

SPRING 2017

# East

THE MAGAZINE OF EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY.

Making good marks  
Stories of success  
Fitting in



## Hitting their stride

ECU takes aim at male student success



# East

The magazine of East Carolina University  
produced in partnership with the  
East Carolina Alumni Association

**Hitting their stride** 18

When some male students started slipping, administrators and faculty—and students—went to work.

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Students start on right foot with living-learning communities.

**On the cover:** Students Austin Stewart, Korey Kuhlman and Taron Fenner are aiming for academic excellence at ECU.

*Photo by Cliff Hollis*

From left, ECU dance students Maddy Engleman, a sophomore; senior Megan Anna Griffin; and sophomore Lauren McKee perform a work from *The Sleeping Beauty* during a March 27 practice for ECU's Dance 2017. The work was choreographed by Galina Panova, associate professor of ballet.

*Photo by Cliff Hollis*

Spring is an exciting time at East Carolina University. As the weather begins to warm, campus becomes busy with activity, and we prepare to welcome a new class of graduates into the ranks of the nearly 170,000 East Carolina alumni who have gone before them. Many are taking what they learned at ECU and applying it toward making contributions to their professions, improving their communities and giving back to their alma mater.

As a proud member of the class of 1979, I know how special spring in Greenville can be. It is an excellent time to return to campus! One of my favorite things about returning to home to ECU is exploring the campus and taking note of the ways that the university is changing. This time of year reminds me of the many students who have made ECU their home and how integral they are to the continued success of our university. We know our students will shape the future of our university far beyond their time on campus.


In this issue of *East* magazine, you will read about our university's commitment to student success through living-learning communities, where students live in residence halls with students with similar majors and interests, and many other residence hall improvements. Additionally, we are pleased to share features on alumni educators who have had an impact on student success and highlights of successful students and alumni from across the university.

While serving as the chair of the board of directors of the East Carolina Alumni Association, I have had the opportunity to meet with many students, alumni, donors and parents. I feel it is of great importance to have an open dialogue with all members of the ECU community to maintain an environment of inclusion for all. Service is a value held dear at East Carolina, and carried on in the alumni association's mission to inform, involve and serve members of the ECU family throughout their lifelong relationship with the university.

I am proud of the efforts we're making in serving all alumni—specifically improvements with young alumni, affinity groups and chapters such as the Military Alumni and Black Alumni chapters—and in our support of student scholars and women's philanthropy through the Women's Roundtable. Our work would not be possible without your support. We welcome continued feedback from you as a key stakeholder within the university community.

I hope that you enjoy the magazine and discover the powerful impact that East Carolina has on the lives of students and alumni.

Always, Go Pirates!



Glenda Palmer-Moultrie  
Chair, Board of Directors of the  
East Carolina Alumni Association



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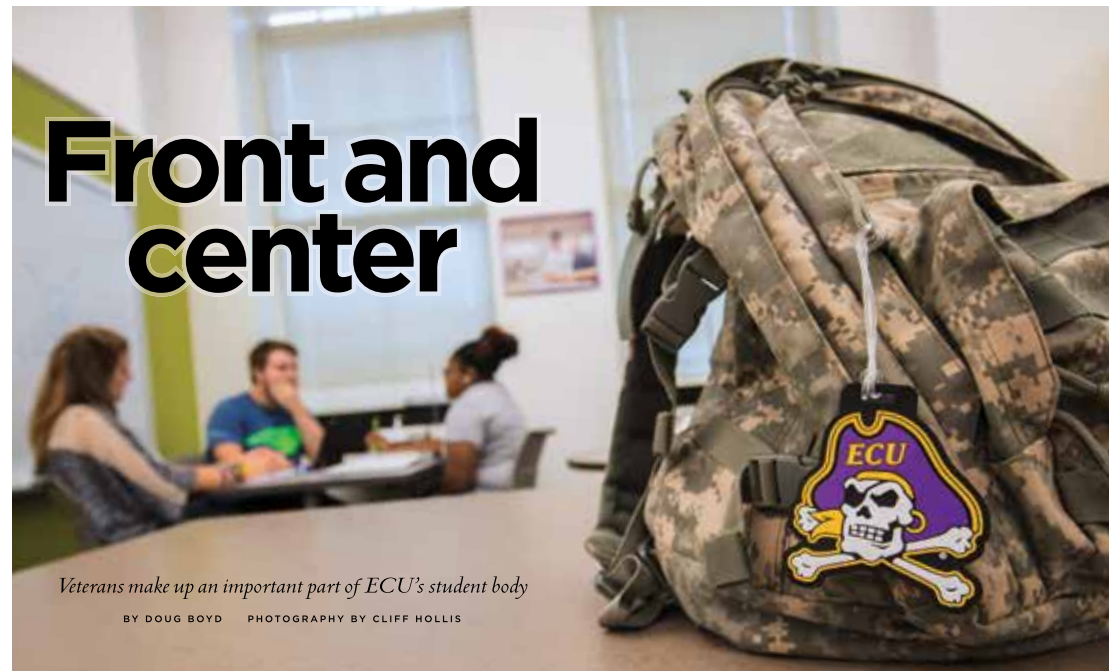
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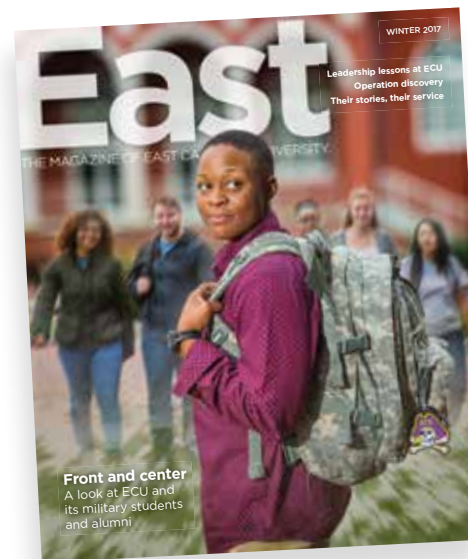
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## Front and center

*Veterans make up an important part of ECU's student body*

BY DOUG BOYD PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLIFF HOLLIS



### MILITARY MEMORIES

I was very impressed with the "Front and center" article about ECU military students and alumni. After graduating from high school in Pittsburgh as an immature teenager, I enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard and served four years during the Vietnam War and Cuban Missile Crisis era. My military experience helped me to mature, to get a very high score on the SAT and to finish in the top 10 percent of my ECU School of Business class. Also, the GI Bill helped pay for my education and saved my parents thousands of dollars. I highly recommend military service before college for all boys and girls.

—John Osborne '69  
Chocowinity, N.C.

Thank you so much for the recent *East*. What a great tribute to past and current graduates who serve our country. Makes me proud to be a Pirate!

—Hervy B. Kornegay  
Mount Olive

Congratulations on another outstanding edition of *East*. I certainly appreciate the recognition of veterans whose challenges I can certainly relate. I returned to ECU after fulfilling a military commitment in 1975.

—Steve Butler '78  
Greenville

Student Success



Regional Transformation



Public Service



East Carolina Alumni



Call to Action



*East* uses a set of icons to identify stories, photos and features with specific content. They are student success, regional transformation, public service, alumni and call to action. The first three are the commitments in ECU's strategic plan, the fourth indicates information with an alumni focus, and the final icon could have various meanings, from giving opportunities to a call to stay connected or take action on behalf of your university. We hope these images add to *East's* coverage of ECU and the people and stories related to the university.

### How to receive *East*

*East*, the magazine of East Carolina University, is published three times a year. It is mailed to members of the East Carolina Alumni Association and the Pirate Club as well as to those who support ECU through donations to the university.

If you would like to receive *East* by mail, please make your donation by calling 252-ECU-GIVE (328-4483) or visiting the ECU Giving website at [ecu.edu/give](http://ecu.edu/give).

To join the East Carolina Alumni Association and receive *East* as well as other benefits and services, visit [piratealumni.com](http://piratealumni.com) or call 800-ECU GRAD (328-4723).

To join the Pirate Club, visit [ecupirateclub.com](http://ecupirateclub.com) or call 252-737-4540.

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or use the form on page 51.



Accompanied by his wife, Catherine, Cecil Staton is sworn in March 24 as ECU's 11th chancellor by N.C. Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Martin and UNC system President Margaret Spellings.

## Staton formally installed as ECU's 11th chancellor

Members of the East Carolina University community, University of North Carolina system President Margaret Spellings, chancellors from other universities and hundreds of guests celebrated the installation of Cecil Staton as the university's 11th leader March 24.

Staton, who started at ECU on July 1, was formally installed in a ceremony at Wright Auditorium. The event followed a week of celebratory events on campus.

"I am at ECU today because I believe in the power of higher education to change the world," Staton said. "We are committed to the success of our students because we know their success leads to public impact and to personal and community transformation."

Before coming to ECU, Staton served as vice chancellor for extended education for the University System of Georgia, which included time as the interim president of Valdosta State University. Additionally, he

was associate provost at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, and served five terms as a Georgia state senator.

"Our public universities are fantastically diverse, vibrant places. They are some of the most innovative, dynamic and interconnected institutions in public life. And that means we expect an awful lot of the chancellors that lead them," said Spellings. "We have in Chancellor Staton not only someone with a rich academic background, but also a long history of public service in state government and a successful background in business."

The week's activities included a reception for international faculty, staff and students; a student festival called Pirates Rock the Mall; the Pirate Nation Gives Back day of service and philanthropy; the presentation of service awards; a ribbon-cutting for the Health Sciences Student Center; a lecture by Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of

Maryland, Baltimore County; the installation ceremony and luncheon; and a black-tie gala. During the installation ceremony, Staton emphasized the importance of student success and of providing students with an international perspective, and he reiterated his vision of ECU as "America's next great national university."

The ceremony also featured a musical composition by ECU student Christopher Short. His work was chosen following a commissioning competition among ECU student composers to write a piece to be performed by the ECU Chamber Singers at the installation. He adapted the lyrics from a poem by John Masefield, late British poet laureate, chosen by Staton.



The Statons spoke and took pictures with students during Pirates Rock the Mall on March 21.



Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, lectured on "Student Success in the 21st Century" at an installation week event.

Ted Morris, associate vice chancellor for engagement, innovation and economic development, said Staton has already started working on initiatives he announced when he was named chancellor in July.

"This is a day to celebrate the progress already achieved," Morris said.

The \$34 million, three-story Health Sciences Student Center has a 20,000-square-foot recreation center and 2,000-square-foot event room. Additionally, a convenience store, three dining facilities and satellite offices for services such as parking and student health are inside. It is the first stand-alone student center on a medical

campus in North Carolina and one of the few in the United States.

During Pirate Nation Gives Back, the Statons announced a \$100,000 gift to endow the Cecil P. Staton and Catherine D. Staton Study Abroad fund, which will support international travel and educational opportunities for ECU students.

"I've always recognized my study abroad experience as an undergraduate as a defining point in my life," the chancellor said.

Altogether, Pirate Nation Gives Back raised \$273,663.

Complete coverage of the week is at [go.ecu.edu/08f78b09](http://go.ecu.edu/08f78b09).

—ECU News Services



Staton joined students in the Pirate Nation Gives Back day of service and philanthropy.

## Alumnus donates funds to launch Student Pirate Investment Fund

A recent donation to the College of Business has created the Student Pirate Investment Fund, giving students the chance to practice what they learn.

The \$100,000 leadership gift by ECU trustee Bob Plybon '72, a graduate of the college, will be part of a graduate/undergraduate-level finance class where students will serve as investment advisors. They will construct, manage and monitor the fund using approaches employed by professional registered investment advisors.

"I think it's important that young people have some accountability for what they're learning," said Plybon of Greensboro. "If we can put something in place where our students can have a great learning opportunity and make a difference in other students' lives again and again, what a great legacy."

The class of 20 students meets twice a week with Scott Below, chair of the the Department of Finance. He said the students now can put what they've learned in the classroom into practice. According to Below, students will "act in a variety of investment management roles and will have full fiduciary responsibility, following the tenets of modern portfolio theory."

The Student Pirate Investment Fund will follow the same endowment rules set by the ECU Foundation board. The foundation's finance committee will provide additional oversight.

Graduate student Zach Bass and senior Mark Matulewicz understand the impact of the leadership gift. However, according to Matulewicz, several things need to happen before final investment decisions can be made.

"We're taking a lot of steps that include the necessary research and analysis," he said. "Then, we'll start investing that money."

Though many will be eager to see how the group of assets performs, Bass pointed out the investment portfolio is a long-term endeavor.

"Hopefully, in years coming and with a longer period to generate more returns, we can start applying (these returns) to scholarships," Bass said.

Plybon understands the positive effects his gift will have on generations. This endowment will change the lives of current students and future students, he said.

"To the extent we can promote the college experience, it's transformational," said Plybon. "It's going to impact them (the students) economically, socially, their children and grandchildren."

He also said the fund will need to grow beyond his initial donation.

"We need to get this to be a million-dollar fund to have the impact that we should be having," said Plybon. "This is a great opportunity for not only individuals but foundations and corporations that want to have a long-term impact on the students coming out of ECU and the College of Business."



Bob Plybon



Proceeds from the endowment will also supplement student travel, allow for data and software purchases and support other enrichment opportunities.

"This is an investment in the future," said Plybon.

For more information, contact Paige Sammons, director of outreach for the College of Business, at [sammonse15@ecu.edu](mailto:sammonse15@ecu.edu).

—Michael Rudd



**Second-year graduate student and teaching assistant Rachel Clark turns glass while first-year graduate student Ronson Schultz helps in ECU's first glass-blowing class held during the spring semester at the GlasStation in Farmville.**

students, but also become a destination for anyone interested in glass-blowing. Hand-blown glass eventually could become a new concentration in the art school, Buddo said.

That's also the vision for teaching instructor Michael Tracy, a glass and graphite artist originally from Virginia Beach, Virginia.

The art majors enrolled this semester are pursuing a mix of concentrations, from graphic and textile design to ceramics.

On a warm February afternoon, the electric furnace that heats glass over 2,000 degrees also helped heat up the studio space where the students worked to make their first drinking glasses.

Using a long-handled metal rod, ECU senior Qattera Brown constantly moved her glass object from the fire to a specially made bench where she rolled and cooled it before returning it to the fire. Another student blew into the end of the hollow rod, and the mix of air and heat helped to expand the glass on the other end.

The process was repeated many times—including the use of a block, paddle and jack, which resemble large tongs—to manipulate and prevent the glass from collapsing or becoming misshapen.

"Ninety percent of glass-blowing is controlling the heat," Tracy told the students. "If you control the heat, you control the shape."

It's a choreographed process of

heat, movement and pressure. "You don't want anything to start cracking so you need to keep everything above 1,000 degrees," Tracy said.

Tracy commended Brown on her glass. "This looks great," he said. "I can't believe this is your first one."

Brown, a student in the graphic design concentration, said she's never worked with glass before and didn't know it was the first glass-blowing class at ECU before signing up.

While glass-blowing is coming to her easily, Brown said the hardest part was the constant rotation. "Because you have to try to keep rotating and you also have to maintain to make sure the glass doesn't stay too hot and to make sure it's not off balance, so to keep rotating to make sure all those things work perfectly is very difficult," Brown said.

By the end of the semester, Brown said she wants to make something really nice for her mom—possibly a wine glass with a funky stem—and "make an A, of course."

Textile design student Kim Brown said she wanted to "try glass because it looks really interesting. I think it's important to learn more things and have new skills."

Ronson Schultz, a first-year graduate student in ceramics, said glass-blowing and ceramics have similar elements, but the steps to a finished product are jumbled. "I'm accustomed to the heat, and starting at the foot," he said. "But we're starting hot as opposed to ending hot."

Because of the equipment and space needed, Tracy can teach up to eight students a semester. Another class will be offered in the summer and fall, with continuing education courses for the community beginning in late March.

—Crystal Baity

## Students begin ECU's first glass-blowing class

Five students made history as the first enrolled in ECU's glass-blowing class this spring in downtown Farmville.

Hand-blown glass is a new curriculum area for ECU and the only one in the University of North Carolina system, said Chris Buddo, dean of the ECU College of Fine Arts and Communication.

The School of Art and Design class is being held in the "GlasStation," a nod to the building's former life as a gas station on West Wilson Street. Built in 1946, the building features exposed brick, large windows and industrial light fixtures with about 2,400 square feet of studio space.

ECU's class in Farmville—about 15 miles west of Main Campus—is the result of a grassroots effort by The Farmville Group, a volunteer economic development association interested in growing the local economy through the arts.

The Allen and Stowe families donated the building to the DeVisconti Trust, which is leasing

it to ECU for \$14,000 a year plus utilities. ECU also purchased about \$130,000 in equipment from North Carolina-based Wet Dog Glass.

Community leaders contacted ECU in 2014 to talk about opening a studio or art gallery space as a way "to use art to breathe economic life into downtown," Buddo said.

In response, ECU proposed a glass art facility that would not only serve as a classroom for

**Glass is pushed in the electric furnace in the 'GlasStation' the home of ECU's first glassblowing class in Farmville.**



**Kyle Summers and Paul DeVita**

## Faculty members honored for research

Two ECU faculty members were recognized for their career achievements in research, and several others were commended for recent accomplishments during the annual Research and Scholarship Awards Ceremony in February.

Professors Paul DeVita and Kyle Summers received the Lifetime Research and Creative Activity Award.

"This year, the committee narrowed the field down to two nominees and could not pick a clear winner, and when you see these individuals you will understand their dilemma," said Michael Van Scott, interim vice chancellor for research, economic development and engagement.

DeVita is the LeRoy T. Walker Distinguished Professor and director of the biomechanics laboratory in the Department of Kinesiology. He has spent more than 30 years analyzing complex biomechanical processes and presenting them to audiences in an understandable way. He established the first National Biomechanics Day, which was celebrated by more than 2,000 elementary and high school students in 30 states across the nation in April 2016.

"Anyone who has worked with Paul knows that he is a talented

scientist and teacher who combines wit and knowledge effortlessly, making science fun," said Van Scott.

DeVita's research has had significant impact on the understanding of age and disease on lower limb function and provided information for clinical trials designed to improve the quality of life in older adults.

"Biomechanics is a broad field, and I have been so wonderfully lucky to work in it," said DeVita after accepting the award. "We are so happy that our science has helped other people and improved their quality of life, especially people with arthritis."

Summers' research on brightly colored tropical frogs are at the center of most of his work on evolutionary ecology and genetics.

"My research was inspired by my fascination with nature, especially tropical forests and amphibians. For reasons that are not clear to me, I've always been fascinated by frogs since I was very young, and that led me into my career," said Summers.

He was the first to demonstrate Müllerian mimicry in frogs and to use modern comparative methods to demonstrate an evolutionary correlation between toxicity and bright coloration in any animal.

Additionally, Summers has conducted innovative research on the application of evolutionary approaches to the study of heart disease, cancer and psychopathology.

"Kyle is respected across Central and South America and across Europe. His work is frequently reported on in popular media including *National Geographic*, *The New York Times* and *Scientific American*," said Van Scott.

Also recognized during the ceremony were associate English professor Amanda Ann Klein and associate sociology professor A.J. Jacobs, who each received the Five-Year Research and Creative Activity Award. This award is presented to faculty members whose work over five years at ECU had an exceptional impact on their field of study.

Jennifer McKinnon, an associate professor of history in maritime studies, received the Scholarship of Engagement Award for her commitment to community engagement that impacts the region and promotes academic scholarship.

The Coastal Scholar Award was presented to Ariane Legaspi Peralta, an assistant biology professor in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

Juvenio Rocha Peralta Jr.,

executive director of AMEXCAN, received the Academy of Community Engaged Scholars award for his influence helping ECU faculty and students understand ethnic, cultural and linguistic issues in community engagement.

Van Scott also recognized ECU faculty and a doctoral student who secured a U.S. patent titled "J-Series Protaglandin-Enthanolamides as Novel Therapeutics." The following from ECU will be inducted into the National Academy of Inventors:

Colin S. Burns, faculty member in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences

Allison S. Danell, faculty member in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences

Daniel Ladin, doctoral student at the Brody School of Medicine

Rukiyah T. Van Dross, faculty member in the Brody School of Medicine

Nine faculty members who excel at integrating scholarship and teaching received Scholarship-Teacher Awards, and another 68 faculty members were named University Scholars, a new program established to acknowledge the diversity in scholarship and excellence in different disciplines across ECU.

—Jamie Smith

## Music, sociology students benefit from gift from former faculty members

The generosity of two former ECU faculty members will soon provide \$1.2 million for student scholarships.

The gift comes from the estate of Eleanor and Paul Toll, who taught at ECU between 1937 and 1978.

The funds will provide scholarships for students in the School of Music, where Eleanor Toll taught piano, and the sociology department, where Paul Toll was a faculty member.

"I really and truly think that she would love to help somebody that had financial troubles trying to get through school, because she had to struggle through the (Great) Depression," said Fonda Sanderlin '64, a former student. "(She) knew what it was like to work and go to school and for her family to sacrifice to go to school."

Eleanor Toll died in April 2016 at the age of 103, but she took steps 30 years ago to make the gift to ECU.

According to her will, the school and department each will receive \$600,000 to establish scholarship endowments in the names of Paul A. Toll and Eleanor Etheridge Toll for students demonstrating financial need and scholastic ability.

"Generations of students will be helped through her generosity," said Chris Ulfers, director of the School of Music.

The Department of Sociology is looking at a unique approach for its share of the scholarship funding—boosting its graduate program.

Bob Edwards, sociology chair, said the gift alone could increase the number of sociology graduate students by 25 percent. There are 16 graduate students.

"Six thousand dollars a year from the Toll fund, for four different students, for an example, could be the difference between four people being able to go to grad school to get a degree or not," Edwards said.

According to ECU archives, the Tolls met after Paul "Pat" Toll began teaching in the ECU sociology department in 1937 and Eleanor Toll joined the music faculty in 1942. They married in 1946, and Eleanor Toll left ECU to teach private piano lessons at home before returning to the School of Music in 1952. They didn't have children.

Both retired after 30 years at ECU. Pat Toll died in 1984.

Those who knew the Tolls say they were kind, unassuming teachers at ECU. However, their dedication to the university and their students ran deep.

In the summer of 1960, Sanderlin was about to start freshman orientation, and her future husband, also a music major, suggested she meet Eleanor Toll.

She found the Tolls' address in the phonebook and showed up on their Eighth Street doorstep; it was the first encounter of a relationship that would grow for the next 56 years. Not only would Toll become Sanderlin's piano teacher, but she also was her advisor.

"She was very calm, patient and encouraging, but she also set pretty strict standards, and she could tell if you practiced or not," Sanderlin said. "You had (such) respect for her, so you made sure you got the work done."

Sanderlin was a public school music teacher for 34 years. After Sanderlin's mother died, Toll became her surrogate mother. "We kind of adopted each other. That was the way we felt for each other."

As Toll's health deteriorated, she eventually moved into a rest home, but Sanderlin continued to visit weekly.

After Toll's death, Sanderlin received the contents of Toll's home and her 1904 Steinway piano—something she uses all the time.

"I usually go in and sit down and play a little bit most every day, but the sentimental value of that piano, money just cannot buy—really and truly," Sanderlin said. "It is a piece of furniture probably to a lot of people, but to me, it's my connection to her."

Sanderlin still remembers the lessons Toll taught her.

"There were just some things that were automatic when you sat down at the keyboard that she taught you that you thought about when you played the piece," Sanderlin said. "Make sure the dynamics are strong enough so that the audience will know the difference between soft and loud, make sure you exaggerate enough so that they can hear it, make sure you bring the melody out with your right hand, and make sure that you go down deep into the keys when you play."

Gladys Howell, an associate professor emeritus of sociology, remembers Paul Toll as a kind and learned man.

"I think he would be really honored that the sociology department was significantly included in the legacy that (Eleanor) gave," Howell said.

—Rich Klindworth



## ECU, N.C. State collaboration supports farm sustainability

ECU and N.C. State kicked off a series of workshops this spring designed to help North Carolina's sweet potato and tobacco farmers maintain and improve sustainability.

Instructors from the ECU College of Business joined event organizer N.C. State University in developing and delivering content to help large family farmers strengthen their business-management skills, meet the demands of the global market and gain a competitive advantage. Key topics during the five-day workshops included strategic planning, succession planning, human resources and labor management, financial management and risk management.

Curriculum for the sessions came out of a series of focus groups that included eastern North Carolina farmers.

The North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission helped fund the program.

A. Blake Brown of N.C. State started the program after receiving feedback from local farmers who attended similar programs out of state. Following the support from N.C. State leadership, Brown developed this pilot program to focus on the "specialized needs of large commercial farms in the southeast."

"Southeastern agriculture is very diverse, and farms grow many specialty crops, most of which are labor- and management-intensive," said Brown.

"Our goal was to bring farmers together," said Sharon Justice, an instructor with ECU's business leadership and professional development program. "The program wants to provide the

tactical tools and resources so our farmers can compete, be sustainable and grow their business." David Mayo, an instructor with ECU's Miller School of Entrepreneurship, joined Justice as a representative from the university.

Steven Archie Griffin, chief operations officer for Griffin Farms of Washington attended the program because he wanted to gain insight into how other farms operate. Griffin has already put these new lessons to work.

"We have been able to properly take a much deeper look into how our company is performing from a financial standpoint, our financial solvency and how we stand compared to others of a similar scale," said Griffin, who is an MBA student in the College of Business.

Pattie Mills, co-owner of J.P. Davenport & Son of Greenville, said she wanted to sharpen her business skills in finance, accounting, human resources and economics as well as to learn about issues and changes in the local agricultural industry.

"I immediately came back to the office...and began to benchmark our company financials against the data that was provided about the agricultural industry," said Mills. "I have started to reevaluate several of our H.R. programs and document them to make sure we are compliant in various areas."

Justice says organizers of the program, as well as farmers statewide, recognize that strengthening farming business skills will strengthen the area's economy. All involved agree that maintaining and improving the economic sustainability of these farms is critical for North Carolina's rural areas.

The program will continue with a series of webinars and meetings, and a second five-day workshop is being planned for November.

—Michael Rudd



Dr. Walter Pories talks with patient Glenda Williams in this July 2000 file photo.

## Journal: Weight-loss surgery should be a standard of care for some diabetes patients

A surgery developed at ECU that can put an end to insulin shots for patients with diabetes has been recognized as a "standard of care" for some patients with the chronic disease.

More than 20 years ago, Dr. Walter Pories published evidence that a type of bariatric, or weight-loss, surgery led to a long-term remission of diabetes symptoms. Now, the journal of the American Diabetes Association, *Diabetes Care*, has said the operation should be considered a way to treat type 2 diabetes in patients who are obese.

"The thought was always that diabetes was an incurable, progressive disease, but with a fairly simple operation that takes about an hour, you can cure it," said Pories, the founding chair of the Department of Surgery at ECU's Brody School of Medicine. "We found that diabetes disappears completely between two to four days after surgery."

Type 2 diabetes is a long-term metabolic disorder characterized

by high blood sugar, insulin resistance and a relative lack of insulin. Long-term complications include heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure and poor circulation, which can result in limb amputation. It generally occurs as a result of obesity and not enough exercise, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and the World Health Organization.

In eastern North Carolina, 11 percent of the population suffers from diabetes, surpassing state and national averages. According to the ADA, 1.4 million people in the United States are diagnosed with diabetes every year.

"It's an epidemic here, and it's my belief that we have one of the highest diabetes rates in the United States," Pories said in a January interview with Public Radio East.

It affects African-Americans, who make up 22 percent of the state's population, at a rate 1.7 times greater than non-Hispanic whites,

according to the ADA. And a quarter of all people with diabetes don't know they have it, says the National Institutes of Health.

But two decades ago, Pories found his work with a type of weight-loss surgery that creates a small stomach pouch and reroutes the small intestine to it pointed to a remission of diabetes.

Gastric bypass is now established as an effective and safe therapy for morbid obesity and its associated conditions. And no other therapy has produced such durable and complete control of diabetes mellitus.

Pories, 87, is still on the faculty at ECU's Brody School of Medicine, where he is involved in diabetes research and serves as a professor of surgery, biochemistry and kinesiology. He was recently honored as an "Icon in American Surgery" by the American College of Surgeons for his work. Pories is the first North Carolina surgeon to receive this honor.

—Doug Boyd



Eleanor Toll's faculty photo from the 1966 *Buccaneer*, left, and a more recent portrait

## ECU part of \$170 million NIH study

ECU researchers will help lead a groundbreaking national study to better understand the body's response to exercise.

ECU will receive about \$1.5 million over the next six years as part of \$170 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health Common Fund. The grants are part of the NIH Molecular Transducers of Physical Activity in Humans Program.

The funding will support clinical research sites in analyzing how physical activity changes the chemical molecules within the body, which could lead to more targeted types of exercise.

ECU has teamed up with scientists at Duke University and Wake Forest University to form a joint clinical research site in North

Carolina—one of seven across the country. It will be one of six sites that will focus on adults, while another will be dedicated to children, said Joseph Houmard, principal investigator of the ECU grant and director of the Human Performance Laboratory and the LeRoy T. Walker Distinguished Professor in kinesiology.

"We all know exercise is good for your health, but we don't know why," Houmard said.

The study—which will target 3,000 people nationwide—will help develop a comprehensive map of the molecular changes that occur in response to exercise. Researchers not only want to investigate the mechanisms of exercise, but also hope to figure out why some people respond better

than others to physical activity, Houmard said.

The findings will allow for personalized medicine, prevention and treatment plans, and can better help those who are unable to exercise, he said.

ECU researchers expect to evaluate about 140 people in Greenville beginning this year, Houmard said. Findings from testing before, during and after exercise and muscle fat biopsies will contribute to the national study.

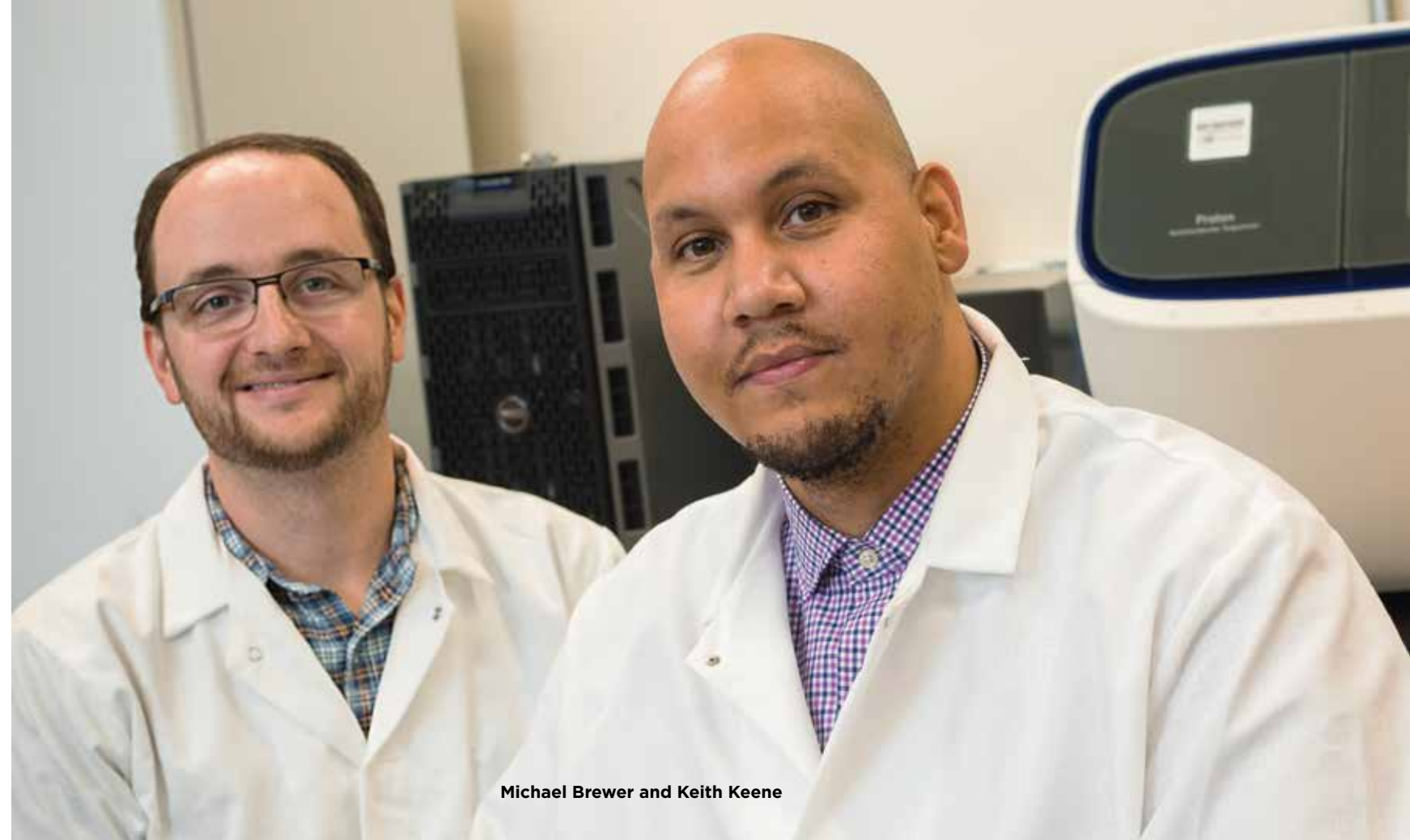
ECU's multidisciplinary research team will include faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students in the Department of Kinesiology, the Brody School of Medicine and the East Carolina Diabetes and

Obesity Institute.

Houmard looks forward to working with colleagues at Duke, Wake Forest and across the country. "It's good on a national and state level," said Houmard, who has been funded by the NIH since about 1992 to study exercise on a broad scale. "It's a seminal study and it's great for ECU to be a part of it."

The Molecular Transducers of Physical Activity in Humans Program is managed by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Institute of Aging and National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering.

—Crystal Baity



Michael Brewer and Keith Keene



Kristen Turner conducts research in Joseph Houmard's lab.

## Project aims to identify genetic markers for stroke risk

Strokes are the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States and the top cause of serious long-term disability, and two ECU biology professors are working to identify genetic markers that indicate greater risk of recurrent stroke.

Work by Keith Keene and Michael Brewer could provide insight into personalized risk assessment, targeted prevention and response to treatment, helping to reduce the health impact of strokes. The National Institutes of Health has awarded a grant of almost \$450,000 to fund the project, which will also expose students to the research process.

Using DNA from a clinical trial conducted in the 1990s, Keene and Brewer are examining two regions of the human genome that have been identified in previous research as potentially having markers that could indicate a higher risk of recurrent stroke. The sample represents a mix of ethnicities, which Keene said is important because different ethnicities have different

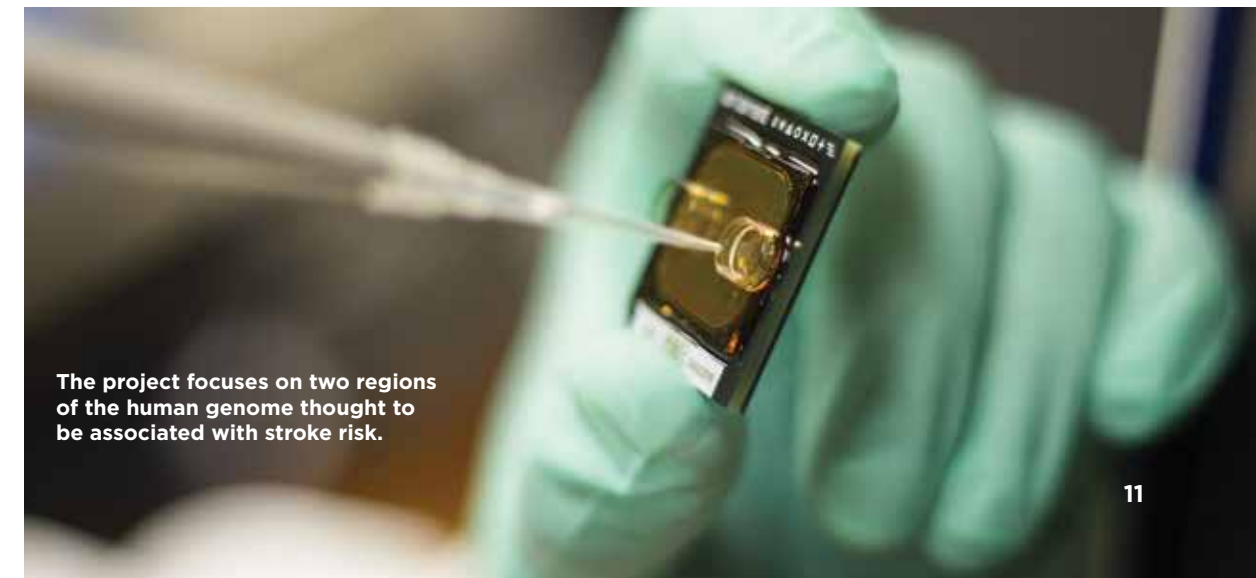
likelihoods for suffering a stroke. "Instead of sequencing the entire genomes of these people, we're going to capture these two regions of the genome through DNA hybridization. We're going to make probes that grab these two sequences of the genome so that we can sequence a lot of individuals for those smaller regions," Brewer said. "It's more cost-effective than sequencing the full genome."

The goal is to better understand the factors that contribute to stroke risk in order to tailor prevention and treatment efforts to each individual, a concept known as precision medicine. The study could potentially help explain why African-Americans have nearly twice the likelihood of having a stroke, are more likely to have a stroke at a younger age and are more likely to die from a stroke.

As with all NIH R15 grants, exposing students to research is an important component of the project.

"We hope that we can teach the students the entire process of DNA sequencing and the analysis associated with it," Keene said. "Not only do they get hands-on laboratory experience, but they also get bioinformatics and computational experience."

—Jules Norwood



The project focuses on two regions of the human genome thought to be associated with stroke risk.



John Shearin

### John Shearin remembered

John D. Shearin III, professor and director of the School of Theatre and Dance at East Carolina University, died April 9. He was 72. In addition to leading the school for 27 years, Shearin taught student actors and produced and directed productions for ECU.

Last year, Shearin announced his decision to step back from the chair position to concentrate solely on teaching beginning this fall.

“John has been the guiding light of our theatre and dance program for the better part of three decades,” said Chris Buddo, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. “John’s leadership was so effective because he always kept a sharp focus on the mission of the school and the good of the students.”

Shearin produced more than 195 plays and musicals for the ECU/Loessin Playhouse and Summer Theatre. He directed 72 productions and acted in about a dozen, several of which he significantly reconstructed or adapted for ECU’s facilities and students.

In 2015, Shearin received ECU’s Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activity, one of the most prestigious awards given by the university.

A Vietnam War veteran, Shearin graduated with a bachelor’s degree in theatre from the College of William and Mary and received his master of fine arts degree from Penn State University.

He appeared in network television shows including *Matlock*, *Designing Women*, *Dawson’s Creek*, *Hunter*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *American Gothic* and *Bret Maverick*. He stayed involved in theatre including stints on and off Broadway and in several Los Angeles area theatres, the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and the Loeb Drama Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

He was a founding member and associate director of the Playhouse West School of Acting in Los Angeles before deciding on a move for his young, growing family.

“I discovered I liked working with young people,” Shearin said in a

2015 interview when he received the Lifetime Achievement Award. “I enjoyed that mentoring, of working with young actors to help their development as actors and performers. Teaching was something I always wanted to do.”

After 18 years as a working actor, he became chairman of the ECU theatre department in 1990.

Shearin, who spent time as a child on his grandparents’ farm in nearby Edgecombe County, recognized the potential for growing the arts in eastern North Carolina. Under his leadership, the school grew in enrollment and majors, drawing thousands of patrons to student productions each year in Messick and McGinnis theatres and Wright Auditorium. A recent project has been the development of a much-needed dance studio.

Shearin is survived by his wife, Jennifer, and three children.

A scholarship fund is being established in his memory. For more information, contact Mary Jane Gaddis in the College of Fine Arts and Communication at 252-328-1268 or gaddism@ecu.edu.

—Crystal Baity



Dan Neil

### English alumni put degrees to work

Traditional liberal arts degrees are sometimes overlooked with the focus on science, technology, engineering and math fields. But students continue to find degrees such as English help build skills that are employers are looking for.

“Four of the top five traits employers are looking for are teamwork, clear writing, problem-solving aptitude and strong oral communications,” said John Stowe, career development counselor for ECU’s Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences. “These are skills acquired in a traditional liberal-arts education. Companies are hiring humanities and social science degree holders for long-term employment due to the skill set they have developed through their liberal arts programs.”

It often makes more sense, Stowe said, to hire employees who can write well and then teach them the specific skills they need, rather than hiring specialists in the hopes that they can become strong writers.

ECU English department chair Marianne Montgomery said the department has seen its students go to work for law firms, pharmaceutical companies, data and software companies, and nonprofits.

Job titles for recent graduates include community outreach coordinator for a nonprofit, content marketing writer, multimedia designer, social media coordinator and research analyst, as well as more traditional positions such as fiction writer, technical writer and journalist.

“People call writing and critical-thinking skills ‘soft skills,’ but they’re really the hardest things to learn and are highly valued by employers in a wide range of fields,” said Montgomery.

As English majors, she said, students not only learn those skills but also learn how to talk about them in resumes, cover letters and graduate school applications.

Bridget Todd ’07 said the opportunity to try varied projects and activities at ECU helped prepare her for the twists and turns of her career. She wrote for *The East Carolinian* and *Expressions*, ECU’s minority representative magazine. She also interned with the *North Carolina Literary Review*,

submitted to *Rebel Magazine* and was an announcer for WZMB.

Since graduating, Todd has taught classes at Howard University and worked for a political consulting firm and for MSNBC. Today, she is a political outreach editor at Medium, a blogging platform where she writes about politics and works with lawmakers and activists to “amplify their own writing on our platform,” she said.

Though her career is different from the life in academia that she originally envisioned, she is happy to be making her way as a writer in her own way.

“ECU offered a lot of outlets for budding creatives,” Todd said. “Juggling different things has been a hallmark of my career success, and I think I learned that at ECU. Even with my current full-time job, I write on the side, talk about politics on TV shows, speak at colleges and universities, and volunteer for local causes.”

Automotive writer and Pulitzer Prize winner Dan Neil ’82 also credits the diverse field of studies at ECU for helping prepare him for his career.

“The single biggest event that made me become a writer about design and automobiles was an art history class at East Carolina,” he said during a presentation in November for ECU’s College of Business. “This job spans... culture, history, business and corporate structure. The universe of automobiles is vast.”

Neil, now an automobile writer for *The Wall Street Journal*, focuses his writing on energy efficiency, electric vehicles and the future of the automobile industry, as well as its impact on society as a whole.

“Occasionally I take time out to drive fast cars,” he said. “I have the greatest job in the world, driving new cars and writing about it. ... After 20 years, sometimes I still have to pinch myself.”

Neil encouraged students to take advantage of the opportunity to expand their horizons by taking classes outside of their major. While he was an English major at ECU, he said one of the classes that had the most impact on him was a sculpture class.

“Always take 18 hours or more,” he added. “You don’t have time to do anything else, so it goes by fast.”

Another English alumna using her degree to make a difference is Megan Oteri, who earned her master’s in English in 2012. She had been teaching language arts for 15 years and wanted to study creative writing to become a better teacher and develop her writing skills. Today, she is helping children learn by using Legos® through her own company, Brick Scholars.

“We believe all children can learn,” she said. “Creativity and fun are the focus; learning is the outcome.”

Oteri said ECU prepared her to process and synthesize complex ideas and concepts as well as formulate and articulate her opinion, ideas and thoughts. Communicating effectively is essential to her work with schools, businesses and students, from public relations and marketing to working with students and their parents.

“Ideas are great, but they can remain stagnant without the fuel of the written word,” she said. “Ideas need to be expressed, developed and polished, and this happens through written and verbal communication. It is an essential skill to be successful.”

Oteri said an English degree provides an advantage in any profession because everything is based in language.

“[Language] is our tool as humans,” she said. “English degree-holders are not only fluent using that tool, they know how to make the tool do tricks. Critical thinking, processing and synthesizing complex ideas and concepts are essential skills in any career.”

Todd encouraged prospective English majors to keep an open mind about what success looks like.

“For a long time I thought being a ‘successful’ English graduate looked like writing for a newspaper or being a full professor at a university,” she said. “But success can be having your own blog or working at a nonprofit or (if you’re me) writing about politics for a Silicon Valley tech company. ... English majors are everywhere, from Sally Ride to Mitt Romney. Anyone who says an English degree will limit you is wrong. An English degree can take you wherever you want to go.”

—Jules Norwood

## Online graduate, undergraduate degree programs ranked among nation's best

ECU's online graduate programs in business, criminal justice, education and nursing as well as the online bachelor's degrees are listed in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2017 Best Online Programs announced Jan. 10.

ECU's online criminal justice graduate program placed the highest in North Carolina and tied for 15th out of 55 schools ranked.

William Bloss, professor and chair of the criminal justice department, said enrollment in the master's program has more than doubled since 2014.

The College of Education's online graduate education programs tied for 16th out of 262 schools and were the highest ranked in the UNC system.

A total of 273 students were enrolled in the following online education programs during the 2016-2017 year: adult education, business education, elementary education, instructional technology, science education, reading education, special education and middle grades education.

College of Nursing programs were ranked 35th out of 140 schools. This fall, 325 students were enrolled in the college's six online graduate options: adult-gerontology clinical nurse specialist, neonatal clinical nurse specialist, neonatal nurse practitioner, nursing education,

nursing leadership and nurse midwifery.

ECU's online master of business administration program has been recognized by *U.S. News* since it began ranking graduate-level business distance education programs. The MBA program tied at 86th out of 239 schools in the country.

Last fall, 700 out of 797 total students in the ECU MBA program enrolled online.

Also this year, ECU's online bachelor's degree programs placed 156th out of 308 schools ranked. ECU—the leading provider of distance education in the UNC system—offers online degree-completion programs in various disciplines at the undergraduate level for students who can't take classes on campus due to work and family obligations or geographical barriers.

Last fall, approximately 3,300 ECU undergraduate students—more than 10 percent of the student body—took only online courses, according to data from ECU Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research.

To develop the rankings, *U.S. News* evaluated a combination of areas such as student engagement, faculty credentials and training, student services and technology, peer reputation and admissions selectivity.

—Crystal Baity



Matthew Militello

## ECU launches international online educational doctorate

The ECU College of Education has launched a program—the only one of its kind—where educators can earn their doctorate in educational leadership online in just three years, including dissertation.

Nationally, fewer than 40 percent of educators complete their doctoral degree within seven years. The new online educational doctorate at ECU allows participants to shorten that time by combining their current jobs, research and dissertation, according to program founder Matthew Militello, ECU's Wells Fargo distinguished professor in educational leadership. It also features individualized help from an ECU faculty mentor and travel opportunities.

"We are the only program in the UNC system that has a three-year online Ed.D.," Militello said. "I say

online, but it is really a hybrid since we meet face-to-face each summer, and there is personal dissertation coaching. And, when taking in all these features, we are unique in the world."

The first group—consisting of 16 educators from across the United States, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and Singapore—started in June with a meeting at the Thai-Chinese International School in Bangkok. Participants got right to work with their mentors on dissertation preparation.

A lot of programs claim to be three years, but that often does not include the dissertation, Militello said. "We've embedded the dissertation throughout the coursework. This feature is distinct. Our focus is on training practitioner researchers and to balance inquiry with action."

Too often, programs just do

research, Militello said. "There has always been a huge disconnect between K-12 schools and higher education, he said. "What universities are researching is not always what K-12 teachers are doing. This is an attempt to bridge the gap."

The next group will begin in 2018, which will allow Militello and other faculty time to focus on their goal of a 100-percent success rate for the first group. The program is self-funded but could get state funding as it continues to grow. The program costs a bit more than standard tuition but is competitive with other education doctorates.

ECU is part of the Carnegie Project on the Educational Doctorate, a consortium of more than 80 schools of education in the United States, Canada and New Zealand, housed at the University of Pittsburgh School of Education. In addition to gaining international recognition, ECU is helping to improve the doctor of education degree and the field of education itself by providing a model other institutions could emulate, Militello said.

"The Ed.D. is focused on the preparation of current and future educational leaders," Militello said. "The new educational doctorate has a single focus: to build capacity for school, district and community leaders that our educators, parents and students deserve. To do so, we have reimagined the Ed.D."

—Jackie Drake

## ECU leads state in rate of primary care medical graduates

ECU continues to lead the state in the percentage of medical graduates training in or practicing primary care five years after completing school, according to a report presented in December to the state university system.

Of the 65 students who graduated from the Brody School of Medicine in 2010 who were practicing medicine or in residency or fellowship training in a primary care field, according to the report compiled by the N.C. Area Health Education Centers and the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The report defines primary care as family medicine, general internal medicine, pediatrics, OB/GYN and internal medicine-pediatrics. It comes at a time when ECU wants expand by as many as 120 students.

According to the report, 34 percent of a total of 420 N.C. 2010 medical graduates were still in training or practice in a primary care field in 2015. In addition to ECU's 55 percent, 38 percent of UNC-Chapel Hill's 136 graduates in 2010 were in primary care five years later as were 30 percent of Wake Forest University's 115 graduates and 21 percent of Duke University's 99 graduates. Those numbers do not include graduates who are no longer in training or practice.

In addition, the report says 146 of the total number of the graduates were practicing or training in North Carolina in 2015. ECU led the way in this category, too, with 62 percent of its 2010 graduates still in the state five years later. Thirty-five percent of Chapel Hill graduates, 29 percent of Wake Forest and 25 percent of Duke graduates were still in training or practice in North Carolina in 2015.

ECU also had more of its 2010 graduates training or practicing in rural areas of North Carolina as of 2015 than the other schools.

The report noted, however, that North Carolina's rural areas continue to have a higher supply of physicians than comparable rural areas elsewhere in the country, largely due to the work of the medical schools, the N.C. AHEC program, the N.C. Office of Rural Health and other programs. Report authors nevertheless called for continued work to increase the supply of providers and better distribute them.

While all four medical schools have programs encouraging students to aim for a career in primary medicine, other factors such as pay and workload make the job more difficult.

The report also noted that community psychiatry, general OB/GYN and general surgery are also vital for rural and underserved communities, and future reports will look at those figures over a certain time period.

A 1993 state law addressing North Carolina's chronic shortage of primary care doctors said ECU should aim for 60 percent of its graduates choosing residencies in primary care. Since 2011, the percentage of ECU medical graduates matching into primary care residencies has averaged 62.5 percent, according to university figures.

—Doug Boyd



Dr. Vontrelle Roundtree is an ECU medical graduate, completed residency training in family medicine at ECU and now practices in Wayne County.

## 100 YEARS AGO

Model school opens



With an investment trustees voted "not to exceed \$500," East Carolina Teachers Training School takes over operation of Joyner School, fulfilling a long-time goal of ECTTS to have a rural school where student teachers could practice. The three-room, three-teacher school 7 miles west of Greenville opens Oct. 15, 1917, with 36 students, according to *The Training School Quarterly*. Enrollment that year grew to 58 students from first to eighth grades. It was the first school in the state to be taken over by a teachers college. East Carolina operates it until 1923.

## 75 YEARS AGO

War rationing hits baseball

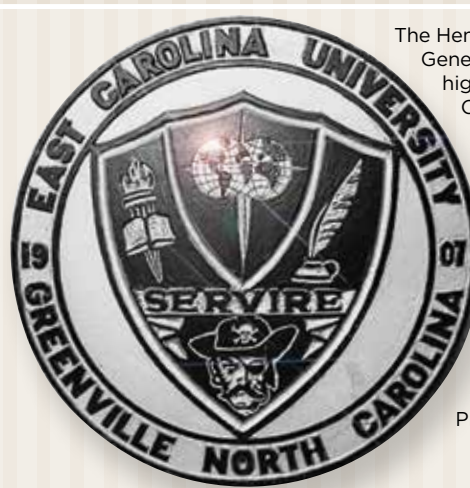


1942, *TECO ECHO*. But the Pirates were faring better than the University of Tennessee. The Volunteers had to cancel their entire season, the *TECO* reports.

The Pirate baseball team struggles to fill out its spring schedule due to the national rubber shortage making diamond bases scarce. With nearly all available rubber going to the war effort, the Pirates had to cancel six games, according to the March 28,

## 50 YEARS AGO

ECC becomes ECU



The Henley Bill passes the N.C. General Assembly, reorganizing higher education in North Carolina and granting East Carolina College university status. However, some feel East Carolina got shortchanged in the deal, which also grants university status to N.C. A&T, Western Carolina and Appalachian State. Junior Bob Jenkins of Statesville tells the July 6, 1967, *East Carolinian*, "It's a bone tossed to the East by the Piedmont political demagogue."

## 25 YEARS AGO

Cancer center opens



The Leo W. Jenkins Cancer Center opens on the campus of the School of Medicine. It provides one center for surgical, medical and radiation oncology services for patients with cancer as well as outreach, research and prevention efforts.

# University Life



**David White** has been named dean of the ECU Honors College. White has served six years as dean of the ECU College of Engineering and Technology and as interim dean of the Honors College

since January 2016. He will continue as dean of CET on an interim basis until the search for a permanent replacement is complete. He has been at ECU for 35 years and spent most of his career within the university's College of Health and Human Performance, where he served as associate dean and department chair for health education and promotion. He also is an adjunct professor with the Brody School of Medicine. As dean, White will oversee an expansion of the Honors College that will double enrollment to 800 students during the next four years.



**Jay Golden** has been named vice chancellor of research, economic development and engagement at ECU. His appointment is effective June 30. Golden comes to ECU from Duke University, where he

has been director of the Center for Sustainability and Commerce. He is an associate professor in the Division of Earth and Ocean Sciences and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and faculty chair of the Business and Environment Program at Duke. He previously served in the role of associate vice provost for research and corporate relations. As vice chancellor of the Division of Research, Economic Development and Engagement, Golden will be responsible for directing the promotion of research and creative activity at the university. He has a doctorate in engineering from the University of Cambridge and a master's degree in environmental engineering and sustainable development through a joint program between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cambridge. He also has a professional certification in management and leadership in higher education from Harvard University and holds a bachelor's degree in management.



## Swimming and diving take conference title in Kobe's final season

ECU swimmers and divers sent coach Rick Kobe out a winner, taking their third consecutive American Athletic Conference Men's Swimming and Diving Championship in February at the University of Houston.

In addition, 18 ECU swimmers and divers earned all-conference accolades following their performances at the conference championships.

Kobe retires as the winningest coach in program history and one of only six coaches in NCAA history with 500 dual meet victories. He was named The American Men's Coach of the Year for the third consecutive year. He ranks fourth on the NCAA all-time wins list.

"My 37 years at East Carolina were filled with so many great moments," Kobe said in December. "I want to thank all our wonderful student-athletes that made my tenure so much fun and extremely successful. I was very fortunate to have had many outstanding assistant coaches over the years. Every student-athlete and coach shares with me all the great accomplishments that were achieved during my 35 years as head coach."

Kobe has directed the men and women's program since 1982 and has compiled a record of 538-191-1 with numerous accolades earned during his tenure. He has been named coach of the year a total of 10 times in four

different leagues (Colonial Athletic Association, Conference USA, East Coast Athletic Conference, American Athletic Conference).

The Pirates have won 11 conference championships under his direction, winning at least two championships in each of the past four decades.

The ECU men's swimming and diving team has posted a dual meet record of .500 or better for 33 consecutive years, while the women's team has recorded 24 consecutive winning dual meet campaigns.

Kobe has helped the Pirates set 349 varsity records and capture 164 individual/event conference titles during his 35 years overseeing the program. He has coached four NCAA All-Americans, two ECU Athletics Hall of Fame inductees, one Olympic participant and 227 all-conference performers. More than 100 of his student-athletes have made their NCAA "A" or "B" cut and participated in seven NCAA Division I Championship meets.

Kobe has also coached some of the top academic performers at ECU, including three Academic All-Americans.

Kobe came to ECU in the summer of 1980 to serve as an assistant coach under Ray Scharf and was named head coach March 15, 1982, following Scharf's retirement.

—ECU Athletics



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"(My job is) providing leadership that puts our company in the best position to meet and serve the needs of our clients. To lead and serve my team by providing opportunities for their professional, personal and spiritual growth that honors God, achieves strategic goals and objectives and rewards individual and overall company performance.

"Statistics with Maggie Capen in undergraduate and Financial Management II with James Buck in graduate school (taught me) how important it was to understand and utilize data in making decisions. They both stressed developing the ability to analyze and understand what's behind the data and why.

"To be successful, you must be trustworthy when building and maintaining relationships, always work as a team and look to serve others in a way that best positions them for success. People say that it's who you know that makes you successful, others say it's what you know. I've learned that it's what you do with both of these that really matters in life and business.

"We love and support our Pirates!"

We want to hear stories from alumni about how their experiences at ECU shaped them today and how they pass those lessons to others. Send us an email at [easteditor@ecu.edu](mailto:easteditor@ecu.edu).



## 5 minutes with Mike Aman '81 '83

**Position:** Founder, One Source Communications, Greenville

**Degree:** Bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration

**Hometown:** Roanoke Rapids

Mike Aman has built a successful business career since graduating from ECU. In college, he and his wife, Page, were cheerleaders, and Aman was the first Pee Dee. He also was a diver on the swim team. He stays involved with ECU as a speaker at the College of Business Leadership Conference and in classes and as a Pirate Club member.





Austin Stewart

# Hitting their stride

*When some male students started slipping, administrators and faculty—and students—went to work*



Taron Fenner

You could describe Taron Fenner as determined.

He's made the dean's list every semester. He's an R.A. at his residence hall. His eyes are firmly on his May 2019 graduation date; he's not planning to be at East Carolina University any longer. And he and his classmates are watching out for one another to make sure they all stay on target.

"We pretty much rely on each other," says Fenner, an engineering major from New Jersey. "I do see people falling off track, but with it being a group thing, it's a matter of having that positive surrounding. It's something that's uplifting. You see your friend doing whatever he has to do—it makes you better yourself. If anything, it's uplifting each other.

"Especially here at ECU," he adds. "There's so many opportunities."

BY DOUG BOYD

Those are words that should please university leaders, because they're staring at a problem that could derail other would-be Taron Fenners on campus: Male students are falling behind and falling out of college at a growing rate.

"Males are lagging in a lot of different areas," says Kathy Hill, director of assessment in the ECU Division of Student Affairs. "Retention and graduation rates—it's about a 10 percent difference on average. The last couple of years, folks really started to see that."

But Hill and others are working to stop and then reverse that trend with programs such as the Male Student Success Summit, which Fenner and Corey Kuhlman attended in January.

Kuhlman, junior business management major, is the first in his family to graduate from high school.

"I have a little brother who's 7," Kuhlman says. "I want to lead by example."

Numbers tell the story

Higher education in the United States was once an essentially male domain, but by the 1970s the vast majority of colleges and universities were co-educational. Women's educational levels lagged behind men's for some time, but according to a 2011 report by the Pew Research Center, that changed around 1990. That year, women surpassed men's attainment levels, and since then the gender gap has continued to grow.

That trend is manifesting itself at ECU, which traditionally has had more women than men enrolled, but in recent years has seen those male students slip further behind their female classmates in persistence, retention and graduation. Administrators and faculty members are looking to turn the tide.

An Internet search for "male student success" returns links mostly related to black

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLIFF HOLLIS



Corey Kuhlman

retention was similar to that of the women's retention—85 percent to 84.9 percent.

Graduation rates also show a gap. Between 2003 and 2009, six-year graduation rates among women ranged from 57.8 to 62.6 percent. Among men, it ranged from 50.2 percent to 55.8 percent—generally about the 10 percentage point difference Hill cited.

A similar gender gap in retention rates exists at ECU's two most closely aligned UNC system institutions—UNC-Charlotte and UNC-Greensboro—though the rate is less at those schools, according to university figures.

National numbers show similar trends. A 2010 study from the University of Washington found the higher academic performance of women at the outset of college suggests that they enter better prepared for college's academic rigors and are less likely to delay their education or drop out of school.

Another 2010 study, this one from the Pew Research Center, found a higher percentage of women see college as being advantageous than do men, and more women than men see college as providing a good value.

To ECU senior Kaitlyn Draughn, such figures are obvious.

"Males kind of have this attitude that I can make it even with a high school diploma," says the marriage and family therapy major from Winston-Salem. She was working at the second annual Male Student Success Summit at ECU in January as part of her internship.

"Education is pushed on women so much," she says. "Growing up, I was told as a woman you're not going to get anywhere without an education. Men, I just feel like..."

"You meet so many older men who are successful with just a high school diploma, and that's inspiring," she continues.

male college students. The issue is more widespread, Hill says.

"It's all males, across the board, regardless of what their racial background is," she says.

For example, university figures show that almost 70 percent of males who didn't return to school after their freshman year had a GPA under 2.0. For females, more than 70 percent had GPAs above 3.0.

Other university statistics show first-time, full-time male students in fall 2012 received a higher number of academic alerts than females—41 percent to 26 percent. And they attended tutoring at a lower rate than females upon receiving an alert—45 percent to 21 percent, or about 1 in 5. However, for those men who attended tutoring,

But that's not the case today?

"Yeah."

"I'm going for myself," she adds. "I think everyone realizes with hard work comes great things. I already know as a woman I have to work harder than a man to get what I want."

She goes on to say she tried to get her boyfriend to come to the event, suggesting he might benefit from it.

"He was like, 'I just want to sleep,'" she says. "He's struggling to find himself."

Mason Church looks the part of a college student—tall with a goatee and tan skinny jeans. If you guess he came to college to major in art, you'd be wrong. He started in a pre-med curriculum, because, he says, becoming a doctor seemed like a good way to be able to pay bills.

That didn't work; he's not a science person, he says. Neither did his next major, finance; accounting gave him trouble. That's why he's taking a year off from school. He says he plans to re-enroll in the fall in economics in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences and minor in art, which is what he says he would have majored in if he could have a do-over.

He's Draughn's boyfriend.

"It's all about me just trusting people too much instead of doing what I want to do," he says. He graduated from a magnet high school in Winston-Salem; his sister just graduated from Davidson, so it's not that college is too hard for someone like him, he says. It's that he didn't make the right choices.

"Now that I know that, I need to get out of the rut of doing what my parents want me

to do," he says. "I feel like guys are a little more susceptible to the pressure. People just need to experience life before they get pushed into college."

### One student's story

Sophomore Austin Stewart credits one of his professors with getting him back on track after a poor first semester.

"Coming to ECU with the amount of stuff they have and the amount of teachers was a culture shock to me," says Stewart, who's from Scotland Neck, a Halifax County town with a population of about 2,000 best known for its Sylvan Heights Bird Park. He graduated from Hobgood Academy, a small private school about 8 miles from Scotland Neck.

"All the stories about them saying your first year is the hardest are right," he says. "Without someone there telling me I need to do this and this... I guess I took too much advantage of my free time to do what I wanted to do instead of what I needed to do.

"I was lazy for lack of a better word," he says.

Lathan Turner, associate director of student transitions at ECU, was teaching the section of COAD 1000, a class all freshmen have to take, and Stewart was one of his students. He noticed the freshman was having trouble and stepped in. He got Stewart a job at Mendenhall Student Center—one that required him to maintain his grades.

"If it wasn't for the COAD professor, Dr. Turner, I wouldn't have this job and probably wouldn't still be at ECU," Stewart says.

Turner helped organize Project MORE at ECU. MORE stands for male outreach, retention and engagement and includes workshops such as the Male Student Success Summit and other resources to help male

students not fall behind on their studies. The first step is often recognizing they need help and asking for it.

"It's just a lot of times the young man doesn't want to come forward," he says.

The university is also creating a living-learning community this fall called The League, centered on an interest in athletics and focusing on promoting male student success. (*Learn more about ECU's living-learning communities beginning on page 38.*)

### Changing structures

Advising is a key starting point for helping students get started on the right track and catch them if they start to get off it, says Henry Peel '79 '80, who joined the ECU education faculty in 1989 and served as associate dean and interim dean among other university positions. He was part of a team that worked to create a professional advising staff.

"Prior to that, a good deal of advising was done by faculty," says Peel, who retired around 2010 and now is chief of staff at Florida Southwestern State College in Fort Myers. "There was a real shared vision among the deans and administrators that we needed to look at personalizing advising. The bigger it was getting, the worry was we would lose that.

"We just didn't want students to get lost," says Peel, who was a teacher, assistant principal and high school guidance counselor before joining ECU. A system was created where advisors would keep tabs on student performance and call them in if they were having problems with grades, attendance or other issues. Students also knew where to turn if they needed help.

"They knew one person they could go to

and that's their advisor," Peel says. "The personalization is just very important for student success."

Sometimes, other obstacles keep students from graduating. Peel says when he began working in Florida, he learned the university system there had a \$50 graduation fee. It's not clear exactly what it was for.

"But some students actually never went through graduation because of the fee," Peel says. "That's a small thing, but it's an example of the things you learn when you look at thing systematically and learn what the stumbling blocks are."

Florida erased the fee, and Peel says graduation rates climbed 3 percent.

Another case is the student who's gathered plenty of credits but can't matriculate into a degree program or decides the program they're in isn't for them. ECU created the university studies degree in 2014 with those students in mind. Peel said the idea was being talked about before he retired.

"After they get to a point where they realize 'I don't want to be a teacher' or 'I don't want to be a nurse,' for them to be able to be a college graduate is very important," he says. "We don't want them to be forced to stay in their major just to be a college graduate."

### What's ahead?

While college and university leaders have had an eye on student success for years, Peel believes the issue moved more into the public eye as state legislatures began seeking accountability from the education system due to escalating costs.

For example, he says, Florida awards funding to colleges and universities based on graduation rates. In North Carolina,

the Legislature has changed the N.C. Guaranteed Admission Program from one that deferred university admission of some students, instead steering them to community colleges, to one that requires universities to make plans for improving four-year graduation rates.

ECU is focusing on three groups: first-time full-time freshmen, Pell Grant recipients and first-generation students. They'll focus on selecting courses, completing necessary hours each semester, counseling, campus involvement, and understanding credit and debt.

"We really want to reestablish the culture at ECU that students should complete in four years. We label ourselves as a four-year school and we should be one," said ECU Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ron Mitchelson.

The five-year goal is to increase four-year graduation rates to 46 percent from 37 percent, according to university officials.

In the area of male student success, Hill and others who are leading ECU's efforts say improvement will require a "systems change" strategy that includes reframed tutoring, mentoring and support services to attract and engage male students; male-targeted programming and wellness initiatives; male mentoring and coaching initiatives; and more.

And it will also take men watching out for each other. Kuhlman, the business management major, says knowing about the issue is "half the battle." And sticking together is a big part of the other half.

"If you want to be successful in anything you want to do, you have to have friends who have the same goals," he says. "You have the power to be successful."

East



Austin Stewart

# Making good marks

Alumni educators prepare tomorrow's college students for success



BY JAMIE SMITH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLIFF HOLLIS

Leondus Farrow





Patrick Miller

As he walks through classrooms of high school students learning to weld and navigate computer-integrated machinery, Greene County Public Schools Superintendent Patrick Miller '05 '11 smiles.

"This is how you put your thumbprint on the future," he says.

East Carolina University College of Education graduates such as Miller, Leondus Farrow '96 '04, Tonya Faison '00 '06 '13 and Colleen Burt '02 '09 serve in schools or districts with high poverty rates and work to find ways to put success into action for their students.

"Their basic needs have to be met first. If a child is hungry, they can't learn," says Burt. "If they didn't sleep at all the night before or are emotionally distraught, they're not going to be able to learn."

The College of Education is the largest producer of educators in North Carolina. Each year, hundreds of teachers and principals from ECU set out across the state to put their mark on the schools and share ECU's commitment to student success, public service and regional transformation.

**Raising graduation rates**

Miller is a second-generation graduate of Greene Central High School and returned

to his hometown to teach after completing his undergraduate degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a member of the COE Educators Hall of Fame and was named regional superintendent of the year in 2014.

When Miller became superintendent, the graduation rate was 62.3 percent. He says many students dropped out to work, help their families or would get so far behind they couldn't catch up. In 2016, the graduation rate for Greene County Schools was 93.3 percent, far above the state average and fifth-best in the state.

"We realized a rigid eight-to-three schedule is not what every kid in every family needs," says Miller. "We began to really pay attention and understand that every student has a story and began working with them to craft individual plans to help them graduate."

In addition to the individual graduation plans, Greene County started offering classes outside the normal 8 a.m.-3 p.m. school hours to allow students to finish credits. Before these programs were implemented, 64 students dropped out of school. Last year, only 14 chose not to complete high school.

Now that Miller has more students graduating, he is focusing on keeping them in Greene County after they finish



college or learn a trade to help the community thrive. A new computer-integrated machining class was created during the 2016-2017 school year because Miller listened to the needs of employers in and around Greene County who had high-paying trade positions open but no one to fill them.

"The good thing about having these conversations with employers is that we know what they perceive as skills gaps, and it's our job to figure out programs or ways to shrink those gaps," says Miller.

In addition to the machining class, students may take welding or other courses through Lenoir Community College and earn an associate's degree or trade certification while completing high school.

Additionally, Miller spends time during the year advocating for public education policy change in Washington, D.C. He has served in leadership positions at the state and national level of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Miller is part of the 16-member legislative committee that

puts together the legislative agenda for the 130,000-member national group. After the agenda is approved, he meets with North Carolina's representatives in Congress.

"It's basically what our organization feels should be considered when any education law or act is reauthorized," says Miller.

**Success despite circumstance**

Leondus Farrow is the principal of Rocky Mount High School and knows about struggles and second chances. He also knows what it's like to overcome those obstacles to succeed.

"I was a kid who grew up in poverty, in a single-parent home. I know what it feels like to look at the world from a perspective of not knowing if things will ever change for you," says Farrow.

When Farrow graduated from ECU, he knew he wanted to help students realize

there was a life outside of whatever difficulties they may face.

He has been principal at RMHS for nine years and was recognized as principal of the year at the district and regional levels. Since he arrived at RMHS, the graduation rate has increased from the 60s to almost 80 percent, and the dropout rate is 2 percent. That is no small feat considering the school serves communities where violence, drugs and gangs are a distraction for his students. Farrow estimates nearly 10 percent of students are in a gang or affiliated with one.

Even with the distractions, approximately 90 percent of RMHS graduates move on to pursue education or training beyond high school. Farrow says most of the graduates moving on to college are the first in their family to have the opportunity. Each year, school counselors review what they can do to provide more opportunities for students and

their families navigating the college application and funding process for the first time.

"I was a first-generation college student, and the process was intimidating for my mother and me in many ways. We didn't want to look ignorant, so you didn't ask questions, so we made mistakes trying to figure it out on our own," says Farrow. "We have to make sure we are a resource for families."

Farrow uses the experiences he had as a teen and young adult to relate to the students in his school. He attributes his success to his family and the teachers and professors who encouraged him along the way.

Former RMHS student Tevin Taylor says Farrow helped boost his confidence when he was struggling academically in the international baccalaureate program at the school.

"Mr. Farrow was someone I could talk to about anything. He connected with the

Farrow chats with students Justin Francis and Jacob McDonald between classes.





© Nancy Pierce

Tonya Faison

Before going to JMMS, she was principal of Hawthorne Academy in Charlotte and helped raise the graduation rate from 59 percent to 90.6 percent. Since Faison arrived at JMMS three years ago, the school's proficiency score has improved from 32 to 38 percent. The school added the mentoring groups Girls to Pearls and Boys at Martin, which stress academics, social skills and community service.

"I was one of those students that would fight all the time and get suspended. I had a teacher stop me one day and tell me I was fighting the wrong fight; I needed to fight to be a better person," says Faison.

After attending North Carolina A&T State University, Faison pursued a career in finance until colleagues who worked alongside her at a nonprofit for youth saw how she interacted with teenagers and encouraged her to pursue teaching.

After receiving her teaching certification and master's degree from ECU, she returned to get an educational specialist degree. A new job as a principal and life as a single parent had her questioning her ability to finish the program. Faison says when she called ECU's Art Rouse, who chairs the Department of Educational Leadership, about her concerns, he assured her she could complete it.

"If I didn't have that support I don't think I would have made it through the Ed.S. degree. They kept telling me I could do it—you can run that school and get your Ed.S.," says Faison.

"Education is a calling for me. I couldn't see myself doing anything else," she adds.

**Never too early**

The phrase college- and career-ready is one most teachers are familiar with. But what does being college- and career-ready mean for a kindergarten class?

Colleen Burt, principal of Elmhurst Elementary School in Greenville, says asking children what types of problems they like to solve and how they want to help the world are ways to encourage college and career



Colleen Burt at an Elmhurst Elementary School assembly

readiness early on. She also says that giving them hope is a key piece to their success.

"You can't teach hope; you have to instill it in them. A lot of these kids come from poverty, and they have to see something beyond the street they live on," said Burt.

Originally from Maryland, Burt received her undergraduate degree from ECU and returned two years later for her master's degree in education. She also completed the Principal Fellows program at ECU in 2009. She was the assistant principal at Eastern Elementary and was named assistant

principal of the year for Pitt County in 2012 before moving to Elmhurst three years ago. Elmhurst is across the street from Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium.

During an assembly for the school's annual Career Week this year, Burt told her students, "It doesn't matter if you have a big house, a lot of money or if anyone in your family went to college. What matters is what's in your heart and your attitude."

Jessie Jordan '09 is a second-grade teacher at Elmhurst and says Burt "is here, there and everywhere making sure learning is taking

place. She's an advocate for learning outside the classroom."

Burt encourages students and teachers to take advantage of opportunities to experience things outside of Pitt County. The school's robotics team traveled to Raleigh for a competition, and it was the first time the students competed with other students outside their hometown.

"It was a great eye-opening experience for them to see teams from other areas," says Burt.

Burt has also implemented strategies that helped pull her school out of low-performing status. One strategy added a 45-minute enrichment period the entire school participates in at the same time where students are separated into small groups for more one-on-one attention.

It takes everyone working together, she says.

"We use everybody in the building—I teach a fifth-grade group each morning. We have to do everything we can to help here."

**East**



Lydia Ritchie

# Stories of success

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLIFF HOLLIS

For many at East Carolina University, success starts sometime between freshman orientation and senior graduation. As they become alumni, their ECU experiences help lead them to new levels of achievement. Here are some of their stories.

## Lydia Ritchie

ECU softball pitcher

You could say it's about numbers for ECU softball pitcher Lydia Ritchie. As in GPA and ERA.

Through mid-March, the senior had a 3.04 earned run average. And through the fall semester, her grades put her among the top of her class. She's received the ECU Academic Award of Excellence.

On the diamond, she entered the season 10th on ECU's all-time strikeout list with 218. Through mid-March, Ritchie had an 8-5 record with 52 more strikeouts.

Ritchie is accustomed to achievement. She was valedictorian of her high school class in Pikeville, Tennessee, and began her college career at Division III Berry College in Georgia, where her older brother was on the football team. But she longed for the chance to play Division I softball, and former ECU

coach Beth Keylon-Randolph recruited her to Greenville.

"I came on my visit, and I knew immediately this was where I wanted to be," Ritchie says. She transferred the spring semester of her freshman year. Since arriving, the recreation therapy major has made the all-conference academic team each year as well as earning weekly American Athletic Conference honor roll recognition five times for on-field performance.

She was named AAC pitcher of the week Feb. 20, the first time an ECU pitcher has received the honor since the Pirates joined the American, and was ECU's co-student-athlete of the month for February.

Under coach Courtney Oliver, Ritchie has lowered her ERA by more than half a run and entered her final season as a preseason pick for pitcher of the year. *Fastpitch News* ranks her the 35th-best NCAA pitcher for the 2017 season.

Ritchie calls Oliver's workouts "rigorous." "I definitely had to work a lot harder," she says. And that helped reinforce the idea that work yields results, she adds.

She also credits ECU's academic advisors with keeping tabs on students and making sure they don't fall behind.

"In this university, everybody's there for you because they want you to succeed," she says.

David Loy, an associate professor of recreational therapy, calls Ritchie "one of the best recreational therapy students I've ever had in class. True meaning of student-athlete."

After graduation, Ritchie hopes to attend graduate school and work with children and adults with autism.

Though she's accomplished a lot, she's not relaxing, either in class or on the mound.

"I don't want to slack off at the end," she says.  
—Doug Boyd

## Bob Lucas, Tremayne Smith and Shannon Russell

Former SGA presidents

The opportunities ECU gives its students help breed success, according to former Student Government Association presidents.

"Some kids just need the door opened," says Bob Lucas '74, who served as SGA

president in 1974-1975 and on the ECU Board of Trustees from 2006-2011, including as chairman the last two years. "They can do it themselves if you give them the opportunity, and I think that's what East Carolina stands for."

Lucas says he enjoyed serving on the board because he likes helping students. At ECU, he spent his junior year abroad in Germany, where he learned the political, economic and social systems of European countries while visiting most of them.

"That's how I got involved in student government," says Lucas, who is president and managing attorney with Lucas Denning and Ellerbe in Selma.

Lucas earned the nickname "Radical Robert" for calling attention to a plan to levy student fees to pay for lights at the football stadium. "It wasn't so much the fee, but if you're going to tax students with costs, at least ask them about it," says Lucas.

Another issue was a proposed tuition increase that led to the formation of the UNC Association of Student Governments, which still exists.

Lucas served as the first president of the association, which helped defeat the tuition increase by holding demonstrations with the same signs on the same day at the same time at universities across the state. "It showed that students could have success if they got organized," he says.

He says he is forever grateful for his time at ECU. "I wouldn't have been able to achieve what I have without ECU giving me an opportunity," he says.

Tremayne Smith, who was SGA president in 2010-2011, says he still practices what he learned from mentor Lynn Roeder, ECU dean of students. "She was very formative in my early leadership experience," Smith says. "She says 'You're on an upward trajectory, but don't forget to look back and help



Tremayne Smith with former Chancellor Steve Ballard and his wife, Nancy

others. Lift as you climb,' and I've always wanted to do that."

Smith, known for his backflips as a Marching Pirates drum major, got involved in many ways, from the ECU College Democrats to helping charter Phi Gamma Delta fraternity to eventual junior class president and SGA.

"I had some false starts and mistakes obviously, but for me, my roughest moment was my senior year when my aunt passed away suddenly from cancer. I really had not been knocked off my foundation before," Smith says. "Dr. Roeder and a host of others helped me through that."

Five weeks after graduation, Smith moved to Washington, D.C., where he interned with U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan. He was lured back home to serve as band director in Rocky Mount, where he helped grow membership, encouraging his band members to run for office and get involved in clubs.

In one of the hardest decisions he's faced, Smith left as band director to become a special assistant with Rep. G.K. Butterfield and pursue a master's degree in political management at George Washington University. "In my leaving, I said, 'It's OK to pursue other interests, and I'm encouraging

you to continue your education,'" Smith says.

He says he has a lot of work to do to reach his ultimate goal. "I do see myself running for and winning the presidency of the United States one day," Smith says.

Attorney Shannon Russell transferred to ECU after falling in love with campus at an open house. She got involved to avoid the lack of connectivity she felt at her previous university.

"I got too involved," she says. After her grades slid, she sought help at the Office of Student Transitions, where she learned how to balance student life, prioritize and still succeed academically.

A member of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority, she later ran for student body senator and became chair of two SGA committees before winning the student body president seat in 2004-2005.

Only the fifth woman elected to ECU's top office, she says it was great preparation for becoming an attorney.

Political science professor emeritus Maurice Simon and communications professor Pam Hopkins were important mentors. "It was very difficult to ascertain which political party he (Simon) was affiliated with," she

says. "His neutrality helped me to form my own opinion. It's what we call 'critical thinking' now."

Hopkins' speech course helped in Russell's role as a student leader, remembering a presentation she gave at orientation. "As an attorney, you have to talk a lot. It gave me practical skills that I still use to this day."

Former Chancellor Steve Ballard, who had just joined ECU at the time, was another mentor. "He deferred to me to get that student opinion," Russell says.

Now a wife and mother of two young children, she recently started her own consulting firm.

Russell has great memories of being in SGA and meeting so many wonderful people. "I think if you look at how I was able to be successful, it truly was just from one single step of getting involved to becoming a senator and part of a student organization."

Her advice to students: "Get involved. Be something more than just in the classroom. That's how I got to law school!"

—Crystal Baity



Bob Lucas



Shannon Russell



Contributed photo

Chris Bullock

### Chris Bullock Jazz musician

Chris Bullock '03 inhabits many musical worlds.

Bullock's early love for music was nurtured by church music, piano lessons and the Beach Boys before the clarinet and electric guitar entered his adolescence. But after doing due diligence in a couple of long-haired garage bands, Bullock stumbled on a radio jazz broadcast and became obsessed with the saxophone.

This obsession has now rewarded the jazz studies major with two Grammy Awards—Best R&B Performance in 2014 and Best Contemporary Instrumental Album in 2016 and again this year—playing and recording with the multi-genre ensemble Snarky Puppy, performing in more than 50 countries.

“The journey with Snarky Puppy has been quite an experience,” Bullock says. “For many years, we were schlepping around the U.S. in vans with no air conditioning, playing close-to-empty rooms. Through a lot of hard work, time and energy we are now able to perform all over the world to attentive audiences.”

The artists Bullock has worked with include David Crosby, Lalah Hathaway, Charlie Hunter, Phish, the Metropole Orkest and others. Recent projects have him performing on saxophone, clarinet, flutes and synthesizers, and his interest in hip-hop and electronic music has him exploring new ventures that include deejaying, beat-making and production.

“I have always had somewhat of an eclectic taste, and I've tried to embrace that in my musical endeavors and find my own blend of influences and interests,” Bullock says. “It's only natural to combine that in the various musical situations I find myself in.”

Bullock's ECU experience instilled in him an interest for teaching, and he now presents clinics and master classes at high schools, conservatories and universities across North and South America, Europe and even Cuba.

“My time at ECU was a very influential period for my development as a musician,” Bullock says. “It was during those four years that I established a work ethic and drive to pursue this current path.

“Dr. Jeff Bair, my saxophone professor, was and continues to be a very meaningful and significant mentor and teacher. He embodied a strong balance of encouragement and challenge to his teaching. As well, Carroll Dashiell, a jazz professor, exhibited a selfless approach to teaching and growing an appreciation and love for music.”

Bullock will release his first solo recording this year and will tour with his own band in addition to Snarky Puppy.

—Harley Dartt

### Rick Latham Drummer, composer, author

2017 marks 50 years that Rick Latham '77 has been playing drums. And if it can be done on a drum set, Latham has been there, done it and wrote the book on it. Literally.

An in-demand studio and touring drummer, a successful solo artist, a published author and composer, Latham is the drummer with Grammy Award-winning artist Juice Newton

and is founder of the all-star jazz ensemble Rick Latham and the Groove Doctors.

However, it was the success of his groundbreaking drum text *Advanced Funk Studies*—called “The bible for funky drumming” by *Drums and Percussion Magazine*—published when he was just 25 that launched him into the international percussion spotlight. Latham has gone on to publish two more drum texts, produce numerous instructional videos and conduct clinics worldwide.

“Being able to teach others around the world and writing instructional material that has been accepted internationally by my peers is very gratifying,” Latham says. “I enjoy passing on useful information, based on my personal and professional experiences, that may help encourage others.”

But it is his expertise as a versatile performing and recording artist that has made him one of contemporary drumming's most respected players.

Latham has performed with greats in all genres: R&B bass legend Chuck Rainey, bluesman B.B. King, rockers Edgar Winter, Rick Derringer and Neal Schon, jazz artists Howard Roberts, Bill Watrous, Jerry Coker and others. He has performed on numerous television and movie DVD tracks including the *9 to 5* and *Fame* series, *Gone in 60 Seconds*, *Daredevil* and *Spiderman*, and his compositions have been featured on television, in films and as product jingles.

“I love the fact that I have the opportunity to perform with many different artists in many different music genres,” Latham says. “Feeling comfortable and being able to adapt quickly to the various styles is something very important to a professional musician, and I feel that ECU certainly helped prepare me for this.”

Latham started drumming at age 12. Initially self-taught, he worked on the technical aspects of drumming, but his primary focus was always on playing “the groove.”

“To me, it's all about the groove,” he says. “The groove of a song is something that is not easily explainable; however, it is more

felt, it's the feeling conveyed.

“Whether, pop, rock, R&B, jazz or even classical—it all has a certain groove or feeling that is important. As a drummer, it's my job to make sure it feels right and grooves, no matter what the style.”

At ECU, Latham studied with renowned percussion professor emeritus Harold Jones and won the School of Music's Young Artist Concerto Award.

“My years at ECU are so memorable and important to me for many reasons—great teachers, great friends and great overall experiences,” Latham says. “Studying with Harold Jones at that time has had such a major, positive influence on my career.

“Harold's guidance and preparation for the real world is something I will always be most grateful for. An incredible teacher, friend and mentor. I think of him every time I perform.”

Latham is based in Los Angeles and Milano, Italy.

—Harley Dartt



© Brooks Ayola

Rick Latham

### Beatrice White Nurse administrator

Beatrice White '16 is an ECU success story as an alumna, an employee and a mother.

White began her 23-year career with ECU in 1990 as an administrative assistant for Dr. Walter Pories, the founding chair of the Department of Surgery, before deciding to pursue an associate's degree in nursing from Pitt Community College.

She began working as a staff nurse in ECU's Pediatric Outpatient Center in 2000. But even after working her way up to a nursing management position, she still wanted to go back to school and earn a bachelor's degree.

White waited until her sons completed their baccalaureate degrees at ECU—both are former ECU cheerleaders—and entered the university's online RN-to-BSN program while she continued working full time as a nurse administrator for pediatrics. Though a bachelor's degree wasn't a requirement for her position, she felt that earning one would make her a better role model for students.

“The location and not having to do so many more prerequisites were the main reasons,” White says of choosing ECU's program, adding that the instructors were engaging and made the experience rewarding.

“They just have an awesome program. That's just the reputation that ECU has,” she says.

### Taylor Nelson Honors College nursing student

Like many students entering college, Taylor Nelson wanted to change the world. As a junior she still does. And after working nearly two years on a Susan G. Komen health grant with ECU professors Kathy Verbanac and Ann Schreier, her ideas about how she might do that have changed.

Nelson, a Mocksville native, always knew growing up that she wanted to focus on women's health, and a trip to Ethiopia during high school instilled a desire to work internationally.

The summer after her freshman year at



Beatrice White

White earned her bachelor's degree in December. She credits her husband, William, with providing the support necessary for her to devote time to her studies while remaining a full-time employee.

Success, she says, is a matter of making a firm decision.

“The hardest thing is deciding to do it,” she says. “You can have many things that you think you want to do, but when you make up your mind and are determined that ‘This is what I'm going to do,’ that's when you'll be successful.”

—Natalie Sayewich

ECU, she began working on the Komen grant, which provides free mammograms to uninsured and underinsured women in Pitt County. The following summer she was selected for the State Employees Credit Union Public Service Fellows program and worked with Verbanac and Schreier to expand the Komen grant into neighboring Wilson County. Working with the Wilson County Health Department and Wilson Medical Center, they provided free clinical breast exams and mammograms to the uninsured and underinsured.



Taylor Nelson

capable of making in eastern North Carolina. “I knew I wanted to reach out and work with the underserved community, but this kind of opened my eyes,” Nelson says. “I just realized how much need there is right here in Greenville. The biggest way that my goals have changed is that I’d really like to stay here in eastern North Carolina and make a difference here.”

In her second semester of nursing school, Nelson is a member of the Honors College and Gamma Sigma Sigma service sorority. She hopes to pursue a doctorate after graduation.

Nelson says the opportunity to work on the things that interest her keeps her motivated, and having faculty support in her endeavors has been instrumental to her success.

“I knew when I came to college I wanted to work on women’s health,” she says. “That progressed into the Komen grant, and I’m about to start my senior honors project, which will be exploring alternative medicine and how it can help relieve common discomfort from pregnancy. That is awesome to me. . . . I actually get to do what I enjoy and what I think will make a difference.”

—Natalie Sayewich

“I went out in the community and did a lot of work to advertise our project and encourage women to participate in breast cancer screenings,” Nelson says.

Connecting with women in the community, Nelson began to see the impact she was

### Jake Francisco

Honors College biology, chemistry student

One of ECU’s most accomplished undergraduates is certain to continue to make an impact after he graduates this spring. Jake Francisco, who will earn a bachelor of science in biology and a bachelor of arts in chemistry, says he chose those majors because he knew he wanted to pursue a career in medicine.

He credits the Honors College as well as faculty, family and friends for helping get him this far. For his part, he has been involved in campus life, tutoring students at the Pirate Academic Success Center and serving as vice president of the ECU Chemistry Club and secretary of the club sport badminton team. He’s also a member of the ODK National Leadership Honors Society.

As an undergraduate student, Francisco has already been published as a co-author of two scientific papers.

“During my sophomore year, I wanted to gain more knowledge and experience with scientific research,” he says.

After taking the initiative to learn about laboratories on ECU’s Main Campus and at the Brody School of Medicine, he contacted David Tulis in the physiology department at Brody, who took Francisco on as a volunteer in the lab.

“Under the guidance of Dr. Tulis and graduate students within the lab, I began to learn procedures and basic research skills,” Francisco says. “I would take the bus from

Main Campus over to Brody almost every day after class. During the summer, I would come in every morning and stay until the afternoon.”

Eventually he earned more autonomy and the opportunity to participate in several ongoing studies focusing on cardiovascular physiology and pathology. His name is now on two published papers, and he says more are in the works.

Francisco, who grew up in Greenville, has applied to and hopes to attend medical school after graduation.

“Being a part of the Honors College here at ECU has provided me with numerous opportunities both academically and for personal growth,” he says. “Faculty such as Dr. David Tulis, Dr. Tim Christensen, Dr. Todd Fraley and others have provided me not only with knowledge, but also with invaluable guidance and advice. My friends and family have been so instrumental in my success through their unwavering support.”

—Jules Norwood



Jake Francisco

### Austin Phillips

EC Scholar

For junior communications major Austin Phillips, the key to success has been embracing a world of opportunity. Through the EC Scholars program, he has participated in study abroad, volunteer stints and activities fueled by a love of sports. He has found ways to open his mind to meeting his potential and helping others meet theirs.

“When I serve it allows me to do what I love, which is to help people,” Phillips says. “To exemplify service just lets me express my passions and what I love to do, and I do it to the best of my ability.”

Phillips, who wants to attend law school and eventually become an athletics director for a Division I school, is interested in exposing inner-city children to Olympic sports. He is an intern with the specialized

### Toni Abernathy

Biology student

For Toni Abernathy, an ECU education means not only the pursuit of knowledge, but also embracing opportunities for service.

The junior biology major from Hickory is exploring as many avenues as she can that will teach her about herself and about improving the world around her. From serving as an intern at an eastern North Carolina bird park to helping teach young students to read, Abernathy hopes her variety of activities will help her choose an occupation that helps others.

“In the back of my head I am always thinking how can I make myself better,” she says. “And how can I be a better role model, how can I be a better leader my community?”

Abernathy is a State Employees Credit Union Public Service Fellow, a volunteer in reading at Third Street Academy, past chair of ECU’s Children’s Miracle Network Dance Marathon and a member of several other campus initiatives. As the education intern at Sylvan Heights Bird Park in Scotland Neck, she has not only cared for

recreation program with Greenville Parks and Recreation, helping people with special needs participate in sports and activities, including the Spring Games for Pitt County Special Olympics. He also engages middle-school students in games, sports and faith through Wyldlife, a Christian organization he leads.

The EC Scholars program also motivated Phillips to study abroad in Scotland, where he is considering attending sports-management school. While abroad, he experienced a unique mix of Scottish culture and sports.

“I was able to play sports that I never would get to in the United States and got to play some of the best golf courses in the world, including St. Andrews,” he says. “The great people in Scotland combined with the sport environment they had made it an easy choice.

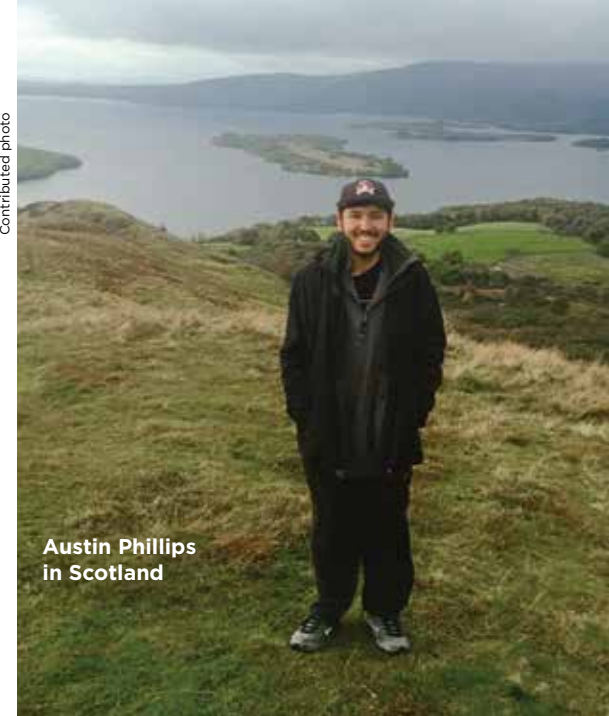
“Living in Scotland has broadened my view of the world and makes me want to

birds and other animals, but also branched out into leadership roles by directing camps and teaching classes.

Taking advantage of academic and community opportunities is close to Abernathy’s heart for reasons closer to home as well. Excellence and hard work run in her family, and she wants to earn her degree and meet her



Toni Abernathy



Austin Phillips in Scotland

experience it again. I would have never considered going to grad school in a foreign country until I studied abroad in Scotland.”

—Spaine Stephens

potential in all areas for her parents as well.

“My parents inspire me to be a better person not just by going to school but by being compassionate,” Abernathy says. “I’m getting my degree for not only myself but my parents because they have helped me every step of the way.”

—Spaine Stephens

# Fitting in

Students start on right foot with living-learning communities

BY JULES NORWOOD



Patrick Fay

Gateway West



Global Living-Learning Community

More information about ECU's living-learning communities is at [www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/campusliving/community.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentaffairs/campusliving/community.cfm).

James Davis

Jenna Price knows the transition to college to be a challenge. But she's part of a growing number of students who are getting off to a strong start by being part of a living-learning community.

"Being a first-generation college student would have been tough if not for the support of my friends in the living-learning community," says Price, a freshman double-majoring in English and communication. "The most valuable thing I've learned is that you don't have to do college alone. There are people that are going through the same things that you are; you just have to look around to find them."

Living-learning communities, or LLCs,

are on-campus housing options, generally for freshmen, designed to bring students with similar interests, goals or experiences together in smaller groups as they learn their way around campus and adapt to the less-structured format of college life.

Students participating in ECU's LLCs, which range in size from 14 students to more than 150, live together on campus, share classes during their first year and participate in a range of activities based on their areas of interest. Each LLC has the autonomy to determine its own formula, but they share an emphasis on personalizing the college experience and boosting engagement and participation on campus in order to improve student outcomes.

### Getting settled

River Renn, a member of Anchors LLC, says that one helpful aspect of the LLC was arriving at ECU early.

"I was afraid that I would be totally lost," she says. "But by moving in two weeks early I became very comfortable with the campus with the help of Anchors."

That two-week period gives students a chance to learn the ropes, says Steven Asby, associate director of academic advising. Many LLCs bring their students to campus early, but it's especially important for Anchors, which was organized with the goal of helping first-generation college students.

"It gives them a jump-start to their college career and to everything that... if you had a parent or older sibling who had been to college before, they could give you those little tips," says Asby, who was a first-generation college student when he came to ECU. "All those things that I remember not being told, that I had to figure out, it really became apparent... that this is something that's needed."

Anchors students not only move in early but also start some of their classes early and participate in structured activities. Asby says the two-week period is structured to help students learn how to organize their time, a new concept that takes some getting used to for many.

By the time the rest of the student body moves in, he says, the Anchors students already have a sense of belonging and ownership. They even help new students on move-in day.

"I told them, 'You are not going to be seen as first-gen, or even as freshmen. You're going to be seen as the experts, and people are going to be asking you about the residence hall,'" Asby says.

LLCs also help students feel more comfortable by creating a built-in community of peers.

"They're living in the same residence hall and the same area of the residence hall, so they are each other's roommates," says Mary Farwell, biology professor.

They're also scheduled in the same sections of some of their first-year courses, so they share common experiences and can support each other at exam time.

"(Some of those) are large lecture courses, so that gives them a little group within that big course where they know each other," Farwell says. "They form their own study groups to work together and with tutors."

Many of the peer tutors are former members of the LLC or upperclassmen from the same academic program, so there's a built-in opportunity for students to continue their involvement in the LLC beyond their first year.



Cliff Hollis

Alex Hondros

In addition, they get direct faculty involvement.

"All of our programs have faculty that come help those students move in, so right from day one, some of those barriers are being broken down a little bit," says Gretchen Brockmann of ECU Residence Life. "The faculty partner or academic advisor is going to be very intentional with an LLC student and know them on a first-name basis."

For Alex Hondros, the connections formed through the Biology LLC helped him earn a research position at the East Carolina Heart Institute.

"This is not something many freshmen can claim," he says. "Having an internship position, especially for all four years, will look exemplary on future applications."

The Education LLC helped Kyndall Westerbeke meet friends and form relationships with teachers and peers, she says.

"My friends in the Education LLC became the people that I knew I could count on to relate to when I needed to talk, grab lunch with or just wave to on the way to class," she says. "It was just the comfort that I never knew that I would need as I made my transition to college."

### Improving outcomes

Most LLCs start with activities to help students get to know each other—such as welcome picnics, ropes courses or sailing excursions—but there are also programs targeted at improving their chance of success in college and after graduation.

The Anchors LLC holds a financial-awareness session, Asby says. "It was amazing how timely it was. The presentation ended and we stayed for an hour with them asking questions. It's all about helping the students with information that they may not realize they need."

New this fall will be the Global LLC, aimed at students interested in international issues and other cultures. It is sponsored by the Department of Foreign Language and Literatures but is open to any student looking for a global perspective.

Jennifer Valko, an associate professor of Hispanic studies and Global LLC organizer, says one activity she's planning is a professional etiquette dinner with an expert from the ECU Career Center.

"We want to help them make a good impression if they're dining with someone, whether it's for a job interview



Patrick Fay

Gateway common area

### Designed for success

Clean, well-designed and up-to-date facilities for campus living and dining are essential for student success, and ECU continues to invest in new and existing buildings on campus.

“As Campus Living has looked at rebuilding our residence hall system for the future, we have been especially sensitive to the changing needs of our students and how they live their lives today,” said William McCartney, associate vice chancellor of campus living. “Student rooms have become electronic social centers as students use these spaces as their bedroom, recreation center and living room.

“We have made an effort to add study spaces, music practice rooms and quiet lounges into our residence halls so that students have a refuge in which to study and focus on academic success. Since 2010, Campus Living has added more than 75 small-group and private areas where students might meet, study or practice an instrument in the residence halls.”

Recent and ongoing projects include the following:

#### NEW

- The Croatan—2011
- Gateway East and West—2015
- Food trucks—2015, 2017
- Health Sciences Student Center—2017
- Main Campus Student Center—opening in 2018

#### RENOVATED

- Scott Hall—2010
- Todd and West End Dining Halls—2013
- Tyler Hall—2013
- Fletcher Hall basement—2014
- Bate Market—2015
- Reade Street Market—2015
- White Hall—2016
- Clement Hall—2017
- The Galley—opening in 2018
- Greene Hall—opening in 2019

or studying abroad,” she says.

The Global LLC will focus on providing students with an international perspective as well as skills that will help them with intercultural communications, which Valko says can be valuable for students in any major.

Each LLC has specific goals, tracks data on student success and surveys feedback from its students. All have reported positive feedback in terms of developing camaraderie and support. They also track graduation rates and GPAs.

The Biology LLC, which began in 2012 and graduated its first class of seniors in spring 2016, saw a four-year graduation rate of 53 percent, well above the campus-wide rate, despite having a majority of first-generation students.

“We’ve also shown that their GPAs are at or above the average biology major, which is fairly high,” Farwell says.

While the data is limited for Anchors LLC, which started in fall 2016, Asby says, “after our first semester we’re just under a 3.0, which compared to the average freshman is pretty good.”

Looking beyond the numbers, LLCs also promote involvement on campus. Asby says one of his proudest moments was finding out all four of the male students in Anchors’ first class joined the Residence Hall Association.

Randy Stitt, a former member of the Jarvis Leadership LLC who will graduate this December, jumped into a leadership role in only his second semester on campus.

“During the second semester of my freshman year, I was selected as a resident assistant in Jarvis Hall,” he says. “Being a freshman R.A. was not easy, but it allowed me to put my leadership skills to the test.”

After two years as an R.A. in Jarvis, Stitt was selected as an Elite Pirate, a recognition of academic, service and leadership achievement.

### Growing program

While there had been a few related programs on campus before, says Brockmann, the LLC

Patrick Fay



### Community growth

Since fall 2011, living-learning communities at ECU have increased from two to 19. This year, 824 students are in an LLC, making up about

15 percent of on-campus residents. Four residence halls house LLCs.

program as it exists today launched in earnest in about 2009. A team within Campus Living began reaching out to departments and academic partners about setting up programs to help students be successful.

“Bill (McCartney, associate vice chancellor of campus living) came in and really pushed those of us involved in living-learning communities to really look at what we could do with it and what the requirements should be,” Brockmann says.

Today those efforts are paying off, with new LLCs added each year and more than 800 students now participating. In addition to Anchors (new for 2016-2017) and Global (2017-2018), there will be a new LLC this fall called The League, centered on an interest in athletics and focusing on promoting male student success.

Brockmann says other institutions nationwide are trying to build and strengthen similar programs. “We at ECU are really lucky—our students are really lucky—that we have the support from our academic partners; they have an interest and see that it’s of value,” she says. “When we go to conferences and hear from other schools,

we often hear that they don’t have the same kind of support.”

That support ranges from faculty and administrative support to infrastructure planning. Gateway East and West residence halls, new in 2015, were designed specifically with LLCs in mind, with lots of shared lounges and study space.

“We’ve been very purposeful about what the buildings that house LLCs look like,” Brockmann says. “In Garrett, where our Art and Design LLC is housed, we have an art studio. We converted one of the lounges so they can go in and paint, and if they get paint on the floor, it’s okay, that’s what it’s there for.”

Keerthana Velappan, a senior who lived in the Honors College LLC her freshman year, remembers studying and socializing in the shared spaces in Garrett Hall.

“It was everything from staying up late before an exam with a study group . . . to organizing a surprise birthday celebration in one of the large study rooms for two Honors roommates,” she says. “Little did we know that we were making memories to cherish even as we prepare to walk

Here are the communities that will be part of ECU during the 2017-2018 academic year:

- Biology
- Chemistry and Physics
- Wellness
- Future Pirate Nurse
- College of Education
- Quest Transfer Student
- Music
- Kinesiology
- College of Business
- Camp P.I.R.A.T.E.S.
- Dance
- The League
- Athletics
- Art and Design
- Engineering
- Jarvis Leadership
- Anchors
- Global

across the stage together soon as seniors.”

Valko, who attended a conference about LLCs while planning for the launch of the Global community, confirms the positive perception of ECU’s program.

“Many of the things that are done here at ECU are things that other campuses are just learning to do,” she says. “When we had representatives from our campus give a talk, it was well-received and people were coming up afterward because it seems that ECU really does things right.”

While some LLCs are tied to academic disciplines, others to campus departments and programs such as athletics or recreation and wellness, they all share the common goals: helping students achieve academic success, engage in academic, local and global communities, and discover their leadership potential.

“We want to show them how they can be successful, support them if they’re having trouble and make sure they get the help they need so that they do well in college and beyond,” Valko says.

# Changing Lives, Changing Communities

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT



After having a successful career as a surgeon, Dr. Bryan Latham wanted to give back. He credits his education for his success, and since his

parents were teachers who received their master's degrees from ECU, he funded the Walter and Daisy Carson Latham Clinical Schools Network. "It's money well spent in my opinion, it's an investment in the future and East Carolina does more to produce people who go out in the community and make a positive impact than any other school that I have ever encountered," Latham said.

For information on giving to ECU, visit [ecu.edu/give](https://ecu.edu/give).

## Charlie Howell '12

**Occupation:** Assistant principal of Greene County Middle School, Snow Hill, N.C.

When Howell was an education student at East Carolina University, he did his internships through the Walter and Daisy Carson Latham Clinical Schools Network. In its 20th year, the network is a student-teaching partnership between ECU and 43 public school systems in eastern North Carolina.

### Why I teach

"I wanted to impact the next generation. It was my desire to be a positive role model. Outside of the family institution, the educational system is the greatest influence in empowering, redirecting and structuring the next generation for success."

### Career-shaping

"My clinical schools network ... offered so much assistance through my process as a clinical student, clinical teacher and as an assistant principal. The network has always been very clear with expectations, norms and procedures for the clinical sites and for clinical students. Coming from the network and being familiar with the program prepared me to assist interns and clinical teachers."

### Ready to work

"We use a lot of interns in the network. Not only are they well-prepared, but we often hire those in the network because of the support that we receive and the systems that we have in place here at Greene County Schools."

### Philanthropy builds opportunity

"Philanthropy is very important; it is the foundation for success. Knowing people care and putting it into action has afforded me several opportunities. My philanthropic views have been influenced through those who have spent time, coached me without selfish motives and cared about my future. Likewise, it is my goal to give back to others the benevolence I received."



[ecu.edu/give](https://ecu.edu/give)

Cliff Hollis

Cliff Hollis



David Leake in the Kiehin Lab on the third floor of the Science and Technology Building. See the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isImWocVKb0>.

## INVESTING COMES FULL CIRCLE

An investment in East Carolina University is benefitting students and Keihin Carolina System Technology.

In its Tarboro factory, KCST assembles and tests electronic assemblies that control the fuel management systems of vehicles. The company sponsors the Kiehin Lab on the third floor of the ECU Science and Technology Building.

"We shall share joy with our society by being a model corporate citizen." That statement is written as one of Keihin's fundamental beliefs," said Batt Masterson, senior manager of technical operations at KCST. "Sponsoring the lab at ECU was one way we could give back to the community by investing in the next generation."

"With the complexity of the product that we are manufacturing here, obviously we have the need for highly skilled individuals," said David Catt, plant manager in Tarboro.

The Keihin Lab is used to teach circuit design and

analysis, electromechanical systems, electronic and electrical measurement, and advanced controls.

"This lab has really revitalized the way we teach electrical engineering courses," said Ricky Castles, assistant professor of engineering.

David Leake is a senior engineering student at ECU concentrating in electrical engineering. He's had several classes in the Keihin Lab and likes the way it gives him experience with working with circuits.

"I want to work with robotics, so a lot of robotics is hands-on, building circuits, analyzing circuits," Leake said. "I think it's definitely been a benefit for me."

"I think it's really smart at a bunch of different levels," said ECU senior electrical and mechanical engineering student Ricky Tharrington. "They're doing their part in generating a new, good generation of engineers, but they're also ensuring their own financial and engineering futures

by ensuring they have people they've trained themselves, in a way, to work for them."

That is exactly what happened with Daniel Kirkendall '14. He is now an assembly controls engineer at Keihin. But when he was a student at ECU, he had never heard of Keihin until he had class in the lab.

"That was my first time hearing about them, and then I got an email saying they had internships, so I immediately recognized the name and said, 'Oh, well, I'm going to apply,'" Kirkendall said.

He interned with KCST for six months and then got hired after graduation.

"Just being able to work here while I was in school gave me even more motivation to do better in school, so that I could do better here," he said.

Catt estimates that over the past couple of years they've hired about 10 ECU graduates following their internships.

"I think it's great because many

of my students have been those recipients of jobs at Keihin. What they learn here, they must like at Keihin," said Jimmy Linn, teaching assistant professor in the Department of Technology Systems.

With the student success and the success that KCST has had in hiring ECU graduates because of the lab, those in the engineering department are hoping others will follow Keihin's lead.

"The investment from the private sector in our education is really critical to us developing the 21st-century workforce," Castles said. "We're just really thankful for the investment, and we hope that other corporations would see the great things that we're doing at ECU and help us to expand our program."

"By putting their name on the face of the (lab) door that everyone walks in, they're making sure engineers know about them and have interest in them," said Tharrington.

—Rich Klindworth

# CLASS NOTES

2016

**Jonathan Jeffries** was named a Distinguished Graduate at his Air Force ROTC commissioning ceremony in December. The honor is given to the top 10 percent of the Air Force ROTC graduating class nationwide, which this year included 1,815 graduates from 144 detachments.



**Mark Obrock** has joined Hamilton Capital Management as an associate financial advisor.

2015



**Grayson B. Compton** '15 '16 joined Butler+Burke LLP in Winston-Salem as an associate accountant.

2013



**Amanda Bounajim** has joined Kelly Services as the scientific and clinical business development lead in the Raleigh-Durham area.



**Cara Linens Sharpe** wed **Justin Sharpe** '12 (left) on Sept. 30 at Prestonwood Country Club, Cary. The couple lives in Charlotte.

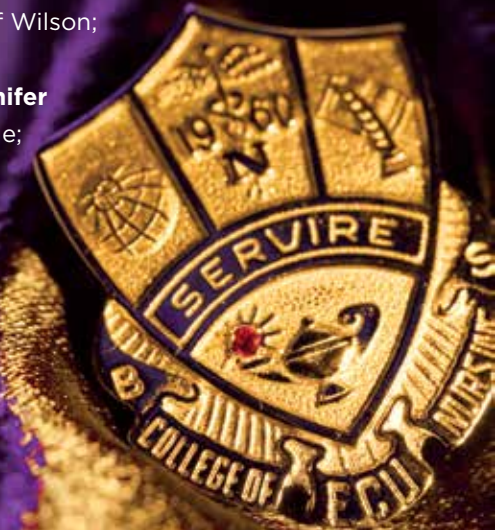
**Tina Foster** '13 '15 '16 wed G. Clay Mickey Jr. on Oct. 15 at

Flowers Landing, Belhaven. The wedding party included **Ashley N. Bonner** '16, **Tammy Mickey Reynolds** '97 '99, **Erica H. White** '01, **Melissa McDonald Mickey** '03 '08, **E. Paul Mickey** '04, **Charles Reynolds** '95 and **Joseph D. Pope** '03 '07. She works as a public communication specialist with the ECU College of Nursing.

*continued on page 49*

## Nursing alumni honored

The College of Nursing graduates were among those included among the 2016 Great 100 Nurses, which recognizes and promotes nursing excellence in North Carolina: **Teresa Anderson** '96 of Winterville; **Lisa Callahan** '99 and **Heather Hall** '99 of Greenville; **Susan Clayton** '08 of Wilson; **Meji Crawford** '15 of Winston-Salem; **Jennifer Parnell** '93 of Pikeville; **Cynthia Rape** '09 of Monroe; **Tamara Rush** '13 of Lexington; **Laura Stines** '15 of Greensboro; and **Sue Tripp** '87 of Colerain.



## Harold Varner III

'12 retained his PGA Tour card for 2017 by finishing in the top 125 on the official money list and then won the Australian PGA Championship in December. He had lost the same tournament in a playoff in 2015.

Photo courtesy PGA of Australia



## Alumnus recognized for urban forestry work

Henry David Thoreau was known to say he'd tramp miles through deep snow "to keep an appointment with a beech tree, or a yellow birch or an old acquaintance among the pines."

ECU alumnus John Sugg '88 can relate. A certified arborist, he's been working with local governments and other organizations to make the most of the trees in their midst. For that work, the N.C. Urban Forest Council last fall recognized him and his company, Treeful Communities, with its 2016 Outstanding Professional Award.

"It was very gratifying and rewarding to be recognized for this very hard work I've done these past 16 years," Sugg said during an interview in the Tarboro Town Common, a landscape he's spent several years helping preserve.

A Grifton native, Sugg has a bachelor's degree in parks, conservation and natural resources management from ECU. He lives in Wilson

with his wife, Tonja, and daughter, Holly. Son Brandon is a sophomore at ECU.

He attributes his love for trees to his late grandfather, George C. Sugg, who bought him a maple tree for his first birthday followed by a magnolia tree a few years later. In the following years, his granddad would pull up saplings as they were walking through the woods together to go in Sugg's yard on Dawson Road.

Arborists are professionals in the practice of arboriculture, which is the cultivation, management and study of individual trees, shrubs, vines other perennial woody plants. They regularly work with cities and other large land-owning organizations on managing and caring for their trees. In cities, those are commonly referred to as "urban forests."

Sugg has been a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists since 2004. He serves as contracting and on-call arborist for multiple cities and towns

across the region and regularly speaks about trees and related topics at various conferences.

He started his consulting business in 2000 by providing grant proposal-writing services to communities, obtaining federal funds to develop urban and community forestry programs for them. In 2003, he shifted his focus from tree planting to urban forestry: tree inventories, urban forest management plans, master tree-planting plans and tree-preservation ordinances.

He's mapped tens of thousands of trees with corresponding data across North Carolina to allow cities and towns to better manage their urban forests.

Buddy Hooks is a member of the Tarboro Rotary Club, which has been working with Sugg on mapping and managing the trees in the town common. Together, Sugg, interns and volunteers have mapped 220 trees on the 12-acre common, and a smartphone app

pinpoints each one and offers details on their health status.

"We wouldn't know anything if he hadn't come along," Hooks said. Sugg has helped the group secure grants of about \$1,500 a year that helps care for the trees and add mulch around them to protect the trunks and roots from mowers.

Sugg also works for residential and corporate clients, such post-storm assessments at multiple golf courses across New Jersey following Superstorm Sandy, Cape Fear Golf and Country Club in Wilmington following the 2014 ice storm and the Country Club of South Carolina following the historic flood of 2015 and golf courses in Hilton Head, South Carolina, following Hurricane Matthew.

He's even worked for ECU, supervising the reduction pruning of the large white oak at the Country Doctor Museum in Bailey several years ago.

—Doug Boyd

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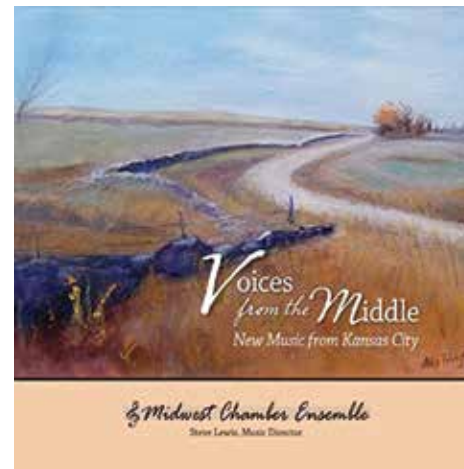
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Valid through June 16, 2017

2010



Steve N. Lewis Jr., director of the Midwest Chamber Ensemble, has been named a semifinalist for the American Prize in orchestral performance and in performance in American Music for the ensemble's CD, *Voices from the Middle: New Music for Kansas City*.



Paige White married NASCAR driver Brad Keselowski on Feb. 10. They live in Mooresville.



Brandon Qualls '05 executive chef of Villedge Wood-Fired Kitchen and Bar in Greenville, has been honored by the Food Network and as a competitor at the Food Lion Cooking Challenge at the North Carolina Seafood Festival. The Food Network featured Qualls' CBR Burger on its list, "51 Top Burgers from Coast to Coast." In September, Qualls won the Chef's Hat at the Seafood Festival cooking competition for the second consecutive year.

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[hessertm@ecu.edu](mailto:hessertm@ecu.edu)  
East Carolina University  
Educational Foundation



2007

**Anthony J. Maglione** has been commissioned to compose a 25-minute cantata for chorus, soli, organ and chamber orchestra for the 2018 American Guild of Organists National Convention to be held in Kansas City in July 2018.

2005

**Dana Bullard Hall** of Autryville was named parks and recreation director for Sampson County in January. **Timothy James Morgan** has been appointed to the North Carolina Symphony Society board of trustees. His term expires in 2020. He is a risk advisor for Towne Insurance in Raleigh.

2003

**Kelly Garner Dixon** has been promoted to budget and grants analyst for Pitt County. **Lesley Ashworth Tyson** '03 '09 has been named the K-5 director for Harnett County Schools.

2000



**Chesley "Chess" Black** '00 '08 joined Sealed Air Corp. as executive director of corporate campus operations for the new global headquarters in Charlotte. He was previously executive director of university IT service management of Johnson & Wales University's four-campus system.

1999

**Jarrett Duke Wallace** and **Susan Gregg Wallace** '99 '00 announce the birth of their daughter, Juliette Grace, on Aug. 8.

1995

**Brian Thomas McDonald** received his doctorate from Penn State University and is now a district administrator in the school district of Lancaster in Lancaster, Pa. **Denise Cobb Urban** has been

promoted to budget administrator for Pitt County. **Larry "Donnell" Williams** is director of quality assurance for Healthgrades in Raleigh.

1992

**Jennifer Marceron Moss** has been recognized with the Florida Public Relations Association's John Dillin Professional Award, the highest honor in the organization. Moss was recognized for her continued and sustained leadership in FPRA.

1991

**Dr. Emil Cekada** '91 has joined Wilson Surgical Associates and the medical staff at Wilson Medical Center. He will be offering general surgery services.



**William Thomas "Tom" Fyle** has been appointed to the Wilson Community College Board of Trustees.

1987

**Michael Camden** is the 2016-2017 president of the Virginia Advisory Council on Military Education. The VA-ACME mission is to serve, support and educate the military community in Virginia.

*continued on page 54*



**Rob Pressley**, president of Coldwell Banker Commercial MECA in Charlotte, has been named to the Platinum level of the Coldwell Banker Commercial Circle of Distinction. Pressley was recognized for being the top sales professional in his state for the organization.



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Complete this form (please print or type) and mail to: **Class Notes Editor, Howard House, Mail Stop 107, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353.** Please use additional paper as necessary when sending your news. You also can email your news to

[ecuclassnotes@ecu.edu](mailto:ecuclassnotes@ecu.edu). While *East* happily prints wedding announcements, it is our policy not to print engagement announcements. Also, when listing fellow alumni in your news, please include their class year.

Please send address changes or corrections to: **Division of University Advancement, Greenville Center, Mail Stop 301, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353, or email [advancementservices@ecu.edu](mailto:advancementservices@ecu.edu).**

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YOUR NEWS

# French '76, Band of Oz inducted into Hall of Fame

It happens often when the Band of Oz is playing at a fraternity house or another college function. A student approaches Chuck French '76 or his bandmates and tells them that not only does he love their music, his mom and dad loved it when they were in college as well.

French never tires of reminders that his band has been providing timeless, danceable music to the Southeast and beyond for more than 45 years. And in October, the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame recognized that legacy of entertainment when it inducted the Band of Oz into its ranks.

"I guess it just proves that if you do something long enough, people will pay attention," said French, who joined the band as a trumpet player and vocalist in 1971 while he was a student majoring in trumpet in the ECU School of Music.

French has played with the band consistently through those decades, even as no fewer than

28 different musicians have rotated in and out of the lineup. He also worked a "real job" for about two years after he graduated from ECU. But by 1978, the Band of Oz was getting so many steady gigs that he decided to play music full-time. He has never looked back.

"That's one thing I have learned is how fortunate I am and how blessed I am to be able to play music for a living," he said.

Although the Band of Oz has recorded several hit singles, including "Shaggin," "Shama Lama Ding Dong" and "Star of My Life" (written by French), the group has always been known for its relentless touring schedule. During the band's busiest seasons, French and company were on the road playing upward of 300 dates a year, he said, entertaining audiences in locales such as Pittsburgh, Ottawa and Las Vegas. In 1997, they were also inducted into the Beach Music Hall of Fame.

"We've been all over, and people recognize the music," he said. "People just appreciate good music."

The band will play at any event, but they are in particularly high demand for shag-happy crowds at outdoor concerts and festivals, college parties and weddings throughout the Southeast. They play more weddings than anything else these days, French said, and in recent years they have scaled back their travel commitments so they don't have to spend the night on the road.

The N.C. Music Hall of Fame is in Kannapolis, and the induction ceremony, featuring performances from the inductees, was held Oct. 20 at the Kannapolis Performing Arts Center. French and his fellow musicians were in excellent company as the 2016 Hall of Fame class also included a diversity of Tar Heel talents such as the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Kellie Pickler and Chuck Brown.

"They've really had a big influence on the beach music scene in the Southeast," N.C. Music Hall of Fame board member Roy Honeycutt told *The Daily Record* in Dunn. "Anyone who knows beach music knows them."

—Bethany Bradsher

## Avett Brothers also inducted

Folk-rock/bluegrass/Americana band The Avett Brothers were also inducted into the N.C. Music Hall of Fame in October.

The band, including banjo player Scott Avett '99 '00, was profiled in the spring 2009 issue of *East*. In addition to other dates, The Avett Brothers will be performing at Red Rocks 2017 in Colorado July 7-9. Their latest album, *True Sadness*, was nominated for best Americana album at the 59th annual Grammy Awards in February.

—Doug Boyd



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Band of Oz  
Chuck French, second from right



Avett Brothers  
Scott Avett, left



1986

**Glenn F. Kuhn III** of Oneida, N.Y., received the Samuel Gompers Distinguished Service Medal for demonstrating qualities of leadership that keep union management strong. Kuhn is a nationally certified school psychologist and building principal in the Rome City School District, Rome, N.Y.

1985

**Richard L. Barfield Jr.** has retired from the Wake County Public School System after 30 years.

1983



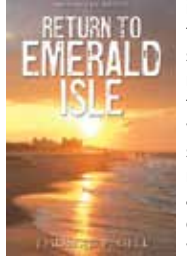
**Stephen Brody** '83 '84, a senior financial planner and the founder of Greenville Financial Advisors, has received his doctorate in interdisciplinary leadership from Creighton University.

1981



**Tom Gill** published *Return to Emerald Isle*, the sequel to his 2016 novel, *The Bridge*. The book takes place 17 years later as Kirby and her

14-year-old son, Journey, return home following the tragic and heroic death of her husband, Marine Lt. Col. Sam Fontaine. In their return, they face barriers including



transition from a successful military family to a single mom with a teenage son, issues with a mysterious suitor and life-and-death challenges with a killer hurricane. It's available in area book stores and through Amazon.

1980



**Claude Tant** has joined Florida Luxurious Properties as a broker associate.

1979



**Debbie Caton Rogers** '79 '86 has been named executive director of the North Carolina Foundation for Alcohol and Drug Studies. She retired from

the Eastern Area Health Education Center in August.

1970

**Margaret Daniel Bradsher** '70 '81 was elected to a third term on the Person County (N.C.) Board of Education and will serve as chair.

1969



**Linda McMahon** of Stamford, Conn., has been named to lead the federal Small Business Administration. She's the former chief executive of World Wrestling

Entertainment.

1953



**William H. "Bill" Rowland** received the Governor's Medallion Award for Volunteer Service in July. He was honored for his 57 years documenting the history of the CSS Neuse and was named an honorary captain of the Neuse. The remains of the Civil War ironclad are in Kinston.

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*Where Pirate Memories Continue*

**Antonia Dalapas** was born to Greek parents in Lawrence, Massachusetts and grew up in Maine. She received a BM and MM in voice and opera at the prestigious New England Conservatory in Boston. While earning her master's degree, she was chosen to sing operatic scenes on the inaugural program of WGBH-TV in Boston.

*"Cypress Glen residents are an amazing and diverse group who enjoy learning and discovering new interests."*

Antonia fondly reminisces about meeting ECU Chancellor Leo Jenkins, who chauffeured her around Greenville when she interviewed for the position which she accepted. She served on the voice faculty at the ECU School of Music from 1971-1992.


Her love of ECU continues at Cypress Glen where she still enjoys attending the plays, concerts, symphony and performing arts.

**Antonia Dalapas**  
ECU Faculty 1971-1992  
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# IN MEMORIAM

## 1940s



**Nypmie Edgerton Gordon** '41 of Carthage died Sept. 13 at 97. She was a teacher and later assisted in running a family business with her husband, Leslie.



**Norma Wellons Blevins** '42 of New Bern died Sept. 13. She was a high school teacher at a number of different schools in North Carolina and West Virginia.



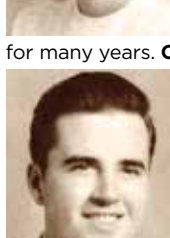
**Alice Leigh Hargrove Hussey** '42 of Wilmington died Nov. 14 at 95. She was active in a number of groups in the Tarboro community.



**Mildred "Jay" Jordan Miller** '46 of Asbury Grove, Mass. died Sept. 6 at 92. She was a physical education teacher and opened her home to seminary students, missionaries and other young people.



**Peggy Hopkins Gray** '47 of Wilmington died Nov. 30 at 90. She taught at Williamston High School and was the librarian at Williamston Primary School for many years.



**Clifford Craven Hughes Jr.** '49 of Wilmington died Sept. 15 at 89. He was a custom home and commercial builder, working with the Minchew Corporation and Scholz Homes before founding the C Hughes Company.



**Enid Petteway White** '49 (top right) of Winston-Salem died June 21 at 85. She was a former teacher at Farm Life High School



and operated the Arlington Hall Art Gallery in Greenville for 15 years. **Jerome Worsley** '49 (below) of Fuquay-Varina died Nov. 13 at 88. The majority



of his 32-year vocational career was spent at what is known as Durham Technical Community College. There, he served as a professor, dean of adult and general education and dean of the faculty for technical degrees and vocational educational diplomas. He was one of the founders of the N.C. Community College Adult Educators Association and served as its president.



**Thomas Edward Casey** '50 of Grifton died Nov. 4 at 92. He was the owner and operator of Grifton Gas Company for 45 years. **William Carter Smith** '51 of Greenville died Jan. 20. A World War II veteran, he worked in and taught correctional and rehabilitation administration.



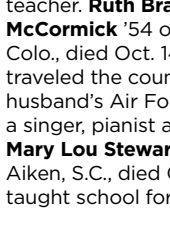
**Raymond David Meiggs** '53 of Hertford died Oct. 5 at 84. After two years as a teacher, he embarked on a 60-year career in the fertilizer industry in North Carolina and was a founding member of Parkway Ag and served as its consultant for 19 years. **Vera Hardison Salter** '53 '77 of Beaufort County died Oct. 10 at 85. She was a retired second-grade school teacher. **Ruth Branch Little McCormick** '54 of Colorado Springs, Colo., died Oct. 14 at 83. She traveled the country throughout her husband's Air Force career and was a singer, pianist and piano teacher. **Mary Lou Stewart Wingard** '56 of Aiken, S.C., died Oct. 4 at 82. She taught school for 40 years in



Newport News, Va., Hollywood, Fla., Wilmington and Turbeville, S.C.



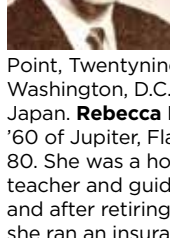
**Robert Joseph Nelson** '60 of Fayetteville died Sept. 27 at 81. He was a public health professional with the Cumberland County Health Department, where he specialized in the treatment of infectious diseases. **Johnny Daniel Wike** '60 of Cullowhee died Sept. 3 at 82. He coached football at Cullowhee High School and Carson-Newman College and spent most of his career coaching football and golf at Western Carolina University. He was inducted into the WCU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009.



**Pearl Tyndall Patrick** '58 of Gastonia died Nov. 6 at 79. She taught school in Gaston County for 30 years, with most of her career spent at Grier Junior High. **Alfred Lonza "A.L." Moyer** '59 of Snow Hill died Sept. 17 at 85. A special education teacher, he retired from the Caswell Center in Kinston. **Billy Powell "Bill" McLawhorn** '59 '61 of Ayden died Aug. 20. He worked in education for 30 years with the Martin County Board of Education and in adult education at Pitt Community College for several years, and he also bought tobacco for the TY Tobacco Co. **Mary Byrd Nickerson** '59 of Framingham, Mass., died Oct. 23 at 87. She was a teacher and worked for her family insurance business. **Verne Strickland** '59 of Wilmington died Nov. 12 at 79. He was an anchor at WRAL-TV in Raleigh for 16 years, and his voice was also heard daily on the N.C. News Network and Capitol Agribusiness Network. He also served as media consultant for U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms' re-election campaign, produced a television special called *KGB: The Lie and the Truth* and later



formed his own multimedia production company, Verne Strickland Communications, which provided specialized communications to leading agribusiness companies and government agencies.



**Robert Joseph Nelson** '60 of Fayetteville died Sept. 27 at 81. He was a public health professional with the Cumberland County Health Department, where he specialized in the treatment of infectious diseases. **Johnny Daniel Wike** '60 of Cullowhee died Sept. 3 at 82. He coached football at Cullowhee High School and Carson-Newman College and spent most of his career coaching football and golf at Western Carolina University. He was inducted into the WCU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009.



**Richard L. "Dick" Hodgson** '61 of Wilmington, Del., died Oct. 11 at 84. He was a history teacher and a track and cross-country coach, spending most of his career at The Tatnall School. **Billy Ray Ward** '61 of Ocean Isle Beach died Sept. 28 at 83. He enjoyed a successful 30-plus year career as an educator, spending most of his career in Marlboro County as the principal of Wallace High School. He also served as assistant superintendent of the Marlboro County School System. **Louis W. Sewell Jr.** '61 '66 of Jacksonville died Oct. 14 at 81. He was a founding director of Investors Management Corporation, the corporate parent of Golden Corral, where he served until his retirement in 2015. His involvement helped Golden Corral grow into a national chain of 500 restaurants. He also founded Coastal Equipment Co. in Jacksonville. **Percy Eugene "Gene" Saunders Jr.** '62 of Raleigh died Aug. 15 at 80. He was an accountant for C.C. Mangum Construction Co. in Raleigh. **George Donnelly "Goldie" Golden** '63 of Atlantic died on Dec. 2 at 75. A lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force, he earned his pilot wings in 1965 at Webb Air Force Base, Texas, and completed combat crew training in F-102s. He flew combat assignments in Vietnam, winning the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, and he worked as an



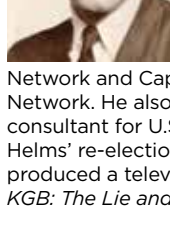
instructor pilot at air bases in Texas, Florida and Georgia. After his military retirement, he was president of KRIGO Associates.



**Betty Cash Buchanan** '64 of Winterville died Sept. 21 at 75. She taught school in Winston-Salem and then Farmville for 20 years. **Joyce Lee Worthington** '64 of Greenville died Nov. 5 at 74. She was a longtime educator with Pitt County Schools. **Virginia Dickens Cannon** '65 of Charleston, S.C., died Sept. 2 at 87. She spent 30 years as a guidance counselor with Charleston County Schools and was a dance instructor and etiquette teacher. **Wade Anderson Gardner Jr.** '66 of Wilson died Nov. 10 at 80. A lifelong educator, he was a teacher and principal at Charles L. Coon Junior High, Woodard Junior High and Beddingfield High in Wilson. He was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 2004. **Robert Christesen** '66 '87 of Raleigh died Oct. 12 at 73. Known to his students and colleagues in the Wake County Public School System as "Mr. C.," he was an educator and former opera singer. He was a teacher and administrator for a number of Wake County schools and sang with the N.C. Symphony and at Duke Chapel.



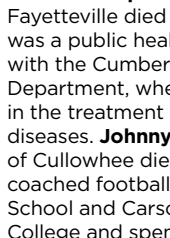
**Winston Lee Underwood** '66 of Roanoke, Va., died Oct. 15 at 78. He served as a principal for Botetourt County School System and as director of career education for the Title 3 project in Bedford County. In 1983, he started a career in real estate and founded Winn & Company Realty. **Janine "Jann" K. Bertram** '68 of Virginia Beach, Va., died Sept. 17 at 69. **Ronald B. "Ron" Byerly** '68 of Charlotte died Aug. 29 at 70. He spent more than 25 years in the financial services community, retiring from Met Life. **Sharon Leigh Davis** '68 of Southern Pines died Sept. 24, at 69. She and her husband, Woody, owned and operated Sherwood Downs Farm in Southern Pines, and her passion of horses led her to many Morgan horse championships and carriage-driving events.



**Frances (Elaine) Reddick** '68 of League City, Texas, died Nov. 24 in Webster, Texas, at age 70. She taught elementary school in North Carolina and Virginia for several years. **Jasper Donald Hudson** '69 of Greenville died Nov. 20 at 76. He was employed by Greenville Utilities Commission as assistant finance director, retiring in 2000 after 31 years of service.



**Larry Ray Deal**, '70 of Salisbury died Oct. 24 at 68. He was the head football, track and basketball coach and the athletic director at South Rowan High School. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserves for more than 20 years. Retired Lt. Col. **Douglas R. Whiteside** '70 of Leavenworth, Kan., died Aug. 28 at 68. He served in the U.S. Army for 24 years, and after retirement he worked for USPA and IRA as a financial planner. **Anne W. Blanchard** '71 of Seven Springs died Nov. 26 at 79. She taught in the business department at Wayne Community College for 30 years.



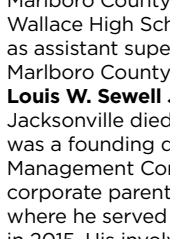
**Jennie Murphy Alexander** '71 '73 of Greenville died Oct. 16 at 84. She worked as the head of reference services at the Wilson County Public Library from 1973 to 1997. The Rev. **William Dail Tyndall** '72 of Wilson died Nov. 4 at 89. He was a retired Baptist minister, serving many churches in eastern North Carolina. He was also a chaplain with the Wilson Sanatorium, Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem and Louisiana Technical Institute, and he worked in administration with Carteret Technical College and Wilson Community College. **Elinor Workman** '72 of Seneca, S.C., died Oct. 14 at 84. She was a teacher for more than 25 years in the Wilson County Schools. **Rebecca Crane "Becca" Gray** '73 of Fort Mill, S.C., died Oct. 14 at 68. She was employed by Bimco Wholesale Plumbing Supply in Lexington for 28 years and later worked at Lowe's in Fort Mill, S.C. **Jerry Lynn Jones** '73 of Williamston died Nov. 24 at



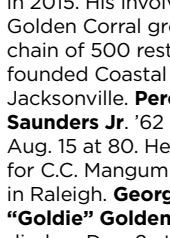
**James Jordan Jr.** '76 '83 of Macon died Sept. 6 at 81. He was a teacher and later assistant superintendent of Warren County Schools. **Josie Ernestine Sermons Roberts** '77 of Edgewater, Fla., died Aug. 23 at 77. She worked in the microbiology lab at Beaufort County Hospital. **Lawrence Calvert Hall Jr.** '78 of Bolivia died Oct. 30 at 62. He was an assistant county ranger for the N.C. Forest Service. **Wyatt Kelly Harper** '78 '80 of Garner died Sept. 14 at 69. He was a teacher and coach at Daniels Middle School, Carnegie Middle School and Sanderson High School and served as director of transportation for the Wake County Public School System. **James Bruce Herring Jr.** '78 died Aug. 31 at 69. He was a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War. **Jill Barnhill High** '78 '85 of Washington died Oct. 29 at 73. She was a retired teacher with 27 years of service. **Edward "Ed" James Ormsby** '78 of Newton died Oct. 15 at 60. He was a corporate compliance manager with CommScope in Hickory and former production manager with CommScope in Catawba. **John "David" Pollack** '78 of Morehead City died Oct. 15 at 72. He was president of Pollack Enterprises, and he and his wife, Nancy, founded Miss Nancy's Early Learning Centers and owned and operated seven day care centers throughout eastern North Carolina. **Robert "Bob" Speight Melton Jr.** '79 of Nashville died Nov. 17 at 65. He was a certified public accountant with Sprint for 20 years.



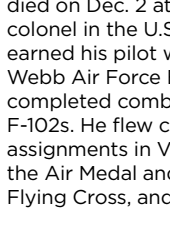
**Nancy Caldwell Adams** '80 of Nashville, Tenn., died Sept. 2 at 81. She was a CPA and worked as an auditor in North Carolina for 10 years. **James Luther Kiser** '81 '85 of Buies Creek died Sept. 29 at 78. He retired honorably from the U.S. Army in 1976 after 20 years of service and was later employed by the N.C. Department of Human Resources as a rehabilitation counselor. **John Rodney Yeglin**



**John Rodney Yeglin**



**John Rodney Yeglin**



**John Rodney Yeglin**

## 1960s

## 1970s

## 1980s

'81 of Glen Allen, Va., died Dec. 15 at 65. He played professional baseball for the farm teams of the Yankees, Giants and Orioles and later worked in sales for McGeorge Toyota.



**Elizabeth Newman Trevathan** '82 of Burlington died Jan. 13 at 56.

From the early 1990s until her death, she worked as executive director of the N.C. Academy of General Dentistry. **John Daniell Weyler** '82 of Atlanta died Oct. 7 at 57. **Warren Dean Riggs** '83 of Shiloh died Oct. 19 at 55. He was the owner and operator of Riggs Landscaping. **James Mark Goodson** '86 of Jacksonville died Dec. 4 at 54. He worked as a logger.



**Eva Elizabeth "Beth" Adell Saleeby** '86 of Greenville died Nov. 6 at 53. She was a retired unit manager with the N.C. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

and served in leadership roles in area vocational rehabilitation offices. **Wayne E. Miller** '82 '86 of Browns Summit died Aug. 28 at 63. He worked as an elementary school counselor in Rockingham County for 21 years. **A. W. "Bill" Moorefield III** '82 '86 of Gibsonville died Aug. 28 at 69. He was a retired salesman for Carolina Container.

### 1990s

**Daniel Byron "Danny" Rains** '92 of Greenville died Sept. 14 at 47. He worked for 15 years in the pharmaceutical industry, most recently for Janssen Pharmaceuticals. **Arthur Andrew "Andy" Sutorius** '93 of Concord died Sept. 2 at 47. He was employed with Suddath as a website programmer. **Victor Leonard Slade** '95 of Chapel Hill died Sept. 21 at 59. He worked at Wilson Memorial Hospital, ECU's Brody School of Medicine and most recently with the Environmental Protection Agency. **Sarah Kathryn Morgan-Hardman** '97 of Hickory died Nov. 15 at 42. She worked as a vice president/business center manager for People's Bank.

### 2000s

**Donald "Donny" Scott Johnson Jr.** '00 of Wake Forest died Nov. 10. He was employed by the N.C. Department of Labor. **James Baxter Ray Jr.** '00 of Carthage died Oct. 1 at 39. He was a teacher at Robbins Elementary School and participated

in the Envision Experience in Vienna, Va. **Melissa Christine Langham** '02 of Arlington, Va., died Sept. 29 at 38. She was a nurse at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. **Erin Elizabeth Dale** '02 Raleigh died Sept. 11 at 35. She spent her career with Marriott as a sales manager.

### 2010s

**Ashley Amelia "Amy" Shore** '15 of Bradenton, Fla., died Nov. 19 at 24. She was a member of the Association of Southeastern Biologists and the commanding officer of the Junior ROTC at Wake Forest-Rolesville High School. **Keosmond Nelson** '15 of Ayden died Nov. 14 at 23. **Zeke Sigler** '15 '16 of Wilmington died Oct. 14 at 23. He was going to work for Ernst & Young as an accountant.

## FACULTY

**James Robert "Jim" Bruner** of Greenville, a retired U.S. Navy captain and judge advocate general, died Oct. 22 at 84. After nearly 30 years in the Navy, in 1984 he took a position as associate professor of criminal justice at ECU, retiring in 1994. He served as a member of the N.C. Grievance Resolution Board from 1986 until 1996. He was a Kentucky Colonel and a member of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

**Hal Jefferson "Jeff" Daniel III** died Feb. 5 at 74. He was a member of the anthropology, speech/language auditory pathology and biology faculty for 38 years. He also wrote 11 collections of poetry.



**Elizabeth Drake** of Greenville died April 12, 2016, at 100. A pianist, she was a professor of music at ECU for 31 years. She was featured in a Class Notes spotlight in the summer 2011 issue of *East*.



**Grace Miriam Ellenberg** of Greenville died Nov. 29 at 95. After teaching abroad in the 1960s, she taught French at ECU for 20 years before retiring.



**Rebecca Fay** of Greenville died Jan. 2 at 38. She joined ECU in 2011 and was an assistant professor of accounting in the ECU College of Business.

Last year, Fay received the Innovation in Auditing and Assurance Education Award from the American Accounting Association.



**Robert Wayne Leith** of Greenville died Nov. 3 at 92. He taught in the ECU School of Technology for 29 years and served as interim head of the department.

**Bramy Resnik** of Atlanta died Nov. 26 at 87. A Holocaust survivor and Korean War veteran, he immigrated to the U.S. after escaping from a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. He taught in the ECU foreign language department from 1968 to 1999.



**Edward Seykora** of Greenville died Jan. 23 at 78. He worked on Project Gemini, helping develop the engines that would later get astronauts to the moon. He also developed monitors for seeing clear air turbulence, for the Air Force and major airlines, which is

still being used at solar observatories around the world. He came to Greenville in 1968 and was a professor of physics at ECU for 47 years.

**Harold Michael Snyder** of Morehead City died Nov. 25 at 72. A Marine, airman and Vietnam War veteran, he investigated alien sightings for Project Blue Book. He later served as the Joint Public Affairs Officer at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point before serving on the faculty of the ECU English department for 16 years, retiring in 2008.

**Rita T. Finnen** of Greenville died Aug. 26 at 85. She taught at the ECU School of Nursing from 1978 to 1994.



**Patricia Lois Peoples** '95 '01 '11 of Greenville died Aug. 23 at 65. An educator for 27 years, she was the kindergarten-through-12th-grade English language arts

and social studies curriculum coordinator for Pitt County and then an instructor for the ECU College of Education.

## STAFF

**Marie Covil Horne** '84 of Garner died Nov. 6 at 84. She worked for ECU and later for the State Board of CPA Examiners, the NCDOT and as a legislative assistant for the N.C. General Assembly.

**Victor Leonard Slade** '95 of Chapel Hill died Sept. 21 at 59. He worked at Wilson Memorial Hospital, ECU's Brody School of Medicine and most recently with the Environmental Protection Agency.

**Kimly Sabine Blanton** '04 of Greenville died Sept. 21. She worked for ECU library services, working her way from student worker to system administrator and supervisor of the networking unit.

## FRIENDS

**J. Earl Daniele**y of Burlington, the former president of Elon University and a higher education advocate in North Carolina, died Nov. 29 at 92. He served on the ECU board of trustees from 1973-1979.

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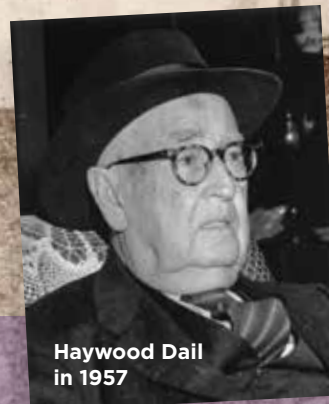
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# UPON THE PAST

*"We are not here to destroy the old and accept only the new, but to build upon the past..."*  
 —Robert H. Wright, Nov. 12, 1909  
 From his inaugural address and installation as East Carolina's first president



Haywood Dail is shown to the right and behind Gov. Thomas Jarvis (with shovel) at the 1908 groundbreaking of East Carolina Teachers Training School.

## Haywood Dail's 'jaws' of victory

In 1907, former Gov. Thomas Jarvis had his doubts the people of Greenville wanted their town to be the home of the state's next teachers school. To be a site finalist, voters had to OK a \$50,000 bond referendum.

'No' votes—and that there was considerable opposition to the idea of new local taxes in Greenville. And Dail was determined. He must have chewed vigorously.

Local brick maker W. Haywood Dail Jr. promised Jarvis he would take care of the bond vote. As a chief official for the bond election, Dail was in position to make good on his pledge. Former East Carolina University Chancellor Leo Jenkins himself wrote the story of how Dail literally chewed up the opposition in the May 24, 1970, issue of the Greenville *Daily Reflector*.

"He chewed only in the area on which the ballot had been marked—and put the wet paper wad in his pocket. Of course when time came to count the votes, those ballots had to be discarded."

Jenkins writes: "History does not record exactly how many of the negative votes Dail absent-mindedly stuffed into his mouth that day. But somehow he knew which were the

Though the bond passed by more than 300 votes, Greenville still had to prevail against Kinston and Rocky Mount in a June 10, 1907, vote by the State Board of Education. Greenville won on the third ballot.

Jenkins continues: "In later years, Dail confessed. 'I'm not sorry I did it,' he said, 'because if I hadn't, the issue wouldn't have

carried. It was a long time before I said anything about it to anyone, but I'll be damned if I'm ashamed of it.

"None of us had any idea that the college would grow as it has. None of us had that much vision. We just thought it would be worth a great deal to Eastern North Carolina. If it takes vision to think that way about a thing then I guess we had vision."

In addition to making bricks, Dail was a farmer, tobacconist, car dealer, builder, highway commissioner and avid horse racer, according to local historian Roger Kammerer. A native of Greene County, Dail made the brick for the first buildings at ECU—and built the Dail House, also known today as the chancellor's residence.

—Doug Boyd

# Gear up for Spring!

idas



Spring is the perfect time to come back to campus for a visit. And when you do, stop by ECU Dowdy Student Store in Wright Building!

We're not just the student bookstore, we carry a wide selection of East Carolina merchandise and apparel in our stores. By shopping with us, your purchase benefits scholarships and support campus programs.

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**Mothers and their 2- to 5-year-old daughters participate in a Saturday morning exercise class and research study aimed at promoting lifelong physical activity. The study is led by Deirdre Dlugonski in the ECU Department of Kinesiology in the College of Health and Human Performance.**

*Photo by Cliff Hollis*