Coming Home
D.P. Culp Student Center Reopens

The 1911 Society Inaugural Members
Bucs Help Bucs
What Could Have Been: Abrupt End to Bucs’ Season
The BucMart, a staple of the Culp Center, also moved to the 1st floor and during grand reopening festivities was renamed Roger’s BucMart in honor of longtime employee Roger Armstrong.
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The 1911 Society
Meet the Inaugural Members

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Dr. Thomas G. Burton: 62 Years on Campus and Counting

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At East Tennessee State University, we are accustomed to dealing with hardship. It has been a defining part of our past. When tested by economic crises, wars, and threats to our very existence, our leaders, our faculty and staff, our students, our alumni, and our neighbors have met the challenge. ETSU not only survived, but it prevailed and prospered. It will continue to do so.

From the very earliest days, our leaders faced uncertainty. Only eight days after the beginning of classes at East Tennessee State Normal School, our founding President, Sidney Gilbreath, was troubled. Faculty had already been on the job for weeks and in some cases months, but they had received no pay. On October 10, 1911, during the official dedication of the Normal School, President Gilbreath turned to the state’s Superintendent of Instruction, John Willard Brister, and asked that faculty paychecks be sent forthwith, because, he said, the professors “are now living on credit, which does not always purchase the best quality of flour.”

President Gilbreath’s successor met challenges even more severe. Dr. Charles C. Sherrod, whose name graces our beautiful library, led East Tennessee State for 24 years, through the Great Depression and World War II, from 1925 to 1949.

When I reflect on the challenges we face today during an uncertain and unprecedented time, I think about Dr. Sherrod often, and I take consolation in the fact that we have weathered enormous difficulty, to emerge as an even stronger institution. Despite very limited resources that he faced beginning on the very first day of his presidency, Dr. Sherrod provided the leadership and vision that would lead to our accreditation, by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, in December of 1927. He worked night and day for the next 22 years to maintain it.

The late Dr. Frank B. Williams, Jr., Professor Emeritus of History, once wrote that Dr. Sherrod operated on “a frayed thread rather than a shoestring.” In 1930-31, there were more missed paydays. The legislature reduced the appropriation from $175,000 to $150,000. To meet payroll on October 1, 1931, Dr. Sherrod used the college’s local funds as a loan, to be repaid when state checks were forthcoming. In the spring of 1932, conditions had worsened. Dr. Sherrod told the faculty that the state was broke. Because the state could not regularly meet payrolls, faculty borrowed money and paid interest rates from 18 to 24 percent. Professors exhausted meager savings and dropped insurance policies.

On the last day of 1932, Dr. Sherrod read in the Nashville Banner that a state senator from Union County was introducing a bill to abolish the teachers colleges. Dr. Sherrod led the campaign to defeat the bill and keep the institution open. From 1933 through 1937, however, the legislature only appropriated $56,000 a year for each state college.

In 1933, bank failures prevented a number of students from registering for winter quarter. Four days before President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Bank Holiday, Dr. Sherrod sent a letter to all of our students. He wrote, “On account of the unsettled condition of the banks in our territory, we regret to announce that we cannot cash out-of-town checks or accept them in payment for meal tickets, fees, etc., until the banking situation clears up.”

The year 1935 was worse. Dr. Sherrod had to eliminate the last six weeks of the summer session. In 1937, the school received a $90,000 appropriation, but the state still had trouble meeting payroll. The closure of the school was again debated, by political candidates seeking office and by members of the General Assembly. Those who advocated closure described all the former normal schools as “an unnecessary luxury.”
During the World War II years, our enrollment steadily declined and reached a low point of 260 students during the winter quarter of 1944. Several faculty had to teach in other disciplines to take the places of colleagues in the military. Not until 1946 did the budget return to the pre-Depression level of $175,000. Depression and war disrupted the schedules and the career plans of hundreds of students.

Our institution has survived some very dark days in our history. That survival required flexibility, can-do attitudes, faith in each other, and a deep commitment to the fundamental mission of higher education. As Dr. Sherrod and his colleagues knew so well, those traits have always defined us at East Tennessee State University.

For very different reasons, we faced some dark periods of financial uncertainty during the winter and spring of 2020 as COVID-19 upended our world. An appreciation for the history of this institution helped us through those days of uncertainty. Facing deep budget cuts and threats to the very existence of East Tennessee State, our predecessors never lost focus on our mission, which has always been to improve the quality of life for the people of this region.

The spring 2020 semester began like any other semester. There was anticipation. Hope. Excitement. Our students had dreams. For many members of the class of 2020, this was to be the greatest semester of them all as they were just a few months away from earning their coveted degrees.

The time soon came, however, when we had to alter almost every aspect of university life. When unprecedented decisions had to be made, they were driven by that fundamental mission. And those decisions were accepted by a campus that never lost faith in our enterprise. As we were figuring out new ways to carry out our teaching, research, and public service missions, good things kept happening. We launched our ETSU Partnership Plus program. We celebrated the reopening of the Culp Student Center. Our men’s basketball team won the Southern Conference Tournament. We saw final touches to the Martin Center for the Arts being made. ETSU received many national rankings. Students, faculty, and staff continued to earn national recognition for their work.

The close of the semester did not look like other spring semesters. Academic instruction had moved online. The year-end events that I always cherish looked different. Classrooms, research labs, our library, our residence halls, and the quad were empty. Still, it was a time of celebration. A time of hope. A time of dreams being realized. Over 2,200 students celebrated the ending of a journey on May 9. It was our first virtual commencement ceremony, and the ingenuity and creativity that made it happen deeply touched and inspired our entire region.

Since graduation, we have continued to see challenges emerge across this nation, opening wounds that strike to our core values of equity and inclusion. No one could have imagined that in the weeks following Commencement, our nation would watch a horrific murder unfold on the streets of Minneapolis, Minnesota, as the killing of George Floyd reminds us that dramatic progress and improvement are still needed in this nation if we are to truly open doors of opportunity and change outcomes so that all of our students are able to achieve their dreams.

Higher education must play an even greater role in teaching those lessons. Knowledge is the hope of the human race. With it come compassion and understanding and respect. In these difficult times, it is vital that America’s colleges and universities reaffirm those eternal values.

Sincerely,

Brian Noland
President
On March 24, 2015, members of the Student Government Association anxiously gathered in the forum room on the third floor of the D.P. Culp University Center to vote on a resolution that would transform the student experience at East Tennessee State University.

“I remember that vote like it was yesterday. It was unanimous,” recalls Doretha Benn (Class of 2016), who was SGA President at the time. “I don’t think people understand how many hours me, Taylor (Dunn), and Zack (Sholes) spent planning every floor because we wanted to be so detailed. That whole year was pretty intense. Me and Taylor were only juniors and as President I was working on this multi-million-dollar project.”

Nearly five years later, the 2019-20 SGA President, Aamir Shaikh, stood in front of a crowd gathered to celebrate the reopening of a completely renovated, and arguably unrecognizable, student center.

“One of the things about ETSU I value most is that students truly have a voice on this campus,” he said during the ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 5. “This is a place where students are encouraged to bring forward their ideas, and this is a place where students are encouraged to dream.”

In 2013, students began voicing their dream to improve the “living room” of campus. Small conversations between SGA senators grew to
Following the passage of the resolution in 2015, each SGA administration played a role in the renovation. During Alex Cassell’s presidency, Sodexo was chosen to be the new food service provider for ETSU, and Pooja Shah worked closely with ETSU administration and architects Beeson, Lusk & Street Inc. to transform the vision for the new Culp Student Center into actual design plans. Then, in April 2018, SGA President Megha Gupta stood alongside Board of Trustees members, the family of the building’s namesake, Dr. D.P. Culp, former SGA presidents, and ETSU President Brian Noland as they pushed shovels into the dirt to celebrate the groundbreaking and another major step toward bringing students’ dreams to reality.

“... student surveys and visits to similar student spaces on other college campuses. Former SGA President Michael Wallace (Class of 2015) said he and fellow senators felt the Culp Center was sufficient but had the potential to be so much more. Momentum for the project grew, but the student body wasn’t quite ready to commit to the fee increase necessary to renovate the Culp.

“We started the discussion and allowed students the space to talk about the Culp and how much they were willing to pay to see the services they wanted on campus. I felt confident that the next group of leaders would carry it forward,” Wallace said.
“Our students have been dedicated to seeing this happen, even though many of them knew they would never be here to enjoy it,” said Dr. Jeff Howard, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment and SGA advisor. “I am so proud of our students who choose to serve in leadership positions and have a positive impact on the future of ETSU.”

To cut down construction time and cost, many offices housed in the Culp Center relocated to other buildings during the renovation. The temporary inconveniences for students now seem worthwhile. The new Carrier Center for Student Success and Engagement (2nd floor) houses University Advisement, Student Activities and Organizations, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Leadership and Civic Engagement. ID Services has also returned to the 2nd floor beside the new Student Media Center that brings together student media from The Edge Radio and the *East Tennessean* to create academic support for media and communications students. A new Pride Resource Center is also located on the 2nd floor.

“This building will continue to play a transformative role in the lives of our students and those who work in the Culp and dedicate their careers to ETSU,” said ETSU President Brian Noland. “These individuals are planting seeds daily that will be realized for years to come.”

“For me, it was a lot about creating community,” Benn said. “I was the first black female SGA president and I wanted to make space for an inclusive community to be built. We did it out of love. ETSU gave me lifelong friendships, community, the education, hope, and support that I needed.”

The renovated Culp Student Center connects the east and west sides of campus and features 20,000 additional square feet of space, plus an outdoor plaza. Even though the renovation finished on time and on budget, the construction crew did make one surprising discovery of an old blasting cap and wires under rocks in the Cave, likely left from the original construction. The “dynamite discovery” made local news headlines during the summer of 2018.
Renovations to the dining hall (3rd floor) were completed in a very tight timeframe in summer 2019 with the help of Sodexo. The new facility doubled its capacity, began offering an “anytime dining” experience from 7 a.m. to midnight seven days a week, and remained open while the rest of the building was under construction.

The ETSU Bookstore debuted a brand new look and location on the 1st floor where several new and returning dining options have opened, including Starbucks, Mein Bowl, Chick-fil-A, and Steak ’n Shake.

“Steak ’n Shake was something we joked about and I can’t believe it actually made it into the building,” Benn said while reminiscing about the visions she had for the Culp.

The BucMart, a staple of the Culp Center, also moved to the 1st floor and during grand reopening festivities was renamed Roger’s BucMart in honor of longtime employee Roger Armstrong.

The Cave, now free of any pre-existing “dynamite,” features a new stage for performances and a video wall for ETSU’s Esports teams.

Probably the most noticeable change is the removal of a feature that was part of the building since it opened in 1976: the ramp, which was located in the center of the building.

Numerous meeting spaces, including a modernized and expanded East Tennessee Room on the 2nd floor that overlooks the amphitheater, are available for reservation for campus and community events and meetings.

More information about the D.P. Culp Student Center is available at etsu.edu/culp.

Amanda Marsh Mowell is Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
East Tennessee State University has created a new interprofessional research center that will expand ongoing efforts to improve the health and well-being of women, particularly women from rural areas.

The ETSU Center for Applied Research and Evaluation in Women’s Health (CARE Women’s Health) was formally established this year. However, its roots go back to 2017, when ETSU’s College of Public Health received a grant to fund research and evaluation efforts aimed at reducing unintended and teen pregnancy and improving maternal health outcomes.

Over the last three years, that project has blossomed into additional funding opportunities and an interprofessional team whose aim is to advance women’s health by engaging in research that informs policy and practice.

CARE Women’s Health leverages the expertise of approximately 50 ETSU students, faculty, and staff members, as well as collaborations with other universities, public health agencies, and stakeholders from throughout the country. In addition to its main office at ETSU, CARE has faculty and staff working and conducting studies in Alabama and South Carolina. While the primary focus of CARE is the South/Appalachian region of the United States, its work has implications for women nationwide.

“When you look at indicators such as teen birth, cancer mortality rates, or cardiovascular disease, women’s health is clearly not where it needs to be in rural areas,” said Dr. Amal Khoury, Director of CARE Women’s Health and a Professor in the College of Public Health. “Rural women carry a disproportionate burden of disease and disability.”

ETSU has always been deeply connected to its community and to its region. This is a defining feature of our university.

Amal Khoury
CARE Women’s Health exists to help mend these disparities, and this goal goes to the heart of ETSU’s mission to improve the lives of the people of its region, Khoury explained.

“ETSU has always been deeply connected to its community and to its region,” Khoury said. “This is a defining feature of our university. We see CARE as an extension to the university’s commitment to its region, and we see it as a regional and national player that has already established ETSU as a leader in women’s health research.”

Women’s health research is happening across many disciplines at ETSU. While CARE Women’s Health is housed in ETSU’s College of Public Health, current CARE projects also include research in ETSU’s Quillen College of Medicine and College of Arts and Sciences. Plans are underway to partner with other colleges across campus to further expand the reach and impact of the center.

“We have a strong team of researchers at ETSU who have worked together for several years to evaluate programs seeking to improve women’s health outcomes across broad populations,” said Dr. Michael Smith, Director of Policy and Programs for CARE Women’s Health and an Assistant Professor in the College of Public Health.

Examples of current CARE Women’s Health research projects include examining policies related to health insurance and to women’s access to reproductive services.

“We know that health insurance is a very important determinant of access to care,” Khoury said. “In the South, in particular, significant portions of the population continue to lack health insurance or they are seriously underinsured. We examine how health insurance affects utilization of services.”

And while access to health care is a major contributor to health outcomes, the center’s work addresses the multiple determinants of health at the individual, health system, social, and policy levels. Current projects examine both the delivery and the use of reproductive health services across diverse communities and populations, with a focus on how state and federal policies and programs affect women’s health and health care over time.

CARE Women’s Health also complements and expands the work of other research centers at ETSU, notably the Addiction Science Center and the Center for Rural Health Research. Recently, CARE collaborated with the Addiction Science Center to study opioid use among women of child-bearing age.

In addition, CARE Women’s Health increases training and mentorship opportunities for existing junior faculty and fellows, as well as providing valuable research experience for undergraduate and graduate students. Since 2017, more than 40 students have trained alongside the faculty and engaged in conducting research and disseminating findings.

The center’s leaders hope that its effects will be both far-reaching and close to home.

“As a husband, a father of two daughters (and a son), and a native of Appalachia, it’s important to me that the center’s research not only informs women’s health policy nationally, but also supports the health and well-being of women in the communities we call home,” said Dr. Nathan Hale, Director of Research for CARE Women’s Health and Associate Professor in the College of Public Health.

Melissa Nipper is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
When the story of COVID-19 is recounted years from now, it certainly will be a narrative of many firsts. For the first time in the history of ETSU, all academic instruction moved online, research operations came to a halt, and over 2,200 employees left their cubicles, offices, and desks to begin working in remote locations. All that happened within a matter of weeks.

The common spaces of residence halls became silent as the majority of students left for spring break only to return long enough to gather their belongings. International study programs hit the pause button, internships were abbreviated, and though plans for end-of-the-semester events such as commencement and honors convocations moved forward, it was with the understanding that within a virtual world, these beloved celebrations would appear differently than they had in the past.

Most faculty spent spring break transitioning their course loads online. Advising and counseling services continued. Admissions recruiters engaged prospective students throughout the virtual world. And for the Class of 2020, all eyes remained on the finish line just weeks away.

The second quarter of 2020 was never intended to be a series of extended snow days; ETSU was open, but the definition of “open” required some editorial revision.

Still, that’s just part of the story.

“I have never been more proud to be part of the ETSU community than I was during the spring 2020 semester as our students, faculty, and staff transitioned through what was an unprecedented era in the history of our campus and the history of our nation,” President Noland said. “Though so much was unknown during that time, our faculty and staff stepped forward to make adjustments that were needed and to offer strategies and suggestions that would minimize any disruption to the experience of our students.

That was first and foremost throughout those days, and while the COVID-19 pandemic was a time of many challenges, it also presented opportunities for us to respond to the needs of our community...the very reason why this school was founded in 1911.”

**SHIELDS OF PROTECTION**

Production of several types of emergency face shields, including one designed by faculty at ETSU, began in March when Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission issued a statewide request for personal protective equipment.

Dr. Keith Johnson and Bill Hemphill from ETSU’s Department of Engineering, Engineering Technology, and Surveying immediately went to work developing a prototype that would be comfortable to wear. They used copolyester previously donated by Eastman Chemical Company as well as other materials commonly available at hardware stores. Meanwhile, STREAMWORKS, an educational program in Kingsport, began producing 3D printed headbands for face shields in its STEM Gym.

Both groups had almost everything they needed to begin manufacturing, with the exception of one very important piece: the clear copolyester for the actual face shield. Eastman Polymer Technology Division teams quickly turned out rolls of PETG, a material typically used for medical devices.

Brendan Boyd, Eastman’s Vice President of Specialty Plastics and Fibers Technology, said he received a call on Saturday, March 21, from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission about the project to provide PPE for frontline medical personnel in Nashville and discovered that the company was running out of materials for a critical piece of the face shield. The following Monday, his team began to extrude out the resins made at Eastman into film material for that component. Later that week, he heard about ETSU’s face shield design and other local PPE producers such as STREAMWORKS in similar need of material.

“Given Eastman’s presence and our roots in the community, we certainly wanted to do our part to make sure local efforts had the materials they needed,” Boyd said.

Initially, the face shield project relied heavily on existing equipment in ETSU’s guitar-building lab to cut the actual shields out of sheets of PETG provided by Eastman. Hemphill, Johnson, and others worked tirelessly in the lab-turned-manufacturing-center to try to keep up with demand for the shields.

Thankfully, Borla Performance Industries offered to help. The performance exhaust manufacturer located in Johnson City has equipment capable of cutting out the shield pieces much faster. “This has been a great opportunity for Borla to work in conjunction with ETSU,” said Patrick Mardis, Operation Manager. “We had the equipment, we had...
the people, so we thought, ‘Let’s put the resources to good use.’

The face shield design evolved to incorporate zip ties and PEX tubing rather than bolts, washers, and nuts to secure the frame. Additionally, engineers at Borla took an open-source design from the internet and developed a single-use face shield with a lighter weight and simplified design, and began production in conjunction with ETSU.

ASSISTANCE IN THE “NEW” CLASSROOM

As K-12 schools sent students home and instruction moved online, faculty in the Clemmer College at ETSU stepped forward to offer support and assistance to educators who were navigating through the new normal and to extend a helping hand to the other newly appointed full-time “teachers,” namely mom and dad.

The Homework Hotline was staffed by future educators in the Clemmer College and was offered to school districts across the Northeast Tennessee region, from Sevierville to Mountain City.

Dr. Karin Keith, ETSU Chair of Curriculum and Instruction, identified students from all grade levels and subjects, such as math, science, and language areas, as well as in early childhood and special education, to assist. The ETSU students were available to meet with those needing assistance via Zoom, Skype, or by email or phone, and assistance was provided at no charge.

For physical education teachers, instructing students on how to play tennis, do squats, and perform other types of body movements can be challenging in an all-online learning environment. Dr. Kason O’Neil from ETSU helped lead a grassroots effort to provide strategies, resources, and other virtual teaching techniques to the physical education community across the nation.

“The physical education is definitely a hands-on field and our preparation for teachers involves in-person interactions,” said O’Neil, Associate Professor of Sport, Exercise, Recreation, and Kinesiology in the Clemmer College. “The online learning structure also had an impact on faculty who are involved in the training of future PE instructors. We work in a kinesthetic-driven field, and this transition has been difficult in terms of how we teach our classes, conduct research, and work with community partners.”

The transition to an online learning environment was also a game-changer for teachers and parents trying to educate students at home who have severe disabilities, such as significant Autism or significant cognitive, physical, or sensory disabilities, or multiple disabilities.

“As schools began closing, we began hearing from teachers and parents asking for help,” said Dr. Pamela Mims, Associate Dean of the Clemmer College. “We wanted to be a resource for them during that time when so much in education had changed.”

Mims and two Clemmer special education colleagues, Dr. Cynthia Chambers and Dr. Dawn Rowe, began holding Zoom meetings for those with questions or looking for ideas, strategies, and best-practices for teaching children with severe disabilities in an online environment. Mims said the move from in-person classes to learning at home online can be very disruptive to students with high-intensity support needs.

BIG CHALLENGES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The Tennessee Small Business Development Center at ETSU partnered with the College of Business and Technology’s Department of Management and Marketing to provide guidance, information, and resources to small businesses in our region amid the COVID-19 crisis. The center offered weekly free Zoom webinars to explain available Small Business Administration funding and other financial assistance. Faculty members offered guidance on a variety of topics.

A TIMELESS MISSION

“Our students, faculty, and staff stood on the front lines to address the many challenges this region and our nation faced during the past months,” Noland said. “Though these were extraordinary times in history, ETSU responded the same way as it has since 1911 by bringing solutions to the problems before us. When our region needed better prepared teachers, or more rural health care providers, or access to new educational programs, or opportunities to enhance the arts, ETSU stepped forward.

“It is a mission of regional stewardship, and it is a mission that will always be part of our story.”

HELPING HAND FOR STUDENTS

In late March, the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) was signed into law that provided financial assistance to students who demonstrated need and were facing significant financial hardships as a result of COVID-19. Over $5 million has been distributed to over 8,300 students based on a formula developed by the Office of Financial Aid following guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. Additional funding is also available in the form of emergency grants to students through the Division of Student Life and Enrollment.

CARES Act Funding to ETSU Students

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*prorated for eligible students

“The CARES funding was one of several initiatives put into place to help our students,” said Dr. B.J. King, ETSU Chief Financial Officer. “The COVID-19 pandemic was a major disruption that was unforeseen when the spring semester began, and the last thing we wanted was for the financial hardships created by the pandemic to be a distraction to our students and their goals.”

King added that ETSU has also authorized prorated refunds to eligible students for housing and dining services. This included $2.1 million for housing expenses and over $1.2 million for dining fees. An estimated $1 million in wages was paid to tuition scholars, graduate assistants, and regular work study students for hours not worked after the university moved to remote status.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations, and Amanda Mowell is Director of Communication. | Photos by Ron Campbell
As Tennessee started grappling with the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early March, Dr. Sheri Holmes and a team of ETSU Health leaders began discussing how they could help mitigate the spread of the disease. “We knew there was a need for additional testing in our region, so our conversations focused on how we could help,” said Holmes, an alumna of the ETSU College of Nursing (1989) and Quillen College of Medicine (2001) who now serves as ETSU Health Chief Medical Officer and Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs at Quillen.

Dr. Jonathan Moorman, Chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at ETSU and a member of Governor Bill Lee’s Coronavirus Task Force, suggested a testing site, where members of the community who had symptoms—but perhaps no known exposure to COVID-19—could easily be tested. The idea was supported by Dr. Bill Block, Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Dean of Quillen College of Medicine, who proposed a drive-through tent as a convenient setting to offer the testing.

In just 72 hours, the team brought the idea to fruition. On March 17, ETSU Health opened the first drive-through testing site in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

A large white tent was erected in front of the ETSU Health clinic on North State of Franklin Road in Johnson City, where prescreened patients could be tested for flu and COVID-19 without having to go into a clinic and potentially exposing other patients to the virus.

In the 12 days that the site was open, ETSU Health administered more than 600 tests at the tent and in its clinics. In addition, the testing site was instrumental in detecting the first cases of community spread of COVID-19 in the region.
“One of the most remarkable things about setting up this testing site was how we were able to identify an immediate need during a crisis and act quickly to meet that need,” Holmes said. “The development involved lab processes, supplies, equipment, nurses, volunteers, public safety—to many aspects to name. Everyone involved stepped up to the plate and gave 100 percent effort.”

Holmes said the planning team, consisting of her, Moorman, Dr. Kevin Breuel, Beth Ann Henley, and Rusty Lewis, worked to overcome challenges including procuring test kits, setting up a phone room and hotline that patients could call for screening, site preparation, and mobilizing staff to administer the tests.

“The success of the site was due, in large part, to Dr. Block giving our team free rein to do what was needed—within reason—to ensure that we could provide this service,” Holmes said.

ETSU Health’s drive-through testing center remained open and served the community until April 1, when the local health department opened its own drive-through testing sites in Washington and surrounding counties.

“At that point, we transitioned the drive-through testing to the health department, but continued testing in our clinics,” Holmes said.

As Holmes looks back on the ETSU Health testing center’s impact on the community during the early days of the pandemic, she is filled with satisfaction at the service they were able to provide—but her satisfaction is also tinged with sadness.

At the same time that ETSU Health was ramping up testing efforts, a member of Holmes’ family was dying from COVID-19 in North Carolina, in an area where testing was not readily available. Holmes wonders how things might have been if he had been able to be tested earlier.

“If he had lived here, he could have been tested in our tent,” Holmes said. “Here I was fighting this illness, and where he lived, he couldn’t get tested until day eight of his illness.”

Both the personal and professional effects of COVID-19 have reminded Holmes, a native of Kingsport, of the impact of ETSU on the region.

“From the medical school that has trained nearly 700 providers in the region to all of the other health sciences colleges, this region is fortunate to have ETSU,” she said. “I am so proud to care for the people here.”

Melissa Nipper is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
TELL US YOUR COVID-19 STORY

The Archives of Appalachia is inviting alumni to document their personal experiences of living through the COVID-19 pandemic here in the region.

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, which includes the Archives of Appalachia, will collect materials during the duration of the COVID-19 crisis and permanently house them within the center.

“Our project, ‘Telling Your Story: Documenting COVID-19 in East Tennessee,’ will chronicle how the people of our region journeyed through these unprecedented times,” said Dr. Jeremy Smith, Director of the Archives of Appalachia. “We want to hear from our community how they spent their days, how their lives, families, and businesses were affected and how they experienced loss and hardship, as well as how they stood in solidarity and the lessons they learned.”

Smith said interested persons are invited to share materials such as diaries, writings, photographs, videos, social media posts and business correspondences that represent their experience during this time.

More information about the project, including a submission form, is available at etsu.edu/cas/cass/archives/covid19story.php. Questions about the project can be directed to archives@etsu.edu or 423-439-4338.
In times of challenge and adversity, the ETSU family unites to serve the Appalachian Highlands and support one another.

In other words, “Bucs Help Bucs.”

That pledged resonated more than ever this past semester as students faced extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following spring break, all courses went completely online and most students moved out of campus housing. With “safer at home” orders in place, many students were confronted with job loss, housing insecurity, and family financial hardships, all while continuing to progress in their courses as the semester approached the final stretch.

“The need for mental health support was great. When we left campus to enjoy Spring Break, we didn’t know how quickly our lives would be turned upside down,” said Aamir Shaikh, former President of the Student Government Association. “Some of our students were suddenly challenged by food insecurity and no longer having access to meals on campus.”

Realizing the urgent financial challenges ETSU students were immediately facing, Ritter and the University Advancement staff chose to launch the Bucs Help Bucs initiative in place of the annual Day of Giving program. According to Ritter, the primary relief areas identified were Student/Staff Emergency Funds, Bucky’s Food Pantry, the ETSU Counseling Center, or other areas where donors wanted to designate a specific gift.

The initiative was a smashing success! At the conclusion of the campaign, $130,204 was raised from 583 donors who made 620 gifts. Among the major gifts was a donation of $25,000 from AT&T to support the Bucs Help Bucs initiative.

According to Jon See, Executive Director of Annual Giving, 37 percent of donations for “Bucs Help Bucs” were from persons who identified as faculty, staff, or retirees.

“Since the onset of this health crisis, many members of our Buccaneer family began reaching out asking how they could help during this time of uncertainty and hardship for our students,” said Pam Ritter, Vice President for University Advancement. “The Bucs Help Bucs initiative became a way for us to raise funds that would provide financial support in the areas of highest need that will make the greatest impact.”

In additional to the ‘Bucs Help Bucs’ project, other sources of funding were made available to those in crisis. Through the Buccaneer Student Crisis Fund, more than 140 students received nearly $80,000 in financial support through emergency student grants.

“As an international student at ETSU for my first year, when the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, I wasn’t sure how I was going to be able to financially handle it,” writes one ETSU student. “I knew I had to get home, and as soon as possible. I lost my job on campus, and I was forced to dig out a large sum of money to pay for my unexpected flights back home. I had not calculated this. The Buccaneer Student Crisis Fund has allowed me to recover my financial losses due to the pandemic, and for that I am extremely grateful towards the university. This has only made me prouder to be a Buc!”

“These grants allowed students to meet expenses such as rent and utilities, buy food, secure internet service, and cover other needs that allowed them to remain enrolled and maintain their basic needs,” said Dr. Michelle Byrd, Dean of Students. “Many of the students I worked with had lost their jobs or experienced a reduction in hours and unfortunately had no other means of support.

“The true spirit of being a member of the ETSU Buccaneer Family is embodied in the grants provided to students in need,” Byrd added.

ETSU students still need your help. Persons interested in making a contribution to the Buccaneer Student Crisis Fund can do so at www.etsu.edu/give or by contacting Dessi Foster, Director of Development for Student Life and Enrollment, at fosterdk@etsu.edu.
Not even a global pandemic could dampen the celebration of graduation this past May as more than 2,200 degrees were conferred during ETSU's Virtual Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 9.

Members of the Class of 2020 heard special congratulatory remarks from Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and country music superstar Dolly Parton as well as special music from the ETSU Chorale. The virtual environment allowed for each college to host its own ceremony that included remarks from the dean and best wishes from the faculty.

A link to each college ceremony is available at www.etsu.edu/classof2020.
Ms. Dolly Parton

Singer, Songwriter, Multi-Instrumentalist, Record Producer, Actress, Author, Businesswoman, and Humanitarian

WELL HEY THERE, CLASS OF 2020, it’s me, Dolly! First, let me say that I’m sorry that we’re not together in person on this special day. Now I don’t know about you, but I’m getting tired of being in the house. And I’m really sorry that your special day of celebration has to be on video. But each of you have a lot to be grateful for and to be proud of. You’ve achieved a very important milestone in your life, and every one of you have a great future. Well, let’s get through this pandemic, and we’re gonna be better than ever, once we get this in our rearview mirror. That’s the thing about life, though. You’ll have great times, and you’ll also have some challenges. Just try to make the best out of it. Make it work. Work hard and help people and everything else around you as best you can, and this will all take care of itself. So do like I do in the meantime. Follow your dreams! Oh, and thank you for letting me take part in your special day. And take that East Tennessee Buccaneer spirit with you, class of 2020, and don’t forget to come see us when we’re all back in business. I’ll be looking for you!

The Honorable Bill Lee

Governor of Tennessee

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020! Governor Bill Lee here, saying while your celebration this year may be a little bit different than they have in years past, embrace that moment, because you are a unique class yourself. You certainly have accomplished much to get yourself into the position that you’re in now. Hard work, commitment, lots of effort. And we congratulate you and thank you for all that you’ve done. The Lord has a great plan for your life ahead. We look forward to watching that plan. Embrace this moment. Congratulations!
Ten members of the ETSU Class of 2020 were inducted into the newly formed 1911 Society. Named in commemoration of the year when ETSU was founded, the honorary recognizes the university’s most notable graduates from undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. The 1911 Society recognizes students who have distinguished themselves among all graduates for academic excellence, service, and leadership.

ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland said, “For more than a century, ETSU has carried forth a mission to improve the quality of life for the people of this region. That initiative began in 1911 when the doors of this institution opened, and this new organization recognizes an elite group of graduates who have embodied that very mission. We are honored to recognize these members of the Class of 2020 and look forward to seeing the new ways they advance this mission as alumni during their future journeys.”

The selection committee evaluated the applicants and based its decision on all of the following: academic achievement; sustained service; honors, awards, recognitions, publications, and presentations; demonstrated leadership; and work experience, such as study abroad, internships, externships, and clinicals.

“The 10 students inducted into The 1911 Society have achieved great accolades in the classroom, in research laboratories, and in service to this campus and our communities,” said Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Senior Vice President for Academics and Interim Provost. “Each has transformed ETSU in some way during their years as a student, and selecting them as inaugural members is our way of recognizing and celebrating the legacies they have established.”

These are the members of the Class of 2020 who are being inducted into The 1911 Society:

Sarah Hamilton of Johnson City has been a member of the Preview and Orientation Leadership Organization, serving as Vice President and as one of the student leaders. In addition, she is the service-learning coordinator for the Language and Culture Resource Center. Hamilton earned a B.S. degree in Biology and a second B.A. in Foreign Languages with a concentration in Spanish. Other campus-involvement initiatives include International Buccaneer Buddies, Volunteer ETSU, Admission Ambassadors, the ETSU Homecoming Committee, and SGA Major Events. Hamilton also served as a Spanish tutor at Science Hill High School and helped plan the Corazón Latino Festival.

Alexis Harvey from Dunlap was active with Volunteer ETSU throughout her four years and served on the executive council for the organization during her junior and senior years. A University Honors Scholar and a Ronald McNair Scholar, she was a member of the ETSU Honors College Student Council and also served as a site leader with Alternative Breaks for three years. Harvey received a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry. She helped as a chemistry supplemental instructor for three years and as a chemistry TRIO tutor for two years. This spring she received an award from the Northeast Tennessee Section of the American Chemical Society that is given to an outstanding senior. She also was the Department of Chemistry’s “Faculty Outstanding Student Award” recipient.
Gabrielle Johnson earned a B.A. in English and Philosophy. The Knoxville native held several leadership roles with Phi Sigma Pi, Epsilon Xi, including President, National Delegate, and Fundraising Chair. She was also active with Sigma Tau Delta, ETSU Philosophy Club, Alternative Spring Breaks, and the ETSU Creative Writing Society.

Shannon Ketchem of Alexandria, Virginia, graduated from Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy. While a student, she served as a student ambassador for the admissions committee and was Class President during the 2017-18 year. In addition, she was Chapter President of the Phi Lambda Sigma Pharmacy Leadership Society and a committee chair for the American Pharmacists Association – Academy of Student Pharmacists.

Brianna McCoy of Ashe County, North Carolina, was selected for the highly prestigious Roan Scholars Leadership Program. She received her bachelor’s degree in Health Sciences with a minor in Public Health. McCoy has held several leadership positions, including President of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and of the Admissions Ambassadors, Secretary of the Presidential Ambassadors, and Fundraising Chair of Timmy Global Health. McCoy also completed a number of volunteer internships at health care facilities in the region.

Margaret Jean Miller of Knoxville earned her M.D. degree from the Quillen College of Medicine and also a Master of Public Health degree from the College of Public Health. While a student, she was active with the American Academy of Family Physicians, serving as a student member of the Board of Directors and student chair for the national conference. She was recently inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society, and she is a former President of the Family Medicine Interest Group. Miller trained in Quillen’s Rural Primary Care Track and worked closely with the Interprofessional Education Program.

Taylor Osborne came to ETSU from Clyde, North Carolina. While a student, she served as President of Alpha Delta Pi sorority and also held the roles of Vice President of Panhellenic Relations and Assistant New Member Coordinator. She was selected for the highly prestigious Roan Scholars Leadership Program and spent a summer studying in Spain. A member of the Pre-Law Society and the International Buccaneer Buddy Program, Osborne worked in the Crime Addiction Re-Entry Lab and was a Presidential Ambassador. She earned a B.S. degree in Psychology.

Aamir Shaikh of Knoxville served as President of the ETSU Student Government Association for the 2019-20 year and graduated with a B.S. degree in Microbiology. While at ETSU, he completed an honors thesis exploring the role of a novel antidepressant in the treatment of depression, among other research projects at the Quillen College of Medicine. Shaikh’s volunteer work focuses on the provision of medical care to the isolated and underserved. His other leadership positions held on campus include President of the Multicultural Association of Pre-Health Students, Secretary of State for the SGA, Vice President of the Honors College Student Council, and working as a campus Diversity Educator.

John Sterrett of Martin was a University Honors Scholar and a member of the ETSU Jazz, Trombone, and Wind ensembles. Sterrett, who held executive leadership roles with the Student Dietetic Association and the Allied Health Student Association, was involved in research activities in ETSU’s Nutritional Biochemistry Lab and spent time as a tutor and a supplemental instructor on campus. He was also active with the National Residence Hall Honorary.

Raina Wiseman of Crossnore, North Carolina, earned an M.A. in Brand and Media Strategy. She worked for the East Tennessean student newspaper as a reporter and, for the past two years, Executive Editor. In addition to serving as a member of the Strategic Media Club, she was a co-creator of The ET Echo, a news show that aired on the campus radio station. Wiseman assisted in communication efforts and marketing for the Niswonger Foundation, Roan Scholars Leadership Program, ETSU University Relations, and BucDigital.
DATELINE: ETSU

■ JANUARY 14
A grant totaling nearly $5 million over the next four years will fund evidence-based BSN-RN home visiting services for first-time mothers who live in poverty in nine Northeast Tennessee counties. The Tennessee Department of Human Services awarded the grant to ETSU’s Nurse-Family Partnership program, which provides services to women living in nine counties. Mothers in this program receive services from prenatal care through age 2 of their child.

■ JANUARY 25
The work of ETSU professors Dr. Dobbie Dotson and Dr. Michelle Johnson is featured in two national peer-reviewed continuing education journals. The researchers offer education and techniques that can help prepare patients with sensory processing disorders for successful dental visits, and that can support optimal care while in the clinic.

■ FEBRUARY 16
The British Medical Journal publishes an article co-authored by Dr. Joel Hillhouse, Associate Dean for Research for the ETSU College of Public Health, challenging the tanning bed industry’s attempts to change the conversation about the dangers of tanning bed use.

■ FEBRUARY 27
A recent financial and compliance audit of ETSU conducted by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury results in no findings or recommendations.

■ FEBRUARY 26
The Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy announces an Early Admission Pathway for aspiring pharmacists that provides students the opportunity to earn both a Bachelor of Science and a Doctor of Pharmacy in six years. It is open to high-achieving high school seniors choosing to attend ETSU or current ETSU freshmen.

■ MARCH 2
Quillen researcher Dr. Alok Agrawal receives a $1.8 million award for a new R01 grant proposal from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health to further develop his research on a protein that could be used to develop a treatment for pneumococcal infection.

■ JUNE 30
U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams and U.S. Representative Dr. Phil Roe host a roundtable discussion at ETSU regarding the opioid epidemic.

■ JANUARY 17
President Noland launches ETSU Partnership Plus Program (see story on page 30).

■ JANUARY 28
ETSU’s undergraduate elementary teacher preparation program is named one of the best in the country by the National Council on Teacher Quality, a nonpartisan, not-for-profit research and policy organization. ETSU’s program was recognized for its strong commitment to evidence-based reading instruction.

■ FEBRUARY 6
Tennessee Governor Bill Lee delivers “State of East Tennessee” address on the ETSU campus.

■ FEBRUARY 12
Dr. Joe Moore and Jay Seehorn are named members of the 2020 All-SoCon Faculty and Staff Team, presented by the Southern Conference.

■ FEBRUARY 14
The State Board of Education releases its annual Educator Preparation Report Card. The ETSU Clemmer College performed very well and was among a small number of institutions to earn an overall designation as “Exceeds Expectations.”
March 3
Renovated D.P. Culp Student Center reopens (see story on page 4).

March 4
ETSU announces that students representing three disciplines—business, computer science, and mathematics—competed at the first-ever National Analytics Case Competition held at Elon University and earned 2nd place out of 10 other participating schools.

Teams of ETSU business students perform strongly in the Tennessee Valley Authority Investment Challenge Program and the Chartered Financial Analyst Institute Research Challenge.

March 10
For the second time in the last four years and the 11th time in program history, the ETSU Buccaneers claim the Southern Conference Men’s Basketball Championship. They defeated the Wofford Terriers 72-58.

March 12
Dr. Gerardo Arceo-Gomez receives a grant from the National Science Foundation to further his research on the organization of flowering plant communities.

March 20
‘Match Day’ for the Quillen College of Medicine reveals that more than half of the Class of 2020 are entering primary care residency training programs.

March 26
Six students from ETSU’s Department of Media and Communications learned that they are finalists in the 2019 Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors College Contest.

April 9
The Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy is ranked first in the state for its Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1) residency match rate, as well as 12th in the nation.

April 13
ETSU announces that Tipton Gallery and Slocumb Galleries have earned two awards in the 2020 Tennessee Association of Museums Awards of Excellence competition for a series of exhibits highlighting diversity.

April 22
University School is ranked as the eighth best high school in Tennessee by U.S. News & World Report in its 2020 “Best High Schools” listing.

April 24
The College of Nursing earns the number three ranking in the 2020 Best Online RN to BSN Programs in Tennessee released by RegisteredNursing.org.

The ETSU Board of Trustees votes not to raise tuition and fees for the fall 2020 semester. This includes students at the Gatton College of Pharmacy and Quillen College of Medicine.

May 9
ETSU confers over 2,200 degrees during a Virtual Commencement Ceremony. Country music superstar Dolly Parton and Tennessee Governor Bill Lee offer congratulatory remarks to the Class of 2020.

May 12
Graduating students in ETSU’s educator preparation programs earn a 95 percent passing score on the edTPA assessment. Some of the university’s educator preparation programs had a 100 percent pass rate.

May 15
After winning first place in district 7 of the American Advertising Federation’s National Student Advertising Competition sponsored by Adobe, members of ETSU’s National Student Advertising Competition team earn a spot to compete at the national championship for the second time in three years.

May 18
ETSU launches free tuition program for qualifying students (see story on page 30).
Kate Trabalka, a senior from Oak Ridge, is an ETSU Fine and Performing Arts Scholar who is pursuing a degree in Media and Communication with a concentration in Journalism and a minor in Dance. Trabalka is the new Executive Editor for The East Tennessean, the university’s student newspaper, and co-captain of the ETSU Dance Team. In addition, she shares her talent elsewhere in Johnson City as a dance coach at Liberty Bell Middle School and as a teacher at The Dance Company.

Q: I understand you’ve danced your whole life. Please share with us your journey as a dancer.

I started dancing when I was four, because my sister was a dancer and I used to sit in the studio and watch her dance, thinking, “Wow, I want to do that, too!” So I started out taking ballet and tap, and I fell in love with it and wanted to start taking more classes. For a while I was only able to pick up one extra class at a time just because we couldn’t really afford to take a lot of classes. Eventually, I started working to pay for extra classes myself, and by my junior year of high school, I started paying for it all by myself. I babysat in middle school to pay for extra pointe classes, and later I began teaching some of the younger classes at my dance studio to compensate for my own tuition, and I fell in love with teaching. It not only allowed me to take dance classes and better myself, but it allowed me to realize how much I love teaching dance. Now I teach at a local studio here in Johnson City, and it has been one of the most rewarding parts of my college career so far.

I didn’t go to competition for a long time because it’s very expensive, but was eventually able to afford to do a couple of small group tap routines and a solo my senior year. Coming here to ETSU and getting to compete in my first nationals dance competition in Orlando my freshman year was an insane experience. I’d never done anything like that before, but it was one of the most life-changing things because I got to share it with a team that I love so much.

Q: What led you to choose ETSU?

The thing that really drew me here was the fact that ETSU had both a dance team and a dance minor. With the dance minor, I could pursue the more artistic side of dance and learn things that would help me in the future if I wanted to teach dance. On top of that, the dance team here is a lot smaller than those at larger schools, but that is what makes it so much better for me, because it’s more like a family. I even like living in a smaller city like Johnson City, because the community ties are just so much more impactful.

Q: I was selected as an alternate for the Fine and Performing Arts Scholarship when I first applied here, and then last summer, I got a letter saying I was given the full scholarship. That’s amazing to me, because I struggled to afford dance classes my whole life, and now my dancing is actually paying for my college tuition.

Being an alternate my first two years, I basically did everything in the program that everyone else did, but without the money. I honestly didn’t care about that, though, because the projects I’ve gotten to do and the classes that I’ve gotten to take through that program have been some of my favorite dance experiences that I’ve had at ETSU. The money’s like a cherry on top.

Q: How did you choose journalism as your major?

That one’s a little weird to explain, because I don’t remember a specific moment where I thought, “I want to do journalism.” I took a journalism class in seventh and eighth grades, and ever since I took that class, I knew I was going to major in journalism. I took a real interest in photojournalism when I was taking film photography classes in high school, because I did a project on a famous photojournalist and ended up looking online at some of the most powerful pictures ever taken. They moved me to tears so much that I said to myself, “This is something I want to do, and I can combine my love of photography and journalism.” I really found—or rediscovered—my love of writing for journalism in my in-depth reporting class here at ETSU. I got to listen to this amazing woman’s story in an interview, and the fact that I was getting to tell her story to other people made me realize how much I love that.

Q: Tell us about your experience writing for The East Tennessean.

This is my first year writing for The East Tennessean, and it is one of my favorite things at ETSU. It has not only allowed me to grow as a writer, but it has taught me so many things about writing news that I didn’t really know before getting the job. I have met so many people in so many programs on this campus that I didn’t even know existed, and now I get to tell people about them. I’ve just made a lot of great connections and it’s also been sort of a rekindling of my passion for journalism.

Jennifer Hill is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations.
Dorothy Grisham appreciates the family atmosphere she encountered when she came to ETSU as a freshman in 1970.

“I met all these wonderful people who helped me get around and understand my purpose in being there was to get an education,” she says. “I had people who cared about me, who pushed and prodded me, and said, ‘You can do this!’ That family atmosphere is still there now.”

Today, Grisham strives to do her part to help today’s students have that same experience, as well as to help the university grow and prosper, as a member of ETSU’s Board of Trustees.

Grisham, who graduated in 1974 with a bachelor’s degree in Social Work, has remained involved with ETSU through the years as a member and officer—including a year as President—of the National Alumni Association and was named the university’s Outstanding Alumna in 2011. She worked through college at Sears Roebuck & Co.
in sales and was also employed at a dentist’s office. The desire to help people that spurred her to study social work, as well as the skills she gained through her employment, led her to look at the insurance industry. Grisham became the first black female hired by Allstate Insurance in the state of Tennessee, and she moved to Chattanooga, where she owns and operates Dorothy Grisham Allstate Insurance Agency.

Although she has served on numerous boards, including the Boy Scouts, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Urban League, and CHI Memorial Hospital, Grisham said she was surprised when President Brian Noland first spoke to her about the possibility of serving as an inaugural member of the ETSU Board of Trustees. The magnitude of the role really hit her when she received the call from then-Governor Bill Haslam regarding board service.

“Being on the board is a huge responsibility, because you’re setting into place ideas and thoughts to ensure every part of the university is run well,” Grisham said. “More than that, it has also helped me understand, as a former student, how important it is to have the right package in place—to make sure the students are getting the education they’re paying for, making sure they’re impacted in a positive way, making sure the community is involved with ETSU. It’s an important part of making sure that ETSU is one of the best schools in the South and in the nation. I just want to credit ETSU and the many wonderful staff and students for the great things that are going on at the university.”

The values that were strengthened in Grisham as a student at ETSU and that she strives to uphold as a board member continue to play a big role in her work as an insurance agent. These values have been particularly important as she has helped clients through recent tough times.

During the COVID-19 pandemic this spring, Grisham closed the doors of her office and modified the ways she and her office manager interacted with clients. Although she knows many customers prefer face-to-face interactions, she worked to protect both her clients and her staff by taking payments and conducting other necessary business using good social distancing practices.

“I can truly tell you COVID-19 has turned the world around,” she said. “In my business, it’s made me realize we need to make sure we’re on hand within our workspaces, but be there for our families, too. We’ve got to make sure we stay on course, because COVID-19 is serious.”

On top of all the disruption caused by the coronavirus, Chattanooga was hit by an EF-3 tornado with winds reaching 145 mph in the early hours of April 13, 2020, which resulted in multiple deaths and injuries and destroyed many homes and businesses.

In the aftermath of that tornado, while working under the restrictions in place due to COVID-19, Grisham and her agency helped more than 100 clients with claims.

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“Being able to be there in times like this is probably one of the greatest parts of my job,” she said. “When a customer calls me and says, ‘My house is gone,’ I can say, ‘I’m here for you. Don’t worry about anything. I’ll worry about that, and put you in the position you were in before.’ When you put yourself to that task, at every point you’re helping somebody get peace of mind.

“That’s just like at ETSU. We help people because that’s what we’re supposed to do. We have a value system that says we respect people. We give people dignity when we take care of them. And that’s what ETSU did for me. They gave me dignity when I was there in the 1970s, so I think it’s very important that we live by the mission statement of ETSU to give students the education they pay for, but more importantly, to give them really good guidance for their next step in life.”

Jennifer Hill is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations. | Photos by Charlie Warden
TO STRIVE, TO SEEK, TO FIND, AND NOT TO YIELD.”

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, from “Ulysses”

As a teenager in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Tom Burton had a job delivering supplies to dental offices. With an innate curiosity about all subjects, young Burton contemplated a career as a dentist.

But the literature of the Victorian Age and the ballads of Scotland held greater appeal for him than molars and bicuspids, and his ambitions turned to a life of scholarship. Thousands of students who took his courses at East Tennessee State College and East Tennessee State University are thankful that his career turned out the way it did.
Dr. Thomas G. Burton is one of the most beloved professors in the history of ETSU. And that association is a long one. After writing a master’s thesis on Geoffrey Chaucer, Burton, the son of a truckline maintenance manager and a homemaker, earned his M.A. at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. (Glen Burton, by the way, once ran a commercial fishing operation off Deerfield Beach in Florida and owned The Big Joy, a Fort Lauderdale drive-in.) In 1958, Tom Burton was hired to teach five courses in freshman English composition at ETSC, five years before the institution gained university status. It was a one-year contract.

Burton never left East Tennessee State. He still lives on the south side of Johnson City, just minutes from the ETSU campus, and visits the D.P. Culp Center every day to check his mail.

Until COVID-19 closures, he could often be found deep within the stacks at Sherrod Library, his research agenda ever active.

Of the recent pandemic, Burton said, “If you’ve lived most of your life in a study carrel in the library like I have, the past few months haven’t been all that different.”

As that one year in Johnson City slowly evolved into a permanent, lifelong commitment, Burton completed a Ph.D. in English at Vanderbilt in 1966. There, he had studied under Donald Davidson, a member of a well-known group of poets and literary critics known as the Fugitives. One of Davidson’s courses, “The English and Scottish Popular Ballads,” would help to shape Burton’s career, and he would go on to teach the same course at ETSU. Burton remembers meeting novelist Robert Penn Warren at Vanderbilt and auditing a course taught by another founding member of the Fugitives, poet John Crowe Ransom. Vanderbilt’s Department of English was one of the best in the country.

Burton had earned his undergraduate degree at Nashville’s David Lipscomb College, where he was deeply influenced by a professor named Dr. Morris P. Landiss. The summer after Burton’s freshman year, Landiss mailed him a set of books, including Stephen Crane’s The Red Badge of Courage and Plato’s Republic.

“Tought it was really cool that he took that kind of interest in me,” Burton recalls. “I took every course he taught.”

Burton would develop that same kind of reputation among students at ETSU, where he taught courses in Shakespearean tragedy, Victorian literature, and Appalachian folklore, among others, as well as graduate seminars on the works of Tennyson.

Although Burton has indeed logged countless hours alone in libraries over his career, his interests have taken him far beyond those confines. He is equally at home in mountain cabins, country churches, and the workshops of dulcimer makers, proving that the stories, songs, craftsmanship, and religious beliefs of the Appalachian region have a legitimate place in academia.

Burton credits the late Ambrose Manning, another longtime faculty member in the ETSU Department of English, for his interest in folklore. Manning had studied the subject at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and at George Peabody College in Nashville. He and his wife Mary, who taught English courses at ETSU as well, were also among the most popular professors on campus. Together, Burton, Ambrose Manning, and the late Dr. Robert J. “Jack” Higgs would lead what came to be known as the Appalachian studies movement among...
American colleges and universities, their work serving as the genesis for ETSU’s Department of Appalachian Studies and the university’s worldwide reputation for excellence in regional studies. In the late 1980s, Burton was a prime mover behind one of ETSU’s most prestigious exchange programs, with the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, an institution founded in 1582.

In 1964, Burton and Manning started collecting traditional ballads, beginning with Audrey McGuire in Sullivan County, Tennessee. Burton recalls that the late Dr. Robert Peplies, Chair of the ETSU Department of Geography and head of a research unit on campus, supplied the two with their first tape recorder, a Wollensak, “like the one made famous a few years later during Watergate,” Burton jokes.

From 1966 to 1971, Burton and Manning wrote a column for the Johnson City Press-Chronicle newspaper entitled “Singing Out.” Through that column, they asked readers to tell them about traditional ballad singers and storytellers. That’s how they learned about a man named Ray Hicks (1922-2003), who had lived his entire life on Beech Mountain in North Carolina.

Burton struck up a friendship with Hicks almost immediately. “I got to be part of his extended family,” Burton remembers proudly. When the scholar and the mountain man first met, Hicks and his wife Rosa were living in a cabin with no running water. But their lives were rich with songs and Jack Tales, stories about the exploits of an archetypal character with origins in the British Isles.

As he was planning for the first National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, Jimmy Neil Smith asked Burton if he knew “an authentic mountain person.” Burton told Smith that Hicks fit the description perfectly, and on October 7, 1973, Hicks was a featured performer at that very first festival. He would return almost every year thereafter, along with Rosa, who sold her fried pies on the streets of Tennessee’s oldest town. Ten years later, Hicks was named a National Heritage Fellow, a lifetime honor presented to master folk and traditional artists by the National Endowment for the Arts.

When I asked Burton about the appeal of the old ballads, he quickly quoted his good friend Ray Hicks: “They touch your feelings.”
Around the time he was getting to know Hicks, Burton was teaching a course in field research in Appalachian studies when a student mentioned serpent-handling. “At that time, I didn’t know anything about it,” Burton said. But before long, it became a topic forever associated with his name.

About a year after that course was finished, Burton received a letter from one of the students, indicating that her mother had been the grade-school teacher of a man named Liston Pack. He was the pastor at the Holiness Church of God in Jesus’ Name, near Newport, Tennessee, and would be quoted often in news reports detailing legal fights over serpent-handling in churches. Pack and others like him based their practice principally on a single verse in The Bible:

And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them . . . . (Mark 16:17-18, King James Version)

With the late Jack Schrader, then Chair of the Department of Art at ETSU, and later Tom Headley from the university’s broadcasting division, Burton was welcomed into the church to document, on film, a practice that Burton never sought to judge but to understand. This respect for the culture carried over into Burton’s 1993 book, Serpent-Handling Believers.

During his career at ETSU, Burton has written, co-written, and edited ten books and three monographs. He retired from ETSU in 1995, but the pace of his life didn’t slow. When I contacted my former professor to interview him for this story, I didn’t realize that yet another book was on the immediate horizon. But I was not at all surprised. Voices Worth the Listening:

Three Women in Appalachia is Burton’s latest work, published this summer by the University of Tennessee Press.

Dr. Thomas G. Burton is 85 years old.

Fred Sauceman, ’78, ’80 is Executive Editor of ETSU Today.
ZERO PERCENT TUITION INCREASE
OTHER FALL 2020 INITIATIVES PART OF ETSU ADVANTAGE

Nothing matches the magic and excitement that surround the ETSU campus upon the arrival of the fall semester as students and faculty return to classrooms, research labs, and residence halls. There is a sense of anticipation of the journeys ahead, the new and returning friendships that will help define those journeys, and the dreams and destinations that will be made possible.

Already, there is an even greater anticipation for the fall 2020 semester as it will be an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to be reunited for the first time since departing campus for spring break. After that, all academic instruction moved online for the spring and summer sessions.

As for the upcoming fall semester, ETSU fully intends to offer face-to-face instruction and to have students occupying the residence halls. And for the first time in possibly decades, ETSU students arriving for the fall term will not see an increase in tuition and fees. This is one of the components of the ETSU Advantage, a campaign to promote the unique opportunities for new and returning students this fall.

This was the decision of the ETSU Board of Trustees during its April quarterly meeting. The recommendation was made by the Finance and Administration Committee following discussions among shared governance bodies at the university, including the Student Government Association. ETSU was the first locally governed institution in Tennessee to announce plans for tuition and fees to remain unchanged for the 2020-21 academic year.

“One of the best investments someone can make in their future is to attain a college degree,” President Noland said. “During these uncertain times, students and their families should be afforded the opportunity to plan ahead. We want to do everything we can to ensure prospective students feel like ETSU is the best choice for them.”

ETSU will also offer new payment options for students beginning this fall and has set an earlier deadline for fee payment to allow more time for students to get assistance with any outstanding issues that may cause disenrollment from classes due to fee non-payment. Students can pay tuition balances in full or choose from four- or five-installment payment plans.

Trustees voted to revise previously approved rate increases for the Gatton College of Pharmacy and Quillen College of Medicine, as well as rent for campus housing. Current tuition and fee rates, including program fees and meal plans costs, will remain in place this fall.

Two new initiatives were also announced this spring to improve access to higher education for graduating high school seniors.

ETSU Promise Plus Program

ETSU Promise Plus begins in fall 2020 and will be open to first-time, full-time freshmen eligible for the Tennessee Education Lottery (HOPE) Scholarship and the maximum Pell Grant. In addition to financial assistance, Promise Plus offers free support to help students be successful in their pursuit of a degree.

These support services include participation in pre-college programs such as new student orientation, Preview ETSU, and early move-in to the residence halls. Program benefits include access to faculty and peer mentors, academic tutoring services, career support, a first-year experience course, and membership in the Buccaneer Family Association. Students living on campus can receive up to $6,000 in on-campus housing scholarships ($1,500 annually).

“This is much more than just a scholarship or free tuition,” said Dr. Joe Sherlin, Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment. “We have spent considerable time envisioning a program that offers a range of pre-college and four-year benefits designed to support students and help them succeed in pursuing their dreams of earning a college degree.”

The program will cover a student’s last-dollar amount of tuition and program service fees after other financial aid, such as the Pell Grant, the HOPE Scholarship, and institutional scholarships, are applied. Students must stay continuously enrolled full-time each fall and spring term to retain eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship and ETSU Promise Plus.

The program is open to incoming, first-time freshmen beginning in fall 2020. To be considered for ETSU Promise Plus, students must apply for admission to ETSU and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the verification process, if applicable.

Free Freshman Tuition for Eligible Students

In addition to Promise Plus, another new initiative—Free Freshman Tuition—will be available during the 2020-21 academic year for first-time, full-time freshmen who are Tennessee residents and meet the following eligibility requirements:

- First-time freshman, enrolled full time for fall 2020 and spring 2021
- Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA) recipient
- Tennessee HOPE (Lottery) Scholarship recipient

More information is available at www.etsu.edu/free. Students may visit the website to fill out a form expressing their interest in Free Freshman Tuition, and a member of ETSU’s Undergraduate Admissions Office will contact them.
This Stereoscopic Skin Clinic was produced in 1918, a year which is remembered as being historically significant due to events and social changes that were experienced here in East Tennessee as well as globally. This artifact was donated to the Reece Museum by friend and patron Dr. Frank Barham in 2019. Dr. Barham was born in Johnson City and took pre-med courses at East Tennessee State College (now University). He went on to study and earn degrees in internal medicine, specializing in cardiology, healthcare administration, and the medical humanities.

Patented in 1910 by Dr. Selden I. Rainforth, a graduate of Johns Hopkins Medical School, the Stereoscopic Skin Clinic represents the early stages of a more standardized approach to modern medicine. In 1917, when the United States entered the Great War, medical leaders focused on health and fitness as a way to build a strong military force, and the influence of science-based medicine began to eclipse folk remedies and traditional healing. The outbreak of the global influenza pandemic in March of 1918 further revolutionized medical practices, giving rise to public health programs and creating wider availability of training programs for medical professionals.

Developed as a self-contained educational resource, the Stereoscopic Skin Clinic introduces itself as “an atlas of diseases of the skin, consisting of colored stereoscopic illustrations and a text in the form of clinical lectures, designed for the use of practitioners of medicine.” Along with this included “atlas,” which lists 132 skin conditions in alphabetical order, from acne to zoster, the box contains a stereoscopic viewer and a full-color photographic card for each skin condition, with a description of the symptoms, a diagnosis, and treatment options for the corresponding condition.

The stereoscope was a very popular pastime during the Victorian Era. Its appeal crossed social and generational boundaries, and it was enjoyed as both a toy and a scientific instrument. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894), professor and researcher at the medical schools of Harvard and Dartmouth, became renowned for his work with the art and science of photography. Dr. Holmes developed his own simple stereoscope design and refused to patent it, so that everyone could use this technology to experience the way “the mind feels its way into the very depths of the picture.”

Stereoscopy creates the illusion of depth in a 2-D object by presenting the eye with two slightly different versions of the same image, which the brain then combines to give the perception of depth. As Holmes described the experience in an Atlantic essay published in 1895, “The first effect of looking at a good photograph through the stereoscope is a surprise such as no painting ever produced.”

The experience would have been similar to VR (virtual reality) in today’s technology and was considered a revolutionary way to study the human body. During the early 1900s, dermatologists were rare in the United States, and general practitioners had limited dermatological training. The binocular depth of these medical images gave students a new understanding of three-dimensional anatomy and “aided in the detection of diagnostically relevant shapes and positions.”

Rebecca Proffitt is Collections Manager at ETSU’s Reece Museum.
Many times, people turn to their old yearbooks to look up photos of people they once knew, to show their children and grandchildren pictures of the schools they attended and the teams and clubs they enjoyed being part of, and to read the special words their friends wrote on the pages. But what if that yearbook from 1964 has been misplaced, or you didn’t even purchase one that year?

For East Tennessee State University alumni, that's now easy, thanks to the Archives of Appalachia, which is in the process of digitizing all of the university’s yearbooks and making them available online.

ETSU, which was founded in 1911 as East Tennessee State Normal School, first published a yearbook in 1919. During the first 10 years of publication, it was called “Old Hickory” before the name changed to “The Chalkline” in 1930. The yearbook was known as “The Buccaneer” from 1937 until it ceased publication after the 1998 edition.

Beginning in the fall of 2018, the Archives of Appalachia undertook the task of digitizing the yearbook. Until the project had to pause when the university temporarily ceased on-campus operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic in March, student workers diligently scanned and saved pages, and each time the scanning of a yearbook was completed, a graduate assistant checked to make sure each page had been scanned correctly and prepared it to go online.

To date, all of the yearbooks from 1919 through 1965 have been digitized and are now available through the university’s Digital Commons (https://dc.etsu.edu/yearbooks/), a digital preservation system managed by the Sherrod Library that also makes available copies of electronic theses and dissertations by ETSU students, publications authored by university faculty, and more.

“A lot of institutions are making their historic yearbooks available, and these are just tremendous resources for alumni, for researchers, and for current students. They are a great value for the university,” said Dr. Jeremy Smith, Director of the Archives of Appalachia, which is a division of ETSU’s Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. “We get a lot of requests from people who want to come in and access our yearbooks on-site. That’s great—we’re happy to do that. But people who can’t travel to campus or don’t want to take a day to come and do that can now access this resource online at night, at home.

“Everyone can come together and reference these historic yearbooks. Maybe as students, they didn’t know or care about the yearbooks and now they’re interested. Alumni recognize themselves as a part of the history of the institution, and through this, they can explore and learn about other individuals who also identify as a part of that history. So, I think that can galvanize an alumni identity.”

Smith also believes the digitized yearbooks are useful for outside researchers, including families of alumni, who may download .pdf files as well as high-resolution images they find on the pages.

“Researchers beyond ETSU who might be interested in the history of this institution, or even how yearbooks looked in the 1920s compared to the 1930s, will be able to use these,” he said. “And descendants of our graduates, too, may want to go back and find a picture of their grandmother or grandfather, so it can be a great resource for families to learn more about their ancestors.”

“Having the yearbooks in a digital format will truly immortalize our university’s history,” added Lee Ann Davis, Director of University Alumni Programs for ETSU.

“These snapshots in time are so important to our alumni to not only reminisce about their days at ETSU, but also share their favorite collegiate memories with family and friends.

“These yearbooks will be digital references for the Alumni Association when affinity groups, such as Greek organizations, athletes, and others, want to gather for future reunion activities. Digitizing the yearbooks will help keep these treasured mementos in pristine condition.”

The Archives will pick back up with yearbook digitization once on-campus operations resume. Smith anticipates needing two more semesters to complete the digitization of all remaining yearbooks.

The yearbook project is just part of a larger effort to digitally preserve the historic university documents and publications within the Archives’ holdings, including State Teachers College bulletins, “ETSU In Motion,” “The Dean Says,” “Accent,” and, of course, ETSU Today. And all of that is on top of the ongoing work to digitize the Archives’ regional collections.

“We’ve scanned a lot of photographic collections, and we’ll continue that,” Smith said. “We’re scanning in diaries, journals, and manuscript items, and then transcribing those and making all that available online. We’re also digitizing our audio and video files to make those available as well.

“Digitizing collections is going to be a big part of what we do for the foreseeable future, because we’ve got two miles of stuff—a quarter million photographs and 100,000 recordings—that we’ve got to do this to, so it’s going to take some time.”

For more information on the Archives of Appalachia, visit www.etsu.edu/archives/.

Jennifer Hill is Assistant Director for Communications in the ETSU Office of University Relations. | Photo by Larry Smith
WHITNEY’S NEXT JOURNEY
MEET ETSU’S NEW ALUMNI DIRECTOR

Though Whitney Calhoun Goetz is a member of the ETSU Class of 2005, her journey at ETSU began long before her freshman year. She says she officially became a Buccaneer when her parents enrolled her at the Child Study Center, and for two years she attended University School.

After earning her B.A. degree in Mass Communications with a minor in Criminal Justice and Criminology from ETSU, Goetz began her career at Mountain States Health Alliance (now Ballad Health), where an internship led to a full-time position in communications. She later moved into human resources as a nurse recruiter, a job she describes as “an extension of college” in that it allowed her to spend time on college campuses speaking with soon-to-be nursing graduates.

Her journeys have taken her to the floors of the capitol buildings in both Washington, D.C., and Nashville, where she worked in constituency relations, policy, and human resources, beginning with U.S. Senator Bob Corker and, most recently, with the state treasury.

Along the way she met her future husband, John (a Tennessee guy, also on Senator Corker’s staff), got married, and is now mom to two young boys.

This summer, Goetz is back home in Johnson City and also back on the campus she is proud to call home, all set to begin a new journey leading ETSU’s alumni program.

“Even though I’ve been away for several years, I always kept my finger on the pulse of what was happening at ETSU,” she said. “So when I heard that Dr. [Bob] Plummer was leaving, I thought…maybe this is an opportunity I should consider.”

Goetz threw her name in the hat for the position and on July 1 became Executive Director of the ETSU Alumni Association.

“My family has a long legacy of ties to the university,” said Goetz, who hopes to add other members of the family tree to the alumni association by convincing her sons to one day become Buccaneers. “It’s always been home, and I am thrilled to have this opportunity to contribute to and support the mission of ETSU and be an advocate for the alumni community.”

She adds that she is proud to continue the work of Bob Plummer, who is now back at ETSU working in corporate relations for the Office of University Advancement.

“When our alumni think of ETSU, they can’t help but think of Bob. His contributions to the university are well documented,” she said. “I am impressed by all he has accomplished, especially the team he has built in the alumni office. It excites me to have this opportunity to continue traditions and build new ones as we move into the next decade.”

Goetz says her first priority is to listen and engage with alumni, faculty, staff, and community partners.

“The alumni office and the alumni association have done a fantastic job in building connections with our alumni and with the region, and I look forward to hearing from them about their ETSU experiences and other ways we can work together,” she said. “ETSU has done magnificent things, and we have wonderful stories to tell.”

Joe Smith ’94, ’16 is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations. | Photo by Larry Smith
YOU EARNED IT! WEAR IT!

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 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.

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’s class ring.
Jay Yelton has been named the new Head Coach of the ETSU Women’s Soccer program. Yelton, who becomes the fourth head coach in program history, joins the Blue and Gold after spending the last 17 seasons as Assistant and then Associate Head Coach at Samford University. Before that, he served as an Assistant Coach at Georgia State, Head Coach at Division II Lees-McRae, and as Goalkeeping Coach for Parkview High School in Atlanta.

Yelton has compiled an overall record of 210-104-40 (.650) as an assistant coach, including a 193-82-37 (.678) record while at Samford that encompassed four OVC regular season championships, one OVC tournament championship, seven Southern Conference regular season championships, three Southern Conference tournament championships, and five NCAA tournament appearances. In addition to the championships won during Yelton’s tenure, the Bulldogs recorded 12 wins over Power-5 programs: two over Alabama, Auburn, and Vanderbilt and wins versus Baylor, Kentucky, Ole Miss, Mississippi State, Tennessee, and Wake Forest.

Hailing from Piney Flats, Tennessee, Yelton played soccer at King University from 1994-98, where he became a two-time all-conference selection as well as team captain in both his junior and senior years. In his final season, he was named the team’s Most Valuable Player. He completed his bachelor’s degree in History and graduated with honors in 1998. He and his wife Graham have one son, Monroe.
On May 6, ETSU announced that Jason Shay would become the new head coach of the men’s basketball program.

Shay, the 17th head coach in program history, spent the last five seasons as the Buccaneers’ assistant coach. During that time, ETSU compiled an overall record of 130-43.

“In talking with numerous athletic administrators and basketball minds across the country, everyone had incredible praise for Coach Shay,” said Scott Carter, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics at ETSU. “I have known Coach Shay and his family for 15 years and am so excited for his hard work to be realized with this opportunity. His connection to our student-athletes, wealth of basketball experience, competitiveness, and knowledge of the game will be invaluable.”

Shay already knows the standards and expectations surrounding the program.

“I am humbled, excited, and thankful for this opportunity with Dr. Noland and Scott Carter entrusting me to be the leader of the ETSU men’s basketball program,” said Shay, who has been invaluable to the Bucs’ game planning and scouting processes during his tenure. “I understand the expectations and standards that have been built for the men’s basketball program, and I guarantee that I
Shay replaces former head coach Steve Forbes, who left ETSU to become the new head basketball coach at Wake Forest University.

Forbes, who spent the last five seasons as the head coach at ETSU, compiled an overall record of 130-43 (.751), and directed the Buccaneers to four Southern Conference championships and two NCAA Tournament appearances. This past season, Forbes led the Bucs to a program-record 30 wins on the way to capturing both the SoCon regular season and tournament titles. The 130 wins are the most over a five-year run in program history.

“ETSU is very proud of Coach Steve Forbes and his historic work for our basketball program,” said Carter. “Championship culture at ETSU was restored under his leadership, and I particularly want to thank him for the outstanding young men he has recruited to ETSU. They have represented our university with character and dedication. We will all miss Steve, Johnetta, and the entire Forbes family and wish them happiness in Winston-Salem.”
WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN

COVID-19 ENDS BUCS’ SEASON ABRUPTLY
It was a season for the record books. And for the ages.

For the Buccaneer Men’s Basketball program, their last memory on the court was defeating Wofford in front of a sold-out crowd—primarily ETSU fans—in the Southern Conference Tournament championship game, which led to a celebration as they cut down the nets inside Harrah’s Cherokee Center in Asheville on Monday, March 9.

The win added to an already historic season for the Blue and Gold as it marked their 30th victory of the season. Only four programs in SoCon history have reached that mark.

However, with confidence at an all-time high following a 12th straight win, ETSU wasn’t given the opportunity to add to a season of great memories.

Throughout the week leading up to Selection Sunday, news continued to run rapid regarding the spread of COVID-19. At first, the NCAA Tournament was changed to allow only immediate family and essential staff to attend. But less than 24 hours after news broke of Utah Jazz player Rudy Gobert testing positive, NCAA President Mark Emmert canceled all winter and spring sports championships, bringing an abrupt halt to the 2019-20 basketball season.

The news ended the Bucs’ dreams of playing in March Madness. It would have been the
first time ever for all the players on the roster and the 11th appearance in program history.

ETSU, a team that had eight different leading scorers, was primed to make a run in the NCAA Tournament and continue to make a name for itself on the biggest stage.

Instead of sulking and being down, however, the Buccaneer players took to social media and celebrated what they accomplished all year with their family, friends, and fans. The team posted photos of favorite memories and let those be the final images of a championship campaign. Even though they couldn’t play in the NCAA Tournament, the Bucs knew that the coronavirus was much bigger than the game, and safety for the country had to be paramount.

“It’s pretty disappointing,” said senior guard Isaiah Tisdale, the Most Outstanding Player at the SoCon Tournament. “But it’s bigger than basketball when it comes to the virus because people are dying. It’ll hurt, but it’s for the good. Doctors know what they’re doing.”

“I don’t know where we fit in the history of ETSU basketball, but I know this, if there’s a Mt. Rushmore, we’re on it,” said former ETSU Head Basketball Coach Steve Forbes. “These guys are just unbelievable.

“That’s why I hurt for our players, because these young men dedicated their lives to have the opportunity to represent ETSU in the NCAA Tournament and it was taken away from them at no fault of their own. It’s really sad for the players, fans, and everyone involved with this great tournament, but they had to do what’s best for the health and safety of everyone. It’s a historical time that warranted a historical decision.”

One thing is certain: No one can take away the program-record 30 wins, including regular season and SoCon Championships, a road win at LSU—the third Power-5 win over the last five seasons—12 straight wins to end the season, and a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Europe.

“It plays in my head every day on what could have been,” said Forbes. “With our team and the way we were playing, we were ready to show the world what we were capable of. It was more ‘we’ than ‘me’ with us, and that’s something you don’t get at every university. We were dangerous 1 to 13. We could have shocked a lot of teams in the tournament.”

Kevin Brown is Director of Athletic Communications at ETSU. | Photos by Dakota Hamilton
Sports programs have always played a rich part in ETSU’s history. In fact, the roots of these programs can be traced back to more than 100 years ago, all the way back to the institution’s early days as East Tennessee State Normal School when, during the 1917-18 academic year, the women’s basketball team went undefeated.

“While the number of teams and the types of sports we compete in has expanded, what has remained consistent throughout this time is the experience that being part of a competitive team brings to our students,” said ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland. “The presence of these teams draws students to our campus who may have never heard of ETSU. Being part of a team is a way for our students to engage with our campus, to build friendships and to create lasting memories.”

In fall 2020, a new Buccaneer team will take the field. Tryouts were held earlier this year, team captains have been selected, and training will begin when the members arrive for fall classes.

They are part of ETSU’s first esports varsity team which was announced last December. A total of 22 students are being recruited for the League of Legends® team and the Overwatch® team and will compete in tournaments hosted by the National Association of Collegiate E-Sports and Tespa, a network of esports students, competitors, and club teams.

Xavier Mitchell will lead the team competing in Overwatch®, and Lucca Weber will captain the League of Legends® team. Both have been awarded scholarships and will be enrolled as students starting this fall.

Mitchell, of Knox County, is joining the digital media program and will be a first-time freshman at ETSU. He received his orange belt in Taekwondo after only seven months of training. Within the Overwatch® arena, his peak rank was within the top 80 on the North American server.

“I love having a structured environment where all six people are on the same page with strategy,” said Mitchell, who noted that his Overwatch® hero is Winston. “I am really looking forward to getting to play in a zero ping environment when ETSU goes to the national championship.”
Weber moved to Greeneville in 2018 after graduating from high school in Berufskolleg, Ennepetal. He is also a graduate of Walters State Community College and will transfer to ETSU and major in environmental health, with the goal of a career in hydrology. His hobbies include hiking and soccer.

His peak rank in League of Legends® on the North American server is in the top 700 and his favorite hero is Caitlyn. “I am really excited this program got launched and I can do something competitive with being a nerd,” Weber said.

Jeff Shell, who is interim coach for the ETSU varsity team, said team members will spend the fall training while also competing in tournaments.

“Though we are competing in the virtual world, there will be an element of physical training for the team,” Shell said. “We will do light cardio and weight lifting, as it is important to take steps to prevent some of the long-term problems, such as back pain or posture issues, that are associated with extended gaming.”

“E-sports has become one of the fastest growing areas of collegiate and professional competition here in the United States and around the world,” said Brad Engle, interim esports coordinator at ETSU. “The university has a very active gaming community that competes through our student organizations. Last fall, we had more than 40 students in our Video Game Club, and our first-ever Buccaneer Brawl Super Smash Brothers Video Tournament, also held in the fall, drew participation from over 400 gamers from five different states.”

Noland added that students, faculty, and staff brought the idea to him for ETSU to have its own varsity esports team. The team is sponsored by ETSU Online.

A much-anticipated benefit of being part of the ETSU esports team will be having the opportunity to compete in the new esports arena in the D.P. Culp Student Center. A new 32-foot video wall has been installed to display tournaments and other livestreaming esports events.

Technology available to team members includes machines with 9th Gen Intel i7 processors, 512 GB M.2 solid state drives, 25-inch G-sync monitors with 240Hz refresh rate, and peripherals such as specialized keyboards, mice, and headsets.

“Our team members will have access to the same state-of-the-art equipment that top professionals from around the world are using,” Engle added.

To be eligible to try out for the ETSU varsity team, the person must be a current or incoming student, maintain a 2.5 grade point average, and be on a path toward graduation.

ETSU Now Offering Online Grad Certificate in Esports Management

The launching of the new esports varsity team coincides with the offering of a new graduate certificate in Esports Management through the Clemmer College.

According to faculty member Dr. Natalie Smith, the esports industry is booming, yet there are only 20 or fewer academic programs in the country.

“This program will differentiate our graduates in the job market,” said Smith, Assistant Professor of Sport, Exercise, Recreation, and Kinesiology. “As the industry grows, the need will continue to rise for professionals who understand the world of esports but also have skills in marketing, communication, and event management.”

The program is 100 percent online.

Smith said students will take courses specifically in esports and sports management and also choose from other courses in areas such as marketing. Participants in the program will also work closely with the esports varsity team.

Joe Smith is Executive Assistant to the President for University Relations.

Do you know someone who might be interested in the esports varsity team at ETSU? Contact Brad Engle at brad@etsu.edu.

Persons interested in learning more about the graduate certificate in Esports Management should contact Smith at smithnl4@etsu.edu.
1960s

Stanley Williams (BS ’69) of Tampa, Florida, was a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to alumni with noteworthy achievements in business, technology, and public or community service. His degree is in Marketing.

1970s

Dr. Dorothy Dobbins (BSW ’70) of Kingsport has received a 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences. Her degree is in Social Work.

The Honorable Steven Jones (BS ’71) of Kingsport received the “Significant Sig Award” during Sigma Chi’s 50th anniversary celebration banquet. This award is annually presented to Sigma Chi alums whose exemplary achievements in their fields of endeavor have brought great honor and prestige to the name of Sigma Chi. His degree is in History.

Charles “Don” Royston (BS ’73) of Kingsport has been honored with the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce’s Lifetime Membership Award. His degree is in Accountancy.

Ronald Edmond (BS ’74) of Knoxville was a representative for the ETSU Knox Alumni Club at an ETSU Top Scholars student recruitment event. His degree is in Speech Pathology.

Dr. William “David” Epps (BSW ’75) of Sharpsburg, Georgia, was named the 2019 Marine of the Year by the Sgt. Clyde Thompson Medal of Honor Detachment of the Marine Corps League. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1970 to 1975. His degree is in Social Work.

Fred Newman (BS ’75) of Glade Spring, Virginia, announced his retirement from the Washington County, Virginia, Sheriff’s Department after serving as Sheriff for 20 years. He has served in law enforcement for 40 years. His degree is in Criminal Justice and Criminology.

1980s

William “Bill” Brown (BBA ’80) of Suwanee, Georgia, started a new position in Advanced Visualization with ScioTeq in July 2019. His degree is in Transportation.

Patricia Woods (BSN ’80) of Elizabethon started a new position as a Registered Nurse with the Elizabethon City School System. Her degree is in Nursing.

Mary Manes (BS ’81, MS ’96) of White, Georgia, was a recipient of the Award of Excellence at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to individuals whose work has brought distinction to the ETSU College of Business and Technology. Her degrees are in Computer and Informational Science.

Michael Lynch (BA ’84) of Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, has recently published a book, Edward M. Almond and the U.S. Army: From the 92nd Infantry Division to the X Corps. His degree is in English.

Cecilia Whittington (BSW ’85) of Knoxville was a representative for the ETSU Knox Alumni Club at an ETSU Top Scholars student recruitment event. Her degree is in Social Work.

Marshall Wilkins (BS ’77) of Knoxville received the “Significant Sig Award” during Sigma Chi’s 50th anniversary celebration banquet. This is awarded annually to Sigma Chi alums whose exemplary achievements in their fields of endeavor have brought great honor and prestige to the name of Sigma Chi. His degree is in Accountancy.

James “Jim” Harlan (MBA ’87) of Kingsport was a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to alumni with noteworthy achievements in business, technology, and public or community service. His degree is in Business Administration.

1990s

Joy Cox McElroy (BBA ’90) of Knoxville was a representative for the ETSU Knox Alumni Club at an ETSU Top Scholars student recruitment event. Her degree is in Office Administration.

Mark Davis (BS ’91) of Bonita Springs, Florida, started a new position as Volunteer Recruiter for Gulfside Hospice & Pasco Palliative Care/Gulfside Healthcare Services. His degree is in Health Education.

Timothy Coleman (BS ’92) of Kingsport was a recipient of the Award of Excellence at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to individuals whose work has brought distinction to the ETSU College of Business and Technology. His degree is in Engineering Technology.

Dr. Ryan Stanton (BS ’99, MD’03) of Nicholasville, Kentucky, was elected to the Board of Directors of the American College of Emergency Physicians. His degrees are in Chemistry and Medicine.

Guy Trawick (BBA ’86) of Wake Forest, North Carolina, received the Capital Heartland 2019 Agent of the Year award to recognize his achievements with AAA Insurance company. His degree is in Management.

Kris O’Quinn (BA ’84) of Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, was a representative for the ETSU Knox Alumni Club at an ETSU Top Scholars student recruitment event. Her degree is in Marketing.

Kristopher Armstrong (BM ’99) of Johnson City has started a new position as Sales and Marketing Director at Positive Approach Events and Consulting. His degree is in Mass Communication.

Jonathan Webb (BS ’98) of Jonesborough started a new position as Sales and Marketing Director at Positive Approach Events and Consulting. His degree is in History.

Kristi Smith Bailey (BBA ’93) of Kingsport was elected President of the 2020 Northeast Tennessee Association of Realtors. Her degree is in Marketing.

Christopher Lowe (BS ’93) of Johnson City has started a new position as the General Manager of The Durham Hotel in North Carolina. His degree is in Political Science.

Lt. Col. Michael Humphreys (BS ’94) of Greeneville started a new position as Insurance Broker at Tasche and Associates. His degree is in Mass Communication.

Kristopher Armstrong (BM ’99) of Knoxville has retired from the United States Army Chorus after serving for 15 years. His degree is in Music.

Dr. William Almond (BSW ’75) of Sharpsburg, Georgia, was named the 2019 Marine of the Year by the Sgt. Clyde Thompson Medal of Honor Detachment of the Marine Corps League. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1970 to 1975. His degree is in Social Work.

Mary Manes (BS ’81, MS ’96) of White, Georgia, was a recipient of the Award of Excellence at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to individuals whose work has brought distinction to the ETSU College of Business and Technology. Her degrees are in Computer and Informational Science.
2000s

Bucky Mabe (BBA ’01) of Johnson City was a recipient of the Award of Excellence at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. This award is presented to individuals whose work has brought distinction to the ETSU College of Business and Technology. His degree is in Finance.

Dr. Douglas Masini (EdD ’01) of Savannah, Georgia, has been inducted into the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences Alumni Hall of Fame. His degree is in Educational Leadership.

Dr. John Quindry (PhD ’02) of Missoula, Montana, was a co-author of the 11th edition of an ExPhys textbook. His degree is in Biomedical Sciences.

Andrew Simmons (BS ’02, MS ’10) of Goose Creek, South Carolina, is a Supervisor at the Medical University of South Carolina. His degrees are in Mass Communication and Technology.

Jennifer Solly Smith (BS ’04) of Knoxville and James Smith were joined in marriage on November 30, 2019. Her degree is in Dental Hygiene.

Lee House (BBA ’07) of Greeneville started a new position as CPA, CFP, and Financial Advisor at Brick House Wealth Strategies/Raymond James. His degree is in Accountancy.

Amy Dye Reeves (BA ’07, MA ’09) of Lubbock, Texas, started a new position as an Associate Education Librarian at Texas Tech University. Her degrees are in History.

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

Lt. Cmdr. Marissa Greene (DPT ’09) of Gulf Breeze, Florida, received a 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences. Her degree is in Physical Therapy.

Cheri Worley (BS ’09) of Clarkdale, Arizona, started a new position as Program Assistant with the United States Department of Agriculture. Her degree is in Geography.

2010s

Tyler McCann (BS ’10) of Elizabethton started a new position as Personal Banker II at Wells Fargo. His degree is in Sport and Leisure Management.

Matthew Ellenburg (BBA ’11) of Afton, Tennessee, started a new position as Auditor at MSL CPAs & Advisors. His degree is in Accountancy.

Christina McCray (BSN ’11, MS ’18) of Johnson City was promoted to Family Nurse Practitioner-PRN at ETSU. Both of her degrees are in Nursing.

Amythyst Kiah Phillips (BA ’12) of Johnson City was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best American Roots Song for “Black Myself,” a song she wrote and performed. Her degree is in Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music Studies.

Bronson Winters (BBA ’12) of Afton, Tennessee, started a new position as General Manager at The General Morgan Inn. His degree is in Management.

Kristen Bearfield (BBA ’13) of Conover, North Carolina, was nominated for a Grammy in the Best Roots Gospel Album category with her band, High Road. The album is entitled Gonna Sing, Gonna Shout. Her degree is in Marketing.

Casey Coyne (BA ’13, MBA ’15) of Russellville, Tennessee, is Marketing Communications and Event Specialist at TEVET LLC. Her degrees are in English and Business Administration.

Anne G’Fellers-Mason (MA ’13) of Jonesborough was promoted to Executive Director of the Heritage Alliance. Her degree is in History.

Adam Jarvis (BS ’14) of Columbia, Tennessee, is Deputy Director of the Office of Customer Focused Government with the State of Tennessee. His degree is in Public Health.

Dr. Christine Mullins (DPN ’14) of Big Stone Gap, Virginia, was awarded the 2019-20 American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Novice Faculty Excellence Clinical Teaching Award. Her degree is in Nursing Practice.

Jason Terry (BBA ’14) of Mulica Hill, New Jersey, was a recipient of The Horizon Award at the ETSU College of Business and Technology Hall of Fame Awards ceremony. The award is presented to graduates of the College of Business and Technology establishing noteworthy careers in business. His degree is in Marketing.

Dr. John Grubb (EdD ’15) of Church Hill celebrated 20 years of working as a business intelligence analyst at Northeast State Community College. His degree is in Educational Leadership.

William “Chuck” Short (BS ’15) of Johnson City is Owner/CEO/CIO at Short Technical Services. His degree is in Interdisciplinary Studies.

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

Gina Alston (BBA ’17, MBA ’19) of Morristown has started a new job in Research Services Opportunity Fulfillment at Qualtrics. Her degrees are in Management and Business Administration.

Gabrielle Billiot (BS ’17) of Houma, Louisiana, is Career and Workforce Readiness Program Coordinator at The Niswonger Foundation. Her degree is in Media and Communication.

Paige Davis (BS ’17, MA ’19) of Johnson City is Content and Experiential Strategist at The Buntin Group. Her degrees are in Media and Communication and Brand and Media Strategy.

Kayla Hernandez (BGS ’17) of Johnson City was a representative for the ETSU Knox Alumni Club at an ETSU Top Scholars student recruitment event. Her degree is in General Studies.

Daniel Hughes (BS ’17) of Memphis is Camera Operator with the Memphis Redbirds. His degree is in Media and Communication.

Melissa McElroy (BA ’17) of Chicago is Strategic Partnerships Associate at Taproot Foundation in Chicago. Her degree is in Political Science.

Dr. Rebecca Odom (MPH ’17, MD ’17) of Johnson City and Thomas Odom IV were united in marriage on August 3, 2019. Her degrees are in Public Health and Medicine.

Amber Ramsey (BS ’17, MA ’19) of Kingsport and Levi Williams were joined in marriage on October 12, 2019. Her degrees are in Media and Communication and Brand and Media Strategy.

Helen “Elizabeth” Saulsbury (BS ’16) of Johnson City won the Quirk’s Marketing Research Review “Outstanding Young Researcher” award at the 2019 Marketing Research and Insight Excellence Awards in New York City. Her degree is in Mass Communication.
Meet Pepper

She’s only been part of the ETSU team since February, but already she has become a rock star on campus and in the community.

Her name is Pepper, and she journeyed to ETSU from Florida via the Paws & Stripes Comfort Dog Program. As a therapy dog, she is available to meet with students when they need a break from the pressures and demands of college. She is not a trained K-9 and will not be assisting police or other law enforcement personnel in any type of arrests or investigations.

"Pepper is here to be a source of support for our students, whether it be during exam times or when someone might be in distress or may just be feeling homesick," said Captain Mark Tipton from ETSU Public Safety.

Officer Bill Mitchell participated in training to become Pepper’s official handler.

Since arriving on campus, Pepper has visited with students across campus, attended some special events, and even made a few television appearances.

Daniel Greeson (BA ’18) of Jamestown, North Carolina, received the "Song of the Year" award for his bluegrass hit "Thunder Dan" during the International Bluegrass Music Association Awards. His degree is in Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music Studies.

Dr. Christian Francis (MD ’19) of Johnson City and Kathryn Green were joined in marriage on July 27, 2019. His degree is in Medicine.

Megan Harmon (BSN ’19) of Johnson City is a Registered Nurse at Emory Hospital in Atlanta. Her degree is in Nursing.

Justin Hill (BS ’19) of Johnson City is a Marketing Communications Representative for Eastman Chemical Company after recently finishing an internship in Marketing Communications. His degree is in Media and Communication.

Joseph Vollmer (BBA ’19) of Inman, South Carolina, is a Sales Representative at Eli Lilly and Company. His degree is in Marketing.

Grayson Loyd (BBA ’19) of Gray is a Recruiter for Northwestern Mutual. His degree is in Marketing.

Robert David Jenkins, Sugar Hill, Georgia, January 20, 2020. BS ’54 Business Administration

Ben Ellis Allen, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, July 10, 2019. BS ’57 Business Administration

Jack Gilmer Wilson, Greenville, November 24, 2019. BS ’57 Business Administration

Marion Elaine Byrd, High Point, North Carolina, December 15, 2019. BS ’57 English

Allen Phipps Jennings, Wytheville, Virginia, March 8, 2018. BS ’58 Social Studies, MA ’59 Education

Barbara Rose Bristol Hampton, Elizabethton, October 13, 2019. BS ’58 Business Education, MA ’71 Elementary Education

Kenneth Richard Davenport, Charleston, South Carolina, December 15, 2019. BS ’58 Economics

Marie Wassum Mottern, Johnson City, January 1, 2020. BS ’58 Business Administration

Dr. George Harris Gumm, Wise, Virginia, January 11, 2020. MA ’59 Education

Sarah Jeannette "Jan" McAllister, Walled Lake, Michigan, January 14, 2020. BS ’59 Elementary Education

Albert Merriweather, Jr. (BS ’17) of Medon, Tennessee, is playing for the Harlem Globetrotters. His degree is in Engineering Technology.

Garrett Tumlin (BS ’17, MA ’19) of Chattanooga is Social Media Coordinator with Florida State University’s College of Business. His degrees are in Media and Communication and Brand and Media Strategy.

Taylor Dollar (BBA ’18) of White Pine, Tennessee, is Service Supervisor at Cintas. His degree is in Management.

Joseph Vollmer (BSBA ’18) of White Pine, Tennessee, is Recruiter for Northwestern Mutual. His degree is in Marketing.

Grayson Loyd (BBA ’19) of Gray is a Recruiter for Northwestern Mutual. His degree is in Marketing.

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Dr. George Harris Gumm, Wise, Virginia, January 11, 2020. MA ’59 Education

Sarah Jeannette "Jan" McAllister, Walled Lake, Michigan, January 14, 2020. BS ’59 Elementary Education

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

Janette Campbell Diehl, Jonesborough, August 26, 2019. BS ’50 Business Administration

Willis D. Bowman, Greenville, September 20, 2019. BS ’50, Business Administration

Helen R. Agee, Johnson City, September 14, 2019. BS ’51 Health

Inez Gregg Arnott, Morristown, October 12, 2019. BS ’51 English

Helen Waddell Madron, Chattanooga, October 2, 2019. BS ’52 English

Lewis Russell Hagood, Knoxville, October 11, 2019. BS ’52 Sociology

Virginia Joyce "Joy" Love-Snapp, Surfingville, October 12, 2019. BS ’52 Home Economics

Leola Bowling Olinger, Gray, January 13, 2020. BS ’53 Business

Kenneth C. Istre, Dallas, Texas, November 4, 2019. BS ’53 Social Science

George Martin, Alpharetta, Georgia, November 3, 2019. BS ’54 Business Administration

Joe F. Smith, Bristol, Virginia, November 13, 2019. MA ’54 Education

Lawrence Edward Garland, Bristol, Virginia, November 13, 2019. MA ’54 Education

Robert David Jenkins, Sugar Hill, Georgia, January 20, 2020. BS ’54 Business Administration

Ben Ellis Allen, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, July 10, 2019. BS ’57 Business Administration

Jack Gilmer Wilson, Greenville, November 24, 2019. BS ’57 Business Administration

Marion Elaine Byrd, High Point, North Carolina, December 15, 2019. BS ’57 English

Allen Phipps Jennings, Wytheville, Virginia, March 8, 2018. BS ’58 Social Studies, MA ’59 Education

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Kenneth Richard Davenport, Charleston, South Carolina, December 15, 2019. BS ’58 Economics

Marie Wassum Mottern, Johnson City, January 1, 2020. BS ’58 Business Administration

Dr. George Harris Gumm, Wise, Virginia, January 11, 2020. MA ’59, Education

Sarah Jeannette "Jan" McAllister, Walled Lake, Michigan, January 14, 2020. BS ’59 Elementary Education

1960s

James Compton, Abingdon, November 10, 2019. BS ’60 Physical Education

Paul Renfro, Elizabethton, January 1, 2020. BS ’60 Biology
Sharon “Sherry” Carter Marrs, Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, October 11, 2019. BS ’65 English
William Fulton Green, Lebanon, Virginia, November 27, 2019. BS ’65 English, MA
Betty Rutter Conley, Bristol, Virginia, November 9, 2019. MA ’66 Education
Charles Clint Leonard, Jr., Kingsport, August 23, 2019. BS ’66 Management
Lewis Albert Snyder, Gray, December 1, 2018. BS ’66 Business Education
Mary Frances Crabtree, Rochester, New York, December 9, 2019. MA ’66 Educational Administration
Bob Huston Hoover, Cary, North Carolina, October 13, 2019. BS ’67 Business Administration
Bonnie Frazier Heimbach, Orlando, Florida, November 28, 2019. BS ’67 Home Economics
James Harvey Payne, Advance, North Carolina, August 17, 2019. BS ’67 Management
Patricia “Pam” McCloud Rentenbach, Knoxville, October 13, 2019. BS ’67 English
Donald Scott Forshay, Greeneville, December 3, 2019. BS ’68 Management
George King Barnes, Blountville, November 25, 2019. BS ’68 Industrial Technology
Lanny Atkins, Mount Airy, North Carolina, November 27, 2017. BS ’68 Biology
Richard L. Hiers, Greensboro, North Carolina, December 1, 2019. MBA ’68 Business
Martha Adelaide Carter Tipton, Johnson City, November 6, 2019. BS ’69 Elementary Education
Dr. Robert George Sutherland, Lebanon, Virginia, December 4, 2019. MA ’69 Elementary Education

1970s
Bobby Joe Starnes, Duffield, Virginia, September 11, 2019. BS ’70 History
Bobby Ray Church, Franklin, Tennessee, November 22, 2019. BS ’70 Health Education
Edwin Anthony Murray, Johnson City, November 15, 2019. BS ’70 Accountancy
James Howard Gregory, Abingdon, Virginia, July 20, 2018. BS ’70 Physical Education
Herman Stephen Giles, Chattanooga, January 8, 2020. BS ’70 History and MA ’73 Sociology
Martha Nan Meredith, Johnson City, August 31, 2019. BS ’70 History
Mary Anne Adair, Kingsport, September 22, 2019. BS ’70 English
Merrell Dale Read, Winchester, Tennessee, November 27, 2019. BS ’70 Industrial Technology
Beverley Kathryn Howard, Kingsport, November 7, 2019. EDD ’71 Educational Administration and Supervision, MA Education
Jean Devere Cottrell, Johnson City, September 23, 2019. BS ’71 Elementary Education, MA
Terry Lewis Leonard, Bluff City, November 26, 2019. BS ’71 Chemistry
Richard E. Gerwig, Anderson, South Carolina, December 2, 2019. BS ’71 Management
Rita Wheatley Lewis, Savannah, Georgia, December 4, 2019. BS ’71 Music
Robert Nolan Hunter, Midlothian, Virginia, July 5, 2019. BS ’71 Biology
Virgil Lee Ferrell, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August 24, 2019. BS ’71 Political Science
Bradley Albert Franklin, Garrison, Kentucky, October 13, 2019. BS ’72 Political Science
Brenda Davis Brown, Greeneville, September 23, 2019. BS ’72 Accountancy
Lt. Col. (Ret) Patrick Way Tindall, Kingsport, September 14, 2019. BSN ’73 Nursing
Woody Lee Crowder, Elizabethton, September 9, 2019. BS ’73 Biology
Albert Creed Fleenor Jr., Bristol, Tennessee, October 22, 2019. BS ’74 Accountancy
William Henry Cox III, Canton, Georgia, November 29, 2019. BS ’74 History
James Byerly, Kingston, Tennessee, December 11, 2019. BS ’75 Biology
Joann Keith Bond, Hampton, September 14, 2019. BS ’75 Health Education
Thomas Peacock, Reno, Nevada, June 30, 2017. BS ’75, Environmental Health and Safety
Donis E. Rice, Cary, North Carolina, October 27, 2019. BS ’76, Art
Joelma Tosh Powers, Bristol, Tennessee, September 21, 2019. MA ’76 Instructional Communication
Stephen R. Smith, Johnson City, November 3, 2019. ALE ’76 Criminal Justice
Donald Gene Shrock, Bristol, Tennessee, October 11, 2019. AS ’77 Biology
Don Greer Robinson, Kingsport, October 11, 2019. MA ’77 Educational Administration

1980s
Bruce William Merrill, Nashville, September 13, 2019. MAT ’80 Elementary Education
Carolyn Kay Christian Gibbons, Church Hill, August 30, 2019. BS ’80 English, MED ’97 Educational Leadership
Debra Anne Putney, Johnson City, March 11, 2019. BS ’80 Elementary Education
Pajan Elizabeth Cox-Wilhoit, Greeneville, October 9, 2019. BS ’80 Political Science
James Reece Carter Jr., Atlanta, August 7, 2019. BBA ’81 Management, MBA ’85 Business Administration
Michael Harrell Rice, Erwin, October 30, 2019. BS ’81 Engineering Technology

Rev. Charles Hayes Charlton, Johnson City, January 22, 2020. BS ’82 Philosophy, MED ’84 Reading

Deborah Joan Baker Woods, Johnson City, September 2, 2019. AS ’83 Medical Laboratory Technology
Kathy Jane Feathers, Blountville, September 8, 2019. BS ’83 Elementary Education
Teddy Richard Yokley, Greeneville, June 7, 2019. BSW ’83 Social Work
Jessica Katherine Birchfield Gladstone, Lauderhill, Florida, July 28, 2019. BS ’84 Biology
Faculty and Staff Obituaries

Edward J. Hill, December 31, 2019
Mr. Hill was an employee in the Digital Media Center at ETSU.

Dr. James E. Vaught, Sr.,
December 9, 2019
A dentist by trade, Dr. Vaught founded the Dental Hygiene program at ETSU. After working at Indiana University and the University of Tennessee, he returned to campus to become Dean of the ETSU College of Public and Allied Health. He later served as Assistant to the President and as Vice President for Information Resources.

J.C. Mills, January 7, 2020
Professor Mills had taught for over 30 years in the ETSU Department of Art and Design.

Dr. Joseph Taylor Miller, May 6, 2019
Dr. Miller was a faculty member in the ETSU College of Public and Allied Health.

Mark Allen Stout, November 14, 2019
Mr. Stout was an employee in Facilities Management at ETSU for 34 years.

Dr. Patricia Ann Chase, September 17, 2019
An audiologist, Dr. Chase served as Graduate Coordinator for the ETSU Department of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

David Lewis Kite, January 16, 2020
Mr. Kite worked at ETSU for 21 years, retiring as Associate Vice President for Administration and Finance.

Margaret L. Brown, March 27, 2020
Ms. Brown worked as a Secretary in the ETSU President’s Office before retiring in 1998.

Jean S. Copeland, March 29, 2020, at the age of 100
Ms. Copeland worked in the Business Office at East Tennessee State from 1942 until her retirement in the early 1980s.

Elaine Gerace, May 3, 2020
Ms. Gerace taught first grade for more than 25 years at ETSU’s University School.

Dr. Kenneth O. Hasson, May 21, 2020
Dr. Hasson taught geology at ETSU for 25 years.
We’re proud to partner with East Tennessee State University National Alumni Association. To learn more about Liberty Mutual auto and home insurance, please call us at 1-888-749-5644, or visit libertymutual.com/www.libertymutual.com/etsu.
East Tennessee State University has worked together to improve the lives of the people of our region for more than a century. Students attending this fall will see no across-the-board increases in tuition, housing or meal plan costs and incoming freshmen may be eligible for new last-dollar tuition assistance programs for Tennessee residents. With more than 140 academic programs available, the ETSU Advantage is clear. Visit etsu.edu/advantage to begin your path toward graduation.

etsu.edu/advantage

NEW TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Incoming Bucs may be eligible for last-dollar tuition assistance programs such as ETSU Promise Plus or Free Freshman Tuition for the 2020-21 academic year.