ON THE COVER:
A highlight of the Homecoming 2019 celebration was the opening of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Plaza, a new gathering place that honors the nine historic African American fraternities and sororities that are part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council founded in 1930. Dozens of alumni, current members and students were in attendance for the dedication ceremony on Saturday, November 2. NPHC was formed to promote unanimity of thought and action among the organizations, who operate on the basic premises of scholarship, service, and sisterhood/brotherhood. Situated between Centennial and Governors halls, the plaza serves as a place to educate the campus about the history of each of the “Divine Nine” NPHC member organizations and offers an outdoor setting for community engagement and programming.
Many of our academic programs reached milestone anniversaries in 2019. During Homecoming, we celebrated the golden anniversary of two of our health sciences programs, as 2019 marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of our Dental Hygiene program. It was also 50 years ago that our undergraduate program in Environmental Health was accredited. This program was the first in the nation to earn full accreditation from the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council. This fall, we also recognized the 50th anniversary of the Zeta Omega chapter of Sigma Chi.

Our campus also had the opportunity to be part of another major anniversary celebration that took place in 2019 commemorating the 150th anniversary of the place we are proud to call our own. The City of Johnson City was founded on December 1, 1869. During the early 1900s, the leaders and other prominent businessmen – namely George L. Carter – lobbied for Johnson City to be the eastern destination for one of the state’s three new normal schools. Mr. Carter even donated his own land that became the campus home of East Tennessee State Normal School. The normal school was officially dedicated on October 10, 1911, and while this was a day of celebration for many, the residents and leaders of Johnson City went to work the next day on ways they could support and strengthen their hometown’s new institution of higher education.

Through the years that followed, that spirit of partnership would continue to flourish, and the investments of time and resources made by the people of this region would yield much in return. The presence of ETSU has enhanced educational opportunities and business growth. Through our work with ETSU Health, we have revolutionized health care in the region. Our faculty and students have contributed new knowledge through their research and scholarly activities. We have transformed the arts and culture of this region. We have served the communities around us. We have helped people realize their dreams. This was, after all, the mission of East Tennessee State Normal School—to improve the quality of life for the people of this region—and this commitment to service will continue to drive and empower this institution.

Earlier this fall, we held a sesquicentennial celebration event on our campus. The event was held on October 10, the anniversary of the normal school’s dedication ceremony, and I used that setting to announce our new ETSU Elevates initiative that further enhances that mission of service in this region. You can read more about the ETSU Elevates project on page 23.

For over a century, our students, faculty, staff, and alumni have called Johnson City home, and we are proud and honored to be part of a community so deeply rooted in the belief of the power of higher education. The histories of Johnson City and ETSU are closely woven together and create the fabric that is the foundation for the future of our region. We look forward to the new opportunities that are ahead. Happy 150th, Johnson City!

Godspeed and Go Bucs!

Sincerely,

Brian Noland
President
ETSU is known for producing excellent nurses.

Roz Wilkerson
East Tennessee State University’s College of Nursing has expanded its presence and programs throughout Tennessee in order to meet the state’s growing health care demands.

“The program that has seen particular growth over the past year has been our LPN to BSN program,” said Dr. Wendy Nehring, Dean of the College of Nursing. “The demand is there for a convenient and economic way for LPNs to increase their skill set and their job opportunities, and ETSU has stepped up to meet that demand.”

ETSU is the only public university in Tennessee to offer an LPN to BSN program, giving licensed practical nurses (LPNs) an accessible, convenient way to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree.

ETSU has been approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to offer the program at seven sites throughout the state (Johnson City, Crossville, Nashville, Sevierville, Shelbyville, Newbern, and Erlanger Hospital) and is finalizing approval for two additional sites to be announced in 2020.

The idea for ETSU’s new LPN to BSN program came by accident, when leaders from the College of Nursing decided to visit community colleges to discuss ways to build the RN to BSN program.

“While we were visiting the community colleges, we were able to meet with many Tennessee Centers for Applied Technology Practical Nursing students who shared with us why they were not able to attend ETSU’s current LPN to BSN program,” said Dr. Melessia Webb, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs. “We decided to develop a needs assessment to see what we could do to offer a program that would appeal to this group of nurses.”

When the LPN to BSN program started at ETSU in 2001, it was primarily accessible to working nursing professionals in the Tri-Cities area, with courses offered on-ground with traditional students on ETSU’s main campus in Johnson City. This format did not provide opportunities for the growth that was in demand across the state.

The needs assessment revealed that Practical Nursing students wanted a program that was accessible, meaning that the college needed to offer it remotely to meet the demand from students as far away as Memphis. Students also wanted an accelerated format and articulation credits awarded based on knowledge gained from their LPN training.

With that information in hand, ETSU’s College of Nursing faculty went to work to develop a program that would meet these requests. The college worked with Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) sites to ensure that 23 hours of articulation credit could be awarded to students based on their LPN training. They also developed a program that could be completed in four straight semesters, including summers.

“One thing that was surprising as we developed the program was that we figured students would want a 100 percent online program, but they actually wanted a hybrid program,” Webb said.

A hybrid program offers 50 percent of coursework fully online and 50 percent of the courses conducted via instructional television (ITV) at other Tennessee locations.

In the fall 2018 semester, the College of Nursing enrolled 59 students in cohorts in three cities, with classes livestreamed from Johnson City to the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology in both Nashville and Crossville. In spring 2019, the program expanded to Chattanooga’s Erlanger Health System.

This fall, the program added its first cohorts in Sevierville and Newbern, and the college is looking at two additional sites for spring 2020.

“The growth of the program has been exponential,” said Tabitha Quillen, Director of Undergraduate Post-Licensure Programs. “We have 94 students enrolled this fall and already have 178 applicants for spring 2020. Within four semesters, we have been able to enroll almost the same number of students our traditional program enrolls.”

The program has allowed students like Roz Wilkerson, an LPN who lives and works full time in Roane County, the opportunity to earn her BSN. She will be among the first class to graduate from ETSU’s new program this December.

“The job that I am aiming for requires you to have a BSN, so this would be a substantial raise if I were the one to get the position,” Wilkerson said. “I chose ETSU’s LPN to BSN program because when comparing other bridge programs, this program was the most doable for the working LPN. ETSU is known for producing excellent nurses.”

She also appreciated that the program could provide a bridge to a master’s or doctoral degree in nursing, if she chooses to continue her education.

“This degree will open numerous job opportunities for me to advance in the nursing field.”

Not only will the program meet the needs of individual nurses like Wilkerson, it will also affect health care across the state.

“Ultimately, this program will help impact the state’s nursing shortage as we create more educational opportunities,” Quillen said. “We are leading the way to make a difference – from Johnson City to Memphis.”

To learn more about ETSU’s LPN to BSN program, visit etsu.edu/nursing.

The program that has seen particular growth over the past year has been our LPN to BSN program.

Wendy Nehring

Melissa Nipper is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations. | Photo by Charlie Warden
Last summer, East Tennessee State University received a monumental challenge and a historic gift that will significantly impact the health of rural communities.

On July 16, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced the creation of a new Center for Rural Health Research to be housed at the ETSU College of Public Health. The goal of the center is to identify new mechanisms to improve health in rural and nonurban areas.
“In order for Tennessee to truly lead the nation, we must ensure we help all Tennesseans succeed, particularly in our rural areas,” Lee said. “I believe the Center for Rural Health Research at ETSU is going to be a major contributor to solving problems that have been developing in rural America for decades.

“ETSU has a proven record in helping to solve problems, particularly on health care, so this is a natural fit for this doctoral and research institution.”

We’re committed to working together collaboratively across ETSU Health to put together a world-class Center for Rural Health Research.

Randy Wykoff
Lee also announced that ETSU will receive a $1.5 million first-year grant for the implementation of the center, and then a recurring $750,000 annual investment to support ongoing operations. These appropriations were recommended by Lee and approved by the Tennessee General Assembly during the 111th legislative session.

In addition, Alan Levine, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Ballad Health, announced that the system would contribute more than $15 million to the center over the course of the next 10 years. The gift is the largest in ETSU history and the largest to date for the $120 million capital “Campaign for ETSU” launched earlier this year.

Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean of the College of Public Health, will serve at the helm of the center as its founding director.

“This is an exciting time,” Wykoff said. “Governor Lee has recognized the resources and the opportunities that exist here at ETSU and the opportunity to partner with Ballad Health to address the needs of rural Tennessee.”

In just a few months since the center’s creation, Wykoff has reached out to many key players in the public health arena to gather vital information that will help drive the center’s mission. He has met or spoken with well over 50 national, state, and regional leaders to identify areas of concern and potential research opportunities, as well as make connections and build networks that can support the center’s long-term mission.

“We are being systematic and thoughtful to make sure that we set up a center that is going to make a real difference in the lives of the people of this state,” Wykoff said.

Initial discussions have focused on five areas of priority: interrupting intergenerational cycles of poor health, lack of education, and poverty; exploring innovative models of health care delivery; creating a longitudinal database of women, children, and families in rural areas; identifying policies and practices that will improve health and well-being in rural areas; and providing support to empower local organizations.

Through his outreach efforts, Wykoff has already identified a sixth priority—a focus on the unique needs of the rural elderly population.

Wykoff also has established a transition team and has begun the process of recruiting a full-time director for research and programs, a coordinator, and a team of new faculty who can assure a rapid start-up for the center. He is also in the process of finalizing space for the new center.

ETSU has a proven record in helping to solve problems, particularly on health care, so this is a natural fit for this doctoral and research institution.

Governor Bill Lee

The new Center for Rural Health Research will begin a new chapter in ETSU’s longstanding mission of service to improve health care in rural communities.

For more than 20 years, the university has garnered numerous awards as well as a recurring spot in U.S. News & World Report’s rankings of the nation’s best medical schools for rural medicine.

The roots of that mission trace back to 1974 when the Tennessee legislature authorized the establishment of the Quillen College of Medicine, whose goal was to increase the number of primary care physicians in rural communities.

But the true game-changer came in the summer of 1991 when the W.K. Kellogg Foundation awarded $6.1 million to ETSU to launch the Community Partnership for Health Professions Education Program.

This would be more than just an elective or a rotation.
“We’re committed to working together collaboratively across ETSU Health to put together a world-class Center for Rural Health Research,” Wykoff said.

Wykoff points out that the need for the center is great, especially when comparing health outcomes of Tennessee’s five richest counties and the 15 most distressed counties.

“Comparing these counties, the early death rate is almost twice as high in the distressed counties, so you begin to realize what poverty and rurality do to our health statistics in this state,” Wykoff said.

Wykoff said the center will be a reliable source of information for policymakers, providing evidence-based data from which to help inform policy decisions that can improve health in rural and nonurban communities. It will also pursue connections with a range of funding partners to support efforts that advance the health and well-being of residents in those areas.

“We are grateful to Governor Lee and our partner, Ballad Health, for this significant investment that will help to improve the lives of the people of this region and in rural communities across the nation,” said Dr. Brian Noland, ETSU President. “Appalachia is going to lead in developing solutions to many of the challenges facing our rural communities.”

First, the program would extend beyond the College of Medicine campus. The paramount word was interdisciplinary, and medical students, nursing students, and public health students would have the opportunity to work together as teams, gaining a deeper appreciation for how health care professionals work collaboratively to care for their patients.

And secondly, the communities became the classroom. Two rural communities in Northeast Tennessee—Johnson County and Hawkins County—were chosen as the partnership sites. Both counties had major service gaps in health care and poor health outcomes. One day per week, the student teams would meet in these counties and work with residents to identify the major health challenges and develop intervention strategies.

“The Kellogg grant was the beginning,” said Dr. Paul Stanton, then Dean of Medicine and Vice President for Health Affairs who, after serving as President of ETSU for 15 years, was named President Emeritus. “Students across the country who had a passion for rural health care arrived on our doorsteps. This was an innovative educational approach in that we placed students in the communities and they were able to see firsthand the struggles rural areas faced in accessing health care. And, with their team members, they were able to be part of the solutions.”

In the years that followed, the Kellogg Foundation awarded two additional grants to ETSU, and the model has been sustained and used to form new partnerships with Unicoi, Hancock, Carter, Greene, Cocke, Sevier, Sullivan, and Washington counties, as well as with the regional African American and Hispanic communities. Opportunities have been expanded to include students from social work, nutrition, environmental health, and psychology.

Approximately 16 new Quillen medical students are admitted into the Rural Track Program each year.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer at ETSU.
BONDS OF BROTHERHOOD
Reimagined

FOUR FRATERNITY CHAPTERS
ESTABLISH DEDICATED SPACE
ON CAMPUS FOR THE FIRST TIME
To make an impact is to leave a legacy.

“It just feels more like home. We’re doing things differently than before. Everyone is bought in and believes we can execute new programming and grow our chapters,” says Nolan McClain, 2019 President of ETSU’s Interfraternity Council.

Nolan is among a group of young men who will have plenty of stories to tell the next generation – about starting a new phase, forging a new path, and the brothers who believed in bringing their chapters to campus and put in the work to make it happen.

On a beautiful Saturday morning in September, the Interfraternity Council (IFC) held an open house to debut four new learning community spaces. Both Sigma Alpha Epsilon and Sigma Phi Epsilon relocated to houses at 916 and 920 West Maple Street, respectively, and ETSU’s two newest chapters of Alpha Sigma Phi and Beta Upsilon Chi introduced dedicated suites on the first floor of Nell Dossett Hall. These facilities are available for meetings of organization members, alumni, and guests, and for use as a gathering place for academic enrichment and organization activities.

“Chapter alumni, and myself, have been profoundly impacted by the fraternity experience,” ETSU President Brian Noland said during the open house ceremony. “In order to ensure that the next generation has the same opportunities, we had to do something different. The Greek letters provide visibility and a home on our campus.”

Greek letters now adorn five campus buildings. However, the concept of fraternities on campus emerged decades prior. While she was packing up files in preparation for the D.P. Culp Center renovation, Maggie Darden, Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life, discovered a particularly interesting memo. In 1979, Dr. Sally Lee, then Sally Thomas, the Fraternity and Sorority Life Coordinator who would later become Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, sat at a typewriter and carefully outlined a proposal for fraternity houses on campus.

“There were a number of supporting factors that made this the perfect time,” Maggie noted while discussing the latest version of the proposal to create the Interfraternity Council Learning Community submitted by the Division of Student Life and Enrollment earlier this year.

“At a time when many universities are doing less, ETSU is doing more. The university is providing more support for fraternities by implementing a creative and innovative solution.”

The proposal outlines the vision for the new learning community that includes providing resources, through dedicated space and implementation of a core curriculum, in order to meet student success and retention goals specific to the university’s strategic plan. It also lists the structure and expectations for the learning communities broken into four categories – academics, conduct, programming and engagement, and operations.

While Sigma Chi continues to maintain an off-campus residency, they have demonstrated commitment and support for the learning community model by making modifications to their house to include study space accessible by non-residential members and by implementing new programming focused on promoting strong and healthy brotherhood.

“The core curriculum is targeted to support the fundamentals of scholarship, leadership, and mentorship development,” Maggie said. “The curriculum and dedicated space are mutually beneficial. One can’t work without the other.”

During the two weeks leading up to the open house, chapter members worked around the clock to ensure their spaces were ready for visitors. It was during the painting and prep work that Preston White, President of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, said their house became home. He, along with other leaders from the four fraternities, worked closely with university leadership and alumni to make the transition.

“We advocated for this and being on campus has improved our image,” Preston said.
SIGMA CHI CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AT ETSU

The Zeta Omega Chapter of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, installed at ETSU on May 18, 1969, celebrated turning 50 this October. Alumni brothers from 16 different states were joined by former chapter sweethearts, little sisters, and other guests to celebrate.

Twenty-four of the 45 original members, as well as three widows of the initiates, returned to campus to commemorate the milestone. Each Alpha class member was presented with a 50-year Sigma Chi pin and a special challenge coin. The weekend also included several events celebrating contributions and accomplishments of Sigma Chi culminating with an anniversary banquet.

ETSU alumni Marshall Wilkins and Judge Steven Jones received the national “Significant Sig Award” given annually to Sigma Chi alumni whose exemplary achievements in their fields have brought great honor and prestige to Sigma Chi.

Wilkins has been with Chick-Fil-A for almost 40 years and owns two restaurants in the Knoxville area. Jones was a longtime attorney and general sessions judge in Sullivan County.

Zeta Omega chapter alumnus Ken Bailey said, “Sigma Chi appreciates and values the relationship and partnership it has had with East Tennessee State University for the past 50 years and looks forward to continuing for at least 50 more.”

For Beta Upsilon Chi, it was less about the transition and more about establishing a place to call home. The ETSU chapter was chartered in 2016 and, with no official space, had no option but to meet in various locations across campus, local restaurants, and members’ homes. The option to move into a suite, rather than a house, made joining the learning community a viable option for Beta Upsilon Chi and Alpha Sigma Phi, which chartered in 2017. “This is truly a step in the right direction,” said Zachary Warren, President of Beta Upsilon Chi. “It has been wonderful to have a central place on campus where we can all meet. We’re here to show that the stereotypes aren’t true.”

According to the program guidelines, the structure and expectations set forth by the Interfraternity Council Learning Community aim to disrupt repetitive cycles of unhealthy stages of organizational development by improving the member experience. Each chapter is encouraged to foster high impact character development and educational programming that is recognized through national awards and scholarships. Alumni are also encouraged to offer their support through their time, talent, and treasure, and to become chapter advisors and mentors.

“We have fulfilled most of the physical vision for the fraternity spaces on campus,” Maggie said. “However, much of what we have done remains unseen. It is now up to chapter members and alumni to use these spaces to their full capacity.”

Amanda Mowell is Director of Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations. | Photos by Larry Smith
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Valid through September 9, 2018.
An ETSU graduate student in Storytelling has learned that an award-winning book she self-published in 2012 is to be made into a major motion picture.

The film adaptation of Cassie Dandridge Selleck’s The Pecan Man will star Laurence Fishburne (“The Matrix,” “CSI”) and will be directed by So Yong Kim (“In Between Days,” “For Ellen,” “Lovesong”).

In The Pecan Man, a widow hires a homeless black man to mow her lawn. Known as the “Pee-can Man” by the neighborhood children and held in suspicion by their mothers, the man Ora knows as Eddie is charged with the murder of the police chief’s son, who was found near his camp. Twenty-five years later, Ora sets out to tell the truth about the Pecan Man.

The Pecan Man won first place in the CNW/FFWA Florida State Writing Competition in the Unpublished Novel category in 2006.

Selleck is also the author of The Truth About Grace, a sequel to The Pecan Man published in 2018, and What Matters in Mayhew, which is book one in her new Beanie Bradsher Series.

The town in The Pecan Man closely resembles Selleck’s hometown of Leesburg, Florida, where she grew up during the desegregation era. She does not remember any protests, but does recall seeing and feeling the injustice of the “whites only” signs on water fountains.

She said she met her best friend – a black girl – on the first day of sixth grade, when full integration took place.

“From that moment on, I was able to see the world didn’t treat her the same way it treated me, and that set this passion in my heart for discovering why we do this.

“It’s not the overt racism that causes the most problems, because with overt racism, everybody goes, ‘Whoa, no!’ Every decent person would say, ‘No, we’re not going to be like that.’ No, it’s the things we don’t know. I would see people say things that they didn’t recognize as racist or hurtful, and so that was what I explored in the book – what happens when you mean well but you don’t do well.”

Selleck is thrilled to see that her story is well on its way to the screen. She learned four years ago that BCDF Pictures of New York was interested in adapting The Pecan Man as a movie after finding her on Amazon.

“It’s crazy to see words you’ve written performed by people you’ve respected and watched for years, and it’s a little surreal,” she said. “I’ve known that it’s coming, but with all the announcements they’re making, it’s getting real.”

Selleck’s presence at ETSU continues a journey she has been on since her second-grade teacher first told her she was a writer and she started imagining the shed in her backyard as a playhouse with a stage where she could write and produce plays.

After working as a young adult in various sales and marketing jobs, including stints with Merrill Lynch, Anderson Crane, and Bridge Technologies Inc., while raising her children, Selleck wanted to mark two items off her “bucket list.” The first was obtaining a college degree, and the second was to write a book. She worked on-and-off on the manuscript that would become The Pecan Man for 10 years, and she also took a class at a time for 20 years in community college. When The Pecan Man started doing well after she self-published it in 2012, she was able to leave her job and go to school full time. She completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing within two years at Vermont’s Goddard College, graduating in 2016.

The study of storytelling seemed like the logical next step for Selleck, who considers herself more of a storyteller than a writer. She worked in children’s programming for a tri-county library system in Florida and quickly discovered that the children responded better when there was no book between her and them, when it was just her telling the stories with greater interaction with the children.

The library system sent her to various storytelling events, one of which was the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, where she learned of ETSU’s well-known Storytelling Program, through which students earn a Master of Arts degree in Communication and Storytelling Studies.

“It just seemed like the thing to do,” Selleck said. “I’ve never cared about the degree, but about the experience, and if this is going to be part of my life – and it is – I want to know as much as I can about it.”

In addition to earning her master’s degree, Selleck says her goals include writing a mainstream novel, as her agent has been encouraging her to do, and delving into screenplays and stage plays.

“I want to explore all the different ways to tell a story,” she said, “and I want to be an encouragement to other writers.”

Selleck and her husband, Perry, live in Northwest Florida, in a home they built on the banks of the Suwannee River, and she has three children and six grandchildren. In addition to attending school at ETSU, she travels frequently for speaking engagements, including creative writing workshops and book-signing events.

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Jennifer Hill is Assistant Director of Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
Our goal with Access is to offer students the opportunity to have a college experience that is identical to their peers without disabilities.

Cindy Chambers

PHOTO BY DR. SUSAN EPPS
As a toddler, Garrison Buchanan took his first steps at the ETSU Child Study Center.

This fall, he was back on campus leaving a new set of footprints, this time as the inaugural student in the Access ETSU program, an initiative designed for students with intellectual disabilities.

“Our goal with Access is to offer students the opportunity to have a college experience that is identical to their peers without disabilities,” said Dr. Cindy Chambers, an Associate Dean in the Clemmer College. “Garrison went through the public school system and graduated at the age of 18. When his friends went off to college, he had the same opportunity.

“Access students like Garrison do the very same things other ETSU students do,” she added. “They attend classes, meet up with friends at the Center for Physical Activity, go to football games, eat lunch in the dining hall, and participate in internships. One of our main desired outcomes is to prepare Access participants for future employment, so students are able to take classes to gain skills that are aligned with their career goals.”

Chambers noted that research indicates that students who participate in inclusive higher education programs like Access are more likely to find employment.

Garrison’s dream is to work in a gym or somewhere in the sports field.

And thanks to the Access program, his résumé is already taking shape. In addition to attending classes, Garrison is interning at ETSU’s Basler Center for Physical Activity as a facilities assistant, a position he applied for and underwent an interview for before being offered the job.

“He does very well interacting with the students, faculty, and staff when they come here to work out,” she added. “The Basler CPA is one of the largest employers on campus, and it is important that our student employees develop skills that they can use to build their résumés.”

Whether he is enjoying Zumba or is taking a physical education course, Garrison is often seen in the company of his BucMate, Matt Williams. Each Access participant is paired with a BucMate who tags along with the student and provides support as needed.

Chambers said because this initiative has been a campus-wide effort, participants have access to the same resources as other students do, such as the library, food services, and disability services.

“I go to class with Garrison, help get the notes and assignments, and we study together,” said Williams, a graduate student pursuing a degree in special education. “Some days we have more free time than others, and it just depends on what he wants to do.

“He knows the campus better than I do,” Williams laughed. “He is doing very well. On one of the first days of class, each of us was asked to stand up and tell the others about us. Garrison did great.”

This past August, Garrison attended Preview, a weekend-long event held prior to the start of classes that provides first-time freshmen the opportunity to build connections and make new friends.

Access ETSU is a two-year certificate program open to students who are 18-28 years of age and who have a desire to continue their education at the university level. Students are admitted at the beginning of the fall semester each year.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer at ETSU.
WHO’S GOING TO ETSU?
An exchange agreement between his high school in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and University School provided a pathway for Cristopher Santana to learn more about ETSU.

“From the moment I stepped foot on campus, they had me,” recalls Santana of his first tour of ETSU. He arrived as a freshman in fall 2014 and from there the journey commenced, a journey that led him to earn two degrees, hold various leadership roles, earn the honor of “SGA Senator of the Year,” and, earlier this year, be appointed to the ETSU Board of Trustees.

All that and much more in just five years, though Santana says none of this would have happened had he not been willing to step outside his comfort zone.

“When you get outside your comfort zone, you get used to change, and that is important because we live in an ever-changing world,” said Santana, who is now a graduate student at ETSU. “It was difficult for me at first because I consider myself an introvert, but I started socializing and talking to people more and it became easier. I have met some amazing people.”

Santana began his first year as an economics major, and with the encouragement of his advisor he added finance as a second major during his sophomore year. He graduated from ETSU in May 2018 with two B.B.A. degrees.

“The faculty are really invested in their students,” he said. “They have a lot of time in class to answer questions and they are great about meeting with you during their office hours. I really appreciate how involved they were in helping us be successful.”

While an undergraduate he was active with the Economics Club, the Hispanic American Student Community Alliance, and the Student Finance Association and held leadership roles with all three. He also joined the Student Government Association as an associate justice during his junior year and the following year became a senator for the College of Business and Technology.

He wrote seven items of SGA legislation that year and was named “Senator of the Year,” which Santana says was very humbling and came as a surprise.

Earlier this year Santana submitted his name as a candidate to be part of the ETSU Board of Trustees as the Student Trustee for the 2019-20 year. He underwent a series of interviews before his name was recommended to President Noland as the finalist. His first meeting as a member of the Board of Trustees was in September 2019.

“I reflect on something my parents told me over and over since I was a kid. ‘Leave the place better than how you found it,’” he said. “That is the least I can do when I think about all the opportunities that ETSU has given to me. I could never repay this university for all they have done for me.

“It has been a wonderful journey.”

Future plans for Santana include earning a Ph.D. degree and working in the financial sector in the United States or back home in Ecuador.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer for ETSU.
I GET TO BE CURIOUS EVERY DAY!

For Dr. Lori Meier, the fall 2019 semester started with a bit more fanfare than usual. Just days before the first day of classes, she was presented the highest honor given to an ETSU professor, the Distinguished Faculty Award for Teaching. And a few weeks later, she received a letter from ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland asking her to be the keynote speaker for one of the December 2019 commencement ceremonies.

JOE SMITH: We will start with the obvious question that I bet you get a lot. Was teaching something you saw yourself doing ever since you were a child?

LORI MEIER: I do remember playing “school,” but it was because I was curious about everything in the world. I had parents who supported that, whether it was learning about other countries, or space, or rockets. I suppose my interest in teaching comes from being “nerdy” about knowledge. I wanted to learn it and I wanted to share it.

JS: I suppose that made education an easy college major to pick.

LM: (laughs) It was just the opposite. I went through five or six majors, and it was because I loved everything. I took an intro to geology course and thought that rock identification was the greatest thing, so I became a geology major. I took a course in meteorology and said, yep, this is what I was going to do. My parents supported me and bought me a weather radio for the car so we could chase tornadoes. I went through a lot of different majors, and even though I loved learning, I was not the best student. I just wasn’t disciplined and didn’t enjoy going to class. I started at a university in West Virginia and that didn’t work out, so I went to a school in Ohio where my parents were living then. It was there I got my act together. I liked the school but I was a commuter and did not have a social group to call my own, so I began looking for a smaller college that had more of a residential campus. And that is how I landed at Milligan College.

JS: What happened when you got to Tennessee?

LM: My goal was to just graduate. I declared English as my major, and by the time graduation came around I had met my husband, Rob, who still had more semesters ahead of him. Immediately after graduation, I enrolled in the M.A.T. program here at ETSU.

JS: So it is within the same walls where you train teachers that you yourself answered the calling?

LM: Yes! Teaching was an avenue where I could be everything. I loved geology and as a teacher I got to teach about geology. I loved meteorology and as a teacher I got to teach about meteorology. I loved social studies and I get to teach about social studies. I get to be curious every day!

JS: But soon emerged the idea of being an educator who prepares other educators, right?

LM: First, you should know that when graduation day came I didn’t walk because it was the same day Rob and I were married. We moved to Florida to Brevard County where I was hired as a sixth-grade teacher. It was a good fit for me. The school was very diverse and was progressive. I realized that I wanted to help those who wanted to be teachers. During my fourth year, I became a district professional developer teaching teachers, and it was during this time that I also started part-time as a doctoral student at the University of Central Florida.

JS: Tell me about being back home at your alma mater as a faculty member.

LM: I’m surrounded by absolutely wonderful people, and I am now colleagues with the people who were powerful mentors and role models to me. I am the advisor for the Master of Education program and my area of focus is in teaching social studies, particularly methods and curriculum theory. One of the things that is highly important to me is that we prepare teachers who are culturally responsive. Being culturally responsive is about awareness and it is about action. The kids entering their classrooms are the most diverse groups we have ever had. Each kid has a worthwhile story to share about their own lived experiences, and it is imperative that we work to create equitable classrooms where everyone’s story is valued and appreciated.

JS: Looking back on your journey as a student, what stands out to you today, 20 years later?

LM: To be honest, while it wasn’t the journey I would have picked, that of a struggling college student who eventually realized she was a strong college student, I am not sure any other one would have worked. It’s absolutely okay to learn and grow from what can feel like failure. I was quirky and curious, and if that was the way it had to be to get me to this point, then that’s fine.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations and Chief Communications Officer for ETSU.
ETSU HELPS LEADING WORLD WAR II SCHOLAR FIND THE PERFECT BALANCE
After three books on the subject, Dr. Stephen Fritz thought he had finished writing about World War II. Then an email arrived in his inbox.

He had turned his thinking to the aftermath of the war in Europe and the transition to peace. The idea outlined in that 2013 email, he felt, should be pursued by another scholar.

“Would you be interested in writing a book about Adolf Hitler as military leader?” the emailer asked.

Fritz politely declined. But the emailer persisted. She knew that the subject had not been covered adequately in three decades, and new material and new understanding had emerged since then.

That email came from Heather McCallum, an editor in the trade books section of the prestigious Yale University Press in London. She had read all three of Fritz’s books published by the University Press of Kentucky and felt he was especially skillful in writing books that appeal both to the academic community and to the educated general public.

I LIKE DOING RESEARCH, BUT I ALSO LIKE TEACHING.

Steve Fritz


McCallum convinced Fritz to reconsider his original turndown. He took a couple of months to do some preliminary research. By 2017, his manuscript was finished, and the next year, The First Soldier: Hitler as Military Leader was published by Yale University Press, to great acclaim by World War II historians. One scholar called it “magnificent.” Author Richard Overy wrote, “Perhaps the best account we have to date of Hitler’s military leadership. It shows a scrupulous and imaginative historian at work and will cement Fritz’s reputation as one of the leading historians of the military conflicts generated by Hitler’s Germany.”

“But the idea for the book was not mine at all,” Fritz emphasizes. “Heather, who is now head of Yale’s trade books division in London, is very good at discerning historical topics that the general public would be interested in and then getting academic scholars to write these books.”

Fritz, who has been teaching in the ETSU Department of History since 1984, said he was “flattered that Yale University Press would contact me and ask me to do a book, which validated the earlier three books.”

Fritz’s interest in German history and culture extends back to his childhood in rural Illinois, an area populated by many German immigrants. “When I was growing up, we still had German language schools and German language churches,” he recalls.

His two great-grandfathers were German immigrants, and both fought for the Union during the American Civil War. True to his profession, Fritz knows their history in detail.

“One, Jacob Mayer, was in the Seventh Illinois Cavalry and took part in the famous Grierson’s Raid, starting from West Tennessee and going down through Mississippi. It was made famous by the John Wayne movie The Horse Soldiers back in the late 1950s.

“He was actually captured in December of 1863 by Nathan Bedford Forrest’s forces and sent to a POW camp outside Montgomery, Alabama, and then in the spring of 1864, he was sent to the newly opened Andersonville POW camp. He, amazingly enough, spent almost the entire time that Andersonville was open and survived to go back to Illinois and farm.”

Although Fritz has traveled to Germany, researching Hitler’s military decisions for the book took place largely in the professor’s Rogers-Stout Hall office on the ETSU campus.

“The Library of Congress has made available, in digital format, all the official records of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials,” Fritz said. “Those records constitute a gigantic history lesson. The prosecutors gathered all the evidence they could find to document what the Nazis had done. There are 48 volumes, each running from 800 to 1,000 pages of documents.”

The maps for the Hitler book (and Ostkrieg, too) were done by Fritz’s wife Julia, a self-taught cartographer. Her academic training is in physiology, and that’s one of the reasons she and her husband moved to Johnson City some 35 years ago. For about 10 years, she worked in research with the Quillen College of Medicine.

When daughter Kelsey started school, Julia reinvented herself as a computer expert, eventually taking a job as the information technology person at Lake Ridge Elementary in Johnson City. Heavily influenced by her father’s passion for history, Kelsey is now enrolled in the master’s program in Cultural Heritage Management at the University of York in England. “She is in her element now,” her father proudly adds.

With such a distinguished record of scholarship, Dr. Stephen Fritz could teach anywhere in the country. “What has kept you at ETSU?” I ask. His answer echoes the sentiments of many ETSU faculty and staff members over the years.

“I didn’t anticipate we would be here so long,” he says. “I figured we’d be here five to six years and I’d get another job.”

Then after a perfunctory job search or two and the promise of tenure at ETSU upcoming, Steve and Julia reassessed, reaffirmed their love for the mountains, scenery, and people of East Tennessee, and decided to stay.

“In a few more years, our daughter was born, and we realized what a good environment this is for raising a child. Then when our daughter started school, we said, ‘Johnson City has really good schools, so there’s no point in moving on.’"
Although he technically qualifies for retirement, Fritz continues to teach a full load of classes. Among them in the fall of 2019 was “Europe of the Dictators: 1919-53,” a comparative history of the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany. The basic theme of the course is that all three countries were what Fritz calls “coercive utopias.”

Each leader, Fritz says, had a utopian vision for rebuilding their shattered societies coming out of World War I. “They were utopian in their promises but used extraordinarily coercive measures to achieve them.”

His fall schedule also included a new graduate seminar, “The Aftermath of War in Europe,” covering, among other topics, the famine in Ukraine of 1932-33 in which millions of Ukrainians died.

Meanwhile, Fritz continues to direct master’s theses, including one by graduate student Bianka Adamatti of Brazil.

“She got interested in the Holocaust and has taken a couple of academic courses at Auschwitz,” Fritz says. “Her thesis is a trans-national comparison of the origins of concentration camps.”

That kind of student contact is another reason why one of the nation’s leading World War II scholars has stayed at ETSU.

“For my particular interest, ETSU is almost a perfect place to be,” Fritz says. “I like doing research, but I also like teaching. In history, at some of the high-powered universities, you have these people who are churning out books, but they don’t really like to teach, and they rarely teach.

“But I really like to teach. I like to get in contact with the students. Here at ETSU at a certain point I realized I could do both—teach with time to do research and writing. It’s almost a perfect situation. That’s what keeps me here.”

Fred Sauceman holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and History and a Master of Arts in English from ETSU. | Photos by Charlie Warden
A major new initiative aimed at improving the quality of life for the people of the region was launched this fall. Through ETSU Elevates, $90,000 will be awarded to fund service projects across the region.

ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland made the announcement during a tree dedication ceremony held as part of Johnson City’s Sesquicentennial celebration. The ceremony took place on the same date that East Tennessee State Normal School was officially dedicated in 1911.

“Throughout our history are countless examples of how ETSU, the City of Johnson City, and other cities across the region have grown together and supported one another,” Noland said. “Together, we have improved access to education, brought more health care services, strengthened businesses, influenced the arts, and created many new opportunities for the people who call the area home. ETSU Elevates service grants will help bring new ideas to life and enhance existing projects. We are more successful if we work together to elevate our region.”

ETSU Elevates offers a unique opportunity to engage all members of the region, not just members of the ETSU community. Service grants of $5,000 each are available to teams that submit their ideas to create and enhance a healthy, thriving region with opportunities for all. Anyone is eligible, as long as they form a team with at least one member of the ETSU community (faculty, staff, students, organizations, departments, colleges).

All applicants will have an equal shot at an opportunity to pitch their service project ideas in front of a live audience that will vote and choose which projects receive funding. The university will host drawings before each ETSU Elevates pitch competition to select the applicants that will pitch their ideas in front of a live audience. To increase the opportunities for teams to receive funding for their service projects, five ETSU Elevates pitch competitions will be held through April 2020. The first competition was held in November.

“ETSU Elevates is going to do more than transform our region. We will learn from one another and be inspired by the ideas that are brought forth, maybe even from those who may not have felt they had a voice previously,” Noland added. “There is a competitive component to this initiative and we hope communities and members of our campus will come out to show their support for those who pitch their service project ideas.”

More details about ETSU Elevates, including application information, is available online at etsu.edu/ETSUElevates.
Dr. Chaya Nanjundeswaran Guntupalli, Associate Professor of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, receives a three-year, $407,000 grant from the National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders - National Institutes of Health to study a novel approach to treating vocal fatigue.

Dr. Adam S. Green is named Chief of Staff at ETSU and Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Mark Fulks is named University Counsel.

Dr. Lian Wang receives a two-year, $148,000 grant through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Small Grant Program to study childhood obesity.

The 2019 Distinguished Faculty Awards are presented to Dr. Alok Agrawal (Research), Dr. Andrea Clements (Service), and Dr. Lori Meier (Teaching).

ETSU celebrates the opening of the newly renovated dining hall in the Culp Center.

Dr. Brian Partin, Principal at Robinson Middle School in Kingsport, is named Director of University School.

The College of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program earns the top spot in a national ranking of “2019 Best DNP Programs” by RegisteredNursing.org.

Dr. Christine Mullins, Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing, is the 2019-20 recipient of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Novice Faculty Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award.
Dr. Keith Johnson is named Vice President for Equity and Inclusion. He will continue to serve as chair of the Department of Engineering, Engineering Technology, and Surveying.

Dr. Mike Hoff is selected as one of 15 members of the inaugural cohort of the Tennessee Higher Education Leadership and Innovation Fellows program.

Dr. Istvan Karsai from the Department of Biological Sciences is the recipient of a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award to Hungary in biology.

(As pictured) ETSU receives a $1.24 million grant to cover educational costs for a group of graduate students in special education and speech-language pathology whose career goals are to work with young people who have high-intensity support needs, such as persons with multiple disabilities, significant Autism or significant cognitive, physical or sensory disabilities. Students selected for the program will receive tuition reimbursement as well as funds to cover books and travel. In return, the student will commit to working in the field after graduation serving this population. Dr. Pamela Mims, Associate Dean for Research and Grants in the Clemmer College, is directing the project along with Dr. Cindy Chambers and Dr. Dawn Rowe, also from the Clemmer College, and Dr. Brenda Louw, College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences.

Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean of the College of Public Health, is one of 26 individuals across the state selected to serve on Tennessee Governor Bill Lee’s new Health Care Modernization Task Force.

ETSU launches STRIVE: Startup Training Resources Inspiring Veteran Entrepreneurship, an eight-week cohort led by faculty members in the College of Business and Technology. STRIVE is open to all veterans, Reserve and National Guard members, and their spouses. Participants will engage in online learning, meet one evening per week, and be connected with mentors.

Dr. Tom Donohoe is named University Registrar.

Dr. Dawn Rowe, an Associate Professor in the Clemmer College, is named Editor of TEACHING Exceptional Children, a top-tier, peer-reviewed journal produced by the Council for Exceptional Children.

ETSU students and alumni take home five International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Awards in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness appoints Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Senior Vice President for Academics and Interim Provost, to the Defense Health Board Public Health Subcommittee.

The new addiction medicine fellowship receives initial accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

ETSU’s Dental Hygiene program celebrates its 50th anniversary.

ETSU also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the B.S. program in environmental health earning accreditation.

Jaylen Grimes and Olivia Webb are crowned ETSU Homecoming King and Queen.
For four days, Dr. Pam Peterson Mobley, an Erwin native, was among the hundreds of people missing after Hurricane Dorian struck the Abaco Islands in the northern Bahamas September 1.

Pam and her husband, Dr. Ed Mobley, are anesthesiologists and alumni of East Tennessee State University’s Quillen College of Medicine. They live in Knoxville but also purchased a home on Green Turtle Cay, one of the smaller Abaco islands, about four years ago. Pam, a 1994 Quillen graduate, retired from medicine in 2008, and Ed, class of 1991, still works as an anesthesiologist at the University of Tennessee.

Pam was visiting their island home with a friend when Dorian started brewing in the Atlantic Ocean.

“It started as a Category 1 storm, and no one was really worried,” Pam said. “They thought we’d lose power, and that would be it. When it upgraded to a Category 3, we started to think about leaving. But all of a sudden, it was a Category 5, and it was too late to leave.”

So Pam evacuated to a friend’s home on the island and prepared to ride out the storm on higher ground.

“We watched as the walls started bulging in and out—it felt like they were breathing,” Pam said. “The floor started shaking, and the roof started to lift. We pushed the furniture against the walls to strengthen them and then ran into the bathroom to huddle in a bathtub. Eventually four of us took shelter in a closet.

“It was pretty terrifying. I’m from the mountains and have never experienced a hurricane,” she said. “And I don’t plan on ever experiencing another one.”

As the storm approached the island, Pam was able to communicate with Ed and their son, Chris Mobley, through FaceTime. But once Dorian reached land, the storm snapped every power pole on the island and they were completely cut off from electricity and communication. Ed and Chris waited anxiously in Tennessee for any word of Pam’s fate.

On September 4, they finally confirmed that Pam had survived. However, the gorgeous island that the couple had enjoyed visiting for the last two decades was in shambles, along with their home, which was a pile of debris after the storm.

“Miraculously, though, no one from our tiny island lost their life,” Pam said. “Our island was extremely lucky.”
The storm devastated the island and left it without any medical care. There was one clinic on the island, but the nurse who staffed it evacuated, along with her children.

So after a quick 36-hour trip back to West Palm Beach to reunite with her family, Pam decided to leave behind the comforts of electricity, internet, fresh food, and running water in order to return to Green Turtle Cay to help her neighbors recover and rebuild their lives.

Volunteers cleaned up the clinic, and Pam immediately started mobilizing donations of life-saving supplies and medications to restock what the clinic and residents had lost. Using portable generators, she began providing medical care to neighbors and relief workers, who needed everything from tetanus shots because of nail wounds to emergency care for injuries from falling off roofs while doing repairs. She met relief workers from across the globe, including members of the Dutch Navy.

“I have witnessed an incredible amount of love and kindness here, and from my home in Tennessee,” Pam said. “I found out that there were people from my home church who had prayer chains going while I was missing. That blew me away.”

Their kindness has inspired Pam and her family to give back. Ed is still practicing medicine in Knoxville, but he plans to join Pam when he can to assist with medical care on the island; they are both applying for voluntary physician licensure in the Bahamas. In addition, their son Chris, who has a degree in mechanical engineering and is currently working toward a second degree in computer engineering, is planning to take a semester off from school to help with efforts to provide clean water to the island.

“There is so much work to be done,” Pam said. “Seeing constant debris and devastation grinds on you a bit.”
While running a medical clinic on a devastated island was not the way Pam envisioned her retirement, she has found a silver lining.

“At Quillen, there is a lot of emphasis on primary care,” said Pam. “Before I began medical school, I had a nursing degree from the ETSU College of Nursing. Studying to become a doctor, I always wanted to be a family practitioner. But then I did a rotation in anesthesia and fell in love with it. Although I loved my career in anesthesia, I’ve always had some regrets about never getting to do primary care. I guess you could call this my second chance.”

Her second chance recently came with a moment of encouragement. She heard from a couple that she had treated and ordered evacuated from the island after they were rescued by the Coast Guard. They were hospitalized and recovering.

Pam predicts a similar fate—one of recovery—for the island she has grown to love.

“We’re going to rebuild our home there. These people have become our people.”

Melissa Nipper is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations. | Photos contributed by Dr. Pam Peterson Mobley
For more than 70 years, women organized and fought for the right to vote in the United States, building a movement to enfranchise them that culminated with the ratification of the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. Leaders of suffragist organizations used fashion to create a striking visual rhetoric that raised the status of the movement and allowed it to become more acceptable within polite society. During the Belle Époque, a woman’s social standing would have been very apparent by the quality of her footwear. These formal evening boots are part of the Reece Museum permanent collection and were owned by Torrey Stanley Harris (1881-1977), who married into the socially prominent Johnson City Harris family in 1902.

Harris family ladies were extremely active in organizing clubs and societies around women’s issues of their day. Ida Potter Harris (1852-1936) was the first president of the Monday Club, a subgroup of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. They hosted lectures, fundraisers, and educational programming, and eventually founded the Johnson City Public Library. Many members of the Monday Club were politically active and belonged to other organizations, such as the Johnson City Suffrage Club.

In the early 1900s, the National Women’s Party adopted a symbolic color scheme that capitalized on the traditional association of the color white with moral purity. The decision to create a uniform based on color rather than one particular item or article of clothing democratized the movement and made it accessible to women across social, economic, and racial divides. In an age of black-and-white photography, the color white also created striking visual contrast, providing photographs and images that quickly became iconic due to the eye-catching and fashionable appearance of the Suffragists.

The intelligent use of color and fashion was very successful, and membership in suffrage organizations continued to grow. Jewelry, clothing, sashes and ribbons, and even underwear and toilet soap were created and marketed to women of the day. Shoes became an important consideration for the well-dressed woman once skirts reached ankle-length. The size and shape of these white kid leather boots would have showcased Torrey Harris’s small foot and dramatically curved instep, which were the height of sophistication. The French Louis heel and scalloped embellishments along the edges were a holdover from Victorian times, while the white color and lacing up the front would have been considered thoroughly modern. These boots perfectly illustrate the way fashion, feminism, and politics have long been intertwined, and they are one example of the way the women of Johnson City used exaggerated femininity to advance their cause.

Rebecca Proffitt is a folklorist who earned her Master of Arts degree in Appalachian Studies at ETSU. She is currently the Reece Museum Collections Manager.
On January 8, 1999 I left 80-degree Hollywood to come to my job as holder of the Wayne G. Basler Chair of Excellence at ETSU in Johnson City. After the prop plane out of Atlanta landed, I was walking across the tarmac when I suddenly noticed a “thing” on my nose! What could it be? It was ICE! I had left 80 degrees and palm trees and Jerry Seinfeld and Tim Allen for 8 degrees and the most gorgeous mountains in the world. Thus began what would be a 20-year romance with Appalachia.

Places do matter, but it is the people who make your heart sing. I loved my family and friends in Los Angeles, but at ETSU and in Johnson City, I would meet people who would change my life forever. When I think now of ETSU and Appalachia, I think of Walt Whitman and Leaves of Grass. I feel the majesty of the mountains and the hearts of the people.

My memories now 20 years later are of people: Paul Stanton, one of the finest men I have ever met; the late Charlie Jones, an oral surgeon and lover of all things theater; Fred and Jill Sauceman who opened their home and hearth to me and who took me to the now closed, alas, Bean Barn in Greeneville and who shared with me for years their fight with lupus and honored me deeply by asking me to write about their wonderful book about their triumph over this disease; and Charles Roberts, who asked me to come to ETSU and who is my oldest friend and a man with whom I share a birthday, April 11, and who, during my first week here, had to say, gently, “Ah, Pat, no one calls me Charlie!”

My semester as Basler Chair went very quickly, as I was commuting to L.A. to help with my wife’s care (Beatrice “Betsy” Colen, star of “Happy Days” and “Wonder Woman”) as she battled lung cancer. The tapestry of life ties many threads together. I am leaving ETSU as a professor and playing Grandpa in You Can’t Take It With You, a play written by Betsy’s grandfather, George S. Kaufman. Betsy died on November 18, 1999, leaving me with two sons, James (ETSU 2004) and Charlie (ETSU 2005), both honors graduates. After she died, I was asked to give the commencement address in December of 1999. Though it was a painful time for me, I did come back to what would become my new home (though I didn’t know it then) and talked with the graduating class of ETSU about what it means to be not only a “graduate” but also what it means to be alive and to understand that Spiderman is correct: “With great power comes great responsibility.”

I struggled for many months in L.A., trying to work on my career and to help two sons who had just lost their mom. Finally, things, as they often do, fell into place and James Cronin was awarded a scholarship in the Honors Program at ETSU. Charlie didn’t want to be without me or his brother, so we moved to Johnson City. I taught part-time at ETSU while trying to figure out my next move. Meanwhile my boys were trying to make sense of the Tri Cities after having spent their entire lives in Los Angeles. But, again, things tend to play out. I began to fall in love with teaching again. (I had taught at Temple University in Philadelphia in the late 1960s.) Charlie graduated from Science Hill High School, and suddenly the “Cronin men” were living on the Tree Streets and learning to live and speak Appalachian.

Judy Slagle, one of the brightest, most gifted people I’ve ever met, hired me to teach drama in the English Department, and son Charlie became a Buc. Rebecca Pyles, another academic force, asked me to work in the Honors Program, and next thing I knew I was helping her to create the ETSU Honors College, as first Director of the Fine and Performing Arts Program.

What began as a one-semester job turned into 20 years of a life. I missed Los Angeles and my life as an actor, but I began to love the students, who are the lifeblood of any university. Many of these students were like me, the first in the family to go to college.

As I fell in love with teaching again, I also fell in love with an amazing woman, Dr. Amber Kinser. We were married on Folly Beach in South Carolina in 2004. I became a new thing—a stepdad to two wonderful young people, Chelsea Kinser, a 2013 ETSU honors grad, and Isaac Kinser, who will graduate, as I retire this December, as a Second Lieutenant and Distinguished Military Graduate in the ETSU ROTC program.

In the 15 years Amber and I have been married, we have both made ETSU a fantastic home. For 10 years she was head of the Women’s Studies Program, and for the last 10 years she has been Chair of the Department of Communication and Performance. During that time, I was creator and Head of the Fine and Performing Arts Program in the ETSU Honors College and then Head of the Division of Theatre and Dance. At age 70, I spent my sabbatical in Ireland in my father’s home city, Cork City, doing Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman with my son James playing Willy’s son Biff. We then had the great fortune of touring the show to Belgrade, Serbia.

And, as always, life moved on. We welcomed a new President to ETSU, Brian Noland, and
Brian has been an exciting new light on the campus. I took on a new role as Director of Artistic Outreach and saw Bert Bach’s dream of Theater and Dance becoming a department under the leadership of Karen Brewster. Now I see us all making ready to enter the new Martin Center for the Arts.

As I write, I think of the 20 years of love I’ve had in Appalachia, and I feel, at 78 years of age, that I couldn’t have asked for a better last act. Come December, as I retire, all four of my children will have graduated from ETSU. Amber continues to direct her department, and I have continued to teach and act and direct at a school that has truly become my home. As I finish my last semester, teaching both Introduction to Theatre and Acting for TV and Film, and as I work with our wonderful Theater and Dance majors playing Grandpa in You Can’t Take It With You under the first-rate direction of my old friend Bobby Funk, it becomes very clear to me that 20 years ago I began a journey I didn’t understand but which, as I lived it, has filled me with a joy that is like the mountains and the music that define our lives in Northeast Tennessee.

Thank you to all of you who have allowed me to live and work in these mountains and, Brian, let me steal this from you one time: GO BUCS!

Patrick Cronin’s television credits include “Seinfeld,” “All in the Family,” “Home Improvement,” “Alice,” “Fantasy Island,” “One Day at a Time,” “Hill Street Blues,” “Cheers,” “The Love Boat,” “Night Court,” “The Wonder Years,” “L.A. Law,” and many more. His film credits include Rocky V, Ferris Bueller, Star Trek: The Next Generation, and many others.
A longtime fixture in the ETSU Alumni Office has vacated his quarters, but he hasn’t gone far.

Dr. Robert “Bob” Plummer was such a fixture on the East Tennessee State University campus for so long that things seem strangely different now that he has packed up the countless pieces of ETSU memorabilia from his office.

Plummer, who served as Associate Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of ETSU’s National Alumni Association, recently left the university to join the team of his former ETSU colleague Dr. Bethany Flora, now President of Northeast State Community College, as Chief Advancement Officer for that institution.

The Tazewell, Virginia, native first came to ETSU as a student in the early 1980s after earning his associate degree in Education at Southwest Virginia Community College. He graduated with his baccalaureate degree in 1984 followed by his master’s in 1987, as well as a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis in 2014.

Plummer started working at ETSU as a student worker for longtime athletic trainer Jerry Robertson while working on his Social Sciences degree with a concentration in Political Science. He had intended to teach, coach, and work in school administration, but after holding graduate assistantships for then-President Ronald Beller and former Vice President for University Advancement Richard Manahan, various opportunities presented themselves. While still in graduate school,
he found himself working as a coordinator in the D.P. Culp University Center, where one of the first events he assisted with was a 1985 visit by Vice President George Bush to honor Congressman and Mrs. James H. Quillen upon the creation of the Cecile Cox Quillen Chair of Medicine. Soon, Plummer became the Alumni Coordinator in the Alumni and University Relations Office, and “it worked out for (him) to stay ever since,” Plummer said.

During his time at ETSU, Plummer strove to grow and increase the impact of the National Alumni Association, during economically lean years and during times when the university was able to capitalize on significant successes. Those times included the spectacular run of the Buccaneer men’s basketball team during the late 1980s and early ’90s.

“We tried to maximize the impact of those young men who brought home four consecutive Southern Conference Championships and went to the NCAA tournament,” Plummer said. “We tried to take that interest and build on it.

“I’ve also tried to be an example to others,” he continued. “I encourage students to not just take the diploma and leave. I try to connect people back to ETSU at every opportunity. And relationships are paramount. Part of my commitment to ETSU came in the fact that it took somebody to be here a long time to build relationships and partnerships and be the person people call, or be the person people would answer a call from, to do the things we needed them to do to help the institution.”

Some of the accomplishments of the National Alumni Association of which Plummer is most proud include the construction of the ETSU Foundation Carillon and Alumni Plaza, which became an instant campus landmark and popular gathering place; growing the numbers of alumni active with the ETSU Foundation; creating the Alumni Gallery in the Culp Center; converting the house at 908 West Maple Street on campus to a comfortable, flexible space for alumni meetings and social events; and taking $500 to produce a handful of yard signs that were strategically placed at intersections throughout Johnson City in an effort that became the annual ETSU PRIDE Week observance; and increasing the name recognition of and pride in the university.

“Our goal was to get alumni to embrace and raise with pride this place where they’ve earned a degree that’s changed their lives, that’s helped them hopefully to go on to earn a livelihood and raise a family,” Plummer said. “And many of them have done so many incredible things in their careers.”

“The real most important thing is that out of all the meetings I went to, I happened to go to a meeting one day and I saw a woman in the office. We were introduced, and we just passed 30 years of marriage,” Plummer says of his wife, Carol, who recently retired from ETSU’s Quillen College of Medicine. “I found somebody who loved this place as much as I did and was committed to her job. That may be my single most important accomplishment, that and raising our son and having a place where he can be comfortable.”

In his new role at Northeast State, Plummer hopes to help raise that institution’s profile as he helped raise ETSU’s and work to raise the outside money the community college needs to continue to grow. He is excited about the business, technology, and emerging aviation programs at Northeast State.

“Northeast State Community College is a place where the rubber meets the road,” Plummer said. “Technology lifts us. It makes our lives better, and when the students are trained in those fields, hopefully they’ll find careers and jobs here. This is a great opportunity to continue to serve the community in a different way and still benefit the people of the region. And everything that raises Northeast State has an indirect, positive effect on ETSU.”

Jennifer Hill is Assistant Director of Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
RAISING THE TOWER

On February 24, 1974, from a tiny studio on the ETSU campus, WETS-FM signed on the air for the first time.

Longtime WETS-FM employee Wayne Winkler, who has been station manager for some 25 years, says the loyal support of generations of listeners is the number one reason why the station has been able to thrive for the past 45 years.

A source for popular NPR programs such as “All Things Considered,” “Fresh Air,” “Mountain Stage,” and “Morning Edition” as well as local and regional news and Americana and classical music, the station reaches listeners on 89.5 FM and on three HD stations. And while the station looks ahead to another year of offering programming that reflects the interests of a broad audience of listeners, Winkler has concerns that the station may be on borrowed time.

The station’s transmission tower, which is the same one that transmitted the first signal back in 1974, is in dire need of replacement. The 160-foot tower contains the original construction materials and the technology is severely outdated. “We have done the best we can to make piecemeal repairs in order to keep the station on the air, but that is about all we can do for a tower that was installed in 1973,” Winkler explained. “The tower is supported by guy wires, and during heavy winds the tower sways and torques just a bit, which has caused stress fractures.”

Winkler said the station is turning to its loyal listeners to help fund the tower replacement. WETS-FM operates as a partnership between listeners and ETSU, which provides funding for staff salaries and other infrastructure costs. In addition to receiving some federal grant support, WETS relies on funds raised through private donations and underwriting activities to support programming costs.

“We have two major fund drives each year and our supporters respond faithfully every time,” he said. “The money yielded through our fund drive is used to cover operational costs as well as programming, which rises approximately eight to 10 percent each year.

“Morning Edition,” “Fresh Air,” and “All Things Considered” alone total nearly $177,000.

A new tower would cost approximately $200,000; more than half has already been raised, thanks, in part, to an anonymous $100,000 matching gift to the station this fall.

“To close the loop, we need approximately $75,000, and we are asking our supporters and friends to help us get there,” Winkler said. “If the tower were to fall, the station would go off the air and it would take possibly a year to be back up and running. We can’t let that happen.”

Persons wishing to make a donation to WETS-FM can do so by visiting etsu.edu/wets or contacting Karen Sullivan, Director of Development, at 423-439-6969 or sullivan@etsu.edu.

CAMPAIGN REACHES MIDWAY MARK

Another major campaign milestone has entered the ETSU history books in 2019, and Pam Ritter says the message has been loud and clear.

“People truly love ETSU and want to see our institution grow, thrive, and be able to have a greater influence on the lives of others,” said Ritter, Vice President for University Advancement and President/CEO of the ETSU Foundation.

This past spring, Ritter joined President Noland and the ETSU Foundation in launching the Campaign for ETSU, a comprehensive campaign that is set to raise $120 million to support initiatives that will transform the campus and provide new opportunities for students and faculty.

Already, the Campaign for ETSU has raised over $60 million.

“We began our silent phase of the campaign in January 2017 by talking with donors, both current donors as well as potentially new ones, and asking them what their passions were for ETSU, and from those conversations it was clear that our alumni and friends had a vision for how they wanted to see ETSU advance,” Ritter said.

By the time the campaign was announced at the Distinguished President’s Trust Dinner this past April, the university already had $50 million in commitments.

“There are four major pillars of our comprehensive campaign,” Ritter said. “A major focus is to create new opportunities for students, and our goal of $21 million will help fund scholarships, graduate student stipends, travel abroad experiences, and participation at national conferences.” Ritter added that the Campaign for ETSU will raise $23 million to support faculty through the creation of distinguished professorships and chairs and other endowments.

Ritter said that donors have expressed interest in helping ETSU launch new academic programs that prepare students to serve in new roles that are emerging in the workforce. The Campaign for ETSU seeks to garner $35 million to support the creation of new undergraduate and graduate programs.

“Our alumni and friends also want to help transform how our campus looks, so another priority of the campaign is to raise $40 million to be used for facility renovations and new construction projects,” she added.

“Each donor has the opportunity to help write their own story for what they want ETSU’s future to be,” Ritter said. “We are blessed to have so many people – alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents, and community friends – who are deeply invested in our future.”

To learn more about ways you can support the Campaign for ETSU, visit etsu.edu/give or call 423-439-4242.
Half a century later, it remains the most famous game in East Tennessee State football history.

The Bucs defeated Louisiana Tech 34-14 to win the 1969 Grantland Rice Bowl. It capped off a 10-0-1 season for ETSU, and it came against a Tech team led by future NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Terry Bradshaw. It also gave the Bucs the title of NCAA Mideast Region champions for the small-college division.

The 1969 game was moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, from the Rice’s hometown of Murfreesboro for the first time. It was Louisiana Tech’s second straight appearance in the bowl game after Bradshaw led the Bulldogs to a 33-13 win over Akron the previous year.

Bradshaw was the MVP of that Tech victory, throwing for 261 yards and two touchdowns and rushing for 35 yards and two more touchdowns.

In his senior season and just months before he was the Pittsburgh Steelers’ No. 1 draft pick, the All-American Bradshaw was expected to carve up the ETSU defense.

Instead, the Ohio Valley Conference champion Bucs sacked Bradshaw 12 times for 140 yards and came up with three interceptions. Doug Linebarger, the Bucs’ all-conference linebacker, who along with Bubba Tims and Al Guy had interceptions, remembers the game plans of defensive coordinator Franklin Brooks and secondary coach Buddy Bennett.

“Coach Bennett noticed that Bradshaw took an extra step or two deeper drop than other quarterbacks on his pass pattern,” Linebarger said. “It forced the halfback to block one of the ends or he blocked up the middle.

“We had a five-man defensive front and we usually rushed another linebacker. That forced the running back to make a choice to block inside or go out and get the defensive end. Because Bradshaw took the deep drop, it allowed our ends to rush a little wider. I think the first offensive play they had, Ronnie Mendheim sacked him. We rushed at least six players most passing downs.”

ETSU Dominates First Half

Louisiana Tech rolled to a 21-0 lead over Akron in the first quarter of their 1968 bowl game. ETSU, a 14-point underdog according to the Dunkel Power Index, was determined not to let it happen again.

Pat Hauser, the team’s leading receiver, recalled that Coach John Robert Bell didn’t need a big rah-rah speech. Instead, there was a simple pre-game instruction to “get on them like a duck on a Junebug.”
The Bucs got on the scoreboard first with Jerry Daughtry’s 1-yard touchdown run capping off a short 19-yard drive after Bradshaw fumbled. Daughtry and fellow running back Mike Young had big games of 104 and 95 yards respectively, as the Bucs controlled the game on the ground.

The normally conservative Bell opened the playbook in the second quarter with a halfback pass from Young to the flanker Hauser for a 37-yard touchdown and a 13-0 halftime lead.

“We were really conservative and didn’t throw the ball much,” Hauser recalled. “On that play, the cornerback was coming up on the run. It was an option where Mike could run the ball. When the back came up, he flipped it over to me and I was wide open.”

**Bulldogs Come Back**

Despite the constant harassment, Bradshaw posted big numbers, completing 20 of 39 passes for 299 yards. He threw two touchdown passes in the third quarter to bring Tech within six points and a chance to take the lead.

Trailing 20-14 and with the ball 2nd-and-7 at the Bucs’ 34, Bradshaw went back to throw when Bubba Tims came through the line and sacked him for an 18-yard loss. An incompletion on the next play ended the scoring threat.

As a wide receiver, Hauser appreciated the talents of Bradshaw, who had been a high school state champion in Louisiana for throwing the javelin.

“We knew if he had time to pass, he could kill you,” Hauser said. “He could drop back 15 yards, run guys on 15-18-yard patterns, and put a string on a 40-yard pass that people couldn’t knock down. They had three guys with Bradshaw, a receiver named Tommy Spinks and a tight end Larry Brewer, who were drafted in the NFL.”

Linebarger has gone on to a long career as an official. He has seen thousands of players over the years. Few made an impact like Bradshaw.

“Bradshaw threw bullets. I remember the ball just zipped by me,” Linebarger said. “In my memory, he threw the ball harder than anyone I know. I officiated games for both the Manning brothers when they were in college and I remember Bradshaw throwing harder than either of them.”

**Bucs Shut the Door**

ETSU’s quarterback Larry Graham threw touchdowns of 39 yards to John Gibson and 10 yards to Rick Anderson for the game’s final scores. Graham finished 10-for-16 passing for 136 yards.

An ETSU defense which had 37 interceptions on the season and held opponents to seven points or less in seven games took care of the rest.

Mendheim ended with five sacks, while the secondary, led by Bubba Casey and Al Guy and nicknamed “Bennett’s Bandits,” wasn’t about to allow anyone in the end zone. Linebarger said ETSU’s defense had both depth and confidence.

“One of the things Franklin Brooks did real well was he rotated people in and out,” he said. “We had 3-4 defensive ends. We were deep at the tackles, linebacker, and we rotated people in every series. We had a lot of good players, who weren’t very big — but they were quick and had played together for a while. We always had that confidence we could get that stop when we needed to.”
Bradshaw Still Wants No Part of Bucs

Hauser has the unique distinction of playing against Bradshaw in his last college game and in his first professional game. Hauser was a rookie with the Miami Dolphins against the Steelers in a 1970 exhibition game in Jacksonville.

He missed an opportunity to talk to Bradshaw afterward as a downpour came and the players hustled to get off the field.

Through a mutual acquaintance, Hauser tried to get in touch with the longtime FOX Sports analyst to say some words for the ETSU team’s 50th reunion. He was able to contact Bradshaw’s publicist and his wife, but after multiple requests was told the Hall of Fame quarterback wasn’t interested.

It’s little wonder, probably a day Bradshaw would like to forget. Bill McIntyre, the sportswriter for the Shreveport Times who covered the game, gave this descriptive account of No. 12’s rough day.

“Bradshaw, the finest passer ever produced in Louisiana, was the boy caught on the burning deck as the Pirates climbed aboard. He was the kid with his finger in the dike and the water swirling around his shoulders,” McIntyre wrote.

Actually, it was the Bucs’ defense often swirling around Bradshaw’s shoulders.

Jeff Birchfield is a sportswriter for the Johnson City Press. | Photos by Dakota Hamilton
Over the past three decades two constants surrounded the ETSU men’s golf program – a winning tradition and Hall of Fame Head Coach Fred Warren.

Warren, who turned ETSU into a household name around the golf world, retired from his position on June 30, 2019, and turned the keys over to then Associate Head Coach Jake Amos.

“The past 33 years as the Head Coach of the ETSU men’s golf program has produced so many accomplishments and memories which I will cherish in the years ahead,” said Warren. “I would like to express my gratitude to Scott Carter, Jeremy Ross, and Dr. Brian Noland for their leadership and their support of our men’s golf program as well as those who allowed me to have my start at ETSU.”

“I had a passion to help young men become better golfers, better people, and with their experiences as student-athletes at ETSU, provide them with a solid foundation for future success in life. Looking back over my career at ETSU, I was fortunate to be the right person at the right time to build our golf program and with a lot of really great players, managed to keep it competitive at the national level for many years.”
Since stepping onto campus in 1986, Warren turned ETSU men’s golf into one of the most respected and well-known programs in collegiate golf. Despite having to restart the program from scratch, Warren quickly built the Blue and Gold into a national power and formed quite an impressive résumé which includes:

- 56 career wins
- 17 Conference Championships, including a SoCon-best 15 titles
- 12 Coach of the Year honors (10 SoCon, 2 ASUN)
- 2 NCAA District Coach of the Year honors and one runner-up for National Coach of the Year
- 22 NCAA Regional Appearances
- 23 All-Americans
- 24 All-American Scholars
- 17 Conference Players of the Year (13 SoCon, 4 ASUN)
- Being ranked No. 1 in the country during the 1995-96 season
- Third-place finish at 1996 NCAA Championship (ahead of fourth-place Stanford, led by Tiger Woods)
- Winning six tournaments in 1995-96, which was tied for the most by a Division I program that season
- Finishing in the Top-13 six times at the NCAA Championship and in the Top-25 13 times
- Winning the 2001 NCAA East Regional in Williamsburg, Virginia, with a then record score of 36-under-par 828 and ahead of nationally ranked Georgia, Georgia Tech, Florida, NC State, and Duke to name a few
- Winning the 2018 Bank of Tennessee Intercollegiate – his final home tournament
- Winning the 1995 SoCon Championship after rallying from 15 strokes back of host Georgia Southern entering the final round and winning in a sudden-death playoff on the first hole
- 11 straight GCAA Academic Team honors, including National Champion in 2009
- Signing Rory McIlroy to a National Letter of Intent to attend ETSU
- Coaching Rhys Davies, arguably ETSU’s greatest all-time golfer, earning three-time First Team All-America Honors and one of the 3 finalists for Division I Player of the Year

Following his tenure at Oklahoma State, where he helped guide the Cowboys to three Big Eight Conference championships and three national runner-up finishes, Warren got the call from ETSU to help restart its program in 1986.

“When I arrived on June 30, 1986, I was entrusted to start a program that was dropped in 1983. There was not much of a budget at that time and little support, so I started working on rebuilding the program immediately,” said Warren. “It was an exciting time at ETSU with Les Robinson being the Athletic Director and the men’s basketball team was about to begin the ‘Glory Days’ with Mister Jennings, Greg Dennis, Calvin Talford, and the Bucs making a run at four straight NCAA Tournaments from 1989-92. That stretch was such an exciting time for ETSU and we started to build our men’s golf program during that span.”

Warren’s very first recruit in 1986, Rex Kuramoto, became a two-time All-American and claimed medalist honors at the 1990 SoCon championship.

“Every time a serious job offer came along – of which there were quite a few during a 10-15-year stretch – I prayed about them, and although I came close to accepting a couple of times, God seemed to give me a great sense of contentment to remain at ETSU and continue to build our program. And, to be honest, I did not really feel that coaching at another university was a step up from coaching at ETSU. Next thing you know 33 years went by and I am staying here for my retirement.”

Support from the community and Warren’s persistence led to the creation of the Warren-Greene Golf Center. Construction began in 2002, and it was dedicated in August 2004. With a lot of planning, fundraising, vision, and support, the 3,000-square-foot facility, designed by Ken Ross Architects of Johnson City and built by Burleson Construction, gave the golf program a new home. In addition, the exterior practice area was designed by world-renowned...
golf architect Tom Fazio. This $2.4 million project was privately funded and not only had a significant impact on both the men’s and women’s golf programs, but all of ETSU Athletics, as it was the first major capital project since the Mini-Dome was built in 1977, and it jump-started other new capital projects.

“When construction of the Basler Center for Physical Activity was completed in 2002, the intramural field was closed and our team no longer could practice there,” Warren remembers. “We had to go to local golf courses and driving ranges to practice, but at times we had to wait if members were playing, so it affected our recruiting. That’s when I really started working hard to get things rolling as the future of our team’s competitiveness was at stake. It was at this point that longtime supporter Bill Greene became more actively involved. Bill played collegiate golf (and basketball) at Wake Forest and understood what was necessary. At that time Wake Forest also had the top on-campus golf facility in the country. I wasn’t envisioning what we currently have now, but just wanted to have a place where we could practice. Eventually things all fit together, and I always will be grateful to Mr. Greene and ETSU President Dr. Paul Stanton, who approved the project.”

Warren didn’t have any intention to coach after college at UCLA, but his strong communication and leadership skills made him a perfect fit for the position. After guiding the Blue and Gold to a No. 1 ranking, 56 tournament wins, coaching 23 All-Americans and 24 All-American Scholars, Warren unquestionably left the program better than he found it. Warren’s 33-year tenure of coaching golf at ETSU is now behind him, but he has since turned his attention to giving back to the community.

“The last several years of my coaching career, our team started volunteering at the Animal Shelter as part of our community service during the off-season. I then started volunteering on my own when I had time,” said Warren. “In future years, while I look forward to continuing to support the university and athletics, I will also be using much of my newly-found free time and the lessons I learned over the years in coaching and in the military, in volunteering at the Animal Shelter and the Humane Society. This is one of the best regions of our country, and it will be nice to have a little more time to enjoy its greatness in the years ahead.”

Kevin Brown is Director of Communications for the ETSU Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.
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<td>Jan. 1</td>
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Home game in gold and bold
(Played at Freedom Hall)

^ Maui Mainland Games
* Southern Conference

Game times listed in Eastern Time

For tickets, call 423-439-3878 or visit www.etsubucs.com
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The East Tennessee State University Class Ring is your way to show the world your achievement. This personal token of excellence connects you to your experiences during your time in the shadow of the mountains every time you put it on.

Custom crafted for East Tennessee State University, the designs of the official rings are based upon ETSU's legacy of values and traditions. The official ETSU seal is placed with "East Tennessee State University" around the top emblem. A diamond, blue sapphire, or a cubic zirconium stone can be incorporated into the ETSU seal.

The front steps of Gilbreath Hall have the words from the ETSU Alma Mater "In the Shadow of the Mountains" inscribed on a banner that flies proudly above the original university building, which is placed on the right side of the ring. Pictured in the distance from the Hall is the Amphitheater built in 1936. Embracing the Amphitheater is your degree.

Built in 1999, The Charles C. Sherrod building is featured on the left side of the ring with the individual graduation year of the student. All these elements come together to symbolize the university’s past, present, and future - an ETSU graduate ready to carry on the ETSU legacy with Pride.

THE BESSE BROWN COOPER
Class Ring Story

Besse Brown Cooper was the oldest living graduate of our original institution until her death in 2012. In honor of this significant life achievement and in tribute to her steadfast love of her alma mater, the ETSU National Alumni Association has honored Ms. Cooper with the renaming of the Class Ring Ceremony, portraying the class ring legacy she so fondly exemplified.

Besse Brown Cooper is an alumni member of ETSU who has broken the Guinness Book of World Records and other sources by being the oldest living person in the world.

Cooper’s life and legacy was her love of East Tennessee State Normal School. For over nine decades she continued to proudly wear her ring. Twirling it on her fingers over time made the ring almost smooth, but for 94 years, the ring was her tie to ETSNS and her college education.

For more information, please visit us online at balfour.com/etsu or call 1-866-225-3687.
1950s

Frank Weeks (BS '76) of Johnson City married Diane Flanagan in Charleston, South Carolina. His degree is in Marketing.

Dr. Jack Parton (AS '78, BS '79, MAT '82) of Sevierville received an award for 30 years of service at the 70th Annual Superintendent's Study Council Conference. His degrees are in Criminal Justice and Education.

Arthur Bohanan (BS '79) of Strawberry Plains was the guest speaker at a meeting of the Hamblen County Genealogical Society. He is an international-award-winning patented inventor, researcher, lecturer, and author. His degree is in Criminal Justice and Criminology.

Robert W. Fox (BS '79) has been elected Mayor of Sevierville. His degree is in Criminal Justice.

Fred "Pal" Barger (BS '55) of Kingsport owns "Pal's Sudden Service" restaurants, named the best fast food in Tennessee by Food & Wine magazine. His degree is in Business Administration.

Paul (PJ) Johnson (BS '79) of Bristol, Tennessee, was given the Virginia Associated Press Broadcast award for Best News Anchor. His degree is in Journalism and Speech.

1960s

William "Butch" Waller, Jr. (BS '65, MA '66) of Salisbury, Maryland, was honored by Wicomico High School's Basketball Program with a court being dedicated in his name after winning his 800th game as Head Basketball Coach. His degrees are in Physical Education and Secondary Education.

1970s

Chuck Mason (BS '73) of Johnson City earned a 2019 Pinnacle Award for Volunteer of the Year for the Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association. His degree is in Marketing.

Larry Hartsock (BS '76) of Castleton, Virginia, took home the 2019 title of the ASB 5 Gaited Jr./Amateur Grand Champion at the Bonnie Blue National Horse Show. His degree is in Elementary Education.

Dr. Ramona Williams (BS '83, MA '85, EdD '96) of Johnson City was named Vice President of Enrollment Management and Financial Aid at Tusculum University. Her degrees are in Political Science, Counseling, and Educational Leadership.

Gary Nelson (BS '82) of Sumter, South Carolina, was honored by the South Carolina Athletic Trainers Association with the Fred W. Hoover Award of Excellence. He is the athletic trainer at Sumter High School. His degree is in Physical Education.

August Trupiano (BS '82) of Cumming, Georgia, has been named National Sales Manager of the Specialty Glass Division at General Glass International. His degree is in Mass Communication.

Tammy Hawes (BS '83) of Brentwood, Tennessee, has been named one of the Enterprising Women Magazine 2019 Women of the Year award winners. Her degree is in Computer and Information Science.

Barry Reed (BS '83) of Bristol, Virginia, is now Head Softball Coach at Bluefield High School in West Virginia. His degree is in Business Education.

Gary Nelson (BS '82) of Sumter, South Carolina, was honored by the South Carolina Athletic Trainers Association with the Fred W. Hoover Award of Excellence. He is the athletic trainer at Sumter High School. His degree is in Physical Education.

Kevin Ennis (BS '84) of Beaufort, South Carolina, was honored by the South Carolina Athletic Trainers Association with the Fred W. Hoover Award of Excellence and will be placed in the South Carolina Athletic Trainers’ Hall of Fame. He is Director of the Datat Island Community Center. His degree is in Physical Education.

Jeff Fleming (MA '84) of Kingsport was presented the 2019 Distinguished Leadership Award by the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. His degree is in Political Science.

Michael Lynch (BA '84) of Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, has released a book entitled Edward M. Almond and the US Army: 32nd ID to X Corps. His degree is in English.

Dr. Robert Plummer (BS '84, MED '87, EdD '87) of Johnson City was named Chief Advancement Officer of Northeast State Community College. His degrees are in Political Science, Educational Administration, and Educational Leadership.

Andre’ K. Westfield, Sr. (BS '84) of Austell, Georgia, retired from the State of Georgia Department of Public Health. His degree is in Environmental Health.

Robert Cantler (BBA '85) of Johnson City was named President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce serving Johnson City, Jonesborough, and Washington County. His degree is in Marketing.

Mary Sharon Stack (MS '85) of Niles, Michigan, has been named Professor and Director of the Harper Cancer Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame. Her degree is in Biomedical Sciences.
Jana Fullbright (BS ’85, MBA ’86) of Johnson City is now working for State of Franklin Healthcare Associates. Her degrees are in Management and Business Administration.

Gregory Reece (BBA ’86) of Trade, Tennessee, is now Head Softball Coach at Johnson County High School in Mountain City. His degree is in Management.

Renee Bays Lockhart (BBA ’87, MA ’89) of Bluff City has been appointed President of Heritage Partners while continuing to serve as Chief Financial Officer. Both of her degrees are in Accountancy.

Dr. Paula Hill-Collins (BS ’89) of Pound, Virginia, was named 2019 Rural Health Practitioner of the Year. She is Clinical Director of the Health Wagon. Her degree is in Nursing.

Colleen Noe (BS ’89, MS ’91) of Johnson City has been named Associate Director of the James H. Quillen VA Medical Center. Her degrees are in Speech and Hearing.

April Stovall (BS ’89) of Mt. Carmel has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Mt. Carmel Elementary School. Her degree is in General Science.

1990s

George Krueger (MBA ’90) of Plateville, Wisconsin, has been awarded the Doctorate of Business Administration degree from Taft University, where he is an associate professor. His degree is in Business Administration.

Michael Goforth (BS ’91) of Blacksburg, Virginia, was inducted into the Virginia Athletic Trainers’ Association Hall of Fame and was honored at the Virginia Tech vs. ODU football game. His degree is in Physical Education.

Timothy McConnell (BS ’91) of Lenoir City, Tennessee, accepted a new position at Bass, Berry, & Sims Law Firm. His degree is in History.

Mark A. Stevens (BS ’91) of Pawleys Island, South Carolina, has joined the Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce as Director of Tourism Development. His degree is in Mass Communication.

Tracie Jones (BBA ’92, MAT ’08) of Fall Branch has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Mt. Carmel Elementary School. Her degrees are in Marketing and Elementary Education.

Ginger Little (BA ’92) of Kingsport has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Surgoinsville Elementary School. Her degree is in English.

Jeremy Parrot (BS ’92) of Rogersville coached the Bearden Bulldogs to victory in the 2018 Arby’s Classic Tournament Championship. His degree is in Social Sciences.

Rodney English (BBA ’92, MA ’99) of Chattanooga was hired to lead the Whites Creek boys’ basketball team. His degrees are in Management and Elementary Education.

Patricia Ledford (BBA ’92) of Johnson City has released her debut novel Strings - The Story of Hope. Her degree is in Management.

Greg Dennis (BS ’93) of Dunbar, West Virginia, had his No. 11 basketball jersey retired by ETSU. His degree is in Physical Education.

Kristie Hammonds (BSW ’94) of Gate City, Virginia, has been appointed CEO of Frontier Health. Her degree is in Social Work.

Matthew Pendleton (BS ’94) of Seymour, Tennessee, graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. His degree is in Criminal Justice.

Celeste Crowe (BS ’95, MS ’02) of Vilas, North Carolina, was honored as the recipient of the Southeastern Association of Advisors for the Health Professions 2019 Award for Service. She is Director of the Health Professions Advising Office at Appalachian State University. Both her degrees are in Biology.

Bryan Daniels (BS ’95, MS ’97) of Maryville is a recipient of Leadership Blount’s Community Leadership Award and was named to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100. His degrees are in Speech Pathology and Engineering Technology.

Andrew Hall (BBA ’95) of Kingsport was named Chief Operating Officer of General Shale. His degree is in Economics.

Susanna Hauk (BA ’95, MAT ’98) of Kingsport has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Surgoinsville Elementary School. Her degrees are in Art and Elementary Education.

Dr. Marjorie Jenkins (MD ’95) of Silver Spring, Maryland, has been named Dean of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, Greenville.

Chisty Waye (BS ’95) of Rogersville has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Pathways Alternative School. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Robert Chikos (BS ’96) of Cary, Illinois, was selected to be a part of the Illinois Teaching Policy Fellowship. His degree is in History.

Dr. James Owen (MD ’96) of Princeton, New Jersey, was appointed as Navitor Pharmaceuticals’ Chief Medical Officer.

Rebecca Redding (MD ’96) of Rogersville has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Hawkins Elementary School. Her degree is in Educational Media and Technology.

Cyndi Snapp (BS ’96) of Church Hill has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Carter’s Valley Elementary School. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Sonya Vaughn (BS ’97) of Rogersville has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Joseph Rogers Primary School. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Dr. Gary Lilly (MED ’97, ED ’04) of Bristol, Tennessee, has been selected as the new Superintendent of the Collierville Board of Education. His degrees are in Education and Educational Leadership.

Calvin Clifton (BSG ’98) of Kingsport was appointed to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations as a citizen representative. His degree is in General Studies.

Torin Hamilton (BBA ’98) of Lorton, Virginia, graduated from the Army War College with a Master’s of Strategic Studies. His degree is in Accountancy.

Angela Dawn Carrier (MCM ‘99) of Bluff City was joined in marriage with Reggie Vernon Tiller (BS ’02, MS ’04) of Davenport, Virginia. Her degree is in City and Public Management while he holds degrees in Computer and Information Science.

Richard Church (BS ’99, MED ’04) of Kingsport was selected as the new Principal at Cloudband High School. He previously served as a teacher with the Johnson City School System. His degrees are in Interdisciplinary Studies and Educational Leadership.

Carla McKinney (BA ’99) of Columbus, Georgia, was named Region Coach of the Year for Girls Basketball by the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association. She is Head Coach of the Kendrick Cherokees girls basketball team. Her degree is in Mass Communication.

Keith Moser (BA ’99, MAT ’01) of Starkville, Mississippi, won the 2019 Arts and Sciences Faculty Research Award from Mississippi State University. His degrees are in Foreign Languages, History, and Secondary Education.
2000s
Jamey Chadwell (BA ‘00) of Summerville, South Carolina, has been named Head Football Coach at Coastal Carolina. His degree is in Economics.

Kevin Hilton (BS ‘00) of Kingsport was selected as Teacher of the Year for the 9-12 grades category of the Hawkins County, Tennessee, school district. His degree is in History.

Mary Ellen Miller (MBA ‘00) of Johnson City was honored by the Tri-Cities chapter of Public Relations Society of America with the Rod Irvin Excellence in Public Relations Award, which is the highest award bestowed by the organization. Her degree is in Business Administration.

Gary Hicks (BS ‘01) of Rogersville has been named Chair of the Tennessee House of Representatives’ House Finance Subcommittee. His degree is in Computer and Information Science.

Rhonda Richards (BA ‘01, MEd ‘04, MEd ‘16) of Church Hill was selected as Teacher of the Year in the 5-8 grades category of the Hawkins County, Tennessee, school district. Her degrees are in English, Secondary Education, and Educational Media and Educational technology.

Jocelyn Lacey (BA ‘02) of Kenneskunko, Maine, had her newest children's book, Coral’s First Sleepover, published. Her degree is in Mass Communication.

Brandy Nothnagel (MAT ‘02) of Blountville has been named the Sullivan County Department of Education’s Elementary Teacher of the Year. She teaches at Indian Springs Elementary School. Her degree is in Elementary Education.

Dr. Lisa Piercy (MD ‘02) of Milan, Tennessee, was selected to join Tennessee Governor Bill Lee’s cabinet. Her degree is in Medicine, with a Residency in Pediatrics.

Jeremy Terry (BBA ‘02) of Lexington, Kentucky, was promoted by KEMI, Kentucky’s leading provider of workers’ compensation insurance. His degree is in Finance.

John Lusk Hathaway, III (BS ‘03, MFA ‘12) of Johnson City has been selected by the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art to be featured in its new project, “Southbound: Photographs of and About the New South.” His degrees are in Interdisciplinary Studies and Fine Art.

Amy Sharp (BS ‘03, MS ‘07) of Morristown has joined the staff at Providence Clinic as a Nurse Practitioner. Her degree is in Nursing.

Brad Bowles (BS ‘04) of Jonesborough has been hired as Head Football Coach at Porter-Gaud School in Charleston, South Carolina. His degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Kim McCann (BS ‘04) of Mt. Carmel has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant recipient for Mt. Carmel Elementary School. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Rick McVey (BA ‘04) of Bristol, Virginia, lends vocal talents to Washington County Public Library’s audio program by recording children’s books for Dial-A-Story. His degree is in Speech.

Aarika Sandlin (MA ‘04) of Henderson, North Carolina, was selected as the Public Information Officer for Vance County Schools. Her degree is in Professional Communication.

Brian Newman (BS ‘05) of Hickory, North Carolina, has been appointed Office Manager at Mattern & Craig. His degree is in Engineering Technology.

Chuck Hargis (BBA ‘06) of Powell, Tennessee, has been named the first Head Baseball Coach at Lakeway Christian Academy. His degree is in Marketing.

Ashleigh Lingerfelt (BS ‘06) of Kingsport is serving as a Clinical Fieldwork Coordinator for Milligan College’s Occupational Therapy program. Her degree is in Physical Therapy.

Rebecca Rollins (BS ‘07) of Kingsport has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient for Church Hill Elementary School. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Adam Strachn (BS ‘07, BBA ‘09, MACC ‘11) of Crossville, Tennessee, has been appointed CEO of the Cosby Harrison Company. His degrees are in Biology and Accountancy.

Alice Pope (MBA ‘07) of Scottsdale, Arizona, became Inova Health System’s Chief Financial Officer on July 1, 2019. Her degree is in Business Administration.

Kristan Brookshire Ginnings (BS ‘08) of Jonesborough and Jody Spear were joined in marriage on May 30, 2019. Her degree is in Professional Studies.

Shanna Smith (MAT ‘08) of Mt. Carmel has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant recipient for Church Hill Middle School. Her degree is in Secondary Education.

Tammy Mercure (MFA ‘09) of Violet, Louisiana, has been selected by the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art to be featured in its new project, “Southbound: Photographs of and About the New South.” Her degree is in Fine Art.

2010s
Tyler Duncan (BS ‘10) of Kingsport was hired by Watauga Orthopedics. His degree is in Biology.

Sally Berry (BS ‘11) of Elizabethton has released her debut gospel CD, God is in Control. Her degree is in Sociology.

Marc Borghetti (BS ‘11) of Surgoinsville has been promoted to Banking Officer and Surgoinsville Branch Manager at First Community Bank of East Tennessee. His degree is in Biology.

Rhys Enoch (BS ‘11) of Truro, UK, finished tied for eighth in the qualifier for the Professional Golf Association’s U.S. Open Championship at Pebble Beach. His degree is in Sport and Leisure Management.

Desireé Raynor (BSN ’11, MSN ’14) of Jonesborough has opened her own regenerative medicine clinic called New Day Regenerative Medicine. Both of her degrees are in Nursing.

Kendra Edgell (BS ’12, MAT ’18) of Kingsport has been named a 2019 UTrust recipient for Church Hill Middle School. Her degrees are in Psychology and Teacher Education.

Amynthyst Kiah (BA ‘12) of Johnson City, along with her group, has been recognized by National Public Radio for their debut album Songs of Our Native Daughters. Her degree is in Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music Studies.

David Lilly (MBA ’12, MA ’14) of Johnson City serves as an Instructor of International Business and Sports Management at Milligan College. His degrees are in Business Administration and Kinesiology and Sports Studies.

Dr. Dustin Price (MD ’12) of Jonesborough has been inducted into the Milligan College Athletics Hall of Fame for his college baseball career.

Dana Glenn (BBA ’13) of Kingsport has been named to the first class of Leadership Tennessee NEXT. Her degree is in Management.

Keri Prigmore (EdD ’13) of Maryville has been elected Commissioner At-Large and Vice Chair for the Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County Parks and Recreation Commission. Her degree is in Educational Leadership.

Zachary Vance (BS ’13) of Roan Mountain accepted a Communication Specialist position at Ballad Health. His degree is in Mass Communication.
Megan Devine Ailshie (BS ‘14) of Kingsport has been named Assistant Volleyball Coach at the University of Alabama. Her degree is in Physical Education.

Dr. James Hoffmann (PhD ‘14) of Chicago is the author of Integrated Periodization in Sports Training and Athletic Development, released earlier this year. His degree is in Sport Physiology and Performance.

Mary Jernigan (MEd ‘14) of Kingsport has been named the Sullivan County Department of Education’s High School Teacher of the Year. She is Principal of Sullivan South High School. Her degree is in Special Education.

Phillip Klahs (MS ‘14) of Bloomsdale, Maryland, was recently awarded a 2019-20 Brown Graduate Fellowship. His degree is in Biology.

Jennifer Simery (EdD ‘14) of Bulls Gap has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient at Kingdom Kare Daycare in Maryville. Her degree is in Educational Leadership.

Tosha Bean (BS ‘15) of Bulls Gap has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant recipient at St. Clair Elementary School in Hawkins County. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Lesley Fleener (EdD ‘15) of Bristol, Tennessee, has been named the Sullivan County Department of Education’s Principal of the Year. She is Principal of Holston Elementary School in Blountville. Her degree is in Educational Leadership.

Clint Freeman (BS ‘15) of Jonesborough, a former baseball pitcher at ETSU, is playing for the Long Island Ducks as a relief pitcher and first baseman. His degree is in History.

Brittany Kirkland-Hopkins (MPH ‘15) of Cleveland, Tennessee, has been appointed Director of the Bradley County Health Department. Her degree is in Public Health.

Janette Campbell Diehl – Jonesborough, Tennessee, December 11, 2018. BS ’50 Chemistry

Brittany Rhoton (MAT ’15) of Weber City, Virginia, has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient at Clinch School. Her degree is in History.

Dr. Sam Rowell (EdD ’15) of Meadowview, Virginia, has been named Vice President for Economic and Workforce Development at Northeast State Community College. His degree is in Educational Leadership.

Dr. Andrew Sims (MA ’15, EdD ’19) of Fort Wayne, Indiana, is Associate Director of Football Operations for the Nebraska Cornhuskers football program. His degrees are in Business Administration and Global Sport Leadership.

Shelbi Webb (BS ’15) of Bristol, Tennessee, serves as the new Community Relations Coordinator for the United Way of Southwest Virginia. Her degree is in Psychology.

Jason Wilder (BS ’15, MEd ’18) of Jonesborough is the new Veterans Affairs Director at Walters State Community College. His degrees are in Educational Leadership and Social Work.

Taylor Dunn (BS ’16, MA ’19) of Newport is a Kindergarten Teacher at Newport Elementary School. Her degrees are in Early Childhood Development and Education.

Chloe Garner (MBA ’16) of Johnson City won the World Long Drive Championship in 2019 in Thompson, Oklahoma, unleashing a 347-yard bomb in the finals. Her degree is in Business Administration.

Sabrena Snow (BBA ’16) of Bean Station has been selected as the Executive Team Leader of Guest Experience at Target. Her degree is in Marketing.

Madison Leigh Warden (BS ’16) of Gray and Zachery Ethan Peters were wed on April 6, 2019. Her degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Sarah Zadrazil (BS ’16) of Sankt Gilgen, Austria, and a former ETSU soccer standout, was named Austria’s Footballer of the Year in 2018. She is the first woman to be presented this award. Her degree is in Physical Education.

Carson Biggs (BS ’17) of Elizabethton has accepted a job with the University of Kentucky’s Athletics Department in the role of Ticket Operations Coordinator. His degree is in Sports and Leisure Management.

Emilee Ketron (MS ’17) of Kingsport earned a spot on the Tennessee Titans’ cheerleading squad. Her degree is in Speech-Language Pathology.

Michelle Lamb (MEd ’17) of Sneedville has been named a 2019 UTrust Grant Recipient at Clinch School in Hawkins County. Her degree is in Educational Media and Technology.

Albert Louis Merriweather (BS ’17) of Medon, Tennessee, signed another contract with the Harlem Globetrotters. His degree is in Engineering Technology.

Serena Allen (PhD ’18) of Cincinnati has been appointed Associate Director at Medpace. Her degree is in Biomedical Sciences.

Lakyn Buskell (BAS ’18) of Bristol, Tennessee, has been hired by the Bristol UPS store. Her degree is in Applied Science.

Zachary Pell Jamison (BBA ’18) of Morristown married Gabrielle Lynn Davis (BSN ’19) of Morristown on June 1, 2019. His degree is in Finance, and her degree is in Nursing.

Hannah Swayne (BA ’18) of Kingsport has accepted a position as News Editor at the West Orange Times & Observer/Windermere Observer in Winter Garden, Florida. Her degree is in Media and Communication.

Desonta Bradford (BS ’18) of Humboldt, Tennessee, has been drafted by the Phoenix in the EuroMillions Basketball League. His degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Daniel Wedding (MS ’19) of Chucke has accepted a position as Austintown, Ohio, Local School District Director of Strength and Conditioning. His degree is in Sports Management.

Kendal Ivester (BS ’19) of Pineneads was hired as a Second-Grade Teacher at East Side Elementary and Head Volleyball Coach at T.A. Dugger Junior High School in Elizabethton. Her degree is in Elementary Education.

Micah Kaczor (BS ’19) of Ashburn, Virginia, has signed a professional contract with the Colorado Rockies. Kaczor went 7-2 with a 2.13 ERA with 85 strikeouts in 16 appearances this past season for the Bucs. His degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

1930s
Dr. Lacy E Harville, Knoxville, March 4, 2019. BS ’31 Social Science

1940s
Margaret Louise McMackin, Johnson City, September 3, 2019. BS ’42
Ronda Council Buchanan Jr., Greenville, South Carolina, August 20, 2019. BS ’46 Industrial Arts Education

1950s
Fred Gray Childress, Sr., Norris, Tennessee, December 11, 2018. BS ’50 Chemistry

Janette Campbell Diehl – Jonesborough, August 26, 2019. BS ’50 Business Administration. Mrs. Diehl was a Foundation Past Board Member, Outstanding Alumna, and recipient of the Chancellor’s Award.

Robert F. Thomas, Johnson City, January 29, 2019. BS ’50 Social Studies

Helen R. (Tence) Agee, Sylva, North Carolina, September 14, 2019. BS ’51 Health

Leroy Combs, Knoxville, August 31, 2019. BS ’51 History, MA ’52 Education

Mary Ann Fudge Range, Surgoinsville, March 3, 2019. BS ’53 Geography

Robert F. Thompson, Johnson City, January 29, 2019. BS ’50 Social Studies

Helen R. (Tence) Agee, Sylva, North Carolina, September 14, 2019. BS ’51 Health

Leroy Combs, Knoxville, August 31, 2019. BS ’51 History, MA ’52 Education

OBITUARIES

1960s
Edward Henry Helfer, Elizabethton, February 18, 2019. BS ’62 Industrial Technology

David Lee Jones, Fayetteville, Tennessee, August 29, 2019. BS ’62 Mathematics

Charles Robert Burchett, Austin, Texas, July 1, 2019. BS ’63 General Science

David Henry Hampton, Sr., Elizabethton, August 21, 2019. BS ’63 Mathematics
**FACULTY AND STAFF OBITUARIES**

**1970s**
- Mary Anne Adair, Kingsport, September 22, 2019. BS ‘70 English
- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Lyndon E. Holloman, Williamsburg, Virginia, August 14, 2018. BS ’70 Mathematics
- Ruth Ann Lundy, Johnson City, February 15, 2019. BSN ’70 Nursing
- Martha Nan Meredith, Johnson City, August 31, 2019. BS ’70 History
- Bobby Joe Starnes, Duffield, Virginia, November 11, 2019. BS ’70 History
- Jean Devere Cottrell, Johnson City, September 23, 2019. BS ’71 Elementary Education, MA ’73
- Nancy Kathryn Ellis, Elizabethton, February 8, 2019. BS ’71 Elementary Education
- Virgil Lee Ferrell, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August 24, 2019. BS ’71 Political Science
- Leon Franklin Duobinis-Gray, Murray, Kentucky, August 31, 2019. BS ’71, MS ’76 Biology
- Linda Sue Irwin, Maryville, March 17, 2019. BS ’71 Physical Education
- Thomas Glenn Tucker, Oak Ridge, September 17, 2019. BS ’71 Industrial Arts Education
- Woody Lee Crowder, Elizabethton, September 9, 2019. BS ’73 Biology
- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Patrick Way Tindall, Kingsport, September 14, 2019. BSN ’73 Nursing
- Joann Keith Bond, Hampton, September 14, 2019. ASN ’75 Nursing, BS ’75 Health Education
- Joelma Tosh Powers, Bristol, Tennessee, September 21, 2019. MA ’76 Instructional Communication
- Anita Kay Martin, Kingsport, August 22, 2019. ASN ’77 Nursing
- Ada Mae Tallman, Johnson City, February 28, 2019. BS ’77 Elementary Education

**1980s**
- Carolyn Kay Christian Gibbons, Church Hill, August 30, 2019. BS ’80 English, MEd ’97 Educational Leadership
- Debra Anne Dickson Putney, Johnson City, March 11, 2019. BS ’80 Elementary Education
- Pandora Elaine Constantine, Elizabethton, September 13, 2019. ASN ’81 Nursing
- William “Bill” Ray Thomas, Maryville, January 24, 2019. BS ’82 Criminal Justice and Criminology
- Kathy Jane Feathers, Blountville, September 8, 2019. BS ’83 Elementary Education
- Deborah Joan Baker Woods, Johnson City, September 2, 2019. AS ’83 Medical Laboratory Technology
- Jessica Katherine Birchfield Gladstone, Lauderdale, Florida, July 28, 2019. BS ’84 Biology
- Jane Kay Newell, Kingsport, August 29, 2019. MEH ’85 Environmental Health

**1990s**
- Nancy Kathryn Ellis, Elizabethton, February 8, 2019. BS ’71 Elementary Education
- Virgil Lee Ferrell, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August 24, 2019. BS ’71 Political Science
- Leon Franklin Duobinis-Gray, Murray, Kentucky, August 31, 2019. BS ’71, MS ’76 Biology
- Linda Sue Irwin, Maryville, March 17, 2019. BS ’71 Physical Education
- Thomas Glenn Tucker, Oak Ridge, September 17, 2019. BS ’71 Industrial Arts Education
- Woody Lee Crowder, Elizabethton, September 9, 2019. BS ’73 Biology
- Lt. Col. (Ret.) Patrick Way Tindall, Kingsport, September 14, 2019. BSN ’73 Nursing
- Joann Keith Bond, Hampton, September 14, 2019. ASN ’75 Nursing, BS ’75 Health Education
- Joelma Tosh Powers, Bristol, Tennessee, September 21, 2019. MA ’76 Instructional Communication
- Anita Kay Martin, Kingsport, August 22, 2019. ASN ’77 Nursing
- Ada Mae Tallman, Johnson City, February 28, 2019. BS ’77 Elementary Education

**2000s**
- Delmar R. Whaley, Elizabethton, March 3, 2019. BGS ’00 General Studies
- La’Shan Denise Taylor, Atlanta, March 7, 2019. MS ’01 Biology, MPH ’03 Public Health, DRPH ’09 Public Health
- Jan Minton Gruber, Kingsport, September 15, 2019. BSN ’03 Nursing
- John David Meredith, Elizabethton, August 31, 2019. BS ’05 History, MPA ’10 Public Administration
- Phillip Roy Smith, Duffield, Virginia, February 9, 2019. BGS ’06 General Studies
- Terry Landon Clevenger, Johnson City, March 2, 2019. BS ’16 Professional Studies

**2010s**
- Dr. Frank Newby of Tunnel Hill, Georgia, October 9, 2019. Dr. Newby taught chemistry at ETSU for 38 years.
February 10-14, 2020
For more information, visit etsu.edu/festival.

Featuring:
- Jon Meacham, a Pulitzer-prize winning presidential biographer and historian and author
- Melissa Fitzgerald, a television star
- Mandy Harvey, an American jazz and pop singer and songwriter
- Panel Discussion: Perspectives on Voting
- Mike Wiley, a playwright, director, and actor