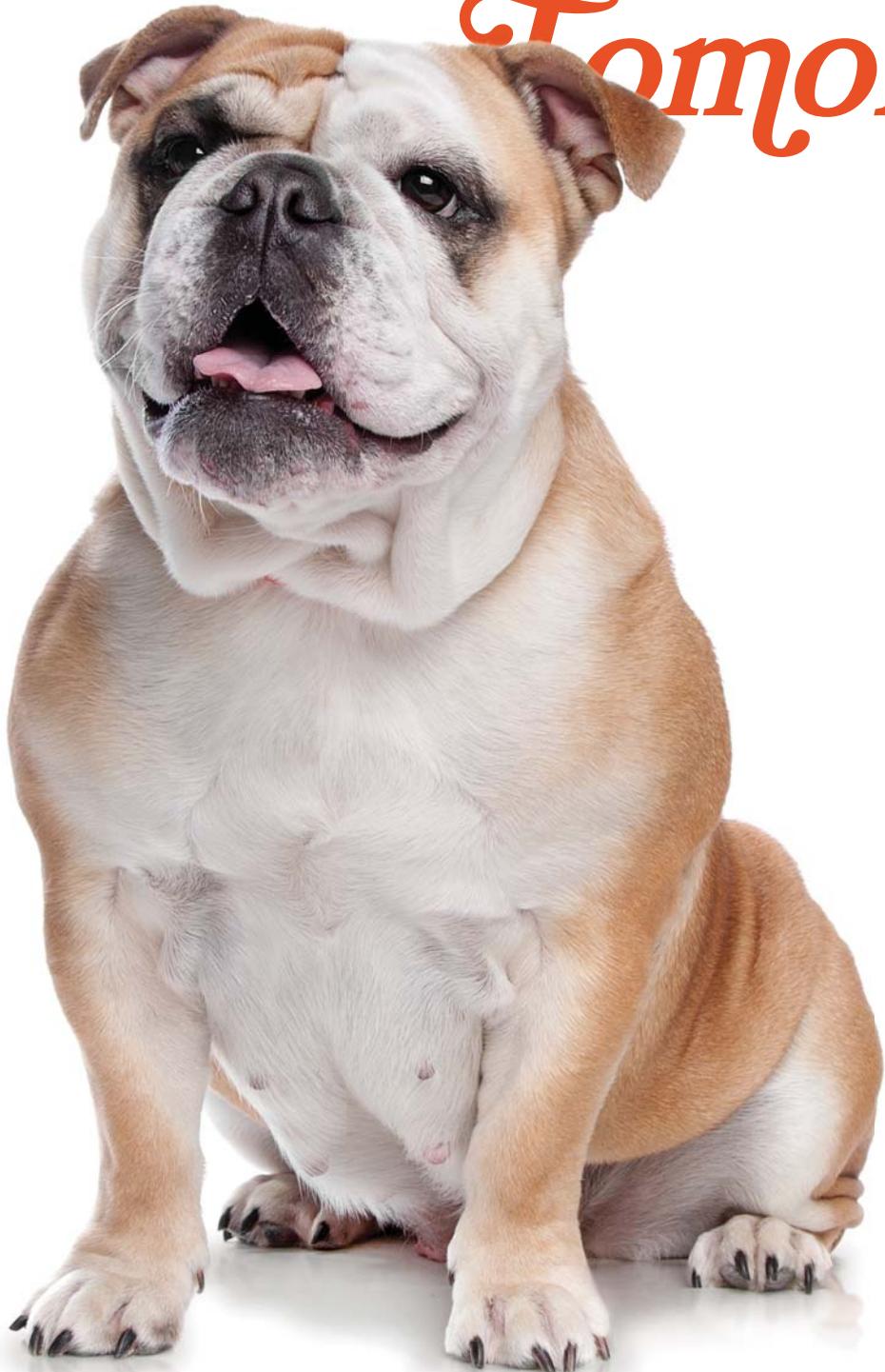


*Fall 2017*

\$9.00

# WINGATE

*Tomorrow*



# WINGATE

## *Tomorrow*

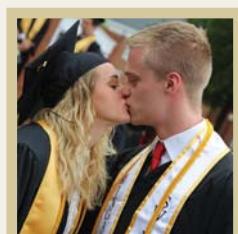
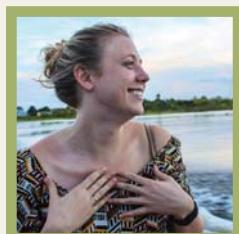
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Chuck Gordon



## Throwing shade on the first day



The start of a new school year hardly needs any additional hype. But there it was anyway: The Great American Eclipse, Aug. 21 – also the first day of undergraduate classes on the Wingate campus.

Want to make your first day of college classes memorable? Sear a retina.

Luckily, there were no reports of eclipse blindness on any of the University's three campuses. Wingate made it easy for students to (safely) experience the first solar eclipse to make landfall only in America since the U.S. gained its independence in 1776. The University supplied every student and employee with a free pair of eclipse glasses and set up solar telescopes in the Academic Quad, where the moon blocked out 98% of the sun. The Quad was packed for the viewing party, and other students and employees watched from in front of the Stegall Administration Building.

Thousands showed up in Ballantyne (98.4% blockage) for a WU-sponsored viewing party. After all, we were promised that the eclipse was an event not to be missed.

And it was. The unique experience brought a distinct buzz to campus and

provided a needed break after a hectic summer and an emotional move-in day. As a filter-like shadow gradually dimmed the afternoon sunshine, cicadas started to rev up their engines, streetlights came on and the green-and-white "Starbucks" sign on the Dickson-Palmer Center building suddenly glowed much brighter. Seeing the moon gradually eat into the sun was unusually satisfying.

As the peak occurred and the moon steadily made its way out of our view of the sun, there were nods of approval and chatter about the wonders of the cosmos. But overall there seemed to be a sense of "is that all there is?" to the afternoon. From what I've heard from friends who ventured south or west to view totality, 99% coverage makes you say, "That's pretty neat," while totality brings tears to your eyes.

A much more welcome sense of "is that all there is?" occurred four days earlier. Freshman move-in day came and went without incident, even though close to 500 more first-timers arrived this year than last.

Internally, the hype had built up throughout the summer, as the total number of new students who had sent in deposits kept rising. Eight fifty. Nine fifty. More than a thousand. The numbers were eye-opening. There was a constant buzz as it

became clear that we were going to (sorry about this) eclipse all previous enrollment records.

It also meant we were undoubtedly in for headaches come move-in day and beyond. How would we move so many through the check-in process and get all their stuff into the dorms without getting anyone trampled? How would we feed and house all these people? How would we instruct them adequately in crowded classrooms? Where in the world would they park?

Well, move-in day came and went with a shrug, and a few days later classes started with only an afternoon eclipse to make it anything other than a normal day on campus. Planning and hard work over the summer paid off big-time.

There will certainly be the odd grumble about waiting longer than usual in the dining hall, or having to park in an overflow lot. That's OK. Complaining about logistics is a time-honored college tradition. But overall it's a positive thing that more people are getting to reap the benefits of a Wingate University education. At a time when many universities are struggling, we're growing – faster than we imagined we could.

So don't throw away those eclipse glasses just yet. The future's pretty bright. ■



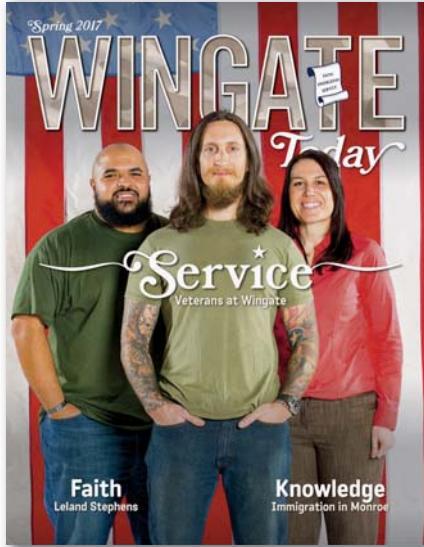


### HEADS IN THE CLOUD

Students burst through veils of colored chalk during the Blue and Gold run on May 4, 2017. The 5K run was part of SpringGate, an annual week-long series of events that give students an opportunity to blow off steam before final exams. See pages 8-9 for more on SpringGate.  
(And May the Fourth be with you.)

## LETTERS

06



## Long hair and progress

I just wanted to thank you for the quality of the Wingate Today magazine. You and your staff are to be commended. The cover of the spring 2017 magazine brought a smile to my face today when it arrived in the mail. There in the center of the cover was a young man with long hair. Why did this bring a smile to me?

When I graduated from Wingate Junior College in 1970, this young man would not have been allowed to remain on campus due to his long hair. Yes, we have come a long way. Back then, long hair reminded people of a "hippie" and a person who might protest the Viet Nam War. They might even take drugs and advocate free love. Yes, it was the hair that caused this, right.

I am so glad our country and Wingate University have matured over time. Maybe now a young man will be judged according to his character rather than his long hair. Keep up the good work; Wingate is a wonderful university, and the professors back in 1968-1970 were outstanding.

I went on to earn degrees at Appalachian State University and the University of South Carolina. Wingate College provided the foundation for me and resulted in a long career in public education that I really enjoyed. I will always remember Wingate with fond memories, and I will always appreciate what the many people at Wingate did for me.

**Gordon Correll**, class of 1970  
Salisbury, NC

# WINGATE Today

Fall 2017 | Vol. 74, No. 3

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*Wingate Today* is a magazine for alumni and friends of Wingate University. The magazine's editorial staff strives to inform, engage and inspire readers through stories about the University's contributions to the world. We encourage you to send us your story ideas.

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Rhett Brown



**Every year, scores of Wingate students volunteer during the University's annual One Day, One Dog Day of Service.**

**Question:** **"How is Wingate University contributing to the surrounding area and getting students and faculty to feel a sense of community involvement?"** – Maria Simpson Jennings '00



Wingate has a long history of serving the community. In fact, service is an integral part of our motto: Faith, Knowledge, Service.

You could say it's in our DNA. Wingate School was founded in 1896 to serve the counties of Union (in North Carolina) and Chesterfield (in South Carolina) by providing educational opportunities to young people before publicly funded education was available to all.

Since those grammar-school days – as we've evolved gradually into a university – we have provided Union and surrounding counties with a steady supply of teachers, ministers, bankers and entrepreneurs. In that way, we have contributed to the region for 120 years, providing an educated workforce that has raised the standard of living for many.

The second part of your question is a little different but does go hand-in-hand.

My first job here, back when I was an idealistic young grad with an English degree and a mustache, was to implement UCAN, a community-service organization.

We initiated an annual Earth Day celebration, staffed what was the "winter

shelter" at night and served meals there, helped start Habitat for Humanity in the community, tutored young kids and did odd jobs for older community members.

That tradition continues today. Every year, I'm amazed to see hundreds of Wingate students and employees fan out across Union County to clean out gutters, install wheelchair ramps and plant trees as part of the United Way Day of Caring. This year more than 350 University volunteers (faculty, staff, and students) joined in the fun.

That these Bulldogs gladly sacrifice a precious Saturday lie-in to make their community a better place is no accident. It's the kind of community involvement that is integral to being a Wingate student. We make such opportunities available – the annual Day of Service, the W'Engage program, the community garden – and our students jump at them.

Recently, we've been combining the two missions of educating the populace and doing hands-on service work. If we're teaching the next generation and serving the community already, why not do both at the same time?

The result is what we like to call a "laboratory of difference-making." What that means is that we provide opportunities for our students to put

their classroom learning to use in a real-world setting – one that just happens to benefit the community.

For example, Community Health Services of Union County runs a free clinic in Monroe that provides medical treatment to diabetes patients. In the past year, 45 people associated with the University volunteered or interned at the clinic. They help with real patients in a real medical setting. Such hands-on learning enables students to better retain what they learn from textbooks and lectures while benefiting the community.

Dr. Roy Blank, medical director of our Physician Assistant Studies program, is a tireless promoter of the clinic. He helped convince me that, even beyond the many volunteer hours Wingate students and employees put in at the clinic, there was a greater opportunity there. At his insistence, Wingate is now providing the clinic with a full-time physician assistant.

When the expertise being acquired in the classroom aligns with the needs of the community, it's a perfect opportunity for students, and the University as a whole, to carry out their good work. ■

**Got a question for the president?  
E-mail [c.gordon@wingate.edu](mailto:c.gordon@wingate.edu).**

# SPRINGGATE 2017



As classes wrap up and another academic year ends, students always look forward to the pressure release offered by SpringGate. A week of events, free food, fun activities and concerts, SpringGate helps students mentally refuel before final exams. Favorites this year included Bulldog Battleship, the Blue and Gold Run, the Holi Festival and a concert by the rapper Waka Flocka Flame.





## Wingate Opera alums return for 10<sup>th</sup>-year anniversary

**D**r. Jessie Wright Martin has gotten great response from alumni for Wingate Opera's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary performance during Homecoming weekend Nov. 3-4. But perhaps the best indication of the success of the program can be found in the names of those who won't be there.

**Ethan Greene '14** regrettfully declined. He's appearing in a performance of "Little Women" for Annapolis Opera in Maryland that weekend, and he apologized for missing the reunion. "I said, 'Ethan, that's exactly why we started the opera program: so people like you could have a career,'" says Martin, professor of voice and director of Wingate Opera.

The program started in 2008 with a spring performance of scenes from various operas and a fall performance of "Hansel and Gretel." This fall, about 40 alums will return to perform scenes from operas the program has produced over the years.

The alumni performances will constitute the tail end of a double bill, with current students starting things off with the second act of "The Marriage of Figaro." Show times are Friday, Nov. 3, at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 4, at 2:30 p.m. All performances will be held in the Batte Center's McGee Theatre and will close with a rousing all-cast (current students and alumni) rendition of *Brindisi*.

(*The Drinking Song*) from the opera "La Traviata."

Martin arrived on campus in 2007 to teach voice, but she soon found that one of her tasks was to start an opera program. She promptly e-mailed all music majors to see who was interested in attending a series of exploratory opera workshops and was surprised when she got 25 replies.

The program has only grown since then. "Other schools that are bigger than us fight to get maybe 10 people in their opera program," she says. "Regularly, I have 25 to 35, and I've had as many as 45 people in the program."

Martin doesn't turn anyone away, though of course not everyone gets a starring role. Each fall Wingate Opera puts on a major production – alternating between opera and light opera – and then in the spring Martin puts on a production of "opera scenes."

The result is better prepared students, Martin says. At larger schools, most of the plum roles go to graduate students, but at Wingate sometimes freshmen even get starring roles. "Over the years, some students get to sing a principle role their entire time here," Martin says. "If they're going to go off to graduate school, they're going to have a lot more experience performing."

Many of them will be back to show off their skills next month.

# Midtown Men bring music of the '60s to life

**N**early a decade ago, the original cast of “Jersey Boys” left the Tony Award-winning production. But having already developed a side gig performing first at promotional events and later at private parties, the quartet realized they wanted to keep the momentum going.

Since 2009, they’ve toured the country as the Midtown Men, performing a variety of songs from the 1960s in a high-energy show. “The only way I can encompass what we do in one word is ‘entertainer,’” says Christian Hoff, who won a Tony Award for his portrayal of singer Tommy DeVito in “Jersey Boys.”

Hoff and the rest of the Midtown Men headline The Batte Center Presents’ 2017-2018 season of concerts and shows. The Midtown Men will perform on Oct. 21 at 8 p.m. in the Batte Center’s McGee Theatre.

Musical performers this season include guitar virtuoso Leo Kottke, folk group The Wailin’ Jennys, the Julian Bliss Septet, classical-music act the American Spiritual Ensemble, and bluegrass group Balsam Range. Other acts and shows include the Mystical Arts of Tibet, and Pinkalicious, the Musical.

Hoff says Midtown Men shows encompass a wide range of music – essentially, they’re a cross-section of the ’60s pop scene. The group is likely to play songs by the Everly Brothers, the

Beatles and the Beach Boys, Motown hits, and classics from Stax Records. “We literally cover it all – as much as we can in an hour and a half,” Hoff says. “Can you imagine us trying to figure out our set list every night?”

Performing as the Midtown Men has been somewhat freeing for Hoff, who spent three years playing DeVito, a member of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, in “Jersey Boys.” Now, he and his bandmates get to be themselves – or a version of themselves – on stage.

Hoff says that comes through in the show, especially when they mix things up by varying the set list.

“We’re not just a tribute band that goes through the motions,” he says. “This is an experience. Unless we’re feeling it too, we can’t be at the top of the game where people go, ‘That was unique. That was special.’”

Show times and ticket prices vary for the Batte Center Presents season. For more information, contact the Batte Center box office at 704-233-8300 or visit [www.batteccenter.org](http://www.batteccenter.org). ■



## The Batte Center Presents

Sept. 22 @ 8 p.m.  
The Mayhem Poets

Oct. 21 @ 8 p.m.  
The Midtown Men

Nov. 10 @ 8 p.m.  
An Evening with  
Leo Kottke

Nov. 17 @ 7 p.m.  
Mystical Arts of Tibet

Jan. 26 @ 8 p.m.  
American Spiritual  
Ensemble

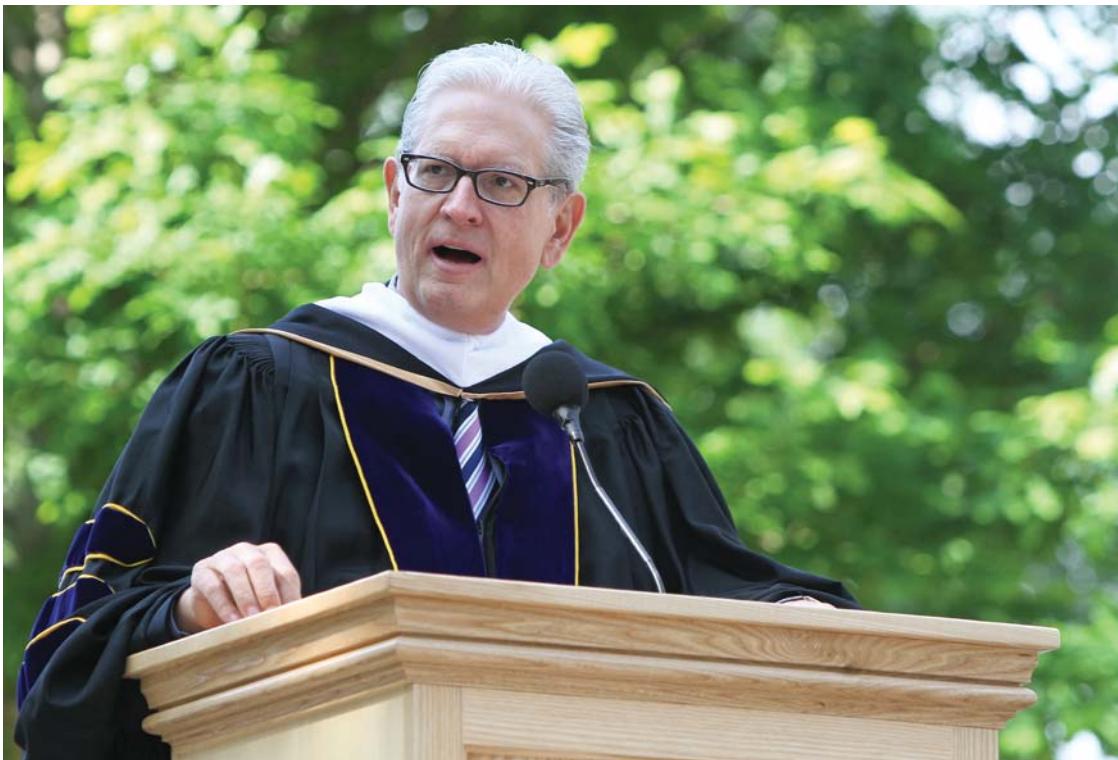
Feb. 2 @ 8 p.m.  
The Wailin’ Jennys

Feb. 18 @ 3 p.m.  
Pinkalicious,  
the Musical

Feb. 25 @ 3 p.m.  
A Tribute to  
Benny Goodman:  
The Julian Bliss  
Septet

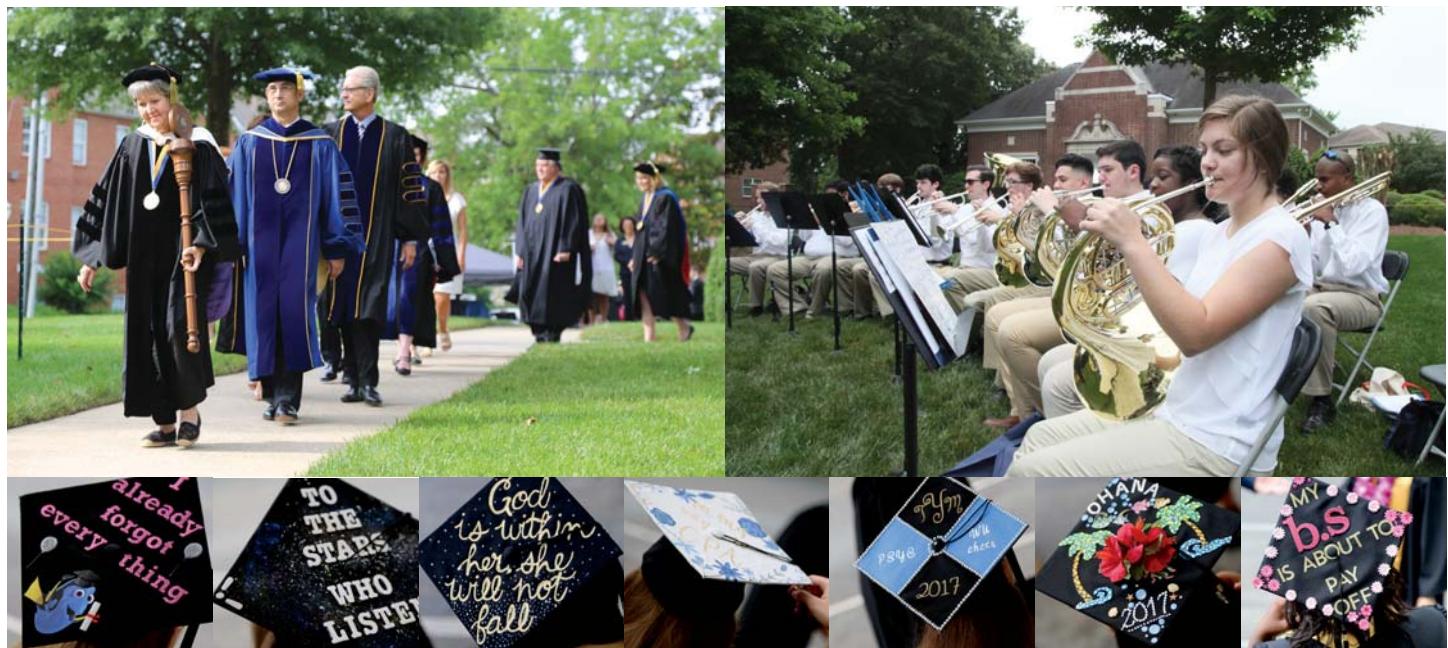
March 23 @ 8 p.m.  
Balsam Range

[batteccenter.org](http://batteccenter.org)



Saturday, May 20, 2017

Wingate made room for this fall's huge freshman class by conferring 675 degrees in the past academic year. At Spring Commencement 2017, 455 students walked across the stage in the Academic Quadrangle to receive a degree. David W. Neu, a retired pharmaceutical executive who in the past five years has become a Wingate University benefactor, gave the Commencement address. He urged graduates to be "fearless."





# A standout on the field and in the classroom, Brunworth makes helping others a priority



## LEADER

The first time Kaitlyn Brunworth went overseas to help with a service project, she made the experience her own. For years, she had helped a local youth soccer club in her native Colorado collect used cleats and equipment to send to children in impoverished areas of the world. During her senior year of high school, the club was heading overseas for the first time – to South Africa – to deliver the donated equipment and conduct soccer clinics.

"At the time, I needed to complete a high-school senior project," Brunworth says. "I was like, 'I want to hold a medical clinic while we're there and see how it goes.'"

So she did. That's kind of how Brunworth goes about life: powering straight ahead, with an expectation that it will all work out. Last fall, despite being a starter on Wingate University's women's soccer team and trying to maintain her perfect 4.0 grade-point average, Brunworth decided she wanted to go on a medical mission trip to Peru. So she started a club.

Brunworth enlisted the help of her soccer teammate Alexis Jones and Dr. Melissa Fox, assistant professor of biology, to launch a Wingate chapter of MEDLIFE (Medicine, Education and Development for Low-Income Families Everywhere). In March, Brunworth, Jones and five other Wingate students – plus Brunworth's mother – spent a week in Peru

helping in a medical clinic and building a staircase in one of the steep shantytowns on the outskirts of Peru's capital, Lima.

The conditions in the shantytowns were difficult for Brunworth to take in. "It's tough. It was hard to see all of that," she says. "But it felt good really good to know that we're getting to the root of some problems here."

Brunworth's resume would stand out even without her problem-solving volunteer work: four-time all-South Atlantic Conference, second-team All-America, three-time Academic All-America, SAC Scholar-Athlete, Geddings Award winner, Burris Award winner. She scored in the 97th percentile on the Medical College Admission Test, and at the senior Honors and Awards banquet in late April Brunworth won both the biology award and the Spanish award.

But her dedication to improving society – the local community and the wider world – makes her something special. During her time at Wingate, Brunworth was a Gateway 101 Peer Mentor, served as a head assistant in the biology lab, participated in United Way Day of Caring and volunteered at a local medical clinic.

She also traveled – a lot. She spent a month in a language-immersion program in Costa Rica. She went to Cambodia with WInternational. She even picked up a minor in international studies, naturally – just so she could earn academic credits while spending a

semester studying in Spain. Also, during winter break as a freshman, she tagged along with a friend from another university as that school's Students Serving Honduras group did volunteer work in Central America.

"I just have a million things I want to do with my life, so I've got to cram as much in as I can," she says.

## More than Band-Aids

Lima's shantytowns are expansive and growing in a country where about a third of the population is below the poverty line. "You would get on top of a hill and look at all these shanties, and then you looked out in the distance and it was just hill after hill, covered," Brunworth says.

The problem, as Brunworth explains it, is that the shantytowns are not recognized by the Peruvian government as actual communities, and therefore the inhabitants do not have access to the otherwise free health care provided by the government. But once one of the collections of shacks has a staircase and a road, she says, it becomes an official entity.

So, over spring break, Brunworth and her Wingate friends built a staircase. They also helped nurses give screenings for breast cancer and other diseases. "They would mark anybody who had a serious problem, and when our volunteer group would leave, the nurses would go back and find them and link them up with the insurance Peru already has, help them get the care that already exists," Brunworth says.

Brunworth could appreciate the attempt by MEDLIFE to make long-lasting changes in Peru. During her first foray into volunteerism – the medical clinic she set up in South Africa – Brunworth was distraught by what she considered the hopelessness of the situation. For three days, Brunworth, a nurse and other volunteers disinfected wounds, handed out pain relievers and removed stitches and casts. Brunworth was happy to do that much, but the experience also left her feeling somewhat despondent.

"It was so frustrating, because we were one little group," she says. "We were not really making a difference. That's what I learned there. The kids walking in have AIDS. There's nothing we can do. We're not curing them. It was so sad. It was so hard. That was brutal."

That's why Brunworth plans to focus on education in her next service project – whenever

*Continued on p 14*



that is. First comes medical school at the University of Colorado, where she started in August. Brunworth chose the school in part because it is close to her hometown of Littleton. It also offers a Global Health Track, which provides opportunities for students interested in international health care.

That's right up Brunworth's alley. Brunworth's travels – especially those with a service angle – have convinced her that Band-Aids are not the answer. When she next dives headfirst into a service project, she wants it to lay the groundwork for significant, long-lasting change.

"Medicine and education are such basic things in life," she says. "You need those to go on and contribute to society."

Brunworth took plenty of initiative during her time at Wingate, but she says the University was instrumental in creating an environment in which students can succeed. "I'm so happy I chose Wingate," she says. "Everything about it. The community mainly. The friends that I made. I'm so connected to professors. I can go up to Dr. Fox and say, 'Would you mind helping me start a club?' And she just says, 'Sure!'

"Coming out of here, I know that if I want to get something done, ever, I just need to get myself to the right people and show them that I want to do this. 'I want to study abroad.' 'I want to start this club.' They'll help you figure it out."

—Chuck Gordon

# 'Server' to give back in Dominican Republic



"What are you going to do when you get out of college?"

For most of his time at Wingate University, it was a question that Austin Greeson didn't necessarily want to hear.

"I really never knew what to say," Greeson says. "So for four years, my answer would be, 'Well, I'm majoring in religious studies and minoring in Spanish, so maybe I'll be a missionary in a Spanish-speaking country.'"

In August, he did just that. Greeson and his wife, Laura, moved to the Dominican Republic to work for Freedom International Ministries.

"It ended up happening, and that's where I'm headed. We're going to be there as long as God wants us there," says a smiling Greeson, a self-described "plant nerd" and a track and cross-country athlete with an affinity for construction work and a passion for serving others.

"I've grown up being a server," he says. "My parents instilled that into me."

Greeson says that for several years his family has taken time out each summer to work on Mission Serve construction projects all over the eastern United States.

"It might be houses that need a roof or a handicapped ramp or need painting," he says. "It's a way of using construction as an avenue to share my faith with the homeowners. That's what gave me a love for missions."

A Fellowship of Christian Athletes leader in his high school in Burlington, North Carolina, Greeson became the FCA captain for cross country and track when he came to Wingate, leading devotions and Bible studies. He says volunteering for United Way's Day of Caring,

working with Habitat for Humanity and helping with One Day, One Dog projects came naturally for him.

He was also drawn to the University's motto of "Faith, Knowledge, Service."

"I really felt like that was already the kind of student I was, but even more I wanted to totally embody that motto," he says.

Initially planning to attend a large, state-supported school, Greeson says he's glad a visit to Wingate in the spring of his senior year of high school changed his mind. He remembers having lunch with the track coach and Dane Jordan, minister to students, and realizing he had found the right fit.

"I knew that if I went to a big school, I wouldn't have had the minister to students come and meet with me. Then the coach got to know me on a personal level," he says. "Because of the smallness and closeness at Wingate, it allowed me to have a bigger impact and not get lost in the chaos of the numbers. It showed me I could have an impact on others around me in a big way."

## Considering other perspectives

Early in his freshman year, Greeson found his voice on the cross-country team, speaking up to seniors about goal-setting and realizing that he could make a difference. As a resident assistant his sophomore year, he says, he loved building relationships and a sense of community among fellow students. He also realized that Wingate was making a difference in him.

"Coming to Wingate, I was kind of a closed-minded student. I had my beliefs and I didn't want to hear about anybody else's. That's

how I came in, but coming out there's been a complete transformation," Greeson says. "Now, I've learned to dialogue with other people. I love being able to sit down and hear their perspective. It's not compromise, because I won't compromise on my beliefs, but it's about being able to build relationship."

He believes God will use the openness he gained at Wingate in the Dominican Republic.

"I think He's definitely going to use it, because I won't only be in a different culture but a whole different way of life," Greeson says. "Before, I might have gone in with the mindset of 'y'all are doing that wrong,' but now God is going to be able to use me because my mindset will be 'Oh, so this is the way you are doing this. Let's see how we can use this way of doing things to glorify God.'"

The Greesons spent a week at the Freedom International campus in Ramon Santana in January. One of the ministry's goals is discipleship, which is one of Greeson's strengths. The ministry needs construction workers, an area he's familiar with from his Mission Serve work, and is starting a sports program – again, right up Greeson's alley.

Education is also a Freedom International priority. The ministry has opened a school for the children living in the "bateyes," primitive villages deep within thousands of acres of sugar cane. Laura Greeson is an elementary teacher.

"It was amazing to see the impact that Freedom has had on these children already," Austin says, reflecting on their time there in January.

The couple is working to raise the financial support they'll need, with plans to move by the end of summer, and Austin is researching even more ways that he can help meet the needs he's seen on the island's interior, where electricity and clean water are scarce.

The ministry uses solar energy to provide limited power to its buildings (no crock-pots or hair-dryers allowed). Greeson would like to see solar panels and clean-water wells in the center of each village.

"Cholera is a huge problem in the Dominican Republic because of the water," he says. "Clean water and clean energy work hand-in-hand."

"Already, Freedom International is meeting physical needs with the education and meeting spiritual needs. I would love to do more about the clean water and lack of energy while at the same time introducing Jesus to them, telling them what he did and who he can be for them."

—Luanne Williams

# Finding her passion; changing her world



GLOBAL

## IMPACT

This fall, the University is hosting 30 new international students from 17 different countries. That makes 141 total international students with F1 visas studying at Wingate. Our international students represent 45 countries from around the globe.

## CATALYST

"She truly is Wonder Woman. I am constantly amazed at how she manages to be a full-time student, work in the library and be an RA, while also doing selfless things for others. She lives out faith, knowledge and service every single minute of every single day."

Courtney Bailey's nomination of her classmate Leyli Garryyeva for the University's Unsung Hero award may sound like hyperbole, except for the fact that one faculty member after the next sang Garryyeva's praises at the spring Honors and Awards Celebration.

A math major with minors in economics and finance who is headed to William and Mary to study computer science and public policy, Garryyeva won the senior award in mathematics and the Jerry and Alice Surratt Award, presented annually to the graduating senior who has made the most significant contributions in the area of international education through scholarship and service. She was recognized as a member of the University's Honors Program and a member of Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.

She started the university's successful Model United Nations Club and was commended for her research on hyperbolic geometry and on the progress in human rights as a result of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).

Even without the accolades, it's hard to disagree with Bailey's assessment of Garryyeva: "She's changed Wingate over the past four years."

Softspoken and unassuming, Garryyeva would rather focus on how Wingate has changed her, a process that she says couldn't have happened without the connections she made with her professors.

"You have these small everyday conversations that lead to big decisions," Garryyeva said. "You ask for advice, they give it to you, and you have to decide how to apply it."

She says she found support at every turn.

"I'm really thankful for all the different

offices at this school," Garryyeva says. "I was able to walk into each office, and if I asked for advice or help, I would always get some sort of help. That was very important for me, being away from home by myself."

A native of Turkmenistan, Garryyeva finished high school at age 15 and completed a two-year degree in economics and finance. She worked as an accountant in a bank for six years before taking advantage of an international program called Prep4Success that opened the door for her to study in the United States.

## Interacting with others

Curious and versatile by nature, Garryyeva took the advice of her SAT prep coach to major in math rather than business, with the idea that she could then study a range of topics, from economics to engineering. The broad approach to education also helped lead her to Wingate.

"One of the reasons why I chose a smaller school was that I would be able to interact with people from different fields," she says.

That she did. Working as a resident assistant pushed her to meet people she would not have otherwise encountered, as did her job at the Ethel K. Smith Library. Her freshman Gateway class and her English 110 and GPS 120 courses fed her interest in global issues and led her to push for a Model U.N. Club. With the help of assistant professor Jacob Wobig, the organization was underway by the fall of her sophomore year.

"We went to our first conference, and we were learning as we were going," she says. "There were just four of us, but people were surprised that it was our first time. They said we were doing amazing, and that gave us confidence."

Whether the group was tackling issues such as Ebola and water sanitation from the perspective of Switzerland or studying Mongolia's history and its role in the Korean peninsula, Garryyeva says Model U.N. was an incredible learning experience.

"You're learning about the country, the

problem, how to negotiate, about bringing an idea and implementing it," she says. "I found myself coming up with some ideas in a conversation with other people that I had not thought of before hand."

Her enthusiasm spread.

"She gave students like me the amazing opportunity to learn more about international relations, foreign affairs and world problems – not to mention the added bonus of going to New York City and sitting in the U.N. headquarters," Bailey says.

She says that over the past four years, Wingate's campus has had more political dialogues and lyceums on difficult topics – and that Garryyeva played a big role in engaging other students in global issues.

"Even though Leyli isn't the only person that brought about these changes, she was certainly a huge force behind them," Bailey says. "She sparked a passion for changing the world on our campus. So many students care now. They're engaged."

Again, Garryyeva credits "amazing faculty that are supportive and understanding" with helping her excel. She says working alongside Wobig to analyze CEDAW data was eye-opening and inspiring.

"It was very rigorous, but I learned so much about statistics," she says. "He took his time to explain the things I didn't understand and he introduced me to upper-level statistics, which made me realize there is so much more to learn."

Garryyeva says majoring in math at Wingate was the perfect choice for her.

"I absolutely enjoyed it," she says. "I realized it was exactly what I wanted to do. It was hard at times, especially the proof-based classes, but at the end of the day, when you realize you are doing something you love, you just keep pushing."

"Wingate really gave me my passion by helping me learn about myself and what I want my future to look like."

After her three years at William and Mary, Garryyeva plans to pursue her doctorate and wants to use her math background and interest in public policy to advocate for human rights.

Bailey has no doubt that Garryyeva will change the world, and will do so through her service to others.

"I don't think there's a single person on this campus who doesn't know Leyli," Bailey says. "She always greets everyone with warm hugs and smiles, she remembers everyone's names and asks about their families, and she's always there to lend a helping hand whenever anyone needs it."

"If you need homework help, she'll be there. If you need a shoulder to cry on or someone to vent to, she'll be there. Her thirst for knowledge has enriched both her life and the lives of those around her. We're all better students, teachers and global citizens because of knowing her."

—Luanne Williams

# Born entrepreneur made classes better



**DONOR**      **IMPACT**

This semester, close to 600 student-athletes are able to pursue their academic and athletic passions because of scholarships granted by Wingate University's scholarship funds.

**MOTIVATOR**



**L**ucas Cuadros' success in marketing and entrepreneurship isn't surprising. A native of Colombia and captain of the Wingate University swim team who graduated with honors in May, Cuadros comes from a business-oriented family.

His grandfather started a hardware store, which his father now operates. His mom has her own business, as do many of his uncles and cousins. Even as a school boy, Cuadros hawked candy and pens. In high school, he and his friends bought an industrial blender and a cooler and would get up at 4:30 a.m. to make ice cream, which they sold to the school cafeteria.

He's worked as a research-and-development intern for his father's business, marketed superhero swimsuits internationally and helped to build a larger market for Stone Table in Monroe.

What's interesting about Cuadros is the motivation behind his ventures.

"It's all about people; everything is about people," Cuadros says. "Businesses have the opportunity to bring people together and work for a greater cause. They can be a way to solve problems for people. If you can connect the two, you can have a business that does good for the world."

Professors say Cuadros brought people together for a greater cause in every class he took, which is one reason he was awarded the Porter B. Byrum School of Business Faculty Award last spring.

"He has been a remarkable student and a joy to have walking the halls," says Peter Frank, dean of the Porter B. Byrum School of Business. "So many of the faculty say that what he does best is to make the class better."

Cuadros said he asked a lot of questions, joked "respectfully" in class, built a close relationship with his professors and talked to all of his classmates.

"I am sincerely interested in learning. It's the best gift my dad has ever given to me – how to

enjoy learning," he says. "I don't care about the grades at all. I just want to learn, so I do a lot of reading and researching and bringing more questions to class."

Cuadros says he was only able to bring his ideas and creativity to the classroom because the faculty was so supportive.

"Feeling supported by professors is what makes a difference," he says. "In order for a student to fall in love with learning, they have to feel that support. They need to feel trusted, important, loved and cared for."

Similarly, Cuadros believes business owners have a lot of responsibility for their employees. "You should inspire them, help them grow as a person," he says.

It was swimming coach Kirk Sanocki's philosophy of growth that brought Cuadros to Wingate in the first place.

"One of the things I've enjoyed the most and learned from the most – it challenged me every single day – was swimming," he says. "I want to emphasize the benefits of combining athletics with academics. I am truly grateful that I was able to do that."

Although he says his last swimming season was a rough one, Cuadros says learning to motivate others even as he struggled at times was a life lesson he'll always treasure.

The winner of the A.F. Hendricks Award and the Innovator Award, both handed out in April, Cuadros has taken his knowledge and enthusiasm for marketing to his new job at Assa Abloy in Monroe and says he'd like to work for a while before studying for a master's degree.

Wherever life takes him, you can be sure that Cuadros will be investing in people and making every day fun.

"I believe life is the adventure that you make out of it, and that well-intentioned businesses can change the world," he says. "I live by the motto 'Leave the world better than you found it.'"

—Luanne Williams



# McKenzie made a BIGG impact



DONOR

IMPACT

Internships and student research like Trevor's are made possible through gifts to Wingate's Annual Fund. Wingate University blends in-class exploration with out-of-class application to deliver an uncommon and life-changing educational experience.

ENVIRONMENTALIST

**G**rowing up at Ocean Isle Beach, Trevor McKenzie saw the impact of environmental changes up close. "We lived on the end of the island, and we lost our house because of erosion," he says.

He brought that concern for environmental issues with him to Wingate University. In four years at Wingate, McKenzie made his mark by focusing students' attention on the environment around them. The senior math major was instrumental in starting the student sustainability organization Bulldogs Into Going Green (BIGG), which enters its third year this fall having accomplished a significant amount during McKenzie's two years as president.

BIGG played a sizable role in starting Wingate University's bike-share program, BIGG Wheelz, which kicked off in the fall and has had consistently strong ridership (the "BIGG" logo appears on the bikes). BIGG has helped refine the University's recycling program, has periodically hosted "Trash in the Quad" to educate students about how much waste each of us is responsible for, and teamed up with the Biology Club this spring to plant a community garden behind the Goodman Campus Service Center.

For his efforts in launching and running BIGG, McKenzie, an honors student who graduated in May, won a Community Impact Award from North Carolina Campus Connect in 2016.

McKenzie's interest in sustainability and the environment was stoked by an honors seminar he took with Dr. Catherine Wright, assistant professor of religion and philosophy, as a sophomore. "It was on ecojustice – how

politically and within society you see injustices from an economic standpoint as well as an environmental standpoint," McKenzie says.

His interest piqued, McKenzie readily jumped in when Wright suggested that the University needed a student-run sustainability group. Before long, he'd amassed an e-mail list of about 50 students, with up to 20 showing up for meetings.

McKenzie says he was determined for the group to be extremely active. BIGG started in the spring of 2015, and that semester the group held its first Trash in the Quad event – "there were, I think, 160 pounds of trash from the Klondike," McKenzie says – and put on a Lyceum. "I said, 'We want to *do* things,'" McKenzie says.

And "do things" they have. BIGG members had a voice in the development of BIGG Wheelz – from the look of the bikes to how long riders would be able to keep a checked-out vehicle. Also, BIGG members run the program.

A BIGG taskforce helped reshape the way the main campus thinks about recycling. "We did lots of brainstorming, lots of talking about where we get our recycling from," McKenzie says. "We found out our bin was out of date. I don't think the people picking it up knew it existed."

"The University signed a contract with a new company, using a single-stream system. It's so much easier. If things are a little mixed up, you don't have to dump it all out." That saves money and helps the environment.

BIGG was also a partner in the month-long Nile Project in March, holding a panel discussion on water.

Last semester, BIGG members set up shop

on Elm Promenade outside the Klondike urging students to sign a petition expressing displeasure over an N.C. Senate bill removing a 50-foot buffer that protects the Catawba River shoreline.

"I printed off the bill and highlighted the sections so people could read it themselves," McKenzie says. "I also printed off the name of our representative for this district, so people will know who we were sending it to. It's education, but action as well."

## Ocean engineering

McKenzie came to Wingate to play football, but a shoulder injury derailed his playing career after two seasons. That freed McKenzie up to add several items to his Wingate resume. He became a resident assistant and a peer mentor, and he worked in the IT department.

Academically, McKenzie jumped from major to major until he found the perfect fit. "I know so many different professors in so many departments, because I almost became a history major, then I thought about becoming a business major," he says. "Talk to Dr. (Edwin) Bagley – I almost became a philosophy major. I was all over the place. I took three entry-level education classes because I thought I was going to teach."

He settled on math, because he was good at it, and he added a physics minor in order to prepare himself for his next academic pursuit: a degree in ocean engineering. McKenzie had an internship at Florida Atlantic University over the summer and then entered a graduate program in ocean engineering at FAU this fall.

In his internship, he worked with the U.S. Navy on LIDAR positioning – the use of lasers for underwater location. He participated in the same internship in 2016 and continued his research at Wingate during the most recent academic year, presenting the resulting paper, "Feasibility Analysis of Hyperbolic LIDAR Positioning," during the Creative and Investigative Partnerships Symposium last spring.

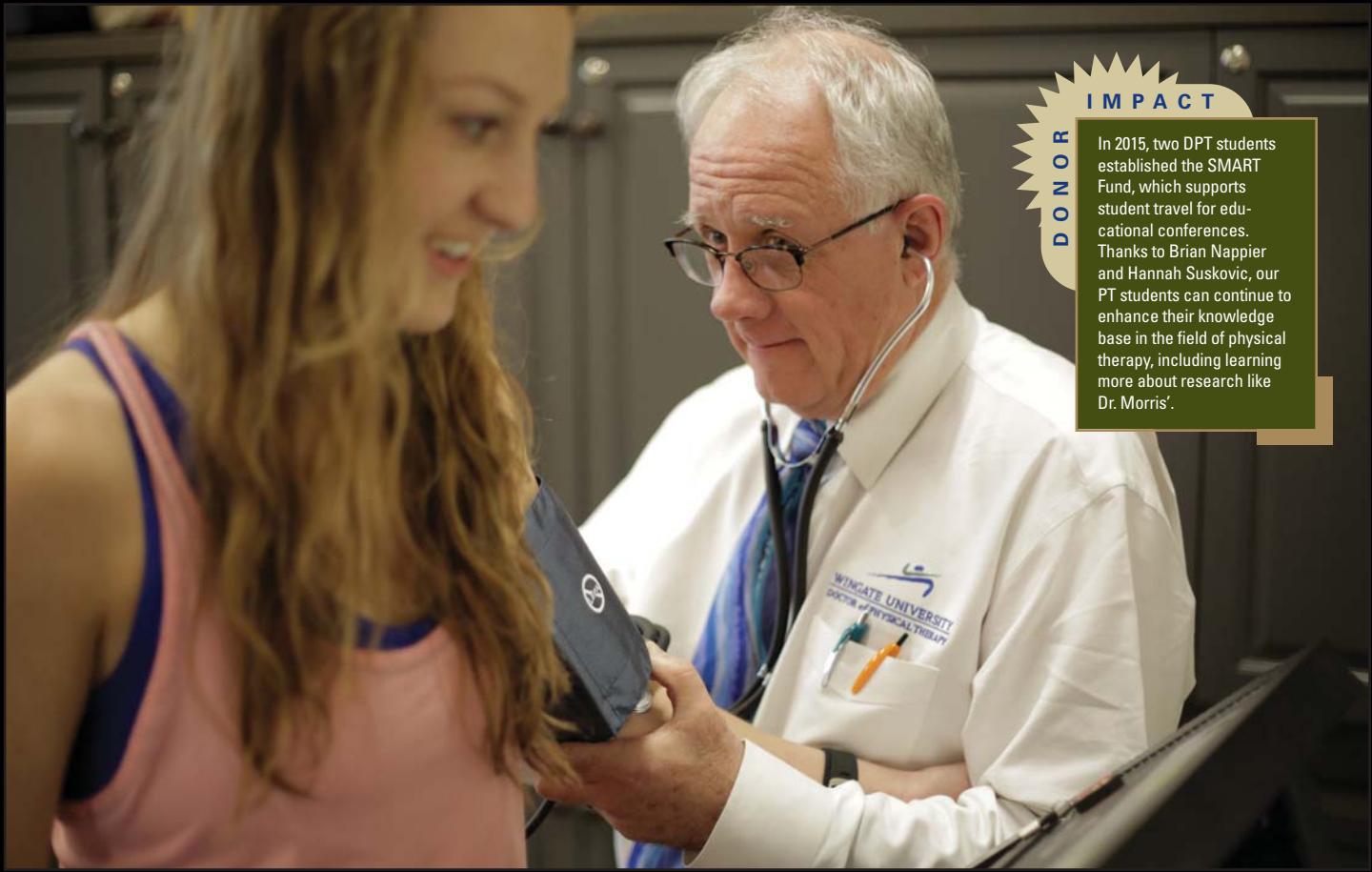
One potential pathway for McKenzie is to take his ocean engineering degree and use it to further the development of ocean wave energy, a form of electricity generation that uses ocean currents.

It would certainly fit into the sustainability ethos he says Wingate helped foster in him. "This is something I was taught in a lot of GPS classes, and just from being at this school in general: You can be on campus and worry about yourself, but you are not an island," McKenzie says. "Everything affects you, and you affect other things. BIGG, I think, is focused on that a lot." —Chuck Gordon

# REHAB *Evangelist*

by Chuck Gordon

*In key national role, WU professor spreads the word about PT for cancer survivors*



Chemotherapy and radiation are effective cancer treatments, but they often leave behind a host of side effects that can have a lasting impact on patients' lives. Dr. Stephen Morris is spreading the word about the role physical therapy can play in improving patients' quality of life.

In the late 1970s, Dr. J.F. Lehmann, a physician in New York, decided to study cancer survivors and see how well they could function after treatment. His study found that a majority of the patients had some sort of physical deficit that could be treated effectively by physical therapy (PT).

"They couldn't walk. They had reduced endurance. They had limited range of motion. They had pain. They had fatigue – all things that physical therapy traditionally deals with," says Dr. Stephen Morris, associate professor in Wingate University's Department of Physical Therapy (DPT).

There hadn't been much study of cancer rehab up to that point, and nearly 40 years later physical therapy for cancer patients is still something of a niche area. Morris is trying his best to bring it into the mainstream.

Morris, in his fourth year at Wingate, is the president of the American Physical Therapy Association's Oncology Section, the newest of the APTA's 18 specialty practice areas. His role with the section is basically to be a cheerleader for cancer rehab.

To that end, last year he co-authored a paper funded by the National Institutes of Health that laid out the guidelines for oncology rehabilitation. The report serves as a how-to guide for hospitals looking to set up their own cancer-rehab facilities.

Physical therapy for cancer patients is a large potential market, but convincing patients and the medical community that it is an advantageous – or even necessary – avenue to pursue is not easy. One big reason that rehabilitation is largely an afterthought among cancer patients is the specter of cancer itself. The relief at having defeated the disease is so great that by the time all of the radiation or chemotherapy cycles are over and the tumor has shrunk, patients mostly just want to get on with their lives. Rehab? Sorry. Life's too short.

"Cancer's such a frightening disease," Morris says. "Once you're free of it, life is good, regardless. And that's been a prevailing attitude."

But, Morris says, most cancer survivors' lives could be much better.

### Mitigating side effects

For many people, the phrase "physical therapy" brings to mind a limited range of rehabilitation scenarios. "This is what people think of: total hip replacements, total knee replacements, shoulder rehab and sports medicine," Morris says. "But there's a whole lot more to physical

therapy than that."

There are physical therapists who specialize in improving the heart, the brain and bones. Others work in pediatrics or in offsetting the typical consequences of aging, such as balance disorders, arthritis and Alzheimer's disease.

Cancer falls into the category of not-so-well-known PT specializations – even among many cancer patients. Because their focus is on getting rid of the tumor – and rightly so, since that's the life-threatening part – cancer patients often don't concern themselves so much with rehab.

But Morris says it can be effective and should be part of comprehensive cancer care.

"Anyone you know who has torn an ACL playing flag football or soccer on Sunday afternoon, they go to rehabilitation to manage very specific problems," Morris says. "And cancer survivors have specific problems that also can be better managed by rehabilitation specialists, particularly physical therapists."

Many of those problems arise because of the cure. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy differ in many ways, but both are effective because they're so potent. They're generally very good – and getting better all the time – at eradicating the bad cells. But radiation, a localized, concentrated treatment, often doesn't differentiate between good cells and bad cells; it just fires away. There can be a good bit of collateral damage. And chemotherapy involves drugs that kill cancer cells but can also damage any rapidly dividing cell, cancerous or not, beyond the tumor itself, causing a host of unwanted and debilitating side effects.

The list of side effects that go along with chemotherapy and radiation is long and ranges from mostly cosmetic (hair loss) to potentially fatal (heart attack). Patients often have trouble walking more than a block or two without becoming fatigued, their feet can swell up and ache, they can have trouble fully extending their limbs,

and they often develop "chemo brain" – a general foginess in which they have trouble remembering how to do everyday things. Some of these problems persist long after treatment has ended; others crop up years later.

"When we survive the disease, sometimes the treatment is just as bad or worse on our bodies than the disease itself," says Dr. Kevin Brueilly, director of WU's physical therapy program. "The first step, obviously, is surviving it. But after you've gotten through that, you've got to step back and think, 'What about my quality of life? What am I going to do from here, and how am I going to do that?'"

Morris's goal is to promote the use of physical therapy, which he says can mitigate many of the inevitable problems that go along with destroying cancer cells. "I guess my area really is survivorship," Morris says. "Cancer is the disease that keeps on giving."

For instance, a 70-year-old woman who has undergone radiation for breast cancer might see the range of motion in her arms restricted so that she can't raise them above shoulder height. "What's she going to do in her kitchen?" Morris asks. "She might be able to get things from only the very lowest shelf. It's not functional. ... If she's a cook, it's not really going to allow her to cook."

PT, Morris says, can help with that. The idea is not necessarily to extend someone's life but to enhance the quality of it.

"Cancer survivors tend not to exercise, either during treatment or afterward, and so part of cancer rehab is focused on helping these patients recover their strength and endurance," Morris says. "You need strength and endurance to do many of the things you and I take for granted, such as walking across the street and climbing stairs."

The 67-year-old Morris has found himself on a crusade to help cancer survivors improve their strength, endurance, motor function and much more.

## Back to school

Morris's involvement in cancer rehabilitation came about through a chance meeting during a midlife career change. Armed with a Ph.D. in exercise physiology, Morris had been teaching and doing research at Louisiana State University when he decided he wanted to do some "human work." The best way to do this, he decided, was by getting licensed as a physical therapist.

So, at age 46, he went back to school. He was the oldest student – and one of only a handful of men – in his PT classes at Texas Woman's University in Houston. For the most part, he took the inevitable ribbing in stride. When he asked why he was being nominated to present his small group's findings one day in class, on the topic of "death and dying," he was told by a classmate, "because you're closer to death than the rest of us!" He'd occasionally go to bars with the other male students, but not often. "They were all in their 20s," he says. "I spent about a month trying to stay up with them and realized, 'This isn't going to work.'"

Morris says he wasn't a great PT student – "Anatomy's all memorization," he says. "I wasn't particularly good at it." But he did have a Ph.D. and years of research experience in exercise physiology under his belt.

"My experience from a research perspective was invaluable," he says. "I automatically understood the importance of carefully evaluating a patient. You wanted to figure out what the problems are for the patient and then figure out ways to solve the problem and to show that the problem had been solved. This was second nature to me. But for the kids, it took a while to really understand this and the importance of using outcome measures. Using these measures helps us to show that we did a good job."

Morris wound up teaching physical therapy at TWU, and on a lunch break one day he ran into one of his former professors, who worked at MD Anderson Cancer

Hospital, a world-renowned facility down the street from TWU. She persuaded Morris to work weekends at MD Anderson, treating patients in the ICU and on the surgical floor. After four years, he was hired full time to both treat patients and to direct the research efforts of the Rehabilitation Department.

Morris later spent a couple of years at St. Jude Children's Hospital, as director of rehabilitation services, and it was there that he got to experience the real menace that cancer can be: the changes that cancer cures can cause both during treatment and after treatment has been completed.

Morris says that "rates of obesity are very high" among survivors of childhood lymphomas. "These kids would say, 'I've been to hell and back. I'm going to do as I damn well please,'" Morris says. "It's something we can't completely understand, because we haven't walked in their steps."

One drug, doxorubicin, is very effective in treating a variety of cancers, including childhood cancers, but could be altering molecules in a deliberate way that creates problems later in life. "It'll kick the butt of these cancer cells," Morris says. "But 30 years downstream, when they're 35 years old, about a third of them will have measurable heart failure – a disease that you really associate with old age."

Other St. Jude research demonstrated that some cancer survivors showed signs of frailty – another mark of aging – at a much earlier point in their lives. "So their physiologic age is more advanced than their chronologic age," Morris says. In his role with the APTA, Morris is championing their cause.

## To Wingate, and beyond

Morris was in administration at St. Jude, but he's a teacher and researcher at heart, so when Brueilly was starting the Department of Physical Therapy at WU, Morris, a former colleague of Brueilly's at

Texas Tech University, was all ears.

"I try to hire good people and then get out of the way, as cliché as it sounds," Brueilly says. "Truthfully, that's the case with him."

Brueilly calls Morris "a great teacher," but Morris's renown as a champion of oncology PT is also valuable to WU's physical therapy program. As president of the Oncology Section of the APTA, Morris travels the country and the world evangelizing about the importance of cancer PT. In February, he served as a panelist at a National Cancer Policy Forum Workshop in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. The goal of the meeting was to identify emerging high-priority policy issues in science, clinical medicine and public health relevant to the goals of preventing and treating cancer.

In 2015, Morris was asked by the NIH to be part of a group that would make recommendations about various areas of oncology rehabilitation.

"I was in a group that looked at ways of making oncology rehabilitation available to the cancer survivor," Morris says. "What models are out there? What models are useful? And then all the groups were asked to identify gaps in knowledge and where to go from here."

Most of Morris's research for the NIH report involved data-mining existing research. He contributed content focusing on two areas: determining what treatment interventions can help patients function better, and how to demonstrate that participation in rehabilitation has improved patient function.

With the report now published, it's up to hospitals and physicians to recommend rehab to their patients. If they do, the effects could be enormous, just based on the current and predicted numbers of cancer survivors. Statistics compiled by the American Cancer Society show that the five-year survival rate for patients with all types of cancer diagnosed between 1975 and 1977 was just under 50 percent. The corresponding figure for 2003-2009 was 68 percent, meaning a lot more survivors in the population. The ACS expects there to be more than 20 million cancer survivors in the U.S. in 2021.

So, from a business perspective, the potential market for providing oncology rehabilitation is huge. But for Morris, it's more about the individual.

"My background is exercise, and there's really no question about it that exercise provides lots of benefit," he says. "One of the things exercise does is just make everybody feel a little

# Dr. STEPHEN MORRIS

*Associate Professor, Dept. of Physical Therapy*



bit better, something we call quality of life.

"People are beginning to recognize, albeit slowly, that rehabilitation offers a lot to these cancer survivors. They don't necessarily need to experience pain, limited function, weakness. There's things that can be done for them."

And some studies have shown that getting, and staying, physically fit can ward off some types of cancers.

"There's good evidence to suggest that fitness levels can prevent, or limit, the risk for developing certain cancers, including breast cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer," Morris says. "If you're a breast-cancer survivor, your risk of having a reoccurrence is twice as high if you don't exercise. But often patients don't pay attention to the long-term issues. Rather, they pay attention to current problems,

such as pain, an inability to straighten out their arms or to walk around the block, a constant sense of fatigue. That's what they do pay attention to."

Exercise is also good for those who aren't yet survivors: cancer patients still undergoing treatment. "It's very limited, but there is some data to show that if you exercise while receiving treatment, you get more bang for your buck," Morris says. "But you feel like hell when you're being treated. These folks are heroic."

To make it easier, some PT clinics are employing technologies that only a few years ago might have

seemed more like science fiction. In a Canadian study, cancer patients were remotely monitored via the internet while exercising. They wore a body suit containing sensors that monitored their vital signs, and a doctor could give them instructions and monitor their health status in real time without either doctor or patient having to travel. "It's rehabilitation provided in real time but at a distance and in a location convenient for the patient," Morris says. "I think that incorporating technology is looming large on the horizon for rehab."

Anything, Morris says, to improve the lives of cancer survivors. ■

## EDUCATION

M.S. Physical Therapy  
Texas Woman's University

Ph.D., Exercise Physiology, Dept. of Kinesiology  
University of Texas at Austin

B.S., Zoology  
University of Oklahoma

## KEY PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

Director of Rehabilitation Services, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee

Supervisor of Clinical Research, Department of Rehabilitation Services, UT M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston

Professorships: Texas Tech, Texas Woman's University, LSU

Other administrative positions: Lallie Kemp Medical Center, American Heart Association

## HONORS

Student Impact Award, Wingate DPT (2016)  
Faculty Research and Scholarship Award, Wingate University (2016)

Stephen Gudas Award, outstanding publication in Rehabilitation Oncology (2012)

Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine (2011)

Tom and Tillie McDonald Fellowship (1997-98)  
Outstanding Teacher Award, College of Education, LSU (1994)

Nearly 70 research presentations given  
60 continuing education/invited talks given  
65 journal submissions published  
Three book chapters contributed

CV is 29 pages long in Word (Ariel 12pt)

# Diplomacy by STEALTH

*Fulbright puts students in position  
to change minds*

by Chuck Gordon



GEORGE BOYAN

**IMPACT**  
**DONOR**  
Not just Fulbright scholars get to travel abroad. From fall 2016 to summer 2017, 161 students traveled to 11 countries. Many of these students were able to travel abroad thanks to our Annual Fund, WInternational Program and scholarship assistance.

**D**r. Steven Hyland's first Fulbright experience was like something out of a John Le Carré novel. It was 2006, and Hyland was studying in Syria after receiving a Fulbright research award. As his time in Syria was winding down, he traveled to Lebanon to work in the archives at the American University in Beirut.

"Of course, four days before I'm about to leave, Hezbollah goes south of the border, kills a couple of Israeli soldiers, takes a couple of hostages, and then a military conflict breaks out," says Hyland, assistant professor of history at Wingate. "I had to be airlifted out by the U.S. Marines."

For three days in a row, Hyland had to report to a certain spot at the university, waiting to be whisked away from a burgeoning conflict. Eventually, his ride showed up.

"The third day they put us on these big buses," he says. "They had a gun truck in the front, a gun truck in between the two buses, and a gun truck behind us. We snaked through the city and went to the northern suburbs, halfway up the mountain to the U.S. Embassy. There, we sat poolside, waiting for the helicopter to take us to a U.S. Naval ship."

He was eventually placed on a Chinook helicopter. "We were only allowed to bring a small suitcase. I left behind books, I left behind clothes, stuff like that," Hyland says. "They transferred us to a communications ship, took us to Cyprus, and put us on a chartered flight to Philly. That was the end of my Fulbright."

Hyland doesn't promise such adventures to the Wingate students he shepherds through the Fulbright process these days, but he does tell them that the experience will change their lives.

Thanks in large part to Hyland's efforts, Wingate is

starting to crack the Fulbright world. Before 2015, only one WU graduate had been selected for the Fulbright. That was in 1995, when Roy Campbell went to the South Pacific Island of Vanuatu to study the effects of European colonization on the native people.

But in the past two years, three WU graduates (**George Boyan '14, Grace Krauser '13 and Tyler Lee '15**) have spent the better part of a year teaching English, making friends and soaking in the culture abroad as part of the Fulbright Teacher Exchange program. A handful of other WU students have been finalists for the award, and Hyland has pegged other potential Fulbrighters among Wingate's current student body.

Dr. Peter Frank, dean of the Porter B. Byrum School of Business, did a Fulbright in Moldova in 2012. And Hyland's experience waiting on the shelling to die down in Beirut clearly didn't dampen his enthusiasm for the Fulbright program. He is heading out next spring on his second Fulbright, this time doing research for his next book, on the "itinerant radicals" who made their way to Argentina in the first half of the 1900s.

Wingate has even welcomed Fulbrighters from abroad. Brazilians Valderes da Silva (2015-2016) and Aderson da Silva (2016-2017) each spent a year teaching Portuguese and taking classes at Wingate.

Most recently, Lee has spent the past several months teaching English in a middle school in Malaysia. He'll be returning this winter a changed man.

"The Fulbright teaching program has affected me in ways that I did not anticipate," Lee says. "It has filled me with more ambition than I ever imagined, made me more likely to travel the world, and also more open-minded."

That's pretty much exactly what the program is designed to do.

## SORT POWER

**S**eventy-one years ago, Congress got something right. Sen. William J. Fulbright had introduced a bill in 1945 proposing the establishment of a program designed to promote "international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture, and science." In August of 1946, President Truman put ink to paper to make it law, and the Fulbright program was born.

Since then, more than 370,000 Fulbrighters have participated in the program, with at least as many visiting scholars studying and working in the U.S. as Americans going abroad.

Sen. Fulbright had a grand vision for the program and for what it could accomplish. He was proposing, essentially, diplomacy by stealth. In 1967's *The Price of Empire*, Fulbright wrote that since the program had been established, he'd had difficulty explaining "that educational exchange is not merely one of those nice but marginal activities in which we engage in international

affairs, but rather, from the standpoint of future world peace and order, probably the most important and potentially rewarding of our foreign-policy activities."

That's a far cry from where – it appears, at least – we are today. The post-9/11 combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan seem as if they'll go on forever. Nationalism has been resurgent in the West. And we are still quick to flex our military muscle or impose economic sanctions when confronted with a challenge to our statehood. But Hyland says that the use of "soft power" is just as effective.

"In political science they have this thing they like to call hard power and soft power – hard power being the military, economic sanctions," Hyland says. "Soft power is using culture. And so this is the best soft-power tool in the toolbox – where you send young, talented people, like Grace, like George, like Tyler, and they get to represent the United States. It's genius, absolute genius. That's why it's been around for 70 years."

# INDESCRIBABLE EXPERIENCE IN TURKEY



TURKEY



**GEORGE BOYAN**

**G**eorge Boyan's "soft power" moment came in Istanbul, after Friday prayers. Boyan spent an academic year teaching English at Ataturk University in Erzurum, in the eastern part of Turkey. He traveled the country, as Fulbrighters tend to do. On his first trip to Istanbul, he attended Friday prayers in a mosque with friends of a friend, who were playing host to him.

"It was incredible for me," he says. "I had been to a couple of mosques before, but I'd never been to a Friday prayer."

He simply observed the service – "I'm not Muslim, so I didn't think it would be very respectful for me to take part in it," he says – and afterward the group went for "talking turn," where they simply had a respectful conversation. Boyan, a Christian from North Carolina, spoke with a group of devout Muslims, through an interpreter, about their differences and similarities.

"We had a good dialogue," he says. "That's definitely soft diplomacy. Now that I look back on it, that hopefully

impacted them as much as it impacted me."

Boyan was Hyland's first Fulbright success story. He left for Turkey in August of 2015, six months before Grace Krauser left for Brazil. Boyan says that of all the hurdles in front of him once he decided to go for a Fulbright, choosing the country to which he would apply was the hardest part of the process. Hyland helped him figure that out, went over (and over) his essay revisions, and prepped him for his interviews.

"I can't even explain how much he helped me in terms of learning about the Fulbright and gaining the confidence to go after it," he says.

Turkey wound up being the perfect country for Boyan, who majored in social studies education and had a deep interest in the Ottoman Empire. Turkey is a heavily Muslim country that has turned toward the West and had a secular government since Kemal Ataturk founded modern Turkey out of a declining Ottoman Empire in the 1920s. In the past few years, however, a strain of authoritarianism has begun to creep into Turkish politics under the rule of President Recep Erdogan, leading to an increase in the number of terrorist attacks.

"It's a great time to be in Turkey for someone who's interested in history and geopolitics and foreign policy," Boyan says. "Some people worried about me being there, because of some of the terrorist attacks and some of those things that have been going on. When I was there, there were a number of rallies and there was a general election, and so there were a lot of things going on that made it an exciting time to be in the country."

In fact, Boyan had chosen to "re-up" and go back to Turkey – an option given to many Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) – but an attempted coup a month after he returned to the United States torpedoed those plans, as the State Department suspended the program in Turkey for safety reasons. Boyan wound up working for a year for a floor-cleaning company and then left in August for a two-year master's program at New York University.

He hasn't ruled out going back to Turkey one day, maybe on a research Fulbright. "I can't even describe how valuable an experience it is to go live in a different country, experience a different culture and learn a different language," Boyan says. "I met a number of like-minded people who were interested in history and culture and language and all these different things. I have a number of friends from Fulbright who I still keep in touch with today and I will have as friends probably for the rest of my life. It definitely exceeded my expectations."



# DEEPLY CONNECTED IN BRAZIL

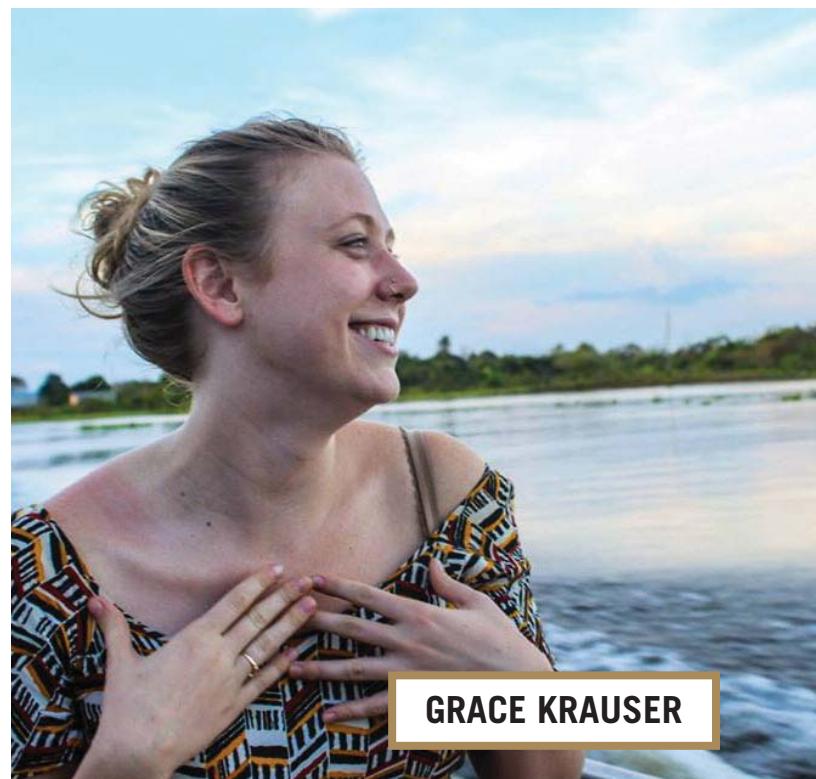
**G**race Krauser was looking for adventure and a challenge when she applied to the Fulbright Student Program in 2014. Krauser had been all-everything at Wingate – a starter on a volleyball team that won 131 games in her four years and the winner of a slew of academic awards after posting a nearly perfect grade-point average. Still, she wasn't selected for her first Fulbright choice, Colombia, and she figured she wasn't meant to be a Fulbrighter.

Krauser decided to go to graduate school and earned a Latin American Social and Public Policy Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. She'd been there barely a week when she got a call from the State Department asking if she'd be interested in going to Brazil, on a Fulbright.

Even though she didn't know Portuguese and would have to take a hiatus from the grad program, Krauser eagerly accepted. She had such a great time in Brazil that she went back this past summer for an internship.

"Fulbright is targeted at people who want to make a difference and do something cool and make an impact," Krauser says. "But by the end of the experience you realize that while you've touched many people's lives, there is no way you could impact the area you are in more than it can impact you."

During her nine-month Fulbright tour, Krauser taught English at a public university in Vitorio, the small island capital of the state of Espírito Santo, 325 miles north of Rio. Fulbrighters are on their own regarding housing, and most rent apartments or rooms. Krauser, who knew she'd need a crash course in Portuguese to get by, instead opted to live with a host family.



**GRACE KRAUSER**

"I got connected with this amazing family," she says. "I decided to live with them my entire time. I was able to really get integrated in the culture. Every day we came home from work and had a two-hour lunch together. I traveled with them some and got invited to family celebrations."

She attended a lavish wedding, traveled up and down the East Coast of Brazil and even had her picture taken with Michael Phelps at the Summer Olympics.

More than anything, Krauser feels she connected deeply with a different culture. There are two types of Fulbright awards: Study/Research and English Teaching Assistant. Wingate's three most recent Fulbright winners have all been ETAs. In Brazil, Krauser taught practical English to faculty and staff members as well as students. That's where "soft power" can come into play.

"If they were interested in political issues, I would bring up something in the U.S. and compare it to Brazil and try to generate conversation around that," she says.

It was a win-win: The Brazilians would sharpen their English skills, and Krauser would get a chance to shape the global perception of Americans.

# ROLLERCOASTER IN MALAYSIA



**T**yler Lee applied to a less-popular spot – Malaysia – for his Fulbright. Since January, he has been teaching English at a middle school. He says he has had a chance to enjoy what Malaysia has to offer.

“This program has allowed me to travel the world in ways I could only dream of before, whilst also offering phenomenal opportunities for self-reflection and introspection that are helping me to become both a better teacher and person,” he says.

There is a downside, however. Lee, like Boyan but unlike most people selected for the Fulbright Student Program, entered the program as a professional educator. He was teaching history at Monroe High School when he got the news that he was to be a Fulbrighter. Having teaching experience in the U.S., Lee has at times felt shackled by the Malaysian educational system – perhaps more than a non-educator would.

“I have struggled with motivation in a system that does not value structure or consistency,” he says. “All too frequently I find myself hoping most of my classes for any given day are not cancelled or relocated.”

He’s making the most of it, however, and feels like his ambition has been stoked by the experience. He would definitely recommend that more Bulldogs take the plunge.

“Ten months abroad can seem like a lot of time – and it certainly is – but that is the charm,” Lee says. “You have so much time to live and think in ways you never have before. You may feel one way two months in, but



**TYLER LEE**

you have eight more months to truly digest the feeling. Your brain goes on a rollercoaster of thoughts, ideas and emotions, and it is a ride that I would recommend everyone try.”

Thanks in large part to Hyland, more Bulldogs than ever are getting that chance.

## OPENING DOORS

**W**ith more than 370,000 people having been Fulbrighters over the years, it might seem like the club is not exactly exclusive. But it’s tough to get into. The process includes “local” vetting – a group of Wingate faculty and staff members grill interested students to make sure they’re Fulbright material – plus a personal statement and a statement of grant purpose, which essentially outlines what you will bring to the classroom (if you’re going for an ETA award). The essays require multiple revisions.

Applications are then sent to the national selection committee in New York – “this is the difficult one,” Hyland says – and if they make it past that stage, the application is sent to the host country for a final determination.

“Anything you do with the government, it’s

bureaucratic and hard to get through, so it’s quite an accomplishment when they do get an award,” says Jennifer Armentrout, director of international programs at Wingate, who serves on the committee determining which applications go on to the New York phase of the process.

The Fulbright program has enabled Hyland to do research he wouldn’t have been able to do otherwise, it has enabled him to travel, and it has broadened his view of the world. Over the past few years, he has been committed to helping Wingate students enjoy those same benefits.

Hyland is intimately involved at every stage of the process. He identifies students he thinks would be good candidates, encourages them to apply and makes sure they have all their ducks in a row.

“I just have to keep them interested,” he says. “I tell

every applicant who does this: We're likely going to lose. I'm going to ask you to do 15 revisions of each narrative that you have to submit with the likelihood that we're not going to win. But it's good practice for graduate school or law school! It's the only assurance I can give them."

Win or lose, the experience is valuable.

"At Wingate University we aspire to provide our students with an 'uncommon and life-changing educational experience,'" says Dr. Helen Tate, Wingate University's provost. "The stories of the students who have been impacted by Dr. Hyland's investment of time, knowledge and profound commitment to student success exemplify the best of who we are. Whether successful in their Fullbright ambitions or not, Dr. Hyland has opened new worlds of opportunity for his students that will profoundly change who they are and how they live lives of meaning long after they graduate from Wingate."

Hyland knows well the benefit of being a Fulbrighter. "Fulbright meant that I would be competitive in the job market," he says.

Being a two-time Fulbrighter is even more prestigious. In February next year Hyland will leave for Buenos Aires to research the political dissidents who made their way to Argentina between 1916 and 1966. "These are people who are committed to transformative politics – be it nationalist, socialist, fascist, whatever – who are finding their way in and out of the city of Buenos Aires, and how this connects the city of Buenos Aires to a bunch of other hubs in the Atlantic world where these activists are going." The result will be Hyland's second book.

For researchers such as Hyland, the Fulbright

provides the time necessary to do in-depth research that wouldn't be possible otherwise. For ETAs, the Fulbright opens doors.

"In the universe that George and Grace will work in – and that will be in international development, NGOs, these sorts of things – everyone understands what a Fulbright is," Hyland says. "So when you walk in the room and someone says, 'You see Grace over there? She's a Fulbrighter,' there's a certain cachet that comes with it."

"People know about the Fulbright," Krauser says. "It's not something I have to explain. The more Fulbrights Wingate is able to get, that's just value added to the school, because that's positive PR. That is saying that our students are globally minded and are interested in what's happening around the world, and not only do they have an interest in serving other countries and developing these cross-cultural relationships, but they are also interested in doing research and seeing how the U.S. fits into the world at a broader level."

But how does it benefit Wingate University? Just ask Hyland, who is the perfect Fulbright pitchman. "It's tailor-made for fundraising," he says. "It generates positive energy on campus. It generates positive public relations. It inspires other kids who are sitting on the fence or don't know that they can do it. And it creates an ethos that we can compete at the highest levels for awards."

"From a cultural standpoint, one of the things I've wanted to do since I've been here is build the ethos that we can compete. And we've proven that we can. We just need to convince more students to apply."

## VITAL DIALOGUE

The Fulbright fits neatly into an already robust international-studies program at Wingate. With W'International and various other study-abroad programs, Wingate students get to see the world unfiltered. And with Wingate's visiting Fulbrighters, not to mention a wide range of international students and professors, the University and the local community get to experience "soft power" every year.

"A lot of people, especially in this rural area, don't have access to international people in the way that you come in contact with people in a university setting," Armentrout says. "It's really a great opportunity not only for them to learn about Americans and American culture but also to teach the Wingate community about their own experience and perspectives and take out the narrative of the media. They can have a one-on-one dialogue."

In today's political climate, where immigration, terrorism and religion are front and center, that dialogue is vital.

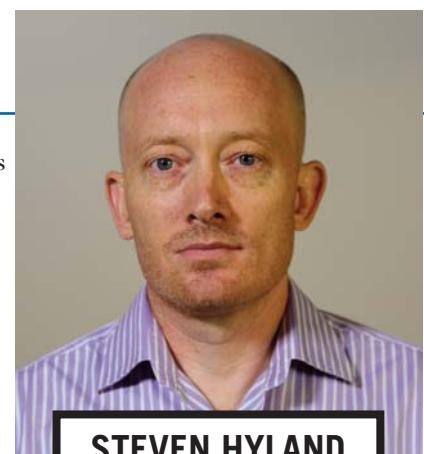
"The best way to learn about the world is to learn about the people who are from there in an informal environment like a university," Armentrout says. "That is such an

opportunity for our students who don't leave the South.

"People have their formal roles, but getting to have those informal conversations with people and learn what they're about and where they're from, that's the whole part of building a community and building a global community. That will hopefully keep us more on the understanding side of things versus the conflict and name-calling."

That works both ways.

"The three people we have sent recently from Wingate are all wonderful human beings," Hyland says. "The people of Turkey, Brazil and Malaysia have learned that average Americans are kind, are generous, are thoughtful, and they mean well. That is a powerful example we're in short supply of now." ■



**STEVEN HYLAND**

# Enrollment



# THE RACE TO



*Wingate takes big step toward becoming  
a 4,000-to-6,000-student university*

----- by Chuck Gordon -----

Years ago, well before he became president of Wingate University, Rhett Brown was in charge of student activities at the school. He organized many social outings, and he was conscious of the economics of such activities even then. ● When asked how many students could go on a ski trip, Brown would say, "You can take 15 or you can take 30, but you can't take 22." The students wouldn't always get it. "There are 15 seats on a bus," Brown would explain. "The economics works at 15 or close to 30. You can't have a half-filled bus." ● Brown made a similar argument – scaled up just a bit – when he was being interviewed for his current position a couple of years ago. At that point, the University had undergone steady growth for a few years, increasing freshman enrollment yearly while adding several graduate programs.

Brown had a hunch, later substantiated by experts, that there are “sweet spots” for schools, enrollment-wise. At one level there are colleges such as Davidson, which are fairly exclusive and are undergraduate-only. With sizable endowments and high-SAT students, they can thrive with enrollments below 2,000. In the next tier were schools such as Elon, Samford (in Alabama) and Stetson (in Florida).

“I realized they were all about 5,000 students plus, and kind of in a 5,000-to-6,000-student sweet spot,” Brown says. “That’s when I started to think that it’s not an accident.”

Wingate had already started the march above 2,000 by opening a pharmacy school, followed by other health-sciences and business-related graduate programs. At that point it became clear, to Brown, that the University would be much better off moving into the next tier. He proposed a move to between 4,000 and 6,000 total students during his interviews with the search committee, and eventually he was hired as president.

“When I said that in the interviews, I had no idea we could get there as quickly as we are,” Brown says.

After bringing in more than 700 new undergraduate students in 2016 – a figure that had been inching steadily upward – Brown figured that with some tweaks to marketing and admissions processes, Wingate could hit 850 new students this year. That would move the needle on growth a notch or two above “steady.”

The fiddling worked much better than expected. This fall, Wingate welcomed 1,175 first-year students – an increase of 62 percent. Total enrollment – including graduate and professional students – now stands at 3,600.

While many other schools struggle to attract students, Wingate is booming.

“It is a shock to the system,” Brown says, “and one that’s a little frightening, because can you handle it? Does this crash the system?”

### **How did we get here?**

Before we dive into the economic whys of the University’s substantial growth, let’s take a look at how it happened.

Higher education is a competitive business. Enrollment in colleges and universities in the U.S. has declined slowly since peaking at 21 million in 2010. There are several reasons for this, including a reduction in the number of college-age kids and an improving economy, which encourages many young people to enter

the workforce rather than further their education.

A shrinking field of potential applicants puts more pressure on institutions of higher learning to stand out. There are myriad ways to do that. Curb appeal is important. Offering classes that lead to lucrative degrees helps. Also – as we’ll find out later – being in the right place at the right time doesn’t hurt.

Wingate checks all those boxes but for years has had another arrow in its quiver: a creative and game admissions office. The University has been tinkering with its admissions process for much of the past decade. Like most universities, Wingate buys names of high-school students from marketing firms that specialize in higher education. A few years ago, the school purchased additional sophomore names, above and beyond the number it had been buying, with an eye on the 2017-2018 academic year. It began contacting those students and developed a relationship with the ones who expressed interest.

Once a student is interested enough to apply, Wingate makes the process as quick as possible. The University has a rolling admissions policy, which means that it doesn’t decide students’ fates all on one deadline day. Instead, it provides a decision on admittance within 48 hours after the complete application has been submitted, meaning the school stays in the forefront of the student’s mind.

“That timeliness and customer service is very powerful,” says Erin Preston, senior strategic leader with Royall and Co., a marketing firm that has worked with Wingate for the past dozen years. “You’re keeping that institution top of mind for that student and their family when they’re hearing from tons of other colleges across the board.”

The tweak that made the biggest difference this year was instituted in the summer of 2016. That year, the University began letting students “self-report” their vital details: standardized-test scores, grade-point average, class rank, courses taken, etc. They’d have to come up with the official goods later, of course, but Wingate would go ahead and provisionally admit or deny them based on the information they provided themselves.

“Ninety-nine percent of the time they’re right,” Brown says.

Before self-report, many students showed an interest in Wingate but for whatever reason never accumulated all the necessary materials to complete the application. Self-report meant that they could get a decision much sooner.

“When students would submit applications, a very large percentage of them would not go to their counselor and get the transcript submitted, but yet they’ve taken action to apply,” Preston says. “They’ve raised their hand to say they’re interested, but we were looking at a population where only 35 percent sent in those subsequent documents that were needed.”



As a result of the move to a self-report model, Wingate went from about 5,500 acceptances in 2016 to a little over 14,000 this year.

### Changing expectations

By February, the previous summer's target of 850 new students this year looked conservative. Brown and his staff moved the goal posts to 950, but cautiously: They were secretly wondering whether, once other schools had made their admissions decisions, many students would start asking for a refund on their deposits (which they could do until May 1).

"We thought two things would happen: Students would request their deposits back, and deposits would slow down," Brown says. "Neither thing happened."

In fact, deposits kept coming in. All the tweaks of previous years were holding up, and the self-report feature was proving to be a boon to enrollment.

The sooner students are accepted at a school, the longer they have to seriously consider it as an option. Self-report also helps the relationship get off on the right foot.

"The other major goal with this new type of initiative we've explored is shifting the conversation from nagging the student to submit their transcript, to

**The move-in process went smoothly on Aug. 17, even though Wingate has about 400 more freshmen this year than last.**

get us a recommendation, 'we need this, go to your counselors and do this' to 'We are so excited to offer you admission to Wingate University,'" Preston says. "There is something psychological that happens with a student when they feel that all of a sudden they're being welcomed into the community."

"The earlier you can admit a student and get them into your pipeline and have the counselors start to build relationships, the more likely that student is to persist and stay with you and ultimately deposit and enroll."

Of course, it's not all about simply changing to self-report.

"You've got to come kick the tires," Brown says. "What programs do you have? Who are your teachers? What's the experience like? What do the grounds look like? And we present well."

### Curb appeal

The University offers a pretty desirable product. The grounds are immaculate. Many of the buildings are new. Smiling faces are everywhere. The school offers tons of resources – free tutoring, a writing center, experiential-learning opportunities – to help students succeed.

There's another plus that is more of a happy accident: geography. Wingate is in the South, one of the few areas of the country seeing enrollment growth. It is

## Feeding the 5,000

*It's one thing to admit 450 additional students. It's another to house and feed them. Here are a few changes made to the University this fall to accommodate the record-breaking crop of newcomers.*

- The University bought and renovated the former Days Inn just off U.S. Highway 74 in Monroe, four miles from the Wingate campus (see page 40).
- Ground has broken on a new 224-bed residence hall, to be located next to the W.T. Harris Dining Hall.
- Twelve new faculty positions have been created. The student-to-faculty ratio will stay the same, and all first-year students started the semester with 15 credit hours.
- The W.T. Harris Dining Hall has been expanded. In addition, a full-service Starbucks coffee shop opened in August, and school meal-plan cards are now accepted at the Subway sandwich shop in the Levine Health Sciences Center.
- Five hundred ninety parking spaces have been opened up through the creation or reclassification of four "overflow" lots.

also 30 miles – and soon to be 30 minutes – from Charlotte, one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas of the country.

Because of population shifts, being located in the South is a huge benefit for universities.

"I see many schools wanting to [grow like this]," says David Feldman, professor of economics at the College of William and Mary and the author of the new book "The Road Ahead for America's Colleges and Universities." "But in some parts of the country, the only way that growth can happen is if you cannibalize your neighbors. In the South, it can happen because of fortuitous circumstances. Your growth isn't coming at the expense of somebody else. Your possibility of growth is not happening because one of your neighbors died."

Even so, it's not happening all over the South. Some schools are contracting. Others are considering shutting their doors (though this is exceedingly rare in the area of private higher education).

The Wingate enrollment surge is a consequence of key decisions made over the past several decades – to become a four-year college and then a University, to enter the health-sciences field, to prioritize service to the community. Self-report merely lit the fuse.

And Charlotte is getting even closer. Next year, the Monroe Expressway, a toll road that will cut through northeastern Union County from Stallings to Marshville, is set to open. The road will start at U.S. Highway 74 near the I-485 ring road around Charlotte and dump out on 74 near Forest Hills School Road, just past the University. Ultimately, once 74 is turned completely into an expressway in Charlotte, the city's uptown will be just 30 minutes from the University.

That draws the town of Wingate and the University even closer into the orbit of the 17<sup>th</sup>-largest city in the United States (see page 36). It is likely to lead to a substantial increase in residential, business and commercial development around the University over the next couple of decades.

"The state just handed us an economic stimulus package," Brown says.

### Why grow at all?

So Wingate is a desirable place in an ever-more-desirable location. That helps explain why the number of applications is so high, but it doesn't explain the number of students who have been admitted. Why grow to the 5,000-student range?

To answer that, we return to Dr. Brown's bus story. One activity bus could hold 15 students and all their gear. Once you've rented the buses, they're a sunk cost. If you rent one and then just seven students ride in it to the mountains to ski, you're wasting money.

In this analogy, Dr. Brown is a bus.

"Imagine that you are an institution of 700," says Feldman, whose area of expertise is the economics of higher education. "You have to have a college president, right? You have to have a dean of students. You have to have a fill-in-the-blank. There's a suite of administrative personnel that you're going to have somebody filling. If you go from an institution of, say, 700 to 1,500, you've just doubled the size of the institution. You don't have to double the size of the administration."

Makes sense. You can add 800 students without adding another Dr. Brown, or another library or fitness center. It's standard economies-of-scale stuff. But what about going from 1,500 to 5,000? By then, maybe a few administrative positions are added, but not three times as many.

"As an institution goes from 1,500 to 2,500 and from 2,500 to 4,000, you're still capable of economizing on many areas of the administration," Feldman says. "You're spreading those administrative costs over a larger number of students, which is driving down costs per student."

And you still don't need another library or gym. You can also fill seats in classes that don't draw a ton of students, without adding faculty. Wingate will have to add faculty

members – and has, adding 12 positions for the fall of 2017 – but it's not proportionate to the rise in the number of students.

The result, Brown says, is more money to spend on the student experience.

"I think that's a sweet spot for us in terms of maintaining a personal education where people know who you are and invest in you as an individual but still being able to scale up to offer more international travel programs, to offer more athletic teams," he says. "It's a big-school experience with a small-school feel."

"You can use that revenue to do some good things," Feldman says. "You can increase the quality of your programming. You can offer more financial aid, so that you can have a more diverse campus. If you have more revenue per student, good things start to happen. That's the holy grail."

There is a caveat: It won't quite be the same place.

"An institution of 45 hundred students doesn't feel the same as an institution of 18 hundred," says Feldman, who says such changes can lead to "eternal battles over the soul of the institution."

"A school of 14 hundred – most of the students know each other," Feldman says. "A school of 5,000, that's not true. And there's no way you can change that. What you can do is create an environment where students find their right subgroup. They find

their niche. And that becomes the small-college experience for them."

Brown is certain that students will still get that small-college feeling from a 5,000-student Wingate. And he says any minor change is ultimately for the better – and not just for the University and current and future Bulldogs. It's also good for the town of Wingate, for Union County and for North Carolina.

"We don't need another Davidson or Wake Forest in North Carolina," Brown says. "We need one that educates Pell Grant students, bright first-generation students, aspiring students, teachers, doctors, lawyers, nurses. It's the public-good part of what we're doing. Not only is it good for us and good for the individual, but it's good for our whole region. It's good for the state to have a 5,000-plus Wingate University educating the next generation of civic leaders and teachers."

"It's almost a moral imperative that this is who we need to be. Where are the middle-school math teachers coming from? Where's the next captain of the Union County Sheriff's Department coming from? Where's the next head of nursing at CHS coming from?"

"More students need Wingate, not fewer. Our job, is it exclusion? Is that the goal? Or is it to deliver something we believe in and has value to as many deserving and hard-working people as possible. It's inconsistent to me to think that the goal is to restrict access to something that individuals and our country need, and we can do it." ■



# TOWN AND GOWN

by Chuck

Gordon

*How the town of Wingate can thrive  
as the University grows*



# P

Patrick Niland loved playing *SimCity* as a kid. In the computer game, the player develops a city from the ground up, building commercial, residential and industrial zones and providing all the basic services residents need: parks, roads, schools, etc.

"I tell my friends it's like I do the same thing as an adult," says Niland, town manager of Wingate for the past six years.

These days, he's in full-on *SimCity* mode. With Wingate University growing by leaps and bounds and the state of North Carolina deep into its Monroe Expressway project, the town of Wingate is at a turning point.

A larger student body means not only more people in the town but also more buildings on an expanded campus, more town services used, and more cars on the road. It can also mean a more vibrant, attractive city with untapped labor resources – an appealing town with available workers to attract business.

There is certainly room for some symbiosis: The town benefits from the attention placed on the University, the increased number of students and the potential businesses that will follow. The University benefits from a town that is attractive to potential students and employees and offers a full range of services.

Niland envisions the Wingate Main Street of the not-too-distant future as a typical college town: brick-paver sidewalks, benches, streetlights, coffee shops, restaurants and a bar or two, places that serve as a secondary hub of campus life.

Sounds like a no-brainer: The town came into being because of the school, and it should be able to grow alongside it. But it's complicated.

### **A few challenges**

The Wingate School, named after a former president of Wake Forest College, was founded in 1896. It took another five years for the town of Wingate to be officially established, and the two have been closely linked ever since.

The town has tended to mirror the school: small, quiet, reverent. But with the University expected to roughly double in size from 2010 to 2020, the town is presented with challenges and opportunities.

"The growth is good," Niland says. "We consider that a positive,

but at the same time it also brings some challenges, because with increased students comes the need for increased services – roads, sidewalks, fire, police, that sort of thing. And our main funding mechanism is property taxes."

Therein lies the problem for the town. The University is a nonprofit entity, and thus it doesn't pay taxes on property that fulfills its mission, which is most of the property the University owns. "We're bringing in a bunch of students but don't see an increase in revenue," Niland says.

It would be nice if sales taxes helped make up for that shortfall, but there again the town is in a difficult spot. In Union County, sales taxes are dumped into one big pot and are redistributed to the municipalities based on property-tax rate. Wingate's rate is not high.

"The university students add a ton of sales-tax collection to the county," Niland says. "We don't

necessarily see the direct benefit, because it goes back to our property-tax rate. They look at our total tax value, which is half what it should be because of the nonprofit nature of the school."

In the past few years, the University has increased the amount it contributes to the town, to help make up some of the property-tax difference. The University makes a sizable, and increasing, annual contribution to the town – last year, that contribution accounted for 12% of the town's budget – and has stepped in to help the town during times of need. There are also some infrastructure projects – such as, say, a sidewalk – that the University might take care of, freeing up resources for the town to put in a sidewalk elsewhere.

Other factors, such as proximity to the much larger town of Monroe, handcuff the town in terms of revenue. Monroe offers many of the amenities students want – a Target, a Walmart, restaurants – and therefore few of those businesses feel the need to be located in Wingate. If the University were farther away, developers might come in to tap into the expanding student

# WINGATE



base. Or if that student base were much higher – say, in the 20,000-student range – that would draw developers' attention. But it's difficult for the town to attract much retail based on student numbers when much of what students are looking for can be found five miles down the road.

Still, Niland feels that, ultimately, a larger University will help Wingate break free of Monroe's shadow and become a more prosperous town. And he has been working with the University to make sure that happens.

### **Closer relationship**

Niland says that in the past few years, the town and the University have worked more closely together to make sure they're on the same page.

"When I got here there wasn't a whole lot of communication," he says. "You look at it and say, 'The University is our biggest asset in town. We have to work with them to get most of what we're trying to accomplish done.'

"We reached out to them. We had a very progressive board – we still have that same board – and they were willing to sit down and talk to the University about some of the things they wanted to see from the town."

Both entities know that it's in their best interest to grow together, and they're singing from the same hymn page. Both would like for there to be more of a "college-town feel" to the areas surrounding the University.

Work in that regard has already begun. One half of the block of Main Street that lies on the University side of the railroad tracks has been renovated in recent years. The University bookstore, Wingate Outfitters, is located there, along with a Pizza Hut restaurant. The streetlamps along that stretch are painted to match those on campus, and it's easy to picture a couple of similar blocks featuring restaurants, shops and pubs.

That's pretty much the plan. The University has a few desirable restaurants on campus, such as Einstein Brothers Bagels, a Subway sandwich shop and a Starbucks, which recently opened to much fanfare. For the town to thrive alongside the University, some of the services that students use need to be off campus.

"What we're hoping to do is a coffee shop, a bar, a restaurant, possibly doctors and lawyers offices, having a first-floor retail, second and third floor either office or residential," Niland says. "It's easier to go up than it is to go out. The higher you go up, the more value it has. We're going to try to create that Davidson feel on these two blocks. ... We feel if we can develop this block and the one heading north, that could be our 'college town.'

"I think that's where getting both our plans together and saying, we

understand we're not going to be able to tax any of these buildings that you're building for students coming in. But if there's a possibility of maybe taking that restaurant that you're going to put on campus and having that off campus to where it's a taxable property for us, citizens can use it and students can use it."

Some of that development could also fill a University need by providing housing for graduate students, particularly pharmacy, physician-assistant-studies and physical-therapy students. Currently, the majority of them live closer to Charlotte, but many have said that they spend so much time at the school that they'd prefer to live close by.

"We're trying to look into some higher-density residential – the Main Street three-story apartment complex or townhomes or condos or something that the graduate students could live in," Niland says.

Head north on Main Street, and a potential game-changer is on the way.

### **Bypassing Monroe**

Just a hair north of the University's football field, Irwin Belk Stadium, lies a construction project that could provide enormous economic benefits to both Wingates. The Monroe Expressway will start at U.S. Highway 74 near I-485, southeast of Charlotte, and cut through northeastern Union



County before dumping out in Marshville. It is expected to be a toll road that will bypass Monroe and its slow-moving stretch of 74.

The bypass is set to open next year, followed shortly by a virtually stoplight-free Independence Boulevard expressway in Charlotte. The result is expected to be a 30-minute straight shot from the University to uptown Charlotte.

"One developer said to us, 'There are only going to be six interchanges on that expressway, and yours is the only one with a college town at the end of it,'" Wingate President Dr. Rhett Brown says. "And they said that at some point people are going to realize that. If you're a 25-year-old moving from Pittsburgh to Charlotte to start a job at Wells Fargo, and you can't afford to live in Elizabeth, and you're looking for a place to walk your dog and have a burger, and this will put you 25 minutes from work once all of it's done, he said at some point development will come your way."

Now, when that development will happen is still to be determined. But Niland is optimistic that it could transform the town. "With the bypass, we've received a number of calls that we hadn't received before about land and what it can be used for," he says. "There are businesses that have said they're going to wait until the bypass is open and then they're going to look for a location in town."

"The bypass will give us something we haven't had, and that's connectability. Being able to get to Charlotte and get to 485 and everywhere that goes will open up some opportunities for us, absolutely."

Residentially, it's conceivable that subdivisions will be built on the northern side of the expressway interchange, with "senior living" facilities also a possibility. Commercially, there could be some type of large shopping area with "big box" stores, boutique shops and restaurants. Industrially, Niland would love to attract the type of manufacturing and service businesses that could make use of the University's intellectual capital. He mentions call centers – "they could take advantage of a qualified, part-time labor force that the University could provide," he says – as well as precision

**The western side of Main Street near the railroad tracks provides a glimpse of the "college town" feel the University and the town of Wingate envision.**

manufacturing, especially in the medical-device field.

"These businesses would provide a pretty good bang for your buck on property value," Niland says. "They don't use a lot of services but they add a lot back to the community. That's what we're trying to do: Attract development that doesn't continue to stress our limited resources."

And the best part is that the development can be controlled.

"In and around where the interchange is going to be there's a lot of land that hasn't been developed, so we're not worried about redeveloping it," Niland says. "It's kind of a blank slate. We can put plans in place to make sure we don't have the issues Monroe had on 74, so you don't have a stoplight every 12 feet. It's more planned development than it is haphazard development."

Of course, the best-laid plans often go awry. But Niland is glad to have the challenge in front of him.

"If someone came to me and said, 'It's your choice to decide if you want more people or don't,' absolutely we want more people. To a certain point," he says. "You still want to keep that small-town community feel. At some point it gets so big you lose that, but we're not there yet."

"The benefits to me far outweigh any negatives we have." ■

# Students glad they gave Hilltop a chance in 2010



In the summer of 2010, **Breon McMichael '14, '16** (MBA) was all set to enter Wingate University as a freshman. He'd been accepted and paid his deposit, and now he just needed his housing assignment.

Then a couple of hammers dropped: Wingate did away with his intended major, computer science, and McMichael was told that, because of unprecedented enrollment growth that year, he and 100 other freshmen would be housed at a Days Inn in Monroe, four miles from campus.

"I said, 'OK, you don't have my major. I don't have a place to live on campus in a dorm. What is my purpose in going to Wingate if I'm not going to have that?'"

Then McMichael thought about why he had picked Wingate in the first place. "The reason I ended up going was I reverted back to when I first stepped on campus when I went for my tour," he says. "Something told me to just stick through it and I was going to get a lot of knowledge, I was going to meet a lot of people, and I was going to get a lot of one-on-one help from my professors."

His gut turned out to be right. McMichael went on to earn a business management degree in four years, and two years later he'd tacked on his MBA from the University. Now a financial advisor for Northwestern Mutual, McMichael says that if he ever has children, he'll encourage them to go to Wingate.

McMichael's story is similar to that of many students who spent their first semester of college at the Hilltop outpost back in 2010. Wingate's freshman enrollment grew about 50% from the fall of 2009 to the fall of 2010, and the



# HILLTOP HALL

University needed a temporary facility to house students for just a semester while construction on Byrum Hall in Watson Village was wrapping up. Wingate leased the Days Inn and paid to have all 50-plus rooms remodeled.

Fast-forward seven years, and Wingate is again experiencing massive enrollment growth. At a time when many universities are desperate for students, Wingate is bringing them in by the truckload.

That means that, until more dorm space opens up in the fall of 2018, Wingate has had to find some creative ways to house the new Bulldogs. In addition to opening up housing in former office space, such as the Young Guest House and the first floor of Alumni Hall, and adding a bed to rooms in some dorms, Wingate decided to buy the Days Inn.

## Reservations

Crews spent much of July and August replacing air conditioners, furniture and carpet in all rooms at the newly christened Hilltop Hall. Essentially, the rooms in Hilltop Hall are brand new from head to toe.

In mid-August, about 100 first-year students moved into their new rooms at the facility, which will serve as their home until May. Some of them may have had reservations – the “I’m not sure about this” kind, not the Expedia.com kind – but McMichael and others can offer reassurance that life at Hilltop is surprisingly nice.

Within a few weeks of moving in, McMichael had found that living at “Hilltop,” the name of a former hotel on the site and still the name locals associate with the building, had its advantages. He could get his laundry done free of charge, and his meal card was good at the well-regarded Hilltop Bar and Bistro.

Best of all, he bonded with the other freshmen who took the twice-hourly shuttle from Hilltop to campus.

“Living in a smaller community, you’ll start to build close relationships quicker than meeting people all around the Wingate campus,” he says. “You’ll start to see the bond in the first few weeks.”

Cody Greene echoes that sentiment. At first, he had his doubts after receiving his housing letter in the summer of 2010.

“I had mixed emotions about it,” Greene says. “I think as a first-year student, you’re 18 years old, you feel kind of different because you’re not getting the same experience that everyone else is getting. You somewhat feel excluded.”

It didn’t take long for Greene to feel comfortable being a hotel dweller.

“Within that first month I began to feel that my living situation wasn’t that different,” he says. “People would comment that they were jealous that we were able to use

our meal plans at Hilltop.”

“To have your laundry done and get to eat at Hilltop? I didn’t get any real major complaints about that,” says Mick Reynolds, now dean of campus life but the director of residence life in 2010.

In fact, the retention rate for those who stayed at Hilltop in 2010 was comparable to that of the general student population.

Many of the amenities this time around are similar to those in 2010. The meal plan is honored at Hilltop Bar and Bistro; students’ clothes are washed and folded every week, free of charge; and students share a bathroom with just one other person, unlike the eight-to-a-bathroom situation in most on-campus residence halls. There is also a basketball court and a pool. As Reynolds points out, Helms Hall also offers those last two amenities but has “twice as many students.”

According to **Emily Holmes ’10**, who served as the residence director at the Hilltop location seven years ago, once students got into the rhythm of living at Hilltop, they enjoyed it.

“They were generally happy because they got treated more as adults than freshmen normally are,” she says.

## Safe and secure

Holmes says any concerns parents had regarding security at a hotel just off a busy highway proved unfounded. She had two residence assistants working for her, and several student workers took shifts manning the front desk in the lobby. Their main training involved security situations.

Also, just like now, a Union County Sheriff’s deputy or Monroe Police officer was on site from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. every day.

Although the Hilltop stopgap proved successful for a semester seven years ago, Reynolds understands that things are somewhat different this time around. For one thing, students will be housed there all year, with a new 224-bed residence hall set to open in the fall of 2018. All students housed in Hilltop this year will have the first opportunity to live in the new residence-hall apartments as sophomores.

In order to make the Hilltop experience more special in 2017, Reynolds says, a primary focus this time is on improving “programming.”

“The last time we did this, we had a real focus on making sure the students could get to campus to participate in as many programs as possible,” he says. “A central part of what we were trying to do was make sure they felt like there was seamless integration. While we want to make sure that we offer those opportunities this time, we also want to try to tailor some programs specifically to those students too.”

That means more Hilltop-specific gatherings in the hotel lobby or at the on-site basketball court or pool. It could be pizza parties, trivia games or basketball tournaments.

No matter what, the students at Hilltop tend to get everything campus life offers and then some.

“What we tried to do was make them feel special, and I hope that’s what came through in 2010,” Reynolds says. “Places are important when it comes to an experience, but the most important thing is the people, and that’s something that transcends the experience, whether you’re on campus or at Hilltop or wherever you are.”

Greene, who views his situation not only with 20/20 hindsight but also as an area coordinator in the

An on-site pool is one big advantage of living at Hilltop Hall. Students living there also get free laundry service.



Office of Residence Life and Housing at William Peace University in Raleigh, says situations such as housing students at Hilltop bring out the best in Wingate University.

“I just think that Wingate in general does a really good job of meeting students where they are, whether that be off campus, on campus, whatever walk of life you come from,” he says. “Having a complex four miles off campus, I think they will continue to do a good job of meeting student needs where that student is. That ultimately is what provides an awesome campus-involvement experience: making sure you’re meeting students where they are, especially if they feel disconnected from campus in a sense.” ■



## OT doctoral program to begin in 2019



Wingate University is adding to its Levine College of Health Sciences roster with a doctor of occupational therapy (OTD) program. The first director of the program, Dr. Melissa Sweetman, started at WU on Sept. 1, and the first cohort of students is expected to begin coursework in the fall of 2019.

Occupational therapy is a natural next step in the evolution of Wingate's health-sciences program. The first cohort of students in the doctor of physical therapy (DPT) program graduated in December of 2016, and Wingate also offers doctor of pharmacy, physician assistant

studies and nursing programs. Just over 20 percent of Wingate's nearly 3,200 students are in graduate health-sciences programs.

The field of occupational therapy, which is closely related to physical therapy, is growing rapidly. *U.S. News and World Report* cited occupational therapy as one of the 15 best careers of 2015. The average OT salary in North Carolina is \$80,000, and there are only 2,520 registered OTs in the state. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for OTs and OT assistants is expected to increase from 2010 to 2020 at a rate 33% faster than the average occupation.

"Because of the success of our physical therapy program, and because of the need that we have locally, occupational therapy was a natural consideration," says Wingate University President Dr. Rhett Brown.

Wingate is joining a field that is growing fast but is far from crowded. In 2007, the United States had only

five OTD programs accredited by the American Occupational Therapy Association. By the end of this year, there are expected to be 47 programs that are accredited, candidates for accreditation or applicants for accreditation.

But demand for occupational therapists is high, and there is likely to still be a shortage of seats for qualified students.

"Nationally there is only a 17 percent acceptance rate into occupational therapy schools," Sweetman says. "That tells you that we have far too few programs for the number of qualified applicants."

Unlike physical therapy, which is more often concerned with rehabilitating a physical injury, occupational therapy concentrates on helping people who have suffered a physical or mental illness to perform everyday tasks. "I think of physical therapy as being restorative and occupational therapy as being more about accommodation," says Dr. Robert Supernaw, vice provost, Levine College of Health Sciences. "You've got a particular condition, and how do we allow you to continue to do the things that fulfill you in life without being a bystander?"

Brown found out firsthand how valuable OTs can be when his mother became ill. "The

occupational therapist was a godsend," he says. "It's like they had these magic powers for helping her navigate the smallest, most painful things that there's no way I could have helped her with."

Sweetman says occupational therapists play a big role in making life better for patients and in keeping them out of the hospital – the latter which brings with it a huge cost-saving benefit.

"Our goal is to make sure every human being can complete the activities, which we call 'occupations,' that are important to them," she says. "Many of those things develop someone's identity of who they believe they are. But they are also basic activities that help someone stay in their home: bathing and feeding and dressing and paying bills, or working a job or doing the things they love to do – cooking or gardening or playing cards. Whatever it is people enjoy doing, when they are able to do those things they are healthier and happier."

Sweetman came to Wingate from the Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions in Provo, Utah, where she ran the post-professional OTD program.

## WU, free clinic team up to battle diabetes

**C**ommunity Health Services of Union County has been caring for its medically underserved neighbors for 25 years, helping them battle diabetes and related complications. Beginning this summer, the nonprofit will expand its free clinic services with the addition of a full-time physician assistant provided by Wingate University's William and Loretta Harris Department of PA Studies.

WU President Rhett Brown announced the partnership in May at CHSUC's annual fundraising breakfast at Rolling Hills Country Club in Monroe. He said having a PA on staff would enable the organization to give patients more consistent and comprehensive care while offering increased clinical opportunities to Wingate University students.

"When the expertise being acquired in the classroom and the community needs align, it's a perfect opportunity for students to carry out their good work," says Brown, describing one of the University's strategic-plan initiatives, that of creating a "laboratory of difference-making."

## Wingate gives cancer patient full ride

**W**ingate University has a history of helping students clear hurdles, and that's exactly what happened one day in May in the library of Chase High School in Forest City, North Carolina.

"We're here today to honor your high academic achievement and your strength of character, and we hope to remove any barriers in front of you and achieving your goals," WU Director of Admissions Gabe Hollingsworth told a stunned Parker Jackson as he presented him with a full scholarship, worth an estimated \$167,000.

The surprise announcement lifted an incredible burden from the shoulders of the 18-year-old and his family, four members of which are battling a rare, genetic illness. Wayne Jackson was diagnosed with pancreatic neuroendocrine cancer in 2014. A year later, his sons Preston and Parker began having similar symptoms, and he says that his 9-year-old son also tested positive for the illness in the spring.

Molly Grantham, with WBTV in Charlotte, had reported on the family's struggles and Parker's plan to attend Wingate. Knowing he'll have one less hurdle brought the high school senior to tears.

He says at first that he was totally confused about why his family and friends were in the



school library and "a tall man in a suit" was talking to him.

"When he said 'full scholarship,' I was so grateful and speechless," Parker says. "It was very overwhelming, but in a good way. This means more than I could ever put into words."

Parker had initially thought he

would attend a large state-supported school, but he says that during a visit to Wingate he began to feel at home.

He plans to major in biology on the pre-med track and become an anesthesiologist, a career goal that he attributes in part to his time in hospitals and being put to sleep for medical procedures.

## DPT helps Monroe man walk again



**T**hanks to an experimental device and a free clinic at Wingate University, a Monroe man is learning to walk again despite prolonged numbness in his feet.

Just a few years ago, Timothy Kelley spent his days off on the tennis court – for hours at a time. Then one morning he woke up and couldn't feel his feet. Kelley, a truck driver by trade, has not worked in the intervening three years. He suffers from peripheral neuropathy, a condition that afflicts many people who, like Kelley, have diabetes.

With neuropathy, “you don’t know where your feet are in space,” says Dr. Diane Wrisley, director of post-professional programs for Wingate University’s Department of Physical Therapy. “It’s like you’re walking with bricks on your legs.”

The numbness in his feet, coupled with diminished vision, makes it hard for the 51-year-old Kelley to walk around his house, much less pilot the 18-wheelers he drove for 31 years. He can’t even stand at the sink to wash dishes.

A device Kelley has been trying out at Wingate University is changing

all that. Kelley is getting to use Walkasins, a device that tells the brain which part of the foot is on the ground. From the moment he first inserted a set of the devices into his shoes and got to his feet, Kelley has been able to walk without assistance.

“As soon as I stood up and got both feet flat on the floor, it was a game-changer,” Kelley says with a huge grin.

The device is essentially a modified sole insert that connects to a strap worn above the ankle. Sensors in the insert trigger vibrations in the strap that tell the wearer which part of the foot is bearing the person’s weight.

Kelley is the first person in the world to get to take a set of Walkasins home for his personal use. Until now, all testing had been done in the lab, mostly in Boston and Minneapolis, where the device’s inventor, Dr. Lars Oddsson, is based.

Kelley is getting to try them out because of Oddsson’s professional relationship with Wrisley – they were colleagues at the University of Buffalo a few years ago – and because of a group of Wingate students. Kelley is the beneficiary of a free clinic begun





in the fall of 2016 as a capstone project by a quartet of second-year students in the Department of Physical Therapy. The students provide a clinic for people in the local community who need exercise similar to physical therapy but, like Kelley, don't have health insurance or have maxed out their coverage.

"I started (at the clinic) last October, and when I got here, I could not walk," Kelley said in March. "Literally could not walk. Couldn't stand, couldn't bend, couldn't do any type of activity."

After a couple of months, he was making steady progress. But Wrisley

thought that there was more that Wingate's DPT program could offer Kelley.

"I knew we had these devices and I said, 'You know, this might keep this man walking for a lot longer,'" Wrisley says. "His brain learned to use it immediately. I didn't even have to do any training. He put them on and it was like, 'Wow! I know where I am in space.' His improvement is phenomenal."

But don't take Wrisley's word for it.

"I put them on, and it was like a miracle," Kelley says. ■

## Alum helps Macron win big in France

In May, Emmanuel Macron shocked world politics when he became France's youngest-ever president at the age of 39 – less than a year after he formed his political party, En Marche.

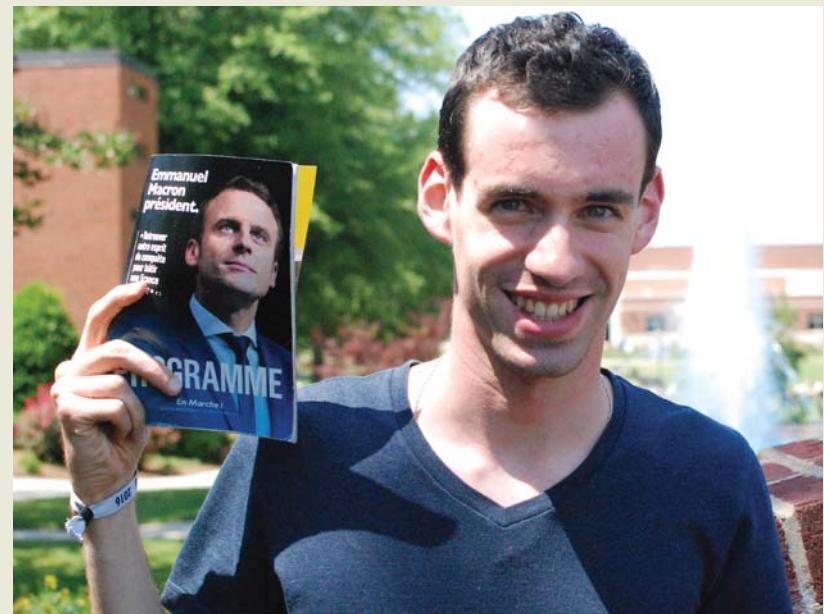
It's little surprise that he enlisted the help of young people in his bid to make history. One of those young Frenchmen, Anthony Gaudin, had only recently graduated from Wingate University with a degree in political science when he started working on the Macron campaign, as a legal consultant.

By May, he was the head of polling-station assessors for the En Marche operations in Gaudin's hometown of Orleans.

"Two months after graduation, I was the head of a department. I was working for a presidential candidate," he says. "It's crazy, and I love it."

Gaudin, who continued working for En Marche after the presidential campaign ended, originally came to the U.S. as a distance runner, and he competed in cross country and track for the Bulldogs. At Wingate, he was known for prodding his professors and demanding more out of his classmates, and he's carried that persistence and dedication over to his professional life.

"He made the class discussion better by keeping everybody honest in their arguments," says Dr. Jacob Wobig, assistant professor of political science. "You can't get by with just a simple assertion. He's going to demand that you provide some evidence and arguments in



support of it. Otherwise he's going to say, 'You need to show me more.' I think that's one of the reasons he's done so well."

The centrist Macron appealed to Gaudin, who had voted for the left-leaning Francoise Hollande in 2012 but appreciates ideas from both the left and the right. Macron is best known for his business-friendly approach to economics.

"I was following this guy Macron, saying, 'This guy is smart. He has great ideas,'" Gaudin says. "When I left France in 2013 for the U.S., I was thinking, I don't understand why people are focused on, like, right parties, like Republicans, or left, like Democrats. If you have great ideas on the right and great ideas on the left and great ideas in the middle, bring it together." ■



## Wingate athletics first in SAC



Wingate University athletics has ruled the roost in the South Atlantic Conference for over a decade. Recently, the Bulldogs have made waves nationally too.

At the end of an academic year in which Wingate won its first-ever team NCAA championship, the Bulldog athletic program was rewarded with yet another Echols Athletic Excellence Cup and a top-15 finish in the national Learfield Cup standings.

After netting the school's 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive Echols Cup for top overall athletic program in the South Atlantic Conference, Wingate placed

12th in the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings for NCAA Division II. This marks the third consecutive year the Bulldogs have finished in the top 30 nationally, after a 28<sup>th</sup>-place finish in 2015-2016 and a best-ever sixth-place finish a year earlier.

Leading the way this past season was the men's soccer team, which captured the NCAA Division II national championship, going undefeated in SAC play in the process. Both swim teams collected top-10 national finishes in March, with the Bulldog women finishing third at the NCAA Championships and the men placing sixth. The men's lacrosse team added a fifth-place national finish in the spring.

Grand Valley State – a 20,000-student institution in Michigan – finished atop the final Learfield leaderboard for the 12th time in school history, followed by California Baptist, West Florida and UC San Diego. Wingate is one of only two

teams from the SAC or the NCAA Southeast Region to finish in the top 20, joining fifth-place Queens.

In winning a record 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive Echols Award, Wingate piled up 1,413 points in the recently revamped point system, winning by 232 points over second-place Queens.

"Winning the Excellence Cup is the exclamation point on a great year for Wingate's athletics program," says Dr. Rhett Brown, Wingate University's president. "The athletes, coaches and staff earned the recognition because of their talent, hard work and commitment to each other. Our athletic program's sustained success over the last 11 years is a model for all of us at the University."

Before Wingate's run, the previous record was eight, by now-Division I Elon from 1989 to 1997. Using the old point system, the Bulldogs accumulated 306.5 more points than the next-closest school in the 10-year run. The other current 11 SAC schools have combined to win the cup five times.

The Bulldogs won SAC championships in men's soccer, volleyball, women's tennis and women's track and field and posted second-place finishes in women's cross country, men's tennis and men's track and field, while finishing tied for second in football, women's basketball, women's lacrosse and men's lacrosse.

## Two Bulldogs up for NCAA Woman of the Year

The awards keep piling up for Wingate athletes. In the 2016-2017 academic year, the University added 10 Academic All-America selections, taking its toll to 105 all time – tops in the South Atlantic Conference.

Two of those Academic All-America honorees are also nominees for NCAA Woman of the Year. 2017 graduates Kaitlyn Brunworth (soccer) and Vika Arkhipova (swimming) are among 116 NCAA Division II athletes – and 544 across all NCAA divisions – nominated for the award. At the annual awards ceremony on Oct. 22 in Indianapolis, the top 30 honorees will be recognized and the 2017 NCAA Woman of the Year will be announced.

Brunworth has already been named the South Atlantic Conference Woman of the Year, which recognizes excellence in academics, athletics, service and leadership. The two-time Academic All-America honoree also earned the SAC Presidents Award this year and is a former all-American on the field.

Arkhipova, from Seversk, Russia, helped Wingate to top-three finishes in the past three NCAA Division II championship meets. She had five



Brunworth



Arkhipova



All-American swims at the 2017 meet, and in 2016 she won the 200 backstroke national title and was part of a national-championship swim in the 400 medley relay, in which the Bulldogs set a national record with a time of 3:37.80.

"I am thrilled for Vika," Wingate head men's and women's swimming coach Kirk Sanocki says. "She is an outstanding representative of our university. Vika epitomizes everything the NCAA Woman of the Year award represents."

Arkhipova has logged hundreds of volunteer service hours. "The best experience I have ever had was at Wingate Elementary School, where I went every year to share the Russian culture with the kids," Arkhipova says. "It was

amazing to watch them grow."

She volunteered four years at Wingate's nationally recognized Special Olympics swimming venue. During the summers after her freshman and sophomore years, Arkhipova and her long-time swimming coach ran a summer swim camp for children ages 7-11 in Seversk.

"I always push myself to be the best in everything I do, while inspiring others to do the same," Arkhipova says. "The swimming program at Wingate allowed me to turn from the ugly duckling into the beautiful swan who is ready to change people's lives for the better. I am thankful for everything and everyone at Wingate University."

Read more about Brunworth on page 13.

Wingate's other Academic All-Americans this year, as selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), were Damian Goana (men's soccer), Mikaela Hadaway (women's golf), Andrea Terner (women's tennis), Leif-Henning Kluver (men's swimming), Lucas Cuadros (men's swimming), Alyssa Johnson (women's track/cross country), Jacob Troutman (men's track/cross country) and Valerie Griesche (women's track/cross country).

### 2016-17 SAC Echols Athletic Excellence Award standings

RANK	SCHOOL	TOTAL
1.	Wingate	1,413
2.	Queens	1,181.1
3.	Lenoir-Rhyne	1,080
4.	Lincoln Memorial	1,014.5
5.	Tusculum	929.07
6.	Carson-Newman	910.16
7.	Anderson	891.83
8.	Catawba	825.5
9.	Newberry	816
10.	Coker	748.75
11.	Mars Hill	604.08
12.	Brevard	254

## Saturday night lights

Wingate kicked off its first artificially illuminated football game in Irwin Belk Stadium on Sept. 16. Thanks in part to seed money from Marcella McInnis McGee, wife of former WU president Dr. Jerry McGee, Wingate now plays night football.

Wingate played night games at Walter Bickett Stadium in Monroe from 1986 to 1997, but since the first kickoff at Irwin Belk Stadium in 1998, Bulldog football games had been strictly an afternoon affair.

That all changed when Wingate hosted Carson-Newman on Sept. 16. Marcella McGee and her son, Matt McInnis, flipped the coin to determine which team got the ball first, and shortly thereafter night football at Belk became a reality.

"We believe this will create a festive game environment, complete with afternoon tailgating opportunities for our fans and students," says WU Vice President and Director of Athletics Steve Poston. "For our early September home games, we believe an evening football game will provide our fans with a more pleasant



**Night football  
is finally a reality  
at Irwin Belk  
Stadium.**

environment for watching the game and enjoying the game-day experience."

Night football could also make Bulldog football games a tougher ticket.

"In the past, we have heard from many families in our community who have had conflicts with Saturday afternoon home football games at Wingate," Poston says. "The 6 p.m. start for our 2017 home football games should help us expand our fan base."

Wingate finished 8-2 overall and 5-2 in South Atlantic Conference play in 2016. Seven of Wingate's 10 games this year will be night-time starts.

## Barnhardt Suite dedicated

Last semester, the Caleb and Lorene Barnhardt Athletic Office Suite was dedicated in memory of Lorene Barnhardt, who passed away before the Feb. 28 dedication.

Family and friends of the Barnhardts, members of the community, and Wingate students, faculty and staff were in attendance to honor Lorene's memory.

"I cannot think of anyone whose name is more appropriate or more greatly appreciated on this area where we serve the needs of our student-athletes and their coaches," says Steve Poston, Wingate University vice president and director of athletics.

The impeccable suite houses the newly added athletics wing in the

Charles A. Cannon Athletic Complex, which includes the offices of the athletics director, associate athletics director for internal operations, associate athletics director for compliance, assistant athletics director for sports marketing and promotions, and the staff conference room.

Wingate Athletic Foundation and Bulldog Club director Bill Nash believes Caleb and Lorene Barnhardt are leaving a legacy.

"Like other educational institutions in Union County and elsewhere, Wingate University should count its blessings because of the interest and support of Lorene and Caleb Barnhardt," Nash says. "The Barnhardt family is very supportive of Wingate University and our



athletic program. More notably, their expressions of genuine interest in our students and student-athletes through endowed and annual scholarship assistance is vital to our institution."

The ball that **Donn Goodwin '62** used to strike out all 18 batters he faced in a Little League game in 1954 is now in the World of Little League Museum in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Goodwin is believed to be the first player in Little League history to strike out all batters in a perfect game. Little League started in 1939.

**Larry Lee Hatley '70** has been named senior vice president and Locust-branch manager of First Bank, a subsidiary of First Bancorp. A resident of Oakboro, Hatley serves on the Wingate University Board of Visitors.

**Barry Howard '89** opened a law office in Matthews in October 2016. Formerly a partner in Goodwin and Howard, P.A., Howard specializes in estate planning and estate administration. He graduated from Wingate in 1989 with a bachelor of music education and earned his master's at the University of South Carolina and his J.D. at Charlotte School of Law.

**Yolanda Blakeney '96** is one of only a few teachers nationwide selected to join the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' standard-setting panel for its summer 2017 review team. Blakeney will serve on the team as a National Board Certified Teachers expert in the area of chemistry. Blakeney is dean of students at

Cabarrus Kannapolis Early College High School.

**Michael Royal '01, '16** (Ed.D.) recently became the Mooresville Graded School District's Chief Operating Officer. Royal had been principal of Mooresville High School since 2011.

**Bryan Rudolph '03**, who teaches social studies, was named teacher of the year for the 2017-2018 school year at Forest Hills High School in Marshville and was among the 10 finalists for countywide teacher of the year.

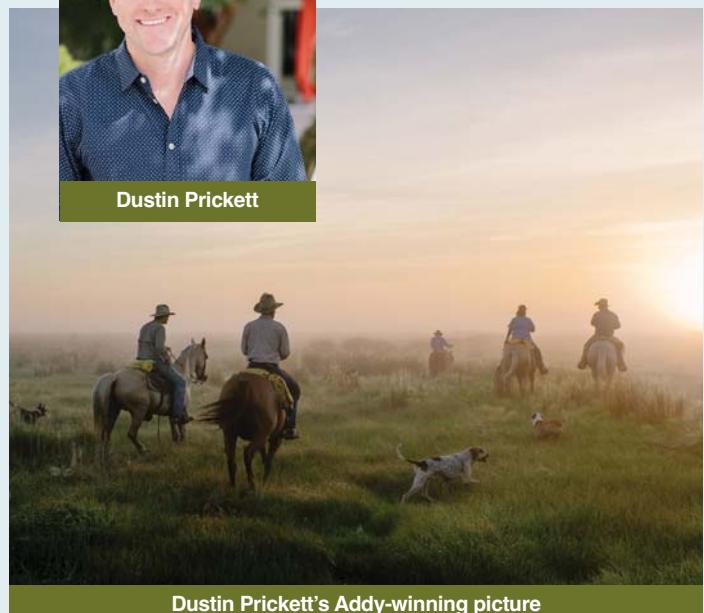
**Randi M. Davis '04** is serving a two-year term on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Davis, who was editor of *The Weekly Triangle* for two years while at Wingate, is an internal-communications specialist for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

**Mindy Jenkins '04**, a fourth-grade teacher, was named teacher of the year at Fairview Elementary School in Union County for the 2017-2018 school year.

**John Bowman '05** was recently inducted into the South Atlantic Conference Hall of Fame. Bowman, a member of the Wingate University Sports Hall of Fame, was an All-American defensive end for the



Dustin Prickett



Dustin Prickett's Addy-winning picture

Bulldogs. The 11-year veteran of the Canadian Football League is the all-time leader in quarterback sacks for the Montreal Alouettes.

**Ben Fleming '06** is the new strength and conditioning head coach at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Fleming, who played soccer at Wingate, has spent time as strength and conditioning coach for various teams at the University of Central Florida, Kansas State University and, most recently, the University of Mississippi, where he concentrated on baseball.

**Dustin Prickett '06** won a national Addy Award for still photography for his photo of cowboys heading out for work. The photo was part of an ad campaign for AgAmerica, an agriculture-focused financial agency. The American Advertising Awards (Addys) are the most prestigious advertising competition in the U.S.

**Kacey Gillis Brooks '08** was recently named girl's head basketball coach at Piedmont High School in Monroe.



John Bowman



John Bowman



Ben Fleming



Ben Hall

**Ben Hall '09** (MBA) was named Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference coach of the year in baseball. Hall has been head coach at North Carolina A&T University since 2015. This year's Aggie team went 26-23 overall and 15-9 in the MEAC, winning 13 more games than in 2016.

**Fermandi Dyson '10** (M.A.Ed.) was recently named principal at Metro School in Charlotte.

**LaRonda McClain '10** was inducted into the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame in May. McClain was all-South Atlantic Conference all four seasons of her softball career at Wingate after a stellar career at Kings Mountain High School.

**Rebecca Little Burke '11** is one-third of the gospel group The Littles, who spent a week in Nashville in May recording their first CD, under the Song Garden record label. The CD was released in June.

**Misha Rogers '12** (Ed.D.) is the principal at Park View Elementary School in Mooresville. Rogers had been an elementary- and middle-school principal in Lincoln County since 2011.

**James Garabedian '08** earned his Ph.D. from N.C. State University in May. Garabedian, who has accepted a position as a postdoctoral research assistant in Aiken, S.C., also recently had his article "Use of LiDAR to Define Habitat Thresholds for Forest Bird Conservation" published in the journal *Forest Ecology and Management*. Garabedian is researching the endangered species the red-cockaded woodpecker.

**Stephen Torkington '08** is the head men's lacrosse coach at Texas State University. In 2008, Torkington became Wingate's fourth men's lacrosse All-American.



LaRonda McClain

## Librarian always willing to help

**W**ingate University alumna and librarian Debra Hargett '01 will never forget the day she heard that her hometown was underwater.

"I started reading posts from friends, people that I knew exactly where they lived, houses I had played in as a child, and they were posting things on Facebook like 'I've lost everything' or 'I still can't get home, the water's too high,'" Hargett says.

On June 23, 2016, West Virginia's Greenbrier Valley experienced a thousand-year flood. The surging water submerged about 90 percent of the homes in Rainelle, next door to Rupert, where Hargett grew up. Before the ordeal ended, it would take 23 lives and destroy more than 1,200 houses.

But it would also set off a chain of events in Hargett's life that would strengthen her faith and remind her of the importance of serving others.

Hargett has worked at Wingate's Ethel K. Smith library since 2005. After driving home from the library with her mind on the flood that day in June 2016, Hargett said she sat at her table staring at her computer and praying. The vacation she and her husband, Jack, had planned for the following week would take them within an hour of Rainelle. She wondered if they could detour and do something to help flood victims.

So she put the word out. "My church, Lee Park, used their office as a drop-off," Hargett says. "People came to my house, filled up my living room, then down the hallway. People at Wingate dropped off supplies at my office."

By the time the Hargetts were ready to leave on vacation, they had a U-Haul filled to the brim with cleaning supplies, brooms, shovels, diapers and more. "It was overwhelming to see the outpouring of love," Hargett says.

A bright student who sometimes got poor marks in conduct because she talked too much, Hargett initially wanted to be a physical therapist. But an emotional attachment to the lab rats at Marshall University forced her to change tack, and she ultimately studied marketing and communications at a branch campus of Bluefield State College.

It was there that she got a chance to run a radio station for a local member of the state's House of Delegates while the lawmaker was away in session. "I figured, 'Well, I like to talk,' so I took my little X's in 'quiet and orderly' and transposed them into work in radio for about 10 years," Hargett says.

She got married, began raising a family and only later, after having moved to North Carolina, decided to finish her degree. That's how she became a Bulldog, taking classes for her bachelor of liberal studies degree in organizational communication at Wingate's Matthews campus (now in Ballantyne).

Hargett went on to earn a master of library and information studies from UNC-Greensboro, and she says her less-than-straight pathway to the job has given her a well-rounded perspective.

"I look at all of my experiences, from my early college days at Marshall to later being at a branch campus and then earning a degree as an adult, as helping me to relate to both the traditional and nontraditional student," says Hargett, who serves as digital-services librarian. "Primarily, people need access to our resources whether they are in the building on campus or in a coffee shop in Connecticut. I always have to keep that perspective in mind."

A few months after the floods in West Virginia, Hargett's generosity paid dividends again when residents of Rupert and Rainelle contacted her after Hurricane Matthew hit North Carolina.

"The children's home in Rupert started sending me messages asking, 'What can we do?' They organized a truckload of supplies and a group of volunteers," says Hargett, who helped them connect with a church in Lumberton and headed east to meet with relief workers and help with logistics for the West Virginia group.

"Knowing my friends and co-workers answered my call for help in such a big way was humbling. Then to see how West Virginia gave back to North Carolina was just as heartwarming," Hargett says. "Compassion is alive and well."



Debra Hargett



Megan Somers White



Ben Biron



Alison Cooke



James Ford

**Megan Somers White '12** passed the North Carolina Bar Exam in February. Somers is an associate attorney at Collins Family Law Group in Charlotte.

**Ben Biron '13** was named one of *Inc.* magazine's "50 emerging global entrepreneurs to watch in 2017." Biron is one of the co-founders of Wasteless, a company that aims to recapture \$1 billion in lost grocery revenue by improving product tracking and increasing the efficiency of grocery sales.

**Alison Cooke '14** has been named assistant volleyball coach at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. Cooke had been serving as a volunteer assistant volleyball coach at Duke University. Cooke was a two-time All-American setter at Wingate.

**James Ford '14** (certification in educational leadership) was named a co-chair of the Leading on Opportunity Implementation Council, whose task is to help tackle poverty in Charlotte. Ford is a former North Carolina teacher of the year and was named *Charlotte* magazine's Charlottean of the Year in 2014.

**Shelly Stumpff '15** has been named assistant coach for the University of South Dakota's volleyball team. Stumpff was South Atlantic Conference player of the year in 2015 and led the Bulldogs to a 125-14 record during her four years. Stumpff had been serving as a graduate assistant coach at South Dakota.

**Jerome Benoit '16**, a communications major and a U.S. Army veteran, has opened Signs Mpress in Monroe. Located at 312 W. Roosevelt Blvd., the company offers

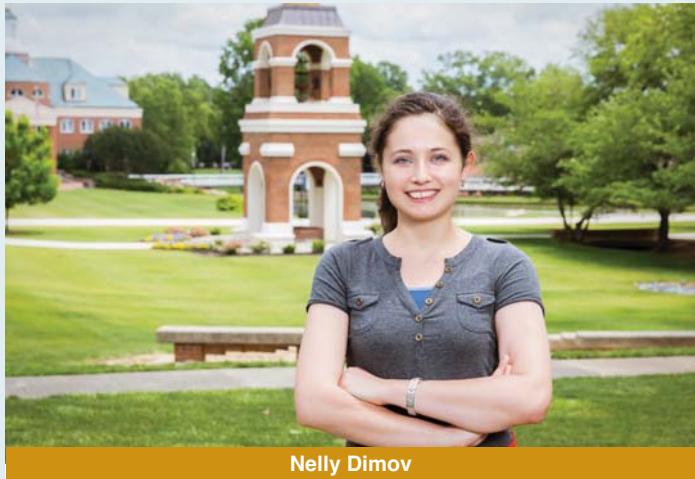
a wide range of products, such as custom banners, window decals and business cards.

**Dr. Maxine Brigman-Brown '16** (Ed.D.) is the new principal at Troy Elementary School in Troy, N.C.

**Nelly Dimov '16** was appointed a student ambassador by the U.S. State Department and spent the summer working in the U.S. pavilion at the World Expo in Kazakhstan. Dimov is in the master's program at the University of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce.

**Alicia McCree '16** (Ed.S.) became principal of Cabarrus Charter High School on April 3.

**Jordan Smith '16** became a physical-education teacher at Banks Elementary School in Kinston in January.



Nelly Dimov



Shelly Stumpff

## Births



Tate Jacumin Willis



Austin Frederick MacKay



Brielle Makenzie West



Dani Mae Arndt

Ben and Mollie Willis, a boy, Tate Jacumin, April 15, 2017. Tate is the grandson of **Ginger Jacumin**

**Sellers '82** and the great-grandson of Cookie Jacumin, longtime Wingate University athletics support.

**Todd MacKay '98** and Cassidy MacKay, a boy, Austin Frederick, June 20, 2017.

**Rashid West '02** and Emily West, a girl, Brielle Makenzie, June 2, 2017.

**Regina Arndt '05** and Kevin Arndt, a girl, Dani Mae, Feb. 20, 2017.

Let the Bulldog family know about all the great things happening in your life!

Email Brittany Bumgarner at

[b.bumgarner@wingate.edu](mailto:b.bumgarner@wingate.edu)

by November 30 to be included in the next issue of *Wingate Today*.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

# Part of Rangers' pregame ritual

Unlike the typical baseball fan, Mason Randall '97 is less concerned about hits and runs than he is about players' spiritual walks. Since 2015, Randall has volunteered with an international ministry called Baseball Chapel and been assigned as the Rangers' chaplain, or as the ministry calls him, "chapel leader."

"A friend of mine who is chapel leader for the Astros called me three seasons ago and asked if I would do it," says Randall, who is a pastor at Lake Pointe Church in suburban Dallas. "As he described the ministry, I realized it was an opportunity to influence influencers."

I was being given the opportunity to spiritually invest in men who would be able to influence people for the rest of their lives because of baseball. Athletes have a different kind of credibility than a lot of people."

About two hours before the first pitch of every Sunday home game, Randall meets up with players for a short service that he describes as a cross between a devotional time and a sermon.

"My hope is not that I am giving them brilliant content," he says, "but that I'm being a spiritual leader in their lives, pushing them clearly toward Jesus and steps they might consider in being better men, better husbands, better leaders."

In fact, Randall says that what happens during the chapel time, which is both voluntary and well attended, is not nearly as important as the one-on-one relationships he builds with players, coaches and staff.

"Most of the ministry happens when I go and take a guy out to lunch, call them or go on a road trip and hang out. It's the nongroup dynamic that provides the best ministry opportunities," he says. "I've had one of the guys call me and become a Christian over the phone. I've sat at lunch and had them share struggles going on in their marriage. I've had coaches sit down and talk about family problems."

A 1997 Wingate graduate, Randall majored in sociology. As a member of Pi Kappa Phi fraternity, he rode his bike across America in the Journey of Hope the summer after graduation and has been involved in full-time ministry in Texas ever since, first with Young Life and, since 2004, at Lake Pointe. He and his wife, Lydia, have a son, Boone, who is 7, and a 3-year-old daughter named Aspen.

Before becoming the Rangers' chapel leader, Randall underwent training with Baseball Chapel, which provides chaplains for all 210 teams in Major and Minor League Baseball. The nondenominational organization is concerned with protecting the environment and clubhouse dynamic while providing ministry to the team "right where they are," he says.

"I am an outsider stepping into their world. I have to understand how to walk softly and strategically," Randall explains. "One thing that I communicate to them very often is that I will never ask anything from you. I will never ask for a ticket, an autograph, a favor, or for money. I'll never ask for anything other than that you take your spiritual life seriously."

A cross-country runner and lacrosse athlete at Wingate, Randall admits that he isn't a huge baseball fan, but he is keenly aware of the pressures that players face – not just at the stadium but in their daily lives as well.

"That's where my heart is: investing in these guys away from the clubhouse as much as possible," he says.



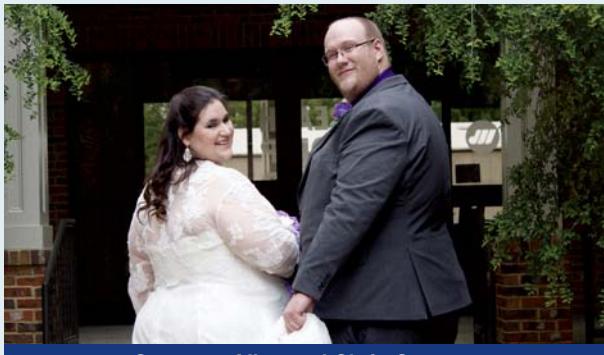
Mason Randall

## Weddings



Julia Johnson and Patrick Chabai

**Julia Johnson '16** and Patrick Chabai were married on Aug. 7, 2016.



Courtney Allen and Chris Conway

**Chris Conway '09** (formerly Chris Garlow) and Courtney Allen were married on April 22, 2017.

## Those we'll miss

**Cliff Gaddy '42** – July 12, 2017

**John W. Lowery Sr. '47** – June 17, 2017

**Star Forney '90** – Aug. 1, 2017

**Clint Stephens '91** – March 7, 2017

**Freddy Ossmann '03** – June 16, 2017

David Roger Work, former executive director of the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy who helped create the program at the Wingate University School of Pharmacy – April 22, 2017

Henry B. Gaye, former trustee – June 7, 2017

## Taking the reins at a large daily paper

**W**hen Mike Svetitz '00 was just 22, he found himself promoted to sports editor at a small-town daily newspaper in Florida. Being in charge after just six months on the job didn't scare him.

"I was excited, but what I didn't know didn't scare me," Svetitz says. "I should have been terrified."

Svetitz, 39, takes that same self-confident approach to his new role: managing editor of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, a 100,000-circulation newspaper in northern Virginia. Svetitz served as sports editor of the *Times-Dispatch* for two and a half years, managing a team of 18. He's now in charge of about 90 reporters, editors, photographers and designers, who combined put out a daily newspaper and digital content that cover a range of local and national topics.

This isn't how Svetitz saw his life evolving when he entered Wingate's Department of Communications as a freshman in 1996. Back then, he wanted to entertain sports fans with catchphrase-heavy highlights as the next star of ESPN's SportsCenter.

"I wanted to be the next Chris Berman, Keith Olbermann or whatever," Svetitz says. "The fact that Wingate had its own TV studio and TV station, I could jump in right away and do TV. That really excited me."

Svetitz made the most of those resources, becoming the host and producer of a weekly half-hour TV show, *Bulldog Sports*, during his freshman year, and then gradually adding sports-radio and newspaper-writing duties to his work slate over the years.

There were few on-air restrictions on Svetitz and his classmates – "Just don't cuss," he says – and that freedom enabled him to learn not only through his classwork but also through trial and error. He and his director, Lee Sims, tried location shoots, investigative journalism, even sketch comedy. Not all of it worked, but it was all great experience.

"That's why I wanted to come to Wingate," Svetitz says. "If I went to Syracuse or any of these massive journalism schools, I don't know when I'd get to have my own show. At Wingate, I had my own show right off the bat. It wasn't good, mind you. But we were gaining invaluable experience."

It also helped him realize that his biggest strength was writing, and after graduation Svetitz applied to an opening at a newspaper in Florida to cover high-school sports. He was hired almost immediately.

After four years there and 10 years as the sports editor of the *Opelika-Auburn News* in Alabama, covering big-time college football, Svetitz became sports editor at the *Times-Dispatch* in 2014. Within a month, the number of page views on the *Times-Dispatch* website's sports page doubled.

As sports editor, Svetitz still hit the sidelines fairly regularly. But as managing editor, he takes more of a bird's-eye view. "I'm more of the head coach or GM," Svetitz says. "In sports, I was more of a quarterback, facilitating, calling the plays, getting in the huddle."

There will be a learning curve, but after 17 years in the business, Svetitz is confident. "Obviously, I need to learn all the players," he says. "Now, instead of head coaches and athletic directors and general managers you've got city council members and mayors and judges. So there's that."

"But I'm good at what I do. That's not to boast, but I know news and I know how to deliver the news. Breaking-news situations, on-site, when stuff hits the fan – that's my sweet spot. There's the adrenaline rush that you get every day when stuff is happening and news is breaking. Some people run away from it and some people run toward it, and I've always been a guy who runs toward it."



Mike Svetitz

# Byrum helped hundreds become Bulldogs

## IN MEMORIAM

**P**orter Byrum changed the course of Wingate University with a gift of nearly \$21 million in 2011. But it's the individual lives that have been changed by the establishment of the Byrum Scholarships that interested him the most.

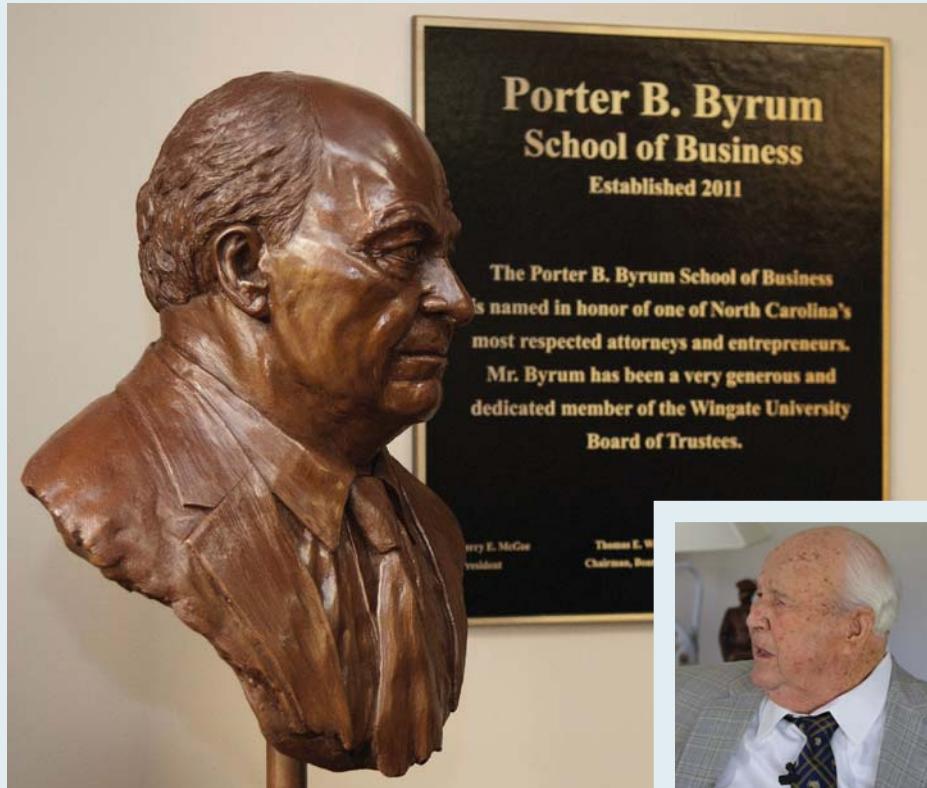
Byrum, who died on March 27, 2017, at the age of 96, was touched by the stories of the Byrum Scholars – all 451 of them. Group photos of each year's Byrum Scholars decorated a wall in Byrum's living room in south Charlotte.

"When I would go and visit Mr. Byrum and talk with him about the power of his gift, sometimes I would take some of the scholarship recipients with me, because that's what he enjoyed most," says Dr. Rhett Brown, Wingate University's president. "There is nothing you could buy the man that he wanted, but to meet the students he was helping gave him a great deal of joy."

All told, Byrum gave Wingate University more than \$25 million over the years. His association with the University began in 2001, when he was introduced to Wingate's president at the time, Dr. Jerry McGee, by a mutual friend, Allen Laymon. Later that year, he made his first gift to the University, giving Wingate two parcels of land and an office building that together sold for \$1.45 million.

Byrum was awarded an honorary doctorate by Wingate University, served as a member of the WU Board of Trustees and had the Wingate University School of Business named in his honor.

After graduating from Wake Forest University School of Law in 1942, Byrum enlisted in the U.S. Army. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge and also served in Korea. After the war, he was an attorney by trade, but he invested wisely, mostly in real estate, amassing a multimillion-dollar



portfolio. Over the years he gave away significant portions of his holdings to institutions in need.

In 2011, Byrum gave a 25.5 percent interest in Park Road Shopping Center in south Charlotte to Wingate. He also gave stakes in the shopping center to Queens University and Wake Forest University, making him the 14<sup>th</sup>-most-generous philanthropist in the United States in 2011, according to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*.

Wingate's stake turned out to be worth \$20.92 million – the largest one-time gift in University history.

"At that point, we were an institution where 100,000-dollar gifts were pretty infrequent," McGee says. "One hundred thousand dollars was eye-opening for us. Any gift that had two commas in it was pretty big. We had never had a gift that had eight numbers in it. It was kind of stunning."

Wingate used about half of the

money to fund capital projects, including the construction of a new dormitory. The rest was put into an endowment, the Porter Byrum Fund, that every year pays for about 200 students to attend Wingate University on a Porter Byrum Scholarship.

So far, 812 scholarships have been awarded, with 451 students in 33 majors benefiting from Byrum's generosity. Byrum, who never had any children of his own, is helping ensure that future teachers, pharmacists, musicians and ministers reach their career goals without being burdened with an unmanageable debt load.

"He wanted kids who didn't have the means but had solid ambition," says Tom Williams, a longtime Wingate University trustee and chairman of the Board of Trustees at the time of the Park Road Shopping Center sale. Williams says he gets emotional when he sees a photo of Byrum Scholars surrounding the man who made their scholarship possible. "They were his kids," Williams says.

## IN MEMORIAM

# Bullock instrumental in expanding music program

**T**hrough his late wife, **Jimmy Bullock '68** grew to have a deep appreciation for music. Her influence led to a support for music that has had a profound effect on Wingate University.

A sizable gift from Bullock helped create the Cynthia LeGette Bullock Center for Music Studies, which opened in early 2015, greatly expanding the rehearsal space available to Wingate's music students. Bullock, a University trustee, died Sept. 1 in Greensboro following a stroke.

The LeGette Bullock wing added 5,000 square feet of valuable rehearsal space to the Batte Center. It is named for Cynthia Bullock, a nurse by trade who also had a passion for music. Cynthia died of cancer in 2009. She and Bullock had been married since 1970.

"Cynthia was a music lover," says Dr. Kenney Potter, chair of the Music Department. "They ended up supporting the Greensboro Symphony. Through that support, Jim became a lover of music. When she passed away, he wanted to honor her. He saw it as an opportunity, and it met our needs."

The Legette Bullock wing of the Batte Center includes the Payne Vocal Hall, with permanent tiered standing space, giving Wingate's choirs a more natural rehearsal area. It also includes a flat space identical to the size of the McGee Theatre stage, enabling Wingate's opera company to more easily perfect their performances.

Bullock's gift came at the perfect time for the Music Department, which had become almost too successful. Students who dreamed of becoming performers, church musicians and school music teachers flocked to Wingate's renowned program, and eventually the department was bursting at the seams.

The opening of the wing doubled the number of practice rooms available to students. "That certainly met a dire need at the time," Potter says.

Before the Legette Bullock wing opened, the band room was too small for the 50 or so instrumentalists to rehearse comfortably.



On the other side of the wall from the band room was the previous vocal hall, which was not large enough for Wingate Opera to rehearse properly. Now that the wall has been torn down and the room remodeled, Wingate's band is 80 members strong.

"Mr. Bullock's generosity has made a profound impact on the music department as a whole," Potter says. "The expansion has really helped our students excel."

Bullock also pledged a \$50,000 challenge gift that has the Music Department's campaign to become an "all-Steinway" piano school on track.

After graduating from Wingate, Bullock served in the Special Forces arm of the Coast Guard, where he was the Secret Service officer in charge of Richard Nixon's security when the president was visiting Key Biscayne. After leaving the service, Bullock and Cynthia moved to his hometown of Greensboro, where he ran his father's business, Environmental Air Systems. Under Jimmy Bullock, the company grew to over 1,000 employees. Because EAS's specialty was modular mechanical and electrical construction, during his short time on the Wingate Board of Trustees Bullock helped advise the University on facilities and grounds.

Bullock is survived by his wife, Sherry, whom he married on New Year's Eve 2015. Sherry, also a music lover, invited the University's Chamber Choir to perform at Bullock's celebration of life in late September.



Jimmy Bullock and his daughter Sarah (above) pose during the dedication of the Cynthia LeGette Bullock Center for Music Studies in 2015. The LeGette Bullock wing of the Batte Center doubled the number of rehearsal rooms for music students and added the Payne Vocal Hall.

## YOUR GIFTS

**\$7,824,231**  
total amount raised  
(\$439,786 for the Annual Fund)

**\$72,876**  
total raised during  
One Day One Dog

**125**  
Faculty & Staff  
Corporations/  
foundations

**\$20,020**  
total raised by  
men's soccer team

**990**  
Alumni

**39**  
Trustees

**496**  
Friends

**2,572**

donors in Fiscal Year 2016-17

THANK YOU!  
FROM THE  
BENEFIT

SUPPORT

#1

Men's soccer  
team wins  
Wingate's first  
national title



106

2016-17 South  
Atlantic Conference  
Commissioner's  
Honor Roll

105

Academic All-Americans  
(and counting)

3

Fullbrights  
awarded  
since 2015

412

Students received  
endowed scholarships  
in 2016-17



160

The McGee Health  
& Wellness Center  
opened in 2017,  
just in time to  
welcome our largest  
incoming class ever

Students studied  
abroad in

2016-17 through

W'International  
opportunities



Cuba



Costa Rica



Denmark



Ecuador



Japan



Korea



Germany



Honduras



Peru



Romania



United Kingdom

THEIR IMPACT

OUR STUDENTS – INCLUDING 1,156 NEW STUDENTS – WELCOME CLASS OF 2021 –

HERE'S TO OUR LARGEST INCOMING CLASS EVER

# 2017 DONOR REPORT



Wingate University students, faculty, administration and trustees gratefully acknowledge the gifts of alumni, friends, foundations, corporations, parents, churches and estates, without which the University would not exist. Since the founding of Wingate School in 1896, gifts have sustained the institution through the years. Faithful donors have added immeasurable value to the quality of campus life. The names of those donors who made one or more gifts to Wingate University during the fiscal year June 1, 2016, to May 31, 2017, are included in the following Donor Report.





### FRONT OF THE QUEUE

The new Starbucks coffee shop opened just in time for move-in day. Situated in the Dickson-Palmer Center overlooking the pond, the facility is the largest Starbucks in a three-county area (Mecklenburg, Union and Cabarrus). Admissions officers **Kayla Cherry '14** and **Chelsea Parker '11** were first in line at the soft opening on Aug. 17. The restaurant has been a big hit with students, employees and visitors alike.

# Save the Date

**OCTOBER 21**

Midtown Men

**NOVEMBER 2-3**

Wingate Opera performances

**NOVEMBER 4-5**

Homecoming Weekend

**NOVEMBER 10**

An Evening with Leo Kottke

**NOVEMBER 17**

Mystical Arts of Tibet

**NOVEMBER 27**

Wind Ensemble Concert

**NOVEMBER 28**

Chamber Ensemble Concert

**DECEMBER 1**

Choral Concert

**DECEMBER 4**

Final day of classes

**DECEMBER 16**

Fall Commencement

**JANUARY 10**

Second semester classes begin

**JANUARY 26**

American Spiritual Ensemble

# WINGATE

Fall 2017 | Vol.74, No.3

## EDITOR

Chuck Gordon '89

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Chuck Gordon '89

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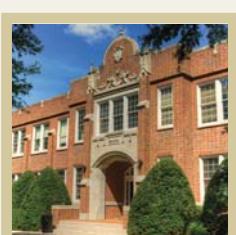
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