to see one of the few doctors in the town of Buea, where I grew up,” he says. “It was there that I first met Dr. Sundjo Motaze, a brilliant and very well-dressed surgeon. I was very impressed by how he was able to treat me but also frankly surprised at the very long lines of patients who waited for hours under the tropical sun for a consultation. This was my personal introduction to the world of medicine, and it piqued my curiosity enormously.”

Now an assistant professor of surgery at the UT Health Science Center (UTHSC), Foretia holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, a medical degree from Vanderbilt



*Dr. Denis Foretia operates with another doctor at Soddo Christian Hospital in Soddo, Ethiopia, in October 2016.*



*Makeshift wheel chair in Zambia*



*Dr. Nia Zalamea, left, with a coworker and patient in the Philippines.*



University, and Master of Public Health and Master in Business Administration degrees from Johns Hopkins University. Still, he has not forgotten his childhood introduction to the realities of medicine in Cameroon and has made it his mission to improve treatment, research and health outcomes in Africa.

“Growing up in Cameroon, a place where the hospitals do not really have much at all, and then training at a place like Vanderbilt and working at Hopkins, the discrepancy is huge regarding resources and what you can do and how the lack of resources affects the outcome and how it changes people’s lives,” Foretia says.

Foretia has joined other UTHSC faculty members with a similar desire to extend the university’s expertise and impact overseas and, at the same time, to bring back experience and knowledge to improve care at home.

From their passion, the UTHSC Center for Multicultural and Global Health (CMGH) was born. Its mission is to cultivate and leverage relationships with institutions locally, nationally and globally to expand student, resident and faculty access to multicultural health-care delivery, address global health challenges and train the next generation of global health leaders.

Foretia; Dr. Nia Zalamea, an assistant professor of surgery; and Dr. Austin Dalgo, an assistant professor of pediatrics and the director of the Center for Bioethics and Health Equity at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital, are the architects and the foot soldiers, along with others, behind the center. All three are experienced at overseas

health-care work. Each has a deep dedication to improving delivery abroad and bringing lessons learned back home.

“The mission of the center is to advance equitable and sustainable health across Tennessee and the world through knowledge, partnership and discovery,” says Dalgo, who has spent time during his medical career in Peru, Kenya and Zambia. “I believe our center is poised to serve as a hub within the university that connects partners and our center to the real needs of the world.”

Dalgo believes embracing health care beyond the confines of the university and its immediate partners is the ticket to advancing health equity in Memphis and elsewhere.

“As I often say to my learners, most U.S.-trained health-care providers understand the problems and diseases that face the 1 billion or so people living in high-income countries, but in our center, we are seeking to teach about and work alongside the other 6.5 billion,” he says. “I believe that our center will provide a forum for students and faculty to seek health equality through knowledge and experience, both locally and globally.”



*Dr. Denis Foretia*



*Above: NICU in Zambia; Background photo: A street scene in Zambia.*



*Dr. Denis Foretia with other UTHSC physicians (Drs. Austin Dalgo and Ken Busby) and leaders of the Levy Mwanawasa University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, in August 2019.*

## GETTING STARTED

The Center for Multicultural and Global Health was born from experience gained through another outreach organization at UTHSC, the Global Surgery Institute (GSI). Founded in 2018 in the College of Medicine, the GSI was designed to anchor and support surgical mission work that was already being done across specialties.

A survey done during the organizational phase of the Global Surgery Institute showed that approximately 20 surgical faculty members were providing 58 weeks of mission work each year around the globe on their own time, Zalamea said. The physicians, including Zalamea, were donating their surgical skills to help people in China, Vietnam, Honduras, Nicaragua, India and the Philippines, among many destinations. They included ophthalmologists, plastic surgeons, pediatric surgeons, pediatric cardiac surgeons, general surgeons, surgical oncologists and more.

That survey also showed 60 percent of incoming residents were interested in doing international work as part of their training, and 65 percent to 70 percent of medical students had already been involved in international work prior to residency.

"That's a pretty moving statistic," she says. "Not only do they want it, but they've already engaged in it."

That didn't surprise Zalamea, who is well acquainted with surgical work overseas. Prior to the pandemic, she had done medical mission work annually in the Philippines since 1999 with her father, a nurse anesthetist, and mother, a nurse, both of whom were born in that

country and came to Memphis in the 1970s. The family founded the Memphis Mission of Mercy, a nonprofit to provide health care to their home country.

Dedication like this from her professors inspired medical students like Janyn Quiz, who grew up in the Philippines, to join the GSI.

"I'm really grateful for my country, and I want to give back to them as much as I can," says Quiz, who graduated in May.

"It has been shown that, when folks go and train even two weeks abroad, especially at the residency level, it really fundamentally alters the way they deal with costs in a hospital," Foretia says. Having seen and performed surgeries in places with a fraction of what is available in the U.S., physicians are inclined to be more conscious of costs, waste and impediments to care, he says.

Foretia traveled to Africa many times in recent years until the global pandemic put that on hold. The most recent trips to Zambia helped Foretia and Dalgo establish a partnership with Levy Mwanawasa Medical University in Lusaka, Zambia, that allows the institutions to collaborate in clinical-care delivery; in teaching medical, nursing, pharmacy and other



*In Zambia, left to right, Nathan Mowa (professor of biology at Appalachian State University and Honorary Professor of International Relations at Levy Mwanawasa Medical University), Dr. Denis Foretia (UTHSC general surgeon), Dr. Austin Dalgo (UTHSC internal medicine-pediatrics), Dr. Ken Busby (former UTHSC resident and now a pediatrician in the Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Emergency Department).*

health-care students; and in research. UTHSC has secured equipment to replace some outdated machinery in the hospital in Zambia, and while the affiliation agreement, initially set to last three years, does not involve a financial commitment, it is resulting in cooperation among students and faculty of both institutions.

A new effort, the Herbert Shainberg Scholars Program, will provide medical students with the opportunity to study





*Dr. Ken Busby taught Neonatal Resuscitation and Helping Babies Breathe to medical students in Zambia.*

there, to facilitate learning the various cultural, ethnic and religious aspects of providing care.

## OUTGROWING ITS ROOTS

So many UTHSC faculty members and students are now interested in or involved in health outreach in the U.S. and abroad that it became clear the effort was bigger than the GSI.

“Most of the work that is being done is not necessarily restricted to surgery or surgical subspecialties. It is all-encompassing, including global health in general in addition to surgical care, but it also includes the real need that we have across UTHSC to really better understand multicultural care delivery,” Foretia says.

As the new Center for Multicultural and Global Health moves forward, a steering committee of university leaders across UTHSC campuses is being formed, along with an advisory board of community leaders. New curricula are being added to better engage students and expose them to the multicultural aspects of health and delivery of care, as well as the global nature of health care.

Even COVID restrictions on travel have not stalled the mission.

“We have gone completely digital,” Foretia says. “And part of this digital transformation, which we believe is going to stay, is that we have increased our communication with our international partners. Our medical students and medical students in Zambia, for example, meet on a monthly basis to exchange ideas through a journal club.”

Plans for the Israel program are developing in order

at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel for four weeks. In exchange, Ben-Gurion University will send students to UTHSC for four weeks. This exchange will enable both UTHSC and Ben-Gurion students to study and learn about the multicultural context of health care in Israel and Memphis. Ben-Gurion University Medical School for International Health has extensive programming and opportunities, including work with the Bedouin community

to be ready once travel restrictions are lifted. International speakers have been brought in to exchange information virtually about COVID-19 response around the globe. The research collaboration with the medical university in Zambia is developing. And work in the Philippines continues long distance.

“The Philippines group has been super-active, though from a distance,” Zalamea says.

Since February 2020, the mission has distributed more than 80,000 N-95 masks to the Philippines, South Korea and Italy. In Memphis, it also distributed more than 50,000 N-95 masks to Regional One Health, Baptist Memorial Health Care, Methodist Le Bonheur Health Care, local nursing homes and testing centers as well as to schools in Bartlett, Millington, Frayser, Arlington and Lakeland.

“The message we are trying to send is that, at UTHSC, we are really looking to leverage our expertise in providing care locally and internationally to inform how we better train medical students and residents coming out of our program,” Foretia says.

The center provides a home to faculty, residents and students who want to address health equity locally and globally.

“The word ‘global’ can be a misnomer for both

Global Surgery and Global Health,” Zalamea says. “At the end of the day, students and colleagues need to be able to find the folks doing work in Malawi, just as they need to be able to find the folks doing work in the Klondike Smokey City community in Memphis. The needs may be very different, or very similar, but at the end of the day, the more opportunities we give ourselves (as a UTHSC community) to do the work we are passionate about with regards to understanding the needs of the underserved and acting to address those needs, the better our community will become.” ①



*Department of Surgery members volunteer on missions in many countries. Pictured on a past surgical mission in the Philippines are: from left, Dr. Jeremiah Deneve; Dr. Jennifer Gordon, chief resident; and Dr. Martin Fleming.*



# Not Lost in Translation

*Tennessee Language Center Trains Medical Translators*

**BY SUSAN ROBERTSON | COURTESY PHOTOS**

**At the physician's office, it can feel as if doctors are speaking a foreign language when discussing a diagnosis. Now, imagine that same scenario if English is not a native language.**

A relatively new career field aims to help Tennesseans who need interpretation services in a medical setting. The Tennessee Language Center (TLC), an agency of the Institute for Public Service, is in its fourth year of providing medical interpretation training. The intensive training combines classroom instruction and clinical

hours at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC). The TLC training is one of a few in the country that includes the clinical requirement.

The training concludes with an oral exam. Following the training and exam, the students are strongly encouraged to become certified through the National Board of



Certification for Medical Interpreters or the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters prior to pursuing employment in the field.

“Our training has gained traction as it has progressed,” says Sarah Ryan, interpretation training specialist for TLC.

In the inaugural 2017 class, 15 students enrolled, followed by 17 in the second year and 28 in the third year. In its fourth year, 22 are undergoing training.

“I have gotten excellent feedback from all the doctors that I work with,” says TLC graduate Maria Del Villar. “They have noticed a new side of my interpretation. I have you, your course and all of the amazing teachers we had to thank.”

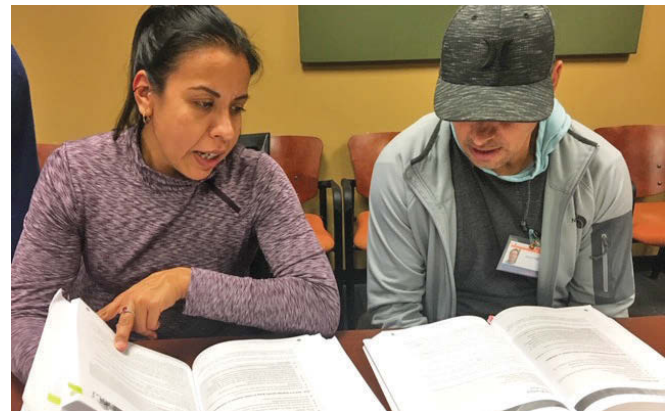
Throughout students’ tenure in the medical interpretation program at TLC, they employ their fluency in both English and their best, second working language. The program has served students who speak Spanish, Arabic, Russian, French, Swahili and Sorani-Kurdish. This semester’s Arabic-speaking majority is joined by one Russian-speaking and three Spanish-speaking students.

The TLC medical interpreter program started four years ago as a partnership with VUMC.

“We were facing a dilemma of hiring from skilled interpreters, and I was tasked with coming up with a solution,” says Hope Collins, VUMC manager of interpreter services. “I felt we needed a community partner for this because we weren’t equipped for the classes, so I reached out to TLC and other groups. I used to work for TLC and felt they would be a great partner.”

VUMC employs 23 medical interpreters—most of whom speak Spanish and five who speak Arabic. They contract with vendors when they need other languages. Most hospitals in Tennessee offer interpretation services, whether using contractors or full-time staff members. **T**

**“I have gotten excellent feedback from all the doctors that I work with,” says TLC graduate Maria Del Villar. “They have noticed a new side of my interpretation. I have you, your course and all of the amazing teachers we had to thank.”**



*Erika Salas, left, and José Pedroza, right, work on an in-class activity.*



*Genevieve Linton, right, practices simultaneous interpretation using the transmitter while David Morales, left, reads from a script.*



*Sarah Rodriguez, a staff-certified medical Spanish interpreter, works with two students who are practicing their interpretation skills in one of the course’s simulated practice sessions.*



*David Morales, left, a medical interpreter and certified court interpreter, and Mayra Yu, right, a VUMC staff-certified medical interpreter, let Imelda Maronde, center, try on a headset transmitter that is used for simultaneous interpretation in conference or large group settings.*



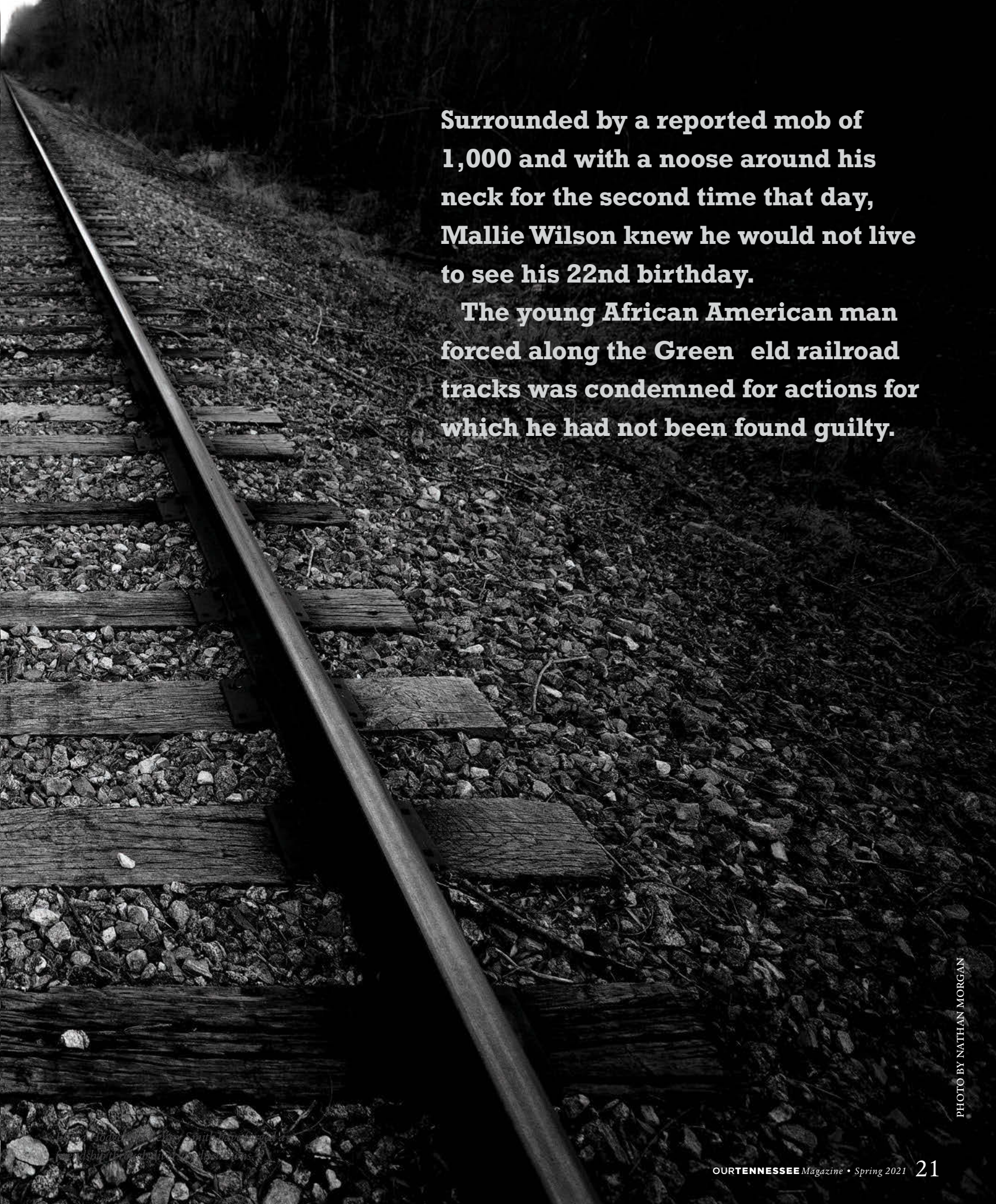


# Honoring Their Humanity

*Project Researches Weakley County Lynchings*

BY SARAH KNAPP | NATHAN MORGAN AND STEVEN MANTILLA





**Surrounded by a reported mob of 1,000 and with a noose around his neck for the second time that day, Mallie Wilson knew he would not live to see his 22nd birthday.**

**The young African American man forced along the Greenfield railroad tracks was condemned for actions for which he had not been found guilty.**

PHOTO BY NATHAN MORGAN



The mob accused Wilson of entering the bedroom of Shelia White, a white woman, after dark. Yet she could not identify who came into her room. She “saw it was a negro,” according to the newspaper article at the time. Wilson, who knew Shelia and her husband, James Plummer White, was taken into police custody but was seized by a violent mob on the way to the jail. Members of the mob tied Wilson to a telephone pole with a noose around his neck to await James White to fulfill his duties as executioner. When James White refused to partake in the lynching, Wilson was returned to jail. Later, the mob returned, forcibly removed him from jail and marched him down the railroad tracks to the church he attended on the edge of town.

On Sept. 4, 1915, the eve of his 22nd birthday, Wilson, an innocent man, was hanged and slowly strangled to death while the violent mob jeered and cheered.

“The Dresden Enterprise newspaper article made clear that the purpose of the lynching was racial control,” Carol Acree Cavalier, a Weakley County researcher, says. “The very first paragraph says, ‘The sight of Mallie’s lifeless body was a silent yet impressive warning to the black man that he must keep his place.’”

More than 6,000 race-related lynchings occurred in the United States between the Civil War and World War II, according to research by the Equal Justice Initiative. Even in Weakley County, Tennessee, Wilson’s story is not an isolated incident.

But now the Weakley County Reconciliation Project—a nonpartisan community organization dedicated to facilitating conversations about race, racism and social injustice, in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative—is working to ensure their names are known.

“There’s no way that we will ever know how many

people were actually lynched, but this is a way to honor them. This is a way to put a spotlight on that period of time in our country where this was commonplace,” says Henrietta Giles (Martin, ‘84).

As Giles visited the Equal Justice Initiative’s National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, with her family, wandering through the hundreds of steel columns, organized by state and county, dedicated to the victims of lynchings, one specific memorial caught

Giles’ attention. She stopped to read on the memorial, “Weakley County, Tennessee: Loab Sanders, July 29, 1892; Lee C. Dumas, June 7, 1893; Edgar Bell, July 27, 1893; Bob Hudson, Oct. 8, 1893; Mallie Wilson, Sept. 4, 1915.”

“Seeing the Weakley County memorial made the issue of lynching more real. The gravity of taking in the memorial as a whole was immense, but seeing the names of people who walked around and lived their lives in the same space where I now live was powerful,” says Giles, a UT Martin communications instructor. “These memorials were a reminder of the horrors that took place in areas that mean a lot to me.”

She wanted to know more about the individuals. But she

also wanted to accomplish more.

During her trip to Montgomery, Giles learned the Equal Justice Initiative created each memorial column with a replica designed to be returned to its home county in honor of the victims. To obtain their respective memorials, however, counties must prove they are dedicated to eradicating racial division through community outreach programs.

Through her work with the UT Martin annual Civil Rights Conference, Giles found a group of Martin community members who had also visited the memorial and were trying to create a safe space to further



*Weakley County column at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Alabama.*





PHOTO BY STEVEN MANTILLA



**A Young Negro Lynched.**  
NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 1.—A young Negro named Loab Sanders was lynched in Weakly county for an attempted rape on the person of Marthy Stephenson, a ten-year-old daughter of Mack Stephenson, a well known and highly respected farmer of that locality.

#### TELEGRAPHIC BREVITIES.

There were 60 deaths from cholera at Mecca yesterday.

Iras Dumas, a negro, was lynched at Gleason, Tenn., Wednesday night, for an assault upon a young white girl.

While riding, James Gordon Bennett, proprietor of the New York Herald, fell from a coach in Paris, Wednesday, and was critically injured.

The Federal court by a majority of two to one, says that the world's fair gates must be closed on Sunday. An appeal was taken.

#### A MOB AT DRESDEN

Lynched Edgar Bell, Colored, for Killing Another Negro.

The Sheriff Resisted But Was Overpowered—Mob Was Comprised of White Men.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 28.—A special to the American announces the lynching at Dresden of Edgar Bell, colored, who killed Sim White, also colored, his brother-in-law. The coroner's jury returned a verdict of murder in the first degree. White was a negro of good reputation. Intense indignation was created by the killing. Yesterday morning at 1 o'clock a masked mob, said to have been composed of white men, broke into the jail, took Bell and hanged him in the suburbs of the city. The sheriff resisted, but was overpowered.

#### KILLED BY A MOB.

Bob Hudson Shot Down by a Mob While Defending His Wife.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Oct. 9.—News of an outrage and murder comes from Weakley County. Bob Hudson, a negro, was shot while trying to protect his wife from ten masked white men who went to his house at night and whipped her severely. The woman had given offense by having a white man (Parrish) arrested and fined for assault and battery. When the masked men reached Hudson's he called Mr. Harris, the white man on whose farm he lived, to his assistance. The gang opened fire on Harris and in the fight Hudson was killed. Mr. Harris has had Tom Parrish, a cousin to the man who was fined, arrested.

#### NEGRO NOOSED, BUT LIVES

Let Go When Husband of Alleged Victim Balks

By Telegraph.  
Dresden, Tenn., Sept. 4.—A mob early today overpowered Sheriff Lafon near here, seized the officer's prisoner, Mallie Wilson, a negro, and locked the sheriff in the jail. The negro was charged with entering the room of Mrs. James White.

A noose was tied around the negro's neck, but when Mrs. White's husband refused to be the executioner the mob returned the prisoner to the jail and released the sheriff.

understand what they had learned and experienced at the memorial. Soon after, the small group became the Weakley County Reconciliation Project, and later Giles was elected co-vice president. The Weakley County Reconciliation Project is working with the Equal Justice Initiative to bring the memorial home.

"The purpose of this group is to create a space for people to have conversations about race. That's the topic that a lot of people shy away from; they just don't know how to approach it," Giles says. "We thought it would be a good idea to have a place, create a forum for people to discuss this, to talk about it in a safe place, a safe space. There's no judgment. There are no harsh responses to people's experiences because our experiences are our experiences, and we are shaped by those. ... It's a way for us to understand each other better."

Giles says her experiences growing up in Stanton, Tennessee, in the 1960s and seeing her parents' involvement in the civil rights movement have influenced her as she continues to fight for equality and justice. Giles and her siblings were among the first to integrate the Haywood County schools.

"We were separated in class. There were only a handful of Blacks in each class, and we were not allowed to sit together. We were not allowed to have conversations together. So, it was just very strange," Giles says.

"I have no memory of playing on the playground because the whole idea was we were not to congregate or integrate with the white children."

After a bad experience on the bus, Giles' mother's words resonated with her.

"She told me, 'You're as good as anyone else,'" Giles says. "And I remembered that. That sort of planted that seed in me that I am as good as everyone else, and any opportunities extended to someone else, they should be extended to me as well."

Now Giles recognizes her parents' courage to place their children in a situation that wasn't always safe and admires their dedication to creating a better reality for generations of African Americans to come. She says their willingness to lead the way allowed her to pursue careers unusual for African American women at that time, such as working as a TV writer and producer or teaching at a predominantly white university.

Just as her parents helped to register voters in the civil rights movement, Giles feels her work in the media industry and with the Weakley County Reconciliation



Project is her way to continue her parents' mission to ensure equality for all.

"I feel like that it's very similar because there is still work to be done when it comes to equality, when it comes to social justice, racial issues. So this is just my way of being involved in something that does deal with racial justice and with creating a better understanding for people," Giles says.

Though remembering the lynching victims and telling their stories as part of the Weakley County Reconciliation Project has sparked a backlash against the group for "bringing up bad memories," Giles insists that the purpose is not to place blame but to honor the lives of the victims. Those involved in the lynchings have died.

"So it's not pointing fingers or trying to shame a community," Giles said. "It's a way to say this happened. It was awful, but we are going to remember this person. It's not making a big political statement; it's honoring a person. He was someone's son. He was someone's brother, friend, relative, and he does not deserve to be forgotten."

On Sept. 4, 2020, 105 years to the day Wilson died, Weakley County Reconciliation Project members traveled

to Greenfield to the location he was lynched and held a solemn commemoration of life in his memory. The group also took turns collecting soil from the area to send to the Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum in Montgomery to memorialize where Wilson drew his last breath.

**"So it's not pointing fingers or trying to shame a community," Giles said. "It's a way to say this happened. It was awful, but we are going to remember this person. It's not making a big political statement; it's honoring a person. He was someone's son. He was someone's brother, friend, relative, and he does not deserve to be forgotten."**

In the process of researching the victims listed on the memorial, Weakley County Reconciliation Project members uncovered three other race-related lynchings through newspaper clippings, including an unidentified boy on Aug. 24, 1869, and William and Edward Johnson on April 24, 1871. As they find more information about each lynching, the group will hold a ceremony for the victims, shining a light on lives lived.

"It's not a pleasant topic to talk about. I mean, lynching is a very gruesome

act, but the fact that this person lived and walked among us, and then they were killed, their life deserves recognition," Giles says. "Their lives deserve to be honored, where they aren't forgotten because these are not just isolated people. These are people who had families and other people who are connected to them. This is a way to honor their humanity." **T**



# Stress and Agriculture

## *How A New Network Will Offer Support*

BY BETH HALL DAVIS

FARMER PHOTO BY DEPOSIT PHOTOS | SEDGES PHOTO BY TORY SALVADOR

*Not everything is idyllic out on the farm.*

In rural Tennessee, Jack is gradually taking responsibility for managing his family's 500-acre farm. As the reins are handed over from his aging father, Jack learns that the last decade has seen an increase in loans for equipment purchases and regular budgetary challenges. He encounters a deep sense of fear that maybe he can't do this, after all. His family is counting on him, but as the bills and feelings of loneliness pile up each day, he wonders if they would all be better off without his help. For the first time in his life, Jack struggles to have a positive outlook. His thoughts even turn to the possibility of suicide.

While fictional, this account is too common across Tennessee and much of the nation. It's a particularly worrisome trend among those in agricultural and forestry careers. As these professionals experience the isolation and fear associated with operations like the one owned by Jack's family, the daily stress of life and the shame of possible failure often lead to tragic mental-health outcomes.

In Tennessee, a new effort aims to bring hope and intervention to those with stories like Jack's.


Heather Sedges (Knoxville, '03, '07, '10), an associate professor of human development in the UT Extension Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, is the principal investigator of the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network: Southern Region. The three-year, \$7.2 million U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant addresses individual- and family-level stress in farming, ranching and forestry occupations. In her role, Sedges leads 13 states and two U.S. territories toward establishing a hotline, website, resource clearinghouse,











e-academy and support groups specifically for agricultural-related professions. These objectives will be accomplished through dedicated action teams comprised of representatives from participating states. Three matching USDA grants support similar initiatives across the country.

Sedges is joined by leading partners such as the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, the UT Institute of Agriculture's MANAGE program, UT AgrAbility and the Tennessee Farmer Suicide Prevention Taskforce. Mental-health providers, health-care workers, industry organizations and other businesses that are influential in the lives of farmers, ranchers and foresters also are part of the network.

"Biodiverse ecosystems yield a healthier planet," Sedges says. "In the same way, addressing complex issues like rural stress and suicide requires diverse thoughts and approaches to achieve impactful change. There is no single way we're going to change the landscape of mental health, so we must learn from each other and collaborate with those outside our own disciplines and our own states in ways that create systemic outcomes."

Sedges is a scholar with UT's One Health Initiative, which has allowed her to work across disciplines to better understand the factors influencing stress and how it can be remediated in sustainable ways. Including family and consumer sciences experts, along with agricultural economists and communication experts, helps create real-life solutions that are more likely to resonate with those working in agriculture. Humans can't be removed from the equation when addressing stressors that affect farm and ranch management, so it is imperative to include human-development experts on this journey.

"Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, stress in our daily lives had a great impact on our mental health and well-being," continues Sedges. "And stress will always be there in one form or another. One reason we're taking a long-term, multi-disciplinary and sustainable approach to combatting stress is because it isn't going away. Ultimately, we're getting to the root causes of the issue."

Across the United States, suicide remains a leading cause of death, with continuously increasing rates observed during the past 20 years. From 2000 to 2016, the rate rose from 10.4 to 13.5 per 100,000 people, according to a National Center for Health Statistics analysis of data from the National Vital Statistics System.

Rates in Tennessee are higher than the national average, with white, middle-aged men at the highest risk with 24.8 deaths per 100,000 versus the national average of 20 deaths per 100,000. Other major risk factors impacting Tennesseans are a lack of access to care and treatment, rural locations that increase feelings of isolation, and substance and alcohol abuse.

With the support of a different \$325,000 USDA grant, another team of UTIA researchers is working to combat the opioid crisis in Tennessee and lessen the impact of substance abuse on the lives of rural Tennesseans. While the stressors may be related and even intertwined, approaches that address both substance abuse and suicide are desperately needed, Sedges says.

Ultimately, the goal is to increase outreach to those in crisis, particularly those isolated in rural situations, and make it less daunting for them to reach out for support. Tangibly, this means increasing the capacity for professionals to connect with rural communities and increasing the ability and willingness of those in distress to access care through peer support networks and other available resources, like hotlines, online trainings and direct outreach and programming. The network also hopes to develop a comprehensive understanding of factors contributing to stress in rural communities and comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies to help individuals manage the stress of daily life.

"We want to see fewer families and communities impacted by suicide," says Sedges. "Farmers, ranchers and foresters provide for our families and communities in healthy and sustainable ways. Now, it's our turn to help them get healthy, too." ❶

"We want to see fewer families and communities impacted by suicide," says Sedges. "Farmers, ranchers and foresters provide for our families and communities in healthy and sustainable ways. Now, it's our turn to help them get healthy, too."

# Part of the Solution

*UTC Students Assist With Vaccinations*

**BY SHAWN RYAN**

**PHOTOS BY ANGELA FOSTER  
AND CHI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

**T**he vaccination process worked as efficiently as an assembly line.

Nurses at CHI Memorial Hospital in Chattanooga loaded syringes with the COVID-19 vaccine.

They handed the syringes to students from the School of Nursing at UT Chattanooga.

Students injected the vaccine into patients' arms and tossed the used syringes into medically approved trash bins.

Then everyone did it all over again. And again. And again.

Depending on the day, as many as 400 vaccinations might be given in a four-hour shift, says Phan Nguyen, an UTC level-one nursing student who worked some of those shifts.

"I remember, at one point in the first hour, we had 170 people come through. That was a record," he says.

Nursing students from UTC not only volunteered at CHI Memorial and other Chattanooga hospitals. Standing outside, facing never-ending lines of cars, they gave vaccinations at multiple locations set up by the Hamilton County Health Department. They visited senior and assisted living facilities managed by the Chattanooga Housing Authority.

"It was just very eye-opening to be able to be a part of something that has taken such a toll on the society we live in and to be able to help change that," says Briley Hurd, a level-two nursing student.

Students also were involved in routine testing and vaccination of UTC students, faculty and staff.

"Whether it is providing community COVID testing, participating in contact tracing efforts or providing immunizations, the School of Nursing students and faculty have been on the forefront in filling the staffing void," says Chris Smith, director of the UTC School of Nursing. "We certainly hope this is a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic.

We have tried hard not to miss the opportunities for service this response required."

Nursing senior Emily Hohenbrink was already working at CHI Memorial in its COVID-19 ward when



she volunteered to give the vaccine.

"It's been very nice to know that I can have an impact on people and help people," she says.

Some nursing students squeezed the vaccination volunteering into schedules already packed with classes, clinicals, studying and life in general.

"I definitely think it was worth it to work around my schedule, to be able to have that experience," Hurd says.

Many of those being vaccinated were medical personnel, and it was a bit daunting, she adds.

"It's very intimidating giving these vaccines to doctors and nurses," she says. "But it was really cool to see the people who have been working the front lines during this whole pandemic."

Janelle Reilly, CEO at CHI Memorial Health System, calls the nursing students "God's warriors."

"Words cannot express our gratitude to your nursing students for assisting with our health-care worker vaccination clinics," she says. "Bless each one of you."

Hohenbrink says she felt a bit of trepidation when giving the vaccine, worrying, "Am I doing this right? Am I going to hurt or help the patient?" But those feelings were quickly quashed.

"As a student, you're always going to have that fear in the back of your head, but I think one of the biggest things I regret not doing in nursing school is trusting myself and giving myself credit.

"I've gotten through these four and a half years, and I've learned all this stuff. It's there. I just need to trust myself and do it. I know what I'm doing."

Smith says it is important for the students to be an active part of the solution.

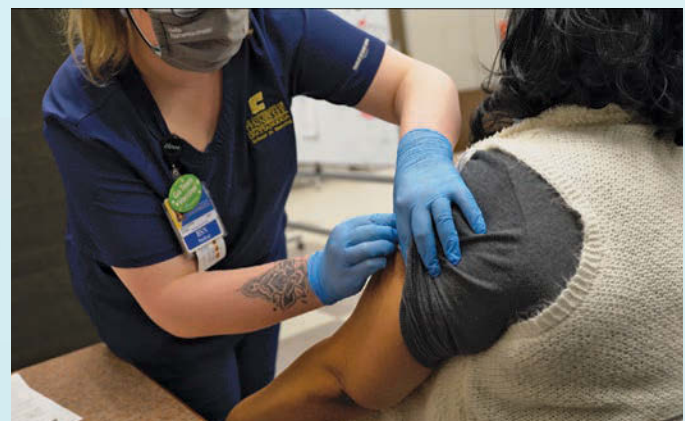
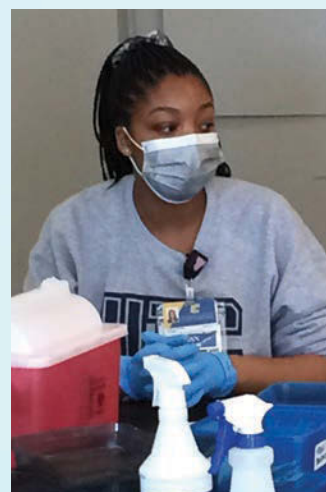
"When they are asked in years to come, 'What did you do to help resolve the COVID-19 pandemic?' every one of our students should be able to respond that they played a significant role," Smith says.

Nguyen agrees there's pride in being involved in a process that may stop the spread of COVID-19. Being a part of history is something they will carry for the rest of their lives.

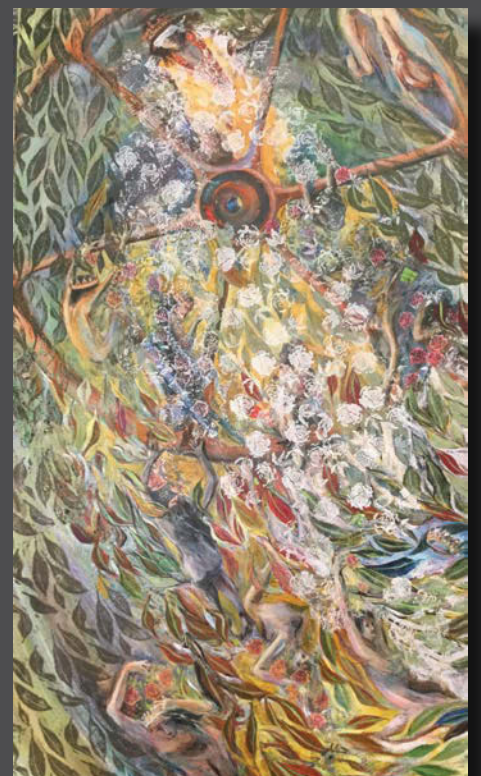
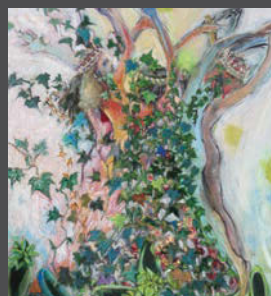
"That's something like I can reflect on and tell my kids that I got to help fight a pandemic," Nguyen says. **T**

*Additional content online.*

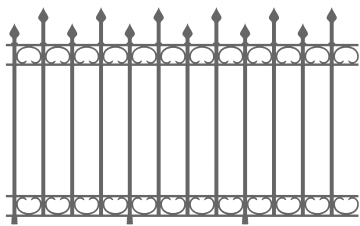
*UT Chattanooga nursing students helped to vaccinate patients at CHI Memorial Hospital and senior citizens at Dogwood Manor.*



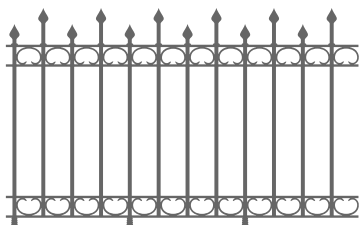








# ART UNFENCED



*Alumna Turns Fence  
Into Outdoor Gallery*

BY JENNIFER SICKING

PHOTOS COURTESY PAULA TEMPLE

*With art galleries  
closed throughout  
France, Paula  
Temple, an artist  
living in the  
Champagne region,  
began displaying  
her art in an  
unusual gallery.*

**One hour from Paris** in the Aube, Champagne, region of France, Paula Temple (Knoxville '72) works in her studio creating paintings using reds, blues and yellows—brighter colors than she used to use. She also incorporates mixed media now into surrealistic and expressionistic watercolor and oil paintings.

Retired after 30 years teaching at the University of Mississippi, she allows herself to experiment and play in her studio in the village of Marnay-sur-Seine. For the past year, she's created new pieces, exploring painting figures. But, due to COVID-19 restrictions, she has missed her weekly meetings at the café L'Expressoire in Paris with other members of La Salonistas—an artist group of women from various countries—to discuss art. She misses visiting galleries.

She decided to do something about it. Much as La Salonistas members displayed their art behind windows or from balconies in Paris, Temple brought her art outside the studio to her small town with her Galerie du Trottoir, the sidewalk gallery. She began displaying it on the wrought iron fence enclosing her house.

"France is an incredible place, especially for artists," she says. "It's not just the other artists who are interested in you as an artist. It's everyone."

From weekends when the entire country celebrates poetry, art and music to children regularly taken to art museums and galleries, Temple says, "They have a really strong affinity for the arts."

Growing up in Memphis, Temple turned to art early as a career. After graduating from Memphis State University, now the University of Memphis, she journeyed across the state to UT Knoxville to study painting—the only woman in the Master's in Fine Arts program at that time.

"It's very immediate as opposed to sculpture and printmaking," she says. "I like to draw fast. I like to paint fast. It was just so much more scope in painting for experimentation, for color materials."

After graduating, she backpacked in Europe for six months, seeing the art she had spent years studying. Teaching led her to California, then the Peace Corps took her to the West Indies where she met her British husband before she landed in Oxford, Mississippi, teaching drawing and painting. Decades later, she received an invitation to apply for a residency in France. She first went in 2013 to Marnay-sur-Seine. In 2014, she returned to France for a residency at La Maison Verte. In 2015, she retired from teaching at Ole Miss and moved to France.

With her house located close to the botanical garden, café and bakery, the townspeople regularly stroll by and for the past year—except the winter months—on the weekends expect to see about 10 of Temple's pieces displayed on the fence.

"One time I was over at a neighbor's house, and the work was out on the fence, and then it started raining real quick," Temple says. "I mean everybody in town was out here taking the work down. It was a real scramble."

Though she closed the gallery for the winter months, she reopened it in March.

"Who knows, but it may continue after COVID-19 is under control," she says. **T**



*Paula Temple and her Galerie du Trottoir*

## **“I’m going to look back at this**

and think we helped with that, we helped create a world that’s a better, safer place for our children,” says Jennifer Winbigler.

A passion for their community and a drive to create a safe environment for their three children led Brian (Knoxville ’03, Health Science Center ’14) and Jennifer (Knoxville ’06, Health Science Center ’13) Winbigler past the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic as they built solutions on a local level and helped break ground on hope worldwide.

Outside of their full-time jobs, Brian, an assistant professor in the UT Health Science Center Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Translational Science, and Jennifer, a hospitalist at Blount Memorial Hospital, run Winbigler Medical, where they provide general internal medicine services and on-site clinics in Maryville.

COVID-19 intertwined their personal and professional lives in a way that hadn’t existed before, and as schools opened back up, the Winbiglers saw a need in their local district. If teachers developed symptoms of COVID-19, they had to remain home until they could produce a negative test result. Those results could take a week or more, and teachers out of the classroom

were leading to children out of the classroom.

“It’s the kids who don’t have that support at home that are going to suffer, that have suffered, and it’s going to create an even bigger social disparity,” Jennifer says on the drive to help keep Maryville schools from going virtual.

Using their own money, Brian and Jennifer purchased \$5,000 worth of COVID-19 diagnostic tests and, through a relationship with a local lab, provided a 24-hour turnaround on results at no

charge to teachers. Before long, other essential workers reached out, and they went from helping maintain safety within the schools to safety throughout the community, performing tests on a daily basis.

Through their professional and personal lenses, they were seeing the effects of COVID-19 that went beyond the virus. They saw the strain on the health-care system, the influx

of patients and the difficulty in treating everyone quickly and efficiently. They watched their children deal with the changes in school and social routines and were all in when it came time to fight COVID-19.

Pre-virus, Jennifer spent a few days a month working as a sub-investigator on clinical trials with the Alliance for Multispecialty Research/ New Orleans Center for Clinical Research. It was

# A Better Place

*Restoring Safety Through Research*

BY JACKIE WISE | PHOTOS BY YASMIN MURPHY





*Jennifer and Brian Winbigler*





Brian and Jennifer Winbiger participated in the trials of four vaccines, and by doing so, Jennifer said she felt as if she could “help heal the entire world.”



there that she and Brian had the opportunity to take part in the trials of four vaccines, and they said the experience was unlike anything they had seen before.

Prior to the COVID-19 vaccines, the fastest vaccine developed was the Mumps vaccine, which took four years and was licensed in 1967. Since that time, technology has grown considerably, and scientists sequenced the entire coronavirus genome in less than a month. Brian, who managed the pharmacy throughout the trials, explained that knowing what parts of the virus that bodies recognize as foreign, and being able to sequence those parts in a laboratory setting, put the coronavirus vaccine development quickly ahead of anything else in history.

Also making history was the number of volunteers participating in the vaccine trials. The Winbiglers had people coming to them in the hopes of receiving the vaccine so they could hug their grandchildren again, go to their jobs protected and advance medicine to help end the pandemic.

"We didn't have trouble enrolling. People were coming to us, which in most trials we have to actively recruit, advertise and do all those things," says Brian.

Each phase of a clinical trial serves a different purpose in the study of safety, efficacy, dosing and adverse reactions, but the full process can take years. For COVID-19 vaccine development, researchers were able to run phases one, two and three concurrently, while maintaining the normal data collection and safety standards required.

This change to the clinical trial process allowed manufacturers to evaluate vaccine effectiveness and

generate scientific data to apply for an Emergency Use Authorization through the Food and Drug Administration. While the timeline seems fast, each vaccine is rigorously tested before approval.

Regarding the long-term side effects of the vaccines, Jennifer says, "We don't know the long-term effects of COVID, and honestly, the long-term effects of COVID scare me more than the long-term effects of a well-studied, well-investigated vaccine."

"If anything, the vaccine—if you get it and you should get COVID, it's lowering your risk of any complications and that main one being death," says Brian.

In addition to the reduction in severe outcomes, the vaccine also helps contain the virus from mutating into new variants. These variants can cause milder or more severe illness, alter the effectiveness of current treatments or change how the virus is spread.

"By reducing spread, you reduce the opportunity for the virus to mutate and change because, the fewer people

that it's exposed to, the less likely it is to adapt," Brian explains.

From helping maintain normalcy for children in their classrooms to finding ways to fight COVID-19 through vaccinations, the Winbiglers are hopeful that the work they have done, and are still doing, will create a better and safer world.

"As a physician, I can only help those that I can physically touch, usually, but doing this I feel like I can touch the entire world and help heal the entire world by doing the work that I did," says Jennifer. **T**

**From helping maintain normalcy for children in their classrooms to finding ways to fight COVID-19 through vaccinations, the Winbiglers are hopeful that the work they have done, and are still doing, will create a better and safer world.**

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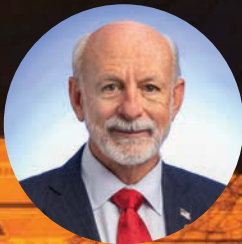
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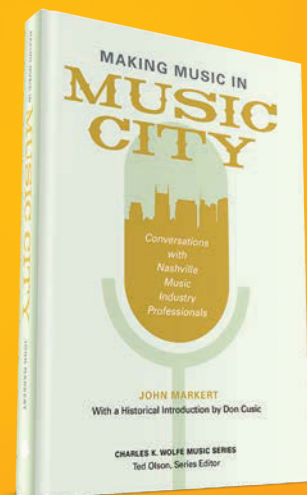
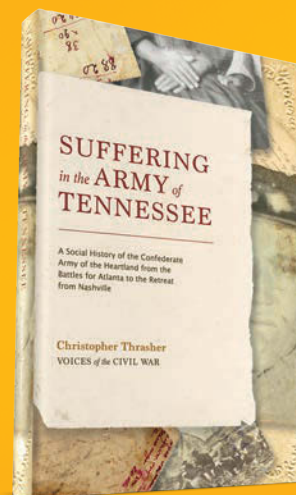
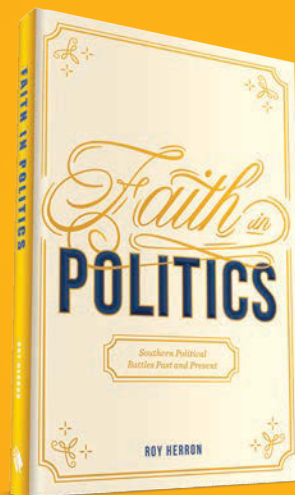
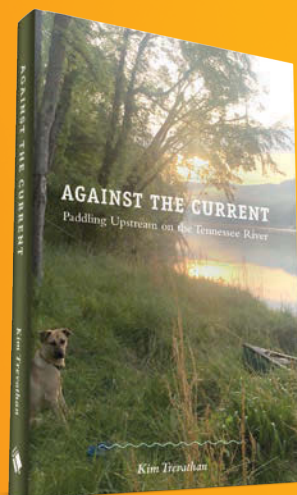
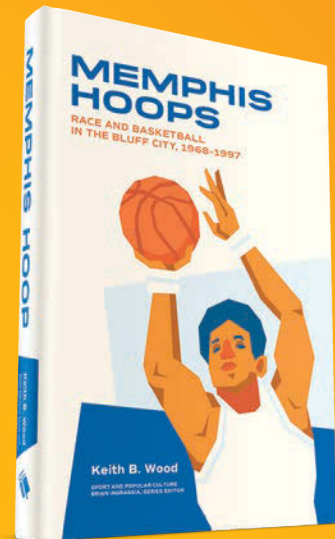
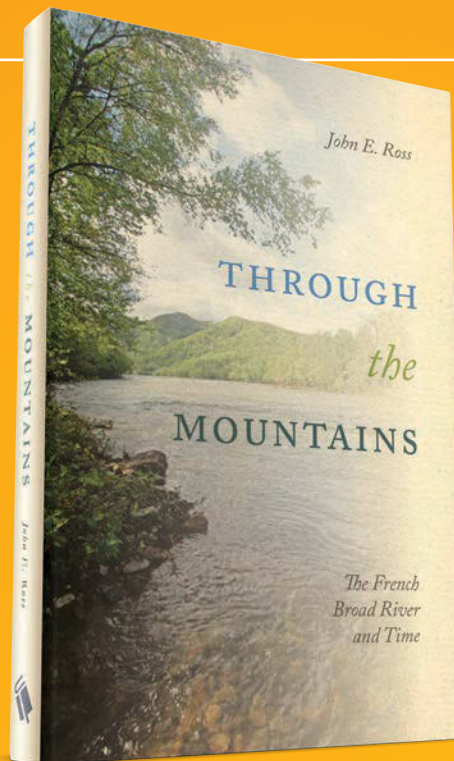
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## UT Board of Trustees Receives Award

In less than three years since the Tennessee General Assembly passed the University of Tennessee Focusing on Campus and University Success (UT FOCUS) Act, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees was selected to receive the 2021 John W. Nason Award for Board Leadership by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, the premier organization representing higher education governing boards.

“We are honored to be recognized by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges,” UT Board Chair John Compton (Knoxville ’83) says. “Our trustees have worked collaboratively and diligently to learn more about the UT System, to understand our roles and responsibilities as board members of a public, land-grant institution and to ask the difficult questions needed to ensure that the university fulfills its mission and helps the state of Tennessee prosper.”

## ORNL and UT Name Bienvenue Director of Oak Ridge Institute



*Joan Bienvenue*

Joan Bienvenue has been selected as the first executive director of the Oak Ridge Institute at the University of Tennessee, established in 2020 to align the expertise and infrastructure of Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the university in support of world-leading research and talent development. As director, Bienvenue also will serve as a vice provost at UT. She began her new position March 2021.

## Whitworth Appointed Vice President for Government Relations and Advocacy

Trustees appointed Carey Whitworth (Knoxville ’11, ’12) to serve as vice president for government relations and advocacy. Prior to this appointment, Whitworth served as associate vice president for government relations and advocacy. Whitworth has been with the UT System since 2012.

“There is no one more dedicated and passionate about UT and our service to the state than Carey,” says UT System



*Carey Whitworth*

President Randy Boyd. “She has nearly a decade of experience serving UT. She is exceptionally smart, a strategic thinker and tireless. I look forward to serving with her.”

## Trustees Approve Paid Parental Leave

During the winter Board of Trustees meeting, trustees approved allowing six weeks of paid parental leave within the first 12 months following the birth or adoption of a child. Employees will not be required to use any accrued sick or vacation leave. It can also be used concurrently with leave provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Tennessee Parental Leave Act.



*Left to right, Trustee Donnie Smith, Chair John Compton and UT President Randy Boyd in a meeting prior to COVID-19.*

## New Partnership Established with CGI

In February, CGI announced the establishment of a new information technology delivery center in Knoxville, where the company plans to create 300 local jobs, engage regional educators, support area workforce development

**CGI**

and provide opportunities for the community's students,

graduates and professionals. CGI is partnering closely with UT Knoxville on the launch of the center and will be working with the university to engage students across interdisciplinary programs in its Haslam College of Business and Tickle College of Engineering.

## Vol Nursing Students Step Up

In partnership with the Knox County Health Department and multiple campus departments, Vol nursing students began distributing the COVID-19 vaccine to eligible populations on campus. Over the past



two months, students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs have spent more than 600 hours volunteering to help distribute vaccines. Students gave out roughly 5,000 vaccines by early March. Student nurses continued to help administer vaccines throughout the semester.



*Avery Burnham*

## Future Vol Surprised with ROTC Scholarship

Avery Burnham, a senior at South-Doyle High School in Knoxville, received a surprise Zoom call from Lt. Col. Justin Howe, professor of military science and the director of UT Knoxville Army ROTC, with news that he'd been offered a four-year ROTC scholarship. Access and affordability are huge priorities for UT Knoxville's Army ROTC program; nearly 90 percent of its third- and fourth-year cadets are on scholarship. As Burnham prepares to begin a new journey at UT Knoxville this fall, he's looking forward to studying civil engineering.

## Two Residence Halls Renamed for Black Trailblazers



*Robinson Hall*

UT Knoxville leaders announced that two residence halls will be renamed in honor of Theotis Robinson and Rita Sanders Geier, two African American trailblazers whose fight for equity and social justice transformed the state's higher education system and the university. The UT Board of Trustees approved the renaming of Orange Hall for Geier and White Hall for Robinson at its winter board meeting. Both residence halls were constructed in 2016. Robinson is well known as the first Black undergraduate student admitted to the university and one of three Black students to fully desegregate the university in 1961. Geier, a Memphis native, is best known for the landmark lawsuit that sought to dismantle inequities in the state's higher education system. Both Robinson and Geier later worked for the university.



*Geier Hall*



## Martin Chosen for Educator Award



*Erika Martin*

a Martin (Chattanooga '12, '16) is one of 46 public school educators nationwide to receive the California

Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence by the National Education Association Foundation.

Named after the California Casualty Insurance Co., the award recognizes educators for their dedication to the profession, community engagement, professional development, attention to diversity and advocacy for fellow educators.

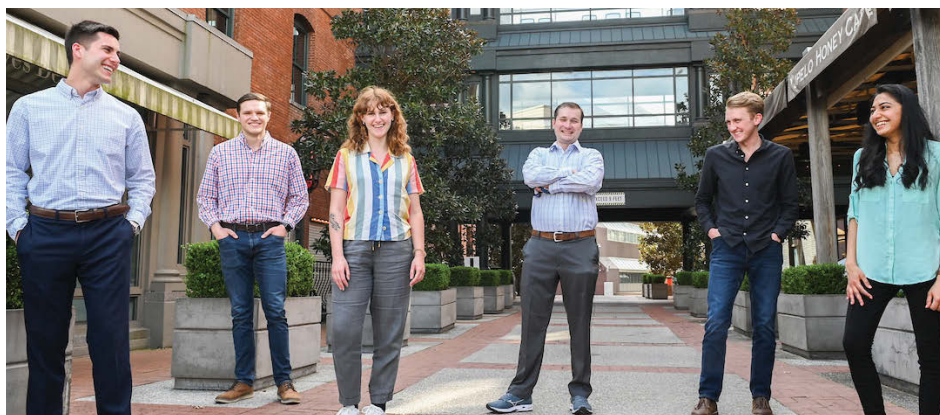
"Being a classroom teacher, and now an instructional coach, continues to provide opportunities to work toward positive changes in education for all students. That is what motivates me daily," says Martin.

She has been an elementary school instructor in the Hamilton County School System for almost 10 years.

## To the Rescue

UTC freshman Hannah Petty helped her father, Brad, a captain in the Chattanooga Fire Department, save a woman's life on the side of Interstate 24 west of Chattanooga.

The woman had been shot in the head by a man in a passing car. While her father was helping to stop the blood flow and stabilize the woman, Hannah spoke with a 911 operator, relaying



*From left, Drew Reynolds, Daniel Trentham, Leanah Chestnut, Associate Professor of Finance Hunter Holzhauser, Jacob Snook and Reedhi Bamnelkar*

medical information from her father.

"I went into it thinking, 'I'm going to do anything that I can do, kind of control the controllable,'" Hannah says.

The woman lived, and a man was later arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit attempted first-degree murder and unlawful possession of a weapon while committing a dangerous felony.



*Hannah and Brad Petty*

## Team Wins Statewide Competition for Fifth Time

For the fifth consecutive year, a team of UT Chattanooga students has won the Chartered Financial Analyst Institute Greater Tennessee Research Challenge.

The team—Jacob Snook, Daniel Trentham, Reedhi Bamnelkar, Leanah Chestnut and Drew Reynolds—are members of the SMILE Fund (Student Managed Investment Learning Experience) in the Gary W. Rollins College of Business. SMILE members research and make decisions on where to invest money from the UC Foundation.

For the competition, they analyzed SmileDirectClub, a Nashville-based direct-to-consumer medical technology company that provides clear aligners to help straighten teeth.

## 50th Birthdays Celebrated

Five National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternity and sorority organizations celebrated their 50th anniversaries at UT Chattanooga in 2021. Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta and Zeta Phi Beta sororities and Omega Psi Phi and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternities all opened chapters at UTC in 1971.



## New License Plate Unveiled

UT Martin released a specialty license plate that features the new Skyhawk attack logo created by DVL Seigenthaler, the Nashville office of global marketing and communications firm Finn Partners. The license plate design was selected through a university-wide survey conducted in August 2020 to update the previous plate which debuted in 2003. Of the three options provided in the survey, the tri-striped plate with the attack logo received over 40 percent of the votes. The license plates are available for purchase to Tennessee residents at local county clerk offices upon request.



main campus includes 250 acres, as well as a 680-acre teaching farm at which technical classes are held. The bike share program was created through a grant from the university's Center for Sustainability and has seen increased ridership since its debut.



*The Clark Family*

## Clark Family Donation Benefits Cattle Facility

UT Martin received a \$150,000 pledge by John Clark ('75 Martin), the interim director of the UT Martin Horace and Sara Dunagan Chair of Excellence in Banking, and his wife, Janie, to support the new Beef Cattle Research Facility. The state-of-the-art Beef Cattle Research Facility will be the

first of its kind in Tennessee and will provide hands-on teaching experiences for students preparing for careers in agriculture, animal reproduction, nutrition, genetics and health. Located on 80 acres of the UT Martin Teaching Farm Complex, the facility will house a classroom, laboratory, a large covered barn with cattle-working system and a meats lab to provide enhanced teaching resources and research opportunities.

## Corteva Agriscience Donates Drones

Corteva Agriscience, of Union City, donated 35 retired drones, valued at approximately \$35,000, to UT Martin to supplement three new courses premiering fall 2021 that will teach students the fundamentals of unmanned aerial systems and their emerging importance in the field of agriculture and natural resources



*Donated drones will help teach students the fundamentals of unmanned aerial systems.*

## Bike Share Program Implemented

UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences professors Emalee Buttrey and Sandy Mehlhorn established a free bicycle share program on campus to help students, faculty and staff travel across campus and the surrounding community. UT Martin's



*A new bike share program helps UT Martin faculty, staff and students travel across campus.*

management. Students will learn the fundamentals and operations of flying drones, and how to maintain and repair the equipment. The courses also will prepare them for the FAA pilot certification exam.





Walter and Lynne Fain

## Knoxville Couple Gives \$1 Million to College of Dentistry

Dr. Walter and Lynne Fain of Knoxville made a gift of \$1 million to help the UT Health Science Center's (UTHSC) College of Dentistry launch a dental training center in Knoxville.

The college's strategic plan is to place clinics across the state to help address the needs of those with limited access to dental care. The facility will be named the Walter and Lynne Fain Dental Center.

"The initial plan for the Knoxville training site is to establish a senior dental student clinical rotational site, followed by an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program," says UTHSC College of Dentistry Dean James Ragain. "Ultimately, we plan to provide a facility where approximately 40 dental students will complete their last two years of dental school in Knoxville."

Walter graduated from UT Knoxville in 1968 and the UT College of Dentistry in 1970. Lynne graduated from UT Knoxville in 1972. He has been in private practice in Knoxville for the last

50 years. Lynne has served as president of the UT Alumni Association and has chaired the UT Alumni Past President's Council. She is currently a member of UT President Randy Boyd's President's Council.

"I realized I could make a difference and move this initiative forward," Walter says. "What would be more fitting than to return something to a profession I have enjoyed for 50 years and to the community where I have always lived? Practicing dentistry in Knoxville is not just what I do; it is who I am."



## UTHSC College of Nursing Opens Nurse-Midwifery Program

The UTHSC College of Nursing is now offering a Doctor of Nursing Practice Nurse-Midwifery option—the only such program at a public university in Tennessee.

The college recently received a four-year pre-accreditation from the American College of Midwifery Education and anticipates admitting its first cohort in August.

The program also is the only nurse-midwifery program in close proximity to Arkansas and Mississippi, where no program is offered. The first cohort includes a maximum of eight students.

The full-time plan of study for the program is three years, and the part-time plan of study is four years.

"We are pleased to bring this program to the Mid-South to improve access and outcomes for women, their babies and their families," says College of Nursing Dean Wendy Likes.

## Students Join Community Vaccination

Students and faculty from UTHSC joined volunteers from various local academic health-care institutions in Memphis to assist in the administration of COVID-19 vaccinations.

The university is working with the city of Memphis and UTHSC's clinical

practice partner, University Clinical Health, to staff the city's community vaccination distribution sites.

The volunteer workforce from UTHSC includes students from the colleges of Nursing, Medicine and Pharmacy.

UTHSC students have volunteered more than 4,924 hours in direct vaccination roles and 3,978 hours in vaccination support roles.



## UTIA Names New Dean of Extension

A veterinarian, beef industry partner and expert in teaching and community engagement

has taken the reins as the new dean of UT Extension.

Ashley Stokes has joined the UTIA leadership team after having

served as associate vice president for engagement and deputy director of Colorado State University Extension. Stokes is the first woman to serve as dean of UT Extension. UT Extension includes agriculture and natural resources management faculty, specialists in family and consumer sciences and youth development, and strategically located county agents who work with all 95 local governments to provide adult learning opportunities while also managing Tennessee 4-H, the state's branch of the USDA's national youth development and leadership program.

"UT Extension is one of the strongest in the country with traditional programs that have been robust for more than 100 years, as well as new programs that are tailored to the ever-changing needs of our communities," says Stokes. "I am thrilled and honored to join these incredible Extension professionals."



Ashley Stokes

PHOTO COURTESY UTIA

## Tennessee 4-H Camping Reimagined

Parents and campers have been hopeful that in 2021 youth could return to the wild, so to speak. However, as spring approached, the decision was made to reimagine 4-H camping this year. If youth can't come to camp, then camp will come to the youth. A new camp-on-wheels trailer, complete with equipment and tools to provide hands-on learning and fun, will visit each county throughout the 2021 camping season. Precautions will be taken to ensure participants will remain safe and physically distant while still enjoying in-person interaction with counselors and friends.

Meanwhile, plans are in full swing for broader 4-H camping experiences once the pandemic has passed. Construction on the long-awaited overnight housing facilities—the cabins—and two wings of the science, technology, engineering and math



A rendering of overnight facilities at Lone Oaks Farm.

complex at West Tennessee's Lone Oaks Farm in Middleton began in March.

The first overnight campers are expected in 2022.

## Research and Education Center at Milan Expands

For decades, the UT AgResearch and Education Center at Milan has managed crops on property leased from the U.S. Army Milan Ammunition Plant. Part of the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act transfers some 900 acres from the ammunition plant to the university. The Milan AgResearch Center is internationally known for its contributions to soil conservation advances through the research and development of no-till agricultural production techniques, including work to understand the rate of soil erosion experienced under different cropping systems, pesticide movement through air and water, and precision farming systems.

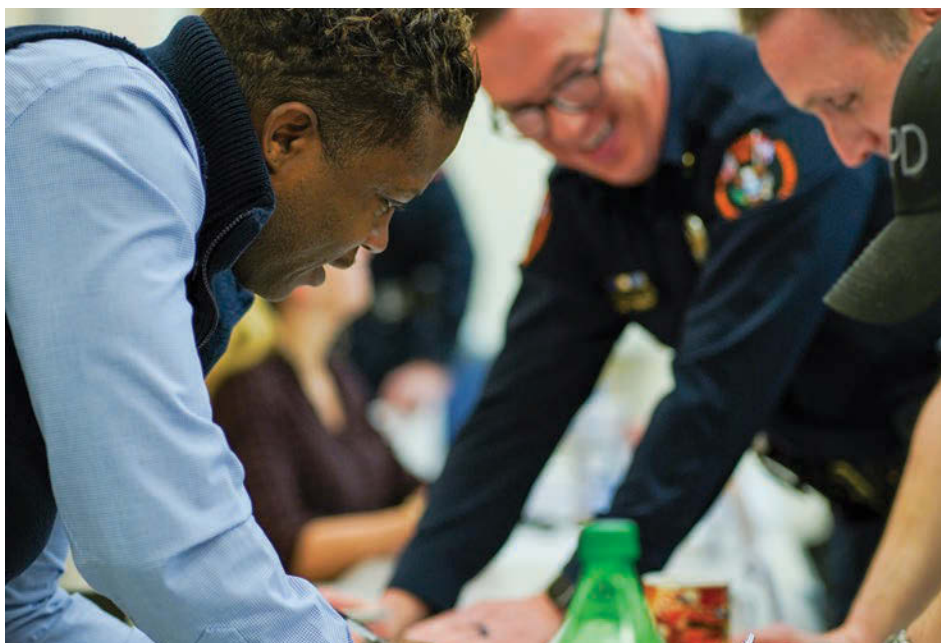
## A Special COVID Commencement

The College of Veterinary Medicine conferred 47 degrees, including Master of Science, Ph.D. and Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine. The Herbert College of Agriculture added some 245 students (Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Ph.D.) to the rank of alumni. Among them is Bill Dance, famed advocate for wildlife and fisheries management and host of *Bill Dance Outdoors*. Dance was awarded an honorary Doctor of Natural Resources for his work and for his support for UTIA and the Vols.



Bill Dance





*The Law Enforcement Innovation Center began training UT police officers in its Cultural Competency program, which was developed in partnership with the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.*

## Law Enforcement Innovation Center Rolls Out Cultural Competency Training

The UT Law Enforcement Innovation Center (LEIC) launched its Cultural Competency training in March, with members of the UT Police Department as its first students. All UT law enforcement will receive the training before it is launched nationwide.

“LEIC has created a national certification program for law enforcement agencies across Tennessee and nationwide,” says Rick Scarbrough, LEIC executive director. “This training will increase diversity in law enforcement and examine perceptions, stereotypes and cultural assumptions.”

LEIC is offering this training in partnership with the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles to meet the critical need of increasing diversity, cross-cultural competency and minimizing biased-based policing.

## Inaugural Administrative Professionals Academy Class Graduates

Nine administrative professionals from within the Institute for Public Service and the UT System recently graduated from the first Administrative Professionals Academy, a program operated by the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership.

This first cohort began its journey in April 2019. Over the course of the two-year program, the group met quarterly to learn about different leadership principles and concepts, build its professional networks and gain insight into students’ own leadership strengths.

The administrative professionals who completed the program:

Alison Ross – *UT System*  
 Amy Hall – *Law Enforcement Innovation Center*  
 Angie McLemore – *IPS Administration*

Doree Brown – *UT System*  
 Felicia Roberts – *Center for Industrial Services*  
 Kelley Myers – *Municipal Technical Advisory Service*  
 Linda Arms – *Center for Industrial Services*  
 Malea Hinson – *County Technical Assistance Service*  
 Sharon Sexton – *Law Enforcement Innovation Center*

## Center of Industrial Services Receives Additional CARES Act Funding

The Center for Industrial Services (CIS) is one of three organizations to receive \$5.5 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Recovery Assistance grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help the state of Tennessee prevent, prepare for and respond to coronavirus.

CIS operates the EDA University Center for Tennessee. The agency will receive \$1 million to implement a Business Continuity Planning program in support of the Tennessee Manufacturing Resiliency



Initiative, a statewide effort to enhance resiliency of manufacturers to mitigate pandemic-related losses and to bounce back from disruptions to the economic base. The project will be matched with \$255,960 in local funds.

These projects are funded under the CARES Act, which provided EDA with \$1.5 billion for economic assistance programs to help communities.

# The last word



## Better Days Ahead

### *Loosening the Grip on the Big Life Plan*

By Erin Zammatt Ruddy

#### About a month into my sophomore year, my mother came down from New York to visit.

She offered to do laundry for my roommate and me.

"Where's the detergent?" she called.

"It's right there," I said pointing to the bottle on top of the machine.

"Erin, that's fabric softener!"

Turns out we'd been washing our clothes without detergent for weeks. Whoops!

By the time I graduated, I did know the difference between Snuggle and Tide, and I'd picked up a few other skills, too. I felt ready to go do big things and make my beloved journalism professors proud. I had a *Plan*. I moved to New York City and started working at *Glamour* magazine, which was a lot like the magazines you see in movies except the people were much nicer and my clothes were mostly from the Gap. I was living the life I had always dreamed of, and anything seemed possible.

Then, just a year after I'd left Knoxville, I was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia, and it brought my world to a screeching halt. I went from researching articles on love and relationships to researching doctors and treatment plans and, yes, Googling my chances of survival (five years without successful treatment).

Ultimately, a new drug saved my life and continues to do so. Nearly 20 years later, I'm not just surviving; I'm thriving. (My oncologist likes to tell me I could run a marathon if I wanted to—I don't.) Those early years when my cancer was all encompassing seem distant to me now. But I look back to remind myself what I endured and how I pivoted and persevered. I shared my experience as a young cancer patient in the pages of *Glamour*. I became a patient advocate and traveled the country, raising tens of thousands of dollars for research. I loosened the grip I had on my Big Life Plan and allowed other, completely unexpected things in—honing life skills that are way more important than laundry (sorry, Mom). Rolling with life's inevitable punches became a go-to tool for me, one that definitely came in handy last year.

Am I saying I was prepared to face a global pandemic with three kids at home and a book to launch? Not exactly. Like everyone else, I was sad, frustrated and worried. I felt unproductive and helpless and watched a lot of Netflix and ate a lot of bread.

But I also knew what it was like to feel like all the things you'd worked for were taken away, and I remembered that sometimes Big Plans need to be rewritten. Most importantly, I was kind to myself. I let myself off the hook and lowered my expectations for a bit. And I shared these lessons with my children (when I wasn't

yelling at them to log onto their Google meets). They may not always have perfectly washed and folded clothes at the ready (I still haven't quite nailed that skill), but they do know how to reframe a negative situation, how to find the silver linings, how to give themselves grace when needed but also how to keep going. And they know how important it is to hang on to hope that better days are ahead. Because they always are. **T**



Erin Zammatt Ruddy (Knoxville '00) is the author of the new book *The Little Book of Life Skills: Deal with Dinner, Manage Your Email, Make a Graceful Exit and 152 Other Expert Tricks (yes, laundry is one of them)*. She lives in New York with her husband and three kids. Follow her on Instagram @erinzruddy.



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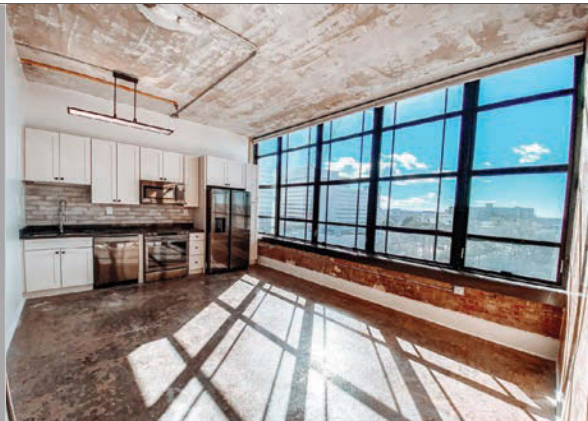
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