

# UT

JOURNAL FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA

SPRING 2020

**Jane Goodall to  
Speak on Campus**

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**Spartan Sparks:  
Alumni Who Found Love**

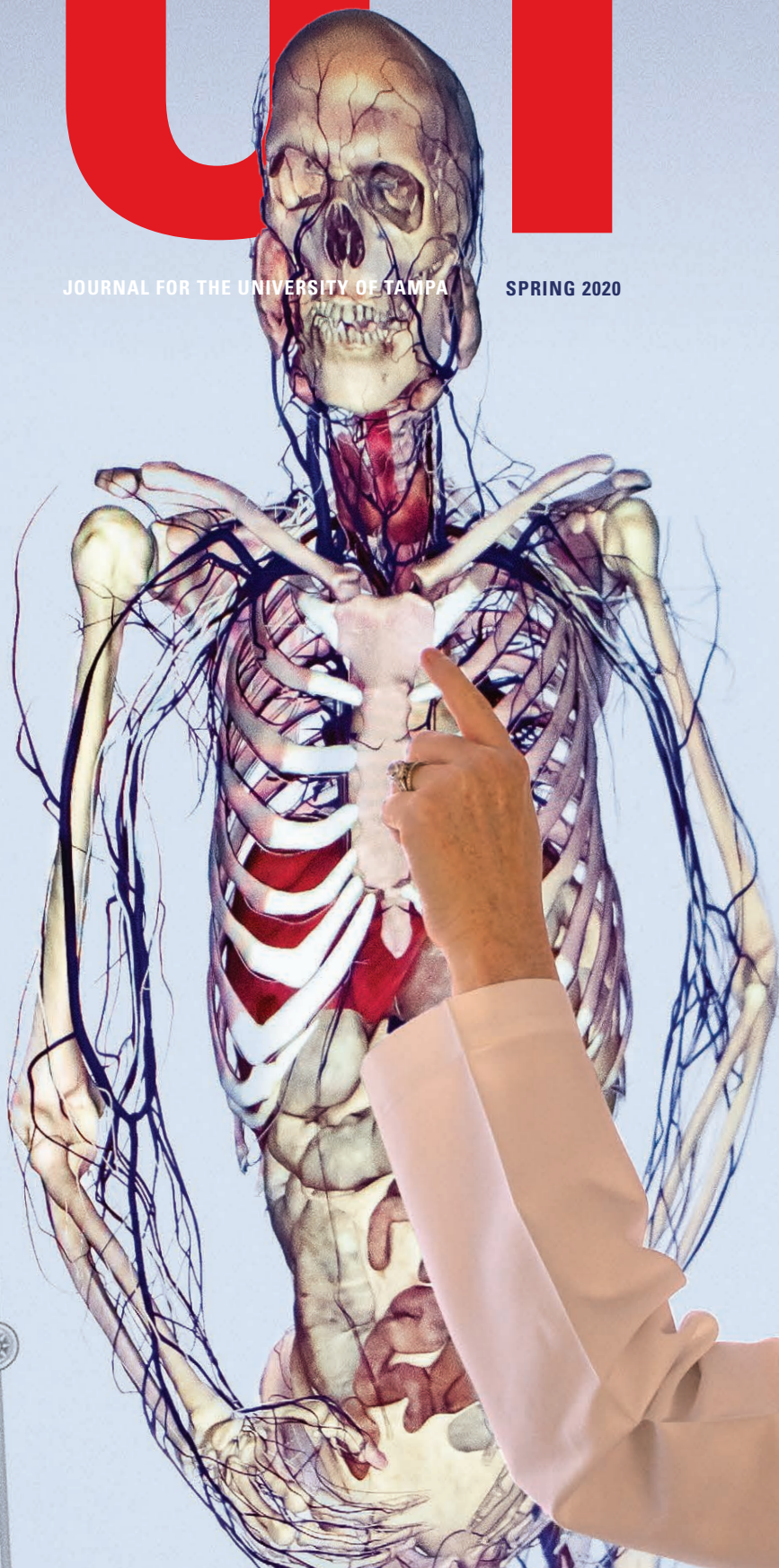
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**Class of 2020:  
From Freshmen to Seniors**

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## **Hands-On Medicine**

**The New Physician Assistant  
Program is High Tech**







## RISE UP

At an early morning practice on the Hillsborough River, the women's rowing team hauls a boat across UT's new dock, which was installed in January.



# UT

[ut.edu/utjournal](http://ut.edu/utjournal)

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# The Value of a UT Accreditation

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In these days of increased accountability, rising college sticker prices and lower confidence in the value of a college degree, one might wonder: What is the value of accreditation?

That value is at a premium, particularly for institutions like UT that are accredited by a regional authority under the umbrella of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Our regional accreditor is the Southern Association of Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Without attending an accredited institution, students would have difficulty obtaining federal financial aid or transferring credits to other schools. The stakes are high.

Institutional accreditation is earned and maintained by the submission of annual reports, a comprehensive demonstration of quality every five years and then compliance audits every 10 years, coupled with an onsite visit by a team of academic leaders from across the Southeast. Every facet of the institution is inspected, ensuring not only financial and governance fidelity, but that a university is living up to its educational promises. So, accreditation is one very important and externally monitored way in which university quality is judged.

In December 1951, UT was granted its initial, full accreditation from SACSCOC. Since I became president in 1995, UT has focused on not only maintaining our regional accreditation but also achieving specialized accreditations. Specialized accreditations are granted to only the strongest academic departments — most often less than 10% of all colleges and universities — either nationwide or internationally.

These specialized accreditations show how UT has pushed the envelope, as these credentials take an even more detailed examination to determine quality. Our first specialized accreditation was in 1971, granted by the National Association of Schools of Music for music and music education. Today, UT boasts 18 general and specialized accreditations or certifications — ranging from chemistry and sport management to criminology and criminal justice — as part of its focus on developing a high-quality education and institution.

Recently, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) awarded UT additional specialized accreditation for two departments: Art and Design, and Film, Animation and New Media. This was a two-and-a-half-year process that included an extensive self-study, rigorous peer review from external experts, a formal on-site visitation and a comprehensive review by NASAD. Out of more than 4,300 colleges and universities in the U.S., only 363 have been awarded this accreditation. UT is only the second private university in Florida to achieve it. (*For a full list of UT's accreditations, see page 13.*)

Do accreditations make UT that much better? The answer to that question is a resounding yes. This is why UT will continue to be a model in higher education, striving to exceed all bars of industry performance measures.

RONALD L. VAUGHN, PH.D.  
*President and Max H. Hollingsworth  
Professor of American Enterprise*







## 16 The PA Will See You

Take a look at the inaugural year of the physician assistant medicine program, housed in a state-of-the-art facility.

## 22 Spartan Sparks

Love is in the air! Find out how UT played cupid for these four alumni couples.

## 26 Class of 2020

In 2017, the *UT Journal* spotlighted a collection of freshmen. We're catching up with them — now seniors.



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ON THE COVER: Johnna Yealy, director of the physician assistant medicine program, touches an Anatomage Table.

PHOTOGRAPH: Alex McKnight



## NEWS OF NOTE

HAPPENINGS IN OUR COMMUNITY



Jane Goodall will speak on campus in April.

# Back to Earth

**Jane Goodall, world-renowned primatologist and conservationist, is the first guest in a new UT speaker series.**

A new annual speaker series will launch this spring with a talk by primatologist and conservationist Jane Goodall, the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) who is widely known for redefining the relationship between humans and animals, at the Falk Theatre at UT on Monday, April 20, at 7 p.m. (barring any coronavirus-related cancellation).

Tickets are free to UT students, faculty and staff. Tickets for the public went on sale on March 23.

Goodall is best known for her landmark study of chimpanzee behavior in what is now Tanzania at Gombe Stream.

Her presentation will be titled “Gombe: 60 Years of Discovery” in light of 2020 being the 60th anniversary of Goodall’s first trip to Gombe Forest in Tanzania.

Roots & Shoots (R&S), JGI’s global environmental and humanitarian youth program, was founded by Goodall in 1991 with a group of Tanzanian students. Through the program, young people are encouraged to make a difference in their community, creating service projects that benefit people, other animals and the environment. Today, R&S is active in more than 50 countries.

UT’s chapter of R&S was founded in 2014 and conducts weekly volunteer

sessions at St. Peter Claver School’s learning garden, monthly sessions at The Sustainable Living Project and two trash cleanups per semester.

Goodall’s honors include the French Legion of Honor, the Medal of Tanzania and Japan’s Kyoto Prize. In 2002, she was appointed to serve as a United Nations Messenger of Peace and in 2003, she was named a Dame of the British Empire. *Time* magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people in the world in 2019.

UT’s Distinguished Speaker Series is intended to bring high-profile speakers to the University. The series is sponsored by UT’s Honors Program with support from the College of Arts and Letters, Sykes College of Business, College of Natural and Health Sciences, College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education and Student Government.

For more information about this event, go to [ut.edu/janegoodall](http://ut.edu/janegoodall).





## SPEECH WINS BIG

UT's speech program received the National Communication Association (NCA) Rex Mix Program of Excellence award last fall at the NCA's 105th annual convention in Baltimore. This award is given to the nation's top program annually based on excellence in curriculum, program quality, course design and special programs.

Dartmouth College won the award last year. The award is named in honor of Rex Mix, a professor of speech communication at the University of Lynchburg (VA).

At UT, the speech program offers communication courses driven by innovation to support the University's mission of learning by doing. Classes and practical experiences are designed to nurture students' creative expression, enhance verbal and physical communication and teach critical thinking. The program also houses the Center for Public Speaking, which is focused on enhancing communication skills and providing support services. The center provides one-to-one tutoring and small group workshops with peer tutors and experienced professionals.

Accepting the award, in the photo above, from left to right, are Chris Gurrie, director of communication and speech studies; Kristen Foltz, professor of instruction I, speech; and David Gudelunas, dean of the College of Arts and Letters.

## Tell Your Teens

In February, UT joined TikTok, a video-sharing social networking service that's used to create short lip-sync, comedy, informational and talent videos that's extremely popular among teens and young adults — with more than 500 million active users worldwide. Follow the account @uoftampa.



## It Was Professor Plum, With the Revolver, in Plant Park

If you thought you saw a crime scene in Plant Park last semester, you did — but it was fake. The events were offered as an out-of-class experience for BAC 100 classes and were organized by Anthony LaRose, associate professor in the Department of Political Science and International Studies. Four classes participated (about 100 first-year students) by collecting "evidence" like bullet casings, "body parts," fingerprints and tire tracks. Three forensic experts were involved, including Danielle Dixon '07, who is a forensics specialist in the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.



Students examine a mock crime scene.





**Lilli Sutherland '20**  
swabs a shark's mouth  
to identify bacteria.



**These swabs may lead  
to better treatments for  
shark-bite victims.**

# Open Wide

**Two seniors are swabbing sharks' mouths to identify bacteria, which may help doctors treat shark-bite victims.**

Since August, a UT team has been trolling the waters of Tampa Bay, sticking their hands into the mouths of sharks. "Why??" you might ask. Don't worry — there's a good reason.

Lilli Sutherland '20, an allied health major, and biology major Nicholas Greenberg '20 are working on an undergraduate research fellowship that may help Tampa Bay medical professionals.

Treating shark-bite victims can be challenging, because bacteria can be resistant to many different types of antibiotics. Their goal: identify

the types of bacteria living in sharks' mouths through cotton swab samples, determine which strains are associated with the greatest risk of infection and then figure out the best treatment options for shark-bite victims in Tampa Bay.

"We're both science nerds and ocean nerds," says Greenberg, who reels in sharks from UT's 27-foot Grady-White boat reserved for marine field work. "We're really passionate about sharks, as well as medicine, so it's a perfect project for us. It's so fun."

The fellowship, which is provided by UT's Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry, gives the team funding of just under \$7,000 for academic, yearlong research. Sutherland and Greenberg were eager to build on research that was started by a doctor in Palm Beach, FL, named Robert Borrego '79. So they pitched the idea to Dan Huber and Ann Williams, both professors of biology at UT.

"The research idea has a ton of scientific merit, but I was more impressed by the fact that they pitched an idea to Dr. Williams and me," says Huber. "Not many students have thought through the process deeply enough to pitch an idea to their professors."

The team has tested 30 sharks and is planning on publishing their findings, as well as presenting them at the American Society for Microbiology's Microbe Conference in Chicago in June.

— MALLORY CULHANE '21





Joseph Cappuccilli '21, Tiffany Maziarz '21 and Catherine Reveco '21 organized a panel on autonomous weapons.

## Drones: Helpful or Hurtful?

Three students are studying the ethics of autonomous weapons used in modern warfare.

Technology has invaded nearly every aspect of our lives — including how we fight wars.

Catherine Reveco '21, Tiffany Maziarz '21 and Joseph Cappuccilli '21 have been working with the American Red Cross as members of its International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign to research the use of autonomous weapons (like drones and robots) in modern warfare.

They're analyzing the ethics of using these weapons and how it relates to international humanitarian law, a set of rules aimed to limit the effects of armed conflict. For example, while using a drone might decrease the number of soldiers entering dangerous areas, it might also put the lives of more civilians at risk.

The team's goal was to design and implement a public health campaign to spread awareness of these issues to fellow students, so they created a symposium held on Dec. 4 in the Sykes Chapel and Center for Faith and Values. It included presentations by four panelists: Marcus Arvan, associate professor of philosophy; Esme Aston, program officer for the American Red Cross; Abigail Blanco, assistant professor of economics; and Col. J. Stephan, a U.S. military veteran.

The students are collaborating with the Red Cross through UT's Applied Learning Experience (ALEX) internship, a partnership between UT's Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry and Career Services. It's designed to solve issues for a local organization while offering opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios through multidisciplinary teamwork.

Arvan and Tracy Zontek, associate professor of health sciences and human performance, oversaw the team's efforts. The students plan to participate in an international humanitarian law summit in Washington, D.C., in the future.

— MALLORY CULHANE '21



## Calling All Baseball Fans

The library received a donation of dozens of baseball cards of Tino Martinez '11, the two-time All-Star and four-time World Series champion. They were donated by Donald Marinelli '75, who collected them for fun throughout his life. The cards, in pristine condition and stored in a ringed binder with plastic holding sheets, show Martinez on various Major League Baseball teams over the years, such as the Mariners, the Devil Rays and the Yankees. The collection includes a 1991 rookie card.



## A TASTE OF HOLLYWOOD

Grab a tub of popcorn, because you may be seeing UT's beautiful campus in an upcoming feature film. This semester, movie stars such as Ryan Phillippe and Justin Long graced Fletcher Lounge in Plant Hall while filming *Lady of the Manor*, a belated coming-of-age comedy. UT students studying in the Department of Communication and the Department of Film, Animation and New Media worked alongside the cast and crew behind the scenes, while theater students got a chance to be on set as extras.



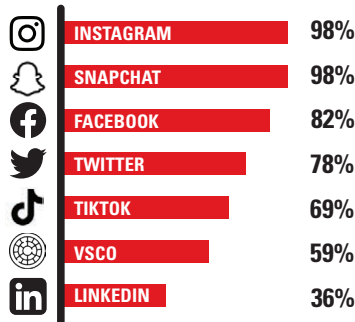


# GENERATION

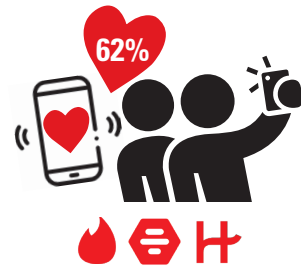


We surveyed 156 UT freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors — all of whom are members of Generation Z (defined by the Center for Generational Kinetics as born in 1996 or later). We asked them questions about technology, money and media consumption. Whether you're a fellow Gen Z-er, a Millennial, a Gen X-er, a Baby Boomer or a Traditionalist, find out how their habits compare with yours.

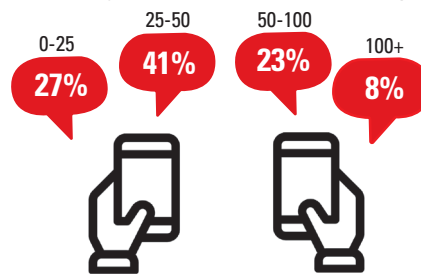
## Most popular social media platforms



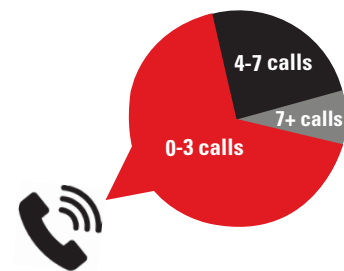
## Use dating app(s)



## Average number of texts sent daily



## Average number of phone calls made daily



## Read print media



## Carry cash in wallet



## REST IN PEACE: UT LOSES TWO LONGTIME FRIENDS

UT bid a fond farewell to Jerry Dingle, who passed away on Nov. 3 at the age of 84. He was a member of UT's Board of Trustees from 1991 to 1999, chair of the Board from 1995 to 1997 and a member of UT's Board of Trustees audit committee from 1993 to 1995. Both he and his wife, Alice, were longtime donors and members of the Minaret Society, silver level. We appreciate and will miss his lifelong commitment to UT.

On Nov. 18, UT also said goodbye to the namesake of Straz Hall: David A. Straz, Jr. He served on the Board of Trustees from 1996 to 2009 and was chair from 2005 to 2007. Straz was named chairman emeritus in 2010 for having served "loyally and with distinction." He and his wife, Catherine, were members of the Pacesetters Society, one of UT's most prestigious lifetime giving societies.



5 MINUTES WITH

# Ray Mohler '20

**This entrepreneurship major — the founder of Little Saint Nick Foundation (LSNF), a nonprofit that helps kids who are sick — helped launch a LSNF student organization at UT last semester.**

## **What inspired you to create a nonprofit?**

In 2002, when I was 4, I woke up one morning with pain in both hips and spent eight hours in a children's hospital, feeling scared. I had a rare condition called Legg-Calve-Perthes disease, which meant that I had to wear a brace on my legs at night for two years and couldn't run or jump. I recovered, but I kept thinking about the kids from that hospital who had to stay there for a long time. When I turned 5 on Christmas Eve, I donated half of my gifts to those kids to cheer them up. The next year, I turned the idea into a nonprofit and collected toys and money from my neighbors. The Little Saint Nick Foundation was born and has grown ever since.

## **How did the new LSNF student organization at UT come about?**

I was seeing a tremendous amount of willingness to help the foundation on campus and when I looked at how some other student organizations operate, I thought we could create something special. We launched the student organization this past August, and it's led by Gabriella Mass '20, who did social media volunteer work for LSNF before that. The faculty/staff adviser is John Caslione, lecturer I, management and entrepreneurship.

## **What has the UT organization been up to?**

There are 53 members now and in just the past few months, they've raised more than \$1,000 and packed 650 gift bags to donate to Mease Countryside Hospital in Safety Harbor, FL. The gift bags contain items like a stuffed animal, crayons, a coloring book and a get-well card made by another child.

## **How do the kids respond to the gift bags?**

When we walk around the ER, every kid is coloring or hugging their stuffed animal. They light up when they see you. It just takes their mind off everything.

## **What are your plans for the future?**

I plan to move back to my hometown — Lynbrook, NY — and go back and forth between there and Tampa, running the organization full time. I'd love to expand to as many locations as possible and eventually hire employees. If anyone reading this would like to donate or get involved, they can visit [littlesnick.org](http://littlesnick.org).





# Celebrating President Ronald Vaughn

■ In January, Vaughn was honored on two occasions by faculty, staff, students, trustees and University friends for marking 25 years at the helm of UT. At right, Vaughn (middle) poses with his wife, Renée (left), and his daughter, Susan '02.

■ In February, he was honored with the Tampa Metro Civitan Club's 2019 Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award. The recipient is recognized annually for their unselfish commitment of time, talent and energy for the betterment of the city of Tampa. The photo below (left to right) includes Linda Devine, vice president of operations and planning; Vaughn; his wife, Renée; and Scott Tracy, capital campaign director in Development and University Relations.

■ Also in February, at the Senior Staff/Student Government Breakfast, Student Government presented Vaughn with a resolution honoring his 25 years of service as president. Below right, he's featured with Amanda Barrie '20, vice president of Student Government (left), and Wil White '20, president of Student Government (right).



## TWO NEW MASTER'S DEGREES LAUNCHING FALL 2020

### **M.A. in Professional Communication**

This degree will cover masterful presentation techniques, theories of organizational communication, crisis communication, conflict management and the effective use of visuals and media, inclusive of digital and emerging technologies. Through a unique schedule of accelerated, seven-week evening courses, one course is taken at a time. Students may begin the program during the fall, spring or summer semester. No GRE is required.

### **M.S. in Business Analytics**

This degree will educate students on how to organize and analyze complex data across diverse industries to improve business planning, operational efficiencies, capital investments, market position and more. It can be completed in as few as three semesters, and students have the ability to take some or all of the classes online. The program caters to working professionals, and students may begin the program during the fall, spring or summer semester.





The late Janet Matthews '66 and her husband, Lee Matthews '67, provided an extraordinary gift to UT.

# Honoring Janet R. Matthews

**UT alumnus Lee Matthews announces an endowed chair in psychology in memory of his late wife, an alumna.**

Janet and Lee Matthews met as freshmen at UT in 1962, were married as undergraduates and went on to become established and renowned clinical and academic psychologists. More than 55 years after meeting, Janet and Lee had planned to make a significant gift to UT and, in honor of Janet who passed away in March 2019, they established the Janet R. Matthews Ph.D. Endowed Chair of Psychology.

The endowed chair is the first in UT's history to be named after a UT alumna or alumnus, and the first endowed chair outside the Sykes College of Business, which has two. The endowment will be used to support a new faculty chair position in the Department of Psychology, within UT's College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education. The University will conduct a national search in the 2020-2021 academic year for the position to begin in Fall 2021.

"This gift is to honor all of our former professors at The University of Tampa, who not only encouraged us, but set an example of the meaning of what it was to be an undergraduate teacher and mentor," Lee Matthews

says. "And, the 'non-academic lessons' that Janet and I obtained, such as supporting the local community, building relationships and supporting future generations, were all values that we learned at The University of Tampa."

Janet graduated from UT in 1966, cum laude and first in her class. Lee graduated one year later. Both received master's degrees from Trinity University (TX) and doctorates from the University of Mississippi.

Janet was a university professor at two other prestigious universities. More than 37 of her former undergraduate students went on to receive doctoral degrees, and one student became president of the American Psychological Association (APA). She served on more than 50 different boards, committees and task forces for the APA, including membership on its Board of Directors. Upon her passing, Janet was still on an advisory board of a nonprofit foundation that provides grief group resources to the community.

Lee's career focused on clinical psychology. He was co-owner, with Janet, of Psychological Resources in Kenner, LA, and is an adjunct faculty

member at the LSU Health Science Center and at Tulane Medical Center in New Orleans. In addition he is a consultant to Children's Hospital New Orleans and South Louisiana Medical Associates at Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center in Houma, LA. He has also had positions with the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and DePaul Hospital/Tulane Medical Center.

In recognition of the gift, UT has also established the Drs. Janet and Lee Matthews Psychology Award, which will be given annually to an outstanding rising senior psychology major.

Jack Geller, dean of the College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education, says the gift will substantively impact both faculty and psychology students.

"The Janet R. Matthews Ph.D. Endowed Chair of Psychology, along with the associated Drs. Janet and Lee Matthews Psychology Award, is by far the most comprehensive gift to date in the College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education," Geller says.



# A List to Be Proud Of

Take a look at just how many accreditations and certifications UT has accumulated over the years.

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) (B.S. in Management Information Systems)
- Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) (B.S. in Criminology and Criminal Justice)
- American Alliance of Museums (AAM) (Henry B. Plant Museum)
- American Chemical Society (ACS) (B.S. in Chemistry)
- American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) (B.S. in Biochemistry)
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (Sykes College of Business)
- Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) (B.S. in Athletic Training)
- Commission on the Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology (CAPACS) (B.A. in Applied Sociology)
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (B.S. and M.S. in Nursing; post-graduate APRN certificate program)
- Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) (B.S. in Sport Management)
- Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) (B.S. in Forensic Science)
- International Standards Organization and International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC) 27001/2013 certification in information security, human resources, management of information technology and the Sykes College of Business information security lab (IS 609052)
- National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) (Department of Art and Design, Department of Film, Animation and New Media)
- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) (Department of Music)
- Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA): Accreditation Provisional (Master of Physician Assistant Medicine)

Additionally, UT programs are approved by:

- Florida Department of Education
- Florida State Approving Agency for Veterans' Training

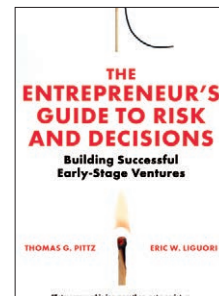
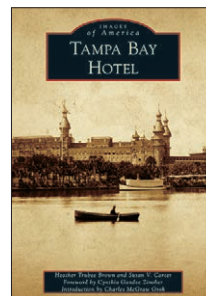
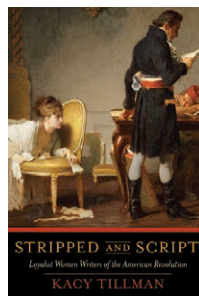
## ENTREPRENEURIAL NEWS

**First-Time Ranking:** UT was named as one of the top 50 schools in the country for entrepreneurship studies by The Princeton Review and *Entrepreneur* magazine.

**Inspiring Podcast:** On Nov. 1 Rebecca White, director of the Sykes College of Business Lowth Entrepreneurship Center, launched a podcast that she hosts called EnFactor. It features conversations with local, national and international entrepreneurs (some of whom are alumni).

**Helpful Website:** Launched on Nov. 14 by the center, the website [tampabayeso.org/esomap](http://tampabayeso.org/esomap) (which features a color-coded map) helps entrepreneurs in the Tampa Bay area find entrepreneurial support organizations.

## BOOK CORNER



■ Kacy Tillman, associate professor of English and co-director of the Honors Program, wrote *Stripped and Script: Loyalist Women Writers of the American Revolution* (University of Massachusetts Press, July 2019).

■ Two curators at the Henry B. Plant Museum — Heather Trubee, curator of education, and Susan Carter, curator/registrar — co-wrote *Tampa Bay Hotel* (Arcadia Publishing, February 2020). The forward is by the museum's executive director, Cynthia Gandee Zinober, and the introduction is by Charles McGraw Groh, associate professor of history.

■ Thomas Pittz, assistant professor of management, co-authored a book called *The Entrepreneur's Guide to Risk and Decisions: Building Successful Early-Stage Ventures* (Emerald Publishing, January 2020).



## ATHLETICS HIGHLIGHTS

# Coaching in the Big Leagues

**Mike Rabelo '11, a former Major League Baseball player, has joined the Pittsburgh Pirates' coaching staff.**

As of January, Mike Rabelo '11 is back working in Major League Baseball (MLB) — except instead of swinging a bat and scoring runs, he's now teaching players how to bunt, smack line drives into left field and pop home runs over the fence as the assistant hitting coach for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

He's had a wild career so far — and he's only getting started.

After his senior year at Ridgewood High School in 1998 in New Port Richey, FL, he was such a star baseball player that he was drafted by the Boston Red Sox. Instead, he chose to play collegiate baseball at UT until 2001 as

a catcher. Following his junior year at UT, he was drafted by the Detroit Tigers' organization and climbed from playing in the Minors to playing in the Majors by 2006. He went on to play for the Florida Marlins from 2007 to 2009 and again with the Tigers in 2010. He is one of only seven Spartans who have played at this prestigious level.

In 2011, Rabelo completed his bachelor's degree in liberal studies at UT and then transitioned into a baseball coaching/management career, working his way up the hierarchy. For the next couple of years, he worked in coaching positions in the Minors (with the Gulf Coast League Tigers and the Connecticut Tigers). He was then promoted to manager for a variety of Minor-League teams for six seasons, starting in Class A and then moving up to Class AA with the Erie SeaWolves.

In his new MLB position, he's assisting the Pirates' hitting coach, Rick Eckstein. This season, Rabelo has a simple-but-detailed goal for the Pirates: He wants every hitter to "rake" — in other words, make contact with the ball and hit it hard all over the park. "The score could be 10 to 0. I care about the hits. I want 1,000 hits," says Rabelo, who is now splitting his time between Pittsburgh and Tampa, where his wife, Erin, and two daughters (Sofia, 7; Brooklyn, 6) live.

## A GOOD ARM

Growing up, Rabelo was always playing baseball. Whether it was Wiffle ball on the street with neighborhood kids or on the Little League field, he knew from age 11 that baseball was the sport he loved the most. He credits his parents for introducing him to a variety of sports from a young age, which developed his athleticism.

"I was blessed with a good arm. The idea of throwing the ball as fast as I could without getting in trouble was exciting," says Rabelo. "I got to utilize my gift."

When Rabelo was being scouted by colleges, UT's baseball coach at the time, Terry Rupp, noticed his talent. "Coach Rupp was straightforward and told me,



Mike Rabelo '11, who was a star baseball player at UT, has come a long way.



‘You’re not very good right now, but I think after three years of school you have a chance to be pretty good,’” Rabelo says. “He was a tough coach, but I trusted him and knew he was going to make me the best player possible. It was because of him I came to the University.”

During Rabelo’s career playing for UT, coaches Joe Urso and Sam Millitello took over, and this change in leadership provided him with continued inspiration. He was named to the All-South Region Team two times, was a member of the 2001 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) South Regional All-Tournament Team and was named to the 1999 and 2000 All-Sunshine State Conference First Team. Of the 169 games he played at UT, he started 165, throwing out 40% of baserunners

who attempted to steal a base. In total, he threw out 50 runners (a UT record). These accomplishments landed him in the University Hall of Fame in 2018.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without Rupp, Urso and Millitello,” says Rabelo. “With the University sitting in the middle of downtown Tampa, exposure to the next level is unmatched. It’s a hub for scouts and executives for MLB. I was pushed to work hard and was supported every step of the way. Choosing UT was one of the best decisions I have ever made.”

#### THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Surreal is how Rabelo describes his baseball career. He attributes his success to his constant desire to learn and to never become complacent. More

importantly, he values his relationship with each team member. “You treat the person first, then the player,” he says. “I want to connect with the people I am working with.”

Pete Incaviglia, a former MLB player and a renowned hitting coach, once shared a sentiment that left a lasting impact on Rabelo. “I’ll never forget the day Pete said to me, ‘I’ve never worked a day in my life,’” Rabelo says. “It changed my mindset. Your work should never feel like a job. This is my 20th year in professional baseball, and I’ve never felt like I go to work. I owe everything in my life to baseball and have so much respect for the game. I’m very fortunate, and I never take one day for granted.”

—EMILY STOOPS

## SPORT MANAGEMENT: A POPULAR UT MAJOR

A growing number of UT students would like to follow in Rabelo’s footsteps and work in the professional sports industry someday. Maybe not as coach, but perhaps a sports agent, PR manager, lawyer, facilities manager or event coordinator, to name a few. Want proof? Just look at how popular UT’s sport management major has become over the past couple of decades.

Since the major was established in Fall 2002, it’s grown to become its own department, led by Jay Jisha, chair and associate professor, who teaches with five other faculty members.

Over the last 17 years, the number of students majoring in sport management at UT has skyrocketed from 25 to 323. Out of 200 undergraduate majors offered at UT, sport management is the 10th most popular choice. A minor is also offered.

The major provides students with a combination of sport business theory and practical experience. Monthly meetings are held where representatives from sport organizations in the Tampa Bay area discuss internship and volunteer opportunities. These organizations include: MLB spring training, the Tampa Bay Rays, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, United Soccer Leagues, NCAA Women’s Final Four and the Tampa Bay Vipers XFL team that launched this year.

This past fall, sport management students volunteered more than 1,800 hours total at more than 120 events in Tampa Bay. It will be exciting to see where their future careers take them.

—MALLORY CULHANE ’21







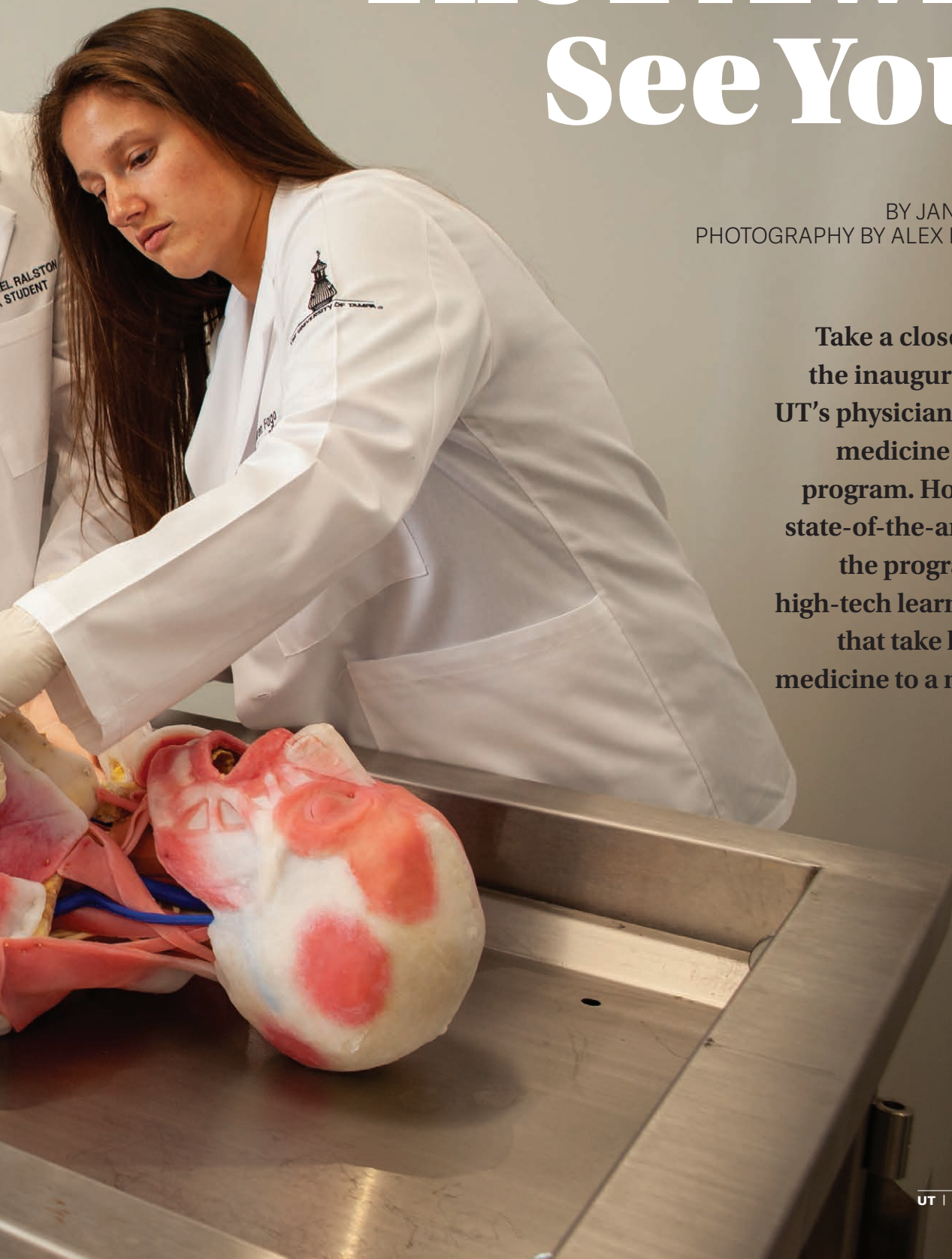
Marisa Belote, director of simulation for the program (left), advises PA students Michael Ralston (middle) and Lauren Fago (right) on how to dissect a SynDaver — a “skinless,” synthetic cadaver that remains submerged in filtered water when not in use. Her name is Morticia.



# “The PA will See You”

BY JANE BIANCHI  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX MCKNIGHT

Take a closer look at the inaugural year of UT's physician assistant medicine graduate program. Housed in a state-of-the-art facility, the program offers high-tech learning tools that take hands-on medicine to a new level.





**“When I walked  
into the facility,  
I was amazed ...  
The resources, the  
cadaver lab, the  
rotations they offered  
— it was so nice.”**

—MAURISHA TAYLOR, A PA STUDENT



Before entering the exam room, Maurisha Taylor took a deep breath and told herself, “Go in with confidence.” On the other side of the door was a female teen, ready for her head-to-toe physical. Taylor walked in, smiled and followed her mental checklist.

*Is the patient speaking clearly? Any skin issues like jaundice? Any hygiene problems like body odor? Any abnormalities with her eyes, ears or throat? How do her heart and lungs sound? How is her muscle strength? How does her spine look? Can any masses be felt or seen on the body? How do her veins look? How are her reflexes? Is her pulse within a normal range?*

Those were only some of the 176 questions Taylor asked herself from memory as she conducted the exam. When it was over, the teen didn’t have to check out with a receptionist or pay a bill — that’s because she wasn’t a real patient. She was a UT undergraduate student who had volunteered to help Taylor, one the 48 graduate students

(out of a whopping 1,700 applicants) in the inaugural class of UT’s physician assistant medicine program.

### **SIMULATING REAL-WORLD MEDICAL SCENARIOS**

Taylor’s practice exam took place in one of the PA program’s 10 simulated outpatient clinic rooms, which look like doctors’ offices. These “sim rooms” are one of many unique features of UT’s state-of-the-art facility. During a practice exam, each PA student is evaluated in real time by a PA or medical doctor in the sim room, and each exam is videotaped so the PA student can play it back later.

Every moment of the exam is monitored carefully. “If they don’t wash their hands, they get a point off. If they don’t introduce themselves, they get a point off,” says Johnna Yealy, the founding director of the program and one of the program’s associate professors.

Later this year, actors from a local theater group will be brought in for

something known as “moulage” — faking certain ailments to test the students’ ability to properly diagnose medical problems. “There’s a whole makeup mirror for the actors, just like in the theater, and they have a dressing room. We can make it look like they have a rash or a broken bone, whatever we can dream of,” says Yealy.

### **MAKING HISTORY**

For Taylor, being part of UT’s inaugural PA class and making history is nothing new, as she’s one of multiple students in the class who is the first in her family to have a college degree. Her parents were teens when she was born. “Watching my parents grow up and not follow their dreams because they had me young, I looked at that as more of a push,” she says. Taylor was raised primarily by her grandmother, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012 and survived. Watching her grandmother go through all of that solidified Taylor’s interest in going into





PA student Maurisha Taylor performs a practice exam while Johnna Yealy, founding director of the program, looks on.

a medical field — and possibly joining an oncology practice someday.

Choosing UT's PA program was a no-brainer for Taylor, who worked as a medical assistant and medical scribe after college. "When I walked into the facility, I was amazed because I'd never seen a program that was so well equipped. There was no other program I could compare it to. The resources, the cadaver lab, the rotations they offered — it was so nice," she says. "And they didn't make the interview process feel competitive. They made it feel team-oriented."

### IF YOU BUILD IT

The welcoming, collaborative vibe that Taylor noticed is one that Yealy was intent on creating when she was hired in May 2016, more than three years before the program officially launched in the fall of 2019. Her monumental task was to build a program from scratch — draft the mission statement, develop a budget, help design the

facility (which takes up 30,000 square feet, the second and third floors of the Graduate and Health Studies Building), hire the faculty and staff, establish the curriculum, write the syllabi, determine the admissions policies, arrange the clinical sites, etc.

One of her largest responsibilities was earning accreditation from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant Inc., which the program achieved in March 2019. (Without graduating from an accredited school, students wouldn't be able to get licensed or practice medicine.)

This is the third PA program that Yealy has launched during her career, which includes being a crisis counselor in hospitals, spending 12 years as a nurse and becoming a PA, among other accomplishments. She teaches some classes along with seven other faculty members. There are also two staff members. As more students join the program over time, three more faculty

members will be added, as well as one more staff member.

### TOP-NOTCH FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS

The experience level of those faculty and staff members is a big draw for students, because the program doesn't rely solely on PAs as instructors. A molecular biologist teaches one class, and a physiologist teaches another, for example.

"I'd say, hands down, the faculty and staff are what make this entire program successful and how phenomenal it'll continue to be. When you see the work that they've done and the experiences they've participated in, it makes me feel safe and comfortable knowing that these powerful figures will help me develop my knowledge and learning," says Lauren Fago '15, a PA student from Jupiter, FL, who liked UT so much as an undergraduate that she wanted to come back for graduate school.

Her path toward becoming a PA began at the age of 15, when she sustained a major injury playing soccer. A complete ACL rupture, a medial meniscus tear and a partial MCL tear led to reconstructive surgery and early exposure to a lot of different medical professionals. "I was unhappy with my rehab care in post-op. That's typically a time when most patients are vulnerable with anxiety. Will I be able to bend my knee again? Play sports again? I learned the importance of patient education, building a relationship, establishing trust, showing someone that you care — things you won't learn in a textbook," she says.

This inspired her to major in athletic training as an undergraduate at UT and take on an internship during her senior year as the head student athletic trainer for the Tampa Bay Storm arena football team. She spent 15 to 25 hours a week at practices and games doing everything from ankle taping to using ultrasound machines. After working at





### Meet the Mannequins

This is Apollo, a high-fidelity simulator (a lifelike doll that breathes, talks, blinks, moves and even vomits on command). Faculty can give him high blood pressure or a fast heart rate and then PA students like Huu Phan (left) and Teri Vrchoticky (right) must decide how to treat him. Students can see in real-time whether a treatment is helping, doing nothing or making symptoms worse.

an orthopedic practice as an athletic trainer for a few years, she decided to get her PA degree and hopes to return to the orthopedics field in the future.

### AN INTENSIVE PROGRAM

UT's PA program is not for the faint of heart. It's a full-time, Monday-to-Friday program, and students are highly discouraged from working on the side. The 27-month schedule includes summer sessions and allows students little time off, but appeals to those who don't want to slog through four years of medical school (plus a residency), accumulate more student debt and deal with possible medical malpractice lawsuits as an M.D.

During the first four semesters of classroom-based, didactic training, each student takes 68 graduate credit hours of coursework. During the clinical year, each student

spends a minimum of 2,000 hours working alongside physicians and PAs in clinical practice to apply their knowledge and improve their medical decision-making skills. The clinical training takes place at local off-campus sites like Tampa General Hospital, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, BayCare and more. "There are programs in Tennessee that are sending students to Texas, to Arizona. All of our clinical rotations are in Tampa Bay, so they don't have to move," says Yealy.

The program attracts students who crave variety or aren't sure yet which medical field is their favorite. "PAs practice medicine, but they're not specialized medical providers. In other words, you're not going to go out and be an orthopedist or a dermatologist. The training is generalist, primary care — so the nice thing is you can start

working with a dermatologist and then if you want to, you can switch later on and work with an orthopedist or another specialist," says Yealy.

PAs can collect a patient's medical history, make a diagnosis and develop a treatment plan under the supervision of a medical doctor. If a complex or rare medical situation arises that's beyond their scope of knowledge or if a surgical procedure may be needed, they can collaborate with their supervising physician to determine the best course of action.

### A DIVERSE CLASS

One thing that stands out with this inaugural PA class is its diversity. "The normal ratio for programs is 70 to 80% female, and we're in the 50 to 60% range. The average age for most programs is 24, and ours is 30. We've chosen students with life experiences and maturity, the kind of things that we can't teach them," says Yealy.

You'll find a respiratory therapist, a paramedic, a lawyer, an occupational therapist, a pharmacist — you name it. PA student Huu Phan came to the U.S. as a Vietnamese immigrant at the age of 17, speaks both English and Vietnamese fluently, is a registered dental hygienist and co-owns a nail salon with his parents.

Another stat worth bragging about: 20% of the students in the inaugural class are military veterans (the average PA program rate hovers around 5%). This is something that Yealy — who serves in the U.S. Army Reserves in the Medical Support Operations Unit with the rank of major — is particularly proud of.

In fact, the history of the PA career has a military connection. In the mid-1960s there was a shortage of primary care physicians, so Eugene A. Stead, M.D., of Duke University Medical Center, put together the first class of PAs: four Navy hospital corpsmen who had received considerable medical training during their military service.



## FAST FACT

Employment of PAs is projected to grow 31% from 2018 to 2028, much faster than the average for all occupations.

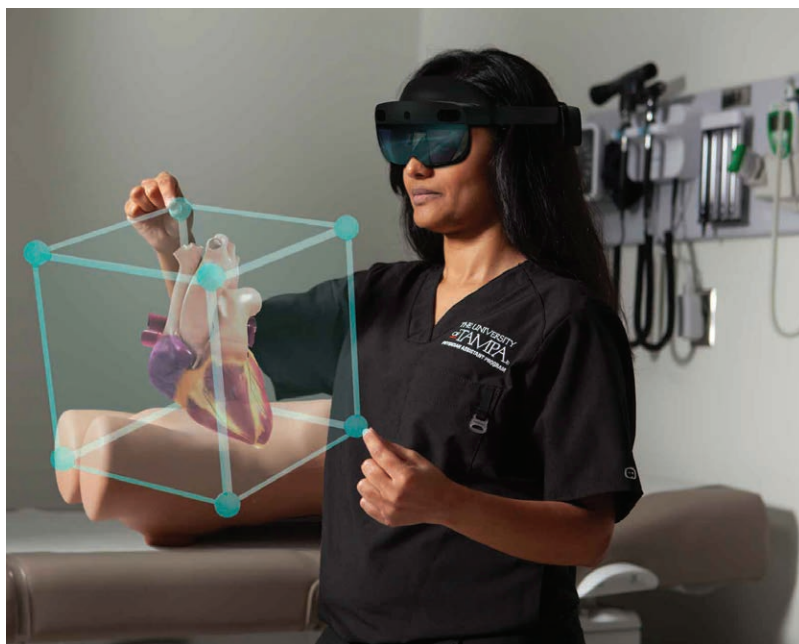
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

### A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

One person who can relate to the military connection is PA student Michael Ralston, who was in the U.S. Army infantry for four years and later became an elite Green Beret (a member of the U.S. Army's Special Forces). During that period of his life, you might have found him leaping out of a plane at 25,000 feet in full-body armor wearing an oxygen mask to perform a top-secret raid. In his last few years in the Army, he took on an additional role as a medic, treating civilians in the developing world during emergency situations — often with the help of an interpreter.

Ralston, who has been to more countries than U.S. states and also carves out time to co-parent his 11-year-old daughter, has lived a life straight out of the movies, and he's excited for his next chapter as a PA. "Ever since I was young, I've always wanted to help people," he says. "It sounds so cliché, but I want to make an actual, tangible difference that I can see."

Thanks to UT's new PA program, he and the other 47 inspiring graduate students in this cohort are on track to do exactly that. 🍷



### A Taste of the Future

Through a partnership with CAE — an international simulation company — PA students recently got to try out the Microsoft HoloLens 2, an augmented reality headset. Here, PA student Khushbu Patel examines a 3D image of a heart.



### Task Trainers

Task trainers are fake body parts that allow students to practice medical procedures. For instance, using a pretend arm, a student could learn how to start an IV, and using a pretend back, a student may learn how to do a lumbar puncture. Above, PA students Jessica Levasseur (left) and Agnia McGinn (right) learn how to ventilate a patient in preparation for intubation.



# Spartan *Sparks*

Love is in the air!  
Find out how UT played  
cupid for these four couples.

BY JANET SIROTO

Tyler Ward '16 proposed to  
Briana Mansour Ward '15 next  
to the Hillsborough River.



When most students arrive on campus for orientation, their brains are buzzing with questions: Will my roommates be fun? What if I get the world's hardest chemistry prof? Do I really have to do my own laundry for the rest of my life?

But probably not: Hey, is that cutie lugging boxes into the room next door my future spouse?

Yet even if it's not top of mind, long-term love has a way of infiltrating college connections, as these Spartan couples can attest. Their *awwww*-inspiring stories show just how well UT can orchestrate a lasting love match.

### TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

Those first-day-of-college butterflies hit Briana Mansour Ward '15 harder than most. In late summer of 2012, she was moving into McKay Hall when Tyler Ward '16, her new next-door neighbor, dropped in to introduce himself. "It felt like the world had stopped," she says. "I was mesmerized by his kind eyes and gentle smile." Tyler, who's now a digital advertising account manager, felt a similar attraction: "All I remember thinking that day was, 'Wow, I need her to be mine.'"

But love and marriage weren't the next steps. It was the start of college, after all — the beginning of their independent adult lives. They became friends first. They'd study together, often sitting on a bench by the Hillsborough River, overlooking downtown Tampa. This became their preferred meeting place. They'd eat their favorite chicken parmesan there and even had their first kiss there, though the time wasn't right for romance. Even when Tyler moved off campus the next year, they'd unexpectedly run into each other at the bench, as if fate wanted them to be together.

They would bump into each other at other spots too, and their chemistry was evident. "People would say, 'Wait, you two are just friends?!'" recalls Briana. They weren't for long. After graduation, Briana moved



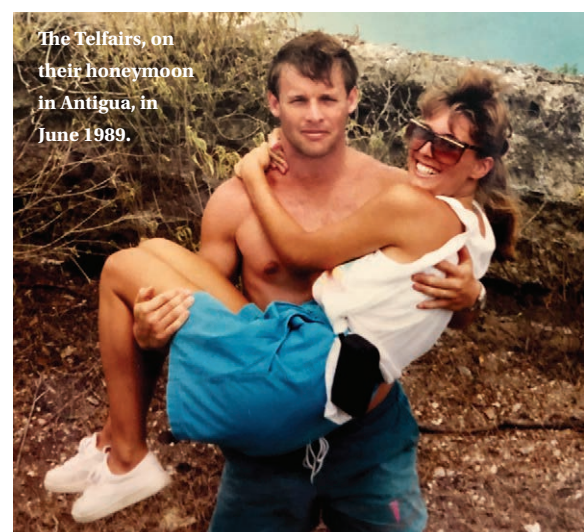
The Telfairs in  
New York City in  
December 2018.

**"At first I thought, 'What a bossy guy!'"**

—VALERIE (GALLE) TELFAIR '89

to Boston for law school (she's now a recent grad), while Tyler headed to New York. He came to visit her in August 2016, and that's when they officially became a couple.

In 2018, the couple visited their old stomping grounds, since Briana's younger brother, Nathaniel, was a student at UT. They made a beeline for their bench but discovered, alas, that it had been torn out to make room for a walkway by the water. The spot still had its stunning view, which provided the perfect backdrop as — wait for it — Tyler



The Telfairs, on  
their honeymoon  
in Antigua, in  
June 1989.

got down on one knee, with Nathaniel filming the proposal. Married since last August and now living in Boston, the newlyweds say UT is still the heartbeat of their love story. As Tyler puts it, "UT not only gave me my best friend, it also gave me my beautiful wife."

### A LOBBY LOVE STORY

"It was not love at first sight," says Valerie (Galle) Telfair '89 with a laugh, describing how she met her husband, Charlie Telfair '87. During her freshman year, she was spending time



in her resident adviser Dan's room, where students congregated and studied. Dan's best buddy from high school — Charlie, then a junior — often popped by.

Val's strongest impression of him: when Charlie stuck his head into the room, saying everyone needed to go to a campus-wide event hosted by the Phi Delts ... now. *What a bossy guy*, she thought as she complied. At the event, however, he came over and chatted her up. Just then, her feelings

Val bonded big-time, thanks to the ease with which they communicated and their spirited natures.

They married right after Val graduated, near her family's summer place in New York's Adirondack Mountains. (Unfortunately, their car collided with a wayward cow that weekend, which led to their being nicknamed the Griswolds, after the hapless but hilarious family in the *National Lampoon* movies.) Making their home in the Sarasota area, lawyer Charlie

## AN ROTC ROMANCE

When Maria (Fulgencio) Weizer '96 suited up in camo, a hat and boots as a freshman for the first ROTC Leadership Lab at UT, it was so scorching hot outside that she passed out, and her squad leader — a junior named Paul Weizer '94, MBA '11 — got her help.

That same year, they planned the Military Ball, UT's annual formal dance and ceremony. Since Maria didn't have a car, she'd ride with Paul, racing around town to florists and the



The Weizers at the U.S. Marine Corps Ball in Brussels, Belgium, in November 2017.



The Weizers in front of Plant Hall in May 1996.

changed — completely. *What a sweet and wonderful guy, speaking to me, a lowly freshman*, she thought. He later admitted that he had noticed her, that serious young woman studying in Dan's room.

Their romance bloomed in the Plant Hall lobby. "It was the heart and soul of campus. Charlie and I were there together all the time, especially between classes or to get to our mailboxes. We'd see professors hanging out and talk with them," says Val. In the lobby and wherever else they went, Charlie and

and realtor Val haven't been shy about returning to campus. "We've taken our kids as newborns to Pops in the Park on the verandah," says Val, "and we love seeing the school evolve. President Ron Vaughn, my former marketing professor, has done an amazing job."

In fact, they turn up on campus quite often since one of their three children is a UT student. "Our son has this preconceived notion that you meet your future spouse at UT!" Val says. Time will tell if second-generation UT wedding bells start chiming.

like, as their friendship bloomed into a relationship. Maria jokes about how their romance got serious, explaining, "It became pretty solid when we went in together to buy a printer to use for our UT classwork. It was a pain to go to the computer center to print stuff, so we put our money together to buy our own. After that, we had no choice but to stay together!"

Kidding aside, by Maria's junior year, when Paul had graduated and started U.S. Army flight school, they decided to marry over winter break.



The Kahns with their sons (Vinny, 2, and Kenny, 7) in their yard in November 2018.

**“We had that connection as UT alums. It makes you feel as if you both grew up in the same small town.”**

—BOB KAHNS '00

The timing, however, became tight as Paul had to report back to training in Alabama at the end of the year. They tied the knot twice to stay on schedule. UT's Sticks of Fire sculpture in Plant Park was the setting for the small, first ceremony, performed just after the stroke of midnight on Dec. 30. This allowed Paul to race around on the morning of the 30th and get the paperwork filed before offices closed for the holiday. Later that day, after sunset, they had another, larger ceremony and their reception in Rocky Point — and could relax and revel, knowing Paul could make it to training in time.

That was in 1994. Two children have since rounded out their family. Paul has stayed with the Army — he's currently a colonel and program executive officer — and the couple has recently landed

back in Tampa. Maria is a laboratory technologist at a community college, and they look forward to their campus visits. As Paul puts it, “UT is the foundation upon which I have built my family and my career. Every time I return, it is like coming home.”

#### ALUMNI AMOUR

Not all UT matches are kindled while the lovebirds are students. Sometimes it happens years later. In 2005, Jamie (Ferenbach) Kahns '04 headed to an Odessa, FL, country club to watch a UT alumni golf tournament hosted by her beloved Delta Zeta sorority and the Sig Ep fraternity.

As the event wound down, she helped an alumnus find lost photo albums he'd brought to show his fraternity brothers. That guy, Bob Kahns '00, recalls, “We had so much in common. Even though I graduated four years before her, we knew some of the same people. Plus, we had that connection as UT alums. It makes you feel as if you both grew up in the same small town.”

Fast forward four months, and that connection was blazing brightly. Jamie, who's now a senior vice president/market manager at Bank of America, moved in with Bob, a digital marketing manager.

“I joke that I fell in love with his 8-month-old Boxer named Max. I had an 8-month-old cat Missy, and those two got along great. So did we. And we had the same goals; we were both working on master's degrees,” she says.

A few months later, they were engaged and planned a wedding in just 100 days. “The song ‘Fools Rush In’ was mentioned as a good soundtrack for us,” says Jamie, “but our timetable worked fine!” Married on St. Pete Beach with their toes in the sand, Jamie and Bob were surrounded by UT alumni. “My sorority did flowers and an arbor,” Jamie adds.

That tie to Greek life and the school stays strong. “We were each president of our fraternity/sorority and won Greek Man and Greek Woman of the Year when we served. We have UT memorabilia on every wall of our home office. We both joined the Alumni Board, we climbed the minaret and did a Spartan Run together, and we almost never miss the President's Reception and Gasparilla Brunch,” Jamie notes.

Living in Bradenton, FL, the Kahns have two boys now, ages 7 and 2. “Both boys have UT shirts and have been on campus multiple times,” says Jamie. Future Spartans? We'll see! 🍀

#### DID YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE GRADUATE FROM UT TOO?

Submit your love story and photos to [spartansparks@ut.edu](mailto:spartansparks@ut.edu) and post it on social media using #SpartanSparks.







# CLASS OF 2020: THE FUTURE IS NOW



BY SUSANNAH ROSENBLATT  
ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN MCCABE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX MCKNIGHT

In 2017, the *UT Journal* spotlighted a diverse group of freshmen students from the Class of 2020 to explore their passions and dreams for the future. Since then, these Spartans have embraced the opportunities college has provided. We're catching up with these students — now seniors on the cusp of graduation — to discover how UT has transformed them.



# Julia Calandra

**Hometown:** St. Petersburg, FL

**Major:** Management; double minor in sport management and leadership studies

**Future Plans:** Stay in the area and incorporate her event-planning experience into a career as a business manager

Calandra, vice president of the Student Productions programming board, planned student events, such as a comedy performance from *Full House* actor Dave Coulier, trips to Disney World and concerts featuring artists like the rock group X Ambassadors. "It's exciting to see the smiles on the students' faces when we put on an event that they're going to enjoy," Calandra says of the role, which taught her budgeting, marketing and logistics.

She interned with the Tampa Bay Lightning National Hockey League team in Membership Services, where she supported season-ticket holders by answering questions and confirming orders, coordinating arena tours and brainstorming VIP experiences. "I grew up a hockey fan," Calandra says. "Both my parents are from Canada, and it's always been a part of my life."

In Summer 2019, Calandra did a six-week business management internship at Ganzo Restaurant in Florence, Italy. She studied Italian, greeted patrons, served food and learned from the manager how a full-service dining establishment operated. These lessons in customer service, teamwork and leadership built on her six years of work at Chick-fil-A. "Working in a restaurant in Italy, I don't think it can get much better than that!" she says.

THEN

NOW







# Dominique Goden

**Hometown:** Riverview, FL

**Major:** History with a concentration in global history and culture; minor in business administration; certificate of international studies

**Future Plans:** Working part-time for the U.S. Census Bureau, conducting fashion research and applying to graduate school in the field(s) of fashion, textiles and/or museum studies

Before she arrived at UT, Goden was intimidated and shy. “I wasn’t as open or active a person as I am now,” she says. The Success Scholars program for first-generation and underrepresented students showed her the importance of networking. Her confidence grew, and she served as a peer mentor supporting other students, in addition to coordinating Adulting 101 sessions on post-graduate skills like budgeting and saving.

Goden studied abroad in Nagoya, Japan, last summer, which was an exciting experience. Most notable to her were differences in attire: “It was as hot as Florida, but women’s skirts all fell below their knees,” she says.

She also enjoyed interning at the Henry B. Plant Museum on campus, where she created two informational wall placards and a brochure on the pioneering African American fashion designer Anne Lowe (who designed former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy’s wedding dress) for the Gasparilla exhibit in early 2020.



## Esther Cho

**Hometown:** Chicago, IL

**Major:** Communication with a concentration in advertising

**Future Plans:** Move to New York City to work in fashion or beauty, or work at a large advertising agency

"I look totally different, compared with four years ago," says Cho, a lead resident assistant. "I had braces, my hair is blond now, and I don't wear as much makeup anymore! But my passions are the same: social justice, immigration rights and women's empowerment."

Meeting people from different cultures and parts of the world has shaped Cho. "My Latinx friends helped me learn more about their culture, food and music, which is becoming a big part of American culture," she says. "Some of my close friends are from Trinidad, which opened my eyes to the beauty of Caribbean culture." Cho, who is Korean, attended a predominantly white high school where she sometimes did not fit in. "Coming to UT and seeing all the different cultures helped me to embrace mine too," she says.

Art therapy class with part-time faculty member Stephanie Wray was transformative for Cho. "A lot of people were vulnerable in that class, sharing sides of themselves you might not normally see. It was helpful for me to process my thoughts, especially if I was going through a hard time. It was just a healing time for everybody in that class; our professor provided such a safe space for us."





# Marlena Penn

**Hometown:** Tampa, FL

**Major:** Biology with a concentration in business; minor in chemistry

**Future Plans:** Find a job overseas leading scuba dives or work on a conservation project connected to wildlife or marine science

Penn began college as a finance major and then did a 180-degree turn toward the sciences — and has never looked back. She loved choosing electives like parasitology and connecting with faculty like Lori Benson McRae, associate professor of biology in vertebrate zoology class. “Her passion and knowledge of the animals was phenomenal, just totally engaging,” Penn says.

Penn worked at the Florida Aquarium last year, where she scuba dived, interacted with a goliath grouper, fed and played with a nurse shark, scrubbed fake coral to maintain habitats and was a crew member aboard the wild dolphin cruise. She also did a marine science internship in South Africa.

Her undergraduate research with Robert Masserini, assistant professor of chemistry, and fellow student Hannah Hunt '20 is a source of pride. She and Hunt will present their findings on measuring small amounts of nutrients in seawater at the American Geophysical Union meeting, and they aim to publish their results in an academic journal. “At UT, we’re lucky that you can be recognized by your professors as a freshman or sophomore and have opportunities to lead research,” she says.



# Frederick Elvington

**Hometown:** Irmo, SC

**Major:** Political science; minor in cybersecurity

**Future Plans:** Commissioning in May as a second lieutenant in the Army

Elvington’s time at UT fulfills his late grandmother’s wish that he earn his college degree in addition to serving in the military. Elvington began serving in the U.S. Army in 2012, about four years before he landed at UT. For three of those years he was stationed in Italy, which is where he met his now-wife, Isabelle. They moved to Tampa, largely because of UT’s great reputation, and Isabelle now works as a sales associate for MAC Cosmetics.

As a member of the Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), Elvington is excited to rejoin the military after graduation — this time as an officer. He found a mentor in former professor of military science and director of UT’s Army ROTC, Lt. Col. Scott Greco. “He taught me a lot about what it means to be a leader and how to act regardless of any position you’re in,” Elvington says. “That means knowing when to be professional and when to be personal, and showing that you truly care about the wants and needs of others.”

Elvington is most proud of being well liked by his peers, so that they feel confident coming to him with their problems and trusting him to help them find solutions.







## Vincent Biffle

**Hometown:** Indianapolis, IN

**Major:** Human performance

**Future Plans:** Play professional basketball overseas; eventually become a personal trainer and open his own gym

A member of UT's men's basketball team, Biffle has perfected the art of time management to juggle practice, travel, games and coursework. Playing on the team has connected him with athletes and friends from Spain, Brazil, Puerto Rico and beyond. He loves the diversity on and off campus and UT's friendly vibe.

The shooting guard emerged as a leader among his peers, serving as this year's team captain. In that role, he brings different personalities together and delivers pep talks. "You have to be encouraging," he says, "but you have to hold people accountable too." Even when the Spartans lose, Biffle is proud when the squad plays a hard-fought game, and he loves the adrenaline rush of the bright lights and cheering crowds.

He discovered his passion for health and fitness after experiencing how his workouts boosted his self-esteem. "After you see results, it's very encouraging," he says. "You see yourself changing, growing, just evolving as a person."



# Claire Swanson

**Hometown:** Fairfax, VA

**Major:** Advertising and public relations; double minor in Spanish and aerospace studies

**Future Plans:** To serve 20-plus years in the U.S. Air Force and strive to achieve leadership positions, or perhaps 10 years of active duty and then the Air National Guard plus commercial aviation

Swanson is proud of the women's lacrosse team winning its first-ever Sunshine State Conference championship last spring. "Being named to the 2019 Division II All-American First Team was one of my big dreams when coming to college," says Swanson, who is president of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

She began college as a sport management major and worked in communications for UT Athletics, but had a change of heart after freshman year. "I decided: 'I want to fly. I love aviation. I want to serve my country,'" she says. Being part of the Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) helped her develop leadership skills and discipline. "In ROTC, you have a completely different mindset than most people, waking up at 4:30 a.m. and doing physical training, working hard," she says. "As cadet wing commander in charge of 200 people, that's an experience most people my age have never had."

Swanson received her private pilot license at Peter O. Knight Airport on Davis Islands her junior year. Since then, she and her father enjoy defying gravity in his small acrobatic aircraft. "It's kind of my happy place" she says.

NOW


THEN





## ALUMNI REPORT

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A photograph of two students walking on a paved path on a university campus. The student on the left is a woman wearing a black t-shirt with 'THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA' in red and blue jeans. The student on the right is a man wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and light blue jeans, carrying a backpack. They are walking towards the camera. In the background is a large, historic brick building with a prominent cupola, identified as Plant Hall. The scene is surrounded by lush green trees and landscaping. A black lamppost is visible on the left side of the path.

Walking Tall: Two students stroll by Plant Hall — with a spring in their step — taking in the beauty of their surroundings.

PHOTOGRAPH: COREY NOLEN



## CLASS NOTES

### 1950s

FloridaNewsLine.com profiled **William Bosworth '57**. He attended UT on a four-year basketball scholarship, joined the Marines and then became a medical doctor, specializing in general and family medicine. Currently, he's semi-retired and active in various civic and neighborhood organizations. He's married to Wanda and has one daughter and one granddaughter.

### 1960s

**Marshall '69** and **Claire '71 Bradley** recently returned to campus and took a photo in "their spot" in front of Plant Hall. How come? They took a photo in the exact same location at UT in 2012 and also in 1969 — on the day after they got engaged.

### 1970s

**James MacLeod '70** was elected to serve as vice chairman of the Medical University of South Carolina Foundation Board of Directors. He is chair of the Board of Trustees at UT and chairman at Coastal South Bancshares Inc.



"I've always wanted to make a difference by becoming somebody in the advertising field. I took a chance and promised myself I'd figure it out. Here's the result. I graduated with a bachelor's in advertising and public relations. Excited for what's coming next!"

—VIA LINKEDIN IN DECEMBER 2019 FROM  
LUIA LAURELLI '19

**Dan Boone '71** was re-elected to a third term as a Huntersville (NC) town commissioner.

**Lt. James Taylor '72**, a recipient of the Medal of Honor (the U.S. military's highest and most prestigious decoration), shared stories and answered students' questions during a presentation at Wilson Elementary School in Plant City, FL.

**Robin Siegel '76** has been appointed by the Rutherford County Board of Elections (NC) to a two-year term to serve as chief judge, the head official at a polling place for all elections and primaries.

**Mitchell Weiss '79** was quoted in an article on WTSP.com

about Tampa International Airport topping the list of America's best mid-size airports.

### 1980s

In December, the Florida Department of Children and Families announced Judge **Michelle T. Morley '83** of the Fifth Judicial Circuit as the 2019 winner of the Judge William E. Gladstone Award, which recognizes judges and magistrates who have made the greatest contribution to the courts in serving dependent children and their families.

**Jim Dye '84**, a former partner at the law firm Dye, Harrison, Kirkland, Petruff, Pratt & St. Paul of Bradenton, FL, retired at the end of 2019. He looks forward to spending

time on Anna Maria Island with a fishing pole in hand.

Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. named **Rob Weisbord '84, MBA '87** president of the local news and marketing services division in November. He's been with the company since 1997.

Last April, **Lawrence Schreiber '85** was named president and CEO of SantaFe HealthCare in Gainesville, FL.

**Les McGlothlin MBA '87** was named Knight of the Month in October by the St. Scholastica Knights of Columbus Council 14485 in Lecanto, FL. He lives with his wife, Paula, in Homosassa, FL. They have a son, Chris, who is also a Knight, and a daughter, Clarinda.

## FROM THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

We're excited to announce the first UT Leaders' Summit, an opportunity for alumni and volunteers to hear about UT's progress. At the summit, you can learn about volunteer engagement opportunities. The summit will be held on campus, starting with a reception on Thursday, July 30, followed by a full day of speakers and informational sessions on Friday, July 31.



## 1990s

**Patrick Allman MBA '90** was reappointed to the Tampa Port Authority by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis in October. Allman, who is the general manager at Odyssey Manufacturing Company, will serve a four-year term.



Amy Judy '92

**Amy Judy '92**, a firefighter of 26 years who is based in Punta Gorda, FL, was chosen as a "hometown hero" and invited to fly with the Thunderbirds (the air demonstration squadron of the U.S. Air Force) during the Florida International Air Show in November. She was awarded a Medal of Valor for saving an elderly woman during a house fire in January 2019.

**Nigel Kirwan '92**, the video coach for the Tampa Bay Lightning professional hockey team, was written about in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. He

reflected on the team's 2004 Stanley Cup championship.

**Brad Schiff '92** was the animation supervisor on the movie *Missing Link*, which won the Golden Globe for best animated movie in January.



James D. Botkins '96

**James D. Botkins '96** was admitted to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida in May 2019 and the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida in December 2019.

**Vincent Frattaruolo '97** co-authored a book based on his experience as a nurse. The book is entitled *Bend Over: Medical Stories You Won't Forget* and is published by Gypsy Press. The book is available to buy on amazon.com or ebay.com.

WCVB News named **Bill Sheerin '98** managing editor

of its NewsCenter 5 in January. He's a journalist who previously worked at WFXT Boston. This past year he was honored with a National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Boston/New England Emmy Award for continuous breaking news coverage for a story on the Merrimack Valley gas explosions. He began his career at WTVT Tampa during his senior year at UT as an intern and was hired by the station after graduating.

## 2000s

In November, **Dan Visage MBA '01** became the senior vice president of payer access at DermTech, a leader in precision dermatology enabled by a non-invasive skin genomics platform. Visage has more than 20 years of health care leadership experience, principally in developing high-performing teams to contract and manage health plan relationships.

**Chelsie Lamie '02** wrote about the benefits of transforming a brick-and-mortar law firm into a virtual one for [abovethelaw.com](http://abovethelaw.com).

**Deborah Bauer '03** earned a doctorate in history from

USF in December 2019. Her specialization is early America to 1783, and her dissertation is entitled "Trial & Error: Royal Authority and Families in the Colonization of British Florida, 1763-1784."

The Greater Riverview Chamber of Commerce in Riverview, FL, welcomed new member **Gabriel Mbulo MBA '03**, a financial advisor at Edward Jones Investments. Mbulo has been in the financial services business since 1997.

**Kareem Escayg '04** is the coach of the Academy of the Holy Names girls' varsity high school soccer team in South Tampa. The team won its third district championship this year and was written about in the *Tampa Bay Times*.

**Danielle Dixon '05**, a biologist at the University of Delaware, was quoted in an article in *The Scientist* on acidification and its effects on fish behavior. She earned her bachelor's degree in marine science-biology and earned a doctorate in marine science from James Cook University in Australia.

## SAVE THE DATE!

Come join us during UT Alumni Weekend on Oct. 23-24 on campus. You'll have the chance to connect with fellow Spartans during the President's Reception, climb up into a minaret and join a campus tour. The classes of 1995 and 1970 will be celebrating their 25th and 50th reunions that weekend.



## SPARTAN SPOTLIGHT

# One Driven Doctor

Jay Patel '92

Jay Patel '92 craves work that's "fast, smooth and efficient," which explains why he ended up with a double career as an endovascular surgeon and race car driver.

His path toward medicine began during college, when a summer job as a hospital technician in his home state of Indiana inspired him to switch his major from music to biology — a decision that led him to Chicago Medical School and a fellowship in interventional radiology at Harvard Medical School. Today, at his practice in the Greater Atlanta area, Patel Imaging, he does minimally invasive procedures that treat problems such as blocked arteries, uterine fibroids, tumors and spinal fractures.

Although he began going to the Indy 500 with his father in high school, the possibility of a racing career didn't seem realistic. Then in 2003, during his residency, a BMW executive noticed Patel putting groceries into his souped-up BMW and invited him to drive around a local race-track. Patel was hooked enough to sign up for a coaching session with Porsche champion driver Wolf Henzler, who said he was a natural. With encouragement from his wife, Nancy, Patel began a part-time career as an amateur driver and then became semi-pro.

Patel later earned a spot on the team headed by *Grey's Anatomy* actor-turned-driver Patrick Dempsey. (Drivers once asked Dempsey what he thought about the skiing injury suffered by a famous Formula 1 racer. "I'm not the real doctor," Patel recalls Dempsey responding. "Jay is. Ask him.") The following year Patel joined the Kelly-Moss Motorsports team and placed second in his class in the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge. He's taken a break to focus on his day job and hopes to compete again soon. His goal: to win the GT3 Cup someday.

Does this doc worry about crashes? "There's always a risk," he says. "But the riskiest place is the bathroom in your home. When I worked in the ER, most of the injuries I saw were people falling in the bathtub and breaking a hip."

One thing Patel has learned is that there are many similarities between medicine and racing. "There's an adrenaline rush that you have to control. In medicine your goal is to save that person, and in racing your goal is to get to that checkered flag first," he says. "But in between you have a lot of chaos. You have to navigate whatever's coming at you."

When he's not zooming around a track or treating patients, he's chauffeuring his two kids (Cain, 12 and Lexa, 11) in a four-door Porsche Panamera — which can go as fast as 150 mph (though he's never tested it).

—LINDSY VAN GELDER





## ALUMNI REPORT

**Matthew Evans '06** has been elevated to partner at Barnett, Bolt, Kirkwood, Long, Koche & Foster, where he practices in the areas of tax, tax-exempt organizations and estate planning.



**Cory Diamand and Caroline (Avery) Diamand '08**

**Caroline (Avery) Diamand '08** married Cory Diamand on Sept. 1, 2019, at Stratton Mountain, VT.

Indiana State University named **Danny Plasencia MBA '08** the assistant director of athletics and director of the Sycamore Athletic Fund in November. Before that, he was the director of championships and the director of development at the University of Louisville in Kentucky.

**Ali de Meric '09** and her family were profiled on ocalastyle.com. They are involved in the thoroughbred industry.

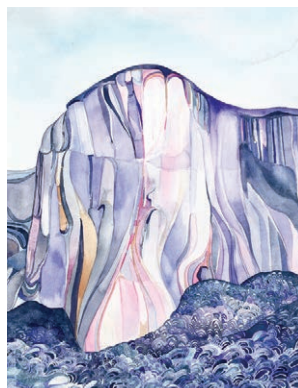
Vestaron named **Eric Hammons M.S. '09** Southeast manager. He'll manage sales efforts and distribution relationships throughout Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.

Hammons has more than 20 years of experience in crop protection, crop nutrients, vegetable seed and livestock production.



**Paige '10 and Jonathan '09 Howard**

**Jonathan '09 and Paige '10 Howard** were featured in the February 2020 issue of *Davis Islands Living* magazine. The Tampa-based couple met in biology class at UT in 2007 and now have two children: Jackson, 3, and Hope, 1. Jonathan is a loan officer for American Mortgage, and Paige works in medical device sales. Paige, who placed third in the Gasparilla Distance Classic half marathon this year (four months pregnant), runs 50+ miles per week.



**Art by Rhiannon Klee Williams '09**

**Rhiannon Klee Williams '09** was featured in a Q&A on climbing.com. She lives in her van, which doubles as an art studio, and travels all over North America to rock climb. She makes a living by painting rock formations that inspire her art.

## 2010s

**Edouard Carrie '10** is the founder of ECSSA (Environmental Cleaning Solutions S.A.), which allows Haitians to make money collecting plastic so it can be recycled and used by companies like Hewlett-Packard. He was written about in an article on GreenBiz.com.

**Chrissy Nieves MBA '10**, a licensed realtor with Yellowfin Realty, was selected as a 2019 NextDoor Neighborhood Favorite for Winthrop Village in Riverview, FL. Her clients consistently praise how stress-free she makes buying, selling and leasing property. She lives in Winthrop Village with her son, Nolan, and husband, José.

**Bobby Soroory M.S. '11, MBA '11** works in acquisitions at Convergent Capital Partners. He married Sheida Ghominejad in Italy last year. He was written about in the *Business Observer*.

**Tricia Vaillancourt '11, MBA '13** welcomed her second daughter, Gwen Marie, on Oct. 3, 2019.

Kelley Kronenberg, a business law firm, announced the addition of **Jason Hepperly '12** to its Miami

office in December. Hepperly assists in matters involving property and casualty claims. After UT, he earned a J.D. from the University of Miami and is currently working toward an LLM in environmental law from Vermont Law School.



**Tricia Vaillancourt '11, MBA '13 and her family**

The Medical Center of Aurora (CO) appointed **Tyler Hood MBA '12** as chief administrative officer of Centennial Medical Plaza.



**A mural by Princess Smith '12**

**Princess Smith '12**, a painter and muralist, took part in the SHINE mural festival in St. Petersburg, FL, in October. She created a mural version of her painting "Stay Gold," which portrays her daughter flexing her muscles. Smith is a Los Angeles native who now lives in the Tampa Bay area.

**Elaine Thornton '12**, who majored in public health at UT, recently graduated from



Sherman School of Chiropractic and successfully passed her national board exam.

**Vincent A. Lanci '13, MBA '15** self-published a book called *Left for Dead: A Story of Redemption*. It's a memoir about how he survived a hit-and-run accident that nearly killed him — and the lessons he learned from the experience that can lead to a better, richer life. It's available as a paperback or e-book on amazon.com.



**Dylan Clifford '13 and Alexis Laursen '13**

**Alexis Laursen '13 and Dylan Clifford '13** got married last June in Chadds Ford, PA.

**Kendra New '13** is the head coach of the teen court team from Clay County, FL. The

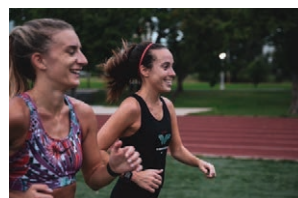
11-person team took home their first win at the third annual Florida State University Sunshine State Showdown, a high school mock trial competition. They competed in four rounds and won them all. New earned her J.D. from Florida International University in Miami.

**John Davis Jr. MFA '14**, a poet based in the Tampa Bay area, was a guest on the YourArsty-Girl podcast in November. He works as associate dean of academic affairs for Keiser University in Clearwater, and his books of poetry include *Hard Inheritance*, *Middle Class American Proverb* and two other collections.

**Jacqueline French '14** was promoted from a senior consultant to an associate at Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. in Washington, D.C. She provides consulting services for federal information technology projects, with a focus on cloud technologies and federal acquisitions.

**Vanessa Righeimer '14**, an openly gay runner who competes with a group called the Nike Windrunners (Chicago's first all-women's competi-

tive road-racing team), was profiled by [outsports.com](https://www.outsports.com). She's worked as a copywriter, a freelance journalist and a volunteer with Back On My Feet, a nonprofit that uses running to help get homeless people moving.



**Vanessa Righeimer '14, right**

**Undine Shorey '14**, a musician and freelance writer, released her first EP, *Quality of Life*, and was written about on [Bradenton.com](https://www.bradenton.com).

**Courtney Osteen '15** writes for [screenrant.com](https://www.screenrant.com) about cultural topics such as Harry Potter, Martin Scorsese movies and classic television shows like *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*

**Cristophoros "Cris" Beck '16 and Blaise Telemaque '18** co-founded a company called Breezeshare last June. It's a platform that uses real-time screensharing, file-sharing and video chatting to help people collaborate on musical projects.

**Giovanny Alfonzo '16**, a former professional baseball player for the Miami Marlins and the New York Mets, has joined the Pryor Baseball Farm in Wesley Chapel, FL, as a coach/instructor for youth baseball and softball players.

**Erin Elser MBA '16** is a branch manager and licensed title agent at Majesty Title Services. She also hosts a podcast with her sister called Millenials360Life, which is designed to educate people about millennials. It has more than 2,500 subscribers. She was written about in the *Business Observer*.



**Stephanie Will Hellthaler '16, MBA '17 and Kurt Hellthaler '17**

**Stephanie Will Hellthaler '16, MBA '17** married **Kurt Hellthaler '17** in October 2019. Stephanie is the assistant director of alumni and parent relations at UT, and Kurt

## MIX AND MINGLE

Wondering how to meet other Spartans in your city? Browse alumni networking receptions across the country at [alumni.ut.edu/events](https://alumni.ut.edu/events). Representatives from the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations, as well as Career Services, travel to more than 10 cities each year to connect alumni.



SPARTAN SPOTLIGHT

# The Master Negotiator

Stacy (Estes) Yates '02

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Former UT soccer star Stacy (Estes) Yates — who graduated with honors, with a major in criminology and criminal justice and a minor in psychology — has always been goal-oriented, both on and off the field.

At 40, she's now an experienced litigator and a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Court Mediator. In 2019, she was named a "top lawyer" by *Tampa Magazine*, and she earned the title of "rising star" by *Super Lawyers Magazine*.

But her path wasn't always so certain. Yates — now a South Tampa resident, along with her husband, Jason; daughter, Harper, 8; and son, Hagan, 6 — got through college thanks to a combination of athletic and academic scholarships, as well as multiple part-time jobs like hostessing at Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City and working the 5 a.m. shift at a YMCA. She says she never would have become an attorney if

she hadn't been recruited for UT's 1998 inaugural women's soccer team.

As a center midfielder (who is still in the UT record books as 10th in assists for women's soccer), Yates learned how to work with a team, take criticism constructively and be flexible. Being named co-captain by her peers all four years also taught her how to be a leader.

After getting her law degree from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2006, the Arlington, TX, native started working as an assistant state attorney in Tampa and was determined to make partner at a firm by 35. She did — at Pennington, P.A., where she focused on insurance litigation and eventually became the top-producing female lawyer and one of the top-five producers at the firm.

This member of the Athena Society (a group of Tampa professionals who promote women's equality) has since left Pennington to focus on the next chapter of her career: opening her own litigation and mediation firm and possibly running for office in the future. ("When the time is right," she says.) This year alone, Yates has already spoken at the National Association of Legal Investigators Conference regarding investigation procedures and discussed mediation for young lawyers for the Florida Defense Lawyers Association.

She's also examined the pathways to equity partnership for lawyers who are mothers at the Southeast Women Litigators Conference in Atlanta. "It is still very stifling for lawyers who become mothers to become shareholders in firms," says Yates. "I have been able to do that. It has been very hard, and I think it's because there haven't been women in those spots to pave the path for more female attorneys, but I have definitely tried to do that for those who come after me."

—PATTY ADAMS MARTINEZ





is a deputy for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and first lieutenant in the Army National Guard.

**Morgan Tamayo '17**, who is earning her master's degree in sociology at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, presented "Applied Gender Studies" at the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology annual conference in October in Portland, OR.



**Chase Corley '18**

**Chase Corley '18**, who founded the UT guitar club, worked with the Hillsborough County Historical Advisory Council to create a historical marker in honor of his favorite musician, Jimi Hendrix, in November. A \$2,500 plaque (mostly paid for by the UT guitar club) was placed in Curtis Hixon Park to commemorate Hendrix's two sold-out performances at the old Curtis Hixon Hall in 1968. The ceremony for the marker was covered by the *Tampa Bay Times*. There are more than

150 green historical markers scattered around Hillsborough County, and this is the first to honor an individual musician.

**Francisco J. Oller Garcia MBA '18** works in digital operations and marketing for BeniComp Health Solutions in Tampa. He was featured in the "I Want Your Job" blog series on the website of Providence College, his undergraduate alma mater.

**Samuel Thomas '18** grew up in rural Virginia and spent a lot of time walking through the forest with his grandfather. Soon after he moved to Tampa, he noticed that many palm trees were dying. He wrote to the *Tampa Bay Times* about it last year, which prompted an investigation by the newspaper. The disease affecting the palm trees is called lethal bronzing.

The Washington Wild Things, a professional baseball team that's part of the Frontier League and located in Washington, PA, signed **Nick DeTringo '19** to the team in January. His UT career batting average of .321 ranked as one of the best in program history with 18 home runs and 89 career runs batted in.

Image Surgical Arts in Nashville, TN, hired **Kristin Torres MSN '18** as a board-certified nurse practitioner in November. She specializes in aesthetic medicine.

During the National Lacrosse League entry draft this past September, the New England Black Wolves selected former UT All-American men's lacrosse player **Andrew Kew '19** with the third overall pick.

**Astaja Tygchter '19** signed a deal to play professional basketball overseas with Baerum Oslo of the Norwegian Basketball League. During her time on UT's women's basketball team, she led the team in scoring with 12.9 points per game and was named first-team All-Sunshine State Conference as a senior.

#### IN MEMORIAM

George Mills '49  
William "Ward" Richardson '50  
Everett Prevatt '53  
Claire Hoel '58  
Dominick Cassano '60  
Sigfrid Johnson '62  
Charlene Conkline '75  
Geraldina "Sherry" Gaalswijk-Vennett '81  
Herbert Green, Jr. '84  
Kevin Greene '91  
Bonnie Judy '95  
Robyn Larson '99

#### Faculty

James Krause  
Judith (Patterson) Edberg

## SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Want to be in Class Notes? Submit your update at [ut.edu/alumni/alumni-updates](https://ut.edu/alumni/alumni-updates).

## CHECK OUT THE UT JOURNAL'S NEW WEB PAGE!

We're proud to share the magazine's updated web page: [ut.edu/alumni/ut-journal](https://ut.edu/alumni/ut-journal). You'll find links to each issue's feature articles and Spartan Spotlight profiles — so you can read them digitally and share them on social media.

## SAVE THE DATE!

UT Day at the Rays  
will take place Aug. 30.







# GASPARILLA

## PRE-PARADE

### B · R · U · N · C · H

Photographs by Chris Zuppa

The UT Tampa Bay Alumni

Chapter thanks our 500+

alumni and friends who joined us

on Saturday, Jan. 25, for the annual

Gasparilla Brunch. It was great to welcome

home so many Spartans for a morning of

food, drink and fun before Tampa's parade

along Bayshore Boulevard.



2020







# What Matters Most at UT?

## People. Opportunity. Impact.

Think deeply, for just a moment, about your life. Picture every person who has ever done a kind favor for you, provided a word of encouragement or steered you toward a better path. It is hard to get ahead in life without some help from our family, friends and neighbors, and we owe those folks our gratitude.

Similarly, The University of Tampa would not be where it is today without the generosity of people like you. UT's success is due to the collective support and commitment of the Spartan community.

Just take a glance at how far the University has come over the past several decades: record-breaking enrollment (including approximately 10,000 students from 50 states and about 130 countries), growth to more than 200 academic programs, 63 new construction projects and major remodels since 1994, and the expansion of the campus to 110 acres in the heart of Tampa.

And those are only a few examples.

Today, UT continues to move forward and climb even higher — and we need partners to help us do it.

**WHAT MATTERS MOST AT UT? YOU.**







PE YOUR  
PROFESSOR



**SPARTAN  
READY**  
PHILANTHROPY



# People. Opportunity. Impact.

“My grandfather was a high school music teacher, and concerts and marching band were a big part of my early life. I didn’t play an instrument, but I was in the audience supporting the performances.

“Today, I’m a facilitator for UT students in the College of Arts and Letters. Whether it’s providing a scholarship, pizza parties for hungry cast and crew members, a trip to the Tony Awards or supporting the new Ferman Center for the Arts, my goal is to connect people and opportunities — to help those with the desire to succeed get that extra push.

“Not all arts students will perform on stage. We need future performing arts managers, directors, talent agents and set designers. And when a business major, future nurse or technology student gains arts experience, they increase their skills to command attention and improvise. They are learning to use both the right and left side of the brain.”

*Charlene Gordon; retired aerospace and defense sales manager for Pilgrim Software Inc.; UT Trustee; UT Pacesetters Society inductee; donor*



## People

“At UT, my relationships with professors, baseball coaches and teammates made a lifelong impact on me. As a baseball player, my coaches reminded me — you joined something bigger than yourself. The UT experience showed me everyone can make a difference, and winning extends beyond the diamond.

“I feel it’s my personal duty to pay it forward, like so many before me. That’s why I give to the Rene Martinez Memorial Baseball Scholarship Fund. You can be a vital resource to a student and help set them up for success. When you volunteer or provide support, students learn they are not alone in the arena of life. It is inspiring to watch students excited about advancing the Spartan community today and in the future.

“At our baseball team reunions, we gather and our children get to see and be part of the bonds of our Spartan family. To sustain the University’s proud heritage and tradition of excellence, we have to stay involved and nurture the Spartan culture.”

*Sergio Perez '09; client relationship specialist, ARU CPA Business Services; donor*







## Opportunity

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"It's up to you how successful UT is going to be. That is why I give. In 1929, my college fund was lost in the Wall Street crash. I had to start working at the Tampa Shipbuilding Company and taking classes at night. I know what it's like to struggle to afford tuition and books and juggle work and school.

"I also know what it's like to have opportunities and support. I left UT early to serve in World War II and the Korean War, and because of the GI Bill of Rights, I was able to return and graduate from UT in 1949.

"I have many UT memories, from professors and organizations to proposing to my late wife, Mary, at the annual Ring Dance in the Plant Hall lobby."

*Clifford Mott '49; retired southern territory merchandise manager at Sears, Roebuck and Company; donor*



## Impact

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"We established the Psychological Assessment Resources Inc. (PAR) Scholarship in psychology at UT because we believe in the vision of the University and its students. As a society, we need talented people to go into the field of psychology and help others.

"Even if a student doesn't pursue a master's or doctorate degree, having the desire and skills to understand, support and develop others is vital in many professions. That is why PAR feels passionate about giving back, and there is no time like the present.

"There are so many ways to give, and there is satisfaction in knowing that you are equipping others to make a positive impact. Personally speaking, giving back helps me stay grounded. It gives me a wonderful perspective on all I have to be grateful for."

*Kristin Greco; CEO of Psychological Assessment Resources Inc.; donor*



# Career Connections

At three events along the East Coast over winter break, students met with alumni in their hometowns to prepare for the future.



Back in January, Jordan Washington '22 deliberated. Would battling the Washington, D.C., traffic be worth it? Which UT alumni would he meet? Would this event help him land a future internship or job?

The event in question was called UT Career Connections, and it was one of three events held over winter break in three different East Coast locations: D.C. (with 25 people in attendance), New York City (74) and Boston (32).

They were all co-hosted by the Office of Career Services and the Office of Development and University Relations to bring students and alumni together to connect and learn about opportunities, including internships, employment, military service and continuing education. Last year, the first UT Career Connections event was held in Boston, and this is the first year events were held in multiple cities.

For Washington, taking part in the event was well worth the drive. He talked with alumni and learned about their jobs and how they rose to the positions they're in now. As an environmental science major, he hadn't considered working for the federal government until he had gained more professional experience. However, at the event, he learned about and has since applied for an internship and research opportunity there.

"I have goals and need help to achieve them. Meeting different people and having different internships is life-changing. Whether it helps you decide where you want to be or where you don't want to be, it gives you a clearer career focus, and you realize talents and opportunities you didn't know you had," says Washington.

## UT IS EVERYWHERE

One of the major benefits of these events is that they aren't on campus; they take place in (or very close to) many students' hometowns and are strategically timed over winter break. "These events enable students to network in the cities where they live and may move back to later, so they can make valuable connections with people who have something in common with them," says Stephanie Will Hellthaler '16, MBA '17, assistant director of alumni and parent relations, who was at the New York event.





Mackenzie Hackett '20, another student who was at the D.C. event, certainly appreciated that because before attending, all of the internship and job opportunities she had known about were based in Tampa. Hackett isn't sure yet where she wants to live after graduation, but events like these give her a much broader network. "I'm grateful that my Spartan network is anywhere and everywhere I want to be. It opens up my options to have connections and support that stretch beyond campus as a student and in the future as an alum," says Hackett.

Following the D.C. event, alumni gave Hackett feedback on her résumé and helped her connect with resources to get ready for a sales interview. Hackett feels that students can be confused and overwhelmed about the future, but when they see other Spartans who are successful, make an impact on the world and offer their guidance to them, it makes all the difference.

### ALUMNI MEET RISING STARS

Students weren't the only ones who got something out of these events. Alumni who attended now have a recruiting advantage, because they were introduced to rising stars from UT who might one day make fantastic interns or new hires.

Brandy Wimberly '00, branch chief of the National Institutes of Health, was thrilled to be one alumna at the D.C. event. She was impressed with how well prepared the students were and by the activities they're pursuing in addition to academics. She had fun helping them discover how to describe their involvement in Greek organizations and on-campus employment as skills that can be included on their résumés and leveraged in job interviews.

"I came away with a sense of pride that I graduated from The University of Tampa. It was inspiring to see how these young adults balance school, social organizations and work to become well-rounded professionals. The opportunity to be involved in this event is a wonderful way to help our next generation of leaders, and to see their faces light up with excitement and confidence was priceless," says Wimberly.

Stay tuned for 2021 UT Career Connections in all three cities again — plus a possible expansion to more cities. Any alumni who are interested in attending may contact Stephanie Will Hellthaler at [swill@ut.edu](mailto:swill@ut.edu) or (813) 257-3219, and any students who are interested in attending may contact Molly Butters, career coach in Career Services, at [mbutters@ut.edu](mailto:mbutters@ut.edu) or (813) 257-5498.





# Helping a Tampa Landmark Thrive

**Students in the Naimoli Institute for Business Strategy are partnering with the iconic Tampa Theatre this semester to solve real-world business challenges.**

The late Vincent Naimoli — founder and first owner of the Tampa Bay Rays, emeritus chair of UT's Board of Trustees and a longtime donor — was certainly onto something big when he established UT's Naimoli Institute for Business Strategy (NIBS) in 1998 within the Sykes College of Business.

NIBS is directed by Jody Tompson, professor of management and entrepreneurship. He is one of seven NIBS faculty teaching 14 sections of a class this semester called Management 431: Practical Strategic Assessment, where undergraduates form teams and work with a local company or nonprofit to find solutions to real-world business challenges in a case study competition.

Hundreds of companies and organizations have participated in the past, including Starbucks, College Hunks Hauling Junk, Regions Bank and United Way Suncoast. This spring semester, the participating organization is one of downtown Tampa's most iconic and historic landmarks: the Tampa Theatre, which was built in 1926 and is famous for having a ceiling that is painted like a night sky and studded with twinkling light-bulb stars.

The challenge for students in this semester's class? The retail space next to the theatre's box office will soon be vacated by the florist who's currently there. The nonprofit would like to turn that 1,260-square-foot space into an additional theatre, a "micro-cinema" that seats about 40 people. The students were tasked to figure out: What are the best ways to utilize that new space? How should it be positioned in conjunction with the existing facilities?

Throughout the semester, student teams have been meeting with managers from the Tampa Theatre to strategize about design, marketing and operations. On May 1, each finalist team will make a presentation to those managers.



Rachel Warden '20 hopes to be on one of those finalist teams. "The competition brings together and encapsulates everything I've learned over the four years," she says. "Our team is analyzing real-life business challenges, and we're learning how to best leverage each team member's strengths to win."

The entire process is a win-win for both students and the nonprofit. "We're impressed by how fast the students took a deep dive into their analyses and the level of questions they've asked," says John Bell, CEO of Tampa Theatre. "The process has been energizing. Success is fleeting, so you need to continually stay relevant and cultivate new audiences, especially among younger generations, who will be responsible for the future care and preservation of this landmark."





# UT Give Day Returns

In economics, “growing the pie” is a theory that by growing the size of each individual slice, you raise the standard for everyone. And so is the case with UT Give Day: the University’s annual, 24-hour donation drive that involves tons of fun, on-campus activities — and will take place on April 21 (barring any coronavirus cancellations).

Each Give Day, alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends of UT donate funds to the University — and if they like, they can target their donation toward one of 30 different programs, including individual colleges, academic programs, athletic teams and organizations. In 2019, Give Day donations totaled a record \$169,359.90.

The lively event, which started in 2016, now includes more than \$40,000 in matching donation opportunities, a phone-a-thon, free coffee and doughnuts, golf cart rides, a photo challenge, a scavenger hunt and more. One major event last year was a pie-a-thon: where

for two hours in the Vaughn Center courtyard, more than 30 faculty and staff members volunteered to take a pie in the face for donations.

Adrian Bush ’95, head coach of men’s soccer, participated in the pie-a-thon because he feels a strong connection to the University. Not only does he work at UT, but he was the team captain of UT’s men’s soccer team when they won the 1994 national championship, and his wife, Trish ’92, is an alumna. “I attended UT through the assistance of others, which is also the case for many of our student-athletes,” says Bush. “Athletic program donations also allow us to have first-class athletic teams and facilities. I’m forever grateful for what this University has done for me.”

Dannielle Roque ’21, an annual giving intern, also knows firsthand about Give Day’s direct impact on students. “I see how the dollars are being designated — for first-generation

college student scholarships, support of the basketball program, research labs — I get to see how it touches every part of UT, and my friends and I are able to attend UT because of those scholarships,” she says.

This Give Day, you have the opportunity to support what you love most about UT and transform your generosity into a currency that will pay dividends long into the future. Are you #allinforUT?

**WHAT MATTERS MOST AT UT? YOU.**

**PEOPLE. OPPORTUNITY. IMPACT.**





## High Note

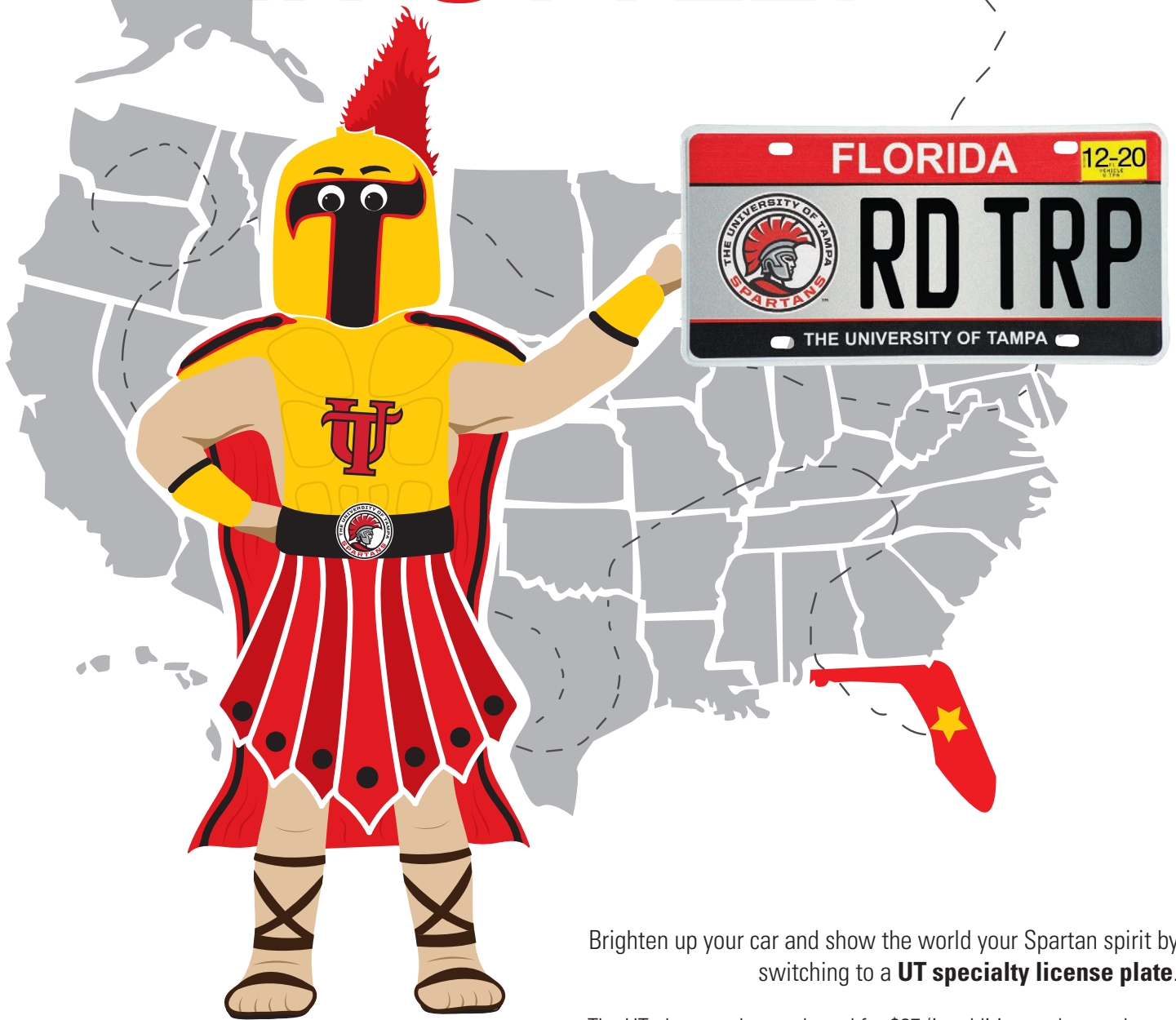
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Anyone up for a polka or a march? This photo, from March 1958, features members of the Spartan Band (UT's athletic pep band) playing lively music on Franklin Street in downtown Tampa. The group was performing during a drive for Easterseals, a nonprofit organization that is committed to the health and wellness of Americans with disabilities.





# HIT THE ROAD IN STYLE!

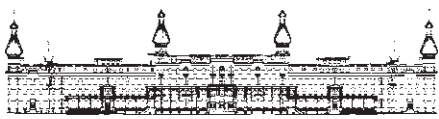


Brighten up your car and show the world your Spartan spirit by switching to a **UT specialty license plate**.

The UT plate can be purchased for \$27 (in addition to the regular tag fee) any time of the year, regardless of your plate renewal month (Florida residents only). For each \$27 spent on a license plate, \$25 goes toward funding scholarships and University improvements.

To learn more about the UT license plate, call the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations at (813) 257-3219 or email [alumni@ut.edu](mailto:alumni@ut.edu).





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## **FABRIC OF SOCIETY**

Artist Gregory Siff, who was a guest speaker at two UT events in February, critiqued the work of five seniors in Saunders Art Center. Here, he's discussing art created by studio art major Sarah Hughes '20 using hand-stitched denim and oil paints.

PHOTOGRAPH: JAIME AELAVANTHARA