# AUSIIN PRAN

The Magazine for Alumni and Friends of Austin Peay State University Fall 2017

# Training at **TESLA**

**APSU physics student Jonathan Bunton** 

## **Austin Peay**

To change your address, contact Alumni Relations, alumni@apsu.edu, 931-221-7979.

To share your opinion, contact Public Relations & Marketing. persingerb@apsu.edu, 931-221-7459.

## FEATURES 10 APSU THRIVING UNDER "LEADING THROUGH EXCELLENCE" STRATEGIC PLAN

Two years in, the University is already making progress on its 10-year plan.

## **20 THE ALIEN DREADNOUGHT**

The APSU College of STEM is preparing students like Jonathan Bunton for the workplace of the future.

## **28 A MILLION EXTRA YEARS**

Alumnus Joey Smith is working with his alma mater to help every Montgomery County resident live a few extra years.

## **36 MEN'S BASKETBALL'S NEW ERA**

New men's head basketball coach Matt Figger has spent his life waiting for this opportunity.

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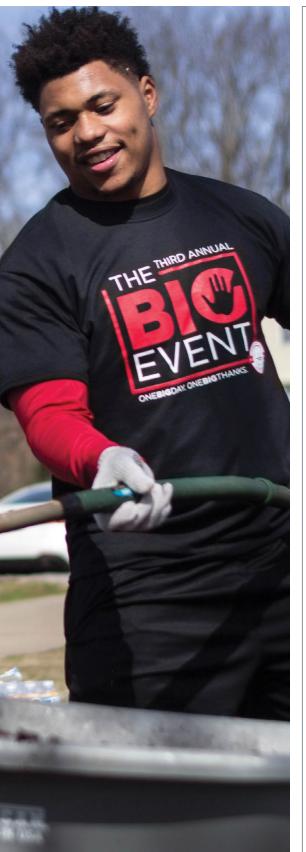
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APSU football player Pat Walker was one of the more than 600 students who participated in The Big Event in April. The annual day of service allows students to express gratitude to the community that supports their University.

## From the President



Several months ago, a colleague from another state asked me to describe the Austin Peay community. I relished the opportunity, because that word—community—is one of this institution's core values, and it's something we take seriously here. Our faculty and staff are vigilant about finding new ways to enhance this region, and in this issue of "Austin Peay: The Magazine for Alumni and Friends," you'll see what we're doing to improve our local and global communities.

I was particularly proud of how the University responded to the recent total solar eclipse, turning that historic experience into a community-wide and regional educational event. On Aug. 21, NASA

scientists, along with children attending NASA Space Camp, converged on the Austin Peay farm, where they observed the eclipse and conducted experiments. The University's observatory also provided a NASA live feed, allowing people across the country to watch the eclipse through the safety of our telescopes. The Martha Dickerson Eriksson College of Education presented educational seminars, training local teachers how to include lessons about the eclipse in their classrooms, and the APSU College of STEM (previously the APSU College of Science and Mathematics) hosted several eclipse-themed events, including community lectures over the summer, an educational fair and a viewing party at Fortera Stadium.

This university also continues to enrich the cultural life of our community through its Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts. The programs and outreach provided by the Center improve the quality of life for citizens in this region, and the Center is a highly regarded incentive for companies looking to relocate into areas where their employees will be happy to live and work. Dr. Janice Crews, an experienced and respected arts administrator, began serving as director of this program in January, and she has embarked on a new rebranding campaign to let the public know that the Center's events are open to everyone.

This year, the University also embarked on a major project to restore and preserve the native grasslands that once flourished in this community. In the last 200 years, more than 99 percent of the region's grasslands have disappeared. In 2017, Dr. Dwayne Estes and the APSU Center of Excellence for Field Biology launched the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative (SGI). This nonprofit, based at Austin Peay, is a collaborative effort of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, the North Carolina Botanical Garden and Roundstone Native Seed. According to Dr. Estes, the program's executive director, the SGI will now use a combination of scientific research, public education and the administration of grants to help restore the Southeastern grasslands, "the most imperiled ecosystems in eastern North America."

Members of our community also demonstrate their commitment to our University in a variety of significant ways. A few days ago, I turned onto University Avenue and noticed the beautifully landscaped medians with the letters "AP" greeting me as I drove toward the University. The Hand Family Companies—longtime supporters of this institution—adopted this stretch of green space as part of Clarksville's adopt-a-plot program so that the view of the primary entrance to the campus would be memorable and welcoming. The Hands recognize the important role Austin Peay plays within this community and are valued partners.

Whether I'm referring to the efforts of our faculty, staff and students on behalf of our community or the efforts of our larger community members on behalf of our University, I'm proud of the commitment to embrace the core value of serving one another. I hope you enjoy this issue of "Austin Peay: The Magazine for Alumni and Friends."

alica White

Dr. Alisa White APSU President

## Gov News



## GOVS GIVE Campaign Surpasses Goal

Last spring, in conjunction with the University's 90th anniversary, the APSU Advancement Office hosted a 90-hour giving event, Govs Give, with the goal of raising \$90,000 for the different colleges' Funds of Excellence. These are innovation funds that allow deans and directors in academic and student areas to provide students with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed. The campaign raised more than \$148,000, with donations coming in from as far as Canada and Australia.



## **CHANDLER APPOINTED DEAN**

of Martha Dickerson Eriksson College of Education

In April, Dr. Prentice T. Chandler was appointed as the new dean of Austin Peay State University's Martha Dickerson Eriksson College of Education. He replaced Dr. Carlette Hardin, who recently retired as dean after serving in that position since 2010.

Chandler previously served as associate professor of education and associate director of teacher education and leadership at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio, where he oversaw programs in middle childhood education, secondary education, special education and educational leadership. As an educator, Chandler taught courses in social studies education, diversity and critical race theory. Prior to Cincinnati, he served as department head of secondary education and a professor of secondary history and social science education at Athens State University, Alabama. His book, "Doing Race in Social Studies: Critical Perspectives," was published in 2015.

## **NEW BOOKSTORE**

APSU Opening Barnes & Noble Campus Bookstore on College Street Austin Peay State University's 10-year strategic plan calls for creating "a vibrant downtown for a traditional college town experience," and that goal will receive a major boost when the institution opens a 13,000-squarefoot retail bookstore and coffee shop at the corner of College and Fourth streets.

The University is partnering with national book retailer Barnes & Noble to operate the campus bookstore, which will be open to the public, selling children's books, trade books, best sellers, office supplies and Austin Peay branded merchandise. The venue, set to open by the fall of 2018, will be similar to the Vanderbilt University Barnes & Noble on West End Avenue in Nashville, with a Barnes & Noble Café that also will be open to the public.

# BARNES & NOBLE COLLEGE

## SCHOOL OF NURSING

Receives Fifth Grant to Help Combat Breast Cancer

For the fifth year in a row, the Greater Nashville Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure has awarded a grant to the APSU School of Nursing and the Montgomery County Health Department, providing more than \$200,000 in that time for free mammograms and breast exams.

This year, the Nashville Komen affiliate presented the two organizations with a \$42,930 grant to help women who are uninsured and 40 years of age or older receive a free mammogram and breast exams through the Montgomery County Health Department.



Joey Smith, director of the Montgomery County Health Department, shares a \$42,930 grant check with Dr. Patty Orr, Austin Peay State University professor of nursing.

## Gov News



Aaliyah Mitchell, left, Andrew Wadovick, Celeste Malone, Noah Houck, Lauren Cottle and Ethan Steinquest proudly display The All State's awards at the Southeast Journalism Conference last spring.

## THE ALL STATE

Wins National Awards

The All State, APSU's student newspaper, earned two national Apple Awards at the Spring National College Media Convention in New York City on March 14. The newspaper placed second in the Best Newspaper category, and its website — www.theallstate.org placed third for Best Homepage.

APSU's student newspaper was the only public university in Tennessee to garner an award from the conference competition.

Last spring, the newspaper also earned 10 awards from the Southeast Journalism Conference's Best of the South competition and two national Pinnacle Awards from College Media Association's (CMA) Fall National Media Convention.

# Beef Cattle Show Team WINS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The University's Beef Cattle Show Team is barely older than the livestock it shows, but the program has quickly made a name for itself as a competitor on the local, state and national levels. They only reinforced that reputation when Ruby, the team's prize heifer, was named Reserve Division Champion Percentage Simmental at the 2017 Dixie National Livestock show held in February in Jackson, Mississippi.

In addition to multiple local and state championships, Ruby is the team's second national championship heifer. In 2014, the program won its first Dixie National championship when a heifer, Dreamy, was named Senior Calf Champion Percentage Simmental.

The recent national championship was the culmination of months of work



for the five-person team made up of APSU students John Thomas Fussell, Tyler Davis, Austin Henley, Kayla Jackson and APSU associate professor of agriculture and team adviser Dr. Rod Mills. Dr. Rod Mills, left, Austin Henley, Tyler Davis, John Thomas Fussell and Kayla Jackson



# Community Celebrates

On June 10, more than 500 people offered their well-wishes to retiring APSU men's basketball coach Dave Loos during the Celebrating a Legend fundraiser and roast in the Dunn Center. Special guests—including Kansas Head Basketball Coach Bill Self, Big 12 Deputy Commissioner Tim Weiser and ESPN's Mark Adams—talked about Loos and his impact on the game. The event raised more than \$47,000 for the APSU Dave Loos Scholarship Fund and the Rally for Rhyan campaign.



## Army Veteran Appointed FIRST STUDENT TRUSTEE

During its inaugural meeting in March, the APSU Board of Trustees appointed junior Crystal Wallenius as Austin Peay's first student trustee. Wallenius, a U.S. Army veteran and member of the U.S. Army Reserves, is a nonvoting member of the 10-member board. Eight of the trustees were appointed by Gov. Bill Haslam and one faculty member was selected by the APSU faculty.

Crystal Wallenius is introduced to the Board.

## For more news, visit www.apsu.edu/news.

- APSU NAMED BEST NONPROFIT BY NASHVILLE BUSINESS JOURNAL
- NEW CYBERSECURITY DEGREES OFFERED AT AUSTIN PEAY
- APSU STUDENT WOODS BEGINS WORK ON TREE INVENTORY OF CLARKSVILLE CAMPUS
- STATE HONORS APSU'S CHESTER WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
- STUDENT WHITE WINS 1st PLACE AT INTERNATIONAL GLASS AND OPTICS MEETING
- APSU COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS RENAMED COLLEGE OF STEM



Thousands of people—including NASA scientists, space campers and international travelers visited Austin Peay on Aug. 21, 2017, to witness the total solar eclipse. Because the eclipse's path of totality passed through Clarksville, the University hosted several events, including a watch party, an educational fair, NASA-sponsored high-altitude balloon launches and a free talk by former astronaut Dr. Rhea Seddon.







NASA scientists and space camp students use smartphones to capture the blacked-out sun at the APSU Farm and Environmental Education Center during the Aug. 21 total solar eclipse.

**1** A young girl reacts with awe at an experiment during the PeayClipse Educational Experience for schoolaged children in the Dunn Center.

**2** Dr. Rhea Seddon, one of NASA's first female astronauts, meets with a young admirer following her talk and book signing held as a part of the University's PeayClipse celebration. **3** The view of the moon blocking the sun above campus during the total solar eclipse. See more eclipse images at apsu.edu/ alumni-magazine.

## LEADING THROUGH EXCELLENCE

## APSU THRIVING UNDER NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

On a warm afternoon in March, several members of Nashville's business elite mingled inside the Music City Center, discussing a state school 40 miles north in Clarksville. These men and women, dressed in professional attire, had just enjoyed a meal during the Nashville Business Journal's 2017 Best in Business Awards Luncheon, and as waiters refilled coffee mugs and water glasses, a few of these attendees brushed crumbs from their phones and googled, "Austin Peay State University."

Throughout the luncheon, they'd heard plenty about the schoolfrom its growing enrollment to its efforts in downtown Clarksville's revitalization—and they wanted to learn more about the University that had just been named the region's best nonprofit.

"This award demonstrates that leaders across our state are beginning to take notice of what we're accomplishing at Austin Peay," APSU President Alisa White said.

The University's recent success is the result of its adherence over the last few years to an ambitious strategic plan that calls for guiding APSU's evolution through the year 2025. The "Leading Through Excellence" Strategic Plan was unveiled in early 2016 with the five goals of growing enrollment, enhancing student success, sustaining University growth, expanding diversity and broadening communication, and after only a year into the process, Austin Peay has made significant progress toward fulfilling those goals.



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> Transformation occurs when the potential that is visible to some becomes visible to all."

> > Dr. Alisa White President



# "

We're admitting more students with a 29 ACT score or higher, and we're also up on students who have no conditions for admission. That means we're bringing in not only a larger class, but also a more prepared class."

Dr. Rex Gandy, provost and vice president for academic affairs

## **GOAL 1: ENROLLMENT**

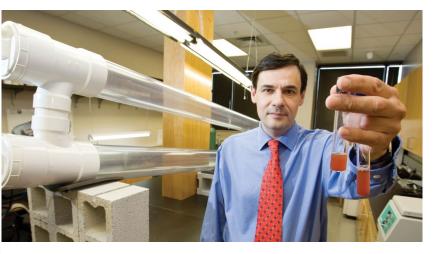
In August 2016, 1,900 freshman students arrived for the fall semester, making them the largest freshman class in APSU history. Another record-setting class arrived in Fall 2017, helping push APSU toward its enrollment goal.



## **GOAL 2: STUDENT SUCCESS**

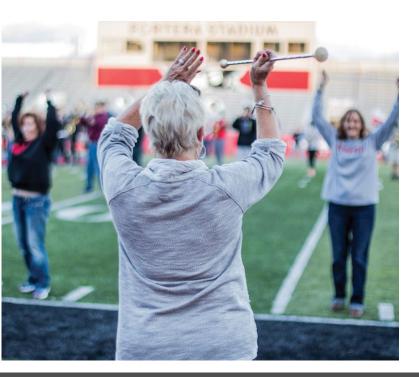
Last year, in an effort to improve student success, the University joined a national higher education project known as "Foundations of Excellence." The project, sponsored by the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, is helping APSU faculty and staff redefine the first-year college experience at Austin Peay.

Research has long indicated that new students who are successfully integrated into college are much more likely to succeed. This year, the campus community will begin implementing first-year experience recommendations from various stakeholders across campus.



## **GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY**

In January, the University Advancement Office moved to the Jenkins Building on newly purchased land along College Street, and Austin Peay is now working with Barnes & Noble to relocate the campus bookstore to a renovated, 13,000-squarefoot building on that property.



## **GOAL 4: DIVERSITY**

Increasing diversity continues to be a priority for the campus community, and last year, minoritystudent enrollment grew to more than 34 percent of the total student population. Last fall, Dr. Rex Gandy developed a Diversity Task Force to identify and explore successful methods for the recruitment and retention of minority faculty members.



## GOAL 5: COMMUNICATION, BRANDING, STRATEGIC PLANNING

This summer, the Austin Peay brand received a major boost when the University unveiled its new www.apsu.edu website. The University also increased its number of donors this year with more than 4,000 gifts totaling more than \$3.6 million to Austin Peay. In April, as part of Austin Peay's 90th anniversary, the APSU Office of Advancement raised more than \$148,000.



Read the full story, and see more images at apsu.edu/alumni-magazine.

## Alumni News and Events

2017-18 ALUMNI CALENDAR — OF EVENTS —

> Sept. 28 Knoxville Govs Gathering

Oct. 12 Memphis Govs Gathering

Oct. 17-21 HOMECOMING 2017 (calendar on page 18-19)

Oct. 20 John Morgan Walkway Dedication

## Oct. 21 APSU vs. SEMO

Oct. 21 Homecoming Alumni Village

**Feb. 2018** Atlanta Govs Gathering (TBA)

March 10 34th Annual Candlelight Ball

June 2018 Alumni and friends Australia/New Zealand Trip



For the most up-to-date alumni event and National Alumni Association information, visit www.apsu.edu/alumni. For the most up-to-date Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts events and information, including all "Downtown Art Galleries," visit www. apsu.edu/creativearts.



## 34TH ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT BALL

For over 30 years, Austin Peay State University's Candlelight Ball has been one of the University's premier social events. Hosted by President Alisa White and Elliott Herzlich, this year's ball will be held at the Downtown Nashville Omni Hotel on Saturday, March 10, 2018. Along with the reception, dinner and dancing, the Ball this year will feature the eighth annual Wendell H. Gilbert Award and Spirit of Austin Peay Award presentations to two individuals, Maggie Kulback and Terry Griffen, who have made memorable contributions to Austin Peay.

The primary purpose of the Candlelight Ball is to assist in providing scholarships to deserving students. Over 300 scholarships were given out to Austin Peay students during the 2016-17 academic year.

Austin Peay would like to thank the Candlelight Ball Committee, under the leadership of co-chairs Christina Clark and Andrea Herrera, for their continued work and service for this event, as well as the underwriters and businesses that support the event each year.

Tickets for Austin Peay's 34th Annual Candlelight Ball are \$150 per person.

To make your reservation or for more information, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 931-221-7979, or visit alumni.apsu.edu/candlelight2018.



## APSU ALUMNI AND FRIENDS TRAVEL

The APSU National Alumni Association has an international trip planned for alumni and friends for the summer of 2018.

June 2018 - Australia/New Zealand – accompanied by Dr. Timothy Winters.

For updated information, visit www.apsu.edu/alumni/alumni-travel, or call the Alumni Relations Office at 931-221-7979.

## NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD

President Nicole Aquino Williamson ('04) nicole.aquino615@gmail.com

President Elect Joe Shakeenab ('04) joe@shakeenab.com

Vice President Tom Chester ('73) thomas.w.chester@tn.gov

Past President **Makeba Webb ('00)** webbm@apsu.edu

## JOIN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OR CREATE A CHAPTER

It is the goal of the APSU National Alumni Association to encourage and foster lifelong alumni participation, involvement and commitment. This group of dedicated alumni strive to strengthen the bond between the University and its alumni; create programs which match the interests and needs of the alumni; maintain and build upon the positive relationships with seasoned alumni; increase the participation and communication with younger alumni; and continue to serve as the primary communication link between the University and its alumni.

For more information on the APSU National Alumni Association, how to join the NAA Board or start an alumni group in your region, visit www.apsu.edu/alumni or email alumni@apsu.edu.

FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON APSU ALUMNI, GO TO WWW.APSU.EDU/ALUMNI.



John Chapman knew his late wife, Betty Joe Wallace, loved Austin Peay State University—the school where she taught for more than 50 years—and shortly before she passed away, she told him she wanted to help students earn a degree from that institution.

Earlier this year, Chapman honored his wife's wish when he established the Betty Joe Wallace Memorial Endowment Scholarship. Now, her name will be intertwined with the school and students she loved in perpetuity.

**She never had a moments regret** for teaching, and this is what she wanted to do."

Join us in supporting Austin Peay State University. apsu.edu/advancement • 931-221-7127



## Alumni Awards

## **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**



#### **JOE SHAKEENAB ('04)**

A 2004 graduate of Austin Peay State University, Joe Shakeenab is a passionate builder of young adults, especially in the area of character development. Through his business, Shakeenab Consultant Services, Shakeenab uses the insightful sessions of engagements and continued interactions to groom the current and next generation of leaders. He conducts training sessions for growth to elevate

individuals, organizations and aspects of the community.

Former U.S. Special Forces, Shakeenab served 20 years with the 5th Special Forces Group as a Green Beret. During his military service, he traveled extensively to the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, training others in order to facilitate better opportunities.

Shakeenab continues to serve both Clarksville and APSU in a number of roles, including serving as president of the APSU Military Alumni Chapter and vice president of the APSU National Alumni Association. In these roles, Shakeenab has led a number of initiatives, including the creation of two endowment scholarships, the Military Alumni Chapter Scholarship and the CSM(Ret.) Sidney Brown Scholarship, at \$25,000 each over a three-year period. Shakeenab also has served as vice president of the Montgomery County Veterans Coalition, as well as chair of the advisory board of L.E.A.P. Organization Clarksville.

Shakeenab earned a master's in strategic leadership from Austin Peay in 2014.



#### **DAVE LOOS**

Known as the "Dean of the Ohio Valley Conference" during his 27-year coaching career, Dave Loos retired as head coach of the APSU men's basketball team following the 2016-17 season, leaving behind countless memories — both on and off the court.

The winningest coach in APSU and OVC history, Loos accumulated 420 victories at Austin Peay to go along with four OVC Tournament

championships, five OVC Coach of the Year honors, four NCAA Tournament appearances and six 20-win seasons. Only the second coach in program history to lead Austin Peay to both an OVC regular season title and an NCAA Tournament berth, Loos finished his 31-year coaching career with 502 victories.

For more than 16 years, Loos helped APSU thrive off of the court, serving as the University's athletics director in addition to his coaching duties. Stepping down from the position in 2014, his dual role garnered Loos respect both on and off campus. He applied the same common-sense approach to his athletics director's duties that have been representative of his APSU basketball tenure. To honor his achievements at the behest of several longtime basketball supporters, then APSU president, Dr. Sherry Hoppe, named the basketball floor Dave Loos Court. Loos was inducted into the Austin Peay Athletics Hall of Fame in February 2008.

## **OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS**



### STEVE HARMON ('83)

Steve Harmon is editor of Morning Read, a golf newsletter that targets over 1 million golf industry insiders and consumers. In his role, Harmon steers the editorial direction of the newsletter, as well as manages a network of freelance writers. Before joining Morning Read, Harmon served as deputy editor and later as editor of Golfweek Magazine from 2007-16.

From 1993-2007, Harmon served in a number of positions with the Orlando Sentinel, including senior desk editor, senior desk chief and news production editor, a position he held from 1998-2007. In that role, Harmon supervised a 40-person universal desk that edited and designed more than 50 news, business and feature sections weekly. A veteran news writer, Harmon has worked for a number of newspapers, including the Cincinnati Post, the Winston-Salem Journal, the Asheville Citizen-Times and the Kentucky New Era. Harmon got his start in sports journalism at APSU, serving as sports editor for The All State for three years.

Harmon graduated from Austin Peay State University in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in political science. A three-year letter winner ('80-'82) on the Govs men's golf team, Harmon was a member of the program's 1979 OVC championship team.

## **OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI**



#### TRENT CAFFEE ('11)

Trent S. Caffee is a senior trader with the Dorado Trade Group, a full-service trading group focused on physical metals trading by making a two-way market in all major gold, silver, platinum and palladium bullion products. Prior to that, he worked with Elemental Capital as a trader of precious metals. An accomplished

football coach, Caffee

has worked in a number of positions for a number of programs, including a stint as quarterback coach at Austin Peay State University from 2011-12. Caffee continues to mentor and train young, multi-sport athletes in the Dallas, Texas area, having coached wide receivers and special teams for two Texas high school programs, as well as serving as a wide receiver coach for USA Football's U-16 team.

A four-year letter winner for Austin Peay State University, Caffee was a 2010 team captain for the Governors, as well as an Ohio Valley Conference Offensive Player of the Week and a two-time Athletic Director's Honor Roll member. As a student, Caffee was a founding member and officer of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. Caffee graduated from Austin Peay in 2011 with a bachelor's degree in health and human performance. He currently lives in Fort Worth, Texas, along with his wife, Ashly, and their four children.



#### JOHN SWIGART ('00)

John W. Swigart is the president of Spartan Chemical Company Inc., a recognized leader in the formulation and manufacture of sustainable cleaning and sanitation solutions for the industrial and institutional market. Swigart graduated from Austin Peay in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in marketing.

Swigart began his

career with Spartan in 2000 as an area sales representative working with distributors in Clarksville. He was quickly promoted to distributor relations manager, working his way through the company before being appointed to Spartan's board of directors in 2007. In his current role, he is responsible for the development and implementation of the company's strategic direction. He also serves as president for Spartan do Brasil, Spartan's wholly owned subsidiary in Campinas, Brazil, and works closely with the company's international affiliates.

Passionate about advancing the professionalism and success of the cleaning industry, Swigart has held various leadership positions for the industry's principal trade association, ISSA, including board appointments. Swigart also is active in his local community and serves on the board of directors for the Toledo Mud Hens, Toledo Walleye and the Inverness Golf Club.

## **OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS**



#### MIKE KRAUSE ('07)

Mike Krause was appointed as the executive director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation by Gov. Bill Haslam in August 2016. Prior to assuming this role, he served as the founding executive director of the Tennessee Promise and Drive to 55, where he coordinated the launch of the nation's first free community college program and an array of other programs focused on increasing the state's higher education attainment.

During the Tennessee Promise launch, he led work to build an entirely new outreach structure for 74,000 high school students, prepare a financial aid pipeline to support disbursement of \$33 million annually and traveled tens of thousands of miles across the state to ensure students and communities understood the opportunities that lay ahead. Krause previously served as the assistant executive director at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

Serving eight years in the U.S. Army and Tennessee Army National Guard, Krause completed three combat tours with the 101st Airborne Division and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Krause earned his bachelor's degree in public administration from Austin Peay State University in 2007.

## HOMECOMING 2017 ALUMNI CALENDAR OF EVENTS

View a complete schedule at apsu.edu/homecoming.



### TUESDAY, OCT. 17 PEP RALLY/BONFIRE/COURT ANNOUNCEMENT

**7 p.m.**, Dunn Center, front lawn Free and open to the public. Contact Student Life and Engagement, 931-221-7431.

## WEDNESDAY, OCT. 18 GOV TUG

**4 p.m.**, Intramural Fields Tug-of-War for student organizations to have fun and display their athleticism. Contact Student Life and Engagement, 931-221-7431.

#### THURSDAY, OCT. 19 APSU APOLLO (STUDENT TALENT SHOW)

**7 p.m.**, Foy Center Sponsored by Govs Programming Council. Free and open to the public. APSU students amaze the audience with their talent. Contact Student Life and Engagement, 931-221-7431.

## FRIDAY, OCT. 20

## 39TH ANNUAL HOMECOMING GOLF TOURNAMENT

**10 a.m.**, Swan Lake Golf Course Sponsored by Budweiser of Clarksville. \$60 per person and open to the public. Fee includes ditty bag, refreshments on the golf course and light lunch. Frazier Allen ('99), chair. To RSVP or sign up your full team, call 931-221-7979 or visit alumni. apsu.edu/hcgolf17.

## WNDAACC ALUMNI & CURRENT STUDENT HOMECOMING MIXER

**2-4 p.m.**, Wilbur N. Daniel African American Cultural Center (Clement 120) Free and open to all alumni and current Greek or non-Greek students. Contact Cultural Center, 931-221-7120.

### STUDY ABROAD ALUMNI AND CURRENT STUDENT RECEPTION

**4-6 p.m.**, Harned Hall Gallery Connect with former studyabroad scholars, faculty coordinators and current students. Refreshments provided. Free event. Sponsored by the Office of International Education and Department of Languages and Literature. RSVP to International Education at internationaled@apsu.edu or 931-221-6851.

### MILITARY ALUMNI CHAPTER DINNER AND SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

**6-8 p.m.**, Morgan University Center Ballroom \$30 per person and open to all. Portion of proceeds benefit Military Scholarship Endowment. To RSVP, visit alumni.apsu.edu/ militarydinner2017.

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS HOMECOMING RECEPTION

6-8 p.m., F&M Bank (Franklin Room) All College of Business alumni are welcome and invited to attend. Food will be provided. To RSVP, contact April Williams at 931-221-1283 or williamsan@apsu.edu.

## GOVERNORS' OWN ALUMNI BAND REHEARSAL AND COOKOUT

5:30-8 p.m., Fortera Stadium All former Governors' Own Band members are welcome. Free event. At 5:30 p.m., the alumni band will be rehearsing the Fight Song and other tunes. At 6 p.m., alumni will



join current band members for a mix and mingle cookout to take place in the choir room. To RSVP by Oct. 16, contact Barb Syme Cramer at bjcramertn@aol.com.

## SMASH! BANG! LIP SYNC COMPETITION

7 p.m., Foy Center Student organizations combine the APSU Fight Song and traditional lip sync to entertain the audience. Free event. Contact Student Life and Engagement, 931-221-7431.

#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN ALUMNI CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP MIXER

8 p.m. – 1 a.m., Riverview Inn Sponsored by the APSU African-American Alumni Chapter. Join us for a night of mixing, mingling and dancing! Donations can be made at the door to benefit the Marvin Posey Jr. Scholarship Endowment. Contact Jasmine Jones at jhalljones823@gmail.com.

### SATURDAY, OCT. 21 50-YEAR REUNION BREAKFAST (CLASS OF 1967)

8-10 a.m., Morgan University Center, Room 305 \$30 per person. RSVP at alumni.apsu.edu/class67 or contact Alumni Relations Office, 931-221-7979 or 1-800-264-2586.

## GOVERNORS FOOTBALL ALUMNI BREAKFAST

**8-9:30 a.m.**, Echo Power Club Level at Fortera Stadium All former football players are invited to reunite at this breakfast in support of APSU football. Advance reservations requested for this free event. RSVP at alumni.apsu.edu/ govsfb17 or contact Alumni Relations Office, 931-221-7979 or 1-800-264-2586.

### GREEK ALUMNI PARADE "WATCH PARTY"

9:30 a.m., Clement Building lawn (off of College Street -Greek Tent) Join current APSU Greeks and reconnect with your fraternity brothers and sorority sisters during the Homecoming Parade. Immediately following the parade, you are encouraged to join your organization's tailgate in Alumni Village, located in the Fortera Stadium west side parking lot. Contact Victor Felts, Greek Alumni Chapter president, at 931-221-7431 or feltsv@apsu.edu.

## COLLEGE OF STEM ALUMNI RECEPTION

9-10 a.m., Maynard Mathematics and Computer Science Building (Ken and Amy Landrum Courtyard) Reunite with alumni, faculty and staff of the College for this year's Homecoming and Homecoming Parade! Contact Tami Fraley at fraleyt@apsu. edu or 931-221-7971.

## GOVERNORS' OWN ALUMNI BAND REHEARSAL AND SOCIAL

9 a.m., All former Governors' Own Band members will meet in Choir Room (MMC Building) for final rehearsals, followed by parade, Tailgate Alley and game performances. Contact Barb Syme Cramer at bjcramertn@aol.com.

## HOMECOMING PARADE

**10 a.m.**, APSU campus APSU gathers together to celebrate Homecoming 2017. Tailgate Alley opens at 2 p.m. Free and open to the public. Contact Athletics to reserve a spot, 931-221-7904. Contact Student Life and Engagement, 931-221-7431.

## POLITICAL SCIENCE ALUMNI REUNION BBQ

Noon, Morgan University Center, Room 305 Mix and mingle with alumni and current students. Lunch provided. Free event. To RSVP by Oct. 14, contact Sage Disney at disneye@ apsu.edu or 931-221-7515.

### **ALUMNI AWARDS LUNCH**

**Noon**, Morgan University Center Ballroom Meet and mingle with alumni and friends as we honor this year's outstanding alumni award recipients: Joe Shakeenab ('04), Dave Loos, John Swigart ('00), Trent Caffee ('11), Mike Krause ('07) and Steve Harmon ('83). Admission is \$25 per person. RSVP at alumni.apsu.edu/ alumniawardslunch17. Contact Alumni Relations Office, 931-221-7979 or 1-800-264-2586.

#### **ALUMNI HOSPITALITY TENT**

**2-4 p.m.**, Tailgate Alley Stop by to meet and mingle with other alumni, faculty, staff and friends. '

### HOMECOMING GAME – APSU VS. SEMO

**4 p.m.**, Fortera Stadium Open to the public. Presentation of 2017 Homecoming King, Queen and court at halftime. Contact Athletics Ticket Office, 931-221-7761 for ticket information.

### **HOMECOMING STEP SHOW**

7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.), Foy Center Advance tickets for students/ military are \$10 and \$15 for community/alumni. Tickets at the door are \$20. Contact Fraternity & Sorority Affairs, 931-221-6570, or visit www. apsugreeks.com.

## THE ALIEN **Dreadnought**

APSU College of STEM prepares students for tomorrow's jobs

By CHARLES BOOTH and COLIN HARRIS



Some industries get hung up on finding interns from big names like M.I.T. or Cal Berkley, but I knew that I needed a chance to show that students don't have to come from those massive, well-known schools." -Jonathan Bunton



**INSIDE** the massive, sparkling white facility, a sign offers a grim warning: "Please don't give them any more reasons to overthrow mankind." The notice, hanging near the production floor, is referring to the giant robots—Wolverine, the Beast and Iceman—and the need to keep dirt particles and other debris from causing them to malfunction.

These machines, named after comic book superheroes, work alongside some 200 other robots at Tesla Inc.'s Fremont, California, facility or what Wired Magazine once called, "the car factory of the future."

Every year, thousands of college students hope to get an internship at the famed electric car company, with the jobs usually going to individuals from top-tier institutions. But last year, Austin Peay State University physics student Jonathan Bunton decided to show the Tesla executives that Austin Peay is just as good at preparing students for this type of high-tech work.

"A lot of times, some industries get hung up on finding interns from big names like M.I.T. or Cal Berkley, but I knew that I just needed a chance to show that students, who are just as skilled or more skilled than any other candidates, don't have to come from those massive, well-known schools," he said. "The interview process was stressful, but they asked questions about my research work, and I was able to go into detail about what I've done over the past year."



Continued on next page

Bunton's research background impressed the hiring committee at Tesla, and he spent three months this summer at the Fremont facility as an intern in the company's quality engineering department. But he is not an anomaly at the University. Rather, he is an example of the type of student Austin Peay's newly named College of STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics is now producing. In the last few years, the College (formerly the College of Science and Mathematics) has retooled its focus to better prepare students for the high-tech realities of the 21st century workplace.



Science Foundation grant to explore possible substitutes for crystalline materials in computing, optical technology and other modern applications.

## **AN ALIEN Dreadnought**

Earlier this spring, hundreds of German-built robots arrived at the Tesla factory to help with production of the company's Model 3—a more affordable version of its popular electric car. The robots are part of CEO Elon Musk's vision of an automated factory that looks like something from a science fiction novel. In a conference call with investors last year, he said, "(When) our factory looks like an alien dreadnought, then we know it's probably right."

But this isn't simply Musk's vision. According to the Boston Consulting Group, "the share of tasks performed by robots will rise from a global average of around 10 percent to about 25 percent across all manufacturing industries." APSU will provide individuals to design and later operate many of those robots thanks to two College of STEM programs—mechatronics and the new Bachelor of Science in Engineering with a major in engineering physics. *A* 



Tesla CEO Elon Musk's "Alien dreadnought" name refers to these robotic machines that build other machines. Photo courtesy of Tesla



Read the full story, and see more images at www.apsu.edu/alumni-magazine.



## APSU GEOGRAPHY PROGRAM EXAMINES GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

ast summer, Dr. Christine Mathenge, Austin Peay State University associate professor of geography, sat on a rocky cliff at an ancient religious site in Kisii, Kenya, and stared at the meager, metal roof homes that glimmered in the valley below. In addition to those homes, she saw several large boulders that could be used to create an elaborate economy of expensive flooring tiles, ornate sinks and carvings and sculptures, but the area's landowners have yet to tap the value of the rocks dotting their landscape.

"They sell large chunks of rock cheaply, yet it could really be a larger part of their economy," Mathenge said. "I'm interested in land ownership and land laws in Kenya and East Africa in general. I'm interested in giving landowners more control."

Mathenge began a collaborative research project that could lead to the development of a ceramic tile lab at a nearby university, thereby increasing the value of the rocks (soap stone) that dominate the area. Her work could ultimately transform the lives of thousands of people living in Kisii, but it also forms the basis of a unique degree program she oversees within Austin Peay's Department of Geosciences. For the last few years, Mathenge has served as the lead faculty member for the department's global environment and development concentration. The program's curriculum provides students with an understanding of the geographic, economic, historical, political and philosophical issues surrounding human society's interactions with the natural environment.

"The concentration's cluster of classes are designed to give the students exposure to the global environment," Mathenge said. "By the time students graduate, they're graduating into a global job market, and they need to be prepared, regardless of what their individual interests are. They have to understand how the global





economy works and how other cultures interact with and preserve nature."

Studying abroad is a key component of this concentration because Mathenge believes students need to witness the environments and cultures firsthand. In the summer, she takes a group of students to the Central American country of Belize where they develop research projects based on their encounters.

"We want to get students connected to the world outside of Clarksville," she said.

For more information on the Department of Geosciences' global environment and development concentration, visit www.apsu.edu/ geosciences/geography/globalenvironment-development.

> All photos contributed by Dr. Christine Mathenge





## Student Success

## STUDENTS SPEND SUMMER PURSUING PASSIONS THROUGH **INTERNSHIPS**



## **CASSIDY GRAVES**

When Cassidy Graves graduated from Austin Peay State University in May with a bachelor's degree in communication, she quickly traded in her monocle for mouse ears.

That's because in June, Graves relocated to Florida where she joined Disney as a full-time, professional intern with the House of Mouse's Talent Acquisition Communications team. As a communications team member, Graves was tasked with showing prospective hires what life is like at Disney, spotlighting the company's culture and environment through its various social media, blog and digital media channels.

"Disney is a major brand, so they were only looking for candidates who already had a lot of experience and exposure to social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook," Graves said.

The opportunity came at the right time for Graves who said she had been reaching out to potential employers for an opportunity to work with their social media teams. While Graves noted she would have considered any chance to begin her career, she understood that the chance to work with Disney represented a lot more than a line on her resume.

"I've been going to Disney World at least once a year since I was about three years old," Graves said. "It's our vacation destination as a family; last year, I went twice. We love it there, but never in a million years did I think I'd actually get the chance to work there...when they called to tell me they were offering me the job, yeah, I started crying on the phone. The woman even said 'You know, you're the second person I've made cry in an hour." The job is a perfect fit for Graves who spent the past two years working with Austin Peay's Office of Public Relations and Marketing as a social media assistant, creating photo and video content that shaped the University's social media identity. In fact, it was that wealth of experience, Graves said, that gave her an advantage over an extremely competitive field.

"I don't think I'd have gotten this position without my time at Austin Peay," she said. "They wanted someone who could shoot photos, record and edit videos and someone who had a real knowledge of social media and branding."

An amateur filmmaker, Graves said she intended to study film, but the experience representing Austin Peay opened her eyes to social media's real potential.

"I think what I really enjoy more than anything about social media is the human relations aspect," Graves said. "People think social media is watering down human connections, but I think it's bringing people closer together, and it has even brought brands into the everyday lives of consumers. That's why I like creating content; I have the chance to make things that people can see and then relate to their own lives."

I think what I really enjoy more than anything about social media is the human relations aspect. People think social media is watering down human connections, but I think it's bringing people closer together. "

-Cassidy Graves

I remember taking the intro to sociology class and realizing this would impact my understanding. I also love to write, so I decided to major in both sociology and journalism."



-Sarah Eskildson

## **SARAH ESKILDSON**

On April 25, 2015, an earthquake ravaged parts of Nepal, destroying homes and businesses and killing nearly 9,000 people. In the months following the devastation, several mysterious individuals appeared in the rubble, offering survivors the opportunity to pursue a better life through education or jobs overseas. Thousands of women and girls, having no alternative, accepted these seemingly generous offers.

According to a 2016 report by Public Radio International, many of those women and girls were then "sold into a global network that includes the dance bars of Kenya, the brothels and underground organ clinics of India, 'paper marriages' of South Korea and China, home-cleaning services in the Middle East, slave labor in South Asia and smuggling rings at the Mexico-U.S. border."

A year before the earthquake, in 2014, more than 13,000 Nepalese women and children were victims of human trafficking, and police in that country believe that number has increased by at least 15 percent since the earthquake.

In 2006, Free For Life International, an anti-trafficking nonprofit, was founded in Nashville, and this summer, Austin Peay State University student Sarah Eskildson worked to help Nepalese women and girls as part of her internship with the organization.

"This is my passion, and I'm excited to be just a little part of something so big," she said.

When Eskildson, a Clarksville native, first enrolled at APSU, she had difficulty settling on a major. Nothing seemed to fit her interest, but one afternoon, she happened to read an article on human trafficking.

"That caught my attention, so I started researching it more," she said.

She read articles and books, traveled to Nashville to volunteer with groups, such as End Slavery Tennessee, and organized public awareness campaigns. When it came time to pick a major, she decided to pursue areas that fit this new interest.

"I remember taking the intro to sociology class and realizing this would impact my understanding," she said. "I also love to write, so I decided to major in both sociology and journalism."

Free for Life International, in collaboration with the Peace Rehabilitation Center, operates border monitoring stations along Nepal's borders with India and Tibet, and in 2015, the organization rescued 213 girls from slavery and counseled more than 1,700 Nepalese on the dangers of trafficking. This summer, Eskildson used the skills she acquired during her studies at APSU to assist these missions.

"I will be writing a lot of survivor stories," she said. "When they rescue a victim, I will write up a story to publish on the website and on social media. I'm excited I'll be bringing awareness to this issue."

Eskildson returned to campus this fall, and she plans to graduate in December. When she leaves APSU, she hopes to find a job that expands upon her experiences as an intern.

"It doesn't matter how much you're getting paid," she said. "If you love it, you're going to be happy. And this is my passion."

One recommendation of Healthier Montgomery, created by County Public Health Director Joey Smith, is the formation of neighborhood walking groups to encourage engagement and accountability.

# A Million **Extra** Years

Health director looks to prolong life in Montgomery County

Story on next page –





# A Million **Extra** Years

Health director looks to prolong life in Montgomery County

**By COLIN HARRIS** 

On sunny afternoons, Joey Smith ('99), director of the Montgomery County Health Department, can occasionally be found on Austin Peay State University's Clarksville campus. While most people are there to study or teach, Smith's motivations are a bit more abstract. He spends his downtime at the University campus because he enjoys watching people who dream big.

"I look around, and I see people who truly believe that they'll do something big when they leave here," Smith said. "I'll walk through campus or sit at the coffee shop in the student center and listen to conversations, but I always see people who are doing things to better themselves because they're moving toward a greater goal.

"That's what I'm trying to do for my community; I'm trying to help this community move toward something greater."

For Smith, that "something greater" is a number—a very large number—but one he believes is achievable.



By the time I retire, I want to be able to say that I helped the people of Clarksville-Montgomery County live a million extra years. If I'm able to help every person live just three extra years, you're already at 900,000 extra years of life collectively.

Neighborhood gardens, like the Victory Gardens at APSU, are another recommendation of Healthier Montgomery.

As interns for the Healthier Montgomery program, APSU students Aaliyah Burroughs and Rachel Alfred work with Joey Smith on street marketing initiatives. "By the time I retire, I want to be able to say that I helped the people of Clarksville-Montgomery County live a million extra years," Smith said. "It's hard to get your mind around that number, but the way our community is growing, we could be at 300,000 people by 2030. If I'm able to help every person live just three extra years, you're already at 900,000 extra years of life collectively.

"What if you had three more Christmas mornings or three more birthdays to share with your children or grandchildren? That's what I hope I can say we accomplished by the end of my career."

## Partnering with APSU

To achieve his goal, Smith has enlisted Austin Peay faculty and students in a number of projects geared at improving lives in this area. For the past five years, he has worked with Dr. Patty Orr, APSU professor of nursing, to address what both saw as an alarming reality. After looking into incidents of breast cancer in the area, Smith and Orr discovered that Montgomery County ranked 88th out of 95 counties in Tennessee for breast cancer incident and mortality rates.

"We surveyed the data, and it was really bad in Montgomery County for underserved populations," Orr, who also occupies the APSU Lenora C. Reuther Chair of Excellence in Nursing, said. "They were being diagnosed when it had progressed too far."

Those findings prompted Orr and Smith to submit a grant proposal to the Greater Nashville affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure to help fund breast health education and services to underserved populations in this community.

For the fifth year in a row, the Nashville Komen affiliate has awarded the grant to the two organizations, providing more than \$200,000 in that time for free mammograms and breast exams.



Read the full story, and see more images at www.apsu.edu/alumni-magazine.

## TWO ALUMNAE PURSUING GRADUATE DEGREES AT **UK'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS** INSTITUTIONS

## WILCOX ATTENDS UNIVERSITY OF KENT

On a sweltering afternoon in Tallil, Iraq, a U.S. Army soldier named Elizabeth Wilcox ('17) paused on her way to the gym to examine what looked like seashells on the desert floor. Centuries ago, the Euphrates River had flowed through the area, surrounding a nearby stone structure some scholars believe was the Tower of Babel, but that channel of the river had long since turned to dust.

"Today, it's a desolate desert," Wilcox said. "There were no signs of large bodies of water nearby. I knew the history of the place, but the shells brought to life this history."

In that moment, Wilcox became curious at how geology can reveal history's lost secrets. Now, her curiosity is taking her to the United Kingdom's prestigious University of Kent, where she'll study Roman History and Archeology.

Wilcox's application received a boost last spring when she won the Classical Association of the Middle West and South's (CAMWS) Dr. Peter Knox Award. The prestigious \$2,000 award, named for the former president of CAMWS, is presented each year to one undergraduate student, one graduate student and one teacher. Wilcox, the undergraduate winner, used the monetary award to attend an excavation field school in Romania. She spent six weeks during the summer learning how to use ground penetrating radar while she assisted the excavation of the Roman site.

Hundreds of students from some of the top archeological programs in the country applied for the CAMWS Award, but the awarding committee was impressed by Wilcox's proposal to conducting phosphorus analysis of the site's soil.

"The thing about Liz is she had a very specific interest in the discipline, so I thought she stood a better chance," Dr. Tim Winters, APSU classics professor, said. "But still, that's a lot of students at a lot of top universities applying. I'm impressed. I'm very proud of her."

When Wilcox left the army after 14 years of service, she enrolled at Austin Peay with the intention of studying biology. But then she took a Latin class and "fell in love" with the subject. "Reading Virgil and Cicero made me fall in love with the culture and love it more," she said. "And then I went to Greece last summer with Dr. Winters."

During her weeks in Greece, Wilcox met some of Winters' close friends, including Dr. Guy Sanders, director of The American School of Classical Studies in Athens' excavation at Corinth.

"I never thought anything like this would ever happen," she said. "I would have to say the classics program—Dr. Winters, Dr. (Stephen) Kershner, Ms. (Mary) Winters—was such an asset to my learning here."



For more information on classics at Austin Peay, visit www.apsu.edu/classics or contact Winters at winterst@apsu.edu.

## **ORTON ENROLLS AT CAMBRIDGE**

In certain academic circles, Dr. Simon Keynes, Elrington and Bosworth professor of Anglo-Saxon history at the University of Cambridge, is considered a "rock star." In addition to being the great-great-grandson of Charles Darwin and the grandnephew of economist John Maynard Keynes, the renowned professor is a member of the British Academy and a fellow with the Royal Historical Society. As a scholar, he isn't easily impressed, but earlier this year, Keynes was intrigued enough by recent Austin Peay State University graduate Brittany Orton's ('16) research that he agreed to take her on as a graduate student this fall at Cambridge.

"He's a rock star of Anglo-Saxon history," Orton said recently. "The opportunity to study under him will be amazing."

Her acceptance into the nearly 800-year-old university is the realization of a lifelong goal—a goal she never expected to achieve. As a precocious eight-year-old, Orton became fascinated with medieval history. She thought of becoming an archeologist, but her lack of motivation in high school almost stopped her from one day attending a university that existed during the medieval period.

"I almost didn't graduate high school because I failed too many classes," she said. "I went to college at 18 and failed out of that."

A few years later, after marrying a U.S. Army soldier and having three children, she ended up earning her associate degree in Alaska. Then, when her husband was reassigned to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, she suddenly found herself living near a university with strong history and language programs. Orton enrolled at Austin Peay and decided to take a Medieval England course taught by Dr. Cameron Sutt, associate professor of history.

"In my last year here, I fell in love with Anglo-Saxon history," she said. "This is from the 5th century to the 11th century. My family has ties with the Anglo-Norman people, but I'd never heard anything Anglo-Saxon until last year."

Orton, a history major, began taking all the classes taught by Sutt, APSU's resident medievalist.



"She's a wonderful student," Sutt said. "She got it. She knew what the main points were, understood the significance. When I was writing the recommendation for her (for Cambridge), I thought, 'she just might have a chance at this.""

Last year, Orton, who has never traveled overseas, applied to Cambridge's one-year graduate program in Anglo-Saxon history. The key to getting into the exclusive school, Sutt said, is to get one of its renowned professors interested in your research project. Orton submitted her application, hoping that Keynes would like her topic, "Queenship in 9th century Wessex." She then waited to hear back, periodically checking her application status online.

"I was at the gym getting ready to do my thing, and I thought, 'I'll just check it," Orton said. On her cell phone, she saw an offer for admission into Cambridge. "I freaked out. I didn't have anybody to tell, except the gym people, and they just stared at me."



As seen in this window, this interesting light fixture, affectionately nicknamed the "onion rings" by faculty, greeted students in the newly opened \$21.3 million, 46,000-squarefoot Art and Design Building.

## Sports News



## MEN'S BASKETBALL'S NEW ERA

APSU lands motivated new coach

Att Figger, Austin Peay State University's new men's basketball coach, spent much of his childhood obsessed with coaching legends Vince Lombardi, Joe B. Hall and Paul "Bear" Bryant. In 1993, Figger took his first step in a lifelong journey to follow the lead of these legends when he became an assistant coach at Wabash Valley Junior College in Illinois. He took the job while still a college student himself at Pikeville College. "I felt like it was the chance of a lifetime to pursue a dream I'd always had, which was to be a basketball coach," Figger said. "It was a chance to quickly figure out if I wanted to pursue that deal."

But pursuing a dream isn't always easy, as Figger soon learned. On busy days, he'd leave the house at 5 a.m. to drive international students around the county, and he wouldn't return home until midnight. In 1994, he took an assistant coaching job at Vincennes College in Indiana, but the new post came with a small caveat—he had to complete his degree.

"There was one year where I lived basically in a warehouse," he recalled.

"I had a mattress, a microwave and a shower. It was very humbling, but it made me more hungry to pursue my dreams."

While coaching at Vincennes and pursuing a degree at Eastern Kentucky, Figger worked as a custodian from seven at night to three in the morning after practice. During his last semester, he took a class that was 250 miles away.

"There were days where I'd only get two or three hours of sleep, then make a 500-mile round trip," he said. "The adversity turned me into the man I am today."

He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1995, but he continued to work as an assistant coach at Vincennes. One day, while attending the University of Florida's individual camps, he encountered a gangly, intense coach from Miami High School named Frank Martin. The duo struck up a friendship, with Figger eventually coaching five Miami players at his next assignment with Odessa Junior College in Texas. When Martin became Kansas State University's head coach, Figger joined his staff. In 2008, that team made it to the NCAA Tournament's Elite 8.



I wouldn't want anyone else's journey. I think we all have our own paths, and maybe mine has taken a little longer than I'd like, but it's prepared me to be the best person I'm capable of being at this moment in time."

### ~Coach Matt Figger

"I think Frank looked at us as kindred spirits because nobody gave us anything," Figger said. "His high school coach pushed him toward college (at Florida International) and even then, Frank was working jobs and coaching JV basketball and taking



Matt Figger, who grew up in Jenkins, Kentucky, speaks to team members as South Carolina's associate head coach and recruiting coordinator in 2016. Photo by Travis Bell, South Carolina Athletics

classes on the side. Whether we knew it or not, like people bond together, and I think that's what started our journey."

In 2012, Martin was named head coach for the South Carolina Gamecocks, and Figger followed his friend east. In the spring of 2017, the Gamecocks made their first Final Four appearance, dispatching powerhouse teams like Marquette, Duke, Baylor and Florida along the way.

A few weeks later, Figger was named APSU's new men's head basketball coach.

"Sometimes, I catch a moment—five or 10 minutes—and I sit back and think, 'Wow, this is really happening' or 'That really happened,'" he said. "I've been blessed to be a part of that phenomenal run at South Carolina and then to be only the 12th head coach in Austin Peay history is a blessing in itself.

"I wouldn't want anyone else's journey. I think we all have our own paths, and maybe mine has taken a little longer than I'd like, but it's prepared me to be the best person I'm capable of being at this moment in time."

And Figger sees his job as a continuation of his most important roles in life—being a devoted family man.

"I want to be known as a good husband and father, someone who's about family and who knows what his faith is," Figger said. "When my time is done as a coach or as a human being, I want to be known as someone who tried to help young men accomplish things in their lives that they may not have been able to accomplish on their own.

"I just want to make sure our players know I love them and care about them as people. My job is to help them become grown men, to help kids coming from a troubled past or maybe didn't have a great situation growing up, and teach them how to become a father, become a parent. I want to be about life." *A* 

### GLEASON ON GOLDEN SPIKES WATCH LIST

In his finest season as a Governor, senior Dre Gleason did something no one else in the history of Austin Peay baseball has accomplished—earning a spot on USA Baseball's Golden Spikes Award Midseason Watch List.

A first baseman from O'Fallon, Missouri, Gleason has long been a dynamic presence in the middle of the APSU order, but reached new heights last season. Entering the Ohio Valley Conference tournament, he led the Govs in hitting (.338), RBI (54) and walks (34) to go along with 11 home runs, 13 doubles and a .441 on-base percentage.

The 2017 Golden Spikes Award winner was named June 29 in Los Angeles, California, where the finalists and their families were honored at the Rod Dedeaux Foundation Award Dinner at the Jonathan Club.





### BANKS, YANES GARCIA EARN OVC PLAYER OF THE YEAR HONORS

A pair of Austin Peay standouts garnered recognition as OVC Player of the Year in their respective sports, with Tearra Banks (women's basketball) and Lidia Yanes Garcia (women's tennis) taking home the conference's top athletic honor.

Banks earned the nod thanks to a dominant senior campaign that saw her average 19.3 points and 8.0 rebounds and shoot 60.5 percent from the floor. As the three-time OVC Player of the Week, Banks reached the 1,000 career point mark in December and made another little piece of APSU history in the Feb. 4 game against Tennessee State, going a perfect 11-for-11 from the floor against the Tigers, equaling Gerlonda Hardin's single-game shooting record.

Yanes Garcia's two-year Austin Peay career has now included two OVC Player of the Year honors—a year ago, she became the first player in league history to earn Freshman of the Year and Player of the Year in the same season and backed that up with a 14-2 sophomore campaign that included a perfect 9-0 mark in league play at No. 1 singles.



### TIASHA GRAY CONTINUES BALLING OVERSEAS

Tiasha Gray goes up for a layup in a women's basketball contest against Trevecca.

Although she's left the hardwood of the Dunn Center behind, Tiasha Gray is still dominating on the basketball court.

In her first professional season with the Swedish club Mark Basket, she led Basketligan Dam in scoring (24.3 points) and steals (3.6) per game, also pulling down 7.5 rebounds and dishing out 5.4 assists per contest. She led Mark Basket to the Damligan playoffs, and her squad reached the quarterfinal round.

Gray will take her talents to Israel, where she signed a three-year deal with Bnot Hertzeliya with team options for 2018-19 and 2019-20. She joins a squad which lost to the eventual Israeli champions, Maccabi Ashdod, in the semifinals of last season's playoffs.



### TRIO OF TRACK AND FIELD STANDOUTS FOR THE NCAA EAST PRELIMINARY

Austin Peay track and field was well-represented at the 2017 NCAA Track and Field Championship East Preliminary in Lexington, Kentucky, with Savannah Amato, Chancis Jones and KayInn Pitts earning qualifying marks.

This is the seventh consecutive season Austin Peay has sent at least one athlete to the regional round and the second time in three seasons the Govs have equaled the program record with three athletes earning qualification.

Amato, a pole vaulter, earned her third straight gold medal in OVC Championship competition and qualified 37th overall and seventh among sophomores. Jones made her second career regional round in the long jump after leaping a career-best 20' 1.5" at the OVC Championships, earning the bronze medal in the event. Pitts qualified in both the long and triple jump for the second time in her Austin Peay career—she's the only student-athlete in program history to accomplish that feat and done it twice—in 2015 and 2017.

### Class Notes

### BARBARA SCHAFER

('73) recently received a performance award from the State of Illinois Department on Aging and was also named to the state's Senior Hall of Fame. Schafer, a 25-year employee with King-Bruwaert



House, was honored for her leadership in directing the K-B Adorables and Men in Black dance and fitness troupe. The group was started 15 years ago, and members have been entertaining local and national audiences. The award for Schafer recognizes her dedication, accomplishments and commitment to senior adults who benefit from the activities she oversees that promote health, wellness, fitness, social interaction and community service.



### **LENNY MANNING ('84)**

was promoted to commander of fire suppression of the Nashville Fire Department. A three-time All-OVC selection in men's basketball during his time at Austin Peay, Manning has served in several positions during his 27 years of service with the department.

### **JANA BRANHAM ('87)**

recently joined Ergon Inc. as the company's vice president and chief information officer. In this role, she will have oversight of the organization's information technology department and related divisions. She will also serve as a member of Ergon's



operating committee. Branham holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Austin Peay State University, and she also serves on the advisory committee to the University's College of Business.



### **ROBERT RICE ('93)**

was promoted to regional vice president with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES). Rice previously served as general manager of AAFES's Hawaii Consolidated locations. **REX HOGAN ('95)** was named vice president of player personnel for the Indianapolis Colts. He previously served as senior director of college scouting for the New York Jets.



**ANDY BROWN ('96)** was appointed as the new assistant director for facilities and support services for the Sumner County School District. Brown previously served as the corporate field director of Response Team One, a nationally based commercial and residential contracting firm, with 1,100 employees and 42 offices.



### **CHRISTOPHER GREEN**

('96) recently joined Terracon, an engineering consulting firm providing environmental, facilities, geotechnical and materials services, as a senior project manager. In this role, he provides client and project support and consulting for the

Nashville and neighboring community market areas. He also serves as the vice president of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Nashville Post and has recently served on committees for both the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce.

### JOEY SMITH ('99) was

elected to the Board of Trustees of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). Smith, the public health director of the Montgomery County Health Department, will be a part of a 27-member board comprised of health officials from around



the country. Based in Washington D.C., NACCHO is an organization focused on being a leader, partner, catalyst and voice for change for local health departments around the nation. Since its inception, it has sought to improve the public's health while adhering to a set of core values: equity, excellence, participation, respect, integrity, leadership, science and innovation.



('01) recently joined SouthComm Inc. as the Nashville-based company's vice president of marketing and public relations. In this position, Kilgore will work to set the vision and strategy for marketing and publicity activities, campaigns and projects across the SouthComm Inc. brands nationwide. SouthComm is the largest publisher of chamber maps and

magazines in the country, including the Nashville Scene, Nashville Post, Cincinnati's City Beat and Washington City Paper. Kilgore most recently served as vice president of publicity for the BBR Music Group, where she strategized and lead corporate and artist publicity initiatives for the company's four label imprints and publishing arm.

### **MELONY SHEMBERGER ('06)**

professor assistant of and iournalism mass communications at Murray State University, was selected as a fellow for the Scripps Howard Academic Leadership Academy, June 11-14, at Louisiana State University in



Baton Rouge. The Manship School of Mass Communication at LSU partners with the Scripps Howard Foundation each year to host 12 to 15 participants in the academy. The program brings together professionals, scholars and administrators to help fellows learn about the challenges and rewards of leading an academic program.



### **BRYANNA LICCIARDI**

('11) recently published her debut poetry collection, titled "Skin Splitting," through Finishing Line Press. Licciardi is a Pushcart Prize nominee and has had work appear in such journals as "Poetry Quarterly," "BlazeVOX," "491 Magazine," "Adirondack Review" and "Cleaver Magazine."

### ANDRA RUFFIER ('11, '15)

was recently named as marketing director of Governor's Square Mall in Clarksville. Ruffier will oversee all marketing-related activities, including advertising, promotional income activities and events for the mall.



**KATELYN CLARK ('16)** recently contributed а chapter to "Fuel Your Soul: Transform Your Body," a selfhelp collection of stories from people who changed not just their bodies, but their lives, through fitness. Clark currently works as marketing director at Scenic City Boot Camp and Transformation Center in Chattanooga.

### BETH LOWARY ('16) was

recently appointed to the Nossi College of Art Alumni Council. A 2007 graduate of Nossi, Lowary currently serves as the marketing manager in the Austin Peav State University Office of Public Relations and Marketing.



### **IN MEMORY**

**Dr. Garland Eugene Blair** Feb. 11, 2017

> Olen Bryant July 11, 2017

Norma Jean Smith May 27, 2017

Bill Roberts

July 11, 2017

Dr. Joyce Hargrove Jan. 25, 2017

Nelda Hargis Steeley ('71, '77) April 22, 2017

To submit APSU class notes, please contact Charles Booth at **BOOTHCW@APSU.EDU**.



# GOVS GATHERING

ach year, President Alisa White, Athletics Director Ryan Ivey, Vice President for Advancement, Communication and Strategic Initiatives Derek Van der Merwe and the staff of the APSU Alumni Relations and University Advancement offices meet with Austin Peay friends and alumni on campus and around the country. Events held throughout the year include alumni receptions and gatherings, homecoming events, pregame/sporting events and chapter-sponsored activities. There are no fees associated with membership in the National Alumni Association or specific alumni chapters. To find an alumni group in your area or if you are interested in organizing one, call the APSU Alumni Relations Office at 931-221-7979. For a complete look at the upcoming alumni event schedule and an updated list of alumni groups, visit www.apsu.edu/alumni or email alumni@apsu.edu.



1 Over 150 APSU alumni in the greater Nashville area came together for the inaugural Governors Gathering at the Richland Country Club this past fall, co-hosted by APSU alumni Keri McInnis ('95) and Hendricks Fox ('51).

**2** APSU Executive Director for University Advancement Kris Phillips ('91) and alumna, Staci Trimm ('93), meet for a quick selfie at the 2016 Nashville Governors Gathering at the Richland Country Club.



### **Governors** Gathering continued



**3** The 33rd Annual Candlelight Ball Committee celebrates a successful event. Over 400 guests gathered together to raise money in support of APSU student scholarships.

**4** APSU President Alisa White recognizes John Smith and other veterans for their service to their country.

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**5** APSU baseball and softball alumni gathered this past spring for a reunion. Pictured are baseball alumni from the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s.





ast year, these individuals established new scholarships and endowments at Austin Peay, creating life-changing opportunities for future APSU generations. Because of their generosity, their names—or the name of someone they love—will now be associated with Austin Peay in perpetuity.

An endowment is a permanent, self-sustaining source of funding. Endowments are invested, and each year, a portion of the value of the fund is paid out to support the endowment's purpose. The minimum amount to start an endowment is \$25,000.

A non-endowed scholarship is supported with an annual gift. This gift is paid out to support the scholarship's purpose. The desired minimum award is \$500 per year.

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Joanne Maust Scholarship Susan Fanning

Sue Ann Nash Memorial Study Abroad Scholarship Thomas Hussey

Jodicus and Ruth Prosser "Keep Striving" Scholarship Jodicus Wayne and Ruth Prosser

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Join us in supporting Austin Peay State University. apsu.edu/advancement • 931-221-7127





I often tell people there's never been a better time to be a Gov, but what does that really mean? To me, it means we've been busy, working together as a community to make Austin Peay the best it has ever been in its 90-year history.

This year, the University Advancement Office won the 2017 CASE Educational Fundraising Award, which honors superior fundraising programs at educational institutions across the country. This award is shared with all of our alumni and friends who helped us raise \$5.3 million this year.

In April, we held our inaugural Govs Give online giving campaign, and I put out the call for champions. I asked you to help Austin Peay with more than just your wallet; I asked you to "Pass the Hat" and tell your friends and fellow alums about Govs Give on social media and email. Well, the results are in, and I couldn't be any prouder of your efforts.

Govs Give was an overwhelming success, raising \$148,301 for University colleges' Funds of Excellence, athletics and student affairs. The numbers are humbling, as 455 donors from 26 states made 486 gifts in just a little over 90 hours, with each gift showing that Austin Peay and its mission of giving students the tools they need to succeed is worth supporting.

But APat90—the University's 90th anniversary celebration—is more than Govs Give; it's a yearlong celebration of Austin Peay, and we want our alumni and friends to join in the festivities. I look forward to visiting with you during our regional and national Govs Gatherings, and I would like to personally thank each of the hosts of these events who greatly contribute to the success of these gatherings.

Homecoming 2017 is Oct. 20-21, and it's the perfect opportunity to return to campus, reconnect with old friends and cheer on the Govs. This year, we're also celebrating our graduating class of 1967, as we welcome them back to campus for a special 50-year reunion. We hope you will mark this date on your calendar and make plans to attend.

And while you're here, I hope you take the time to see all the ways our University has changed since you left campus. By the time you read this, we will have opened our new, 46,000-square-foot Art and Design Building. The beautiful new building is a commitment to our growing student body and gives the Department of Art and Design a first-class facility that matches the quality of its instructors.

Finally, on Oct. 6, we will have the dedication of the new Jenkins Building (318 College Street) honoring the generosity of the Don Jenkins family. An open house will be scheduled for that day, and we look forward to seeing all our donors and friends.

When I tell people there's never been a better time to be a Gov, it really does mean we've been busy. We've been busy growing our campus, we've been busy supporting our students, and we've been busy giving back to a University that gave us so much.

Kris Phillips Executive Director APSU University Advancement

This donor list that follows contains information compiled in a computerized database since 1986. The 2016-2017 Honor Roll of Donors is dedicated to all donors who made gifts during fiscal year July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. Every gift, regardless of amount, is needed and is appreciated by students, faculty and staff. The following listing recognizes contributors who have made gifts totaling \$100 or more during fiscal year 2016-17. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this listing. Please let us know of any corrections that need to be made so we can ensure accuracy in future years. If an error has been made, please accept our apologies.

\*Denotes individuals who support Austin Peay through consecutive annual contributions.

> Office of University Advancement P.O. Box 4417 Clarksville, TN 37044 931-221-7127 adkisonk@apsu.edu



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### THE LEGACY SOCIETY

Austin Peay State University Legacy Society signifies a new era in the University's effort to recognize, in a meaningful way, those who share a commitment to the institution through planned and estate giving. If you have already made provisions for APSU in your will or through another type of planned gift, or you would like more information about how to include Austin Peay in your estate plan, contact the University Advancement Office at 931-221-7127.

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### CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

In 2010, Dr. Harold S. Pryor ('46) established APSU's first gift annuity. That gift is now changing the lives of students.

### What is a charitable gift annuity?

A charitable gift annuity combines a charitable gift with an income for life. A gift annuity allows you to make a gift to the APSU Foundation and the program of your choice while benefitting from the following:

- · Safe, fixed income for your life and the life of a loved one
- Tax savings—immediately and in the future
- · Favorable treatment of capital gains, if funded with appreciated assets
- Membership in a giving society at the level of your gift

If you have an interest in establishing a gift annuity, please call the APSU Advancement Office at 931-221-7127 or Office of University Advancement, P.O. Box 4417, Clarksville, TN, 37044

### How does a charitable gift annuity work?

In exchange for an irrevocable gift of cash, publicly traded securities or other assets, the APSU Foundation agrees to pay one or two individuals a fixed annual income backed by the resources of the APSU Foundation.

The minimum age to establish a gift annuity is 65. If you are using interest from CDs or dividends from other investments to assist in your living expenses, a gift annuity may be an option as the rate of return in greater than a CD and provides tax benefits.

Your income from a charitable gift annuity will never decrease, nor can you outlive it. This one-time purchase can provide a stable annual income and make a difference in the lives of APSU students.



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