

# HONORS

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2016

*Magazine*

## *true*BLUE WORLDVIEW

*International students find  
a welcoming environment  
in MTSU's Honors College*

MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY





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### TRUE BLUE WORLDVIEW

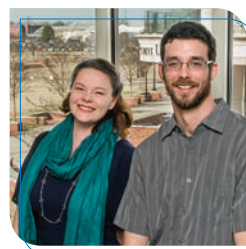
International students find a welcoming academic and social environment in MTSU's Honors College



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Howard Wall has spent his professional life building Murfreesboro; now he's building a legacy of giving at MTSU



Cover photo:  
Honors Students  
Pel S. Doski and  
Evidence Nwangwa

At left:  
Campus scene

photos:  
J Intintoli

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## HONORS MAGAZINE

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## From the Dean's Desk



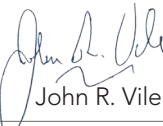
I have been recently reading a book by fellow professors who describe how they go about integrating their work life with what they believe to be their life callings. I know this is an issue that often confronts our students as well. The book's chief thesis is summarized in its title: *Faithful is Successful*. Students, faculty, and staff all have jobs

to do; we succeed not simply by garnering top honors or winning prestigious awards, but also by remaining faithful to our tasks.

By many different objective measures, the Honors College is a success. We regularly enroll between 750 and 800 students a semester. We have scholarships for incoming freshmen and for transfer students. We recruit homeschooled, veterans, graduating seniors with International Baccalaureate diplomas, National Merit Scholars, and individuals with GEDs. The number of students completing Honors theses continues to increase (63 last year). We have certificates for individuals who can only complete their first two years in Honors and associates for individuals who arrive midway through their college years at MTSU and decide they want to complete upper-division Honors classes including a thesis.

Our students consistently serve as interns and MTSU ambassadors and participate in Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs). They routinely garner the University's top honors (President's, Provost's, and other awards) and make presentations at professional conferences. Our literary magazine and our news magazine have both won national honors. Our students consistently enroll in top graduate and professional schools, with recent graduates enrolled at Harvard Medical School, the law school of the University of Chicago, and such colleges as Texas A&M, Baylor, Hebrew University, Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Tennessee, and Cal Tech. Thirteen students recommended by our Undergraduate Fellowship Office have received Fulbright Scholarships in the last six years. Others have won Gilman, Boren, Goldwater, and Critical Language Scholarships and other national and international fellowships. We are offering our first dual enrollment Honors classes at Central Magnet School. We have one of the most committed Boards of Visitors on the entire campus and a staff that is second to none.

However impressive these facts are, I believe that the Honors College ultimately succeeds or fails by the manner in which it develops relationships with—and meets the needs of—individual students. I am confident in saying that the entire staff is committed to being faithful to our tasks and in doing all that we can to enhance the educational experiences of our students. This is truly a case where being faithful is being successful.

  
John R. Vile



# THE BIGGEST HONOR OF ALL: HONORS STUDENTS REPRESENT CAMPUS

by Jake Garrette | Jake is a freshman Buchanan Fellow majoring in Aerospace and is a nonfiction editor for *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression*.

## **Student Ambassador.**

It is a position filled by only a handful of MTSU's students, but the effect of their presence is seen throughout campus. Upon donning their signature blue jackets, student ambassadors take on the role of official hosts to those visiting the MTSU community. They welcome dignitaries, former alumni, and prospective students, and they strive to create and maintain connections between those individuals and the University. They benefit students by acting as a liaison representative during their meetings with University officials. And they have goals, one of which is an aspiration to become active alumni who continue to represent their alma mater well in the years to come.

**"Our job is basically to be  
the best face of MTSU."**

*Keaton Davis, an ambassador majoring in  
Business Administration and Management*

Only a select few make the cut, and **Nausheen Qureshi**, a junior Nutrition and Food Science major, is one of them.

Qureshi, an international transplant, describes herself as quiet and shy—features that may not seem like the most obvious choice when selecting someone for the role of ambassador. However, in speaking with her, it quickly becomes apparent that she has a lot to offer.

The Pakistani native may be quiet, as she says, but she exudes a confidence that gives the impression of a person who has long since lost the need to prove anything to anyone. And there is a sense of focus and energy behind her eyes that is reinforced by her words, stated in a voice that speaks clearly and with purpose and that seems ready to take on whatever the world throws her way, leaving no doubt that she is well-qualified to represent the school.

And, to her knowledge, she is the first person with her particular background to represent MTSU, making her an emissary in more ways than one.

"There's a big minority population, and I feel they need to be represented a little bit better," Qureshi said. "I want to eliminate



Nausheen Qureshi



that factor of where people are afraid of you because they don't know you, they don't know your beliefs, and they don't know how similar you are to them."

It makes sense, then, that Qureshi should hold the title of student ambassador.

The MTSU Student Ambassador Program is sponsored by the MTSU Alumni Association and was started in 1978 as a way for distinguished alumni and guests of the University to be greeted by student "hosts," with those students giving tours and supporting events across campus. Today, student ambassadors represent the University at functions and events from every aspect and avenue of MTSU. They are a select group, one that represents the work ethic, not to mention the heart and soul, of Middle Tennessee State University. One could think of them as a sort of a True Blue fire department, ready to gear up

and dispatch whenever they get the call.

"Our job is basically to be the best face of MTSU," said **Keaton Davis**, an ambassador majoring in Business and

Management. "Our goal is to provide one [student ambassador] to any department or college on campus that wants one."

And, if the University asks, they will come, appearing in their trademark blue blazers with smiles on their faces and professionalism in their manner. Although they have varied backgrounds, majors, and even reasons for initially being interested in the position, they are united by one common bond—their love for MTSU.

Michelle Stepp, associate director of MTSU Alumni Relations, puts it best: "MTSU Student Ambassadors are, many times, the only interaction a University guest has with the MTSU student body.

They are, indeed, the face of current MTSU students. President Sidney A. McPhee and other MTSU administrators place their trust in them to uphold MTSU's True Blue image and put their best foot forward in welcoming, serving, and hosting our guests. It is considered an honor and a privilege to serve the University in this capacity."

**Madison Tracy**, a Public Relations student, first noticed the ambassadors shortly after moving to campus.

"When I lived in Lyon my freshman year, I saw a girl on the bottom floor with a blue jacket on, and I was like, 'What is that? You look so cool; I want that jacket!'" Tracy said.

A few years hence, one can find a very polished and poised Tracy in a blue blazer of her own. She fulfilled her wish and is now one of the most experienced ambassadors, having hosted guests and dignitaries for nearly two years.

"We want to bring warmth to the campus," she said. "I also feel like I have a responsibility to give back because I have been given so much." Tracy, like several of the ambassadors, is a recipient of the Buchanan Fellowship, a prestigious scholarship awarded to only 20 incoming freshmen per year.

The Student Ambassador program is excellent for Buchanan Fellows and other students interested in leadership due to the many opportunities it affords. In addition to learning in-depth information about the University, they have opportunities to practice public relations, hone leadership skills, and engage in social networking. It is an experience for which many of the ambassadors are grateful.

When asked about his involvement in the program, Davis says one particular opportunity initially caught his attention. "I say the big draw was networking," he said. "But I love MTSU. It really is a great school."

**Collin McDonald** is a member of the Aerospace program, a pilot who is slated to graduate in 2017. A leader by nature, the ambassador position comes easily to him.



Keaton Davis



Tandra Martin



Madison Tracy



Collin McDonald



Brooke Morgan



Samantha Crossland





Nathan  
Tilton



Anna  
Gray



Joan  
Crenshaw Torres



Sydney  
Youngman

His outward confidence is reassuring, conveying a sense of “Don’t worry. I know what I’m doing. Trust me on this.” It is an attitude that must give comfort to those with whom he flies, and it doubtless transfers well when he encourages new students and meets dignitaries, even though he has only been an ambassador for a year.

“We have a lot of MTSU Aerospace alumni that come to these presidential events,” he said. “It also gives me the opportunity to talk to some of our prospective students.”

## “I have a responsibility to give back because I have been given so much”

*Madison Tracy, an ambassador majoring in Mass Communication*

In talking to McDonald, it is clear that he enjoys sharing his experiences with future students and learning from students who have since graduated and succeeded in their fields, especially since piloting is an occupation that requires significantly more networking than most. However, he says who you meet isn’t the most important thing: “You can’t get distracted by that,” he said. “You have to have a servant’s attitude, being helpful and informative.”

That servant’s attitude, combined with gratefulness and humility, makes those selected for this position a special lot, and, while the role of a student ambassador may seem simple and straightforward, the process to become one is not. Those interested must first obtain an application from the MT Alumni website and ensure they fit all qualifications—such as being a full-time student in good disciplinary standing with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. After applying, they are carefully screened by a committee. If they pass, they are sent on to the next round, which is a panel interview of applicants administered by a judicial panel. It is a highly selective process. Of the more than 100 students who applied last year, only 15 were chosen.

While those appointed see themselves as lucky to have made the cut, the University is also fortunate to have such elite representatives. So, the next time you’re at an event or prestigious meeting, keep an eye out for one or two of these 20 remarkable young men and women. They’ve given much of their time and effort for the opportunity to approach and meet you as representatives of MTSU.

With those blazers and their dazzling True Blue smiles, you will, of course, see them coming. **H**

## Honors Students who have served as Student Ambassadors

### Holly Thompson Lynch

*Mass Communication, 1994*

### John Toy

*English, 2001*

### Ada Egbuji

*Biology, 2004*

### Rachel Simes Guttman

*Recording Industry, 2009*

### Chloe Robinson Calhoun

*Family and Consumer Studies, 2010*

### Troy Berry

*Mass Communication, 2012*

### Chad Slaven

*Chemistry, 2012*

### Anna Gray

*Social Work, 2014*

### Tandra Martin

*International Relations, 2015*

### Brooke Morgan

*Forensic Science, 2015*

### Joan Crenshaw Torres

*Family and Consumer Studies, 2015*

### Samantha Crossland

*Organizational Communication, 2016*

### Keaton Davis

*Accounting, 2016*

### Nausheen Qureshi

*Nutrition and Food Science, 2016*

### Nathan Tilton

*Aerospace, 2016*

### Madison Tracy

*Mass Communication, 2017*

### Sydney Youngman

*Biology, 2016*

### Collin McDonald

*Aerospace, 2017*

# An Unexpected Harmony: A Senior's Thesis Sheds Light on African-American Police in the South

by Jake Garrette | Jake is a freshman Buchanan Fellow majoring in Aerospace.



There's a sense of serenity one feels when driving along a typical road leading into the South. Maybe it's the beauty of the scenery, with rolling hills and trees lining the sides, only occasionally letting a stripe of sunlight shine down onto the pavement. Perhaps the nature of the people permeates the air with a feeling of welcome. The modern South promotes an attitude of friendliness and acceptance to newcomers, which has not always been the case.

Few people would look back on the era immediately following the American Civil War with a large sense of optimism for African-Americans. The adoption of the 14th Amendment did not, in fact, guarantee equal rights for people residing in the South. They actually faced discrimination and violence with startling regularity as many former Southerners, bitter about the loss of the war and their property, did their best to limit African-Americans' newly found freedom. It was a culture of total intolerance, right?

Not necessarily, says [Justin Farr](#).

An often-overlooked feature of some Southern cities during Reconstruction was the introduction of black officers into those cities' police forces. Farr, a History major, discovered this trend almost by accident, in a short paragraph of a book that only mentioned it in passing. He describes his discovery:

"I'm reading this passage and I saw a quotation that talked about the rarity of Negro policemen, and I said, 'Hold up. There were black police officers in the South during this time?' And that really grabbed my attention. We never went over this in history class."

Farr was hooked, and he began his senior thesis with the topic in mind. He dug in and found that the first black police officers appeared in the South in 1867, only two years after the end of the Civil War. He and his fellow researchers attribute this to the Union's military occupation of Southern cities and the subsequent Republican (the party advocating for the freedom of enslaved workers at the time) governments that were installed.

"Radical Republican governments after the Civil War were known to start giving more rights to African-Americans, and this facilitated [black police officers]," Farr said.

Yet, surely there was no way that Southerners took this well or adhered to the authority of black policemen, right? Wasn't this move simply a show by the Republicans, who likely heavily regulated the black police officers? Farr's research shows otherwise.

"It's really very interesting," Farr said. "You would think they would be regulated to only policing black areas. But there were cities like Charleston, South Carolina, and New Orleans, where they were allowed to arrest both black and white people. They were allowed to carry firearms."



Charley Bird (top) and George White (middle) are two of seven African-American policemen serving on the Chattanooga police force in the early 1800s. *Photograph courtesy of the Chattanooga Times, July 1, 1928, Jubilee No. 25.*

A faded drawing of Andy F. Thompson, an African-American who began his career as a Chattanooga policeman in 1880 and rose to the position of captain of the Colored Fire Department. *Photograph courtesy of the Chattanooga Times, 1896.*

(Images taken from *African Americans of Chattanooga: A History of Unsung Heroes*)

If this sounds surprising, it was even more shocking to Farr. The MTSU senior from Nashville is so intrigued that he plans to continue his research even after his graduation in May. His curiosity and passion for the subject are evident the moment one speaks to him.

"What white man during this time would even think about giving a black man a gun and a badge and telling him, 'You have authority to arrest white men'?" he said.

However, while tension did mount occasionally, Farr says the integration of officers in Charleston and New Orleans created a harmony not seen until the civil rights movement. In fact, there are recorded situations of some white residents even commending black police officers for their performance, creating a Tuskegee Airmen-like scenario.

"Very few historians have touched on this subject," Farr said. "We have mountains on Reconstruction and all sorts of other events, but whenever I tell someone about this, they've never heard about it."

Farr wants to change that. The budding historian, an African-American himself, wants to learn and share as much as he can about this topic and the surprisingly harmonious twist it offers to the story of the 19th-century South.

"I want to tell these peoples' stories," he said. "I seek to grow more into the future historian I would like to be. I want to tell this story about my race."

It seems Farr may have hit upon history's equivalent of a gold mine in finding and pursuing this little-known narrative of peace and collaboration. The story is certainly an unexpected one from a time known for its violence and hatred, and it reinforces the idea that even in times of intolerance and uncertainty there are veins of peace and hope. [H](#)



photo: Darby Campbell



# Fall 2015 Theses Defended



## Nathan Abelt<sup>1</sup>

History

"Rise of the Civilian Soldier from Resistance to Revolution: Case Studies in Italian and Vietnamese Guerilla Warfare"

Derek Frisby, advisor



## Shannon Allen<sup>2</sup>

Biochemistry

"Isolation of Apigenin from *Antirrhinum majus*"

Norma Dunlap, advisor



## Emily Ball<sup>3</sup>

Accounting

"Accounting's Role in the Ethical Behavior of Management"

Terry Ward, advisor

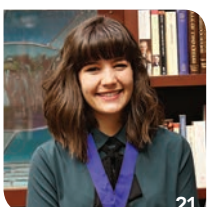
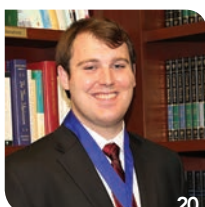


## Trevor Ball<sup>4</sup>

Mass Communication

"A Filmmaker's Journey into the Heart of God"

Edward Bowen, advisor



## Alayna Cate<sup>5</sup>

Music

"Musical Arrangement of Claude Debussy's *Children's Corner* for Clarinet Choir and Percussion"

Paul Osterfield and Daniel West, advisors

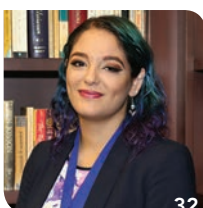


## Melody Cook<sup>6</sup>

English

"Young Single Adult Mormon Women in Tennessee: A Brief Ethnography"

Rebekkah King, advisor



## Ashley Corson<sup>7</sup>

Biochemistry

"Synthesis and Screening of Antimicrobial Peptoid Combinatorial Libraries Against the Fungi *Aspergillus*, *Candida*, and *Cryptococcus*"

Kevin Bicker, advisor





**Zachary Dresch<sup>8</sup>***Recording Industry*

"Comparisons between Select Studio Microphone Techniques in Middle Tennessee State University's Studio A"

*John Merchant, advisor***Austin Duke<sup>9</sup>***Mass Communication*

"Apocalypse Then & Now"

*Derek Frisby, advisor***Mathias Dusabe<sup>10</sup>***Foreign Languages*

"The Marginalization of Burundian Refugee Children in America: A Pilot Study"

*Denise Bates, advisor***Seneca Ewing<sup>11</sup>***Animal Science*

"Validation of the Use of Radiographic Bone Aluminum Equivalence to Measure Bone Mineral Content in the Equine Coffin Bone"

*Holly Sue Spooner, advisor***Shelby Flatt<sup>12</sup>***Mass Communication*

"Cosplay in the USA"

*Priya Ananth, advisor***Chelsea Harmon<sup>13</sup>***Chemistry*

"Isolation and Identification of Medicinal Metabolites from *Cichorium intybus*"

*Norma Dunlap, advisor***Lydia Harris<sup>14</sup>***History and Anthropology*

"At the Intersection of Earth and Sky: Archaeoastronomy and Experimental Archaeology, an Autoethnographic Perspective of Sacred Landscapes"

*Shannon Hodge, advisor***Lauren Heusinkveld<sup>15</sup>***Biology*

"Regulation of Canonical NF- $\kappa$ B Signaling in Macrophages by *Cryptococcus neoformans* Capsular Polysaccharide"

*David Nelson, advisor***Alesha Hicks<sup>16</sup>***Psychology*

"Empathy and Experiential Learning: How a Community-Based Project Enhances the College Experience"

*Stuart Bernstein, advisor***Morgan Hunlen<sup>17</sup>***Aerospace*

"Exploring the Sociological Climate towards Transgender Women College Students"

*Gretchen Webber, advisor***Zach Hutcherson<sup>18</sup>***Aerospace*

"The Projected Ability of General Aviation to Adapt to a Comprehensive Mandated Safety Program"

*Paul Craig, advisor***Daniel Ingram<sup>19</sup>***Mass Communication*

"The Controversy Surrounding Net Neutrality"

*Todd O'Neill, advisor***Evan Lester<sup>20</sup>***Aerospace*

"NASA FOCUS Lab Operations Manual"

*Andrea Georgiou, advisor***Chloe Madigan<sup>21</sup>***English*

"Dionysian Archetypes in 1960s Popular Culture"

*Jill Hague, advisor***Emily Matheney<sup>22</sup>***English*

"The Monstrous-Feminine and the Politics of Trash in the Film *Excision*"

*Elyce Rae Helford, advisor***Kailey McDonald<sup>23</sup>***Computer Science*

"Mining Educational Data to Create a Model to Predict Student Retention"

*Cen Li, advisor***Olivia Musgrove<sup>24</sup>***Psychology*

"Attitudes Toward Interpersonal Violence Against Women as a Function of Relationship"

*Mary Ellen Fromuth, advisor***Andrew Nolin<sup>25</sup>***Biology*

"Elucidating the Molecular Mechanisms that Control the Switch between Mitochondrial Repair and Destruction after Mitochondrial Damage"

*David Nelson, advisor***Chisha Nwobilo<sup>26</sup>***Music*

"Extra-musical Inspirations in Robert Schumann's *Carnaval*, Op. 9"

*Adam Clark, advisor***Erin Paul<sup>27</sup>***Interdisciplinary Studies*

"Effective Teaching Strategies of ESL"

*Dorothy Craig, advisor***Matthew Pyles<sup>28</sup>***Music*

"Secondary Choral Educator Traits and Characteristics that Support Adolescent Male Enrollment"

*Jamila McWhirter, advisor***Mason Riley<sup>29</sup>***Biology*

"Determining the Enzymatic Pathway of the Stress Reaction in *Caenorhabditis elegans*"

*Lynn Boyd, advisor***Mabel Rodriguez<sup>30</sup>***Nutrition and Food Science*

"Development of an e-Cookbook for Preadolescent Children"

*Janet Colson, advisor***Lee Rumble<sup>31</sup>***Plant and Soil Science*

"A Survey of Wounding Frequency among Trees Found in Urban and Forested Environments"

*Drew Sieg, advisor***Yucera K. Salman<sup>32</sup>***Microbiology*

"Evolution of the Soul: A Study of the Collaborative Nature of Creative Expression Through Visionary Art"

*Darren Levin, advisor***Leigh Stanfield<sup>33</sup>***Communication Studies*

"The Bluff"

*Kaylene Gebert, advisor***Katherine Stubblefield<sup>34</sup>***International Relations*

"Ukraine Was Not the Tipping Point: Russia-European Union Relations"

*Andrei Korobkov, advisor***Trevor Wiemann<sup>35</sup>***Finance*

"Private Firm Valuation: A Case Study"

*Charles Beauchamp, advisor***Larissa Wolf<sup>36</sup>***Biology*

"Effect of Neuroinflammation on Mitochondrial Quality Control Pathways in Parkinson's Disease-affected Neurons"

*David Nelson, advisor***Rachel Yates<sup>37</sup>***Biology*

"Investigating the Effects of  $\alpha$ -synuclein Variants on Mitochondrial Function in Parkinson's Disease"

*David Nelson, advisor*

# Buchanan Bust Unveiled during Annual Buchanan Fellows Ceremony

A long-awaited and much-anticipated bronze bust of the late MTSU alumnus James M. Buchanan was unveiled by his youngest sister and a nationally acclaimed sculptor during a special ceremony Sept. 18 on campus.

People attending the annual Buchanan Fellows inauguration in the James E. Walker Library saw the unveiling of the 75-pound bust by Tracy H. Sugg of Wartrace. The Honors College commissioned Sugg to create a clay bust that would be turned into a bronze bust as a lasting tribute to Buchanan (Class of 1940), an American economist who was the recipient of the 1986 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences and who died Jan. 9, 2013.

His sister, Elizabeth "Liz" Buchanan Bradley of Pearland, Texas, who earned three degrees from MTSU, joined Sugg for the unveiling of the bust. Bradley and her brother grew up in the Buchanan community in Rutherford County. She worked in elementary education, retiring as principal of Homer Pittard Campus School. One of Bradley's sons, Jeff Whorley of Indianapolis, serves on the Honors College Board of Visitors.

A Rutherford County native, James Buchanan graduated from what was then Middle Tennessee State Teachers College. He later completed a master's degree at the University of Tennessee and his doctorate at the University of Chicago. He held teaching and research positions at the University of Virginia, UCLA, Virginia Tech, and George Mason University. He authored hundreds of scholarly articles, published numerous books, and received dozens of awards.

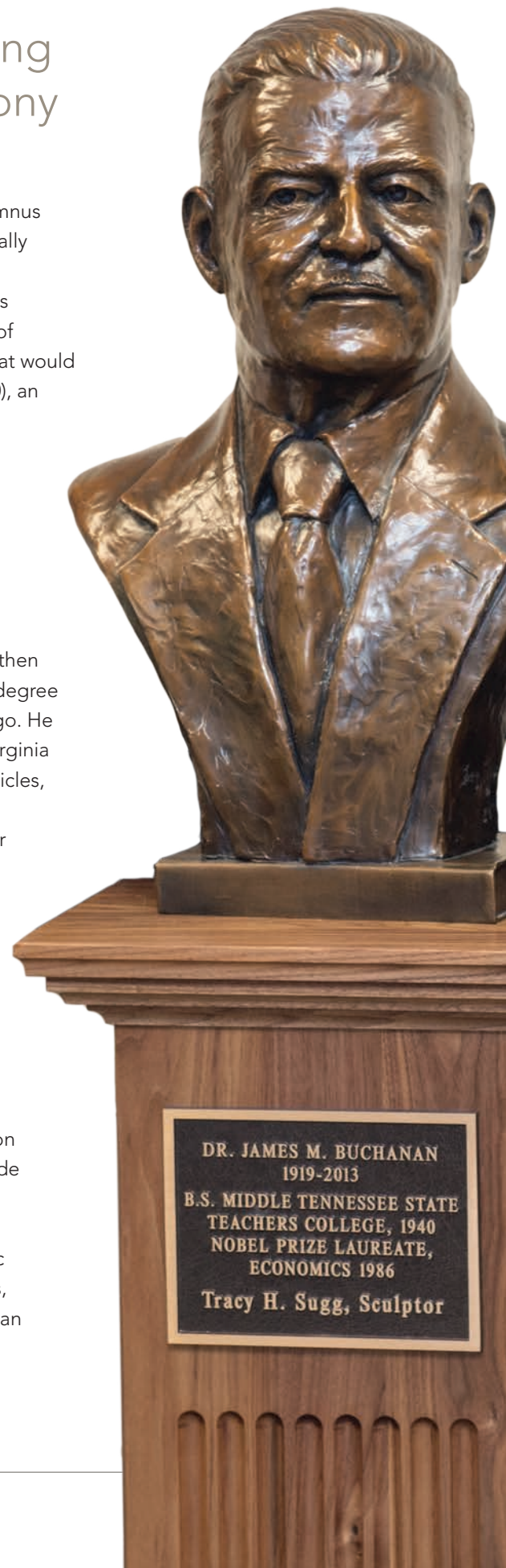
"His generosity, both in life and in death, has largely been responsible for the many extra benefits we have been able to provide to our Buchanan students," said John R. Vile, Honors College dean. The bust of Buchanan will remain on permanent display in Walker Library's Buchanan Family Reading Room.

As part of the ceremony, senior Buchanan Fellow Keaton Davis and junior Madison Tracy welcomed the new class of scholars. Vile introduced the Buchanan faculty: Tony Eff, Amy Kaufman, Eric Klumpe, Joan McRae, Phil Oliver, Karen Petersen, and Jack Purcell. New Buchanan Fellows received a book of Dr. Buchanan's essays.

This year's Buchanan Fellowship recipients have an average score of 32 on their ACT exams and average high school GPAs of 3.95. Their majors include Music, Chemistry, Aerospace, Physics, English, Mechatronics Engineering, Forensic Science, Finance, and Mass Communication.

The extremely competitive Buchanan scholarships, the highest academic award an entering MTSU freshman can receive, are named for the alumnus, whose estate gave MTSU \$2.5 million in May 2013 following his death and an additional \$1.2 million in 2014.

For more on the Buchanan Fellowship, call 615-898-2152 or visit [mtsu.edu/honors/buchanan.php](http://mtsu.edu/honors/buchanan.php). [H](#)







Tracy Sugg and Liz Buchanan Bradley



Hannah Hall

## 2015 Buchanan Fellows

Hannah Ruth Berthelson  
 Nathan Alexander Bowen  
 Nicole Kaylyn Chandler  
 Jonathan Lee Ciecka  
 Jacinda Margaret Drenckpohl  
 Kami Sharik Dyer  
 Tatum Lanette England  
 Jake Owens Garrette  
 Lauren Kaylee Grizzard  
 Hannah Jee-Kaitlin Hall  
 Devyn Hope Hayes  
 Elizabeth Grace Keller  
 Benjamin Taylor Kulas  
 Madeleine Joy Kurtz  
 Alexia Texiera Marshall  
 Asfah Fatima Mohammed  
 Mikaela Danielle Ray  
 Cayman Nash Seagraves  
 Jacob McKinney Smith  
 Hannah Mary Tybor



Dean Vile

# Honors College Welcomes TRANSFER FELLOWS


Senior Honors Transfer Fellows Sydney Youngman and Sam Hulseley welcomed the incoming class of Transfer Fellows at a Sept. 11 inauguration program. Martha Hixon, who has taught the Transfer Fellows Seminar, delivered the keynote address.

Modeled after the Honors College's successful Buchanan Fellowship awarded every year to 20 of the top incoming freshmen, the Transfer Fellowship seeks to create a complementary scholarship to give 15 transfer students similar opportunities to participate in the Honors program. John R. Vile, dean of the Honors College, noted that, "over time, we've recognized that many of our best students have been transfer students who bring diversity to our Honors program."

The Transfer Fellows program is unique in that it attracts top-tier, nontraditional students. This year's class includes students who attended community college directly after high school, students who have families, and students who have been in the work force for several years while attending a community college. "The Transfer Fellowship offers these students a community of intellectual support and is geared toward students who would find the Honors thesis process very rewarding," said Laura Clippard, Honors College advisor.

This year's class includes such varied majors as Biology, Biochemistry, Nursing, Finance, International Relations, Actuarial Science, Mass Communication, English, and Psychology.

To be considered for a Transfer Fellowship, students are required to have a 3.5 GPA and have completed 60 hours of coursework prior to their first year at MTSU. Also required is a completed application form and admissions packet, which should include official transcripts from all colleges and universities previously attended, two letters of recommendation from college professors or administrators, and a 500-word personal essay. The application deadline is Feb. 15.

Fellowship recipients who qualify for in-state tuition will receive \$3,500 per semester for up to four semesters. Up to three scholarships of \$7,000 per semester will be available each year for students applying from out of state or foreign countries. 

## 2015 Honors Transfer Fellows

Bassam Emad Aboona

Jennifer Michelle Crow

Miranda Shay Dotson

Amanda Lynn Freuler

Zeke Parker Grissom

Samantha Bernadette Hunt

William Edward Johnstone

Amanda Megan Nadler

Todd Ryan Pirtle

JoAnna Kate Ruth

Joy Abigail Shind

Jensen Mikayla Still

Robin Nicole Stone

Bonnie Ellen Walker

Aaliyah Yahlonda Yisrael



Transfer Fellows

Students



L to R:

Philip Phillips  
and Aaliyah Yisrael

Zeke Grissom

Martha Hixon



I AM *true* **BLUE**

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY



Science Building

Share your MTSU experience.  
Encourage your friends and family to

**TAKE A CLOSER LOOK**



# How I Found Myself While Serving Others

by Darcy Tabotabo | A Buchanan Fellow, Darcy is a senior Science major (Pre-Medical).

I left for Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in hopes of giving what I could and serving others. I have always had a passion to help others, and a medical mission trip with MTSU Global Brigades was a perfect opportunity to do so.

As we landed at the second-most dangerous airport in the world, I did not know what might be in store for us. After deplaning from our six-hour flight, we loaded into a bus and traveled for two hours through mountains and villages to our compound. There was no air conditioning or hot water and very little cell phone service. Apart from sending texts to my loved ones, which I was able to do each day, there was no other reason to look at my phone. The absence of technological interruptions allowed our group to work without distraction.

Our meals were comprised solely of Honduran food, and everyone around us spoke Spanish. I was completely immersed in another culture.

We left at 6 a.m. every day for our 2½-hour drive to the small community of Joyas del Carballo where we set up our medical station. Our first day was dedicated to meeting the community and learning how they live. We discovered that they still have mud ovens; a well for their bathing, drinking, and laundry water; only a few open rooms for a school; and very few electronics. They were



Top: Darcy Tabotabo with village child

Middle: Teaching dental hygiene

Right: Honduras countryside

Inset at right: Medical brigade

always thankful and showed it by their many hugs and generous offers of homegrown mangoes and oranges. They were also hard

workers who sought to improve the community. One man had lost two legs and one arm in an accident, and he still worked as hard as anyone else. We met and played with the children and went back to our compound to prepare the medications we would administer that week.

After our long drive the second morning, a lengthy line of smiling faces greeted us. What happened over the course of the next three days truly changed my life. There were six different stations set up in the school: triage, consultation, charla (education), data input, dentistry, and pharmacy. Three of the stations made a big impact on me.

Charla, Spanish for “chat,” was the education portion of the brigade where we taught children how to brush their teeth. After a quick lesson, we talked to the kids and played games. I felt like a kid again as I had the chance to enjoy being one of them and getting picked in Duck, Duck, Goose.

In consultation, I sat with a doctor as she treated patients. She was a caring doctor who allowed me to be hands-on and taught me every step of the way. I realized that we made an impact on many lives. Simple problems like allergies, sun-related headaches, skin discolorations, eye burns, and parasites were abundant. All of these were easily treated and even more easily prevented.

In triage, I took patients’ blood pressure, height, weight, and





temperature; however, what meant the most to me was talking to the patients. They expressed a deep trust in me to help them. I exchanged warm smiles with everyone, played with the children, and connected with people who truly needed our help. By the end of the three days, we had helped 1,002 patients.

Our last day in Honduras was spent breaking down rocks, mixing them into mud, and forming adobe bricks to build a community center. It was here we learned what we ultimately contribute to communities.

Global Brigades begins work in each community with medical and dental brigades. They then bring in microfinance, water, public health, and environmental brigades to improve the community's foundation. They finish with a business brigade to help the

community become self-sustaining. Then, every four or five months, medical and dental brigades return.

What I thought would be an opportunity to give my time to assist others resulted in those I had come to help actually helping me learn about myself. I learned that the small inconveniences I found upon my arrival—like no hot water, no air conditioning, and limited cell service—were nothing. These people were blessed to have any clean water, let alone running water.

I put down my cell phone and realized that playing with kids is more fun than the Internet. Some of the children we interacted with were orphaned, and seeing their sad faces when we had to leave made me appreciate my own loved ones. The eagerness the people had to go

to the doctor was amazing. And our 2½-hour trips to the village seemed like nothing when I learned that the nearest medical help these people usually had was three hours away.

My heart was set on fire to serve others as I felt what it is like to heal people physically and emotionally. I was able to work with doctors to make people better; I connected with people whose language I could barely speak; and I found the inspiration to live my life as a servant. People put their trust in me, and I did all I could to help them. I quickly realized that one week wasn't nearly enough time. I finally understood what John Bunyan meant when he said, "You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you." [H](#)



## Research Experience in Uganda Requires Adaptive Attitude

by Jessica Shotwell | *Jessica is a junior Buchanan Fellow majoring in Sociology.*

**W**ow! I would have never in a million years thought that I would have the opportunity to experience my first research project in Uganda as an MHIRT-CBU intern. The MHIRT (Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training) internship is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. There are several programs offered by colleges nationwide, and I chose Christian Brothers University specifically because it allowed a sociological perspective to health disparities in a developing country's health care system.

During my time in Uganda from late May to early August 2015, I was fortunate to work alongside two

graduate students—Daryl Stephens and Eyerusalem Tessema. Stephens, who was our site mentor, participated in MHIRT in Ishaka, Uganda, last summer and is currently pursuing her master's degree in Anthropology at the University of Memphis. Tessema, my research partner, is pursuing her master's in Public Health at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. From understanding the skills needed to probe effectively during an interview to learning the ins and outs of the small, yet exciting little town called Ishaka, I had an enhanced experience working with graduate students.

Before actually arriving in Uganda, my program director told me that the international research experience would require an adaptive attitude. I would not realize how important this

piece of advice was until we made it to Ishaka. Other than the obvious differences in the research process that may occur while in a different country than your own, the specificity of our research study did not come until after being properly introduced to important members of Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Ishaka Health Plan, and Akashanda Medical Clinic.

To give a bit of background, Ishaka Adventist Hospital is a private, non-profit hospital located in Ishaka, Uganda. Ishaka Health Plan is a community-based health-financing plan that helps families and groups receive medical services at Ishaka Adventist Hospital. MHIRT-CBU has had a long-standing relationship with the hospital and the health plan; therefore, living in Ishaka was not only pleasant, but also welcoming.







While there, I learned that Ishaka Health Plan had purchased a clinic in the nearby village of Akashanda with the purpose of reaching more people living in the Bushenyi District in Uganda and aiding the finances of the health plan. Although Akashanda Medical Clinic is small and can only provide basic services at present, it is a place of convenient medical care for the community. Hopefully with time, the center can grow and continue to thrive in Akashanda.

Our research, "Need Assessment and Feasibility Study of Akashanda Medical Clinic," focused on the newly acquired clinic. We were the first ones to conduct research at the center. I will never forget my experience this past summer. I not only gained an unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime research experience, but I adapted to a culture unlike my own. In turn, I was rewarded with a broadened mind and approach to customs unlike mine. [H](#)

*Clockwise from top left:*  
Jessica Shotwell and Moreen,  
a nurse assistant-in-training

Akashanda Medical Clinic

Shotwell with a Nombe Health  
Center nurse

Shotwell with her research partner,  
supervisor, translator, and villagers  
from Chanti

Shotwell with fellow researcher,  
Eyerusalem Tessema, right, and  
her supervisor, Daryl Stephens



# Phi Kappa Phi Student Vice President Selected to Attend Summit

by Evan Lester | *Evan, a senior Buchanan Fellow, is an Aerospace major with a concentration in Flight Dispatch.*

In November 2014, I was one of a select group initiated into MTSU's chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (PKP). The society, whose purpose is to "celebrate excellence in academics and integrity of character," invites students in the top 7.5 percent of the junior class, top 10 percent of the senior class, and top 10 percent of graduate students to become members.

A few weeks after my initiation ceremony, Philip Phillips, the associate dean of the University Honors College and president of MTSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, invited me to assume a leadership role in Phi Kappa Phi. Then, only a few weeks later, the executive committee of MTSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi elected me to serve as a student vice president. I was excited about my new role and working with

Phillips and the executive committee, and it was not long before yet another opportunity arose.

In April 2015, Phillips informed me that our executive board had nominated me to attend the 2015 Phi Kappa Phi Student Vice President Leadership Summit in Salt Lake City. Two weeks after I completed an application through PKP's national website and submitted the application to the national headquarters, I received an email informing me that I was one of 65 Phi Kappa Phi student vice presidents nationwide selected to attend the Leadership Summit scheduled for July 31–Aug. 1, 2015.

On July 30, I flew from Nashville to Chicago on the first leg of my journey to the leadership summit. During a four-hour layover at Chicago O'Hare International

Airport, I did what any typical college student would do—I worked on my Honors thesis.

When I arrived in Salt Lake City, I boarded a shuttle that wound its way up a tall mountain for 45 minutes to reach the Snowbird Ski Resort, where the summit was being held. I checked into my room and soon met my roommate for the summit, Tim D'Agostino. Tim, the current PKP student vice president at the University of Delaware, and I instantly became friends.

On the first day of the summit, attendees took part in a collegiate empowerment session. We participated in team-building exercises, and I actually met all the other 64 vice presidents and quickly made friends. We also learned how to enhance our leadership skills, especially through the five practices

Evan Lester on top of a Utah Mountain





View from Hotel Room



of exemplary leadership: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. We also learned that we need to establish a transition program for our PKP chapters so that future student vice presidents can start their terms already knowing the required tasks and responsibilities of the position and can successfully continue the chapter's activities and events. Overall, we learned that we must keep our chapter's flame burning and not let it burn out.

On the second day of the leadership summit, all student vice presidents attended a Phi Kappa Phi Academy session held by representatives from the national headquarters. We learned about the history of Phi Kappa Phi, scholarships available for active Phi Kappa Phi members, how to get our chapters more involved, the responsibilities and tasks required of student vice presidents, and much more.

Later, we were placed into regional groups. Those of us in the Southeast region discussed how to get our chapters

involved and the problems our chapters are facing. I learned that MTSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi is facing the same challenges as other chapters—lack of

involvement and lack of recognition on campus and in the community. My group discussed strategies to combat these problems, such as whether hosting a trivia bowl on our campuses would increase our chapters' involvement and recognition. The Phi Kappa Phi Academy session was my favorite one at the leadership summit because I learned more about Phi Kappa Phi and how I could improve MTSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi.

Later that day, student vice presidents and representatives from Phi Kappa Phi headquarters attended a formal dinner. Much to our surprise, the executive director of Phi Kappa Phi, Mary Todd, joined us for dinner and also spoke to the group. We were surprised to learn that students who apply for Phi Kappa Phi scholarships have a 33 percent chance of receiving the scholarship due to the small number of scholarship applications received every year.

*continued on page 23*

PKP executive director,  
PKP representatives,  
and Lester





Clockwise from top left: New initiates; Ken Paulson and Phi Kappa Phi officers; Student Vice President Nausheen Qureshi



## Phi Kappa Phi Holds Fall Initiation

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi initiated 16 Honors students into its MTSU chapter Tuesday, Nov. 17, and recognized eight current members of the Honors faculty as influential faculty designated by the student initiates.

Four College of Basic and Applied Sciences Honors students were initiated: **Natalie Musselman** (Biology); and **Pascal Holtkamp**, **Zachary Hutcherson**, and **Nathan Tilton** (Aerospace).

**Kelee Dawson** and **Bethany Marcum** (Psychology) represented the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences. **Nathan Abelt** (History), **Walter Duckett** (English), **Emiliya Mailyan** (Global Studies and Cultural Geography major and Foreign Languages), and **Mitchell Brisbon** and **Connor McDonald** (Political Science) represented the College of Liberal Arts. **Dakota Beverly** (Information Systems) and **Sahvanh Ford** (Economics) represented the College of Business.

Two College of Media and Entertainment students were initiated: **Aaron Itzkovitz** (Recording Industry) and **Madison Tracy** (Journalism/Advertising). **Calla Sharp** (Early Childhood Education) represented the College of Education.

Honors faculty members recognized as influential faculty were **Laura Clippard** (Undergraduate Fellowships Office), **Tricia M. Farwell** (Journalism), **Kaylene Gebert** (Communication Studies and

Organizational Communication), **Nancy S. Goldberg** (Foreign Languages), **Angela Hague** (English), **Amy Kaufman** (English), **Ann M. McCullough** (Foreign Languages), and **Lauren Rudd** (Human Sciences).

The honor society initiated a total of 69 students and recognized 34 influential faculty members during the fall initiation ceremony in the ballroom of the Student Union Building. Ken Paulson, dean of the College of Media and Entertainment, spoke at the event on the importance of civil rights and liberties.

Clippard and Kathy Davis, chapter coordinator, received recognition from MTSU Chapter President Philip Phillips for their Meritorious Service to Phi Kappa Phi. Davis organizes every initiation ceremony, and Clippard helps MTSU students apply for national scholarships offered by the honor society.

Other chapter officers are Honors College Dean John R. Vile, Phi Kappa Phi treasurer and fellowship coordinator; Dianna Rust, vice president; Gina Logue, chapter secretary and public relations chair; and Honors students Evan Lester, Collin McDonald, and Nausheen Qureshi, student vice presidents.

Phi Kappa Phi encourages and recognizes superior scholarship in all academic disciplines. Junior initiates must rank in the top 7.5 percent of their class. Seniors must rank in the top 10 percent of their class. **H**





## MTSU Chapter Phi Kappa Phi President Attends Partnering for Success Workshop

Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips, president of MTSU's chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, joined selected chapter officers from around the country in Snowbird, Utah, Aug. 2–5, 2015, to participate in "Growing Your Chapter: A Partnering for Success Event." Sponsored by the Phi Kappa Phi national headquarters, the workshop focused on chapter management, membership building, and leadership challenges. MTSU's Phi Kappa Phi chapter, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in August 2014, is dedicated to promoting academic excellence on campus and leadership opportunities for its student members. [H](#)

PKP SUMMIT *continued from page 21*

Students

In addition, Todd challenged us to take the information we learned at the summit and apply it to our individual chapters. After her speech and the formal dinner, I took pictures with all of the friends I had made, with Todd, and with representatives from Phi Kappa Phi headquarters. Then, I said my final goodbyes to my new friends. It was truly amazing how we had become friends after knowing each other only two days.

On my flights back home from Salt Lake City, I reflected on my time at the Student Vice President Leadership Summit. I realized that the summit was beneficial not only for my personal growth, but also for my role as a student vice president of MTSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi. The collegiate empowerment session helped me become more outgoing and creative and also helped me enhance my leadership skills to be a successful student vice president and aviation professional.

I am currently working alongside MTSU's other Phi Kappa Phi student vice presidents, Nausheen Qureshi and Collin McDonald, to help increase the involvement and recognition of MTSU's chapter of PKP on campus and in the community. Our goal is to help MTSU's chapter fulfill Phi Kappa Phi's motto: "Let the love of learning rule humanity." [H](#)







Voting members of MTSU's circle of ODK, from left, John Vile, Matthew Hibdon, Susan Lyons, and Philip Phillips, meet to discuss plans to expand the group's Veterans Christmas Card Project using a \$500 grant. The ODK circle recently received its second Clay Grant from the ODK Foundation since its chartering in 2010.



Members of MTSU's circle of Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK), from left, Sam Crossland, Miranda Dotson, Larissa Wolf, Bennie Hunt, Amanda Freuling, Aaliyah Yisrael, and Alex Ishmetov, visit residents and deliver holiday cards at the Tennessee State Veterans Home.





## ODK National Leadership Honor Society Initiates 50

The MTSU circle of Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society (ODK) initiated 50 new members Nov. 19, 2015. David A. Foote, associate dean of the Jennings A. Jones College of Business, spoke to the initiates on the meaning and value of the Statue of Liberty.

Philip E. Phillips, associate dean of the Honors College, presided over the ceremony, which took place in the ballroom of the Student Union Building. Among those initiated were Lara

Daniel, assistant dean of the Jennings A. Jones College of Business; Jeff Gibson, chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance; David Gotcher, interim dean of the University College; and Philip Mathis, professor emeritus of Biology and former dean of the University Honors College.

New student initiates were Nathan Abelt, Charlotte Archer, Holly Aslinger, Trevor Ball, Katherine Benton, Mitchell Brisbon, Kathryn Brittain, Abigail Carter, Rebecca Clippard, Samantha Crossland, Jennifer Crow, Miranda Dotson, Grayson Dubois, Amanda Freuler, Erin Gardner, Haley Greene, Zeke Grissom, Samuel Hulse, Samantha Hunt, Zachary Hutcherson, Brady Inman, Joseph Kennedy, Janie Kullmar, Kaylin Larimer, Amanda Leachman, Evan Lester, Melinda Lewis, Devin Marsh, Collin McDonald, Connor McDonald, Yusra Mohammed, Patrick Murphy, Martina Ramos, Mason Riley, Ashley Sanders, Calla Sharp, Joy Shind,

Airianna Sky, Leigh Stanfield, Jensen Still, Darcy Tabotabo, Madison Tracy, Alden Wakefield, Bonnie Walker, Logan Whiles, and Aaliyah Yisrael.

Five sophomores were introduced as ODK squires and will be eligible for full membership as juniors. New circle squires are Skylar Dean, Akmal Ishmetov, Hannah Kanyuh, Nicholas Limbo, and JeSui Scott.

Officers for 2015–16 are Larissa Wolf, president; Saraf Chowdhury, vice president; Nausheen Qureshi, student secretary; Tiffany Graciano, True Blue Leadership Day project coordinator; Matthew Hibdon, national ODK liaison; John Vile, faculty advisor; Philip Phillips, faculty secretary/treasurer; and Susan Lyons, circle coordinator.

Omicron Delta Kappa, founded in 1914 and now over 300,000 members strong, is "the first college honor society of a national scope to give recognition and honor for meritorious leadership and service in extracurricular activities and to encourage development of general campus citizenship," according to its website, [www.odk.org](http://www.odk.org). The society recognizes achievement in the areas of scholarship; athletics; journalism, speech and the mass media; creative and performing arts; and campus/community service, social/religious activities, and campus government.

For more information about ODK, contact Susan Lyons, circle coordinator, at 615-898-5645 or [susan.lyons@mtsu.edu](mailto:susan.lyons@mtsu.edu). [!\[\]\(cf531ed27e91483460120fcc057b3901\_img.jpg\)](#)



# Fall Creative Expression **Award Winners**

Three undergraduates and one graduate student won the fall 2015 *Collage* Creative Expression Awards. **Megan L. Smith** and **Leah Bailey** won Martha Hixon Creative Expression Awards for best literature submissions. **Kyle S. Baker** and **Ambre Rogue** won Lon Nuell Creative Expression Awards for best visual submissions.

Smith, a senior transfer student majoring in English with a concentration in Writing, won the Hixon award for her poem "To My Sisters (High School Exit Strategies)." The poem was inspired by the time Smith spent last summer with her younger sisters listening to their struggles.

"I came to realize that a lot of the things they were concerned about—boys, drama, broken friendships—none of these things held much value after graduation," said Smith, a Psychology minor. "The poem eventually became a list of the recurring lessons that I had been faced with the past six years, and I hope it speaks truth to more than just myself."

Bailey, a graduate student studying Mass Communication, won the Hixon Creative Expression Award for her fiction story, "The Tea Cup." Bailey said she was inspired to write the story after seeing a photograph of a pink and white teacup. "It was extremely delicate, and immediately I began to wonder what happened to the rest of the set."

Bailey, who transferred to MTSU as an undergrad, has a B.S. in Animal Science (2006) and a B.A. in Foreign Languages (2007).

Rogue, a transfer student majoring in Mass Communication with a concentration in Photography, won the Lon Nuell Creative Expression Award for her photograph *Bisti Badlands*. Rogue took the photograph in Farmington, New Mexico, while

taking a summer photography course in the Southwest.

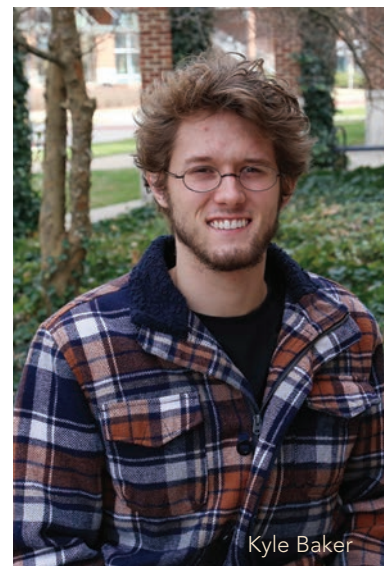
"The Badlands are where the real meets unreal, a wilderness where nearly nothing grows nor lives," Rogue said. "I wanted to capture the unrealness of the place—how even though the sun rains down, it is also deeply in the shadows."

Baker, a senior Art student with a concentration in Studio Art, won the Nuell Award for his drawing *We Finna Put it on da Map*. The Philosophy minor said the drawing was rendered from a photograph and was worked from top left to bottom right.

"This guy is my longtime friend, and we had been waiting at a bus station in San Francisco when I looked over and saw him standing like this," Baker said. "I had my camera out and had to get the shot. I took the photo home and worked out the piece."

Each semester, *Collage* staff members participate in a blind grading process to select journal content. Literature staff members select approximately 20–30 writing pieces from among the 100–130 submitted. Visual staff members also select 20–30 art and photography pieces from a large pool of submissions for publication. The *Collage* Advisory Board awards Creative Expression Awards to outstanding submissions from each of four areas: prose, poetry, art, and photography.

Copies of the fall issue of *Collage* are available in magazine racks in various locations around campus including Peck Hall, Todd Art, the Student Union, and the Martin Honors Building. [H](#)



Kyle Baker



Left: Megan Smith; Below: Leah Bailey



Above: *Bisti Badlands*; inset, *Ambre Rogue*

Left: *We Finna Put it on da Map* by Kyle Baker





Members of the fall *Collage* staff were: from left, Patrick Murphy, Aaron McMillian, A. J. Holmes, Nausheen Qureshi, Chloe Madigan, Luke Judkins, Melinda Lewis, Arianna Skyke, Sara Snoddy, Bronwyn Graves, Mary Vaughan; back, Kate Ruth, Matthew Olive, Jake Garrette, Rebecca Clippard, Richard Cox, Talea Rahman, Erin Gardner, Matthew Holder, J. T. Cobb, and Rachel Huttering. Not pictured were Sydney Smith, Laura Bryant, Aly Booker, Shelby Flatt, and Grace Hollowell.

Honors Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips meets with the fall *Scientia et Humanitas* staff members, from left, Jacquelyn Hayek, Capron Hedgepath, Emily McElroy, Morgan Hanson, and Dennis Wise. Staff members not pictured are Aaron Shapiro, Courtney Wright, Nausheen Qureshi, John Gleason, Sara Snoddy, and Kayla McCrary.







## Honors Dual Enrollment Classes

### Offered at Central Magnet School

In fall 2015, the Honors College began recruiting high-achieving students at Murfreesboro's Central Magnet School through a new dual enrollment (DE) biology course taught by Drew Sieg. CMS juniors and seniors enrolled in DE General Biology I (BIOL 1110) will receive Honors credit for the course if they attend MTSU, and regular college credit can also be transferred to other universities.

While MTSU offers several dual enrollment options for CMS students, this is the first honors-level course that has been offered to them. While lectures are held at CMS, students in General Biology (as well as an introductory chemistry course) come to MTSU's Science Building one Saturday per month to conduct labs and tour the facilities. This is a great way to promote the new Science Building to prospective students.

In the fall, there were 28 students divided into two sections taking Honors dual enrollment biology. This cohort constitutes one of the first two high school groups in the nation to pilot the "Small World Initiative," a

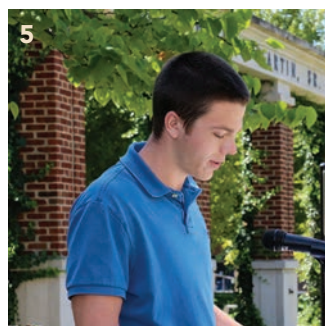
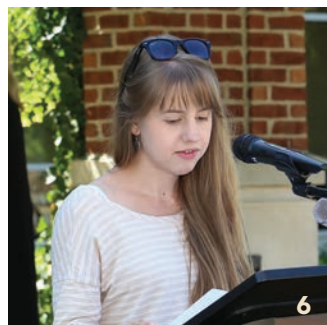
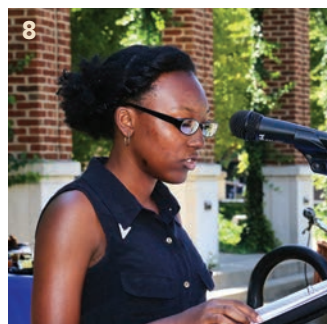
semester-long authentic research project where students attempt to isolate, culture, screen, and identify antibiotic-producing bacteria from soil samples. Sieg has previously run this initiative at the college level, but is now assessing its efficacy as a way to promote the sciences to a younger audience. CMS students began this project in January by taking a field trip to the Flat Rock Cedar Glades to collect soil samples for analysis.

Sieg, who never thought he would be teaching college-level courses to high school students, said it has been a learning experience for him and a great way to reassess the high school climate in order to have a better understanding of the expectations and needs of incoming college freshmen.

The dual enrollment program's expansion is part of MTSU's stated Quest for Student Success initiative and will likely continue to expand in the future. Many dual enrollment students have applied to MTSU, several of whom are also in consideration for the top Honors College scholarship, the Buchanan Fellowship. [H](#)



# Constitution Day



*Clockwise from top left:*

1. Honors Dean John R. Vile in the persona of James Madison
2. Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett
3. MTSU Vice Provost for Student Success Vincent Windrow
4. Voter registration
5. Transfer Fellow Zeke Grissom
6. Transfer Fellow Bonnie Walker
7. Buchanan Fellow Jonathan Ciecka
8. Transfer Fellow Aaliyah Yisrael

# 2015



# Fall 2016 Honors Interdisciplinary Seminars

## Your Brain on Books: Reading Fiction and the Science of Mind

UH 4600-001 • CRN: 83525  
MW 2:20 to 3:45 pm • HONR 218  
Dr. Maria Bachman

What happens when we read fiction? What does it really mean to “get lost” in a good book? Can reading novels rewire our brains?

In this course, we will investigate how recent developments in the sciences of mind—cognitive psychology, neuroscience, moral philosophy, anthropology, and sociology—can illuminate what happens when we read fiction, particularly novels.

We will employ the selected British novels from the 19th through 21st centuries as case studies to investigate such theoretical concepts as theory of mind, embodied cognition, mental time travel, and affective narratology. At the same time, we’ll explore some ideas about the evolutionary roots

of the arts in general and, more particularly, about narrative.


This interdisciplinary Honors seminar is intended to have broad, cross-disciplinary appeal. While *Your Brain on Books* will be of immediate interest to students in English studies, it will also have relevance for students in psychology, sociology, philosophy, education, and anthropology, as well as for students who simply like to read and are curious about the power of fiction and its wider role in human experience.


## Contemporary Middle East Culture

UH 4600-002 • CRN# 85225  
T 2:40 to 5:40 • HONR 218  
Dr. Allen Hibbard


In this course we will explore various ways in which the Middle East (particularly, but not exclusively, the Arab Middle East) has been represented in movies, novels,

anthropological studies, and the media. Our explorations will involve a critical examination of the ways images are formed and the cultural effects of various kinds of representations, taking us beyond images in the popular media.


We will consider representations created by “insiders” and “outsiders.” We will also think about how representations in literature, film, ethnography, and media differ—in construction, presentation, and reception. Among possible works we will examine are Gillo Pontecorvo’s marvelous film *The Battle of Algiers*, novels by Egyptian Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz, anthropologist Lila Abu Lughod’s *Veiled Sentiments*, and Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. If you don’t know these works, don’t worry. Our journey will expose us all to a whole host of new and exciting discoveries, sights, and perspectives. 



Ashley Corson received funding from the Honors College to present her research at the Fall 2015 National Meeting of the American Chemical Society in Boston.



Kendall Martin (Animal Science and Biology, 2014) accepts an award for receiving the top score among all Honors students on the 2014–15 Major Field Test.



Beth Chitwood (Music, 2015) received the top score among all Honors students on the 2014–15 General Education Test.





# HONORS ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Clockwise from top left:

Sept. 14 ice cream social

John Vile and Caleb Morris

Philip Phillips and Collin McDonald

Laura Bryant and Richard Cox

Laura Clippard and Jennifer Crow



Caleb Hough discusses his poster "Green Girls: Renewable Energy Activities for Science and Civil Engagement" with Jackie Eller, interim vice provost for research and dean of the College of Graduate Studies, at the Summer Research Celebration.





## Welcome Aboard!

Trisha Thompson Murphy, the assistant director of annual giving at Middle Tennessee State University, who oversees direct mail solicitation and stewardship appeals, student giving initiatives, online giving websites, and the MTSU Phonathon, has added another job responsibility. She is now working directly with the Honors College to contact alumni and solicit funds for Honors priorities.

Dean John R. Vile notes that having a designated foundation officer to help with fundraising has been a long-term goal of the college and that having Murphy in this job is especially appropriate because of her past experiences in the Honors College and because she volunteered for the job.

Murphy earned her bachelor's degree in English from MTSU. During her time in college, she contributed a poem to *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression* and developed a special love for the Honors College. She subsequently earned an M.Ed in Higher Education Administration and Supervision.

In addition to her work with the MTSU Foundation, Trisha is active within several community organizations, such as the MTSU Young Alumni Board, Leadership Rutherford, and the Rho Omicron chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi. She has served as a children's ministry teacher for grades K-2 and is currently a college ministry leader at New Vision Baptist Church.

Murphy resides in Rockvale, with her husband, Mark, who also works at MTSU within the Office of Admissions. She and Mark are expecting their first child in June 2016. [H](#)

## Honors College Hosts Shared Inquiry Workshop for **Great Books in Middle Tennessee** Program Volunteers



Shared Inquiry Workshop participants included, from left, Don Whitfield, Candice Moonshower, Brett Hudson, and Philip Phillips.

Donald Whitfield (vice president, Great Books Foundation, Chicago) returned to the MTSU Honors College to participate in the Fall 2015 Honors Lecture Series on veterans and to provide a special workshop on Shared Inquiry, a Socratic-style discussion method, for volunteers participating in the Great Books in Middle Tennessee Prisons program, directed by Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips. The program, which offers 10-week, non-credit, college-level classes, resumes at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution and DeBerry Special Needs Facility in Nashville in spring 2016. Volunteers who participated in the workshop included MTSU honors graduate Candice Moonshower (lecturer, English), Brett Hudson (lecturer, English), and Phillips. Other program volunteers include Amy Sayward (History) and resident honors faculty member, Shelley Thomas (Foreign Languages). The program is grateful to Honors Board of Visitors member Raiko Henderson for her generous support. [H](#)





# *true***BLUE** **WORLDVIEW**

by Chloe Madigan

*International students find  
a welcoming academic  
and social environment in  
MTSU's Honors College*

**A**s the world shrinks due to improved transportation systems, interconnected economies, and global communications, exposure to world cultures has become an even more important aspect of a well-rounded education.

The Honors College is committed not only to sending its American-born students abroad to study for part of their college experience, but also to recruiting international students to Murfreesboro and to the campus of MTSU to study.

The following stories spotlight just a few currently enrolled international students who have helped enlighten and enliven Honors classes with their unique global perspectives.



## Rising **STAR**

**Evidence Nwangwa** first arrived in the United States almost five years ago at the age of 13. When her plane landed in New York, she was shocked by an altogether unfamiliar phenomenon.

“It was snowing,” she said, laughing. “I had never experienced cold before, and I thought I would die from it.”

Before coming to America, Nwangwa lived with her biological mother and siblings in a small village in Nigeria. There, she was surrounded by a variety of cultures—Nigeria alone has more than 250 languages, and Nwangwa herself is bilingual.

Asked about her homeland, Nwangwa expressed her love of the way her home country prizes a high moral code and sense of community. She also highlights that their food came solely from within the community. Nwangwa explained that everything she and her family ate came either from their own backyard or from local markets, and that it was all very healthy.

In 2003, Nwangwa’s father became the first family member to leave Nigeria. He moved to the United States with the hope of eventually bringing his children to America as well so they would have more opportunities and a better future. Nwangwa and her siblings followed nearly eight years later, arriving in January 2011. The family settled in Maryville, in east Tennessee about 25 minutes south of Knoxville.

“The hardest part was adjusting to school in America,” she said.

Nwangwa enrolled in Maryville High School and found it to be very different from her experience in her home country. Notably, her high school in east Tennessee had two floors, and she was immediately lost, since no one had explained that the rooms were numbered according to the floor on which they were located. In Nigeria, she had attended school in a city where the same teacher taught every subject. Now in America, a different teacher instructed each subject. During the transition, she fell behind in math, but, never one to give up, she enlisted the help of a tutor.



photo: J Intinoli



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## Hard work is always worth it.

You get to be unique, and you have something you are proud of; if you work hard, you always reap benefits. The world's most successful people don't wake up in the morning and listen to negative comments; they look for opportunities and ways to stand out from the crowd.

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In her senior year, Nwangwa transferred to Heritage High School. There she enrolled in AP Biology. Her teacher inspired her to pursue a major in Biochemistry. She loved chemistry and did well in the course, so her degree seemed like the next logical step. When it came time to choose a college, however, Nwangwa ran into a slight problem.

"My father wanted me to go to the University of Tennessee [at Knoxville], but it was just too close to home for me," she said. "I did not want him visiting every weekend. I applied anyway, and just hoped I wouldn't be accepted."

Surprisingly, her wish came true. She was not accepted at UT but did receive letters of acceptance from the University of Tennessee–Chattanooga and Middle Tennessee State University. It was then just a matter of choosing which school had the better Biochemistry program. She made her decision quickly; Nwangwa says she took one look at the new Science Building at MTSU and was sold. Now that she is a student here, she says the Science Building is her favorite place on campus.

Nwangwa also decided she wanted to be part of the MTSU Honors College. Due to her ACT score, though, she was not immediately accepted. Undeterred, she worked extremely hard her first semester, achieved the necessary grades, and joined the Honors College in the spring of her freshman year.

"I knew I wanted to graduate college with honors," she said. "I had a 4.0 at the end of my first semester and started taking Honors classes in January."

Now a sophomore, Nwangwa continues to excel as an Honors student. She says she loves the community aspect and appreciates early registration. This past spring—her first semester in the Honors College—she was awarded a Bart McCash scholarship.

After graduating from MTSU, Nwangwa hopes to pursue a career with the United States Navy as a nuclear engineer and eventually earn advanced degrees in nuclear engineering. Her goal is to help design and build engines that power ships and submarines using nuclear propulsion.

As for her advice to other international students who might want to join the MTSU Honors College, Nwangwa said, "Hard work is always worth it. You get to be unique, and you have something you are proud of; if you work hard, you always reap benefits. The world's most successful people don't wake up in the morning and listen to negative comments; they look for opportunities and ways to stand out from the crowd."



photo: J. Intintoli





## *Girl on a* **MISSION**

“We actually ended up living in Guam for six months because I needed to be born. So that was kind of interesting.”

So begins **Pel “Bell” Doski’s** story of how her family came to live in the United States. Originally from Kurdistan—a cultural region that spans parts of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran—the family was forced to leave in the late 1990s following an increase of attacks and genocides against Kurdish people. Doski’s father, at the time a high-ranking government official, was given priority and was moved from the region to the United States by the government. However, they were forced to stop in Guam so that Doski’s mother could give birth.

The family stayed on the island for six months before finally arriving in New York. They later moved to Connecticut. Following the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the family felt they needed to relocate once again for their own safety. They chose to come to Nashville, which was known at the time as “Little Kurdistan” due to the large population of Kurdish immigrants and refugees located here. The family has lived in the area since 2002.

Doski attended John Overton High School in South Nashville and graduated in 2014. She says she always knew she wanted to go into medicine and that choosing MTSU was an easy decision for her.

“My older sister was already enrolled at MTSU, and I was very attracted to the Honors College,” she said. “I wanted a private college experience without having to pay private college tuition, and that’s exactly what the Honors College has given me.”

She says she also appreciates the student–teacher ratio and the fact that professors have taken an interest in her and ensuring her success; she said she often receives help without even having to ask.

Doski began her tenure at MTSU as a Nursing major but recently switched to Biology. Now in her second year at MTSU, she said she still wants to attend medical school but is also trying to decide what will be the best path for her in the long run. She is considering becoming a physician’s assistant or pursuing her medical degree in women’s health or epidemiology.

# Nontraditional **SUCCESS**

While some international students come to the Honors program at MTSU as part of a traditional learning path, that is not the case for all. Honors student **Mathias Dusabe**, for instance, is a 58-year-old nontraditional student from Rwanda.

A graduate of the University of Rwanda, Dusabe worked as an officer in the Rwandan Finance Ministry until September 1993, when he moved to Senegal, West Africa, to study at a university there. During his time away, members of the Rwandan Hutu ethnic majority brutally slaughtered more than 800,000 minority Tutsis in what came to be known as the Rwandan genocide.

Due to the violence and instability in the aftermath of the genocide, Dusabe could not return to his home country, so he immigrated to the United States in May 1997. He worked several jobs before finally settling into a job with a major local banking company, where he worked for 10 years. In 2010, though, he was laid off and decided it was time to return to school. However, because he could not access his records from Rwanda, he had no transcripts to show as proof that he had ever graduated from college. He was forced to get his GED before applying to Nashville State Community College. Finally, in 2014, he arrived at MTSU after being named a recipient of the Honors Transfer Fellowship.

Dusabe now splits his time between taking Honors courses on the campus of MTSU and his new job at World Relief, a nonprofit social services organization that specializes in refugee resettlement. He says he enjoys the MTSU Honors College for the fact that “anytime you need help, someone is there to help you.” He is pursuing a major in French and a minor in Social Welfare and hopes to continue his work with immigrants and refugees upon his graduation in 2016.

“I want to help people. It can be very difficult to transition to life in a new place, especially for older [people],” he said. “Particularly with the language barrier, [new immigrants and refugees] can become very isolated.” (Dusabe himself speaks five languages, including French, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Swahili, and English.)

This past summer, using a scholarship he received through the Honors College, Dusabe studied in Cannes, Normandy, a region of France. He hopes to defend his Honors thesis and graduate later this spring. His dream is to go to graduate school if he can receive scholarships.

“Going back to school at an older age is really inspiring; I would recommend that people not be scared to go back to school at an older age. It is never too late to learn.”





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I wanted a  
**private  
college  
experience  
without  
having to  
pay private  
college  
tuition**, and  
that's exactly  
what the Honors  
College has  
given me.

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If she does pursue a degree in medicine, Doski hopes to use her profession to help citizens of her home country by returning on mission trips. She has already visited Kurdistan three times. Other than her immediate family and one aunt and uncle, all of her blood relatives are in Kurdistan. Although she said she wishes to spend an extended amount of time in the region (perhaps as long as a year), she does not desire to live there permanently.

"I often feel as though I am too American for Kurdistan and too Kurdish for America," she confessed, revealing that, when she was growing up, she was often too afraid to defend her homeland. "Americans have a very negative perception of the Middle East, but I don't necessarily think it is a correct perception. They have a misconception about Kurdistan, especially, and often think it is just part of Iraq. Really, the differences between Kurdistan and Iraq are huge. Our culture is different; the way we practice religion is different. In Kurdistan, different religions coexist peacefully. Your neighbors might be Christian, Muslim, Jewish. . . . It's a huge melting pot of different religions."

Doski says she especially appreciates how many Kurdish traditions have been untainted by modern society and culture. The costumes and dances are the same as they have been for centuries, even when practiced by Kurdish immigrants and refugees in America. However, on the flip side, she said she loves the way Americans say "please" and "thank you" and how they hold the door open for one another.

"I came to realize that there isn't even a word for 'please' in my native language, which is kind of funny," she said.

An international student with international ambitions, Doski hopes to eventually be able to study abroad in South Korea. In the meantime, she is looking forward to continuing her studies in the Honors College. [H](#)

*[About the author: Chloe Madigan is a senior Buchanan Fellow majoring in English. She has held several Collage staff positions, including literature editor and editor-in-chief.]*





As evidenced  
by these GED  
students, not all  
Honors scholars  
follow a typical  
academic path



# Coming Full Circle

by Vicky Travis

**S**uccess. Defined for many, it is a linear path through high school, college, and into a good job. But, thankfully, success enjoys its own subjective definition. Two MTSU Honors College students found higher education in their 30s, after working hard, dealing with a few hard knocks, and, most importantly, focusing forward and staying driven. Both are now in the enviable position of having choices—choices about graduate studies, college-level teaching, or dream jobs.

The Honors College didn't shape the incredible work ethic that Lee Rumble and Lydia Harris each embody, but its focus on striving and critical thinking has led both to do research theses. Each will graduate with honors in May. And because of inspiring connections made with faculty and advisors, both have a desire and are motivated to help guide other students.

For very different reasons, Rumble and Harris dropped out of their high schools. Two decades later, the world is their oyster.

"In recent years, we've begun to realize that there are lots of students who appear outside the box of traditional recruiting—GED students, home-schooled students, transfer students, and others—and yet who are making tremendous contributions to our college and to the world," said Honors College Dean John Vile.

Rumble and Harris are two such students.

## Stepping Out on a Limb

Life's timing, twists, and turns can be unexpected, but serendipitous.

Lee Rumble commutes at least 30 minutes to MTSU and stays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. five days a week, spending the time either in class or studying in the Honors College building.

"If nothing else, the same skill set that I applied to working applies to my education," he said. "Sometimes I can't stand to look at a computer for one more minute, and I force myself. Until it's done, I can't walk away from it."

Rumble, 36, a certified arborist, will graduate in May with a Bachelor of Science in Plant and Soil Science. After graduation, he may choose to pursue a master's in botany or plant physiology, work at an arboretum, or return to his family's tree business, Community Tree Preservation. His pursuit of a master's would likely take him out of state, either to Indiana or possibly North Carolina, where his girlfriend's family lives.

"I have a really nice hand of cards, and now I have to decide how I will play them," Rumble said.

Life hasn't always been so full of great choices.

"I dropped out of high school because I didn't like being there," he said. "I did well, but I was a very hyperactive guy."

His grades at John Overton High School were fine, but after skipping a large number of classes,

he learned he wouldn't have enough credits to graduate with his class. He'd been working, so he dropped out at 18 and passed his GED the following week. As friends went off to college, he first became an assistant manager at H.G. Hill grocery store and then worked for Sam's Club until his dad's new lawn-cutting business started taking off and he joined in.

The family would soon change the business from lawns to trees—a pivot that would change Rumble's life direction.

From 2001 to 2010, he worked with his dad, younger brother, and two other owners to keep up with demand at their fast-growing business, often putting

arborist, which involved studying a thick book and passing a test.

Still working full time, Rumble took the next step at age 30, enrolling in one class at Nashville State Community College.

"I ate it up," he said. "I loved it. Whatever I had hated about school was gone. It was cool to study and get back in the flow."

Rumble jokes that it took four years to get a two-year degree, but get it he did; he obtained an associate's in Horticulture in May 2014.

A Nashville State professor noticed all of Rumble's A grades in Honors classes and suggested he apply for MTSU's Honors College transfer

"As a crew leader, I would work until the last log was on the truck," he said.

Once he started full time at MTSU, Rumble sustained that get-it-done attitude. He's become well known to Honors College advisors and staff, who see him every day in the study area.

"I don't consider myself overly educated, but I do consider myself more willing than others to put forth the work to do this," he said. "There might be times I don't understand something, but if I sit here for hours, I bet I will."

For his thesis, Rumble studied tree wounding in depth, comparing 17,000 wounds on 750 trees around middle Tennessee from December 2014 to August 2015 and compiling a massive amount of data sets.

"As laborious as it is, every time I start working on it, I smile a little bit," he said. "This is so cool. Every time I redo it, I get better at it, and I learn from it."

"What I found is there's not a particular student for the Honors College," he said of the elitist stigma the college sometimes gets brushed with. "I'm not that student."

"The positive attitudes of everybody here are just absolutely awesome. Success is finding a new trail if you get knocked off the one you're on . . . When you have no other options, you just have to find an option. Find another direction."

## Digging up the Future

Lydia Harris has a daily philosophy: strive to improve and keep putting one foot in front of the other, no matter the circumstances.

Harris left her California home on Christmas Day at age 15. Suffice it to say, it wasn't a safe place to be. She

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**Success is  
finding a  
new trail** if you  
get knocked off the  
one you're on.

*Lee Rumble*

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in 12-hour days estimating, leading crews, climbing, and cutting trees for residential and commercial clients.

"We had growing pains for 10 years," Rumble said. "It's one of the noisiest, most life-threatening jobs with no margin for error."

It was in 2010 that Rumble decided he wanted more than a work routine.

"I never read much as a child, but I was looking to change something," he said. He read motivational books like Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich*. He decided to become a certified

scholarship. He followed the advice. Some time later, Rumble received a call during class. It was Dean Vile. As Rumble paced the hallway, he learned he had won the scholarship. The news sealed his decision to continue his education at MTSU.

"It was life-changing in that I knew I had to enroll full time," he said.

While he's still an owner in the family tree business, his younger brother took over his role as lead climber, and the business now employs about a dozen people.





managed to finish that school year while staying with friends, but then dropped out before the following fall. A year later, she took the high school proficiency exam in California and went to computer programming technical school.

It was the 1990s, and her data entry job meant she could live on her own and buy her own furniture (prior to this, she had lived with friends or boyfriends). In many ways, these accomplishments at this juncture in her life were their own success story, but Harris wasn't done.

"I had always wanted to go to school," she said. "When my closest friends in California would talk about college classes, I felt completely left out and totally stupid. I just stayed quiet, smiled, and nodded."

In San Mateo, she planned on starting community college, but as hard luck would have it, she broke her collarbone in a rough fall at the pier and missed all the deadlines. So, she worked at Barnes & Noble, then married at 21, and had a son. The family moved to Oregon. Then, 12 years ago, just after her daughter was born, they moved to Tennessee for a job her husband acquired. The couple divorced in 2008, but Harris decided to stay in Tennessee.

She took a job at a civil engineering firm, first as a receptionist, but, always striving, she soon learned accounts payable and more. It was also where she met her future wife.

After a layoff resulting from the recession, she again worked at Barnes & Noble, this time in Murfreesboro. Willis Means, who retired recently from MTSU's College of Education, was a regular customer at the café there.

"He would come in with his wife, and they would sit and talk," Harris said. They got to know each other. One day, Means asked Harris what she



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## Making a difference.

### That's success to me.

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*Lydia Harris*

wanted to do with her life, and why was she working at Barnes & Noble.

"He told me I should be a teacher and talked to me about going to MTSU," she said.

After working through one more Christmas retail season, Harris was more than ready to go. It turned out, though, that MTSU wouldn't accept her high school proficiency exam, so she quickly took the GED and scored in the top one percent.

Before starting as a freshman in 2011 at age 32, she met her advisor, Dawn McCormack.

"She's amazing," Harris said. "I began to figure out how this school thing worked. This was my first college experience and I wanted to suck the marrow out of it."

Her life vision began to crystallize quickly with inspiration and

encouragement from Means, McCormack, and her anthropology advisor, Shannon Hodge.

"I want to be [Hodge] when I grow up," said a smiling Harris, now 37. "Making a difference—that's success to me. I knew what I wanted to do by the end of my first year."

That is, to teach and to advise college students. To that end, Harris is currently pursuing two degrees, one in History and one in Anthropology.

"History doesn't go far enough back. I appreciate both, but I love the why behind the why," she said. "That's where anthropology comes in."


Harris knew she wanted to study Celtic peoples (her heritage). Armed with an idea from Hodge, Harris divided her time between classes, travel abroad and research, and her wife and children, now young teens. Her thesis involved traveling to passage tombs in Ireland where she immersed herself in the culture and its people for weeks, then returning to design and build her own sacred space in her Murfreesboro backyard based on ideas of Irish passage-tomb building.

What drove her onward when life got tough? "Ultimately, my firm belief that everything happens for a reason and the love of friends," Harris said.

Her dream now is to pursue a Master's in Public History focusing on Museum Studies and, eventually, to do her doctorate work in Ireland.

Looking back, Harris reasons that if Means hadn't taken the time to encourage her, she probably wouldn't have started school in 2011.

She's glad it worked out as it did.

"If I'd waited, it would have been really late to start a career. But now, I'll start at 40 and end at 80," she said, laughing. "You can do that in anthropology." 

# An EXPERT Experience

by Gina K. Logue, Katie Porterfield, and Drew Ruble

*Honors College students  
enjoy smaller classes  
led by some of the  
brightest minds working  
on MTSU's faculty*

Exceptional students deserve exceptional faculty. As part of its commitment to quality—and its commitment to student success—MTSU's Honors College provides students the opportunity to interact with and be guided by some of the nation's leading educators and practitioners. Here are some examples of faculty members at MTSU achieving great works.

## *Back in the* GROOVE

**Vinyl makes a comeback, and an industry notices**

by Drew Ruble

Vinyl is back. According to Nielsen SoundScan retail figures, LP, or album, sales have leapt since 2013.

In the world of Recording Industry professor Paul “Doc Rock” Fischer, vinyl has never fallen out of style. A vinyl collector since age 12, Fischer started working in record stores as a teenager in the 1970s for \$2.10 an hour. Like all music lovers since then, Fischer adapted to format changes through the years, from records to tapes to CDs to digital downloads; but, unlike most, Fischer never chucked his vinyl while buying everything all over again on CDs.

About 15 years ago, Fischer began accumulating vinyl again in earnest, mainly by going to estate sales in and around Nashville. That his hobby evolved into his becoming a second-hand vinyl dealer, frequently traveling to record shows in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Louisville, Huntsville, Indianapolis, and Dayton, is evidence that the world has caught up with his obsession. But, so too has the industry.

“All of the major record labels are doing it now,” Fischer said, citing the proliferation of vinyl recordings by modern-day acts like Nashville-based pop star Jack White. “It is one of the few categories of physical media growing in sales of new music.”



Fischer, who has been cited in publications nationwide regarding the uptick in vinyl sales, points to several reasons for the trend. First and foremost is the important distinction that purchasing vinyl nowadays is wisely paired with a modern method of consuming music.

“If you buy new vinyl—the record companies are very smart—you also get the download code for all of the songs,” Fischer said. “So at no additional cost, you can get the digital version of it for your iPod or other mobile digital music player; you can listen to that wherever you go, but you can listen to the vinyl when you get home.”

Next, he says, is the younger generation’s growing appreciation for packaging and album art—an integral part of the music-buying experience that older generations were accustomed to (and now wax nostalgic about) but one that younger music fans never experienced.

“I know that when I was a kid, that was part of the thrill—digging into the liner notes and the additional art,” Fischer said. “Whole generations of kids who grew up with digital downloads and access to all of the music that they want, either free or streamed or downloaded, didn’t

even know what that experience was like until now. An LP with a big picture and maybe a gatefold and a booklet in the center—that adds a lot to the sitting and listening experience at home.”

Also key to the vinyl revival among younger listeners, according to Fischer, is that most of their parents tossed out their old record collections.

“So this is also a cultural, generational kind of thing,” he said. “Most moms and dads did not hang on to their vinyl. So it can be cool all over again. For the younger generation, it’s like they discovered it for themselves. It is of their generation.”

Fischer also believes the tactile nature of retrieving music from a vinyl record and a turntable with a needle is instrumental to the medium’s revival, especially in a time where a few taps on a smartphone can play music.

“When you push the button to start your CD player, you are not manipulating the laser. You are telling the machine to go to work,” Fischer said. “However, when you have that tone arm in your hand and you poise it over the entrance groove to the record and you let it drop, that’s a different kind of relationship with what you are listening to.”



MTSU associate professor Meredith Dye (Sociology and Anthropology) researches women serving life sentences in prison, a small population (5,000 in the United States) that receives little research attention. In 2010, she and her colleague, Professor Ron Aday, visited three Georgia prisons and surveyed 214 of the 300 women serving life sentences in the state. As far as the pair knows, their data represents the largest sample of its kind.

After working with Aday to gather data, Dye published “I Just Wanted to Die” in *Criminal Justice and Behavior Journal*. The article compared suicidal ideation among women before receiving life sentences and then while in prison. Another study, “The Rock I Cling To: Religion in the Lives of Life-Sentenced Women,” was cowritten for the *Prison Journal*.

photo: J. Intintoli

## Working BEHIND BARS

**Meredith Dye studies an  
oft-ignored female population**

by Katie Porterfield

Her findings so far, Dye explains, are myth-breaking in that they don't fit most preexisting perceptions of who the women serving life sentences really are. Though Dye readily cites useful and interesting percentages about the women she surveyed, she's quick to point out that her research isn't just about crunching numbers. It's also about telling the stories of incarcerated women “nobody seems to care about.”

“One thing that stands out right away when you meet these women is that they're like your mom and your grandma,” Dye said. “They are aging. They have wheelchairs, walkers, white hair, and health problems associated with aging. Or they are middle-aged women who never saw themselves ending up in prison, much less serving a life sentence.”





## A Proper BURIAL

**Shannon Hodge and her archaeology students help the Nashville Zoo reinter the human remains of its plantation past**

by Gina K. Logue

In the pre-industrial South, cotton was king and Africans brought here against their will labored long hours to pick it. Now, as a result of what expert bio-archaeologist and MTSU associate professor of Anthropology Shannon Hodge and her crew recently accomplished at a Nashville construction site, 20 slaves whose eternal slumber was to be disrupted by modern commercial development have new resting places.

The bodies of nine adults and 11 children were recently reinterred on the site of the Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo in preparation for the construction of an entrance kiosk near the original burial grounds. A plaque at the site of the new cemetery reads, “Here lie 20 unknown individuals who lived and worked on this property, reinterred with reverence at this site on the 12th day of June 2014.”

Hodge’s now-colleague at MTSU, Kevin Smith, first began investigating the project while a graduate student at Vanderbilt University. The zoo, however, did not begin making plans to relocate the cemetery until 2013. That’s when Hodge was called in to handle the delicate work. Hodge performed the DNA analysis on the remains, but her work took her much deeper, so to speak, and offered a unique experience for her student researchers, who were involved in every aspect of the process with her—from excavating, to washing, to inventorying, and DNA testing the remains.

The Grassmere Farm, originally willed to the Children’s Museum of Nashville to educate people about animals, was passed down through five generations of family ownership. It includes a house built in 1810, a livestock barn, family gardens, outbuildings, and cemeteries. A relatively modest-size operation, census records dating between 1830 and 1860 show that there was an average of 30 to 35 enslaved workers living and working on the property.

The infants’ and children’s bodies that were found were not suitable for testing, but much data was gleaned from the adults’ remains. Hodge said the crew was able to determine age, gender, and, to a degree, the injuries and illnesses they had suffered.

Following the lab analysis, the bodies were reinterred with the greatest of care and concern for the lives and souls that once inhabited them.

“It was a real beginning-to-end experience for the students,” Hodge said.

JoBeth Sorensen, who has graduated and now lives in Clarksville, helped with the inventory, which included flat underground stones that might have been used to mark the original graves. The stones were placed with the remains at graves in the new cemetery.

“It brings tears to my eyes every time I think of the project,” she said. “A piece of me and my heart will always rest with those people.” [H](#)

# Seven Honors Faculty Members Receive Foundation Awards

Seven current Honors faculty members, including Honors Associate Dean **Philip E. Phillips**, were among the recipients of MTSU Foundation awards at the Fall General Faculty Meeting Aug. 21, 2015.

Phillips (*English*) received a Distinguished Research Award for his extensive research in medieval studies, Milton, and antebellum American literature. He has numerous recent publications on Boethius—*A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages*, *Prison Narratives from Boethius to Zana*, and the forthcoming *Vernacular Traditions of Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy*—and on Edgar Allan Poe. The president of the Poe Studies Association, he organized the “SymPOEsium on Place” held at the Martin Honors Building and the Walker Library in spring 2015. Phillips won the award previously for 2007–08.



philosophical works can aid in their efforts to lead meaningful lives.

**Marsha Barsky** (*Theatre and Dance*) was selected to receive an Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award. A teaching artist who is artistic director of a Nashville-based dance group, Barsky uses cutting-edge technology, such as online dance portfolios that utilize social media and real-time movement assessment and feedback, to enhance the learning process.



**Kim Sadler** (*Biology*), who received an Outstanding Public Service Award, serves as an MTSU Science Olympiad coordinator, is an Expanding Your Horizons mentor, conducts workshops for the Tennessee Science Teachers Association conference, and operates a microscope and materials loan program. In addition, she consults



with area K–12 schools about native plant gardens, pest removal, conservation, and ecology.

**Nancy Goldberg** (*Foreign Languages and Literatures*) won a Distinguished Research Award for her research on the interconnectedness of French politics and literature in the early 20th century. She has published books, book chapters, and numerous peer-reviewed articles in journals in France, Italy, England, Chile, Australia, and the United States.



**Tammy Melton** (*Chemistry*), who was selected for a Special Projects Award, received \$10,000 for an MTSU Chemistry Scholarship Tournament. The annual competition for area high school seniors will select three rising freshmen electing to study chemistry or biochemistry to receive scholarships.



**Jason Pettigrew** (*Foreign Languages and Literatures*) won an Outstanding Teacher Award. A member of the MTSU faculty since 2011, Pettigrew endeavors to create a low-anxiety classroom so that students are comfortable experimenting with Spanish. He also integrates culture into his classes so that students not only communicate competently but also gain a broadened perspective and cultural understanding.

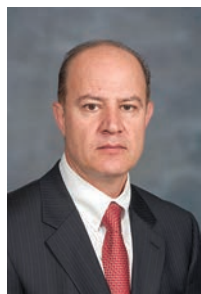


**Mary Magada-Ward** (*Philosophy*) received recognition for Outstanding Teaching in General Education. The major field test, advising, and general education assessment coordinator for the Department of Philosophy, Magada-Ward seeks to guide her students to the discovery that canonical





# In Memoriam: Katherine Elaine Royal



Former Honors faculty member **Ahad Nasab** (Engineering Technology) also received an Outstanding Teaching Award. Nasab oversees the Mechatronics Engineering program and is passionate about student advising and helping

students see the value and future application of knowledge.

**Carroll Van West** (History/Center for Historic Preservation), a friend of the Honors College, received the coveted Career Achievement Award. In addition to directing Honors theses, he has directed approximately 100



M.A. history theses and 14 doctoral dissertations. He has served as an editor and as a reviewer of publications and has an impressive body of work in the field of history. He has directed hundreds of historic preservation projects and is the state historian of

Tennessee. He is also director for the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area and is co-chair of the Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission. [H](#)

**Katherine Elaine Chavers Good Royal** died at her home in Murfreesboro, Sunday, July 26, at the age of 70.

A professor emeritus of the MTSU Psychology Department, Dr. Royal taught from 1978 to 2010. The Indianapolis, native was a graduate of Purdue University and a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

Dr. Royal helped to establish the Lawrence Good Honors Scholarship in memory of her first husband who was a Psychology professor at MTSU in the 1970s.

Survivors include her niece, Lisa Ambrosio; nephew, David Chavers; stepchildren, Michael Royal, Barry Royal (Sherry), Elyse Royal Johnson (Steve); 12 step-grandchildren; sister-in-law, Bernice Chavers; and step-daughter-in-law, Anna Emory-Royal.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Matthew Royal; stepson, Wade Royal; parents, George and Mary Katherine Hester Chavers; and brother Richard Chavers. [H](#)



In his role as President of the Poe Studies Association (PSA), Honors College Associate Dean Philip Edward Phillips traveled to Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, on Dec. 2, 2015, to present the 2015 PSA Honorary Membership Award plaque to Harry Lee Poe, who is Charles Colson University Professor of Faith and Culture at Union. PSA Honorary Membership is the highest honor given by the Executive Committee of the Poe Studies Association to its members in recognition of significant and sustained contributions to the organization and to Poe studies. Professor Poe has visited the MTSU Honors College twice recently, to participate in the Spring 2013 Honors Lecture Series on Innovation and Design and to speak on Poe and the Universe as part of the Spring 2015 SymPOEsius on Place hosted by the University Honors College and the Walker Library.

Photo by Emily Littleton

# Book's Wisdom Benefits Students

by Jimmy Hart

While growing up in rural Alabama, **Cornelia Wills** collected plenty of nuggets of wisdom from her mother, Rosa.

Rosa Lee Wills "spoke these parables daily, and many times throughout the day, to empower us with wisdom or teach a lesson to her children or those around her," her daughter recalls. Now the director of student success within MTSU's University College and a member of the Honors faculty, Cornelia Wills is offering that wisdom to the students she counsels and others through her new book, *Mama Said: A Word to the Wise Is Sufficient*.

The 114-page book published in 2013 is a "whimsical, yet wisdom-filled collection of 101 of my mother's favorite proverbial sayings, parables, quotes, and expressions for successful everyday living," Wills said. "When applied, it helps to effectively navigate life. It deals with 'takers' and other issues such as relationships, friendship, trust, morals, finances, time management, procrastination, honesty, and humbleness, just to name a few."

The book includes both familiar and lesser-known maxims which may pique the interest of readers. Well-known sayings such as "a penny saved is a penny earned" and "robbing Peter to pay Paul" appear alongside aphorisms like "it'll never be seen on a galloping horse" or "an empty wagon makes a lot of noise."

"Each saying is followed by an interpretation of its meaning based on the context in which it was said. It is written for readers of all ages," Wills said. "Some of the sayings are serious and some are funny. Nevertheless, there is much wisdom in them all."

Last year, Wills launched a philanthropic initiative to give a portion of the proceeds from her book back to help MTSU students in need through the University's student micro-grant program, which supports students who have emergency situations. Wills, who launched the effort in 2015 during a book signing at MTSU's annual Unity Luncheon and had a second signing at Phillips Bookstore

during Homecoming week, has already contributed toward the micro-grant fund.

Under MTSU's micro-grant program, grants up to \$250 are available to qualified undergraduate, graduate, and international students. The grant does not have to be repaid; however, a student may receive it only once during their tenure at MTSU. To be eligible, students must be in academic good standing with a minimum 2.0 GPA at the time of the request.

Wills, who has a doctorate in Educational Administration, said she has been developing tools over the past


three years to enhance student success and to teach students how to succeed, not only in college but in life. It is work that plays to her strengths, with Wills describing herself as one who has "always possessed the gift of encouragement" and saying she has come to realize "that helping others to be successful was an innate passion."

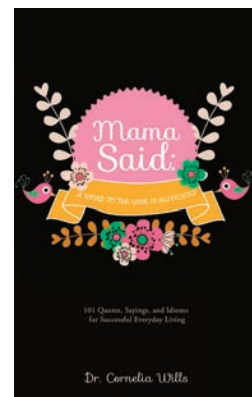
"We should remember that success is not always measured in dollars and cents. It goes much deeper," she said. "I want to pass on the wisdom from lessons learned that has helped me tremendously through the years

to either avoid or successfully navigate some of the pitfalls of life. I am anxious to share this wisdom with others."

For more information about *Mama Said*, contact Wills at 615-473-8924 or [cwillscw1@gmail.com](mailto:cwillscw1@gmail.com).

To learn more about the University's emergency micro-grant fund, established last year, visit [mtsu.edu/studentsuccess/crisis-aid.php](http://mtsu.edu/studentsuccess/crisis-aid.php).

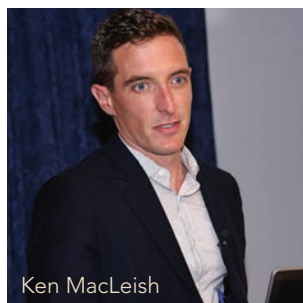
*Editor's Note: Wills reported Nov. 3 that she had received the following email: "I have a hold on my account and have to pay \$165. I really need to pay this or I will not be able to register for my classes for next semester." Wills said, "The student was able to get the micro-grant. This put an exclamation point behind using my Mama Said book to benefit students and the micro-grant fund."* 







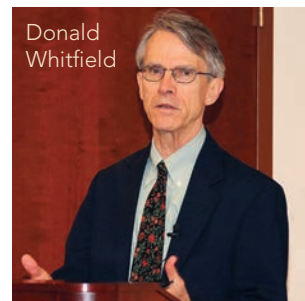
Matt Brown



Ken MacLeish



Lt. Gen. Keith Huber, Hilary Miller, Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder, Philip E. Phillips

David  
FooteDonald  
Whitfield

Louis Kyriakoudes

Jimmie  
Cain

## MTSU Honors Lecture Series Focuses on Veterans

The opening of the MTSU Veterans and Military Family Center served as the inspiration behind the theme for the fall Honors Lecture Series "Veterans."

Philip E. Phillips, Honors College associate dean, planned and co-hosted the series with Hilary Miller, director of the Veterans and Military Family Center. The series began Monday, Aug. 24, with the course introduction by Phillips. The Aug. 31 lecture, "How to Get Involved, Contribute to the Need," was presented by Miller.

The commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services, Many-Bears Grinder, lectured on "Women in Service" and met with students informally at the Honors Ice Cream Social held afterward on Sept. 14. Ken MacLeish of the Center for Medicine, Health, and Society at Vanderbilt University delivered the Sept. 21 lecture titled "Imagining Military Suicide." Donald Whitfield of the Great Books Foundation presented "Talking Service: A Reading and Discussion Program for Veterans" Sept. 28.

MTSU English lecturer Matt Brown spoke on "Writers Corps" Oct. 5, and Lt. Gen. (US Army, Ret.) Keith Huber of the MTSU Veterans and Military Family Center lectured on "Who Are Our Veterans and Student Veterans?" Oct. 19. Louis Kyriakoudes, director of the Albert Gore Research Center, spoke on "Veterans and the MTSU Oral History Project" Oct. 26. David Foote, associate dean of the College of Business, lectured on "Veterans in Higher Ed: Competing Effects of Military Training" Nov. 2, and English professor Jimmie Cain spoke on "The Combat Veteran as a Monstrous Other" Nov. 16.

The long-running lecture series features focused topics and presenters from multiple disciplines on and off campus. It not only is a required class (UH 3000) for Honors College students, but also is free and open to the public. Focusing on a primary theme, weekly presenters provide perspective based on their own field of study and research.

For more information about the lecture series or Honors College, call 615-898-2152. [H](#)

# Science, Society, and Superheroes

by Judith Iriarte-Gross | Gross is a professor of Chemistry and a member of the Honors faculty.

Is Harry Potter's invisibility cloak invisible? Is Magneto magnetic? May the Force be with you? Do Wonder Woman's bullet-deflecting bracelets deflect bullets? Does Superman save the planet? Can one boldly go where no man has gone before? These are some of the questions asked in the Honors physical science course titled Science, Society, and Superheroes, a specific theme offered under the Contemporary Issues in Science (Honors PSCI 1130/1131) umbrella.

Martha Weller and I developed Contemporary Issues in Science and its accompanying activity course in 2007–08 as an introductory level physical science course. PSCI 1130/1131 engages students through the application of scientific principles and concepts to problems of current interest to society such as clean water resources, energy and its impact on the environment, or policy regarding controversial topics. Weller and I are both SENCER (Science Education for New Civic Engagement and Responsibilities) Fellows and are familiar with SENCER ideals and practices ([sencer.net](http://sencer.net)). In Contemporary Issues of Science, students apply the "science of learning to the learning of science."

In Science, Society, and Superheroes, students focus on fundamental physical science topics and the impact of physical science on everyday life. These topics might include sustainability and its impact on our community and state, as well as on national and global communities. Other topics might include green chemistry, air pollution, global climate change, fossil fuels, alternative energy sources, nuclear power, and technology. David Burns, SENCER's principal investigator and one of its founders, states that teaching STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) "through complex, capacious, often unresolved problems of civic consequence" broadens the impact of learning from the classroom to society. Both SENCER faculty and students report that the



Sam Tagger, center, and Chase Bobier demonstrate to Dean John Vile their research related to Superman.

SENCER approach makes science more real, accessible, useful, and civically important to them.

Science, Society, and Superheroes students use a variety of pedagogical techniques to learn and apply physical science. Students participate in group discussions and problem-solving and also work together in teams to conduct applied laboratory activities. For example, "Going Green" illustrates the greenhouse effect where students measure the temperature of a planet's atmosphere (in a Mason jar) after adding excess carbon dioxide to it. Another lab activity is "How Low Can You Go?" where students explore phase changes of water while listening to the song "Ice Ice Baby." Students collaborate on a specific case study, which involves data collection and analysis as well as writing reports and making presentations to the class. Students review how popular media communicates science to its audience such as the popular *Avengers* movies or television shows such as *Star Trek*.

*continued on page 54*



## Iriarte-Gross Receives ACS Award

Judith Iriarte-Gross was selected as the 2015 recipient of the E. Ann Nalley Southeast Region Award for Volunteer Service to the American Chemical Society.

Michael L. Mohler, chair of the Awards Committee for the 2015 joint Southeast and Southwest Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society (SERMACS-SWRM), informed Iriarte-Gross of her selection in October.

She attended the 2015 SERMACS-SWRM Awards Luncheon in Memphis on Nov. 6, at the Cook Convention Center where she received the award, which consists of \$1,000 and a memorial plaque recognizing her accomplishment.

Award namesake Ann Nalley is a professor of Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Engineering at Cameron University. She is the vice president of the Malta Conferences Foundation and served as the president of the American Chemical Society in 2006. She was the fifth woman in history to serve in that position.

Nalley has given more than 500 presentations on chemistry and professionalism and has spoken in more than 25 foreign countries. She also served as president of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi from 1996–98 and as a member of its Board of Directors for 21 years.

In 2013, Iriarte-Gross received the President's Silver Column Award from MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee in recognition of 18 years as a passionate advocate for science as a career possibility for girls and young women.

In 2011, she was invited to attend the White House Champions of Change event, which saluted efforts to recruit and retain girls and women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. She received the invitation in recognition of her role as director of the Girls Raised in Tennessee Science (GRITS) Collaborative. GRITS is a statewide organization and part of the National Girls Collaborative Project. 





Members of the 2015-16 Honors Council include (front, from left) John R. Vile, Donald Snead, Judith Iriarte-Gross, Leigh Stanfield, and Craig Rice; chair, (second row) Rebecca Seipelt-Thiemann, Collin McDonald, Sanjay Asthana; (third row) Roger Heinrich, Tony Eff; (back) Amy Kaufman, John Mullane, and Janis Brickley.



## 2015-16 Honors Council

### SUPERHEROES *continued from page 52*

In addition to learning concepts in physical science, students also learn about career paths of scientists. In Science, Society, and Superheroes, myths are busted. Scientists don't always wear white lab coats. Scientists do not spend their days mixing up chemicals that bubble or explode. I share with my students about my encounter with Jaws as an FDA chemist, and how I analyzed shark for mercury levels. I also describe how my team in the plastics industry developed a brass-colored plastic lens for motion detectors. Students learn that there is more to science than what is often shown in the popular media.

They examine the science behind Spiderman's web and learn about its amazing properties. They learn about gamma rays and the Incredible Hulk and why he turns green. Holograms and transporters are favorite topics of students who are into technology. Harry Potter fans learn that NASA is studying the invisibility cloak as adaptive camouflage.

However, there is more to becoming an expert in Science, Society, and Superheroes. Students organize a symposium in order to present their research. The marketing team promotes the event to campus and the community. The space team works with the venue on setup and utilities needed by the presenters. The proposal team collects information and prepares a budget in order to request funds for supplies from the Honors dean.

Finally, because this class is an Experiential Learning (EXL) class, the giving back team identifies and organizes an activity, which will "give back" to the campus community. Giving back activities have included collecting pennies for Pur to provide clean water supplies to those who need it, writing letters to soldiers, and collecting food for the campus food pantry. In Science, Society, and Superheroes, students learn the value of science and its connection to real-world civic issues. [H](#)



# ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Alumni  
and  
Friends



Dean John R. Vile gives a tour to Honors College visitors from Chattanooga State Community College.



Jennifer Johnson (Psychology, 2012) dropped by to visit Philip E. Phillips and other members of the Honors staff in December. Johnson is completing requirements for an M.Ed. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Vanderbilt this spring.



Honors College Board of Visitors members, from left, Gordon Bell and Don Midgett and spouses, Carolyn Midgett and Sara Bell, at the Homecoming parade.



State Rep. Judd Matheny of the 47th District and Sam T. Harper, treasurer of JUDD PAC, visit with Dean John R. Vile.



Rebecca Rutherford, dean of the Honors College at Kennesaw State University, tours the MTSU Martin Honors Building with Dean John R. Vile.



# Laying a FOUNDATION

*Howard Wall has spent his professional life building Murfreesboro; now he's building a legacy of giving at MTSU*

by Patsy B. Weiler

Howard Wall and Middle Tennessee State University are lifelong friends.

True Blue buddies.

They have a long history together—more than 70 years of memories and milestones.

The successful real estate agent and developer earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1963 from MTSU. In 1998, he was honored by the University with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

Wall's latest connection with the University is serving as a member of the Honors College Board of Visitors.

"I'm just so pleased to be on this board," Wall said. "The students in the Honors College can go nose-to-nose with anyone, anywhere. They are the best of the best, and it is important to support them."

It is the latest chapter in the story of his relationship with the University, and he is just as engaged as when it all began.



## Homegrown Success Story

“MTSU has always been there, a part of my life,” said Wall, reflecting on his lifetime relationship with the University while sitting in the conference room of Coldwell Banker Snow and Wall, Barnes Realty, a company he and his wife and business partner Sally built together.

Wall, known to many by his childhood nickname “Poochie,” recalls traveling the 7 miles along Halls Hill Pike, the distance from the family farm to town, and passing the college. It was a familiar landmark sitting on the corner of Greenland Drive (the name to which Halls Hill Pike changed) and Tennessee Boulevard, now called Middle Tennessee Boulevard.

Although Wall began his love of learning under the roof of a rural, four-room school located in Halls Hill-Sharpville community, his elementary education became entwined with the college at an early age. During the latter part of his third-grade year, Wall and his late brother, Joe, transferred to the historic Training School (now Homer Pittard Campus School). The school’s name at the time referenced its role in providing classroom training for future educators attending MTSU—a practice which continues today.

“My aunt, Jessie Wall Farmer, knew the principal at the Training School. We transferred during the last few weeks of the year to see if we were on the same academic level with the other students. I never missed a lick. And, getting taught by those pretty coeds from the college was not so bad either,” Wall said good-naturedly, with a laugh that could fill a room. The jokes, memories, and stories he shares

reveal a love for fun, people, a little mischief, and, mostly, life in general.

The intrinsic value of hard work and education was instilled in Wall and his siblings by their mother, Myrtle Dye Wall.

Known for her indomitable spirit, Myrtle moved to middle Tennessee from West Virginia as a young woman in the 1920s. She initially came to Murfreesboro to work in the county’s fledgling public health department and, according to her

**One of the reasons I financially support MTSU—other than thinking it is just the right thing to do to give back to my community—is that I know a lot of those kids there are having to work their way through school.**

son, wasn’t daunted when more than once she ended up riding horseback to get to remote households. She also persevered following the untimely death of her husband. In the 1950s, the young widow and her sons relocated from the family farm to the downtown community of Murfreesboro. She continued her work in the medical field and became a well-loved head nurse at the former Rutherford Hospital.

Eventually, her sons would also work at the hospital. The lawn mowing was done by Wall’s oldest brother, Pat—now better known to most as Dr. Hershel “Pat” Wall, a retired pediatrician and chancellor emeritus of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis (he completed his undergraduate studies at MTSU in 1957). Both Pat and Howard worked in the laboratory, where they washed many, many test tubes. After high school, Howard became a certified technician, and often pulled the all-night weekend shifts while a college student.

“One of the reasons I financially support MTSU—other than thinking it is just the right thing to do to give back to my community—is that I know a lot of those kids there are having to work their way through school,” Wall said.

Of course, Wall’s memories of MTSU don’t all revolve around work. In the years prior to attending college, Wall found plenty of time to have fun on campus. Following the family’s move to downtown Murfreesboro, the nearby university became the stage for many of his youthful adventures.

“(MTSU) was a good environment,” Wall recalled. “In the basement of the boys’ dorm was a pool table, and they would let me come down there and play.”

Two indelible first experiences associated with MTSU share top billing as unforgettable moments in Wall’s life—taking his first airplane ride and seeing his first football game.

“Back in the day when H. Miller Lanier was head of the aerospace program, there was a runway located

where Rutherford Boulevard is now,” Wall said. “A neighbor and student pilot, Randall Stegall, took my brother and me for a ride in a little Piper Cub plane. I’ve never forgotten it.”

Likewise, he has never forgotten getting to witness his first Blue Raider kickoff and game. Of course, thanks to a little creative knowhow, Wall also got to enjoy several other gridiron contests for free in his early years.

“As a kid, I knew the location of a loose board in the fence around the football field near where a bush was growing and could squeeze through and get in to watch the game,” Wall said with a smile, recalling his mischievous actions. “I think the coaches probably knew it was happening, but they never said anything.”

## *Footprints in the 'Boro*

In the years since then, Wall has expanded his stomping grounds a bit. He has left his footprint as a developer throughout middle Tennessee on the grounds of various residential and commercial developments. From the Kensington subdivision in southeast Murfreesboro, to the 87-acre Smyrna Commons site near Nissan North America, to being involved in the early land acquisition of the Gateway area of Murfreesboro, Wall has played a role in it all. Nearly 2,000 home lots have gone on the market under his watchful eye.

Now in his mid-70s, Wall continues to work as a real estate agent and developer.

“I like being active,” he said. “I’ve still got a pretty good eye for kicking a clod of dirt around and seeing the potential in a piece of land.”

Seeing the potential in people is also something in which he strongly believes, and he evidences this through his generous philanthropy to

**I love going to our meetings and learning about these outstanding students.**

***They will become the leaders of the future.***

numerous local causes. For a quarter century, he has been a patron of Black Fox Elementary School, where the media center is named for his and Sally’s many gifts for the children. Those years were also spent helping the Boys and Girls Club of Middle Tennessee and The Good Shepherd Children’s Home. In the early 1990s, he spearheaded the opening of a local, year-round office of the Republican Party on the historic courthouse square and had a long tenure as the Rutherford County party chairman.

Meanwhile, Wall’s philanthropy and service to MTSU is vast.

The athletic staff’s past kindness to a neighborhood youngster eventually reaped a bountiful return when, in 2005, Wall and his wife donated \$10,000 toward the exhibit area of the Rose and Emmett Kennon Sports Hall of Fame. Later, they committed \$100,000 toward the completion of the baseball program’s Reese Smith Jr. Field and stadium. A tall section of the facility’s wall behind center field reads “The Howard and Sally Wall,” in a slightly tongue-in-cheek

manner that captures Wall’s famous sense of humor while honoring the family’s gift.


The Honors College is where Wall is making his latest mark. He offers enthusiastic encouragement for the scholars in the college and views his recent contributions and participation as a board member as investments in the future.

John R. Vile, dean of the Honors College, said he was drawn to Wall because of Wall’s sincerity and the depth of commitment they both share for MTSU, as well as their shared affinity for a good story.

“Howard’s generosity has been especially appreciated because it flows so clearly from his genuine interest in our students and their achievements,” Vile said. “Howard and his wife Sally have deep roots in this community and understand the degree to which its future is tied to that of our graduates.”

In his typical candid manner, Wall said he wasn’t exactly sure what to expect the first time he heard students address the board at the Board of Visitors meeting, wondering if they would solely be focused on academics.

He was pleasantly surprised.

“It was beyond my expectations,” Wall said. “These students are well-rounded, work hard, and have many interests, including athletics. I was impressed with how articulate and well-spoken these young adults are. They come from diverse backgrounds, and several are fluent in foreign languages. I love going to our meetings and learning about these outstanding students. They will become the leaders of the future. I’m very interested in the Honors College program.” 



# Honors College Board of Visitors Meets

The Honors Board of Visitors held its annual meeting in the amphitheater of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building on Oct. 2, 2015, the day before Homecoming. Ten board members attended, including three former Honors deans and directors—June McCash, Ron Messier, and Phil Mathis—as well as Judge Don Ash, Gordon Bell, Debra Hopkins, Raiko Henderson, Don Midgett, Howard Wall, and Don Witherspoon.

The meeting began with a report on the state of the Honors College from Dean John R. Vile. He noted the college was experiencing a second year of growth in enrollment and in the number of Honors theses (63 over the past year) as well as in the number of individuals receiving grants and studying abroad. Events over the past year included the dedication of the June McCash Room on the first floor of the Honors College and the unveiling of the Buchanan bust at the annual initiation of new Buchanan Fellows.

Mark Byrnes, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, gave an update about developments and special events in his college. He was joined by Matthew Hibdon, an Honors graduate who is one of the new advisors the college has hired as part of the University's student success initiatives.



Student Presenters: Caitlin Henderson, Tandra Martin, Leigh Stanfield, Sam Hulsey, and Trevor Ball

Six Honors students, Leigh Stanfield, Trevor Ball, Caitlin Henderson, Sam Hulsey, Logan Whiles, and Tandra Martin, detailed some of the experiences they have had as part of the Honors College and joined board members for lunch on the second floor of the Honors College.

The meeting concluded with a report by Trisha Murphy from the Development Office and a short business meeting.

A number of board members joined members of the Honors College staff again the next day at the Homecoming parade and the lunch that followed.

This is the last year of the three-year term for the board members, and those serving were asked to indicate whether they wanted to continue to serve and whether they had any recommendations of other individuals who might be interested in so doing.

Board member contributions have been the chief outside source of support for students to attend conferences, study abroad, and engage in other scholarly activities, Vile noted. He further observed that the student presentations are always the highlight of the meeting and said, "Our students are doing amazing things, and it is a privilege to highlight their achievements to our primary supporters and donors." [H](#)

Philip Mathis,  
June McCash,  
Ron Messier,  
John R. Vile,  
Raiko Henderson,  
Don Midgett,  
Don Witherspoon,  
Gordon Bell,  
Debra Hopkins,  
Howard Wall,  
Don Ash, and  
Philip Phillips







# HONORS COLLEGE PREPARED SLEDGE FOR ELECTED OFFICE

by Colby Sledge  
*Colby (Mass Communication, 2007)  
represents District 17 on Nashville's  
Metro Council. He works as an  
account supervisor at MP&F Public  
Relations in Nashville.*

During my time at MTSU, some of my most introspective moments on campus occurred in the student commons of the Honors College. As a staff writer for *The Tennessean* before I had graduated or even defended my Honors thesis, I was often rushing from one end of campus to the other while on the phone with sources, working to make the most of the opportunity that my childhood newspaper had given me.

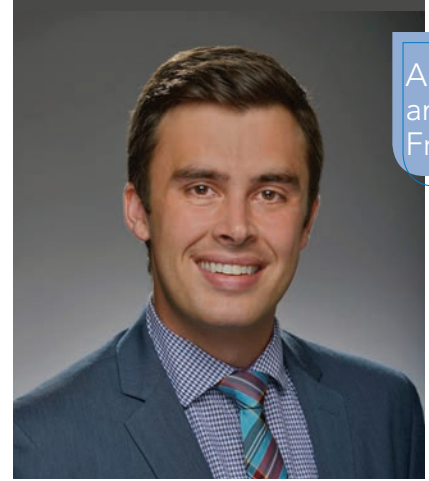


But when I entered the doors of the Honors College, I found peace. The Honors College environment gave me space to rest, to think about the events of the day, and to untangle the jumble of facts and quotes before me. It embodied the space the Honors College provided me to match my coursework to my pursuits as I considered how I could best impact my environment and my peers.

Learning to create a space for critical thought helped me attain elected office, which I achieved in September when I was voted into Nashville's Metro Council as its youngest member. The district I serve is a vibrant, exciting area of the city filled with equally diverse opportunities and challenges: It is experiencing some of the largest housing and job growth in a rapidly changing city, but also

has one of the city's lowest median household incomes. The district contains great neighborhoods with a mix of longtime Nashvillians and newcomers, but both groups are struggling to find housing that fits their needs and their budgets.

Thankfully, the Honors College has provided me the foundation to consider these issues and work through challenges that sometimes involve conflicting views and necessarily unique solutions. Producing and defending my thesis taught me the value of matching academic work with real-world examples and applications, as I studied the growth of the evangelical church in Central Mexico. Today, I'm able to consider policy regarding urban planning, housing affordability, and historic preservation by applying the needs and desires



of my district to best practices—and, when necessary, challenging and adapting those practices to better serve my constituents.

And the Honors College curriculum continues to speak to issues facing our civic leaders, including our response to terrorism, as a speaker series examined in my time on campus. The Honors College is training civic leaders to discuss, address, and ultimately overcome the challenges facing us.

As the University Honors College continues to guide us, I hope we, as alumni, will take our charge seriously as leaders in our communities and our chosen fields. The opportunity is there; it's up to us to take hold of it and lead. [H](#)



(left) Colby Sledge and his wife, Lindsey Harris. (opposite page) Colby Sledge campaigning for Metropolitan Council.

# Class Notes {students}

**Kayleah Bradley** (Chemistry) was awarded the Johnson & Johnson Scholarship for the 2015–16 academic year. The Johnson & Johnson Co. awards the scholarship to STEM majors with proven academic performance and strong community involvement.

**Morgan Davis** (Mathematics) presented "Math Dance," a concert exhibition of her Honors thesis "Teaching Common Core State Standards of Mathematics through Concert Dance," Nov. 7.

**Lauren Heusinkveld** (Biology) received a Grant-In-Aid of Research from Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Society to support her Honors thesis project. The Grants-In-Aid of Research program is an internationally competitive funding opportunity open to students in all areas of science and engineering. Only about 15 percent of applicants receive funding. Lauren has also been the recipient of two URECA awards and is second author on "Modulation of Macrophage Inflammatory Nf-Kb Signaling by Intracellular *Cryptococcus Neoformans*," a paper submitted to the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. Lauren received funding from the Honors College to travel to the American Society for Cell Biology annual meeting in San Diego in December to present her Honors thesis research. She is currently working as a research assistant in the neurology department at Vanderbilt.

**Matthew Pyles** (Music) presented his senior recital Oct. 23 in the T. Earl Hinton Music Hall of the Wright Music Building. Pyles, a tenor, was accompanied by Joseph Walker on piano.

**Kelly Richardson** (Political Science) was selected by PPIA (Public Policy and International Affairs) to attend the 2015 Moving the World Forward Conference in October at Indiana University to learn about various careers in public service.

**Emily M. Rogers** (Biology) was selected by the Disney College Program to receive a paid internship this spring. She is working in Florida January through May.

**Sydney Youngman** (Chemistry) presented her research at the annual meeting of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry in Salt Lake City in November.



Qureshi and Phillips at NCHC

**Nausheen Qureshi** (Nutrition and Food Science) was selected as the first ever recipient of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) John J. Hanigan Student Scholarship Award, which was established last year to assist students selected to present posters at the NCHC annual conference. Nausheen's presentation was based on her Honors thesis, "Rising from the Depths of Despair: The Healing Arts of Lady Philosophy in Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*." She was the first MTSU Honors student to present a poster at the conference, which was held in Chicago in November 2015. Philip E. Phillips, Honors associate dean, was her thesis advisor.



## Caitlin M. Chase

(Animal Science), Kevin Downs, mentor

## Z. Megan Chong

(Animal Science), B.G. Ooi, mentor

## Evan T. Conley

(Science), Scott Handy, mentor

## Melody H. Cook

(English), Rebekka King, mentor

## Ashley E. Corson

(Biochemistry), Kevin Bicker, mentor

## Samantha D. Crossland

(Organizational Communication),

Jessica Kratzer, mentor

## Kelli N. Dunn

(Psychology), Jon Frederick, mentor

## Lauren E. Heusinkveld

(Biology), David Nelson, mentor

## Michele Kelley

(Physics), Daniel Erenso, mentor

## Stephen D. Kinser

(Computer Science), Joshua Phillips, mentor

## Casey J. Klein

(Industrial and Organizational Psychology),

Jon Frederick, mentor

## Amanda L. Leachman

(Biology and Science), John DuBois, mentor

## Nicholas D. Matteson

(Computer Science), Suk Jai Seo, mentor

## Nicodemus J. Myhre

(Physics, Aerospace, and Mathematics),

Nate Callendar, mentor

## Todd R. Pirtle

(Agribusiness), Song Cui, mentor

## Nausheen Qureshi

(Nutrition and Food Science),

Philip Phillips, mentor

## Sydney L. Smith

(Chemistry and Physics), Rob Mahurin, mentor

## Aimee C. Wilson

(Biology), John DuBois, mentor

# Class Notes

{faculty and staff}

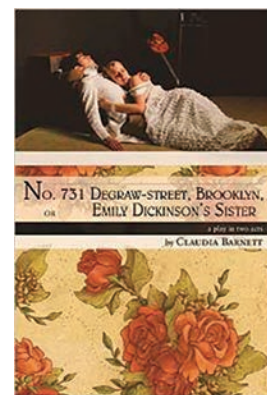
## Sanjay Asthana (Journalism) has two

new publications, a book and a journal article. His book, *Palestinian Youth Media and the Pedagogies of Estrangement*, was published in November. His journal article, "Youth, Self, Other: A Study of Ibdad's Digital Media Practices from the West Bank, Palestine," was published online (on OnlineFirst service platform for SAGE Journals) and in print.



## Claudia Barnett's (English)

*No. 731 Degraw-street, Brooklyn, or Emily Dickinson's Sister: A Play in Two Acts* was published in October by Carnegie Mellon University Press.



## Laura Clippard (Honors) has been focused

recently on developing professional fellowship skills in order to assist students in writing stronger scholarship applications. She served as a national Gilman Scholarship reader last spring in Austin, Texas; completed the Fulbright Program Development Initiative Training in New York City in December 2014; and was accepted as a Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) first round national reader for the second year in a row. From the Fulbright Program Development initiative, Clippard learned about many options available through the State Department, such as the U.S. Student Fulbright Program, Boren Scholarship, EducationUSA, the Fulbright Teacher Exchange, and the IIE Administered Programs. She also observed national screening committees in action for the U.S. Student Fulbright program. As a reader for Gilman and CLS, Clippard has learned by reading other national applications what the State Department is seeking in terms of a strong candidate.

## Wandi Ding's (Mathematical Sciences) recent publications include

"Optimal-Harvesting Strategies For Timber and Non-Timber Forest Products in Tropical Ecosystems," which was published in *Theoretical Ecology*; "Global Asymptotic Behavior of Positive Solutions for Exponential Form Difference Equations with Three Parameters," published in *Journal of Applied Analysis and Computation*; and "Boundedness and Asymptotic Behavior of Positive Solutions for Difference Equations of Exponential Form," published in the *Journal of Nonlinear Science and Applications* in 2015. Ding attended the Institute for Mathematics and IT Applications (IMA) Workshop on Biological Systems and Networks Nov. 16–20, 2015, and Drs. Huili Ma (Northwest Normal University, China) and Yan Hu (Shanghai University of Electric Power, China) have been visiting Ding for collaborations.

# Class Notes {faculty and staff}

**Meredith Dye** (Sociology) and husband Dwight welcomed son Jasper Sept. 4. He arrived one month early, weighing 5.1 pounds and measuring 17.5 inches long. The Dyes also have a daughter Piper.

**April Goers** (Honors advisor) gave birth to Ellory May Goers June 29. Ellory weighed 8 pounds and 8 ounces and was 21.5 inches long. Goers and husband Brent also have two sons, C.J. and Drake.



Meredith Dye and Jasper

**Tricia Farwell** (Journalism) was appointed to the Tennessee Board of Regents as the 2015–16 Faculty Regent.

**Elyce Rae Helford** (English, Women and Gender Studies) is composing a scholarly book that engages with the complexity and contradictions that make George Cukor's films worthy of deeper study. The book explores Cukor—from his directorial style to the relationship between his personal and professional lives—in conversation with the complexity of the history and development of auteurism (directors as artists). Such juxtaposition encourages compelling questions about the director and provides a unique method for exploring his contributions and importance to Hollywood cinema. In particular, the book will argue that his importance centers in his studio-era films in their approaches to issues of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and questions of cultural assimilation. In Spring 2015, Helford was awarded a 2015–16 Non-Instructional Assignment Grant for work on this manuscript, and in fall 2015 Wayne State University Press granted her a contract for the book. *The Woman Fantastic in Contemporary American Popular Culture* is an edited academic collection, forthcoming from the University Press of Mississippi. Helford serves as senior editor, working with MTSU English graduate student/alumni co-editors Shiloh Carroll, Sarah Gray, and Mick Howard. Begun with papers from the graduate student-organized 2011 Catwoman to Katniss conference at MTSU, the book has expanded to engage with fantasy girls and superwomen in genre fiction, television, comics, and graphic novels. The volume will examine how contemporary American representations of the "woman fantastic" engage with prevailing conceptions of gender, race, sexuality, class, nation, and related facets of identity and culture. Chapters include the work of such scholars as Marleen S. Barr, Rhonda Wilcox, Ewan Kirkland, and Joan Ormrod. The book is to be published in 2016.



April Goers and Ellory

## HONORS FACULTY TENURED AND PROMOTED

**James Beeby** (History) promoted to professor

**Laura Cochrane** (Art) tenured and promoted to associate professor

**Mark Doyle** (History) tenured and promoted to associate professor

**Karen Petersen** (Political Science and International Affairs) promoted to professor

**Donald Snead** (Womack Educational Leadership) promoted to professor

**Shelley Thomas** (Foreign Languages and Literatures) promoted to professor



**Yang S. Kim** (Communication Studies) has been elected to the editorial board of *The Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*. She had an academic publication, "Communication Experiences of North Korean Defectors in Los Angeles: An Exploratory Interview Study of Cross-Cultural Adaptation," published in *International Journal of Arts and Humanities* in 2015. Kim also had the top session paper in 2015: "Communication Experiences of North Korean Defectors in Los Angeles: An Exploratory Interview Study of Cross-Cultural Adaptation" presented at the Korean American Communication Association at the annual conference of the National Communication Association in Las Vegas.

**David Lavery** (English) has recently given three significant lectures: "Twin Peaks' Vision ("as distinguished from a dream which is mere sorting and cataloging of the day's events by the subconscious . . . fresh and clear as a mountain stream—the mind revealing itself to itself") and the Discovery of Television Creativity" as the keynote for the "'I'll See You Again in 25 Years': The Return of Twin Peaks and Generations of Cult TV" conference, University of Salford, Manchester, England, May 2015; "The Imagination will be Televised: Showrunning and the Regeneration of Authorship on the Small Screen" at the MTSU English Department's Community Dialogue Speaker Series, February 2016; and "The Plan is Death: Imagining the End with James Tiptree, Jr.," as keynote for Apocalypse: Exploring Dystopianism in Texts, University of North Alabama, February 2016.

**Susan Lyons** (Honors) is pursuing a master's degree in Educational Leadership from MTSU. Also, Lyons and **Marsha Powers** (Honors) attended the InDesign and Photoshop Conference at the Denver Marriott City Center in November.

**Jane Marcellus** (Journalism) co-authored *Mad Men and Working Women: Feminist Perspectives on Historical Power, Resistance, and Otherness* in 2014. The book was named to *Teen Vogue*

magazine's "epic feminist reading list." The book is also coming out in paperback with a revised conclusion to reflect the end of the show. See [teenvogue.com/gallery/feminist-literature-womens-equality-day/25](http://teenvogue.com/gallery/feminist-literature-womens-equality-day/25). Marcellus served on the local host committee for the American Journalism Historians Association's national convention in Oklahoma City, her hometown, in October and served on the Board of Directors for the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) as chair of the organization's Publications Committee. In addition, Marcellus has two book chapters forthcoming in 2016: "'Business at a Very High Level': *Mad Men*, Corporate Culture, and Violence against Women" in *Bad Men and Damaged Women: Gender, Violence and 21st Century Television* written with Tracy Lucht, edited by Brian Faucette and Ina Hark, and published by Wayne State UP, and "'The Suitcase' and 'The Strategy': The Pro-Family Feminist Bond between *Mad Men* Protagonists Don Draper and Peggy Olsen" in *Friends, Lovers, Co-Workers, and Community: Everything I Know About Relationships I Learned from Television* (Lexington Books) written with Erika Engstrom and edited by Kathleen Ryan, Deborah Macey, and Noah Springer.

**Dawn McCormack** (History) presented a paper, "Thirteenth Dynasty at Abydos: A Working Hypothesis," at the International Congress of Egyptologists XI in Florence, Italy, Aug. 23–30, 2015.

**Robert Petersen** (English) presented two papers in 2015: "Elizabeth Strickland's *Life of Mary II* (1848): Rereading the Glorious Revolution from the Perspective of a Victorian Historian" for the 18th and 19th Century British Women Writers Conference at the Graduate Center at City University of New York in June, and "The Consumption of Visual Culture in George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888)" for the South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAML) meeting in Durham, North Carolina, in November.

**Philip E. Phillips** (Honors) attended the 50th Annual National Collegiate Honors Council in Chicago. He was reappointed by the executive director to serve a second three-year term on both the NCHC Research Committee and NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Committee. Phillips chairs the MTSU 2015–25 Academic Master Plan Committee that produced *The Reach to Distinction*, and serves on the MTSU 2015–25 Campus Master Plan Committee. He attended the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in Houston, Dec. 5–8, 2015, where he participated in a pre-convention workshop on Strategic Planning in Higher Education.

## GIVE TO THE HONORS COLLEGE!

The Honors College is raising funds to support educational enhancement opportunities for our talented students, particularly scholarships, study abroad, student research and travel to conferences, and honors publications.

Please consider making a tax-deductible gift.

- To make a gift online, go to [mtsu.edu/supporthonors](http://mtsu.edu/supporthonors).
- By mail, please make your check payable to MTSU Honors College and send it to Middle Tennessee State University Development Office, Box 109, 1301 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37132.

Thank you in advance for your support!

## Class Notes {alumni and friends}

**Amanda Broome** (Public Relations, 2015) is a communications specialist at Patrick Henry Community College.

**Garrett Ewers** (Accounting, 2015) is a tax accountant at Blackburn, Childers and Steagall PLC.

**Matthew Fuller** (Biology, 2015) is pursuing a master's degree in Biotechnology at MTSU.

**Haley Hannum** (Psychology, 2015) is earning a master's degree in Counseling from Lipscomb University.

**Adam Higgs** (Political Science, 2015) is attending law school at American University.

**Meredith Holt** (Biology, 2014) is studying at Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy.

**Thomas Knies** (Mathematics, 2015) is studying Economics in graduate school at MTSU.

**Sara Moadi** (Communication Disorders, 2015) is studying Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Tennessee.

**Brooke Morgan** is pursuing a master's degree in Biology at MTSU.

**Joseph Mosqueda** (Biology, 2015) has chosen to study B cell lymphoma and cancer metabolism for the next five to seven years at Washington University where he is pursuing a Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics and Genomics.

**Trevor Moyo** (Construction Management, 2015) is working for Goodall Homes in middle Tennessee. He and his wife welcomed a son, Jabulani Trevor Moyo (J.T.), Sept. 11. He weighed 9 pounds and 7 ounces and was 21.75 inches long.

**Birgit Northcutt** (Foreign Languages, 2015) is continuing the study of German at the University of Cincinnati.

**Patrick Pratt** (International Relations and Political Science, 2010) is completing his initial training with the U.S. Foreign Service in Washington, D.C. and will begin work in June in the consular section at the U.S. Embassy in Bamako, the capital of Mali and fastest growing city in Africa. Pratt was the recipient of a 2011 Fulbright grant to conduct research in Tanzania.

**Tony Pritchard** (Biology, 2011) is completing requirements this spring for a D.D.S. at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis and has signed a contract to associate with a dentist in the Memphis area.

**Emily Smith** (Biology, 2015) is seeking a master's degree in Biology at MTSU.

**Katelyn Stringer** (Physics, 2015) is pursuing a Ph.D. in Physics at Texas A&M.

**Davis Thompson** (Political Science and Journalism, 2015), who is teaching English in Slovakia on a Fulbright grant, was a guest on "MTSU On the Record" in August. He described his spring 2015 experience working as a White House intern for first lady Michelle Obama.

**Jay Voorhies** (Psychology, 2015) is studying Experimental Psychology at MTSU.

**Leland Waite** (Aerospace, 2013) married **Jennifer Travis** ('12, '14) in September.

**Reid Wiggins** (Computer Science and Mathematics, 2015) is working as a software engineer at Rustici Software in Franklin.

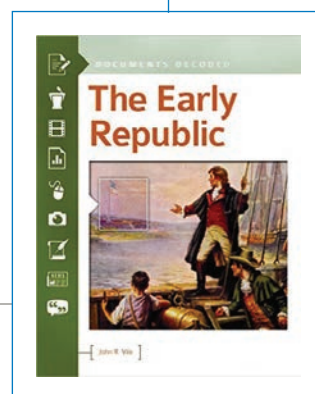
**Will Wright** (Philosophy, 2015) is pursuing a master's degree in Philosophy at Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

**Taffy Xu** (English, 2011) is an associate English Language School instructor and is a writer/translator at *Magic Bilingual magazine*.

## {faculty and staff}

**R. Drew Sieg** (Biology) attended the 2015 SENCER (Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities) Summer Institute at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he presented a poster and gave a talk, which was captured as a webinar. His webinar, "Middle Tennessee State University Students Help Address Antibiotic Resistance," described teaching introductory biology through authentic research experiences tied to the Small World Initiative. His talk was the webinar of the week in the Aug. 19, 2015 NCSCE (National Center for Science and Civic Engagement) and SENCER eNews. His webinar can be viewed at [youtube.com/watch?v=hIF184fWfsk&feature=youtu.be&list=PLqrxVJWeU95LIHPEN8XIJ4mmZ2Hp3CkD5](https://youtube.com/watch?v=hIF184fWfsk&feature=youtu.be&list=PLqrxVJWeU95LIHPEN8XIJ4mmZ2Hp3CkD5). Sieg and his wife Tracey Myers (former advisor, Basic and Applied Sciences) welcomed their daughter, Leona Jayne, Oct. 22. She weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces and was 20½ inches long.

**John R. Vile** (Honors) has two books coming out this spring. ABC-CLIO published *The Early Republic: Documents Decoded*, and the University of Georgia Press published *Conventional Wisdom: The Alternate Article V Mechanism for Proposing Amendments to the U.S. Constitution*. Vile also participated on a panel at the American Political Science Association annual meeting on constitutional change and at the National Collegiate Honors Council annual conference on "Preparing a Winning Newsletter."





# 2015 CONTRIBUTOR Honor Roll

The Honors College deeply appreciates friends who have contributed to its success in countless ways. Philanthropic support has been integral to the college's history, most notably through the construction of our beautiful building. We are honored to recognize those who made giving to the college a priority in 2015.

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Honors duck on  
her nest in the ivy.

photo by J. Intintoli