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Spring 2024

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SECRETS REVEALED**





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Kentucky Alumni (ISSN 732-6297) is published quarterly by the University of Kentucky Alumni Association, Lexington, Kentucky, for its members.

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All current Life and Active Members of the University of Kentucky Alumni Association automatically receive the Kentucky Alumni magazine quarterly. All who give \$75 or more (\$25 for recent graduates) to any UK fund, including UK Athletics/K Fund and DanceBlue, are recognized as Active Members regardless of alumni status.

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From the President

Spring is a season of revival, rejuvenation and renewal. We see signs of it across our campus, as the weather turns warmer, the days brighter and the green spaces livelier.

We see it in our students, as our first-year class moves with more confidence — having navigated the pathways and throughfares for nearly a year — and our soon-to-be graduates contemplate their prospects for the next big milestones in their lives.

This spring, different celebrations and traditions of faith — Ramadan and Easter, Holi, Passover and Vaisakhi, among many others — also remind us of our enduring principles and duties to each other. All these customs share the value of bringing people together, in community, to reflect and act upon a purpose higher than oneself.

Indeed, all of us at the University of Kentucky, from different backgrounds, faiths, ethnicities, political ideologies and perspectives, are called to pursue lives of meaning and purpose. We are called to build a brighter future for ourselves, those we love and those we may never meet.

Together — as the University of, for and with Kentucky — we are building that future for our Commonwealth.

We are educating and graduating more students than at any other time in our institution's history. We are making life-changing discoveries in our \$476 million research and development enterprise, generating \$873 million in eco-

nomic activity across Kentucky. We are moving forward on constructing the Michael D. Rankin MD Health Education Building, which will boost our state's healthcare workforce and ultimately help create a healthier Kentucky.

We also have been called upon by our Board of Trustees to continue this momentum — to prepare more graduates to grow Kentucky's workforce and advance outcomes in health and prosperity.

Of course, we document these achievements with numbers. But those numbers represent lives — futures transformed, communities uplifted and legacies extended. They illustrate our promise as Kentucky's indispensable institution.

This progress is only possible by working together with our alumni.

Your continued support plays a critical role in the success of our university family. Thank you for your commitment to advancing Kentucky.

Sincerely,



Eli Capilouto
President

University of Kentucky President Eli Capilouto posed for a selfie with graduate student Deidra White at the December 2023 commencement ceremony where she read her poem "Here In Kentucky." To read more about White, see page 14.



Photo by Mark Cornelison, UK Photo

Pride in Blue

I have been honored to represent the UK Alumni Association at many wonderful events and activities over the past several months.

One highlight that stands out is when I addressed our graduates at the December commencement ceremonies. Witnessing our recent graduates and our distinguished faculty achieve what is wildly possible left me truly inspired.

As the holidays approached and many of our international students remained on campus, the UK Alumni Association hosted the Multicultural Student Thanksgiving Dinner. More than 400 students, family members and faculty attended. We were entertained by a wind ensemble from the College of Fine Arts and they even let me join as their guest clarinetist.

My last stop for this year's football season was the Gator Bowl in beautiful Jacksonville, Florida. UK Alumni Association officers, staff and club volunteers hosted a pregame breakfast and pep rally as we cheered on the Wildcats. While we all hoped for a different result, the game was exciting.

Throughout 2023, we celebrated 135 Years of Women at UK in honor of Belle Gunn, the university's first woman graduate. Our three female trustees, our executive director and our female past presidents were recognized throughout the year. I was recognized at a UK women's basketball home game when the team honored impactful women in the community through its Power of Women program.

I am so proud to be a part of the UK alumni family and I know you are, too. My journey began soon after law school when I was invited to become a member of the Big Sandy UK Alumni Club. Being a part of that club gave me a connection with UK that I hadn't had in any other way. This led to my seat on the board of directors, my selection to serve as committee chairs, and eventually to my election as treasurer, president-elect, and now president.

Club involvement allowed me to connect with alumni who shared my love for UK, and to become active on a state and national level. Over the years, club involvement has changed, and the alumni association recognizes there is a need to evolve our clubs and alumni engagement. Members of our Leadership Advisory Council are providing recommendations on how to involve, engage and support our alumni and clubs through new and innovative



Photo provided.

UK Alumni Association President Janie McKenzie-Wells received the Power of Women recognition during a University of Kentucky women's basketball game.

methods. Let us know your ideas on how you want to connect with fellow Wildcats by emailing us at ukalumni@uky.edu. We welcome your input.

Always remember you are a part of Big Blue Nation and that means something. And for my Eastern Kentucky friends — #606 it's more than just a number!

Go Cats!

Sincerely,

Janie McKenzie-Wells

Janie McKenzie-Wells '83 AS, '86 LAW
UK Alumni Association President



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MIRA BALL RECEIVES FOUNDERS DAY AWARD

Businesswoman Mira Snider Ball '56 ED, a prominent figure in the Lexington community, was honored with the 2024 Founders Day Award. As the former CFO of Ball Homes LLC, co-founded with her late husband, Don Ball, in 1959, she played a pivotal role in the company's success.

Throughout her illustrious career, Ball broke barriers, serving as the first woman chair of the UK Board of Trustees and the first female president of the Lexington Chamber of Commerce in 1991. She also made history as the initial woman elected to the Kentucky Utilities Board of Directors.

Ball's community involvement includes leadership roles on various boards such as United Way of the Bluegrass, Kentucky and Lexington Chambers of Commerce, YWCA, Sayre School, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, and many more. Her dedication was acknowledged with honors like being named to Junior Achievement's Bluegrass Business Hall of Fame and receiving the Woman of the Year award from the Women's Center of Central Kentucky.

A committed philanthropist, Ball, alongside her husband, received numerous accolades, including joint recognition as Philanthropist of the Year, recipients of the Optimist Cup, and the Happy Chandler Kentuckian Award. Most recently, she co-chaired the successful *Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign*, raising \$2.1 billion for UK.

In recognition of her and Don Ball's contributions, Ball Hall, located in Woodland Glen, stands as a testament to their legacy.

Ball received a Founders Day Award medallion and a one-time donation of \$10,000 will be made in her name to a UK philanthropic fund of her choice. ■

UK AMONG TOP 100 WORLDWIDE UNIVERSITIES GRANTED US PATENTS IN 2023

The University of Kentucky was ranked in the Top 100 Worldwide Universities Granted U.S. Utility Patents in 2023 by the National Academy of Inventors.

The report uses data provided by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and highlights the vital role patents play in university research and innovation.

Published annually since 2013, the report ranks the top 100 universities holding U.S. utility patents, which protect the way an invention is used and works, in the 2023 calendar year.

A member institution of the NAI, UK ranked 99th along with three other institutions, with 33 U.S. utility patents granted in 2023. UK filed 161 patent applications and held 930 worldwide patent assets in fiscal year 2023.

"We are honored to stand among the world's top 100 universities in utility patents," said Taunya Phillips, director of the UK Office of Technology Commercialization. "This is a testament to our dedication to foster innovations while safeguarding the groundbreaking discoveries made by our UK innovators. This recognition reaffirms our commitment to driving impactful research and collaboration that ultimately benefits our Commonwealth and country." ■

PENCE HALL RENOVATIONS TO TRANSFORM CI

Rendering provided



The College of Communication and Information is in the midst of transforming its spaces into an environment with state-of-the-art classrooms and learning laboratories.

These enhanced facilities will provide students with a place where they can collaborate, innovate and create in top-notch facilities alongside their peers and award-winning faculty, setting them up to excel when they pursue their careers and passions.

The Pence Hall project is part of the University's Asset Preservation initiative—a multi-phase effort to preserve existing campus buildings so they continue to serve their intended functions well into the future.

College of Design which has moved into the newly renovated Gray Design building, formerly the Reynolds Building.

Pence will house part of the college, including academic programs and student support units, and complements CI's existing operations in neighboring McVey Hall, which houses the Department of Integrated Strategic Communication, Graduate Program in Communication and Business Center and in the Lucille Caudill Little Library, home to the School of Information Science and future home to UK Debate. Pence renovations are scheduled to be completed in 2025.

Visit ci.uky.edu/pence for more information on the Pence Hall project. ■

The \$32-million project includes transforming 24,000 square feet while retaining key historic elements of Pence Hall. An outdoor classroom space, five classrooms, two labs, a seminar room and a multi-use auditorium will be added.

Currently CI is spread across campus. In 2022, UK launched a plan to reunite CI by building a cohesive College of Communication and Information neighborhood in the heart of campus.

At the center of that neighborhood is Pence Hall which until recently housed the

DENTISTRY ALUMNUS ESTABLISHES MOBILE PRACTICE

College of Dentistry alumnus, Kwane Watson, founder and CEO of Kare Mobile Inc., strives to serve those who need dental care but often lack access.

What started with a vision and a van in Louisville, has now expanded across multiple states. Kare Mobile currently serves patients in Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Michigan, Georgia and Oklahoma.

Watson's goal is to bring affordable, comprehensive dental services to low-income communities where services have been hit hard by the rising cost of dental operations. The mobile dental service provides adult and child cleanings, root canals, extractions, fillings and more.

While working as the State Dental Director for Community Dental of Kentucky, Watson gained a clearer view of access issues and demand for dental care while traveling between Western Kentucky and west end Louisville.

"Practicing in Western Kentucky was an eye-opener," said Watson. "I didn't realize the degree of need in Western and Eastern Kentucky, or how long people have to wait to get an appointment because there are no Medicaid providers available." ■



Photo submitted

NEW BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMS ADDRESS GROWING NEEDS

University of Kentucky students now have three new undergraduate majors to consider.

A **Bachelor of Arts in sport leadership** is based in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Promotion in the College of Education and offers three tracks, two in collaboration with the College of Communication and Information.

"Interest in careers in sport is rising each year," said Justin Nichols, program chair and assistant professor of sport leadership in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Promotion.

The **Bachelor of Science in statistics and data science** will equip students to execute all stages of data analysis, from acquisition and exploration to application of statistics and machine learning methods for the creation of data.

"The program prepares students to enter the workforce directly, or with our specialization in statistical theory, as strong candidates for graduate school in statistics," said William Rayens, department chair."

The College of Social Work offers the choice of a **Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice**. These undergraduate programs started in the spring of 2024. At the graduate level, a Master of Science in criminal justice will start in the fall 2024.

The criminal justice degrees prepare students for careers in criminal justice settings. ■

STUDENTS UNRAVEL MURDER MYSTERIES

The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice-Kentucky project, a pilot program stemming from the pioneering CRRJ project at Northeastern University School of Law, has been launched at UK to address unsolved murders in Kentucky tied to racism and racial hostility.

Working with UK's J. David Rosenberg College of Law, students are taking a multidimensional approach to the project, with legal seminars, historical research and a restorative justice element to unravel mysteries dating back through the past 100 years.

"Law and history are kind of detective disciplines," said Anastasia Curwood, history professor and director of the Commonwealth Institute for Black Studies

at the University of Kentucky. "We like to go back, excavate evidence, find it, build a case."

The project offers students the opportunity to delve into cold cases that state agencies, hindered by resources constraints, often overlook or are unable to continue work on.

"We really see this project as an opportunity to engage in disciplines throughout UK," said Austin Zinkle, a post-doctoral scholar at UK. "Right now it's history, law, and African American and Africana studies, but there are opportunities already in the pipeline (with) journalism, geography, sociology and anthropology — just to name a few." ■

MENTORING PROGRAM AT LEWIS HONORS COLLEGE BENEFITS STUDENTS, ALUMNI

A Lewis Honors College mentoring program that started during COVID has now reached 25 alum-student pairs who meet remotely and/or in person.

Unique to the Lewis Honors College is the Center for Personal Development which aims to help students cultivate self-awareness, well-being and career readiness. Among the various CPD offerings is the Alumni Mentoring Program.

As a result of attending a webinar during the pandemic focused on supporting students virtually, Ramla Osman, associate director of CPD, sought "to provide meaningful connections and find ways for the students to grow personally and professionally." She researched mentoring programs at other universities and because almost everyone was working remotely, it made it possible for alumni all over the country to participate.

Sometimes the pairing aligns with the student's career interests as it did for Kauner Shacklette, a UK Lewis Honors student from Vine Grove, Kentucky, who is majoring in architecture with a certi-



Photo submitted

cate in historic preservation.

Shacklette aspires to work for Lego one day, which was his inspiration to pursue architecture. Shacklette's mentor is Matt DeLuca, an associate architect with JRA Architects. Through the program, Shacklette meets in person with DeLuca monthly and gains exposure to the field of architecture.

The alumni participating include a variety of professionals in fields such as medicine, law, business, science and more. ■

Research

FARMERS, WINTER ANNUALS CAN SAVE HONEY BEES

Some plants that are disregarded as mere weeds in fallow crop fields could be an untapped resource, providing essential nutrition to honeybees during the winter season, according to the results of UK researcher Clare Rittschof's team.

Published in *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, the research focused on a critical time for honeybees – the late winter and early spring period when bee colonies come out of their winter dormancy and their need for adequate nutrition is peaking.

Researchers from the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Department of Entomology placed honeybee colonies near fields rich in winter annuals. The bees displayed more robust growth and stronger immune responses than those near fields lacking plants.

"Fallow croplands, particularly those previously used for cultivating crops like corn and soybeans, were identified as the most beneficial for the bees," Rittschof said. "These fields typically exhibited a higher density of winter annuals, providing a richer and more diverse food source for the honeybee colonies." ■

MARKEY STUDY PAVES WAY FOR SOLUTIONS TO BOOST PEDIATRIC CLINICAL TRIAL ENROLLMENT

A University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center study published in *JCO Oncology Practice* sheds light on the disparity, and paves the way for solutions, to increase clinical trial participation among young patients with cancer.

Co-led by Eric Durbin, director of the Kentucky Cancer Registry and Cancer Research Informatics Shared Resource Facility at the UK Markey Cancer Center, the research demonstrates the feasibility of linking central cancer registry and pediatric cancer clinical trial consortium data to track patients and describe gaps in clinical trial enrollment. The research is being used to guide a nationwide linkage study between the National Childhood Cancer Registry and the Children's Oncology Group.

The research team successfully linked data from the Kentucky Cancer Registry, which tracks all new cancer cases in the state, and the COG, a national database of children enrolled in clinical trials. By matching these datasets, they identified Kentucky patients who had not enrolled in a clinical trial or other COG study.

"This study is a crucial step toward ensuring all children have access to the latest and most effective cancer treatments offered by clinical trials," said Durbin. ■

UK CLIMBS AMONG NATIONAL PEERS IN HIGHER ED RESEARCH RANKINGS



Photo by Mark Cornelson, UK Photo

The University of Kentucky climbed several spots in national higher education rankings for research and development expenditures.

Based on UK's \$476.5 million in research expenditures — the funds the university spent to conduct research in fiscal year 2022 — as reported to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics:

- UK ranks 61st among 637 public and private universities in the United States, up from 64th in FY21.
- UK ranks 40th among 410 public universities, up from 43rd in FY21.
- UK ranks 5th out of 14 Southeastern Conference institutions.

Vice President for Research Lisa Cassis said, "It is incredibly challenging to move up in these national rankings on research and development expenditures. The University of Kentucky's research enterprise has experienced record growth. This is a testament to the creativity and innovation of the faculty, staff and students who make up our research investigator community at UK. Their tireless work continues to propel the university forward." ■



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Let the UK Alumni Association be your guide to year-round fun with your Wildcat family. If you are missing the UK spirit, come join us!



Black Alumni Reunion

Cultivate community during a weekend filled with educational experiences, social events and networking opportunities. Mark your calendar for the Black Alumni Reunion, set for April 11-13.



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Watch the most exciting two minutes in sports at a Derby party on May 4 with your local alumni club. Experience the thrill of the race with fellow UK graduates – a winning ticket for a fun time!



Cats on the Town

Connect with young alumni in several cities nationwide at a Cats on the Town event near you this summer. Meet other Wildcats who, like you, are passionate about the blue and white.



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Good morning. [Strike a pose for Big Blue Nation!](#)

What else are we mixing into today's Brew?

-  SEC showdown at Rupp
-  Maxey talks Kentucky
-  And much, much more!

 **STOCK UP**



 **Home Cookin'.** Nineteen minutes was all Rob Dillingham needed to score a season-high 23 points in Kentucky men's basketball's 90-77 win over Missouri at Rupp Arena [on Tuesday night!](#)



The realization of a languishing self-promise leads a hard-working single mother on a journey of inquiry, introspection and purpose where she ultimately discovers fulfillment.

She is...

Photo by Tim Webb

finding her voice

By Dan Knapp

Gliding into a rickety wooden chair, Deidra White, AS '22, is eager to speak of words. Her words. The unvoiced words of ancestors lost to history. The words of those who have worked to keep her down and those who provide inspiration. A cascade of obsidian braids sways across White's shoulder. Her creaseless face belies her years. Only her tresses' errant silver strands betray her age.

She's 45. Far from ancient, but hardly the age when most people veer from established career trajectories. She wears the number as a badge of honor for how far she has come despite enduring the maelstrom of circumstances that waylaid so much early promise.

"When I was younger, you couldn't tell me I couldn't be whatever I wanted, but through life, people try to beat you down, especially when you're a confident Black woman," White says. "Everybody is telling you that 'you shouldn't be this,' 'you shouldn't be that' — even other Black people."

White explains how oppressive words, buttressed by the harsh realities of everyday life often encountered by a demoralized Black working-class single mother, cast a cloud of self-doubt that loomed large for years. Only now is she beginning to emerge from the bleak miasma and revel in the glow of her unveiled talent.

Still at the nascency of a writing career yet displaying a keen versatility in diverse composition styles, White is completing a Master of Fine Arts degree in the University of Kentucky's selective creative writing program. The rising star has been lauded for her work. Rapt audiences respond to her public readings with thunderous applause. She has captured the attention of those she idolizes, literary luminaries like Crystal Wilkinson and DaMaris B. Hill. Frank X Walker — the acclaimed author and poet, 2013-14 Kentucky Poet Laureate and former UK creative writing MFA chair — has christened White "a dynamo" and his "dream student, every mentor's dream."

Despite the adulation, however, Wright sometimes feels insecurity's weighty burden.

"The one thing I'm still trying to rectify is the imposter syndrome, the self-doubt," she says. "I used to be so audacious..."

In a moment of vulnerability, her words trail off as she ponders the profound metamorphosis that has recently unfolded in her life. Shimmering pools form in the corners of her chestnut eyes. She composes herself and smiles.

"...But I'm finding my way; I'm working on it," she continues. "I'm getting all the external validation I

could ever want. The hardest part was believing I had the right to even be in the rooms with some of the people I was in those rooms with."

A LIFE INTERRUPTED

White regards her life as an open book, one that she seems quite intent on writing in her own words, on her own terms, with unabashed candor.

The inquisitive daughter of accomplished parents — her father, now retired, was an attorney; her mother, a healthcare executive — White took the SATs as a 'tween after being scouted to be part of Duke University's prestigious Talent Identification Program. She then saw that promising scholarly journey capsized for more than two decades by a tsunami of obstacles. At 15, White stepped into the unenviable role as sole caretaker for her mother, who was slowly dying of liver and colon cancer. She lost her academic scholarship to Duke when her grades plummeted.

"My father was in Atlanta working on a big case, refusing to come home," White explains. "I don't think he understood how bad the cancer had gotten because she had been fighting it for so long. I was too young to know that if I'd contacted Duke, they probably would've given me some sort of deferral. I didn't realize that, so I just chalked it up to, 'I guess I won't be going to college.'"

After her mother succumbed to the illness, White grew estranged from her father. She became pregnant with a son, Marcus, and navigated a period of homelessness.

"My sole responsibility on this planet at that point was to give my son the best life that I could offer him," White says, "so I worked and worked and worked and never looked back."

She crafted metal seat frames at a Scott County automotive supplier and established a cleaning service to help make ends meet, but she never lost sight of her collegiate aspirations. She vowed that when her son enrolled in school, she would do the same. Years passed. Marcus went off to Kentucky State University. Suffocating under the drudgery of years of backbreaking factory labor, White finally mustered the gumption and enrolled in community college at 37, more than twice the age of the typical college freshman.

Call it fate, providence or, as White does, "mysticism," her path to successful businesswoman took a hard left with an off-the-cuff remark from an insightful instructor.

"It's one of those otherworldly stories," White shares. "I had a wonderful English professor at Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Tammy Ramsey. I was leaving her class one day, and she asked what I was majoring in. I was, like, 'Oh, I'm a business major,' and I told her my big plans about factory management and my big cleaning company ideas. And she said, 'Oh, that's too bad. I thought you were an English major because your writing's so good. Have you thought about becoming a writer?'"

White left the room replaying the conversation in her mind. She scoffed. She never wanted to be a writer...or had she?

"I was thinking, 'this lady's nuts!'" White laughs. "The minute I hit the corner, though, it was as if a Rolodex of images flipped through my mind; memories I'd suppressed just came back up. I saw myself

with my white typewriter and my little binder full of stories that I would type up just for myself in my room. When it all came flooding back, leaving that classroom and walking down that hallway, it hit me hard,” White recalls. “I was like, ‘Sooooo...am I supposed to be a writer?’”

‘BEES TO HONEY’

After graduating with an associate’s degree in business, she took a year and contemplated her next steps — whether to continue the business route or indulge her talent for storytelling.

White tested creative waters by attending free writing classes at Lexington’s Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning and participating in writing circles. By the summer of 2020, writing had evolved from mere pastime to potential profession. She jumped headlong and enrolled in the undergraduate English program at UK.

“For me, it was just like bees to honey,” she raves regarding her UK experience. “It became this beautiful journey of doors opening and people supporting me, uplifting me, encouraging me.”

Scholarships helped defray some of White’s college education costs at a time when she was “struggling bad,” but what meant the most to her was the assurance that she had chosen the correct path.

“More than just the funding, there was the confidence of standing on that stage with people saying to me, ‘you’re a distinguished writer,’ just something that acknowledges that ‘you’ve got the right stuff, kiddo. You’ve got it.’” says White, who received the coveted Patricia and William Stacy Fellowship/Scholarship during her senior year. “It helped me in so many ways, but especially with my confidence.”

She balanced factory work, cleaning and her studies, seldom leaving much time to eat, let alone sleep. Right before graduation, the routine took its toll, and she was hospitalized from exhaustion’s debilitating effects.

“I was working at the factory from 4:30 in the afternoon until 4:30 in the morning,” she remembers. “I’d get off, drive to Frankfort and clean buildings until 6 or 7 o’clock. I’d go home, throw

something in the microwave, shower while it cooked, eat, lie down for an hour, get up and go to class by 9:30. I’d get out of class at noon, maybe 1:30, depending on the day, go home, sleep two more hours, and start over again. I did that for two years, so I felt like my body could keep doing it, but it finally caught up with me.”

She chuckles that she slept during the commencement ceremony, asking the person next to her to nudge and awaken her when her name was called.

Accepting neither the role of victim nor martyr, White drew inspiration from her struggles. She says the fire ignited by the work-a-day life of a Black woman in America fueled her creativity allowing her to release long-carried resentments and repair fractured relationships.

“When I first began writing poetry, it was writing from a place of pain,” the burgeoning author reveals. “That’s what people gravitated to because it was so raw and so emotional, so visceral. But I’m happier now — happier than I’ve ever been in my life — so I find myself writing about other things, usually whatever’s on my heart at the moment, the thoughts that cross my mind. I just have to put it all on the table.”

The voracious lexophile devoured the words of James Baldwin and Zora Neal Hurston, Toni Morrison and Nikki Giovanni — authors who continue to inspire her. She segued beyond writing poetry and began exploring the nuance of fiction and nonfiction. Today, she indiscriminately draws inspiration from the mundane — something as innocuous as the pattern on a stranger’s shirt—to the extraordinary splendor of the Commonwealth.

“One of the best things about living in Kentucky is along I-64 and I-75 — the Horse Park and the horse farms!” White enthuses. “You can see horses running in this beautiful landscape. Who gets to see that every day? There’s so much beauty here!”

DEEP ROOTS IN THE SOIL

White’s love affair with the Bluegrass State has increased her interest in the art and literature known as Affrilachia. Its name



Photo by Mark Cornelison, UK Photo



Late last year, UK President Eli Capilouto invited White to perform her recent spoken word piece, “Here in Kentucky,” during the December commencement ceremonies at Rupp Arena. The poem — which can be enjoyed by scanning the QR code above — weaves White’s personal story within the greater context of the opportunities and triumphs at UK and throughout the Commonwealth. And, unlike at her own graduation, she remained awake for the duration of the program.



White's son, Marcus, congratulates his mother after an uplifting performance in front of some of UK's most respected and influential community members.

A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

The demons that dogged White for so long followed her throughout her undergraduate career despite establishing herself as an ascendant voice with a distinctive point of view. Mired by self-doubt and exhaustion, she nearly missed the MFA application deadline and was uncertain if she would even be accepted.

"I first heard her at an outdoor reading celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month," Walker recounts of White's electrifying public performance of her poem, "Meihua," and its resonating theme of sacrificing one's identity for the sake of fitting into society. Walker hugged her after the recital, saying, "I'll see you in the fall."

She received an acceptance letter mere days after the performance.

"Witnessing her arrival with a mountain of talent but less than a handful of confidence in her craft and her voice and watching her grow and blossom during our MFA program inside and outside the classroom fills me with pride and more than a little satisfaction," Walker gushes.

Although much of her evocative work looks to the past, White imagines where life will lead as she turns the page on the next chapter of her life after she graduates. She has contemplated settling down on a Costa Rican beach and teaching English as a second language. She may stay put in Central Kentucky and look for a teaching position at a university or community college. Working as a teaching assistant for Walker, she discovered a penchant for sharing her love of words with students. For White, words equate joy.

"This is what I've wanted so much that if I have any free time, I'm writing," she says without a trace of earlier insecurity. "If I have any free time, I'm down at the Carnegie Center. If I have any free time, I'm at the Lexington Writer's Room. The things I do outside of school are writing and the literary arts, and I've never been happier."

Although her road has not necessarily been the smoothest, White harbors no regrets for the bumps and turns along the way. She believes everything works together for the greater good, and every hardship is an opportunity to grow and become better.

"The passion that thrives in my stories and poetry comes from my hardships," she says. "I couldn't write the way I do without those experiences."

"I'll never stop writing," she adds resolutely. "This is my life now. And it's so much more beautiful than anything I could have imagined." ■

coined by Walker in the 1990s, Affrilachia focuses on the historic and contemporary cultural legacy of Black and African-American artists, writers and musicians in the Appalachian diaspora.

"When people think of Appalachia, they often think of Kentucky and especially Eastern Kentucky," White explains. "They think 'white people'. But there are Black people in those mountains. Our history is just as much a part of those mountains as any other resident in this state. We want it to be acknowledged that Kentucky's not just white people. We have something to say about this land, about this space, about this beautiful state."

She finds Affrilachian literature cathartic and has begun to delve deeper into her family's rich history to tell untold stories from Eastern Kentucky's hills and hollows, especially those of the matriarchs that came before her.

"I want to know where their blood resides in mine," the wordsmith says.

One such female elder was Sallie White — "Maw Maw to people she terrorized" — the irascible four-foot-eleven-inch dowager who ran a Prohibition-era moonshine empire with an iron fist. There was also her great, great, great, great grandmother.

"Hannah Maguire is what they named her after they dragged her off the beaches of Equatorial Guinea," White explains. "They brought her here in the late 1700s, and she lived in Beattyville. She was born free, enslaved and then died free because she lived to be 125 years old. It's the craziest story. Articles have been written about her. When she died, she left each of her children \$25, which was a lot of money in the late 1800s. She left them the land as well."

That fertile Eastern Kentucky land is where generations of her family lived — esoteric ancestors who punctuate so much of White's work and offer insight into her own identity.

"I'm tied to the soil just as much as if I was born and raised up there," she reasons.

"I see Deidra as firmly rooted in the legacy of those Kentucky writers who came before her — especially Black writers whose aims were both artistic and in search of justice," says Shauna Morgan, associate professor of creative writing and Africana literature at UK. "One of the most distinctive features of her literary art is the way its language and imagery draw the reader into the intimacy of the world of the poem so much that we can feel what the speaker is showing and sharing. It brings us close to the environment — whether that is the natural or manmade world — and it allows us to see its subjects."

Coming in 2026

THE MICHAEL D. RANKIN MD HEALTH EDUCATION BUILDING

There's something that unites us at the University of Kentucky: the drive to create new possibilities for our state, region and beyond. As the University *for* Kentucky, we must meet the moment and step up to change the trajectory on health outcomes for the Commonwealth.

That's what the nine-floor, 500,000 square-foot Michael D. Rankin MD Health Education building is all about.

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This is what's wildly possible at the University of Kentucky — the future of health care for all.



Rendering provided



NEW TRACK AND FIELD CENTER NAMED FOR UK **CHAMPION**

By UK Athletics

The new Jim Green Track and Field Center – dedicated in honor of the first Black student-athlete at Kentucky and in the Southeastern Conference to win both SEC and NCAA championships – officially opened in December.

At the dedication ceremony, University of Kentucky Athletics Director Mitch Barnhart said, "Today's about a lot more than a building. Today is about Jim Green and a lifetime of knocking down barriers, first for himself and ultimately for others."

Green '71 ED was born in Eminence, Kentucky. While in high school, he excelled in football, basketball, baseball and track where he trained on the town's railroad tracks and inside tobacco barns because the school didn't have its own track.

He broke state records in the 70-, 100-, 220- and 440-yard dashes. And he once scored 10 touchdowns in a high school football game. After high school, he committed to compete at UK in track and field.

At UK he succeeded at the highest levels of collegiate sports.

A contemporary at UK of football players Nate Northington, Greg Page, Wilbur Hackett and Houston Hogg, Green was the first Black athlete competing for an SEC school to win conference and NCAA individual championships in any sport.

Despite facing hostility at many competitions, he was a three-time NCAA champion, winning the indoor 60-yard dash in 1968 and the 100-yard dash in both 1968 and 1971. He earned All-America honors six times and won eight SEC individual events, including the indoor 60-yard dash (1968, 1971), outdoor 100-yard dash (1968, 1970, 1971), and outdoor 220-yard dash (1968, 1970, 1971).

He was also the first UK Black to serve as co-captain on the track team and in December 1971 became the first Black student-athlete to graduate from UK.

"I am grateful today!" Jim Green said at the December 2023 dedication of the \$20-million facility. "This is not just about me. This is about my family also, because without family you don't get very far. I am so excited that a little old kid from Eminence, Kentucky, has something named after him. I'm thankful and hopeful the new class of young student-athletes get to enjoy this new facility."

Green said nearly 18 members of his family are UK graduates, including lawyers, engineers and educators.

Green is thankful for all the relationships he developed with UK team members and members of other track teams, he said. He has friends all over the world, thanks to his UK track experience. He cited Notre Dame track record-setter Bill Hurd as an example. They've been friends for 52 years, Green said.

It was tough dealing with the racism of the 1960s and being spit on and called names, Green said, but he knew it would be different for future generations.

"It wasn't about me," he emphasized. "It was about the kids coming behind me. I did not want those kids to have to go through what I did."

Kentucky men's and women's track and field and cross country teams will use the facility for practices. The 81,000 square foot facility has a 200-meter banked track enabling the runners to train on a surface that is now standard for the NCAA and SEC indoor championships.



The Jim Green Track and Field Center features a statue of a sprinting Jim Green and a list of all his accomplishments as a Wildcat are located at the building entrance.



Jim Green and his wife, Eva, talk at the building dedication with former U.S. Ambassador Kelly Craft and Joe Craft who provided a gift for its construction.

The building is located adjacent to the UK Outdoor Track and the teams' locker rooms and strength and conditioning areas in Shively Sports Center.

Along with the new building, a statue was unveiled showing a sprinting Green and a list of all his accomplishments as a Wildcat.

Current UK Track and Field and Cross Country Head Coach Lonnie Green said of Green at the building dedication, "When I met Jim Green for the first time, the sincerity of the man and who he is just blessed my heart. He was concerned not just about the African American student-athlete, he was concerned about students in general and we thank Jim for being that person who stepped up."

Green was a 2007 inductee into the University of Kentucky Athletics Hall of Fame, one of eight halls of fame bearing his achievements. The others include: The Eminence High School Hall of Fame, Dawahare's Kentucky High School Hall of Fame, Kentucky High School Athletic Hall of Fame, Kentucky Track and Cross-Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Mason-Dixon Games Hall of Fame, Kentucky Black Athletic Hall of Fame and the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame.

A pledged \$7.5 million gift from Joe and Kelly Craft was applied toward the new indoor track and the renovation of the Nutter Field House – the current indoor track – for primary use as a football facility.

"Joe and Kelly have been talking about this gift for months," Barnhart said. "I am thankful it has come to fruition and equally excited about how the Crafts have asked us to recognize this gift in honor of Jim." ■





WHEN IT COMES TO
WILDCAT,

WHAT YOU SEE
ISN'T ALL THERE IS

As a University of Kentucky graduate you may call yourself a Wildcat, but we all know there's only one real Wildcat at UK.

You know him. He's easy to spot and hard to forget. He's the tall, lanky cat with the big paws. Whether on the field, in the community or on campus, he's encouraging Wildcat fans to get fired up.

Wildcat is our treasured mascot and a symbol of the university. He has a swagger in his step and is the special guest at every celebration, sporting competition and awards ceremony. And if you ask him, and thousands of people have, he'll be glad to have his picture taken with you.

But what you see with Wildcat isn't necessarily all there is. The beloved mascot has a life behind the scenes that includes hours of preparation and training, a support staff and some secrets that, until now, have never been revealed.

By Jacalyn Carfagno

Like most of the students who get to be the university's beloved mascot Wildcat, or his silly sidekick, Scratch, Andrew Schmitt '23 ED, said it's hot, exhausting, demanding work and, "the most fun thing I've ever done in my life."

Schmitt, a lifelong Kentucky Wildcats fan, embodied the mascot for his four years as a University of Kentucky undergraduate, from 2019 to 2023. He balanced atop the pyramid of cheerleaders at basketball games, sweated through hot August quarters during football season, and did hundreds of push-ups, some of them one-handed, after the football team scored.

These days Schmitt, now studying physical therapy at UK, can talk freely about his time "in the suit" but during his four years as Wildcat it was different.

"Once you put on that suit, you're a whole different character," he explained. "Wildcat isn't Andrew, Wildcat is Wildcat."

THE SAME PERSONALITY

Wildcat has his own distinctive way of performing regardless of who is inside the four-piece wildcat costume.

"They work so hard at making them a character. They walk the same, squat the same, take pictures the same," said Ryan O'Connor, UK's head cheer coach whose domain includes the mascots. That's why "mascot is very private," she said.

To the public, as Schmitt said, Wildcat is Wildcat and it doesn't matter who is behind that hairy mask.

But losing yourself in the character can be extremely rewarding said Shahruckh Ellahi '21 AS, '22 BE, who played Wildcat's sidekick Scratch from 2017 to 2022.

"It's like being Spiderman," he said. "When you don't have the mask on no one cares who you are, but you put the mask on and everyone loves you."

Sometimes, though, Wildcat and Scratch leak over into the "real" lives of the students who play them.

Ellahi would find himself raising a finger to proclaim, "number one" like Scratch when out of costume and think, "what am I doing?" Schmitt's friends would call him out when, in his early days as Wildcat, he'd walk in the trademark swagger out of costume. "As I matured into that character, I was able to separate the two," he said.



Photos by Chet White, UK Athletics, Britney Howard, and Mark Cornelison, UK Photo

WHERE'D WILDCAT COME FROM?

The Wildcat name began with a win over the University of Illinois in 1909. The story goes that Commandant Philip W. Carbusier, who was head of the military department at UK, told students later that the football team had "fought like wildcats." It stuck.

The modern incarnation of Wildcat in a fur suit first appeared in 1976 when UK student Gary Tanner began prowling the sidelines to cheer on the team and entertain the fans.

Tanner had made the cheer team, according to a 1976 story in the Kentucky Kernel, and accepted the job when asked if he'd like to be the mascot.

Like everyone after him, his main complaint was the heat inside the suit.

"The most weight I've ever lost was 17 pounds but that was a three-hour game," he told a reporter. Tanner recalled "fun times," like tackling the Nittany Lion at a game against Penn State ("I was victorious"). And, he said, donning the suit had improved his social life. "I've swiped cheerleaders from the other teams. The girls always want to hug me because they think I'm so cute."

These days, Wildcat is not likely to fraternize with opposing cheerleaders but many things, in addition to the heat in the suit, are the same.

ATHLETICISM AND HYDRATION ARE KEY

Like Tanner, modern mascots work out three times a week with the rest of the cheer squad.

"Even when you're really tired and really sweaty, to keep going, that takes a pretty good level of fitness," Schmitt said.

"Most people don't get to see the other side of what mascot-ing looks like," said Emalee Johnson '20 ED, '22 HS, a trainer who works with the mascots. Being a mascot takes strength and endurance, she said.

Although modern materials have made the costume a little lighter and more breathable, it's still hot in there. Johnson oversees the hydration routine that Wildcat and Scratch follow to stay healthy during games. Two days before she gives them a "hydration packet" made up of three different Gatorades and some electrolyte solutions. The day of the game they drink at least one Gatorade in the morning and one right before they go out in costume.

Heat sickness is a real danger, especially during the hot, early season football games. The trainers keep an ice tub on standby to immerse a Wildcat and bring down his body temperature if he gets overheated.

"Thank goodness," she said, she's never had to use it. "Hopefully, we can keep it that way."

O'Connor, the cheer coach, said working out with the cheer squad is about more than just fitness.

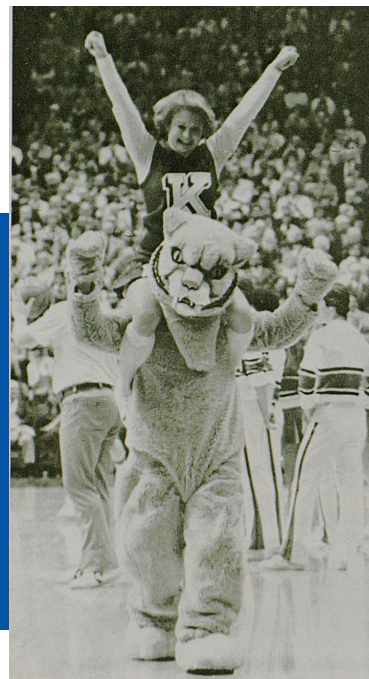
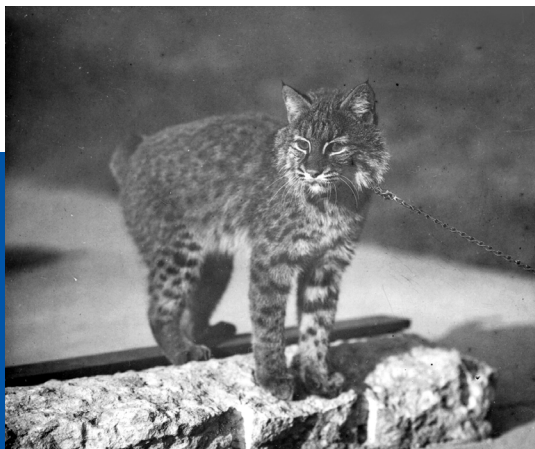
"They have to have physical trust with our cheerleaders" who hold them aloft in the pyramid at basketball games and hoist the board that Wildcat does pushups on to celebrate scores at football games. "They do pushups on a board held by six 18-year-olds," she said, "they have to know those kids."

The mascots "are so busy," O'Connor said, as they juggle classes (they are, after all students), workouts, appearances and their own lives. The mascots attend scores of sports competitions and travel with the football team and for postseason contests in basketball and volleyball. From time to time there's special travel, like when Wildcat went to Los Angeles last year to appear in a Paramount commercial.

They also attend academic functions and community events. Campus organizations can request Wildcat's appearance.

"The month of November is crazy," when all four sports they support – men's and women's basketball, football and volleyball – overlap, O'Connor said.

"They have to be organized," she said, and responsible. "We're trusting them with a \$10,000 suit and to represent the university."



EVOLUTION OF THE MASCOT



"It's like being Spiderman. When you don't have the mask on no one cares who you are, but you put the mask on and everyone loves you."

— Shahrukh Ellahi who was Scratch



AND THEN THERE'S SCRATCH

Wildcat is the mascot with the swagger, the cool cat who might taunt opposing fans while Scratch, who came on the scene about 1995, is "more the goofball, kid-like character...being a big idiot, really" said Matt Hogg '04 BE, '05 ED who was Scratch during his years at UK.

As the friendlier, more kid-friendly guy, Scratch makes a lot of appearances at UK Children's Hospital to cheer up both kids being treated and their families.

Hogg made some enduring connections during those visits, including one boy who, "years later, after we graduated, we were still checking in with him."

Hogg went on to work professionally as a mascot for the Washington Wizards before a torn ACL (it is a very physical job) sidelined him. Ellahi did an internship as the mascot with the Tennessee Titans then with the Cincinnati Reds, where he still appears occasionally, although now he works as a stage manager for the Bengals.

All the former Wildcats and Scratches have stories about favorite times – when they were crowd surfed down a row of stands, when a kid's eyes lit up in a hospital bed, when a stunt they'd planned didn't quite work out.

But in the end, each says the real joy of being Wildcat or Scratch is the day-to-day interaction with Big Blue Nation.

"It really is an incredible privilege," Schmitt said. "I just wish I could do it again one more time." ■



WILDCAT SECRETS

WHO GETS TO BE WILDCAT OR SCRATCH?

- To be Wildcat a student must be about 6 feet 3 inches tall and thin enough that the cheerleaders can hold them up on a plank to do pushups but strong enough to do the pushups (and at least one with only one arm).
- Scratch can be 5 feet 9 inches to 6 feet tall.
- Students try out. They do improv out of costume while reacting to the fight song and other prompts and then try a "field walk" in the suit.

YOU'VE BEEN CHOSEN. CONGRATULATIONS! NOW WHAT?

- Wildcat and Scratch learn how to do all the mannerisms of the character.
- Mascots attend a four-day summer workshop.
- They attend strength workouts two to three times a week and work with a trainer to assure they hydrate properly (particularly for day football games in August and September).
- They must have the strength and endurance for the job. Wildcat and Scratch don't just cheer on athletes, they are athletes.



Photos by Chet White, UK Athletics

FUN FACTS ABOUT UK'S MASCOTS

ALL DRESSED UP

- There are four parts to the mascot costumes: head, body, hands (or paws) and feet.
- Each Wildcat has its own body costume. The mascots share two heads and there are lots of feet and hands. The heads and feet (that include Timberland boots) are the heaviest parts.
- Wildcat has only four fingers; Scratch has five.
- Don't bother to ask Wildcat or Scratch a question that requires more than a yes or no answer. Neither Wildcat nor Scratch speak.

SUPER-SECRET WILDCAT SECRETS

- Ideally, there are four students who are Wildcat and three who are Scratch at any given time.
- Wildcat often has a "handler" with him, a person who helps intervene when talking is necessary. Often, this is a recruit who is along to watch an experienced Wildcat in action.
- Wildcat and Scratch have their own signatures.
- All mascots receive scholarships, but no one receives a full scholarship. The mascots are not paid, but they receive Nike gear and priority registration, just like the cheer student athletes receive.

WHO'S SCRATCH?

- Scratch came on the scene about 1995, billed as "a more 'hip' character for children."
- The first Scratch was Nate Brown. Scratch was a special guest when Brown announced he was running for student body president in 1998. (He won, leading to the Kernel's headline: "Ex-mascot scratches way to presidency.")



To learn more about the history of Wildcat, check out the photos in Class Notes, pages 42-50.

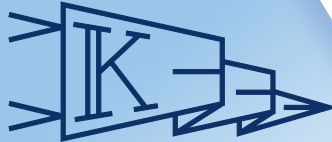
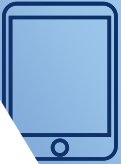


LET'S CELEBRATE THE 2024 GREAT TEACHERS

This year's Great Teachers were recognized on the court of Rupp Arena before the men's basketball team defeated the Vanderbilt Commodores in early March. Pictured from left are: Jordan Brower, Bradley Elliott, Mark Mark Fillmore, Kayla Johnson, Eric Thomas Weber and Zada Komara with UK Alumni Association President Janie McKenzie-Wells and UK Alumni Association Awards Committee Chair Kelly Sullivan Holland.







INTRODUCING

2024 GREAT TEACHER AWARD



Recipients

By Sally Scherer

Each year the University of Kentucky Alumni Association recognizes six of the university's best teachers with the Great Teacher Award.

The oldest continuously given award on campus for teachers, the award honors teachers based on outstanding teaching, concern for students inside and outside of the classroom as well as involvement in the academic community.

Great teachers are at the core of the classroom experience for thousands of students each year at UK.

Now in its 63rd year, the award is based on nominations accepted by current students. Recipients are selected by a committee appointed by the UK Alumni Association's Board of Directors and representatives of the student organization Omicron Delta Kappa. Recipients receive an engraved award and a stipend.



JORDAN BROWER

*Assistant Professor, department of English,
College of Arts & Sciences*

Senior English major Jessica Miller finds the discussions that Jordan Brower encourages in his film classes to be one of the greatest benefits to his class.

Each week, students complete discussion board posts and then Brower reads them for common themes and questions that he explores in class, with reference to academic sources and relevant films, she wrote.

"These discussions are the perfect balance between being entirely student-led vs. being

highly structured lectures," wrote Miller in her nomination. "Because of Dr. Brower's careful planning, these discussions are incredibly fun and productive, and they help boost student morale because we all feel as if we have something to contribute."

Brower, who earned his bachelor's degree from Amherst College and his Ph.D., from Yale University, previously taught as a lecturer in the interdisciplinary history and literature program at Harvard University and as a graduate student and then adjunct at Yale University.

His research studies the ways artists — writers of fiction and screenplays, directors, stars — understand their positions within the increasingly complex and chaotic media industries in which they work.

For Miller, that focus helps keep Brower's classes current.

"He often finds ways to discuss patterns in the history of film that extend to recent events, such as the SAG-AFTRA strike and the 'Me Too' movement. It's fascinating to hear him talk about how 'crisis is the backbone' of Hollywood and how great

movies are often made in reaction to the industry's constant turmoil," she wrote.

His first book, "Classical Hollywood, American Modernism: A Literary History of the Studio System" (Cambridge University Press, 2024), charts the entwined trajectories of the Hollywood studio system and literary modernism in the United States.

Brower's interest in education extends beyond the classroom, too. Miller describes Brower as "very approachable." He has had coffee with his senior seminar class and the time together was "good natured and morale building," Miller wrote.

Also, when she mentioned to Brower that she was adopted from foster care, he introduced her to a magazine, Youth Communication, in which she later published a review of the Barbara Kingsolver novel "Demon Copperhead." The review was reprinted in The Nation.

Nominator: Jessica Miller,
*College of Arts & Sciences,
English major, senior*

BRADLEY ELLIOTT

*Faculty Lecturer, department of mathematics,
College of Arts & Sciences*

Bradley Elliott knows what it's like to be a student at the University of Kentucky because he has been one. Elliott earned his bachelor's in computer science and his master's in business administration at UK prior to earning his Ph.D. at Emory University in 2020.

And he knows what it's like to be a great teacher, too. His work in the classroom was recognized by Camden Jackson, a junior majoring in chemical engineering.

"I never had a question he couldn't explain thoroughly and to a high level," Jackson wrote in his nomination letter. He described Elliott's teaching methods as challenging and effective.

"Before teaching the class in a group setting, he let us work on problems and attempt to figure out (answers) based on things we had previously learned. It was incredibly effective and helped me use previous learnings to understand new content," Jackson wrote. "The normal lecture-style classroom was a rarity in his classroom and it paid off."

Elliott describes his classes saying he focuses on active learning and student collaboration. He designs lessons and assignments that "develop students'

problem-solving skills and resilience so students are better prepared to solve novel problems in the future."

In addition to his teaching style, Jackson recognized Elliott for making students aware of the latest findings in mathematics research.

"He is incredibly familiar with things going on in his field and consistently involved us with discussion in mathematics research. Every week we would come into seeing the name of a research professor on the board and he would highlight that professor and the research they were doing. Dr. Elliott is incredibly knowledgeable in his field and handled questions with excellence."

Each summer Elliott is a faculty member at the Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program, working with high-achieving high school seniors. Pre-Covid he was the director of multiple math outreach programs and ran math competitions for K-12 students.

He was a tutor at the UK Center for Academic and Tutorial Services from 2014-2015, is chair of Math Department's inclusive excellence committee, a member of the Math Department's salary committee, lecturer hiring committee and a participant in UK's working group on ethics, equity, inclusion,



and justice in the mathematical sciences. He is also a member of UK's Teaching Innovations Institute. He is a faculty advisor for the Innovation Club and the Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. The Innovation Club is for STEM majors to grow professionally and learn professional skills via real-life applications.

Jackson wrote, "I also recall him attending events he was invited to by students showing his investment in them and their wellbeing."

Nominator: Camden Jackson,
*Stanley and Karen Pigman College of Engineering,
chemical engineering, junior*



MARK FILLMORE

*Research Professor, Department of Psychology,
College of Arts & Sciences*

understanding of the material. He provides interesting lectures and engaging discussion questions to promote a comfortable and educational learning environment.”

Fillmore joined the UK faculty in 1999. He has a bachelor’s degree, a master’s degree and his Ph. D. from the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario.

In addition to teaching, his research areas include behavioral pharmacology, substance abuse and behavioral neuroscience. The general focus of his program concerns how acute doses of abused drugs alter behavioral and cognitive functioning in humans. His research is part of the University of Kentucky’s efforts to find solutions to drug and alcohol addiction.

Since joining UK, he has published more than 180 papers in leading journals of the discipline, has authored or co-authored 10 book chapters and has given numerous invited talks all over the world.

He has also acquired more than \$10 million in grants from the National Institutes of Health. He is recognized as one of the world’s leading scholars in the examination

of the effects of alcohol on human cognitive information processing.

Wrote Tomaszewski, “I began working in Dr. Fillmore’s research lab as an undergraduate assistant in the spring of 2023. Since then, he has shown a great interest in my academic career and has stepped up to guide me through my final year at UK and through my graduate school purists.

“He takes an interest in the life of his undergraduate and graduate students and assists with compassion and attentiveness. He has made me feel as if I always have a guiding figure in my educational life.”

Fillmore is the mentor for three graduate students and one undergraduate student. He has served as the director of Graduate Studies for the Psychology Department at UK.

Mark Fillmore’s teaching style appeals to Grace Tomaszewski and it’s one of the many reasons she nominated him for recognition as a Great Teacher.

“Dr. Fillmore seems to understand what it’s like to be a college student,” she wrote in her nomination. “He teaches his classes with passion and excitement for the subject matter. He integrates firsthand experiences and tells interesting stories relating to class content that heavily contributes to my

Nominator: Grace Tomaszewski,
*College of Arts & Sciences,
psychology/sociology major, senior*

KAYLA JOHNSON

Assistant Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation and Director of Graduate Global Learning Initiatives, College of Education

Kayla Johnson shared information about her personal life in a “Who I Am” discussion in her diversity in higher education course.

It was all nominator Kayla Gill needed to gain respect and appreciation for Johnson.

“When she shared that she — a millennial white woman — was also first generation, low income, formerly homeless and Appalachian, we were floored and immediately understood that this course was going to be better than we expected,” Gill wrote.

“By sharing her own identities and what they meant to her, she encouraged us all to do the same, while also reminding us to first be curious, not judgmental about others based on who we think they are. For a graduate-level course on diversity, that was a terrific takeaway and something that I know many of us now carry into our own professional and personal interactions.”

Johnson, an assistant professor in the College of Education and Director of Graduate Learning Initiatives, teaches courses in higher education, comparative and international education, diversity, equity and inclusion and qualitative research.

Johnson earned a dual-title Ph.D. in higher education and comparative and international education from Penn State University, a master’s in higher education from the University of Kentucky and bachelors in English, French and secondary education from Marshall University.

“Her knowledge and confidence gets students excited about what they are learning and encourages them to ask questions in and out of class,” Gill wrote.

Johnson believes that international and intercultural perspectives are pivotal in higher education. As director of Graduate Global Learning Initiatives, Johnson aims to internationalize the graduate student experience. In 2016, she co-founded Centro Educativo Pallata Ayllu (Pallata Community Education Center), a non-governmental organization that facilitates access to culturally grounded and community-driven educational opportunities for Indigenous children and adults in the Peruvian Andes.

Johnson was awarded the 2023 NACADA Region 3 Outstanding Advising Award and the 2022 UK Ken Freedman Outstanding



Faculty Advisor Award and she credits her faculty advisors for her success. She has worked with UK Transformative Learning, International Student and Scholar Services and Education Abroad.

Nominator: Kayla Gill,
*College of Education, studies in higher education,
doctoral student*

ZADA KOMARA

Faculty Lecturer, Lewis Honors College and affiliated faculty member with the UK Appalachian Studies Program and the UK Department of Anthropology

Zada Komara led an overnight field trip to Kentucky's Red River Gorge where students participated in immersive living archaeology demonstrations to experience the area's rich cultural traditions beginning with the Commonwealth's ancient Indigenous residents. It's that kind of opportunity that makes Komara stand out to nominator Jack Goebel.

"She brings a very contemporary perspective to the issue of anthropology and archaeology," Goebel wrote. "Dr. Komara is well acquainted with current issues in the field. She provides a contemporary perspective to issues in anthropology that are constantly evolving. She allows students to lead discussion so that we learn how to engage with the reading and engage our classmates."

Komara earned her bachelor's degree in anthropology from Edinboro University in Pennsylvania and her master's and Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Kentucky. Her research includes archaeology of the recent past, Central

and Southern Appalachia, oral history, public history and general material culture studies. She is currently studying archaeologies of gender, race, class and their intersection with the consumer revolution in Appalachian coal towns and modern material culture studies on UK's campus.

"She sets everything up so that we are able to learn the material factually as well as learn critical thinking and analysis," wrote Goebel. "She chose a week to devote to garbology, which was developed in the 1970s to analyze garbage and determine what that reveals about modern values."

She administers the UK Appalachian Center's Coal Camp Documentary Project, a collaborative documentation effort focusing on company coal towns in Kentucky's 54 Appalachian counties.

Goebel wrote that during Komara's office hours it's not unusual to find groups of students — current and former — congregating in her office to discuss course content, current events and their favorite video games.



Nominator: Jack Goebel,
College of Arts & Science and Stanley and Karen Pigman College of Engineering physics and computer science dual degree, sophomore



ERIC THOMAS WEBER

Associate Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation, College of Education

them to develop a realistic plan to achieve them," Cowherd wrote. "He enjoys working with his students and will partner with them on academic projects such as journal articles and conference presentations."

He "actively tries to assist his students in reaching their career and educational aims."

Weber received the 2020 Teacher Who Made a Difference Award from the UK College of Education and the Dr. Jean Pierce Student Recruitment Award at the 2021 Mid-Western Educational Research Association, which is "awarded to individuals who had the largest number of students who indicated with their registration that the recipient encouraged them to join and/or attend the organization's annual meeting."

Weber received his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University with a double major in philosophy and communication, earned his master's in philosophy from Ohio University and his Ph.D. in philosophy from Southern Illinois University. He joined the faculty at UK in 2016 as a visiting associate professor in the department of philosophy before joining the department of educational policy studies and evaluation in the College of Education as an associate professor in 2018.

Weber, who serves as executive director of The Society of Philosophers in America, is known for his expertise on John Dewey, an American philosopher, psychologist, and education reformer. In 2021, Weber edited "America's Public Philosopher: Essays on Social Justice, Economics, Education, and the Future of Democracy," published by Columbia University Press. It features a collection of 46 essays of John Dewey's writings.

Weber's expertise in educational philosophy is evident in his academic work, which consists of five books, 36 articles or essays (including reviews, book chapters, and commentaries), 56 popular media publications (e.g., op-eds, radio interviews, and podcasts interviews), and 151 presentations.

"As my advisor, I believe that Dr. Weber truly wants his students to succeed and tries to be available to them as much as possible," Cowherd wrote.

Nominator: Heather Cowherd,
College of Education, higher education, doctoral candidate

Eric Thomas Weber teaches the philosophy of education, ethics and educational decision making, philosophical research methods and education in American culture.

In his graduate-level classes, he asks students to create a philosophical statement to examine who they are and how their goals relate to their ethical viewpoints, wrote nominator Heather Cowherd. The assignment is an impactful exercise.

Weber "asks students about their goals and career aspirations, and then tries to help

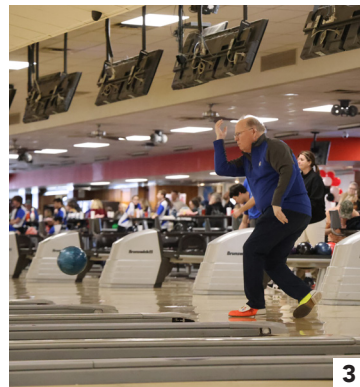
Club News



1



2



3



8



9



13



14

1. In January, the **Arizona UK Alumni Club** attended a Phoenix Suns game. UK legend Rex Chapman (and former Suns player) was at the event, too.

2. More than 30 UK alumni, current students, family members and local fans came out for the **Upstate South Carolina UK Alumni Club's** Gator Bowl game watch party at The Bellwether Public House in downtown Greenville, South Carolina.

3. The **Fayette County UK Alumni Club** held a scholarship fundraiser, Strikes for Scholars, with proceeds benefitting the club scholarship endowment fund.

4. **Northern Alabama UK Alumni Club** President Annie Saylor addressed Eastern Kentucky high school students who visited the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center and the U. S.

Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama, in November 2023. The students traveled with faculty and staff from the Pigman College of Engineering as part of the NASA Propulsion Technology Outreach Program.

5. & 6. Members of the **Northern Alabama UK Alumni Club** had fun at a Rocket City Trash Pandas baseball game in late August 2023. The team is a double A affiliate of the Los Angeles Angels and plays in Madison, Alabama.

7. The **Greater Birmingham UK Alumni Club** welcomed a future member during a watch party in early December 2023. Pictured are Olivia and Aaron Fons with son David (Class of 2045).

8. The **Arizona UK Alumni Club** gathered at a football game watch party to watch the Cats compete in the Gator Bowl.



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16

9. Sarasota/Suncoast UK Alumni Club member Mike Murphy helped fire up the fans at a basketball game watch party when the Cats took on the Florida Gators.

10. 11. & 12. Big Blue Santa joined members of the **Sarasota/Suncoast UK Alumni Club** at a basketball game watch party. Santa took pictures with fans, passed out Big Blue candy canes and helped make the BBN's wishes come true as the Wildcats defeated favored North Carolina.

13. Several members of the **Big Sandy UK Alumni Club** and their families enjoyed a game watch party at Buffalo Wild Wings in Pikeville, Kentucky, as the Wildcats defeated the Arkansas Razorbacks. Also in attendance were two potential students. Some recruiting may have occurred.

14. A group from the **San Diego UK Alumni Club** got together for a basketball game watch party in December to see the Cats take on the University of North Carolina. The event was held at the San Diego Distillery, owned by a UK fan. In addition to watching the game, the group had a tour of the distillery and enjoyed some samples of the product.

15. Members of the **Hardin County UK Alumni Club** celebrated the holidays by donating bicycles and \$2,000 toward the Shop with a Cop program to the various law enforcement agencies in Hardin County.

16. Sherry Moak, a member of the **Louisville UK Alumni Club** and her son James, volunteered with the Salvation Army as bell ringers.



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Education

ITS ALL ABOUT CONNECTIONS

A Big Blue thanks to all our new Life Members! We are pleased to recognize your commitment to the Wildcat family and intention to stay connected to the University of Kentucky for life.

Dave Albritton
Heather Albritton
Gene Baker
Randy Baker
Roberta Baker
Darrin Banks
Melissa Barnes
Kyle Barron
John Barth
Shannon Barth
Melissa Becher
Robin Bennett
Simon-Brooks Berry
Susan Berry
Douglas Black
Nicholas Black
Sally Black
Robert Blanchet
Jennifer Blatz
Jeanne Bouvier
Joseph Bouvier
Amanda Bowling
Jacob Boyd
Carolina Branson
Tyler Branson
Ryan Buckler
Angela Bushway
Gregory Bushway
Jerry Byers
Molly Byuers
Kendall Cain
Joe Cantrell
Gary Chambers
Su Chang
Kristie Chinn
P. Christensen
Tony Collier
Jennifer Connell
Thomas Connell

Addison Conway
James Cooper
Claudine Costich
Ronald Couch
Ida Craft
Joseph Craft
Steve Daugherty
Vera Daugherty
Kevin Davies
Theresa Davies
Angela Deane
Silas Deane
Heather DeCamillis
Jane Ann Dempsey
Diana Doggett
William Doggett
Susan Douglas
Zengyu Du
Donald Eblen
Danita Elliott
Terry Elliott
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Brandi Fishback
Craig Folsbee
Marilyn Folsbee
Caitlin Fortier
Robert Fowler
Ginger Fraser
Kevin Fraser
Blaike Freeman
Jennifer Garrison
Shawn Garrison
Emilie Guy
Cyndi Hall
Cindy Ham
Timothy Ham
Audra Hamlin
Kathleen Harris
Jason Hayden

Elizabeth Henderson
Gregory Herron
Sean Hetzell
Stephanie Higgins
Daniel Howard
Michael Hubbard
Mindy Hunter
Barbara Irwin
Kellie Johns
Jacob Keeton
Daniel Kelly
Cheryl Kersey
Steven Kersey
Jedidiah Kinderknecht
Monica Kinderknecht
Kelley Kline
Mark Korros
Lori Lashgari
Brian Lee
Melissa Lewis
W. Lewis
Jodi Lukas-Stem
Tim Madlung
Cezar Mamaril
Natasha Mamaril
Michael Matile
Traci Mattera
Mark McAndrew
Cheryl McDaniel
Angela McKenzie
Penny Meredith
David Millay
Cary Mitchell
Laura Moore
Tariq Muhammad
Deborah Navin
Salome Nnoromele
James O'Bannon
Paula O'Bannon

C. Payne
Alison Peltcs
Robin Penick
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Teble Peterson
Jeffrey Peyton
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Richard Russell
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Katie Sedlaczek
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Arthur Shaffer
Jerri Shaffer
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William Skees
Bryan Skoog
Jennifer Skoog
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Sarah Smith
Vickie Smith
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Jane Spiegel
Jo Anne Stafford
Anthony Stalion
Cooper Stanley
Shannon Stell
Brian Stinson
George Stokes
Benjamin Sullivan
Katherine Taylor
Chad Thompson
Sarah Thompson
Bernadette Tucker
Kirk Vidra
Lyndsey Vidra
Fred Waddell
Jason Warren
Katherine Warren
Nathaniel Whitaker
Rachel Whitaker
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Sports

TIM COUCH ELECTED TO THE COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Tim Couch, All-America and record-setting quarterback who led the University of Kentucky football team to some of its greatest moments in school history, has been elected to the College Football Hall of Fame.

"I'm honored and humbled," Couch said upon receiving the news. "This is an unbelievable honor; I'm blown away by it. I'm really excited for the celebration this year, representing Kentucky and doing my best to do that."

Couch played at Kentucky from 1996-98. Couch's sophomore and junior campaigns – coinciding with the arrival of the "Air Raid" offense of Coach Hal Mumme – sent a lightning bolt of excitement through the Kentucky program and Wildcat fan base.

In the first game of the 1997 season, Couch threw for a then-school-record 398 yards and four touchdowns as Kentucky reclaimed the Governor's Cup with a 38-24 win over Louisville. Two weeks later

he threw for a school-record seven touchdown passes in a 49-7 win at Indiana.

Couch guided Kentucky to a win for the ages when playing host to the Alabama Crimson Tide, whom UK had defeated only one time in school history (75 years earlier in 1922), Couch threw for 355 yards and four touchdowns, including the game-winner in overtime, as UK posted a 40-34 triumph.

During his first season as the starting quarterback, attendance increased from 40,000 fans per game to more than 59,000 fans per game. As a response to the surge of interest, the University enlarged Commonwealth Stadium (now Kroger Field) by 10,000 seats, an expansion that was nicknamed "The House That Couch Built."

Following his junior season, Couch declared for the National Football League Draft and was the overall No. 1 selection by the expansion team Cleveland Browns in the 1999 draft. ■



Photos courtesy of UK Athletics

SEC WOMEN'S LEGENDS INCLUDES SOFTBALL STANDOUT



Molly Johnson-Belcher '11 '13 ED, who was the Kentucky Softball program's first-ever All-American and currently is in her 14th season as an assistant coach, has been named the University of Kentucky's 2024 Southeastern Conference Women's Legend.

She played at Kentucky from 2007-2010, holding numerous school records, appearing in multiple Team USA competitions, and guiding Kentucky to its first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance in 2009.

She currently is in her 14th season as Kentucky's assistant coach, where she coaches first base and oversees the UK outfield development.

In 2010, she was the No. 2 overall pick in the National Pro Fastpitch Draft, where she left UK as its all-time hits leader and was named the program's first-ever NFCA All-American just weeks later. She currently ranks inside the top 10 at Kentucky in hits, batting average, runs scored, doubles, home runs, at bats, slugging percentage, total bases, stolen bases, and fielding percentage.

The All-American shortstop also had a bevy of SEC accomplishments, winning All-SEC honors in all four years as a Wildcat. She was voted All-Freshman in 2007, All-SEC Second Team in 2008 and First Team in 2009 and 2010. She was also a member of the All-Defensive Team in 2010 and made the SEC All-Tournament Team in 2009, her junior campaign. ■

FIVE WILDCATS EARN INDOOR ALL-SEC HONORS

The Southeastern Conference has named five Wildcats from the Kentucky Track & Field program to All-SEC teams after the 2024 SEC Indoor Championships.

Three Wildcats are first-team All-SEC honorees while the remaining two are All-SEC second-team honorees.

First-team All-SEC is awarded to those who won gold medals at SEC Championships while second-team All-SEC is awarded to those who won silver and bronze medals.

Kentucky's three first-team All-SEC student-athletes are **Luke Brown**, **Keaton Daniel**, and **Charity Hufnagel**, who recently won gold medals at the

SEC Championships.

Kentucky's two bronze medalists, **Kennedy Lightner** and **Dennis Ohene-Adu** are second-team All-SEC.

The men's side concluded the SEC indoor championships with a sixth-place finish with 41.5 points while the women's side finished 10th with 30.5 points. ■

IMPROVEMENTS COMING TO KROGER FIELD

New lighting and ribbon video boards are coming to Kroger Field. The University of Kentucky Board of Trustees approved the facility enhancements in February.

The LED lighting system will include the ability to do light shows during timeouts and breaks in play similar to those at games in Rupp Arena and Kentucky Proud Park.

The new ribbon boards have greater functionality, featuring sharper visual resolution than the previous set and expanded capability for display of video and graphics.

The stadium upgrades, expected to be completed before the 2024 season and designed to enhance the gameday experience, build on the new videoboards introduced for the 2022 season and the new playing surface that debuted for 2023. In 2015, the stadium underwent a \$126 million renovation.

The project will be funded privately and was initially approved by the Kentucky General Assembly in 2022. The ribbon boards, which were installed in 2011, have exceeded their useful life.

"We're excited to begin this project to enhance the fan experience in Kroger Field," Athletics Director Mitch Barnhart said. "Our fans have supported the Wildcats so well over the years and we look forward to bringing a modern, and technologically advanced lighting and ribbon board system to Kroger Field. These improvements will level up the gameday environment and help our fans continue to create great energy in our stadium."

Constructed in 1973 and originally called Commonwealth Stadium, the 2015 renovation included a new press box, loge box seats, club seats, recruiting room, suites, concourses, bathrooms, lights and exterior facade while setting capacity around 61,000.

The Board of Trustees also approved gifts of \$10 million from Larry T. Gibson, \$8 million from Joe and Ambassador Kelly Craft and \$1 million from Jim and Sheila Master, whose previously announced, donation will be split evenly between UK Athletics and the UK Gatton College of Business and Economics. ■





ADVICE FROM A CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONAL ON STAYING SAFE

By Sally Scherer

Alex Keedy wants you to be safe. Not look-both-ways-before-you-cross-the-street safe but prevent-your-information-from-getting-hacked safe.

When it comes to cybersecurity, today's "threat surface" is bigger than ever, Keedy said. Certainly much bigger than it was when she was a student at UK studying political science and diplomacy/international relations.

"Think about it. We're connected to everything. We have phones and laptops and even smart cars and smart TVs. Everything is connected to the internet. Even our smart microwaves. From the microwave to your phone, your information is out there," said Keedy '15 AS, '17 GS.

And all your information out there makes you, and it, very vulnerable to cyber criminals who want to steal it. As far as cybersecurity expert Keedy is concerned, it's not a matter of if it gets stolen, but a matter of when. While no company nor individual is truly safe from a breach, you can take steps to mitigate the impact.

"There are people who use these things called password checkers. They have software and they're feeding different

commonly used passwords in it and all they're doing is testing it against your login portal to see if it works," she explained. "It's much more sophisticated than that, but that's the idea. My advice is you make it as difficult as you can for them to steal your information."

She added, "I read a couple of months ago that cybercrime is the third largest economy in the world."

Don't doubt her. Keedy knows what she's talking about. She was a finalist for the 2023 Cybersecurity Woman of the Year. The annual international Cybersecurity Woman of the Year award is regarded as the highest accolade for women in the field of cybersecurity, with nominees hailing from 59 countries.

In 2022, she made the short list of finalists for Women in IT's Next Generation Leader of the Year award.

The Next Generation Leader of the Year award is given to women younger than 30 who have progressed rapidly through their career and demonstrated business value and innovation using technology.

Keedy felt compelled to work in some capacity in the security field, which is very much a male-dominated field, after the 9/11



Photos provided.

terror attacks in 2001. She wanted to make the United States more secure in some way, she said.

At UK, Keedy was a student of Clayton Thyne, professor of political science, department chair and associate dean of academic affairs.

"She's the type of student I love to teach," he said about Keedy. "She was a fantastic writer, a critical thinker and she made eye contact with me. She had all the essential skills to know how to learn."

As a graduate student at the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce, she took her first cybersecurity course with Dr. Robert Farley.

It wasn't long before she had an internship in the cybersecurity division at the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security. "I always tell students that if they're looking for a great internship, Frankfort isn't that far away."

Some of her early exposure into cybersecurity came as she started reading books about early cybercrime markets, like "The Silk Road." In addition to cybersecurity, she loved languages, so she took Arabic "for fun" at UK and eventually was able to travel to Jordan to teach English.

Before starting her career in cybersecurity, the Lexington native founded a modeling agency, worked as a Spanish/English interpreter for the Lexington Legends (a minor-league baseball team) and worked at Trust Lounge in downtown Lexington.

Eventually she moved to northern Virginia to work for Booz Allen Hamilton as a cyber threat intelligence consultant. Her love for research led her to Deloitte as a senior cyber threat intelligence client manager and then to Intel 471 as senior director of customer success. She's at ZeroFox now as the director of strategic operations.

"I work with mergers and acquisitions and anything long-term for the company. The company does everything from dark web intelligence to providing security operation center (SOC) services, which monitors for threats to companies," she explained.

ZeroFox works with large private sector corporations to help them stay safe. It also works with law enforcement and government to identify criminals and decrease crime.

"Some countries find it beneficial to just steal intellectual property from companies in the U.S. That way they don't have to spend five to 10 years and billions of dollars on research," she said. "They steal the information using cyber espionage. And then, they ask the company to pay \$500 million to get it back. We deal with threats like that. Ransomware has become an everyday threat."

Generally, having private section information stolen, whether it's from a hospital, a bank or your credit card company, means your information is compromised and the fraud that can result from it can cost billions of dollars.

What tips does Keedy have on how to stay safe in the cyber world?

- Make it as hard for cyber criminals as you can. Layer your security with multi-factor authentication. For example, you not only require a password to get into an account, but also a text to your phone.
- Make your passwords hard to guess. And change them often.
- Although there are apps and programs that will save your passwords for you, you're likely to be better off if you keep a hand-written list of passwords on a piece of paper and store the paper away from your electronic devices.

Jessica McClure, marketing and production coordinator for Information Technology Services at UK, has known Keedy for years and invited her to speak at the UK's CyberCon 2023 held in October during National Cybersecurity Awareness Month at UK.

"Alex is doing great work in a very male dominated profession," said McClure. "She's an amazing human and I'm so proud of her." ■



While a student at UK, Alex Keedy took Arabic "for fun" and then traveled to Jordan where she taught English.

Class Notes

1960s

Terry T. Woodward '63

BE was inducted into the Owensboro, Kentucky, Walk of Fame. As a teen he worked at his dad's store, Wax Works, Owensboro's only record shop. In the 1980s, Wax Works had expanded to include a chain of retail outlets called Disc Jockey. Woodward helped to make Owensboro the "Bluegrass Music Capital of the World."

Rankin Powell '64 AFE was honored with the Shirley H. Phillips No-Till Award by the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at UK. Powell, a retired Union County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent, has been a no-till proponent since his days as a student at UK.

Tom Hammond '67 AFE, '18 HON was honored with the Special Eclipse Award for Career Excellence at the 53rd Annual Eclipse Awards Dinner and Ceremony. Presented by the National Thoroughbred Racing Association, the Daily Racing Form and the National Turf Writers and Broadcasters, the award recognizes Hammond's more than 50 years in television broadcasting production.

Porter "P.G." Peeples '68 ED was honored as a legend by the University of Kentucky Men's Basketball program during its Unity Series. A Lynch, Kentucky, native, Peeples was honored as a trailblazer in diversity, equity

and inclusion. He was named the director of the Lexington chapter of the Urban League in 1969, becoming the youngest director in the country at 22 years old.

1970s

Phillip H. Doty '71 AS, '74

LAW has been appointed to a three-year term on the Board of Trustees of the Former Agents of the FBI Foundation. He was a regional vice president for the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI, Inc and retired after a 32-year career with the FBI as a special agent and supervisory special agent.

Michael Mountjoy '72 BE has received Greater Louisville Inc.'s Golden Cup. The award recognizes individuals who represent lifetime leadership

in making the Louisville area a better place to live and work. A CPA, Mountjoy is a founding partner of Mountjoy Chilton Medley LLP and has worked with numerous civic organizations.

Robert J. Bridges '77 '80

AS was awarded the Dorothy Andersen and Paul di Sant'Agnese Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award at the 2023 North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference. The award is the highest scientific honor awarded by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Mary Diane McCord Hanna

'77 AFE was elected Fayette County Judge-executive. In addition to her duties, she is the owner and manager of Silvacola farm in Fayette County, owns and manages rental property and is an artist and calligrapher.

Gregory L. Summe '78

EN has been named senior advisor at Star Mountain Capital, LLC. Summe has more than 30 years of experience as an investor, operator and C-level executive with leadership experience.

1980s

Gregory F. Wooten '80 EN

has been appointed to the West Virginia State Board of Education. Wooten has spent 25 years managing landowner interests for oil, gas, coal, aggregate and timber holdings.

Jane Englebright '81 NUR

has been named chair of the board of directors at Galen College of Nursing. She has served as vice chair since 2022. Englebright is the former chief nurse executive and senior vice president for HCA Healthcare.



Class Cat

Whether he is rolling around the floor, raising his hands in dismay at a referee's call, climbing into the stands to shake the hand of a regular fan or chasing the opposing team's mascot under the press table, Ralph McBarron, the man beneath the furry Wildcat suit is a favorite with the sports crowd.

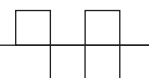
Although he practices with the cheerleaders twice a week and does join in on some of their formations, McBarron is very independent on the field or court and his antics have delighted many halftime spectators.

A senior, McBarron was selected to wear the mascot's suit in the spring of 1980. He said he watched the Wildcat as an underclassman and "liked the idea of being part of the UK spirit."

—MARY BETH WILLIAMS

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PEOPLE/Seniors

Ralph McBarron gave fans a behind-the-scenes look at who's wearing the Wildcat mascot costume in a short story in the 1981 Kentuckian yearbook. Who's portraying Wildcat is kept top secret these days.

**John James '81 '84 BE**

has been named to the board of directors at United Community Banks, Inc. James is an accomplished financial executive with more than 35 years of experience including senior-level positions at Bank of America, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Rebecca H. White '81 LAW

received the President's Medal from the University of Georgia. White served as dean of the University of Georgia's School of Law from 2003 to 2015 and has continued to support the law school and its goals since her retirement in 2015.

Sarah Wyatt '81 '84 AS, '91

A FE is among 18 scientists selected by NASA to work on its Decadal Survey on Biological and Physical Sciences Research in Space. A professor of environmental plant biology at Ohio University, Wyatt is working on an experiment to see how radiation in space affects plants.

Stephen E. Macadam '82

EN has been appointed to the board of directors at Sleep Number Corporation. Macadam is the chairman of Atmus Filtration Technologies Inc., and Veritiv Corporation and the former CEO of EnPro Industries Inc. and BlueLinx Holdings Inc.

Robert Goldsmith '83 BE

has joined the board of trustees at Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio. Goldsmith

has decades of higher education and non-profit organization experience.

Derrick Ramsey '83 AS

has joined the Kentucky Community and Technical College System as special assistant to the president for strategic partnerships. Ramsey is former secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the state's Labor Cabinet.

James "Jamie" Schrader

'83 BE was named the 2023 Central Kentucky Broker of the Year by the Kentucky Commercial Real Estate Association. Schrader is the owner of Schrader Commercial Properties in Lexington, Kentucky.

Bill Roark '84 AS

and his wife Brenda were recently recognized as the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville's 2023 Community Philanthropist of the Year. Bill Roark is the CEO at Starfish Holdings Inc. and co-founder of Torch Technologies Inc., which made the Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing companies 12 years in a row.

Paul Boulos '85 '86 '90

EN was elected to the National Academy of Construction. Boulos is the chairman and CEP of Aquanuity, Inc., a leader in strategy-led simulation-powered geocentric water infrastructure digital two software.



Wildcat mascot greeted Kentucky's Art Still as the defensive end took the field against Tennessee in his final college game on Nov. 30, 1977, at Commonwealth Stadium.

Photo by David Perry, Herald-Leader Archive

Information in Class Notes is compiled from previously published items in newspapers and other media outlets, as well as items submitted by individual alumni. Send us your class note by emailing ukalumni@uky.edu or submitting your information in the online community at www.ukalumni.net/class.

COLLEGE INDEX

A FE	Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food & Environment
AS	Arts & Sciences
BE	Gatton College of Business & Economics
CI	Communication & Information
DE	Dentistry
DES	Design
ED	Education
EN	Pigman College of Engineering
FA	Fine Arts
GS	The Graduate School
HS	Health Sciences
HON	Honorary Degree
LAW	Rosenberg College of Law
MED	Medicine
NUR	Nursing
PHA	Pharmacy
PH	Public Health
SW	Social Work

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Class Notes

Susan Wesley McClure

'85 AS, '88 LAW is the new president of the Kentucky Circuit Judges Association. She was chosen by her fellow judges to lead the association. She will serve a two-year term.

Andrew Oppmann '85 CI

was reappointed to a second three-year term as an Army Reserve Ambassador for Tennessee, a civilian advocacy role on behalf of the state's 3,500 warrior-citizens. In a separate appointment, he was named to the Publisher's Advisory Board of Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper and website.

Bruce Wilson '87 CI

has been recognized by BestAgents.us as a 2023 Top Agent in real estate. He is operating out of Charleston, West Virginia, and is an active member of the Kanawha River Valley Board of Realtors.

Robert Benvenuti '88

CI, '91 GS, '98 LAW has been named chair of the Republican Party of Kentucky. The Lexington health care attorney began his Frankfort career as the inspector general for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and served two terms in the Kentucky House of Representatives.

James R. Crider '88 AS

has been appointed as chief of staff in the mayor's office in Carmel, Indiana. He has served as director of administration for the city since 2017.

Nancy Wiser '89 CI

has joined PR Consultants Group, a national network of independent public relation firms. Wiser is an experienced public relations expert and president of Wiser Communications. She has more than three decades of experience and is known for her strategic communication skills and expertise in media relations.

1990s

Kim Russell '90 NUR

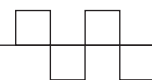
is CEO and owner of Westlake Hills Surgery Center, Austin, Texas, an ambulatory surgical center. She is the chief of anesthesia at WHSC which was named the Best Surgery Center in Austin 2023 by the Best of Austin Community Choice Awards.

Zhiqiang An '91 AFE

has been named UTHHealth Houston's first vice president of drug discovery. A professor of molecular medicine and the Robert A. Welch Distinguished University Chair in chemistry, An is a trailblazer in the development of antibody-based biologicals to treat cancer, spinal cord injury and Alzheimer's disease.

Sheila Gordon '91 '96 SW,

'15 CI was named Harlan County's Educator of the Year by the Harlan County Chamber of Commerce. Gordon is a professor of social work and human services at Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College where she



has worked for more than 25 years.

Michael Horn '91 AS, '96 MED has joined the staff at Harrison Medical Hospital in Cynthiana, Kentucky, as the head of cancer care. He brings more than two decades of medical expertise to his new role.

Craig Nelson '91 AFE has been named chief executive officer of Indiana Crop Improvement Association. He brings more than 30 years of seed quality testing and laboratory operations experience to the job.

Susan Stockton '91 LAW was named national president of Kappa Delta. She is a retired attorney who previously worked as a senior counsel for General Electric and she founded Stockton Consulting in Geneva, Switzerland. She is a director on the Kappa Delta Foundation board.

Michelle Stepp '92 AS has been named alumni relations coordinator for the Southeast region of Western Governors University. Prior to joining WGU, she served as assistant director and associate director of alumni relations for Middle Tennessee State University.

Jenifer Stevie '92 BE has joined PERA Holdings as chief financial officer. PERA Holdings is a national manager of mid-sized regional hospice and palliative care providers. Stevie worked as chief

financial officer for several divisions of Fresenius Medical Care North America before coming to PERA.

William Fleming '93 PHA has been elected to the board of directors at Petauri Health, a purpose-built pharmaceutical services platform. He has worked for Humana for 30 years, currently serving as the company's chief corporate affairs officer.

Cynthia Meyers Foley '94 FA has been appointed to the Michigan Arts and Cultural Council by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. Foley is the CEO of the Grand Rapids Art Museum.

Chris J. Hammer '94 EN was named president and chief operating officer at GRW, one of the region's longest-serving engineering, architectural and geospatial design firms. He brings more than 30 years of experience to his new position, including most recently serving as vice president and regional director for AECOM's water resources team.

Michelle L. Shuffett '94 AS, '98 MED has been named the chief medical officer at RS BioTherapeutics. She joined the company in May 2023 as senior vice president of medical and scientific affairs.

Kevin Smith '94 BE has been appointed president,

chief executive officer and a member of the board of directors of Inogen, Inc., a medical technology company. Smith most recently served as chief executive officer at Sirtex Medical Limited.

Jason E. Glass '95 AS, '96 ED, '07 AS has become associate vice president of teaching and learning at Western Michigan University. Glass had served as Kentucky Commissioner of Education since 2000.

Jeffrey Keller '96 '99 AS has been named principal investigator to oversee Answer ALS' open access data repository, Neuromine. Keller serves as director for Pennington Biomedical's



Wildcat is regularly featured at the top of the cheerleader pyramid at home basketball games. This photo, from a 1985 Kentuckian yearbook, shows that the cheerleaders used to form the pyramid at football games, too.

Photo courtesy of ExploreUK

Career Corner

by Amy Gamblin



STEPS FOR ALIGNING CORE VALUES TO A PURPOSEFUL CAREER PATH

Are you experiencing genuine satisfaction and purpose in your career, or do you have a sense that something essential is missing?

If you feel trapped in a job that lacks fulfillment and find yourself contemplating the possibility of a more meaningful alternative, it's likely that your career path is not aligned with your core values.

Being in a work setting where the values of the organization are at odds with your own can result in dissatisfaction and impede your personal and professional growth. It is important to understand and be in alignment with your core values. They are the cornerstone of a solid career foundation.

Below are five steps to guide you in aligning your core values with a purposeful career path.

- 1. Identify your core values.** Explore a list of "core values" and choose the top 10 that resonate most with you. Consider which ones you want to shape and define your life and reflect on the significance they hold for you.
- 2. Assess your current alignment.** Reflect on your chosen top values and consider how you are currently embodying them in your career. If there are values that are not showing up, think about how you want them to be present.
- 3. Craft a mission statement.** Summarize your top three or four values into a one-sentence mission statement. Consider what you want to be, what you want to do and the purpose your values serve. For example, if one's core values were leadership, service, positivity and contribution, a mission statement may look like: "My mission is to be a leader for my team by contributing in a way that shows service to others so that I bring a positive energy and make a difference in the world around me."
- 4. Be intentional by identifying goals and creating action plans.** Develop actionable plans based on your goals to bring your values and mission to life. Envision your career roadmap with these values incorporated. What does your future career roadmap look like when you incorporate these areas? What decisions do you want to make as a result? Which habits do you intend to establish in order to align with your values and mission statement? To increase success, write down your goals and actions while actively monitoring and tracking your progress.
- 5. Be flexible.** Take time to review and revise your goals. Circumstances and experiences may prompt adjustments to your career roadmap. If experiencing a setback, embrace that as an opportunity for growth. Having flexibility will lead to a more authentic journey without the feeling of thinking there is only one path to take.

Remember to also celebrate your progress along the way. Recognizing achievements sustains motivation and strengthens your commitment. By following these steps, you will gain awareness of aligning your core values with career objectives, paving the path for a fulfilling and purposeful career.

Amy Gamblin, CCC, CPRW is a Career Coach with UK Alumni Career Services. Visit www.ukalumni.net/career to learn more.

Class Notes

Institute for Dementia Research and Prevention and is a professor of aging and neurodegeneration.

Jon Kimberlain '96 EN has been promoted to principal TS&D scientist for Dow Performance Silicones. He is recognized globally as an expert in design and fabrication of structural silicone glazing and has consulted on numerous iconic building projects.

Kim Shelton '96 '98 BE has been named the chief executive officer for the Lexington Sporting Club. Shelton came to Lexington in 1992 as a member of the inaugural women's soccer team at UK. She captained the team for five years and served as assistant coach while completing her MBA.

Michelle Stevenson '97 MED has been appointed vice dean of faculty affairs and advancement at the University of Louisville School of Medicine. She has taught at the undergraduate and graduate level of medical education for nearly 20 years.

Russell Coleman '98 AS, 04 LAW was elected Kentucky Attorney General. In 2017 he was selected to be the U.S. Attorney for the Western Division of Kentucky. Before that, he was senior advisor and legal counsel to U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell.

Michael A. Frye '98 LAW has been named a member of Jenkins Fenstermaker law firm in Huntington, West Virginia.

Mark Miller '98 DE has been named associate dean for hospital affairs, oral and maxillofacial surgery residency program director and associate professor in the department of advanced specialty sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina James B. Edwards College of Dental Medicine. He comes to the job from UT Health San Antonio, Texas.

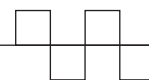
Christine Borowski '99 AS has been appointed to the VYNE Therapeutics Inc., board of directors. VYNE is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing therapies for the treatment of immune-inflammatory conditions.

Todd Polk '99 CI has joined WGI, Inc., as director of federal and water management business development. Prior to joining WGI, he served as the deputy commander for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

2000s

Kathleen Bertuna '00 AS won the reserve championship in the amateur preliminary division at the United States Eventing Association American Eventing Championship with her 8-year-old Irish Sport Horse Excel Star Harry. Professionally, Bertuna is an obstetrician gynecologist.

Andy Green '00 BE has been named senior vice president,



player development for the New York Mets. Green spent 13 seasons as a coach or manager, most recently as the bench coach for the Chicago Cubs. He was an infielder for the University of Kentucky baseball team.

Charles B. Mathews

'01 AFE is the new chief operating officer at ECHO, a leading player in sustainable agriculture and global food security. Mathews comes to the non-profit with extensive experience managing global, multi-site international non-governmental organizations.

Champ Kelly '02 EN, '04 BE

served as interim general manager of the Las Vegas Raiders. He was the assistant general manager. Prior to joining the Raiders, he was the Chicago Bears assistant director of player personnel. He spent eight years with the Denver Broncos in player personnel before joining the Bears.

Vincent Harrison Jr. '03 BE

has been named manager of the Dayton Dragons, a Reds minor league team. Harrison brings 10 seasons of minor league managing/coaching experience to the job. He has a nine-year professional career with the Rays, Mets and Marlins.

Gerad Parker '03 BE, '05 ED

is the head football coach at Troy University. Parker played at UK before going on to coaching positions at Duke, Penn State, West Virginia and Notre Dame.

M. Elizabeth Walker '03

AS has joined Barnes & Tornburg's Indianapolis office. She is a leading tax-exempt bond practitioner.

William H. Whitaker Jr. '04

ED has been appointed dean of South Carolina State's Dr. Emily England Clyburn Honors College. Whitaker had been serving as acting dean at the South Carolina State College of Agriculture, Family and Consumer Science.

Susan Faus '05 ED

has been named executive director of the Fargo Park District, Fargo, North Dakota. She joined the Fargo Park District in November 2022 as deputy director of administration, previously serving as the deputy director of parts and recreation for the City of Bloomington, Minnesota.

Shae Godwin '05 MED

has joined the team at Jennie Stuart Health in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. A board-certified family physician with more than 15 years of experience, Godwin has been working in emergency medicine to help with COVID response most recently.

Ryan McLane '05 AS, '08

LAW has joined the board of directors of People Working Cooperatively, the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky nonprofit dedicated to providing critical home repairs, energy conservation and accessibility modification for low income, elderly and homeowners with disabilities. McLane is a partner in DBL

Law's litigation and dispute resolution practice group.

Mark Roozen '06 BE

has been named deputy state veterinarian by the Kentucky State Board of Agriculture. Roozen is an experienced international veterinary business advisor for the veterinary industry and is the owner and web developer of Pro 360 Thoroughbred, an online platform for the thoroughbred industry.

Todd Allen '07 BE, '10

LAW has begun serving as deputy commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Education in addition to its general counsel. He has worked in KED's Office of Legal Services since 2014.

Nicole Franco Gateley

'07 AS owns and operates a psychotherapy private practice, Nicole Franco Counseling. She specializes in PTSD and trauma recovery.

Donna Hedgepath '07 FA

has been named president of Wayland Baptist University, Plainview, Texas. Hedgepath served as provost and vice president of academic affairs at Campbellsville University in Kentucky. She is the first woman to serve in this role.

Jesse R. Johnson '07

AFE has been named the Danville market president of Community Trust Bank, Inc. Johnson has worked in banking for 17 years, all in Central Kentucky.

Brandi Stewart '07 LAW

has been appointed civil



Lady Kat Mascot Susan Bridges

For a number of years, the women's basketball team was known as the Lady Kats. The team had its own cheer-leading squad and mascot. The Lady Kat mascot had long eyelashes and wore a bow in her hair and a skirt. Photo from the 1988 Lady Kats' game program.

chief of the management staff of Kenneth L. Parker, United States attorney for the southern district of Ohio.

Katie Bing '08 AS, '13 LAW

has been named clerk of the Kentucky Supreme Court. Bing started her law career as a clerk for Deputy Chief Justice Mary C. Noble. She spent six years in private practice and returned to the Supreme Court as the deputy court administrator in 2020.

Chase Mudd '08 CI

has joined Priority Marketing as a project manager for client services. Before joining Priority, he operated as an independent marketing consultant.

Tyler Wells '08 AFE

is expanding his business and



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Class Notes

has opened AW Meat House. The location is a retail store in Catlettsburg, Kentucky, where customers can buy beef and pork raised by Wells' ranch. He continues to operate a meat processing plant in Argillite, Kentucky.

Sherri Kay Phelps '09 FA was named to the Butler County (Morgantown, Kentucky) Schools Hall of Fame. Phelps had a distinguished career as a professional opera singer and dedicated voice teacher.

Phil Robb '09 FA will become the new superintendent of the Richland School District 88A in Crest Hill, Illinois. He has been with the district since 2009 and currently serves as chief school business official.

Savannah Robin '09 '13 AFE, '22 ED has been named 2023 Kentucky Farm Woman of the Year. She and her husband own and co-manage Robin Ridge Farms in Paris, Kentucky. They raise beef cattle, sheep, goats and cut flowers. She also serves as a lecturer of career and professional development for the Martin-Gatton University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment equine programs.

Elisa Sebastian '09 SW has been named the first deputy director of the Northern Kentucky Health Department. She joins the health department after a career in the nonprofit world, including serving as program manager for the Alzheimer's

Association's 37-county Greater Cincinnati Chapter and as executive director of two Northern Kentucky assisted living communities.

2010s

Michael Frick '10 '11 ED has been hired as an instructor of acquisitions and program management at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

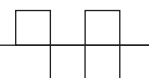
Tegan Miller '10 FA founded and directs the feminist treble Spectra choir. She also owns a voice studio, MTC Vocal Academy in Savannah, Georgia.

Brock Wright '10 BE has been promoted to chief investment officer at The Connor Group, a leading national real estate investment firm.

Jacob Ball '11 AFE, '18 ED received a national Milken Educator Award for the 2023-24 season. The award comes with a \$25,000 cash prize that Ball can use for any purpose. Ball is an agriculture teacher at Carter G. Woodson Academy, an all-boys school in Lexington serving a high minority population.

Kevin Dailey '11 '12 ED is the 2024 Kentucky Teacher of the Year. The Boone County resident is a United States history teacher at Ballyshannon Middle School.

Loren N. Dechtenberg '11 FA joined Santa Cruz



Shakespeare as the managing director. He brings more than 15 years of arts management experience to the job. Before coming to Santa Cruz, he served as executive and artistic director of Bluegrass Opera & Music Theatre.

Maegan Mansfield '11 '13 EN received the Young Leaders of Western Kentucky award from the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce. She works for Bacon Farmer Workman Engineering, is a Leadership Kentucky graduate and serves on the Greater Paducah Economic Development Board.

Mitch Ruscitti '11 GS has been named town administrator in Hopedale, Massachusetts. He worked in the Worcester (Massachusetts) City Manager's office before returning to Kentucky to be a project manager for the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development.

Patrick Schach '11 LAW has been elevated to shareholder in the Birmingham, Alabama, Littler law office. Schach advises and defends employers across a wide range of workplace law.

Holly Vogler '11, '16 '18 ED has been selected as principal at Stonewall Elementary School, Lexington, Kentucky. Vogler has 12 years of experience in education, starting her career as a second-grade teacher.

David W. Harper '12 AS, '15 LAW has been promoted

to member at the Nashville, Tennessee, law firm office of Bass, Berry & Sims. Harper represents borrowers, lenders and private equity funds in structuring and negotiating new credit facilities, as well as refinancings existing credit facilities.

Julie Peterson '12 AFE has been named associate director of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's West Central Research, Extension and Education Center in Noth Platte, Nebraska. An entomologist and extension specialist, Peterson leads the center's Agroecosystems Entomology Lab.

Angela Grant Bartlett '13 PH has joined Positively Living & Choice Health network as senior director of development and marketing. Positively Living, the nonprofit arm of the organization, serves those affected by the challenges of HIV, homelessness, mental health, substance use and LGBTQ+ discrimination.

Sarah Hahn '13 FA is the university's artist-in-residence at Ohio Wesleyan University for 2023-2024. As part of her residency, Hahn will install three 10-foot-tall dandelion seeds throughout the campus. The public art installation is tentatively titled, "Where the Wind Carries You."

Nicole Magnera '13 AFE has been named administrator of Huntington Living Center, a 160-bed skilled nursing facility in Waterloo, New

York. She previously served as long term care assistant administrator.

Kimi Blewett '14 ED has been inducted into Ohio Northern University's 2023 Athletic Hall of Fame. She played softball at Ohio Northern from 2009-2012. She coached at Transylvania University but now works as the director of environmental services at Crothall Healthcare, North Audubon Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky.

Patrick Brankin '14 AS has been named financial director at the Village of Glen Ellyn's (Illinois) Finance Office. Brankin was assistant financial director and has served as interim financial director.

John Gruenewald '14 '18 AS has launched a YouTube channel aimed at making physics innovative and fun. Named "Dr. John," the channel serves as a conduit, connecting the intricate world of science and mathematics to the technologies that define modern society and our daily lives.

Marc Messer '14 PHA has been named director of inpatient pharmacy at Highlands ARH Regional Medical Center in Prestonsburg, Kentucky. This past year he served as the clinical pharmacy coordinator for Highlands Regional Medical Center.

Daniel Kim '15 MED has joined the staff at Andrews Sports Medicine

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Class Notes

& Orthopaedic Center in Hoover, Alabama. In 2022, Kim was named to the North American Spine Society's SpineLine "20 Under 40" list of top spine surgeons in the country.

Nick Lavin '16 BE has joined the South Florida multi-housing investment sales team in the Miami office of JLL Capital Markets. Lavin has been with the Los Angeles JLL office for six years.

Ashlee Nichols '16 NUR has joined King's Daughter Medical Center in Ashland, Kentucky, in its outpatient Wellness and Recovery program. She has been an addiction medicine/family nurse practitioner at Bright View in Portsmouth, Ohio.

Sabirah Rayford '16 CI has joined FOX 13 News Seattle KCPQ as an evening co-anchor. Prior to this she was a reporter and anchor at KPRC 2 Houston. An Emmy-nominated journalist, Rayford received the Lyman T. Johnson Torch of Excellence Award from the University of Kentucky in 2019.

Celia Shoffner '16 CI has been named the executive director of Middlesboro Main Street, Middlesboro, Kentucky. Shoffner was born and raised in Middlesboro.

Eric Straud '17 LAW is the newest member of the Paducah Junior College board of trustees. Straud is a partner with the law firm of Whitlow, Roberts, Houston & Straub, PLLC and is

immediate past president of the Rotary Club of Paducah.

Dustin B. McKie-Miller '18 AS, '20 EN completed every challenge to get into Ranger School on his first attempt and finished the course in 62 days, the shortest time possible for training. McKie-Miller is a second lieutenant with the Kentucky Army National Guard. He is a software architect with General Electric Aerospace.

Robert Boone '19 ED has been named the director of the Kentucky Gateway Museum Center in Maysville, Kentucky. Boone served as secretary of the board of trustees for the museum center in 2021 and as a trustee on the board from 2013-2017.

2020s

Shannon L. Dierking '20 AFE has joined the team at CSA Animal Nutrition as a consulting swine nutritionist.

Andrew Tao '20 CI, '23 LAW has joined Bradley Arant Boult Cummings as a fall associate. Tao will work in the Nashville office with the litigation practice group.

Katherine A. Sharp '21 ED has joined the faculty at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Missouri as an assistant professor of education and biological sciences. Before joining S&T, she was an assistant professor of chemistry at Stephens College.

Warren Taylor '21 CI has been named executive editor for Bluegrass Newsmedia's seven publications. Taylor started his journalism career as a staff reporter at the Winchester Sun, Winchester, Kentucky.

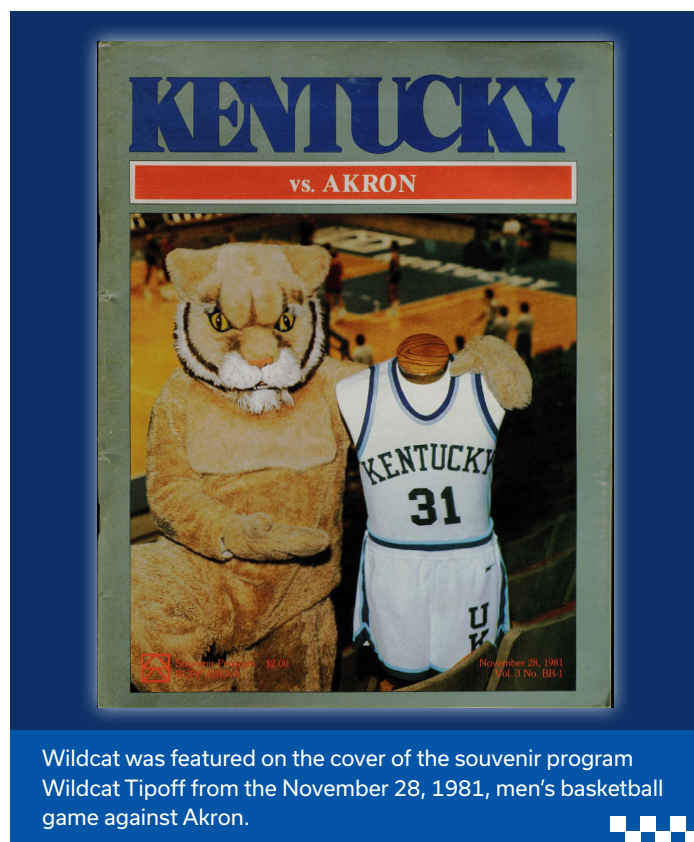
Jessica Williams '21 FA directed "The Vagina Monologues" at Bunnell Street Arts Center, Homer, Alaska. Williams is the theatrical director at the arts center.

Shanita Jackson '22 AS has been named writer-in-residence at UNC Asheville. A poet, Jackson will use her time to develop her poetry manuscript "FleshCrawl" and pursue publishing opportunities.

Gabrielle M. Masterson '22 EN is working for NASA in the Johnson Space Center in Houston as a CRONUS flight controller.

Parker Wohlstein '22 AFE has been hired as the Gogebic Conservation District's forest assistance program forester in Bessemer, Michigan. Wohlstein has worked in conservation management in Kentucky, Illinois, South Dakota and Louisiana.

Kendall Staton '23 CI received the Champion of Open Government Award from the Scripps Howard First Amendment Center. Staton is the editor of The News-Herald, Grant County News and Cynthiana Democrat.



Alumni Feature

PHARMACY ALUM HONORED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, BECOMES PARTNER IN FACULTY EXCHANGE INITIATIVE

By Rosa Mejia-Cruz

José O. Rivera, PharmD, R77, founding dean of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) School of Pharmacy, has been awarded the distinguished 2023 Paul F. Parker Award. Rivera received the award at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Midyear meeting in Anaheim, California.

The Paul F. Parker Award, a beacon of recognition for lifetime accomplishments, celebrates individuals whose contributions have significantly enriched the pharmacy profession. Rivera's steadfast dedication to excellence, visionary leadership, and unwavering mentorship have left an indelible imprint on the field. He is the first Latino to receive the award.

A native of Barranquitas, Puerto Rico, Rivera began his career with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from the Universidad de Puerto Rico in 1976. He furthered his education with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree at the University of Kentucky, where he completed a prestigious residency program under the mentorship of the legendary Paul F. Parker in 1979.

Throughout his illustrious career, Rivera has made monumental contributions to both clinical practice and academia. He has held distinguished positions at renowned institutions such as the University of Cincinnati and the University of New Mexico before making a significant impact in El Paso, Texas, notably at Sierra Medical Center and R.E. Thomason General Hospital. His leadership in the UTEP Cooperative Pharmacy Program led to his appointment as director in 2001.



José O. Rivera, PharmD, R77

A trailblazer in pharmacy education and practice, Rivera's research spans a diverse array of topics, ranging from cultural competency to medication literacy. His groundbreaking contributions to border health and complementary alternative medicine have earned acclaim and support from various organizations.

Beyond his pivotal role at UTEP, Rivera also serves as a clinical professor and assistant dean at the University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy, where he continues to shape the future trajectory of the profession.

In a testament to his commitment to fostering academic collaboration and innovation, Rivera has partnered with the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy in a transformative faculty exchange program. This initiative, set to launch in the Spring 2024 semester, aims to cultivate intercollegiate relationships and promote excellence in research and clinical service.

The collaboration will facilitate exchanges between faculty members from the University of Kentucky, UTEP School of Pharmacy, and Xavier of Louisiana College of Pharmacy. Through this initiative, participants will engage in teaching, practice, and scholarly collaboration, enriching the academic landscape and nurturing a culture of shared learning.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Dean Rivera and UTEP to expand our faculty networks and forge new pathways for collaboration," remarked Trenika Mitchell, PharmD, associate dean of inclusion at UKCOP. "This initiative underscores our unwavering commitment to inclusion and excellence in pharmacy education."

Dean Rivera's receipt of the Paul F. Parker Award and his leadership in the faculty exchange initiative exemplifies his enduring impact on the pharmacy profession, marking yet another milestone in his illustrious career. ■



2023 Paul F. Parker recipient José O. Rivera, left, with UK College of Pharmacy Dean R. Kip Guy.

In Memoriam

Betty Anne Rehm '46 CI
Versailles, Ky.

Doris H. Cornett '48 AS, '62 FA
Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Gene F. Conway '49 AS
Georgetown, Ohio
Life Member

Joe L. Craig '50 EN
Henderson, Ky.
Life Member

James V. Green '50 EN
Lexington, Ky.

William F. Hamilton '50 EN
Nicholasville, Ky.

Dr. Robert L. Blevins '52 '58 AFE
Tempe, Ariz.

George K. Fischer Jr. '52 EN
Roanoke, Va.
Life Member, Fellow

Richard S. Frank '52 BE
Louisville, Ky.
Life Member

Mary C. Heitz '52 AFE
Madison, Ind.

Louis A. Nichols '52 BE
Apopka, Fla.
Fellow

Bosworth M. Todd Jr. '52 BE
Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Thomas L. Wilborn '52 CI, '56 '65 AS
Spotsylvania, Va.

Lucy Anne Booker '53 SW
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

James E. Humphrey Jr. '53 '54 EN
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

Bert A. Jody Jr. '53 FA
Paducah, Ky.

John B. Roberts Jr. '53 BE
Albuquerque, N.M.

Gus S. Story '53 BE
Paducah, Ky.

E. Dean Anderson '54 BE
Greenville, S.C.

Hon. Julian M. Carroll '54 AS, '56 LAW, '76 HON
Frankfort, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Mary C. Metzner '54 ED
Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Herbert W. Ockerman '54 '58 AFE, '16 HON
Columbus, Ohio

Edsel L. Rawlings '54 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

William E. Creel '55 EN
Cypress, Texas

Betty P. Dusing '55 CI
Kansas City, Mo.

Delia L. Kirwan '55 AFE
Newark, Del.

Margaret Lou Lyne '55 GS, '76 ED
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Donna Gail Maze '55 AS
Owingsville, Ky.

Peggy L. Southgate '55 ED
Lexington, Ky.

Don C. Sullivan '55 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

Helen V. Gilb '56 AS
Lighthouse Point, Fla.
Fellow

Barbara G. Perry '56 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Gene T. Wells '56 EN
Raleigh, N.C.

William K. Wheeler '56 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Robert K. Bennett '57 ED
Covington, Va.

Arthur L. Brooks Jr. '57 FA, '59 LAW
Lexington, Ky.

Lloyd L. Cain '57 AFE, '64 ED
Mount Vernon, Ky.

Dorothy A. Friend '57 '61 ED
Lexington, Ky.

Leola B. Herring '57 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

Dr. Michael N. Prunty '57 AS
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Ella Mae Wade '57 AFE
Elizabethtown, Ky.

Albert L. Wilson '57 AFE
Frankfort, Ky.

Earl F. McKinney '58 EN
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Lila Josephine Rankin '58 ED
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

Dr. William R. Stagg '59 AS
Southern Pines, N.C.
Life Member

William C. Van Inwegen '59 LAW
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member

Dr. Carl W. Watson '59 '64 MED
Oakland, Calif.
Fellow

Glenn A. Bottoms '60 EN
Frankfort, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Glenn M. Epperson '60 '62 BE
Louisville, Ky.

Donald G. Hurt '60 AFE
Somerset, Ky.

Don M. Mills '60 BE
Richmond, Ky.

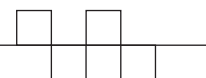
William H. Sims '60 '62 AS
Encinitas, Calif.
Fellow

William R. Barker '61 BE
Danville, Ky.
Life Member

John T. Cecil Sr. '61 AS
Gilbertsville, Ky.
Life Member

James W. Clay '61 LAW
Naples, Fla.

William B. Dickerson '61 ED
Williamsburg, Va.



Ann Rodgers Ashley '61 FA
Georgetown, Ky.

**William H. Fortune '61 AS,
'64 LAW**
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

**William A. Mossbarger Jr.
'61 '64 EN**
Lexington, Ky.

James C. Petty '61 AFE
Hopkinsville, Ky.

**Thomas H. Williams '61 '68
EN**
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Frances J. Beard '62 AFE
Sarasota, Fla.

Ronald B. Blackburn '62 EN
Cynthiana, Ky.
Life Member

Barbara H. Brands '62 AS
Bonita Springs, Fla.
Life Member

**Thomas M. Cooper '62 AS,
'74 LAW**
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Mary C. McDaniel '62 FA
Dripping Springs, Texas
Life Member

Rita S. Stout '62 '71 AFE
Madison, Ind.
Life Member

Max E. Wilson Jr. '62 AS
Johnson City, Tenn.

**Dr. Barbara Jean Burns '63
AS**
Chapel Hill, N.C.

**Morell E. Mullins '63 AS, '67
LAW**
North Little Rock, AR

**Dr. Daniel G. Boeh '64 ED,
'68 DE**
Wesley Chapel, Fla.

Silas H. Brewer Jr. '64 LAW
Walton, Ky.

**Gerald W. Dryden '64 '68
AFE**
Peoria, Ariz.

Donald H. Hovermale '64 EN
Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

**Wendell P. Hummel '64 '65
EN**
Newton, N.C.

Anne H. Welsh '64 '66 ED
Paris, Ky.

Carol S. Wheeler '64 AS
Saint Johns, Fla.
Life Member

Terry D. Trovato '65 CI
Fairhope, Ala.

**Robert M. Coots '66 AS, '69
LAW**
Taylorsville, Ky.
Fellow

**Dr. James L. Crockarell '66
ED**
Saint Paul, Minn.

W. B. Kluesner Jr. '66 PHA
Beckley, West Virginia
Life Member

**Jacqueline Jones Quillen
'66 AS**
Columbia, Tenn.
Life Member

Paul M. Rose '66 BE
Nicholasville, Ky.

Roger J. Auge II '67 AS
Covington, Ky.
Life Member

Dr. William C. Sallis '67 AS
Jackson, Miss.

John A. Yeager '67 AS
Edgewood, Ky.

Sam D. Ball '68 ED
Henderson, Ky.
Life Member

Michael Beirne '68 ED
Covington, Ky.
Life Member

Ann Black Sturm '68 FA
Versailles, Ky.
Life Member

John H. Thompson '68 LAW
Cincinnati, Ohio

John M. Whitt '68 AFE
West Liberty, Ky.

**Dr. Robert H. Curtis '69 EN,
'75 '77 DE**
Estero, Fla.
Life Member, Fellow

John S. Parton '69 LAW
Whittier, N.C.

**Elizabeth Ann Weissmueller
'70 ED**
Lexington, Ky.

**Dr. S. R. Littlepage II '70
MED**
Greenville, S.C.

**Dr. William E. Adams Jr. '71
AS, '75 MED**
Paducah, Ky.
Life Member

**Jeanne Brewer Downing '72
CC**
Lexington, Ky.

Life Member, Fellow

**Larry R. Thompson '72 '73
EN**
West Paducah, Ky.

Nancy I. Ward '72 AS
Aiken, S.C.

Mary J. Ouren '73 ED
Muscodas, Wis.

Robert M. Wixson Jr. '73 ED
Monticello, Ky.
Life Member

**Randy G. Clark '74 BE, '77
LAW**
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Elizabeth L. Cook '74 ED
Cynthiana, Ky.
Life Member

**Catherine Ann Hockensmith
'74 FA**
Frankfort, Ky.

Rev. Dee H. Wade '74 AS
Louisville, Ky.
Life Member

**Timothy S. O'Neill '75 AS,
'79 LAW**
The Dalles, Ore.

**Dr. Edward A. Riordan '75
BE**
West Bloomfield, Mich.

Barbara H. Slone '75 SW
Xenia, Ohio

William D. Spalding '75 AFE
Winchester, Ky.

In Memoriam

Dr. Forrest R. Fightmaster
'76 AS, '79 DE

Paris, Ky.

Edward P. Hawkins '76 EN

Vine Grove, Ky.

Anne D. Hodges '76 HS, '82 ED

Center, Ky.

Dr. James R. Pigg '76 MED

Nashville, Tenn.
Fellow

Gilbert P. Zierer '76 AFE

Jackson, Ky.

Dr. Judith Ann Hildenbrand
'77 ED

Louisville, Ky.

Wade C. McKnight '77 BE

Coronado, Calif.
Fellow

Dr. Paul E. Benard '78 DE

Tarpon Springs, Fla.

Jagjit S. Dade '78 EN

Frankfort, Ky.

Kathy M. Hocker '78 CC

Nicholasville, Ky.

Brian C. House '78 AS, '81 LAW

Richmond, Ky.
Life Member

Laura M. Maples '78 AS

Villa Hills, Ky.

Elizabeth S. Pigg '78 FA

Nicholasville, Ky.

Katherine H. Bihl '79 AS

Lexington, Ky.

Philip A. Gilkison '79 AFE,
'86 HS

London, Ky.

Michael M. Stephens '79
'88 EN

Vicksburg, Miss.
Life Member

Charles A. Wash '79 CC

Winchester, Ky.

Marie Hanlon Ward '80 HS

Shelbyville, Ky.
Fellow

Russell B. Glenn '81 ED

Rockville, Va.

Thomas M. Kelly '81 ED

Benton, Ky.

Danny A. Simons '81 LAW

Richmond, Ky.
Fellow

Patricia L. Allen '82 CI

Fort Myers, Fla.

Dr. Jack C. Blanton '82 AS

Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

John G. Grohmann '83 AS,
'87 LAW

Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Michael L. Scott '83 DE

Lexington, Ky.

Steve Steltenkamp '83 BE

Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Ken R. Haggard '84 LAW

Hopkinsville, Ky.

Amey C. Hugg '84 AS

Prospect, Ky.

Frederick T. Losson '84 EN

Richmond, Ky.

Dr. Charles C. Willhite '84
DE

Decatur, Ill.

Susan F. Clay '85 AS

Covington, Ga.

Francis L. Hardesty '85 ED

Versailles, Ky.

Pamela C. Wright '85 BE

Olive Hill, Ky.

Irma J. Sullivan '86 BE

Lexington, Ky.

Mark W. Hite '87 BE

Chattanooga, Tenn.

Leah McCain-Settles '89 '92

SW
Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

Geve Lynn Dicken '90 SW

Lexington, Ky.

Rand Leslie Marshall '90

LAW
Georgetown, Ky.
Fellow

Cynthia W. Johnson '91 ED

Lexington, Ky.
Fellow

LaDonna Lynn Koebel '93

LAW
Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Mary L. Crews '95 DE

Decatur, Ga.

Brannon L. Thompson '95

CC, '02 EN
Mayfield, Ky.
Life Member

Whitney S. Hale '97 AS, '00
GS

Lexington, Ky.
Life Member, Fellow

Arthur Kyungsuk Kim '00

AFE, '07 ED
Owensboro, Ky.

Vivian A. Lasley-Bibbs '00
HS

Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Dan F. McCune '02 MED

Louisville, Ky.

Monta J. Taylor '05 '05 CC

Lexington, Ky.

Wilhelmenia Fernandez

Smith '08 FA

Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Olaf N. Jaime-Riveron
'17 AS

Lexington, Ky.

Ashley Catherine Austin '18
AFE

Inman, Kan.

FORMER STUDENTS AND FRIENDS

Dr. Joseph R. Bowling II

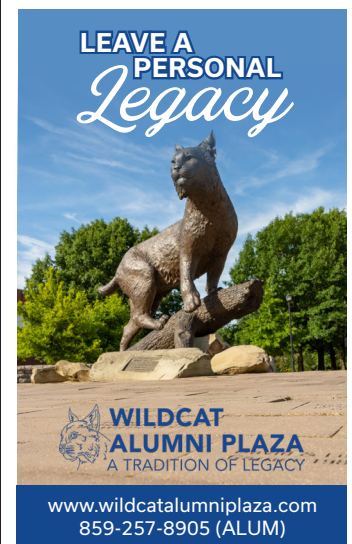
Louisville, Ky.

Brandon S. Collofello

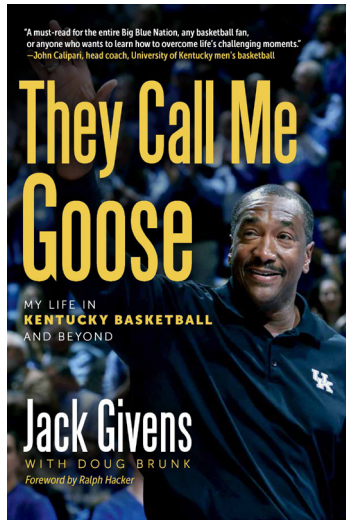
Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Philip F. Corbett

Lexington, Ky.



Creative Juices



Jack "Goose" Givens '78 AS has written "They Call Me Goose: My Life in Kentucky Basketball and Beyond," an intimate and all-encompassing look at the life and career of the basketball legend. When Givens walked onto the basketball court at Lexington's Douglass

Park for the legendary Dirt Bowl league, it was the beginning of one of the most illustrious sports careers in Kentucky history. From growing up in a Lexington housing project to his success with the University of Kentucky men's basketball team to his years with the NBA's Atlanta Hawks to his role as a commentator for the UK Sports Network, Givens shares personal and endearing stories.

Derrick Ramsey '83 AS has written "They Call Me Mr. Secretary: Through the Lense of a Winner," a memoir that examines his life from humble beginnings growing up in segregated Hastings, Florida, to winning Super Bowl XV with the Oakland Raiders. Ramsey, the first Black starting quarterback at the University of Kentucky, addresses head on the tension between athletic prowess and academic achievement. He dives deep into relationships with family, friends, teammates, opponents and adversaries. He openly discusses the issue of racism in America. His story is one of encouragement and inspirational leadership and tells of how his drive, determination and competitive spirit culminated in the achievement of life-long dreams.



Nathan L. Vanderford '03 AFE, '09 MED has edited "Cancer in Appalachia: A Collection of Youth-Told Stories." The book is an anthology of fictional stories about cancer in Appalachian Kentucky written by a group of high school and undergraduate students from Appalachian Kentucky. The authors leveraged their lived experiences and knowledge of cancer to convey fictional, yet highly realistic stories about the pain and disruption that cancer causes. The authors are participants or alumni of the Youth Enjoy Science National Cancer Institute-funded Appalachian Career Training in Oncology Program location at the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center.

David Hager '72 MED has published two books. "Simmering Anger, Smoldering Rage," examines the emotions of anger and rage that are sweeping our society, resulting in damaged relationships, uncontrolled reactions and horrific crimes. Hager believes anger must be identified and dealt with. He shares valuable keys to recognizing anger and steps to deal with it. "On the Way: Ministering in the Moment," shares stories of people who have witnessed modern-day miracles that happened to themselves and others when they allowed the Holy Spirit to guide them.

Henrietta Pepper '85 BE, '85 CI has written "UNBRANDED: Emerge a Brand New You." In this book, readers are taken on a journey of self-discovery to recalibrate their personal brand. The book empowers individuals to embrace their uniqueness and emerge as the truest version of themselves. Pepper's methodology encourages reflection and exploration rather than adopting cookie-cutter concepts.

Dorian Hairston '16 '18 AS has written "Pretend the Ball is Named Jim Crow: The Story of Josh Gibson," a poetry collection which explores the Black American experience through the lens of the life of baseball legend Josh Gibson (1911-1947). Hairston reconstructs the personas of Gibson, one of the greatest power hitters in the Negro Leagues and in all baseball history, and others in his orbit whose encounters with white supremacy interweave with the inevitability of losing loved ones. These poems address social chance, culture, family, race, death and oppression while honoring and giving voice to Gibson and a voiceless generation of African Americans.

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Quick Take



LOOK WHO'S STYLING!

Five alumni participated in a fashion photo shoot on campus for the fall 2023 issue of KRNL Lifestyle + Fashion. The outfits and styles were handpicked to represent the days the alumni were students at the university. Michael A. Burleson '74 PHA, Paula Leach Pope '73 '75 ED, Marian Moore Sims '72 '76 ED, Cammie DeShields Grant '77 LCC, '79 ED and Diane M. Massie '79 CI were featured in a four-page spread. The KRNL Lifestyle + Fashion magazine promotes "the individuality, creativity and uniqueness of storytelling by University of Kentucky's students."

Photo by Gianna Mancini



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