

THE MAGAZINE OF SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

seasons

FALL 2020



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Samford Among Best in the U.S.

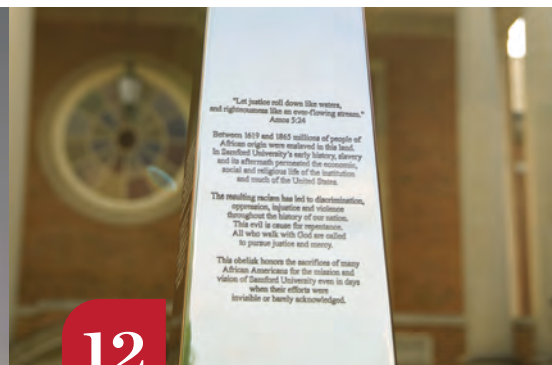
Samford's growing national reputation continues to be recognized by rankings from *The Wall Street Journal* and *U.S. News & World Report*.



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Samford promotional campaign on campus reminds students and employees to mask up.



From the President



Remembering 86

Metrics consume our lives these days—calorie count, screen time, steps, and a host of measures (thankfully) relegated to privacy under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

Metrics also consume much of higher education today, mostly for good reasons. It is important for colleges and universities to demonstrate to savvy prospective students and their families that promotional rhetoric is undergirded with facts. There are so many measures of quality that it is possible to be lost in a sea of numbers.

This fall, please remember one number: 86. That's the percentage of Samford classes taught this semester either fully or substantially in person. True. And the members of our faculty are accomplishing this feat during a global pandemic.

In one of the most memorable semesters in Samford's history, we've experienced record enrollment and our largest ever freshman class while implementing detailed plans designed to mitigate the risks for contracting and spreading COVID-19 on our campus.

While a crisis of this magnitude has presented monumental challenges, we also have strengthened our processes and developed new competences. The pandemic has challenged us to evolve and adapt, but more than anything, it has reaffirmed the importance of our mission, which unites and inspires us all.

As you read this issue of Seasons, filled with inspiring stories of our programs and our people, please remember "86." We're keeping our eye on the ball . . . the provision of personal instruction by competent, compassionate faculty members, within an environment nurtured by people who seek to demonstrate the love of Christ. Not perfect, but aspirational. And inspirational.

As always, please keep Samford in your prayers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Andrew Westmoreland".

Andrew Westmoreland
President

Westmoreland Announces Retirement, *Presidential Search Committee Named*

Samford University President Andrew Westmoreland, who has led the institution since 2006, will retire from the presidency effective June 30, 2021. The official announcement to Samford's Board of Trustees was made at a called meeting on Thursday, Aug. 27. Westmoreland shared the news with students, employees and alumni in an email on Aug. 28.

In the message he wrote, "I've said so often that, despite my many flaws, I am a better person because of my association with Samford. Jeanna and I agree that serving here is the greatest honor of our lives."

Westmoreland's tenure as Samford's president has been marked by enrollment growth, new and enhanced campus facilities, and a growing national reputation for academic quality. Since 2006, enrollment has increased by almost 30% and the university has seen 12 consecutive years of enrollment growth. More than 30 new or enhanced academic programs have been added at the undergraduate and graduate level, including many in the College of Health Sciences, which was established in 2013. The university has raised more than \$400 million in philanthropic gifts and has invested approximately \$100 million in its physical plant and campus. A timeline of key milestones and achievements during the Westmoreland presidency has been added to the university website.

Samford also continued gains in its reputational standing among higher education institutions, being recognized as one of the best Christian universities

in the country in national rankings for teaching quality, value and affordability. Among these recognitions, the university is ranked second nationally for student engagement and first in the state of Alabama in a national ranking published by *The Wall Street Journal*.

"As we begin this transition in the university's leadership it is important to remember Samford is stronger today than at any time in its 179-year history," said Samford Board of Trustees chair Bill Stevens. "We all are immensely grateful for the tremendous service of President Westmoreland."

In his statement to Samford employees Westmoreland said, "Including our 15 years at Samford, Jeanna and I will have served more than 23 years in presidencies at two universities. Our careers in higher education now span more than four decades. We have been blessed with opportunities far beyond our dreams and we believe that this is the appropriate time to open the door for new leaders at Samford."

Westmoreland added that "mountains of work must be accomplished this fall and next spring," and he plans to be fully engaged until the arrival of a new president next summer.



Westmoreland came to Samford following 27 years of service in higher education, including eight as president at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. After retirement from the presidency, he plans to reside in Birmingham and to continue serving in a part-time capacity as executive director of Samford's Frances Marlin Mann Center for Ethics and Leadership.

A search for Samford's next president began immediately. Trustees Tim Vines, CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, and Beth Thorne Stukes, a corporate and civic leader from Jasper, Alabama, are serving as co-chairs of the search committee. Michael Morgan, assistant to the president at Samford, is serving as search committee secretary.

The 23 members of the presidential search committee were announced on Aug. 30. ▀

Despite Pandemic, Samford Announces **Record Enrollment for 12th-consecutive Year**

Samford University announced in September its 12th-consecutive year of record enrollment, bucking national predictions of struggling fall enrollment nationwide due to COVID-19. University officials confirmed a record of 5,729 students in its undergraduate and graduate programs enrolled across the university for the fall semester.

Included in the totals are 3,576 undergraduate and 2,153 graduate/professional students, representing 47 states, the District of Columbia and 30 countries. The numbers reflect new individual records in terms of size and quality for both enrolled graduate students and the entering class of 971 freshman students.

"It is gratifying to see the hard work and resilience of our faculty and staff and their steadfast commitment to making this a place of superior learning and extraordinary personal development," said Samford Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management R. Philip Kimrey. "There is no

doubt these efforts, combined with the innovative work of our admissions team, greatly impacted the growth of our student enrollment this year. We are grateful for each student and family who chooses to invest their future at Samford."

Developing engaging ways to share the unique Samford experience with incoming and returning students was essential to demonstrating the university's commitment to student success despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. In the spring, Samford's Office of Admission quickly developed virtual adaptations of recruitment events, including an Admitted Student Day, campus visits, college fairs, a series of informative webinar-style topical conversations and personalized individual meetings and appointments. The tailored approach resulted in a record-high attendance of more than 1,000 families at virtual Bulldog Days, the university's new student orientation. In September the office began hosting Senior Days, on-campus experiences for high school seniors to tour campus in small groups.

Samford faculty prepared all summer to deliver classes in several different modalities this fall semester, including in-person, online and a combination of the two, with a commitment to maximizing the number of in-person learning experiences. Approximately 86% of fall courses include some elements of in-person learning across all courses in all undergraduate and graduate degree programs; an estimated 52% of courses are face-to-face, and 34% of courses are hybrid, involving online modules offered along with in-person classes.

The record fall enrollment comes at a time of growing national recognition and expansion across all ten academic schools at the university. Samford's strategic plan outlines ambitious goals for enrollment, retention and student engagement.

Samford is regularly recognized as one of the top Christian universities in the United States and consistently receives especially high marks for quality teaching and value. The university was recently ranked #34 nationally among private universities on *Kiplinger's Personal Finance's* "Best College Values" list. ▀



Samford Ranked Second in the Nation for Student Engagement by *Wall Street Journal*



Samford's growing national reputation continues to be recognized by rankings from *The Wall Street Journal* and *U.S. News & World Report*, highlighting the university's commitment to academic rigor, student success and value.

In its 2021 ranking of higher education institutions, *The Wall Street Journal* and *Times Higher Education* rank Samford second nationally for Student Engagement, climbing one spot from third last year. Samford also ranks 183rd overall among the nearly 800 universities in the national ranking, and first in Alabama, a position held every year since the rankings' inception in 2016.

The annual Student Engagement ranking assesses the degree to which students feel prepared to use their education in the real world. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, this category examines "how engaged students feel they are with their professors, their peers and their education." Student engagement is deemed central to exceptional teaching quality and reflects "how well a university manages to inform, inspire and challenge students."

Samford is also Alabama's best value according to the 2021 Best Value Schools ranking published by *U.S. News & World Report*. In the list of national universities included in the best value ranking, Samford ranks 86th and is the only Alabama university included in the list.

U.S. News & World Report determines value by evaluating academic quality and cost after accounting for total expenses and financial aid. The ranking reflects the ratio of academic quality relative to price, including measurement of need-based aid and the average tuition discount or scholarship.

Samford also moved up to 143rd overall in the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of national universities, which includes the largest and most prestigious private and public institutions in the U.S. today. Universities on this list offer a full range of undergraduate majors as well as master's and doctoral degrees. The ranking criteria include academic reputation, graduation and retention rates, class size, faculty/student ratios and peer assessments from higher education leaders.

U.S. News & World Report also recognized Samford in its list of Least Debt National Universities, which highlights schools whose graduates have the lowest average debt as measured by graduates' mean federal loan indebtedness.

Cumulatively, these recent rankings affirm Samford's growing national reputation as one of the leading Christian universities in the United States today. Considering there are nearly 4,300 degree-granting postsecondary institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, these rankings easily place Samford within the top 5% of colleges and universities in the country.

"We are pleased that Samford continues to be recognized for the quality and value of our academic programs," said Samford President Andrew Westmoreland. "While national rankings are just one measure of our progress, they provide a source of pride for Samford students, employees and alumni who celebrate the growing national reputation of their university." ▮



Virtual Homecoming 2020

— NOVEMBER 12-14 —

Join us for a virtual Homecoming celebration with fellow alumni.

Thursday, November 12

Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives, Virtual Day Party

11 a.m.-1 p.m. CT, Facebook Live

Join students, alumni and friends for a virtual day party hosted by the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives. We will be joined by a live DJ, and students, alumni and friends will be able to share about what Samford means to them. There will also be a Homecoming prize pack for registered participants.

Daniel House Quiz 1 p.m., Zoom

Come test your knowledge of London and British culture! You will learn about history, sports, television and more in this fun event that is sure to boost your intelligence and your wanderlust.

Alumni of the Year Celebration 6 p.m., Zoom

Join us as we celebrate the 2020 Humanitarians of the Year, Outstanding Young Alumnae of the Year and Alumni of the Year! We will also be joined by Dr.

Andrew Westmoreland, president of Samford University, as we learn more about this year's honorees.

Friday, November 13

Daniel House Classroom Visit

8 a.m., Zoom

Registration: samford.edu/alumni/homecoming

Along with the recent \$2.5 million renovation to the Daniel House in London, the academic curriculum of the program also underwent some major changes. Students now have the unique opportunity to learn from Samford and British faculty while participating in an international internship in their area of study. You will get an inside look into the new academic curriculum and hear a mini lesson on the British monarchy.

Samford Family Movie Night

What better way to celebrate Virtual Homecoming than with a Samford Family Movie Night! Gather your family and rent, download or stream one of four Samford-related movies: The star of Toy Story 4 is Forky, voiced by alumnus Tony Hale '92.

Ben Davies '13 plays David Thomson, one of the leading roles in *Courageous*. The Erwin Brothers are successful producers and directors from Birmingham, and have chosen to film portions of several of their movies on Samford's campus. See if you can spot Samford in the movies *October Baby* and *Woodlawn*.

Saturday, November 14

Classes of 1970, 1995, 2010 and Golden Bulldogs Reunion

9:00 a.m., Zoom

Join the classes of 1970, 1995, 2010 and Golden Bulldogs for a virtual reunion! We will meet as a large group through Zoom, then will move in to break-out rooms by class year or as Golden Bulldogs. We will also be joined by Dr. Andrew Westmoreland, president of Samford University, Randy Pittman, vice-president for university advancement, and Stephen Dillard, president of the Samford University Alumni Association.

To register for events and to view a complete Homecoming schedule of virtual activities, visit samford.edu/alumni/homecoming.

Alumnus of the Year

Brandon Bailey

Brandon Bailey

"Brandon has served this country with honor and distinction as a nurse in the United States Air Force," says a former professor of the Ida Moffett School of Nursing and, in summary, is why Brandon Bailey '05 is a 2020 Alumni of the Year award recipient. Some of Lt. Col. Bailey's honors and awards include 1999 Alabama Nurse of the Year, 2001 Air Force Achievement Medal, 2004 Air Force Commendation Medal, 2004 Army Achievement for resuscitating 11 critically injured Army soldiers and transforming an exercise hospital into a fully-functioning medical facility with Level IV capability, and the Purple Heart.

After becoming a Certified Flight Registered Nurse and the program manager of the critical care transport operations stationed in Georgia, Bailey moved to headquarters at the Pentagon in Washington D.C. where he served as the director of reserve medical plans and programs, overseeing a \$4 billion budget which supports 67 facilities and 8,000 personnel. He also served as an advisor to the secretary of the Air Force, a legislative and policy expert to Congress, and restructured the Air Force case management process, decreasing approval time by more than 60% and saving \$40 million annually, while also ensuring that ill or injured Air Force families avoided financial hardship. He also spearheaded a \$30 million initiative to overhaul the Health Professional Scholarship Program.

Bailey also served as director of search and rescue, aeromedical evacuation, and critical care air transport missions for Operation Iraqi Freedom. During this time, he was awarded the Purple Heart for critical injuries incurred during combat operations. Although these injuries ended his military career, they did not end his dedication to his country, to service or to helping others.

Bailey has continued to serve his country through his involvement with the Disabled American Veterans Association and Samford by volunteering with the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. He has served as a case manager of the NCR Wounded Warrior Regiment in Washington, D.C., where he monitored recuperating service members and



assisted with retirement and applications for available services. He continues to be involved with Samford as a member of the centennial committee, as well as veteran adviser to the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing for grant applications and awards for programs that enable military veterans to pursue a nursing degree. He has received both the Living Legacy Award and the Courage to Care Award from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. ▮

Alumnus of the Year

Michael Escoe

"Michael is a Samford graduate of true distinction, wide respect and acknowledged leadership, who has given selflessly and worked tirelessly to better the lives of others and society at large by staying true to the Samford University mission." This is what one fellow Samford graduate said of G. Michael Escoe '84, one of two 2020 award recipients for Alumni of the Year.

Escoe is an internationally recognized expert in the fields of marketing, communications, events and branding, earning prestigious Telly and Site awards for marketing and business excellence. He has spent more than 30 years at senior level

positions with three giants of the technology industry—AT&T, BellSouth and France Telecom.

Although he had great success in the business world, Escoe transitioned his focus in 2014 to a career devoted to ministry and philanthropic causes. As his friend said, "Michael shifted his pursuit from a life of importance to a life of significance." In addition to more than 10 international mission trips, he also became the executive director of U.S. operations for "Because of Kennedy," which promotes the physical, emotional and spiritual development of orphans and vulnerable families, primarily in Ethiopia, to empower them while demonstrating faith, hope and love in Jesus Christ. He currently serves as an area director of Christian Leadership Concepts, which trains small groups of men for spiritual leadership. Escoe also serves Samford in leadership for a Samford alumni chapter and as chairman of Samford's Brock School of Business executive advisory board. Of this role as chairman, Escoe says, "Watching the school of business grow to what it is today and allowing me to support in that growth is my best [Samford] memory!"

Escoe earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Samford after earning degrees in business administration and management from Limestone College, and history from The Citadel. He says of his educational experience, "I went to The Citadel to get leadership training and got an education; I went to Samford to get an education and got leadership training! On the wall of every barracks at The Citadel there is a plaque that states: 'A cadet does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those that do,'—that taught me the value of personal integrity. In front of each school at Samford is a sign that names the building, which is followed by: 'For God, For Learning, Forever.'—that taught me that there is something greater than me!" ■

Michael Escoe



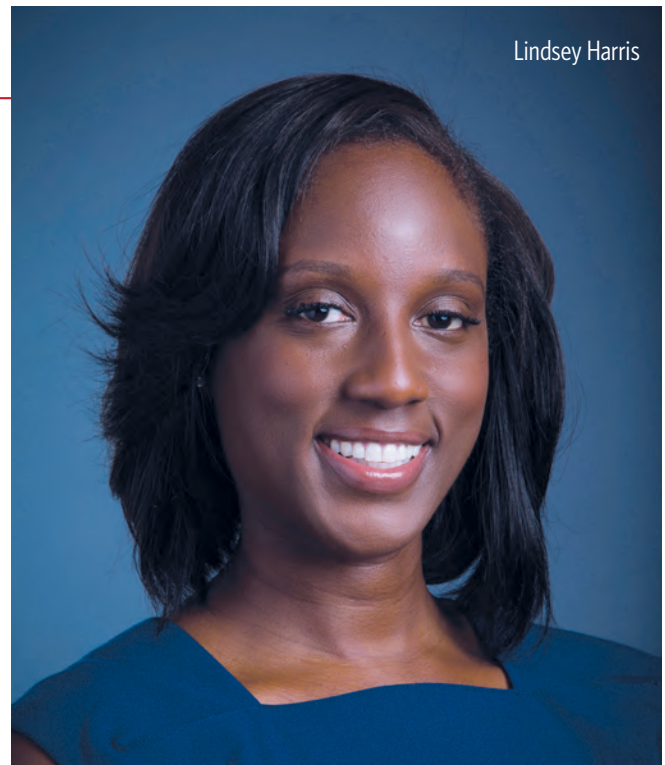
Outstanding Young Alumna of the Year

Lindsey Harris

Outstanding academic and career excellence coupled with service to individuals and communities define the way Lindsey Harris '06 lives and why she is a 2020 Outstanding Young Alumna. Harris, a nurse practitioner at UAB Hospital, is recognized for her leadership and service, as well as exceptional nursing care. As a Samford student, her reputation was no different. She was a member of the women's basketball team and was named to the conference's All-Academic team while making time for significant community volunteer efforts and serving as president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

Her dedication to others continues today. As a member of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association mentorship program, she serves as an enthusiastic participant and role model for nursing students at Samford by offering academic and social support. Her mentees have shared that Harris' caring concern and professional behaviors are instrumental in their continued education as graduate students and advanced practice nurses. She is also committed to her community by serving at her church in health and wellness ministry as well as collaborating with Birmingham City Council members to teach Hands-Only CPR in each of the Birmingham city schools. Students receive instruction on emergency care of a person with a sudden cardiac arrest, and each school receives a reusable, custom CPR in Schools training kit.

This year Harris will assume the presidency of the Alabama State Nurses Association (ASNA) as the first African American president of the 100-year-old organization. She has previously served as state secretary and as a member of the Commission on Professional Issues. Harris is also active in District 3, the local chapter of ASNA. In addition to receiving the Living Legacy Award and the Courage to Care Award from the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, she was also recently recognized by the UAB School of Nursing with the JoAnn Barnett Award for Compassionate Care. She has received the ASNA Lillian Holland Harvey Award for significant contributions in nursing and health care, as well as recognition from the National Black Nurses Association with the 45 Under 40 Award for her strong leadership, excellence



Lindsey Harris

and innovation in the practice setting. Despite these honors, however, Harris considers having the opportunity to serve her greatest achievement. "I feel that my greatest personal accomplishment is the fact that I can truly live my passion every day of my life," she says. "Serving and giving to others whether in my role as nurse practitioner or as a community leader truly brings me a sense of personal accomplishment knowing that I can truly walk in God's purpose for my life."

Harris continues, "I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend Samford as a student-athlete. I had the opportunity to cultivate many friendships which I continue to maintain today. I am also proud to be a graduate of the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing. Samford's nursing program truly prepared me to not only care for a patient medically, but to care for them holistically. Samford University has helped shape me into the person I am today. My professors taught in the mind of Galatians of 3:28. I have found this truth to be very useful as I journey through my personal and professional life. This simple yet important principle has genuinely opened up doors of opportunity full of love, compassion and fulfillment." ▮

Outstanding Young Alumna of the Year

Mary Kathryn Steel

"Mary Kathryn is one of the most impressive young people I have ever known," says Samford Vice President for Marketing and Communication Betsy Holloway, who has known Mary Kathryn Covert Steel '07 since her time as a student. Steel has made quite the impression in each industry she has tackled, starting in college as a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship and being selected as Omicron Delta Kappa's National Leader of the Year, continuing with her first post-graduate job at Coca-Cola in Atlanta and making her way to her current role as director of global corporate communications for AbbVie, one of the top pharmaceutical companies in the country. Through this career success, Steel has continued to invest in her alma mater and its future success, which is why she is being honored as one of the 2020 Outstanding Young Alumni. She has previously served on the advisory board for Howard College of Arts and Sciences, is currently a member of the *Forever Samford* campaign cabinet and has recently served as the chair of fundraising efforts for Samford's Daniel House.

"In September 2006, my family lost our home in Mississippi in Hurricane Ivan, and with money tight and no physical home, I decided to apply for a scholarship to study at the Daniel House in London for the spring," says Steel, "That semester changed my life for the better. It opened my eyes to a broader world and expanded my purview in ways that I remain grateful for to this day. I had a once-in-a-lifetime internship at Christian Solidarity Worldwide...I backpacked through Europe with stops in places I'd only seen in movies, like Venice, Prague, Munich and Cork. I saw countless plays, musicals and museums—soaking up as much of a foreign culture as possible...and it prepared me for a life beyond the limited world I knew

growing up. Fast forward 15 years, I opted to become the fundraising chair on Samford's capital campaign for the Daniel House [and] donated a 'room' at the Daniel House in honor of one of my favorite Samford professors, Dr. Ginger Frost, who has focused her research on British studies."

Throughout her time at Samford, Steel remembers that many people asked what she was going to do with a history degree. "Looking back on it, it makes me smile to think about how much I stressed over these questions. If only I could go back and tell myself not to worry!" Steel says, "The beauty of my liberal arts degree—or any liberal arts degree really—is the focus on critical thinking. That framework prepared me well for a corporate career. I've been afforded incredible opportunities as a result, like going to the World Economic Forum in Switzerland and the Olympic Games. While my career has focused on the intersection of policy, perception and public affairs, I'm particularly grateful for the opportunity to guide AbbVie's philanthropy and how we share about that work with the public. Last year, I had the opportunity to accept several awards on the company's behalf, including the

CSR Award for 'Best Philanthropy Communications' and 'Best Stakeholder Engagement Campaign' around donations we made to Ronald McDonald House Charities and Habitat for Humanity/Direct Relief, respectively. These awards served as validation that we were making an impact on those who need it most. And those values of servant leadership date back to my days at Samford."

"Samford continues to be a lodestar in my life," says Steel, "giving me a fixed point to steer from as I navigate what it means to be a Christian today, as the world and my place in it—as a corporate leader, committed philanthropist, wife and mother—continue to evolve." ▀



Mary Kathryn Steel

Humanitarians of the Year

Katherine and Jay Wolf

As authors and founders of the Hope Heals organization, Katherine and Jay Wolf '04 have written two books, *Hope Heals* and *Suffer Strong*. These books, alongside their blogs and social media presence, speaking engagements and Hope Heals Camp “disrupt the myth that joy can only be found in a pain-free life. Their hope is to offer families and individuals steadfast hope and practical insight into surviving anything by redefining how we think about everything,” said a Samford alumna who attends the camp with her family. For these efforts, the Wolfs are the 2020 Humanitarians of the Year.

The Wolfs met at Samford, were married after graduation and promptly moved to California with dreams of law school and the entertainment industry. In 2008, they had their first son and, six months later, Katherine suffered a massive brain stem stroke from a ruptured AVM, a rare congenital defect she did not know she had. To save her life, over half of her cerebellum was removed and many vital intra-cranial nerves were sacrificed, which could have left her paralyzed or in a vegetative state. Against all odds and after 16 hours of surgery, Katherine lived. Although she continues her recovery to this day, Katherine and her husband Jay have dedicated their lives to communicating and advocating on behalf of families with disabilities like them.

“[Hope Heals Camp] and the relationships that we’ve created with families from all over the nation through it has been such an amazing experience. In connecting with other families in unique circumstances...we all bonded in praying for one another, redefining hope in our lives and living a life that is not only pleasing to God, but a light that will stand out to the world of non-believers,” says a fellow Samford grad.

Jay Wolf says that their new life, which has yielded Hope Heals Ministry, is his family’s greatest achievement. “Coming back from near-death to a totally new life together, as a family, is our greatest personal accomplishment. Our ministry, Hope Heals, was our attempt to take what we had personally been given through our tragedy and recovery and give it away to others in need. Reimagining disability ministry through Hope Heals Camp and creating a community that goes way beyond our story has been our biggest professional accomplishment.”

The Wolfs credit Samford with playing a large part in their story. Although lingering meals and lengthy conversations in the Caf are a favorite memory, their love for Samford is much deeper. “Samford was where our story as a couple and family began!” says Jay. “Also, since we communicate for a living, we are quite proud of the fact that we are using our major. Samford’s communication studies department really honed our skills and gave us a vision for being storytellers and advocates way before we even knew the story we would be telling. It’s also been powerful to know the next generation of Samford students who volunteer at our camp—such a powerful, full-circle experience for us.”

Katherine and Jay Wolf



Reconciliation Memorial

A Lasting Commitment to Advancing Racial Justice

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Amos 5:24

Samford University has dedicated a new memorial to honor the many contributions of the African Americans who built and sustain the institution's mission, including a legendary hero and a groundbreaking scholar. The memorial was scheduled to be dedicated on May 5 in conjunction with the spring meeting of the university's Board of Trustees. Due to COVID-19, the dedication was postponed and trustees, instead, viewed a video of the monument, which was installed on campus May 4.

Consistent with Samford's core values of integrity, honor, justice, accountability and service to God and the community, the etchings on the monument express the virtues of justice and righteousness, and affirm the university's mindful commitment to reconciliation.

In the form of an ancient obelisk, the memorial is crafted from stainless steel and stands eight feet tall atop a granite base at the center of the circular garden at Divinity Hall, on the west side of the university quadrangle. Its etchings recall the wrongs of slavery and the sins of the resulting violence and racism.

According to Cassandra Adams, assistant dean of Samford's Cumberland School of Law, the honesty of the inscription is very important. "True reconciliation begins with honesty. My heart is filled with joy and thanksgiving knowing that the memorial represents reconciliation, which is work that we are all called to do," said Adams.

The memorial reads:

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Amos 5:24

Between 1619 and 1865 millions of people of African origin were enslaved in this land. In Samford University's early history, slavery and its aftermath permeated the economic, social and religious life of the institution and much of the United States.

The resulting racism has led to discrimination, oppression, injustice and violence throughout the history of our nation. This evil is cause for repentance. All who walk with God are called to pursue justice and mercy.

This obelisk honors the sacrifices of many African Americans for the mission and vision of Samford University even in days when their efforts were invisible or barely acknowledged.

In memory of Harry (1831-1854), an African American man who lived in slavery and died from injuries received while rousing the students at the burning of the Howard College building at midnight on October 15, 1854. Harry is remembered for bravery that saved lives and sustained this institution.

In memory of Audrey Lattimore Gaston Howard (1940-1989) who in 1967 became the first African American student admitted to Samford University. She received a Juris Doctor degree from Cumberland School of Law in 1970 and later became the first woman in the southeast appointed to the United States Attorney's Office.

This marker was authorized as a symbol of the university's mindful commitment to the mission of reconciliation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Samford University Board of Trustees.

Dedicated May 5, 2020

The memorial specifically honors the memory of Harry, a 23-year-old African American man who lived in slavery and died from injuries he received while waking the students at the burning of Howard College. Harry is known in Samford's history for his bravery that saved lives and sustained the institution. Students from the college first memorialized Harry by placing a monument at his grave in Marion, Alabama, in 1857. He has since been memorialized along the university's Centennial Walk and a likeness of a young African American man representing Harry is engraved in the university's ceremonial mace. More than 20 years ago, the Samford Student Government Association approved the naming of the food court coffee house venue in the Ralph Beeson University Center in Harry's memory.

As the recent renovation of the university center was underway, several students and university leaders voiced a desire for Samford to find a more visible way to

commemorate Harry's memory and to visibly recognize the many contributions of African Americans throughout Samford's history. In February of 2019, the year marking the 400th anniversary of the landing of the first slaves in this country, the Board of Trustees approved the placement of the memorial, "to commemorate Harry's bravery that saved lives and sustained this institution and to recognize Samford University's connection to slavery and the work of the Africans and African Americans, enslaved and free, who helped build this university, state and nation."

The monument also honors the memory of Audrey Lattimore Gaston Howard, who in 1967 became the first African American student admitted to Samford University. In recognizing Howard in her distinctive role crossing an unjust racial divide that wrongly existed at institutions across the nation, the university also recognizes the ongoing contributions of all African American students and alumni who followed her pioneering path.

Jewel Littleton '05, '10, president of the Samford University Black Alumni Association, shared her reflections on the memorial, "This memorial commemorates the important contributions of African Americans to Samford's legacy and is an immeasurable honor. From the bravery of Harry to the trailblazing character of Audrey Gaston Howard, Samford continues to benefit from the tireless and selfless service of numerous minorities as the years go by. I am thankful that Samford is making a permanent statement of appreciation and support for the contributions made by so many. The love of Christ continues to be exemplified in all that Samford does."

Littleton and more than 50 individuals and groups representing a broad cross-section of university life engaged in conversations to craft the etchings on the memorial. Early in the planning, the university community embraced the importance of addressing the conditions of slavery and its aftermath in this remembrance of Harry.

"This monument stands as a testament to the fact that Samford University is an institution that recognizes reconciliation as a mandate of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," said Robert Holmes Jr., vice chair of the Samford University Board of Trustees. "I am proud to serve as a trustee of this great university."

"The etching on the memorial recalls the painful chapters of our past and the ongoing evils of racism that continue to resonate in our society. The etching also honors the historic sacrifices of many African Americans for the mission and vision of Samford University—even in days when their efforts were invisible or barely acknowledged," said Samford President Andrew Westmoreland. "The specific wording on the memorial is the product of dozens of individual



conversations with students, alumni, faculty, staff, trustees and friends of the university. Draft after draft was constructed and revised until the wording reflected the heart and soul of our people."

"On behalf of all Samford alumni, I am grateful for this tangible symbol of reconciliation, as well as the acknowledgment of painful truths about our university's history," said Samford University Alumni Association President Stephen Dillard '92. "Every one of us has a role to play in atoning for the past and building a future for Samford that ensures all people made in the image of God can flourish. This monument to that worthy commitment and the lives of Harry and Audrey Lattimore Gaston Howard brings us closer to the fullness of that hope," he added.

The monument was crafted in the studios of David Harber a world-renowned sculptor based in Oxfordshire, England. It is a companion piece to the Armillary Sphere mounted outside Reid Chapel which was commissioned from the artist to commemorate Samford's 175th anniversary in 2016. ■

Samford Launches New Initiatives Aimed at **Increasing Diversity and Achieving Racial Reconciliation on Campus**

“We will do more. We must do more,” said Samford University President Andrew Westmoreland.

In the wake of the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, Samford University students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends engaged in meaningful dialogue resulting in a renewed and strengthened university-wide commitment to racial diversity and reconciliation throughout campus.

“If we have learned anything in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent protests and tensions throughout our country, it is that whatever we have done—or believe we have done—to overcome racism, we have not done enough,” said Westmoreland. “We must achieve the elimination of racism from the root and branch of our lives and our institution.”

In June, Westmoreland committed to a number of new initiatives intended to further racial diversity and equality at

Samford. These include required diversity training for all employees, additional resources for the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives, and new events to facilitate intentional dialogue around race and justice. Two veteran administrators were promoted to serve among the university’s executive leadership team. Garry Atkins, assistant vice president for student affairs, will advance opportunities to improve and expand diversity in Samford’s workforce. Denise Gregory, assistant provost and associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry, will continue to lead the growing programs and initiatives of the university’s Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives.

“It remains important to me and to so many others at Samford to do whatever we can, day by day and course

by course, to help each of us understand and practice the ways in which we can build a better future not just for ourselves, but for everyone. We cannot grow weary in pursuing those goals,” said Westmoreland.

Appointment of Task Force on Racial Justice

In an email to the campus community on June 4, Gregory announced the creation of a new task force on racial justice. The primary goal of the group, co-chaired by Gregory and Samford Board of Trustees vice chair Robert Holmes, is to assist the university in fostering positive, enduring changes in campus culture and existing systems, so that racial justice may become a known attribute of the institution. According to Gregory, racial injustice at Samford, past and present, will be examined and addressed. The 38-member task force, consisting of students, faculty, staff, parents and alumni, will provide the university with periodic recommendations and a final report will be issued by the end of the year.

The group began meeting over the summer and has already achieved progress toward initial goals, including development of a shared, biblically grounded definition of justice that will guide their discussions.

“Our areas of focus include campus training and education, hiring processes and compensation, curriculum development and delivery, promotion and tenure, vendor contracts, and the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty and staff,” said Gregory. “We also will be exploring



Denise Gregory



Garry Atkins

ways to better support the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of our students and employees of color," she added.

Four students are part of the taskforce, providing an invaluable perspective of these issues from a student perspective.

"Our first meeting was a great introduction opportunity for everyone on the task force, but since the second meeting we've really hit the ground running," student member Alondra Hampton said. "As a senior, there are things I've experienced in the past and I'm proud to be part of this to leave an imprint here and help those coming after me."

Expansion of the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives

Samford University's Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives recently announced new positions to lead its expanding work across campus.

Jenée Spencer was promoted to director of diversity education and development. In this role, she will coordinate the IMPACT Peer Mentoring Program, the diversity ambassadors, cultural programming, community partnerships and additional support for culturally centered student organizations. She also will develop and facilitate a variety of diversity education modules and tools for sustaining an inclusive university environment.

Spencer graduated from Samford with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 2013 and a Master of Science in educational leadership: policy, organizations and leadership in 2018. She is the adviser for the Black Student Union and a member of the Staff Advisory Council. Additionally, she serves as the chair of membership and recruitment for the junior board of the Samford University Legacy League.

Cameron Thomas, formerly a member of Samford's undergraduate

admissions team, was appointed the director of diversity enrichment and relations. Thomas will oversee the development of enhanced and diverse curricula across all undergraduate and graduate programs, manage office-sponsored diversity development grants, work with university deans to assess and formulate opportunities for diverse candidate pools in hiring, and work to increase minority alumni engagement. In addition, he will teach in the core curriculum. Thomas earned two degrees from Samford, a Bachelor of Arts in religion in 2014 and Master of Divinity in 2018.

Diversity Liaisons

In order to educate and improve student engagement, involvement and experiences, the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives announced the establishment of diversity liaisons in administrative units, athletics and across all 10 of the university's academic schools. According to Gregory, this "team of colleagues across campus will help involve the entire Samford community in support of Black students and the growing programming the university plans to provide."

Among these, JeNorri Armstead serves as director of diversity and intercultural initiatives for Samford Athletics. Armstead sits on the senior leadership team, oversees a leadership council for minority student-athletes and is responsible for the development and execution of a diversity plan to cultivate a diverse environment for student-athletes and staff. Armstead also manages the processing of game, vendor and sponsorship contracts and is the primary contact for human resources within the athletics department.

"The passion JeNorri has for our student-athletes representing diverse cultural backgrounds made her the ideal person to guide this new office," said Samford's athletics director Martin



Jenée Spencer



Cameron Thomas



JeNorri Armstead

Newton. "Her contributions to our leadership team will strengthen our ability to serve the needs of our student-athletes." ▮

Samford Alumnus Appointed as State Farm's First Chief Diversity Officer

Victor A. Terry—a 1997 graduate of Samford University's Brock School of Business, where he majored in management—has been appointed as State Farm's vice president of public affairs and the agency's first chief diversity officer. Here, he reflects on life-long relationships built at Samford and shares goals for his new role.

What goals do you have as State Farm's first chief diversity officer?

My top goals are to help our internal and external business partners embed diversity and inclusion into all aspects of the business and model organizational inclusion in everything we do. We hope to do this by establishing and using a governance council of leaders within our company who will encourage our employees within their respective departments to adopt the diversity and inclusion tools, and learning paths available to them. Through these actions we hope to build a greater sense of belonging for all employees, especially those with diverse backgrounds.

What influential relationships do you look back on during your time at Samford? How has this relationship helped shape your career?

My relationship with Dr. Robert (Bill) Service was by far the most important relationship to me. Dr. Service became a mentor and was the faculty adviser of the professional business fraternity (Alpha Kappa Psi). I became the first minority president in the chapter's history and also the first president who was an underclassman. I don't believe any of that would have happened without the mentorship of Dr. Service. He was the one who introduced me to State Farm and helped me make

the connection to two vice presidents who worked in the Birmingham Operations Center. My very first interaction with State Farm was with one of the vice presidents of the agency in his executive suite. I later learned that was unheard of at the time. I will always be grateful for his mentorship and guidance. Bill knows my wife and children very well and we remain friends to this day.

How did Samford and Brock School of Business instill in you ethical leadership and management skills? How have you used this in your career and how do you plan to use it in your new role?

Samford and the school of business have a Christian culture that permeates everything that takes place on campus. With that as a foundation, ethical leadership was always at the forefront of instruction within the school of business. This values-based approach helped to further cement my perspective on doing what's right as a business leader. It has been confirmed for me many times over during my career how ethical leadership better serves our customers, our employees and our independent contractor agents. A business built any other way is simply not sustainable.

How is the unprecedented Black Lives Matter movement impacting the way State Farm approaches diversity, equity



and inclusion initiatives?

Since the tragedies, we have taken several unprecedented steps to effect positive change in the communities we serve. One of those steps has been a \$1 million donation to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund that goes toward education and research around social injustice and its impact to our communities. Another step was formalizing my position as chief diversity officer. In this role, I am now leading a well-established team of diversity and inclusion professionals as we further define and advance our diversity and inclusion efforts. Moving forward, we will continue our listening sessions. These conversations have not only provided our employees at all levels with a platform to share their experiences, challenges and frustrations related to the inequalities they have faced in society, but also granted them an opportunity to share solutions and educate others. ▀

Cumberland School of Law Partners with Tuskegee University for Accelerated Program

by Morgan Black

Samford University's Cumberland School of Law and Tuskegee University have partnered to offer Tuskegee undergraduate students an accelerated bachelor's to Juris Doctor program. This new partnership creates a pathway for students to receive a bachelor's degree from Tuskegee and a law degree from Cumberland in six years of study, rather than the traditional seven.

"We are extremely proud to partner with Tuskegee to offer this accelerated program," Cumberland School of Law Assistant Dean for admission and enrollment management Whitney Dachelet said. "I look forward to seeing how this relationship grows over the coming years and watching even more Tuskegee/Cumberland students flourish in their careers."

Currently, Tuskegee juniors who have completed all core and major requirements in political science will be able to use course work from their first year of law school to fulfill the requirements for the bachelor's degree.

"We noticed that the largest number of Tuskegee students are from Alabama and that Cumberland has a long history of producing a large number of lawyers who practice law in the state," Tammy Laughlin, assistant professor of political science and prelaw co-adviser at Tuskegee added. "With Cumberland being situated in Birmingham, the largest legal market in Alabama, we have no doubt that this program will prepare our students to become better acquainted with the legal profession."

Students with a competitive GPA and LSAT scores are eligible to receive a scholarship ranging from 25%-tuition scholarship to a full-tuition scholarship. The partnership will create summer



course work and internship opportunities to help students build relationships with attorneys and judges within the Birmingham legal community.

The agreement signed by Carla Jackson Bell, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at Tuskegee, and Michael Hardin, provost and vice president of academic affairs at Samford, will allow both universities to benefit from unique academic opportunities.

"Both Tuskegee and Cumberland fully embrace a family atmosphere where students feel comfortable interacting freely with faculty and administration. In addition, both universities instill a certain 'can-do' spirit that will assure that our students are fully prepared to excel in the legal profession," Laughlin said.

Shenita Brazelton, prelaw co-adviser and associate professor of political science at Tuskegee, also believes the partnership will be a tremendous asset

for both institutions. "One of our major priorities when establishing this agreement was finding a proactive program that would teach and prepare our students. We also wanted to assure that our students would be successful once entering the program," she said.

"We are excited to partner with Tuskegee University, which is known for its extraordinary history and outstanding academic reputation," said Corkey Strickland, dean of Cumberland School of Law. "As we worked to create this program, I was struck by the dedication of Tuskegee faculty and administration to promoting their students' success, the same priority we have at Cumberland. I look forward to this partnership helping prepare great leaders for our state and country."

Cumberland School of Law also has 3+3 partnerships with Samford University, Birmingham-Southern College, the University of Montevallo and Troy University. ■

Samford's Ida Moffett School of Nursing Renamed to Honor Former Dean Nena F. Sanders *by Sara Roman*

Samford University President Andrew Westmoreland announced Tuesday, Aug. 25, that Ida Moffett School of Nursing will be renamed to honor current namesake Ida V. Moffett and former Dean Nena F. Sanders. The school will now be known as Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing.

The Board of Trustees previously approved the name change but the formal announcement was made during the university's fall 2020 semester opening convocation. A socially distanced reception honoring Sanders followed.

As a young nurse in the 1970s, Sanders knew Moffett informally. Over the years, their friendship bloomed and Sanders was blessed to hear Moffett's stories and dreams for her school of nursing firsthand. When Sanders accepted the deanship position,

she was committed to carrying forward the Moffett legacy to future nursing graduates. "To have my name forever linked to Mrs. Moffett's school of nursing is an honor, and I am blessed beyond measure by this naming. My prayer is that the vision and values laid by Mrs. Moffett will continue to serve the school as a strong foundation for the next century."

Moffett was more than a nurse; she was a gifted healer whose compassion and courage transformed the lives of her patients and the health care industry. Her vision for the nursing school and the role of the bedside nurse has prevailed for nearly 100 years. Likewise, Sanders transformed numerous health care systems throughout her career and, in 1999, she aligned this gift with the education and training of Moffett nurses. Through her innovation, she built upon the four foundational pillars designed by Moffett: academic excellence, compassion, caring and service—to further incorporate interprofessional training and professionalism.

Under her leadership, the nursing school earned numerous rankings and recognitions, vastly expanded its degree programs, set new enrollment records and pioneered online education at Samford. In her initial year of teaching, Sanders oversaw the school's first grant submission. Today, the school has accumulated more than \$22 million in grant and foundation funding.

Sanders also played a central role in the development of the College of Health Sciences, which



Sanders speaks with guests at her reception.

“My prayer is that the vision and values laid by Mrs. Moffett will continue to serve the school as a strong foundation for the next century.”



is comprised of Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing, McWhorter School of Pharmacy, School of Health Professions and School of Public Health. In addition to her role as the dean of the nursing school, she also served as the college's founding vice provost.

Through the college, she further perpetuated Moffett's legacy while simultaneously expanding the training of nurses by implementing a progressive training model that prepares nurses to work as integral and collaborative members of a health care team. Today, students in the Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing have the opportunity to practice alongside students training in more than 30 health care disciplines.

“Dr. Sanders has made tremendous contributions to health care and to the preparation of nurses at Samford University,” said Westmoreland. “It is our hope that our graduates will emulate the courage, compassion and caring seen in Mrs. Moffett and the professionalism, passion and pioneer spirit displayed by Dr. Sanders. Both of these women are trailblazers within the profession and their work will continue to benefit students here at Samford and patients around the world.”

In 1922, the Birmingham Baptist Association founded Birmingham Baptist Hospital School of Nursing with the goal of educating nurses to meet a desperate need for skilled practitioners. While the name, location, programs and population have transformed since this foundation nearly 100 years ago, the school's mission remains unchanged—to prepare students to provide exceptional, compassionate, patient-centered care.

Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing currently offers three certificate programs and 16 programs and degree pathways at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral level, with an enrollment of 900 students. Graduates consistently boast impressive employment rates and achieve certification and licensure pass rates that exceed national averages. The National League for Nursing has twice named the school a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education for creating environments that promote the pedagogical expertise of faculty and for creating environments of learning and professional development.

Although Sanders retired in May 2020, her legacy will forever be a part of Samford University and its nursing graduates. ►

Samford's Big Give Raises *More than \$234,000 for Student Needs*

Driven by enthusiastic support from alumni, faculty, staff, parents and friends, Samford University's eighth-annual Big Give raised \$234,821 in an effort to help "Bring Back the Bulldogs." Over 1,000 donors came together to support a range of essentials from student emergency assistance to need-based scholarships to aid students returning for on-campus, in-person classes.

The all-digital campaign Aug. 11-12 continued a tradition of celebrating Samford students and programs with small gifts that build up to accomplish big things. In addition to highlighting student essentials, the Big Give also spotlighted plans for increased multicultural programming on campus.

"I gave to the Diversity and Intercultural Excellence Fund to help support students of color at Samford," said Dave Garza, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry. "Many families are making great sacrifices to support students here. My donation is not a lot of money in the big scope of things, but if we all give it little, it will be enough to make a difference in these students' lives."

The fund raised \$28,260 and will support programming that advances Samford's efforts to enhance cross-cultural

initiatives and curricular activities that celebrate diversity and inclusion, while promoting respect for others in the campus community.

"I am so proud of the support the Samford community demonstrated during the Big Give," said Denise Gregory, assistant provost for diversity and intercultural initiatives. "To have the support of students, alumni and friends of Samford speaks clearly to their commitment for growth at the university."

The spring Big Give is scheduled to take place April 13-14, 2021. To make a gift in support of Samford students today, visit samford.edu/giving. ▶

— THE BIG GIVE —

BRING BACK THE

BULLDOGS

Parents Bridge the Gap

Devotion and Generosity

The Samford Parents Scholarship is fueled by a committed community of parents who work to ensure that Samford students complete their education despite enduring unexpected hardships. Rebecca Haskins, a parent volunteer, understands all too well why the Parents Scholarship remains vital to Samford students.

“As a teenager, I experienced the sudden death of a parent,” she said. “I knew as college drew near, there would be no financial support. In faith and hope, I went to college. I faced days without a hot meal and few resources, but knew a better life depended on a degree. With God’s help, I persisted and graduated.”

As one of the first volunteers for the parent campaign, an annual drive raising awareness about the scholarship, Haskins bravely and enthusiastically shared her story and the stories of recipients reminding parents that every gift, no matter the size, makes an immediate impact in the life of a Samford student facing difficult circumstances.

This past year, the Samford Parents Scholarship has reached the point of being able to help multiple students—a milestone that seemed far off in 2016 when a compassionate group of parents established the scholarship and asked their fellow parents to support it. Last December, Markeda Payne completed her nursing degree with the aid of the scholarship and Joyner Bousquet completed his healthcare administration degree with its help in May.

Growing the scholarship fund each year ensures that students can graduate even after facing unexpected financial hardships. To learn how to help in this year’s campaign or to hear the stories of recipients, go to samford.edu/parents/giving. ▶



“My personal story reflects *the lives of Samford students who have and will benefit from the Samford Parents Scholarship. As a teenager, I experienced the sudden death of a parent. I knew as college drew near, there would be no financial support. In faith and hope, I went to college with a suitcase. I faced days without a hot meal and few resources, but knew a better life depended on a degree. With God’s help, I persisted and graduated with a degree. As I participated in the Samford Parent’s campaign, I began to share my story, while asking parents to give any amount to the fund. Every dollar counts! Because, as Samford parents, we are supporting another generation of Samford students who will impact our world and our future! I personally thank you for giving!*” — **Rebecca Haskins, Parent of Lily Haskins '19**

The Legacy of *a Lasting Friendship*

Hammers
and Cobb

by Sarah Waller

Mike Cobb '73 and Scooter Hammers '76 first met in the summer of 1971. They were members of Samford University's football team and were pursuing degrees in pharmacy. "I don't think there was anyone else crazy enough to commit to such a demanding combination," Cobb said. This first meeting proved to be a fateful one; they are still close friends more than 40 years later.

After earning their degrees, both men pursued work in Birmingham. At first, they remained connected through the friendship of their wives—Jan Cobb '73 and Susan Hammers '74, who also met at Samford—but with time, their bonds of friendship became even stronger. They were passionate about family (each having three daughters), pharmacy and the communities they served. Then, in 1990, Hammers, who was working at Crestline Pharmacy at the time, was approached with the opportunity to buy the store. The first person he called was Cobb.

They became the co-owners of Crestline Pharmacy, located in the heart of Crestline Village in Mountain Brook, Alabama, in March 1990. When asked what makes a good business partner, Hammers said, "You just have to know the person. You need similar work ethics, morals and general ideas of things."

"Being business partners is like being married, especially there in the beginning," Cobb chimed in. "We were working 60-65 hours per week; we would sometimes see each other more than we saw our wives."

Yet beyond their friendship, Cobb and Hammers dedicated their work to knowing the people they served. "It's one of the most important things," Hammers said. "After 30 years, you really get to know the people. We strived to know everyone by name."

At the beginning of this year, Cobb and Hammers announced their intentions to retire. "It was just time," Hammers said. "We both have back aches, and it was getting harder to work a 12-hour day." But before their retirement was official, they decided—together with their wives—to make a gift to Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy and further

establish the legacy of their lasting friendship.

In fall 2019, they endowed the Michael '73 and Jan Cobb and Alvin "Scooter" '76 and Susie Hammers Endowed Scholarship, made available to any Doctor of Pharmacy student.

When they first took over Crestline Pharmacy, Hammers said they almost immediately accepted pharmacy students in their store. "It's great training for them; they work hard and gain valuable experience," Cobb said. "We got a lot of enjoyment seeing these students go out and establish themselves, and then hearing back from them. But this [scholarship] was something else we wanted to do—to leave a legacy," Cobb said.

Crestline Pharmacy has been family-owned since 1950, and Cobb and Hammers wanted to continue this tradition. They sold the pharmacy to McWhorter School of Pharmacy alumnus Matt Leach '08, who had worked for them as a pharmacist for more than 15 years. ▀

Industry Professionals Spearheaded *School of the Arts' Expanded Offerings*

by Ashley Smith

Samford University School of the Arts launched two innovative areas of study this fall—Bachelor of Arts in commercial music and Bachelor of Science in game design and 3D animation—and plans to launch a five-year architecture program for 2021-22 enrollment.

The programs were developed over the past year after two faculty members, William (Wink) Winkler and Steven Potaczek, joined Samford in August 2019. Both industry professionals in their related fields, Winkler and Potaczek bring tremendous expertise to Samford.

Winkler's digital design background enriches the technology-driven game design and 3D-animation program to provide students with specialty skills in animation, 2D, 3D and game design. His resume includes working with Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, in previsualization for amusement rides and park experiences, and creating motion graphics for an Amazon TV series. Additionally, he has worked on projects for Viacom's Nickelodeon Resort, Theory Studios and iHeart Radio.

Potaczek brings industry knowledge to the commercial music area. As a professional songwriter, producer and musician, his work has earned placements on several networks and shows including MTV, *Parks and Recreation*, *America's Top Model* and *Dance Moms*. This summer, Potaczek and his wife had their song, "Wrecking Ball", chosen by the NBA to be used on the Turner Broadcasting Network during regular-season games and the finals.

The faculty and program additions are reflective of the school's commitment to developing innovative training for students to gain professional skills and hands-on experiences in their disciplines.

"These degrees are a reflection of what our students need in terms of skills related to the business side of music and the increasing opportunities in game design and 3D animation," Dean of the School of the Arts Joe Hopkins said. "Both of these technology-rich programs complement the School of the Arts existing curriculum and provide opportunities for current students as well as incoming freshmen."

Game design and 3D animation delivers a strong foundation in art and technology in preparation for careers in the multimedia industry, which is expected to grow 8% by 2026. Students in the commercial music area can select from four concentrations in music business, production, songwriting and live touring and performance. The commercial music industry is also projecting growth due to the extensive technological advancements and creation of new jobs related to the field.

Both programs have been well-received by students. Junior Taylor Wilson transferred into the commercial music program immediately after it launched. For Wilson, meeting Potaczek and joining the program came at a perfect time as he sought to add business skillsets to his pursuit of music and songwriting. "The commercial music program will provide the knowledge I need to make it as an artist in the industry," he said.

Similarly, junior Bridget Hooks switched to game design and 3D



animation as it combined her love of the technical aspect of entertainment, storytelling and art. "Professor Winkler is so knowledgeable about this field and it is exciting to have a teacher so invested in his students and dedicated to helping us grow in what we are passionate about," said Hooks.

A five-year architecture program is also in development for the School of the Arts pending Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approval. The new program is slated to enroll its first cohort next fall and grows out of the success and reputation of Samford's Department of Interior Architecture, which offers an interior design degree and a pre-architecture option. 

Home at Last:

Ownby Leads Service for Unclaimed Veterans by Sean Flynt

Many homeless U.S. military veterans have no family to claim them and nowhere to go even when they die. They might be forgotten entirely if not for dedicated strangers who will speak their names and lay them to rest with their fellow veterans. Samford religion and Latin alumnus Kirby Ownby '05 is among those providing that final moment of dignity.

Now pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, Ownby answered a unique call for his services this summer. Jeff Berry, general manager of Knoxville's Berry Funeral Home, invited him to lead a funeral for unclaimed veterans in early September. "Considering the high amount of homelessness and mental illness among veterans, I felt compelled and humbled just to have the chance to eulogize and to preach for those gathered," Ownby said.

Since 2013, the funeral home has partnered with East Tennessee Regional Forensic Center and East Tennessee Veterans Cemetery to provide funerals for small groups of these honorably discharged veterans. Folded flags used in the services, traditionally presented to family, are instead given to community partners or, in the case of the Sept. 1 service, given to the minister who helped provide the final honors for seven men:

SP4 Richard Allan Blehar (4/26/1957-6/3/2020)

SP4 Lonnie Dewey Buckner (9/8/1952-6/22/2020)

Private Thomas Allen Freeland, Jr. (1/17/1947-7/21/2020)

SSGT Allen Ray Haynes (11/27/1944-10/15/2019)

Private Billy Dayral Johns (7/21/1956-7/4/2019)

SP5 David Lee Williams (11/18/1952-9/11/2019)

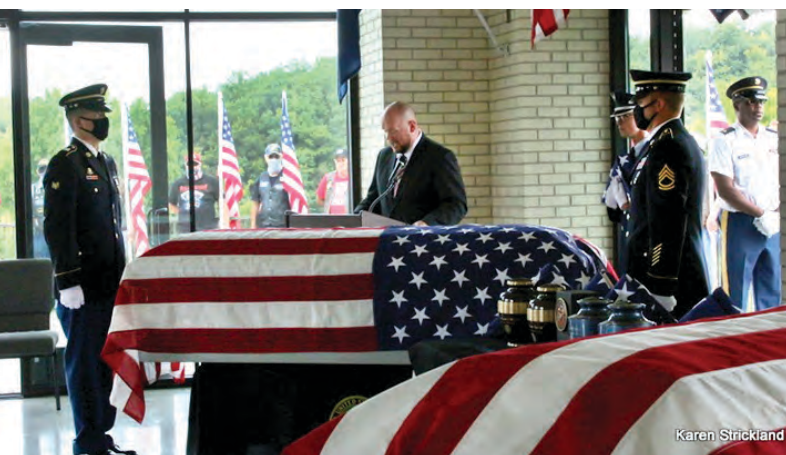
Airman Michael Pierce Wright (11/30/1959-5/5/2020)

"Each one of these men—men of different backgrounds, different races, different political beliefs and different upbringings—considered it a worthy cause to serve in our military," Ownby told community members gathered for the service. "These seven men endured hardships, some endured combat and all believed that the reward of freedom for others was worthy of risking their lives." And although they didn't lose their lives during their military service, they were prepared to do so. "When I think about their willing commitment to serve this country and people they would never meet, it always makes me think of John 15:13: 'Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends,'" Ownby said. The pastor explored that theme during his message, emphasizing the rarity of that sacrifice in a violent world.

"These men knew that evil was real, and they understood that sometimes people would be called to stand up and fight," Ownby said. "I believe we honor them by remaining forever thankful for their service, I think we honor them by exercising our right to vote, I believe we honor them by striving to believe the best about each other and I believe we honor them by knowing that the sacrifices they made for their country were great," he said. "But we can also honor them by realizing that Jesus died to make sinners free forever."

"I don't know of a finer message that could have been presented that day," Berry said of Ownby's first service for unclaimed veterans. Berry said it will not be his last if the pastor is willing and able.

"I honestly considered it a very high privilege and would do so again if needed," Ownby said. "Our country seems to be tearing itself apart, and this was an excellent reminder for me about some of the best parts of our nation." A single folded flag reminds him, too, of seven veterans who are home at last. ▀



Samford religion and Latin alumnus Kirby Ownby '05 leads a funeral service for unclaimed veterans in September.

Data Analytics Program Prepares for the Top Jobs in Today's Global Marketplace

by Morgan Black

Samford University students are now able to further understand the way business decisions are made through the data analytics program in Samford's Brock School of Business. The curriculum will equip students with the tools needed to operate within the dynamic data environment and will allow them to compete for some of the top jobs in today's global marketplace such as data analyst or data scientist.

Because data analytics is such a multidisciplinary field and touches all industries, the program is offered to business majors as a concentration and to nonbusiness majors as a minor. This will allow a health care-related major studying data analytics as a minor to gain skills needed to process big data in the health care industry; and a marketing major with the data analytics concentration will be able to use data to advise his or her company's leaders on marketing-related decisions.

In Brock School of Business, undergraduate students are required to complete a four-course sequence in data analytics, regardless of their major, including, Introduction to Spreadsheet Applications, Introduction to Data Analytics, Intermediate Data Analytics and Advanced Data Analytics. Students who choose to add the concentration or minor to their major will complete additional courses including Data Management for Business Analytics and Introduction to Data Mining. All business majors pursuing the concentration will complete an academic internship in the data analytics field prior to graduation.

Ashlee Fincher, a 2020 graduate and current Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) student, shared, "Through the data analytics program, I was able to learn the tools to be able to take data, interpret it and use the information to help companies make better decisions. Before getting into the concentration, I would never have had the confidence or the skills to look at big data, let alone use it in everyday decision-making."

Data analytics is also offered as a concentration in the M.B.A. program. This programming for the M.B.A. includes Data Visualization for Business Analytics, Data Analytics in

Accounting and Finance, Big Data Strategy/Topics in Organizational Leadership and Topics in Data Analytics. To complete the concentration in the M.B.A., students are required to successfully finish three of the four courses. The courses are also available to any M.B.A. student as electives.

Samford's data analytics program is offered in partnership with SAS, the global leader in data analytics software. In addition to the use of the SAS software in Cooney Hall's M. Chad Trull/Krowten Capital Data and Sports Analytics Lab, students in the program have already had the chance to work on data-centered projects for some of the world's largest brands including Nike and Coca-Cola. Students also have the opportunity to complete an internship in Samford's Center for Sports Analytics which promotes the intersection of big data, analytics and sports.

"Having the data analytics knowledge from this program has allowed me to market myself as a better asset to companies," Fincher added. ▀



Ashlee Fincher

Beeson Divinity School's Prestigious Faculty Receives Awards, Continues Excellent Publishing Record by Kristen Padilla

Samford University's Beeson Divinity School faculty were recognized for excellence in scholarship during an extraordinary year of publishing and research in 2019-20.

Paul R. House, professor of Old Testament, received The Center for Biblical Studies' Biblical Foundations Book Award in Feb. 2020 for the best Old Testament Commentary for his *Isaiah: A Mentor Commentary, Volumes 1-II* (2019). Professor of New Testament Frank Thielman's commentary, *Romans* (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary, 2018), was a finalist in the category of Bible Reference Works for the 2020 Christian Book Award.

Seven of Beeson's 20-member faculty published 12 books in 2020, with a few of these titles set to release at the beginning of 2021. This impressive list includes two commentaries on Galatians written by Timothy George, distinguished professor of divinity and Beeson's founding dean, and Thielman.

Two professors in Beeson's Christian preaching department each published works this year. Michael Pasquarello III's *The Beauty of Preaching: God's Glory in Christian Proclamation* (Eerdmans) released in August, and Douglas D. Webster's *The Sermon on the Mount in Our Secular Age* (Regent College) released in February. Research professor Gerald L. Bray also published *Preaching the Word with John Chrysostom* (Lexham Press).

The Oxford Handbook of Jonathan Edwards (Oxford University Press), co-edited by Beeson's Dean Douglas A. Sweeney, is set to release at the end of this year, and offers a state-of-the-art summary of scholarship on Edwards by leading scholars on all six major continents.

In addition to these recent publications, Beeson's distinguished faculty is currently working on approximately 25 contracted projects. Some of these include:

- **Carl Beckwith**, professor of history and doctrine: "Hilary of Poitiers and the Trinity" for *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Retrieving Nicene Orthodoxy for Renewal Today* (IVP Academic)
- **Timothy George**: *Baptists: A Brief History* (B&H Academic) and *Mothers of the Reformation* (Zondervan Academic)
- **Mark Gignilliat**, professor of Old Testament: *Reading the*

Old Testament as Christian Scripture (Baker Academic) and *Isaiah* in the *Christian Formation Commentary* (Eerdmans)

- **Stefana Dan Laing**, assistant professor of spiritual formation: co-editor of a new *CSB Women's Study Bible* (LifeWay)
- **Ken Mathews**, professor of Old Testament: "Genesis 1-11:26" and "Genesis 11:27-50:26" in the *Christian Standard Commentary* (B&H Academic)
- **Osvaldo Padilla**, professor of New Testament: *The Pastoral Epistles* in the TNTC (IVP Academic) and co-editor of *The New Testament in Color* commentary (IVP Academic)

Faculty also contributed more than 30 articles, book chapters and reviews in the past year, including "Ruth: Reading Gender and Eschatology" in *Presbyterion: Covenant Seminary Review* by Sydney Park, associate professor of New Testament, and "Promising the Impossible: Baptist Church Covenants Then and Now" in *Criswell Theological Review* by Mark DeVine, associate professor of history and doctrine.

Prior to the pandemic, Beckwith presented lectures at Lutheran seminaries in Denmark and Norway in early 2020. Associate dean Thomas L. Fuller was the keynote preacher this fall for the Alaska Baptist Convention Pastors Conference. Piotr Matysz, associate professor of history and doctrine, will present one of the keynote addresses at the Pro Ecclesia Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in 2021, which was rescheduled from this year.

"Beeson's faculty productivity is amazing," said Sweeney. "Not only are these brothers and sisters outstanding scholars, they are outstanding teachers, preachers and servants of the church who do everything they do in the service of the Lord. They are just the kind of people we want modeling Christian faith and ministry for our students."

Learn more about Beeson's faculty at beesondivinity.com/ad/become. ▶

Samford University Celebrates 10 Years of the Tom and Marla Corts Distinguished Author Series

by Leighton Doores

The names Tom and Marla Corts have been synonymous with Samford University for three decades. The late Thomas Corts, who was president of Samford for 23 years, was known for his invaluable leadership, service and love for books and classical literature. His wife, Marla, is a former high school English teacher for whom a missionary biography collection in the Samford library is named.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Tom and Marla Corts Distinguished Author Series to recognize the Corts' invaluable leadership to the university, the community and the cause of literacy.

Funded by the Thomas E. and Marla Haas Corts Endowment, the series provides support to host an annual visiting author who is not only a notable name in their field, but challenges, inspires and expands the thinking of students to become more engaged in matters of significant intellectual or historical interest and vital issues of the day.

"We are so grateful that the Corts family continues to support this event so that we may further the Samford experience for all of our students," said Orlean Beeson School of Education Dean Anna McEwan.

Throughout the last decade, attendees have been inspired from such beloved and admired leaders as Laura Bush, Wendell Berry, Eric Motley, Greg Mortenson, Garrison Keillor, Wes Moore, Parker Palmer, Philip Yancey and Anthony Ray Hinton.

"What makes me proud about this series is that the caliber of our authors from year one to year 10 has never wavered," said Kathy Acton, alumni relations coordinator. "We've gotten to hear world-class authors each year who are authorities in their subject. I can't wait to see what's going to happen in the next 10 years."

In celebration of the 10th anniversary, Samford University hosted *New York Times* best-selling author Patti Callahan Henry on Sept. 22 for a complimentary, livestreamed event.

Presented by Orlean Beeson School of Education, Henry shared insights and stories of inspiration from her recent book *Becoming Mrs. Lewis*, a motivational account of the life of Joy Davidman Lewis, wife of legendary writer C.S. Lewis.

"Joy and Jack's (C.S. Lewis) 10-year love story produced some of C.S. Lewis' best work," said Henry. "Once I started to

2020 Corts Distinguished Author Patti Callahan Henry spoke via livestream from the Wright Center.



see his work through a new light and realized how Joy had been much more than just his wife and best friend, she had also been his muse and she had worked with him, I realized that we needed to meet her on new terms. We needed to meet Joy Davidman not as the woman behind the man, as the phrase goes, but as the woman beside the man. And how often do we get to hear that part of the story?"

Historically, proceeds from the Tom and Marla Corts Distinguished Author Series have supported the School of Education Excellence Fund allowing scholarships and academic resources to be provided for students where the needs are greatest. This year, Henry relinquished her honorarium to support the Jewel Littleton Scholarship which is awarded to minority students of any classification who demonstrate significant financial need and are pursuing any degree offered within Orlean Beeson School of Education.

To join Henry in making a gift visit samford.edu/give/corts.

School of Health Professions Alumnus is Making Movement Monumental

by Sara Roman

Kendell Jno-Finn '04 derived the name M3Endeavors from a saying he coined, "Making Movement Monumental." As an exercise science major, Jno-Finn knew that he wanted to become a physical therapist, but he also had a vision for a physical therapy practice that would offer more than physical therapy.

He sought to create a place where he would help clients reach their full potential regardless of the client's injury history, age or current goals.

"The whole body works together as a system," said Jno-Finn. "Understanding what this performance is built on is far more important than many often realize. Overlooking our movement foundation can lead us to build on a weakness that can have a negative impact on performance."

At M3, Jno-Finn and his team do exactly this. For clients who are experiencing pain, he completes a full assessment to make sure that they have the capability to achieve efficient, pain-free movement before he attempts to write a treatment plan. For clients who want to improve their athletic abilities, he completes an assessment and develops performance goals based on the results. Jno-Finn says the goal is to make sure each client has the movement capabilities to make their movement monumental regardless of the reason behind their visit.

Today, Jno-Finn offers physical therapy, sport performance, pilates and a lifestyle consulting program through his practice. He says the relationships, training and experiences of his Samford education play a vital role in the success he has had thus far.

Throughout the School of Health Professions, faculty and staff seek to teach students that their profession is more than an occupation; they have an opportunity to show Christ's love to clients daily and use their gifts and talents to serve others.

"I always knew that I wanted my practice to be more than physical therapy. I wanted to help my clients grow physically, mentally and spiritually, to treat needs beyond the physical body," said Jno-Finn. "A few of my professors at Samford not only encouraged my vision, but provided examples of what it could look like."

Led by the school's Dean Alan Jung, the School of Health Professions has taken students on a mission trip to the Dominican Republic for the past 10 years. In addition to serving



those around the Birmingham area, Jno-Finn has joined the mission team as a medical professional.

"I didn't realize how emotionally vulnerable I needed to be as I prepared for the first trip. This reality hit me driving up to the first place we operated a clinic. I was serving a community full of people who looked like me and shared so many of the same challenges that I did growing up. Now, I have patients there that come back every year and wait on me no matter how long the wait is, and they remind me of my why," he said. On a number of occasions, Jno-Finn has presented the lecture "Connecting Faith, Profession and Service" to Samford students. "For me, it is about living a life that motivates, supports and inspires," he added.

It is this same outlook that drives his passion for treating patients each day. He finds opportunity to show up for clients authentically, with his empathy and the willingness to listen a generous blessing. Jno-Finn is living out his long-held vision of making a difference in the movement of his clients and making a monumental impact in the lives of others. ■

Cumberland School of Law Launches First Full-service Law School Clinic in Alabama for Veterans

by Morgan Black

Samford University's Cumberland School of Law has launched the first full-service law school clinic in Alabama for veterans. The Cumberland Veterans Legal Assistance Clinic (C-VETS) provides free legal assistance to veterans and their families in an eight-county area of north central Alabama including Bibb, Blount, Chilton, Cullman, Etowah, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker counties.

C-VETS is now accepting applications for legal assistance in a wide variety of civil matters including consumer debt, landlord-tenant contracts, uncontested family law matters and wills. Law students and practicing attorneys may also assist with criminal matters such as expungement, driver license issues and fines and court costs.

The clinic is led by supervising attorney Judge John L. Carroll. Carroll, alumnus and former dean of Cumberland School of Law, is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War and has many years of experience representing veterans with legal issues. He assists veterans on cases referred by The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program headquartered in Washington, D.C., and was a leader in helping the Birmingham Volunteer Lawyers Program establish the Veterans Help Desk at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in downtown Birmingham.

"A core value of Cumberland School of Law and of the legal profession is service to others," Carroll said. "C-VETS provides a unique way for our students to truly answer the call to serve by providing free legal assistance to veterans and their families. Veterans and their families have given so much to our country and the creation of C-VETS allows our students and attorneys to give something back to them."

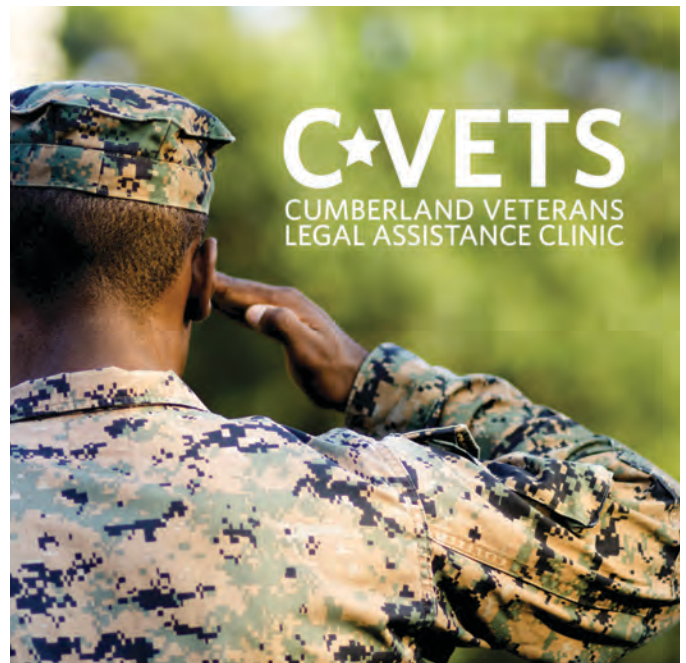
In addition to classroom instruction, participating law students will conduct an average of 12 hours per week of out-of-class casework, including volunteering at the Veterans Help Desk at Birmingham's VA Hospital, working with the reentry program of the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Northern District of Alabama and with Veterans Treatment Courts throughout our area. Students may also be responsible for legal research for cases before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims as needed.

C-VETS clinic students gain experience in addressing veterans' legal needs; collaborating with classmates and supervisors to research and write about legal issues and devise solutions for clients; and learning professionalism,

including civility, responsiveness and identification of ethical issues as they arise in cases.

C-VETS was launched after significant efforts put forth by professor LaJuana Davis, Cumberland's newly named director of clinics, who wrote the syllabus and oversaw compliance with American Bar Association (ABA) requirements. Through her work, in conjunction with Carroll's expertise in the representation of veterans, C-VETS is set to be an asset to Cumberland students and the north central Alabama region. The clinic has been generously supported by Cumberland alumnus and veteran Stephen B. Moss '68 and a \$10,000 grant from The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program.

Learn more about C-VETS and how to apply for legal assistance at samford.edu/cumberlandlaw/c-vets. 



Nurse Anesthesia Faculty Partner to Assist Pregnant Student, Publish Findings

by Sara Roman

Katrina Tuggle '20 was set to begin her nurse anesthesia cadaveric dissection requirements when she learned that she was expecting her second child. During pregnancy, exposure to formaldehyde, which is used to preserve cadavers, has been associated with increased risk of defects including birth malformations, spontaneous abortions, preterm labor and low birth weight. Tuggle was worried that she would have to delay completion of the program, but Moffett & Sanders School of Nursing nurse anesthesia faculty quickly worked to find an alternative means for Tuggle to meet her academic requirements.

Housed within Samford's School of Health Professions, the Anatomage Table is an advanced 3D anatomy visualization system for anatomy and physiology education. The table provides users with the ability to visualize anatomy as they would on a cadaver. All aspects of the human body are reconstructed to an accurate, dissectible 3D virtual image. With this in mind, nurse anesthesia faculty sought to collaborate with health professions faculty to utilize the table as a way for Tuggle to meet her anatomy lab requirements.

"Cadaveric dissection is considered the gold standard for anatomy education because it allows students to transfer didactic concepts to concrete, tactile experiences. However, technological advancements have provided a variety of opportunities for virtual cadaver dissection and recent studies do not show that nonvirtual versus virtual is consistently superior," said Terri Cahoon, associate professor and chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesia.

Faculty from the departments of nurse anesthesia, physical therapy and biological and environmental sciences worked together to identify a solution for Tuggle, while also collaborating to complete an interprofessional study approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Over the course of the semester, the faculty studied Tuggle's performance in comparison to her fellow students who were completing their requirements in the traditional lab.

The nurse anesthesia program is highly competitive, meaning all study participants showed superior academic performance, aptitude and nursing experience. To further ensure that student participant performance could be compared with minimal variables, Tuggle followed the same schedule as all other students including orientation, lectures and dissection sessions. Tuggle also received identical written and practical exams.



Tuggle using the Anatomage Table.

For Tuggle, it was a relief to learn that her course of study would continue as originally planned. "The cadaver lab experience was one of the most appealing aspects of the didactic portion of the nurse anesthesia program. I felt that dissecting the human cadaver would allow me to have a different perspective and better understanding of the skills I would eventually perform as an advanced practitioner. I still feel that this is true and I do not feel like the Anatomage Table experience prepared me any less."

At the completion of the course, the faculty found that student outcomes were similar and that Tuggle performed at the same level, and, in some areas better, than her peers. Research did not show that one method was better than another; instead, the importance is found in how faculty utilize a method, not in the method itself.

"The Anatomage Table allowed me to view the cadaver in ways that the students using the cadaver lab were unable to. I could view cross sections of the cadaver and see the way that veins, arteries and nerves lined up together," said Tuggle. "The anatomy course prepared me for future course work and clinical practice. It was applicable to regional anesthesia and ultrasound guided techniques."

Following the study, the research findings were professionally published and faculty have submitted abstracts to share their findings at state and national conferences. ▀

Walters Receives Gateway to Research Scholarship for Contributions to Cancer Research

by Sarah Waller

Jillian Walters, a fourth-year Doctor of Pharmacy student in Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy, was selected as one of 10 graduate students in the country to receive the Gateway to Research Scholarship from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education.

This prestigious award honors Walters for her academic performance as well as her commitment to pharmaceutical research.

In applying for the award, Walters submitted a proposal entitled, "Comparing Cancer Vaccine Adjuvant Efficacy Across Species and Gender," which is based on the research she has worked on with McWhorter School of Pharmacy professor Bernadette D'Souza for the past three years. Walters began working with D'Souza as a first-year student through the school's pharmaceutical sciences summer internship. This 10-week program allows students to work alongside faculty in their ongoing bench-based research.

Since joining Samford's faculty in 2011, D'Souza has focused her research on cancer and immunotherapies. In 2018, she incorporated a new approach, looking at adjuvants and their role in boosting an immune response.

"Essentially, an adjuvant is something that you add as a supporting molecule or chemical to trigger a better response by the immune system," she said.

Supporting the research of immunotherapy, or the concept that a therapeutic treatment could boost the body's own immune system, like a vaccine, to fight against cancer, D'Souza studies ways an adjuvant—and more recently, herbal extracts as adjuvants—could support these treatments and improve vaccine efficacy.

"A lot of cancer treatment nowadays is very nonspecific, and it's very hard on the human body. Our research is more focused on harnessing the body's own capabilities to fight cancer," Walters said.

Walters joined D'Souza in the lab at the early stage of this new approach. In initial trials, D'Souza identified echinacea, an herbal medication found over the counter, as one with promising results. Working with Walters, they began to test echinacea as an adjuvant in mouse models—in combination with tumor cell fragments—as a therapeutic treatment for skin and breast cancer.

As they entered their third year working together, D'Souza and Walters planned to run a reproducible study this

summer, repeating the work Walters did last year to ensure the results can be reproduced under the same conditions, but COVID-19 limited their time in the lab. Through one of her APPE rotation blocks, Walters was able to return to campus and finish her work with D'Souza, and, today, they are collecting their data with the goal of publication.

For Walters, one of the greatest rewards of this work has been the faculty mentorship. "Dr. D'Souza is a great support system for me in the lab—answering my questions and encouraging me to pursue something interesting."

D'Souza shares the same sentiment. "Having effective student-faculty collaboration on research is the most rewarding experience," she said. "Research can be disappointing—rarely does something work the first time—but Jillian has been a model student, showing determination, enthusiasm and perseverance." ▀

Walters working in the pharmaceutical sciences research lab this summer



Social Work Research Explores the Effects of Social Distancing on Human Behavior

by Sarah Waller

Though we are physically distant, humans have never been more emotionally connected. This is the conclusion Christson Adedoyin has reached after spending months working on a special issue on the effects of social distancing on human behavior for the *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment (JHBSE)*.

Adedoyin, a professor of social work in Samford University's School of Public Health, initiated the call for papers for this special issue after his own research on the topic came up short. "Up until now, research related to COVID-19 has emphasized a medical or epidemiology focus," he said. "But I wanted to learn more on how the pandemic has influenced our behavior as humans in all spheres of human endeavor."

This lack of academic literature inspired Adedoyin to contact Michael Sherr, Ph.D., the *JHBSE* editor-in-chief, and encourage him that a special issue was needed. Adedoyin agreed to be the lead special issue editor and, after reading every paper that has been submitted, he says the collective research reveals a unified theme: with social distancing, human behavior has changed, exposing just how connective, creative and collaborative we can be.

Change in Behavior

Social distancing has caused society to understand more deeply how our own behavior can directly affect someone else. "We realize that we are interconnected—my decisions affect you, and your decisions affect me," he said. "Our individualistic mindsets have begun to break down. We are suddenly realizing that we do not live on an island; instead, we are recognizing the wisdom of God for creating us as a community of people." This awareness has been revealed in the new ways we now work, worship, educate and care for one another.

But along with these positive effects, social distancing has



Adedoyin

also created negative ones with our behavior being influenced by feelings of frustration, vulnerability and fear. "People are frustrated in terms of their limitations," he said. "We have been forced to adjust our lives, and we miss living the way we used to."

Creativity and Adaptability

While these feelings of frustration are natural, Adedoyin says the conclusion of the special issue's body of research should give us hope. Despite the year's ever-changing dynamics, humans have proven to have the capacity to adapt to whatever challenges that assail us.

"I have seen adaptability, creativity and ingenuity emerge from COVID-19 and social distancing," he said. "Even in the midst of a global pandemic, people are collectively working to solve problems."

One lesson Adedoyin has learned from the world's response to the pandemic is that there is no one solution to how we solve human problems. "We need one another; we need to learn from one another. We need to recognize how people from around the world can teach us; there is no one solution," he said. "Nobody is hiding anything from anybody... because if you have a solution, you can't afford to keep it to yourself." ▀



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Bucky McMillan Launches New Era of Samford Men's Basketball

by Joey Mullins

Bucky McMillan was hired as Samford's head men's basketball coach on April 6, 2020. While this is his first job at the collegiate level, McMillan brings a wealth of coaching experience that will benefit the Bulldog program for years to come.

When McMillan was 15 years old, he began coaching his brother's Over the Mountain (OTM) basketball team. He then moved on to coaching a team with the Alabama I Can Through Education Foundation. When he was a student-athlete at Birmingham-Southern College, McMillan coached a 17-and-under AAU team that finished sixth among the estimated 150 teams at the national tournament in Orlando.

Given this, it was no surprise when McMillan decided to pursue a career in coaching after graduating from Birmingham-Southern. Not only did he already have experience coaching, but he had learned from three coaches who had taught him a great deal.

First, his father, who was an appellate judge by profession, coached his team in the OTM basketball league. The senior McMillan's love for coaching basketball had a profound effect on the future career of his son.

"When you're younger, you see what your father does and you look up to your father," McMillan said. "The impact he had as a coach on so many people always stuck in my mind."

McMillan played high school basketball at Mountain Brook High School under another of his mentors, Mark Cornelius. McMillan credits Cornelius with teaching him a great deal about the game of basketball.

McMillan then moved on to Birmingham-Southern College where he played for coach Duane Reboul, who probably had the biggest impact on his coaching career. McMillan says that Reboul, who is now on McMillan's Samford staff as an assistant to the head coach, had a great ability to relate to all types of people.

"Coach Reboul probably had as big of an impact on me as anybody in my life, outside of my family," McMillan said. "What coach Reboul was really good at was he could talk to people from all different backgrounds. My father was able to do the same thing. He could relate to people and talk to them. It didn't matter if they were a wealthy kid from the suburbs or a kid who was poverty stricken. It didn't matter what the color of your skin was, coach Reboul did a great job relating to them and

getting everybody to buy into the same mission of teamwork and hard work."

After graduating from Birmingham-Southern in 2007, McMillan was hired as the junior varsity basketball coach at Mountain Brook, and he spent the last 12 years as the school's head varsity coach.

As the head varsity coach, he led the Mountain Brook program to unprecedented success, reaching the state finals in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, and the team won the title in the state's highest classification in 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018 and 2019. He accumulated 332 wins, averaging nearly 28 wins per season.

While the Mountain Brook program had reached some success previously, the team had never seen the sustained success it reached under McMillan's direction. McMillan said one of the biggest factors was getting people to believe that success at that level was possible.

"We had a lot of success that I don't think people thought was possible," McMillan said. "The biggest factor was just putting confidence in people. We could do it, through a lot of hard work and teamwork."

When the opportunity to come to Samford came up after the 2019-20 season, McMillan said director of athletics Martin Newton was a big part of why he chose to accept the offer.

"I really think Martin Newton is a great athletics director," McMillan said. "I know he cares about the different sports and he loves basketball. You want an athletics director that is going to fight for your program. He's given me this opportunity and we want to make him look good, because we all respect him. I really just think the world of him as an athletics director."

McMillan said having the ability to win, but also to do things the right way and provide a quality education was important to him as well.

"I couldn't coach at a place where I couldn't be successful on the floor, and I know we can be successful here," McMillan said. "But I also wouldn't want to coach at a place just because you can be successful there. It has to be a place that the values



“I know we can be successful here.”

align and a place that you can say, if I had a son, I would be proud if he went to school there. This is a place that hits all fronts from the academics to the athletics, and just the core values of the institution.”

McMillan was hired at Samford during a very difficult time, with the campus closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the situation has made his transition even more challenging.

“We didn’t get to meet our team face-to-face until late July,” McMillan said. “It’s really unique, whenever you come in as a new coach, wanting to establish a new culture, establish style of play, work with your guys and get to know them. This year it has been a phenomenal challenge.”

McMillan and his staff have been working with the team since returning to campus in late July. He said he likes what he has seen, but he wants to see more consistency from the players.

“I think the biggest thing is, we have to get guys who are consistently playing hard and unselfish, and we’re moving in that direction,” McMillan said.

McMillan has surrounded himself with an experienced coaching staff. In addition to Reboul, his staff consists of assistant coaches Tra Arnold (recruiting coordinator), Sergio

Rouco and Gerald Gillion, director of player development and scouting David Good, and director of operations and analytics Matthew Powell.

“I wanted to bring in guys who could complement things that I don’t have experience with,” McMillan said. “One of the things in high school you don’t experience is, you don’t go out and recruit players to come to your university, so I wanted guys who have experience doing that.”

The NCAA announced recently that schools could begin their basketball seasons on Nov. 25, just two weeks after the normal start date of Nov. 10. McMillan said he looks forward to starting his first season with the Bulldogs.

“Everything I hear is that the majority of the coaches are ready,” McMillan said. “I think most people want to have that full season. Obviously, with the virus, the circumstances are unique and it’s something you have to take seriously. It seems like we’re getting closer and closer to understanding it.”

As we approach the start of the 2020-21 basketball season, excitement is building around the Samford men’s basketball program. A new era in the program is beginning and all of Samford is looking forward to seeing what the future of the program holds under new head coach Bucky McMillan. ▀

CLASS NOTES

Compiled by the Office of Alumni Programs and Annual Giving.

1960s

'62 Anne Gray Hartline is serving as chair of the Surviving Spouse Advisory Council (SSAC) to the president of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

'62 James "Jim" H. Pesnell is the 2020 Champion of Health Care in the volunteer category.

'68 Dr. Judy G. Tuggle has been awarded the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by Marquis Who's Who, the world's premier publisher of biographical profiles.

1970s

'70 Lynn Barbour Evans and Dr. Jacky Beck have published an inspirational book, *Through it All: God's Amazing Work in the Life of Jacky Beck*, available on Amazon.

'71 James "Jimmy" Rane has been inducted into the prestigious Marquis Who's Who Biographical Registry.

'72 William "Stan" Starnes has been inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame for the 2020 class. He is executive chairman of ProAssurance Corp.

'75 Joe Ritch has been inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame for the 2020 class. Joe Ritch is an attorney in the firm of Sirote & Permutt PC.

'76 Dr. Richard B. Neely has retired after over 40 years of teaching history and education classes. He finished his teaching career at Indian Springs School, where he retired with honor. He continues 30 years of working at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark giving tours and directing restoration projects.

'78 Joseph "Joe" Henry Hilley has written a new suspense novel, *The Art Dealer's Wife*, set to be released Oct. 1. Joe Hilley is a *New York Times* best-selling author.

'78 Dr. Bill W. King won second place at the Southern Christian Writers Conference in the newspaper article competition. His winning column, "Let's Not Become a People Who Dread Sunrise," originally ran in *The Times-Journal* on March 28, 2020.

'78 Larry D. Sewell, vice president for corporate partnerships and advocacy at Together Credit Union, has been elected chairman of the board for the African-American Credit Union Coalition (AACUC).

1980s

'80 Dr. John Campbell has been named national president of the Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians, with primary responsibility for the annual Conference for Church Musicians.

'81 James J. Bushnell Jr. has been named to *Birmingham Business Journal's* 2020 "Who's Who in Law" list. He has also announced his retirement from Birmingham School of Law effective July 15, 2020.

'81 John B. McWhorter III has been hired as OhioHealth Corp's COO. He will lead the 12 hospital Columbus system, the largest system in Central Ohio.

'85 Rev. Mike Castle has been called to serve as pastor of the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Sioux City, Iowa.

'86 Gerald Swann Jr., of Ball, Ball, Matthews & Novack, P.A. has been named president-elect of the Alabama Defense Lawyers Association.

'89, '93 Alan Lasseter, 27-year Alabama litigator, joins Upchurch Watson White & Max.

'89 Joseph "Patrick" McDonald has been named the new director for musical theatre classes and productions for the Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement (SAFE) performing arts program.

1990s

'93 Steven Altmann has joined the Nomberg Law Firm in Birmingham, Alabama.

'94 Robert Methvin Jr., the founding shareholder of Methvin, Terrell, Yancey, Stephens & Miller P.C. in Birmingham, has begun his year of service as the 145th president of the Alabama State Bar.

'95 Dr. Kimberley "Kim" Benner, BCPS, FASHP, FPPA, has been elected to serve on the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Board of Directors. Benner is a professor of pharmacy practice at Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy and a pediatric specialist at Children's of Alabama.

'95 Hon. Anne Lamkin Durward has been appointed to serve as a domestic relations Circuit Court judge in Jefferson County, Alabama.

'96 Christopher S. Berdy has been elected to the International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC) board of directors for 2020-21.

'96 Steven "Steve" Williams was hired as the new in-house attorney for the Marathon City Council. Most recently, Williams was employed by Monroe County as assistant county attorney of critical concern regulations.

'97 James Johnston has been appointed executive vice president, general counsel and chief compliance officer for Summit Midstream Partners.

'98 Brandom Gengelbach, president of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, has been named chief executive officer.

'99 Anna Funderburk Buckner has been elected to serve as a member of Chi Omega's Governing Council in the position of National Vice President for the 2020-2022 biennium.

2000s

'01 Leah Fenton Treadwell has been named this year's recipient of Mountain Brook City Schools' Margaret Spencer Ragland Award which recognizes a professional staff member

for superior contributions above and beyond the call of duty. Treadwell is a guidance counselor at Crestline Elementary School.

'02 Sharon Settle Mason, president and CEO of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, has extended her employment agreement for another three years.

'04 Joshua "Josh" Watkins has been named this year's recipient of Crestline Elementary's annual faculty award, The Jerome Lewis Legacy Award.

'06 Lee Wright has made a transition from Orlando, Florida, to San Antonio, Texas, within the campus ministry, Reformed University Fellowship (RUF).

'07 Hon. R. Ashby Pate has been appointed to serve on the Board of Directors of the Birmingham Airport Authority.

'08 Hon. Nhan-Ai Simms, is Gwinnett County's first Vietnamese judge to be sworn into a seat on the Juvenile Court bench.

'09 Jay Tyler Boyd has joined the executive team as vice president for strategic initiatives for the Connie Maxwell Children's Home.

'09 Dr. Andrew "Andy" Jackson, who teaches fourth grade at Eden Elementary School, has been named the 2020-21 Alabama Teacher of the Year.

'09 Dr. Beau Rader started as a clinical pharmacist at Tennessee Oncology in July 2020.

2010s

'10 Donald "Don" Benjamin Franklin III, an orthopedic surgeon, has joined the medical staff at Baxter Regional Medical Center. He has joined the Knox Orthopedics team.

'10 Emily Leithauser Hart has been promoted to Chief Operating Officer at MotionMobs, a certified women-owned

technology consultancy and software development firm in Birmingham. She previously served as marketing director.

'10 Dr. Catherine Bowers Magouyrk has been named interim superintendent for Danville Public Schools.

'11 Mary Catherine "Katie" Finch Voss was named to serve a three-year term on the board of America's First Federal Credit Union. Voss is director of corporate risk at Brasfield & Gorrie.

'13 Jeremy Towns was featured on the cover of *Birmingham Christian Magazine*.

'13 Dr. Kacie White of Cowart Drug Company was recently recognized as a Patient Champion by the American Pharmacy Cooperative Inc.

'14 Dr. Justin Hefner has been hired as superintendent by the Homewood school board.

'15 James Bradberry was named one of the New York Giants' Top 7 Most Critical Players of 2020.

'16 Megan Dowdy Curry has been named head softball coach by the Asbury University Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.

'16 Dr. Conner Kapperman, O.D., was among 134 students awarded the doctor of optometry from Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, Tennessee.

'17 Miranda Bolden has been named assistant principal at Rainbow Elementary School by the Madison City Board of Education.

'17 Brantly Cain has been named assistant principal for Jemison High School.

'17 Jermaine Seoposenwe has secured a two-year deal with the Portuguese club Sporting Braga.

'18 Dr. Susan Powell Andrews, assistant professor at Vanderbilt University, recently

published "Identification of Current Best Practices for Short-Term Medical Mission Trips and Adherence to Current Common Principles and Guidelines" in *The Christian Journal of Global Health*.

'18 Kristin Herren Kolenich, a reading specialist at Heritage Elementary School, was named Madison City Schools District Elementary Teacher of the Year.

'19 Julianne Zilahy has joined Cory Watson Attorneys as an associate. She joins the firm's personal injury section in the Birmingham office.

2020s

'20 Dr. Laura Edwards completed her Doctor of Nursing Practice at Samford. Her Doctor of Nursing Practice poster presentation and structured abstract were accepted for publication by Sigma Nursing Repository.

Friends

Friend Jay Grinney has been inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame for the 2020 class. Grinney is the former president, CEO and director of HealthSouth Corp., now known as Encompass Health.

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NEW ARRIVALS



Eden Liliacs Collins, a daughter, born Feb. 21, 2019. Parents are Cameron Collins '13 and Laura Collins of Nashville, Tennessee. **1**

Ruthie Fraser Baggett, a daughter, born March 22, 2019. Parents are Amy Clayton Baggett '09 and Patrick Baggett '08 of Franklin, Tennessee. She joins big sisters, Eleanor and Eliza. **2**

Elliana Ashby Blau, a daughter, born June 4, 2019. Parents are Daniel Blau '00 and Trisel Blau of Mint Hill, North Carolina. She joins big brother, Brooks. **3**

Levi Aidan Harold, a son, born July 23, 2019. Parents are Kyle Harold '04 and Charley Turk Harold '06 of Wilmore, Kentucky. He joins big sister, Ellie Rose and brother, Brooks. **4**

Vivian Hope Hutchins, a daughter, born Aug. 8, 2019. Parents are Eden Richardson Hutchins '07 and Ricky Hutchins '07 of Atlanta, Georgia.

Beau Ruger Roach, a son, born Sept. 12, 2019. Parents are Amanda McCollum Roach '01 and Matthew Roach of Jacksonville, Florida. **5**

Margaret Anne Walker, a daughter, born Oct. 5, 2019. Parents are Gil Walker '12 and Kathryn Heasley Walker '14 of Greenville, South Carolina. **6**

Luke Everett Butler, a son, born Dec. 15, 2019. Parents are Bekah Woosley Butler '05 and Jamie Butler of Hoover, Alabama. He joins big sisters, Emma Kate and Madison. **7**

William "Palmer" Petrovics, a son born Jan. 31, 2020. Parents are Kelly Miles Petrovics '12, '19 and Jarrod Petrovics of Hoover, Alabama. **8**

Madeline Culbreth, a daughter, born March 8, 2020. Parents are Matthew Culbreth '11 and Elizabeth "Craig" Kleimeyer Culbreth '12, '13 of Marietta, Georgia.

Merritt Elizabeth Faulkner, a daughter, born March 16, 2020. Parents are Melia Faulkner '14 and Austin Faulkner of Warrior, Alabama. **9**

Miriam Shelby Rice, a daughter, born April 6, 2020. Parents are Heather Allen Rice '09 and Jonathan Rice of Pelham, Alabama. **10**

Parker Christopher Carmouche, a son, born April 14, 2020. Parents are Mallory Lamons Carmouche '10 and Chris Carmouche of Cumming, Georgia. **11**

Eden Bea Anderson, a daughter, born May 30, 2020. Parents are Emily Aiken Anderson '10 and Brett Anderson '11 of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She joins big sisters Nellie and Naomi. **12**

Matthew Wade Lenard, a son, born June 9, 2020. Parents are Lara Shatas Lenard '10 and Casey Lenard of Odenville, Alabama. **13**

Virginia Grace Davies, a daughter, born July 13, 2020. Parents are Katherine Clemens Davies '15 and Josh Davies '15 of Franklin, Tennessee.

Rhett James Amick, a son, born July 16, 2020. Parents are Jimmi Dixon Amick '10 and Josh Amick '17 of Trussville, Alabama. **14**

Wrennelodie Cordelia Wortham, a daughter, born Aug. 4, 2020. Parents are Benjamin Wortham '06 and Amanda Holcombe Wortham '07 of Helena, Alabama. **15**

Elizabeth Claire Negre, a daughter, born Sept. 8, 2020. Parents are Laurie Smith Negre '11 and James Negre of Bettendorf, Iowa.



IN MEMORIAM

'44 Dr. Myron Eugene "Gene" Elliott, age 96, of Sarasota, Florida, died Aug. 16, 2020. In 1946 Gene joined the U.S. Naval Reserve and continued his military service as a U.S. Air Force Reserve flight surgeon during the 1950s. Gene attended University of Illinois-Chicago Medical School on the GI Bill and earned an M.D. in 1948. He continued his professional growth through a Rush-Presbyterian Hospital Surgical Residency, specializing in vascular surgery and becoming a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. In 1970, Gene and Dr. Edgar A. Feldman created the General and Vascular Surgery Group in Elgin and were joined a few years later by Dr. Raul L. Aron. He and his wife, Helen, married in 1945.

'45 Frances Duke Sharman, age 97, of Vestavia, Alabama, died June 21, 2020. She was a longtime member of Shades Mountain Baptist Church where she taught first grade Sunday school for 52 years. She married James, the love of her life, on April 23, 1944. Together they loved and reared five children. They were married for 53 years.

'50 James "Jim" Michael Reinhardt Sr., age 91, of Montgomery, Alabama, died Aug. 23, 2020. He joined Reinhardt Motors Inc. as vice president in 1951, where he was later elected president, as well as a dealer with Willy's Overland.

'51, '68 Dr. George E. Ricker, age 94, of Talladega, Alabama, died July 2, 2020. Dr. Ricker, a World War II veteran, was licensed into ministry by First Baptist Church, Scottsboro, in 1947, and served as mission pastor. He was later ordained into ministry by Friendship Baptist Church in Fackler in 1949, and served as pastor. By 1970, Dr. Ricker became the first full-time director of Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly and Camps in Talladega until retirement in 1989. He received recognition from the Talladega Chamber of Commerce in 1993 for serving as co-chairman of a Multi-Racial Task Force. The City of Talladega proclaimed George Ricker Day on Jan. 23, 2009 for his selfless community service and positive impact on the citizens of the City of Talladega. He married Iva Nelle Hurt in 1950 after the two met at Howard College. Dr. and Mrs. Ricker were members of First Baptist Church, Talladega.

'55 Bonnie Bolding Swearingen, age 87, of Birmingham, Alabama, died Aug. 2, 2020. Bonnie was known by all who knew her as a grand Southern lady who spoke her mind and always told you exactly what she was thinking. She entered the Miss Alabama contest four times, winning a scholarship to Howard College and a scholarship to the Pasadena Playhouse, where she studied acting after graduating from Howard College in 1955. She left professional acting behind after a brief but highly successful career in movies and television but maintained lifelong relationships with many of the Hollywood elite. Bonnie later moved to New York City and became a Wall Street stockbroker, one of the very first women to earn a seat on the exchange, and she met John E. Swearingen, an oil executive with Standard Oil of Indiana, now BP America. They married in New York City in 1969. Though the Swearingens did a lot of philanthropy work around the country, Samford University was their favorite cause. Their generosity provided funds for scholarships, a rose garden in honor of Bonnie's mother Gertha Bolding, Bonnie Bolding Swearingen Hall, Bolding Studio, Sullivan-Cooney Fieldhouse and the Legacy League. Her 10 surviving nephews and nieces will remember Bonnie as a mentor and a role model, and generous beyond measure.

'56 Andy Lanier, age 84, of West Palm Beach, Florida, died Aug. 9, 2020. He graduated from Samford University at 17 years of age. He started his teaching career in 1955 and after retirement from public school, he became principal at Haverhill Baptist Day School in West Palm Beach. He was a world-renowned orchid expert. He enjoyed collecting orchid stamps, coins and currency and amassed the world's largest collection of each. His hobbies were raising orchids, pigeons and carnivorous plants, creating bonsais, and researching genealogy.

'56 Bobby Clyde Park, age 86, of New Market, Alabama, died June 25, 2020. He worked at U.S. Steel while attending Howard College to complete his B.S. in chemistry. He worked for Southern Research before moving to Decatur in 1962 to start his career as a chemist for the U.S. Army Missile

Command at Redstone Arsenal. He was a member of the Rising Sun Lodge #29 F&AM in Decatur and the Grand College of America Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests. He served in many leadership positions within multiple Freemasonry organizations and the United Methodist Church.

'56 Rev. William Yancey Sanders, age 97, of Lanett, Alabama, died Aug. 19, 2020. He was a veteran of World War II, serving in the Army Air Corps. After returning from the war, he met and married Louise Camp. He was called to preach and attended Howard College, where he received his bachelor's degree. He went on to get his master's degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He was a Baptist preacher and dedicated his life to preaching the gospel.

'58 Frederick "Fred" C. Barnett, age 88, of Birmingham, Alabama, died June 20, 2020. Fred served his country in the Navy during the Korean War. Fred was a devoted and loving husband to his wife of 60 years, Betty Jo, and father to his daughters. He was a member at Briarwood Presbyterian Church and served the Lord there with Betty Jo as a marriage counselor.

'58 Robert "Bob" Lee Haggard, age 84, of Vinemont, Alabama, died July 28, 2020. He attended Howard College where he played baseball and basketball and met his wife of 63 years, Elaine Heath. They were blessed with three boys. Bob's coaching positions included Maplesville, Jones Valley and West End in Birmingham, and Haleyville High School. He later became the principal of Deshler High School in Tuscumbia, Alabama. After retiring in Alabama, he became the principal of Tishomingo Magnet School in Iuka, Mississippi. He was a member of First Baptist Church in Hartselle.

'58 Wilroy Ratcliff, age 85, of Ellisville, Mississippi, died July 23, 2020. Wilroy graduated from Copiah-Lincoln Junior College, then attended Howard College where he earned a degree in pharmacy. After college, he worked as a pharmacist for Southwest Drug Stores in Jackson, then later served as manager/pharmacist of their store located in

the Gardiner Center. In 1965, Wilroy joined E.R. Squibb & Sons as a pharmaceutical sales representative where he earned numerous company honors including being inducted into the Hakeem Society of Bristol-Myers Squibb. Wilroy served as an advisory board member for Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy, was a past board member of the Mississippi Pharmacists Association and a past member of the Jones County Junior College Pharmacy Technology Craft Committee. He was a member of Magnolia Baptist Church.

'59 Claudia Curd Beaty, age 83, of Longview, Texas, died July 5, 2020. She graduated from Samford University and then continued her education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. There she met her husband, the Rev. Dewayne Beaty. As a couple, they served God through churches in Tennessee and Texas for over forty years. Claudia taught junior high history at Pine Tree for 15 years. After retiring, she became activities director at Buckner Westminster Place in Longview, Texas.

'59 James "Fred" F. Hovater Jr., age 82, of Gardendale, Alabama, died July 6, 2020. Fred was a native of Russellville and graduated from Samford University with a degree in pharmacy in 1959. At Samford he was president of the student body and received the John R. Mott Award for Student Public Service. Fred practiced pharmacy for over 30 years in several cities in Alabama. He is survived by two sons, Howard and Wil, and a daughter Megan.

'60 Patricia Nichols Reaves, age 82, of Anniston, Alabama, died Aug. 3, 2020. She married John Earl and taught math at Shades Valley High School. She served at Golden Springs Baptist Church in many capacities including Bible teacher, mentor, pianist and organist.

'60 Mary Annelle Sauls Smith, age 82, of Georgetown, Georgia, died July 7, 2020. Mary taught fourth and fifth grade in Talladega, before relocating to Eufaula, where she lived for over 35 years. She was a member of First Baptist Church of Eufaula for 54 years where she sang in the choir, taught children's choir and served in various other ways. In 1971 she became a charter member of the Camerata Music Club supporting the musical arts in the Eufaula area. Camerata still exists today and supports a scholarship program for students pursuing music degrees.

'61 Rev. Larry Armstrong, age 81, of Montgomery, Alabama, died Aug. 5, 2020. Larry graduated from Samford University with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Religion. He graduated from seminary with a Master of Divinity and a Master of Religious Education. Larry served the Lord as a Baptist minister for 48 years in various states. He was married to his wife, CeCelia, for 58 years.

'61 Dr. Linda Sue Morrison, age 80, of Frankfort, Kentucky, died April 5, 2020. Linda spent her life as a career musician, a professional organist and pianist, earning her B.A. from Samford University. She also earned an M.A. from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary School of Church Music and Doctor of Music in Organ Performance from The University of North Texas. Linda positively influenced thousands of people; first at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, then as co-founder of the Louisville Boys Choir, and later as a professor of music at Louisiana College in Pineville, Louisiana. She also served as the director of music and organist at St. Martins of Tours in Louisville. Linda organized yearly tours of Italy for her choirs as they sang in celebrated cathedrals and even performed for Pope John Paul II.

'62 James "Jim" Marvin McMillian Jr., age 93, of Ormond Beach, Florida, died Aug. 13, 2020. Following high school he served in the Navy during World War II. Later in life, he married his wife Ann of 73 years, and participated in the Honor Flight Network, a program where veterans are honored as heroes at the nation's capital. Jim enjoyed a long career at Chicago Bridge and Iron which allowed him opportunities to travel the world and work in Saudi Arabia.

'63 Marcia Simpson Ball, age 79, of Ridgeland, Mississippi, died May 31, 2020. Marcia taught at Provine High School for many years. A long-time resident of Ridgeland, she spent most of her life as a minister's wife serving in churches throughout Mississippi and Alabama. She was a proud Daughter of the American Revolution and member of Highland Colony Baptist Church.

'63 Judith Greene Hale, age 79, of Notasulga, Alabama, died Aug. 20, 2020. She served the Lord as a missionary in Spain for 25 years (1965-1990). She taught Spanish at Notasulga High School for over 10 years, and at OLLI for 8. She was an active member of Auburn First Baptist Church.

'63 Dr. James "Jim" D. Moebs, age 78, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 14, 2020. In 1962, Jim married Gail Kerr, of Piedmont, Alabama, and in 1963, he was ordained to the gospel ministry in Heritage Hall at Mountain Brook Baptist Church. A 1963 graduate of Samford University, Jim earned his Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1967, he earned his Master of Arts in counseling and educational psychology from The University of Alabama and, in 1970, he received his Ph.D. in counseling and educational psychology from the University of Alabama. In 1975, Jim became executive minister of Mountain Brook Baptist Church. In 1981, he began serving as senior minister of Mountain Brook Baptist Church until his retirement in 2011.

'64 Mabry Robinson Higginbotham, age 77, of Huntsville, Alabama, died July 25, 2020. She was a secondary school teacher who taught Spanish for over 25 years in the Huntsville City School system. She also taught for over 10 years in Giles County. She was a graduate of Samford University, with a degree in Spanish and English. During her career, she was a past president of Alpha Delta Kappa International honorary sorority for women educators, was sponsored by the Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica and was a moderator for the Huntsville City Schools Scholars Bowl.

'64 William Douglas "Doug" O'Rear, age 77, of Pegasus, Tennessee, died July 30, 2020. Doug received his B.S. from Samford University and his M.A. from The University of Alabama. He completed extensive graduate work at The University of Alabama and Cumberland School of Law. Doug's early career was spent in personnel administration with several organizations including Alabama Power Company, The University of Alabama and the former First American Bank in Nashville. He was also an assistant professor of business at Belmont University. He became a Certified Financial Planner and in 1983 opened his own business, Doug O'Rear & Associates. Doug also served in various volunteer and leadership positions at First Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Woodmont and Harpeth Heights Baptist Churches in Nashville, Tennessee. He later served as lay speaker and licensed pastor in the United Methodist Church at Craggie Hope in Kingston Springs, Tennessee, and Eno and Oak Grove in Dickson, Tennessee.

'64 Leslie Stephen "Steve" Wright Jr., age 78, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 21, 2020. Steve was admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1966 and practiced for 54 years prior to retiring. Steve practiced at the law firm of Najjar Denaburg from 1987 until his retirement where he was a shareholder and senior member of the Matrimonial and Family Law Group. He was a member of Phi Alpha Delta and was a curia Honoring Member of Cumberland School of Law. He was also a member of the Alabama State Bar, where he was a charter member of the Family Law Section; Birmingham Bar Association where he served on the Executive Committee, the Domestic Relations Committee and the Family and Juvenile Courts Procedures Committee. He was admitted to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama; the Association of Trial Lawyers, American Bar Association; Alabama Trial Lawyers Association; and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. Stephen was a fellow in the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers where he served as a member of the Board of Governors. In 2001, Steve was selected as Lawyer of the Year by the BLSA. Steve was a member of Briarwood Presbyterian Church and the Birmingham Pheasant Hunters.

'68 William "Bill" T. Denson, age 81, of Goodwater, Alabama, died June 23, 2020. He graduated from West Georgia College and Cumberland School of Law.

'68 Clinton "Clint" Lee Frey, age 73, of Cullman, Alabama, died July 31, 2020. Clint served his country as a helicopter mechanic in the National Guard. He married Marion Knapp in 1973. He was a member of the Million Dollar Round Table, the Cullman Chamber's 1999 Small Business Person of the Year; the 2015 Cullman Regional Medical Center (CRMC) Humanitarian Award Recipient; served on the CRMC Board of Trustees and president of the CRMC Foundation Board. Clint volunteered his time as the Planning and Zoning Commissioner in Good Hope, Alabama, and served young people as a board member of Leadership Cullman.

'68 John Meadows Taylor, age 77, of Lagrange, Georgia, died July 25, 2020. He attended the University of Georgia, where he was a member of Phi Delta Theta, and graduated in 1965 with an A.B. in political science. In 1968, he received his J.D. from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University, where he was a founding member

of the *Cumberland Law Review*. He was first admitted to practice law in Georgia and Alabama in 1968. After passing the bar, John was a Captain in the U.S. Army, serving in the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps from 1968 to 1973 at Fort Knox. After his military service, he returned to LaGrange in 1973, and began practicing law with then Sims & Lewis, now Lewis, Taylor & Todd, P.C. He was appointed to the Georgia State Board of Education in 1983 by Governor Joe Frank Harris, serving until 1990 as its vice chairman for appeals and chairman of Administrative Services Committee. He twice served as president of the Georgia Council of School Board Attorneys. He was a lifelong member of First Baptist Church of LaGrange.

'69 Judith "Judy" Kay Chastain, age 74, of Pelham, Alabama, died Aug. 15, 2020. At the time of her passing, she resided at Peachtree Assisted Living facility in Trussville. She worked faithfully in Christian ministries during her lifetime, including positions with Wales Goebel Ministry (Birmingham), Dudley and T.D. Hall Ministry (Texas), James Robinson Ministry (Texas) and Parker Memorial Baptist Church (Anniston).

'69 John S. Walker, age 80, of Center, Texas, died Aug. 21, 2019. He served in the U.S. Navy and later became a lawyer. He owned and operated John S. Walker Law Firm in Center, Texas, for 50 years, during which time he also served as district attorney of Shelby and Panola Counties for 8 years and county attorney in Shelby County for 8 years. He was a member of James Church of Christ, where he served as elder and Sunday school teacher.

'70 Sheila Oliver Coupland, age 83, of Greenville, Alabama, died July 10, 2020. Sheila graduated from Auburn University in 1957 and was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Kappa Delta Pi and Alpha Lambda Delta honor societies. Sheila and her husband, Bob, were married for 58 years. She taught for several years in Birmingham schools, was a homemaker and a loving mother and grandmother. She was a member of the Montevallo Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and a member of First Christian Church of Valledale.

'70 Ronnie "Ron" Carlton French, age 73, of Harrisonburg, Virginia, died Aug. 11, 2020. After working as a retail pharmacist for many years, he joined the JMU University Health Center provider team in 2014 where

he created the first on-campus pharmacy. His colleagues were his second family and he loved helping students. An Eagle Scout, Ron loved boating, fishing and other outdoor activities. He and his wife also enjoyed completing many home improvement/renovation projects over the years working together as a team.

'70,'82 Alice Barton York, age 72, of Gardendale, Alabama, died June 23, 2020. She taught for 25 years at Mount Olive Elementary School, where she received a Second Mile Teacher Award. Alice was a member of Gardendale First Baptist Church for 72 years.

'72 Richard "Dick" W. Bell, age 76, of Birmingham, Alabama, died May 11, 2020. He graduated from the University of South Florida with a B.S. in chemistry and attended Samford University's Cumberland School of Law while working nights at U.S. Steel. He later attended the University of Alabama School of Law, earning a Master of Law in Tax. He practiced law in Alabama and Florida for nearly 50 years. Dick was honored for his exemplary professionalism in Alabama by the Shelby County Bar Association. In Jefferson County, Alabama, Judge Nakita Blocton honored him with a reception recognizing his dedication to the legal profession. Dick loved his family, his friends, the law and his beloved English bulldog, Winston the Law Dog.

'72 Daniel "Ted" Hull Jr., age 77, of Mountain Brook, died March 15, 2020. Ted attended night law school at Cumberland School of Law while practicing engineering. He was admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1973. Ted was a member and usher at Brookwood Baptist Church, the Exchange Club of Birmingham, Shades Valley Rotary Club and volunteer for Boy Scout Troop 96 and Scoutmaster with Troop 76 at St. Stephens Episcopal Church.

'72 Dr. John "Johnny" H. Mears, age 71, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 2, 2020. Johnny attended Samford University where he was a member of Sigma Nu and met his wife of 48 years, Darleen Hartselle. He received his medical degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1977. Johnny practiced anesthesiology at the Baptist Health System and later the Alabama Colon & Rectal Institute. He was a polio survivor who persevered through adversity his entire life. He was a faithful member of Mountain Brook Baptist Church where he served as a deacon.

'73 Dr. Edgar "Ed" P. Wallen, age 83, of Alabaster, Alabama, died Aug. 29,

2020. While stationed in the U.S. Army in Germany, he pastored a church in Bamberg before returning home to attend Samford University. While at Samford, he pastored at Wayside Baptist Church in Anniston, then later in Hueytown, where he served until retirement. Dr. Wallen authored two books *My Life, My Soul, My All* and *Leaving Darkland*, and hosted a daily radio program on WGIB. Dr. Wallen and wife Tommie were members of Grace Covenant Baptist Church on Rocky Ridge Road.

'74 Robert "Gordon" Pate, age 72, of Birmingham, Alabama, died June 27, 2020. Gordon was an attorney who represented thousands of injured individuals for over 40 years and gained a reputation for being one of the best trial lawyers in Alabama. He was elected to the International Society of Barristers, whose highly selective membership is extended only to lawyers of exceptional talent. In 1969 he married Lenora Pate. They had two sons. He was affectionately known by his five grandchildren as "Pops."

'75 Judith "Judy" Albright Jones, age 83, Montevallo, Alabama, died June 22, 2020. Judy was a 1959 graduate of the University of Montevallo and in 1975, she earned a J.D. from Cumberland School of Law. Judy retired in 2003 after serving 33 years on the staff of the Hon. J. Foy Guin Jr., U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

'79 Mary Louise "Mary Lou" Bard Miller, age 93, of Birmingham, Alabama, died Aug. 7, 2020. Mary Lou completed a history degree at Samford University in 1979 and earned a master's degree in library science from The University of Alabama in 1984. Mary Lou was instrumental in revising Blanche Dean's book, *Trees and Shrubs of the Southeast*, through the Birmingham Audubon Society. As members of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, she and her husband Ed took part in Builders for Christ missions around the country.

'78 Martha Jane Patton, age 74, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 27, 2020. She worked as an attorney in several Birmingham law firms and in her own private practice before serving as the executive director of the Legal Aid Society of Birmingham from 1998 to 2016. Prior to becoming an attorney, she worked for the Selma Project, an inter-religious organization that advocated civil rights and voter registration for Black people in Alabama. Martha Jane was a choir member in St. Andrews Episcopal Church choir and

member in the Magic City Chorale Society. Martha Jane was also the founder and first president of "Friends of Avondale Park," a nonprofit organization that transformed a 100-year-old park in Birmingham into a vibrant neighborhood haven and cultural center.

'80 Lee Burden Osborn, age 67, of Dennis, Mississippi, died Aug. 8, 2020. He attended Cumberland School of Law and practiced law for over 20 years.

'85 Beverly Poole Baker, age 76, of Helena, Alabama, died July 29, 2020. The widow of Birmingham's first African American city attorney, James K. Baker, and the niece of Alabama's first African American associate justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, Oscar W. Adams, Beverly practiced law in Birmingham for 35 years. She graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1982 where she was a Presidential Scholar. Beverly obtained her law degree in 1985 from Cumberland School of Law and was associate editor of the *Cumberland Law Review*. In 1990, she founded and chaired Haskell Slaughter's employment law practice group and later became shareholder and the first Chief Diversity Officer at the firm Ogletree Deakins. She was a council member and chair of the Diversity EEO Committee of the American Bar Association's Section of Litigation, a member of the Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel, a council member of the dean's leadership council of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and member of the dean's advisory board of Cumberland Law School. Beverly was a member of the Cathedral Church of the Advent.

'96 Lee Hale Stewart, age 52, of Vestavia, Alabama, died Aug. 15, 2020. Lee graduated from Samford University's Cumberland School of Law in 1996 and spent his career as a civil defense litigator. A member of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church, he believed in a higher authority and lived a disciplined life. He married the former Claire Bailey and the couple had three children.

'99 Ann Ridinger Skelton, age 68, of Vestavia, Alabama, died June 24, 2020. Ann spent many years volunteering at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute where she shared her passion for equality and fighting social injustice. Ann also taught English as a second language within the Spanish-speaking community and was a faithful volunteer for

many committees at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension where she, with her husband, was a member.

Friend **Harold Apolinsky**, age 87, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 29, 2020. After two years in the Air Force as an auditor, he attended The University of Alabama School of Law and was editor-in-chief of the *Alabama Law Review*. Later, he received a master's in tax law with honors from New York University School of Law and was a teaching fellow at NYU Law. Upon returning to Birmingham, he joined what is now Sirote & Permutt and practiced estate tax law for over 40 years and served as assistant and managing partner for 20 years. Harold served as an adjunct professor of estate tax and planning at the University of Alabama School of Law and Cumberland School of Law. He was a member of Temple Emanu-El, Temple Beth-El and Kneseth Israel.

Friend **Ann H. Harvey**, age 82, of Birmingham, Alabama, died July 10, 2020. Ann taught English at Samford University, but spent most of her professional career at Oxmoor House and Southern Progress editing numerous cookbooks. She was integral to the start of the "Annual Recipes" series at *Southern Living* and *Cooking Light*. She enjoyed her association with the McIlhenny family of Louisiana, judging the Tabasco community cookbook contest. A former president of The Women's Network, Ann was a member of Amulets, Silhouettes, Carousel and Ballerina clubs and served as an officer in some of them. Ann was a deacon, elder and Clerk of the Session at Shades Valley Presbyterian Church.

Friend **Patricia "Pat" Sumner Herndon**, age 83, of Leeds, Alabama, died Aug. 30, 2020. She attended Howard College, The University of Alabama, and earned a B.S. in Business Education from Livingston University. She retired after working at DHR in Greene County for 27 years. Pat was a woman of many talents. She was a pianist for numerous weddings and was the church pianist/organist for more than 60 years, beginning at age 12, playing regularly at both Providence Baptist Church in Linden and Eutaw Baptist Church.

Friend **Lester H. Hollans**, of Mountain Brook, Alabama, died June 6, 2020. Lester attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI) where he was Cadet Major on the Regimental Staff for the Class of 1958. Upon graduating from VPI

with a business administration degree, he was commissioned a second lieutenant and stationed at Ft. Knox and then Ft. Rucker for aviation school. Lester taught economics for the University of Virginia's Graduate School of General Studies and pioneered teaching economics on the first educational TV station in Virginia to broadcast in color. After returning to Birmingham, Lester became the Chair of Private Enterprise and assistant professor in the School of Business at Samford University. He was a Gideon in Virginia and Alabama for over 40 years and served as the western Virginia director of Campus Crusade for Christ. He was married to Anne Johnson for 59 years.

Friend **Stephen "Steve" Page Seibert**, age 69, of Daytona Beach, Florida, died Aug. 19, 2020. Steve was a major contributor to the

Ormond Beach Pop Warner start-up fund as well as serving on the board of directors. Steve organized and was heavily involved with the fundraising for the Seabreeze High School football athletic department as well as being an active member of the Booster Club. At Samford University, he was on the Executive Committee for the Athletic Foundation along with being a major benefactor to the university for the sport sciences department. He and his wife Marlene also started a scholarship fund for the sport sciences department, which still continues today. The football stadium and the basketball arena bear the Seibert family name. He and Marlene started a nursing scholarship in 2008 through the Daytona State College Foundation, which continues for nursing students today.

Friend **Louise Armstrong White**, age 92, of Clinton, Mississippi, died Aug. 8, 2020. She was married to John Wheeler White, Jr. for 66 years. Louise was employed at Samford University as bookstore manager for 20 years. She was a member of Lakeside Baptist Church, a volunteer at Baptist Children's Home and lifelong member of the Samford University Auxiliary and Rotunda Club. After moving to Clinton, Mississippi, she and her husband were members of First Baptist Church, Clinton, Mississippi, and active in the senior adult ministry, Joy Maker's Choir and attended the Lydia Sunday school class.

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If you have a vehicle licensed in Alabama, please consider purchasing a Samford license plate at your local Department of Motor Vehicles office. A Samford license plate purchase of \$50 equals \$48.50 in support of student scholarships. It's an easy and effective way to help current and future students.



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**Become a part of DeVotie Legacy Society
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Thompson Honors Memory of Classmate with Estate Gift

More than 20 years ago, the DeVotie Heritage Society was established at Samford University to commemorate the vision and ideals of Howard College cofounder James H. DeVotie, then pastor of Siloam Baptist Church in Marion, Alabama.

DeVotie helped secure the first planned gift to Howard College, according to Gene Howard III, Samford's director of gift and estate planning. This strategic gift provided the land that would shelter the college in its infancy.

It was not difficult for Samford alumna Mary V. Thompson to consider the DeVotie Society in her estate planning. Her motivation was to honor the memory of a cherished classmate.

It started in the summer of 2007, when Thompson learned of the death of one of her "dearest friends" from undergraduate days, a Nigerian student named Samuel Fadeji. Thompson, who now is a historian with the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon, Virginia, had kept up with Fadeji after they were classmates

in the mid-1970s.

After completing his studies in the U.S., Fadeji returned to his native Nigeria, where he eventually served as general secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention and was a faculty member at the Baptist seminary there. He was also active in the international church, where he served two terms as president of the All Africa Baptist Fellowship and represented Nigeria in the Baptist World Alliance.

"Sam was one of the finest Christian gentlemen I've ever had the privilege to know," Thompson said. "I felt that Samford should be encouraging his sort of dedication; infectious, joyous faith; and love for all."

Thompson contacted Samford about setting up something to honor Fadeji's memory. She explained that it took "three years of emails and conversations, both on the phone and in person" to hammer out the details, but a scholarship fund named for Fadeji was created in 2010.

Although the fund is still small, Thompson has made arrangements in her estate plan to increase the



scholarship fund in the future. She encourages others to follow her lead in making a planned gift to benefit Samford.

Such a gift would benefit Samford by encouraging young scholars to follow in Fadeji's "very large footsteps," Thompson added.

"It also ensures that the legacy of this great man will continue into the future. I hope that the Dr. Samuel Olaniran Fadeji Scholarship will allow future ministerial students, either from Africa or planning a career in foreign missions, to get started in their callings."

To become a DeVotie Legacy Society member, contact Gene Howard at wehoward@samford.edu or 205-726-2366.



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Even amidst a pandemic, President Westmoreland celebrates with May graduates.