

# UT journal

The Publication for The University of Tampa SPRING 2019



## Doing Battle for Business

Cybersecurity grads step into the fray

## Access to a UT Education



Leigh Dittman, a first-year student from Lutz, FL, has wanted to be a nurse since she was 7 years old. That's partly because she's no stranger to hospitals, as she suffers from brittle bone disease and is prone to fractures. But with a service dog, a wheelchair and a can-do attitude, she's quickly becoming no stranger to UT.

Like any prospective student, Leigh looked at nursing programs at other universities. But apparently, they could not give Leigh what UT can: access. But I don't just mean something as basic as wheelchair access to campus buildings, which is ubiquitous at UT. The nursing faculty at UT is committed to working with Leigh to make sure she has the opportunity to access the cutting-edge nursing training equipment that fills the new Graduate and Health Studies Building. Nursing is a challenging course of study, so I have no doubt she will enjoy access to her professors too, just like other UT students.

Access to higher education is a well-worn but critically important ideal that encourages colleges and universities to eliminate barriers for qualified students to receive an outstanding education. Often that means providing scholarships, which we focus on, offering students nearly \$75 million in institutional aid.

But I think it means more than that. I think it means offering students access to their professors. It means access to a wide variety of classes, to research opportunities, to internships, to study abroad programs. And, it means access to leadership development opportunities, to clubs and organizations and to recreation and athletics.

While UT has many of the benefits of a large school in terms of programs, diversity and top-notch faculty, I'm proud to say that we are still much like a small school in that we can provide students access to those faculty members and unique experiences that they simply couldn't touch at a larger school.

For instance, we recently opened the Fab Lab in the Bailey Arts Studio (see page 2). The space includes laser cutters, 3-D printers, computer numerical control (CNC) routers and large format printers. Normally these sorts of tools are reserved for graduate students in engineering, architecture or arts programs. But at UT, art and design students, as well as students from other majors — from their first year on — will have full access.

Likewise, we regularly take students out on Tampa Bay for marine biology research on UT's new research vessel, *Bios 2*. On a typical day, students will spend the morning trawling on the estuary and the afternoon diving off Egmont Key. These trips aren't just for senior-level students doing capstone research; the students range from first-year students and up ... whomever is eager and interested.

I, and the rest of the administration and faculty, am committed to providing students access to UT's many academic and co-curricular learning experiences. We look forward to mentoring students, like Leigh Dittman, who are ready to take advantage of the access that UT offers as they reach for their dreams.

RONALD L. VAUGHN, PH.D.

*President and Max H. Hollingsworth Professor of American Enterprise*

## UTjournal

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# contents



## features

### cover story

## 14 Doing Battle for Business

UT's cybersecurity program teaches students how to be smarter than the bad guys.

## 20 Superstitious Spartans

How hot bread, bows, Carrabba's and kissing goal posts have factored into UT's athletic success.

### profile

## 24 A Not So Hidden Figure

Now a federal judge, Virginia Hernandez Covington '76, MBA '77 made history in the Middle District of Florida as a U.S. District Court judge and in the U.S. Attorney's Office.

## 2 news of note

New maker space, seeing clearly with electron microscopy, rewriting advertising rules, volleyball notches third championship



## 30 alumni report

Gasparilla brunch recap, UT Day at the Trop, Spartan Spotlights and Class Acts



## 44 minaret moment

A patio with a view



About the cover: Cyber attacks have become a war on business. UT is educating students to win it.

# news of note

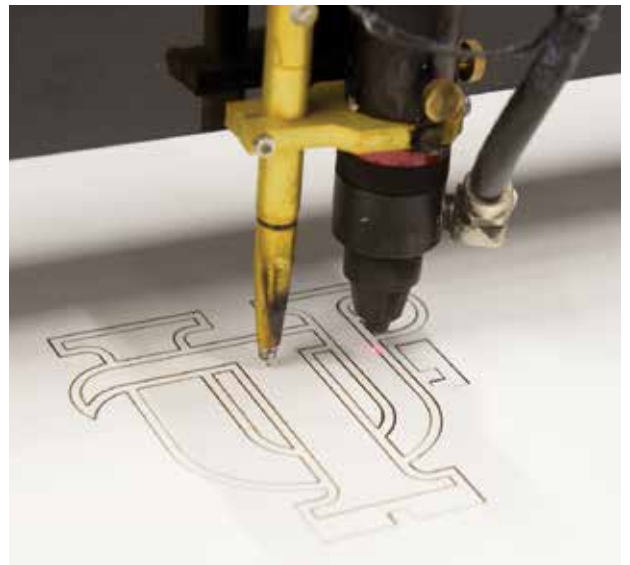
## New Maker Space Transforms Ideas into Reality

The new, reimagined Bailey Arts Studio on campus opened this spring. Today it is one of the most forward-thinking visual arts programs in the country, offering spaces for innovation and creativity amongst UT student and faculty inventors, designers, entrepreneurs and artists.

The spaces take their design cues from the edgy and collaborative vibe that is the standard in tech startups and other creative, professional spaces.

Perhaps most notably, the Bailey Arts Studio includes the Digital Fabrication Lab, known as the Fab Lab. The Fab Lab is an entrepreneurially focused collaborative maker space for students and faculty to turn their ideas and dreams into prototypes and products.

David Gudelunas, dean of the College of Arts and Letters, said that virtually anything can be created in the Fab Lab, "even things not yet dreamed of."





**"The new spaces will also benefit the hundreds of students from across the University who take courses in the visual arts as part of their liberal arts education. These spaces will inspire everyone and improve the learning environment for hundreds of students every semester."**

**- PROVOST DAVID STERN**





JED campus advisors Sadaf Siddiqi, left, and Erica Riba lead a discussion with 28 faculty and staff about mental health needs and strategy on campus.

# UT Joins with the JED Foundation

*Partnership with Jed Foundation Aims to Improve Students' Mental Health*

The University has launched a four-year partnership with The Jed Foundation (JED), a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting emotional health and preventing suicide among young adults.

"The hope is to be ahead of the curve and make sure we are meeting the needs of our students, because without their health, they're not going to perform in the classroom. Health and well-being is primary," said Gina Firth, associate dean of wellness. "We have to make sure their needs are being met so each student can thrive and meet their potential."

According to Firth, the University took a "deep dive into data" by completing a self-assessment, while simultaneously surveying students with the Healthy Minds Study out of the University of Michigan.

"The Healthy Minds Study is looking at mental health and substance abuse issues across the board inside out and backwards. It's very intensive," said Firth, explaining screening tools are built into the survey. "If a student is screening high for a particular problem, they'll be given resources."

In February, a team of UT faculty, staff and students met with representatives from JED during a two-day visit. On the first day, a diverse group of 10 UT students met for several hours with JED representatives to talk about mental health and substance abuse needs of UT students. On the second day, JED met with a team of approximately 28 faculty and staff.

The outcome of this visit, along with the survey results, will be compiled in a strategic plan draft that will be shared with the JED team this

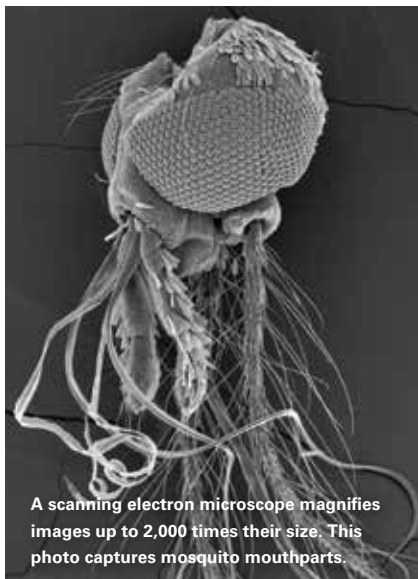
spring. Once the draft is received, the team will reconvene to begin to finalize plans for the next three years.

Going forward, the University will be assigned a partner from JED to help implement the plan. Through JED, UT also has access to a network of other colleges and universities that are going through or have already completed the same process.

"It's exciting. It's a lot of work, but it's worth it, because it will help our students," said Firth. "What's been really wonderful is watching the student reaction to this. I have gotten emails from students who have taken this survey and said, 'Thank you. Thank you for doing this. Thank you for including me. Thank you for listening.' So the students really appreciate that the University cares and wants to find out what their needs are."



# Electron Microscopy Students Study Red Tide, See 2,000 Times Clearer



A scanning electron microscope magnifies images up to 2,000 times their size. This photo captures mosquito mouthparts.

Red tide, an unusually persistent harmful algal bloom that impacted the Florida coastline last summer, killing off wildlife and tourism, was the subject of senior biology major Alexandra Sullivan's research last fall.

In her electron microscopy course, Sullivan researched organisms that were able to sustain life in red tide conditions. She said her project was extremely hands-on and engaging, as she collected, prepped and imaged water samples immediately before the organisms died.

"I have gained a lot of critical thinking skills from this course and have been able to apply so much of this knowledge to other courses, too," said Sullivan. "I've also realized that many images in journals and articles are actually done on a scanning electron microscope, so it has been amazing to have the privilege to do the same."

In the inquiry course Electron Microscopy, students research cells, bacteria, fungi and chemical processes while generating images with an electron

microscope. Stan Rice, professor of biology, emeritus, pioneered the course in the mid-1990s. He purchased the University's scanning electron microscope in 2011 using donor funds, which allows undergraduate students the rare opportunity of using this high-tech piece of equipment.

Kristine White, assistant professor of biology, who took the course with Rice in 2000, taught it for the first time this semester, giving it an inquiry spin. White said unlike a normal research course, she wanted the students in her class to choose their own project topics to research for the majority of the semester.

"Most of this course is focused on students doing independent projects," said White. "I teach the initial skills and allow them to apply them on their own, so that they are doing their own project. I've found that the students are more invested this way."

In Electron Microscopy, White said she initially begins teaching the history, theories and techniques behind the electron microscope so that her student's get a background first, which allows them to practice on their own and hopefully master the techniques. The end goal of the course is to develop these skills into something that will hopefully become employable.

By using critical thinking skills and elements of research, White said this course prepares students for the future in many ways.

"In most science labs, the instructions are laid out for you. But in this course, I'm telling the students to write their own instructions. Doing these things independently is incredibly beneficial for the rest of their career as a student and as a researcher," said White.

—STORY BY SYDNEY RHODES '21



**PORTRAYING THE WARRIOR ETHOS** — In November, the University hosted *The Warrior Ethos: A Four-Star Conversation*, which included a panel discussion with three four-star generals as well as the unveiling of a portrait of Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, 35th chief of staff of the Army, at the Schoomaker ROTC and Athletics Building. The portrait of Schoomaker, which is based on a photograph that originally ran in the magazine *Stars and Stripes*, was painted by artist Jonathan Linton with the support of UT benefactor Tom Arthur.

## In Full Color

*Exhibition honors the work of UT alumnus, professor emeritus Joe Testa-Secca*



Joe Testa-Secca (bottom left) gathered with his family — all UT alumni — at the closing reception of his exhibit at the Scarfone/Hartley Gallery.

This spring, UT's Scarfone/Hartley Gallery paid homage to one of the men who helped bring the gallery into being.

*Modernism Reimagined: Joe Testa-Secca in Full Color* highlighted the art of renowned local artist, UT alumnus and professor of art emeritus Joe Testa-Secca '50, showcasing the scope and evolution of his work and saluting both his artistic career and the invaluable local art supporters who have collected his work over the decades.

"Forty years since Joe created the Department of Art here at UT, we have an incredible opportunity to honor his work as an artist and celebrate his part in the development of the art community of Tampa Bay," said Jocelyn Boigenzahn, director of the Scarfone/Hartley Gallery.

Testa-Secca first came to UT as a student in the late 1940s, graduating with a degree in business administration in 1950. He would return 10 years later to teach drawing and painting, after earning a Master of Fine Arts at the University of Georgia and furthering his

studies at the University of Iowa.

He was an influential leader in the Tampa Bay art community at a time when contemporary art was just starting to become of interest to the region. Seeing this rising attention to contemporary artists' works in Tampa, Testa-Secca worked with UT's administration to be on the forefront of these changes.

As a co-founder of the Scarfone/Hartley Gallery, the first fully dedicated contemporary art space in Tampa, Testa-Secca increased Tampa's access to now world-renowned contemporary artists through exhibitions by William Pachner, William Walmsley and Pedro Perez, among others.

His own works have come to decorate public buildings and private homes all over Tampa Bay, from Malio's Restaurant and the J.F. Germany Library, to the stately homes of Bayshore Boulevard and Culbreath Isles and even buildings on the University of South Florida campus.

"Through his art and teaching, Testa-Secca inspired and fostered hundreds of UT student artists and connected

numerous Tampa residents to support the arts both as patrons of his work and witnesses of his work all over town, and for that, we are truly thankful," said Boigenzahn.

A full-color monographic catalogue of Testa-Secca's work from over 40 years, including the pieces featured in the exhibition, as well as a special print Testa-Secca created for the exhibition are available for purchase online at <https://squareup.com/store/scarfone-hartley-gallery-university-of-tampa>. All proceeds support future exhibitions and educational programs, such as artist talks and Camp SpARTan.

This exhibition was made possible thanks to a group of supporters known as Friends of Joe, the Friends of the Gallery and UT.



Artwork from the *Modernism Reimagined: Joe Testa-Secca in Full Color* exhibit.





As consumers have increased access to content, ad frequency also should increase, research shows.

## Professor's Research Debunks Traditional Rules of Advertising Exposure

In the world of advertising, conventional wisdom holds that the sweet spot for consumer buy-in is three to 10 exposures to an advertisement, and anything above that is excessive and perhaps even negatively affects a consumer's intention to buy the advertised product or service.

But anyone who has watched a show in recent years has likely seen ads featuring the Geico Gecko or Flo from Progressive Insurance well in excess of this threshold.

"You teach this stuff in class, and the students are like, 'But that's not what Allstate does, that's not what Geico does, that's not what Old Spice does. I've seen those ads more than 10 times,'" said Jennifer Burton, assistant professor of marketing. "And so it's hard to sit there and tell students that these big companies spending all this money — and I'm sure collecting a lot of data — are making a mistake."

Through conversations with her students in class and during office hours, Burton decided to dig deeper to see how repetition impacts the relationship between liking an ad and actually purchasing the product.

For the study, Burton surveyed 651 consumers from 46 states about 25 advertisements from Super Bowl XLVII during the one-month period following the game.

The study found that consumers with more than 10 exposures to an ad had higher purchase intentions than those who had only seen the ad three to 10 times — in direct opposition to the rules so widely taught in marketing courses.

One explanation for these findings is that the media landscape has changed so much since the studies these rules were based on were published in the 1980s and 1990s.

"We're exposed to a lot more ads, so to break in, to break through and have maximum persuasive impact, it probably needs to be more than 10. That's what my research showed," said Burton.

Burton's study also looked at 18 different dimensions that fell into either emotional or cognitive responses. These revealed that the driver of purchase intentions was different, depending on how many times somebody had seen a particular advertisement.

For those who had seen an ad less than three times or more than 10 times, emotional responses (The ad was engaging. It was humorous. It was for somebody like me. It was exciting.) were more effective. For those who'd seen the ad between three and 10 times, however, cognitive responses (The ad was believable. The ad was persuasive. The ad taught me something new about the product.) were more prevalent.

Burton found this interesting, but was unsure how to explain this phenomena. Once again, her students helped make sense of the data.

"My students said, 'I think it makes sense, because first, early on in the purchase cycle, it's usually some emotional need that we're trying to fulfill by purchasing these products. Then you have to gather all this information and choose the right product for you — that's more cognitive. And then, at the end, you have to decide whether or not you're satisfied with the product and you want to buy it again, and that's more emotional. They actually helped me see that,'" said Burton.

Burton published her findings in the *Journal of Advertising Research* and *Admap*, and it was featured in an *AdAge* article in the fall.

For advertisers, this research suggests a frequency above 10 exposures should be the baseline for maximum persuasive impact. Burton said they also should consider tailoring messages depending on how many times they've seen the ad — crafting a more emotional appeal for the first few exposures and taking a more informative approach in the three to 10 exposures window.

With the maximum of 10 exposures gone, what is the new threshold?

"We need to figure out where the cap is," said Burton. "At some point there is going to be excessive exposure or negative exposure, where the cost of these extra exposures isn't going to bring marketers benefits anymore, and we need to figure out what that is."

# UT Baseball Celebrates Rene Martinez Sr. With 30th Annual Golf Classic

His loyalty and dedication to helping others. His character, smile and strength. That's how a UT fraternity brother from the 1960s remembers Rene Martinez Sr.

Many also remember Martinez for transforming UT's baseball program and impacting countless lives. In the 1980s, he became a loyal fundraiser and spokesman for the team. His influence has been lasting and played a role in UT's seven national championships and the success of hundreds of players.

Annually, the baseball team hosts the Rene Martinez Sr. Baseball Golf Classic in memory of Martinez. The

2019 tournament, held in January, was the event's 30th anniversary. His sons, Tino '11, Rene Jr. '88 and Tony '92, played in the tournament alongside head coach Joe Urso '92.

"Our UT baseball family is grateful, and words cannot express what Rene Sr. and Sylvia and the entire family mean to us," said Urso. "Since their support of our program began, no baseball team has won more national championships. And the tournament helps us to raise funds to run one of the best baseball programs in the country."

As Martinez's legacy and impact continues, families like the Pollocks

have been inspired to help carry the mantle. Fred '70 and Jeanette Pollock provide endowment support for the baseball program. They have witnessed it change the lives of young players, building lifelong values of teamwork, commitment and excellence.

"My father would be proud of the drive and determination of UT's baseball program — the staff, players, families and supporters," said Tino Martinez. "He believed in hard work, and it's a perfect legacy, testament and reflection of his values. After expressing his pride, however, he'd likely ask — are you working hard enough?"



Left to right: Coach Sam Militello, Tony Martinez, Tino Martinez, Fred Pollock, Rene Martinez Jr., Coach Joe Urso, Coach Jose Jimenez



# Basketball Coaches Reach Milestones



Both University of Tampa basketball coaches reached career milestones in 2018-2019, with men's basketball coach Richard Schmidt winning his 700th career game, while head women's coach Tom Jessee earned his 500th career victory. Both are already the all-time winningest coaches in program history at UT.

Schmidt, who is the third winningest active coach in NCAA Division II, reached 800 in a 99-69 victory over Sunshine State Conference (SSC) opponent Florida Tech in December. Head coach for the Spartans since 1983, Schmidt has led UT to eight regular season SSC championships, five SSC tournament championships and 16 NCAA tournament appearances.

Jessee won his 500th career game in an SSC contest with Rollins College, as the Spartans took a 55-44 victory in front of the home crowd at the Martinez Center. Jessee is currently 12th among active NCAA Division II head coaches in wins. Since 2002, Jessee has led his UT teams to four regular-season SSC titles along with four SSC tournament championships. He has also coached in the NCAA tournament in nine seasons.



## UT'S NEW RIDE

It's no secret when the UT Spartans roll into town now that UT Athletics has partnered with Martz First Class Coach. As part of this partnership, Marts branded one of its buses with UT logos. The bus will be the primary transport for UT athletic teams but will also be used by other UT organizations.

## Amongst the Finalists

Aneka Ingold, part-time professor of art, was selected as a finalist for the inaugural Bennett Prize, a \$50,000 award given to one female artist to support her practice and the largest art award ever offered solely to women painters. Ingold is one of 10 finalists from 647 submissions. She will exhibit her work at the Muskegon Museum of Art amongst the finalists, and the winner will be announced at the opening reception on May 2.



**TOPSHOT** — This year's Top Shot tournament raised more than \$40,000 to support UT athletic scholarships. Hosted by the UT Board of Fellows and held at Tampa Bay Sporting Clays, the tournament attracted more than 200 attendees.



## Support When Needed Most



In her young life, Sydney Bocik has already endured great loss, as her father passed away from cancer when she was just a little girl.

It is a fairly unique experience for someone so young, but instead of facing her grief alone, Bocik sought solace with others in her high school who'd also lost a close loved one.

"We realized we didn't have to go through this kind of loss alone," she said, explaining that together with a friend and the help of a school counselor, she started a kind of support group for fellow students. "We developed friendships that gave us the support when we needed it. It's hard to have support from other people if they haven't been through it, too. It's such a unique loss at such a young age."

When Bocik came to UT, she missed that community, so in her first year she met with staff at the Dickey Health and Wellness Center to start a similar group on campus, Excelsior, which means "ever upward" in Latin.

According to Bocik, Excelsior is not a counseling group. Instead, its mission is to provide the opportunity for mutual peer support for young adults grieving the illness or death of a loved one and to empower the campus community to take action through service.

Bocik is now a senior and the group is thriving. It meets regularly for social activities like having coffee or doing homework and also completing service projects in the community.

Still, Bocik wanted to do more. She thought of the scholarship she'd received from the Legacy Guild, which has been crucial to her coming to UT.

"It really helped me a lot. I would not be able to attend UT without that, so I thought it was important that if I got some help, I wanted to give some help back," she said.

So Bocik is starting the Excelsior Scholarship, an annual scholarship that will go to a student who has suffered the loss of a parent. While she finishes her studies in international business and finance, the scholarship will be funded by Checkers and Rally's, but Bocik plans to take over the funding of the gift once she graduates in December. She also welcomes others to make contributions to fund additional Excelsior Scholarships.

While she is proud of the scholarship, Bocik said it's important for students to know that even those who don't receive the financial support are welcome to join the group.

"Especially with the big life changes — going into high school, going into college, moving far away — not having that support (from a parent) makes a big difference," she said. "So having it with your peers, with people who do understand makes a really big difference."

## Be #allinforUT on April 23



On April 23, 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.

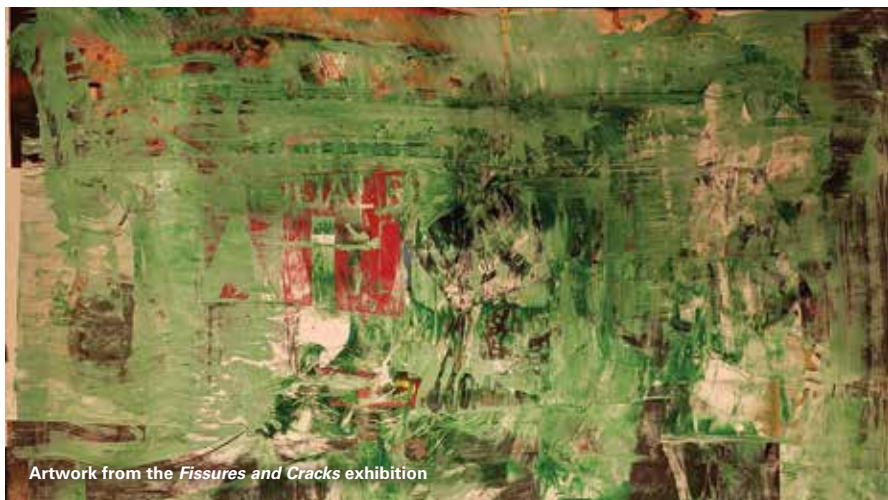
#allinforUT is UT's annual give day — a day dedicated to raising support for the University and sharing Spartan pride with the world. The driving force behind #allinforUT is the idea that when everyone contributes, no matter how large or small, all gifts add up to have an enormous impact.

Throughout the day, there will be activities for students, faculty and staff on campus, as well as challenges for alumni and parents to participate in, no matter where they are. Keep an eye on your inbox on April 23 to get in on the action.

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](mailto:annualfund@ut.edu).

# Releasing the Artist Within

*Art Therapy Students Collaborate with Homeless Community in Exhibit*



Artwork from the *Fissures and Cracks* exhibition

Delaney Bend '19 spent a Wednesday afternoon packaging 190 prints into sleeves. The artwork belonged to several artists, including Larry M., an artist who is homeless she worked with all semester through a program called Art Space.

A collaboration between the Tampa Museum of Art, Hyde Park United Methodist Church/The Portico and the UT art therapy program, Art Space has helped several homeless artists find and release their inner creatives through a weekly gathering, sometimes at the museum and sometimes at The Portico, a café and meeting space in downtown Tampa dedicated to supporting homeless initiatives.

Art Space provides the art supplies, and UT art therapy students help facilitate and guide the creative process. In the past, they've worked with the PACE Center for Girls. Since August 2017 though, they've been working with the homeless community.

"Working with this specific exhibition, and people within it, was one of the most rewarding things I have ever done," said Bend, an art major with a concentration in art therapy and a

minor in painting. "Taking time out of your day to spend with someone who has little to nothing — who you don't really know who they are, or where they come from or the slightest bit of their life story — to just create is the most meaningful gift you can give to someone, and also to yourself."

Last fall UT's Scarfone/Hartley Gallery hosted *Fissures and Cracks*, an exhibition of visual works by the homeless of Tampa Bay. The exhibition also featured *The Faces of a Million Meals*, a photography portrait series by Tim Kennedy, UT professor of communication, originally created for Trinity Café.

Art therapy is a vehicle for communication that uses art for its medium. From veterans with PTSD to children with autism, art tools and symbolism can be used to discover what may be going on internally with someone.

Joe Scarce, a board-certified art therapist and instructor of art therapy at UT, said he initially opened up the opportunity to students from his Art Therapy Applications course, which provides them with hands-on opportunities to make art with a variety of populations. In this instance, his students

were helping the homeless participants tell their stories through art.

"The conversation flowed really well. That's paramount. When you have a group of that diverse a background come together, and it still flows well? That was really powerful for me," said Scarce. "I noticed that the students created art, the homeless created art and they talked about their art together. There was a great energy, and it seemed like they connected really well."

Jocelyn Boigenzahn, director of the Scarfone/Hartley Gallery, was able to secure funding through a partnership with Las Damas de Arte foundation, a Community Arts Impact Grant from the Arts Council of Hillsborough County and the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners, as well as the Friends of the Gallery. Funds have helped cover the cost of making prints out of the homeless artists' work, which the artists have for sale, as well as providing a stipend for them.

For his UT students, Scarce said his hope is for their awareness of the needs of the community in which they live, as well as impactful experiences to reaffirm their career paths.

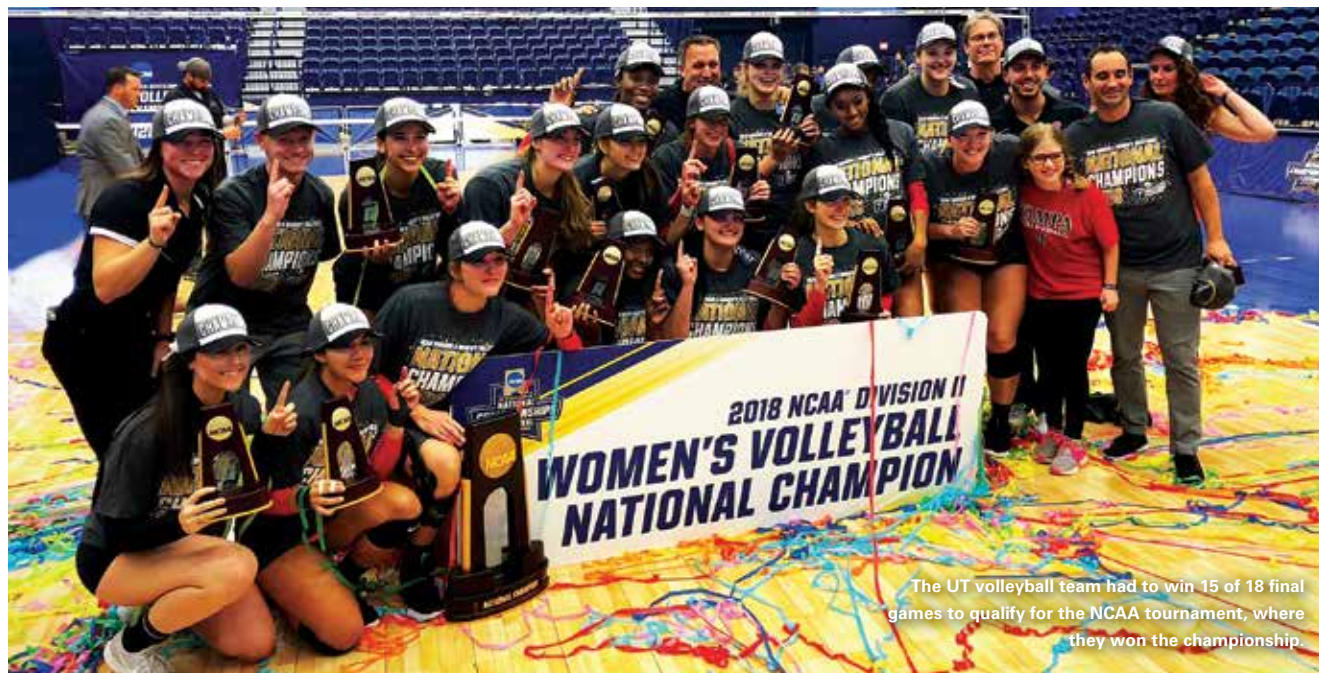
"Art therapists believe that art is healing in itself. We believe that anybody that makes art benefits from it," Scarce said. "If the students benefit from making art, and the homeless people benefit, what a wonderful combination, because they're doing it together and experiencing that energy."

For Bend, working with the program has reinforced her desire to help people heal through art.

"I've always wanted to help and touch the lives of people, but now I want to do this by opening up their creative sides," said Bend.



# spartan sports



The UT volleyball team had to win 15 of 18 final games to qualify for the NCAA tournament, where they won the championship.

## Beating the Odds

### *Spartan Volleyball Brings Home Third National Championship*

This year's volleyball season did not start as hoped. The team was un-ranked to begin.

"If Las Vegas had odds of us winning the championship, I would guess that they would have been 100-1," said Chris Catanach, head coach of the UT volleyball team.

Despite the rough beginning, the mindset of the Spartans never faltered. After an unforgettable season that was full of hard work and determination, the team rallied to make it to the NCAA tournament and brought home the Division II Championship for the third time in the program's history. The team previously won the national title in 2006 and 2014 and have made a total of seven appearances.

"I think the team was mentally

prepared for the season because of the adversity they faced the season before," Catanach explained. "We had to win 15 of our last 18 games to make it to the NCAA tournament. Physically, we were fortunate to stay relatively healthy throughout the season."

He credits team chemistry and selflessness as the two major qualities of the team. It is apparent that both wove together in synchronization to demonstrate excellence on the court.

Leading up to the title game, Catanach credits three specific wins as definitive moments. The first was a five set win over Barry University. In set three, the Spartans were down 21-15, and they came back to win the match. The three-set win over Palm Beach

Atlantic University was the first win over the opponent on their home court in West Palm Beach, FL. The last was winning the Regional Championship at Palm Beach.

Eight teams traveled to the A.J. Palumbo Center in Pittsburgh, PA, with hopes of the title and the ring. After three days of intense competing, the Spartans faced off against the Western Washington University Vikings on Dec. 1, 2018.

"Before the game, the kids were calm and confident," Catanach recalls. "They insisted on doing their pregame routine, which started 1 hour, 15 minutes before game time."

The first four sets ended with two wins for each team: 21-25, 25-18, 21-25, 25-23.



It all came down to the last set. The players and coaches never took anything granted. The team stayed focused and played like champions.

"At any moment, we felt like there could be a momentum shift like we had in the fourth set. The Vikings senior attacker tipped to us on match point, and Katie McKiel '21 terminated the swing for the winning point," Catanach described. With a final score of 15-11 in that last set, the Spartans claimed victory with an overall 65 kills, 63 assists and 87 digs.

While there were many highlights throughout the championship match, Catanach reflected on some key moments.

"The Vikings were rocking and rolling in set four, and it was looking really bleak for us," he said. "Our kids turned it around. Our kids never quit, even when they were down big in the fourth. We won the championship after being down two to one in sets and down 14-7 in the fourth set."

Senior Alexandra Misca played the best match of her career. She had a double-double, 13 kills and 11 blocks. Sophomore Sorrel Houghton had nine kills in the last two set that led the team to the final victory. The tournament's Most Outstanding Player was awarded to Sammy Mueller, a junior. McKiel, Misca and Taylor Fosler, junior, were named to the all-tournament team.

Prior to the tournament, the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) named Catanach the 2018 USMC/AVCA Division II National Coach of the Year. It is evident he is passionate about the sport, his team and the University.

"The feeling of winning a championship is difficult to describe. For a player, I'm sure it is different than a coach," said Catanach. "For a coach, winning a championship is kind of a validation that you are recruiting the right kids, training them well and making the right decisions during the game."

For Catanach, this year's win was sweet.

"I had regrets from my 2014 championship. I did not enjoy the post championship as much as I should have," he said. "That year we were expected to win, and I forgot that it did not matter. Enjoy it when you can. This time was very special, since we were not expected to accomplish this goal."

The win was pure joy. The players are still very proud of themselves and the team's accomplishment. Catanach believes they should be. The Spartans ended the season with an overall record of 33-4.

On April 27, 2019, the team will hold a ring ceremony with

presentations that will be open to the public.

With three NCAA National Championships, 18 NCAA Regional Championships, 68 All-Americans and 26 Sunshine State Conference (SSC) Championships, the UT Spartan family is anxious to see what the 2019-2020 season will bring. Catanach sets the same goals each year:

"Improve every day. Be a great student. Be a great person. Compete at everything. Be a great teammate. Win the Sunshine State Conference. Host and win the NCAA Regional Tournament. Compete for a National Championship."

— EMILY STOOPS

## UT Aces Championships

In recent months, UT has celebrated some championship tennis success — alongside its competitive women's NCAA program.

The UT Club Tennis program, which consists of male and female UT students, won its division in the Florida State "Tennis on Campus" Championships. The team beat a club team from FSU in the final, which was held at Florida Gulf Coast University in November.

The team then earned a berth in the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Tennis Championships in Orlando in late February. The team was able to advance to the quarterfinal against the University of Central Florida.

The team regularly competes against squads from other Florida universities, including the University of South Florida, University of Central Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University and the University of Florida.

Additionally, the volunteer women's coach of the women's tennis team, Jessica Sucupira, won the USTA National Championship in the Women's 30 Singles event in Fort Lauderdale. The

win placed Sucupira as the No. 1 woman player in the U.S. in the 30s division.

As if that wasn't a big enough accomplishment, she and her husband, Jonathas, took the national mixed doubles title as well.

Sucupira was a student-athlete at Florida State University and is currently in her second year volunteering with the UT tennis team.

UT tennis coach Al DuFaux said Sucupira brings a wealth of talent to the UT tennis team.

"She has the ability to relate to the players, and her experience, motivation and talents are what help us to win."



UT Club  
Tennis team  
member Victor  
Marroquin '19

BY KILEY MALLARD  
ILLUSTRATION BY JOEY GUIDONE

With cybercrime on the rise, UT grads  
are stepping into the fray to help

# DOING BATTLE FOR BUSINESS





# "Crime has switched from

**I**VAN MARCHANY M.S. '19 was excited to get the email from his boss letting him know his request to work remotely over the holidays was approved. In the email, his boss asked him to follow a link to fill out his availability during this time.

"This is exciting! I can finally work remotely," thought Marchany, a security operations center analyst at a local cybersecurity firm in Tampa. He clicked on the link — and as soon as he'd done it, he knew something wasn't right.

"When I clicked it, I knew it was a phish test email," said Marchany. "I was not happy at that moment. No one wants to be tricked, but it was a really good test."

Thankfully, what Marchany experienced was just a test from his company, but thousands fall victim to phishing attacks every day. Phishing is an email (or even a call or text) that looks legitimate but is really "fishing" for personal or financial details or login credentials.

The lesson? Never click the link. Instead, if you receive an email from your bank, for instance, Marchany said it is always recommended that you open your browser and go directly to the legitimate website.

"The biggest problem we face in the cybersecurity business world is really the people," said Marchany. "People are not aware of how they can be manipulated. We'd rather train people than bring in technology."

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## PREPARING FOR THE FIGHT

Phishing is just one example of cybercrime that has become pervasive as society becomes more and more connected. Other common forms of attack include:

**Non-payment/non-delivery**, where you send goods but don't receive payment (or vice versa);

**Personal data breaches**, where your personal information (address, birthdate, social security number or sensitive records) is leaked or accessed by unauthorized viewers;

**Corporate data breaches**, where a business' data (which may include your own) is leaked or accessed by an untrustworthy source;

**Overpayments**, where you are asked to help facilitate a money transfer in exchange for a share of the money (but first have to put up some of your own).

Individuals aren't the only victims. Well-known companies — Yahoo, eBay, Equifax, Target, Michaels, Home Depot and most recently, Marriott — have all made headlines in recent years after their networks were compromised by cybercriminals.

Helping to fight against this onslaught of attacks are cybersecurity professionals, and among them are graduates of UT's cybersecurity program, like Marchany, who will graduate with a Master of Science in Cybersecurity in May.

Already studying information technology, Marchany became interested in the field of cybersecurity when he saw how many high-profile companies were being attacked and the high demand for security professionals.

"It's becoming a business problem. I was realizing it was something I could do that really matters," he said.

UT's cybersecurity program launched in 2015 with 52 students. By Fall 2018, the program had grown to just under 300 majors. The graduate program, which launched in 2017, boasts 35–40 students.

It's a field that is only expected to be more in demand. According to the U.S. government's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the information security field is expected to grow 37 percent from 2012 to 2022.

But with cybersecurity programs popping up at many colleges and universities, it begs the question: Is cybersecurity a fad?

"Cybersecurity is a fad if the internet is a fad," said Ken Knapp, professor of cybersecurity and director of UT's cybersecurity program.

According to Knapp, computer security has been talked about since the 1960s, long before the internet.

"Security used to be kind of an afterthought," said Knapp.

But with pervasive use of the internet on not just computers but multiple other devices (smart phones, cars, homes, etc.) the need for security has become a huge priority. As Knapp said it, we are automating and putting more online than ever, so the surface area of targets is increasing.

"Crime has switched from the physical domain to the cyber domain," he said.

Knapp previously served for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force and has seen the disruption cybercrime can cause. In the late 1990s, one base he was stationed at experienced a cyberattack by a criminal organization out of Europe.

"We had to shut down the base computer network for three days," he said. "After that I got into security in a big way. Once you've been burned ..."

According to Knapp, what makes UT's program somewhat unique is that it is housed in the Sykes College of Business, rather than computer science.

"Cybersecurity is a business problem," said Knapp. So alongside their cybersecurity classes, students take core business courses such as accounting and business law as well.

Students begin by learning the basics of networking, management information systems and application development. They then build to more advanced courses in network security, information security principles, information security standards, risk management and compliance.

In addition, students in the program benefit from a dedicated cybersecurity lab, which is ISO/IEC 27001 certified.

The lab allows students to gain hands-on experience in scanning net-

# the physical domain to the cyber domain.”

—KEN KNAPP, PROFESSOR OF CYBERSECURITY AND DIRECTOR OF UT’S CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM

works and exploiting systems. All devices in the lab are segregated on a separate network from the University’s main network — a cyber range, so to speak — so students can learn to perform ethical hacking in a safe environment.

Most cybersecurity professionals are expected to attain professional certifications, which is why UT’s cybersecurity capstone course is centered around the Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) certification, one of the industry’s toughest, most desired certifications.

Benny Calhoun ’18, a security operations center analyst at ReliaQuest and student in UT’s cybersecurity master’s program, said his capstone course helped prepare him for the CISSP exam, which he has since passed.

Like most of us, Calhoun has experienced cybercrime firsthand. He once had an old cell phone that he only used to play music and browse the internet during his workouts. One day, a website he visited downloaded a ransomware attack to the phone, locking the device unless he paid the hacker a fee. He ultimately junked the phone rather than pay the ransom, but thankfully it was an old phone and not his main device.

“It’s a whole new world. If you were to come into our world and shadow us for a day ...,” he said, explaining that the more devices we have and the more spending we do online, the greater the need for people like him to fight back.

## FROM THEORY TO EXPERIENCE

Outside of class and time in the computer labs, students in the program are strongly encouraged to complete an internship by at least their junior year. Like in any field, internships help students to understand the subject matter better by gaining practical experience.

During his internship, one of the companies Michael McKinley ’17 was helping to monitor experienced a security breach.

“At that time security breaches were a classroom idea,” said McKin-

ley. “I understood the context of what breaches were from a technical perspective, but being a part of one firsthand added a whole new perspective for me and really helped me to understand every piece.”

McKinley now works in information security incident response for the Canadian division of Raymond James out of Toronto. He helps do incident response on global security incidents related to Raymond James, and also manages a team of four individuals based in Poland.

What does he find most exciting about the job? The battle.

“Cybersecurity would not exist if not for people being malicious,” he

said. “That’s the weird thing about cybersecurity. You are directly competing against someone else, so that is exciting to me. It’s really a competition of who is better at what they do.”

McKinley also pointed out that a degree in cybersecurity can prepare you for a wide variety of disciplines within cybersecurity, from work on defending against attacks like he does, to offense, or ethical hacking, where you intentionally break into a business’ network to look for vulnerabilities. (One of UT’s most popular cybersecurity classes is Ethical Hacking.) Cybersecurity professionals also serve as consultants, auditors or regulations experts (to name a few).

## A LITTLE CYBERSECURITY ADVICE

“It’s good to raise awareness of these problems, because people don’t take cybercrime as seriously as physical crime. ... Talk to your friends about this, be like an ambassador for the cause. Talk to your parents as well. Tell them what they should and should not do, how to be safe online.” — **Mia Plachkinova**

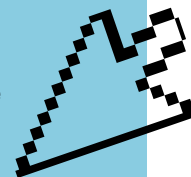
“The easiest thing for most nontechnical people would be to enable two-factor authentication wherever possible. If one of these websites gets breached or you have a virus on your computer — I’m not going to say it reduces it to zero, because it’s not true — but it almost entirely eliminates the possibility of your account being compromised that way. It gives you peace of mind.” — **Michael McKinley ’17**

“Don’t click on the link. I’m kind of paranoid about that. If I get a call from the bank, I will either let them leave a voicemail or end the call and then call them back. Because you never really know who is on the other phone. You want to trust people, but at the same time you have to protect yourself.”

— **Patrick Walker ’18**

“I use a password vault, because none of my passwords are the same. They’re all complex, and I like being notified when my passwords get old so I can change them. I’m also extremely careful about what information I put out on the web, avoid sketchy websites, use spam filters and adblockers, and so forth.” — **Mary Hunh ’18**

“I would get educated. There are so many ways out there for you to get informed on security. Go online, look at articles or best security policies that you could do on your own computer.” — **Daniela Ramirez ’16**





From right, cybersecurity majors Ashley Newsome and Jenny Khanal's work on cybersecurity threats against critical infrastructure was accepted for presentation at the National Council on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), as well as the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference (FURC).

## RESEARCHING VULNERABILITIES

**There is a trend for** the world's critical infrastructures, such as power plants, nuclear facilities, dams and water treatment facilities, to become part of the internet of things (IoT). However, when these supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems were originally created, there was no internet and no threat of hackers, which leaves them vulnerable for malicious attackers to exploit the outdated facilities and cause serious damage.

This trend caught the attention of student research assistants, juniors and cybersecurity majors Ashley Newsome and Jenny Khanal.

"They were made without security in mind," said Khanal, of Nepal. "Physical security yes, but they weren't considering cyberattacks."

Since last fall, Success Scholars Newsome and Khanal have been "investigating the myriad of vulnerabilities, possible threats, and the risks of connecting these devices to the internet or integrating them into corporate networks," and are developing a taxonomy to organize the weaknesses of SCADA systems, the repercussions of attack and possible mitigation efforts within the foundational frame of information security.

"By categorizing them, we will be able to provide more adequate measures to protect SCADA systems from the growing cyber threats," they wrote in their abstract. Newsome, who has a business analytics minor and is from Fort Lauderdale, explained that they used case studies such as the Stuxnet

virus against the Iranian nuclear facility and the attack against the Ukrainian power grid to evaluate their taxonomy.

"Out of all the topics we came up with, this one we thought had the greatest impact on society and the world," said Khanal. "Something we could do research on and make a change."

Newsome and Khanal's work on cybersecurity threats against critical infrastructure was accepted for presentation at the National Council on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), which was hosted at Kennesaw State University in Georgia on April 11–13. They also plan to submit their work, "A Taxonomy of Critical Infrastructure Vulnerabilities: Case Study Approach on SCADA Systems," to a peer-reviewed journal by the end of the semester.

Mia Plachkinova, assistant professor of cybersecurity, said the point of doing any research is to advance knowledge, to help others and to inspire students to think beyond the problems discussed in class.

"I push them to think big and show them that everything is possible if they work hard and are passionate about doing research and solving problems that seem impossible to solve," Plachkinova said. "Ashley and Jenny have picked a very serious topic to work on, and I am confident that they can make a difference in the future. We need people with fresh eyes like them to help us find innovative solutions and protect these critical infrastructures that are of national significance."



**“We want people to have confidence in what we do when it comes to keeping them and their data secure, so it can certainly make you sweat sometimes!”** — MARY HUNH '18

“If you were actually interested in computing from the beginning, it’d be very difficult for you to get bored doing cybersecurity, because you can always switch disciplines,” he said.

If you’ve ever fallen victim to an attack, don’t feel too bad. McKinley said even people who know a lot about security will succumb to poor security practices.

“I might know this is the wrong thing to do, but my laziness will get the better of me, and I will have my home computer get a virus,” he said. “The only difference is once I fall victim, I know what to do. I don’t have to call someone else if I have a virus or have been phished.”

#### ROLE MODELS

UT’s cybersecurity program boasts another somewhat unique feature: three of the four full-time faculty are female.

Mia Plachkinova, assistant professor of cybersecurity, started her own career in public relations and communications. While working for an IT company, they pulled her in on a security audit, which sparked her interest in security and technology as a whole.

“Until then I always thought you needed to be super good at math, and you needed to know programming and all those things,” she said. “Once I started working in this company, I was like wow there is so much more to technology than people think.”

Plachkinova went on to earn a second master’s degree and a doctorate in information systems and technology (and is now enrolled in UT’s criminology and criminal justice master’s program).

“I like having the interdisciplinary (training), because I think it ultimately helps you be a better educator, a bet-

ter professional in the field, seeing different perspectives,” she said. “If you think about cybersecurity, it’s not just its own thing. We need to protect banking, health care, educational data (and so on).”

While she has never experienced any discrimination, Plachkinova said she would like to see more females in the field.

“Especially for students, it’s important to see them as role models. That’s why I guess we’re lucky here to have three females who are teaching cybersecurity,” she said.

One of Plachkinova’s former students, Mary Hunh ’18, said that while only 20 percent of workers in the field are women, she has never felt like she was not given the same opportunities as her peers.

“I believe it’s important to address this in order to encourage other women to pursue a career in this industry,” she said. “I love working in tech, because it all comes down to what you know and how good you are at what you do that will take you far in your career.”

Hunh, who now works for Raymond James in the information security accelerated development program, said that unlike many of the people in this field, she didn’t know from a young age that this is what she wanted to do.

She took a while to come around to cybersecurity, first majoring in marketing then finance. She took a couple of semesters off in 2015-2016 to join the Florida Army National Guard, and while stationed at Fort Gordon, started learning about the field.

“Although I’ve always loved technology growing up, I never considered a career revolved around it until I realized how many opportunities there were for me to find work that was

meaningful and positively affected others,” she said.

Hunh appreciated the guest speakers her professors would bring in, who showed her the breadth of the field and helped her refine what she was most interested in.

At Raymond James, she works on the security operations team, which focuses on data loss prevention, mobile security, endpoint security and more. She also works on projects with other teams, such as the firewall/networking team, governance risk and compliance team, and the vulnerability management team within Raymond James’ Cyber Threat Center.

Hunh admits there can be a lot of pressure and stress at times, because so much of the work she does is critical to keep the business running and the relationship with customers strong.

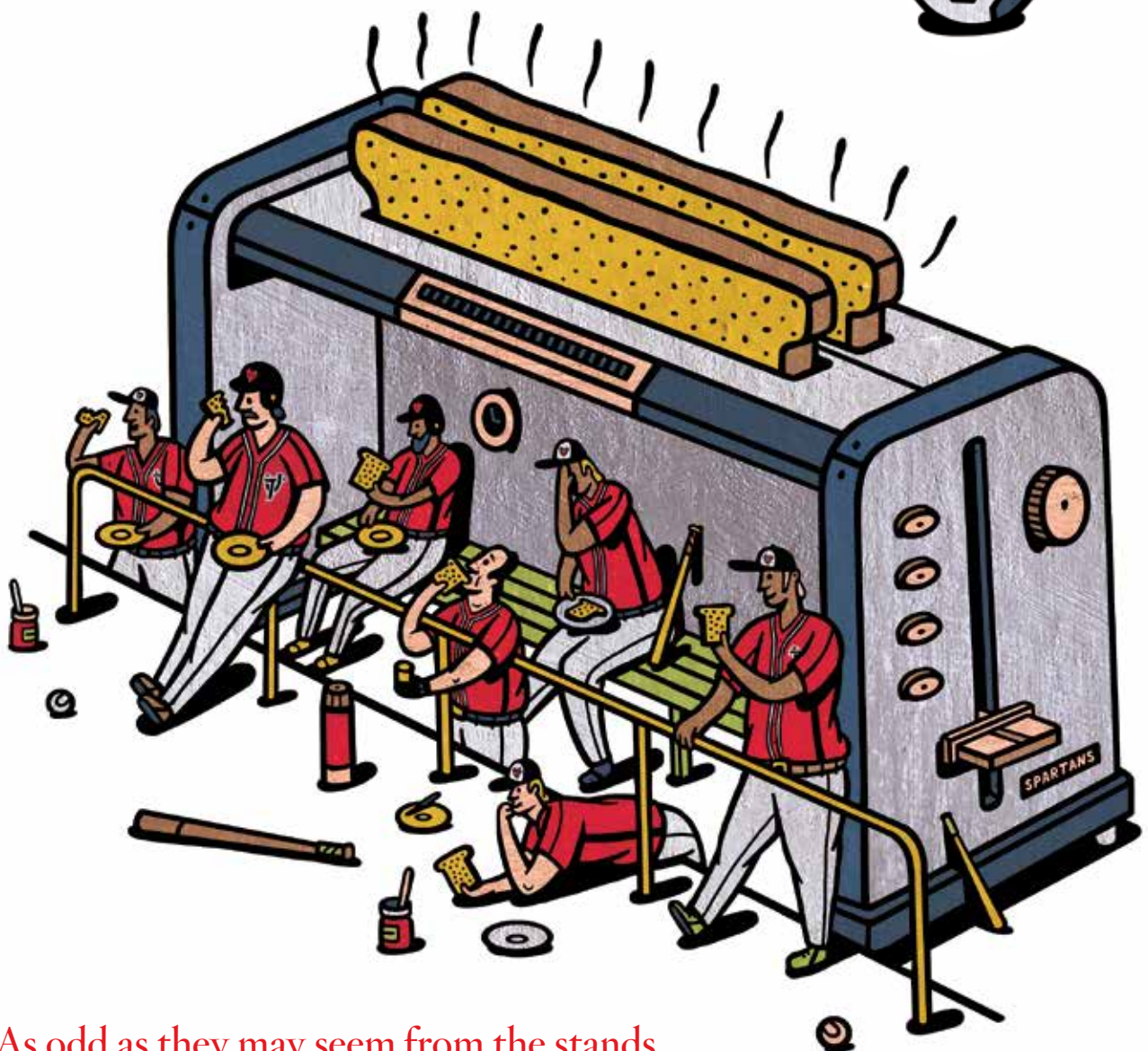
“We want people to trust us and have confidence in what we do when it comes to keeping them and their data secure, so it can certainly make you sweat sometimes!” she said.

Daniela Ramirez ’16 picked up a minor in cybersecurity during her undergraduate studies at UT, and went on to earn a master’s degree in cybersecurity at George Mason University in 2017. These days, she works as an IT engineer in the cybersecurity department with Wipro Limited out of Texas.

For Ramirez, the best part of her job is when she catches an incident and is able to step in and prevent any loss from the company.

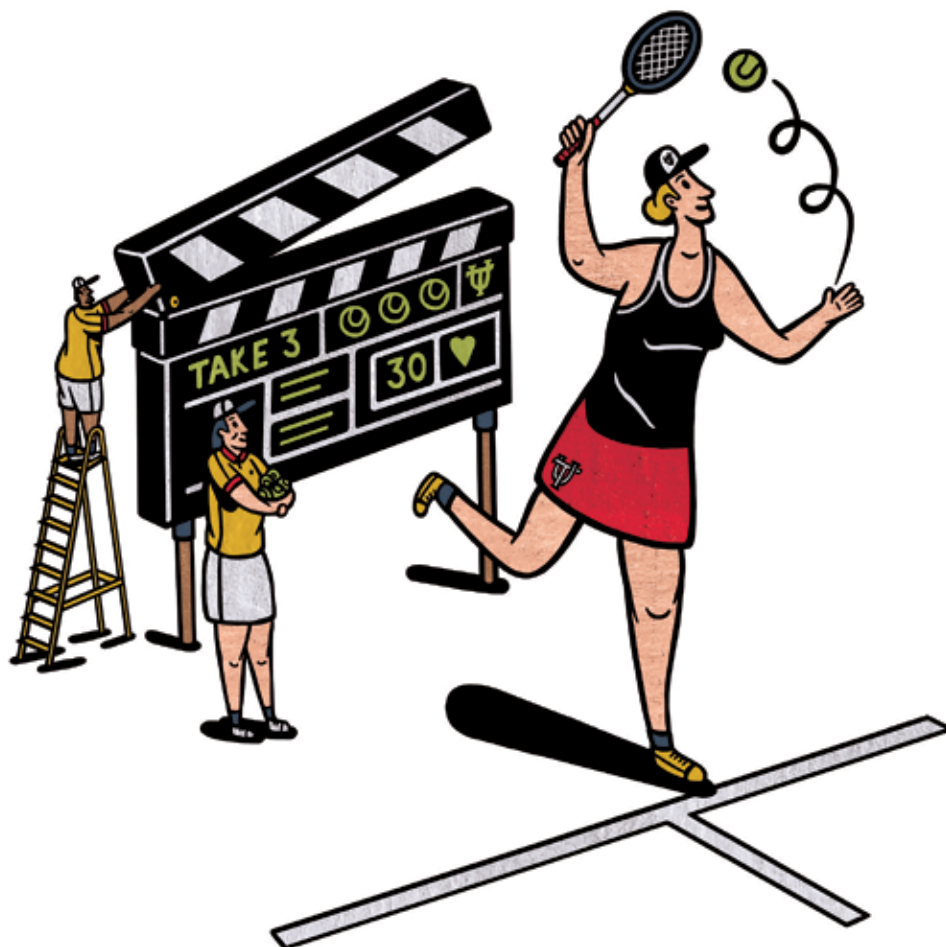
“That for me is a huge accomplishment. You feel awesome, because you did your job correctly and you did what you needed to do,” she said. “You’re like a security guard, but in front of a computer.” **UT**

# SUPERSTITIOUS SPARTANS



As odd as they may seem from the stands,  
athletes' game day rituals are essential to success.

# OUS NS



BY TOM KERTSCHER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
PHIL WRIGGLESWORTH

**W**ATCH NO. 2, THE Spartans' second baseman, long enough during a ball game, and you'll notice a couple eccentricities.

He never steps on the foul line on the way in or out of the dugout. He won't touch a baseball as it's resting near the mound between innings. He'll say a little prayer behind second base after his second warmup throw in the first inning ... but only after his second throw, not the first.

"I definitely try to abide by those laws," said sophomore Drew Ehrhard. Besides hard work, which resulted in his being a second-team all-Sunshine State Conference player as a freshman, Ehrhard believes his success has come in part from rituals, most of which he started doing without realizing it.

And if he inadvertently touches that baseball or steps on a foul line between innings? "You might get a few looks from teammates, but hopefully the baseball gods don't curse you for it."

The tics, tugs, bends, shuffles and flexes you might see at the free throw line or in the batter's box are only

momentary rituals that athletes use in an attempt to gain a competitive edge. Even more elaborate are the sometimes weeks-long superstitions that players, coaches and even entire teams engage in, all with the belief that it will help tilt the field, or the court, in their favor.

Sound crazy? According to Margaret Tudor, an assistant professor of sport management at UT and a certified sport psychology consultant whose research interests include student-athlete motivation, rituals or routines help athletes be in the present and are directly tied to performance.

"I think it's just something natural that as the more elite an athlete gets — so, the more history they have — they try to find things that work for them," she said.

As a college softball player, she made sure to put on the left sock and left shoe first when dressing for a game. She said she encourages athletes to create such habits, because they can prepare them for the challenge they're about to face — or forget the blunder they may have just committed.

Maybe that's what the 2013 Spartans baseball team had in mind with their "hot bread" routine. It was created by pitcher Preston Packrall '14, according to head baseball coach Joe Urso '92, a former All-American player for UT. A toaster was put in the dugout that season and, if the Spartans needed a rally, or seemed on the verge of scoring some runs, a slice of bread would be toasted. As the *Tampa Bay Times* described it:

"It will toast as chants of 'Hot Bread' emanate from the dugout and reverberate through the Spartans supporters in the bleachers. Upon the rally's end, a player will eat the bread. Urso even ordered T-shirts with #hot-bread emblazoned on the back."

That team won the sixth of UT baseball's seven NCAA national championships. Of course, maybe that team would have won the national title without a toaster in their dugout. After all, they scored an average of eight runs per game and won 80 percent of their games.

There's a widespread belief that routines can help relax athletes and improve their concentration.



“Rituals are an essential part of being a successful athlete,” said Ron Woods, a part-time faculty member who teaches courses on sports psychology and sociology at UT. “We teach athletes intentionally to do them to get them to the right level of focus and concentration.”

Woods explained that most of what we do in life is habitual and doesn’t require conscious thought. Similarly in sports, when athletes are getting ready to compete, they might habitually eat a certain meal or listen to specific music to get them in the right frame of mind.

“One of the key things you want to help athletes feel is that they have some control over their performance when they’re playing,” said Woods. “All these are skills that are designed to make an athlete feel confident they control the outcome. It’s not some magical lady luck or accident.”

That’s what Julia Morrow ’14, M.S. ’16 recalls on the softball diamond. A star pitcher for the Spartans, she led the nation in earned-run average as a junior and was the Sunshine State Conference pitcher of the year as a senior.

As a player, Morrow would always do high-fives with her catcher — strictly, once with bare hands, then once with the gloves — before taking the mound each inning. It was a “we’ve got this” confidence booster.

“I think if I didn’t do them, it wouldn’t really affect my performance,” Morrow said, “but I think doing them gets you in a good mind-space.”

Morrow said she didn’t consider herself superstitious. But she admits that her habit had been to wear a bow in her hair for each game — until that time during her junior year when she forgot it and threw her first perfect game. No more bows after that.

Sophomore tennis player Corbin Dorsey has her own set of rituals. As a freshman, Dorsey had an eight-game win streak and posted a 17-4 record in singles play.



Dorsey will use the same tennis ball for up to three points in a row, but always changes it out on the fourth point. She also always tucks the left side of her skirt under her shorts, and when she’s serving, always holds the racquet with the manufacturer’s name facing up. And before every serve, she adjusts her hat.

“I’ve done the skirt ritual and holding the racquet a certain way for as long as I can remember, and the rest of them I just started once I got to college,” said Dorsey. “These rituals have just become a habit now, but I feel like something is off, or I have a greater chance at losing the point if I don’t do them.”

A little more superstitious is Elena de Alfredo ’17. She is currently a graduate student and graduate assistant on the UT women’s basketball team, as well as a former captain of the team. At 14, while growing up in Spain, she cried

for days after losing the red headband she had worn for every game, fearing she had “lost my powers.”

She hadn’t, of course, but while playing at UT, de Alfredo leaned on several pregame rituals, including a 20-minute nap followed by a 5-minute cold shower, putting on the right shoe before the left and always being the last player to walk onto the court. “I was a little crazy; I’m not going to lie,” she said.

At the same time, de Alfredo said she always understood that her hard work was what would determine her success, not missing a step in the pregame routine. The routine, she said, merely helped focus her concentration. “It kept me in the zone,” she said.

At perhaps the opposite end of the spectrum when it comes to superstitions is Adrian Bush ’95, who has been the UT men’s soccer coach since 2005.

**"If I have something to eat on the day that we win, you better believe I'm going to eat the exact same thing before each game until we lose."**

— ADRIAN BUSH '95

Here, too, there is a record of success: In 13 seasons under Bush, the Spartans have won 61 percent of their games and gone to the NCAA tournament seven times.

But to hear the coach describe it, none of it would be possible without scrupulously following superstitions. If he accidentally takes the "wrong" turn on the way to work, he'll go back home and start the drive over. One time Bush made a friend drive his lucky hat that he'd forgotten from Tampa to Boca Raton — 230 miles — in time for a match.

Just listen to Bush:

*"I've had them as a player, and it seems like it's only gotten worse with me as a coach. It's almost to the point where it affects my daily routine. If I have something to eat on the day that we win, you better believe I'm going to eat the exact same thing before each game until we lose. I'm really bad about it; my assistants, it drives them crazy."*

*"I have good clothes, and I have bad clothes. I have gotten rid of clothes that have brought bad luck. My wife has learned: I do all my laundry at my house, and it's for that reason. I don't want anyone else even touching the stuff that I'm wearing."*

*"Years ago, on the way to a game the bus driver went the wrong way. We won the game. So, the next game, we made the bus driver go the same exact same route that he went before. He wasn't lost — but he had to get lost for that game."*

*"We'll never eat as a team at Carrabba's ever again. It's really eliminated me from going there. We lost a real big game after eating there once, and it stung."*

Tudor said these types of superstitions are more dependent on a player's or coach's own personality. They are OK, too, she said, as long as they don't go too far. Losing a lucky sock, for example, shouldn't be so upsetting that it distracts your concentration on the field, she said.

Woods agreed and cautioned against athletes putting too much stock in superstitions, which he defines as things people attribute their performance to

that are typically irrelevant, such as not washing your socks or not stepping on certain lines.

"It's dangerous for athletes to rely on superstitions, because it means that they don't really have control of their performance," he said.

Bush acknowledges that superstitions can be overdone, but he's a believer, nonetheless.

"It can almost be something that kind of takes over, but it goes into confidence, it's a mental part of it. I do think strongly it works," he said. "I associate things with winning and losing."

"UT athletes, for me, are winners, champions," he continued. "When you put that jersey on, you're expected to win. And whatever led you to win, you keep on doing that."

Ryan Thompson '10, who played for Bush and was a two-time All-America

goalkeeper for UT, said he was fine with Bush's extreme rituals, because superstitions, as well as religion, were so common in Jamaica, where Thompson grew up.

Thompson is now an assistant coach and player with the Austin Bold FC soccer team in Texas. That means he'll resume his pregame ritual at the goal. Thompson said he bends down to kiss both poles in the goal and says a prayer.

"I feel like once I repeat those words, I get that sense of calm," Thompson said. "It just reassures me that I have done my best during the week in practice — because I'm a firm believer also in doing the work, which I commit to every single day — and I believe beyond my work, what do I need to do? I need to make sure the spiritual side is satisfied, as well." **UT**







# A NOT SO HIDDEN

The Honorable Virginia  
Hernandez Covington '76,  
MBA '77 reflects on her life, in  
and out of the courtroom





# EN FIGURE

BY MICHELLE BEARDEN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX MCKNIGHT

**“When she walks into the room, it lights up. We all knew she was destined for big things. She always had that ‘it’ factor.”**

—DOLORES RODRIGUEZ MARTINO '77

**V**IRGINIA HERNANDEZ COVINGTON '76, MBA '77 set a goal for herself to run a marathon — and she did just that, completing her first 26.2-mile run at age 50.

Then she followed it up with four more.

“It wasn’t easy, probably one of the hardest things I’ve done,” Covington says. “But I liked the challenge of it.”

Her commitment to run marathons after she reached the half-century mark is no surprise to those who know Covington.

In an impressive career as a trial attorney, prosecutor and now a federal judge, Covington has achieved several milestones — the first female supervisor in the Middle District of Florida, the first Hispanic U.S. District Court judge in that branch and the first Cuban-American woman to serve on any appellate court in Florida.

For all those “firsts,” colleagues honored her last year as one of the legal community’s “Hidden Figures,” a nod to the book and movie that featured female African-American scientists who broke barriers at NASA.

“What we achieve for ourselves is important,” she says. “But what we can pass on to others is even more so. That’s how success should be measured.”

In all, Covington estimates she has prosecuted, presided over and written opinions and orders for some 5,000 civil and criminal cases. But for all the accolades and recognitions she has amassed in a career that has taken her to every continent except Australia and Antarctica, Covington says her biggest achievement is as a mom to three successful adult children — two sons who also pursued law careers, and a daughter, a Peace Corps volunteer who is now working on her doctorate in nursing. She’s also enjoying a bonus these days: two grandchildren.

“It’s been a great ride and it’s not over yet, not even close,” she promises.

### MOTHER KNOWS BEST

Covington grew up in South Tampa, and when time came for her to go to college, she wanted to move away for a new experience. But her parents had other ideas.

She was the only child of the late James Covington, a UT history professor and author, and his wife, Sofia Hernandez, a Cuban immigrant who came to Florida with her parents in 1953.

When choosing a college, her mother felt that at 18 Virginia was too young to leave home. Besides, with her father’s connection to UT, they determined it was the best place for her.

A reluctant Covington went along with their wishes. Within a few months, she realized it was the best possible choice.

“I fell in love with the school,” she says. “I had pretty much grown up on campus with my dad there. But I began to see it in a whole new light as a student. I came to appreciate the intimacy of a smaller campus.”

Fellow UT alumna Dolores Rodriguez Martino '77 remembers her classmate with the trademark long, thick tresses as “very ambitious, very driven.” But not a person so studious that she was disconnected from the social scene.

“She’s outgoing and so much fun. Everyone likes Virginia,” says Martino, whose connection with her friend was their shared Spanish roots. “When she walks into the room, it lights up. We all knew she was destined for big things. She always had that ‘it’ factor.”

Covington graduated a semester early and completed her MBA a year later. At first, she eyed a career in the corporate world, but her love of helping people who didn’t have a voice won out.

She attended law school at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where she also met her future husband. She and attorney Douglas Bagge married in 1978 on the UT campus, a union that lasted 28 years and produced their three children.

Classmate JoAnne Zawitoski sat next to Covington in the first class of their first year of law school. They clicked immediately and became fast friends.

“I call myself an accidental lawyer who just fell into it. But with Virginia, it’s been a passion,” she says. “You can tell how she loves the whole process of law. She’s a quick study with an even temperament, which are the best qualities for a judge.”

### FINDING A BALANCE

After a short stint as a trial attorney for the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, Covington missed her hometown, her Cuban roots and her parents. So she convinced her new husband to move back to Tampa, where longtime mentor and family friend Judge E.J. Salcines hired her in 1982 as an assistant state attorney for Hillsborough County.

The two represented a change in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. Salcines was its first Hispanic state attorney, and Covington was in the first wave of women.

Her mentor had no doubt she had what it took to shine in a mostly male and white environment.

Covington’s work ethic was noticed. Within a year, she moved to the federal branch when she was hired as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Florida, which covers Fort Myers to Jacksonville. The experience was fast-paced and exhilarating, she recalls, but also became exhausting by the time her third child arrived. Repeated requests to work part time were met with a resounding “no.”

“So I did some thinking about it and told my boss I would be taking a year off,” she says. “By the time I got back to my office, I got the OK for a reduced work week.”

Covington studied law at Georgetown University and got her start in Tampa as an assistant state attorney for Hillsborough County.

Those two years with a lightened work load so she could have more time with her kids — ages 6, 2 and an infant — were “probably my happiest ever,” Covington recalls. Part-timers, she learned, work very efficiently and sometimes get even more done in less time. When she became a boss, she advocated for parents of young children who requested a reduction in hours and did everything in her power to accommodate them.

“Like a lot of working parents, my life was consumed with guilt. Guilty for

leaving work at 6 p.m. and not staying later, guilty for leaving my kids in the morning. The nuns did a real number on me,” she says with a laugh. “But I was really, really blessed, because I had my parents and good nannies to make it possible to work and be a mom.”

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#### **A HISTORIC APPOINTMENT (OR THREE)**

Covington returned to work full time in 1988 for a big promotion — a historic appointment as the chief of the U.S. Justice Department’s Asset Forfei-

ture Section, becoming the first female supervisor in the Middle District.

In that job, she oversaw both civil and criminal forfeiture of illegally utilized or acquired property. And at a time when overseas drug kingpins and their cartels were making inroads in the U.S., Covington’s department was in the thick of it.

With her sharp business acumen and organizational skills, Covington developed a model program that was used in prosecutions across the U.S. As the division’s reputation grew, she





lectured throughout the country and in Latin America on trial advocacy, money laundering and asset forfeiture — earning commendations for her training sessions from the governments of Venezuela, Mexico, Columbia, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina.

One of her biggest fans and trusted confidantes is Judge Charles Wilson, a federal judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. He and Covington both participated in the National Forensics League back in high school, and he remembers her “wicked debating skills.”

“Of the 93 U.S. Attorney offices, her program was considered the best managed and most successful in the country,” Wilson says. “When it came to divesting criminals of their ill-gotten gains, no one did it better than Virginia.”

Among her most memorable cases: The Rodriguez-Gacha case that involved a notorious drug trafficker killed in a gun battle with Colombian police who left some \$100 million hidden in places like Panama, Hong Kong and Switzerland. Her testimony convinced the governments of Britain, Austria and Luxembourg to recognize American forfeiture rights for the first time. The U.S. recovered \$80 million after a four-year court battle.

Another one that stands out was seizing Tardee Impressive, a show horse owned by a South Florida drug dealer. The majestic stallion was the gift that kept giving: After the feds took ownership, all of the profits made from Tardee’s progeny went into government coffers.

Her legal prowess was rewarded in September 2001 when former Gov. Jeb Bush appointed to her to Florida’s Second District Court of Appeals, the first Cuban-American to get that honor. Three years later, former President George W. Bush nominated her as a U. S. District Judge. With her Senate confirmation, Covington became the first Hispanic to serve in that capacity for the Middle District.

Elevation to such a lofty role hasn’t changed her one iota, Wilson says.

“It’s not unusual for lawyers’ personalities to change once they’ve been imbued with a lifetime tenure,” he says. “Not Virginia. She still keeps a healthy balance with her commitment to her family, her community work, her colleagues and her role on the bench. And she’s still the same person I knew way back when.”

### IN HER HAPPY PLACE

Life is quite different for Covington, now in her 15th year as a federal judge.

Sometimes she misses the adrenaline that comes with investigating and prosecuting high-profile cases. With nearly all of her civil and criminal cases settled by plea agreement, she spends the bulk of her time researching and writing opinions and orders.

When she’s in the courtroom, it’s from a different perspective.

“You’re not an active player. You’re more like a referee,” she says.

Tampa will always be home. She lives with three rescue pugs — Emily, Eli and Gabe — in a house in Sunset Park she built on the property where she grew up.

But she hasn’t had to sever ties to her beloved Washington, D.C., either. Her longtime boyfriend, a private-practice attorney, lives there with his pug. She also serves on the Georgetown Board of Governors and occasionally teaches there as well.

Her loyalty to UT is steadfast, too.

For 24 years, she was a member of the University’s Board of Counselors, serving as chairman of the board for a term. Over the decades, she has mentored dozens of students.

After all, without UT, she may never have been born. It’s where her parents met and fell in love.

“This is definitely my happy place. This community, this school, have given me more opportunities than I ever could have imagined,” Covington says. “Being grateful isn’t enough. It’s on me to pay it forward. And this is where I want to do it.” **UT**



In 2004, former President George W. Bush nominated Covington as a U.S. District Judge. With her Senate confirmation, she became the first Hispanic to serve in that capacity for the Middle District.









# alumni report

## class acts

**WHAT'S NEW?** Stay in touch by sending us your Class Acts. Go to [alumni.ut.edu](http://alumni.ut.edu) today!

**48** **Mary LiCalsi Cagnina**, was profiled by *Tampa Magazine* as one of three "Tampa Originals," people who have lived in the city since birth or early childhood. Mary shared how she participated in as many extracurricular programs as possible while a student at UT, and she took two streetcars to get to campus from her home in Tampa Heights.

**57** **Ray Wagner** and his wife, **Mary Wagner '56**, celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary on Dec. 22, 2018.

**59** **Jack Espinosa** was profiled by *Tampa Magazine* as one of three "Tampa Originals," people who have lived in the city since birth or early childhood. Jack shared how he paid his way through UT by working as a night janitor at Plant High School, where after graduation he became a history teacher.

**71** **Jose Rodeiro**, who is a visual artist, was interviewed by *Ragazine*. Jose discussed the nature of art in relationship to art history, creativity and his *Amnesia* series of paintings.

**72** **Bismarck Myrick** was profiled in *The Virginian-Pilot* for his long career in the Army

and the U.S. Foreign Service. Bismarck served as an ambassador to South Africa, Lesotho and Liberia. The city of Portsmouth, VA, where he grew up, has named two streets after him: Bismarck Myrick Street and Bismarck Myrick Crescent.

**Barry Perez** has pioneered two churches and served as senior pastor of New Covenant Church in Thomasville, GA, for eight years, according to the *Bonner County Daily Bee*. He recently returned to traveling ministry and has conducted hundreds of renewal meetings in the U.S. and Europe.

**75** **Hal Fritz**, who received the Medal of Honor for his actions in Vietnam 50 years ago, was honored at a celebration at the Peoria Riverfront Museum in Peoria, IL, in January, according to the *Journal Star*. More than 200 people gathered at the event to pay tribute to Fritz and the men who served with him.

**Donald Marinelli** is director of innovation for Inven Global Esports, a lecturer at Columbia University and a visiting professor at Arizona State University. He recently became a grandfather when his daughter, Olivia, gave birth to his first grandchild, Sloane Marie Jeffries.

**76** **Robert Ford** was recently inducted into the Tredyffrin/Easttown and Conestoga High School Athletic Hall of Fame. Robert serves as the head professional at Seminole Golf Club in Juno Beach, FL.

**Timothy Mazzei** was elected as a county court judge of the Superior Criminal Court in the Suffolk County 10th Judicial District in New York.

**78** **Willie L. Williams M.Ed.** recently visited campus to view Plant Hall and share memories of her days as a student. Willie was a full-time elementary school teacher for more than 30 years while raising six children of her own. She now resides in North Tampa with her daughter.



Willie L. Williams M.Ed. '78

**82** **Amy Hill Hearth** was interviewed on Mo Rocca's podcast, *Mobitaries*, where she talked about her new book on African-American teacher and civil rights leader Elizabeth Jennings Graham.

**Beth Kompothecras** is the owner of So Staged Event Design and Rentals in Sarasota, FL. According to *2Paragraphs*, the idea to launch her own events company was prompted while planning her husband's 50th birthday party. Beth

## FROM THE ALUMNI DIRECTOR

We are always on the lookout for new ways to engage our alumni and parents, especially if the engagement benefits students.

This past winter, in conjunction with a member of our Family Association Board, Lori Glover, we were able to connect students to potential summer internship opportunities in Boston by utilizing our parent and alumni network.

On Jan. 11, we held our first ever internship networking event in Boston. The event was held at MIT, where about 10 alumni and parent participants met with close to 40 students to talk about internship opportunities at their companies and ways to utilize the UT alumni network in Boston.

This was a great event, and we are looking to replicate it in a few other cities next year.

To participate, contact Jay Hardwick at [jhardwick@ut.edu](mailto:jhardwick@ut.edu).

and her family, including son **Alex Kompothecras '16** appear on the MTV reality show *Siesta Key*.

**85 Michael Margaroni** was named president and CEO of DeCarolis Truck Rental Inc. in New York. Michael joined the firm 30 years ago, serving over the years as lease account salesperson, branch manager, vice president of sales and executive vice president.

**Herb Smaltz** joined The Chartis Group, a leading provider of comprehensive advisory services and analytics to the health care industry, as director in the firm's information and technology practice.

**87 Marni Berger Stahlman** was promoted to president and CEO of Make-A-Wish Northern and Central Florida.

**Scott Leonard** performed in the Rockapella Christmas Show in Clearwater, FL, according to *Tampa Bay Newspapers*. Scott has been performing with Rockapella since 1991, and serves as the group's chief songwriter and arranger.

**David Whitaker** was appointed vice president, logistics division and a member of the corporate leadership team of RiVidium Inc., a leader in information technology, logistics, cyber and human capital management.

**88 Christina Hurley** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Christina is a data insights

strategist for Paytronix Systems in Massachusetts.

**89 Walter Dyminski MBA '92** was hired to lead BankFirst's Small Business Administration (SBA) lending group, according to the *Mississippi Business Journal*. As vice president, SBA manager, Walter works collaboratively with the bank's relationship managers to incorporate the full suite of SBA lending products into BankOne's offerings and help small businesses obtain financing.

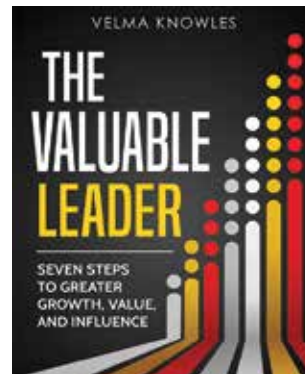
**Patricia Ross**, who is the vice chairman of the Georgia Veterans Services Board, was the speaker at the annual Veterans Breakfast in Moultrie, GA, according to the *Moultrie Observer*. Patricia, who served for 25 years on active duty in the U.S. Air Force, is the executive director of the Veterans Education Career Transition Resource (VECTR) Center, a statewide and joint initiative between the Technical College and University Systems of Georgia.

**92 Greg Canty** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Greg is deputy director, executive services for the U.S. Army, Office of the Surgeon General in Washington, D.C.

**Eric Doherty** is now affiliated as a sales associate at the Reading, MA, office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Commonwealth Real Estate. Eric previously served as a sales professional with Northrup Associates in Lynnfield,

MA, where he received the Top Agent Award for the past four consecutive years.

**Velma Knowles MBA**, founder and CEO of Leaders Pathway, published the book *The Valuable Leader, Seven Steps to Greater Growth, Value, and Influence*, according to the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*. The book outlines the key characteristics that all leaders share, developed from Velma's professional and personal experiences as a marketing executive, entrepreneur and speaker.



**93 Oscar Verges** was promoted to president and chief operating officer of Fall Creek Farm & Nursery Inc. in Lowell, OR. Fall Creek is the leading grower of premium blueberry nursery stock, supplying commercial fruit growers worldwide.

**94 Jessica Killin** was named chief of staff for Rep. Donna Shalala of Florida's 27th Congressional District.

**Richard Malafy**, who is a partner at the Law Offices of Campbell

and Malafy, was awarded Man of the Year, a people's choice recognition in the Best of Marathon (FL) awards, and the Equal Justice designation from Dade County Legal Services/Put Something Back program for his pro bono work, according to *Keys Weekly*.

**Jennifer Parncutt Buchet's** debut picture book, *Little Medusa's Hair Do-Lemma*, was acquired by Clearfork/Spark Publishing.

**Greg Rubenstein**, a business analyst for Chex Systems, ran for a city council seat in Arden Hills, MN, in November.

**96 Todd Haryu**, a Diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology, was promoted to senior director of research services at PreLabs LLC in Oak Park, IL.

**97 Tammy Archer** was appointed deputy chief financial officer for the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority. Tammy previously served as the deputy chief executive officer and chief financial officer for the Cayman Islands Civil Service Association Co-operative Credit Union.

**Stephen Owsinski**, a retired law enforcement officer, is an OpsLens Media Group content manager and contributor. OpsLens provides commentary on trending stories related to national security, public policy and other matters of state by contributors who are former intelligence, law enforcement and military operators.

**Don't miss UT Day at Tropicana Field!** The second annual event will be held on Sunday, Sept. 22, at 1:10 p.m. against the Boston Red Sox. UT will be featured during pre-game activities, and your ticket will come with a UT and Rays co-branded hat.



**98** **Randy Pandis MBA** launched a new primary care practice in Tampa, Azimuth Health, a self-pay practice with affordable and up-front pricing.

**99** **Leslee Byron** joined the Lockett Law DUI and criminal defense firm as an associate attorney, according to the *Jacksonville Daily Record*.

**00** **Danielle Marante** was named head women's volleyball coach at Tusculum University in Greenville, TN, according to the *Citizen Tribune*. Previously, Danielle worked two seasons on the Marshall University women's volleyball staff as the program's recruiting coordinator.

**01** **Kristen Yerger**, chief financial officer (CFO) for Asponte Technology, was selected as Top CFO of the Year by the International Association of Top Professionals for her outstanding leadership and commitment to the industry.

**02** **Kathryn Stamoulis** is a licensed mental health counselor and educational psychologist in New York, where she maintains a private therapy practice, working primarily with teenage girls and young women. Her work has appeared in numerous academic journals and media outlets.

**Carly Wish** was appointed a county judge for Orange County, FL, by former Florida governor Rick Scott. Previously, Carly was a staff attorney at the 9th Circuit in Orange County courts.

**03** **Luke Medvegy** and his wife, Kate, added a new member to their family when Kennedy Anne Medvegy was born on Dec. 26, 2018, at Brandon Regional Hospital in Brandon, FL.



#### spartan spotlight

## Bill Cotter

### *A Chance Encounter*

In late November, the UT women's basketball team traveled far from home to Fairbanks, AK. They were there to compete in a basketball tournament, but during their visit also took on another sport: dog sledding. Little did the basketball team know, their dog sledding instructor, who has been referred to as the "Michael Jordan of dog sledding," was a student at UT more than 50 years ago.

Bill Cotter attended UT for two years from 1966–1967. He ended up in Alaska by chance, at the end of a cross-country road trip. There he found a new home and a passion for dog sledding. For more than 40 years, he led a successful career and competed in 150 dog sledding races, including 25 Iditarods, which are 1,000-mile races.

Throughout his career, Cotter competed in sprint, mid-distance and long-distance races and won many of them. He also won about \$500,000 altogether in competition prize money, was the 1987 1,000-mile Yukon Quest Champion and was awarded four humanitarian awards for the care of his dogs during races.

"I had a pretty successful career," said Cotter. "But all good things come to an end, especially in athletics, and I found another way to continue to do what I love."

After Cotter retired from racing in 2009, he started a family owned dog sled kennel with his wife and son, where they house more than 40 sled dogs in Nenana, AK.

"Racing took a lot of hard work and dedication, but after I retired I knew I couldn't just quit the sport completely," said Cotter. "Dog sledding will always be a lifelong hobby of mine, and I enjoy sharing it with others now."

Cotter said he doesn't have plans to retire from the business any time soon, and he really just enjoys the lifestyle of caring and training his dogs as well as the experiences he shared with fellow UT students.

"Having the women's basketball team out here was a lot of fun, and I think they really enjoyed it," said Cotter, above with the team (camo jacket). "It was a complete coincidence that we both had pasts with UT, and it really makes you think how small of a world it can be."



**04 Miguel Acosta** was named an assistant U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Georgia.

**06 Billy Franchi** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Billy is an attorney and founder of Franchi Law as well as the managing partner of Pro Title Insurance.

**Sharrell McInerney MAT '09** is the science academic coach and department head at Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg, where she's taught for four years in various assignments. Assistant principal DeJuan Patrick told *The Weekly Challenger*, Sharrell is "an educator who wants to develop the entire child."

**Brandon Salem** recently joined the MP Group (Salem, MA) as a manager within its tax practice. Brandon, who is a certified public accountant and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, began his career with CBIZ Inc. in Clearwater, FL.

**Jamal Wilburg M.S. '14** was promoted to senior director, customer success at Greenway Health in Tampa.

**07 Justin Grant** founded Handoff Pro, a communication tool that replaces whiteboards and clipboards, helping clinicians to reduce errors by organizing the transition of care for patients. He will soon pilot the app at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta.

**08 Joel Fenelon** is the founder of Harvest, an online platform that uses data science to match job seekers in all industries with employers looking for people with their specific skill sets. According to *83 Degrees*, Joel and his team provided free online workshops and 30-minute one-

on-one consultation sessions for furloughed employees during the government shutdown, donating \$5,000–\$10,000 weekly in career services until the shutdown ended.

**Priscila Hammett** was promoted to senior product marketing manager at Emerson and started the part-time MBA program at Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management.

**Josh Jones** started a new job in business development for Frankel Staffing Partners in Raleigh, NC.

**Kaitlin Monte**, a news anchor for KRIV-FOX 26 Houston, announced she is expecting her second child, due in the summer. Kaitlin and her husband also have a two-year-old daughter, Avalin.

**Josh Murphy** started Ideas-FWD, a communications and public relations firm, which will focus on social entrepreneurs and startup companies across all sectors who are seeking to solve important social challenges, from economic opportunity to social justice to education.

**Thomas Paterek** was named to the *Business Observer* 40 Under 40 Class of 2018. Thomas is co-founder and co-owner of Stevie & Fern, a St. Petersburg-based ad agency that specializes in creative branding for clients ranging from Red Stripe beer and the Women's Tennis Association to commercial property developer Sembler and St. Pete financial technology startup Intrinio.

**09 J.B. Ball**, a Tampa-based standup comedian, was selected for the prestigious "New Faces" at the 2016 Montreal Just for Laughs Festival and was the winner of the 2014 Trial by Laughter Comedy Festival.

**Lauren Boehm M.Ed. '15** and **Ryan Strzelecki '09** presented at the first Florida Literacy Conference last November, which was

Ryan's first experience presenting at a professional conference.



Lauren Boehm '09, M.Ed. '15 and Ryan Strzelecki '09

**Adam Rosenblum** and his wife, Carissa, are excited to announce the birth of their son, Leo Anthony, on Sep. 20, 2018.



Leo Anthony Rosenblum

**David Yunk** started a new job as legislative aide for the office of Hillsborough County Commissioner Mariella Smith.

**10 Ryan Berg**, a captain in the U.S. Army, returned from deployment in Iraq to surprise his family on the Tampa Bay Lightning's Fan Jam in January, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*.

**Jeremy Figueroa** was promoted to director of sales for the West Coast headquarters of Bowlero Corp. Bowlero is the largest owner and operator of bowling venues in the world. He and his wife, **Lisa Barton Figueroa '10**, reside in Arizona.

**Joshua Long, Andrew Ortoski '09** and **Zach Ramos '09** just finished filming a Lionsgate/

Ambi Media Group feature film called *Bernie the Dolphin 2* to be released this year. *Bernie the Dolphin* was released in theaters in December 2018. (See page 36.)



Joshua Long '10, Andrew Ortoski '09 and Zach Ramos '09

**Phil Michaels MBA '15** is founder and CEO of Tembo, which recently announced a partnership with Nestlé to deliver customized, nutrition-based curriculum to families across Kenya through SMS and WhatsApp messages.

**11 Nicole Caouette** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Nicole is an events manager for Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries in Massachusetts.

**Kristine King** started a new job as associate director of institutional research at Saint Martin's University in Lacey, WA.

**Mike Rabelo** was named manager of the Erie SeaWolves, a minor league baseball team in Erie, PA, that serves as the Double-A affiliate of the Detroit Tigers, according to the *Erie Times-News*. Mike spent last season with High-A Lakeland Flying Tigers.

**Felipe Ramirez MBA** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Felipe is a vice president, commercial banking at Bank of America Merrill Lynch in Tampa.

**Shay Romine** has joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a

three-year term. Shay is director of human resources for ThreeBridge Solutions in Tampa.

**Bengi Tozeren Lynch** is the director of digital marketing and content strategy for B&B Protector Plans Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Brown & Brown Inc. in Tampa. Previously, he worked with companies in Canada, Poland and Turkey.

**Robert Winsler**, president of Winsler Consulting & Advocacy LLC and an adjunct professor at UT, was appointed to the College of Central Florida District board of trustees by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

**12 Jeremy Bell** presented his portrait series *Utopian Blackness* in an exhibition at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle, according to *Real Change*. An award-winning artist, Jeremy is also a civil employee for the Army Corps of Engineers in Omaha.

**Tammy Charles MBA '14**, founder of Tampa Bay Spark, received the Deanne Dewey Roberts Emerging Leader Award from the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce at the 7th annual Emerging Leaders of Tampa Bay meeting in November, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*. Tammy also served as co-chair of the 39th annual Tampa Organization of Black Affairs Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Breakfast in January, and was a panelist discussing innovation in Florida as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week.

**Tracey Clenott MBA** married James Rytlewski on Nov. 2 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.



Tracey Clenott MBA '12 and James Rytlewski

**Joscelyn Cooper** helped organize a reunion on campus for alumni of the Sigma Nu Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha in December to celebrate 15 years of sisterhood, scholarship and service. The chapter was chartered 15 years ago on Dec. 7, 2003.

**David Hiller** was promoted to partnership sales executive for City Football Group in New York. He was previously a corporate account executive and premium sales manager for the New York City Football Club.

**Herman Kelly III** was selected to serve on the Narcotics and Special Investigations Division in

the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department. A former UT basketball player, Herman was voted as most valuable player in the Metropolitan Police Department League for the fall and winter seasons, averaging more than 22 points per game and more than 12 rebounds.

**Eric Kuczynski MBA '13** married **Abbey Ray '12** on April 21 at Tampa Bay Watch. Abbey is assistant general counsel/HR consultant at Modern Business Associates in St. Petersburg. Eric is vice president, credit officer at First Home Bank.



Eric Kuczynski '12, MBA '13 and Abbey Ray '12

**Anthony Justin LaFerrera** married Jessica Graf on Sept. 8 at Crystal Springs Resort in Hamburg, N.J.



Sigma Nu Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha

**Aphrodite Memos and Nicholas Eberenz '10** were married on March 3, 2018, on Davis Islands. Nicholas is the creative manager for Nextech, an electronic medical record and practice management company, and Aphrodite is a senior software engineer at The Depository Trust and Clearing Corp. The couple dated through college, got engaged in Plant Park and took photos on campus the day of their wedding.



Aphrodite Memos and Nicholas Eberenz '10

**Brittany (Foxworth) Miller** opened Board and Brush Creative Studio with her husband in Wesley Chapel, FL, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*. The studio offers both public and private DIY workshops, where attendees can create custom wooden signs.

**Ashley Southard** married Mike London on Oct. 20, 2018, in Cleveland. The wedding was attended by **Eric Louderback '12**, **TJ Morrison '12**, **Danielle Salm '12**, **Joel Podolsky '12**, **Meredith Pariano '12** (bridesmaid), **Bobby Rodriguez '12**, **Corey Albright '12**, **Nick Bancroft '12** and **Chelsea Michelson Albright '12**.

**Save the Date!** UT Homecoming and Reunions 2019 will be held Oct. 17-19. The classes of 1994 and 1969 celebrate their 25th and 50th reunions, and a new young alumni recognition event will be held on Thursday, Oct. 17.



spartan spotlight

# Joshua Long '10, Andrew Ortoski '09 and Zach Ramos '09

*Lights, Camera, Action*



On the set of *Bernie the Dolphin*—filmed in Clearwater, St. Petersburg and St. Augustine, FL—a film crew worked closely alongside actors, both human and dolphin. Among them, Andrew Ortoski '09 controlled the lighting levels to ensure they wouldn't bother the dolphins, Joshua Long '10 asked crew members to complete tasks while lighting the scene and Zach Ramos '09 stepped back to make sure the scene was set to his liking, just in time to hear, "Action!"

This is not the first time these three UT alumni filmmakers have worked together. They first met at UT while building a set for their senior film. After graduating, they each continued working in the film industry, recently reuniting to shoot *Bernie the Dolphin*, and now the sequel movie, *Bernie the Dolphin 2*.

"I was lucky enough to meet Zach and Andrew, and we have been close friends and co-workers ever since we graduated from UT," said Joshua.

Joshua said after being in Broadway and theater, he knew he wanted to pursue film and be in a position of control behind the scenes of movies.

While shooting both *Bernie* films, he served as head of the grip department. In fact, each served

as head of their department: Joshua as key grip, Zach as art director and Andrew as gaffer.

"Film is an assembly line in a way, where we all work hand-in-hand with each other," said Zach. "Andrew and I worked closely together, where he had to light the sets and I decorated them. Joshua, on the flip side, worked with both of us through logistics within the film by making sure we had everything lined up."

As the gaffer for the film, Andrew worked as the head of the lighting department, as he has on the production of many commercials.

"Each of our positions have been very connected since we graduated," said Andrew. "For example, I worked with Joshua on the logistics of production and lighting. So I was in a position of creating the light while Joshua helped shape the light for the film."

Since graduating, the three have worked on 12 larger projects together and have also worked on individual projects through Digital Caviar, a film production company based in Tampa.

"At the end of the day, we're all a team working together for film purposes and in life," said Andrew.

**13** Jessie Bergman, a music teacher at Riverview High School, served as a judge at the school's annual Riverview Idol Contest, according to *The Observer News*.

Daniella Christian was the illustrator for the book *Shifting Tides* by Martin Keeley, according to Loop Cayman.

Kealy McNeal joined the Sanibel Sea School as outdoor education coordinator and leader of the Ocean Tribe Paddling Club, which offers lessons for children, adults and families on Sanibel and Captiva Islands in Florida, according to the *Sanibel-Captiva Islander*.

Dana Saydak joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Dana is a senior enterprise account manager for NationBuilder in Chicago.

Haley Swanson is working towards a doctorate in analytical chemistry at San Diego State University, according to *The Daily Aztec*. She was recently awarded a NASA fellowship to fund her individual graduate research at SDSU as well as an opportunity to work with NASA scientists. Swanson's research focuses on the origin of life and possible chemical reactions that may affect it.

Anna Vallery graduated with a master's degree in environmental science and biology from the University of Houston-Clear Lake. She is now working as a conservation specialist for Houston's Audubon chapter, doing habitat restoration, conservation education and research on birds.

Toni Warren MBA was named to the *Business Observer* 40 Under 40 Class of 2018. Toni is the president of Suncoast Developers Guild, a three-month immersive computer coding school in St. Petersburg, FL. The school held



its first class this summer and is the state's first nonprofit coding school.

**14 Ryan Lowery M.S. '15**, founder of *ketogenic.com*, was one of the expert speakers at a recent Low Carb USA event. In addition to his UT degrees, Lowery holds a doctorate in health and human performance from Concordia University.

**Connor Obrochta** is part of the cast of season two of *Bachelor in Paradise Australia*.

**William Sandoval** attended a retail leadership development program with AT&T in Atlanta where he met **Anna Zotikova-Khan '12**, also in attendance. Both served as head residents of Urso Hall for the Office of Residence Life while at UT. In a serendipitous turn of events, both Anna and William recently accepted job promotions within AT&T and relocated to Dallas. William is now senior product marketing manager and Anna is now associate director for training delivery.



William Sandoval '14, and Anna Zotikova-Khan '12

**Craig Warzecha** was named general manager of the Bradenton Marauders, a minor league baseball affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates organization based in Bradenton, FL. Craig joined the Pirates in 2015 and became the assistant general manager of the Marauders in 2017.

**15 Kevin Angiulo** is part of the musical duo Kate Usher

and the Sturdy Souls, serving as a multi-instrumentalist and recording engineer, according to *27east.com*. The band frequently performs at venues in Montauk and across Long Island in New York, as well as other parts of the country, and spent March playing gigs in Puerto Rico.

**Justin DoBosh** is the chief technology officer of *botkeeper*, a technology startup that is automating the bookkeeping industry. In the last year he's built the company's technology department and raised \$18 million during an investment round led by Greycroft and Gradient Ventures, Google's AI-focused venture fund. He also married the love of his life, **Sara Hudanich '15**, on top of the Tribune Tower in Chicago. The two met the second week of their freshman year at UT and have been together ever since.

**Skyler Howeth** relocated to Cotonou, Benin, in Western Africa for a two-year assignment. He is in charge of security at the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou.

**Dru Jones** is preparing for his seventh season of professional baseball overseas, according to *The Gazette*. Dru's career has taken him to Germany, Australia and Croatia.

**Kat Klein M.S. '18** started a new job as an instructional designer at Charter Communications in Charlotte, NC.

**Kevin Mbundu** is co-founder of Kivu Noir, a premium single estate Red Bourbon Arabica coffee grown on the shores of Lake Kivu in Rwanda. According to *Forbes*, Kevin developed a business model that fosters a strong commitment to support and empower local women and their communities.

**Heather Robyak MBA** joined the UT Alumni Advisory Board for a three-year term. Heather is president of Windward Consulting in Tampa.

**16 Laurel Abrahamsson** joined Corr Commercial Advisors in Port Charlotte, FL, as the director of marketing and social media.

**Kimberly Blackmon** has been promoted to benefits administrator at Kane's Furniture Corp.

**Diana Ropel** married Tim Glende on Sept. 2, 2018. **Kristen McKenna '16**, who Diana met while they both were working on UT's intramural staff, served as one of her bridesmaids.

**Melanie Posner** participated in the 2018 SHINE Mural Festival in St. Petersburg, FL, according to *St. Pete Catalyst*. Melanie was one of five "Open Call" artists, winners of a St. Petersburg Arts Alliance search for the finest "unknown" mural artists in the city.

**Selene San Felice**, along with her colleagues at *The Capital Gazette* and four other individual journalists, were named *TIME* magazine's 2018 Person of the Year.

**Matt Stein** was promoted from an internship to a full-time position as coordinator of media relations with the Milwaukee Brewers.

**17 Sarah Zielinski** was promoted from SEO associate to digital marketing services specialist at PowerChord Inc. in St. Petersburg, FL.

**18 James Assad** started a new job as a defense sales development manager, southeast territory at Decon Seven Systems Inc.

**Destynnee Bush** is an assistant account coordinator for B2 Communications in St. Petersburg, working with clients such as Revenue Management Solutions, Colliers International and Lennar Homes and manages B2's social media accounts. Destynnee also works on the Prevent Needless

Deaths campaign, which educates Tampa Bay area residents about the best ways to prevent unintentional child deaths.

**Mark Caron** is pursuing a master's degree in international affairs at the University of California San Diego, where he is also using his last year of NCAA eligibility to compete as a swimmer for UCSD.

**Nicholas Coccodrilli** joined Colliers International's Tampa-based National Student Housing Group as senior financial analyst. Nicholas specializes in analyzing real estate investments and market conditions to help clients maximize returns.

**Anthony Kershner** was hired as a content development specialist at HCP Associates, a marketing consulting company based in Tampa.

**Christian Maldonado** was interviewed by *Mogul* about his experiences as the founder and chief operations officer of Digilism, a full-service digital solutions agency.

**Melissa Martinez** is an assistant account executive at ChappellRoberts, one of Tampa Bay's largest advertising agencies located in Ybor City. Melissa supports the execution of strategic advertising and marketing initiatives.

**J.D. Osborne** is a professional baseball player in the Miami Marlins organization. He is slated to join the Single-A Clinton LumberKings for 2019, but according to Marlin Maniac will likely join the High-A Jupiter Hammerheads in the Florida State League.

**Nick Reisman** is a new recruit to the Greenwich Fire Department in Greenwich, CT, according to *The News-Times*. He took the oath of office in January. Nick previously worked as a performance scientist, helping with conditioning and player development with the New York Yankees.

# ALUMNI EVENTS

## IN MEMORIAM

### Alumni

Florence Rogers Hurn '40  
 Joe Mills '42  
 Malcom Beard '44  
 Josephine "Josie" Costantino '44  
 Edman Dewey Norris Jr. '48  
 Emmanuel "Manny" Joseph  
 Suarez '51  
 Antoinette "Toni" Minardi  
 Giovinco '53  
 William P. Hovanec '56  
 Patricia "Pat" (Thomson)  
 Bonanno '59  
 Francis "Frank" Fuchek '59  
 Robert "Bob" Anda Burwell '61  
 Wilfred Walter Martin '61  
 Melton "Mel" R. Battle '62  
 Harry R. Trout Jr. '63  
 Stephen Corrao '65  
 Edwin Fenton Crocker '65  
 Robert Lee Davis III '65  
 Dennis Linford Faust '66  
 Arthur William "Bill" Gibbons '68  
 Stephen White '69  
 Mildred "Millie" E. Coton '70  
 Susan "Sue" Riba '71  
 Richard Kelley '72  
 Charles J. Osterman '72  
 Altamease (Gardner) Nickson  
 M.S. '77  
 Marian Frances (Armstrong)  
 Allegrini '81  
 Stephen Aurnou '95

### Faculty

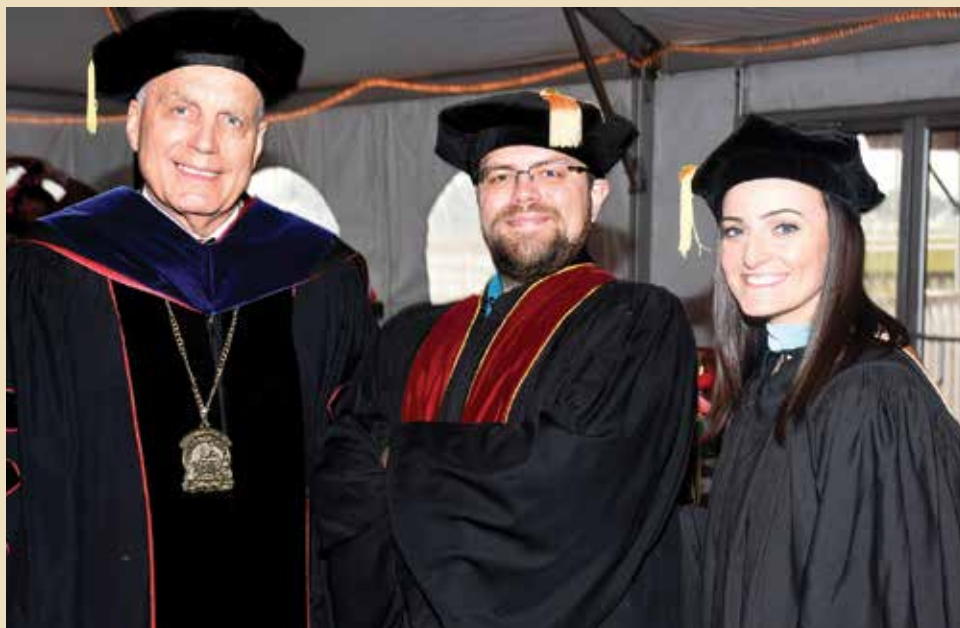
Harold Cave Jr.  
 Duane Locke  
 Michael I. Rothburd  
 Nancy Talley-Ross  
 Malcolm Kristoffer Westly

### Students

Ishmael Perkins '19



Washington, D.C.-area alumni gathered in October to hear from David Gudelunas, dean of the College of Arts and Letters, connect with other D.C. alumni and learn ways to become more engaged with UT. Thanks to Tom Graham (in photo, center) '82, Ade Adebisi '81, MBA '83, Racquel Codling '00 and Matt Rutkovitz '13 for serving as our host committee and for all their help with this event.



At December commencement, David Andrade '07 (center) was presented with the Alumni Association Alumni Achievement Award, which recognizes UT alumni who have made great accomplishments in their careers or civic involvements. David is co-founder and director of Theory Studios, a virtual animation studio that allows artists from around the world to work together under one virtual roof.





Travis Masarti '16, Michelle Karangu '15 and Alexandra DiGiacomo '15 attended the Atlanta Alumni Reception at the Buckhead Club on March 7.



Alumni members of the Alpha Beta Gamma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity came back to campus in November to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their chapter at UT.



In January, alumni, parents and students gathered in Boston for UT Connections to talk about summer internship opportunities and utilizing the UT network. Alumni volunteers included Christina Hurley '88 (in photo, left) representing Paytronix.



Fort Lauderdale-area alumni gathered for a cocktail reception and University update on Feb. 26. Thank you to Jon Anselma '93 and his family for hosting this wonderful alumni reception in their home.



Jason Reed '95, Evan Koorse '03 and Ray Ingersoll '91 were honored at the Sykes College of Business Lowth Entrepreneurship Center Alumni Award reception in February. Reed was recognized with the Family Business Award; Koorse was recognized with the Young Entrepreneur Award; and Ingersoll was recognized with the Service to Entrepreneurs Award.



The UT Tampa Bay Alumni Chapter hosted a minaret climb for local alumni on March 2. It was a great day to participate in this unique experience. Everyone who came through left with some great photos of the climb and city views from the top of one of UT's iconic minarets.



# GASPARILLA PRE-PARADE B • R • U • N • C • H 2019

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSICA LEIGH







The Tampa Bay Alumni Chapter of the UT Alumni Association once again kicked off Gasparilla with a brunch for alumni and friends. Well over 500 people gathered in Plant Hall (11) for breakfast, libations and celebrations before heading down to the parade. The Krewe of Sparta came dressed in their Spartan gear (1, 12), and alumni of all ages came out in numbers (3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13). Many attendees brought the kids (4) this year, making the brunch a family tradition. The proceeds from this event support scholarships at UT, and each year the Krewe of Sparta is able to continue to grow their endowment at UT that also supports scholarships. Thank you to UT's alumni chapter leadership and volunteers (2) for putting this event together again this year.

**What matters  
most at UT?**

**YOU.**







**People. Opportunity. Impact.**



## **A PATIO WITH A VIEW**

In 1969, the Riverside Center served as the University's Student Center, where students enjoyed sitting on the patio and looking out over the Hillsborough River while eating or studying. Over the last 50 years, and especially last year, the footprint of the building and view has changed quite a bit. The patio has been moved to the back of the building, and the view across the river now includes Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, the Tampa Museum of Art and the Glazer Children's Museum. What hasn't changed? How much students enjoy the patio to eat, study or meet with friends.

## Access to a UT Education



Leigh Dittman, a first-year student from Lutz, FL, has wanted to be a nurse since she was 7 years old. That's partly because she's no stranger to hospitals, as she suffers from brittle bone disease and is prone to fractures. But with a service dog, a wheelchair and a can-do attitude, she's quickly becoming no stranger to UT.

Like any prospective student, Leigh looked at nursing programs at other universities. But apparently, they could not give Leigh what UT can: access. But I don't just mean something as basic as wheelchair access to campus buildings, which is ubiquitous at UT. The nursing faculty at UT is committed to working with Leigh to make sure she has the opportunity to access the cutting-edge nursing training equipment that fills the new Graduate and Health Studies Building. Nursing is a challenging course of study, so I have no doubt she will enjoy access to her professors too, just like other UT students.

Access to higher education is a well-worn but critically important ideal that encourages colleges and universities to eliminate barriers for qualified students to receive an outstanding education. Often that means providing scholarships, which we focus on, offering students nearly \$75 million in institutional aid.

But I think it means more than that. I think it means offering students access to their professors. It means access to a wide variety of classes, to research opportunities, to internships, to study abroad programs. And, it means access to leadership development opportunities, to clubs and organizations and to recreation and athletics.

While UT has many of the benefits of a large school in terms of programs, diversity and top-notch faculty, I'm proud to say that we are still much like a small school in that we can provide students access to those faculty members and unique experiences that they simply couldn't touch at a larger school.

For instance, we recently opened the Fab Lab in the Bailey Arts Studio (see page 2). The space includes laser cutters, 3-D printers, computer numerical control (CNC) routers and large format printers. Normally these sorts of tools are reserved for graduate students in engineering, architecture or arts programs. But at UT, art and design students, as well as students from other majors — from their first year on — will have full access.

Likewise, we regularly take students out on Tampa Bay for marine biology research on UT's new research vessel, *Bios 2*. On a typical day, students will spend the morning trawling on the estuary and the afternoon diving off Egmont Key. These trips aren't just for senior-level students doing capstone research; the students range from first-year students and up ... whomever is eager and interested.

I, and the rest of the administration and faculty, am committed to providing students access to UT's many academic and co-curricular learning experiences. We look forward to mentoring students, like Leigh Dittman, who are ready to take advantage of the access that UT offers as they reach for their dreams.

RONALD L. VAUGHN, PH.D.

*President and Max H. Hollingsworth Professor of American Enterprise*

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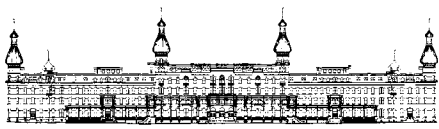
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On the first Wednesday of every month, UT performing arts students cross the Hillsborough River to entertain patrons of the Tampa Museum of Art. In February, the jazz ensemble brought their saxophones, trumpets and trombones to play pieces ranging from traditional swing to contemporary jazz.