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DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE PROFESSOR?

Political science alumni often name professor Barbara Chotiner, who joined the UA faculty in 1978 and retired in 2014. Decades after they were taught by her, alumni still attest to her influence on their lives and careers.

As you know, faculty are the backbone of our enterprise. They are the innovators producing leading-edge research and scholarship; the creatives pushing themselves and their students to think and dream bigger; the leaders empowering students to be impactful leaders and to use their education for the betterment of humanity.

Thus, I was thrilled when I learned of President Stuart Bell’s plan to hire 300 to 400 more tenured or tenure-track faculty over the next five years. As you may know, he announced his vision last fall when he revealed The University of Alabama’s new strategic plan, which 100,000 students, faculty, staff, retirees, parents, alumni, donors, community members, and others helped to develop.

Our enrollment, as you know, has grown tremendously in both quality and quantity over the last decade. But what you may not know is that our faculty have grown only by a few hundred—even less so at the tenured and tenure-track level.

Think about the professors who have made an impact on your life. Contact them to show your appreciation. Share stories of your favorite professors with us. Who has advanced your career or transformed your life?

Increasing the number of faculty on our campus is crucial to helping us continue the legendary success to which alumni like you are a testament.

As you think about your own favorite professors, I’d like to introduce to you just a few new faces we have on campus who are already making their marks on both the College and University levels.

Diana Dolliver, in criminology and criminal justice, has established herself as an expert in the burgeoning field of cybercrime. Her work has been featured in many national and international news outlets, including a *Time* cover story. (You can read her advice on how to improve your own cybersecurity on page 8.)

Cajetan Iheka, in English, received the Carnegie Africa Diaspora Fellowship supporting African-born scholars in the United States and Canada to contribute to higher education in African universities.

Kim Genareau, in geological sciences, received a National Science Foundation CAREER award of more than $600,000 to study the relationship between volcanic ash and lightning, a phenomenon that has only recently been studied in detail.

Rebecca Salzer, in dance, produces screendances that have been featured at festivals across the globe.

Kelly Shannon, in modern languages and classics, held a prestigious Loeb Classical Library Foundation Fellowship this spring.

George Hawley, in political science, has published a book nearly every year since joining the UA faculty in 2013, and he is routinely cited for his expertise by...
Barbara Brickman, a faculty member in New College and the Department of Gender and Race Studies, created and hosted a media camp this summer for girls ages 10-13 in Tuscaloosa County. The camp aimed to empower the young women to create their own stories, learn to express themselves through writing and film, and learn how to think critically about how young women are represented in the media. Read more at as.ua.edu/alumni/camp.


Alabama-native Matthew Therrell, in geography, was among the College’s top 10 contact and grant recipients in fiscal year 2014, his very first year at UA.

There are countless stories like these all across campus. Moreover, all of these faculty were hired within the last five years. They embody the impact that The University of Alabama can have when we invest in our most precious resources. (In fact, go back just two more years, to 2010, and the list includes Samantha Hansen, in geological sciences, UA’s only Presidential Early Career Award winner, recognized by the White House for her research in Antarctica. She was awarded a Fulbright Award to work in Greece this fall.)

As anyone in higher education knows, being a faculty member is not an easy role to fill. Faculty members lead busy and high-pressure lives, balancing their own families and lives with teaching, research, and service.

I encourage you to think about the professors who have made an impact on your life, and to contact them to show your appreciation. I also encourage you to share stories of your favorite professors with us. Who are they? How have they advanced your career or transformed your life?

Send us a note online at as.ua.edu/alumni or by mail at Box 870268, Tuscaloosa, AL, 35487. We love hearing from you.

Have a great fall, and I hope you’re able to visit campus again soon.
Russia-native Maria Gerasikova came to UA on a waterskiing scholarship. But after a back injury that ended her competitive career, she picked up three majors, joined UA’s competitive ballroom team, and filled her life with everything from theatre to mock trial.

Recent graduate Maria Gerasikova—a Russia native who was professionally waterskiing by age 15—said her first exposure to the summer sport was at an indoor pool in the middle of winter.

“In Russia, athletes ski on a cable in the swimming pool during the winter so they can keep training even in cold weather,” Gerasikova said. “I saw them training for the first time when I was 12 or 13 years old. I was a swimmer at the time, and when I asked if I could try, they let me because I looked athletic, but no one expected that I would keep up with the rest of the team and find my way through so quickly.”

Within two years of her first attempt on skis, Gerasikova had fallen in love with the feeling of soaring through the water and doing tricks. She began training six days a week and was so successful that she began competing professionally on the international level. She traveled around Europe and the United States, and after graduating from high school, she realized she wanted to go to a university where she could continue to compete.

Her choice? The University of Alabama.

Though UA is well known for its football, gymnastics, and wheelchair basketball programs, not many have heard that UA also has a waterskiing team. And not only has UA had a team since 1970; that team is also currently ranked third in the nation by the National Collegiate Waterski Association.

For two years Gerasikova practiced with the team on Lake Harris, but then the unthinkable happened: she did a trick flip on the water and landed poorly, leading to a back injury that ended her competitive waterskiing career.

“I was very upset at first,” Gerasikova said. “Skiing had been a very big part of my life. But I soon realized that it was also a new beginning.”

“Before the injury, I had spent so much time skiing that I didn’t really experience a lot of other things in life. Now that I had all this free time, I couldn’t just sit at home and do nothing. I had to fill it up.”

Almost without skipping a beat, Gerasikova began to fill her life to the brim. To her double majors in political science and philosophy, Gerasikova added a third major in French—and even studied abroad in Paris for a few months. She tried rock climbing; she competed with the mock trial team; she acted in the College of Engineering’s Immature Radical Theatre troupe; and then she found ballroom dancing—and her mentor Dr. Richard Richards.

Though Richards leads UA’s competitive ballroom team with his wife Rita Snyder—an associate professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance—Richards is also the chair of the Department of Philosophy. And, like Gerasikova, he had had an injury that shifted the course of his life. Prior to coming to UA, Richards had worked as a professional ballet dancer, but when an ankle injury ended that chapter of his life, he turned to philosophy full-time and began ballroom dancing on the side.

“I hadn’t believed that I’d ever be able to do something again at the competition level, but Dr. Richards had a lot of faith in me,” Gerasikova said. “He both pushed me in dancing and philosophy, and he had confidence that I could succeed.”

Prior to graduating with a 4.0, Gerasikova was the vice president of the competitive ballroom dance team, winning multiple regional dance competitions, and in July she competed in a national event in Baton Rouge, winning first place in four dance categories.

With law school ahead of her, Gerasikova doesn’t plan to slow down. She will keep dancing, but she is also interested in learning to play the piano, ice skate, snow ski, and do acrobatics. She also intends to earn a dual degree while in law school because she thinks law alone may not challenge her enough. She would love to do a master’s degree in philosophy or bioethics.

“Perhaps even one day I’ll be brave enough to get a PhD,” Gerasikova said. “There are just so many options for my future.”
At the first SEC Campus Water Matters Challenge, a team of UA students took home the gold.

Dr. Sagy Cohen, an assistant professor in the Department of Geography, said the main criteria for the competition was water sustainability. The students were also supposed to take climate change effects into consideration and make sure the project was linked to current or planned developments at the university.

To adhere to these criteria, Cohen said the students worked with associate vice president for construction administration at UA, Tim Leopard, to pick a project they could thoroughly research and contribute to.

Through Leopard, the team helped solve an issue with floodwater which gathers on the Paul Bryant Drive end of Bryant-Denny Stadium.

“Whenever it rains, the intersection behind the stadium floods,” graduate student and team member Dinuke Munasinghe said. “Right now, the water drains directly into the Black Warrior River. Our plan is for a 5-million-gallon retention pond, which will use an autonomous system to slowly release the water into the river, or save it for other use.”

Mariam Khanam, a graduate student studying geography and a participant in the project, said the team tested a plan for a large underground retention pond by conducting simulations measuring rainfall, accounting for possible climate change, and taking into account potential for filtering the water before it is used.

Based on their research, the team believes the retention pond is a completely feasible plan and that the water it collects could even be used as extra water for non-potable use in the stadium on game days.

“I think the fact we were very tied into a university development project set us apart from other teams,” Cohen said. “From what I could see, we were the only ones who really made an analysis of climate change, and I think the simulations we did were pretty impressive to the judges. We were given well-defined guidelines, and we made sure we followed them very, very closely.”

The team shared its research with construction administration to be put towards potentially making the retention pond a reality.
DR. E. GAYLON AND MRS. SUSAN N. MCCOLLOUGH gifted the College of Arts and Sciences with its largest academic endowment in more than two decades. The gift will be used to create the Dr. E. Gaylon McCollough Institute for Pre-Medical Scholars as well as the Susan N. McCollough Art Biennale. The Institute, which will welcome its first class in the 2019–2020 academic year, offers innovative interdisciplinary pre-medical training focused on academic excellence, applied analytics, leadership, community service, scholarly research, and ethical professionalism.

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES WELCOMED TWO NEW ASSOCIATE DEANS. Dr. Ray White, a professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, is the new associate dean for the division of natural sciences and mathematics. Dr. Lisa Pawloski is filling a new role in the college as the associate dean of international programs, overseeing, among other things, the college’s work in Cuba and Greece. Pawloski comes to UA from George Mason.

THE UNIVERSITY WAS RECENTLY AWARDED A DEVELOPING LEADERS IN SCIENCE TEACHING GRANT from the National Science Foundation to recruit college graduates from STEM disciplines to pursue master’s degrees and simultaneously earn secondary teaching certifications at UA. The program, funded by a $1.95 million grant, will provide tuition assistance, enhanced teacher training, and robust salary supplements for 15 students beginning in the fall.

DR. CHRISTINA STAUDHAMMER, a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, received more than $750,000 from the National Science Foundation to study the future of forests under a changing environment. According to the abstract for the grant, Staudhammer will use mapping and computer modeling approaches to evaluate national and regional forest management policies, environmental disturbances, and resulting ecological, social, and economic consequences.
Drs. Diana Dolliver and Adam Ghazi-Tehrani are assistant professors in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Dolliver is also the academic director of the Joint Electronic Crimes Task Force, which assists local and national law enforcement in processing digital evidence for cybercrime prosecutions.

1. **Use a unique password for every site you log in to.** When creating a password, make sure it has at least 12 characters with no references to pet names, kids' names, birthdays, or anniversaries.

   “It’s easy for people to click ‘save my password’ on browsers like Google Chrome, so that they never have to log in again, but criminals routinely steal information from Yahoo mail and Google mail. If you use the same password for everything, criminals only have to find out your password on one of those sites, and then they pretty much have access to all of your information.”

   —Diana Dolliver

2. **To keep track of your passwords, try using a password manager like LastPass 4.0 or Dashlane 4.** Many smartphones also have built-in password managers that use your thumbprint as the master password.

   “Password managers use random numbers and letters to generate unique passwords for every website you use. Then you just create one master password that will allow you to access all your others. The password for my manager is 26 characters long, and I memorized it.”

   —Adam Ghazi-Tehrani

3. **Don’t use public wifi without a virtual private network, or VPN, or connecting through a secured HTTPS.**

   “If you’re at a Starbucks, McDonald’s, or an airport, you should never log in to your bank account through their public wifi. It’s better to use your cell network instead. People are out there waiting to steal information, and these public areas are a hot-bed for theft.”

   —Adam Ghazi-Tehrani
If you receive a call from a bank, retirement service, or other organization that claims to be verifying your personal information, get the name of the person you’re talking to, hang up, and then call them back using a number you know is associated with the company.

“You don’t know anyone on an incoming call. Unless it’s your mom, you’re probably not going to recognize their voice, so make sure you establish the communication before giving out your information. For example, once my credit card got stolen, and my bank called me asking to verify my information, but I said ‘No, I will call you. Once I have established the communication, I will give you my information.’ They respected that.”—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani

Do not give information to anyone who calls you claiming to be from the IRS or a large corporation.

“During tax season you hear about all these frauds where people wire transfer $1,000 because they’re told that they were short on their tax return. As an all-around tip, you will never get a phone call that’s legitimate from the government or a company. The IRS sends a person. They will never call you. They will send a letter, and if you ignore the letter, they will send a person.”
—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani

Use two-factor authentication whenever possible.

“For my bank account, my Apple account, and my campus email, I have a login, a password, and then they also text a code to my phone. That way, even if one of those systems is breached, unless the criminal physically has access to my phone, they still can’t get in.”
—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani
Hover over links before you click them. Suspicious links in emails can instantly infect your computer with malware or, more often, will lead you to a site that asks you to log in with your username and password. If you do, the criminals then record the information to sell or use later.

“If something in an email or online says ‘click here,’ hold your cursor over the hyperlink, and it will show the full URL. Fake links will be recognizable. Instead of bankofamerica.com, it will show up as something like endex.ru. When in doubt, don’t click on it.”

—Diana Dolliver

If your computer or device becomes infected, turn it off immediately. Then, either wipe your computer completely with a clean reinstall or restore it from a date when you know it was malware free.

“Say on the fourth of July you click a suspicious email and then you notice your computer acting weird. You can tell Windows to go back to what it looked like on July 3rd, and it will remove all the changes that have been made since then. You will lose everything that you’ve saved since that date, but it’s a whole lot better than a total wipe or reinstall.”

—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani

If you have the option between using the chip on your credit card or swiping, always use the chip.

“A lot of people are anti-chip on their credit cards because the chip takes longer than the swipe, but the chip is much more secure. That’s the point. The reason it takes longer is because it’s actually communicating with the bank. Also, be aware that Congress has passed a law that says if you swipe when using the chip is an option, the credit card companies are no longer responsible for that fraud.”

—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani
10. To add another layer of security to your purchases, try using Google Wallet, Apple Pay, or Samsung Pay.

“Google Wallet, Apple Pay, and Samsung Pay have one-time-use encryptions for each transaction, so they’re even more secure than the credit card chips. Of course, that adds the concern of whether or not you trust Samsung or Apple, but at some point you’re going to have to trust someone, and I trust Apple more than I trust the Bodega or 7-11.”

—Adam Ghazi-Tehrani

11. Get in the habit of checking your bank account transactions often, and request new credit cards from your bank a few times each year.

“Banks are getting really good at catching multi-hundred or thousand dollar frauds, but one thing savvy criminals do is steal a bunch of credit cards and then only spend $5 per card. It’s called salami slicing. Get in the habit of checking your credit card every month because it could be a $5 recurring thing. In a whole year that may only be $60, but the criminal is still making his payday, and you’re still out your $60.”

—Diana Dolliver

12. Help stop cybercrime by reporting it when it happens to you.

“The frequency of cybercrime is a huge dark figure because most people think that as long as the bank refunds their money, there’s no harm, no foul, and they don’t report it. To get a better understanding of what people are actually getting hit with, we need them to file their complaints—either on the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint (IC3) website or with their local police departments.”

—Diana Dolliver
Despite the failed crops, drought, and climate change of recent years, infants in the Andean highlands of Peru weigh more and are taller than ever.

“It’s counterintuitive,” said Dr. Kathryn Oths, a professor of anthropology who has been studying the villagers of Chugurpampa for the last 30 years. “But we think we’ve found what’s going on.”

Oths’ explanation for the apparent paradox, which will be published in the *American Journal of Human Biology*, surprisingly has little to do with nutrition. Instead, it’s a story about migration and oxygen.

According to Hannah Smith, a 2017 UA graduate who has been working with Oths on the project for the last three years, “Anthropological literature has made it clear that in high-altitude Andean populations, people are stockier, shorter individuals because of high-altitude hypoxia.”

Hypoxia is essentially a condition in which the body does not receive enough oxygen. And when the body has less oxygen, it grows at a stunted rate, especially among infants from birth to age 3.

For decades, the villagers of Chugurpama lived in the hypoxic conditions of the Andean highlands virtually without reprieve because the journey down the mountain to the coast, where oxygen levels are higher, was extremely arduous—taking a day to complete.

However, with the addition of new roads and routine bus travel, Chugurpampans can now make the journey down the mountain in roughly two hours. And with drought and climate change threatening their agricultural livelihood, many Chugurpampans travel down the mountain weekly and biweekly.

“We think that the massive growth for the children between zero and 3 years of age is due to the child’s dependence on his or her parents during that time,” Smith said. “At that age, children are still breast feeding, so they’re going up and down to the coast with their parents—thus relieving the pressure of hypoxia.”

Smith, who began working on the project as an Emerging Scholar and who will continue researching with Oths as a master’s student this fall, says that she hopes the article, for which she has been a co-author, will help anthropologists to revisit the importance of hypoxia in understanding growth development.
Though Dr. Juan Lopez-Bautista, a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, completed his graduate and doctoral degrees in biology more than 15 years ago, he is far from done with his formal education. Back in the classroom as a master’s student once more, Lopez-Bautista is now studying abstract painting in UA’s Department of Art and Art History.

“I have been painting most of my life,” Lopez-Bautista said. “In the beginning, I painted still lifes, pretty flowers, and landscapes, but more and more, as I’ve questioned why I do what I do, I’ve detached from reality and objects, and have gone to work in abstraction.”

Abstraction, Lopez-Bautista says, allows him to move beyond objects and what he sees, allowing him to interpret his paintings in a personally meaningful way. By analyzing the body of his work as a whole, he says he’s been able to learn more about himself and come to understand how he feels about things like his Mexican heritage, politics, discrimination, and adaptation.

Lopez-Bautista’s particular style of abstraction is something he calls “organic abstraction” because many of the shapes that he uses have ties to living forms—like cells and amoebas.

“I am a scientist,” Lopez-Bautista said. “Science and the work I do—especially with macroscopic algae—influences everything I do and shows up in all my work. Even if, in appearances, art and science are two completely different fields, there are an incredible amount of similarities. You cannot be a good scientist if you are not creative enough.”
Three University of Alabama faculty and a 2013 alumna recently joined forces to address the challenges of evolution education within Alabama.

According to Dr. Christopher Lynn, who initiated the project and is a UA associate professor of anthropology, Alabama’s statewide evolution education has been struggling for decades.

In fact, in 2009, the National Center for Science Education gave Alabama an F for the second time in 10 years for having poor coverage of evolutionary topics in schools and for including a disclaimer at the front of textbooks referring to evolution as just a theory.

“That was horrible; we had no state standard for evolution at the time,” Lynn said.

And though Alabama has developed some state standards for evolution education in recent years, Lynn says that the state still has a long way to go.

“Teachers who want to teach evolution often aren’t sufficiently armed to do so in a way that is not only meaningful but interesting,” Lynn said. “To help, we wanted to provide them with a resource that would go beyond the few pages that might be in a biology textbook—and we wanted to provide local perspectives that go beyond biological evolution as well.”

The product was a non-technical book on evolution, framed within the context of Alabama culture and landscape.

For two years Lynn worked with Dr. Laura Reed, a UA associate professor of biology; Dr. William Evans, a UA journalism professor; and Dr. Amanda Glaze, an assistant professor of teaching and learning at Georgia Southern University and a UA alumna, to create the 330-page volume called *Evolution Education in the American South: Culture, Politics, and Resources in Alabama*, which was published earlier this year.

The book uses 14 essays, authored by 21 contributors, to tell the history of evolution education in Alabama and showcase that evolutionary theories are not just pertinent to biology, but also history, media, medicine, astronomy, psychology, and virtually every other field.
“Evolutionary perspectives can help explain all sorts of things from social media behavior to tattooing,” Evans said. “I hope the book will encourage readers to think about the many ways they can apply evolutionary perspectives to understand their world.”

Lynn stresses that the primary goal of the book is to give students access to a well-rounded education and to prepare them for their future careers.

“Evolution is one of the cornerstones laid out by the Next Generation Science Standards,” Lynn said. “It’s not just us; this is how you prepare our young people for careers in STEM.”

Of the book’s contributors, many were previous speakers for the Alabama Lectures on Life’s Evolution, or ALLELE, series at UA. The ALLELE series is supported by more than 16 programs at The University of Alabama, and it brings lecturers from around the country to campus to discuss various aspects of evolution.

“Evolutionary Education book will be used at educational conferences, where K-12 teachers and their administrators will be looking for resources to improve STEM education, she also believes that the solution for improving evolution education is in training the next generation of teachers to be intrigued by these topics and prepared to teach them.

“Teachers who want to teach evolution often aren’t sufficiently armed to do so in a way that is not only meaningful, but interesting.

Thaddeus Reed, professor of biological sciences, and co-chair of the ALLELE series, said that there’s a whole population of students here that are amazing, and it’s a resource I’m glad we’re starting to use.”

Every academic book that is published represents hundreds of hours of work—from researching to writing and finally editing and publishing. This year alone, faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences published 24 books in 12 disciplines! To acknowledge and share their efforts, the College hosted its second exhibit of their book covers at The University of Alabama Gallery this fall.
TRUE GRIT
She recalls being burnt with irons, punched in the face by her father, and told almost daily that she was ugly, a disappointment, talentless, and stupid. In grade school, she didn’t apply herself and often received bad grades because she thought that by trying, she might prove her father right.

However, despite the disadvantages of her youth, James eventually graduated from The University of Alabama magna cum laude, working with the Blackburn Institute, Alabama REACH, and the McNair Scholars program along the way. She went on to teach fifth grade in low-income areas in Louisiana and received a national teaching award in 2014.

But her most recent achievement has been competing against 9,000 other hopefuls for a place as a Master of Philosophy student at the No. 2 university in the world—the University of Cambridge—and receiving the prestigious international Gates-Cambridge Scholarship to fund the entirety of her education and travel costs.

“IT’s the greatest honor to even make it to the interview process,” James said of the scholarship, which is awarded to only 40 of the 800 qualified U.S. applicants each year. “They are trying to create a network of leaders who are some of the best in their fields, which is why I think they have so many different levels of vetting. They are trying to find the crem de la crem—those who are specifically interested in applying their unique talents and skill sets to changing and improving the socio-political climate of the world.”

James was accepted to all of the graduate programs she applied to, but she accepted the offer at Cambridge because it is the premiere institution for studying the democratization of education.

Certainly, James’s path has been paved through her hard work, tenacity, and grit, but she is also the first to point out that without luck and a lot of support, her hard work alone would not have gotten her where she is today.

“There is a problem with propagating the idea that folks who grew up on the wrong end of the tracks, so to speak, just need to work harder,” James said. “If we tell students that they need to work harder to pay for books, schooling, and housing, then the students have to sacrifice
their academic opportunities. They have to sacrifice internships, leadership opportunities, and community service opportunities—and these are the kinds of things that make them incredibly competitive for scholarships, jobs, and graduate school.

“It’s not just about hard work; it’s about communities supporting students throughout their education.”

When James came to campus in 2008, she was determined to leave her life of abuse, foster care, and disadvantage behind her. She felt the need to prove herself—to prove that she deserved the opportunities of a university education, and she didn’t want to be branded for her past; she wanted to be seen for her intelligence and her talents.

But for at-risk youth like James, determination is rarely enough to overcome the cards they are dealt in childhood. James wanted to study, but she didn’t have money for books. She wanted to learn, but she didn’t have money for food. She wanted to thrive, but she didn’t even have a place to live.

“My friends were allowing me to eat off their meal plans—and then even that fell through,” James recalled. “It was an amazingly stressful environment for me to be in school, and I remember thinking after that first semester, ‘This is not going to work for me. Perhaps college is just not for me. Perhaps this isn’t my lot in life.’

In her first semester, James failed every course she’d signed up for as a result of her emotional and physical duress. Still, she wasn’t ready to give in. As a last-ditch effort to avoid joining the 96 percent of foster youth who don’t graduate from college, James walked into Clark Hall to meet with then-associate dean of student affairs Dr. Ann Webb.

“I remember Ann Webb coming out, and she was busy at that point, but she made the time to speak to me,” James recalled. “She very simply said to me, ‘What’s going on? Tell me about your semester,’ and I broke down crying.”

Through her tears, James explained the gravity of her circumstance and tried to make it absolutely clear that her grades were not a reflection of her intelligence or her investment.

“I knew and still know nothing whatsoever about her family circumstances,” Webb recalled of the conversation. “I remember having to really probe her as to whether or not she ate breakfast that morning—and whether or not she had had anything to eat the day before. But I did sense that this was a very, very bright young woman who was pretty much going hungry because she didn’t have people to turn to.”

Using discretionary funds and appropriate scholarships at her disposal, Webb immediately bought James a meal card and then helped to purchase her books, secure her housing, and erase the failing grades from her academic record so that she could repeat the semester with a clean slate.

“When I walked out of that office, I felt as though I had been given an opportunity to participate in an education system that was not a part of my birthright,” James said. “It was
that powerful for me. It was absolutely earth shattering."

And it wasn’t a one-time intervention on James’s behalf either.

“Dr. Webb was able to recognize, after resolving the immediate emergency, that my situation needed to change in order to keep me from going through this every semester,” James said. “She found donors who would show up for me every semester—and they did—every single semester until I graduated.”

Over her four years at The University of Alabama, James received eight scholarships, awarding her more than $11,000.

“All of the things that I was able to do—working with the mayor on diversity day, working on Alabama REACH, doing research as a McNair Scholar, and working with the Blackburn Institute—would not have been possible had someone just said to me ‘You need two jobs.’

“Dr. Webb looked at me and she said, ‘I want you to bring your best self. How can I support that?’”

The help James received, not only from Webb but also multiple faculty mentors, became part of the impetus for her participation in Alabama REACH, a UA program that helps foster youth, wards of the state, homeless youth, and others receive the resources and support they need to succeed while in school.

“I didn’t want another student to go through what I had to go through to get help,” James said. “I didn’t want them to feel the shame that I felt when I came with my arms open asking, and I knew that the help couldn’t be done in one-off silos. It needed to be built into the system—catching students before they drop out.”

In the early years of the REACH program, James served as a student voice—helping the founding leaders to understand what being a foster student is really like. She also helped to organize activities for foster youth and tried to help build their on-campus community. In the process, James said that she realized how important it was to speak about her past and be a voice for the upcoming generation of at-risk youth.

“Before REACH, I had been so focused on redeeming myself and showing people that I deserved to be at UA—because I was a leader and an intellectual—that I actually separated myself from my own narrative,” James said. “But I came to understand that if folks like me went to school and became successful but weren’t willing to talk about their gritty narratives, then they couldn’t build a system that would actually help other students to make it through school.”

After she graduated with a degree in New College—in the top 10 percent of her class—James moved to Louisiana to teach fifth graders in low-income areas where educational opportunities are often limited.

Her focus there was to give the students the opportunity and resources to critically evaluate their world—as they might in a top-tier school elsewhere in the country. In part, James achieved this by helping
her students to see themselves as leaders, whose life circumstances, though challenging and hard, had given them unique characteristics like grit that could propel them to success.

“One popular misconception about at-risk youth is that their life of hardship gives them nothing—and only depletes their spirit,” James said. “That is entirely untrue.

“In fact, a number of studies have shown that one of the most important characteristics for any leader in any industry is grit—and I think that the greatest way to develop grit is to have gone through some strife. The reality is, kids who live through the kinds of circumstances I lived through are going to be gritty people. They’re going to show up. They’re going to fight. They’re going to get done what they need to get done.”

The other part of James’s success was in situating each academic subject within the context of her students’ lives. Instead of just teaching percentages, she had her students analyze the ways that news outlets present incarceration rates. Instead of just reading books, she related the stories to things like domestic violence and women’s rights.

“I built my units to address things that get at the core of who my students are,” James said. “It stirs up conversations they would likely never have in a classroom otherwise.”

For her work with her students, James received the Sue Lehmann Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2014, and soon afterward she realized that she wanted to do more.

“I recognized that when my students would go to a new teacher the next year, they likely would not have a curriculum that would allow them to explore their world,” James said. “They would return to thinking of math only in terms of numbers and reading only in terms of facts. I wanted give them this transformational education throughout their entire educational experience because that’s what was going to change their lives.”

As a result, James shifted from teaching youth to teaching teachers. She worked in teacher development for a year and a half—helping two of her students receive nominations for their own national teaching awards—and then realized that she still had more to learn.

“It was time for me to be developed, so I began looking for programs around the world that were redefining education,” James said. “The top one was Cambridge.”

In preparation for her studies at Cambridge, James spent her summer in Chicago working as a non-profit GED instructor so that she could see the ways that education, or the lack thereof, impacts people’s lives. She also participated in and spoke at the Ten for Ten Kids Conference, which chose 100 leaders from around the United States to serve as a think tank for redesigning child welfare.

“Most of the folks who are improving our systems in the United States have already come in with an answer—even when research and ground-level interactions prove otherwise,” James said. “But I am trying to be as open as I can. I’m immersing myself in as much information as I can so that I will ask the right questions, do the right research, and come to the right conclusions about where our education system needs to go.

“I’m no longer just a first-generation college student,” James added. “I am well beyond that at this point—heading off to one of the most prestigious schools in the world with one of the most prestigious scholarships in the world—and that would not have happened without the support of people like Dr. Webb, Dr. Hawk, Dr. Black, Dr. Roach, Karen Baynes-Dunning, and other UA faculty.”
COPING POWER
Being pushed against a locker, tripped in the hallway, or blamed by a teacher for something you didn't do would be enough to make anyone angry.

But according to Dr. John Lochman’s Coping Power program, feeling anger isn’t necessarily the problem—acting out because of anger is.

“In the past, psychology clinicians often saw aggressive conduct problems as willfulness or defiance,” said Dr. Nicole Powell, an associate research scientist in the Department of Psychology who does research with the Coping Power program. “But we are starting to recognize that these behaviors are actually skills deficits.

“The children we work with don’t necessarily want to be getting into fights; they just don’t always have the skills to cope with their everyday problems.”

The Coping Power program, which teaches skills like goal setting, problem solving, and perspective taking to children, has become a national and international standard for helping children and youth reduce their aggressive behaviors—including everything from hitting and yelling to rule breaking and lying.

Even in places like Pakistan, where violence has become an increasingly serious social problem, adaptations of the Coping Power program have been shown to reduce aggression among 9- to 11-year-old boys.
Initially, the program was conceived in the late 1970s when Lochman, a professor and Doddridge Saxon Chair in Clinical Psychology at The University of Alabama, was a new psychologist working for the Children and Youth Project, a federally funded program that provided comprehensive pediatric health care clinics in low-income areas of west Dallas.

At the Texas clinics, Lochman received such high numbers of referrals for children who struggled with aggression and acting out that he decided to create an intervention group with his friend and colleague Dr. Mike Nelson. At the time, they focused their intervention on problem solving and controlling emotions, but over the next 25 years, the program grew into a consistent and powerful research tool for helping kids and parents of various backgrounds, cultures, nationalities, and ages.

Within the last four years, UA’s Center for the Prevention of Youth Behavior Problems has received more than $2.2 million to expand the Coping Power program, and currently more than 10 countries across the globe are using adaptations of the Coping Power program and finding success.

One of the most recent adaptations for Coping Power is a joint project between UA and Dr. Catherine Bradshaw at the University of Virginia. Using a grant from the Institute of Education Science, Lochman, Bradshaw, and their team are conducting tests to see how well a revised version of Coping Power will work in middle schools.

“While there are a growing number of evidence-based programs that have been effective for elementary-school-aged children who have aggression or conduct behavior problems, there have been relatively few evidence-based programs that have been developed for the middle-school-aged period,” Lochman said. “There are a variety of reasons for this, but the prominent one is that these children are going through puberty, so there are a lot of changes happening in terms of their hormones and how they regulate or don’t regulate their behavior.”
According to Lochman, adolescents’ bodies change faster than their prefrontal cortices, which means they are less able to think through and control their impulsive behaviors.

In the abbreviated Coping Power program for middle school students, which is only 25 sessions, participants not only learn skills that will help them to regulate their impulses, but they also get time to practice.

For instance, during the fifth and sixth weeks of the program, participants learn three tools to use when they begin to feel angry: they can breathe deeply and try to relax; they can try to distract themselves; and they can silently repeat coping statements to themselves like “I’m not going to let this get to me,” “I don’t need to prove myself to anyone,” or “Losing my temper means trouble for me.”

To practice, the students take turns working on a single tool while being provoked by their classmates. For example, when practicing distraction techniques, one student will be given 30 seconds to stack as many dominoes on top of one another as possible using only one hand. Meanwhile, the rest of the students will tease the participant with comments like “Your hair is messy!” or “Your breath stinks.” Through the activity, the students are able to recognize and discuss how focusing on a task and not making eye contact can prevent them from losing their temper.

The newest iteration of the Coping Power program also includes six sessions specifically geared toward social relationships. These sessions help the participants to repair damaged relationships by seeking forgiveness, make new friends in less deviant peer groups, and deal with the challenges of cyberbullying and sexting.

“The kids resonate best with the things that are currently relevant to them,” said Shannon Jones, one of UA’s Coping Power group leaders. “We teach problem solving and thinking before you act, and with these kids, we created a session on social media to get them to stop and think before they send out a tweet or before they put something on Facebook.

“One of my favorite things is when a kid comes in and tells you that he saw another kid making a bad choice and then he went over and explained to the kid how to ‘use perspective’ or ‘think about the consequences of what you’re doing,’” Jones said. “It’s really cool when they tell you that they’re trying to teach other people what they themselves are learning.”

Though the findings about the middle school adaptation are preliminary, Lochman says that already, the intervention has helped adolescents to reduce aggression, conduct problems, and hyperactivity.

“Our findings suggest that children who have participated in the program are getting better at impulse control and inhibitory control,” Lochman said. “They also have higher levels of functional communication—meaning the ability to describe their feelings, to perceive what other people feel, and to make decisions.”

The program has been implemented over the past three years, using annual cohorts of 240 children at 40 schools split between Baltimore and Tuscaloosa. Half of the students participate in the intervention, and the other half are in a control group.

“Getting reports about kids who walk away or who try to discuss something with a peer instead of having things escalate is really rewarding—and the kids feel it too,” Powell said. “They come back and brag on themselves. These kinds of experiences are really self-reinforcing.”

For his work with Coping Power and Fast Track, another prevention program, Lochman received two awards from the Society of Prevention Research this year. The first was a SPR Fellow Award for a distinguished record of contributions in the field of prevention research, and the second was the 2017 Service to SPR Award for the professional development of early career prevention researchers.
UA alumnus Dr. George Lundberg is one of the founding fathers of internet medicine. In the early ‘90s, when the world wide web began to boom across the globe, Lundberg was primed and ready to put healthcare in the hands of everyday patients.
From the time he was six years old, UA alumnus George Lundberg knew he wanted to be a doctor. "I was a sickly child," Lundberg recalled of his upbringing in Silverhill, Alabama. "I had ordinary childhood illnesses—a lot of sore throats and a lot of bronchitis—and there was a kindly old family doctor, a general practitioner in our part of Alabama who used to do house calls. He was very kind, and I used to feel better after his visits, so I thought 'maybe one day I'd like to be like that.' It was a career path for me almost from the beginning."

Lundberg is now 84 years old and has served full-time in the medical profession for roughly 60 years. Of the many things he’s accomplished he says the highest points of his career include working as the editor in chief of the Journal of the American Medical Association for 17 years as well as being elected to the National Academy of Medicine.

"But the highest of the high points is continuing to work and practice after all these years," Lundberg said. "That's the highest point by far—my staying power."

Currently Lundberg lives in California and has six part-time jobs to his name. Primarily, he works as the chief medical officer and editor in chief of CollabRx, a company that matches the newest medical information about cancer with the best possible treatments, drugs, and clinical trials currently available. He is also an executive adviser for Cureus, the only online medical journal that provides peer review before and after publication; he is a consulting professor of pathology and health research and policy at Stanford; he is the president and chair of the Lundberg Institute; he is a member of the Cancer Commons Medical Advisory Board; he is the editor in chief of the Curious Dr. George Blog; and, as the editor at large, he writes a bimonthly column for Medscape.

"I'm motivated by what's interesting," Lundberg said. "I like to be able to wake up every day—and be alive number one—but also have something interesting to do with the good fortune that it might even be important for someone else to learn from."

Despite Lundberg's overwhelmingly successful career, however, getting into medical school was not an easy feat. Lundberg was only 15 when he graduated from Robertsdale High School in Baldwin County, and wanting to protect and continue to nurture him until he was a bit older, his parents sent him to a private junior college in Chicago—now known as North Park University.

"It was a private school, so it was
expensive,” Lundberg recalls of his time in the city. “And my parents had very little money because my father was a private music teacher and my mother was an elementary school teacher. Pay for folks like that in the 1940s in Alabama was extremely low, so we pretty much ran out of money after those two years.”

Lundberg returned home and applied to The University of Alabama, where he was accepted and spent the next two years earning his chemistry degree, playing the clarinet in the Million Dollar Band, and cheering on the football program he’d loved since grammar school.

In his second year at UA, he preemptively applied to medical school, as was customary in the early ‘50s, but he was rejected by each of the schools to which he applied both in 1951 and again in 1952. Having finished his bachelor’s degree and still unable to pursue his career as a doctor, Lundberg returned to UA to work on a graduate degree in biochemistry.

Luckily, in just a few months, the Medical College of Alabama in Birmingham reached out to Lundberg for an interview and he was finally accepted into medical school. He dropped out of UA so that he could save up the necessary funds, and fortuitously received a job offer at the newly built Druid City Hospital on University Boulevard as a clinical chemist, working alongside Dr. James Simon Peter Beck, the hospital’s pathologist.

“My interest in pathology began at Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa,” Lundberg said. “Beck befriended me and started to teach me about pathology when I was a med tech. He invited me to come and watch an autopsy, which I did many times, and I learned to love the field. “In 1953, the most compelling thing about pathology was the autopsy, which served then and continues to serve now, as the ultimate quality control check on the practice of medicine. When the doctors would come to the autopsy room, they could find out what was really going on when the patient died—far beyond what the doctor thought was happening—and I thought this was an amazingly important thing.”

During his fourth year of medical school, Lundberg voluntarily enlisted in the Army and spent the next 11 years training in and then practicing pathology as a second lieutenant and then lieutenant colonel.

“Roughly one quarter of my professional life since I graduated medical school has been in government service; roughly one quarter has been in full-time academia, one quarter has been in non-profit association work; and one quarter has been in for-profit entrepreneurial work,” Lundberg said. “I didn’t like the Vietnam War at all, and
though the Army treated me very well, I had three little kids, and they kept making me move around, so I chose to leave the Army and took a job at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles in 1967.

For 20 years, Lundberg practiced pathology in hospitals, in academia, and in the military; he became a professor and chair at the University of California—Davis; but then, in 1982, he received an offer that propelled him in a new direction—one that would lead him to becoming an online medical pioneer.

“As an academic, I had to write and publish papers or I couldn’t get appointed and promoted. I also got invited to join some editorial boards of journals, including the Journal of the American Medical Association."

Lundberg sat on JAMA’s editorial board starting in 1974 and even started his own column for the journal. By 1981, however, the American Medical Association wanted a new editor in chief, and Lundberg was their prime target.

Executives of the AMA, including James Sammons, met with Lundberg in LA for an interview and talked to him about the journal’s international initiatives in Japan and France. They told him he wouldn’t just be overseeing one journal; he would have the capacity to oversee dozens of medical journals the world over.

“Sammons was able to convince me that if I took the job as the editor of JAMA, I could make it the most important job in medical education in the world,” Lundberg said. “To me this was a medical missionary activity—all this international publishing. I loved it because it gave us the opportunity to educate so many doctors from all over the world.”

By the time Lundberg left JAMA in 1999, he’d helped to run and create 21 international editions in 13 languages—covering everywhere from Moscow to Buenos Aires.

He also created the concept of “theme issues” for the journal, in which the editorial team selected relevant papers based on topics that were of particular interest to his readers. Such issues covered topics like alternative medicine, Hispanic or African American health, guns, violence, alcohol, and tobacco.

“I think we published eight or nine..."
tobacco-themed issues over the years, and those publications are credited with being central to the movement of stopping tobacco smoking for most of America,” Lundberg said. “That was hugely important.” By and large Lundberg was interested in getting medical information into the hands of everyday people—in addition to their doctors. The mission statement of JAMA during his tenure was “to promote the science and art of medicine and the betterment of the public health.”

As part of that initiative, Lundberg with the public media so that the reporters for radio, television, newspaper, and magazines would amplify what we published in JAMA and interpret it in English that was easier to be understood for a person who hadn’t been to medical school.” By the time the internet had made a public impression in the early 1990s, the groundwork for Lundberg and JAMA to fully democratize medical information was already underway, and in 1995 JAMA launched its first website. “We put JAMA articles up, beginning much junk there.’ It’s the same thing. It’s just easier to get at the junk, and it’s easier to get at the best stuff.”

Lundberg’s advice for getting the most out of what internet medicine has to offer is finding brand-name sites whose reputation you trust. He recommends Medscape Reference for those willing to tackle a few hard words or WebMD and Everyday Health for those seeking simpler language. “You can go to Google, Yahoo, or Bing and type in your questions—and you’ll get a lot of good information. It may created a strong relationship with the national media. At the time, the public received their medical education largely through health columns and news reports.

“We wanted to educate the public about its health before the internet by working with the public media,” Lundberg said of the days before the internet. “We cultivated relationships with the Times, the Post, the Tribune, and the Wall Street Journal as well as ABC, CBS, and CNN. We also created courses to teach medical reporters how to write better articles, and we ran two-day science reporters conferences with Johns Hopkins, Duke, and UCLA to teach medical reporters about how to write articles better.

“We would cultivate a relationship in 1995 and made them free of charge to the world—inviting open access conceptually,” Lundberg said. “The internet changed the patient-physician relationship by giving patients the opportunity to take charge of their health and to do so as informed consumers.” Of course, there was resistance to the legitimacy of information found on the internet back in 1995, as there is today, but Lundberg says that the difference between hard copies and electronic versions is simply a matter of quantity. “When I started teaching about internet medicine back in 1997, it was often said by critics, ‘I would never trust anything I read on the internet. There’s so much junk there,’ and my answer always was, ‘I would never trust anything I read on paper. There is so even be exactly what you want, but the struggle with search engines is that you might not be able to tailor the question right. That’s usually the hardest thing for the patient—figuring out how to ask the question in a way that the answer that comes back from the vast, vast world of information is actually helpful.” Following Lundberg’s 17 year stint at JAMA, he went on to work at Medscape and then Medpage Today. He is invested in cutting-edge medicine and getting access for that medical information to doctors as well as everyday people, which is why he continues to work six jobs well into his mid-80s.

“I’m online the majority of most days,” Lundberg said. “Because the internet is what it is, I work wherever I am.”

The internet changed the patient-physician relationship by giving patients the opportunity to take charge of their health.
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A CRIMSON HARP

UA alumna Gloria Moody continues her longstanding support of UA’s School of Music with a gift of a different color—a crimson-colored harp. Moody began her career as a pianist but became fascinated with the harp as a UA student. Read more at www.as.ua.edu/alumni/harp.

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A LOVE OF ART AND SCIENCE

Alumnus Bill Jackson didn’t just study physics—he also played French horn in the Million Dollar Band. He and his wife, Barbara, established a scholarship to encourage students studying science to also play in the Million Dollar Band. Read more at www.as.ua.edu/alumni/jackson.
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Class Notes

1940s

Camille Maxwell Elebash (Class of ‘46/’58, BA/MA, journalism) was inducted to UA’s College of Communication Hall of Fame in 2015.

Ellis Keith Williams (Class of ‘49, radio) retired from WBRC-TV 6 in 1994 after more than 45 years in the business. He remembers when TV first went on the air in 1949.

1950s

Dr. Robert L. Hayes (Class of ’51/’60, BS/MD, biology/chemistry) served in the Korean War from 1947 to 1951. After receiving two degrees, he served as a quantitative analysis lab instructor and then practiced medicine in Brewton, Alabama, for 36 years.

C.D. (Chris) Wells Jr. (Class of ’53, broadcast film communication) served in World War II in the U.S. Navy in the Adriatic Pacific Campaign. After graduating from UA, he worked in radio broadcasting for four years, and then went to Montevallo University to earn a Master of Education degree. For 30 years, he taught junior and senior English and speech in public education.

Margaret Z. Searcy (Class of ’54, MA, anthropology) was the first student to receive a master’s degree in anthropology from The University of Alabama. Her thesis was “Tuscaloosa County Hunting.” In 1963, Searcy joined UA’s faculty and was a founding member of the Department of Anthropology when it separated from the sociology department in 1967. Her work largely revolved around North American Indians. In 1988, she retired and became an emeritus faculty member. During her life, she was a member of the American Anthropological Association, the Guild of Professional Writers for Children, the Alabama Academy of Science, and the Alabama Archaeological Society. Searcy passed away May 27, 2017.

1960s

Mary Duncan Finch (Class of ’62, music) taught music in Atlanta Public Schools and then Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools after graduation. She became an early childhood educator in 1976 and currently works at a preschool in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Lynn Hairston Allen (Class of ’65, political science) is the president of the Waco McLennan County Retired Teachers Association, the vice president of the Brazos Forum, the vice president of Blue Star Mothers Heart of Texas Chapter, a docent for the Historic Waco Foundation and McCulloch House Board, a member of Alpha Delta Kappa, and the founder and past president of the Waco Phi Mu alumnae chapter.

Bennett Wayne Dean (Class of ’65/’66, biology/psychology) was inducted into the Murphy High School Hall of Fame April 23, 2017 for his research on and involvement with Mobile, Alabama’s Mardi Gras.

Beverly Richmond Francis (Class of ’65, sociology), the executive director of the Eastside Mental Health Center in Birmingham, was honored by the center’s board of directors, who renamed the building The Francis Eastside Mental Health Center upon her retirement. Francis served as the clinical director for 14 years and as the executive director for 27 years.
She also served as past president of the Alabama Council of Community Mental Health Boards.

**Dr. E. Gaylon McColough** (Class of ’65/’69, BS/MD, biology), a facial plastic surgeon in Gulf Shores, was inducted to the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame on May 13, 2017 as a Distinguished Alabama Sportsman, an award established in 1987 to recognize leadership and ingenuity in the world of sport.

**Stephen Flanagan Jackson** (Class of ’66/’67 BA/MA, history/journalism) is the owner and publisher of Pass Christian Gazebo Gazette. Prior to retirement, Jackson worked at Stillman College and owned the magazines Crimson and Panama City Living.

### 1970s

**John Ludwig** (Class of ’70/’71, BA/MA, history) retired after 41 years as a commander in the U.S. Navy.

**Manning Warren** (Class of ’70, political science) is the Harter Chair of Corporate Law at the Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville and was recently honored as a life member of the American Law Institute. He was also elected a fellow of the European Law Institute.

**Clarence Douglas Self Jr.** (Class of ’70, history) retired in 2014 after working as a senior vice president at National Linen and Wells Fargo Armored Services. He was also on the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games.

**Mary Linda Wimberley** (Class of ’71, journalism) retired after more than 42 years as a news and feature writer on the communications staff at Samford University. She was also elected president of Alabama Media Professionals and is active in the Homewood Rotary Club.

**Kurt J. Volker** (Class of ’72, journalism) is a freelance writer and photographer for more than 10 newspapers and magazines. Formerly he also worked as the executive director of the Broward County League of Cities and as a natural resources specialist at Broward County Parks and Recreation among others.

**Janice Hathaway** (Class of ’73/’76, BFA/MFA, art) had an exhibition of her surrealist collage at The Eugenio Granell Fundación in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The Eugenio Granell Fundación, the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to the surrealist movement, holds 600 of Granell’s paintings along with works by Francis Picabia, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, and André Breton and now two of Janice Hathaway’s photo-collages. A bilingual English and Spanish book was produced for the exhibition that includes 52 of her photo-collages in color and black-and-white photographs from her early years as part of the Raudelunas group at The University of Alabama.

**Steven F. Casey** (Class of ’75, biology) is a senior partner of Jones Walker LLP and was appointed by the Alabama Supreme Court to serve on the Alabama Pattern Jury Civil Committee.

**Mark Richard McCulloh** (Class of ’77, BA, German) returned to Alabama after teaching 33 years at Davidson College in North Carolina.

**Ken Headley** (Class of ’78, economics) has been a self-employed financial advisor for 15 years. He has one daughter, one son, and one granddaughter.

### 1980s

**Tim Gillespie** (Class of ’80, biology) has been a pediatrician with the Memphis Children’s Clinic since 1988. Earlier this year, he was named a Castle Connolly Top Doctor.

**Cynthia Trantham Markusewski** (Class of ’80/’86/’09, BA/MA/MLIS, psychology/education rehabilitation counseling) and her husband John (CCHS family practice resident, ’83) were appointed to the Board of Visitors of the UA College of Community Health Sciences.

**F. Shelton Waldrep Jr.** (Class of ’82/’87, BA/MFA, English/creative writing) published Future Nostalgia: Performing David Bowie with Bloomsbury. The book was favorably reviewed in the Los Angeles Review of Books.

### 1990s

**Dr. Richard David Parker** (Class of ’92/’95/’01, BA/MPA/PhD, political science/public administration/mass communication) was recently awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his work as the United States Public Affairs lead during Exercise Sea Breeze 2016, a multinational military exercise set in Ukraine and the Black Sea, co-hosted by the United States and Ukraine involving 17 nations from NATO countries and the Black Sea region. Dr. Parker was responsible for advising exercise leadership on media-related matters and organizing a media production team that covered events during the exercise for the U.S. Department of Defense. He also was at sea aboard the USNS Whidbey Island for several days with a reporter from NATO Television and provided critical public affairs guidance to the officers and crew of the vessel. He joined the Navy Reserve in 2013 as a Public Affairs Officer and currently serves with the Navy Reserve Unit assigned to the Navy Office of Information, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval Forces Africa and U.S. Sixth Fleet.

**Kelli Dunscombe Staggs** (Class of ’93, art history) is a business analyst with Jacobs Technology, supporting the business management division at U.S. Army Materiel Command in Huntsville,
Alabama. She has been married to Greg Staggs for 21 years.

David W. Blass (Class of ’94, international relations) has worked as general counsel for the Investment Company Institute since 2014. He is married to Dalia Osman Blass, and together they have three children.

Peter B. Gushue (Class of ’97, PhD, history) is the director of Mother Kevin’s Senior Care in Williamsburg, Virginia, and is in the process of opening a daycare facility for seniors with dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Patricia Gaitely (Class of ’97, MA, American studies) is an associate professor at Middle Tennessee State University. She published Robicheaux’s Roots: Culture and Tradition in James Lee Burke’s Dane Robicheaux Novels with Louisiana State University Press.

Agatha-Marie Arie Roth Kaller (Class of ’99, biology and marine sciences) received her PhD from Louisiana State University in oceanography and coastal sciences. She currently supervises several biologists for the federal government.

2000s

Amy Vassar (Class of ’00, criminal justice) began her career as a mental health specialist at the Peninsula Psychiatric Hospital. After receiving her degree in special education at Shenandoah University in 2011, she became a multiple disabilities teacher at the Fairfax County Middle School in Herndon, Virginia, where she currently works.

Dr. Stephen McNair (Class of ’04, history) was recently named to the Advisory Board of UA’s Blackburn Institute and to the Board of Advisors of UA’s Division of Community Affairs.

Dr. Jackie Chavez (Class of ’05/’06, BS/MS, psychology/criminal justice) received her PhD from Mississippi State University in 2015 and is now an assistant professor of criminal justice at Troy University. She is also the team advisor for Troy University’s Lambda Alpha Epsilon pistol team. Chavez was married to Josh McNett December 10, 2016 in Savannah, Georgia.

John H. Holliday (Class of ’05, interdisciplinary studies) retired at age 67. During his career, he served in the U.S. Navy for four years, including two deployments to Vietnam; he was a sales engineer; and then he became a process control systems engineer in the pulp and paper industry for 36 years, working for what is now known as Georgia-Pacific LLC.

Wilson Thomas Adkins Karr (Class of ’05, MFA, theatre management) recently became the director of theatre management at Wayne State University’s Maggie Allesee Department of Theatre and Dance.

2010s

Steven E. Driskell (Class of ’11, geography) is a geographical information systems analyst at Alagasco, the largest natural gas distributor in Alabama.

Jennifer Petenbrink Chalk (Class of ’12, dance/kinesiology) is the assistant director of the Atlanta Jazz Theatre. She was married to Joshua Chalk in 2013, and they had their first child in January.

Jordan Carpenter (Class of ’13, environmental science) graduated from Vermont Law School in 2016, after which he moved to Chattanooga and passed the Tennessee Bar Exam. He is currently an associate at Carr Allison’s Chattanooga office and is married to Emily Carpenter.

Rosemary Alayna Pescod (Class of ’13, foreign languages and literature) is an airman in the U.S. Air Force stationed at the Osan Air Base in South Korea.

Dyan Demyan Wurm (Class of ’13, psychology) was married to David “Taylor” Wurm (Class of ’11, marketing) on May 16, 2015.

Ashley Smith Taylor (Class of ’14, dance) dances professionally for the Ballet Theatre of Maryland. Over the summer, she organized a collaborative community arts concert, and she has been happily married to Jesse Taylor for a year.

Christian Palmer (Class of ’15, chemistry) moved to Nashville, where he is working on his Ph.D. in chemical engineering.

Justin Popielarski (Class of ’15, geology) is a chemist for a subsidiary of the Sunoco Oil Company.

Alejandro B. Staehle (Class of ’16, political science/criminal justice) started work with Vanguard Financial Investments in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Luke White (Class of ’16, theatre) is a second-year medical student at the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Alumni, we want to hear from you!

Please send information about new jobs, promotions, retirements, honors, achievements, and major life events for the Class Notes section. Mail entries to The University of Alabama, College Relations, Box 870268, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487 or email entries to stephanie.kirkland@ua.edu.
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