A Detour of Service on the Road to Retirement

After 25 years as a key executive with one of Alabama's largest corporations, Joe McInnes took the driver’s seat to turn around a troubled state agency.

Rebecca Paul Florence

In 2003, three weeks after Joe McInnes (chemistry, 1965) began serving as director of the Alabama Department of Transportation, volunteering for a job that many in the state would have considered profound self-punishment, he received a phone call.

Monica Lucas of Baker Hill near Eufaula wanted to talk to Governor Bob Riley but was referred to McInnes instead. "She said, 'I want you to listen to this,'” McInnes recalled. “And I heard a little girl's voice calling for her mother. Mrs. Lucas told me that this was her granddaughter, Sidney, whose mother had been killed on Highway 431 in Russell County. She was coming back from Auburn where she had been admitted and her car collided with a truck near one of the road's sharp curves. The narrow two-lane road was dangerous. Mrs. Lucas wanted to know what I was going to do to make 431 safer.”

McInnes drove to Eufaula on a cold February day and promised Lucas that, while it would take time, the highway would be made safer and the four-lane road completed. It had been named one of “America's deadliest highways” by Reader's Digest three years earlier.

McInnes had recently retired from Montgomery-based Blount International where he had served for 25 years in senior management and as right-hand man to its legendary chairman Winton “Red” Blount. He helped oversee Blount International's remarkable growth and the sale of the corporation for $1.2 billion in 1999. He then worked to develop the Blount Cultural Park in Montgomery until Red Blount’s death in 2002.

Before moving to his retirement home on Lake Martin near Alexander City, McInnes was serving on then Governor-elect Bob Riley’s transition team. He was helping identify candidates for cabinet posts when Riley asked him to accept a cabinet post of his own—overseeing the troubled Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT).

The department’s afflictions were numerous, the most pernicious being its longstanding reputation as the governor’s office of political patronage, trading road building projects for legislative votes and political favors. Two of the previous three ALDOT directors had been indicted by federal grand juries and one had gone to prison for soliciting from contractors, creating...

Paul Jones Gallery Honors Legacy of American Art Collector

Inaugural Exhibit, Icon, Explores Prominent Themes of Jones Collection

On August 13 the College held a grand opening for the Paul R. Jones Gallery on Sixth Street in downtown Tuscaloosa, providing a year-round permanent venue for works from the University of Alabama’s Paul R. Jones Collection of American Art and setting a milestone for the University’s contribution to the ongoing revitalization of the city’s historic central district.

The gallery is one of three buildings on Sixth Street under renovation or planned for renovation by private parties. This phase in Tuscaloosa’s downtown revitalization has been stimulated by the construction of a federal building on University Boulevard, a city parking deck and intermodal facility, a city hall annex, and a five-acre park near the new courthouse. The Allen and Jemison Building at Greensboro Avenue and Seventh Street is being developed by the city as the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center, and plans are under way for the University to have gallery and performance spaces within it as well. With restaurants, a theater, and other storefronts nearby, “the Sixth Street location puts us in an attractive, high-pedestrian area,” said Dean Robert Olin in announcing the opening of the Jones gallery.

“While we have wonderful, year-round galleries on campus, the Jones collection is specifically intended to be shared with the larger public. We wanted to place some of our art exhibitions in a streetscape so that someone walking down the sidewalk can drop in and enjoy these works as well as works by students and faculty. And we are delighted to be a part of the cultural revitalization of downtown,” he said.

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On Wednesday, April 27, business as usual ended at our College when an F4 tornado barreled into Tuscaloosa from the west. It seemed only seconds between the storm’s sighting and the reports of devastation and, tragically, death. We mourn the loss of life. Six University of Alabama students died, including College of Arts and Sciences studio art major Morgan Sigler of Bryant, Ala., whose fine talents and promise are remembered on this page.

We are thankful the storm missed our beautiful campus as it cut a swath nearly one mile wide and five miles long through the city, devastating 15th Street; the neighborhoods of Forest Lake, Hillcrest, Glendale Gardens, the Downs, and Rosedale; and Holt and Alberta City before continuing east for some 250 miles. And we join with the greater community in grieving for the losses experienced in Tuscaloosa County and elsewhere.

As soon as the sound of the sirens ceased, our overarching concern was for our students, our employees, and all in the community who lost their homes and possessions. Some 4,996 homes were damaged; 2,375 were destroyed; 69 apartment complexes were leveled.

But the magnitude of the tornado’s devastation was only outsized by the compassion that poured forth from the community and beyond. Moments after the devastation, neighbors began helping neighbors and giving to those in need in remarkable ways.

College comes from the Latin word for “community,” and in my estimation that meaning was never truer of the College of Arts and Sciences than in those days immediately following the tornado.

With power lines down and roadways impassable for several miles, School of Music faculty members Jenny Mann and Chris Kozak went door to door and collected ideas for projects. Their efforts led to establishing a memorial fund in Morgan’s name that will be used to buy art and supplies for mission trips. “She always looked for the good in people,” her father said. “This gift shows that she was surrounded by people who cared for her. I will hold on to that.” Faculty in the department and staff in the Department of Art and Art History created a Raku platter for her parents.

“ar I never knew how close she was to the art department until this happened,” her father said. “This gift shows that she was surrounded by people who cared for her. I will hold on to that.” Faculty in the department also collected portfolio projects by Morgan that were housed in the department, including a lighthearted time-lapse video of herself, and presented these to the Siglers.

Shortly before her death, Morgan had been working on a mold for a piece inspired by the Bruno Mars song “Grenade.” The fragile wax mold was one of the items recovered from Morgan’s tornado-damaged apartment. Joe McCready, an artist whose sculpture Goldie 1971, a larger-than-life recumbent robot, can be seen in Woods Quad, heard about Morgan’s vision for her next piece. The UA art alum finished the casting process and gave Morgan’s last sculpture to her parents.

Morgan was also dedicated to mission work and had traveled in the United States and Mexico with Ebeneezer Baptist Church, teaching and sharing her faith and her love of art. Her mother said she had been looking forward to joining other mission trips after graduation. The family plans to establish a memorial fund in Morgan’s name that will be used to buy art supplies for mission trips. “She always looked for the good in people,” her father said. “And she reminded me to do the same.”

Morgan started her journey at The University of Alabama in engineering, her father’s profession, but it was not the right fit. When she discovered studio art, she quickly fell in love with the discipline. During her time in the College, Morgan worked on sculptures and learned to create pottery, including Raku, a Japanese ceramics technique. To honor Morgan’s memory, faculty and staff in the Department of Art and Art History created a Raku platter for her parents.

Students, faculty, and staff in the Department of Art and Art History students Jason Dobbin, James Davis, and Adam Hill and faculty member Lowell Baker worked tirelessly removing fallen trees from homes. Department of Communicative Disorders graduate students organized 40 students and eight chainsaws to clear trees while the department’s Audiology Clinic worked with FEMA to replace hearing aids lost in the storm.

Walking in food and water to impassable neighborhoods, cooking and serving meals, affixing tarps to innumerable damaged roofs, collecting and distributing vital supplies, recovering for a stranger a cherished possession from the ruins, holding a hand—these acts of kindness by so many steered our collective resolution to recover, to rebuild, and to honor those who were lost.

Likewise, the good wishes and caring expressions we have received from friends and alumni in many places remind us, once again, that the important matters are not temporary adversity or material goods, but what we mean to one another.

Morgan Sigler was a creative person. Her father said she was always observing and collecting ideas for projects. “We would be riding in the car together and she would ask me to pull over so she could take a picture of something she found interesting that she wanted to share.”

That natural curiosity was just one of the traits cherished by her parents, Allan and Vega Sigler of Bryant, Ala. Morgan, who was majoring in studio art, was one of six University of Alabama students killed in the April 27 tornado that struck Tuscaloosa. The College of Arts and Sciences is planning a memorial in the Woods Quad sculpture gardens to remember Morgan and others who died.

Words like caring, outgoing, and compassionate only begin to suggest the depth and character of a girl who was intensely faithful to her friends and incredibly loving to her family.
New College Celebrates 40 Years of Transformational Learning

Experimental Learning a Rare Opportunity in the Region

Since its inception, New College, the College’s interdisciplinary program offering individualized majors and minors, has held tightly to its original purpose: allowing students to build a curriculum that matches their personal goals and interests. When it was formed in 1971, New College was one of many in the country offering students the opportunity to experiment and explore the world of academia without the constraints of traditional curriculums. In recent years, New College has emerged as one of the few remaining programs in the Southeast that holds to the idea that not all students learn in the same way.

When Dr. James Hall came to The University of Alabama as director of New College in 2002, he could immediately see its value for students. “I was clear to me... was the value of a program like this for highly motivated students.” Hall said the program is also helpful for “students who have not always had educational success. [They] feel empowered by being invited in on the academic decision-making process.” In Hall’s opinion, many New College students were searching for an opportunity to think. Students are often so caught up in having to complete requirements they do not get the chance to simply learn, Hall said.

New College now includes 11 faculty members, 210 students in self-designed majors, 50 students in self-designed minors, 50 students in minors in civic engagement and interdisciplinary environmental studies, and nearly 400 students in New College Life Track, the adult education program formerly known as the External Degree program.

Joe Namath, Pro Football Hall of Fame quarter-back and former Crimson Tide player under Paul “Bear” Bryant, is a New College Life Track graduate. Namath did not finish his degree from UA in the 1960s, choosing instead to play professional football. Nearly 40 years later he returned to the University to complete his degree; he graduated in December 2007. Hall said that was a testament to Namath’s desire to complete his college education and to the program’s ability to foster academic growth in a broad range of students.

New College students have a longstanding reputation for identifying and implementing socially responsible projects before they are broadly accepted. UA’s recent sustainability and Go Green efforts emulate recycling programs initiated by New College students and faculty decades ago. In 2011 New College was ranked in Princeton Review’s “Guide to 311 Green Colleges” as one of the country’s top institutions for environmental initiatives.

More important than what New College students do while they are at UA is what they take to the greater community when they leave, said Hall. New College has produced more than its fair share of doctors, lawyers, educators, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders.

For the 40th anniversary, some prominent New College alumni are returning to campus. One of those is Ed O’Neil, director of the Center for the Health Professions at the University of California, San Francisco. O’Neil never took any courses in the disciplines he works with today—medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing—but he has succeeded as director of the center because of the leadership skills he developed during the 1970s at New College. On November 17, O’Neil will speak at a joint health summit sponsored by New College and the Capstone College of Nursing.

“What I learned at New College was that you could approach problems from an interdisciplinary track just as effectively as from a single disciplinary track,” O’Neil said.

Dr. Bernie Sloan, dean of New College from 1977 to 1997, first worked as a coordinator for out-of-class learning. He developed the University without Walls program, an early version of the External Degree program, and later helped to get the Computer-Based Honors program integrated into the College. Sloan cherishes memories of students who flourished in New College and then went on to successful careers. But chief among his memories of New College are its core values of the liberal arts.

“The University itself should be a place where all undergraduate students are taught liberal arts along with attempting to instill in them the value of a lifelong pursuit of learning—just for the sake of knowing,” Sloan said.

New College was a separate academic division of The University of Alabama when it opened its doors in 1971 with Dr. Neal Berte as dean. He served until 1975 when he became president of Birmingham Southern College. Under Berte’s leadership, New College grew to nearly 200 students. Berte had served as a consultant on a committee of UA students, faculty, and administrators to make proposals for a new approach to learning for undergraduates, something he had done at Ottawa University in Kansas.

New College was initially met with mixed reviews by the University, so Berte and his staff initiated face-to-face meetings with UA faculty and administrators to obtain feedback. While dean, Berte hoped to instill accountability. Later, Berte saw other divisions at UA and other institutions in the United States adopt and adapt trademarks of the New College experience.

“There are many values associated with innovative programs such as New College,” Berte said. “But the hallmark is to utilize this opportunity to focus on the learning requirements of each student, with the assistance of a faculty committee, in meeting the student’s overall educational goals.”

Over the years, New College has grown into a significant part of the College of Arts and Sciences. “The best indication of the success of New College rests with the outstanding academic performance and later career achievements of its graduates—a record of success that speaks for itself,” Berte said.
a culture of unethical behavior among some contractors, vendors, and ALDOT employees.

Despite a healthy budget fueled by Alabama’s gas tax, roads had gone unreppaired and projects had been shelved for 18 years as a result of Reynolds v. Alabama Department of Transportation, the infamously unsettled 1985 federal racial discrimination case. Through five gubernatorial administrations, injunctions obstructed ALDOT’s ability to hire, dismiss, or promote among its 5,000 employees, leaving positions empty and forcing ALDOT to contract out almost 80 percent of its work at higher costs.

“Elected officials couldn’t believe the way we ran ALDOT. I disappointed a lot of them who expected business as usual. When we got a call asking that a road be paved or repaired, my response was if it is a safety issue, real need, or an economic development opportunity, come see us. Otherwise, we weren’t going to do it. We sort of drew a line in the sand,” he said. In light of that attitude, skeptics were placing bets that McInnes wouldn’t last. “Some folks thought I was just passing through. Many tried to wait me out. But the more I got involved, the more fun it became,” he said.

Road building and road improvement projects became a new passion for this corporate retiree, who began to measure asphalt and concrete in terms of lives saved. McInnes speaks of the desire to finish uncompleted and dangerous Alabama roads: the new Interstate 22 from Birmingham to Memphis; U.S. Highway 98 in Mobile; U.S. Highway 80 crossing the Black Belt from Montgomery to Mississippi; and State Route 157 in North Alabama, just to name a few.

“You could see where roads had stopped and started with gubernatorial elections, where a Democrat initiated the project and a Republican stopped it or vice versa. There would be 20 miles to finish a road and it wouldn’t happen because of political maneuvering,” he said.

Two projects especially resonated with McInnes. “Bloody I-20,” an eight-mile stretch of Interstate 20 east of Birmingham in St. Clair County, was one of Alabama’s deadliest corridors. “Vehicles would cross over the narrow median and hit oncoming traffic head-on, causing horrific accidents. We got busy and installed concrete barriers in the medians and widened the roadways and stopped those fatalities,” he said.

And then there is Highway 431 in Russell County, the 16-mile stretch of two-lane road that claimed the life of Angel Lucas and, McInnes noted with me—over $300 million in legal fees and court expenses, all unnecessary.” The protracted battle also divided personnel in ALDOT. “People were at each other’s throats. Discord and mistrust were everywhere. It was ridiculous,” McInnes said. Riley charged McInnes with running ALDOT like a business and restoring an ethical culture. And he gave him the green light to end the Reynolds case.

McInnes instituted for employees and vendors an ALDOT principles of business conduct and ethics policy. “We put anyone doing business or employed by ALDOT on notice that there would be no more gifts of bass boats, shotguns, or favors from vendors to ALDOT employees who might look the other way on a project,” McInnes said. “We were very up front about doing things ethically. We talked about this continuously with employees and contractors. We did find a few unwilling to change, and we took appropriate measures to rectify unethical behavior.”

He visited with ALDOT employees in all nine of the department’s divisions. “Many told me this was the first time they had met a director. I do think they appreciated the interest we showed in the good work they were doing,” he said. “It took two years, but I think we were finally able to change the mentality of the department. And we were able to get the right people in the right positions of responsibility.”

McInnes had a decidedly untraditional response to requests for political favors.

Sandra and Joe McInnes in Montgomery

Even though a class-action settlement for the Reynolds case was reached for $54 million in 1994, political and legal wrangling continued. “Past administrations had not done what they should have done to solve it. Lawyers were getting rich,” McInnes said. “This cost taxpayers—you and me—over $300 million in legal fees and court expenses, all unnecessary.”

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A 480-acre tract of forested property near Akron owned by the College has been enhanced with an outdoor classroom area designed to teach students how to manage family, corporate and public lands as a renewable natural resource. The new facilities were dedicated June 7 at the J. Nicholene Bishop Biological Station. The site, a former family homestead known as “Tanglewood” and bequeathed to UA in 1949 by Alma Bishop Williams, has served as a field station for decades, managed by the Department of Biological Sciences.

The Outdoor Learning Pavilion and Support Facility were constructed with funds provided by UA and several Alabama conservation organizations. Supporters of the $500,000 project include the Ben May Charitable Trust of Mobile, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Alabama Conservation and Natural Resources Foundation, the Alabama Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation and Riley Boykin Smith of Tensaw Land and Timber Company Inc.

The structures provide an all-weather launching point for students to study and conduct research at the heavily forested property. The Learning Pavilion, Support Facility and surrounding acres of rolling pine uplands and hardwood creek bottoms are at the center of the natural resources management minor, designed to give students real-world training in forest, wildlife, recreation and aesthetics management.

For more photos from the dedication, visit the College’s Flickr page at:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/uacollegeofartsandsciences/
Geography Faculty Analyze Tornado’s Aftermath
Perceptions and Responses to Tuscaloosa’s Devastating Tornado

In the wake of the April 27 tornado that struck Tuscaloosa, a wave of volunteer and recovery programs swept the city to help those affected by the storm get their lives back to normal. Among them were efforts by Dr. Jason C. Senkbeil and Dr. David Brommer, both in the Department of Geography, to help Tuscaloosans be better prepared for future storms.

The two assistant professors collected information about residents’ responses to the tornado and their perception of its threat prior to its occurrence. Among their many objectives from this research, they hope to formulate some recommendations on how tornado warnings and other weather-related information can be disseminated more effectively.

The project has already gained national recognition, receiving a $35,000 grant from the National Science Foundation in June. The award will fund the project through the summer of 2012 and allow the researchers to analyze the data they have collected. This, in turn, will help them formulate ways for community officials and weather forecasters to get warnings out to diverse populations.

On the days preceding the tornado, Senkbeil and Brommer alerted as many people as they could about the potential for a violent tornado striking the area. The day after the tornado hit on that Thursday afternoon, Senkbeil and Brommer’s “wheels were already spinning” about how to use the experience as a learning opportunity to prevent future fatalities and provide better ways to communicate the danger associated with days likely to produce violent tornadoes. They observed that the six-mile-wide path left by the tornado impacted Tuscaloosa residents from diverse ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds.

The areas hit by the storm included people in low-, middle-, and high-income brackets; people of different ages; permanent residents and students. This cross section afforded the opportunity to investigate how a diverse population responded to the storm.

In the days and weeks after the tornado struck, Senkbeil and a team of graduate students including Courtney Thompson, Laura Radford, Meganne Rockman, John Mason, and Cory Rhodes, began collecting data by going to shelters and by walking through affected neighborhoods to find out how people heard about the tornado (what medium), whether they sought safe shelter, and if they did, what prompted them to do so.

They have conducted more than 200 in-person interviews. Brommer was instrumental in implementing load technology using Zoomeran surveys as an efficient way of archiving field data and eliminating cumbersome paper.

They also sent out a campus wide survey asking the same questions and responses to the survey.

“We want to have an understanding of future possibilities,” Brommer said. “The information we are getting and the data we are going to analyze might change how severe weather warnings are disseminated.”

Brommer said that in the past residents heard warnings and immediately took shelter. Technology such as cell phones and computers now allows people to process information before deciding whether to take shelter. Brommer and his colleagues want to learn how people are making the decision whether to seek shelter or not.

Senkbeil and Brommer hope to supplement the data they have already collected with analytics provided by Facebook and Twitter. This will allow them to understand the traffic that left the impacted area on April 27 and in the days immediately following the storm. This information can help researchers assess how recovery groups such as Toomers for Tuscaloosa and Recover Tuscaloosa were formed and how they affected the recovery process. "Our goal is to take the physical element of the event and understand how it affects social aspects," Brommer said.

Early results from their data indicate that the April 27 storm definitely influenced how people will formulate their severe weather plans in the future. Brommer said he and his colleague hope to use their analyses to inform elected officials and meteorologists how to make warnings more effective and to create learning modules for schools to teach students about severe weather safety.

Yarbrough Named Director of Development

Kathy Yarbrough, director of leadership gifts in UA’s Office of Advancement, was named director of development for the College in July. Yarbrough has served in the Office of Advancement since January 2010. Prior to working at the University, she had development and leadership roles with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Mississippi State University, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, and the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. Kathy is the daughter of Dr. James D. Yarbrough, dean emeritus of the College, and Mrs. Donnette Yarbrough.

Yarbrough replaces Larry O’Neal, who is now director of leadership gifts.

“One measure of team strength is the versatility of expertise in its members. We are fortunate to have advancement professionals who can apply their professionalism and talents to the areas where they are needed most. We look forward to working with both Larry and Kathy in their new roles to advance the stature and endowment support of the College and the University,” said Dr. Robert Olin, dean of the College.

Kathy Yarbrough
Big River Production Brings UA Theatre to Montgomery Audience

Department, Students Adapt to New Venues

More than 800 seats were filled in the Montgomery Performing Arts Centre for the Department of Theatre and Dance’s production of Big River in April, the first full-scale production to be taken to the state’s capital by the University. The performance offered Montgomery citizens the opportunity to see the College’s professional theatrical talent and gave theatre students the valuable experience of performing on the road.

The Montgomery performance was made possible with support from Leadership Board member James Klinger and his wife, Jane Klinger, Stifel Nicolaus and Company, Alfa Insurance, and the University’s Office of Academic Affairs. Big River, written by William Haupton and country music artist Roger Miller, is a theatrical adaptation of Mark Twain’s 1884 classic Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The show premiered on Broadway in 1985 and swept the Tonys that year with seven awards, including Best Musical. A 2003 revival garnered several more Tony nominations.

Billed as a piece of “pure Americana,” the show was an ideal selection for the department’s first time on the road, said Dr. Bill Teague, chair of the department. “We knew that the Montgomery Performing Arts Centre was a large venue, so we needed a show with a large cast that had a broad appeal,” he said. “This was just the perfect show for this venue because it is so classically American.” Big River features some of Twain’s most beloved characters—the Widow Douglas, the King and the Duke, Pap Finn, Mary Jane Wilks, and Huck’s partner in crime, Tom Sawyer.

According to Teague, the experience of taking a full-scale show—with a cast and crew of 60 people—on the road to Montgomery had its challenges. The biggest one was adapting to the much larger space at the Montgomery Performing Arts Centre. Teague said the sets were built to accommodate that larger space. When the show was put on in Tuscaloosa, the audiences in the Marian Galloway Theatre did not get to see some elements of the staging because of that stage’s smaller size.

Teague explained that adapting to different venues is a skill that students who hope to pursue acting on a professional level will need to learn. Many touring productions are in a different place every night. “This is a real job possibility for our students,” he said.

Teague said the complete run of the show in Tuscaloosa was a success, but there was something special about the welcome the cast and crew received from the crowd that attended the first performance in Montgomery. “Everyone really enjoyed it,” Teague said. “We had such an enthusiastic, warm response and a standing ovation from the audience.”

American Studies 50th Anniversary

Program’s Founder Establishes Faculty Fellowship

When UA’s American studies program was founded 50 years ago, its director had to pound the pavement to recruit students. Dr. Clarence “Pete” Mondale went to every student organization he could to promote the program. Now, the department has 800 full-time faculty members, 60 undergraduate students, 18 graduate students, and is recognized as one of the country’s most successful American studies programs. The department has 660 American studies alumni.

Alumni and faculty of the department celebrated its fifth decade this year beginning with a return visit by Mondale during the weekend of October 14–15. Mondale, the brother of former vice president Walter Mondale, is a professor emeritus of American civilization at George Washington University. The celebratory weekend will include presentation of the first Mondale Faculty Fellow in American Studies Award, a two-year fellowship intended to help support faculty members in furthering their research in American studies.

Other scheduled events include a concert of American music, a gallery talk by American studies graduate Cleo Thomas about his collection of African American art, and a panel discussion by American Studies alumni on what the program was like through the decades and how it helped prepare them for their careers.

For information about 50th anniversary events throughout the school year, call the department’s office at 205-348-5940.

Dr. Lynne Adrian, department chair, said alumni who visit the department this year will find a warm welcome and a robust academic program that brings distinction to their degree. According to Adrian, much of the program’s success can be credited to the leadership of its longest-serving chair, Dr. Jim Salem, who headed the department from 1984 to 2007.

American studies is recognized for a curriculum that encompasses insights and methodologies of literature, history, the arts, anthropology, geography, and religious studies, among others. The interdisciplinary focus lends itself to new perspectives and methods of inquiry in gender studies, media studies, and comparative culture. American studies graduates have jobs in publishing, government service, business, nonprofit organizations, music, law, historical preservation, public history, museums, and libraries.

“Our program is very flexible and provides great preparation in a variety of areas,” Adrian said.

Salem noted that an American studies student leaves the program as a scholar versed in American culture and prepared for a variety of careers or academic positions. “American Studies students learn how to learn, and they acquire skills that can help them in any job,” Salem said. Organizational skills, communication, and critical thinking are all important components in American studies, and they translate to a wide variety of career opportunities.
Beidler Appointed to Going Endowed Professorship

Dr. Phillip Beidler, a professor in the Department of English, has been named William and Margaret Going Endowed Professor in the Department of English by the University of Alabama Board of Trustees. The endowment, made possible through a $250,000 donation from the estate of Dr. William Thornberry Going, is intended to provide the College with the means to recognize and retain outstanding faculty. The William and Margaret Going Endowed Professorship honors the memory of Dr. Going’s late wife, Margaret Elizabeth Moorer Going.

Going and his wife, both alumni of the College, taught in the Department of English during the 1940s and 1950s.

Beidler has taught American literature at UA since 1974. He grew up in central Pennsylvania on the outskirts of Gettysburg and received his PhD from the University of Virginia. A nationally recognized scholar on fiction written during American wars and conflicts, he has published extensively. His most recent books are The Victorian Album: Reflections on the Good Life after the Good War (2010), American Wars, American Peace: Notes from a Son of the Empire (2007), and Late Thoughts on an Old War: The Legacy of Vietnam (2004).

Margaret Going, who was born in Bay Minette, Ala., received her bachelor’s degree from the University in 1940. She was a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority as well as several honor societies, including Mortar Board and Phi Beta Kappa. She received a master’s degree from Wellesley College in Massachusetts and a doctorate from the University of Michigan. A well-loved professor of English, Margaret Going taught at the University from 1944 to 1957. She died in 1989 at the age of 69.

William Going was born in Birmingham and received his bachelor’s degree in English from UA in 1936. He served on the staff of the Corolla and the Crimson White, was a member of the Glee Club and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and other honor societies. Going earned a master’s degree at Duke University and received an EdD from the University of Michigan. He taught at the University of Alabama from 1939 to 1957. He died in 2008 at the age of 93.

Gupta Receives Humboldt Research Award

Dr. Arunava Gupta, a professor of chemistry and chemical and biological engineering at UA, has been selected by the Humboldt Foundation to receive a 2017 Humboldt Research award. Gupta, a researcher in UA’s Center for Materials for Information Technology, or MINT, specializes in the investigation of nanostructured materials and their use in potential real-life applications. The award is granted in recognition of a researcher’s achievements to date, whose fundamental discoveries, new theories, or insights have had a significant impact on their own discipline and who is expected to continue producing cutting-edge achievements in the future.

Located in Bonn, Germany, the Humboldt Foundation “promotes academic cooperation between excellent scientists and scholars from abroad and from Germany.”

Nominations for the award, valued at 60,000 euros (about $73,500), must be made by distinguished scientists/scholars employed by a university or research institution in Germany. Gupta was nominated by Drs. Andreas Hütten, Günter Reiss, and Claudia Felser. The Humboldt Foundation grants up to 100 Humboldt Research awards annually to internationally renowned researchers and scholars. Gupta will spend as much as one year at the University of Bielefeld and the University of Mainz, both in Germany, cooperating on a research project of his choice with other scientists and professors.

Meester Honored with Kennedy Center Award

Donna Meester, associate professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance and director of costume design/production, has been awarded the Kennedy Center Golden Medallion for her service to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

Meester served as the festival’s vice chair of design for three years before becoming design chair for Region IV, one of eight regions nationwide. Meester judged student work at these festivals and performed portfolio reviews. She has also served as a regional respondent and guest lecturer for festival events. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in apparel technology from Purdue University and a Master of Fine Arts degree in stage design from Southern Methodist University.

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, which involves 18,000 students from colleges and universities nationwide, serves as a catalyst for improving the quality of college theatre. It includes more than 600 academic institutions throughout the country, allowing theatre departments and student artists to showcase their work and receive outside assessments.
Professors Honored with Druid Arts Awards

Four College faculty members were honored at the Arts and Humanities' Council of Tuscaloosa County's 19th Annual Druid Arts Awards, which acknowledges those who contribute to the arts in Tuscaloosa. The College of Arts and Sciences was given a special award for efforts in 2011 toward expansion of the arts.

The special award recognizes an individual or organization that has positively impacted the arts in the community. The College was noted for its five nationally recognized fine and performing arts programs: visual art and art history, creative writing, music, dance, and theatre. These programs “offer the South’s most comprehensive arts education programs, …infusing our community with talent and creative enthusiasm.”

Dr. John Ratledge, in his sixth year as conductor of the University Singers and director of choral activities in the School of Music, was recognized as the 2011 Musician of the Year. He has conducted two performances at Carnegie Hall, sold out Atlanta’s prestigious Spivey Hall nine times, conducted in South Korea and with the Shorter Chorale, and conducted major premiers of choral works in Europe.

Associate Professor Craig Wedderspoon of the Department of Art and Art History was honored as the 2011 Visual Artist of the Year. His work has been included in public and private collections throughout the United States. His large outdoor pieces have been exhibited in Miami, Huntsville, and Montgomery. He helped plan an arts trail for the Tuscaloosa Riverwalk on the Black Warrior River and engineered the project that turns Coleman Coliseum pink for breast cancer awareness.

Dr. Bronwen Lichtenstein, an associate professor in the Department of Criminal Justice, received the 2010 Award for Career Contributions to the Sociology of HIV/AIDS from the Sociologists’ AIDS Network of the American Sociological Association.

The award recognizes work that has significantly advanced the understanding of social aspects of the pandemic and has contributed to prevention, treatment, or policy interventions. Winners of this award have pursued substantial research or applied work related to HIV/AIDS throughout their careers.

Lichtenstein was invited to speak at the 2010 National Summit on HIV Diagnosis, Prevention, and Access to Care in Arlington, Va. Attendees included the U.S. surgeon general, members of Congress, members of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Press Club, and heads of agencies that comprise the National Institutes of Health.

Lichtenstein’s funded research involves projects on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS among children, women, and minority groups. She has published extensively in academic journals on women’s health, STDs, HIV/AIDS, illicit drug use, and African American health.

She is a research fellow at the Center for Rural HIV/STD Prevention at Indiana University and a member of the Governor of Alabama’s HIV Commission for Children, Youth, and Adults.

Robin Rogers Receives ACS Award

The American Chemical Society (ACS) honored Dr. Robin D. Rogers, the Robert Ramsay Chair of Chemistry at UA, with its ACS Award in Separations Science and Technology. The award, sponsored by Waters Corporation, recognizes “outstanding accomplishments” in fundamental or applied research related to separations science and technology; it covers multiple fields including biology, chemistry, engineering, geology, and medicine.

Rogers was selected for his research on ionic liquids—a new class of solvents that are typically nontoxic, nonflammable, and do not evaporate, significantly reducing harmful emissions. He has published more than 150 scientific papers on aspects of ionic liquid research and was referred to by his nominators as a “world leader” in the field.

Rogers, who also serves as director of UA’s Center for Green Manufacturing, has taught and conducted research at UA since 1996. He earned both his bachelor’s and doctoral degrees from The University of Alabama.

He has been awarded nine patents, has 11 others pending, and has published more than 660 research articles in peer-reviewed scholarly publications. In 2009 he was inducted into the inaugural class of Fellows of the American Chemical Society for “demonstrated excellence.”

Professor Honored for AIDS Research Contributions

Dr. Bronwen Lichtenstein

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Dr. John Ratledge

John Ratledge, Craig Wedderspoon, Andy Fitch, and Seth Panitch. Photos by Porfi orio Solorzano

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Assistant Professor Seth Panitch, also in the Department of Theatre and Dance, was named the 2011 Theatre Educator of the Year. He heads the graduate and undergraduate acting programs in the College and has directed Into the Woods, Romeo and Juliet, and Fifth of July. He has directed plays in Cuba, worked off-Broadway and in regional theaters across the country, and received critical acclaim for his plays in their New York and Los Angeles productions.

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Dixon Selected for Burnum Award

For Dr. David Dixon, who holds the Robert Ramsay Chair in the Department of Chemistry, the last year has been marked with huge successes. One of the most notable was his research on developing a method for recycling a hydrogen fuel source, a major contribution to the overall efforts of the U.S. Department of Energy. Dixon also received the University of Alabama’s 2011 Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award.

“Dr. Dixon’s seven years at The University of Alabama have been highly productive ones on all fronts and have furthered a career of more than 35 years marked by countless milestones,” said Dean Robert Olin in his nomination letter. “His students have won a number of awards, and his research is characterized by groundbreaking discoveries that not only advance pure knowledge in his field but are also quickly translated into remarkable practical applications.”

Dixon, a computational chemist, has published more than 560 papers on a wide range of topics and has been cited more than 13,000 times by other scientists. His research focuses on catalysis and environmental science, including actinide chemistry for next generation nuclear fuels, atmospheric chemistry, hydrogen storage for transportation, carbon dioxide sequestration in the subsurface, and biochemistry for analyzing proteins and fluorine chemistry.

He won a Hydrogen Program Research and Development Award for “outstanding contributions to hydrogen storage technologies” for his contribution to the overall efforts of the U.S. Department of Energy’s Center of Excellence in Chemical Hydrogen Storage. That led to coauthorship of a paper published in the journal Science. The article describes a method for recycling a hydrogen fuel source. Dixon and his colleagues from the Los Alamos National Laboratory, along with his students, demonstrated that a lightweight material, ammonia borane, is a feasible material for storing hydrogen on vehicles.

Dixon earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena and his doctorate from Harvard. He joined the UA faculty in 2004.

The Burnum Award is one of the highest honors the University bestows on its faculty. Established by Mrs. Celeste Burnum and the late Dr. John F. Burnum of Tuscaloosa, it is presented annually to a professor who is judged by a faculty selection committee to have demonstrated superior scholarly or artistic achievements and profound dedication to the art of teaching.

Psychology Professors Receive National Recognition

The Department of Psychology had cause to celebrate this past year as two faculty members received national recognition for their work.

Dr. John Lochman, professor and Doddridge Saxon Chair of Clinical Psychology, won the 2011 Distinguished Career Award from the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology division of the American Psychological Association. As a winner, he was invited to give a 50-minute address at the annual APA conference in August 2011.

Lochman, developer of the Coping Power Program for children, is the director of the Center for the Prevention of Youth Behavior Problems at UA.

Dr. Beverly Thorn, professor and chair of the Department of Psychology, received the 2011 Career Service Award from the American Psychological Association’s Division of Health Psychology.

The award recognizes individuals who have contributed to the division itself or to the advancement of health psychology as a field.

Thorn, an expert on cognitive therapy for chronic pain, also received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology and the 2010 Blackmon-Moody Outstanding Professor Award.

Rable Wins Third Jefferson Davis Award

Dr. George C. Rable, the Charles G. Summersell Professor of History in the Department of History, was awarded the 2010 Jefferson Davis Award, given by the Museum of the Confederacy for his most recent book, God’s Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War. He is only the second historian to have received three Jefferson Davis awards.

According to the awarding committee, God’s Almost Chosen Peoples is a “path-breaking full scale comparative history of religion in the Union and the Confederacy” that presented the ambitious subject with “admirably massive research, smooth writing, and many keen insights.” The book is a volume in the Littlefield History of the Civil War Era Series, a joint project of the University of North Carolina Press and the Littlefield Fund for Southern History at the University of Texas at Austin.

The Museum of the Confederacy annually recognizes those doing scholarship on the origins, life, and legacy of the Confederate States of America and the Confederate period.
Collins Is One of UA’s Two 2011 Hollings Scholars

Double Major to Pursue Research in Microeconomics

When A. J. Collins, a sophomore from Amissville, Va., heard he had been named one of UA’s two Hollings Scholars, he was excited about the financial award and even more excited about the opportunities for research the scholarship would provide.

Collins applied for the highly competitive National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship in February, with the hopes of earning the $8,000 scholarship. He was particularly pleased to receive an additional $6,500 scholarship for an internship at a U.S. NOAA facility of his choosing. He hopes to further his research on testing what is known as the Olson Paradox, looking at whether group size has an effect on resource production and allocation.

The economics and political science double major said many of the social sciences explore how people interact with one another. He is interested in mathematically identifying trends in group interactions. And having grown up within two hours of the nation’s capital, Collins said he has always had a strong desire to work in the public sector.

In addition to the Hollings Scholarship, Collins was named UA’s Most Outstanding Sophomore for 2011 and a Tragos Scholar, an award that allowed him to travel to Greece to learn about the historical and philosophical foundations of Greek life. The trip was part of his participation in Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, where he serves on the executive board.

All UA Goldwater Scholars Are from the College

In the last several years, The University of Alabama has had significant success with students bringing home national awards. The prestigious Goldwater Scholarship, which was created to honor outstanding students in mathematics, natural sciences, and engineering, is no exception. This year, all four of the UA students who applied for the scholarships were awarded the honor, and all are from the College. This year’s winners are Paige Dexter, Matthew Kelley, Mitchell Hughes, and Jessica Duke.

UA is one of only five schools in 2011 with the maximum number of students named Goldwater Scholars. The others are Princeton, Arizona State, the University of Washington, and the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. The UA students are among 275 students nationwide who received the scholarship. They were chosen from 1,095 nominees. Goldwater Scholarships provide up to $7,500 per year for one or two years.

Paige Dexter is a biology major and German minor from Enterprise who is focusing on biomedical research and molecular biology. In her research, she is using a microscopic worm model to study genetic factors that may impact an individual’s susceptibility to Parkinson’s disease. A member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Dexter also serves as assistant editor for JOSHUA, the Journal for Science and Health at the University of Alabama. She is a member of TriBeta National Biological Honor Society and the UA Honors College.

Jessica Duke is a chemistry major from Birmingham who plans on a career in physical chemistry research focused on solving environmental problems. A 2010 Hollings Scholar, she is a member of the Computer-Based Honors Program and Gamma Sigma Epsilon chemistry honor society. She is also a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and has twice received both the Randall Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award and the Computer-Based Honors Outstanding Student award.

Mitchell Hughes, a physics and math double major with a minor in German, is from Homewood. He is in the Computer-Based Honors program and has a 4.0 GPA. Hughes is studying a very rare nuclear reaction known as neutrinoless double beta decay. He plans to obtain a doctorate in experimental nuclear or particle physics and pursue a career in research. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, he received a Randall Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award, the Charles Seebeck Endowed Scholarship, and a Computer-Based Honors Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher Award.

Matthew Kelley is a chemistry and math major from Des Moines, Iowa, specializing in physical and computational chemistry. Kelley plans to attend graduate school and study surface chemistry and its applications to materials and information technology. He is a Hollings Scholar recipient and a member of UA’s Computer-Based Honors Program, Gamma Sigma Epsilon chemistry honor society, and the Society of Physics Students. He has received the Randall Undergraduate Research Award and several outstanding student awards in chemistry.

NOTEWORTHY

Laura Radford, a graduate student in the Department of Geological Sciences, conducted a survey to discover how people in the public interpret the “cone of uncertainty” used by the National Hurricane Center to warn against hurricanes, which lead to the creation of a new, more preferable graphic. She used this research at the 33rd Annual Applied Geography Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, where she won first place. Radford hopes the research will be used to change the way hurricane uncertainty cones are presented to the public.

Jessica Duke is a biology major and German minor from Enterprise who is focusing on biomedical research and molecular biology. In her research, she is using a microscopic worm model to study genetic factors that may impact an individual’s susceptibility to Parkinson’s disease. A member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Dexter also serves as assistant editor for JOSHUA, the Journal for Science and Health at the University of Alabama. She is a member of TriBeta National Biological Honor Society and the UA Honors College.

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Jeremy Davis steps into the national spotlight with not one, but two commissions for statues of Crimson Tide coach Nick Saban

A little more than a year ago, 27-year-old Jeremy Davis was one of several undergraduates working in ceramics and printmaking in the College’s Department of Art and Art History. Although his instructors and peers recognized his skills as a visual artist, not until he got a call from Associate Professor Craig Wedderspoon did Davis really have the chance to display his exceptional talent.

Wedderspoon asked Davis if he would be willing to create some sketches of UA head football coach Nick Saban to be considered for the statue that would be placed in UA’s Walk of Champions to commemorate the Crimson Tide’s 2009 National Championship.

“The whole experience has been surreal,” Davis said. He described the process as having lots of “mountains and valleys,” a fitting analogy for an experience that had him spending six to seven days a week over several months in a secluded studio working on the sculpture design. It all culminated when Davis’s statue was unveiled April 16 at the 2011 A-Day game.

After his sketches were given the green light, Davis constructed a maquette, a miniature replica of the full-size Saban statue that would be cast in bronze. Davis was moving into new territory as an artist. Most of Davis’s previous figure work was in two-dimensions, not larger-than-life-size sculpture. But it was his reputation for attention to detail that made him an ideal candidate for constructing a representation of such a well-known person. According to Davis, it was not details he perfected, but rather the flaws in his maquette that landed him the job.

“I think the imperfections made it look more realistic,” he said.

Working under the mentorship of Wedderspoon and Daniel Livingston, an instructor in the Department of Art and Art History, Davis learned, careful step by careful step, all about the processes of creating an armature, the wire substructure of the model, modeling the image in clay, and then casting a final form. Livingston said the chief reason Davis was chosen to do the statue of Saban was because of his ability to work with figures. Few artists at UA work almost exclusively with figurative forms.

“It’s a little more difficult to create a likeness of someone as opposed to just creating something out of your head, because there is a reference point there that has to be addressed,” Livingston said.

Davis agreed, saying that the task of replicating the likeness of a real person is a “blessing and a burden.” On the one hand, if an artist doesn’t quite get it right, they face that person’s scrutiny. On the other hand, if the artist has questions, they have that person to guide them through the process and show how the figure should be represented.

In the case of Saban’s statue, the person who helped guide the process most was Saban’s wife, Terry. Davis said it was a pleasure to work so closely with her and that her opinions and suggestions—such as casting into the statue’s collar buttons of one of the pennies Saban’s daughter gives to him before each game—really made the project come to life.

In addition to Terry Saban’s direction, Davis and his faculty mentors reviewed each Alabama football game in the fall, hoping to capture useful footage of Coach Saban in action to compensate for the limited access to their famous model. After each game, the three would meet and discuss his specific gestures, movements and expressions, trying to hone in on the moments that represent Saban at his best.

The desire to capture this so-called “coaching moment,” was a part of the project even before Davis was asked to come on board. The pose of Saban with his hands forward in a clapping motion, although different from the other three statues on the Walk of Champions, was picked as the most accurate representation of the coach.

Because of the pose, the finished product required significant skill to craft. According to Livingston, any sculptor would have been challenged to get the pose right. “This one was not as static as the others,” Livingston said. “This has more life to it.”

Davis eagerly accepted the challenge.

According to Wedderspoon, the last 5 percent of a project can make or break its success. In his view, Davis understood that, which resulted in the impressive bronze statue on display today.

Davis is quick to give credit to his two mentors. He says he owes a huge debt of gratitude to Wedderspoon and Livingston. “If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t have gotten the job,” he said. “They also taught me a lot about punctuality and work ethic. And they really pushed me, which is what I need every once in a while.”

The West Blocton, Ala., native married this summer and will continue his studies in the Department of Art and Art History this fall. He is now constructing a life-size bust of Saban to be displayed in the Mal M. Moore Athletic Facility. This time around, he said, he will be more prepared. “Now I know the lines of his face. I’ll also get the chance to put in more details.”
Buried deep in the mangroves of the Florida Keys are exotic species that few people ever get the opportunity to see, much less conduct research on. Amanda Hanninen, a first-year graduate student in the Department of Biological Sciences, has traveled to the Keys on several occasions looking for a species that is essential to her research.

The specimen, a tiny hermaphroditic fish known as mangrove rivulus, is the centerpiece of her experiments, in which she studies the fish’s response to different environmental conditions. Mangrove rivulus are the only animals with a backbone that reproduce sexually and have offspring that are clones of the parent. Because the fish are genetically identical, Hanninen can focus on how the fish respond to environmental changes without having to factor in genetic differences between specimens. Her project is being assessed how those environments might affect the species’ stress levels and energy usage.

She parlayed a Howard Hughes summer research fellowship into graduate work. Seeing the promise in her work, Earley encouraged her to apply for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. The prestigious fellowship is awarded to only 2,000 students each year, less than 17 percent of those who apply.

When the news came that she had received the fellowship, Hanninen said it took a little while to absorb the magnitude of the honor and the opportunities it would provide. No one was more excited about those opportunities than her parents, Paavo and Ashleigh Hanninen. “She had the kind of high school record that would allow her to pursue any career or course of study she wanted to,” her father said. “She just had to figure out what she wanted to do.”

Hanninen says she is looking forward to continuing her research and working toward her doctorate. She hopes to have her own lab one day where she can pursue her research and foster the research of others. Earley said Hanninen is well suited to be successful in the field of research. “You know when someone is passionate about discovery and really interested in learning. Those are the people who stick around and work really hard,” he said. “She is driven to ask questions, to solve them, and to learn new techniques, and that is what is so outstanding about her.”

NOTEWORTHY

Jonathan Stone, a graduate student in the Department of Geological Sciences, was awarded a highly competitive NASA Earth and Space Science Fellowship that includes a grant of $90,000 ($30,000 annually, renewable for three years) to support his research. Through Stone’s work with NASA, he is able to access satellite images of outer volcanic activity and use mathematical analysis to predict activity on the inside of a live volcano.
The College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board

The College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board includes alumni and friends who support the College and its students with their time, influence, and minimum dues of $1,000 annually.

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This is how college is meant to be.
Scholarships and Endowments

The following friends have established or contributed to scholarships and other endowed funds in the College of Arts and Sciences between June 1, 2010 and May 31, 2011.

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Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Abernathy New Albany, IN
Ms. Aleta Ahlstrom Springfield, VA
Dr. Glenn James Ahrenholz Buffalo Grove, IL
Alabama Federation of Music Clubs Huntsville, AL
Alabama Policy Institute Birmingham, AL
Dr. Myra Inez Alford Allgood Birmingham, AL
Mr. Daniel Thomas Altenburg Birmingham, AL
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Ms. Joanna Biermann Tuscaloosa, AL
Dr. Alois Biler Birmingham, AL
Mr. Timothy Mark Bischoff Round Rock, TX
BP Fabric of America Fund Princeton, NJ
Mr. Mick Bray Albertville, AL
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company Princeton, NJ
Dr. Barbara Ann Chotiner Tuscaloosa, AL
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Mr. Norman Alton Crow Jr. Tuscaloosa, AL
Mr. Frederick Smith Crow Jr. Nashville, TN
Mr. John Ellis Curry Northport, AL
Ms. Amanda Douglas Daily Fort Worth, TX
Ms. Susan Daria Tuscaloosa, AL
Mr. Joe F. Davidson Tuscaloosa, AL
Mrs. Beverly Crawford Davis Mobile, AL
Dr. Sara D. Davis Tuscaloosa, AL
Ms. Karen Denise Dawson Bridgeport, AL
Mr. John F. DeBuys Jr. Birmingham, AL
Dr. Jerry D. Dillard Selma, AL
Mr. Andrew Crawford Dillion III Canton, MS
Mr. Robert Francis Dinnean Montgomery, TX
Mrs. Ursula A. Dinter San Rafael, CA
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Mrs. Margaret Koster Finley Tuscaloosa, AL
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Mr. & Mrs. Frank W. Gregory Wetumpka, AL
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Hugheys Donate $100K to Hughey Scholarship

Dr. James F. and Mrs. Geraldine F. Hughey of Tuscaloosa have added $100,000 to the David Thomas Hughey Memorial Scholarship Fund. They established the fund in 1992 to honor the memory of their son David Thomas Hughey, who was a 1990 graduate of New College in the College of Arts and Sciences. The endowment is used annually to fund a scholarship for a full-time student who is pursuing a degree in the School of Music.

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The Society for the Fine Arts (SFA) was established in 1975 to advocate for and support fine and performing arts programs in the College of Arts and Sciences. The society annually honored state and community leaders and artists with a Lifetime Membership for their role in advancing the arts in Alabama. In 2003 the SFA was incorporated into the College’s Leadership Board.

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Artwork Donated by Callahan, Foote Families

The children of Dr. Alston Callahan, one of the founders of the Callahan Eye Foundation in Birmingham, and Mrs. Eiver Holst Callahan, a 1948 UA alumnus, have donated artwork to the permanent collection of the Department of Art and Art History. The work is a plaster cast of Lovahân, Karin Callahan, and Kristina A. Callahan, all friends of the College.

The Department of Art and Art History also received several works from Howard Foutte of New York. This is the second group of art pieces donated by Foutte, who received his bachelor’s degree in history from the College in 1963 and his law degree from UA in 1968. Yucca Pods and Cactus Fruit by Maryam Amiryani, Wow by Fred Stonehouse, Man Laying Down Red Cloth by Brian Novanty, Moving Sky/Red Horses by Jeff Reed, and Sambastian Horses by William Meyerowitz were donated to the permanent collection of the Sarah Moody Gallery of Art.

“Man Laying Down Red Cloth” (June 1998) by Brian Novanty, oil on panel
Semmes Foundation gives $100K to Geological Sciences Scholarship

The Semmes Foundation of San Antonio, Texas, has donated $100,000 to the Douglas Epps Jones–Geological Sciences Advisory Board Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship is intended to benefit students studying in the College’s Department of Geological Sciences.

The Geological Sciences Advisory Board is a group of distinguished alumni and friends who play an active role in the advancement of the department. Annual scholarships are awarded to outstanding graduate applicants pursuing activities directly in support of thesis or dissertation research. The fund is named in honor of Dr. Douglas Epps (Doug) Jones, who served UA for 38 years. He died in April 2010.

The Semmes Foundation was established in 1952 by Douglas Ramsay Semmes to support “religious, charitable, scientific and educational purposes.” Semmes was a geologist who taught at Texas A&M and The University of Alabama; he was the president of Semmes Oil Corporation, a Fellow of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, and president of the South Texas Geological Society.
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The College of Arts and Sciences has received $20,000 from Jeffrey A. Levitetz of Boca Raton, Florida, toward the Jerry Rosenberg Endowed Scholarship in honor of Dr. Jerry Rosenberg, a New College professor since 1971. The fund, which was established in 2008, is designated for an undergraduate pursuing a degree in New College.

Levitetz, a New College alum, is the founder and chair of Purity Wholesale Grocers, one of the largest private companies in Florida. Levitetz was a distinguished speaker for the Helen Crowe Mills Lecture Series in 2010. He spoke about his life in the 39 years since graduating from the College, emphasizing that hard work and integrity will ultimately result in success.

Rosenberg was the director of undergraduate studies from 1992 to 2005 and a faculty adviser to the international honorary society Psi Chi from 2006 to 2008 in the Department of Psychology, where he holds a joint appointment. He is a McKnight Scholars Program Founding Faculty Fellow and a charter member of the International Association of Genocide Scholars. His research focus is the Holocaust; his specialties include psychology, human survival, and ethics.
The J. L. Bedsole Foundation, established in 1949, is named for T. Massey Bedsole Sr., who served on the UA Board of Trustees and is known for his enthusiasm for the Crimson Tide. He earned his undergraduate and law degrees (1939, 1941) from the University. He served in World War II as a naval aviator and was a retired partner in the Hendron law firm of Mobile.

The J. L. Bedsole Foundation, established in 1949, is named for Joseph Liner Bedsole, a well-known Mobile businessman who was the director of the First National Bank of Mobile for more than 50 years. The foundation’s mission is to provide post secondary educational opportunities for worthy youth in Alabama and to support civic, cultural, artistic, and economic development opportunities in the state.
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Nick’s Kids Fund Continues Support to Brewer-Porch Children’s Center
In the 2010-2011 academic year, Nick’s Kids, a charitable fund for children established by UA head football coach Nick Saban and his wife, Terry, gave $8,000 to the Brewer Porch Children’s Center. The center was established in 1970 by the Alabama legislature to provide a model treatment program for Alabama’s special needs children and adolescents, and their families.

Since coming to Alabama in 2007, the Sabans have distributed more than $1 million to over 150 charities, with a total of $23,000 going exclusively to the Brewer-Porch facility through the Nick’s Kids Fund. The Sabans started the fund at Michigan State University and have maintained the charity throughout Saban’s football career.

James Thompson, executive director of the Brewer-Porch Children’s Center, says the fund allows the center to purchase “extras” for special needs kids—toys, games, and Promethean interactive whiteboards, a specialized computerized teaching screen that is costly, but vital to the education of the nearly 170 students served each day at Brewer-Porch.
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Angelo Richard Spinola Estate Provides $6,000 Scholarship

Judith Ann Spinola, daughter of the late Angelo Richard Spinola, has donated $6,000 from the Spinola estate to the College to provide scholarship funds for a student pursuing a teaching career. Angelo Spinola was born in Agrigento, Sicily, and immigrated to the United States in 1921. In 1939 he received a bachelor's degree from The University of Alabama. He later had an extensive career in education as a teacher, principal, and school superintendent in New Jersey. He was an avid sports fan, with a special devotion to football. The scholarship was created to honor his memory and support the special Alabama Crimson Tide football team.
The Collegiate Fund invests in quality education—and the returns are great. The fund provides enriching components to a liberal arts education that state funds just don’t cover:

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Visa, MC, Discover and American Express credit cards accepted. Contributions to the Collegiate Fund are tax deductible as provided by law.
The following friends have made gifts to individual departments or programs in the College that are not included in the previous lists. Gifts were received between June 1, 2010, and May 31, 2011.

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American Studies Fund
Pays Tribute to Former Student

A travel research fund in the College’s Department of American Studies was established this year with a gift of $40,000 in honor of the late John Paul Ahlstrom of Montgomery. Ahlstrom attended the College in 1964 and became a steadfast admirer of UA. He had a lifelong love of learning, with a special interest in American history, literature, and music. Ahlstrom’s sister, Aleta Ahlstrom, and her family established the fund to pay tribute to his brother and to support academic excellence within the Department of American Studies. The John Paul Ahlstrom Endowed Travel Research Fund will be awarded to graduate students presenting papers at scholarly conferences or conducting research that necessitates travel.

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Dr. John H. Blitz, associate professor in the Department of Anthropology, received a grant from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to conduct archaeological research at the Graveline site, an earthen mound constructed by Native Americans.
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Bon Voyage

These College of Arts and Sciences faculty members retired during the 2010–2011 academic year, trading class time and office hours for more leisurely pursuits.

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This is how college is meant to be.
Alumni Notes

1949
Marion Gana De Grove (physics, BS) has retired to Vero Beach, Fla. She says she enjoyed being a female engineer when there were few of them around.

1970
Margaret S. Davis (mathematics; MA, Ph.D) is retired but is back teaching college math part-time. One of her proudest moments was watching her youngest son, J. Clay Davis, receive his Ph.D. from UA in May 2009. Margaret also helps her husband, Phillip, with his videography business.

1978
Ferris W. Stephens (political science, BA), a former student president in the College and an Alabama Assistant Attorney General, was appointed to serve on the Alabama Educational Television Commission (AETC). The seven-member AETC is charged with overseeing Alabama’s public television service to Alabama residents and to ensure compliance with the license requirements of the Federal Communications Commission.

1986
Dr. Cheryl Sington (dance and theatre, BS) runs Sington Consulting, a personalized college scholarship program and a dance studio. “I am enjoying both consulting in education and dancing—each brings great joy as my passions are daily.”

1994
Daniel Aaron Wheeler (speech communication, MA) earned his Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) from the University of Central Florida in Spring 2009. His dissertation was entitled, “The Effect of the Dove Evolution Film as a One-Shot Media Literacy Treatment.” He and his wife, Grace, live in Orlando, Fla., where he is the minister of the Concord Street Church of Christ. He is an adjunct professor of communication and education at Belhaven University in Orlando.

2002
Wes Borucki (history, PhD) published his first book, George H.W. Bush: In Defense of Principle, in June as part of the “First Men, America’s Presidents” series by Nova Science Publishers. He is entering his ninth year as associate professor of history at Palm Beach Atlantic University, and is expecting his first child with his wife, Brigid. Their daughter, to be named Deirdre Louise, is due this October.

2005
Renita L. Russell (political science; BS, MA) is a former middle school teacher who is currently working on her doctorate. She has been an invited speaker at several regional and national educational technology conferences including NECC. She also worked with the Mid-American Earthquake center educating the public on how to protect themselves when natural disasters strike and designed the social media training course for all International Paper employees. Currently, she is the assistant coordinator of the Memphis Gear-up program that connects inner city students to college students majoring in the STEM areas in order to increase their math and science skills, and is designing a professional development for Shelby County Schools on teaching in the inclusive classroom.

William Paddock (environmental science, BS) is a former Parker Adams Living Learning Program resident. He is the Founder and Director of WAP Sustainability Consulting in Nashville, Tenn. WAP Sustainability was recognized by the Nashville Chamber of Commerce as a Future 50 Company. The Future 50 recognizes the 50 fastest growing companies in Middle Tennessee. WAP Sustainability was also recognized by the Nashville Post as one of 50 Green Hero’s in Nashville.

Jones Gallery, Continued from page 1

The first exhibition in the newly dedicated gallery, titled Icon, was curated by graduate students in studio art and art history from The University of Alabama and The University of Alabama at Birmingham. The exhibit, which explores thematically the notions of “the icon” in contemporary art, gives the Tuscaloosa community a glimpse of the many subjects and themes addressed by artists represented in the Jones collection, said Dr. Lucy Curzon, assistant professor in the Department of Art and Art History and faculty advisor of the student exhibition. “In this instance, iconicity is a concept broadly conceived. The works on exhibit embrace religious, national, and community beliefs; exemplify fame, fortune, and success; and embody notions of veneration, to name only a few of the contexts under exploration,” said Curzon prior to the opening.

Pieces from the Jones collection, which is managed by the Department of Art and Art History, have been on display in various venues since Jones donated his 1,700-piece collection, valued at $4.8 million, to the University in 2008. The new gallery will provide a permanent exhibition space for portions of the collection.

In an interview shortly before his death in 2010, Jones explained that by donating his art, he hoped to preserve the legacy of African American artists, spark the interest of future art collectors, and help elevate African American art in the eyes of the art world.

University Singers Travel to Korea for Extended Performance Tour

The University Singers, the premier choral group of the School of Music, traveled to South Korea in May for a two-week performance tour at some of the country’s most prestigious venues, including the Seoul Arts Center, the largest performing arts center in Korea. It was the first time a School of Music ensemble has traveled overseas.

Dr. John Ratledge, assistant professor and director of choral activities in the School of Music, said the idea of doing a trip in Korea was introduced by Imgyu Kang, one of his doctoral candidates. Kang, a native of Korea, went with Ratledge to South Korea in 2008 to conduct the Tanging Choir. That trip established connections in the country and Kang began negotiations with Interkultur Korea, a division of the international performing arts organization.

“At first I didn’t think this was going to happen,” Ratledge said. “These kinds of things can take up to two years of planning.” Interkultur Korea reduced the cost of the trip for 55 singers by $67,000 UA’s Office of the Provost and the College’s Office of the Dean and School of Music contributed a total of $55,000 to make the trip a reality.

Ratledge, who has traveled overseas with as many as 140 singers at a time, said these kinds of trips are costly and a huge responsibility—but they are worth it. “What is marvelous about these trips is what they do for the kids,” he said. “To open up those doors of discovery and exploration is wonderful.”

The University Singers made their Carnegie Hall debut in New York City last spring. The trip to Korea is just the beginning of introducing UA’s musical ensembles to the world, Ratledge said. Plans are under way for both the Alabama Wind Ensemble and the Huxford Symphony Orchestra to travel overseas in the next year.
Opera Theatre Students Shine Again at National Competition

In January 2011 the UA Opera Theatre program in the College’s School of Music competed in the Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition at the annual convention of the National Opera Association in San Antonio, Texas.

The participants brought home second and third place honors with scenes from Giacomo Puccini’s La Bohème and Giuseppe Verdi’s Rigoletto. This is the second time in the history of the young program—and the second year in a row—that UA has made it to the finals of this national competition.

Paul Houghtaling, assistant professor of voice and director of UA Opera Theatre, traveled with the students to the competition. “The students were excited not only to place in the finals, but also to sense that they are part of a growing national reputation for The University of Alabama as a place to study opera and train for careers on the stage,” Houghtaling said.

“They heard comments such as ‘Wow, you guys look great and sound great. ...I want to come to Alabama,’ which made them proud and made all of us even more excited about the future of our opera program. That type of national exposure is incredible,” he said.

Student competitors were Brad Baker of Henderson, Tex., piano; Bryant Bush of Mobile, Ala., bass; Lauren Carlton of Huntsville, Ala., mezzo-soprano; Kasey Fuller of Orlando, Fla., soprano; Perry Harper of Paragould, Ark.; Marcus Miller of Nashville, Tenn., baritone; Andrew Nalley of Huntsville, Ala., baritone; and Dawn Neely of Huntsville, Ala., soprano.

Dawn Neely, soprano and Perry Davis Harper, tenor perform a scene from Verdi’s Rigoletto. Photo by Dusty Compton courtesy of UA Opera Theatre.