

MONTevallo TODAY

University of Montevallo Alumni Magazine • Fall 2022/Winter 2023

Better
Together on
the Bricks



MONTTEVALLO TODAY

University of Montevallo Alumni Magazine
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From Calkins Hall



Dear Montevallo family,

As I reflect on our many accomplishments this past quarter, I cannot help but consider just how true is the theme of this issue. Indeed, "Life is better together on the bricks."

As a University, we've buckled down, dug in and overcome the many obstacles before us in the past few years. We didn't just make it through, we grew in both harmony and efficacy, proving yet again who we are and to what we're committed.

The relentless pursuit and achievement of our mission remains unwavering. We continue to provide an affordable and student-centered liberal arts college experience that develops students intellectually who are ready to enter the workforce or continue their education at the graduate level.

This fall 2022/winter 2023 issue of Montevallo Today showcases our great achievements and highlights a few of the many people who contribute to our noble and essential enterprise.

U.S. News & World Report ranked Montevallo as one of the best colleges in the South in multiple categories for the 14th straight year. Those rankings included No. 6 Best Value School in the South and No. 9 among Best Colleges for Veterans in the South.

For the 11th consecutive year, we were named to the 2022-2023 Colleges of Distinction list, making our mark on both the Alabama College of Distinction and the Public University College of Distinction lists. The esteemed Stephens College of Business and the College of Education & Human Development were also given special recognition.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize my colleague Dr. Courtney Bentley's promotion to provost and vice president of Academic Affairs. We could not ask for a more devoted professional to serve as our academic leader.

We're a committed team at Montevallo, and we'll continue to encourage and support one another because we know that the success of one is the success of us all. "Life is truly better together on the bricks."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Stewart III".

Dr. John W. Stewart III
UM President



ALUMNI SURVEY

Thank you to all who filled out the quadrennial alumni survey. The UMNAA Board will use the survey results to plan events and programming to better serve alumni. To view the statistical analysis, please visit montevallo.edu/alumnisurvey.

On the Cover Smiling students Nick Lyles and Delaney Eaves take a photo with Freddie the Falcon at Farmer Hall on the first day of classes for the fall semester. See page 14 for a Life is Better Together on the Bricks feature highlighting life on campus.

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UM hosted multiple events for incoming freshmen, high school students, returning students, faculty and staff during fall semester.

29 FALCONS IN LAW

Many University of Montevallo graduates hold a juris doctorate and are excelling in their law careers.



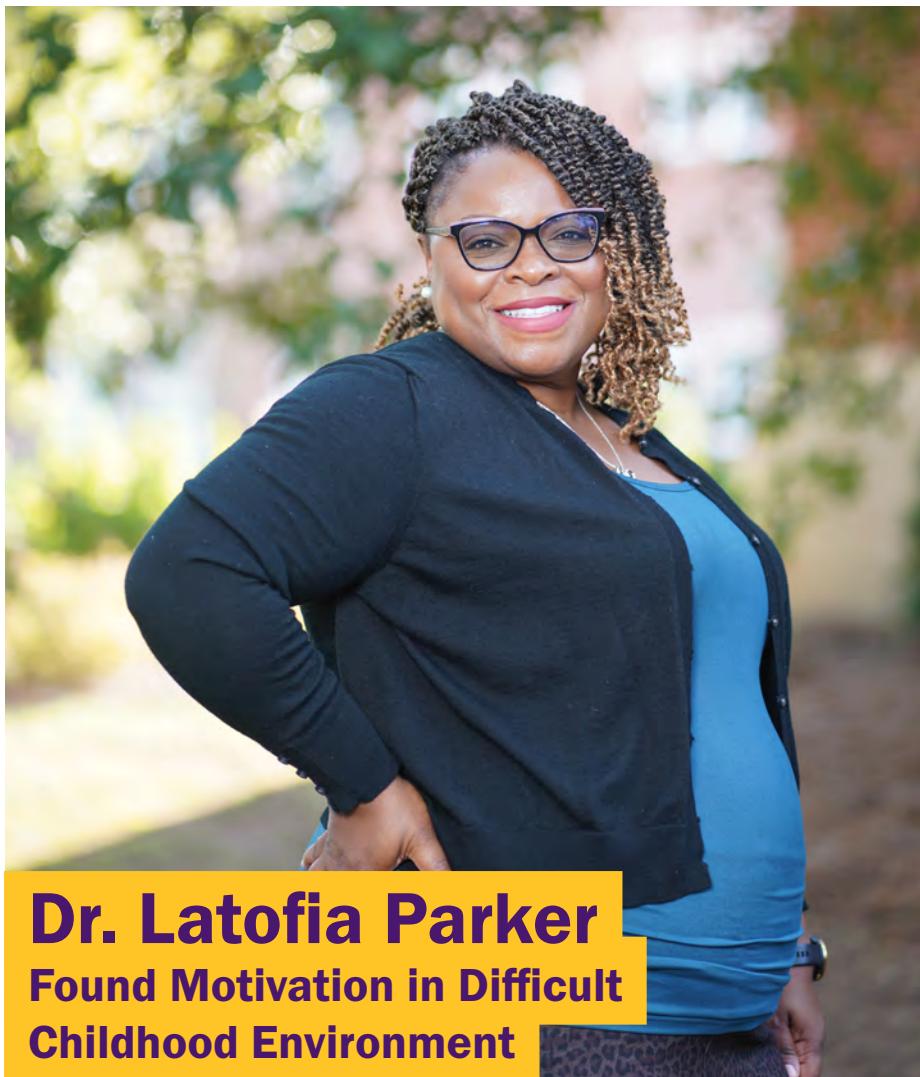
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Dr. Latofia Parker Found Motivation in Difficult Childhood Environment

Raised by a grandmother with alcohol addiction in a dysfunctional home in a trailer park in the small, rural Pike County town of Brundidge, Alabama, Grainger Community Counseling and Wellness Clinic Director Dr. Latofia Parker knew from an early age that academic success was the way to rise above her circumstances.

"My mom was 16 when she had me and had to drop out of school, so my grandmom primarily raised me," Parker said. "We grew up very, very poor."

"I'm a first-generation college student who never saw anyone in my family go to college. When I became aware that a person could achieve academically, I wanted that. In fourth grade, I had a teacher who used to put on a Black History Month program. She had me recite Langston Hughes's 'I, Too, Am America.' There was something about those words; they stuck with me. I didn't have to be invisible."

That mindset took her a long way. She joined academic organizations, transferred

to a higher-achieving high school, applied to a private college, found a way to pay for it, graduated, went to graduate school, started a family and worked multiple jobs throughout.

While pursuing her doctoral degree in counseling education and supervision at The University of Alabama, she interned at UM and eventually became an adjunct professor.

She did all this while working at the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services as a rehab counselor with a caseload of 200 clients.

"I'd start work at 7 a.m., drive to Tuscaloosa for grad school at UA, then drive to Montevallo to teach," she said.

In addition to being the director of the new Grainger Community Counseling and Wellness Clinic, she owns Parker Counseling Services, is an associate professor of counseling at UM. She was recently selected by The Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling as the two-year delegate representing Alabama on the Counseling Compact Commission.

Parker said she chose to specialize in counseling and psychology because of her family.

"My cousin had a mental illness, my mom didn't finish high school and just observing the dysfunction in my environment made me very interested in understanding human suffering and the mind."

Parker has taught at Montevallo for more than seven years. She said she loves the University and owes a lot to her excellent mentors.

In fact, she didn't become full-time faculty at UM until her mentor, Dr. Stephanie Puleo, retired, creating an opportunity for her.

"Montevallo is close to home, and my experiences with the people at UM from leadership to students have been nothing but positive."

She and her husband, Marcus Parker, have two children, Austen and Jackson.

**"There was something about those words; they stuck with me.
I didn't have to be invisible."** — Dr. Latofia Parker

Making an Impact: Jordan Dacus

BY DAVID CLEMONS '03

Montevallo Junior Jordan Dacus is making an impact on the lives of her classmates through her work in the Student Government Association.

She hopes to take that servant's heart into her career.

In addition to her studies, she's focusing on her work serving her fellow students as a member of the executive committee of the SGA and her work in the Alumni Office.

"My role is to ensure that every decision that is made is reflective of students' voices being heard, and those decisions will leave a lasting legacy that represents the students that walk the halls of the University of Montevallo," she said.

Dacus came to UM from Hoover High School, but as a self-described "military brat," she lived several places during childhood from her birth in Shreveport, Louisiana, before moving to the Birmingham area — her parents' home — at the age of 7.

"Because I am a woman of faith, I understand how important it is to select the right school and how it has the ability to change your life," she said. "After much prayer, the University of Montevallo...impressed on my heart, and thus, here I am."

Her classmates elected her to the position of director of diversity and campus outreach in the spring to serve in the 2022-2023 academic year. Before this, she served on Freshman Forum, then as a College of Arts and Sciences senator.

In working with the Alumni Office, she has a chance to meet former students.

"It allows me to connect with students that once walked the halls and the students who currently attend the University," she said.

In balancing her extracurriculars with her class work, Dacus is taking part in an initiative to attend law school. She describes it as an amazing program that prepares students for law school.

Students may attend UM for three years of undergraduate work, and after admission to Cumberland School of Law at Samford University, they can transfer pre-law coursework to complete their final year of undergraduate work, allowing them to complete a bachelor's degree and a law degree in six years.

When Dacus completes the program, she hopes to work in contract law.

"I would love the opportunity to assist companies or organizations when dealing with legal issues associated with creating, negotiating and enforcing contracts."

And she might not be done with politics and public service.

"Similarly to my role now, I would love to enter the political arena to ensure the voices of the people are being heard and reflected in the decisions that are being made."

"But this time, rather than at the university level, I want to be impactful throughout the United States."





Enhancing Recruitment and Retention: The Jacobsons Endow Spanish Chair

When considering their legacy and whom they wanted to leave an impression on, Christiane "Chris" Jacobson and her husband, Dr. Eric Jacobson, thought of UM.

"She had a really nice time at Alabama College," Dr. Jacobson said. "The culture at Montevallo was perfect for her just when she needed it the most. We appreciate the education that she received and felt we should do something for the school."

The 1960 Alabama College alum and her husband donated a gift of \$500,000 to the University, which was earmarked to create the Christiane Angele Jacobson Endowed Spanish Chair in English and World Languages in memory of Elizabeth Stockton, a former mentor of Chris, who was her Spanish professor at Alabama College.

"An endowed chair in Spanish language and literature in the Department of English and World Languages enables the University to offer additional incentives in the recruitment and retention of the best and brightest professors and provide student support through scholarships," said Scott Dillard MBA '17, vice president of Advancement

and External Affairs. "These professors have distinguished themselves through their research and scholarly or creative activity."

"These positions are among the highest and most prestigious appointments at any institution. Moreover, they increase the visibility of the University and aid in attracting additional high-quality faculty and superior students along with external resources for research, instruction and service."

The mission of the Department of English and World Languages at the University is to prepare students for living in and contributing to the global community with language skills and cultural awareness. Courses focus on fostering communication in our students, emphasizing the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Instructors also promote cultural awareness at all levels. Upper-division courses promote further linguistic progress while developing critical thinking through the analytic study of literature and cultures outside the U.S.

The Christiane Angele Jacobson Endowed Spanish Chair will be awarded to an outstanding professor who will be selected

by the dean and provost. Fifty percent of the contribution from the endowed chair will be used to fund one or more merit-based scholarships for a student studying Spanish.

The Jacobsons met while in graduate school at the University of Wisconsin. They fell in love and soon married.

Dr. Jacobson became an academic physician specializing in infectious disease, and they moved to various states before settling down on the Potomac River in Virginia, where he worked at Virginia Commonwealth University teaching internal medicine.

They have three children, Lisa, Melanie and Leif, and three grandchildren. Since Dr. Jacobson's retirement in 2006, the couple spends their time traveling and sailing. He also plays violin in the local orchestra and builds boats.



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montevallo.edu/give



Above: (from left) Trustee Hon. Todd Strange '66, Trustee Leroy Nix '03, Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. '89, Barbara Fallin, Montevallo City Council representative Lelia Mitchell, Trustee Libby Queen '59, UM President Dr. John W. Stewart III, Trustee Wynelle Sewell '77 and Alabama Commission on Higher Education Executive Director Dr. Jim Purcell '71; **top right:** Nix speaks about Dr. Fallin; **bottom right:** Strange and President Stewart present Dr. and Mrs. Fallin with a framed photo of Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. Hall.



UM Honors Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. With Building Renaming

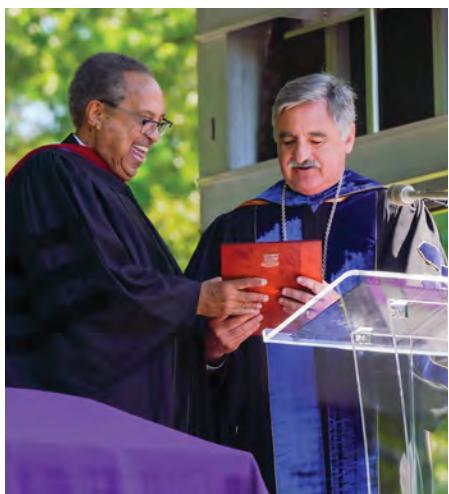
UM held a building dedication ceremony May 4 officially renaming the University of Montevallo on Main to Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. Hall.

Fallin M.A. '89 served as director of minority affairs at the University from 1988 to 1999 and was a history professor at Mon-

tevallo for 28 years, retiring in 2020. In May 2021, the UM Board of Trustees established the "Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. Lecture Series" to honor the history professor emeritus' dedication to civil rights.

"This is a historic moment for our University, and we are proud that the home of our

Behavioral and Social Sciences Program will bear Dr. Fallin's name," President Stewart said. "It says so much about our institution's ethos and culture that we honor a faculty member who has changed so many lives over the years with his passionate teaching, scholarship and civil rights advocacy."



Fallin Encourages Graduates to Strive for Best

Just before 350 class of 2022 graduates walked across the stage during May's commencement ceremony on Flowerhill Lawn, Fallin, history professor emeritus, left graduates with three points by which to govern the rest of their lives:

- Think critically about the great issues of life
- Broaden horizons
- Be in a wholesome state of dissatisfaction

"You have done well," Fallin said. "But let me begin my very brief remarks by raising a question. What should people get from an education? What is important about getting an education and finishing college as you are today?"

Fallin, a Bessemer native, told graduates that getting a job is important so as not to become a "pest on society," but a college education, especially a liberal arts education, should go beyond that.

Cynthia Todd Appointed as First African American Woman to the University Board of Trustees



Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey appointed Cynthia Todd to serve on the University's Board of Trustees. Todd is the first Black woman to serve as a UM trustee.

Todd's term started July 18 and will end Jan. 19, 2032. She fills the spot left by Rep. David Wheeler '72, who died in March.

"In this capacity, I commit to serving with honesty and integrity as done in other leadership roles previously held," Todd said. "I look forward to collaborating with this outstanding group of leaders in making impactful decisions for the University of Montevallo."

Todd, a native of Calera who resides in Pelham, received her bachelor's degree in business administration and management from UM in 1988. Before her trustee appointment, she served in several roles with the UMNAAC from 2006 to 2022, including as the first Black president of the organization.

UM Rises in Best Colleges Rankings, Earns College of Distinction Title for 11th Consecutive Year

In June, Montevallo was named to the 2022-2023 Colleges of Distinction list for the 11th year straight. UM was recognized as a 2022-2023 Alabama College of Distinction and 2022-2023 Public University College of Distinction.

In addition to earning the overall Colleges of Distinction designation, the University received program-specific recognition for the Stephens College of Business and the College of Education & Human Development. Montevallo was also awarded for its efforts to prepare students for their careers after graduation and also, in June, as a 2022-2023 Military Spouse Friendly School.

In July, the Nutrition and Wellness Program was ranked by Intelligent magazine as the fourth-best nutrition degree program in the nation and the best in the South.

In September, U.S. News & World Report ranked Montevallo as one of the best colleges in the South in multiple categories for the 14th consecutive year, including, No. 6 in Best Value in the South ranking.





UM Fishing Team Named School of the Year for Second Consecutive Year

The fishing team was once again crowned the Bass Pro Shops School of the Year presented by Abu Garcia.

Nearly 200 collegiate bass fishing teams from across the nation competed in the Bass Pro Shops 2022 BoatUS Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship tournament at Pickwick Lake in Florence, Alabama, on May 26-27, but only one was named School of the Year for having amassed the most cumulative points of any team in the nation.

Last year, the fishing team, which is part of the President's Outdoor Scholars Program, earned the same achievement. Montevallo became the third school to win back-to-back School of the Year honors in the history of the sport.



Dr. Courtney Bentley Named Provost and VP for Academic Affairs

After serving as interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at the University since January, Dr. Courtney Bentley has been officially named to the position.

"I am deeply honored and humbled to be named provost and vice president for Academic Affairs for the University of Montevallo," Bentley said. "I believe the strength of the University's premiere academic programs are grounded in our liberal arts identity, and I look forward to building on these traditions to embrace challenges and celebrate success as we move forward."

Before becoming interim provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, Bentley was dean of the College of Education & Human Development at UM, a position in which Dr. Donna Ploessl is now serving as interim.

'Last Chance U' Star Brittany Wagner Hired as Director of Grainger Center for Professional Development



Brittany Wagner, star of the hit original docuseries, "Last Chance U," on Netflix, has been hired as director of the Grainger Center for Professional Development and as a full-time instructor and advisor in the Stephens College of Business.

"We wanted to bring her in full-time because her expertise in the sports field allows her to manage our sports business minor," said Dr. Amiee Mellon, interim dean and associate professor of business.

She has more than 15 years of experience as an academic advisor and has helped more than 200 student-athletes academically qualify for nationally respected NCAA Division I schools.

"Moving forward, the purpose of the center will be to help these students with their overall development, personal and professional," Wagner said. "It's meeting them where they are and moving them forward."

Photo by
Corey Nolen

Virtual Reality Campus Tour Now Available

Though in-person tours are the preferred method of experiencing the beauty that is Montevallo's campus, it's no longer the only way to get a real feel for what it's like to attend the University.

Over the past year, UM added two new campus tour options: virtual, and for the first time, virtual reality.

In the VR tour, participants can use VR controllers to click where they want to go and virtually walk from building to building on campus. They can see residence halls, athletic facilities, the cafeteria, Farmer Hall and more. Every building on campus is visible in the VR tour, and a number of building interiors are accessible. Admissions is offering the VR experience during high school visits.

To experience the VR tour, visit montevallo.edu/tours.

Stephens College of Business Adds New Concentrations and Updates Program Name



Photo by Corey Nolen

The swiftly growing Stephens College of Business added four new concentrations — two in management and two in finance — and changed the name of its Computer Informatics Program to the Data Analytics Program.

New concentrations in finance include sustainable finance and financial sales, and new management concentrations include international management and human resources. The new concentrations are part of eight concentrations that have been added to the Stephens College of Business since fall 2021.

Dr. Milad Jasemi, assistant professor of data analytics, and Dr. Shafqat Ali Shad, assistant professor of data analytics and cybersecurity, said the reason they changed the name from computer informatics to data analytics is to better convey the focus of the program, which is about solving business problems using state-of-the-art technology and tools in the market.



Learn more about these top stories and stay informed on UM updates at montevallo.edu/news

Everybody Needs a ‘Push’

On Feb. 19, 2002, in Salt Lake City, Utah, a 26-year-old Black woman from Bessemer, Alabama, made history.

Vonetta Flowers, along with her teammate, Jill Bakken, became the first U.S. women's bobsled team to compete in the Olympics, the first to win a gold medal and Flowers became the first person of African descent — male or female — to ever win a gold medal in the Winter Olympics.

At the second installment of the distinguished Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. Lecture Series held at the Center for the Arts on Oct. 13, Flowers shared the story of her push through adversity and the improbable triumph at the end of her cold road to gold.

“If a girl from Bessemer, Alabama, who had dreams of going to the Summer Olympics, could go to the Winter Olympics and win a gold medal, then anything is possible,” Flowers said. “And remember, everyone needs a push.”

At a 30-minute question and answer session with students from the UM Minorities Achieving Dreams of Excellence (M.A.D.E.) program earlier that afternoon, Flowers explained how she got her start running down Bessemer streets never thinking about the Olympics.

While attending Jonesboro Elementary School, a track coach, Dewitt Thomas, with the Alabama Striders Youth Track Program, came to her school to recruit runners for his team. Flowers ran swifter than everyone at her school, including the boys. Thomas recruited her.

“From that time on, he was my inspiration,” she said. “He saw something in me at 9 years old that I didn’t even know was there.”

From that moment on, she watched the Summer Olympics. Jackie Joyner-Kersee became her role model, and she dreamed of being the best runner in the world.

In 1996 during the Summer Olympic trials in Atlanta, she competed in the 100-meter run and long jump finishing 13th, which wasn’t high enough to qualify for the team.

Her next chance came four years later in 2000. She trained year-round but was injured and had to undergo her fifth surgery in eight years. She recovered in enough time to compete, finishing 12th place. She didn’t make the team.

“Throughout all my ups and downs, I didn’t realize that God was preparing me for something truly amazing. With disappointment staring me in the face, an opportunity came knocking at my door.”

At the trials, her husband spotted a sign encouraging athletes to try out for the U.S. bobsled team. He presented the idea to Flowers, but she wasn’t interested. He worked to convince her for two days, and she reluctantly agreed.

She made the team, but didn’t know much about bobsledding outside of the movie “Cool Runnings.”

With her husband’s support, she departed Birmingham and flew to Germany to learn how to push a 450-pound bobsled.

At the end of her first season in the sport,



she and her teammate at the time, Bonny Warner, ranked 2nd in the U.S. and 3rd in the world.

But soon after, Warner cut her for a new teammate, and she was on a plane back to Birmingham.

A month after getting kicked off the team, she received two offers to rejoin it. She tried out for Bakken’s team and made it.

They went to the Olympics and won, earning first-place gold medals and making history. Tears flowed freely down Flowers’ face as chants of “USA” filled the chilly air that February 2002.

“Going to the Olympics and winning gold was a dream come true. I know my story is filled with twists and turns, ups and downs, but I believe that if you have big dreams, you’re willing to take risks — and if you walk by faith and trust in God — you can do anything you want.”

Vonetta Flowers with M.A.D.E. program students and members of UM’s Black Heritage Committee.





New Sports on the Horizon

UM Hires Head Coach for New Collegiate Cycling Team

Jennifer Nichols has been hired as the first head coach of the University's new collegiate cycling team created in the fall of 2021.

Nichols previously served as the team director and coach of the Helena High School Mountain Bike Team from September 2019 to July 2022. She is USA Cycling Safe Sport trained, has a coaching certification from the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) and has completed the Bike Instructor Certification Program. Nichols is also a Level 3 certified USA Cycling coach.

"I would like to thank Dr. Stewart for this amazing opportunity to be the head coach for the University of Montevallo's cycling team," Nichols said. "The University's passion and energy to develop the first collegiate varsity cycling program in the state of Alabama was evident from the initial interview."

"I'm overwhelmed with excitement to lead this new cycling program and build a diverse team of hard-working, competitive athletes. I'm honored to be a part of the UM family."

The team already has several student cyclists preparing for the upcoming season, and by the time the full team starts competing in fall 2023, it's expected that Nichols will have recruited many more cyclists.

UM is transforming the former Montevallo Golf Club into a premier cycling course that will serve as the home trail for the team. The course will host competitions regularly, bringing hundreds of visitors to Shelby County and the City of Montevallo and strengthening the area's economy. The course will feature a bike shop, wash station and storage and work areas for each student-athlete on the team.

Montevallo Adds Men's Wrestling, Names Daniel Ownbey as Program's First Coach

UM Athletics recently announced the addition of men's wrestling, marking the University's 22nd intercollegiate athletic sport.

With the addition of men's wrestling, Montevallo became the second University in the state to offer the sport — the first at the NCAA Division II level — and is the only school in the Gulf South Conference to add wrestling.

"We are really excited to serve wrestling student-athletes coming into the Falcon family," President Stewart said. "Too many of our high school wrestlers have had to leave Alabama to compete at the highest levels, so we are very pleased to keep them right here in their home state."

Daniel Ownbey has been hired as the first head coach for the men's wrestling program. Ownbey comes to Montevallo from Wheeling University where he served as head coach for two years.

"I would like to thank Dr. Stewart and Mark Richard for the opportunity to become the first head wrestling coach at the University of Montevallo," Ownbey said. "I am extremely excited to return to the South and begin building what will be a successful program. There are amazing things in the future for the University of Montevallo, and I am excited to be a part of the family."

During his coaching experience, Ownbey has helped tutor a combined 17 regional placers and seven national qualifiers. While at Newberry College, he was part of a program that placed five wrestlers at the NCAA Super Region 2 Tournament and had four qualifiers for the NCAA Division II Wrestling Championships.

"Daniel has the opportunity to change the landscape of college wrestling in Alabama," Richard said. "Montevallo will be the only Division II institution sponsoring the sport and providing wrestling scholarships to prospective wrestling student-athletes."

The wrestling team will begin competing in fall 2023.

**Baseball**

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LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER ON THE BRICKS

UM hosted multiple events for incoming freshmen, returning students, high school students, faculty and staff during fall semester, ranging from Move-In Day and food trucks to goat yoga and business networking. These events demonstrate just how much Life is Better Together on the Bricks.

M.A.D.E. Early Orientation & Early Move-In

Each year, the Minorities Achieving Dreams of Excellence (M.A.D.E.) Program hosts an early orientation and early move-in for first-year M.A.D.E. students. During this two-day event, more than 100 students moved into their residence halls, connected with campus resources and their M.A.D.E. mentor and got to know fellow M.A.D.E. students.



Move-In Day

New student Move-In Day is a campus-wide University event held the Friday before the first day of classes. Hundreds of students, staff, faculty, alumni and community members volunteered to welcome new students to campus and help families move students' items into their rooms.



Goat Yoga

This event let students take a 20-minute beginner yoga course while goats prance around the pen, jumping on their backs. A mini pen with goats that students could pet was also available. This was the third goat yoga, which has become a hit with students.





Bid Day

Sorority Bid Day is when women who have participated in formal sorority recruitment discover which sorority offered them a bid. The women gathered on the steps of Palmer Hall and sororities on Main Quad. The sororities cheered and recruitment counselors revealed their sorority affiliations. Potential members opened their bids and ran to their new sorority home.



Food Trucks on Campus

Cousins Maine Lobster, Uncle G's and Wasabi Juan's visited campus on a sunny afternoon for faculty, staff and students to enjoy. The Office of Advancement provided a free meal voucher for the event to faculty and staff donors to thank them for their continued support.



Stephens College of Business Meet the Firms Event

Meet the Firms is an event for upper-level accounting students to connect with accounting firms for internship and job placement opportunities. Thirty-five accounting students participated, and 14 accounting firms attended. The firms were sent electronic copies of each student's résumé.



Exploring Mass Comm Day

The Mass Communication Program hosted its annual Exploring Mass Comm Day event for high school students from across the state. More than 70 students spent the day in Strong Hall learning about mass communication and rotating through workshops about studio production, podcasting and broadcast news writing.



Photo by Josie Shaw '23



Celebrating Montevallo Moments

The University celebrated 126 years Oct. 13 with its Founders' Day convocation and the dedication of the Charles Webb Jr. Post Office — the second Black man in UM history to have a facility named for him.

President Stewart said the Founders' Day theme, A Montevallo Moment, represents how the Montevallo family is truly held together by their experiences at UM.

"A Montevallo Moment may come from personal success or recognition, or it may be the smallest act of kindness that leads to lifelong friendships on our campus," he said.

Blake Hudson, a 2002 graduate who became the dean and a professor of law at Samford University's Cumberland School of Law in July — one of two UM graduates at the helm of accredited state law schools — served as the keynote speaker.

"Serving as the dean of the Cumberland School of Law at Samford ...would not have been possible without many moments that shaped me during my time at Montevallo."

Watch the full convocation at youtube.com/montevalloforyou.

Several faculty, staff and alumni were honored at the convocation for their exemplary work and service.

Dr. Ashley Wurzbacher, an associate professor of English, was named the 2022 University Scholar for her short story collection "Happy Like This," which has received national and global recognition.

Dr. Jermaine Mitchell, an assistant professor of exercise science who died Feb. 20 at the age of 41, was posthumously awarded the Jermaine Mitchell Faculty Service Award for his dedication to community service and impact on the University community. His wife, Dr. Qshequilla Mitchell, accepted it on his behalf.

"He showed heart and compassion for people and their wellness," said Dr. Claire Edwards, president of the Faculty Senate. "He strived for inclusion, built relationships and was devoted to the disadvantaged and misfortunate."

William "Bill" Carmichael, an adjunct professor of world civilizations, received the Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award.

The Convocation also featured the Investiture of the Seniors and students Rachel Johnson, Cole Swain and Lucy Frost-Helms were recognized for winning the annual Hiding of the Crook competition for the second year in a row.

Charles Webb Jr. Post Office Dedication

In honor of Charles Webb Jr., a Black man

from Montevallo who delivered mail to every building on campus from 1941 — while he was still in high school — to 1977 when he retired, the UM post office in Farmer Hall was renamed the Charles Webb Jr. Post Office.

"During our country's social justice movement there were discussions all over the country on college campuses about naming buildings on campus and spaces on campus," Stewart said during the dedication ceremony outside of Farmer Hall.

Stewart said they created two committees out of that conversation. One researched the history of building names on campus, and the other worked on creating new names for campus buildings. He said Charles Webb Jr. was remembered well by alumni and was highly recommended.

Cynthia Todd '88, the newest member of UM's Board of Trustees, who also served on committees as the UMNAAA Board president, said Webb always had a smile on his face and was always on time.

Webb's family thanked Stewart and the board for honoring "Uncle Charlie" and continuing to improve diversity at Montevallo.

Left: (from left) UM Associate Professor of Communication Studies Dr. Ray Ozley, the Webb family and UM Archivist Carey Heatherly in front of the newly named Charles Webb Jr. Post Office; **below:** Blake Hudson '02 delivers the keynote address at Founders' Day.



College Night Revue Relives College Night Performances of the Past

BY M.K. BRYANT '23



Photo by Britton Wade '25

The 2022 College Night Revue, "Once Upon a College Night," an original fractured fairy tale plot by Dr. Jeff Walker '08 and Jenna Bellamy '11, featured a cast of alumni and current students and songs from multiple past College Night shows.

Walker said what made the show so special was that "it is both Purples and Golds together on stage celebrating a tradition we all love."

Held on Oct. 14, in Palmer Auditorium, the Revue's plot consisted of Snow White, as portrayed in the 2006 Purple Side's show, "The Complex Princess with the Princess Complex," and her journey to find her "happily ever after," following her divorce from Prince Charming.

She meets up with several familiar characters along the way. She is joined on her journey by Robin Hood from Gold Side's "A Very Notti Musical," the Itsy-Bitsy Spider from Gold Side's "No Rhyme, Nor Reason" and Prince Rankin from Purple Side's "The Heir Apparent with the Apparent Air." Also, on her journey, she is followed by the nar-

rators: the Purple, Gold and Green College Night fairies known as Violet, Marigold and Tinker Bell.

Her goal is threatened by Prince Charming, who has declared himself the leader of a group of past College Night villains, including Captain Hook from Gold Side's "Peter Pan," Ernestine and Facia as the wicked stepsisters from Purple Side's "The Heir Apparent with the Apparent Air," Willie Wolf and O.U. Money. He and his new friends are set on thwarting Snow White's plan to find the Fairy Godmother and guarantee a happy ending for her friends and herself.

He is eventually beaten by Snow White, and in typical College Night fashion, the protagonists are all given their happy endings.

A few of the songs included in the show were "Halitosis" from Purple Side's "The Heir Apparent with the Apparent Air," "Back in the 'Ham" from Gold Side's "A Very Notti Musical," "Treat me like a Queen" from Purple Side's "The Complex Princess with the Princess Complex" and "Do it for the

Money" from Purple Side's "Witchful Thinking: One Hex of a Musical."

"It was incredible to work with Purples and Golds from different eras of College Night," Walker said. "Some of these were people that I competed against fiercely when I was a student. Some of them were individuals that I loved watching perform as an alum."

"But the Revue brought us together in our common love for the tradition."

Even past and current College Night cheerleaders were given a moment to shine before the show with the College Night cheer that is typically done before the Saturday night performance in February.

"Once Upon a College Night" was made possible with a cast, orchestra and production crew made up of both alumni and students alike who chose to dedicate their time to the show.

Above: "Once Upon a College Night" cast gathers onstage for a final bow.



UMNAA Awards Dinner Recognizes Outstanding Staff, Faculty and Alumni

The UM National Alumni Association held its annual awards reception and dinner on Oct. 13 to honor the outstanding service of a staff member, faculty member and alum, closing the celebration of the University's 126th Founders' Day.

"This evening we come together as alumni and the University community to honor character and commitment," said Stephanie Shaw '93, UMNAA president. "These individuals have strengthened us as an institution and reinforced the values that we hold so dear."

Outstanding Staff Service Award

Jenny Bell, director of Student Life since December 2011, received the Outstanding Staff Service Award, which recognizes a staff member's excellence in service and loyalty to the University.

Dr. Tammi Dahle '92, vice president for

Enrollment and Student Affairs, said Bell is a consummate professional, dedicated staff member, role model and student mentor who understands that leading a department in higher education means oftentimes working nights and weekends.

"Given that demanding schedule, Jenny constantly works to engage UM students from the time they are prospective students by planning orientation and welcome weekend events to maintaining a rigorous plan for the oversight of the SGA, Greek Life, intramural sports and more than 90 student organizations."

Bell said one of the primary reasons she and her husband stayed in Alabama when they moved to the state is because she fell in love with UM because of her co-workers and the students.

"To receive recognition from a place that you love for a job that you love is the most special kind of honor," she said. "Thank you for that. ...I feel so very privileged to be part of this amazing University."

Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award

The Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award was conferred upon Dr. Greg Samuels, associate professor of secondary education and chief diversity and inclusion officer. He is also president of the Social Science Education Consortium, Inc.

The Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award recognizes a UM professor who is dedicated to providing quality education and makes an impact on students through the teaching-learning process.

Nominator Jason Perry '18, M.Ed. '20,



student diversity and retention coordinator, said Samuels embodies commitment and the meaning behind the award as a shining example of humility, dedication and excellence.

"His impact transcends the classroom, and he represents everything you would hope for in a professor and mentor when attending college," Perry said. "Outside of the classroom, he has continued to find ways to serve UM, such as serving as the University's diversity and inclusion officer, and being an integral part of establishing the Dr. Wilson Fallin Jr. Lecture Series. ...He has been an unbelievable addition to the UM family, and his work will forever be a part of the legacy of Montevallo."

Samuels thanked the Alumni Board, colleagues, his wife and students.

"For me, teaching is truly a privilege," he said. "...I'm humbled to accept this award for Outstanding Commitment to Teaching, but please make no mistake. I'm only as good as the students I serve, and the University of Montevallo has some pretty amazing students."

Mary Lou Elder Williams Alumni Loyalty Award

The Mary Lou Elder Williams Alumni Loyalty Award — given to an alum who has demonstrated loyalty and dedication in their strength of service to UM through contributions of time, talents, or resources — was bestowed upon Claudia Harrell '73.

Nominator Sandi Falkenhagen '68 said over the years she's come to deeply respect Harrell for being an unwavering supporter of Montevallo in so many ways.

"Freshman move-in day? She's there," Falkenhagen said. "Alumni Board leadership? She's there. She's always ready to step in and do absolutely anything to make an event or project of any scope successful."

"Plus, she is a delightful person. With Claudia, you get exactly what you see: an active, determined supporter of all things UM. She totally has earned this honored recognition."

Harrell said the news of the award was sprung on her through an ambush Zoom meeting. She couldn't believe she was selected.

"As soon as we got off the Zoom call, I was still trying to breathe. And I thought 'this may have been a mistake,' but then an old phrase came to my mind: 'When pigs fly,'" Harrell said, unwrapping a figurine of a winged pig.

Harrell thanked a plethora of people, telling personal stories about them and heaping high praise upon each.

"I get happy when I come back to the bricks where I belong. Loyalty is everything. It is not about the circle, but the loyalty within. I am proud and honored to be part of that circle. Helen Keller said 'Alone we can do little, together we can do so much.'"

The night was concluded with the 15 Within 15 awards. *See pages 38-39.*

Opposite page: (from left) Recipients Dr. Greg Samuels, Claudia Harrell '73 and Jenny Bell; **this page:** 15 Within 15 recipients in attendance: (from left, front row) Morgan Wilson '10, Gabrielle Dudley '08, Kaley Martin '16, Dr. Kate Hayden '06, Nichole Harris '13, (back row) Paul Tierney M.Ed. '12, Cedric Norman '09, MBA '14, Dr. Bruce Finklea '07, Cindy Mullins '12, Lindsey Bristol '12, Dr. Daniel Birdsong '13, M.Ed. '16, Matthew Nelson '11.

A close-up portrait of Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick. She has long, wavy, light brown hair and is wearing a dark blue blazer over a yellow top. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a soft-focus green foliage.

Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick
helps students find a
place to belong.

Q & A

with Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick '09

Back on the Bricks

Your home: Calera

Your hometown: Guntersville, Alabama

What is your profession? Director of recruitment at UM

What made you choose this profession?

After I graduated from Montevallo, I worked in sales/advertising for a few years, but I didn't enjoy it. I had previously worked as a student worker and orientation leader during my time at UM, so I reached out to the director at the time to see if he knew of anything that was available. The admissions office had an administrative assistant position available, so I applied and got the job. A few months later, UM opened its first-ever out-of-state admissions counselor position, so I applied and became a counselor! Since then, I've worked my way up to the coordinator of transfer recruitment and then the director of recruitment, scholarships and student engagement for The University of Alabama at Birmingham, and later became the associate director and then the interim executive director of admissions at Clayton State University in Atlanta.

After only a few months of working as an admissions counselor, I knew I had found my calling. I love working with students and guiding them on their academic journey. Over time, and after working with different student populations, I also recognized a passion for providing access to higher education for our underserved populations.

How did Montevallo affect your career path?

Montevallo, in one way or another, has positively affected several aspects of my life, including my career path. I'm in higher education because the director of admissions at the time took a chance on me. With almost every job I've gotten since then, there has been a situation of 'someone knowing someone from Montevallo' that created a connection and pathway for me. I knew that eventually I would also need a master's degree for the director-level positions I was wanting. Seven years after I had finished my undergraduate degree, my communication studies mentors and professors, Drs. Ford and Hardig, were willing to write me recommendation letters to graduate school, which led to my admission to the program. That just doesn't happen at other schools!

How did you know you belonged at Montevallo? When I was a senior in high school, I received an invitation to the College Night reception for prospective students. Even though I lived just a few hours away, I had never heard of Montevallo. I had applied to a couple of other schools but wasn't excited about them. The moment I stepped into Palmer Hall, I knew. There was this magical, magnetic energy that you can't explain unless you've experienced it for yourself (which, full circle moment — pun intended — is what I tell prospective students now).

What is your secret for success? The secret is being brave and doing the things that scare you. I've taken a lot of risks (personally and

professionally) and it is terrifying, but you'll never know if you don't try. I'm definitely not the type of person to sit around and think, "what if."

What makes alumni of UM unique? We are such a tight-knit group who not only have a passion for our alma mater, but for each other. I have friends from UM who graduated in the 80s and friends who graduated in the last couple of years. You see us all at an event or getting dinner at the Tavern, and it's like we were all in school at the same time! It really is such a large, diverse network of the most incredible, kind, talented people.

What would you tell a prospective student who was considering UM? At Montevallo, you will be challenged yet supported in ways that you can't even imagine. We have faculty who genuinely care about you and your success during your time at UM, but also after graduation. Here, faculty and staff become your biggest cheerleaders and eventually, your friends. You will also have a group of alumni who encourage you and become a network for you.

What are your thoughts about being back on the bricks? I am so excited to be back! Coming back to UM has always been a part of my long-term plan. I've worked at several different types of institutions in my almost decade-long career in higher education, and I can honestly say, there's nothing like Montevallo. I feel so honored to be a part of this organization.

CLASS NOTES

1942 Retired Lt. Col.

Sara Narcissa

Harris celebrated her 102nd birthday recently. Sara joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps early in World War II and continued to advance in rank. She served in Korea and Vietnam, becoming the first female base executive officer in a combat zone. When she retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1969, she was America's most-decorated female. Sara retired to Liberty Hall, her home near Camden.

1952 Dorothy Jean Davis Moore, of

Montgomery recently wrote the cover story for the winter issue of Alabama Heritage, a publication of The University of Alabama, The University of Alabama at Birmingham and the Alabama Department of Archives and History. The article covers the life and achievements of world champion boxer Joe Louis, one of the first inductees into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

1972 Andy Brunson

has been recognized by Orrville Baptist Church for 47 years of volunteer music ministry in the church. He serves as music director, choir director and deacon.

Dr. Melissa Brown Roth, of Charleston, South Carolina, recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the MidAmerica Hypnosis Association, the third largest professional association for hypnotists and hypnotherapists in the world.

Patricia Garret Vines, of Clanton, was honored by her

former music education students with the creation of The Patricia Vines Endowed Scholarship for music majors at UM. Donations can be made at montevallo.edu/scholarships-giving.

1975 Rev. Michael David Nuss,

of Pike Road, recently retired as director of collegiate and student ministries for the Alabama Baptist Convention.

1976 James Vann

was listed in Birmingham Business Journal's Who's Who in Law for 2022. He was named president of the Dentons Sirote law firm in April.

1977 Jerry Kirkland

was named to the Jackson County Sports Hall of Fame. Jerry's career included coaching football, boys' and girls' basketball and occasionally baseball at the high school level. His teams frequently were high in the rankings, and 15 of his athletes received college scholarships.

1978 Mary Jo Buff

was recently honored at the Smiths Scholarship Foundation dinner and reception with the endowment of the Buff's Bridge Scholarship. The endowed scholarship, named after Mary Jo, will serve first-generation students and students with financial need.

1979 Dr. George "Terry" Barr,

an English professor at Presbyterian College, has had his fourth book, "The American Crisis Playlist (2020-2021)" published by Redhawk Publications.

J R Henderson, of Helena, retired as Shelby County Commission Mapping Services department head consultant/entrepreneur.

1980 Bernadette Persons-Nelson

retired from teaching full time and started the tutoring business, Nelson's Bright Minds Academy in Lexington, South Carolina.

1981 Glen Gourley Jr.,

a professor of theatre arts and director of the University Theatre at Francis Marion University in Florence, South Carolina, received the South Carolina Theatre Association's 2022 Lifetime Service Award at a gala held in Charleston June 25. This award is presented annually to a person judged to have contributed significantly to theatre in South Carolina during the course of their career.

1984 Dr. Margaret A. Purcell,

of Coker, was recently named director of grants for Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa.

1986 Tracey Harwell Robertson,

of Flowery Branch, Georgia, was promoted to associate director of prospect research at Emory University Department of Advancement and Alumni Engagement.

1987 Josh Martin M.Ed. '98

has returned to UM to work as a counselor in the Career Development Center.

Rodney B. Whatley has served Pensacola State College as director of theatre since 2005. His textbook, "Acting: Year One," was recently published by Waveland Press.

1988 Dr. Tracey Morant Adams

was installed as Southeastern regional director of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority in July. She previously served AKA as chair of the International Membership Committee. Tracey is a senior executive vice president at Renaissance Bank in Birmingham and has served on a number of state and national boards. She has been recognized for her civic and professional contributions by the American Heart Association, Alabama Girl Scouts, the NAACP and others. Tracey is a member of the UM Foundation Board.

Dr. Lewis Brooks M.Ed. '98, Ed.S. '03, superintendent of Shelby County Schools, launched a video podcast, "One-on-One with Dr. Brooks," in which he interacts with students from across the county.

Jennifer J. Scruggs was promoted to administrative assistant for Executive Director Dr. Pamela Little in Alabama A&M University's Office of Community College Relations & Global Initiatives.

Cynthia Todd, retired operations manager at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, has been appointed to UM's Board of Trustees by Gov. Kay Ivey. She has served in various roles with the UM National Alumni Association from 2006 to 2022.

She was the first Black president of the UMNAA and is the first Black woman to serve on the University's Board of Trustees.

Melissa Youngblood M.Ed., Ed.S. '04 has been chosen for the Leadership Shelby County Class of 2023. Melissa is the assistant superintendent of student services for Shelby County Schools.

1989 Deidre Mitchell has accepted the role of human resources director for STREAMLINE CXO in Birmingham.

1991 Donna Sorensen has been named superintendent of the North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She has been an administrator at schools serving the Deaf in Montana, Washington, Alabama and Mississippi. She also served as a deaf education instructor in the Peace Corps in Kenya.

1992 Karen Musgrove M.Ed.'96, CEO for Birmingham AIDS Outreach and co-founder of Magic City Acceptance Academy, received the Humanitarian of the Year Award granted by the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship of Alabama. At ASF Alabama's annual Celebration of Service event held at UM in April, Karen was recognized for her service to HIV-positive individuals and the LGBTQ community.

Chris Stewart, a five-time winner of the Alabama Sportscaster of the Year Award, is standing in as the play-by-play announcer

for The University of Alabama football radio broadcasts for the 2022 season while Eli Gold, the "voice of the Tide" since 1998, recovers from health issues. Chris will also take over the hosting duties for "The Nick Saban Show" and "Hey, Coach" radio broadcasts. He has served as the play-by-play announcer for Alabama basketball and the sideline reporter for Alabama football for several years.

1994 Christy Ellis Brasher M.Ed., of Columbiana, has been chosen for the Leadership Shelby County Class of 2023. Christy is an associate broker at Ellis Properties, Inc.

1996 Misty Pruitt Foster, of Greer, South Carolina, was promoted to Eastern Sales Manager at Lee Container Corporation.

1997 Jennifer Combs, of Montevallo, recently accepted the role of director for the Columbiana Public Library. Prior to this role, Jennifer served as a librarian at Parnell Library in Montevallo.

Tracey DeCicco, of Cullman, was named the instructional systems administrator at Athens State University in Athens, Alabama.

Scott Thurmond has been named chief of police for the City of Birmingham. A 24-year veteran of the department, Scott had been serving as acting chief for several months.

1998 Lori Reynolds Patterson

M.Ed., of Clanton, was inducted into the Chilton County High School Alumni Hall of Fame on Senior Day May 20. Currently serving as CEO of the YMCA of Chilton County, Lori is actively involved in several community organizations.

1999 Katherine Simmons Berdy M.Ed. has been named to the Leadership Birmingham Class of 2022-2023.

Larissa Teachworth Root was recognized by Education Affiliates as one of two outstanding learning resource center managers at Fortis Institute in Nashville, Tennessee.

2000 Cindy Hatcher, of Tampa Bay, Florida, is now senior vice president, integrated marketing and content for Modern Luxury. Prior to this, she was director of branded content at Meredith Corporation in Birmingham.

Joshua Aaron Jones recently finished his visiting position at Indiana University and is now a law professor at California Western School of Law in San Diego. He contributed a chapter to the book "Perceptions and Misconceptions of Donald Trump" forthcoming from Nova Publishing.

2001 Christy Byars has been chosen for the Leadership Shelby County Class of 2023. Christy is the market director of business development for Brookwood Baptist Health.

Jamie Czeskleba, of Hoover, accepted the role of accounting manager at Viper Imaging LLC.

James "J.T." Lawrence, of Billingsley, has joined the Alabama High School Athletic Association executive staff as assistant director. He previously served Billingsley High School in various coaching positions over the years and as athletic director since 2011.

2002 Lauren Dressback was named principal of Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights School. She had served as interim principal there since January. An alum of the Vestavia Hills school system herself, she has taught and served as an administrator for 20 years in Vestavia Hills, Homewood and Mountain Brook.

Blake Hudson was recently named dean of Samford University's Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham. He has held faculty positions at Stetson University College of Law, the Louisiana State University Law Center and LSU's College of the Coast & Environment as well as the Houston Law Center. Blake has published more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed academic journals, 10 book chapters and three books. Cumberland School of Law is recognized as one of the oldest law schools in the U.S. and is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year.

2003 Melissa Anderson is now coordinator of health services at the University.

CLASS NOTES

David Clemons accepted a position as the digital content specialist for Northside Hospital in Atlanta.

David Daniels is the senior director of HR business partnerships at Atlassian. He also serves on the board of Ada Developers Academy in Seattle.

Leroy Nix has been named vice president of strategic policy and stakeholder engagement at Entergy in Washington, D.C.

Cary "CJ" Robinson has been appointed by Gov. Kay Ivey to serve as district attorney for Alabama's 19th Judicial District covering Autauga, Elmore and Chilton counties. He served that district as a prosecutor for 15 years and is the only assistant district attorney in Alabama to have attended a full-time police academy while serving as a prosecutor.

Ricky Ruston, of Columbiana, has been chosen for the Leadership Shelby County Class of 2023. Ricky is vice president, consumer and business compliance manager at Regions Bank.

2004 Aubrey Blackwell M.Ed. '06 has accepted the position of head football coach at Jackson Academy in Jackson, Mississippi. Aubrey played baseball during his years at UM and served as an assistant coach after graduation. He has coached several high school football teams in Alabama, taking one (Montgomery Catholic) to the AHSAA Class 3A state championship game. His reputation includes not only building successful football teams but also preparing young men for life.

Kay Butts-Pruett has been promoted to senior director of

philanthropy at the Rheumatology Research Foundation.

Edwina Johnson Hurst, of Gainesville, Florida, sold a growing breakfast brand restaurant called Maple Street Biscuit Company in Gainesville back to the parent company, Cracker Barrel.

2005 John Lowry M.Ed., Ed.S.

'09, director of academic programs and services for Homewood City Schools, has received the 2022 Excellence in Character Education Award from Samford University's Orlean Beeson School of Education. The award honors a graduate who embodies Christ-like virtues and excels in advancing character education in families, schools and communities. John's professional experience includes teaching and holding a number of administrative positions, including that of principal at Shades Cahaba Elementary School.

2006 Nikki Bradbury, of Helena, is now director of student retention and the Samford One Stop at Samford University in Birmingham.

Dr. Rebecca Hanson was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Rebecca is an assistant professor in the University of Florida's Department of Sociology, Criminology and Law Center for Latin American Studies in Gainesville, Florida. (*See p. 38*)

Dr. Kate Hayden was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. She is an associate professor of chemistry at Birmingham-Southern College. (*See p. 39*)

Blake Lewis was recently named athletic director and baseball

coach at Gadsden State Community College. He previously served two stints at Lawson State Community College, the first beginning in 2009 as an assistant coach and head coach culminating in being named Assistant Coach of the Year by the Alabama Baseball Coaches Association. He became the winningest coach in school history and led the Cougars to a 12th-place national ranking. In 2012, Blake returned to UM where he served as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator, contributing to back-to-back 30-win seasons and two trips to the Peach Belt Conference Tournament championship game. In 2015, he went back to Lawson State as head baseball coach where the team won Baseball Academic Team of the Year in 2020, and Blake was named ACCC Co-Coach of the Year.

B.J. Posey MBA '20, of Calera, accepted a job as contract performance manager with E&I Cooperative Services.

2007 Janell Cressman, of

Hellertown, Pennsylvania, was promoted to network manager of nursing education and professional development for St. Luke's University Health Network. The network includes 14 campuses with more than 17,000 employees.

Dr. Bruce Finklea, of Columbiana, was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. He is an associate professor of mass communication at UM. (*See p. 38*)

2008 Gabrielle Dudley

ley was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. She is head of research services at

Emory University's Rose Library. (*See p. 38*)

2009 Amanda Hosey, of Leeds,

recently began the role of editor of custom media for the SAE Media Group. She previously worked as a managing editor for ISSA worldwide cleaning industry association.

Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick has returned to UM as director of recruitment. (*See p. 20*)

Cedric Norman MBA '14 was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Cedric is a city council member for the City of Fairfield and manager of information technology services at Miles College. (*See p. 39*)

Tiffany Westry Womack, of Asheville, North Carolina, was selected as a Southern Exposure Film Fellow by the Alabama Rivers Alliance. During a six-week program, the fellows created short documentaries drawing attention to urgent environmental issues around the state. While working as a television news journalist in Birmingham, Tiffany worked on the documentary film "Deadly Deception" which revealed toxic contamination caused by surrounding industries. The investigation prompted expanded testing and the establishment of a Superfund site.

2010 Dr. Jordan Hutchison, of

Atlanta, recently started working as head of product for Shaping Wealth.

Dr. Madison P. Jones IV was

named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Madison is an assistant professor at the University of Rhode Island. (*See p. 39*)

Yamuna Meleth appeared in the production of "Micro-Face: The Musical" at the Roulette Theater in New York.

Morgan Wilson was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Morgan is director of federal and interstate affairs for the Washington, D.C. office of Washington Gov. Jay Inslee. (*See p. 39*)

2011 **Chris Estes** MBA '14, of Montevallo, is now working as a senior HR business partner at 1Password.

Drew Granthum M.A. '13, of Montgomery, now works as a project manager for Tyler Technologies. Previously he worked as a marketing strategist for Auburn University at Montgomery.

Philip Green M.Ed. '18, of Alabaster, is now assistant director of strategic enrollment management (communication) for the Alabama Community College System.

Matthew Nelson was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. He is the vice president of facilities for the Birmingham Airport Authority. (*See p. 39*)

Randall Porter recently started working as a columnist for Soul Grown, a media production company in Birmingham.

Darlene Wilson has been named to the Birmingham Business Journal's list of Who's Who in Accounting for 2022.

2012 **Lindsey Bristol** was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Lindsey is a casting associate, creative producer and actor with Wendy O'Brien Casting in Los Angeles. (*See p. 38*)

Mikia Carter was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Mikia is a student engagement associate director at the University of West Florida. (*See p. 38*)

Bianca Williams McGrew

M.Ed. has been named assistant principal at Helena High School. She previously served as counselor at Montevallo Middle School.

Jordan Miller, of Leeds, accepted a position as a software support specialist for Topcon Healthcare in Birmingham.

Cindy Mullins was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Cindy is the venue manager for the Alabama Theatre and the Lyric Theatre in Birmingham. (*See p. 39*)

Paul Tierney M.Ed., of Irondale, was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Paul is an adjunct professor at UAB and a Ph.D. candidate at Auburn University.

2013 **Dr. Daniel Birdsong**

M.Ed. '16 was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Daniel is an assistant professor of counseling at UM. (*See p. 38*)

Shelly Butler recently became 7th Floor Department director at Gadsden Regional Medical Center.

Dr. Corey Duke has begun a residency in child neurology at Boston Children's Hospital.

Tonya Fleming was recently promoted to box office manager and office manager for Side-walk Film Center + Cinema in Birmingham.

Want to host your own alumni event?

Throw a flock party!

Want an alumni event in your area or for a specific group of UM alumni, but only have a few people? Plan a UM alumni gathering with our new event kit, Flock Box, and throw your own flock party!

Requests should be made 4-6 weeks prior to the event. Each request will be carefully considered. Priority is given to current alumni clubs and those interested in starting an alumni club.

montevallo.edu/flock-box



CLASS NOTES

Nichole Harris was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. She is chief program officer at The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia in Atlanta. (See p. 39)

Rebbie Taylor Jones is now the student development coordinator for the Upward Bound program at UM.

Katherine Long Kovalsky, of West Palm Beach, Florida, won the 2022 William T. Dwyer Award for Excellence in Education in the elementary education category. A music teacher at Royal Palm Beach Elementary School, Katherine was nominated by her peers in a faculty-wide vote. She plays several woodwind instruments and sings with Espressivo, a semi-professional choir.

Courtney Naish has accepted the position of senior applications analyst at PetSmart.

Andrew Slater MBA started a new position as sports and entertainment group business planning consultant at Truist Wealth in Atlanta.

2014 **Jodi Shaw M.Ed.** has been named assistant principal of Pinecrest Elementary School in Sylacauga. In addition to teaching, Jodi has served as a new teacher mentor, school parent engagement chair, problem-solving team coordinator and in other support positions. She has been Title I reading interventionist since 2020.

2015 **Cecilia Gainer-Lewis**, of Montgomery, incorporated and

became CEO of a non-profit organization called the Children's Museum of Montgomery to provide experiential learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics through play.

Clarke Stackhouse, of Portland, Oregon, is now the marketing manager at Kama Homes — Keller Williams Realty Portland Central.

Erica Stacy Wilson M.Ed. recently opened The Olive Branch Counseling Center in Bibb County. She plans to provide mental health services in the forms of individual, family and couples counseling as well as free parenting classes.

2016 **Joshua Bryant** is now special equipment operator at the University.

Gerald Cunningham, of Birmingham, joined the marketing services team at Encompass Health.

Morgan Gothard M.Ed. '18, of Huntsville, accepted a position as a second-grade teacher with Huntsville City Schools.

Kaley Martin was named to the UMNA Junior Board of Directors' 15 Within 15 list. Kaley is a broadcast producer/editor and Ph.D. candidate at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. (See p. 39)

Chris Smith MBA, of Montevallo, has begun a new position as a senior compliance specialist with ValueHealth Benefit Administrators.

2017 **Devin C. Harrison** graduated from Jones School of Law in 2020 and is an associate attorney with The Vance Law Firm in Montgomery.

Carley Kirkland M.S. is now a clinical supervisor of speech-language pathology at UM.

2018 **Brianna Bryant** is director of marketing at Ironvest Partners in Birmingham.

Mary Haynes Furman accepted the role of development manager at Red Mountain Theatre in Birmingham. She previously served as the digital history curator for the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

2019 **Jasmine Baxter** began working as the Minnesota transform media specialist at the University of Minnesota.

Hunter Chavarry has started working as a laboratory technician for Eastman in Kingsport, Tennessee.

Wyatt Hall has returned to Montevallo as assistant athletics director for communications. He previously served as a student worker in the UM sports information office, and after graduation, assistant sports information director. He went on to work as assistant director of athletic communications at the University of Idaho and most recently at Jacksonville State University as a sports information specialist.

Aryne Hudson started a new position as a litigation associate attorney at Phelps Dunbar LLP in Mobile.

Jazmin Chavez Martinez is working at UM as a student financial accountant.

Katelyn Martinez has been hired as a commercial loan assistant with Merit Bank.

Brenna Washburn, of St. George, Utah, was promoted to the role of senior associate —



ARE YOU AN AVID READER?

Want to discuss books of multiple genres with your fellow alumni?

The UMNA Book Club meets via Zoom every two months.

Learn more at
montevallo.edu/book-club

ALUM

IPS data visualization for Material, a global customer experience transformation company.

2020 **Torian Blackburn** accepted a program management role at Gener8tor in Huntsville. Torian also serves on the UMNAAC Junior Board.

Zelma Mae Cable now serves as the volunteer coordinator at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Alabama.

Madison Hollon accepted an account executive position at Adfero in Washington, D.C.

Savannah Humphries is now the foundation accountant for UM's Office of Advancement.

Justin Williams has accepted the position of cash accountant at Surgical Care Affiliates.

Makayla Wright was recently promoted from graphic design associate to graphic designer at High Level Marketing, LLC in Birmingham.

2021 **Andrew Abbott** is now a technical support analyst in the IS&T Department at UM.

Aaron Binion, of Clanton, accepted a position with the Alabama Department of Public Health as a public health environmentalist.

AnnaMarie D'Angelo, of Arab, Alabama, now works as a cast member for Walt Disney World.

Kendall Duncan has been named director of stewardship and donor engagement in UM's Office of Advancement. She will be designing, implementing and integrating comprehensive donor relations and stewardship programs.

Marcus Harris M.Ed. has been named assistant principal at Calera Middle School. He had previously taught in the Hoover City School System.

Rylee Holt was recently named Shelby County Board of Education's Secondary First-year Teacher-of-the Year. Rylee teaches at Montevallo High School.

Caleb Jones recently started a new position as a stewardship communications specialist in UAB's Office of Advancement.

2022 **AnaKate Andrasko** recently began a new position as an academic advisor at Samford University.

JaMirah Borden started a new position as a communication associate at Pet Paradise.

Joanna Clemons, of Alabaster, accepted a position with Books-A-Million as an assistant buyer for children's books.

Abby Garner is teaching first grade at Montevallo Elementary School after completing two semesters of student teaching there.

Joelle Garrett, of Birmingham, recently started a position as branch analyst for Morgan Stanley.

Gavin Salton is assistant coach for men's and women's tennis at UM.

Noah Wortham is working as a staff writer for Shelby County Newspapers, Inc.

WEDDINGS

2007 **Tia Johnson '09** and Rodney Paul Dickerson II were married Sept. 9, 2021, in a surprise ceremony at Shadow Wood Manor in Moody. The wedding was broadcast live on Facebook. Tia

is a registered dietitian for the Alabama Department of Public Health, and Paul works as a registered nurse at Ascension St. Vincent's East in Birmingham. The couple resides in Pell City where they are building a tiny home.

2011 **Laura Wise** and Robert Goff Jr. were married Sept. 3, at Third Presbyterian Church in Birmingham. The couple spent a week in Hilton Head, South Carolina, and reside in Germantown, Tennessee.

BIRTHS

2001 **Kristia Callaway Rumbley** and husband James (Bo) Rumbley welcomed the birth of their fourth son, Alexander Laine, April 3.

2010 **Dr. Madison P. Jones IV** and his wife **Jane Alford Jones '12** announce the birth of Cate Jones Aug. 16. The family resides in Providence, Rhode Island.

DEATHS

1945 **Betty Wilkes McArthur**, 99, died April 28 in Batesville, Mississippi. After her husband, Lt. Col. William McArthur, retired, the family moved to Sardis, Mississippi, where they co-owned the Como Plaza, the Gulf Trail Lodge, and later built the GTL Motel and Convention Center.

1951 **Ann Hare Porter M.Ed. '78**, 92, of Sylacauga, died July 13. She was a retired teacher.

1952 **Elizabeth Ann Overton Little**, 92, of Houston, died July 17. She was a homemaker.

1956 **Dot Mosley Klepac**, of Peterman, died July 26. She had served as dean of the graduate school at the University of South Alabama in Mobile.

Lila Ruth Yates Lee, 87, of Briarfield, died June 30. She spent the majority of her career as an educator at Shelby Academy.

1957 **Shirley Elizabeth Hall Autrey**, 87, of Greenville, died April 16. She taught physical education and English and coached cheerleaders and girls' basketball in Butler County for more than 30 years.

1958 **Joseph Thomas Bishop**, 91, of Rome, Georgia, died April 12. He had a 40-year career in education as a teacher, coach and administrator.

1960 **William Cooper Jr.**, 88, of Robertsdale, died Aug. 16. He was an analytical chemist with Monsanto Corp., retiring after 30 years of service. Survivors include his wife **Mary Sue Barbaree Cooper '60**, a retired educator.

1962 **Sarie Grantham Ready**, 83, of Dale County, died July 17. She had retired from the finance and accounting division at Ft. Rucker. She was a pianist and enjoyed playing for church services and special events.

1964 **Retired Col. Susan Dale Mason**, 79, of Fairhope, died May 3. After graduation, she received her commission as a second lieutenant upon joining the Marine Corps, and her assignments were many and varied ranging from air traffic controller and crash/

rescue firefighter to management analysis and computers. She was the first woman to successfully command a major Marine unit that was not an all-female unit in Iwakuni, Japan, and was the first foreign member of the Japanese Civil Aeronautics Board. She retired from the Marine Corps in 1988. As chairperson of the Fairhope Airport Authority, she was instrumental in expanding and modernizing the Fairhope Airport.

1967 **Bill Braswell**, 80, died Sept. 22. He was retired from AT&T after more than 30 years of service.

1968 **Jimmy Clark Skipper Sr.**, M.A., 81, of Newton, Alabama, died May 2. He was a teacher at Dale County High School and Southdale Middle School before retiring in 1992. He enjoyed traveling and outdoor activities.

1969 **Stephen John Durel Jr.**, 79, of Northport, died Aug. 13. He was a retired banker. He is survived by his daughter, **Dina Lyn Durel '91**, of Birmingham.

1970 **Patricia Cash Burns**, 74, of Birmingham, died Sept. 16. She had enjoyed a distinguished legal career culminating in her position of municipal judge for the City of Fairfield.

1971 **Shirley Annie Helms**, 72, of Elberta, Alabama, died Jan. 30. A teacher and coach, she was inducted into the Foley High School Hall of Fame on Oct. 20, 2000.

1972 **David Daniel Owen M.Ed.**, 78, of Talladega, died Aug. 16.

He worked as a psychometrist with numerous school systems. He was also the owner/operator of Thackerson Realty Inc. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, **Madeline T. Owen '72, M.S. '91**.

1973 **Lou S. Elliott**, 71, of Dothan, died Aug. 8. She was a founding member of UM's chapter of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. She was a homemaker and enjoyed canning and crafting. Survivors include her husband, retired Navy Capt. **William "Bill" E. Elliott '73**.

Carol Peacock Marik Gimlin, 69, of Lyle, Tennessee, died Feb. 2, 2021.

Thomas W. Yarbrough, 74, of Boaz, died May 26. He was a long-time educator and administrator for the Marshall County School Board.

1974 **Betty Cosper**, 92, of Pell City, died Sept. 18. She was active in the education community until her retirement in 2012.

William Homer Sanders, 79, of Birmingham, died Sept. 1. He served in law enforcement for many years and also served in the Army Reserve, retiring in 2002.

1975 **Carolyn Atchison**, 68, of Clanton, died March 30 while at her home. Her life was defined by her love of Jesus Christ and a tremendous appreciation for music, singing, church choir duets and quartets. After graduating from UM with a bachelor's degree and Troy University with a master's degree, she taught elementary education and piano.

1976 **James Howard "Jimmy" Carringer Jr., M.Ed.**, 79, of Flor-

ence, died Sept. 8. He served as a teacher, coach and administrator in the Florence City Schools for more than 36 years. He was inducted into the Lauderdale County Sports Hall of Fame in 2015 and was recognized for many years of service to his church, the Florence Lions Club and the Salvation Army.

1978 **Clyde Raymond "Randy" Beam**, 66, of Jemison, died May 11. He was store manager of the Piggly Wiggly in Jemison.

Cheryl Lanese Myrick, of Montgomery, died Aug. 10. She retired as director of the Boys and Girls Club of the River Region (Montgomery and Wetumpka).

1993 **Tracy Madden Shipp**, 50, of Auburn, died June 22. She had worked at James Sprunt Community College in Kenansville, North Carolina, and at the Bank of Edwardsville in Illinois.

2014 **Phoebe Olivia Hurst**, 30, passed away Aug. 14. Phoebe is survived by her parents Phil and **Suzanne Hurst '73**. She worked at Iron City Birmingham as a private events manager. She was a talented artist and watercolor was her favorite medium. Under the alias of New Moon, she was a member of the Alabama Rangers SASS (Single Action Shooting Society) and was as comfortable with a gun in her hand as a paintbrush. She was passionate about helping others and was a junior board member of Sweetwater Outreach.

CONDOLENCES

To **James "Jay" Jaxon Jr. '69** on the death of his wife, Lynnette Meadows Jaxon, June 16.

To **Dr. Sherry Greenwood Ford M.A. '94**, chair of UM's Department of Communication, and her husband **Doug Ford MBA '21**, on the death of Douglas' father, Rev. Robert Ford, 88, of Piedmont. Rev. Ford, who died March 11, had served the University of Montevallo in the past as a Baptist campus minister.

To **Professor Ted Metz**, retired professor of art at UM, on the death of his wife **Robin Nance Metz**, on Sept. 23. Robin had studied graphic design and illustration at UM in the early 1980s. As a student, she was hired by the President's Office to draw sketches of UM buildings, many of which are still displayed across campus. Robin worked as a commercial artist for 20 years before retiring to raise her children. She returned to her art, painting for galleries and even began working with clay eight years ago, adding the third dimension to her work. Despite her diagnosis of cancer, she continued to create her distinctive artwork, even having one of her "suns" featured on CBS Sunday Morning. In addition to her artistic creations, Robin opened her creative space to others struggling with grief, knowing the therapeutic relief that art had offered her. She also initiated an assistance program through the Alabama Oncology Foundation to help those in need of co-payments for treatment.



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Montevallo Alumni Lead Top State Law Schools

BY DAVID CLEMONS '03



Left: Blake Hudson '02, dean of the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University; **above right:** Dr. Mark Brandon '75, dean of the Hugh F. Culverhouse School of Law at The University of Alabama.

Two of the top law schools in Alabama have Montevallo alumni at their helm.

Dr. Mark Brandon '75 is dean of the Hugh F. Culverhouse School of Law at The University of Alabama. And since July 1, Blake Hudson '02 is dean of the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

Blake Hudson

Hudson came to Cumberland this summer in time for the school's celebration of 175 years of legal education.

"I'd been teaching and practiced environmental law in Houston for a couple of years," Hudson said. "I was interested in research and writing."

Hudson grew up on forest land in southwest Alabama. His interest in the land directed his path when he came to Montevallo, and the professors inspired him in ways he never considered.

"The great thing about Montevallo — you cannot overstate the value of that liberal arts education and really diving in and taking advantage of the breadth of experience that a place like Montevallo provides," Hudson said. "Had I not done that, I would not be here."

"Had I not been at a liberal arts school that forced me to reach out into other departments, I would not have gone into law."

Hudson recalled helping biology profes-

sor Dr. Mike Hardig with data analysis on a peer-reviewed article that's still cited in research.

"He put me as a co-author as a student," Hudson said.

Dr. Clark Hultquist, now professor of history and chair of the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, mentored Hudson on another research project studying Depression-era advertising, including works from Hudson's native Clarke County.

"Those experiences not only gave me a research bearing but also, the professors reached out and made you a colleague that showed the value of pouring into younger generations," Hudson said. "That was transformative in my development to the profession that I'm in today."

Hudson said his professors at UM showed him that if he wanted to work with natural resources, the law was a great path for it.

Mark Brandon

Brandon has been the dean of the UA School of Law since 2014.

Like Hudson, he credited the liberal arts culture of Montevallo with giving him exposure to the larger world.

"It educated me broadly and deeply in the sciences and the liberal arts, including history, philosophy, oral and written expression, social inquiry, the fine arts and psychology,"

Brandon said. "It provided my first systematic exposure to critical thinking."

"And it provided opportunities for leadership — not that I was a great leader. I wasn't. But I learned a lot, and many of the lessons have served me well."

He said UM also connected him with students "who were smarter, more talented and more interesting than I was — than I am."

Many of them, Brandon said, remain friends.

"They inspired and nudged me to raise my game. I am better for having known them."

He also said the excellent teaching at Montevallo served as a foundation for his career in the law.

"My professors challenged me to do my best. They helped me learn to write — it's still hard work. They expanded and sharpened my mind. And in doing so, they changed my life."

Brandon said the student experience at Montevallo is so multifaceted that it's impossible to sum up with a single moment.

"The experience is marked by hundreds of people, events and ideas — within and outside the classroom," he said. "They make for a place that's not only physically beautiful but also intellectually stimulating and culturally rich."

"It was also an awful lot of fun."



Legal Falcons: Alumni Lawyers Soar Far in the Field of Law

Montevallo doesn't have a law school, but many graduates hold juris doctorates

In this issue of Montevallo Today, Falcons who have made their mark in the legal field share their Montevallo experience.

BEN MARK BAXLEY '87

Wetumpka, Alabama, assistant attorney general chief of the Opinions Division Office of the Attorney General for the State of Alabama

I entered the University of Montevallo as a naïve southern boy from a map dot community on the outskirts of a map dot town. UM opened my eyes to the world. Studying history and English, I learned the arts of writing and research from some of the best professors in their fields.

UM equipped me with the art of communication, not only in writing but in its more personal, verbal form, something that is noticeably missing in today's world. This was made possible by several of UM's attributes, but two qualities stand out the most. First, the smaller classes and faculty-student ratio. I was never intimidated by class size and always felt comfortable expressing my thoughts in class. Also important were the family-like professors that I came to know. I vividly remember the lengthy conversations with Dr. Elaine Hughes on the literary meanings of popular music lyrics, and the debates about world events with Dr. Justin Fuller. UM gave me a platform where I could express my beliefs and argue my points with instructors who were vastly smarter than me. You cannot do that everywhere.

I have been practicing now for 32 years. None of it would have been possible without the UM family.

RAYMOND BELL '94

Mobile, shareholder at Maynard, Cooper & Gale

My time at UM contributed to me becoming a lawyer in a couple of ways. First, the school provided me with a strong undergraduate education which prepared me for law school. Second, my college experience gave me the opportunity to grow as a young adult and meet great people from various places.

The personal growth and development as well as the interactions with so many people helped me gain the skills needed to practice law. I am very grateful for my college experience, and I attribute much of what I have been able to do in my career as being a result of attending UM.

CAROLYN DUNCAN '71, MME '75

Birmingham, senior partner at Phelps Dunbar LLP

I think a good liberal arts education is a necessity for practically everything, and a high percentage of the good things in my life are attributable to Montevallo. I was a music

major, so I had a great deal of experience concentrating on many details at once and for long periods. It is also worth noting that if you have played the 'Bach Trio Sonatas,' public speaking is a piece of cake. If I had it to do over again, I would still get at least one music degree at Montevallo and then go to law school.

J. WESLEY FAIN '06

Birmingham, vice president and deputy general counsel for SCA Health

Taking — and surviving — business law with Dr. Marvin Narz is what ultimately pushed me to go to law school. Montevallo helped me think outside the box and challenged me to be a strategic thinker, taking a solutions-oriented approach. Now that I am in an in-house counsel role, I still rely on the business education that I received from Montevallo.

JAIDREA FORD '08

Tuscaloosa, Alabama, assistant district attorney, district attorney office of the 4th Judicial Circuit

My studies at the University of Montevallo provided me with the foundational skill sets for critical thinking and writing. My



first legal course was business law at UM, and it was with that course that the seed was planted for me to one day become an attorney. The exposure I received, as not only a student but also as a McNair Scholar at the University, helped to shape my career and my character which were key to my success.

TIM LUPINACCI '88

Birmingham, CEO and chair
of Baker Donelson

My four years at Montevallo provided me the critical foundations required to accelerate my journey ever since, particularly in pursuing my legal career and now in leading a large law firm. The seeds of a legal career were first planted during a required class for my mass communication major on media law.

Ideas surrounding the First Amendment intrigued me to walk down the path of taking the LSAT and then go to Vanderbilt Law School. But equally important in my career are the foundations that Montevallo provided in building a strong liberal arts foundation in me leading to my life-long passion for creative arts. Another important corollary foundation is that Montevallo also afforded me the room to take risks, fail and learn from my mistakes. The vital foundations that UM provided enabled my career progression and are one of the reasons I am so passionate to give back to Montevallo to help future generations of students, and in particular, law students.

LYDIA MESSINA '12

Birmingham, associate counsel
at Protective Life

The University of Montevallo gave me a

solid foundation as I prepared for law school and the practice of law. While my English major courses required me to read and digest dense material, and my philosophy minor courses honed my critical thinking skills, it was having engaged with passionate professors that ultimately led me to the legal profession. Having professors who were willing to meet one-on-one and provide specific feedback gave me the boost I needed to move forward. I'm not sure I would have received the same attention and preparation for the road ahead had I attended a larger undergraduate institution.

STACY MOON '90

Irondale, Alabama, partner at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP

As a history and Spanish major, my education taught me to think, evaluate, question and communicate. My experiences on campus also helped me be more empathetic and understanding of those who might have different viewpoints. My extracurricular activities taught me the importance of having a life outside of classes — now work — to maintain mental and physical wellness.

LEROY NIX '03

Washington, D.C., vice president of federal strategic policy and stakeholder engagement with Entergy Corporation

The University of Montevallo provided an excellent training ground for me to really challenge myself socially, academically and creatively. The learning environment at UM pushed me to be objective and open-minded, which continues to help me in my career today. Being a smaller school, there were

many opportunities to be involved, develop lasting relationships and drive positive change within the community. This desire to drive impact and work with like-minded people was certainly a significant factor in my decision to pursue a legal education.

JIM VANN '76

Birmingham, president of Dentons Sirote PC

My time at UM was instrumental and pivotal in many ways to my training and career in law. During my time at UM, Dr. Sarah Posey Morgan taught business law and other law-related courses. I signed up for every one of her courses. I adored Dr. Morgan, and she impressed me so much with her practical and analytical approach to difficult questions, situations and issues. At some point along the way, Dr. Morgan told me I should go to law school because I thought like a lawyer. That is quite a confidence booster for those of us from very blue-collar backgrounds.

Clearly, without UM, I would never have had the support, inspiration and guidance of Dr. Morgan, and it seems unlikely that I would have developed the confidence to apply to law school. While Dr. Morgan was the most influential of my professors, all of them were of great importance in my development as a college student capable of attending law school.

Opposite page, from left: Ben Mark Baxley, Raymond Bell, Carolyn Duncan, J. Wesley Fain, Jaidrea Ford; **this page, from left:** Tim Lupinacci, Lydia Messina, Stacy Moon, Leroy Nix, Jim Vann.





**Give a gift.
Create
a legacy.**

Leave a Legacy

When you give to the University of Montevallo, you not only help us further our mission, but you also play a key role in transforming the lives of UM students and future leaders for generations to come. While we welcome and encourage outright gifts, planned gifts offer additional ways to support the University and provide very specific tax advantages. Every planned gift helps the University carry out its mission of excellence and service in education.

In addition to helping the University of Montevallo maintain a solid tradition of excellence, planned giving can reduce or eliminate capital gains taxes, generate a charitable income tax deduction, reduce or eliminate gift and estate taxes and provide income for life.

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montevallo.edu/planned-giving



UMNAA Board Retreat

On May 21, the UMNA Board of Directors held its annual board retreat in Wills Hall. The UMNA Board serves as the primary contact for Montevallo alumni with their alma mater. Learn more about the board and its mission at montevallo.edu/alumni-association.

- 1 Board members at the UMNA Board retreat;
- 2 Stacy Moon '90 and Greg Lee '99 add their votes to approve the minutes; 3 UMNA Board President Stephanie Shaw '93 presents her report to the board.



1



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Photo by Josie Shaw '23



3

Photo by Josie Shaw '23

Junior Board Retreat

The UMNA Junior Board of Directors held its annual board retreat on Aug. 14 in Stephens Hall under the direction of President Clark Maxwell '13. The Junior Board focuses on fostering engagement with alumni who have graduated in the last 15 years. Learn more at montevallo.edu/junior-alumni-board.

- 4 Board members take a photo before the retreat;
- 5 During their retreat, the Junior Board had a session on Enneagram types and how they can utilize this knowledge to work together; 6 Lindsey Shippey '13 and Stephanie Howe '16 participate in an ice breaker game during the retreat.



4

Photo by Josie Shaw '23



5

Photo by Josie Shaw '23



6

Photo by Josie Shaw '23

FROM THE UMNAA PRESIDENT



You Belong at Montevallo! Each time I hear this slogan, I think of my first visit to Montevallo and the feeling of “belonging” that I felt then. That day was many years ago, yet each time I return to campus, I feel that same sense of belonging.

No matter how many years it has been since you tripped down the red brick streets of UM, you belong at Montevallo. Our alumni association welcomes you to come back for a visit when you can. Homecoming and Founders’ Day are wonderful times to visit campus. There are also multiple opportunities throughout the year to attend one of the athletic events on campus or see a show in the new Center for the Arts.

If you can’t come in person, you can be involved in other ways. You can join in a book club via Zoom or a geographic club in your area. You can request a Flock Box and invite some Montevallo friends to join you for a Falcon Flock Party.

Perhaps you would like to serve in a volunteer role in the alumni association or lead an alumni club — we welcome you to apply to express interest. Or, perhaps you simply prefer to financially contribute to the area of greatest need. Gifts can also help fund successful alumni events, award scholarships and bestow coveted alumni awards. All alumni are encouraged to support UM in your own special way.

You belong here, and we can’t wait to see you!

Stephanie Shaw '93
UMNAA President

Get Involved with the UMNAA

All UM graduates are considered members of the UM National Alumni Association.

As a Montevallo alum, there are many ways you can stay involved:



- Join an Alumni Club
- Attend alumni events
- Apply to serve on an alumni board
- Connect with us through social media groups:
facebook.com/UMalum/groups
- Refer a student

- Hire an intern
- Nominate a fellow alum for an award
- Donate
- Stay connected:
 - Update your information
 - Subscribe to the alumni e-newsletter

- Volunteer
 - Serve as a club leader
 - Help with events
 - Assist with communication
 - Speak to a class



Visit montevallo.edu/ways-to-get-involved or scan the QR code to learn more. You always belong at Montevallo!



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Alumni spotted at events held from April through October



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Theatre Alumni Reading of "The Normal Heart"

1 Special thanks to Theatre Department alumni who returned to do a heart-wrenching reading of the "The Normal Heart" on the Rebecca J. Luker Stage in the Center for the Arts on April 30. The reading was coordinated by Dr. David Callaghan.

Senior Day

2-3 May graduates celebrate their success at Senior Day held on May 6 in McChesney Student Activity Center. The event was hosted by University Advancement and the UM National Alumni Association.

Shelby County Alumni Club's Benefit Bash

4 Local radio personality Dollar Bill Lawson, emcee of the Benefit Bash, with leaders of the Shelby County Alumni Club Bill Nathews '75 and Kirk Lightfoot '76. The event raises funds for the Emma Dean Nathews Scholarship Fund, which is named in honor of Bill Nathews' mother; 5 Sarah Hogan '03 and William Cofer '08 tie for the top prize of the evening. Instead of the typical runoff round, the two decided to share the abundance of UM and Montevallo goodies; 6 Karen Kelly '80 and Mary Lawson wait for the next numbers to be called in the game; 7 Candyce Houston '10 and Megan Davis '11 enjoy catching up between games.

"The Crucible Project" Exhibit sponsored by Linda and Todd Strange

8 Hon. Todd Strange '66 and Linda Strange '67 hosted Montgomery alumni and friends for "The Crucible Project" exhibit and reception, featuring Professor of Art Dr. Scott Meyer, at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts on June 10; 9 Melanie Poole '86 and Dr. Rosa Stoops, UM professor of French and Spanish.

Student Publications Alumni Club Lunch

10 Alumni and advisers who worked on The Alabamian, "Montage" and "The Tower" joined for the Student Publications Alumni Club Lunch on July 16.

ALUMNI EVENTS



11



12



13



14

Photo by Josie Shaw '23



15



16

Junior Board Summer Soirée and Silent Auction

11 Young alumni gather for the return of the Junior Board Summer Soirée and

Silent Auction, held July 22 at Oak Mountain Brewery in Pelham, Alabama;

12 Alicia Smith '06, Lindsay Shippey '13, Emily Fancher '16 and Lindsey Underwood '10; 13 Former Junior Board members Lindsey Sherrill '07, Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick '09, Greg Lee '99 and Julie Elkins '00.

Black Alumni Club Happy Hour

14 Alumni pose for a group photo at the Black Alumni Club Summer Happy Hour on July 30 at Jefferson's in Hoover.

Freshman Move-In Day Volunteers

15 Alumni volunteers help at Move-In Day on Aug. 19. **Front row:** (from left) Betsy Weese Hoffman '94, Diane Ray '68; **back row:** Kacie Slaughter Kilpatrick '09, Rick Casey '00, Zachary Banks '08 and Greg Lee '99; (not shown: Van Nelson '80 and Alison Hunt Yeager '03).

Alpha Tau Omega Anniversary Celebration presented by ATO brothers

16 The Sigmas and Alpha Tau Omega brotherhood gathered for a luncheon on Aug. 20 in Anna Irvin Dining Hall to celebrate 60 years for Sigmas and 50 years for ATO.

Greek Alumni Reunion

17-18 The annual Greek Alumni Club reunion event was held on Sept. 10 in McChesney Student Activity Center. The event welcomes back all Greek alumni for an afternoon of games and fellowship. Alpha Gamma Delta won the prize for most participants; 19 Delta Sigma Theta sisters Nia Taylor '18 and Jennifer Toney '19 show their Greek pride; 20 Alpha Kappa Lambda brothers (from left) Hon. Matt Fridy '98, Matthew Mitchell '06, Greg Lee '99, Rick Casey '00 and Jeff Walker '08.



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Alumni Tailgate

21 Zachary Banks '09 laughs with fellow alumni between the soccer games; **22** Alumni enjoy a game of soccer at the UMNAA Soccer Tailgate on Sept. 18. Special thanks to UM's Manager of Central Supply Johnny Holsemeck for serving as grillmaster at the event.

Purple & Gold Ice Cream Social

23 The Old Golds and Vintage Purples Alumni Clubs joined forces to present the Purple and Gold Ice Cream Social Oct. 14; **24** UMNAA President and Vintage Purple, Stephanie Shaw serves students ice cream prior to the College Night Revue. (See p. 17).



23



24

Alpha Gamma Delta 50-Year Celebration presented by AGD sisters

25 The Gamma Upsilon chapter of Alpha Gamma Delta celebrated its 50-year reunion on Oct. 15 with a day full of activities.



25

Photo by Josie Shaw '23

15 Within 15 Montevallo Alumni Achieving Greatness within 15 Years of Graduation



The UMNAJ Junior Board of Directors is proud to announce the 2022 class of 15 Within 15. This honor was established to recognize driven UM graduates who have demonstrated strong leadership and career passion within the first 15 years after earning their degree.

These rising stars have shown they have what it takes to rise above the rest and what it truly means to have a degree from Alabama's only public liberal arts university.

Criteria for selection included leadership skills, creativity, sustained career progress, dedication, personal integrity, community outreach/volunteer work and unconventional wisdom.

Those selected were honored at the UMNAJ Awards Dinner during Founders' Day celebrations in October. See more at montevallo.edu/15-within-15.

The 2022 honorees of the UM 15 Within 15 recognition are:

(Listed in alphabetical order.)

1



**Dr. Daniel Birdsong '13,
M.Ed.'16**

UM assistant professor of counseling

2



Lindsey Bristol '12

Casting associate, creative producer and actor,
Wendy O'Brien Casting, Los Angeles

3



Mikia Carter '12

Student engagement associate director,
University of West Florida, Pensacola, Florida

4



Gabrielle Dudley '08

Head of research services, Rose Library,
Emory University, Atlanta

5



Dr. Bruce Finklea '07

UM associate professor of mass communication,
University of Montevallo

6



Dr. Rebecca Hanson '06

Assistant professor, University of Florida
Department of Sociology, Criminology, and
Law Center for Latin American Studies,
Gainesville, Florida



7

Nichole Harris '13

Chief programs officer, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia, Atlanta



8

Dr. Kate Hayden '06

Associate professor of chemistry at Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham



9

Dr. Madison Jones '10

Assistant professor, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island



10

Kaley Martin '16

Broadcast producer/editor and Ph.D. candidate, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa



11

Cindy Mullins '12

Venue manager, Alabama Theatre and Lyric Theatre, Birmingham



12

Matthew Nelson '11

Vice president of facilities, Birmingham Airport Authority, Birmingham



13

Cedric Norman '09, MBA '14

City Council member, City of Fairfield; Manager of information technology services, Miles College, Fairfield



14

Paul Tierney M.Ed. '12

Ph.D. candidate, Auburn University; Adjunct professor, UAB, Irondale, Alabama



15

Morgan Wilson '10

Director, Federal and Inter-State Affairs Office of Gov. Jay Inslee, Washington, D.C.

University of Montevallo
Alumni Affairs
Reynolds Hall, Station 6215
Montevallo, AL 35115



Tuesday, Feb. 7

5:30 p.m. College of Education & Human Development Alumni Recognition Dinner (by invitation)

Friday, Feb. 10

5 p.m. *50-year Reunion Celebration for Class of 1973

5:30 p.m. UMNAA Distinguished Alumni Reception (by invitation)

7 p.m. *College Night productions

Saturday, Feb. 11

8:30 a.m. Alumni Coffee & Registration in Reynolds Hall

9 a.m. Departmental Coffee/Breakfast Receptions

9:30 a.m. Departmental/Affinity Receptions

10:30 a.m. GV/PV Reunions

Noon *UMNAA Homecoming Recognition Luncheon

- Distinguished Alumni Award
- Nathalie Molton Gibbons Alumni Achievement Award
- Nathalie Molton Gibbons Young Achiever's Award
- Honored Classes/UMNAA Annual Business Meeting

Join us for Homecoming 2023

Tentative Schedule (Subject to change)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, including a detailed Homecoming schedule, registration and lodging or to purchase College Night and reunion tickets, please visit montevallo.edu/homecoming.

2 p.m. Purple vs. Gold Basketball Game

2 p.m. **Alabama College Reunion** and Class of 1963 recognition

4 p.m. ***Decades Reunions** with special class recognition for: Class of 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2003

4 p.m. **Alumni Art Auction and Poole Party**

5 p.m. ***Young Alumni Party** with Class of 2013 recognition

7 p.m. *College Night productions

**Throughout the day
on Saturday**

Alumni Art Exhibition & Silent Auction

Carmichael Library Open House

View yearbooks and College Night material.

*Event requires ticket or registration.

Learn about other upcoming alumni events throughout the year
by visiting montevallo.edu/alumni-events or calling the Alumni Office at 205-665-6223.