

UT journal

The Publication for The University of Tampa **SPRING 2018**

Not a Job, a Calling

**New UT partnership
trains future leaders
of high-needs schools**



Today's the Time to Create Tomorrow



ONE EXPRESSION OFTEN QUOTED AMONGST HIGHER EDUCATION is that universities are either in a capital campaign or are planning a capital campaign.

Is this true of UT? Absolutely.

We are fortunate to be in the final stage of a current comprehensive capital campaign, as I am pleased to announce that we have surpassed our \$150 million goal.

We have several weeks left before our final campaign closing date, and we are urging UT friends and community members to be a part of this successful campaign. You still have time to make a difference in the future lives of students and to be a part of this historic effort.

More than two years ago we celebrated that the campaign, *Creating Tomorrow* — *The Campaign for UT*, had already surpassed its original goal of \$105 million, an amount unprecedented for philanthropy at UT.

Today the *Creating Tomorrow* campaign — which is only the second capital campaign in UT's history — has taken UT to new heights. If you've been to campus recently you would have seen the results of this campaign firsthand, including new and renovated residence halls and academic facilities. You may also have heard of new academic programs — such as cybersecurity and physician assistant medicine — as well as our many new co-curricular programs. And you may well know students who have benefitted from new endowed scholarships.

We would not be celebrating without the dedication of the entire UT community, ranging from the campaign chairs and committees to every individual alumnus, student or friend who stepped up with a donation.

When we began this campaign about nine years ago, we did so knowing that one thing was certain — we owed it to generations of students and the community to secure UT's future as a nationally recognized university.

The campaign has achieved many campus initiatives. But most of all it has engaged thousands of people who value higher education and who believe UT can reach even greater heights. People who provided funding for new residence halls, people whose support helped launch the cybersecurity program, people who established scholarship endowments and the many who supported UT's annual fund.

As we look out on the horizon, we must continue to build our endowment and particularly seek more endowed scholarships for deserving students. We still need more student housing. We must be ready to fund innovative educational initiatives and support faculty development. And, we must build new academic facilities to replace old state fairground buildings that were constructed as temporary structures almost 100 years ago.

We'll be closing the books on the *Creating Tomorrow* campaign in just a couple months. And yes, as the adage goes, we will soon start strategizing for the next campaign. But, I urge you to take that step and make your gift to support UT students and faculty. At UT, every gift has impact and helps to change lives. Consider leaving your own legacy.

RONALD L. VAUGHN, PH.D.

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Editor's Note: We are proud to share that the *UT Journal* recently received an Award of Excellence in the Magazine II category from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education District III.

About the cover: Partnering with Hillsborough County Schools, a bold, innovative program at UT aims to give struggling schools a boost. Illustration by Ellen Weinstein

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news of note



The Fitness and Recreation Center is the fifth building on UT's campus to receive LEED certification.

A Green Building LEEDer

Fitness and Recreation Center Receives Silver LEED Certification

THE UNIVERSITY RECENTLY RECEIVED LEED® Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for its new Fitness and Recreation Center, which was opened in September 2016.

The Fitness and Recreation Center is the fifth building on UT's campus built in accordance with the rigorous standards set by USGBC's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building certification program. The other four buildings are the Science Annex and Jenkins Hall, which both achieved LEED Gold designation, and the Dickey Health and Wellness Center and the Maureen A. Daly Innovation and Collaboration Building, which both achieved LEED Silver designation.

The LEED rating system, developed by the USGBC, is the foremost program for buildings, homes and communities that are designed, constructed, maintained and operated for improved environmental and human health performance.

"The University of Tampa's LEED certification demonstrates tremendous green building leadership," said Mahesh Ramanujam, president and CEO of USGBC. "LEED was created to make the world a better place and revolutionize the built environment by providing everyone with healthy, green and high performing buildings. UT's Fitness and Recreation Center serves as a prime example of how the work of innovative building projects can use local solutions to make a global

impact on the environment."

Since its opening, the center has experienced a total of 168,628 student visits, and students have logged more than 4,800 hours on the Precor cardio equipment: treadmills; adaptive motion trainers; elliptical motion trainers; recumbent and upright bikes. An average of 48 group fitness classes are held each week, with an average weekly participation rate of 629 individuals.

"The University is committed to providing healthy, safe and efficient buildings for all students, faculty and staff," said UT President Ronald Vaughn. "The Fitness and Recreation Center is a well-utilized facility in the heart of campus. It is satisfying to have achieved LEED certification, while also meeting our facility goals."

"This PV array will have a very real and sizable positive impact for clean power generation."

— STEVE KUCERA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY

Generating Solar Power, Right On Campus

THE PROJECT BEGAN AS AN IDEA UP for discussion at the Faculty Sustainability Committee. With their support, committee member Steve Kucera, associate professor of biology, wrote a detailed proposal to the UT Student Government (SG) Senior Gift Committee that asked for funds to pay for the purchase and installation of a photovoltaic (PV) array of solar panels on campus.

SG funded the proposal, which allowed for the purchase of 106 solar panels capable of generating about 35 kilowatt-hours and the inverters that convert DC power to AC power to tie in to the power grid.

But where to put them? Kucera consulted with UT and facilities leadership, and the decision was made to locate the array on the large flat roof over the historic Thompson Building

where there was already an 11 kilowatt PV array.

Installation occurred late in the Fall 2017 semester, and the system was turned on just in time for the new year. According to Kucera, the total power generation capacity is upwards of 46 kilowatts during peak sunlight.

The installation has been designed for future expansion, should another proposal be funded by SG or another organization.

"This PV array will have a very real and sizable positive impact for clean power generation and is another piece in the substantial portfolio of UT sustainability initiatives," said Kucera.

Plans are in the works to stream data from the array to the UT sustainability webpage, so visitors can both see the array and the power being generated that is being fed into the power grid.

CRIMINOLOGY PROGRAM CERTIFIED

The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) recently conferred program certification to UT's undergraduate degree program in criminology and criminal justice.

UT's program is the only criminology and criminal justice program in the state of Florida to receive the certification, and the ninth program nationwide.

This national program certification was the culmination of an 18-month effort to prove the program met or exceeded all programmatic standards designed by the ACJS. Its certification team revealed that UT met or exceeded all of the published standards and received the academy's full 10-year program certification.

Kayte Branch, associate professor of criminology and criminal justice and chair of the department, said the certification will give credibility to the program and to students who major in criminology and criminal justice.

"We had to review every course, every syllabus, every faculty member and every single piece of our program and what is offered," Branch said.

UT offers a B.S. in Criminology and Criminal Justice and minors in criminal investigations and criminology and criminal justice. At the graduate level, the department offers an M.S. in Criminology and Criminal Justice.



Faculty, staff and students collaborated on UT's newest solar array.

Bobby Bones Inspires Research on What Makes a Good Day

A REGULAR FEATURE ON BOBBY BONES' syndicated country music radio show includes members of his crew giving reasons why the day is good and how they can help others have a better one.

Avid country music fan Jennifer Wortham, associate professor of health sciences and human performance, self-proclaims she has drunk the Bobby Bones Kool-Aid.

"I believe in Bobby Bones and what he does. I'm all in," Wortham said.

In Fall 2016, Wortham was teaching a first-year experience course to 16 Honors Program students, which was also an inquiry-based class. Students read Bones' book, *Bare Bones: I'm Not Lonely If You're Reading This Book*, and came up with a research project based on the mentality that every day can be a good day.

"We wanted to take a look at what makes college students have a good

day," said Jason Behnke '19. "Once we started gathering the data, we realized it could lead to higher retention rates."

Wortham's class designed a survey to ask their peers what things contribute to having a good day and what things detract, with the end goal to decipher whether the things UT is spending money on for student retention are the types of things students report as reasons for their daily happiness.

Behnke presented the findings, "Everyday is a good day: can universities apply *The Bobby Bones Show* and increase retention," at February's Florida Collegiate Honors Council Conference, and Wortham said they hope to submit a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal by the end of this summer.

"What's great is that a class project is being taken all the way through," Wortham said.

The team's hypothesis was that

students would find happiness in food options, availability of alcohol/drugs and sexual experiences. The results, while favorable for food, didn't include alcohol/drugs or sexual experiences. Instead, students were more concerned with the weather, their academic performance for the day and the relationships they had with their friends.

"Kids only picked those items 1 percent of the time, which we thought was pretty impressive, because that means that the kids on our campus are not thinking that drugs, alcohol and sex are factors in what allows their day to be good, which is great," Wortham said.

Of all elements mentioned by students in making their day good or better, around 50 percent were factors universities could control.

"Overall, many university fees do go into programs that focus on commonly mentioned dynamics related to student daily happiness," the team wrote in the presentation abstract. "However, universities may be overlooking simpler ways to increase student daily happiness beyond expensive programming."

Examples reported by students included having more opportunities to travel (such as off-campus trips to area theme parks, which currently sell-out when offered) and increasing hours and classes at the Fitness Center, attendance at which was highly reported as a factor in everyday happiness.

After the conference presentation, Wortham tweeted with photos of Behnke, "This happened today. Got a very positive reception. Student nailed the talk with enthusiasm. Thank you @mrBobbyBones and the @bobbybonesshow for the inspiration. Thank you @UofTampa for sponsoring," and she received a "hey hey. That's awesome," retweet from Bones as well as the show.

That day was indeed a good day.



CLOSING TIME On Dec. 29, 2017, Ray Mohler '20 was honored to ring the closing bell for the year at Nasdaq MarketSite in New York City thanks to his work as founder of the Little Saint Nick Foundation, a nonprofit whose mission is to make hospitals a kid-friendly place. The event included a welcome on a six-story digital billboard in Times Square, and was broadcast live across multiple TV stations.



Koterba's study explored links between narcissism, gender and selfies among emerging adults.

Narcissistic? Or Just Self-focused?

Study explores the reasons for selfie-taking in emerging adults

IN THIS AGE OF SMART PHONES AND social media, the rise of selfies, or self-portraits, seems inevitable. They have become commonplace, especially amongst millennials, leading to the perception of this generation as more narcissistic than their predecessors.

But is there a link between selfie taking and narcissism?

Erin Koterba, associate professor of psychology, and two of her students, Kaitlyn Ligman '17 and Faith Ponti '17, set out to investigate motives for emerging adults (ages 18–29) to take and post selfies to social media and to explore how gender and narcissism predict selfie-taking behavior.

For the study, they collected data from 276 emerging adults at the University through an online survey. Participants were asked to list motives for posting selfies to social media, and reported the number of selfies taken in the last week and whether

they were alone or with others.

They also completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-13, a questionnaire that measures three dimensions of narcissism.

"We predicted that narcissism, particularly grandiose and exhibitionistic aspects of narcissism, would be linked to selfies," said Koterba. "We expected

this relationship to be particularly strong for selfies taken alone rather than selfies taken with another person."

Of the 169 participants who reported a motive, six global motives emerged, with narcissistic themes — such as "I think that I am attractive, and I have no problem sharing that." — being the most common, for both males and females. Interestingly, there was no link between tendencies to report narcissistic motives for taking selfies and actual narcissism scores.

"We found that grandiose and exhibitionistic aspects of narcissism are indeed tied to selfie-taking," said Koterba.

Though no gender difference emerged for selfies taken alone, women took more than double the number of selfies with others per week.

Koterba gave a poster presentation of the research, "Get out of my selfie! Exploring links between narcissism, gender, and self-photography among emerging adults," at the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood conference this past fall, and a paper is forthcoming.

"I think it's becoming clear that selfies are not necessarily tied to narcissism, and that only certain aspects of it are related," she said, and suggests that perhaps the narcissistic tendencies seen in the study are just manifestations of the self-focus that defines emerging adults. "There's a lot left to study."

IMPROVE YOUR FINANCIAL LITERACY

From the basics of how to budget, save and manage income, to how to fund an education and plan for retirement, financial literacy is something we all need to develop. To help, the University has partnered with iGrad to provide the UT community — including alumni and parents — with access to their award-winning financial literacy platform. Create your own account on iGrad and take a look around. All alumni can access the site directly at www.iGrad.com/schools/UTampa.



Hanson was presented with the grant at the March 17 game between the Lightning and the Boston Bruins.

First-year Student Named Community Hero

ERIN HANSON '21 WAS GETTING READY for a Tampa Bay Lightning game when she received the call from the Lightning Foundation. She'd been named a Lightning Community Heroes of Tomorrow recipient.

The Lightning Community Heroes of Tomorrow award is a \$50,000 grant for individuals under 25 who are driving social change and having an impact on their communities. The first \$25,000 goes to her education; the second \$25,000 is awarded to her charity.

Working on behalf of Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) Tampa Bay, Hanson is developing a peer mentoring program for youth athletes, pairing high school students with students in

junior high, middle and elementary schools. She is launching the program in three high schools in Fall 2018, then hopes to add an additional seven the following year, building each year until Hillsborough County is covered.

"A statistic that kind of wowed me is that by age 13, 70 percent of students drop out of athletics. I'd like the high school student athletes to serve as mentors and someone to look up to, who could share their personal stories of athletics as well as promote PCA core values and everything gained from athletics," said Hanson, such as leadership, teamwork, dedication and self-motivation.

"I have applied these characteristics

in my personal and academic life," she said. "I have also learned skills of time management and conflict resolution, which have been helpful in my school, social and athletic life."

Deirdre Dixon, associate director of UT's TECO Energy Center for Leadership, crossed paths with Hanson three years ago when Hanson was a junior in high school. At the time, Hanson was serving as team captain for her volleyball, basketball and flag football teams, president of National Honor Society, vice president of her Senior Class Council, senior adviser of Key Club and a community volunteer as luminaria chairman for Relay for Life of South Shore for two years.

Since coming to UT in the fall, Hanson has jumped right in, becoming involved with the Honors Program, PEACE and Service Oriented Spartans. She is a UT Diplomat, President's Leadership Fellow and is on the crew team.

"I was very proud when Erin asked me to sponsor her for the Lightning Community Heroes of Tomorrow Award," said Dixon. "Erin is a doer. She takes the initiative and gets things not only completed, but she starts them and organizes them. That is true leadership."

"Self. Team. Game.," Hanson said, is PCA's mantra to focus on yourself to better the team to better the game.

"I loved all the principles they teach, the values and benefits of sport participation, not just competing to win," Hanson said. "It's about all the life lessons and values you gain from sports. It's something I didn't realize until I was in PCA."

UT Ideas Worth Spreading In February, two UT seniors hosted TEDxUTampa: Innovation and Development in the University's Falk Theatre. The event included talks from 12 speakers (half from UT, half from the Tampa community) on topics ranging from Bitcoin and digitizing health care to social entrepreneurship.



Welcome Aboard

FOR STUDENTS IN SELECT MARINE SCIENCE courses, part of their lessons take place on a floating classroom — the BIOS II. A custom-built 46-foot research vessel, the BIOS II replaced the old BIOS in September 2017. The boat is equipped with a hydraulic A-frame on the stern for deployment of nets, trawls and other sampling gear and can carry up to 24 scuba tanks and 12 divers. For longer, overnight trips, the BIOS II boasts sleeping quarters for four (or eight if they are good friends).



spartan sports



Timmons said he hopes to help the Rays win a championship "here in my hometown."

Home Base

Ozzie Timmons '91 returns to Tampa as first-base coach for the Rays.

AS A YOUNG BOY, OZZIE TIMMONS '91 dreamed of playing for the major leagues. He envisioned standing at home plate and hearing the sound of a homerun hit — the crack of the ball hitting the bat, followed by the long gaze into the outfield. Little did he know his dream would become a reality that would far exceed his expectations.

Born and raised in Tampa, Timmons began playing baseball at the age of 5 with games in the backyard.

"There was always a game waiting

around the corner," Timmons said. "We would play stick ball or strikeout when the Little League season was over. It only took three guys to play either one of those games, and all you needed was a stick and a tennis or racquet ball."

After graduating from Brandon High School, Timmons decided to stay local for his collegiate career to allow his family — mom, dad, two brothers and a sister — to continue watching him from the stands.

"I enjoyed everything about UT. It reminded me of high school because of the size. I had a chance to get to know a lot of the students outside of athletics," Timmons explained.

From 1989 to 1991, the UT Hall of Famer displayed an impressive performance as a Spartan.

"Playing baseball at UT was awesome. Half of our schedule was against Division I schools, so you always played the best competition," he said. "Our conference was just as good, if

not better, than some of the Division I programs. It always brought the best out of you as a player."

Playing in the Division II College World Series and being named All-American twice are two significant highlights from his time as a Spartan.

Timmons was drafted by the Chicago Cubs in 1991 and made it to the major leagues in 1995. The reality that he had achieved the career he once dreamed of was an incredible moment.

"Baseball was my job, and I couldn't have asked for a better job in the world," he said.

He spent time with seven different organizations — Chicago Cubs, Cincinnati Reds, Seattle Mariners, Tampa Bay Rays, Atlanta Braves, Arizona Diamondbacks and New York Mets. He spent five seasons in the major leagues, playing 142 games with the Chicago Cubs in 1995 and 1996.

"The Cubs will always be my favorite team, because they gave me the chance to live out my dream of playing in the Show (the major leagues)," said Timmons. "As far as I am concerned, anytime you have a chance to put on a professional baseball uniform it is considered to be the best in the world. I enjoyed every team I ever played for in the major and minor leagues."

After spending the 2005-2006 season with the Atlantic City Surf of the Atlantic League, Timmons switched roles from player to coach. The Rays hired him to be the hitting coach of the Low-A Hudson Valley Renegades in 2007. After that season, Timmons moved to the Single-A Columbus. He was then sent to the Double-A Montgomery in 2009. He held that position until he was hired as the hitting coach of the Triple-A Durham Bulls.

His big promotion, first base coach and assistant hitting coach with the Rays, came in November 2017. Timmons feels great about his new position and looks forward to helping the Rays win a championship "here in my hometown."

The goals for the team and the players are clear.

"My plan is to have them prepared every day to succeed, whatever that may be. It could be working on something physical, or it could be having a conversation about what to expect from the other team," explained Timmons.

When the off season arrives, Timmons can be found in the Tampa Bay community volunteering his time and expertise. From baseball camps to helping out with baseball programs at

local high schools, he serves the area as a teacher, coach and mentor. He also works diligently to give a significant amount of time back to the University baseball program.

Timmons is currently finishing his degree at UT and is excited for the new adventures he is embarking on.

To the young kids playing baseball who dream of playing in the major leagues, Timmons has one specific piece of advice: "You must always have fun playing the game."

— EMILY STOOPS

UT Digs Beach Volleyball

THE BEACH VOLLEYBALL TEAM, WHICH recently wrapped its inaugural season, defeated the Morehead State University Eagles 5-0 in the team's first home game on March 1. The University hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony before the competition to introduce the new Beach Volleyball Complex.

The winning doubles teams for the Spartans included Melissa Elias '21 and Sorrel Houghton '21, Leigh Buttner '17, M.S. '19 and Gabbi Pacatte '19, Katie McKiel '20 and Nicole Dominguez '20, Taylor George '21 and Sarah Moore

'19, and Claire Blumenthal '19 and Alexandra Misca '19.

The addition of beach volleyball was announced on March 27, 2017, and is the newest of 20 NCAA-sponsored sports at UT. The first team consists of 18 student-athletes, eight of whom played on the University's indoor team in the fall. The team is coached by Jeff Lamm, who has spent 16 seasons as assistant coach for the indoor volleyball team.

The team defeated Webber International University by a 3-2 score in the program's inaugural match on Feb. 24.



FOR THEIR FUTURE



UT and Hillsborough
County Schools
pull together to train
the next generation
of leaders for
high-needs schools.

BY MICHELLE BEARDEN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX MCKNIGHT

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Paul Johnson M.Ed. '19, at Van Buren Middle School, left a rising career in retail management to become an educator.



LEAVING A COM-
fortable job in
retail manage-
ment in his
mid-30s to
pursue a career

in education wasn't a midlife crisis for Paul Johnson M.Ed. '19.

It was his destiny.

"My mom was an educator for some 30 years," says Johnson, 41. "I knew in the back of my mind it's where I would be one day."

So goodbye, rising career and healthy paycheck; hello, uncertain future in a rapidly changing and often unappreciated field.

Johnson took the first step as a paraprofessional for Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS), changing diapers and lifting students out of wheelchairs in exceptional education classes. He also worked in a tutoring program, helping kids prepare for college entrance exams. And once he earned his teaching certificate, he became a high school language arts teacher.

That was just the start of his life journey. Now Johnson has aspirations that go beyond the critical work that takes place in the classroom. He wants to be a principal who influences students, teachers and administrators in high-needs schools.

But that challenging goal requires specialized training and skills.

So in the fall of 2017, Johnson joined 15 other selected teachers in the fledgling class to pursue a master's degree in educational leadership for "turn-around" schools. Like all the students, he was moved to a low-performing school (Van Buren Middle School, teaching seventh- and eighth-grade language arts), so he'll be getting on-the-job training while completing the program.

The initiative is a new partnership between UT and HCPS. Classroom instruction takes place on campus by UT professors and school leaders from all five school districts in the Tampa

Bay area, and HCPS pays 50 percent of tuition for the students, who are all current teachers within the school system. The financial assistance was made possible by a \$7 million federal grant that targets this area of need.

"These students are our pioneers," said Adrienne Wilson, coordinator of UT's educational leadership program. "This is a bold and innovative program. And with the preparation they are getting, we could really change the direction of some of our failing schools in this county."

The urgent goal is to train the next generation of school principals for high-needs schools. Ultimately, Wilson said, the best scenario is that there won't be a need for a program like this.

"We're a long way from that now," she said. "But with the right leaders in place, it's not an impossible dream."

PIECES IN PLACE

The groundwork for the two-year program has been years in the making.

Tricia McManus, HCPS assistant superintendent for educational leadership and professional development, brings her own experience to the table. She comes from a family of educators and served as a principal in two high-needs schools. One of the lessons she learned: Improving a school doesn't happen by chance.

"It really does take a village," she said. "You have to be collaborative. You can't do this alone. And without the right leadership skills in place, it is difficult to get others on board with you."

The need is most certainly there. Currently, of Hillsborough County's 244 schools, 50 are labeled as high-needs schools, taking in factors such as discipline, academics, attendance and teacher turnover. Another 25 are less critical, but still require much improvement.

Regrettably, McManus said, the numbers have gone up in recent years instead of down. To keep that trend from escalating, the UT partnership

was added to the multi-step Turn-around Leadership Pathways (TLP) run by the district.

"I'm excited that we've got a plan with all the pieces in place that can change the course of these schools," she said. "Now it's our responsibility that we implement each layer with fidelity."

It takes certain qualities for an educator to want to tackle the extra challenges of a turnaround school. And acceptance into the master's program is comprehensive and rigorous. So before a teacher intends to apply, McManus suggests a self-examination of what it takes. Among them:

Belief that all students can perform at a high level. "That's first and foremost," she said. "Do you really believe that you can close achievement gaps between black and Hispanic and white students? That's a crucial requirement."

A sense of urgency. You can never let your foot off the pedal, McManus said. You've got to continue to push the agenda without getting complacent or discouraged.

Grit. "It takes resilience to do this job. You can't let things get you down, or you'll abandon the work before it's completed," she said.

Confidence. Sometimes half the battle is knowing you will win, despite the odds. McManus said applicants have to believe in themselves and that they are capable of reaching seemingly insurmountable goals.

"If you think in terms of black and white, and if you can only follow the rule book, you probably aren't the right person for this job," she said. "You have to be willing to think and act outside the box, and that takes confidence."

A POOL OF FUTURE LEADERS

When the initiative was first announced, nearly 200 educators showed up for an information session to learn more about it.

That turnout was a pleasant surprise for Wilson.



"To know that many people have an interest in taking on this challenge is heartening," she said. "It tells you about the caliber of people we have in this school district."

In the end, about 60 applied for the program. Besides submitting an essay and letters of recommendation, they also had to show a good history of work attendance, undergo a panel interview and site visits to the schools where they worked. Wilson even made personal calls to their principals for additional information.

"We didn't want to just make our

number, we wanted top-notch people," Wilson said. Although the original limit was 15, a 16th person who showed great promise was also added to the inaugural class. Their ages range from early 20s to mid-40s.

The commitment is long and intense. Cohorts agree to move to a low-performing school throughout the duration of the program. They attend classes weekly at UT to earn 30 credits, and complete a 90-hour internship at their school each semester. Each cohort is assigned an on-site administrator as a leadership coach.

Katie Ahern M.Ed. '19, who teaches at Potter Elementary School, considers herself a behavioral specialist as well as a teacher.

For Johnson, taking on multiple responsibilities at this stage of life takes some juggling. He and his wife, a school administrator at Tampa Bay Tech, have two young children, ages 5 and 2. They get some help from extended family when needed, and rely on "a lot of prayer, a lot of patience."

"My wife is the rock star," Johnson said. "I watched the sacrifices she made to get her doctorate; now she's



Drew Gehrke M.Ed. '19, at Leto High School, became an educator to help close the achievement gap between kids in affluent and poor areas.

there for me as I move forward.”

Upon completion of the master’s program, cohorts are moved to a regular performing school for at least a year. Then they are eligible for an assistant principal’s job in a high-needs school. At this point, the clock starts on the contract they signed with HCPS, pledging

to stay with the district for at least six years. If they leave beforehand, they will pay a pro-rated portion of the tuition costs picked up by the district.

If their next goal is to become a principal, they can apply for the Preparing New Principals program. McManus said that’s yet another layer in developing and training the best possible people for the job.

“Our partnership with The University of Tampa is helping us build a pool of future leaders,” she said. “It’s pretty

simple. You have enough people trained and in place, and you’re going to reduce the number of struggling schools.”

NEW DIRECTION

Drew Gehrke M.Ed. '19 started college as a business major. But his priorities while at the University of Florida began to shift.

“The more I learned about the achievement gap between kids who lived in affluent communities and those who lived in poor ones, the more



I wanted to get involved to bring about fair outcomes,” said Gehrke, 28.

After graduation, he headed to Arizona to get his master’s in secondary education and work with Teach for America. He taught in a largely Hispanic Title I school for three years — an experience that convinced him that this was his niche.

He returned to his home state to pursue his dream “to be a principal who helps other principals in ending high-needs schools.” He

doesn’t think he’s being idealistic when he says it can be done.

Getting accepted into the master’s program partnership is giving him the tools he needs to meet his goals. Gehrke is now teaching in the collegiate academy at A.P. Leto High School while he completes his second advanced degree in education.

“It’s a bigger picture kind of thing for me. I look at teaching as a form of community development — equip these kids with better skills, and you’re going to improve the community as a whole,” he said.

One of the problems he intends to address: apathy. Too many students in high-needs schools aren’t being challenged enough. Boredom sets in, and next comes behavior problems and a lack of desire to succeed. And with a high teacher turnover rate in these schools, the students also lack consistency.

“In my experience, there’s not enough urgency,” Gehrke said. “That message has to start at the top. You only get a short window of time to influence these kids, and you have to make the best of it.”

Fellow cohort Katie Ahearn M.Ed. ’19, who got her undergraduate degree at the University of South Florida, grew up in a safe and sheltered home. She attended a private school and never had to worry about where her next meal was coming from.

Her decision to go into teaching came easily. But after working at Reddick Elementary School in Wimauma and being part of the team that helped raise its failing grade up to a “C,” she had a new purpose. She developed an interest in gang culture and how to divert grade-schoolers from following that path.

This new direction in her life caused some concern among friends and family, including her husband and her parents.

“There was the expectation I would go into the family business (towing and

recovery),” said Ahearn, 24. “But once my parents visited my classroom and saw the transformation in these kids with our use of conscious discipline, they came around.”

Ahearn, now at Potter Elementary School, said she considers herself as much a behavioral specialist as a teacher. Like Gehrke, she wants to be part of a community turnaround. Improve education, she said, and it will reflect in less poverty and less crime. In the bigger picture, she would like to run her own school one day, focusing on students who have been sent to alternative programs because of discipline and academic issues.

“I’d like to be the female Ron Clark,” she said. Clark is an educator whose work with disadvantaged students has earned him national acclaim. He’s also a best-selling author, a motivational speaker and founder of an Atlanta-based academy. “He’s proven that where you grow up does not determine whether you will succeed or fail. His kids have come out of Harlem and ended up at Harvard.”

As a young white woman, Ahearn knows that she will have to cross some cultural boundaries to be successful. The master’s program is laying the groundwork to achieve that.

“I’ve got no regrets about doing this, not at all,” she said. “We’ve got a great class and a strong support system. We feed off each other’s energy and brainstorm ideas.”

Wilson couldn’t be happier with this inaugural class. The students in the cohort share similar values and a strong desire to change the world one student at a time, and in schools where hope sometimes has been left behind.

“Education is noble work. It’s even more so for people who willingly take on the extra challenge of high-needs schools,” she said. “It’s not just a job. It’s a calling. They are tenacious, and they are visionaries. They make me proud.” **UT**

JOINTHE



Where students play for pure love of the game (and learn a few lessons along the way)

Leadership. Team building. The value of hard work and facing challenges.

These are a few of the lessons students learn at UT, not just in the classroom, but on the ice, soccer pitch, horseback or 40 feet above the ground.

Club teams allow students to participate in a sport they are passionate about on a level a little more competitive than intramural sports, which only compete against other internal teams, but without the full commitment of a college athlete.

With club sports, students are able to participate in internships, part-time jobs and other extracurricular activities, because club sports tend to have more flexible schedules.

But that doesn't mean club teams aren't competitive. Many club teams travel and compete against other college and university club teams, often with great success.

Here is a glimpse into UT's club sports scene.



THE CLUB SPORT

A collage of sports-related images. At the top left, a bright yellow-green tennis ball is positioned. To its right, the head of a brown horse with a white blaze on its face is visible. Below the horse's head, a soccer ball with black and white hexagonal panels is shown. In the bottom left corner, there are two vibrant orange splatters. A black microphone is partially visible in the bottom left corner. The background is white with some faint, dark, star-like marks.

BY KILEY MALLARD
PORTRAITS BY ALEX MCKNIGHT



UT ICE HOCKEY TEAM

Represented by: Carter Gaines '19

Activities: Practice one to two times a week at their home rink, the Clearwater Ice Arena, with one to three games each weekend. All games are scheduled and sanctioned by the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA).

For Charity: Pink the Rink game to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness, Movember Game in support of men's health initiatives

Proudest Achievements: ACHA Division III National Tournament appearances in 2016 and 2017 (ranked No. 9 nationally those same years)

Did you know? Last fall, the team helped the gold medalist U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey team prepare for the 2018 Winter Olympics by playing them in an exhibition game.

Life Lessons: UT Hockey teaches players that anything can happen if you work hard.

EQUESTRIAN TEAM

Represented by: Kelsey Mercer '21

Activities: Competitions in a classic form of English riding called hunt seat with divisions for jumping, cantering, walking and trotting; also fundraisers and non-competitive trail rides.

Competitors: The team competes in Zone 5 Region 5 of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association.

Logistics: Practice twice a week with Coach Sherri O'Connor at her private barn, Far Reach Farm, in Lutz. Main equipment (saddles, bridles) provided, but any personal items (apparel, boots) must be purchased at a tack shop.

Did you know? In competition, riders are assigned horses by drawing numbers to ensure no one has the advantage of being familiar with their horse.

Best Part: Meeting new people, doing something we all love. Getting off campus and exploring different parts of Florida and Georgia.





WOMEN'S CLUB SOCCER

Represented by: Camila Ramírez '18

Activities: Practice three times a week, tournament competitions, fundraisers and gatherings

Competitors: University of Central Florida, University of South Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Stetson University, Florida State University and others

Proudest Achievement: Attending a round-robin tournament and winning both games.

Best Part: Participating in this club has also helped with my classes, as it's a good stress reliever and brings out the best in me.

Life Lessons: As president of this organization, I have learned to be a leader and to assume responsibility. I have also learned to manage a group of people with different cultural backgrounds, making sure to keep a friendly and fun atmosphere.

SPARTAN CLIMBERS

Represented by: Jay Lawson '18 and Julia Staiano '20

Activities: Primarily funding and transportation for UT students to pursue the sport of rock climbing. In climbing, you really only compete against yourself, both mentally and physically.

Logistics: Practice at Vertical Ventures climbing gyms in Tampa and St. Petersburg

Training Regimen: Lawson climbs three to five days a week, with rest days in between of stretching, slacklining, etc.

Biggest Challenge: As a school in Florida, we don't attract many serious climbers. Most of our members are completely new to the sport, which is great.

Life Lesson: Climbing is a challenge. There have been plenty of times when I've had to really push myself and have experienced failure. People don't get to know who they really are and what their boundaries are unless they push themselves and experience struggle. — LAWSON





BODY BUILDING TEAM

Represented by: Panida Promsook '20

Definition: Weight training combined with nutrition to alter the shape of your body.

Logistics: Team members work out and practice posing at UT's Fitness and Recreation Center, and are responsible for buying their own swimsuit and heels (women) for competition.

Training Regimen: Team members meet once a week to practice posing. About three to four months before a competition, members focus on a healthy diet (mainly lean proteins and vegetables), weight train five days a week, as well as do cardio three to five times a week. Closer to competition, cardio workouts increase up to seven days a week (sometimes twice a day) to trim fat.

Biggest Challenge: Learning to pose for shows. There are seven compulsory poses for men and five for women.

Motto: Team founder Gina Ruccione '14 used to say, "It's not body right now, it's body building."



PAINTBALL CLUB

Represented by: Salvatore Corallo '20 and Ariana Wyatt '19

Activities: Participates in the National Collegiate Paintball Association, the National Xball League World Cup (the largest paintball event in the world) and the Social Paintball League.

Logistics: The club practices at Blitzkreig Paintball or Central Florida Paintball on Sundays. Players on the tournament team participate in five-on-five scrimmage matches against other teams at the field.

Biggest Challenges: Finding new members to continue and grow the team. Paintball is not the most well-known sport, and many students don't know we have a club at UT.

Best Part: The friendships I've made through paintball. I've also had the opportunity to play college-level nationals, which is something I never imagined possible.

Life Lessons: How to be a leader and network with other students, campus organizations and teams. — CORALLO

FISHING CLUB

Represented by: Hunter Spencer '18

Activities: Deep sea fishing trips, in-shore fishing trips, kayak fishing trips, fundraisers, general meetings.

Logistics: Equipment and funding comes from Campus Recreation, though most members bring their personal equipment. The club organizes one or two fishing trips each semester.

Proudest Achievement: Growing from 20 members to almost 140.

Biggest Challenge: Logistics and funding

Best Part: Allows students to network, learn how to fish and go fishing together. Also allows students to enjoy Florida's natural landscapes and weather.

Life Lessons: Never be afraid to ask for help or advice.



OTHER ACTIVE CLUB SPORTS:

- Crew (men's)
- Field Hockey (co-ed)
- Flag Football (men's and women's)
- Roller Hockey (men's)
- Soccer (men's)
- Tennis (men's and women's)

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

Hector Manley '12 lost his legs
as a child in a 7.6 magnitude earthquake,
but he hasn't let it shake him.

BY KILEY MALLARD AND BRIAN HUDGINS
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH RITCHIE

OF THE 16 STUDENTS IN HECTOR MANLEY'S SECOND-GRADE CLASS, 15 SPEAK Spanish as their first language. This makes Hector's job of teaching them to read in English extra challenging.

"Reading is a really big focus for us, because kids are coming in from other countries and they are behind," said Hector '12 of his students at Parkside Elementary School in Naples, FL. "It's a big challenge. Trying to get everyone on board and on level with reading takes a really big effort."

It's a challenge that Hector is familiar with, as he himself came to this country from El Salvador at age 11 without knowing a word of English. What's more remarkable is that Hector did it with the added challenge of relearning to walk after losing his legs from injuries he sustained during an earthquake.

Many of the parents have formed a bond with Hector, based on seeing a native of El Salvador overcome so much, come to the U.S. and earn an education and a career.

"That is a big positive. They see me as someone who came from a third-world country, and I am able to be the teacher now," he said. "They know how important education is, and they really want a better future for their kids."

Hector's own parents wanted the same for him.



GE

When Manley came to the U.S.,
he not only had to learn a new
language and culture, but how
to walk on prosthetic legs.

"I SET MY GOALS REALLY HIGH. THAT'S SOMETHING THAT I'VE LEARNED OVER THE YEARS. I'VE ALWAYS HAD A POSITIVE MENTALITY, AND I ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO CHALLENGES." — HECTOR MANLEY '12

Hector was born in El Guayabo, El Salvador, a small village near the Guatemalan border where the dirt roads have no names.

On a Saturday morning in January 2001, 11-year-old Hector was picking through a trash pit near his home looking for tin cans to sell when a 7.6 magnitude earthquake shook the ground. Tumbling down the hill, he was buried waist-deep in burning trash and unable to dig himself out.

A guard from a nearby sugar cane field dug him out, then flagged down a garbage truck to drive him to the closest medical clinic. It had been flattened by the earthquake.

Doctors at a second hospital in Sonsonate, about an hour away, told Hector his injuries — which included severely broken legs and burns over 70 percent of his body — were too severe for them to treat and put him on a cot in a room with dying patients.

Finally reunited with his mother there, she pleaded with the doctors to treat him, so they arranged transportation to Benjamin Bloom National Children's Hospital in San Salvador.

Soon after arriving, Hector said the shock wore off and a wave of indescribable pain hit him. He passed out, waking three days later — without legs.

An avid soccer fan, he said his first thought was that now he'd never be a professional soccer player.

"Soccer is my favorite sport," he said. "It is basically the only sport that exists in El Salvador. Ever since I can remember, I always had a soccer ball with me."

Hector spent more than three months in the hospital, his mom commuting back and forth between their home and the hospital to care for him as well as his three brothers and sister.

Enter Don and Karen Manley. The Manleys, who at the time owned nursing homes and rehabilitation centers in Ohio, were in El Salvador to assist with earthquake relief efforts. While making the rounds visiting patients in the

hospital (Karen served on the hospital's board of directors), they were about to leave when they realized there was one room they hadn't visited — Hector's.

The couple took one look at Hector in his hospital bed and decided they needed to help him. They met with his parents, Anabel Hernandez and Arnaldo Castro, and asked their permission to bring Hector with them to the U.S. to be fitted for prosthetics. They agreed to the Manleys bringing Hector to the U.S. for eight months.

"We brought him to the U.S. originally with no intent of adopting him," said Don.

Hector said everything about America was a shock.

"I had never seen a place that was so clean and neat," he said. During those first few months in Ohio, he would watch the Disney Channel to help him learn English. Not only was he faced with the challenge of learning a new language and culture, but also figuring out how to walk on his new prosthetic legs.

In December 2001, the Manleys flew with Hector back to El Salvador, and found the country was still struggling to recover from the earthquake. Hector's parents and the Manleys quickly realized it would be best for Hector to continue living in the U.S. in order to continue therapy.

"Hector could walk short distances in the countryside in El Salvador, but he was somewhat confined," Don said. "His parents love Hector so much. They put aside their own interests for his benefit."

So the Manleys began a three-year process to adopt Hector as their son, and Hector Salvador Castro Hernandez became Hector Castro Manley.

From the beginning, the Manleys instilled in Hector the idea that anything is possible.

"We all have certain limitations," Don said. "Hector told me, 'I can't be a pro football player.' I told him, 'Well, I can't be a pro football player, either.' So yes, anything is possible,

but we all have our limitations."

Hector has clearly embraced this philosophy.

It began with shooting baskets from his wheelchair.

"From Day One, Hector could shoot baskets from a wheelchair. His hand-eye coordination was incredible," said Don.

Once he was more comfortable on his prosthetic legs, he decided to take up golf.

"I am not a golfer, but I have played golf enough to know how hard it is," said Don. When he asked Hector why he found golf intriguing, the boy's response was: "They don't run."

"It was a turning point in my happiness," Hector later wrote in *Golf Digest*. "A golf pro told me my swing was destined to be unique, so it was up to me to master it."

Hector took his first swings at The First Tee Club in Columbus, OH, falling over every time. When the family moved to Naples his sophomore year of high school, he petitioned his new school, Seacrest Country Day School, to start a golf team. He captained the team all three years, with his lowest competitive round score a three-over-par 74.

Then, during his time studying advertising and public relations at UT, he decided to up the ante. After graduation, he would kayak the entire length of the Mississippi River, some 2,500 miles from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. It's a feat only about 15 people accomplish each year.

With Don and a good friend paddling alongside him for stretches, and Karen following behind in a supply boat, Hector completed the journey in 93 days. He was the first double amputee to make the trip.

The journey wasn't just for himself. Calling it "Paddling for a Purpose," Hector raised more than \$42,000 for the Wheelchair Foundation and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Using the skills he was learning in



Hector and his class dressed up as crayons from *The Day the Crayons Quit* for the school's Storybook Parade.

his advertising and public relations courses, Hector marketed the project, first to his professors, then to small businesses, gaining donations from \$100–\$3,000 here and there. His story was eventually picked up by local and national media outlets.

In 2013, Hector traveled to El Salvador with the Wheelchair Foundation to deliver more than 270 wheelchairs, including 50 to the hospital he was treated in, purchased in part with the money he raised.

"I set my goals really high. That's something that I've learned over the years," he said in a YouTube video taken while training for the trip in Tampa Bay. "I've always had a positive mentality, and I always look forward to challenges."

His latest challenge has been completing seven Tough Mudder events with Don, who is an avid runner.

Tough Mudder is a series of 10-mile courses with 20 obstacles designed by British Special Forces. Perhaps more than any challenge he has taken on over the years, the races have required some strategic thinking to adapt for Hector's unique abilities.

For the races, he wears one prosthetic leg so he can stand up and climb over walls. For the majority of the race,

he uses his wheelchair, and, whenever Hector can't push himself through the mud, Don tethers himself to Hector's wheelchair to pull him through. It's a true team effort.

"Being a double amputee has not kept me down," he said.

Hector is equally passionate about his day job.

"I wasn't thinking about becoming an educator when I was a student at UT," he said. "But I think I learned how to be an effective communicator and to be able to talk to kids and parents about the importance of education."

After moving back to Naples to be near his family, he became certified with the Florida Department of Education. He started out working with 4 and 5 year olds in the Pre-K program, where he got to see the basis of education. After that, he was able to teach small-group reading comprehension classes, before taking on his current role as a second-grade teacher.

While his priority is teaching his students reading, mathematics and other serious subjects, Hector has also learned during his first few years as an educator that the learning process needs to contain some smiles along with the lectures.

One fun routine he has established right before the class goes outside for recess is listening to Spanish music.

"Sometimes, I play a song, and they might say, 'Mr. Manley, that is such an old song!'" Hector says. "It could be five years old. Obviously, I laugh and say, 'Come on guys. It's four or five years old.' To them, it's old. It's just perspective. That's part of what I think education should be. Being able to have a little fun."

Another way Hector has brought fun to his students is by starting a soccer team for 8–9 year olds.

"There are two soccer leagues here," he said. "One is the East Naples Soccer League, which has a lot of the elementary schools — the immigrant communities with families who enjoy soccer. I have been recruiting and signing up kids. It will be 12 teams, and we will play for a couple of months."

Hector also enjoys going up to watch Major League Soccer's Orlando City Lions. He even has a custom prosthetic leg with the team's logo.

Summer and holiday breaks give Hector a chance to visit his biological parents in El Salvador, or for them to visit him in Florida. They were in attendance at his high school and college graduations, and most recently joined the Manleys for Thanksgiving.

"It's hard to describe what beautiful people (the Manleys) are," Hector's birth mother, Anabel, said in Spanish in a video interview with the Wheelchair Foundation. "They can't understand what I'm trying to say, so I just say, 'Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.' Hector and I know that we are all one family."

"I have just been given so much," said Hector in the same video. "I am extremely blessed to be where I am today." **UT**

alumni report

class acts

WHAT'S NEW? Stay in touch by sending us your Class Acts. Go to alumni.ut.edu today!

55 Robert Beach, one of the longest serving judges in Florida, plans to fully retire this year, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*. Though Robert retired as a full-time judge in 1993, he has been enrolled in the senior judge roster.

57 Sally Giacobbe hosted a holiday gathering at her house in December for UT alumni from the 1950s.

Bob Perdomo is very proud that his grandson, Lance McCullers, played in the 2017 World Series as pitcher for the Houston Astros.

70 Frank Permy was among 11 members of the American Baseball Coaches Association's 2018 Hall of Fame

class, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*. Throughout his 50-year career, Frank totaled more than 1,300 wins.

71 Russell Amerling MBA '77 published the book *Contemplate Life, The Birth of the Choose Life Plate*.

73 Walter Gadzicki retired after serving as district judge for Limerick, PA, for 36 years, according to *The Mercury News*. Walter has applied for senior status.

Vicki (Hamilton) Wade is the program manager of Operation Stonegarden, a federal grant program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).



Russell Amerling '71, MBA '77 (second from left; with his wife and granddaughter) presents his book to former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

75 Audri Scott Williams has qualified to run for the U.S. House of Representatives seat representing Alabama's second congressional district, according to the *Dothan Eagle*. Audri is seeking the Democratic nomination in the primary scheduled for June.

76 Virginia Covington was one of more than 30 Tampa Bay area "Hidden Figures" — judges and attorneys who have been called trailblazers due to various important "firsts" — honored by the Middle District of Florida Bench Bar Fund, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*.

77 Frank Swope has been named director of USTA Florida's new tennis management division, which is aimed at partnering with municipalities to manage and improve public tennis facilities across the state.

Katherine Trott retired and is enjoying life in Woodbridge, VA.

78 Andie Weinman is president and CEO of Preferred Jewelers International/Continental Buying Group Inc. Andie wrote a column for *The Centurion*, an informational website for prestige jewelers, arguing in favor of all small businesses having a sexual harassment policy in place.

79 Ralph Gold Jr., who has spent 39 years in education, is among five members appointed to the newly formed Gulf Shores City Board of Education (AL).

82 Thomas Graham was named chair of the Prince George's County (MD)

FROM THE ALUMNI DIRECTOR

We are excited to announce the inaugural gathering of the UT Silver Spartan Society as part of Homecoming and Reunions 2018.

In the same fashion that our Golden Spartan Society represents alumni who graduated from UT 50 or more years ago, this new group will consist of alumni who graduated 25–49 years ago.

The class of 1993 will be the first class inducted into this society during the inaugural Silver Spartan Society brunch on Saturday, Oct. 20. Each year, a new class will join the Silver Spartan ranks as part of its 25th reunion, and one class will graduate to become Golden Spartans at its 50th reunion.

The Silver Spartan Society brunch is open to all alumni who graduated 25–49 years ago — this year the classes of 1993–1969.

If you would like to volunteer to support this annual event, please contact us at alumni@ut.edu.

Board of License Commissioners, which administers and enforces alcoholic beverage laws for the state of Maryland.

Amy Hill Hearth published her 10th book, *Streetcar to Justice: How Elizabeth Jennings Won the Right to Ride in New York* (HarperCollins). The book received a coveted starred review from both *Kirkus* and *Publisher's Weekly*. (See page 31.)

84 Lisa Comstock, director of the Connecticut Center for the Book, was a guest speaker at the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut's networking series CULTURENet. Lisa shared an overview of the Connecticut Book Awards.

Rob Weisbord MBA '87 was named chief revenue officer of Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. Rob is responsible for developing, executing and leading sales and revenue growth strategies and initiatives for broadcasting, digital, advanced revenue and all networks sales.

85 Lisa Fine, a health care marketing executive, was added to the roster of chief marketing officers (CMO) at Chief Outsiders, a nationwide "Executives-as-a-Service" firm with more than 60 part-time, or fractional, CMOs.

87 Jennifer (Schroeder) DeCarlo is the director of Easton Library, which is located in Greenwich, NY.

90 Elissa Kaplan completed a 28-mile hike in one day as part of the "Rock the Ridge" challenge in the Mohonk Preserve in New York. Elissa also published her first book, *The Finish Line*, now available on Amazon. (See page 31.)

Stephen Mauldin was named co-CEO of CNL Financial Group, a private investment management firm providing real estate and alternative investments.

91 Bradley Brown MBA has served as corporate treasurer of Ally Financial Inc. since November 2013. In his role, he is responsible for capital, liquidity and interest rate risk management.

Christian Gaudio was appointed senior vice president, senior credit underwriter at Peapack-Gladstone Bank in Bedminster, NJ. Christian is part of the private banking team responsible for the structuring, underwriting and ongoing monitoring of commercial and industrial loans.

Ozzie Timmons was named first base coach for the Tampa Bay Rays, according to Rays Radio. Ozzie also will assist the team's hitting coach and work on base running. (See page 8.)

93 John Middleton MBA joined Brighton Financial Planning in 2008 and assumed ownership in 2010. John focuses on investment management, investment advisory services, and financial and estate planning.



Christina O'Brien '96

Tanuj Taneja is living in New Delhi, India, where he is the founder and owner of 3D Boulevard, a company that manufactures 3D printers for educational use.

96 Ed Harris is teaching evolutionary biology at Manchester Metropolitan University in England as a senior lecturer, according to *The Observer News*. He was also featured on five episodes of the Animal Planet show *Intruders*.

Christina O'Brien has been elected stockholder at the law firm of Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt P.A., according to *The Business Observer*. She also serves on the board of directors for the Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida and Fort Myers American Little League.

Linn Preston was named by the Neiman Marcus Corp. as its "Leader of the Year" and promoted to the management team in its flagship store in Houston. Linn and her husband, **LTC Stephen Preston '89**, relocated to Houston in 2017 after living and working in the



Mariah Hayden '00

Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and the U.S.

00 Mariah Hayden was named interim director of New Life Village in Tampa, an intergenerational residential community designed for families raising foster and adopted children.

Ryan Smiley was appointed president and CEO of the new organization that merges two Boys & Girls Clubs — Boys & Girls Clubs of Porter County and Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana — according to *The Chronicle*.

02 Vincent "Vinny" Breault became general manager, Integrated Systems Division, at the rapidly growing payments technology company Cayan. Vinny will be responsible for the leadership and growth of Cayan's Partner Channel.

Carmela Gallace was part of the Holiday Dance Festival in New York in January, according to *Broadway World*. Carmela is a former principal dancer with The Moiseyev Dance Company and

Join us for a Spartan invasion! On July 22, UT will take over Tropicana Field for a Spartans-themed Tampa Bay Rays game. Tickets are \$38 and include a UT-branded Rays hat. Go to Raysbaseball.com/UT. To place a group order call (727) 825-3107 or email groupsales@raysbaseball.com.



former soloist with *Riverdance-The Show*, performing across Europe, North America, Asia and Africa.

Richard Russell MBA joined LM Funding America Inc. as chief financial officer. Previously, Richard worked from his private counseling practice where he provided financial and accounting services.

Jeremiah Smith is business manager for CBT Pinellas, an independently owned intensive outpatient counseling agency in Largo, FL.

03 Sue Ellen Calderon and Suzette (Krajewski) Calderon '04 shared their foster care adoption journey in a December *Palm Beach Post* article. The couple's two sons, Christopher and Oliver, were first placed with them as foster children until they were able to legally adopt them.

Genevieve Whitaker, co-founder and president of Virgin Islands Youth Advocacy Inc., was selected to take part in the inaugural Obama Foundation Summit in Chicago. Genevieve was also selected to serve again as a delegate for the second United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights International Decade of People of African Descent Regional Meeting in Geneva.

04 Missy Hurley MacFarlane, co-founder and principal of B2 Communications in St. Petersburg, FL, received the UT Alumni Achievement Award during the December commencement ceremony. (See page 32.)

05 Kyla Cunico earned a doctorate in pharmacy from Belmont University in Nashville, TN, and relocated to Seattle to work as a pharmacist with Rite Aid Pharmacy.

spartan spotlight

Mike Moore '79

A Minister in the Marketplace



Mike Moore '79 is certain that his life path was impacted by his experiences at UT.

"As a kid at UT, I never dreamed I'd travel to almost 40 countries and speak to hundreds of thousands of people and find success in business," said Moore, an international account manager with CHG-Meridian, which provides technology management in the areas of IT, industrial and health care, and an entrepreneur. "UT has shaped me more than I can express." Moore has written two books, *Love God Hate Church: Moving Past the Do's and Don'ts* and, this past February, *Love God Make Money: Business and God are Not Enemies*, which spread his message of taking ownership for our lives and finding fulfillment in a relationship with God. He's a motivational speaker and is working on his third book now, which he hopes to have published in 2019.

After UT, Moore earned an MBA from the Illi-

nois Institute of Technology. He has worked for decades in sales and finance, achieving the status of No. 1 salesman in the U.S. for multiple years at his current and past two positions. His interactions with people and their consistent reactions urging him to write down his motivations led to his publishing career and motivational speaking engagements.

But it started back on UT's campus in the late 1970s. Moore wasn't the most eager of students and on more than one occasion was locked out of Frances Allen's speech class for being late. So when Allen asked her students after class one day if anyone would like to volunteer to help her out with some yard work, Moore spoke up.

"I just wanted an A in her class," he said with a laugh. It became a regular gig for Moore to mow Allen's lawn. After, she would provide him a meal, and while he ate, she'd read the Bible to him.

"I didn't care what she was saying," Moore said. "I was one of those guys who just wanted to meet women in college."

Moore lived on campus in McKay Hall, which at the time was a residence hall for athletes. (He was at UT on a partial scholarship for golf and became involved in crew as well.) One day Moore saw one of the UT wrestlers carrying a Bible, which lead him to take more of an interest in Allen's afternoon talks.

He also started attending the Navigators, a student religious group.

"Religion sucks when you see it as manmade rules and regulations. But they were talking about a relationship with the creator," Moore said. "Over time, I kept dabbling and got hungry."

An extrovert, Moore doesn't find it difficult to share his story with crowds (he has spoken to IBM, The American Red Cross and the New York Yankees, among others), though he has no interest in being a preacher. He said his life experiences as a businessman make him more relatable.

"People look at you differently when you're a preacher," he said. "Maybe I'm a minister in the marketplace."

spartan spotlight

Kate Gordon '10

The Best of Both Worlds



About a year ago, Kate Gordon '10 was considering a few different performance options and also thinking of planning a trip abroad when she was offered an opportunity that was the perfect combination of the two.

Since August 2017, Gordon has been the star of the show *Encore* onboard the Crown Princess Cruise Ship, which she describes as the best of opera, "popera" and Broadway in an elegant garden party setting.

In the show, Gordon sings "I Feel Pretty" from *Westside Story*, "Les Tringles Des Sœurs Tintaient" from *Carmen*, "Libiamo" from *La Traviata*, "You'll Never Walk Alone" from *Carousel* and "Der Holle Rache" from *The Magic Flute*.

"Singing 'Libiamo' is always interesting for me, because I think to when I sang the chorus part for Andrea Bocelli on the West Coast, and now I'm singing the lead soprano part," she said.

Encore is performed once a cruise, two times a night, and the rest of the time Gordon is free to enjoy the ride.

"It's incredibly peaceful and beautiful," she said. "Really, I get paid to be on vacation and perform for a few hours a week. Some days all

I want to do is binge TV shows in my cabin, and some days I attend the various activities around the ship."

On average, she is on board for two weeks, then flown home to Chicago for two weeks.

"I really enjoy the balance and am able to maintain contacts. It's the absolute best of both worlds," she said.

Another perk? Since joining the show, Gordon has traveled to 12 different countries. Just in the Caribbean, she's been to Antigua, the Turks and Caicos, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, the Bahamas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Kitts and St. Maarten.

"I feel so lucky!" she said. "As a performer, it is a dream come true to not have to worry about auditioning."

Beginning in May, Gordon will star in *Encore's* sister show, *Bravo*. She is also developing two of her own shows that will be performed both on cruise ships and in theaters around the world.

"Honestly, I didn't think I'd be making a living as an opera singer," Gordon said. "I assumed people would always be hiring me for my (vocal) belt. I'm so thankful to my UT professors who pushed me to sing in every style and take risks."



John Hughes '07

06 Samantha Feinstein is the international and legislative policy analyst at GAP (Government Accountability Project), a nonprofit whistleblower protection and advocacy organization.

Kimberly Fellman was promoted to design manager at Pinterest. She oversees the production design team and design system work.

Anthony Pinto M.S. '17, a senior associate director of admissions at UT, earned a Master of Science in marketing at UT in 2017.

07 Candace (Moore) Donnell retired as the regional manager, Virginia and North Carolina, of the Special Investigations Unit at GEICO.

John Hughes, a jazz performer at Dulcet Restaurant and Lounge in New Port Richey, FL, released his first CD, *Blind Date*, in August 2017.

08 Mackenzie Johnson has joined the Critical Care Unit at the Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire, WI, according to *The Chippewa Herald*. Previously, Mackenzie served as a nurse in the Surgical Trauma Intensive Care Unit at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

LaNae Nix is senior director of client services at TaskUs and oversees the company's portfolios in the San Francisco area.

09 Lauren Bentz M.Ed. '15 married Anthony Boehm on Oct. 7, 2017, in California.



Lauren Bentz '09, M.Ed. '15 and Anthony Boehm

Alexandra de Meric and her husband, Brandon Rice, purchase, train and sell horses at RiceHorse Stables in Ocala, FL, according to *Thoroughbred Daily News*. The couple have one son, Preston.

Gordon Dunham married **Francesca Coviello '11** on Aug. 12, 2017, at the Coral Sands Hotel on Harbour Island in the Bahamas.

10 Paige (Williams) Howard won the women's Gasparilla 15K while two months pregnant with her second child, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*. Paige finished in 57:14.56 and won a \$2,000 prize.

Sterling McLean and **Claire Kaiser '12** were married on Nov. 3, 2017, at The Vinoy Renaissance in St. Petersburg, FL.

Barry Rosenblum appeared on ABC's revival of the TV show *Match Game*, according to the *Palm Beach Post*. Barry teaches for Boca Raton's Sick Puppies Comedy improvisation group.

11 Macaela (Quartermouse) Cirish graduated from Sacred Heart University with a master's in nursing in May 2017, and she is now an advanced practice registered nurse at Franklin Medical Group in Waterbury, CT. She and Matthew Cirish were married in July 2017.



Claire Kaiser '12 and Sterling McLean '10

Jill Lazzara has been appointed to the UT Alumni Association Advisory Board.

Art Linares, a Republican member of the Connecticut Senate, and **Caroline Simmons**, a Democratic member of Connecticut's House of Representatives, were married on Oct. 14, 2017, in Old Lime, CT, according to the *Connecticut Post*. The couple's story was featured on CNN's "Love Story."

Joshua Pardue is co-founder and chief financial officer of Catered Fit, a Fort Lauderdale company that delivers freshly prepared meals to your door, according to the *Sun Sentinel*. Founded in 2011, the company built its business in Florida, and most recently opened in the Los Angeles area.

Devan Shulby, a science educator at the Maritime Aquarium in Norwalk, CT, and the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, is the youngest member of Greenwich's Shellfish Commission, according to *The Middle Town Press*.

Kostas Stoilas MBA sat down with U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor and students from UT and the University of South Florida to discuss the student debt crisis, according to WUSF News.

12 Brendan McVay and **Kerry Elizabeth Burns** were married on Oct. 14, 2017, according to



Tori Douglas '13 (second from left) and her Delta Zeta sisters

The Hingham Journal. The couple reside in Boston, where Brendan is a senior analyst at Citizen's Bank.

Megan Verschuere was named an associate attorney at CaseyGerry, a San Diego-based plaintiff's law firm. Megan will work in the areas of catastrophic personal injury, product and premises liability, aviation litigation, wrongful death and elder abuse litigation.

13 Tori Douglas tied the knot in Key West with Mark Kokosko on Oct. 14, 2017. The bride's Delta Zeta sisters were in attendance at the wedding.

Michael Neophytou started FitEx Meals Inc., a meal prep and delivery service based in Tampa, in September 2016, and has since brought on **Anthony Tingley '17**, to

help oversee the business' marketing, according to *The Minaret*.

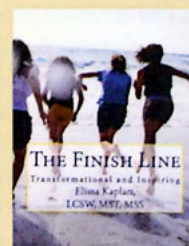
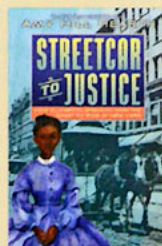
14 Shane Hinton MFA edited *We Can't Help It If We're From Florida: New Stories from a Sinking Peninsula*, an anthology of new stories and essays by authors who are either current or former Florida residents. (See this page.)

15 Kevin Falck was promoted to agent trainee at William Morris Endeavor Entertainment in Nashville, TN.

Kameron Kilpatrick graduated with a doctorate in physical therapy from the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences.

Taryn Taylor was named merchandise manager for Roger Dean Chevrolet Stadium. Taryn spent the

(Continued on page 32)



Recently published books by alumni:

Streetcar to Justice: How Elizabeth Jennings Won the Right to Ride in New York by Amy Hill Hearth '82, *We Can't Help It If We're From Florida: New Stories from a Sinking Peninsula* edited by Shane Hinton MFA '14, *The Finish Line* by Elissa Kaplan '90.



FORMER UT ROWERS reunited on campus Feb. 17. Everyone enjoyed a barbecue at the McNeel Boathouse, and a few went out on the water the next day. Thanks to Bill Schaudt '00 and Bill Dunlap, head crew coach, for organizing the reunion.



ATLANTA-AREA ALUMNI gathered at The Buckhead Club on Feb. 13 to network with other alumni and hear a presentation from Linda Devine, UT's vice president of operations and planning. Pictured here are Matthew Drouin '11, Mary-Helen Moran '15 and Julia Egbe-Monthe '15.



Missy Hurley MacFarlane '04 (at left) was the recipient of the **ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**, which was presented by UT Alumni Association president April Jones '04 during UT's December commencement ceremony.



The UT Tampa Bay Alumni Chapter hosted another swashbuckling **GASPARILLA BRUNCH** on Jan. 27 before the Gasparilla parade. A huge crowd of alumni came out to enjoy the food and festivities again this year at this signature event.

past two seasons as the organization's merchandize intern.

16 Maddy Pelon is engaged to Taylor Hoensheid. The couple is planning a June 2019 wedding in Colorado Springs, CO.

Haleigh Purvis, a creative marketing producer at WTSP-TV, won a Suncoast Regional Emmy Award for her work on "Pledged to Protect."

Angela Redmond-Theodore MFA was a featured alumni reader in January at UT's Lector series.

Cara Shields is working in epigenetics in the cancer biology doctoral program at Emory University.

17 Marissa Killpack was featured in an *83 Degrees* article about Tampa's emerging North Hyde Park neighborhood.

Samantha Mutschler was hired by Degy Entertainment as Greek Life operations manager, assisting with Greek chapters around the country. Sam first worked in the company's internship program.

Vinny Tafuro, an economist and author of *Unlocking the Labor Cage*, appeared on the Tampa Bay Arts and Education Network to share his idea for an education project that enables adults to attend college without taking on a lot of debt, according to *83 Degrees*.

IN MEMORIAM

Alumni

Bernice Elizabeth Horne
Tompkins '40
Nancy G. White '44
Anthony Severiano "Tony"
Gonzalez '50
Benito "Ben" Perez '50
Elizabeth Ann Accurso '51
Kenneth A. Barneby '51
Reinaldo "Coach"
Escobar '51
Carl Q. Rooks '53
Pauline Papia Minahan '54
Howard Jerry "Howie"
Bernstein '57
Tony Reale '58
Joseph Settecasi '62

Larry R. Wagers '62
Richard E. Kunsch '67
Frederick M. Nielsen '68
Donald C. Winterton '69
Joseph Nelson Albrecht '71
Theodore James Mehl '71
Robert March '72
Thomas Michael Mehlberg '72
Eufaula Shepard '77
Mary Ann (Mills) Sammarco '79
Deborah J. Hall '81
Davin Brannon '04, MBA '09
Jake H. Hemrick '13
Faculty
Erika Matulich
Students
Jamal Nganga '19
Alexa Nowak '19

brick by brick

common good

WHY I GIVE: Carl Wilmarth '77



Wilmarth chatted with Nejat Nassir, '18, the recipient of his scholarship, before this year's Scholarship Luncheon.

Major: Biology

Profession: Owner of LaTech Equipment

Interviewed by Nejat Nassir '18, a nursing major and recipient of the Wilmarth Family Endowed Scholarship.

NN: You said the thing you liked best about UT was the small class sizes and direct connections between students and faculty. In my nursing classes, our professors know us by name, and they help us when we struggle.

CW: I wouldn't have survived in a big school. I grew up in New York, and the schools there would have been much harder for me. So, after my first two years in community school, I came here. Without a small school, I probably wouldn't have made it. I was not a great student. I was an ok student, but I got better while I was here. My professors made sure of that.

NN: Do you have a favorite place on campus?

CW: Plant Hall is such an incredible building. I lived in the Science Wing, and it was fun going there for school. I used to study in front on the verandah. It was so quiet and peaceful, you could study anywhere. Of course back then UT was so much smaller and almost everything was centered in Plant Hall.

NN: What were you involved in at UT?

CW: I was chair of Spirit Week in 1977, on the Standards Board, in the Lacrosse Club, Omicron Delta Kappa, a resident assistant and head resident in Delo Hall. It was fun. The thing that I loved about this school, especially back then, was that all of the professors and staff gave you the opportunities to do whatever you wanted to do. If you

wanted to participate, they were going to help you.

NN: You said your most memorable professors were George Jackson (chemistry), David Ford (chemistry), Raymond Schlueter (biology), Richard Gude (biology) and others. Is there one memory you have that stood out with any of these professors?

CW: All of them. I spent hours in Dr. Jackson's office until he threw me out. I would knock on the door and not leave and say I don't understand this and I need to get it. He would spend hours with me trying to get me through general chemistry. I couldn't afford to go home for Thanksgiving, and I had nowhere to go. Dr. Ford and Dr. Jackson must have asked me if I was going home, and the next thing I know I'm at Thanksgiving dinner at Dr. Ford's house with Dr. Jackson. Things like that. I owe them a debt of gratitude. Without them, who knows what my path would have been?

NN: Besides your professors, what things about UT do you think helped you get where you are today?

CW: I think it was being an RA, interfacing with the dean of students on a regular basis. You could set up an outline of what you wanted to accomplish, and they would help. It was the freedom to really go after what I wanted to do. I was so scared when I came here, because it was my first time away from home. I realized after I got here that these people were here to help. It gave me the ability to go

(Continued on page 36)



Jeff Ford with his wife, Donna, and daughter, Perri (center).

leaving a legacy

Unfulfilled Intentions, Realized

EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF THE University of Tampa campus reminds Jeff Ford of the wonderful days spent with his father, David Ford, a chemistry professor at the University for more than 40 years.

Ford remembers exploring every part of Plant Hall, playing billiards in the Student Union, swimming in the pool and hanging out in the library. He loved the specimens in the display cases in the biology department, which he said was like a small history museum to a 7-year-old boy.

The Fords moved to Tampa in 1969, and since his mother was a full-time nurse, his father brought Ford to UT during the summers.

"Early on, I sat in the back of the classroom during his lectures," Ford said. "He allowed me to do some of the experiments in the physical science and chemistry lab courses. Eventually, I had the run of the place."

As a student at Tampa Prep, Ford often used the UT library to do his school work.

"Dad and I rode together to and from school during all four of my high school years. They were wonderful memories," he said.

He noted several important events that occurred in his life on UT's campus.

"As a child, I attended concerts of the Florida Gulf Coast Symphony at McKay Auditorium (now the Sykes College of Business). As a high school senior, I spoke as valedictorian at my high school graduation in McKay. And as an adult, I was married in the ballroom, and our wedding reception was held in Fletcher Lounge," he said.

Ford explained that teaching at UT was the only full-time job his father ever had after earning his doctorate from Syracuse University in 1969. According to Ford, his father loved his days at the University and the UT com-

munity where he developed lifelong friendships.

"He cared very much about teaching. If a student was willing to make the effort, my father would do everything he could to help the student learn," Ford said.

David Ford rarely mentioned challenges in teaching, other than the rush to grade final exams, according to his son.

"I observed him several times during office hours where he didn't merely answer the question presented by the student, but he turned the office hours into multi-hour tutoring sessions with as many students who wanted to attend, stay and learn."

David Ford won many awards during his time at UT and held many leadership positions, such as chair of the chemistry department, chair of the faculty committee, assistant provost and eventually provost.

Ford said his father often talked about his desire to give back to the University by creating a gift through his estate. His idea was to create a chemistry scholarship for students at UT. However, David Ford passed away in 2017 before having the opportunity to leave his legacy.

So, in honor of his father, Ford and the Ford family decided that it was important to fund a scholarship that would live on in perpetuity for students well into the future.

"I was very close to my father and my donation is based on my desire to make his unfulfilled intentions, realized," Ford said.

The Dr. David B. Ford Chemistry Scholarship will help UT students attain their goals of a college education for many years to come.



Need more information about Planned Giving? Contact Cindy L. Tully, Planned Giving Officer ctully@ut.edu (813) 258-7373

BOARD NAMES NEW OFFICERS

THE UT BOARD OF TRUSTEES announced its slate of officers, who will serve for a two-year term. Phillip Casey, retired chairman of Gerdau, will serve as chair; James MacLeod '70, chairman of Coastal South Bancshares Inc., will serve as vice chair; James Ferman Jr., president and CEO of Ferman Automotive Management, will serve as immediate past chair; and Gary Harrod, managing partner of Harrod Properties, will serve as secretary. A treasurer has not been appointed.

COUNSELORS TO HOST TAMPA CITY NIGHTS

ON FRIDAY, APRIL 20, THE UT BOARD of Counselors will host Tampa City Nights, a sunset celebration of all things Tampa. Held at the Tampa Museum of Art's Sono Café from 6–8:30 p.m., Tampa City Nights celebrates the history and culture of Tampa with proceeds benefiting the UT Scholarship Fund.

This popular event typically draws a crowd of more than 400, including Board of Counselors members, University, community and business

leaders, young professionals and UT faculty and staff. Attendees enjoy hors d'oeuvres from Sono Café, spirits, hand-rolled cigars and live music while the sun sets behind UT's iconic minarets across the Hillsborough River.

Tickets start at \$60, and must be purchased in advance. To purchase tickets, go to www.ut.edu/tampacitynights.

Established in 1962, the Board of Counselors' mission is to aid the University in its student retention program and to assist in creating public recognition of, understanding of and confidence in UT. With nearly 100 volunteer members, the Counselors organize social events to raise awareness and funds for UT and maintain programs designed to prepare students for life after college.

BE #ALLINFORUT ON APRIL 24

ON APRIL 24, 2018, ALL MEMBERS OF the University community — from students, alumni and parents, to faculty, staff and friends — will have an opportunity to show they are #allinforUT.

#allinforUT is UT's annual give

day — a day dedicated to raising support for the University and sharing Spartan pride with the world. When we are all in for UT, all gifts, regardless of size, add up to have an enormous impact.

There will be activities for students on campus throughout the day, as well as challenges for alumni and parents to participate in, no matter where they are. Keep an eye on your inbox on April 24 to learn more.

Want to get involved? Become a Spartan Social Ambassador, UT leaders around the world who share the Spartan Spirit and the latest UT news, events, contests and more with their connections and friends through social media, email, text or phone calls. Contact annualfund@ut.edu.

AND THE GREEK CHALLENGE WINNERS ARE ...

FOR JUST OVER FIVE WEEKS THIS FALL, alumni of UT's fraternities and sororities got the chance to compete once more for Greek Week bragging rights during the inaugural Greek Giving Challenge.

An initiative of the Office of Development and University Relations in partnership with the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement, the challenge was designed to increase financial support for the University's Annual Fund, while connecting current fraternity and sorority chapter members with alumni of their organization.

During the challenge, each fraternity and sorority chapter competed along with their alumni base to win points for Greek Week. Chapters received points based on their alumni participation percentage, with gifts of \$25 or more counting toward the percentage.

The winners of this inaugural challenge were Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., with 29 percent participation, and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., with 13 percent participation. Delta Zeta had the highest number of alumni donors.

LEAVE A LEGACY FOR \$20.18

Attention parents of graduating seniors: Looking for a way to recognize your student's accomplishments at UT? Consider making a gift to the UT Class Campaign in their honor.

Since the early 2000s, the UT Class Campaign has encouraged graduating students to give back to their alma mater, starting with an amount inspired by their class year (\$20.18 this year). The goal of the campaign is to fund scholarships for students in the incoming freshman class in honor of the recent graduates.

Encourage your student to contribute to the campaign, or show your pride in their accomplishment, by making a contribution of \$20.18 or more in their honor. Your graduate will receive a Philanthropy Cord to wear at commencement, and they will leave UT having set an example of the importance of giving back for their fellow Spartans to follow.

Gifts can be made online at www.ut.edu/giving, or by calling (813) 253-6200.





WHEN SCHOLARSHIP MEETS GENEROSITY Every year, the donors who have established scholarships at UT are invited to campus to meet the students who are benefitting from their generosity. More than 200 scholarship recipients, donors and UT faculty and staff attended this year's Scholarship Luncheon, held on Feb. 2 in the Vaughn Center Crescent Club.

(Continued from page 33)

after something without knowing what the outcome will be.

NN: How do you continue to stay connected to UT?

CW: For a long time I didn't, but after speaking with staff in the alumni office and establishing a small regular giving policy, I slowly became connected again.

NN: Tell us what philanthropy means to you.

CW: I think that it completes a person, helping others before yourself. The key is that you don't have to do anything monstrously big; you can start small. It doesn't matter the size of the gift or goods given, it is the process of giving, helping others to achieve or succeed in life and goals. We don't go through life without the help of others all along the journey. Once you understand that your success is tied to many people, you realize how important it is to help others.

NN: What would you like to say to people who are interested in giving back, but don't know where to start?

CW: Just call someone and ask. The first time, I simply responded to a call to give from the Office of Development. I think I started with a donation of \$50. Then it finally dawned on me that if you keep making those numbers bigger, something good could happen.

NN: What advice can you give to today's UT students?

CW: Enjoy your time at UT. The people you will meet and the connections you make will last a lifetime. Get involved in any way that you can with others to work toward goals and opportunities. UT gives you a perfect classroom to work and experiment on new ideas and expand life experiences. Once you start working, work is work and it will go on for a long time. Not that it won't be fun — I love what I do. I don't want to retire, because it is so fascinating. Here we are 40 years later, and I am still having fun.

FELLOWS START MINI CAMPAIGN

The UT Board of Fellows has set itself a challenge this year — to raise its endowed scholarship balance to \$1 million.

Established in 2003, funds for the Fellows Scholarship have primarily been raised through the group's annual Fellows Forum. This event brings together a panel of CEOs from nationally recognized companies to share their perspectives with the Tampa Bay business community about their company, brand and issues facing their industry. Proceeds from ticket sales and event sponsorships go to the scholarship endowment, which has grown to more than \$750,000.

This year, the Board of Fellows Steering Committee is working to raise the fund balance to \$1 million, which will support scholarships for seven to 10 UT students annually.

For many gifted students who could not otherwise afford college, the Board of Fellows scholarship is the critical difference that makes higher education possible.

More than 42 students, to date, have benefitted from the Board of Fellows Scholarship.

The scholarship helps attract students who demonstrate high ability, great promise and the intent to major in business. Scholarship recipients must have maintained a 3.0 GPA in high school and performed volunteer service in their communities.

the annual fund

A Belief in the Mission

WHEN DEIRDRE DIXON ARRIVED AT UT in 2000 to be director of ROTC, the program was ranked 209th out of 271 schools. By 2005, Dixon had helped turn the program into one of the top 30 in the nation.

"My role was to teach values to future officers of the United States Army," she said. During her time as director of ROTC, Dixon commissioned 98 officers.

Dixon immediately saw the impact of scholarships.

In addition to tuition assistance, UT provides room and board for cadets in partnership with the ROTC scholarship. This partnership is unique and allows UT to attract and retain some of the best and brightest students who will become future military leaders.

"I saw right away how much UT values not only the military, but education by ensuring our cadets could attend. I started giving from day one, because of how the University valued the ROTC cadets," Dixon said.

The late Joseph House, a former member of UT's board of trustees, was

instrumental in Dixon's integration into UT and the Tampa Bay community. He ensured she felt at home here and shared the vision UT President Ronald Vaughn had for the University.

"And he was right, UT has grown tremendously since I arrived," she said.

Dixon immediately noticed that UT is generous.

"These are giving people. My cadets, they couldn't attend UT without scholarships," she said.

After five years as head of the ROTC program, Dixon retired from the Army as a lieutenant colonel with 22 years of service. She took on a new role at UT as the program director for the TECO Energy Center for Leadership.

In 2010, Dixon began teaching courses in strategy and leadership as an adjunct professor, and in 2015, she became an assistant professor of management. She is still involved in the TECO Energy Center for Leadership as associate director and serves as the coordinator for UT's minor in leadership program.

"UT is special, because of its class

sizes. I love knowing the students really well, and you don't get that at other universities," she said.

Dixon graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1984, and during her military career earned master's degrees from Central Michigan University in 1993 and Duke University in 1995.

In 2014, she earned her doctorate from Case Western Reserve University. Her doctoral research focused on leadership in dangerous environments.

Dixon's research focuses mainly on police, firefighters and members of the military, and the reason they go into these dangerous environments. Each group has different reasons for serving.

"Firefighters and police tend to go in because they are protecting or trying to save people," she said. "Military tend to go in because that is their job, and they are fighting for each other."

After 18 years at UT, and being a continuous donor, Dixon still sees the impact of her giving.

"Oftentimes students tell me they wouldn't come to UT if they didn't have their scholarship," she said. Recently, Dixon was speaking to a first-year student about her major, and the student mentioned she wouldn't be at the University without a UT scholarship.

"That's what makes the difference for me. UT is a good steward of its money and makes my commitment of support easy," she said.

Dixon believes it's not about how much a person donates, it's about demonstrating your support for the institution, showing that you believe in the mission.

"Every bit counts, because it shows that you care," she said.



A longtime Annual Fund donor, Deirdre Dixon said giving demonstrates your support for the institution.



Need more information?
Contact Jennifer Tyler,
Director of Annual
Giving
jtyler@ut.edu
(813) 258-7401

A photograph of a student running on a treadmill in a gym. The student is wearing a dark t-shirt and blue shorts. In the background, there are several other treadmills and a brick wall. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CREATING TOMORROW

THE CAMPAIGN FOR UT

**To compete and win
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strong body, mind
and spirit.**

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We are proud that our students will change lives and create tomorrow for UT and our world.

YOU STILL HAVE TIME ...

Empower students. Equip faculty. Enhance programs. Make your campaign gift to the UT Endowment. **CHANGE LIVES** now!





AND THE BEAT GOES ON

In 1972, several Spartan band members posed for photos that ran in an NCR Co. advertising campaign (the University had recently purchased an NCR Century computer). The two-page color ad ran in *Business Week*, *U.S. News and World Report* and *Newsweek*, reaching an estimated 30 million readers.



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UT JOURNAL

SPRING 2018

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Aloha spring! On March 16, students enjoyed the balmy evening at a Hawaiian luau. Hosted by Student Productions at the Aquatic Center, the event included hula hoop, hula dance and limbo competitions.

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