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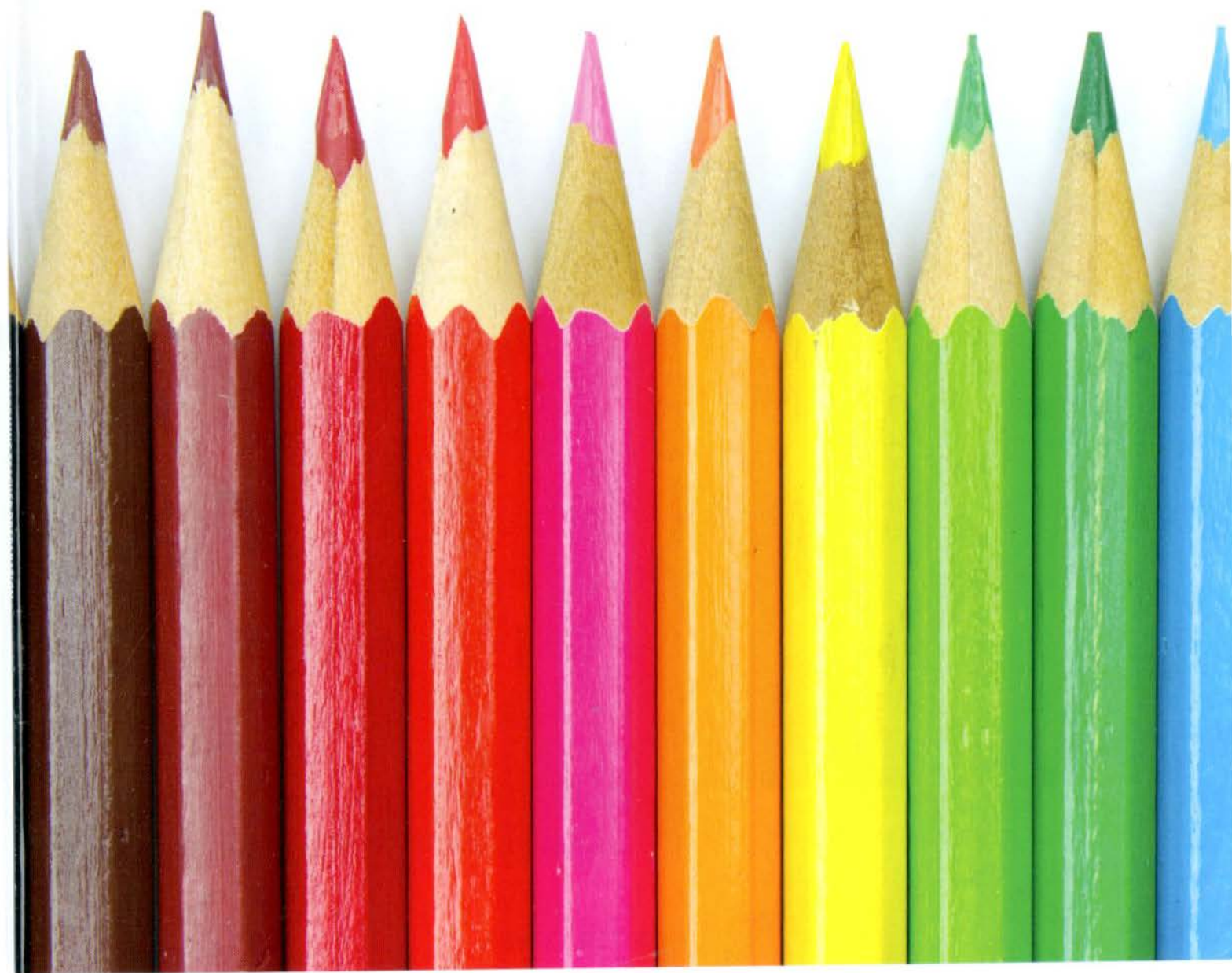
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WKU[®] SPIRIT

MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY



Transforming Teacher Preparation

25 YEARS AFTER STATE EDUCATION REFORM

WKU SPIRIT

Magazine for Alumni & Friends of Western Kentucky University

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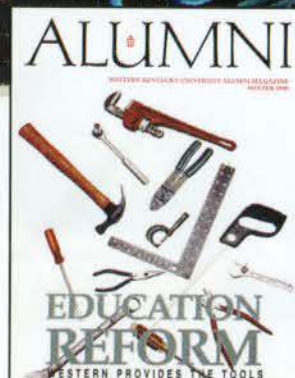
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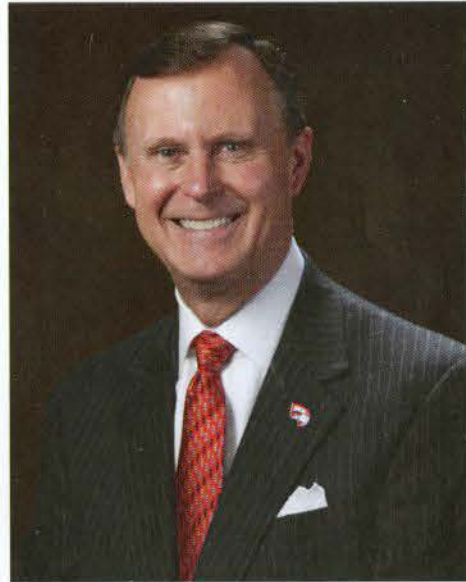
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ON THE COVER

Twenty-five years ago, in the Winter 1990 issue of ALUMNI, we highlighted Kentucky's landmark education reform act. In this issue of WKU SPIRIT, we explore how WKU has maintained its tradition of excellence and transformed the way it prepares teachers for the classroom.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

On May 6 we officially announced the expansion of the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science to accommodate an additional 80 students thanks to a lead gift from Mr. Bill Gatton and a recurring commitment from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The expansion will add two new residential wings on both ends of Florence Schneider Hall, which will be named for Mr. Gatton's parents, Edith Martin Gatton and Harry W. Gatton Sr. Earlier this year, Gov. Steve Beshear recommended, and the Kentucky General Assembly approved, an additional \$2 million annual appropriation for the Academy. The expansion will bring the total number of Kentucky students attending the Gatton Academy at WKU from 120 to 200 by 2017.

The Gatton Academy was envisioned as an academic quality initiative for WKU and an economic development strategy for Kentucky to combat the so-called "brain drain" of our state's

brightest and most talented young scholars. The Academy builds on a strength that is uniquely WKU—The Center for Gifted Studies, which has been identifying and serving the needs of gifted children and their families for more than 30 years. Since 2007, students from 114 of Kentucky's 120 counties have been accepted into the Academy.

The Gatton Academy is the best example of how a public-private partnership can work to benefit Kentucky. In addition to his lead gift for this expansion, Mr. Gatton created an endowment for the Academy in 2006. Support has also been received from a number of other donors, and the state is also investing \$4.8 million annually beginning this July. You can read more about these gifts on pages 12-13. Thanks to both public and private support, Kentucky's most gifted students can be challenged academically and nurtured intellectually, engage in meaningful research, compete for some of the nation's most prestigious academic awards and scholarships, and pursue the highest quality education to prepare for the careers of their dreams.

I'm so proud of the Gatton Academy students and the WKU faculty who teach and mentor them along with the Academy staff. And I am most grateful to Mr. Gatton and the many others who have supported the Academy through the years and to Gov. Beshear and the Kentucky General Assembly for making it possible. All have played an important role in making the Gatton Academy the Nation's #1 Public High School for three straight years—what a wonderful legacy they have left for Kentucky!

Go Tops!

Gary A. Russell

WKU SPIRIT

Magazine for Alumni & Friends of Western Kentucky University

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EDITORIAL

Letters and story ideas for *WKU SPIRIT* are welcomed and encouraged. Submission does not guarantee publication, and those letters that are published may be edited for style and length. Please include the writer's signature, the year of graduation if an alumnus, a daytime phone number and a return address. Letters may be sent by fax to 270-745-5017, e-mail to alumni@wku.edu or mail to WKU Alumni Association, *WKU SPIRIT* Editor, 292 Alumni Ave., Suite 302F, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

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before & after



College Bulletins

Throughout WKU's history, the University's course offerings, as well as course requirements for majors and minors, have been described through undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Just as the registration process has changed from long lines and tables in E.A. Diddle Arena to an almost-instant process online, the course catalogs have also evolved. Students now access the full copy online at <https://www.wku.edu/undergraduatecatalog/>.

CAMPUS NEWS

FACULTY & STAFF APPOINTMENTS



Archambault named Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations

Marc Archambault, a veteran higher education administrator and advancement officer, has been named WKU's Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations and President of the WKU Foundation.

Archambault, currently Vice President of Development and Alumni at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, and CEO of the UVU Foundation, will join WKU on Aug. 17.

"We welcome Marc to the Hilltopper Family," WKU President Gary Ransdell said. "We are fortunate to bring a seasoned educator with extensive fundraising experience to WKU. Our alumni and friends will enjoy working with him, and our faculty and staff will value his guidance and mentoring. He is a pro!"

Archambault said he is delighted to have the opportunity to lead WKU's advancement program at such an important time in the University's history.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Physical Sciences and English from Saint Michael's College in Colchester, Vt., and a Certificate in Fundraising Management from the Center of Philanthropy at Indiana University in Indianapolis.

4 WKU students recognized by Goldwater Program

For the second straight year, all four WKU students nominated for the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program have been honored by the premier award for undergraduates seeking careers in science, mathematics or engineering.

Andrew Brown of Central City, Ky., and Dimitri Leggas of Lexington, Ky., both students in the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, were named Goldwater Scholars. They are the only students from a Kentucky institution to receive Goldwater scholarships this year.

Audrey Brown, a WKU student from Bowling Green, Ky., and Ben Guthrie, a Gatton Academy student from Bowling Green, Ky., received honorable mentions.

WKU President Gary A. Ransdell said he is especially proud that all four nominees—the most allowed—were once again recognized and that 18 of WKU's 20 nominees have been recognized.



Audrey Brown



Ben Guthrie



Andrew Brown



Dimitri Leggas

FACULTY/PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Roberts receives national award for impact on gifted education



Dr. Julia Link Roberts and Norma Lu Hafenstein, Director of the Institute for the Development of Gifted Education, at the University of Denver.

Dr. Julia Link Roberts was recognized for her impact on gifted education as recipient of the 2015 Palmarium Award, presented in February in Denver.

The Institute for the Development of Gifted Education at the University of Denver presented the award during its annual conference.

For more than 30 years, Roberts has been an active advocate for gifted children at the state, national and international levels. She is the Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies at WKU as well as the Executive

Director of The Center for Gifted Studies and The Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky.

The Palmarium Award is presented to the individual most exemplifying the vision of the Institute for the Development of Gifted Education: A future in which giftedness will be understood, embraced and systemically nurtured throughout the nation and world. Recipients demonstrate that vision through practical impacts on education, advocacy outreach, educational publications and influential research.

WKU newest member of Kentucky Proud Farm to Campus Program

Agriculture Commissioner James Comer officially inducted WKU as the 10th member of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Farm to Campus Program in a ceremony March 16.

"By joining the Farm to Campus Program, Western Kentucky University has made a commitment to its campus community as well as the community at large," said Commissioner Comer, who earned an Agriculture degree from WKU. "You have committed to make fresh, local Kentucky Proud foods available to your students, faculty and staff. At the same time, you have committed to support local farmers and small businesses. It's entirely fitting that a university located in one of Kentucky's top agricultural counties should be part of this program."

"WKU has a long and rich agricultural heritage, and our primary service region represents the heart of Kentucky's agriculture community," WKU President Gary A. Ransdell said. "We are proud to be a partner with the Farm to Campus program and all things related to Kentucky's agricultural heritage. We pledge to continue to be a major force for agriculture research, production and economic development. Our faculty, staff, students and alumni are all in for agriculture in Kentucky!"

Warren County produced more than \$114 million worth of agricultural products in 2012, ranking ninth in the state, the U.S. Census of Agriculture reported. Warren County is among Kentucky's top counties in production of corn, soybeans, hay, cattle, wheat, hogs, poultry and milk.



Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner James Comer and WKU President Gary A. Ransdell.

Farm to Campus is the official state program for connecting Kentucky farmers and food producers with Kentucky higher education institutions. Under the Farm to Campus program, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture helps participating institutions locate and purchase fresh Kentucky Proud products to serve in their food service systems and shelf-stable Kentucky Proud products to sell in their campus bookstores.

Muhlenberg County educator inducted into Teacher Hall of Fame

Mary K. Armstrong, a longtime Muhlenberg County, Ky., educator, was inducted on March 3 into the Gov. Louie B. Nunn Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame.

"The whole thing has been great. It's too glamorous for me because I'm just a country girl. I didn't expect all this," Armstrong, 95, said after the Frankfort, Ky., induction ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda that included family, friends, state officials and others.

WKU President Gary A. Ransdell called Armstrong "a very special teacher who has left a long and distinguished mark in the state of Kentucky."

Armstrong, who began her teaching career in 1940, spent more than 40 years as a teacher in Muhlenberg County before retiring in 1999. She remained active in the Muhlenberg County School District as a substitute teacher until 2011, when she was 91.

Gov. Steve Beshear said Armstrong "has touched literally thousands and thousands of students' lives. Good teachers like Mary Armstrong do make a difference for children in our state."

A native of McLean County, Armstrong said she grew up wanting to become a teacher. She began her career in Benton in a two-room school in 1940 and taught grades five through eight at Church Grove Elementary School until 1941.

Her teaching career was put on hold when she moved to Evansville, Ind., and began working at Briggs Aircraft Factory during World War II. After marrying a WWII veteran and raising their two sons, Armstrong returned to college and to her teaching career.

In 1953, she began teaching at Bremen Elementary and continued to teach at the school until she retired in 1999. During her years as a teacher, she graduated from WKU with a Bachelor

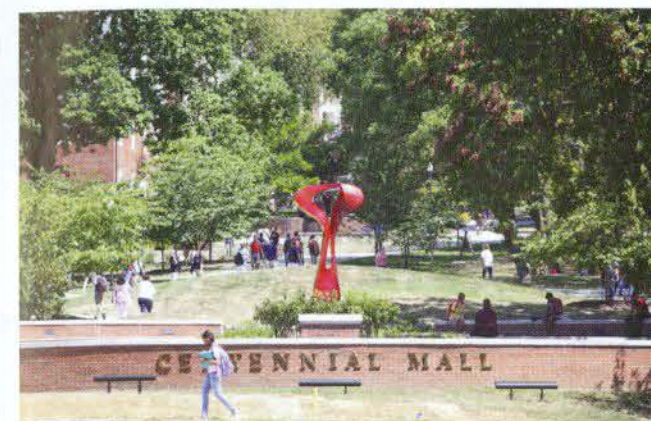


Dr. Tommy Floyd, Chief of Staff for the Kentucky Department of Education (left), and Gov. Steve Beshear (right) present Mary K. Armstrong with her Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame Award.

of Science degree in 1958, earned a master's degree in Guidance in 1962, earned a Standard Elementary degree in 1964, and completed her Rank I in 1977.

Throughout her career, Armstrong was actively involved in the Kentucky Education Association (KEA), National Education Association (NEA) and the Kentucky Teachers Retirement Association.

WKU's campus awarded Level I Arboretum Accreditation



One of the most visible changes at WKU over the past 18 years has been the physical transformation of its 250-acre Bowling Green campus. The intentional enhancement of the urban forest and the strict tree maintenance regimen has propelled WKU into being recognized as a nationally accredited arboretum.

The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum announced that the WKU Arboretum has been awarded a Level I Accreditation. By achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens, the WKU Arboretum is now recognized as an accredited arboretum in The Morton Register of Arboreta.

The WKU Arboretum is home to more than 3,400 trees spread throughout the main Bowling Green campus. Situated on University land, the Arboretum serves not only as an urban forest, but also a living laboratory for the public. The Arboretum is open year-round with more than 27 miles of self-guided walking paths.

In addition, WKU is associated with Baker Arboretum, located a few miles from the main campus. Founded in 1992 by Jerry Baker, the Baker Arboretum now covers nearly 115 acres. Built on a ridge of rolling hills in the outskirts of Bowling Green, the Baker Arboretum overlooks the city and the campus.

Honors College at WKU spotlighted in national guide

The Honors College at WKU is one of five Master's Comprehensive public university honors colleges or programs in the United States profiled in the second edition of *A Review of Fifty Public University Honors Programs*.

"According to the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), there are over 1,000 honors programs and colleges in the United States," said Dr. Craig T. Cobane, Executive Director

of the Honors College at WKU. "The recent book spotlighted the top 55 in the country; therefore, WKU is in the top 6 percent of all honors programs / colleges in the United States."

The book, published by Public University Press, is the only publication that provides detailed ratings and reviews of major public honors colleges and honors programs and is widely used by honors administrators and college admissions consultants.

WKU wins Hearst photojournalism title for 22nd time in 26 years

With two top-three finishers in the final photojournalism contest of the 2014-2015 Hearst Journalism Awards Program, WKU has won the Hearst Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition for the 22nd time in the past 26 years.

Austin Anthony, a 2014 graduate from Herndon, Va., placed second in the Photo Picture Story/Series Competition and received a \$2,000 award. Brittany Greeson, a senior from Owensboro, Ky., finished third and received a \$1,500 award. WKU's School of Journalism & Broadcasting will receive matching awards and will receive a \$10,000 award for winning the photojournalism championship.

WKU students finished fourth and sixth in this year's first photo competition, giving WKU the highest accumulated student points from the competitions.

WKU finished in first place in the Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition followed by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Syracuse University, Ohio University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Kent State University, San Francisco State University, University of Montana, University of Missouri and Indiana University.



FACULTY & STAFF APPOINTMENTS



Brent Björkman appointed director of Kentucky Museum

Brent Björkman has been appointed the Director of the Kentucky Museum at WKU.

Björkman has been the Interim Director since August and "interim" was removed from his title Jan. 1. He is also a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Folk Studies Department at WKU and Director of the Kentucky Folklife Program.

Björkman has worked for the past 15 years throughout the U.S. in a variety of areas within public folklore, including Folklife Specialist with the Kentucky Folklife Program, Associate Director of the American Folklore Society and Executive Director of the Vermont Folklife Center. He is also an executive board member of the American Folklore Society and acts as an advisor to the Kentucky Oral History Commission, part of the Kentucky Historical Society.

WKU Among 2015 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools; WKU one of nine honored with first Postsecondary Sustainability Award

Big Red's efforts to go green earned national recognition in April, as WKU was named among the 2015 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Awardees.

WKU was one of nine colleges and universities honored on Earth Day with the first Postsecondary Sustainability Award. The announcement was made in Washington, D.C., by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Managing Director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality Christy Goldfuss.

"This is great recognition of WKU's priority for conservation and emerging priority for sustainable behavior," WKU President Gary A. Ransdell said. "To represent higher education in Kentucky with this national award is a tribute to years of hard work and a changed culture. Our students are learning to be responsible citizens who protect our planet and value our natural habitats."

The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools, districts and postsecondary institutions that are exemplary in three Pillars: Reduced Environmental Impacts and Costs, Improved Health and Wellness, and Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education.

"The accomplishments that have earned us this recognition are the result of a remarkable degree of commitment, collaboration and determination by students, staff and faculty across campus," WKU Sustainability Coordinator Christian Ryan said. "So many people work really hard to model, teach and learn sustainability, to create a more sustainable WKU. It's evident we take this endeavor seriously, and pursue it passionately, so we are beyond delighted to be one of the inaugural universities recognized as a Green Ribbon School."

In addition to the higher education institutions, 58 schools and 14 districts were honored for their efforts.

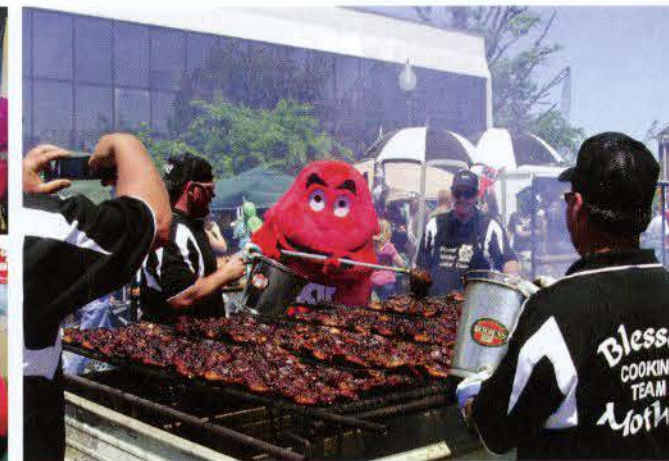
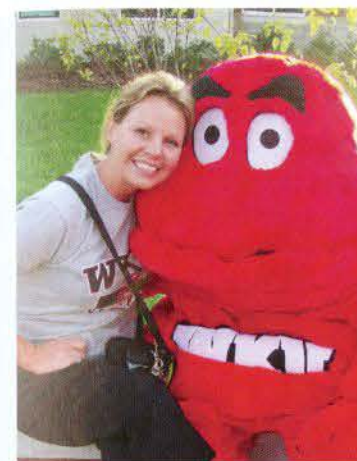
In 2008, WKU created the Office of Sustainability and hired a Sustainability Coordinator. Since then, conservation and efficiency initiatives have reduced WKU's energy use by 25 percent.



WKU's successes include:

- In 2014, 15 tons of food waste from WKU dining halls was composted.
- WKU has been a Tree Campus USA since 2010; in 2015, WKU's main campus was recognized as a certified arboretum.
- In 2009, WKU made a commitment to building to LEED standards and now has three LEED-certified buildings with two others pending.
- WKU has been included in the *Princeton Review's* "Guide to Green Colleges" every year since 2009.
- WKU's Wellness Program has also evolved into a highly visible, proactive model that promotes healthy and sustainable practices.
- In 2014, the National Safety Council accredited WKU as a Safe Community, only the fourth university and 25th community in the nation to receive the award.
- WKU's campus is a "living laboratory" for students as sustainability has been integrated into disciplines across departments and colleges.
- WKU has developed community partnerships, particularly with the Community Farmer's Market and a Mobile Market, in an effort to improve food access.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Owensboro Alumni Chapter

In recognition of its wide array of activities and events, the Owensboro Chapter of the WKU Alumni Association has been named a Chapter of Distinction for the past six years.

This active group of volunteers works to foster local growth of alumni relationships and friendships, encourage and recruit prospective students, and support overall alumni activities and programming at WKU. The group's annual events include a Day at the Races, held each July at Ellis Park, a thoroughbred racetrack

located in Henderson, Ky., as well as picnics and other fun activities. In the coming year, the Chapter plans to host basketball and football events, as well as a community service project to support the Owensboro Help Office.

On Aug. 22, 2015, the Owensboro Alumni Chapter will host an art event with Aaron Kizer at the WKU-Owensboro campus. Owensboro artist Aaron Kizer gained international recognition for his speed painting performance honoring Apple co-founder Steve Jobs. At the August event, he will be speed painting

several portraits, including one of WKU President Gary A. Ransdell, throughout the evening. Tickets are available for \$25. For more information, contact Brooklyn Foster, Business Coordinator at WKU-Owensboro, at 270-852-5995 or brooklyn.foster@wku.edu.

To learn more about the Owensboro Alumni Chapter, contact Deb Fillman, President, at dsfillman@roadrunner.com, or visit the WKU Alumni Association-Owensboro Chapter on Facebook.

CHAPTER CALENDAR

For more information or to view a full list of WKU Alumni Events, visit www.alumni.wku.edu/events.

30 JULY

Greater Louisville Alumni Chapter Night at the Bats

Louisville Slugger Field

09 AUGUST

Northern Kentucky Alumni Chapter Welcome to WKU Picnic

Edgewood Senior Center

20* AUGUST

Greater Louisville Alumni Chapter State Fair Booth

**State Fair runs from Aug. 20-30.*

Kentucky Exposition Center

22 AUGUST

Owensboro Chapter Aaron Kizer Event

WKU-Owensboro campus

02 OCTOBER

Music City Alumni Chapter John Oldham Golf Scramble

Forrest Crossing Golf Course

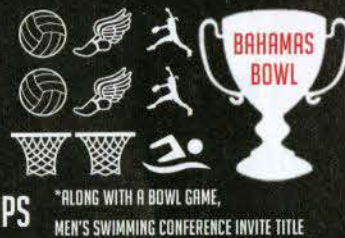
ATHLETICS

IT'S GREAT TO BE A HILLTOPPER

RECORD SETTING **#1** CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS **#1** IN THE CLASSROOM **1ST** TEAM IN C-USA HISTORY WITH 8 TITLES+BOWL WIN

LEAGUE-HIGH
55
PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

WKU WON
8
C-USA CHAMPIONSHIPS



*ALONG WITH A BOWL GAME,
MEN'S SWIMMING CONFERENCE INVITE TITLE

LEAGUE-HIGH
56
STUDENT-ATHLETES
HAVE A GPA OF
OR HIGHER **3.75**

Doughty, Kramer Named Athletes of the Year as WKU Concludes Historic, Record-Setting First Year in Conference USA

When WKU announced it would be moving to Conference USA beginning with the 2014-2015 athletic year, the athletic department knew it would get every league member's best shot as the "new kid on the block."

WKU Athletics delivered in historic and record-setting fashion this year, putting together the best all-around year of all 14 C-USA members in terms of conference competition, academics and making an impact in postseason play.

"Our coaches and student-athletes deserve tremendous credit for all that was accomplished in 2014-2015," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "It was our goal to make an impact in our initial year in Conference USA, and we certainly did on the field of play and in the classroom. It is great to see their sacrifices and commitment rewarded with significant accomplishments. Congratulations also to Miranda Kramer and Brandon Doughty on being named WKU's student-athletes of the year. WKU has had many distinguished performances throughout our rich athletics history, and the seasons these two had undoubtedly rank among the greatest in Hilltopper history. Their accomplishments are even more meaningful because they led their respective teams to new heights."

WKU won eight C-USA championships, a bowl game and a men's swimming and diving conference invitational title in 2014-2015, and the eight total league championships tied the C-USA record for its 20-year history (Tulsa, 8; 2011-2012). WKU was the first league member in C-USA history to win eight championships plus a bowl game.

WKU's Volleyball, Women's Basketball and Softball programs all won both the conference regular-season and tournament titles, and the Hilltopper Indoor Track and Field and Lady Topper Outdoor Track and Field programs also captured C-USA championships.

The overall success of the athletic department in 2014-2015 also earned WKU a league-high point total in all-sports rankings, marking the second-straight year WKU has had an all-sports title. Using a formula that awards the most points for a first-place conference finish, the second-most points for a second-place finish and so on, across all league-sponsored sports, WKU topped Rice for the most points in C-USA after winning the 2014 Bubas Cup all-sports title in its final year in the Sun Belt Conference.



Hilltoppers With Heart

Hilltoppers With Heart is designed to give WKU student-athletes, coaches and staff the unique opportunity to make an impact in the community by volunteering time and talent with numerous organizations. In 2014-2015, WKU student-athletes contributed more than 2,000 hours of community service.

Here's a look at some of the things they are doing around South Central Kentucky:

WKU hosted its annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day Clinic in late January with WKU Cheer, WKU Volleyball and WKU Soccer assisting in the clinic.

WKU Volleyball participated in Read Across America on March 2.

WKU Athletics held a food drive in February and March as part of United Way's Feed the Need Food Drive, collecting items in various athletic facilities during WKU athletic events.



WKU Track and Field and WKU Football assisted in the recent Jesus Prom in Bowling Green.

WKU Cheer helped staff the Family Enrichment Center Fun Run Fundraiser, contributing more than 120 hours of effort to the event.

WKU Softball continues its efforts with Read Across America and their Big Red Readers program, spending more than 60 hours reading in area elementary schools.

WKU Football's auction of game-used footballs from the Army game allowed proceeds to benefit Textbooks for Troops.

WKU Soccer raised more than \$1,200 at their third Friends of Jaclyn 7v7 Tournament.

WKU Athletics hosted its annual Critter Classic games in conjunction with Men's Basketball and Women's Basketball games to benefit the Bowling Green/Warren County Humane Society.

Hesse Leads Lady Toppers' Service Through Compassion International

By Jeremy Brown ('13)

Caitlin Hesse, a sophomore midfielder for the WKU Soccer team, contributes significantly on the field, has achieved a perfect GPA through three complete semesters and is a member of the C-USA All-Academic Team. She also helps support underprivileged children in South America.

Following a church service early in the Spring 2015 semester, Hesse felt called to find more ways to serve and love others. Hesse responded to that call by partnering with Compassion International, a Christian child advocacy ministry. The program receives monthly donations from sponsors around the world. Sponsors not only contribute to children's lives financially, they also interact with them through exchanges of pictures and letters of encouragement.

Hesse told her Lady Topper teammates and coaches about the

mission of Compassion International and her desire help. Every player and coach supported Hesse's passion for the idea and gave her \$20 to sponsor a child.

After searching through a waiting list of children needing to be sponsored, Hesse found Arlyn, a 5-year-old Ecuador native who was among the longest wait-listed children on Compassion International's website. Hesse and the Lady Toppers began sponsoring Arlyn, who lives with her grandmother, in February and are now donating about \$40 a month.

The money the Lady Toppers are sending Arlyn's way is helping her get through school with a tutor, a scenario that wouldn't have been possible without their generous giving. Arlyn lives in La Troncal, La Puntilla, which is a town in the coastal region of Ecuador that doesn't have a sewage system. Hesse organizes



the team's donations and is responsible for sending money Arlyn's way through her own bank account each month.

Hesse and her teammates all have access to the Compassion International account that allows them to interact with Arlyn on a regular basis. They communicate not only on the web, but they also exchanged letters and photos early on in their relationship. Arlyn's first letter to the Lady Toppers thanked them for their sponsorship and asked them to pray for her family.

SPIRIT OF GIVING



Bill Gatton makes generous gift for Academy's expansion project

The Carol Martin Gattton Academy of Mathematics and Science has received a gift from its namesake to further educate Kentucky's gifted students. On May 6, The Gattton Academy and WKU announced a gift from Carol Martin "Bill" Gatton to expand Florence Schneider Hall.

"The Gattton Academy of Mathematics and Science is a great asset for the Commonwealth of Kentucky," Gatton said. "Its students have come from almost every county. It has brought honor to the Commonwealth by its recognition as the nation's number-one public high school three years in a row. That's a remarkable achievement. It has great leadership, great faculty and great students. I am proud to have my name associated with it."

The renovation will allow The Gattton Academy to grow from 120 students to 200 students. Each wing will take the name of one of Gatton's parents, with the boys' wing being named the Harry W. Gatton Sr. Wing and the girls' wing being named the Edith Martin Gatton Wing.

"I am pleased and proud to share

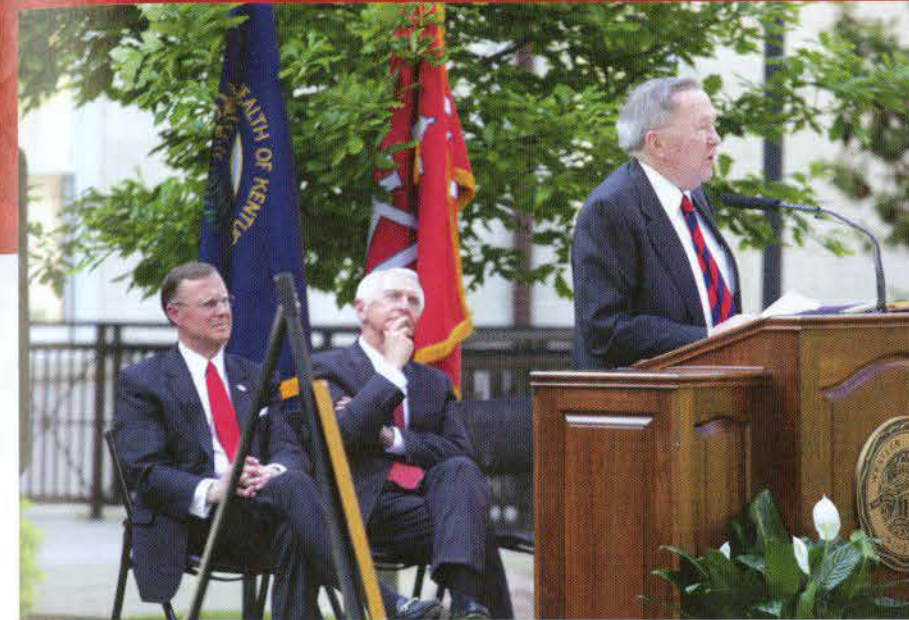


Dr. Julia Link Roberts welcomes Mr. Bill Gatton during the Gattton Academy of Mathematics and Science expansion announcement. Other dignitaries include: Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, President Gary Ransdell, Julia Gensheimer, Sen. Steve Wilson, House Speaker Pro-Tem Jody Richards and Dr. Lynette Breedlove.

with others in this opportunity to expand Florence Schneider Hall in order that more students with special talents and interest in science, technology, engineering, and math careers will be able to take advantage of what the Gattton Academy has to offer," Gatton said.

Gov. Steve Beshear also spoke during the ceremony. "The Gattton Academy is a shining example of how our educators are preparing the next generation of highly

trained graduates," Beshear said. "I'm proud that my last budget included \$2 million for the Academy, which will allow another 80 students the unparalleled opportunity to study in the nation's best high school. Combined with the generous gift from the Gatton family, even more gifted young Kentuckians will have the chance to surge ahead in their education and enjoy the extraordinary experience of The Gattton Academy."



In the building expansion, each wing of the second, third and fourth floors will have four bedrooms added, and the first floor will add a total of 10 new bedrooms.

In addition to Gatton's lead gift, the more than \$10 million Gattton Academy expansion project is being funded by other private donors including Sue and Brown Badgett, Ben and Janine Cundiff, the J. Rogers Badgett Sr. Foundation, Mike and Julie Muscarella, Daksha and Prabodh Mehta, and Bill and Sue Hamilton.

"The Gattton Academy is a classic public/private partnership in support of high academic achievement and economic development for Kentucky," said WKU President Gary A. Ransdell. "Private donors built and are expanding it, and the state supports its operation. WKU provides the talent in the form of our faculty and the intellectual excitement in the form of our campus. The students bring the ability and the energy. It is great to know that 200 students will be coming in the future."

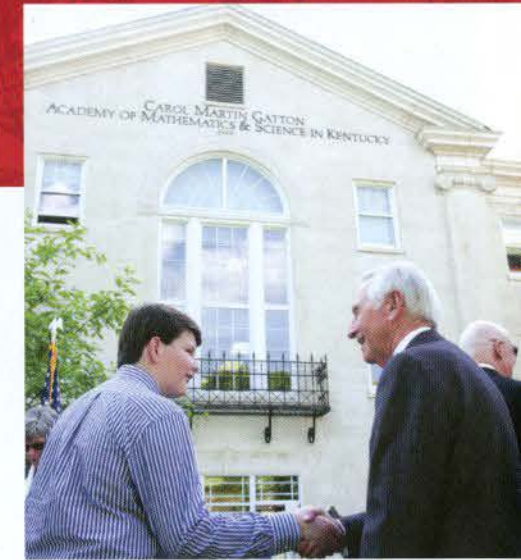
With the increase in bedrooms on the first floor, the offices of The Gattton Academy and The Center for Gifted Studies will extend outward following the renovations.

"Today we are celebrating the opportunity to increase the capacity of

The Carol Martin Gattton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky," said Dr. Julia Roberts, Executive Director of The Gattton Academy and The Center for Gifted Studies. "We are grateful to Mr. Gatton and other donors as well as to the legislators who supported the Gattton Academy's capacity to include more students than we previously have been able to accept."

Another addition to the building will be a second-floor multipurpose room that will be able to seat all 200 students. This flexible space will provide a quiet room for students to study on their own and during study hours, as well as space for seminars and special events.

"There are so many highly capable students across Kentucky who are interested in a challenging learning environment where they can study science, technology, engineering and mathematics at a high level. Each year we have seen the competitiveness of our admissions increase. It will be wonderful to serve more students," said Dr. Lynette Breedlove, Director of The Gattton Academy. "We are indeed thankful for the commitment Mr. Gatton, other generous donors, and the Kentucky legislature have made to the education of Kentucky's bright, motivated high school students."



Gattton Academy Expansion Made Possible by Gifts from the Following:

Sue and Brown Badgett

Confidential Donor
Gift made in honor of a 2015
Gattton Academy Graduate

Ben and Janine Cundiff

J. Rogers Badgett Sr. Foundation

Mr. Bill Gatton

Daksha and Prabodh Mehta

Bill and Sue Hamilton

Michael and Julia Muscarella



Laquetta Carter (left) and Felicia Neblett (right) pose with Kayla Smith (center), recipient of the Tabitha Briggs Scholarship.

Scholarship Celebration 2015

The 15th Annual Scholarship Celebration event was held on April 23, 2015, at the Knicely Conference Center at WKU's South Campus. Approximately 400 endowed scholarship donors and student recipients had the opportunity to meet one another. Attendees enjoyed a dinner theatre performance by WKU's Department of Theatre and Dance students, as well as a special appearance by Big Red.

Scholarship celebration recognizes private scholarship support for WKU students. More than 2,400 students received awards from private endowments and third-party trusts during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Stuff the Bus: School Supplies and Scholarship Funds

Bowling Green, Ky., radio personality Tony Rose and a core group of volunteers have helped schools across the region for nine straight years. This summer, the group's 10th annual Stuff the Bus is projected to be the biggest one yet.

Rose is host of The Tony Rose Show, which airs on WDNS-D93. Ten years ago, his mission was to live on a bus parked at Bluegrass Cellular on Campbell Lane in Bowling Green and fill the bus with school supplies until it couldn't hold any more. The project has since evolved into a community-wide volunteer and donation effort of more than 100 hours with four buses.

In its first year, about a ton of items was collected, and last year, Stuff the Bus amassed 9.5 tons of school supplies, including items like notebook paper, pencils, crayons and even clothing. In honor of their 10th year, the group hopes to collect 10 tons of school supplies. The 2015 event will be take place from July 23-29.

"This event has become so much more than a radio 'stunt,'" Rose explained. "It truly is Southern Kentucky coming together over 10 counties to help all those in need. From the kids in kindergarten to high school to the teachers and parents... so that everyone starts the year on an equal playing field."

This year, the group also started the Stuff the Bus Scholarship Fund in the College Heights Foundation at WKU. In addition to the tons of school supplies provided from the July event, the scholarship fund will provide financial assistance to children or grandchildren of current or retired school bus drivers in the Southern Kentucky counties of Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Grayson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson or Warren.

"It felt like the next logical step in the evolution of the event," Rose said. "After 10 years, our core group of volunteers



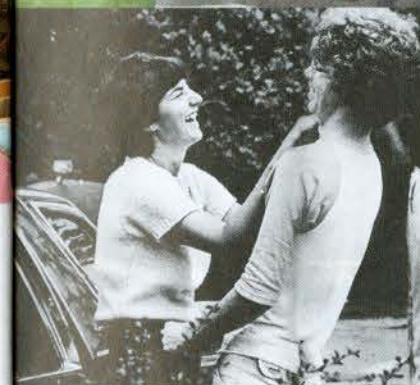
wanted to leave a lasting legacy. Out of the thousands of relationships we have been lucky enough to make over the past decade, the most special are with the hardworking bus drivers in southern Kentucky. They are amazing people who truly see first hand where some of the most poverty-stricken children live. They are the first kind, supporting voice on that nervous first day of school to the last voice they hear at the end of the day. They keep our kids safe and we trust them with our children's lives. We want to give back in some small way to the debt we owe them."

To learn more about the annual Stuff the Bus event, contact Tony Rose at 270-792-5405 or via email at tonyroshow@yahoo.com.

To contribute to the Stuff the Bus Scholarship Fund, visit: www.wku.edu/chf/stuffthebus/.



Mark Lee ('83) and Debbie (Assad) Lee ('82, '84)



Visit the WKU Gift Planning website at www.wku.edu/plannedgiving

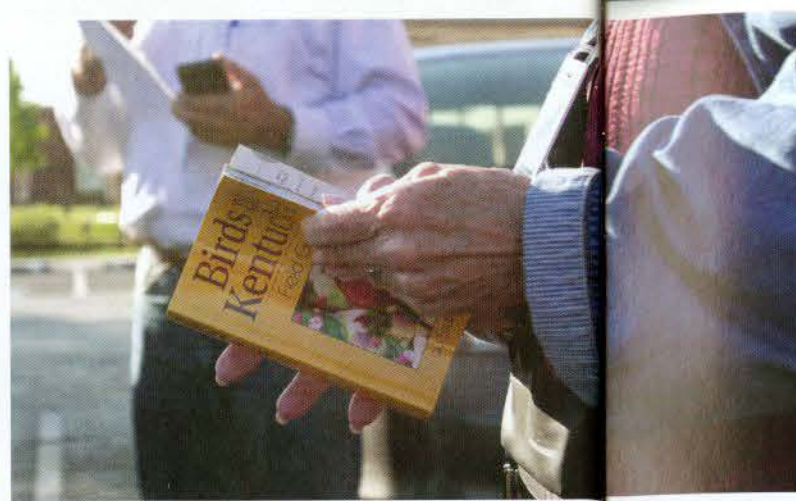
PAY IT FORWARD

"WKU had a profound, positive impact on our lives. We are honored to be able to give back to a place that means so much to both of us. We hope others who share a deep connection to WKU will be inspired to give to help continue and build on the life-changing work the University does."

— Mark Lee ('83) and Debbie (Assad) Lee ('82, '84)

WHAT'S YOUR LEGACY?

To learn more about planned gifts or other ways to support your favorite WKU program, contact the Gift Planning Office at 888-958-2586 (WKU-ALUM).



Society for Lifelong Learning: NO TESTS REQUIRED!

By Carol Cummings ('92)

The Society for Lifelong Learning got its start when three WKU alumni put their heads—and their hearts—into finding a way to start a program that featured intriguing courses for those who love to learn and who happen to be just a bit beyond the typical “college age.”

Last year, Dr. Linda Vitale, Dr. Cindy Ehresman and Barbara Johnston got together and began to brainstorm ways to bring lifelong learning to the Bowling Green and south central Kentucky region. After months of research and planning, the Society for Lifelong Learning at WKU was born and the first classes were held in the spring of 2015.

The Society for Lifelong Learning (SLL) at WKU is a University-supported member organization with a mission to provide opportunities for adults ages 50 and over, living in south central Kentucky, to further their knowledge in both academic and recreational pursuits and to share their experiences and interests with other members.

“It has been a community effort,” Vitale explained. “There are more than 500 universities in the country that have lifelong learning centers for people over age 50. A committee was appointed to explore the idea, and we met with a consultant and focus groups. Our research determined that more than 3,000 individuals in the area fit the demographic for this type of organization, and we concluded that this was an idea whose time had come in Bowling Green.”

A total of 23 courses were offered during the first semester—some meeting only once and others meeting as many as eight times over a couple of months. The “Food for Thought” program brought special lunchtime presentations that were open to the community as well as to members of the SLL. These have included “Moonshine and NASCAR,” “The History of Bluegrass Music” and “The Music of World War I.”

“Western’s Warriors: WWI and WWII” was an eight-session course with various instructors who provided a fascinating look at WKU students and faculty who served in the wars. Dr. Blaine Ferrell, WKU Professor and former Dean of the Ogden College of Science and Technology, offered a four-week “Birding in the Field” course that provided tips and hands-on field work on bird identification and habits in south central Kentucky.

Also, Freida Eggleton, NCAA Academic Compliance Coordinator and University Registrar Emerita, whose professional career at WKU spans more than 40 years, presented “Outside the Classroom-Exploring WKU,” an eight-week course that brought new weekly experiences to different University locations for a behind-the-scenes tour.

“At each of the venues, WKU staff members provided a tour of the facilities and explanation of their programs and services,” Eggleton explained. “Class participants have been impressed with the extraordinary things they have learned about WKU, including how we recruit prospective students starting at the Augenstein Alumni Center, to the multitude of services offered at the Center for Research and Development, to observing a simulation model in action at the Health Sciences Complex, to spending time with several Gatton Academy students. They have especially enjoyed riding the WKU shuttle from the Knicely Center to the main campus venues and talking with students on the shuttle. This group is very inquisitive, and they ask a lot of great questions. They are also very appreciative of the opportunity to see these venues and meet some WKU staff.”

Eggleton served on the inaugural Curriculum Committee for the SLL, and Chair Barbara Johnston suggested visiting campus sites as a course idea. “I loved the idea and agreed to coordinate the class, selecting the sites based upon what I perceive as



uniquely WKU," she said. "Although I had visited all of the sites previously, I experienced a great sense of University pride from the opportunity to showcase these venues and enjoy the visits with them."

A special moment for the first term occurred when Dr. Marion Lucas, who taught history at WKU for many years, offered a course on "The Civil War: From the Beginning to the Day They Drove Old Dixie Down." Once the course catalog was published, Amy Dennison of Nashville, Tenn., wrote in for more information with the following question: "Dr. Lucas is my father and although I graduated from WKU in 1984, I never took one of his classes and would love to now. If there is space, may I sign up?"

Dennison said she highly recommends the SLL. "I am so glad I've had the opportunity to return to my alma mater to take a Civil War class with my dad," she exclaimed. "What a treat for me! I've enjoyed a refresher on the Civil War and getting to know some of my classmates. And I've certainly loved spending time with my father every week. I'm impressed with the variety of classes offered. It makes me want to retire and become a full-time student again!"

Likewise, Dr. Lucas has enjoyed teaching the course. "I see Lifelong Learning as a wonderful program for 'mature' students," he said. "My class of 23 students consisted of an excellent mixture of citizens who were genuinely interested in the topic, some from the Bowling Green area, others who had settled here from as far away as California. My students were an eager, enjoyable group of avid readers who believe Lifelong Learning to be a convenient and important environment

for continuing their education. At WKU's Society for Lifelong Learning, classes are relevant, questions are always welcome and discussions are lively."

Johnston said planning is well underway for the Fall term, and classes will be held between Sept. 14 and Nov. 11. "We look forward to offering courses ranging from a study on the short stories of Flannery O'Connor with Instructor Sue Wilson, to a course on sustainability trends and environmental issues with Dr. Brian Sullivan, to a history course with Dr. Edward Yager, who will offer 'The Political Philosophies of Four American Founders: Jefferson, Madison, Adams and Hamilton.'"

In addition, one of the "Food for Thought" luncheon events will feature a presentation by the WKU Office of International Programs on the "WKU Year of South Africa" to introduce the community and SLL members to the amazing series of cultural events that will be available throughout the year, all with a focus on South Africa.

Vitale said she is pleased with the success of the first term and invites others to be a part of the fun. "Everyone is invited to participate," she said. "It's a member-driven organization for the community, with no previous connection to WKU required. Anyone can become a member."

More than 100 community members joined the SLL for the first term, and Vitale predicts that the organization will only continue to grow. "Our feedback has all been extremely positive," she said. "Best of all, there is no homework and there are no tests! It's wonderful to go to a class to learn for fun."

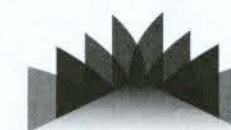
SAVE THE DATE!

Join us on Aug. 30, 2015 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the Knicely Conference Center to learn about our 2015 Fall Term.

Coffee and dessert will be available while you sign up for our exciting courses. Topics for the upcoming term include:

- **Music Appreciation**
- **Literature**
- **Political Science**
- **Gardening in Kentucky**
- **and many more unique topics**

The Society for Lifelong Learning Annual Membership Meeting will be held in the Auditorium of the Knicely Conference Center from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.



SOCIETY FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING

Western Kentucky University

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Annual Membership is \$200, and members may attend unlimited SLL classes, courses and social events. Additional fees may apply for travel programs and some course materials.

A one-term membership is available for \$125 per spring or fall term. Founding Membership is available for \$400, only through the end of 2015. The donation covers one year of tuition, and the entire fee is contributed to the SLL fund, which helps support operations and provide scholarships.

>>> For more information, call (270) 745-1912 or visit www.wku.edu/sll.

ACADEMIC SPOTLIGHT



Semester at Sea brings student to WKU

By Kaitlin Hartley ('11)

After 109 days, 13 countries and 25,000 nautical miles, Amanda English arrived in the final port of San Diego, Calif., as a changed individual. As part of the 100th voyage of Semester at Sea, English had encountered new cultures, perspectives and people that changed her understanding of the world. Just 19 years old at the time, the Smyrna, Del., native was not quite sure where her life would take her, but Bowling Green, Ky., was not an option she had previously considered.

Though she was enrolled at the University of Maryland, English's Semester at Sea is what set her on her path toward earning her own red towel. Aboard the *MV Explorer*, she took a service-learning course with Dr. Bernie Strenecky, Scholar in Residence at WKU. The class utilized Strenecky's service-learning methodology, The \$100 Solution™, a concept that later evolved into an international non-profit organization. English and her classmates were able to engage in community

development projects in Ghana, India, Vietnam and Hong Kong, all impacting a sustainable change and meaningful partnership with just a \$100 bill.

"I had been looking for a new and innovative approach to service—something deeper than volunteering," English explained. "When I met Dr. Strenecky and learned about The \$100 Solution™, I became captivated by the change that could take place in a community with only \$100."

Concluding her Semester at Sea voyage, English made the decision to transfer to WKU, pursuing a bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Non-Profit Administration. "Transferring to WKU, I thought it might set me back and I would lack the full university experience," she said. "However, within days I felt reinvigorated by learning and now going back to WKU's campus means going home."

Committed to The \$100 Solution™, English served as a teaching assistant and then joined the organization's Board of Directors as Vice President of Academic Development. Through this opportunity and as part of the Honors College at WKU, she developed a self-guided Capstone Experience Thesis Project, which received distinguished honors by the review committee. Incorporating her knowledge of The \$100 Solution™, civic engagement and curriculum development, she published "Changing the World from Classrooms to Communities: Designing

and Disseminating a Service-Learning Curriculum for Teaching in a Formal Education Setting."

During her time at WKU and to this day, English finds ways to be involved and engaged. "At WKU, I was encouraged to choose my own interest areas and pursue them with a firing passion," she said. With the vision to be "a leading American university with international reach," WKU contributed to her "understanding that the world is a vast place to be discovered."

Today, English continues her involvement with The \$100 Solution™ as Chief Academic Officer. In 2014, she authored the first official textbook of the organization titled, *Service-Learning Through The \$100 Solution™*. The book is now used in classrooms on several university campuses, high schools and on Semester at Sea.

In addition to this volunteer role, English works for a start-up tech company in Washington, D.C., called STEAM Engine, Inc. Part of the emerging

industry of educational technology, STEAM Engine works to change the way earth and life sciences are taught to students, utilizing a game-based learning platform. As Business Coordinator, English serves the company in many different capacities.

"One facet of my job is growing a great team and creating a company culture," she said. "I also find ways to make STEAM Engine a great place work, and a leader in the EdTech industry."

For English, her professional goals include being a part of a movement for change that dramatically changes the way people think and learn. Her experiences at WKU and around the world have sparked this passion and she has already accomplished much as a young professional.

"The spirit that WKU exudes on campus and anywhere that Hilltoppers travel is infectious," English said. "I'm glad to have claimed my own red towel, which I wave proudly as a WKU alumna."



Above: Amanda English shows her WKU pride.
Right: Amanda English during her Semester at Sea with the *MV Explorer*.





"MY GOAL IS TO HELP EVERYONE
REACH HIS OR HER FULL POTENTIAL.
THERE IS NO GREATER REWARD THAN SEEING THAT
'SPARK' IN THE EYE OF SOMEONE
WHO HAS LEARNED SOMETHING NEW!"

KELLI BROOKS ('95, '00), PRINCIPAL, MCNEILL ELEMENTARY

Transforming Teacher Preparation

25 years After state Education Reform

By Natalie West ('14)

Before he began his own student teaching in 1969, Dr. Sam Evans had only observed in one classroom during his preparation coursework and, at the time, that class was being taught by another student teacher. In fact, even when Evans, Dean of WKU's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, arrived at WKU as a faculty member in 1990, there still were no "intense experiences" for preparing future teachers.

"The focus is supposed to be on learning, not on teaching," Evans said. "Twenty to 30 years ago, the focus was teaching, and that paradigm shift has really made a difference in what we do."

So, while standards-based educational reforms in P-12 schools have now been employed for more than two decades, there have also been great changes implemented in teacher preparation. "There's expectations, accountability on our end, on the schools' end," Evans said about the greater emphasis on being accountable and meeting standards. "We're all in it together."

Today, there are even higher GPA requirements for admission to professional education, and students must pass all parts of the Praxis exam. "We're looking for a higher quality of student," Evans explained.

Students in the teacher education program must also complete at least 200 hours of fieldwork prior to student teaching; during those hours, students must work with children of different cultural groups, students of different socioeconomic backgrounds, English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

"The nature of the student in the classroom has changed," Evans said. "You have greater diversity, so you're going to have to differentiate instruction based upon the nature of the learner, as opposed to 'one style fits all.' We expect all teacher candidates to work with the breadth of [P-12] students."

These experiences are documented in the students' culminating standards-based Teacher Work Sample (TWS), in which students must demonstrate proficiency in instruction, technology and leadership.



"The more practical experience you get in the schools... the more prepared you are to enter the profession," he said, adding that it's not just the number of experiential hours but also the nature of the experience that is valuable.

"You've also got to figure out, 'Okay, this isn't my strength, but... I'm going to have to be able to do A, B and C,'" said Evans, noting that students must have these experiences to help them handle those situations.

"Preparing teachers for the profession is a daunting task," said Adam Spinks, 2013 WKU graduate and French and AP Human Geography teacher at Warren East High School.

Spinks noted that he had a student last year whom he considered his "most

he said. "The frequent opportunities to interact with students and collaborate with teachers were a critical component of my professional growth."

To increase these "real-world" experiences, CEBS in collaboration with Potter College of Arts and Letters, developed the Clinical Experiences and Practices in Teaching (CEPT) program for Social Studies/English Secondary Education students. Evans said the program currently includes about 25 to 30 students who spend two full days a week, for two semesters prior to student teaching, in a high school classroom; WKU faculty, WKU students, the high school teachers and high school students

"NO MATTER WHAT HAS CHANGED IN MY 20 YEARS IN EDUCATION AS IT RELATES TO 'INITIATIVES' OR 'REFORMS,' THE ONE CONSTANT IS HAVING A MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION WITH A STUDENT.  OPPORTUNITY TO BE A PART OF TEENAGERS' MEANINGFUL YEARS IN HIGH SCHOOL SUSTAINS ME AND MAKES ME LOVE MY JOB MORE AND MORE EACH DAY."

GARY T. FIELDS, PRINCIPAL, BOWLING GREEN HIGH SCHOOL

challenging." He said the student had a very poor discipline record, as well as a reputation of being difficult.

"It took several months, but, by the end of the school year, he was passing my class and engaging in positive conversations with me, and his discipline referrals became rare," Spinks said.

"The WKU faculty does an impressive job designing learning experiences that are meaningful for teacher candidates,"

are all interacting, he added.

"We're finding the real value is that they are getting a real-world experience," Evans said. "They not only hear the terminology, they see it being implemented. They live the terminology. Consequently, they know what they don't know and are better prepared. They're ready to do what they need to do," Evans added. "That's the essence of CEPT—it's intensive clinical practice, and you know if this is for you."

"HEARING LIFE STORIES OF FORMER STUDENTS OVER THE YEARS HAS ASSISTED ME IN STAYING THE COURSE AND REMAINING STRONGLY COMMITTED TO THE DRIVING FORCE WHICH LED ME TO BECOME AN EDUCATOR: PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THEIR FUTURE, WHATEVER THAT MIGHT BE."

JOE TINIUS ('77,'80), SUPERINTENDENT, BOWLING GREEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Bowling Green High School has been participating in the CEPT program for the past two years, and Joe Tinius, the District's Superintendent, noted that the program "allows students, from the very beginning to be in that high school culture and atmosphere."

He also said it has not only been good for the University students but for the current high school teachers as well.

"It has caused the teachers to really reflect on their own work as well, as they have worked with these individuals day after day," Tinius said.

Tinius, who earned degrees from WKU in 1977 and 1980, reflected on his teacher preparation and one of his own "field" experiences. "I went in and did a 30-minute lesson... I was in, I was out and that was it," he said. "As opposed to these CEPT students, they're in the classroom every day, they become part of the school."

"It's one thing for them to go back into their class and talk about what they watched," Tinius explained. "It's another thing for them to go back into their class and

talk about 'what did I do,' what worked and what didn't work."

Both Tinius and Evans agreed that it's one thing for a student to watch a teacher who makes it look easy and another thing to actually go into the classroom and have that experience for yourself.

Kayla Sweeney, a 2015 graduate from Somerset, Ky., majored in Secondary Education in English. She completed her student teaching at Bowling Green High School under Anne Padilla, and she participated in CEPT the previous year.

At first, Sweeney said she wasn't sure if she wanted to teach because observations alone "don't get your hands dirty in the classroom," but, two weeks into the CEPT program, she realized that it felt "like home."

"When I talk to people who did the traditional model, it is like day-and-night different," Sweeney said. "I would say any student in CEPT at least taught 10 full lessons, and, if you had a teacher who was very willing to let you co-teach with them, I would say we [Sweeney and Padilla] taught over 20 classes together at least."



"QUITE SIMPLY, IT IS MY STUDENTS THAT HAVE SUSTAINED ME THROUGH TWO DECADES AS AN EDUCATOR. TRENDS AND METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES WILL CHANGE, BUT THE STUDENTS ARE THE FABRIC OF OUR PROFESSION."

DAVID BAXTER ('93, '95), FIFTH GRADE MATHEMATICS TEACHER, WILLIAM H. NATCHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"I BELIEVE THAT GOOD TEACHING HAS ALWAYS BEEN GOOD TEACHING: GOOD TEACHERS HAVE ALWAYS CHALLENGED STUDENTS TO EXCEL; HAVE ALWAYS LIKED AND RESPECTED STUDENTS; HAVE ALWAYS CREATED AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND LEARNING HAVE BEEN HIGH; HAVE ALWAYS CREATED AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH STUDENT IDEAS ARE ENCOURAGED AND RESPECTED AND WHERE IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO MAKE MISTAKES ON THE WAY TO LEARNING AND MASTERY."

ANNE PADILLA ('87), ENGLISH LITERATURE, COMPOSITION AND ENGLISH TEACHER, BOWLING GREEN HIGH SCHOOL



Padilla, who has been teaching for more than 30 years and earned her Specialist in Education from WKU in 1987, said the co-teaching model is "a really good one" and "the more exposure that they [students] can have to actual classrooms is of huge, huge benefit." In fact, Padilla advocates for the CEPT students to spend five mornings or afternoons a week, as opposed to the two days a week, to have a more realistic experience.

Padilla, who was inducted into the Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame in 2013, mentioned a lesson on *Macbeth* that Sweeney taught. "She worked with them, and they got it," she explained. "And I think that was probably one of the most meaningful moments to realize 'I taught something and they got it!' As long as I've been doing it, I still have moments like that too."

Sweeney acknowledged that participating in the CEPT program really helped to build her confidence far more than observations alone would have.

"If I went into student teaching after just observing teachers teach for two years or whatever, then I would not feel prepared," she said. Sweeney also said it's ironic that people tire out from teaching. "I think that's why teacher prep is important because I don't think you get in a rut if you look at it like that, if you like it and want to learn and grow in it."

In fact, a higher percentage of WKU alumni stay in the teaching profession longer compared to graduates from other Kentucky colleges. Evans said this could be because WKU is doing a better job of looking for those who really want to be teachers, and the College has done a good job preparing these future teachers.



"I TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN THE NOTION THAT I HAVE CULTIVATED A LEGACY. WHENEVER STUDENTS LEAVE MY ROOM, THEY LEAVE WITH A PIECE OF ME THAT WILL MOVE ON WELL AFTER I AM GONE."

AARON K. DAVIS ('06, '11), SOCIAL STUDIES 7/KYA ADVISOR, WARREN EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL

"The bottom line is, the successful teacher has to be committed to the student and to the student's learning, and they've got to have the capacity to build relationships with the student," Evans said. "Those things haven't changed over time, but some changes have occurred, and it could very easily be that we are providing more opportunities for teacher candidates to build on the skills and talents they have."

Along with the CEPT program, WKU also has programs such as SKyTeach, where future math and science teachers can get into the classroom early in their undergraduate studies, as well as opportunities to complete a portion of their student teaching requirements abroad.

"Going abroad builds responsibility, it builds flexibility, it builds respect, it also builds trust," Evans said. "When you're working with students in our schools, they don't all come from the same cultural background... so it broadens your horizons, you look and think in a different way that is more positive."

These experiences are especially pertinent for a city like Bowling Green that has a growing immigrant population,

Tinius said, adding the Latino population enrollment in Bowling Green Independent School District is approaching the African American enrollment.

"I think study abroad gives these new teachers an opportunity to experience another culture—to experience a lot of what our students are experiencing in being the one who doesn't speak the native language," Tinius said. "And I think it gives them a better appreciation and understanding as to what those students may be struggling to accomplish."

Ultimately, all of the preparation and experiences are to enhance student learning because as Evans said, "It's always about the learner."

"We're going to have to stay connected with, what is making a difference in P-12 student learning as we are preparing teacher candidates to educate the next generation of university students," Evans said, commenting that there is still more that can be done. "We've got to change the entire system: it's not us, it's not P-12, it's 'we.' We have to learn how to make changes that positively impacts both, and we both have to be invested in the change at all levels."

MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT CENTER

In the state of Kentucky, approximately 19 percent of students in P-12 classrooms are ethnic minorities; however, only 4 percent of the teachers in those classrooms are ethnic minorities. Nationally, the numbers are 48 percent and 18 percent, respectively. Studies show that the benefits of having teachers who more closely reflect the student population include: a close in the achievement gap, positive role models, increased reading and math scores, a higher expectation of students of color, and dispelled stereotypes.

At WKU, the Minority Teacher Recruitment Center (MTRC) is committed to creating racially and culturally diverse school districts by helping to increase the number of minority teachers in Kentucky classrooms through various recruitment and retention initiatives.

MTRC Coordinator Denise Hardesty conducts visits to middle and high schools around the state, as well as community colleges, to discuss career opportunities in teaching. The MTRC also organizes campus visits for middle and high school students, transfer students and career changers who have shown an interest in teacher education.

The MTRC coordinates the Young Male Leadership Academy (YMLA), a program that works with middle and high school males to recruit more males and those from underrepresented populations into the teaching field. Students in the YMLA work on building leadership skills, prepare for college and career readiness and are exposed to career options in education. WKU was also recently chosen by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) as one of 10 teacher education programs from across the U.S. to participate in the Networked Improvement Community initiative to increase the number of African-American and Hispanic males enrolling into teacher education programs.

Services offered through the MTRC for currently enrolled students include: scholarship assistance, Praxis test workshops, resume writing and interview skills workshops, professional development opportunities, moral support and job placement assistance.

For more information, contact Denise Hardesty at (270) 745-2996 or denise.hardesty@wku.edu.



"My time in the Minority Teacher Recruitment Program at WKU not only empowered me to pursue the endless opportunities in the field of education, but it also awoke my passion to advocate on behalf of students and teachers of color. Currently, I serve as the Minority Teacher Recruitment Program Coordinator of Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, KY. The core of my responsibilities is bridging high school seniors to the Minority Teacher Recruitment Programs across the state of Kentucky, as well as supporting the minority teacher graduates as they prepare to interview for certified teaching positions and enter into their first year of teaching."

SELENA FISHBACK ('07)

INTERNATIONAL REACH



WKU signs climate agreements in Iceland and Belize

By Dr. Jason Polk, WKU Professor of Geoscience

WKU extended its international reach and its global climate change research this spring by signing agreements with institutions in Iceland and Belize.

On March 23, in simultaneous ceremonies just over 60 miles from the Arctic Circle in Iceland and in Bowling Green, WKU, the University of Akureyri (UNAK) and the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network (IACN) signed an academic and research agreement that solidified the North Atlantic Climate Change Collaboration (NAC3) project.

The innovative agreement will center on academic exchanges and joint course offerings, research initiatives, capacity building, economic development activities and service-learning. The NAC3 project will focus on the areas of climate change,

climate literacy, health and wellness, ocean dynamics, sustainability, informal public education, economic development, technology exchange and water resources, among others.

On April 27 in Belmopan, Belize, WKU and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) formally signed a cooperative agreement that brings to fruition many years of collaboration. The institutions have been working toward the broader goals of addressing climate change in the Caribbean region and also the impacts in Kentucky and elsewhere in the world.

WKU President Gary A. Ransdell led WKU groups on trips to Iceland and Belize for the signing ceremonies and other meetings with governmental officials in

both nations. Other members of the WKU team included Scholar in Residence Dr. Bernie Strenceky and faculty members Dr. Jason Polk and Dr. Leslie North of the Department of Geography and Geology.

"What started as a climate change study abroad course last summer in Iceland has evolved into a major collaboration with multiple Icelandic institutions to study the international effects of climate change and global warming," Dr. Ransdell said. "We are grateful to our new partners at the University of Akureyri. We are also inspired by the support we have received from several Icelandic governmental officials who understand the effects of climate change and the value WKU faculty and students can bring to our

shared pursuit of remediation and solutions to climate change. This is a long-term partnership which further extends WKU's international reach while strengthening our teaching and research in highly relevant ways."

UNAK Rector Dr. Eyjólfur Guðmundsson, IACN Director Embla Eir Oddsdóttir, faculty and staff from both institutions, and Akureyri government officials were present at the signing ceremony in Iceland. Members of the UNAK campus community and surrounding city of Akureyri were also in attendance, while members from WKU and affiliated parties participated simultaneously in real-time at the Augenstein Alumni Center using video teleconference technology. Participants in the Bowling Green ceremony included Dr. Orn Gudmundsson, the Honorary Consul from Iceland to the Central United States, and his son, Orn Gudmundsson Jr.

"University of Akureyri has set its focus on research in all aspects of the Arctic—with emphasis on both social and natural sciences and the interaction between the two when dealing with issues related to global climate change and

local impact," Dr. Guðmundsson said. "Understanding the impact of climate change is a challenging task and can only be achieved through cross-disciplinary and international cooperation where each institution contributes its expertise to monitor, analyze and understand the future impact of these changes."

"At the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network, we are delighted to be involved in such an important initiative and to be a part of such a strong team of committed people," Oddsdóttir said. "This kind of broad collaboration promises to contribute to the necessary development of interdisciplinary research and education in approaching the complex dynamics of climate change and the inherent uncertainties."

The agreement is part of an evolving synergy that stemmed initially from a WKU study abroad course in June 2014. The course's theme was "A Climate Change Challenge," and nearly 60 faculty, staff and students participated aboard the Semester at Sea *MV Explorer* on a voyage to visit several countries in Europe and Scandinavia.

Following the signing in Akureyri,

the WKU delegation participated in several joint meetings with Icelandic officials. These meetings included an invited visit with the President of Iceland, Ólafur Grímsson at Bessastaðir, the Presidential residence, in Reykjavik to convey the mutual goals of the partners through the NAC3 project.

"The hour and a half we spent with President Grímsson while in Reykjavik may prove to be the most productive of our meetings in Iceland," Dr. Ransdell said. "He is a world leader in understanding the impact of climate change. He is most interested in our climate change work there, and in the possibility that we may connect Iceland with countries in the Caribbean—at the other end of the all-important Gulf Stream. He pledged to track our work and become personally engaged in our future academic endeavors."

The agreement signed with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre in Belize represents the next step in fully realizing the potential of the collaboration between WKU and the CCCCC to address the growing focus on global climate change challenges.



Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre Executive Director Dr. Ken Leslie, CCCCC Deputy Director and Scientific Advisor Dr. Ulric Trotz, and WKU President Gary A. Ransdell



Iceland President Ólafur Grímsson and WKU President Gary A. Ransdell

WKU Student Creates Artwork for Iceland's President

By Bob Skipper ('82)

Katie Adams said she is still "trying to wrap my head around" the experience of creating original artwork that now hangs in the office of the President of Iceland.

The Bowling Green, Ky., junior said she fell in love with Iceland during a visit last summer with the Toppers at Sea program. Her professors from the trip, Leslie North and Jason Polk, saw her artistic creations on Facebook and asked her to create something they could present to President Ólafur Grímsson

during a return trip in March.

Even though she only had five days, Adams said she was not going to let the opportunity pass her by. She spent about 30 hours, in addition to going to class and work, creating a colored pencil drawing that ties Iceland with Kentucky.

"It's just exciting to get to create a piece that reflects my experience that I had in Iceland because it is such a beautiful country," she said. Her creation depicts an Icelandic horse

at the water's edge. When inverted, viewers see a jockey on a Kentucky thoroughbred in the water's reflection.

"Some of the information that I was given was that they wanted to incorporate the connection between Iceland and Kentucky and climate change," Adams said. "While we were there, we learned about the rising sea levels because we visited a town that is right on the water line and this is something that would affect them greatly."

Iceland and Kentucky share a love of and pride in native horses that is unique, she said. And since she has always been interested in horses, it was a natural connection for her illustration.

Drs. North and Polk traveled to Iceland in March with WKU President Gary Ransdell and Scholar-in-Residence Dr. Bernie Strenneky to sign an agreement with the University of Akureyri and the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network to create the North Atlantic Climate Change Collaboration. While there, they also met with President Grímsson.

"What Katie did was incredible, and President Grímsson was absolutely blown away by that original piece of art," Dr. Ransdell said.

Adams described her artwork as having tranquility and peace.

"It's kind of got an easy look to it. It's something you look at and you see the Icelandic horse and then the reflection is kind of like that little bit of something extra that you notice," she said. "Then once you see it, it brings it all together."

Adams said she spent the first day working in pencil to put her ideas on paper.

"It's not just what you see, it's trying to figure out how to put it together so the viewer can see what it is," she said.

The opportunity was especially meaningful for Adams, who recently changed her major from Interior Design to Art.

"I've always drawn and it's something I've been passionate about," she said. "This is kind of a reassurance that I'm doing the right thing for myself and I'm lucky that I got this opportunity. I'm just honored by it."

"The signing of this memorandum of agreement is of great value to both institutions," CCCCC Executive Director Dr. Ken Leslie said. "The Centre is limited in its research capacity and WKU will help us to bridge that gap. International collaborations such as this strengthen our visibility internationally as an authority on climate change issues in the Caribbean. This collaboration also provides a useful platform for deepening WKU's climate change work in the context of small island developing states."

Faculty and students at WKU have been involved in projects in the Caribbean region, particularly Belize, with an emphasis on climate change, paleoclimate reconstruction, water resources, karst and cave research, environmental education, sustainability and other related activities for more than a decade. Much of this has been in conjunction with the guidance and partnership of the CCCCC as the impetus for climate change-related activities continues to grow. Most recently, the CCCCC and WKU have partnered on various research and outreach.

"This agreement with the CCCCC consortium of the dozens of Caribbean nations gives us access to significant teaching and research opportunities in a complex range of environmental dynamics related to climate change," Dr. Ransdell said. "It positions our faculty and students to help our friends in the Caribbean seek solutions and remediation to issues like rising sea levels, which affect their access to fresh water. It also will help us and them better understand how the melting glaciers in the Arctic impact the Gulf Stream, which could impact the climate in the Caribbean, with our new friends in

Iceland and in the U.S. This is timely and relevant international reach for WKU."

The group's next steps are to work on several projects, some of which include downscale climate modeling and outreach and educational activities, as well as participate in a joint research workshop, which was held in Iceland in June. Additionally, they are working with other entities, including the University of Belize and Friends for Conservation and Development, to conduct research on water and land use and develop a study abroad course in Belize that will focus on climate, water, and sustainability and include students from WKU, the Caribbean region and Iceland.

Dr. Polk said climate change continues to be a major focal point around the world, with new information and questions arising each day. As changes in the Arctic become more prevalent, the global implications will be widespread and result in the need for a diverse approach to building resilience and finding adaptation strategies. In the Caribbean, the effects of climate change could impact sea level rise, water availability, disease spread, agriculture and other necessary activities related to the environment, economy and public well-being.

"The implications extend all over the globe, and recent research indicates that the Arctic, Caribbean and North America are all susceptible to what will be short- and long-term effects from climate change, including impacts on the Gulf Stream and related oceanic and atmospheric processes," Dr. Polk said. "The global nature of these impacts, particularly in vulnerable regions, requires working together at an international level to address unresolved questions."



WKU Junior Katie Adams (left) created an original piece of art that was recently presented to the President of Iceland. Her creation depicts an Icelandic horse at the water's edge. When inverted (right), viewers see a jockey on a Kentucky thoroughbred in the water's reflection.



DR. DOM INIQUE GUMIR AKIZA

By Carol Cummings ('92)

An Assistant Professor's Journey from Rwanda to WKU

Education is often touted as a life-changing experience—one that allows a student to find his or her passion and chart a path for the future. For one Western Kentucky University assistant professor, however, the opportunity for education completely changed the trajectory of his life and opened up possibilities that would otherwise have been impossible.

Dr. Dominique Gumirakiza, an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics, was raised in the Burera District in a rural part of Rwanda, the most densely populated nation in Africa and one of the most densely populated in the world.

"I grew up in the country, on a traditional small farm where traditional tools are still used," he explained. "The farming culture was simply one of subsistence—you plant what you eat."

Gumirakiza said nearly 90 percent of Rwandans live in rural areas like the Burera District, with a total dependence on subsistence agriculture. Seventy percent own fewer than two acres of land, a small plot that must feed the average-size family of eight. His own family included his parents and 10 siblings, and he was the fifth-born child and the first boy.

"This situation leads to a vicious cycle of generational poverty, where families become trapped in situations of few resources," he said. "The cycle carries from generation to generation, bringing a swelling pressure to the environment as land becomes divided up into tiny pieces among family members who marry and start new households. This leads to a decline in productivity of both land and the farm labor force, starvation and the inability to afford the cost of education."



As a young boy, Gumirakiza showed promise in the classroom. At that time, only 5 percent of Rwandans who finished primary school had the opportunity to go on to high school. He took a national exam, the results of which were a make-or-break ranking that determined future educational prospects. His results were exemplary, and he had the opportunity to continue in secondary school.

"I was the first in my family to go on to high school and the only one my age from my village to go on to high school," he explained.

For Gumirakiza, going to high school did not involve a quick drive or walk to a local institution. "I walked to school, but it was a walk that took a complete day," he said. "I started out walking very early in the morning, met up with students from neighboring villages on the way, and reached my destination late in the evening. I carried everything I needed for the entire semester on my head. It was a boarding school, so I was only able to see my family on school breaks. During each break, I would make the long walk to and from my village to visit my family."

It was during his high school years in the early-1990s that the nearly three-year Rwandan Civil War was waged between the tribal groups of the Hutu-led government and a group composed largely of Tutsi refugees whose families had fled to Uganda following earlier waves of Hutu violence against the Tutsi. During an approximate 100-day period between early-April and mid-July of 1994, a genocidal mass slaughter of Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda led to the death of as many as 1 million estimated Rwandans, a devastation that eliminated as much as 10 percent of the country's total population.

Gumirakiza's family was displaced as political refugees when the civil war came to his native area, and the young teenager's infrequent visits during school breaks took place in a refugee camp.

"The 1994 genocide in Rwanda made the already strained situation worse," he said. "It left many widow-headed and orphan-headed households who have difficulties managing their lands. It destroyed the nation's fragile economy and impoverished the population."

Once again, Gumirakiza's academic abilities made a way for him to seek a better life. "After I finished high school, I took the national examination again," he said. "Based on my performance, I got a government scholarship to go on to college in Rwanda, and I attended the Kigali Institute of Education where I pursued my bachelor's degree in Business Economics with Education. My goal was to train future high school teachers of business and economics."

While studying at the Kigali Institute, Gumirakiza met his wife, Speciose Nyiramana, who had grown up on the opposite side of rural Rwanda.

"I graduated with a good GPA, and the college hired me as an Assistant Lecturer," he explained. "This was very common in Rwanda at the time, as we didn't have education professors in the years after the genocide. I taught there for nearly three years."

Again, education paved the road to future opportunities, as Gumirakiza applied for a highly competitive and prestigious Fulbright Scholarship through the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda. The flagship international educational exchange program is sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and people of other countries. "It was a very long process," he said. "I was a pre-select candidate, so I went for an interview and passed it. Then I took the GRE and completed my required essays. After the entire process, I was chosen for a Fulbright scholarship."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEPRR





PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEPRR



Though he and Nyiramana had two daughters at the time, the young family made the decision that Gumirakiza would continue his education through a two-year program at Utah State University. However, his first U.S. stop in the summer of 2008 was Texas. "I had my five-week Fulbright orientation at the University of Texas in Austin during the hot summer months," he shared. "It was the cooler season at home, so I wasn't expecting it. It was very hot. I was burning! I arrived at 7 o'clock at night and was shocked to see that it was still light outside. I thought it would be dark by then."

Even in the hottest part of the year, Rwanda's moderate temperature rarely rises above the high-80s, and the cooler mid-year temperatures were far removed from the nearly-100-degree humidity of summer in Austin. Thankfully, the more reasonable temperatures of Logan, Utah, were ahead.

In August 2009, after his first year in the states, Gumirakiza's wife and two young daughters joined him in Utah. "When I graduated with my master's degree in Applied Economics in 2010, I applied for an assistantship to complete my Ph.D.," he said. "My professor knew me and recommended me for the program. My tuition was waived, and I received a stipend from the Department of Applied Economics. I completed my Ph.D. in 2013."

It was during his time in Utah that his life intersected with that of Matthew Todd, a young MBA student at Utah State. After hearing about Gumirakiza's life in Rwanda and his journey to the U.S., Todd knew he wanted to do something to help make a difference.

"We decided to create a network that would help others in underprivileged areas of Rwanda to have the opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education," Gumirakiza shared. "We created a 501(c)(3) organization called the Network for the Education of the Poor in Rural Rwanda, or NEPRR, which links very poor Rwandans who are financially unable to get a college education to individuals or organizations that are willing to contribute to the cause. The network gives priority to those who want to study in fields that will address the economic needs in their local communities. Sponsored individuals go to colleges

in the east African community, including Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Kenya."

Following his doctoral studies and a subsequent one-year contract with the Department of Economics at Brigham Young University Idaho, where he taught Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, an opportunity arose for the young educator at WKU.

"The Department of Agriculture opened a position looking for an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics," he said. "It was perfect fit for my training and interests."

After an on-campus interview, Gumirakiza was offered the position, and he and his family—which now included four daughters, two of whom were born during their time in Utah and Idaho—moved to Bowling Green from Rexburgh, Idaho, in August 2014. He currently teaches courses in Agricultural Marketing, Agricultural Sales and Service, Farm Management, Advanced Farm Management, and Agricultural Accounting.

"Living in Kentucky is enjoyable," the professor said. "I get chances to interact with friendly people. I enjoy the beauty of the landscape in Kentucky. Some parts are mountainous, others are hilly and others are flatter. Flat farmland for agricultural use is my favorite part. In addition, I love visiting Mammoth Cave and other sites in the state."

Gumirakiza's long-term plans include remaining in Bowling Green and seeking tenure as a full professor. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his wife and his four daughters: 10-year-old Divine, 7-year-old Honette, 3-year-old Holy, and Sonyia, who is 18 months old.

"Prayer brings joy into my life," he said, "as does service to people in the community. I also like to explore the beauty of nature and enjoy outdoor recreation such as hiking and visiting new places."

He also devotes time to NEPRR. "My hope is that individuals and organizations can support this cause by donating and getting involved through spreading the word and volunteering," he said. "NEPRR anticipates positive economic and social changes in the rural areas of Rwanda."



(Top row) Dominique Gumirakiza, his wife, Speciose Nyiramana, and their children, Honette, Divine, (bottom row) Holy and Sonya.

"There is no other financial assistance available for individuals that NEPRR assists," he explained. "Based on the cost of education and cost of living there, it requires \$2,300 in U.S. dollars to complete the entire academic year. This includes tuition, housing and all other living expenses. Recipients are selected once the full cost of a four-year degree is raised or a pledge by a dependable donor is secured."

Through NEPRR, Gumirakiza looks forward to offering promising students a helping hand, one student at a time. "It's all about having the opportunity and doing everything you can to take full advantage of it," he said.

That's certainly been the story of his own life: working hard, finding opportunities and being willing to walk through the door to take a chance on a better future.

To learn more about Gumirakiza's organization, visit www.nepr.org.



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CAPITOL SPOTLIGHT



ABOVE: Rep. Jody Richards confers on legislation with Rep. Wilson Stone (D-22) and Rep. Johnny Bell (D-23). **RIGHT:** Rep. Jody Richards with Big Red on the House floor.



Jody Richards

By Jennifer Breiwa Smith ('03)

Rep. Jody Richards (D-20) of Bowling Green, Ky., is the longest continuous serving legislator in the Kentucky State House of Representatives. He never imagined he would serve in the Legislature as long as he has.

"I was elected to office in November 1975, and my plan was to serve about six years. But at the end of my first term in office I was appointed Chair of the House Education Committee and served in that role for the next eight years," he said.

In 1987 he was elected House Majority Caucus Chair, serving in that role for eight years until being elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1995 and remaining in the leadership role until 2009. He moved back into House leadership when he was elected Speaker Pro Tempore in 2015. Richards remains the longest-serving Speaker of the House in Kentucky history.

Richards has been instrumental in shaping policy to move Kentucky forward. He sponsored three different pieces of legislation to improve Kentucky's education systems. In 1990 he was a co-sponsor of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) and co-chaired the KERA Curriculum Committee.

In 1997 he co-sponsored Higher Education Reform, often referred to as House Bill 1. This was considered the second part of education reform in Kentucky. Through House Bill 1, the current postsecondary education system was established, including moving the community college system from the University of Kentucky and creating the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). In 2000, Richards sponsored legislation known as the Kentucky Innovation Act, which was designed to move Kentucky toward more high-tech jobs, businesses and industries. The Kentucky Innovation Act also provided the funding to establish the WKU Center for Research and Development.

In 2007, Richards sponsored landmark legislation that created the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky. The Gatton Academy has been named the number-one public high school in the nation every year by *The Daily Beast* since 2012.

Richards has a long history of sponsoring impactful legislation. He was a co-sponsor in 1976 of legislation to revise the court system, and he sponsored an amendment to the Kentucky Constitution, which changed the legislative session from 60 calendar days to 60 business days and added the 10

veto days. In 2000, he sponsored legislation to allow annual legislative sessions; before 2000, the General Assembly met every two years during the even-numbered years.

He was also instrumental in securing funding to expand Interstate 65 to six lanes, to extend Veterans Memorial Boulevard in Bowling Green to connect with Campbell Lane, to expand Highway 68/80 to five lanes, and to extend the William H. Natcher Parkway in Warren County. Richards also secured funding for the Kentucky Transpark and Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center (SKyPAC) in Warren County.

Richards has always been a strong supporter of WKU. He secured funding for numerous capital projects on WKU's campus including the Kentucky Building addition, L.D. Brown Ag Expo Center, Raymond B. Preston Health & Activities Center, Engineering & Biological Sciences Building, Mass Media & Technology Hall, and Gary A. Ransdell Hall, just to name a few.

Richards has received many accolades in his long career of public service, but he marks two specific moments as the highlights of his career.

"Receiving an honorary doctorate from Western Kentucky University was one of the most special times in my life," he said. "I am a huge supporter of WKU and have worked hard to support the mission of the University. Receiving the honorary doctorate was a humbling experience. My second greatest honor was when Warren County Public School Board decided to name Jody Richards Elementary School after me. I never imagined something like this. It was so special and made me so proud of the work I have done in Frankfort to better our community."

Richards has served on many boards and organizations

locally, statewide and nationally. He was Chairman of the Southern Legislative Conference from 1999-2000 and served on the Executive Committee of both the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Southern Legislative Conference, as well as the Governing Board of the Council of State Governments. He has also served on the Southern Regional Education Board and took part in the Administrative Office of the Courts Task Force on Family Court.

He is a recipient of the William H. Natcher Award for Government Service and was awarded the Hero Award for shepherding funding for Children's Advocacy Centers through the 2000 Kentucky General Assembly. The Lexington Chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police also recognized him for his legislative efforts in helping police officers in Fayette County. In 2004, he received the Paul Mason Memorial Award from the Kentucky Public Health Association for his work in championing improvements in public health and well-being and was recognized by the Southern Health Association with its 2004 Outstanding Legislator award. He is a past President of the Bowling Green Warren County Jaycees and a member of the Bowling Green Rotary Club and American Legion, and he serves as an Ambassador for the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce.

Richards and his wife, Neva, live in Bowling Green, Ky., and are lifelong members of Greenwood Park Church of Christ. They have one son, Roger, a teacher at Jody Richards Elementary School; daughter-in-law, Ellen, a retired teacher; and granddaughter, Holly, a product development and visual merchandising professional with Lifeguard Press.



ABOVE: Rep. Jody Richards testifies before a House committee. **RIGHT:** Rep. Jody Richards with his wife, Neva.



THE PROFESSOR WHO CHANGED MY LIFE



By Laura Walter Sadler ('46, '55)

How can I pick my favorite professor at WKU? There were so many great professors that I can remember having an influence on my life and future career that I cannot choose one, but will tell you about two from my freshman year and why they were so meaningful to me.

One of my first classes was English with Dr. Gordon Wilson. His first assignment was to write our own autobiography. After reading them, he had us meet with him individually to go over our life story. When he found out

that I needed financial aid, he offered me an Ogden Scholarship, which was designated for Warren County students only. The scholarship was very important to me and I appreciated the opportunity to attend Western Kentucky State Teacher's College.

Miss Elizabeth Strayhorn was my College Algebra instructor. All students were required to take College Algebra, which I very much enjoyed and was pleased with the high grade I received. One day at the Cedar House – the recreation center on campus – I was working on my schedule when Miss Strayhorn walked in and looked over my shoulder. She said to me, "Miss Walters, aren't you signing up for Trigonometry?" The boys I was sitting with began to laugh and one said, "She couldn't pass that!" Miss Strayhorn said, "Oh yes she could."

On my way home that afternoon, I started thinking about what Miss Strayhorn said. I had enjoyed Algebra and if she thought I could pass the Trig class, I decided I would try. I erased



Laura Walter Sadler

whatever math class I had signed up for and wrote in "Trigonometry." I was the only girl in the class and found it easier than Algebra. I continued to take classes in math until I had a minor.

These two subjects, English and Math, along with my other minor, Health and Physical Education, prepared me to teach wherever my husband, George "Beaver" Sadler, got a coaching job. Wherever my husband was offered a coaching job, a teaching job was always there for me. George and I continued to teach and coach all sports at every level – elementary, high school and college. We were so very fortunate to have had the wonderful teachers and coaches at Western Kentucky State Teacher's College.



Dr. Gordon Wilson



Miss Elizabeth Strayhorn

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RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Students find funding opportunities through Office of Research

By Lynn Minton ('96, '04, '14)

Student research projects are an important component of the WKU experience, and many students have received financial support for these creative endeavors through the WKU Office of Research. With topics ranging from "Mathematical Models in Wound Healing," to "Challenges of Living With HIV/AIDS," to "The Perception of Artistic Fusion Across Cultures," more than 350 student projects were highlighted at the 45th Student Research Conference held at WKU on March 29, 2015.

A number of these student projects received funding from a Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement (FUSE) Grant from the Office of Research. FUSE Grants are designed to support undergraduate students' intellectual development by providing a mechanism to promote active research, creative and scholarly activities or artistic performances to expand learning beyond the classroom.

FUSE funding allows artists, caregivers, scientists, mathematicians and other future professionals to explore innovative opportunities as they work hand-in-hand

with a faculty member on original research projects. Students' research opens a world of opportunities as they graduate from WKU and move on to fulfill their dreams.

Jade Primicias, a senior English and Dance major from Cordova, Tenn., was able to take a closer look at how international artists have influenced dance companies throughout the United States and Great Britain, with diversity influencing many areas in making creative breakthroughs by experimenting with new techniques.

"The research process for this project has been an outstanding learning experience," Primicias said. "I have been incredibly lucky to have had the opportunities to study and perform in different parts of the U.K. and the U.S. I realize now how vast the world of dance truly is."

Hannah Pennington, a senior Biology and Chemistry major from Union, Ky., plans to work one day as a pediatric oncologist in both a clinical and research setting. She is currently studying the use of mathematical models to predict the wound healing process. Through

her research, she is indirectly learning about tumor growth in cancer by studying the process of wound healing, since the biochemistry of the two processes is similar.

Trevor Davis, a senior Health Care Administration major from Louisville, Ky., plans to work in a skilled nursing or assisted living facility after he graduates. Davis received two FUSE grants to complete his international research. The first grant identified perceptions and challenges that people living with HIV/AIDS experience in Tanzania. The second FUSE grant is being used to better understand the perceptions of and stereotypes about HIV/AIDS that are held by older adults living in long-term care facilities.

Davis realized that more than half of those living with HIV in the United States are over the age of 50, and not much research exists on our older population's perception of living with HIV/AIDS. "Conducting research in Tanzania was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I am fortunate to have had," Davis said. "I was able to experience and witness the hardships of those living with HIV/AIDS first hand. My research project empowers Tanzanians living with HIV/AIDS as their stories and voices are shared with the global community."



FUSION OF ART FORMS ACROSS THE WORLD: EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

JADE PRIMICIAS

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE
CLIFTON KEETER BROWN FACULTY ADVISOR

ABSTRACT [ART]

Artists in the dance world are more experimenting, more and more with collage, with installation and site-specific dance, but audience reception of the type of work is divergent from country to country, and even from place to place within one nation. The programmatic differences between the UK and the US may explain the rift between the types of contemporary dance that are popular in each of the countries. In America, both students and faculty artists who are making breakthroughs and experimenting with new techniques, while many talented, sophisticated cities are not as progressive in nature due to less exposure to the diversity and innovation on the scene. Due to London's role as a world leader in the arts, and its close proximity to the entirety of the UK, more avant-garde artists are especially common throughout the nation.

INTRODUCING AMERICA AND BRITAIN

Contemporary dance continues to grow more prominent in the public eye, contemporary dance has come to be an integral part of the dance culture in both the United States and Great Britain. The effort to understand the modern contemporary dance culture and its role in the lives of the people in each country is a complex one. The United States began producing contemporary dance through pioneers like Alvin Ailey and Paul Taylor at an earlier time. This rapidly evolving genre is more heavily prevalent in modern British culture, and is a seemingly more progressive one.



Clifton Keeter Brown, professor of English, and Jade Primicias, senior English and Dance major, performed a contemporary dance piece in London, UK.



Clifton Keeter Brown, professor of English, and Jade Primicias, senior English and Dance major, performed a contemporary dance piece in London, UK.



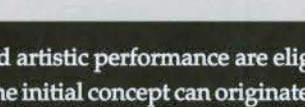
Clifton Keeter Brown, professor of English, and Jade Primicias, senior English and Dance major, performed a contemporary dance piece in London, UK.



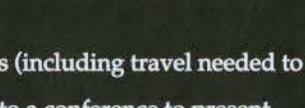
Clifton Keeter Brown, professor of English, and Jade Primicias, senior English and Dance major, performed a contemporary dance piece in London, UK.



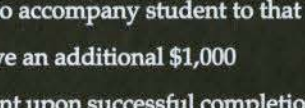
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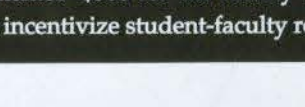
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IS AMERICA REALLY STUCK IN THE '90S?

Contemporary dance has evolved and is thriving, and since its mid-twentieth century beginnings, the presence of contemporary dance on the modern stage is not an all-time high, but more so now than ever. This genre of dance that would once be considered "avant-garde" is now a mainstream form of performance. Because it's not as common to see Americans create this type of progressive work, there is a British notion that American contemporary dance is "stuck in the nineties." Let's change that!

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RESEARCH

CREATE

ENGAGE

About FUSE Grants:

All areas of research, creative activity and artistic performance are eligible for FUSE support. Projects must be student-initiated, although the initial concept can originate from a faculty mentor.

The award provides:

Up to \$3,000 that can be used as follows:

- \$1,000 for project-related expenses (including travel needed to carry out research)
- Up to \$1,000 for student to travel to a conference to present
- Up to \$1,000 for faculty member to accompany student to that conference
- International FUSE projects receive an additional \$1,000

In addition, \$500 is awarded to the student upon successful completion of the project, as well as \$1,000 to the department of the faculty mentor—\$500 for the faculty member's professional development and \$500 for the department to incentivize student-faculty research.

Adventures of the



**Verizon Center
Washington, D.C.**
March 2015
Chad Davis ('99), Thatcher Davis, Debbie Casalengo,
Coby Casalengo, Roger Casalengo ('91), Courtney
Lee ('08) and Ed Bracken ('87)



**Ruins of St. Paul's
Macau, China**
July 2014
Rebecca Schaefer ('11)



Nichter Wedding in Pleasant Hill, Oregon
August 2014
Standing: Jerry Hagan ('76), Sharon (Savage) Hagan ('76), Keith Mefford ('85),
Catherine Melvin ('07), Lauren Sanchez ('07), Ellen (Hagan) Nichter
Kirsten Wohadlo ('11), Marty Nash ('11), Heather (Lewis)
Becht ('07), Shaun Nichter ('08), Kenny Becht ('08), Jon Hall ('08), Vonnice
Becht ('10), Elizabeth (Peterson) Hall ('08), Jim Thomason ('82) and Rachel
(Flener) Thomason ('00, '02), Emily Moore ('07),
Thomason ('08); Kneeling: Laura Gilman ('07), Emily Moore ('07),
Kim (Dacci) Sarlis ('07) and Lauren (Armstrong) Levi ('07)



Killarney, Ireland
April 2014
Mike Harrell ('71, '74)



Wadi Rum, Jordan
May 2014
Mary Owens ('06)

RED TOWEL



See all the Adventures of the Red Towel
online at www.alumni.wku.edu/redtoweltravels



Paris, France
June 2014
Hannah S. Schuster ('09)



Florence, Italy
May 2014
Josh Horton ('12)



**The Pitons
Soufrière, Saint Lucia**
June 2014
Nathan Gray ('99)



**European River Cruise from
Amsterdam to the Black Sea**
May 2014
Bill Brandenburg ('67), Wynne Watson Brandenburg
('66), Bill Heburn ('68), Bob Bush ('68),
Cathy McEwen Kerr ('67) and Randy Kerr ('73)



Ocho Rios, Jamaica
May 2013
ReNita (Lowery) Parrish ('82)

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT!

Please list names of each person in picture
and their graduation year. Please include date
and location of picture. Send pictures to:
WKU Alumni Association, Red Towel Travels,
292 Alumni Ave. Suite 302, Bowling Green,
KY 42101 or email to alumni@wku.edu.
Pictures will not be returned.

MOMENT IN HISTORY

"The Little Rock School in the Vale" WKU's Rural Training School

By Lynn Niedermeier

"Kentucky is a rural state."

With these few words, Alonzo Carroll Burton summed up the greatest challenge for WKU in the first half-century of its existence. Created as one of only two publicly supported teacher training institutions in the Commonwealth, WKU's mission was simple: to equip its graduates to be effective teachers, principals and administrators. But Burton, a veteran educator who joined the faculty in 1912, knew that many of these graduates would find themselves teaching several grades in one- or two-room country schoolhouses, and needed special skills to help their pupils succeed.

Establishing a Rural Training School at WKU—a working classroom in which student-teachers could observe a qualified instructor and practice their own teaching—had been on WKU's "to do" list since at least 1909. Finally, on Burton's recommendation, the first training school—also called the "Model Rural School" or "Rural Demonstration School"—opened in March 1920 on Morgantown Pike as a cooperative venture between WKU and the county school board. A 14-passenger bus carried teacher trainees from the Hill to the school, where they were first

supervised by Mary Watson Green and then, beginning in 1922, by Ohio County native Ethel Baker Clark.

In February 1924, the Rural Training School moved to its new home, a limestone cottage near the present-day intersection of Normal Drive and Virginia Garrett Loop on what was then the college farm. Ethel Baker Clark and a group of parents began to beautify the rough grounds with trees, shrubs and flowers, and soon the children—approximately 40, in first through sixth grades—inaugurated a tradition with a song about the pretty "little rock school in the vale."

The Rural Training School quickly assumed a significant role in raising the number of qualified teachers for the state's country schools. In 1926 alone, 500 students completed 16 hours of observation work, 35 students engaged in directed teaching, and 1,500 more visited to study its setting and methods. That year, Kentucky could count only about a third of its 12,937 elementary teachers, most of whom taught in one-room schools, as having qualifications based on at least two years of college. By 1934, however, 75 percent of the 3,154 rural teachers in a 40-county area around Bowling Green had received training at WKU.

During her 24 years as Director, Ethel Baker Clark turned both the Rural Training School and herself into local institutions. When she was not teaching, supervising student teachers or conducting demonstrations in other counties, she worked in the community and with the Rural School PTA—an exceptionally active group of mothers and fathers—to raise money for books, supplies and hot meals, and to organize class trips, educational programs and entertainments. After Miss Clark's untimely death in 1947, one of her student teachers, Mae Wilson (Mae Wilson Pedigo after her marriage in 1952) succeeded her as Director, fulfilling a long-held wish. While a freshman at WKU more than a decade earlier, Mae had written to her parents, stating, "I would love to teach there."

Pupils, who held coveted spots in an enrollment that was limited to 35-40 on a first come, first served basis, also cherished the opportunity to attend the Rural Training School. Some enrolled in the summer to secure a place for the fall; among those attending in the summers of 1949 and 1950 was a future WKU President, Kern Alexander. Under Ethel Baker Clark, Mae Wilson Pedigo, other WKU faculty and the PTA, they



1 - Rural Training School Brownie troop, 1954. | 2 - "The happiest hours of my life are those that I spend in service for rural schools," wrote supervising teacher Ethel Baker Clark to WKU President Henry Hardin Cherry. | 3 - Director Ethel Baker Clark, her pupils (1935 class shown here) and the PTA used their landscaping and gardening skills to make the Rural Training School the "loveliest place in the vale." | 4 - The playground at the Rural Training School. By 1927, the campus included a baseball field and basketball and volleyball courts. | 5 - Rural Training School pupils at work in their classroom. | 6 - Supervising teacher Mae Wilson's scrapbook contained many snapshots of her students, including this 1948 Christmas party. | 7 - Two graduates of the sixth-grade class of 1948, with teacher Mae Wilson. Three of the four graduates had completed first through sixth grades together.

enjoyed a rich educational experience that included Cub Scout and Brownie membership, music, art and physical education instruction, and excursions to places such as The Hermitage and My Old Kentucky Home.

And always, there were the student teachers. Pupils "just loved them," Mae Pedigo told the *College Heights Herald* in 1987. With a supervising teacher

juggling multiple grades, the children benefited from the personal attention of a teacher trainee. Sometimes, recalled Mrs. Pedigo, an excess of student teachers provided each pupil with the equivalent of a private tutor. Many boys and girls, she noted proudly, "made GOOD."

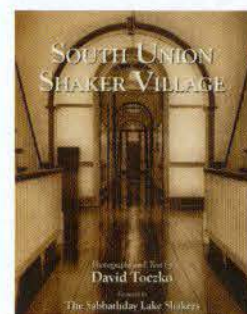
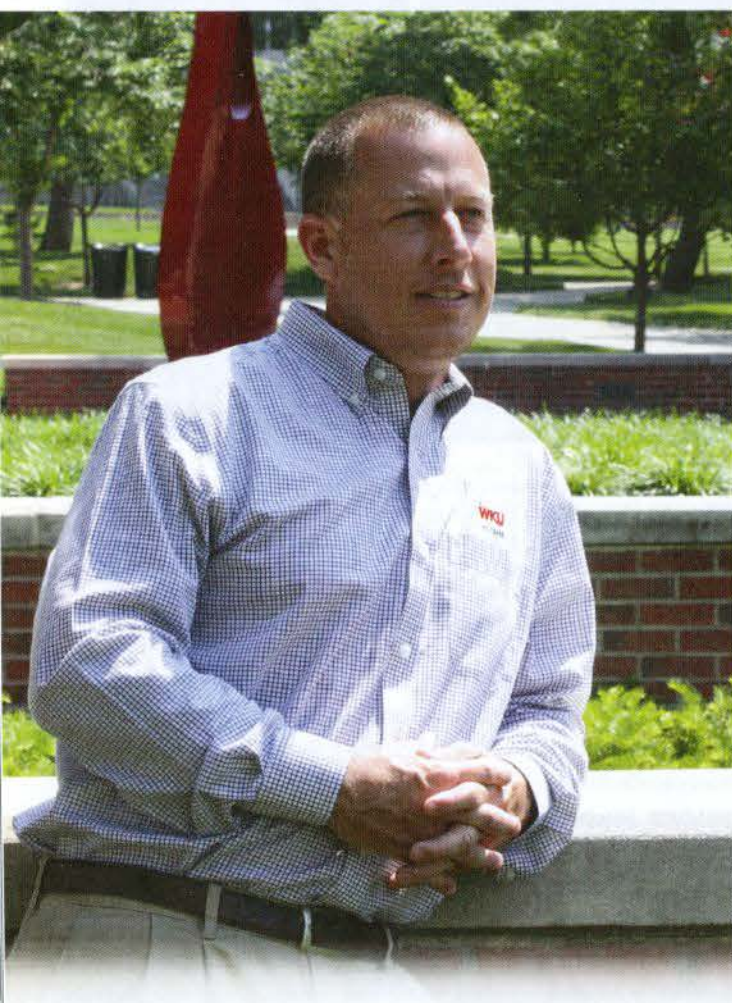
After a long-delayed admission that consolidated schools and improved roads had made the one-

room school in Kentucky a rarity, the Rural Training School closed in 1955. Teachers, parents and pupils, however, long remembered the extraordinarily close and caring atmosphere of this unique institution, where for more than 30 years they sang the praises of the "little rock school in the vale."



Thumbs-Up!

Thumbs-Up! recognizes the artistic endeavors of our talented alumni. We want to honor your creative spirit and share your achievements. Do you have something to share with your fellow alumni? Have you recently published a book, sang your heart out in a musical, or held an exhibition of your artwork? Please submit your announcement by mail to WKU Alumni Association, 292 Alumni Ave., Suite 302, Bowling Green, KY 42101 or via email at alumni@wku.edu.

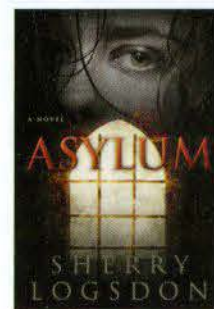


David Toczko ('81)

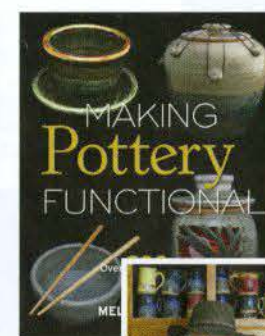
David Toczko ('81) of Elizabethtown, Ky., received two Gold ADDY awards at the Tri-State Advertising & Marketing Professionals event for his books South Union Shaker Village, released in March 2014, and Buffalo Trace - Carving the Trail to Great Bourbon, released in September 2014. Buffalo Trace also received the Judges Special Citation for technical skills in photography, and Toczko was awarded the Best in Creativity Award at the annual American Advertising Awards Show. The photographer behind Lone Dakota Photography, Toczko's work is internationally published and has been acclaimed for its richness and depth of color, texture and clarity. His books, as well as his fine art prints, can be found at www.lonedakota.com, at select galleries in Elizabethtown and across Kentucky, and at major online book retailers.



Sherry Logsdon Johnson ('87, '93)



Sherry Logsdon Johnson ('87, '93) of Eastview, Ky., has recently published *Asylum*, a work of historical fiction that culminates more than 20 years of research into the insane asylums of the early 20th century and the women who lived there. Johnson taught special education for 20 years in Hardin County and also taught English at Elizabethtown Community Technical College. She has received national recognition for her poetry and is currently working on her second novel.



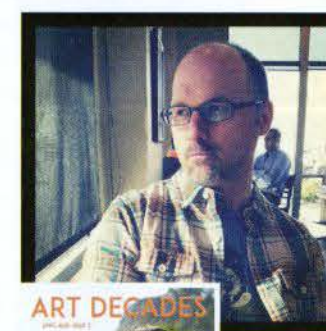
Melvin D. Rowe ('73)

Melvin D. Rowe ('73) of Sulphur, Ky., an accomplished ceramicist, has authored the book *Making Pottery Functional: 200 Pottery Items and How to Make Them Work*. The book, which is intended for the advanced ceramics student, outlines project ideas and offers tips Rowe has collected over his 45-year career working with clay. For more information and to purchase pieces by Rowe, visit www.potteryrowe.com.



Jeremy Richey ('08)

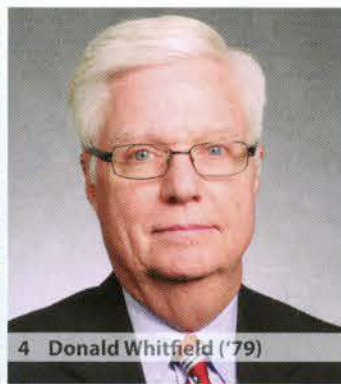
Jeremy Richey ('08) of Nicholasville, Ky., is the co-creator, along with his wife and former WKU student Kelley Avery Richey, and Editor of *Art Decades*, a quarterly print publication that features critical, historical and personal articles on a variety of topics including film, music, fashion and beyond. *Art Decades* also features exclusive interviews with both up and coming and established artists, filmmakers, performers, musicians and photographers. *Art Decades* is available on Amazon and at www.artdecades.com.



CLASS NOTES



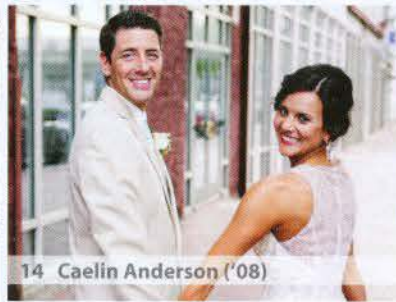
16 Emily ('12) & Chance ('13) Ezell



4 Donald Whitfield ('79)



21 Jace ('00, '05, '12) & Brandy ('99) Lux



14 Caelin Anderson ('08)



18 Curtis Burge ('13)



8 Jill St.Claire-Wright ('98)



19 Marcus ('10, '13) & Kaitlin ('09) Harrison



15 Dr. Kelsey Johnson ('11)



2 Dr. David O. Lewis ('68)



13 James 'Jed' Kerkhoff ('05)



11 Dr. Natasha DeJarnett ('04)



12 JT Henderson ('05)



10 Jennifer Dietzel ('99, '10)



9 Chad W. Davis, MBA, CPA, ('99)



3 Cathy Dorton Fyock ('76)



6 Timothy Bischoff ('98)



20 J.R. ('14) & Rebecca ('11, '14) Nimmo



1 Dr. Don Ball ('68)



7 Michelle James ('98)



17 M. Blake Harrison ('12, '14)



5 Phil Garrett ('81)

Class Notes is a department that allows WKU Alumni Association members to update fellow classmates on significant accomplishments and events in their lives. Annual memberships are \$35 for a single or \$50 for a joint membership. Lifetime memberships are \$700 for a single and \$1,000 for a joint membership. If you wish to publish announcements in Class Notes, please submit them by mail to WKU Alumni Association, 292 Alumni Ave., Suite 302, Bowling Green, KY 42101 or via email at alumni@wku.edu.

Dr. Don Ball ('68) of Auburn, Ala., was awarded the 2015 Distinguished Grasslander Award by the American Forage and Grassland Council. Ball began work with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in 1976 when he was hired as the Extension Forage Crop Agronomist. He has served as a Professor in the College of Agriculture at Auburn University since 1988. (Photo 1)

Dr. David O. Lewis ('68) of Martinsville, Va., has joined the medical staff of the Gretna Emergency Center in Gretna, Va. He is married to Judith Paige Lewis, and he has two sons and four grandchildren. (Photo 2)

Dr. Rodney "Butch" Baker ('74) of Ames, Iowa, received the American Association of Swine Veterinarians' 2015 Howard Dunne Memorial Award. The award recognizes an AASV member who has made important contributions and provided outstanding service to the association and the swine industry. Dr. Baker joined Iowa State University in 2006 as a Senior Clinician in the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine.

Cathy Dorton Fyock ('76) of Louisville, Ky., has authored a new book with coauthors Dr. Lyle Sussman and Kevin Williamson. *Hallelujah! An Anthem for Purposeful Work* is a leadership parable offering strategies to engage the hearts and minds of employees in order to build high performance teams. To learn more about the book, visit www.HallelujahTheBook.com. (Photo 3)

G. Michael Murphy ('76) of Bowling Green, Ky., has been inducted into Junior Achievement's South Central Kentucky Business Hall of Fame. Murphy is Owner and President of Scott & Murphy Inc., Co-Owner and CEO of Hartz Contracting, and Owner and Chief Executive Officer of Scott, Murphy & Daniel, LLC.

Patricia Lyon ('78) of Maybrook, N.Y., was identified by *The Authors Show* as a finalist for "50 Great Writers You Should Be Reading" in 2014 for her book *Carnival Mirrors*.

Donald Whitfield ('79) of Murfreesboro, Tenn., has been promoted to Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Educational Services of America. Whitfield, who joined ESA in 2003, previously served as Executive Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer. (Photo 4)

Phil Garrett ('81) of Frisco, Texas, has been named the Technical Sales Manager with Combilent USA, a supplier to the Public Safety Land Mobile Radio Community. Throughout his 35-year career, he has designed and installed Public Safety LMR systems worldwide. (Photo 5)

Perry Jones ('81) of Florence, Ky., has retired after nine years in food service management and 24 years of service with the Internal Revenue Service, where he most recently served as the Editor in Chief of the Cincinnati IRS Compliance website. Perry plans to spend his retirement with his family and volunteering with Lions Club International.

Dr. Ken Ellis ('83) of Lawrenceville, Ga., has been elected Associate Professor of Christian Ministry and Moral Rehabilitation (Ministry-Based) at Leavell College, the undergraduate program of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Marc Francis ('90) of Woodstock, Ga., has joined Veeam Software as the Video Production Manager where he will manage all video production and post-production efforts for Veeam's Global Marketing team.

Ross Haynes ('93) of Russell Springs, Ky., has joined Lynco Products as the Vice President of New Business Development and member of the executive team where he will have oversight of the strategic direction and expansion of new business.

Dr. Juan A. McGruder ('94) of Smyrna, Ga., has been awarded the Pathways to Excellence Award from Clark Atlanta University. Dr. McGruder, who currently serves as the Director of Development for the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts at Georgia Institute of Technology, is a 1990 and 1992 alumnus of Clark Atlanta University.



Timothy Bischoff ('98) of Lexington, Ky., has been named Chair of the PBS Digital Advisory Council for 2015. Council members are selected from among key leaders at public television stations nationally. Members collaborate with and advise PBS in the development of websites, apps and other digital services that deliver trusted, high-quality public media content whenever and wherever audiences expect. Bischoff, who serves as KET's Senior Director of Marketing and Online Content, first joined the Digital Advisory Council in 2013. (Photo 6)

Michelle James ('98) of New York, N.Y., has been promoted to Vice President, 360 Consumer Marketing & Brand Strategy for BET Networks. She was recognized for her execution of cross-functional, multi-platform original initiatives and award-winning marketing strategies. (Photo 7)

Mark Robson ('98) of La Grange, Ky., is the new Principal of East Oldham Middle School in Crestwood, Ky. Robson has served as the school's Associate Principal since 2011, a position that has included supervising staff, instruction, operations and athletics.

Jill St. Claire-Wright ('98) of Bowling Green, Ky., hosted the Nail Tech Event of the Smokies in Gatlinburg, Tenn., on July 11-13, 2015. The conference is open to licensed beauty professionals, salon owners, and beauty school instructors and students. Created in 2008 by St. Claire-Wright, this nails-only trade show features demos and products from more than 30 professional nail companies and advanced hands-on workshops. Visit www.nailtechevent.com for more information. (Photo 8)

Chad W. Davis, MBA, CPA, ('99) of Leesburg, Va., founder and President of Red Rock Government Services, received an award recognizing his business as one of the fastest-growing mid-sized companies in Washington's SmartCEO's 2015 Future 50 Award program. This is the second year in a row that Red Rock has received this award. (Photo 9)

Jennifer (Sledge) Dietzel ('99, '10) of Mt. Pleasant, Mich., recently accepted an offer from Central Michigan University as an Academic Advisor with the College of Business Administration and Business Student Services. Jennifer's husband, Mike Dietzel, a former WKU Football Coach (2003-2009), has joined CMU's football program as a Special Teams and Secondary Coach. Jennifer is a former employee of WKU's Office of the Registrar and WKU South Campus. (Photo 10)

Brooke Riley Dadisman ('00) of Bardstown, Ky., has received the Daisy Award from Flaget Memorial Hospital, where she is employed as a Registered Nurse. The Daisy Award is a national award that is given to nurses who show exceptional skill, leadership and loyalty.

Travis Renfrow ('00) of Bowling Green, Ky., has been promoted to Vice President and Controller of American Bank & Trust in Bowling Green. Renfrow, who has worked at American Bank & Trust for 13 years, also recently passed the CPA exam.

Douglas Lynch ('01) of Independence, Ky., a Certified Geographic Information Systems Professional (GISP), has been promoted to Senior Professional at TransSystems, an engineering and consulting firm that provides integrated solutions for transportation infrastructure challenges.

MILITARY HONORS

Dr. Jeffery P. Holland ('78) of Vicksburg, Miss., who serves as the Director of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), was selected as a recipient of the Distinguished Executive, Presidential Rank Award. This represents the highest honor for members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) and recognizes strong leaders, professionals and scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry and a relentless commitment to excellence in public service. Holland, who also serves as Director of Research and Development and Chief Scientist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), was one of only eight Army leaders selected to receive the award this year, three of those with USACE.



Command Sgt. Maj. Sheryl Lyon ('90) of Bellevue, Neb., has been named the next senior enlisted leader for U.S. Army Europe, breaking new ground for a position that until now has always been held by male combat arms soldiers. Lyon, who has spent most of her career in military intelligence, is currently the senior enlisted leader for Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.



Brent Ditto ('02) of Elizabethtown, Ky., has opened his own financial planning practice, Ditto Wealth Management, in Elizabethtown, Ky. He holds a CFP designation.

Dr. Andrea Doyle ('02) of Cordova, Tenn., received her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Auburn University in August 2014. She currently works as a Personnel Research Psychologist for the U.S. Bureau of Naval Personnel in Millington, Tenn.

Holly Lewis ('03) of Arlington, Va., has accepted a position as Director of Scheduling for Congressman Andy Barr. Prior to her new position, Holly served as a Field Representative for Sen. Mitch McConnell.

BUSINESS



John Ridley ('74), Managing Director-Investment Officer, **Derek Hull ('93)**, CFP®, First Vice President-Investment Officer and **Katie Beard Stinnett ('09)**, Financial Consultant of The Ridley and Hull Financial Consulting Group of Wells Fargo Advisors, were invited to attend the Barron's Top Advisory Team Summit in recognition for their accomplishments in 2014.

"We are incredibly honored to be invited alongside other top advisory teams," Ridley said. "Our focus is now and always has been, to put the needs of our clients first and to work hard to help our clients succeed financially. We are proud to be selected to attend the Barron's Top Advisory Team Summit and look forward to continuing to build even stronger client relationships."

The Ridley and Hull Financial Consulting Group of Wells Fargo Advisors boasts more than 55 years of combined experience in the brokerage industry. All three team members are graduates of WKU, reside in Bowling Green, Ky., and are actively involved with the University and a wide range of community philanthropic causes.

Dr. Natasha DeJarnett ('04) of Georgetown, Ky., a Postdoctoral Fellow in the University of Louisville Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, has had her first paper, "Acrolein Exposure is Associated with Increased Cardiovascular Disease Risk," published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*. For her research and work on this paper, she received the 2015 Impact Award from the Cardiovascular Toxicology Specialty Section (CVTSS) of the Society of Toxicology. (Photo 11)

JT Henderson ('05) of Louisville, Ky., accepted the position of Vice President of Resource Development at Family & Children's Place, a Louisville-based non-profit that protects children and families from abuse and violence. (Photo 12)



Tucker Publishing

Based in Evansville, Ind., Tucker Publishing Group has employed several WKU graduates since the company was formed in 1999.

"From the very start we have had a strong WKU legacy," **Kristen K. Tucker ('85)**, Editor and Publisher of Tucker Publishing Group, said. "The students who have studied Journalism and Public Relations at WKU are really solid employees. They have the skills we know are necessary to do an excellent job."

Two new Tucker Publishing employees are also part of the WKU Family. **Emily Patton ('12)** has been promoted to the position of Managing Editor at Tucker Publishing Group. She previously served as Staff Writer since December 2013. **Trista J. Lutgring ('08)** joined Tucker Publishing Group in March 2015 as a Staff Writer.

"We have very high standards for our young employees, and our WKU graduates have always risen to those standards," said Tucker.

James "Jed" Kerkhoff ('05) of Lexington, Ky., a Vice President at Assured Neace Lukens, has been named a 2015 Rising Star by Employee Benefit Adviser. Kerkhoff was chosen as one of 20 to receive this national award that recognizes top benefit advisers, age 35 and under, who are making a difference in the benefits industry. (Photo 13)

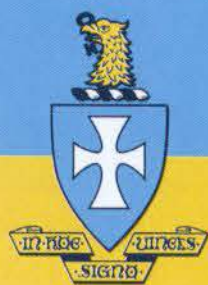
Hope Reeves ('05) of Springfield, Tenn., has earned a Juris Doctor degree from the Nashville School of Law.



Greg Dewald ('11) of New York, N.Y., is the Founder and CEO of Bright!Tax, the premier online tax preparation firm for Americans living abroad. More than seven million Americans live and work overseas, and most of them still have to file U.S. taxes.

"Bright!Tax, from its inception, exists solely to assist American expats with their U.S. tax filing obligation by providing simple, secure and reliable online tax preparation services that heretofore were simply unavailable," Dewald said.

While Bright!Tax is a virtual company except for its data center, an international headquarters will be built soon. Bright!Tax has clients in more than 137 countries.



SIGMA CHI

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Nov. 6-7, 2015 (WKU Homecoming)

Plan to attend the 50th Anniversary Weekend Celebration of the Zeta Mu Chapter of Sigma Chi Fraternity!

There will be a full weekend of events including a 50th Anniversary Celebration Gala on Saturday, Nov. 7, 2015.

For more details on hotel reservations and weekend events, contact Taylor Oaken at exzetamu@gmail.com or 502-229-7605, or visit the Sigma Chi - Zeta Mu - WKU Facebook page.

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Caelin (Smith) Anderson ('08) and Jason Anderson of Louisville, Ky., celebrated their wedding in Louisville on June 7, 2014. Caelin, a former Spirit Master and former employee of WKU, is the Associate Director for Student and Young Alumni Programs in the University of Louisville Office of Alumni Relations & Annual Giving. Jason is the Program Director and Afternoon Host for ESPN 680 in Louisville. (Photo 14)

Drew Caskey ('08) of Stanton, Neb., has been named Box Office Manager at Global Spectrum/Donald L. Tucker Civic Center at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Fla.

Alexandra Booze ('09, '10) of Washington, D.C., was recently named the Director of Communications for Washington Legal Foundation, a private non-profit that advocates for freedom and justice in Washington, D.C.

Karen Hopkins ('10) of Hoboken, N.J., is working as a Casting Director for reality TV production company Departure Films in New York City.

Dr. Kelsey (Fleener) Johnson ('11) of Beaver Dam, Ky., received her Doctor of Dental Medicine degree on May 10, 2015, from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry. Kelsey is pictured with her husband, **Travis Johnson ('11)**. (Photo 15)

Katie (Martin) Lopez ('11, '13) of Fort Campbell, Ky., has been selected as the Fort Campbell Spouse of the Year by the 2015 Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year Program. She currently serves as the Director of Military & Governmental Affairs at the Christian County Chamber of Commerce.

Emily (Borgmeier) Ezell ('12) and Chance Ezell ('13) of Lexington, Ky., were married on Nov. 8, 2014. (Photo 16)

M. Blake Harrison ('12, '14) of Owensboro, Ky., has been named the Director of Development and Donor Relations at Kentucky Wesleyan College. (Photo 17)

Curtis Burge ('13) of Lawrenceburg, Ky., received the State of Oregon's Student Employee of the Year Award and Portland State University's Employee of the Year Award. He recently completed his Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership and Policy at Portland State University. (Photo 18)

Brad Stephens ('13) of Winchester, Ky., is a Sports Reporter for the *Bowling Green Daily News* covering WKU women's basketball and high school sports.

Tyler Wittmer ('13) and Alicia (Beach) Wittmer ('14) of Bowling Green, Ky., were married in 2014. Tyler recently became a licensed minister at Living Hope Baptist Church.

Will Garcia ('14) of Louisville, Ky., has been hired as a Physics teacher at Southern High School in Louisville, Ky.

Marcus Harrison ('10, '13) and Kaitlin (Embry) Harrison ('09) of Morgantown, Ky., announce the birth of their son, Jack Porter, on April 12, 2015. He weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces and was 20 1/2 inches long. He was welcomed by his big sister, Georgia Grace, age 2 1/2. (Photo 19)

J.R. Nimmo ('14) and Rebecca (Stinnett) Nimmo ('11, '14) of Bowling Green, Ky., announce the birth of their daughter, Penelope Lane. She was born Jan. 30, 2015, and she weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 inches long. (Photo 20)

Jace Lux ('00, '05, '12) and Brandy (Trescott) Lux ('99) of Bowling Green, Ky., announce the birth of their son, Connor Brendan, on Jan. 19, 2015. He weighed 8 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 inches long. He was welcomed by his big brother, Colton, who is 4 years old. (Photo 21)

Jim Johnson of Bowling Green, Ky., has been inducted into Junior Achievement's South Central Kentucky Business Hall of Fame. Johnson, who is Owner and President of Jim Johnson Nissan Hyundai, currently serves on WKU's Board of Regents.

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IN MEMORIAM

We pay tribute to all members of the WKU family who have passed away.

Mrs. Beverly Hunt Adkins, '78	Mrs. Pamela Maas Caban	Mrs. Gladys (Allen) Fair, '61	Mrs. Debra (Willett) Hite, '95
Rev. Ben C. Alexander, '41 BU	Mr. Vincent Joseph Cahill Sr.	Mr. Danny C. Farmer, '74	Mr. James E. Hobdy, '52
Mr. Anthony Wayne Anderson, '84	Dr. Richard "Dick" Cantrell, Faculty	Mr. Scott Alan Farmer	Mrs. Iris (Davis) Hodge, '69, '72
Mr. Billy Dale Anderson, '76	Mrs. Eva R. Capps	Mr. Albert Dale Ferrell, '62, '65	Mr. James R. Hoff, '73
Mr. Eric Robert Armes, '95	Ms. Carol Carithers	Mr. John Phelps Fitzwater	Mr. Joe G. Hollingsworth
Mrs. Imogene (Young) Ashby, '50	Mr. Charles M. Chandler	Ms. Mary Flipse, '62	Maj. Carter K. Hooks, '56, '60
Dr. Jackson W. Ashley, '58, '59, Faculty	Ms. Portia (Mitchell) Chandler, '72	Mr. Carlen Gant, '49	Mr. Claude Hopper Jr., '50
Mr. Paul G. Austin, '58	Hon. Phillip A. Childers	Mrs. Bobby Cole Garrett, '43 BU	Mrs. Marie (Riney) Horton, '72
Mrs. Linda Sheets Avery	Kentucky State Police Trooper	Mrs. Rose Ellen Garrett, '92	Mr. Timothy M. Hughes, '99
Mr. Arthur G. Baebler	Eric K. Chrisman, '13	Mrs. Suzanne Hargis Garrity	Mrs. Patricia (Miller) Humphrey, '82, '86
Mr. James H. Bailey	Mr. Paul A. Civils	Ms. Katherine A. Gates	Ms. Ila Gertie Hunt, '68
Mr. Harold C. Baker, '71	Mr. Franklin Lynn Coakley, '99	Ms. Martha F. Gibbs	Mr. Michael S. Irvin, '66
Hon. Joseph Eddie Ballard	Mrs. Essie L. Cobb, '57	Mr. Ransom V. Gibbs, '71	Mr. Walter T. Ivie, '47
Ms. Cheri Yvonne Barrow, '90, '93	Mr. Garland S. Cochrane, '42	Mr. Larry V. Gilpin, '65	Mr. Kip Jackson
Mr. Ronald L. Beach, '94	Ms. Maribelle B. Cole, '78	Mr. Jonathon Kevin Gooden, '93	Mr. Jon S. Jeffries, '88
Mrs. Sara Lou Beal	Dr. Olen Taylor Collins, '70	Col. (Ret.) Wilford "Wil" Gower, '40	Mrs. Barbara R. Johnson
Mrs. Barbara Jo Beasley, '75	Dr. Bill L. Conley	Mr. Charles H. Green	Mrs. Jackie F. Johnson, '57
Mr. Joseph Beauchemin	Dr. James R. Craig, Faculty	Mrs. Billie (Holman) Griggs	Ms. Susan V. Johnson
Mr. Robert Dewayne Bell, '06	Ms. Brenda Blair Crain, '83	Mrs. Yvonne Beckham Guy	Mr. Charles Ray Jones, '71
Mrs. Eunice (Strausburg) Bewley, '59	Ms. Genevieve B. Crawford, '66	Mr. William "Tyson" Hall, '07	Mr. Justin Neal Jones, '07
Ms. Marsha L. Bivens, '77	Mrs. Mary Tate Creech	Mrs. Charlotte Price Hampton Knaster	Mrs. Diann Rutherford Jordan, '89
Dr. Sylvia (Gilbert) Bivins, '65, '71	Mrs. Maria Spugnardi Crews	Mrs. Jewell (Gross) Hampton, '62 BU	Mr. Billy B. Kinslow, '58
Mrs. Polly Neely Blalock	Mr. Leon Culpepper	Mrs. Lorna J. Hannah, '75	Mr. Edward D. Kirby
Mrs. Mozell Moore Bragdon	Mr. James Edward Curtis	Mrs. Linda (Bailey) Harlin	Mrs. Norma Susan (Jones) Lawson, '65
Mr. James M. Bray, '61	Ms. Aline (Lane) Davenport, '64, '66	Mrs. Netta (Oldham) Harris, '55	Mr. Herbert N. Lee Jr.
Mr. Revel Breeding	Mrs. Nancy D. Day	Mr. T. George Harris	Mr. Robert "Bobby" E. Lee
Mr. Hubert E. Brennan Jr.	Mr. Charles R. Denham, '52	Mr. Gordon Keith Hatcher, '95, '08	Mr. Henry "Sonny" Lewis
Mr. Joseph Mark Brennan, '69	Mr. David Dennison	Mrs. Jennie Lou (Wells) Hawk, '63	Mrs. Mary Elizabeth (Hart) Lewis, '74
Ms. Norma Dekemper Brown, '74	Mrs. Annabelle (Hubbard) Dixon, '57	Mr. Adrian E. Hayes, '59, '64	Mrs. Cynthia (Hurt) Logsdon, '93
Mr. Paul Gene Brown Jr.	Capt. James Alan Duncan, '95	Mr. Alvis "Kenny" Hays, Staff	Mr. Ralph L. Lovelace
Mr. Winn Davis Brown, '40 BU	Mr. Julian Vance Durbin	Mr. John R. Helm	Maj. Burlin Lowry, '54
Dr. Charles O. Bruce Jr., '41	Mr. Mark Eckstein	Mrs. Janice Ivey Henton	Mr. Cody Alan Mahan, '13
Hon. James E. Bruce	Ms. Helen Bacon Edwards	Mr. Larry K. Hill, '80	Ms. Phyllis A. Mahnke
Mr. W. D. Bruce Jr.	Mr. Maynard W. Elftmann	Mr. Marvin Douglas Hilton, '73, '80	Mr. Robert Lee Martin, '50 BU

Mrs. June (Stearns) Massengale	Mrs. Minnie (Pais) Molin, '45 BU
Mr. John David McAlister	Ms. Josephine (Cantrell) Moore, '41
Mr. Robert Shawn "Pup" McCormack	Mrs. Frances (Haynes) Morris, '43
Dr. Mark D. McDonald	Mrs. Sue (Frymire) Morris
Mrs. Marilyn McClure McDowell	Mr. Patrick J. Mountain, '79
Mr. Robert B. McMahan	Mr. Thomas J. Nall, '56
Mrs. Sue (Myers) McMillen	Mr. David O. Neel, '67, '68
Mrs. Linda Sue (Hagy) Meadows, '88	Mrs. Mary "Ginny" (Dent) Neel, Faculty
Mr. Jerry Willis Melloan, '67, '69	Mr. Jonathan "John" O'Connor, '72
Mr. Joseph D. Miller, '67	Mrs. Frances Conley Ogden

James W. "Jimmy" Sacca Jr. passed away on March 7, 2015, at the age of 85. Sacca attended WKU on a football scholarship and became a star of the team, but music was his first love.

He and fellow students Don McGuire and Seymour Spiegelman, along with former Westerner Billy Vaughn, formed the vocal quartet known as The Hilltoppers and recorded their first song in 1952. The group notched 29 hit singles from 1952 to 1957. They were rated America's best vocal group in 1953 and their biggest hit, *P.S. I Love You*, sold more than 3 million copies.

The Hilltoppers consistently remained among Billboard's Top Ten through 1960. With record sales in excess of 8 million copies, the group famously appeared on Ed Sullivan's *Toast of the Town* and also on *American Bandstand*.

Sacca was drafted into the Army in 1953 and was stationed in Okinawa, Japan, for two years. After he returned from the Army, Sacca rejoined the Hilltoppers, touring in the U.S. and abroad until 1960, when he went to work in record distribution for Dot. He formed a new Hilltoppers group in 1965 and recorded occasionally until 1973. Sacca later became a talent booking agent, first in Jackson, Miss., and later in Lexington, Ky. The Hilltoppers were inducted into WKU's Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 1996 and into the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame in 2013.

Sacca is survived by his wife, the former Annie Rivers Holloway, as well as three sons, 12 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.



Mrs. Oraola "Bobbie" Everett Parsley	Mr. Dennis Arthur Staples, '84
Mr. Jordan C. Paxton	Mr. Tyler Jones Sterling
Mrs. Linda Rutledge Payne	Mrs. Katherine Williams Stone Stevens
Mr. William "Sam" Payne	Mrs. Elizabeth (Clark) Stone
Ms. Patricia Bowles Pedigo	Mr. Dennis L. Stuart
Mrs. Priscilla "Sue" Pegues	Ms. Mary F. Stuedle
Mr. Tommy Morgan Perdue, '85	Mr. Charles E. Sublett, '47 BU
Mr. James F. Perkins, '70, '80	Mrs. Ruby Faye (Weller) Summerhill, '57
Mrs. Michelle (West) Perkins, '98	Mr. James E. Taft
Mr. Edwin D. Phelps	Mrs. Dana Johnson Tallman, '95
Mr. Harold L. Phillips Jr., '51	Mrs. Pauline Teeters, '63
Mr. Joseph W. Ralph, '88	Mr. Rob Thompson
Mr. Ewing Gray Rascoe	Mr. Claude E. Threlkeld, Staff
Mrs. Margie (Whiteside) Ray	Mrs. Jean Bourland Tierce
Mrs. Carolyn Shreve Reese	Mrs. Margaret (Schiemann) Towery, '43
Mr. Jack E. Reeves	Mr. Terry L. Traylor
Ms. Beverly J. Rhoades	Mrs. Mary Lou Turner
Ms. Ruby McKinney Roach, '70	Dr. Thomas Updike Jr., Faculty
Mrs. Cavella Lyons Robbins, '95	Mrs. Janice Bilik Vanlandingham
Dr. Harry Robe, Faculty	Mr. James H. Ward, '75
Mrs. Mary (Sapp) Rogers, '90	Mr. Ivan Jeffrey Warren, '70
Dr. Nelson B. Rue Jr., '51	Mr. James A. Webb Jr.
Mr. James "Jimmy" W. Sacca Jr., '53	Mr. Jimmy W. Webb
Mr. Charles Richard Scharer, '85	Dr. William A. Webb, '61
Dr. William "Bill" B. Selnick	Mr. Freddie L. Wells, '69
Mr. W. Charles Shuffield, '66	Mr. James Larry Whitaker, '64, '66
Mr. Gary E. Slaubaugh	Ms. Jean Landers Whitney, '53, '60
Ms. Mildred (Wesley) Small, '69	Mr. Gregory C. Whitt, '70
Mrs. Betty Sloan Smith, '63	Mr. David Wigginton
Col. Dewey L. Smith, '53	Mr. Gary Wilcox
Ms. Eugenia Pearson Smith, '43 BU	Mr. Ernest C. "JR" Wilkins Jr.
Mrs. Kathryn Meredith Spalding, '96	Mr. Joe Taylor Williams
Mrs. Shirley Pitchford Spears, '62	Mrs. Anita H. Willis
Mr. Claude Spillman	Mrs. Emily (Hancock) Wilson, '70
Ms. Mildred S. Sponel, Staff	Mrs. Frances Jenkins Witt
Mr. Tony Lee Stamps	Mr. William L. Woolbright
Mr. Joe C. Stanley, '89	Mrs. Celestine Landrum Wright

* Data for In Memoriam is gathered from a variety of sources and is deemed to be correct to the best of our knowledge.

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