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In Our Lens

Mercer welcomed its third-largest incoming class this fall, including more than 1,000 students from 26 U.S. states and 25 countries. Among their academic credentials, 51% had a 4.0 or higher GPA, 22% placed among the top 10% of their high school's graduating class, and the average weighted GPA was 3.96. First-generation college students comprise 27% of the class, and 48% identify as part of a minority group.



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CELEBRATES
43RD YEAR OF
PUBLISHING EXCELLENCE

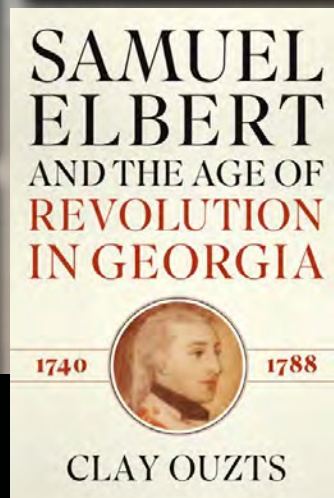
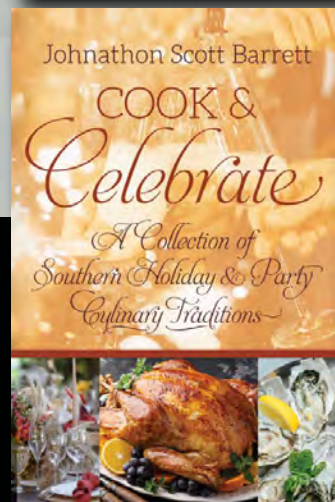
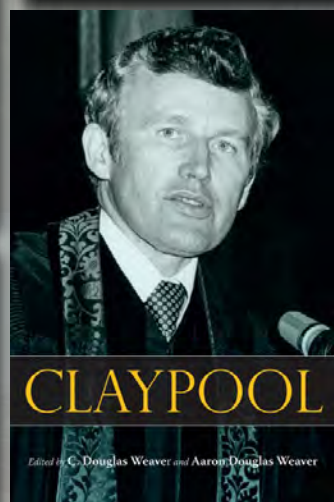
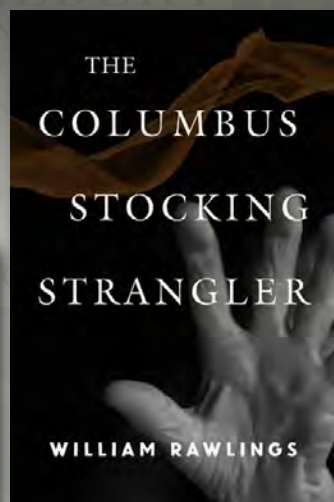
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Mercer University Press offers a new season of books rich in fiction, poetry, music, food, history, philosophy, and religion.

Highlighted titles from the Fall/Winter 2022 season include:
Tell It True by retired

WSB-TV anchor John Pruitt, a novel involving two brave, young journalists who at great risk report the truth in a 1964 rural Georgia racially-motivated murder case; **Diary of a Rock and Roll Tour Manager** by Willie Perkins, who chronicles the tours and recordings of The Allman Brothers Band in their early years; **Cook & Celebrate** by Johnathon Scott Barrett, a collection of Southern holiday and party culinary traditions and recipes; **The Columbus Stocking Strangler** by William Rawlings, a detailed account of the serial killer who terrorized Columbus, Georgia, in the late 1970s; **CLAYPOOL** edited by C. Douglas and Aaron D. Weaver, essays in honor of John Claypool, prominent Baptist preacher turned Episcopal priest who concluded his career teaching at McAfee School of Theology; and **Samuel Elbert and the Age of Revolution in Georgia, 1740–1788** by Clay Ouzts, a biography of the Brigadier General and politician from Savannah, who was also the son of original colonist, Sarah Greenfield.

Visit www.mupress.org to see a complete listing of titles. Books are available from your favorite independent bookstore and major online retailers. **By calling the publisher directly and identifying yourself as a Mercer alum, you will receive a 40% discount on your order.** Taxes and shipping charges will apply. Call toll-free (866) 895-1472 or (478) 301-2880 direct.



32ND AUTHORS LUNCHEON

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NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS FOR **2022-2023**

- **B.A. in Statistics**
- **B.B.A. in Supply Chain Management**
- **B.S.N. to Ph.D. in Nursing**
- **Doctor of Public Health**
- **M.S. in Applied Data Intelligence and Machine Learning**
- **M.S. in Cybersecurity**
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 - Business and Data Analytics
 - Compliance, Regulation, and Analytics in Fintech
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Management
 - Entrepreneurship and Innovation
 - Healthcare Management and Analytics
 - Women in Leadership

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MERCER
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Law Advocacy

Teams See Unprecedented Success While Preparing Students for Practice

By Jennifer Falk

M

ercer University School of Law students achieved more success in competition during the last academic year than ever before.

For the first time, Mercer Law took home two national championships in the American Bar Association's practical skills competitions. The wins in client counseling and negotiations also marked the first time the law school has won either of the national contests.

That's in addition to more than a dozen other successes in moot court, mock trial and other American

skills, including those needed for moot court, mock trial, client counseling, negotiation and arbitration.

"It allows students to apply the skills and education they've learned in the classroom in as close as we can get to a real-world setting," Director of Advocacy **Katie Powers** said. "It allows them to have that practical experience before they go out and represent a client."

Many of the advocacy program's recent innovations and successes stem from the creation of the director of advocacy position in 2021, Sneddon said. Powers, an experienced lawyer and former judge who achieved success in advocacy competitions as a Mercer Law student, was selected for the new position.

"She has brought those experiences, wisdom and drive to provide direct supervision and oversight

Bar Association competitions. Together these wins tied Mercer Law for second place in the national 2021-22 ABA Competitions Championships.

"Our advocacy competition success reinforces the high-quality education and experiences that ultimately prepare our students for practice," said **Karen Sneddon**, interim dean of the School of Law. "These successes show that Mercer Law students receive valuable learning experiences that will inform the professional journey of Mercer lawyers."

"The advocacy program ensures that terrific Mercer Law students become impactful Mercer lawyers."

Mercer's advocacy program provides practical and experiential training that allows law students to hone various

"[The advocacy program] allows students to apply the skills and education they've learned in the classroom in as close as we can get to a real-world setting."

— **Katie Powers**
Director of Advocacy



LEAH YETTER PHOTO

Powers

of the advocacy program,” Sneddon said.

Powers implemented a strategic plan aimed at improving the advocacy program, which included connecting classroom education with advocacy. This meant, for example, making sure students were taking a course in trial practice around the same time they joined the mock trial team, she said.

“Every course in law school is about preparing law students to become advocates. But we do have advocacy-focused pathways that include pre-requisites and co-requisites for selection on an advocacy team,” Sneddon said. “These courses allow students to refine critical skills.”

Powers also built a culture where students aren’t satisfied with just advancing in competition but rather using their skills to the best of their ability.

“There are a lot of things that can be taught, but experience is the greatest teacher, and so I have made sure to strategically select competitions to maximize our experience,” she said.

The advocacy program changes have given more students the opportunity to participate. In addition, students can compete in multiple competitions. During the 2021-22 academic year, 75 students participated in 30 advocacy competitions.

Each competition requires intense practice over the course of several weeks. Depending on the contest, practice could be 50 to 100 hours or more, said **Tim Floyd**, the Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy

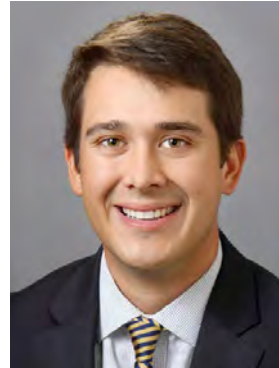
and director of experiential education at Mercer Law.

“The principal benefit of this is that students are learning,” Floyd said. “They learn the importance of collaboration, and they just come out better prepared to be lawyers, win or lose.”

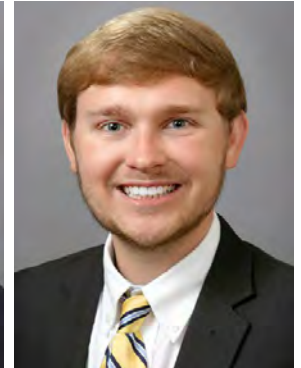
During practice, students work with Mercer Law alumni who serve as coaches and bring real-world experience and mentorship opportunities. Alumna **Zandra Hall** drew on her experiences as a student and practitioner when preparing Mercer’s client counseling



Brennan Collins (left) and Malory-Anne Oliver are ABA Client Counseling Competition champions.



Michael Downing (left) and Bryce Everett are ABA Negotiation Competition champions.



team for its national championship win.

“I learned the most practical knowledge that I could apply later on in my career from my participation on the Mercer Advocacy Council,” said **Malory-Anne Oliver**, who was on the client counseling team that won the national championship.

Oliver, who graduated in 2022, said being on the team taught her the skills needed to make a client feel comfortable while also tackling tough conversations. She learned how to react quickly and effectively in various situations.

“Client counseling was very realistic because you’re not going to have every detail going into a client meeting. So, learning how to have those conversations, how to transition a client from one topic to another in a concise period of time, I think that’s going to be very beneficial for me going into my future career,” she said.

Class of 2022 Mercer Law alumnus **Chad Capers**, past president of the Mercer Advocacy Council, said the advocacy program changed his career trajectory.

“It has changed how I look at the legal field, my network and how I am preparing to practice,” he said. “Since I’m going into litigation, the first day after I graduate or after I take the bar, I’m going to be in a courtroom. Because of Mercer Advocacy Council, I feel a lot more prepared now than I would have if I didn’t participate.”

2021-22 MERCER LAW ADVOCACY TEAM SUCCESSES

Moot Court

- National Moot Court Octofinalist, Region Champion, Best Oralist, Best Brief
- BLSA Moot Court National Fifth Place, Region Champion, Best Brief
- Emory Moot Court Quarterfinalist, Best Brief, Top 10 Oralist
- Southeastern Moot Court Quarterfinalists
- Weschler Moot Court Quarterfinalist

Mock Trial

- National Trial Competition Region Champion
- South Texas Mock Trial Finalist
- BLSA National Semifinalist, Region Finalist, Best Advocate
- Costello Semifinalist
- Trials and Tribulations Best Advocate
- All Star Nationals Best Advocate
- Syracuse National Trial Competition Best Cross Examination

American Bar Association (ABA) Competitions

- Client Counseling International Competition Runners-Up
- Client Counseling National Champions
- Negotiations National Champions, William and Mary Champions
- Arbitration Regional Finalist
- ABA Moot Court Quarterfinalists
- Top Ten Oralist

Read this and other stories about **the Den**
all things Mercer at **den.mercer.edu**

Gerber Named School of Music Dean

Mercer Provost **Dr. D. Scott Davis** announced the appointment of **Dr. Gary Gerber** as dean of the University's Townsend

School of Music, effective July 1. Dr. Gerber succeeds Dr. C. David Keith, who retired at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year after serving as dean of the School of Music since 2013. A native of Azle, Texas, Dr. Gerber previously served as dean of the School of Fine



Arts at Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, since 2015. He also held appointments as chair of the Division of Music and professor of music. He earned his Bachelor of Music from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, and both his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts in choral conducting from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. His areas of expertise include choral music literature, choral techniques and choral conducting.

Strowbridge Appointed Assistant Dean of Student Affairs in Atlanta

Cindy Strowbridge was appointed assistant dean of student affairs on Mercer's Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta, effective June 1. Strowbridge, who earned her Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Mercer in 2006, has worked at the University since June 2009. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in higher education leadership from Mercer and previously earned her Master of Education in counselor education with an emphasis in student affairs from Clemson University. She has served as assistant director and associate director in the Office of Campus Life and Student Involvement and, most recently, director of employee relations and special events in the Center for Career and Professional Development.



Trustees Approve Record Operating Budget, New Programs

Mercer's Board of Trustees, meeting in Columbus for the first time, on April 22 adopted a record \$296.7 million operating budget for 2022-23, exclusive of more than \$40 million in federal research grants.

THREE NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED

Mercer's Board of Trustees approved two new undergraduate majors and a new graduate program, each beginning this fall, at its spring meeting. An interdisciplinary **Bachelor of Arts degree in statistics** will be offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Macon. A **Bachelor of Business Administration degree in supply chain management** will be offered by the Stetson-Hatcher School of Business in a collaborative effort with the School of Engineering. A **Master of Science in applied data intelligence and machine learning** in the College of Professional Advancement will be offered online with plans to add an in-person offering on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta in future years.

Mercer Earns Second Straight Victory in CFA Research Challenge

Mercer for the second year in a row won the 2022 CFA Institute Southern Classic Research Challenge, featuring aspiring investment professionals representing colleges and universities in Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama.

CFA Institute Research Challenges are held across the globe to test university students' analytic, valuation, report writing and presentation skills. Each challenge includes analysis of a publicly-traded company, mentoring by a professional research analyst, writing a research report and presenting research to a panel of experts. This year's subject company was Genuine Parts Company (GPC).

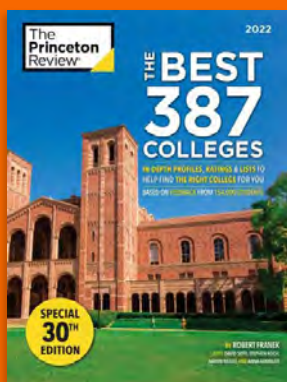
Mercer's winning team consisted of five graduating seniors in the Stetson-Hatcher School of Business: **Carolina Vilomar, Martin Plukka, Colin J. Lynch, Mark Bearden and Premkumar J. Patel.** They were led by faculty mentor **Dr. Jeff Ngene**, who has coached Mercer's CFA Institute Research Challenge teams since 2014, and industry mentor **George Hauptfuhrer**, who has worked with the University's teams for the past five years.

Mercer Recognized with CUR Award for Undergraduate Research Accomplishments

Mercer was one of three recipients of the **worldwide Council on Undergraduate Research's (CUR) 2021 Campus-Wide Award for Undergraduate Research Accomplishments (AURA)**. First presented in 2015, the annual award recognizes exceptional undergraduate research, scholarship and creative activity programs. AURA winners must demonstrate depth and breadth in undergraduate research initiatives and evidence of continual innovation. With 51% of residential undergraduates participating in research, Mercer exemplifies a robust undergraduate research program that spans the disciplines. The culture of service-based research, embedded in the University's mission statement, is strengthened by initiatives such as Research That Reaches Out and Mercer On Mission.



Back row (l-r): George Hauptfuhrer, Dr. Jeff Ngene and Martin Plukka. Front row (l-r): Premkumar J. Patel, Mark Bearden, Colin J. Lynch and Carolina Vilomar.



MERCER NAMED A BEST VALUE COLLEGE BY PRINCETON REVIEW

Mercer is one of the nation's Best Value Colleges for 2022, combining exceptional education and career preparation at a relatively affordable price, according to The Princeton Review®, which selected 209 schools to receive this honor. Released on April 26, this year's list was based on data from surveys of administrators at more than 650 colleges during the 2021-22 academic year. Topics covered academics, cost, financial aid, graduation rates, student debt and more. The company also factored in data from its surveys of students attending the schools as well as data from PayScale.com's surveys of alumni of the schools about their starting and mid-career salaries and job satisfaction.



MERCER EARNES HIGHEST- EVER PLACEMENT AMONG **MILITARY FRIENDLY®** SCHOOLS

Mercer received its highest-ever placement as a Military Friendly® School for the 2022-2023 award year, announced March 8.

Mercer is No. 5 overall and a Top 10 Gold Military Friendly institution among 665 institutions across the country recognized for their military and veteran programs and initiatives. The University first received the Military Friendly® designation in 2017 and earned rankings in one of the four exemplary categories — Top 10 Gold, Gold, Silver or Bronze — each of the past three years.

Mercer Debate Has Top Novice Team, 4th Consecutive Top Novice Speaker at Nationals

M

ercer's debate team had the top novice team and for the fourth consecutive year the top novice speaker in the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA).

Niyati Patel, an international affairs and Spanish double-major from Warner Robins, and **Chirayu Salgarkar**, a biomedical engineering and mathematics double-major from Lawrenceville, won the novice division at this year's NPDA championship, held virtually March 25-27.

Patel earned the Dan Henning Award for top novice speaker, continuing an unprecedented run for the University's debate program by following fellow Mercerians **Matt Thompson**, **Cam Wade** and **Yasmeen Hill** in winning the award over the past four years. Salgarkar was named fourth-place speaker in the novice division.

Additionally, Wade became the first Mercer debater to be named to the NPDA All-American Team, which recognizes top seniors who meet a significant GPA requirement and who have demonstrated leadership and service in the NPDA community and in their individual college communities.

A women's and gender studies and English double-major from Savannah, Wade won the James "Al" Johnson Top Speaker Award at nationals in 2021 and the Dan Henning Award in 2020.



Mercer's debate team for the 2021-2022 academic year consisted of (l-r) Cam Wade, Ashley Pemberton, Chirayu Salgarkar, Esther Egunola Oluwatosi and Niyati Patel.

Mercer Wins Nonprofit Division of SoCon Entrepreneurship Challenge

Four Mercer students won first place and \$10,000 in the nonprofit category of the inaugural Southern Conference Entrepreneurship Challenge. Mercer was among nine colleges that competed in the event at the Tommy and Victoria Baker School of Business at The Citadel on Feb. 25-26.

Olivia Korta, Emma Drash, Aaryanna Mercer and Martha Corinn Thompson earned the victory with their 10-minute presentation on the Agaciro project, which was inspired by the Mercer On Mission program in Rwanda. The group was led by Stetson-Hatcher School of Business faculty members **Dr. Laura Boman** and **Dr. Marko Horn**.



From left, Dr. Laura Boman, Martha Corinn Thompson, Aaryanna Mercer, Emma Drash, Olivia Korta and Dr. Marko Horn.

Since 2015, Mercer students and faculty have helped Rwandan entrepreneurs — many of them widows and orphans of the 1994 genocide — improve their businesses and increase their profits. In summer 2021, six Rwandan women with separate tailoring businesses formed a collective partnership, and the Mercer team helped them develop their brand, called Agaciro.



LEAH YETTER PHOTO

Theology, Medical Schools Partner to Support Holistic Health Outcomes

Mercer's School of Theology and School of Medicine have partnered with the Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center to support the physical, mental and spiritual health of five rural Georgia counties by coordinating the efforts of clergy, physicians and health care professionals.

The three-year project will proceed with three initiatives: assessment of areas of need and opportunities for collaboration, collaboration with existing sites for holistic care modeling and student training, and creation of relationships between medical professionals and local clergy for synergetic work.

Faculty from both schools will lend expertise and facilitate mutual learning, understanding and best practices. Students from both schools will be recruited to participate in two- to four-week rotations at clinical sites where they will learn skills such as screening for emotional spiritual needs, listening and talking about spiritual issues and documenting cases, and addressing health literacy within communities.

Paul Byrd will serve as project director, organizing collaborative efforts in order to identify and develop tangible and systemic responses to better serve the health needs of communities.



Byrd

\$1.5 Million NSF Grant to Develop Computer Science Master Teachers for Rural Georgia

Mercer's College of Education received a \$1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop computer science master teachers for schools in rural Georgia. The five-year project, in the amount of \$1,499,816, is administered through the NSF's Division of Undergraduate Education and Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program. The project aims to serve the national need of developing



Dr. Koballa

highly effective computer science teacher leaders who are prepared to strengthen the ability of rural school systems to provide access to high-quality instruction for all students. **Dr. Thomas Koballa**, dean of the College of Education, serves as principal investigator on the grant project, along with co-principal investigators **Dr. Susie Morrissey**, assistant professor of mathematics education in the College of Education; **Dr. Bob Allen**, professor and chair of computer science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; and **Dr. Anthony Choi**, professor of electrical and computer engineering in the School of Engineering. The project includes partnerships with Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, the Computer Science for Georgia Academic Partners Network and high-need school districts in Clinch, Coffee, Evans, Jeff Davis, Tattnall, Treutlen and Wheeler counties, as well as Dublin City Schools.



MERCER TO JOIN U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIPLOMACY LAB

Mercer was selected to join the U.S. Department of State's Diplomacy Lab, a partnership that harnesses the efforts of students and faculty across the country to solve real-world challenges related to foreign policy. Mercer is one of 46 institutions nationwide to participate in the program since its launch in 2013. The Diplomacy Lab allows the Department of State to tap into an underutilized reservoir of intellectual capital and "course-source" research taking place in American colleges and universities.

\$42K Google Data Center Community Grant to Fund Workforce Innovation Labs in Douglas County

Mercer received a \$42,000 Google Data Center Community Grant to support conversion of two classrooms into high-tech Workforce Innovation Labs at the University's Douglas County Regional Academic Center. The new Workforce Innovation Labs will focus on workforce development through goals serving Mercer students and the enrollment interests of the University, while also supporting corporate partners, community members, entrepreneurs, and emerging and expanding businesses in Metro Atlanta. The Google Data Center Community Grants Program supports eligible organizations and initiatives that directly affect the immediate community surrounding a Google Data Center. Douglas County's Google Data Center and Mercer's Regional Academic Center are located within 3 miles of one another in Lithia Springs.



JOHN AMIS PHOTO

SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

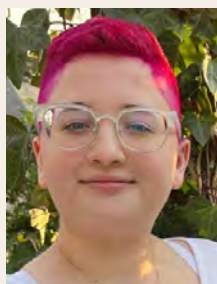
RECORD NUMBER OF MERCERIANS RECEIVE FULBRIGHT AWARDS TO TEACH ABROAD



Evans



Oldja



Rosario



Thomas



Trager

A record five Mercerians were selected to receive Fulbright U.S. Student Awards during the 2021-2022 academic year, with one additional student selected as an alternate. **Presli Evans**, **Jenna Oldja**, **Adri Rosario**, **Erika Thomas** and **Mellie Trager** were chosen as finalists and awarded Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships (ETAs) to Taiwan, Germany, Mexico, Colombia and Spain, respectively. **Anna Grace O'Neal** was selected as an alternate for an ETA to Colombia. Mercer has a total of 30 student and alumni Fulbright Award recipients over the past 13 selection cycles dating back to 2010.

11 STUDENTS SELECTED TO STUDY ABROAD AS GILMAN SCHOLARS

Mercer had 11 students chosen during the spring selection cycle to receive a total of \$46,500 in funding to study abroad through the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship program: **Atia Bailey**, **Bailey Collins**, **Donnell Cudjoe**, **Sandy Dinh**, **Mikyraa Dukes**, **Sydel Idehen**, **Cynthia Osorio-Magana**, **Parth Patel**, **Folajuwon Samo**, **Jason Tha Siam Lian** and **Abigail Yemisrach**. Gilman Scholars receive up to \$5,000, or up to \$8,000 if also a recipient of the Gilman Critical Need Language Award, to apply toward their study abroad or internship program costs. Mercer is one of the top producers of Gilman Scholars in the country. The University was recognized as both a Gilman Top Producing Institution and a Gilman Greatest Growth Institution for its role in broadening the student population that studies abroad overall, as well as in areas of priority achievement. In total, a University-record 32 Mercer students will travel abroad as Gilman Scholars over the next year.



SENIOR HONORED AS NEWMAN CIVIC FELLOW

Senior **Kaitlyn Fowler** was one of 173 student civic leaders selected to Campus Compact's 2022-2023 cohort of Newman Civic Fellows. Fowler, a sociology major and Stamps Scholar from Jackson, Mississippi, joins students from 38 states, Washington, D.C., and Mexico to form the cohort. The Newman Civic Fellowship recognizes students who stand out for their commitment to creating positive change in communities locally and around the world. Fowler has developed a collaborative research plan to perform a case study of a local school system's restorative justice program in the early stages of implementation.



Fowler

CLINICAL REHABILITATION COUNSELING STUDENT SELECTED FOR NBCC MINORITY FELLOWSHIP

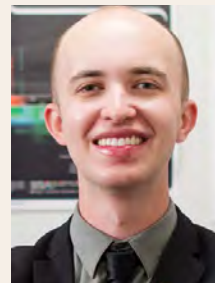
Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling student **Lillie McLean** was recently selected to participate in the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) Minority Fellowship Program. The goal of the program is to increase the number of culturally competent addiction counselors and mental health counselors available to underserved minority populations, with a specific focus on transition-age youth, ages 16-25.



McLean

UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF MERCERIAN'S SELECTED FOR NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Mercer had an unprecedented two undergraduate students and one alumna selected last spring for the National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP). School of Engineering Class of 2022 graduates **Maison Cloutre** and **Ebonye Smith** and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Class of 2020 graduate **Danielle Loving** were among 2,193 students nationwide offered fellowships through the program, which recruits high-potential, early-career scientists and engineers and supports their graduate research training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. GRFP recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in NSF-supported STEM disciplines pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees at accredited U.S. institutions. The five-year fellowships include three years of financial support, including an annual stipend of \$34,000 and a cost of education allowance of \$12,000 to the institution. This is the first time Mercer has had two undergraduates selected as Graduate Research Fellows, and the total of three Fellows ties the University record for a single year.



Cloutre



Smith



Loving

TWO ENGINEERING STUDENTS RECEIVE SMART SCHOLARSHIPS FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

School of Engineering students **Mikayla Alves** and **Alyssa M. Bonifacio** were awarded the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). Alves and Bonifacio will receive full tuition, an annual stipend and additional allowances for each year they commit to working for the DoD after graduation. They will also participate in a summer research internship and be paired with a mentor at one of the scholarship program's sponsoring facilities. Upon completion of their master's degrees, Alves will work at the U.S. Army DEVCOM C5ISR Center in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and Bonifacio will work at Robins Air Force Base in the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center.



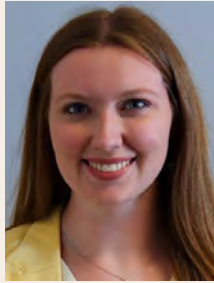
Alves



Bonifacio

SENIOR SELECTED AS LIBRARY OF CONGRESS JUNIOR FELLOW

Senior **Drew Robertson** was selected to participate in this past summer's Library of Congress Junior Fellows Program. The full-time, 10-week summer internship program enables undergraduate and graduate students to experience the integrated analog and digital collections and services of the world's largest, all-inclusive library. Working under the direction of curators and specialists in various divisions, fellows explore digital initiatives and increase access to the institution's unparalleled collections and resources. Robertson worked with the Signature Programs Office in the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement to help plan and implement programming for the National Book Festival in September.



Robertson

RECENT GRADUATE TO PARTICIPATE IN CBYX FELLOWSHIP IN GERMANY

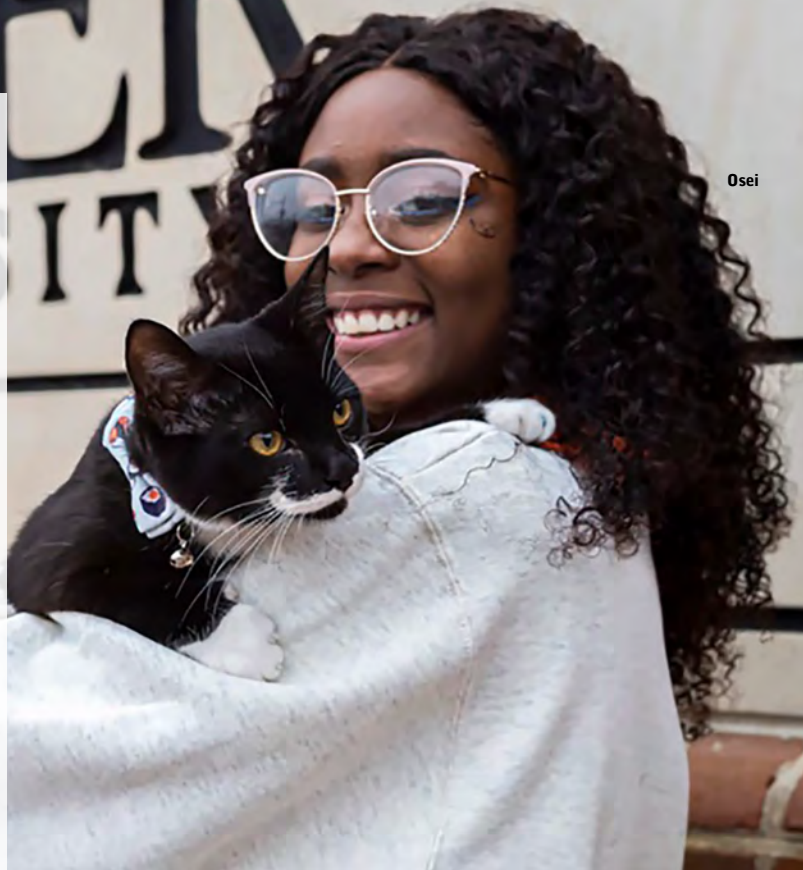
Class of 2022 graduate **Ethan Pettepther** was selected to receive a fellowship from the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) Program for Young Professionals. Funded by the German Bundestag and U.S. Department of State, CBYX annually provides 75 American and 75 German young professionals, ages 18–24, the opportunity to spend a year in each other's countries, studying, interning and living with hosts in a cultural immersion program. Pettepther earned bachelor's degrees in global health studies and neuroscience from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in May.



Pettepther

CLAS ALUMNA SELECTED FOR JAPANESE EXCHANGE AND TEACHING PROGRAM

Alumna **Ama Osei** was selected for the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program and will serve as an Assistant English Language Teacher (ALT) in Hokkaido, Japan, for at least a year. The JET Program is a competitive employment opportunity that allows young professionals to live and work in cities, towns and villages throughout Japan and represent the United States as cultural ambassadors to Japan. Osei, from Monroe, graduated in May 2021 with a double-major in neuroscience and Japanese culture and a minor in chemistry.



Osei

SENIOR NAMED CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENT OF THE YEAR IN GEORGIA

Senior **Marlo Mecredy** was named Civil Engineering Student of the Year by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Georgia Section. The Georgia Section of ASCE is the statewide arm of national organization the American Society of Civil Engineers, whose mission is to promote and advance the profession of civil engineering through public, legislative and student outreach. The award, given each year to an accomplished civil engineering student with outstanding contributions to the profession, was presented during the organization's 2022 Annual Awards Gala, held June 10 at Ponce City Market in Atlanta.



Mecredy

JUNIOR RECEIVES FEA SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY IN JAPAN

Junior computer engineering major **Alyssa M. Bonifacio** recently received a Fund for Education Abroad (FEA) scholarship to support a study abroad program in Japan next spring. Bonifacio received the scholarship, which includes \$5,000 in financial



Bonifacio

support, to study at the University of Aizu in Aizuwakamatsu, Japan. In return, she will produce a weekly blog during the semester abroad, as well as pre-departure and concluding videos.

RECENT GRADUATE EARNS DOD NATIONAL DEFENSE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

School of Engineering Class of 2022 graduate **Maison Cloutre** was selected to receive the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship. The NDSEG Fellowship is designed to increase the number of U.S. citizens or nationals trained in disciplines of science and engineering of military importance. Applicants submit a research proposal to the program in response to the current research interests of one the following agencies: the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR), the Army Research Office (ARO) or the Office of Naval Research (ONR). Fellows are paired with mentors who are current research scientists for the DoD. Cloutre submitted a proposal to AFOSR regarding a new framework for controlling quantum bits, or qubits, which are the fundamental building block of quantum computers and quantum information systems.

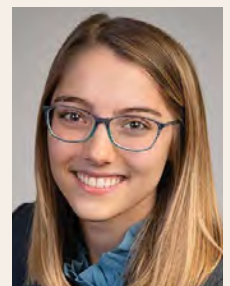


Cloutre

TWO ENGINEERING ALUMNI AMONG 31 TAU BETA PI GRADUATE FELLOWS NATIONWIDE

School of Engineering alumni **Maison Cloutre** and **Gabrielle Rogie** are among 31 scholars nationwide awarded Tau Beta Pi graduate fellowships for the 2022-23 academic year. The Fellowship Board of Tau Beta Pi engineering honor society annually selects fellows to receive cash stipends of \$10,000 for advanced degree programs of study. Mercer, the University of Arkansas, University of Kansas and University of South Carolina were the only institutions with multiple alumni among this year's class of fellows.

Cloutre, from Mount Airy, earned bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering and mathematics in May and will pursue his Ph.D. in aerospace engineering at Texas A&M University. Rogie, from Savannah, earned her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering with minors in chemistry and biology in 2021 and is pursuing both her master's in engineering and Doctor of Medicine degrees through Texas A&M's EnMed dual-degree program.



Rogie

FACULTY HONORS & RECOGNITION



Dr. Mines

MINES NAMED GEORGIA ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

School of Engineering Professor **Dr. Richard O. Mines Jr.** was named Engineer of the Year by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Georgia (ACEC Georgia). The Georgia Society of Professional Engineers (GSPE) coordinates the Engineer of the Year awards, which are judged by the Engineering Council of Birmingham. The purpose of the awards is to honor licensed engineers who have made outstanding contributions to the engineering profession, the public welfare and/or humankind. Dr. Mines received the Engineer of the Year Award as the overall highest scoring nominee from the categories of Engineer of the Year in Construction, Education, Government, Industry and Private Practice. He received the honor during the 2022 Georgia Engineering Awards held March 19.

LE CHOSEN FOR AAC&U PROJECT KALEIDOSCOPE STEM LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Dr. Tri Le, assistant professor of mathematics and computer science in the College of Professional Advancement, was accepted to the 2022 Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL) STEM Leadership Institute sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). The institute, held virtually July 12-15, is designed to cultivate leadership in early- and mid-career STEM faculty, principal investigators and administrators who are engaged in initiatives and interventions aimed at transforming undergraduate STEM education in their classrooms, departments and institutions.



Dr. Le

SARTIN ELECTED TO AACTE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Loleta Sartin, associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Education, was elected to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) Board of Directors. AACTE is the leading voice on educator preparation, representing more than 800 postsecondary institutions with educator preparation programs dedicated to high-quality, evidence-based preparation that assures educators are ready to teach all learners. As a board member, Dr. Sartin will share in the fiduciary and policy-setting responsibilities of the association for a three-year term that began in March.



Dr. Sartin

STEPHEN, VOKHIWA EARN FULBRIGHT AWARDS TO AZERBAIJAN, MALAWI

College of Professional Advancement faculty members **Dr. Jacqueline Stephen** and **Dr. Zipangani Vokhiwa** received Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program awards to Azerbaijan and Malawi, respectively, from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Dr. Stephen, assistant professor of instructional design and director of the Office of Distance Learning, will use the award to design, develop and teach courses centered on instructional design and training and development. In addition to teaching, she will facilitate faculty and student professional development programs in the form of workshops, webinars and seminars. Dr. Vokhiwa, professor of science, will use the award to conduct research, teach undergraduate and graduate students, mentor junior faculty and assist in faculty, curriculum and program development at Malawi University of Science and Technology, which has recently launched nine new master's and three new doctoral degrees. He will also assist the institution in developing and establishing a STEM center with a robust STEM Education and Innovation Lab that will be used for research by students and faculty.



Dr. Stephen



Dr. Vokhiwa

ANAYA SELECTED FOR FULBRIGHT-HAYS SEMINAR IN NORWAY

Associate Director of Study Abroad **Rebekah Anaya** was among 16 U.S. postsecondary educators selected to participate in this past summer's Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad Program to Norway. The program, titled "Typically Atypical: Understanding Modern Norway," took place June 15-July 17 and provided a broad introduction to the basics of Norwegian history, culture, art and literature, politics and governance, among other topics. Among her responsibilities in the University's Office of International Programs, Anaya coordinates Mercer's Peace Corps Prep Program.



Anaya

CARDELINO EARNS ASEE-SE OUTSTANDING NEW TEACHER AWARD

Assistant Professor of Environmental and Civil Engineering **Dr. Natalia Cardelino** received the American Society for Engineering Education Southeastern Section (ASEE-SE) Outstanding New Teacher Award for 2022. ASEE was founded in 1893 and remains the only organization that seeks to promote excellence in engineering education across the full spectrum of engineering fields. The Southeastern Section was formed in 1934 and has grown to more than 2,000 members from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.



Dr. Cardelino

MORGAN NAMED RECIPIENT OF HENDRICKS EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Professor of English **Dr. Mary Alice Morgan** was named this year's recipient of the Joe and Jean Hendricks Excellence in Teaching Award, presented annually at the Macon commencement. The Hendricks Award recognizes a full-time teacher who best exemplifies the qualities that distinguished Joe and Jean Hendricks as teachers and mentors to generations of Mercer students. These include challenging and inspiring teaching in and out of the classroom, active engagement of students in the process of learning, discovery and leadership, as well as caring mentoring to motivate students and junior faculty to achieve their highest aspirations. Dr. Morgan has served on the faculty at Mercer since 1997 and is trained in 19th-century American literature and women's studies. As a former chair of the University's Department of Women's and Gender Studies, she developed service-learning courses on violence against women and sex trafficking and led conferences on LGBTQ rights, poverty and racial inequality. She has co-led eight Mercer On Mission trips to work in townships in Cape Town, South Africa, to promote educational development post-apartheid.



Dr. Morgan

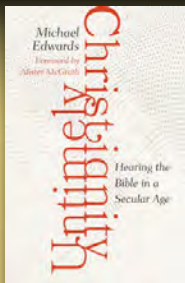
WEINTRAUT AWARDED INAUGURAL MIKE MACCARTHY MENTORSHIP AWARD

German professor **Dr. Edward Weintraut**, who has devoted 39 years to Mercer University, was the first recipient of the Mike MacCarthy Mentorship Award, created this year in honor of the late professor for which it is named. For the past 15 years, Dr. Weintraut has been the Fulbright Program adviser at Mercer. This past academic year, a record five Mercerians were awarded Fulbright U.S. Student Awards, and one student was selected as an alternate. The mentorship award is named for the late Dr. Michael MacCarthy, associate professor of environmental and civil engineering and director of the engineering for development program at Mercer, who died in October 2021 while on sabbatical in Denver.



Dr. Edward Weintraut (center) was presented the inaugural Mike MacCarthy Mentorship Award by (l-r) **Dr. Cameron Kunzelman, Dr. David A. Davis, President William D. Underwood and Provost Dr. D. Scott Davis.**

MERCER FACULTY AUTHOR NEW BOOKS



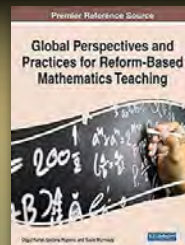
DR. JOHN MARSON DUNAWAY, professor emeritus of French and interdisciplinary studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, translated Sir Michael Edwards' *Pour un christianisme intempestif: savoir entendre la Bible as Untimely Christianity: Hearing the Bible in a Secular Age* (Fortress Press).



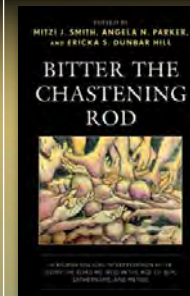
DR. HANI Q. KHOURY, professor and coordinator of mathematics in the College of Professional Advancement, authored and published *Giving Up is Not an Option: Memoirs of a Palestinian American*.



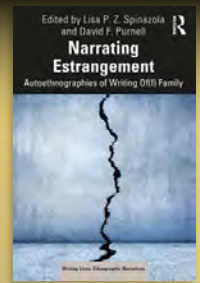
DR. DAVID LANE, professor of counseling in the College of Professional Advancement, authored *The Banana Farm* (Bear's Place Publishing).



DR. SUSIE MORRISSEY, assistant professor of mathematics education in the College of Education, co-edited *Global Perspectives and Practices for Reform-Based Mathematics Teaching* (Information Science Reference).



DR. ANGELA N. PARKER, assistant professor of New Testament and Greek in the School of Theology, co-edited *Bitter the Chastening Rod: Africana Biblical Interpretation after Stony the Road We Trod in the Age of BLM, SayHerName, and MeToo* (Rowman & Littlefield).



DR. DAVID PURNELL, adjunct associate professor of communication in the College of Professional Advancement, co-authored *Narrating Estrangement: Autoethnographies of Writing Off(f) Family* (Routledge).

JAROME E. GAUTREAUX, adjunct professor of law in the School of Law, co-authored *Georgia Law of Torts – Trial Preparation and Practice*, 2022 ed. (Thomson Reuters).

DR. RICHARD PARRISH, professor of pharmacology and medical education in the School of Medicine, edited *Medication Use in Children: A Systems Approach in Ambulatory Care* (Multi-disciplinary Publishing Institute).

DR. THOMAS B. SLATER, professor emeritus of New Testament Studies in the School of Theology, edited *Afrocentric Interpretations of the New Testament Epistles of Hebrews, James, Jude, Peter, John and Revelation* (Mellen Press).

An aerial photograph of a campus. In the center, a large, white, rectangular building with a flat roof and a series of columns on one side stands out. It is surrounded by dense green trees. To the left of the building is a parking lot with several cars. In the foreground, there are more campus buildings, including a long, low white building and a brick building. The background is filled with more trees and a winding road. The title 'ATLANTA CAMPUS TRANSFO' is overlaid in large white letters on a dark brown background that spans the middle of the image.

ATLANTA CAMPUS TRANSFO

MERCER'S CECIL B. DAY GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL CAMPUS IN ATLANTA HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT AND STRATEGIC COMPONENT OF THE UNIVERSITY FOR FIVE DECADES. OVER THE YEARS IT HAS EVOLVED FROM AN UNDERGRADUATE ARTS AND SCIENCES CAMPUS — ACQUIRED BY THE UNIVERSITY WHEN ATLANTA BAPTIST COLLEGE MERGED WITH MERCER IN 1972 — TO PRIMARILY A CAMPUS OFFERING A RANGE OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AND A SELECT NUMBER OF UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAMS SERVING ALMOST 3,000 STUDENTS.

RMATION

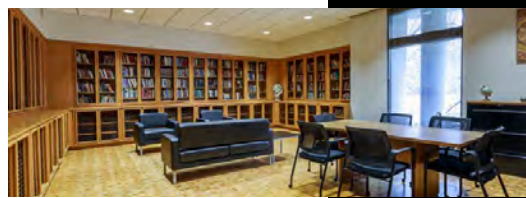


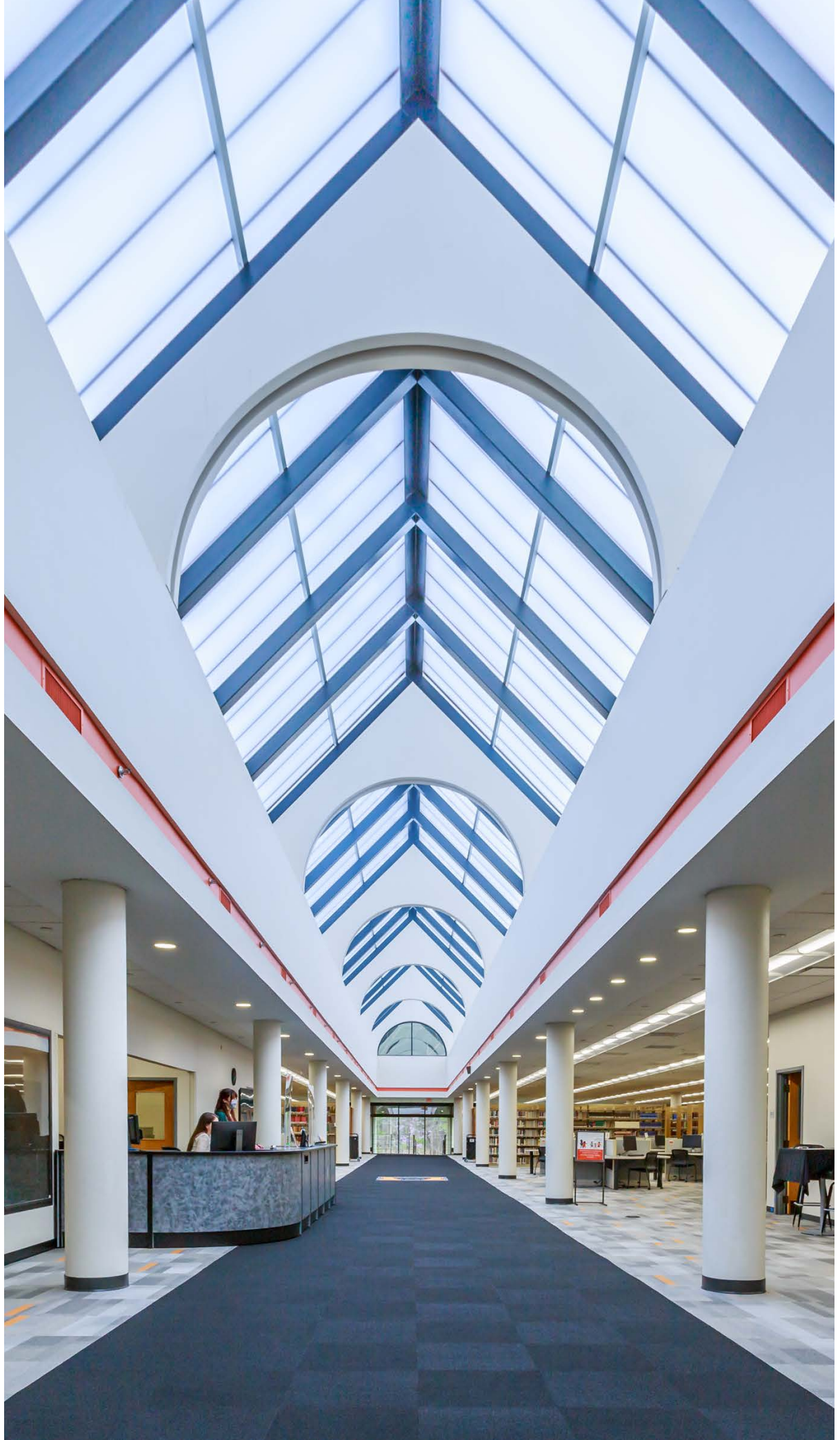


Loft apartments were occupied in fall 2021. University offices – including a new Welcome Center – moved in during the first quarter of 2022, and retail buildout is ongoing.



A large, modern meeting room with multiple long tables and chairs, a curved glass wall, and a patterned carpet. The room is well-lit with recessed ceiling lights and large windows. The carpet features a geometric pattern in shades of gray and orange. The room is furnished with several long tables and chairs, and a curved glass wall on the right side.

**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**





The Administration and Conference Center is currently undergoing major renovations. The outdoor deck that surrounds the building is being rebuilt and will feature landscaping and seating areas. Other interior renovations are ongoing.

LEAH YETTER PHOTO





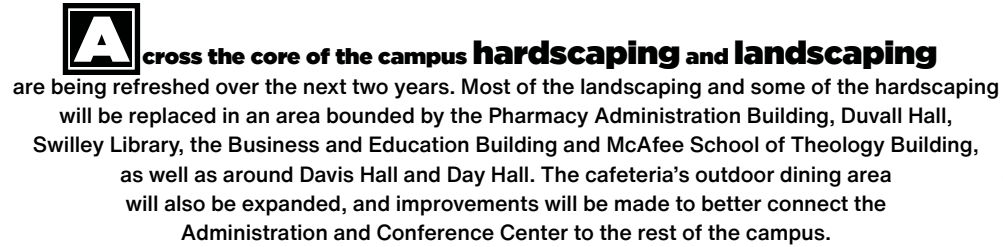
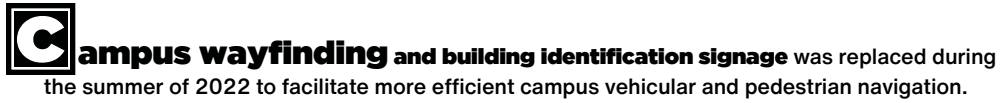


The new Moyer Pharmacy and Health Sciences Building

is under construction, following a formal groundbreaking on May 17, 2022. The new facility, the main component of a \$36.8 million construction project, will house learning, teaching and administrative space for the College of Pharmacy and further facilitate interprofessional initiatives involving the University's four health sciences schools. Completion is scheduled for late 2023. The project also includes renovation of an additional 18,500 square feet of space in the DuVall Building to expand labs for the College of Pharmacy's rapidly growing research activities.









HABEAS PROJECT

Helps Prisoners

While Giving Mercer Law Students Real-Life Experience

By Andrea Honaker

Eliza Guta wrote legal briefs and petitions and helped prepare written and oral arguments that went before the Georgia Supreme Court ... all while a student at Mercer Law School.

The work Guta contributed through the school's Habeas Project resulted in a substantial reduction in a prisoner's sentence. Now a Class of 2022 graduate, she will carry those legal skills and experiences representing clients in need into her first job as a law clerk.

For more than 15 years, the Habeas Project has been bridging a gap in legal assistance in Georgia while giving students experience working with real clients and cases.

"The Habeas Project facilitates access to justice and goes to a core commitment of Mercer lawyers to serve," Mercer Law School Interim Dean **Karen Sneddon** said. "I am proud of the commitment, diligence and care that the students and professors show with their work in the clinic."

The program was founded by **Sarah Gerwig** in 2006 after she joined the school's faculty, and the clinic has



provided representation for about 80 cases since then.

Georgia's public defender system, created in 2003, does not provide an infrastructure for representing clients in habeas corpus proceedings, which are part of Georgia's constitutional and statutory framework, said **Brian Kammer**, director of the Habeas Project since 2019.

"Habeas corpus is a legal writ that is available to all prisoners after they have been convicted and sentenced," said Kammer, who has represented Georgia death-sentence prisoners in habeas corpus proceedings since 1996, including as executive director of the Georgia Resource Center for a decade prior to coming to Mercer. "It's a civil action where the prisoner ... alleges that the criminal process, or sometimes other kinds of processes that put them in confinement, was unconstitutional and that therefore they must be released.

"It has become a vehicle for exposing serious errors, including substandard attorney performance and prosecutorial misconduct in capital trials, especially, often resulting in exoneration or other showings that the trials were fundamentally unfair and therefore unconstitutional."

"The idea that they don't have any real recourse in terms of legal assistance is troubling. That's the gap that the Mercer Habeas Project tries its best to fill."

A habeas corpus proceeding allows the prisoner to present evidence that may not have been shown during the trial, such as proof of innocence or information that may have made a jury more sympathetic at a capital sentencing, Kammer said.

As a public defender in Atlanta in the early 2000s, Gerwig was getting a lot of requests to help with cases where prisoners felt their claims had not been

heard, or they had not had effective counsel, she said. A lot of these habeas corpus cases were making it to the Georgia Supreme Court with prisoners representing themselves, where their lack of training and resources put them at a real disadvantage.

So Gerwig approached Emory University, where she had attended law school, with the idea of working with law students to cover these types of cases, and she started the Habeas Project as an adjunct professor there. When a position opened at Mercer — where she earned her bachelor's degree in English — to start a public service law program, Gerwig brought the clinic to Mercer Law, where it took off.

"To me, this was an opportunity to fill a need that nobody else was filling. The next piece was this kind of radical notion that you should teach lawyers by actually having them practice with clients," said Gerwig, who directed the clinic until she became associate dean for academic affairs in 2019. "It seemed like the perfect fit to marry this unmet legal need with this unmet pedagogical need."

The Habeas Project takes on noncapital, post-conviction cases on a pro bono basis, the only program in Georgia to do so. Each year, five to eight third-year Mercer Law students are chosen for the clinic through a competitive application process, Kammer said. They are involved in multiple cases at a time and generally work on at least a half-dozen during the year with clients across the state.

"We know — from all the stories about how compromised, flawed and perhaps broken our criminal justice system is — that there are a lot of



people in prison who may be innocent or otherwise wrongfully convicted,” Kammer said. “The idea that they don’t have any real recourse in terms of legal assistance is troubling. That’s the gap that the Mercer Habeas Project tries its best to fill.”

Research is a big part of the students’ role. When they get cases from the state Supreme Court, they scrutinize and organize records and trial transcripts, review documentary exhibits, draft briefs, do mock trials, or “moots,” to prepare for oral arguments and sometimes visit their clients in prison.

“They get to have the idea of prisons and prisoners demystified. Students come to see their clients as human beings,” Kammer said. “Prisoners really appreciate when they’re being fought for. That’s a small victory in itself. It’s a lesson in how people need to feel like someone is on their side.”

On appeal, Kammer argues the cases before the Georgia Supreme Court, but his students assist in everything leading up to that. A rule enacted last year allows students to argue before the Supreme Court under supervision,

*“As a starting attorney, I was able to say
**I had experience altering
parole decisions.**”*

and Kammer anticipates that students will be able to take advantage of that in future cases.

Through the Habeas Project, students grapple firsthand with concepts of crime and punishment, justice and public safety, as well as the realities of issues involving poverty and race. They learn how to be allies to clients who may have mental health issues and backgrounds of trauma and chaos, as well as how to best help and represent them.

“I think those are absolutely crucial things for rising new lawyers to be exposed to. If you go into the legal world without having any of that experience, you’re at a disadvantage. I enjoy being able to shepherd students through those experiences,” Kammer said. “They get to grapple with real-world legal problems that aren’t manufactured by the professor as a test case.”

The most recent victory for the Habeas Project came this summer, when the Georgia Supreme Court granted habeas relief for one of the project’s clients, vacating an erroneously imposed felony aggravated assault charge. In essence, early court proceedings erred in counting two charges that should have been merged as one. The work by the Mercer team, in collaboration with the client, resulted in the probation portion of his sentence being reduced from 25 to five years.

“That’s two decades of probation eliminated,” Kammer said. “Probation is a burdensome sentence all on its own. It can severely limit one’s life chances, so to get our client out from under probation in five years is a victory.”

“It was a really cool experience because I got to do it all from start to finish,” said Guta, who in August began a clerkship under Mercer Law alumnus and Judge Marc Treadwell in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia. “Our client was very helpful, and he was very knowledgeable. It was great to help him across the finish line because he had already done so much of the work on his own.”

Victories like this show students that the skills they’re developing can impact someone’s life for the better, which is extremely powerful.

“There are so many little problems that people deal with in our

society that could be remedied if they only knew the ins and outs of the legal system and which paperwork to file and who to contact, and that’s something that lawyers can specialize in that helps others,” Kammer said. “We’re trained to learn this bureaucratic system. It’s a way of giving your clients a face in this otherwise faceless bureaucracy. Lawyers can pull certain levers and make things happen within this system that are beneficial.”

It’s incredibly fulfilling to see clients get out of prison and help them re-enter society, Gerwig said.

“It’s been a joy to work with our clients. Many of our students have been deeply moved by the opportunity and the experience,” Gerwig said. “That human connection is the most valuable and rewarding part of teaching, and it’s the most valuable and rewarding part of practicing.”

Meagan Hurley, a 2019 Mercer Law graduate, and 2020 graduates **Chelsea Henderson** and **Lyra Foster** said the Habeas Project was one of the reasons they were drawn to Mercer Law School.

Henderson said the clinic sets Mercer apart and offers a unique and valuable experience for students. In her first job out of law school, she did legal research and writing, including for federal habeas proceedings, as a term staff attorney for the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. In June, she became an associate in the labor and employment practice group at Troutman Pepper in Atlanta.



“As a starting attorney, I was able to say I had experience altering parole decisions,” she said. “I was able to come into the job with actual knowledge of Georgia habeas law. [The clinic] gave me a step up on being able to go onto different teams in my office at a different pace.”

With interests in social justice and a passion for criminal justice reform, Foster came into law school knowing she wanted to be involved in the Habeas Project. At Mercer, she gained public service experience that remained important to her as she entered her career. Foster is now a defense litigation attorney at Dennis, Corry, Smith & Dixon in Atlanta and also represents transgender people post-conviction on a pro bono basis.

“Mercer has always emphasized giving people practical experience,” Foster said. “I had a lot of practical experience, and then Macon has a lot of unfilled needs as far as the nonprofit space. I got to do things as a law student under the student practice act and with the Habeas Project that I never would have gotten to do in Atlanta because there are lawyers to fill those needs. That shaped what jobs I felt comfortable applying for and what priorities I had.”

Hurley reported on crime, courts and social justice issues as a journalist for a few years before law school, which sparked her interest in indigent defense work and led her to Mercer Law. She interned at the Georgia Innocence Project (GIP), a nonprofit law office that specializes in post-conviction work on behalf of wrongfully convicted people, before her second year of law school, which served as a primer for her work with the Habeas Project.

Her collective experiences as an intern with GIP and a participant in the Mercer clinic then helped her land a job with GIP out of law school. She now represents wrongfully convicted people in Georgia post-conviction proceedings as GIP’s accountability counsel.

“I think the Habeas Project was the best part of my law school experience: learning the law and the procedure, getting to know the client,

getting inspired to continue this work, but also just learning to work as a team. I think that camaraderie was really special,” Hurley said. “The clinic exposed me more to people and some of the injustices they face. I really got to connect with clients. I can’t even begin to tell you how meaningful that experience was for me.”

Guta said she went to law school so she could advocate for people who don’t have a voice, and the Habeas Project was a meaningful way for her to give back and serve. She was the youth relationship violence program director at Crisis Line & Safe House of Central Georgia as an undergraduate student at Mercer, and she was a disability rights section intern for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division in summer 2021. She is interested in doing civil rights litigation and indigent defense work in the future.

“The Habeas Project is one of Mercer’s best projects,” Guta said. “It helps people in need who have real claims that have merit and gives them that extra help. It also gives students a great experience. It’s a win-win for the clients and the students.”

The Habeas Project is not the only project at Mercer Law School through which students can gain practical experience. There are currently an asylum and immigration appeals clinic, a low-income tax clinic and a public defender externship, as well as many other externship programs. A corporate counsel externship program was just started, and domestic violence and consumer bankruptcy clinics are in the works.

Henderson

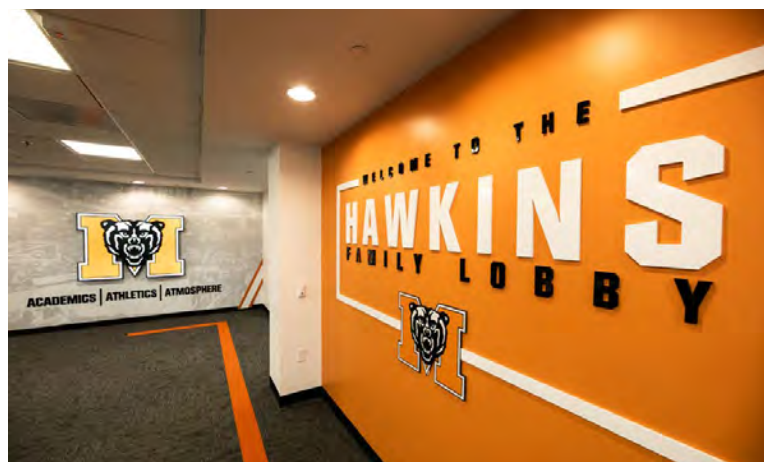


Foster



FIRST IMPRESSION

The Mercer Athletic Foundation set out to visually transform all of the spaces recruits see between the time they park at the University Center and their meeting with a prospective coach. While the project started out as a simple graphics package, it grew to include a new six-seat recruiting golf cart, state-of-the-art graphics throughout the Athletics Department, championship displays, the construction of a new recruiting lounge, a digital hall of fame kiosk, new furniture, new carpets and renovation of the student-athlete support services suite.

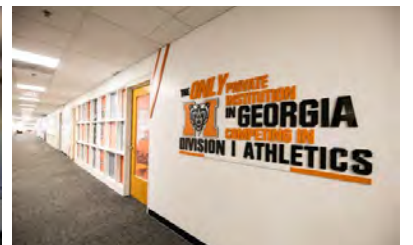


In all, 39 families made gifts totaling nearly \$300,000 to put toward this project.

Lead Project Donors:

- Hawkins Family Lobby (Dr. Chuck and Kathy Hawkins)
- Diane Owens (CLAS '77, LAW '80) Champions Garden
- Reehling Recruiting Lounge (Rosemary Reehling, CLAS '92)
- Mitchell Champions Hall (William Mitchell)
- Hudson Patio (Michael and Bridget Wright, MED '01 and MED '00)





Jonsson Selected for NCAA Golf Tournament

Sophomore competed in Palm Beach as individual

In his first season as a Mercer Bear, men's golfer **Tobias Jonsson** made an appearance in the NCAA Tournament as an individual from May 16-18.

The sophomore from Huddinge, Sweden, was the first Bear to land an invitation to the NCAA Tournament since **Trey Rule**, who made appearances on three occasions, last in 2015.

Jonsson played in the Palm Beach, Florida, regional at PGA National Resort as the second-seeded individual. He carded an even-par (72) to wrap up the event in a T-25th position with a score of five-over

(21) for the championship. Following a one-over 37 on the day's first nine, Jonsson played one-under to finish at even for the final day.

"This is a huge honor for Tobias for the way he has played all season long," said Head Coach **Jason Payne**. "We were proud to have Tobias represent Mercer golf in NCAA postseason play."

Jonsson was named to the All-Southern Conference team after placing in the top five in seven of nine events played. In February, he won the Wexford Intercollegiate with a four-under 212 (71-71-70). He finished runner-up on three occasions and twice placed third.

On a pair of instances, he was tabbed as the league's Player of the Week — in late February and early April.

POE First Mercer Football Player to Join NFL

Jason Poe became the first-ever Mercer football player to join a National Football League team. The offensive lineman and the San Francisco 49ers came to an undrafted free agent deal almost immediately following the NFL draft in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Prior to the 2021 season, Poe was featured on Bruce Feldman's Freaks List, which spotlighted 100 of the most athletic players in college football. He placed 68th on the list.



Women's Lacrosse Appears in **4th** Consecutive NCAA Tournament

Bears Stood Toe to Toe with No. 7 Florida in NAAs

After winning the Big South and an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament, Mercer — which received votes in the final IWLCA poll of the regular season — gave the seventh-ranked Florida Gators a hard fight on May 13 but fell by a 19-12 margin in Gainesville.

Mercer entered the NCAA Tournament off a win over High Point for the Big South's automatic bid. It is the fourth consecutive year in which the Bears have received a bid to the tournament following three straight (2018, 2019 and 2021) championships

in the Southern Conference, which discontinued sponsorship of the sport after the 2021 season.

In the Bears' inaugural season in the Big South, they clinched the tournament championship behind a balance of a potent offense and a strong defense in the 16-13 win over top-seeded High Point. The victory gave the Bears a revenge win over the Panthers after High Point had defeated the Bears in the regular season.

Mercer finished 8-1 in regular season conference play and was successful in a challenging non-conference schedule that featured the University of Southern California, North Carolina, Florida and a 15-12 win over Oregon.

Mercer ended its championship season with a 14-5 record.

Mercer **7th** Earns Consecutive Barrett-Bonner Award for Academic Achievement

Mercer earned its **seventh consecutive Barrett-Bonner Award** from the Southern Conference at the conclusion of the 2021-22 academic year.

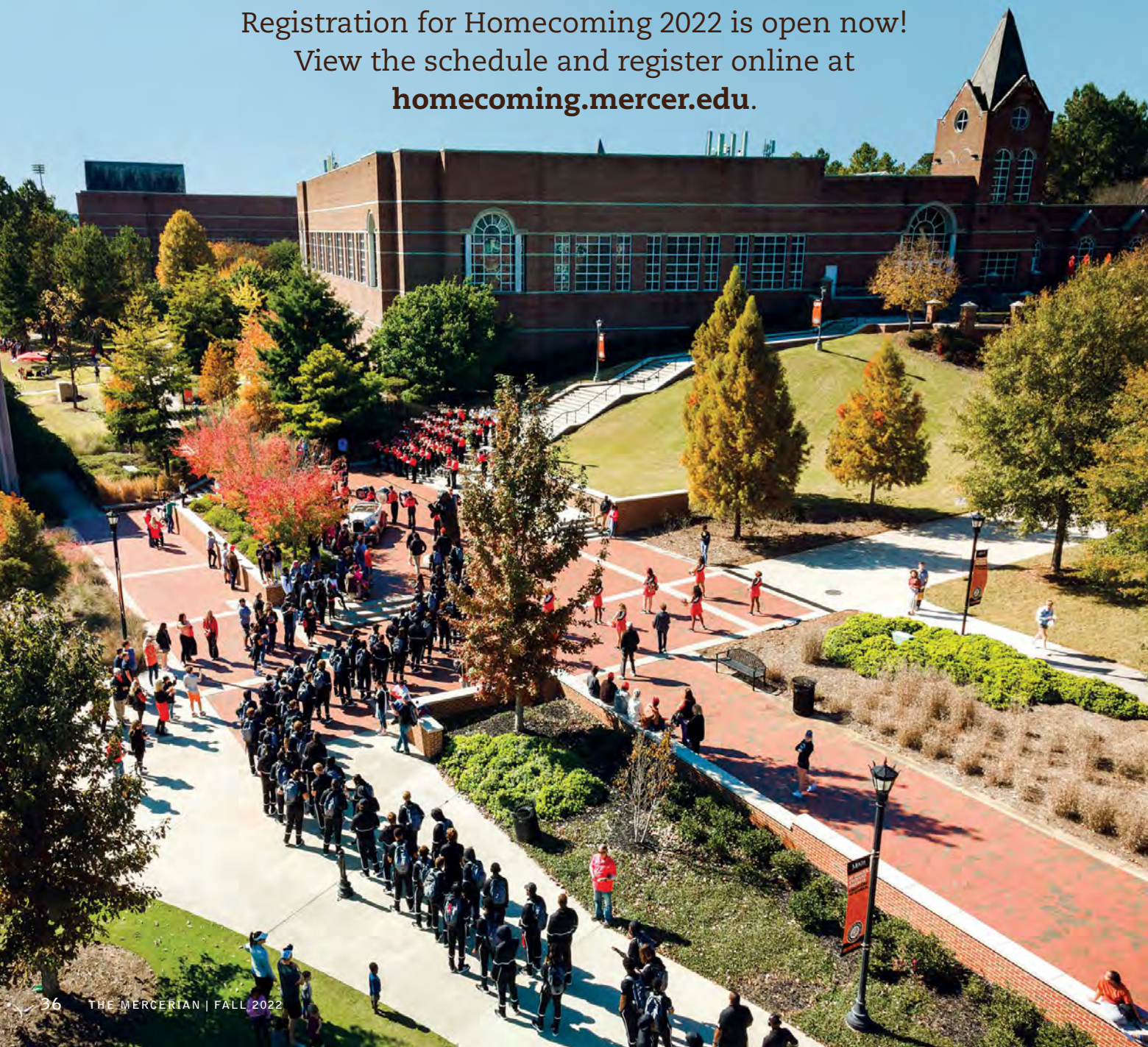
The Barrett-Bonner Award is given to the SoCon institution that places the highest percentage of its student-athletes on the league's academic honor roll. Mercer placed 78.5% of its student-athletes on the Southern Conference Honor Roll.

Mercer has won the award each year it has been eligible since joining the conference during the 2014-15 academic year.



Mercer Homecoming NOVEMBER 11-12 • 2022

Registration for Homecoming 2022 is open now!
View the schedule and register online at
homecoming.mercer.edu.





Make plans to join us!

Plan a tailgate, meet up with old friends and see how Mercer has grown and changed since you graduated. Homecoming is great for all ages, so bring your family.

Featured events will include:

- 10th Annual Alumni Career Speakers Series
- 50th Undergraduate Class Reunion Dinner
- 7th Annual Alumni Awards Dinner
- Pep Rally and Fireworks
- An Evening with Southern Spirits
- Half Century Club Induction and Celebration
- Recognition of the Classes of 1972, 1982, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2012
- Campus-Wide Tailgating
- Saturday Football Game vs. Furman Paladins
- ... and so much more!

Please register at
[HOMECOMING.MERCER.EDU](https://homecoming.mercer.edu)
Online registration ends on November 3.



UNIVERSITY BREAKS GROUND ON MOYE PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER IN ATLANTA

The University on May 17 broke ground on the 65,000-square-foot **Moye Pharmacy and Health Sciences Center** on the Cecil B. Day Graduate and Professional Campus in Atlanta.

The new facility, the main component of a \$36.8 million construction project, will house learning, teaching and administrative space for the College of Pharmacy and further facilitate interprofessional initiatives involving the University's four health sciences schools. The project also includes renovation of an additional 18,500 square feet of space in the DuVall Building to expand labs for the College of Pharmacy's

rapidly growing research activities.

"The Moye Pharmacy and Health Sciences Center and the accompanying renovation of the DuVall Building will provide quality classroom space to assist our faculty and staff with the recruitment of high-quality students and researchers," said Mercer President **William D. Underwood**. "It also will expand the capacity of our scientists and researchers to continue in partnership with numerous government, industry and nonprofit organizations, making Mercer one of the Southeast's leading centers for pharmaceutical sciences education and research."

The first floor of the new facility will include state-of-the-art classrooms, a clinical skills and simulation laboratory, dedicated spaces for students and administrative offices. Interactive classrooms, not fixed in configuration, will allow for more options in didactic teaching and will better facilitate team-based learning and other active learning strategies. A flexible and open building design will provide students with space for breakout sessions, study groups, organizational meetings and projects. The second floor will house faculty and staff offices that will be relocated from the DuVall and Pharmacy Administration and Cafeteria buildings.

The center is named in recognition of the lead gift provided by Mercer alumnus, trustee and longtime supporter **Tony Moye** and his wife, **Nancy**, who reside in McDonough.



MERCER MEDICINE HOLDS RIBBON-CUTTING FOR **NEW RURAL HEALTH CLINIC IN HARRIS COUNTY**

Mercer Medicine last spring held a ribbon cutting for the launch of its fifth rural primary care clinic, which opened April 4 in Hamilton. Mercer Medicine is the primary care practice and the division of the faculty practice of Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM), with more than 30 primary care and specialty providers in six locations. Mercer Medicine Harris County is staffed by **David Kay**, M.D., **Amanda Lee**, MSN, NP-C, and additional clinical staff who offer primary care, X-ray, EKG, lab, point-of-care testing, flu shots, physicals and telehealth services, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. The clinic serves all patients including the uninsured and underinsured. Dr. Kay earned his medical degree from MUSM

in 1998. He completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN) at what is now Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center. Since 2002, Dr. Kay has practiced emergency medicine and OB/GYN across south and central Georgia. He is joined at the clinic by Lee, a certified nurse practitioner. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing from the University of South Carolina in 2011 and has practiced as a family nurse practitioner for nearly 10 years.



COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS AWARDED **\$1.2 MILLION HRSA GRANT**

The College of Health Professions has been awarded more than \$1.2 million by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to train health service clinical psychologists to address opioid use and other unmet behavioral health needs across rural and urban Georgia.

HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce provided the grant, in the amount of \$1,267,867, to the College's Department of Clinical Psychology to fund nine Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) students each year from 2022-2025.

Fellows will be trained to provide interdisciplinary, integrated behavioral

health for Opioid Use Disorder and pain management in community-based primary care settings and will be encouraged to pursue careers and service opportunities in rural and other underserved areas.

Gail Kemp, Ph.D., MPH, assistant professor of clinical psychology, and **Craig Marker**, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Clinical Psychology, will serve as co-principal investigators for the grant. **Davielle Lakind**, Ph.D., assistant professor of clinical psychology, will also be involved in the fellowship training process.



Dr. Kemp



Dr. Marker

MUSM DEDICATES SAVANNAH SIMULATION LABS IN MEMORY OF **DR. DAVID BYCK**

The School of Medicine on June 3 dedicated its three Savannah campus simulation labs in memory of Savannah native and longtime MUSM and Memorial Health University Medical Center faculty member **David B. Byck, M.D.** The state-of-the-art simulation facilities provide hands-on experience coupled with guided debriefing to prepare students for their future roles as medical doctors. The labs, located on all three campuses, allow learners to practice invasive procedures without the risk of patient harm.

Dr. Byck, who passed away in November 2020, served for more than 30 years as an OB-GYN at Memorial, where he held a variety of leadership positions, including chief of the medical staff, chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and director of the OB-GYN residency program.



MUSM Dean Dr. Jean Sumner offers remarks during the dedication of the Dr. David B. Byck Simulation Labs in Savannah.



MPH STUDENT SELECTED FOR **SAMHSA SUMMER INTERNSHIP** PROGRAM

Master of Public Health (MPH) student **Eunice Larbi** was one of 22 graduate and undergraduate students nationwide selected to participate in this past summer's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Internship Program. The 10-week internship program, organized by the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars in partnership with SAMHSA, is designed to equip students from underrepresented populations to work in the public health field. Larbi is the only student from a Georgia institution and one of nine MPH students who participated in this summer's programs. Interns represent a variety of degree programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels.



Larbi

PHARMACY PH.D. STUDENTS EARN **REGIONAL AWARDS** FOR RESEARCH

Ahasanul Hasan and **Smital Patil** were recognized by the Southeast Regional Clinical and Translational Science Alliance for their research. Hasan and Patil won first place in the basic research and pre-clinical research categories, respectively, at the organization's annual conference, held March 3-4 at Callaway Resort and Gardens in Pine Mountain.

Hasan, who conducts research in the cardiovascular research laboratory of **Dr. Raquibul Hasan**, examined the mechanism by which a drug used to treat Type II diabetes also lowers blood pressure. Patil, who conducts research in the vaccine nanotechnology laboratory of **Dr. Martin D'Souza**, researched the effectiveness of using microneedles to deliver vaccines for COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus, commonly known as RSV.



Hasan and Patil

BARBÉ APPOINTED INTERIM DEAN OF NURSING

From left, Dr. Ramon Meguiar, Dr. Robert Shelley, Dr. Peggy Byck and Dr. Edwin Grimsley outside of one of the Dr. David B. Byck Simulation Labs on the School of Medicine's Savannah campus at Memorial Health University Medical Center.



College of Nursing Associate Dean **Tammy Barbé**, Ph.D., was named interim dean of the College by Provost **D. Scott Davis**, Ph.D., effective July 1. Dr. Barbé followed **Linda Streit**, Ph.D., who announced last spring she would step aside after 12 years as dean to return to the faculty of the

state's longest established nursing program. Dr. Barbé, who previously served as associate professor and oversaw the College's graduate programs, has more than 25 years of nursing experience and is a certified nurse educator. She joined Mercer's faculty in 2012 and was promoted to associate dean in 2018. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Master of Science in Nursing from the University of South Alabama, followed by her Ph.D. in nursing education from the University of Northern Colorado.



Dr. Barbé

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY STUDENTS RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Two Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) graduates received national awards at the American Physical Therapy Association

Combined Sections Meeting held Feb. 2-5 in San Antonio, Texas.

Caroline "Carly" Esposito and **Jillian Watson**, both members of the DPT Class of 2022, were awarded by the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy and the Academy of Pelvic Health, respectively, at ceremonies on Feb. 4.

Esposito received the Outstanding Physical Therapist Student Award from the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy, citing her academic excellence, initiative, leadership and engagement in professional organizations. Watson received the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Academy of Pelvic Health for her time and energy in serving as the national Student Special Interest Group Director for the Academy.



Dr. Esposito and Dr. Watson

DPT GRADUATE RECEIVES NATIONAL MINORITY SCHOLARSHIP

Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2022 graduate **Michelle Dennis**, DPT, was named a recipient of this year's American Physical

Therapy Association (APTA) Minority Scholarship Award. The Minority Scholarship Award recognizes physical therapy students in their final year of an accredited program. Dr. Dennis was

notified of the award on May 11 in a letter from APTA President Roger Herr, PT, MPA, who congratulated her and invited her to be recognized at a ceremony and reception on Aug. 14 in Washington, D.C., during APTA's Leadership Congress.



Dr. Dennis

ClassNotes

MERCER SCHOOLS & COLLEGES — BUS — School of Business; CAS — College of Arts and Sciences; CHP — College of Health Professions; CLAS — College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; COPA — College of Professional Advancement; DIV — School of Theology; EDU — College of Education; EGR — School of Engineering; LAW — School of Law; MED — School of Medicine; MUS — School of Music; NUR — College of Nursing; PHA — College of Pharmacy; TIFT — Tift College

ACHIEVEMENTS

1950s

Charles Lee Holland Jr., CLAS '55, HON '72, wrote a book titled *Devotional Reflections on the Sermon on the Mount*. The book was published by WestBow Press and released in March.

1960s

Dr. Charles D. "Pedro" Williams, CLAS '62, received a lifetime achievement and service award from the Florida House of Representatives on Jan. 24. Williams previously received a career achievement award from the governor of Georgia as well as a career achievement award from his hometown of Moultrie. Williams is a previous member of the American College of Radiology (ACR) Board of Chancellors, vice president of the ACR and an ACR Gold Medalist.

1970s

Richard E. Hyer Jr., CLAS '66, EDU '74, was appointed to the Board of Equalization of the Blairsville Tax Assessor's Office by the Union County Grand Jury. Hyer is a former Tift College of Education faculty member and retired as superintendent of the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon.

Donna P. Price, CLAS '76, LAW '79, was elected chair of the Albemarle County, Virginia, Board of Supervisors, the governing body of the county. Price is the first transgender individual to hold the highest elected office in county government in the United States.

1980s

Richard W. Gerakitis, LAW '81, received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 22nd Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service on March 19. The award is the highest recognition given by the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism for demonstrating an extraordinarily long and distinguished commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout one's legal career. Gerakitis is a partner in Troutman Pepper's labor and employment practice group in Atlanta.

1990s

The Hon. Michael P. Boggs, LAW '90, was named chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court in July. Georgia chief justices are chosen by their colleagues to serve a single four-year term leading the state's judicial branch. Boggs was appointed to the Supreme Court by then-Gov. Nathan Deal in 2016 and won election to a six-year term in 2018. He previously served on the state Court of Appeals and as a superior court judge in Waycross, where he founded the circuit's drug court program.

Troy B. Brooks, BUS '93, was named the new senior vice president and chief financial officer for Southwell health care system in June. Southwell includes Tift Regional Medical Center in Tifton, Southwell Medical and Southwell Health and Rehabilitation in Adel, and more than 35 outpatient centers and provider clinics located throughout south-central Georgia. Brooks previously served in CFO roles at Conway Regional Health System in Conway, Arkansas, and Piedmont Newton Hospital in Covington.

Darcy Johnson Davis, BUS '91, CEO of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, was honored as One of Florida's Top Women-Led Businesses by The Commonwealth Institute Florida on June 14.

Jarome Emile Gautreaux, CLAS '90, LAW '98, founder of Gautreaux Law LLC in Macon, recently co-authored the book *Georgia Law of Torts*

Trial Preparation and Practice, 2022 Edition, published by Thomson Reuters. In addition to his active law practice, Gautreaux serves as an adjunct professor at Mercer Law School.

Christian E. Hardigree, LAW '96, was selected as the next regional chancellor of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus. Hardigree most recently served as the founding dean of the School of Hospitality at Metropolitan State University of Denver.

Jeffrey R. Harris, BUS '97, LAW '99, was named to the prestigious Georgia Super Lawyers Top 100 list, making him a five-time Top 100 honoree.

A founding partner at Harris Lowry Manton LLP in Atlanta and Savannah, Harris was also recognized as a 2022 Georgia Super Lawyer in the Personal Injury General: Plaintiff category.

Jo Ann Streiff Herold, BUS '98, an award-winning marketing expert, released her first book, *Living On a Smile — 16 Ways to Live a Big Life and Lead with Love*, in August. The book is based on Herold's personal experience working as a McDonald's employee to becoming chief marketing officer of iconic global brands like Arby's Inc., Interface Inc., and The Honey Baked Ham Company LLC. Part memoir and part leadership guide, the book chronicles Herold's journey from her humble beginnings to becoming the top executive in her field. In doing so, she offers readers 16 powerful lessons for living a life of purpose and fulfillment.

Matthew J. Olson, CLAS '90, was named United States Tennis Association (USTA) southern executive director and COO and began the position in February. Previously, Olson was USTA New England executive director and COO and led the New England section since January 2015. He headed the USTA Atlanta for 12 years beginning in 2003, served as USTA southern tennis coordinator and program manager from 1998 to 2004, and was the USTA Georgia coordinator of community development and schools during the two previous years.

D. Kent Shelton, LAW '92, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve JAG Corps on Sept. 1, 2021.

2000s

Dana Boyer, BUS '02, joined Mauldin & Jenkins as a partner in the firm's Atlanta office. Boyer specializes in assurance and controllership services to small and medium-sized businesses. She has over 15 years of experience in both public and private accounting, primarily in the hospitality, construction, real estate, and service industries.

Lakesha Wiley Butler, PHA '05, was named associate vice president for inclusion, diversity and health equity and chief diversity officer at University of Florida Health in August. Previously, Butler was a professor of pharmacy practice and director of diversity, equity and inclusion at Southern Illinois University's Edwardsville School of Pharmacy. Butler has nearly 20 years of experience as a pharmacy professor, during which time she has published academic papers, textbooks and other research related to pharmacy education and diversity-related topics. She is a frequent invited speaker at national conferences and meetings, sharing inclusive best practices with health care practitioners and educators.

Anna Marie Chafin, CLAS '00, received The Emerging Leader Award from the Southeast Georgia Leadership Forum. Chafin is CEO of the Development Authority of Bryan County and represents the 1st Congressional District on the Georgia Student Finance Commission Board of Commissioners.

Trent Lee Coggins, CLAS '95, BUS '98, LAW '01, graduated from the University of Alabama this

REMEMBERING...

Loyal Alumnus and Former Board Member

Bob Haney

Robert Warren "Bob" Haney Jr., CLAS '72, died on June 4. After graduating from Mercer, Haney earned Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish from the University of Kentucky.

He devoted his life and career to higher education, serving in administration at Georgia Southern University and Georgia College and State University. He also loved music and was an accomplished pianist and organist.

Haney served on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Alumni Board of Directors from 2002-2013 and was president of the board from 2011-2012. During his service on the alumni board, he was instrumental

in establishing the T. Raleigh Mann Endowed Scholarship.



Loyal Alumnus and Former Board Member

Rhett Paul

Francis "Rhett" Paul, PHA '65, died on May 27.

After graduating from pharmacy school, Paul joined the Public Health Service, where he served as a pharmacist at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital on Staten Island, New York, followed by service on the Navajo Indian Reservation at Ship Rock, New Mexico. After several years in retail pharmacy, he worked both for the State of Georgia Department of Regulatory Services and for the Department

of Community Health. Paul served on the College of Pharmacy Alumni Board of Directors from 2000-2010 and received the School of Pharmacy Dean's Award in 2001. Paul and his wife, Joyce, established the Rhett and Joyce Paul Endowed Scholarship in 2016.



spring with an LLM degree. After retiring from the active practice of law, Coggins is now teaching business law at Valdosta State University.

Lilly D'Angelo, BUS '02, was selected by Emory University to receive the 2021-22 Sheth Distinguished International Alumni Award. D'Angelo earned a Ph.D. in chemistry and is a respected global executive with more than 30 years of experience in the consumer products industry.

Julie Darty Dennis, CLAS '08, was named 2021 SEC volleyball coach of the year. Dennis joined Mississippi State as head volleyball coach in 2018.

Katherine "Katie" Ray Duffy, CLAS '03, BUS '07, PHA '07, was promoted to vice president

of operations for Erlanger Health System. Duffy previously served as system senior director of pharmacy for Erlanger. She has been a part of the Erlanger team for over 15 years and has over 15 years of clinical experience and over 10 years of operational leadership experience, both within and outside of the pharmacy.

Elizabeth Buchanan Garner, LAW '09, was promoted to partner at the national litigation firm of Troutman Pepper, practicing in the firm's finance practice group in Atlanta.

Alan Howard Harper, BUS '05, was awarded tenure as an associate professor of finance at Gwynedd Mercy University in February.

Jeffrey Charles Hoffmeyer, LAW '06, joined Stites & Harbison PLLC in Atlanta as a member

(partner). Hoffmeyer maintains a broad commercial litigation practice, helping attorneys, accountants, trustees, bankruptcy trustees, financial advisers and other professionals with fiduciary obligations navigate claims brought against them by former clients and third parties. He also represents major international creditors in recovering multi-million-dollar defaults through negotiation and litigation in state, federal and bankruptcy courts. He assists companies facing cybersecurity claims and represents parties involved in complex business disputes.

Jed Davis Manton, LAW '06, was named a 2022 Georgia Super Lawyer in the Personal Injury General: Plaintiff category for his



*Scan the codes with your mobile device to view complete obituaries.

Loyal Alumnus and Generous Supporter

Bob Pinkston

Col. William Robert "Bob" Pinkston Jr., CLAS '56, died on April 5. Pinkston retired from a distinguished career in the U.S. Army after more than 30 years of active service. He graduated from Mercer

as an Army ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate and was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity, Blue Key Honor Society, captain of the Mercer baseball team and president of the "M" Club. He went on to earn a master's degree from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania in 1975. Pinkston served as president of Mercer's Half Century Club in 2008. He also served as a member of the Mercer Athletic Foundation Board of Directors from 2012-2015 and was a longtime member of The President's Club.



Student Leader and Dedicated Alumnus

Stephen Poydasheff

Robert Stephen Poydasheff III, LAW '21, died on March 13. Poydasheff was a graduate of Brookstone School in Columbus. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and graduated, *magna cum laude*, from Mercer Law School. As a law student, Poydasheff served as president of the Mercer Law Student Bar Association and received the Mercer Law Distinguished Leader Award. He was employed by Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough LLP and served on the Mergers and Acquisitions Team. His beloved wife, Carey Sartain Poydasheff, is a 2018 graduate of Mercer's School of Business and a 2021 graduate of Mercer Law.



exceptional work advocating on behalf of his clients. Manton is a founding partner at Harris Lowry Manton LLP in Atlanta and Savannah.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, MARRIAGES/BIRTHS/ ANNIVERSARIES or IN MEMORY announcements for *The Mercerian* may be sent to **ERIN LONES**, director of advancement communications, at lones_ep@mercer.edu.

Michael Eric Memberg, LAW '08, was named partner at Hickcox, Robertson and Stunda in Atlanta. He defends employers/insurers in workers' compensation claims in Georgia and Florida.

Mitch W. Miller, EGR '05, '09, was promoted to flight director of rotary wing and mission planning with 402nd Software Engineering Group (SWEG) at Robins Air Force Base.

Brandon L. Peak, LAW '04, announced the opening of a new practice, Peak Wooten McDaniel & Colwell LLP, which will handle significant wrongful death, personal injury, False Claims Act, class action and business

torts cases. Peak recently won a record-setting verdict of \$280 million, believed to be the largest verdict in U.S. history awarded in a contested trucking case. Peak has successfully litigated trucking, personal injury and class action cases in courts throughout the nation and has personally been involved in cases with verdicts and settlements exceeding \$1 billion.

Brooke Cottingham Peak, LAW '04, joined the new firm Peak Wooten McDaniel & Colwell LLP as marketing director.

Charles L. Qualls, DIV '08, recently celebrated five years as senior pastor at Franklin Baptist Church in Franklin, Virginia.

Kevin Matthew Rollin, LAW '09, was appointed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to the Board of Optometry. Rollin is a partner at Napier and Rollin PLLC. He currently serves on the Indian River County Environmental Control Hearing Board and is a member of the Vero Beach Rotary Club, the Indian River County Bar Association, and the Florida Academy of Collaborative Group. Rollin earned his bachelor's degree from Florida Southern College and juris doctor degree from Mercer University.

Dr. Earl Stewart Jr., CLAS '09, an internal medicine physician with Thomaston Medical Clinic and Upson Regional Medical Center in Thomaston, was awarded the "40 under 40 Leaders in Minority Health" award by the Washington, D.C., based National Minority Quality Forum. In May 2021, Stewart was named to the 2021 *Georgia Trend* magazine's Top Doctors list, recognizing his career achievements and commitment to stellar patient care within and throughout the state of Georgia.

Cynthia "Cindy" L. Strowbridge, CLAS '06, was appointed assistant dean of student affairs on Mercer University's Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta in June. Strowbridge has served as assistant director and associate director in the Office of Campus Life and Student Involvement and, most recently, director of employee relations and special events in the Center for Career and Professional Development.

Deitrah J. Taylor, CLAS '06, a public historian, worked with Ours Studios LLC to bring the documentary "As If We Were Ghosts" to Georgia Public Broadcasting in June.

Denika E. Thomas, LAW '03, was recently appointed national recruiting director of managed review by IST Management Services Inc. Previously with TrustPoint, Thomas specializes in legal recruiting, development and management.

Nicholas A. Urquhart, CLAS '03, director of academic support at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), was selected as the recipient of the E. Lanier Carson Leadership Award for the 2021-22 academic year. The award recognizes leadership contributions of an ABAC administrator who is not eligible for one of the faculty or staff awards. Urquhart has served as an ABAC staff member and administrator since 2009.

Rebecca A. Young, LAW '08, was named deputy administrative officer of Baltimore County in Baltimore, Maryland. In this role, Young will oversee the county's public safety agencies. Most recently, Young served for more than seven years as executive director of Baltimore City Environmental Control Board, supervising a staff of 13 employees and managing a budget of more than \$1.5 million. She has also served as the prosecutor with the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office, where she tried more than 120 cases.

2010s

The Hon. Danielle L. Brewer, LAW '12, was appointed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to serve as judge on the Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court. Brewer has served as a judge on the DeSoto County Court since her appointment by Gov. Rick Scott in 2016. Previously, she served as an associate attorney at Swaine and Harris PA for four years. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from Mercer University. Brewer fills the judicial vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Debra J. Riva.

Julie R. Comer, LAW '13, joined Sites & Harbison PLLC in Atlanta as an attorney in its intellectual property and technology service group. Her practice focuses on business law and litigation, intellectual property, product liability,

professional liability, construction, insurance defense, and estate and probate matters.

Conrad Cornell, BUS '18, was recently named to *Forbes*' 30 Under 30 list in the social media category. Cornell and his longtime friend, Drew Williams, a 2018 University of Mississippi business, management and marketing graduate, were recognized for their up-and-coming app, Press Sports. Press Sports could be described as a cross between LinkedIn, TikTok and Instagram. The app provides a platform for athletes to digitally catalog their seasons, as they share photos and video highlights; connect with other athletes and coaches; and build their personal brand.

Rachel Neidert Fink, LAW '11, was elected partner at Holland & Knight. Fink focuses her practice on complex commercial financing transactions in the firm's Atlanta office.

Capt. Charles W. Grimsley, BUS '06, LAW '10, was recently promoted to the rank of major in the United States Air Force. Maj. Grimsley currently serves as an instructor at the Air Force Judge Advocate General's School at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama.

L'Zandra V. Jones, LAW '20, joined Conley Griggs Partin LLP as an associate attorney in January, focusing on catastrophic personal injury and complex civil litigation matters and handling a variety of legal issues including wrongful death, automobile accidents, products liability and premises liability.

Margaret "Maggie" McCampbell Lien, CLAS '11, was recently hired to help promote Winchester Public Schools in Winchester, Virginia, and the city's Parks and Recreation Department. From 2013 until this past January, Lien worked for Shenandoah University, most recently as assistant dean of student leadership and development.

Dr. R. Allen Ligon Jr., MED '12, a cardiologist at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, successfully closed a heart vessel opening known as patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), on a 1-pound, 1-ounce infant in April. At the time, the baby was the smallest in the nation to undergo the transcatheter procedure.

Xi Lin, BUS '11, was appointed chief operating officer of HF Foods Group, Inc., a leading food distributor to Asian restaurants across the United States. Lin has served as an independent board member for the company since November 2019, where he served as chairman of the audit committee and the special investigation committee. Previously, Lin was vice president and a senior strategy officer for Blue Bird Corp.

Christopher B. McDaniel, LAW '14, announced the opening of a new firm, Peak Wooten McDaniel & Colwell LLP, which will handle significant wrongful death, personal injury, False Claims Act, class action and business torts cases. McDaniel has successfully litigated trucking, personal injury and product liability cases in courts throughout the nation and was a member of the trial team that recently won a record-setting verdict of \$280 million, believed to be the largest verdict in U.S. history awarded in a contested trucking case.

Kieu "Lily" Nhi, PHA '14, was promoted to pharmacy manager of Publix Supermarket in 2021. Nhi also teaches and precepts pharmacy students for Mercer, University of Georgia and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Erica Hickey Opitz, LAW '10, moved up to equity shareholder at Chamberlain Hrdlicka in the firm's Atlanta office. Opitz is a member of the corporate, securities and finance practice group and often serves as a client's outside general counsel. She assists clients with corporate governance, commercial contracts, mergers and acquisitions, and privately held securities.

Rev. Dr. Nancy Jean Iacobelli Penton, DIV '07, '13, recently published *Praying with Pictures: Paths to Creative Contemplation*, a book encouraging readers to connect with God in myriad ways. Penton is a chaplain, spiritual director and retreat leader in prayer and contemplative practices. She teaches classes in practical theology as an adjunct professor at McAfee School of Theology.

Nigel Phiri, LAW '15, established the Law Office of Nigel Phiri Esquire LLC in Atlanta, focusing on personal injury. Phiri was most recently with Morgan & Morgan.

Tiffany Pickett, DIV '15, was promoted to communications project manager in the Office of Communications & Marketing at Ouachita Baptist University.

Sonia Lee Plotter, DIV '12, recently founded Land of the Living Trauma Care, Consulting & Coaching in honor of her parents and those suffering with trauma and addictions. She transitioned from 10 years as trauma care pastor at a church to working in her own organization. She works with churches, nonprofits and individuals suffering from trauma, depression and addictions.

Stanley D. Singleton, CLAS '01, EDU '10, was named assistant vice president for student success at Augusta University in March. Singleton has more than two decades of progressive experience in higher education, most recently as vice president for student affairs at Baltimore City Community College.

Kathrin Meskel Smith, EDU '17, was named head of lower school at The Walker School in Marietta in April. She previously served as assistant head of school at Cumberland Academy in Atlanta. Prior to Cumberland Academy, she worked at Deerfield-Windsor as director of the lower school, director of learning support, and director of Odyssey of the Mind, an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students. She also served as a teacher and director of Odyssey of the Mind at Woodward Academy's North Campus.

Rodney Frederick Swanson, EDU '15, retired as regional superintendent of the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) in January.

Nicholas E. Wooten, CLAS '17, the accountability/investigative reporter at the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, was named Emerging Journalist of the Year by the Georgia Press Association in 2021. He was also among 20 journalists chosen by the National Press Foundation for a fellowship on data and accountability journalism.

Emily R. Wright, LAW '17, was appointed as a visiting assistant professor in the University of Oregon School of Law's top-ranked legal research and writing program.

2020s

Sean Chitwood, PHA '13, BUS '13, director of workers' compensation at Tempe, Arizona-based One Point Patient Care, a full-service

pharmacy benefits manager, was recently awarded the 2021 Spirit of Volunteerism Award from the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP). The award recognizes AMCP committee members who have demonstrated outstanding service to support AMCP programs.

Sharon Roeder Condrey, DIV '21, began serving as minister to families at Goochland Baptist Church in Goochland, Virginia, in June.

Teresa L. Pardinias, LAW '20, joined Worth Jarrell in Atlanta as an associate attorney practicing labor and employment law.

Mason S. Turner, LAW '21, began working with Nimmons Malchow Johnson (NMJ) in Augusta as a plaintiff's associate. Beginning in July, Turner was able to play a role in drafting a brief resulting in a \$1 million judgment in favor of one of the NMJ team's injured clients.

Spencer Williams, BUS '19, '21, was named assistant athletic director for marketing and promotions at McPherson College in McPherson, Kansas. Williams recently served as the marketing and promotions graduate assistant at Mercer University, where he generated revenue through sponsorship sales while growing and maintaining relationships with athletic sponsors. He produced and directed Mercer's football, men's and women's basketball, and baseball games and served as in-person contact during all sporting events.

Haley Twiggs Wolf, BUS '21, was promoted to marketing and public relations manager at M3 Hotel in Lawrenceville. Wolf joined M3 in 2018 as the sales and marketing assistant. In 2020, she progressed her career at M3 as a sales and marketing analyst and was named public relations coordinator earlier this year. She has led the company to win over five hospitality awards in the last year.

MARRIAGES BIRTHS & ANNIVERSARIES

Jordan Morris McIntyre, LAW '19, and her husband, Ian A. McIntyre, LAW '17, announced the birth of their son, Chase Daniel McIntyre, on April 30. Jordan is an assistant district attorney in Cabarrus County, North Carolina. Ian McIntyre is an associate with Butler, Quinn & Hochman, PLLC in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Cynthia L. "Cindy" Strowbridge, CLAS '06, assistant dean for student affairs on Mercer's Atlanta campus, and her husband, Jay Coalsen, welcomed their first child, a daughter named Clare Kennedy Coalsen, on June 30.

Haley Twiggs, BUS '21, married Austin Wolf on Oct. 23, 2021, at The Chapel on McEver in Gainesville.

Caroline Verdery Galloway, TIFT '48, of Stone Mountain, on Jan. 2.

Anne Ayers Hames, TIFT '45, of Union, South Carolina, on March 12.

Claudia Lee Koutoulakos, CLAS '49, of Raleigh, North Carolina, on March 4.

Frances Mills Syptak, CLAS '49, of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on Jan. 17.

Agnes Roberts Tynan, CLAS '47, of Waterloo, Iowa, on March 6.

Barbara Gothard Wood, CLAS '48, of Duluth, on April 2.

1950s

Delores Jones Anderson, TIFT '59, of Tucker, on Feb. 23.

John R. Andrews, CLAS '58, '59, of Albany, on June 5.

Joseph Lee Boland Jr., CLAS '53, of Macon, on April 12.

Ernest K. Brantley, CLAS '57, of Dawsonville, on June 14.

John Mark Carpenter, CLAS '50, of Gainesville, on Jan. 19.

Charles D. Cope, PHA '55, of Marietta, on March 4.

Barbara Thompson Dean, CLAS '51, of Tucker, on May 13.

Mary Ann McGrady Denmark, CLAS '54, of Jacksonville, Florida, on Feb. 3.

Richard F. Dennis, PHA '53, of Hogsansville, on May 6.

Joseph E. English Jr., PHA '56, of Bremen, on April 30.

William F. Everill, CLAS '50, LAW '53, of Jacksonville, Florida, on Jan. 7.

Julie Brown Fortney, CLAS '57, of Macon, on Jan. 18.

Raphael K. Graves, CLAS '54, of Marietta, on March 15.

Robert Evans Green, CLAS '56, of Ocala, Florida, on April 12.

Mary Johns Griffenhagen, TIFT '52, of Fort Valley, on Jan. 4.

Wyndell W. Hamrick, CLAS '56, of Cochran, on Jan. 22.

Benjamin Franklin Harrison III, CLAS '54, of Macon, on Jan. 31.

Gene Kennedy Hiers, CLAS '59, of Macon, on April 10.

Dorothy Castleberry Hill, NUR '51, of Greensboro, on May 2.

Jeanette Crowder Holland, CLAS '56, of Fort Worth, Texas, on April 13.

Bobby D. Hydrick, CLAS '59, of Columbus, on May 28.

Joan Lecroy Johnson, CLAS '56, of Marietta, on June 20.

Benjamin L. Johnson, EDU '57, of Marietta, on Jan. 10.

REMEMBERING...

Dedicated Alumnus and Generous Supporter

Bill Roberts

William "Bill" Fred Roberts, CLAS '54, died on Feb. 23. Roberts earned an associate degree from Young Harris College, bachelor's degrees from Mercer and Georgia State University and a Juris Doctor degree from Woodrow Wilson College of Law. A respected military officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, Roberts served his country through three years of active duty and 11 years of active reserve, attaining the rank of major. He was a successful stock and bond banker, as well as a public administrator, providing 30 years of leadership to the state of Georgia. Roberts served as president of Mercer's President's Club and a member of the Executive Forum Advisory Committee and the Mercer Athletic Foundation.



Mercer Faculty

Dr. Jim Cox

James Lamar "Jim" Cox, former political science professor, died on June 25. Cox earned Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from Emory University. He practiced law in Atlanta until he was drafted into the Army during the Korean War.

After his military discharge, he earned Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees at Southeastern Baptist Seminary and a Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University. He accepted a teaching position at Mercer in 1965 and became the first chair of the political science department. He taught, inspired and encouraged Mercer students for 38 years. Beloved by students, the 1968 yearbook was dedicated in his honor, and he was awarded the Student Government Association's Outstanding Faculty Award in 1992 and 2002. In November 2018, the classroom where he taught was dedicated in his honor.



IN MEMORY

1940s

Blake S. Bivins, CLAS '49, of Cochran, on March 13.

Mildred Baker Chapman, EDU '48, of Macon, on April 27.

Margaret Jackson Cutts, TIFT '45, of Valrico, Florida, on April 28.

Mercer Faculty

Les Peek

Leslie Hurst “Les” Peek, former math professor, died on April 29. Peek graduated from Carson-Newman College in 1958 and taught math and coached basketball at Maryville High School in Maryville, Tennessee, from 1959-60. He moved to Florida in 1960 and taught math for three years. After earning his master’s degree from the University of Tennessee in 1963, he returned to Florida, where he taught mathematics at Brevard Junior College before moving to Macon and accepting a position teaching math at Mercer. He taught at Mercer for 32 years and also served as tennis coach early in his tenure.



Mercer Faculty

Dr. Art Williams

Arthur Joseph “Art” Williams, former counseling faculty member, died on June 29. Williams earned his Bachelor of Arts from Augusta College in 1972 and Master of Education and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Georgia State University in 1979 and 1992, respectively. He was chair of the counseling and human services department at Mercer for more than 20 years. Under his leadership, enrollments in the College of Professional Advancement’s counseling programs grew exponentially. He served as chair of the criminal justice program and played a primary leadership role in the development of the master’s degree programs in school counseling, clinical rehabilitation counseling, human services administration, and criminal justice and public safety, along with training programs in substance abuse counseling.



1970s

Robert A. Acosta, PHA '70, of San Antonio, Texas, on May 23.
Claudia Hamrick Adams, CLAS '70, of Marietta, on April 29.
Ann Warren Anderson, CAS '79, of Hoschton, on Jan. 6.
Phyllis Chafin, NUR '79, of Dublin, on March 18.
Herbert W. Dean Jr., CLAS '73, of Warner Robins, on Feb. 17.
Mary Nunn Domingos, EDU '72, of Brookhaven, on March 16.
Alvin L. Harris, CLAS '74, of Decatur, on May 31.
William P. Holley III, CLAS '75, of Marietta, on April 28.
Annette Tanner Kelley, EDU '72, of Macon, on May 2.
Frances Frazier Mixon, EDU '79, of Martinez, on July 11.
Gilbert J. Murrah, LAW '75, of Bainbridge, on May 3.
Thomas B. Payne, CLAS '70, of Barnesville, on Jan. 28.
Kenneth E. Robinson, PHA '75, of Savannah, on Jan. 29.
Charlotte Warren Stenbridge, EDU '79, of Macon, on Feb. 19.
David V. Weber, LAW '76, of Augusta, on Feb. 11.
William Charles Witzleben, CLAS '70, of Durham, North Carolina, on March 4.

1980s

Thomas J. Barrs III, PHA '80, of Stone Mountain, on March 7.
Karen Aaron Bilbo, CAS '81, of New London, Connecticut, on April 21.
Jon Gary Branan, LAW '80, of Athens, on Jan. 27.
Lynda Wolfenbarger Eaves, CLAS '87, of St. Simons, on May 13.
Kathleen Kennedy Fritz, CAS '84, of Dunwoody, on Jan. 1.
Marilyn Goldsmith Hudgins, CAS '80, of Dunwoody, on April 18.
Harriet Roberts Madison, EDU '82, of Gray, on June 1.
James Gary McGaha, TIFT '83, of Rex, on May 31.
William A. Ott Jr., CLAS '81, of Winters, California, on June 16.
William P. Simmons Jr., BUS '84, of Macon, on Feb. 9.

1990s

Dale Enoch Callaway, BUS '97, of Lyons, on Jan. 9.
Robert Eugene Clark Jr., BUS '96, of Dunwoody, on June 5.
Aaron John Clark, EGR '97, of Falls Church, Virginia, on Feb. 4.
Ellen Faircloth Hester, COPA '92, of Monroe, on May 1.
Wanda Gay Johnson, CLAS '88, LAW '92, of Forsyth, on Feb. 7.
Buffie Blackstone Lawson, EDU '97, EGR '99, of Griffin, on April 25.
Diane Jean Lombard, EDU '97, of Venice, Florida, on May 1.

2000s

Brian Marlin Allen, COPA '09, of Conyers, on Jan. 24.
Kimberly Trisha Bell, CLAS '06, of Sylvania, on Jan. 31.
Joseph B. Collins, COPA '06, of Kathleen, on June 5.
Tara Denise Dixon, MED '00, of Portland, Oregon, on Jan. 18.
John R. Dozier, COPA '03, of Atlanta, on Jan. 21.

Carolyn Israel, BUS '06, of Kekaha, Hawaii, on May 3.
Laura McFarlin Pittman, EDU '03, of Stockbridge, on Feb. 10.
Carlos David Trivino, LAW '09, of Marietta, on March 3.

2010s

Elias Newton Crosby, COPA '13, of Lilburn, on June 12.
Alicia Hill, DIV '16, of Stone Mountain, on June 9.
Scott A. Markie, BUS '17, '19, of Norcross, on May 14.
John Staunton Shiver, NUR '18, of Loganville, on Feb. 18.

FRIENDS, FORMER FACULTY & FORMER STAFF

William O. Faulkner, of Siler City, North Carolina, on March 31.
Julian K. Franklin, of Athens, on Feb. 14.
Millard B. Grimes, of Athens, on May 3.
A. Gregory Harvey, of Eastman, on March 31.
Ronald Hinson, of Lavonia, on Feb. 3.
Edward M. Hughes, of Savannah, on March 9.
Mary Frances Hurt, of Atlanta, on June 15.
Jewell S. James, of Macon, on Jan. 17.
Grace G. Lewis, of Atlanta, on Feb. 8.
Claude A. Petty Jr., of Roswell, on May 6.
Leonard G. Philipps Jr., of Atlanta, on March 6.
Alacia Rhame, of Macon, on June 20.
Juanita Gould Rybicki, of Macon, on March 1.
Gloria Mills Saxon, of Waynesboro, on June 1.
Bob Lee Smith, of Macon, on July 7.
Peter Solomon, of Macon, on June 20.
John C. Staton Jr., of Atlanta, on June 26.
Opal C. Stevens, of Macon, on June 22.
T. Walter Treadwell Jr., of Macon, on Jan. 22.
Jack K. Widener Jr., of Augusta, on May 30.

A. Wayne Joiner, CLAS '55, EDU '69, of Gig Harbor, Washington, on April 30.
Janet McLaughlin Kelly, CLAS '56, of Macon, on July 12.
Marion Harper Liles, CLAS '56, of Macon, on Feb. 8.
Malcolm Goodwin Lunceford, CLAS '51, of Frankfort, Kentucky, on March 11.
George L. Nowell Jr., CLAS '58, of Dexter, on April 22.
Sylvia Reeves Oakley, CLAS '54, of Richmond, Virginia, on June 20.
Wesley Mason Olds, CLAS '57, of Amherst, Massachusetts, on March 11.
Renee Adams Presley, CLAS '59, of Houston, Texas, on June 20.
Virginia York Reynolds, TIFT '57, of Dublin, on March 6.
Carolyn Faulk Schwartz, CLAS '56, of Macon, on May 3.

Sue Bonner Shields, TIFT '56, of Dadeville, Alabama, on May 30.
James A. Smith III, CLAS '54, of Macon, on Jan. 24.
William A. Stenbridge Sr., CLAS '53, of Macon, on Jan. 31.
Maxine Hunt Strickland, EDU '56, of Fernandina Beach, Florida, on April 7.
James A. Thompson Jr., CLAS '54, of Vero Beach, Florida, on Feb. 12.
Lois Brazier Thompson, CLAS '54, of Vero Beach, Florida, on July 8.

1960s

Janice Kennedy Autry, CLAS '61, of Thomasville, on April 5.
Judy Williams Bowen, CLAS '61, of Watkinsville, on Jan. 8.
Dorothy Cravey, NUR '62, of Cochran, on May 16.
Eugenia English, NUR '61, of Cumming, on April 20.

Benjamin M. Garland, LAW '69, of Macon, on April 10.
Thomas Patrick Hall, PHA '62, of Jonesboro, on Feb. 18.
Roberta Robinson Hicks, TIFT '61, of Conyers, on April 22.
John Jeter Hurt III, CLAS '60, of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, on Jan. 12.
Mary Theresa Eubanks Ireland, TIFT '65, of Marietta, on Jan. 22.
Sandra Fortson Jenkins, TIFT '63, of Ocean Springs, Mississippi, on Feb. 25.
Benjamin T. Jordan Jr., CLAS '65, of Nashville, Tennessee, on Feb. 21.
Jerome L. Kaplan, LAW '61, of Macon, on Jan. 26.
Billy G. Lee, CLAS '61, of Warner Robins, on April 9.
Pauline Tucker Morris, NUR '61, of Acworth, on Feb. 15.

David B. O'Quinn, CLAS '61, of Waverly, Alabama, on June 8.
Dianna Dubree Phillips, CLAS '68, of Savannah, on March 5.
Paul C. Pierce, PHA '61, of McRae, on June 23.
Sara N. Moore Stanley, TIFT '60, of Buchanan, on March 31.
Linda J. Driver Swint, TIFT '67, of Anderson, South Carolina, on May 22.
Joel Cash Williams Jr., LAW '67, of Savannah, on Feb. 14.
Jack W. Wilson, CLAS '62, of Savannah, on June 13.
Larry A. Woodruff, PHA '65, of Atlanta, on July 11.

50-75-100 YEARS AGO

Photos and archival information assembled by Gaby Hale and Daniel Williams of the Tarver Library Special Collections staff.

50 YEARS AGO

The four-year-old Atlanta Baptist College merged with Mercer to create Mercer University in Atlanta in 1972. The boards of trustees of both colleges approved a merger in May; the Georgia Baptist Convention added its assent in Savannah on Nov. 14; and the merger became effective on Nov. 29.



75 YEARS AGO

Shorter Hall, then called Edgewood Hall, welcomed its first residents in the fall of 1947. The \$225,000 building was designed to be fireproof and housed the campus fraternities.



100 YEARS AGO

Penfield Hall, then known as either the Commons or the Daniel Marshall Dining Hall, was completed in 1922 at a cost of \$90,000. The building closed briefly due to low enrollment during the Great Depression but was renovated in 1936 to become a student center and the Mercer Co-Op.



MEN'S COMMONS

A LEGACY OF LOYALTY

JAMES THOMPSON

AND THE VERO BEACH BOYS

IN THE FALL OF 1950, A GROUP OF EAGER YOUNG MEN FROM VERO BEACH, FLORIDA, ARRIVED AT MERCER UNIVERSITY. THE FIVE "VERO BEACH BOYS," AS THEY

became known on campus, had a great deal in common, including the fact that they were all recruited by loyal alumnus **James A. Thompson**, a 1929 graduate of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Also known as "Coach" Thompson, James was a well-respected teacher and coach at Vero Beach High School from 1938-1949. He was elected and served as school superintendent of Indian River County Schools from 1948-1969, making him the longest-serving school superintendent in Florida history at that time.

Coach Thompson loved Mercer and became a volunteer recruiter for the University, helping to draw students from Vero Beach and other parts of Florida. The five Vero Beach Boys — **Jamie Buckingham, John Jewett, John Schumann, Eddie Trent** and James's son **Jim Thompson** — were among his first recruits.

While students at Mercer, all five of the Vero Beach Boys pledged Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and were enrolled in ROTC. They were also at the root of many campus antics, such as a gunpowder bomb they made in sophomore chemistry and set off in the middle of the ROTC parade field late one night. Another antic involved George Ambrose, a mystery student the group originally made up in high school. Jim Thompson knew Ambrose was enrolled in a large economics class, and when the professor took roll, he answered for Ambrose, who ended up passing the class.

After graduating, four of the five received commissions as second lieutenants in the U.S. Army. The fifth, Buckingham, attended Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Eventually, four of the five returned home to Vero Beach in pursuit of various careers, and Jim Thompson became the glue that held the original Vero Beach Boys together through all of life's transitions.

Jim Thompson met his wife, the late **Lois Brazier**, while they were both students at Mercer. The couple graduated and married in 1954. Upon graduation, Jim served two years active duty in the U.S. Army in Virginia and Texas. In 1956, Jim returned to Vero Beach and began his 28-year career in the U.S. Army Active Reserve while also beginning a career in the insurance business, joining Buckingham-Wheeler Insurance Agency, eventually becoming president and sole owner of the agency. He also had a long career as a sports official that began in 1953. When his officiating career ended in 2016 due to knee surgery, he had officiated hundreds of games all over the state of Florida.



Jim and
James Thompson



The Vero Beach Boys, from left,
John Jewett, Jim Thompson, John Schumann,
Jamie Buckingham and Eddie Trent

Like his father, Jim was known as a public servant of Vero Beach. He received numerous awards for his volunteerism and dedication to the causes he served. He was a member and leader in the Vero Beach Rotary Club, maintaining 65 years of perfect attendance throughout his membership. He was also a member of First Baptist Church of Vero Beach, joining when he was 6 years old and attending regularly until mobility issues prevented it.

Jim shared his father's passion for Mercer and joined him as a volunteer recruiter and ambassador for the University. He and his wife also began supporting Mercer financially in 1965 and have made a gift every year since. In the 1970s, he was appointed "Class Agent" for the Class of 1954. He took this role seriously and wrote a letter every year for 48 years, asking his classmates to support Mercer and offering to make an additional contribution for each gift made by a classmate. He also made sure "classmate" George Ambrose made a gift every year.

Jim passed away on Feb. 12, 2022, before he had a chance to write this year's Class Agent letter. However, the Thompson legacy of Mercer loyalty does not end with Jim. Much to his father's and grandfather's delight, Jim's son **David Thompson** also chose to attend Mercer, graduating in 1978. Following in his father's footsteps, David was an ROTC cadet and commissioned graduate.

In memory of Jim and his loyalty to Mercer, this year's letter to the Class of 1954 was penned by George Ambrose. Emulating his father's dedication and support, David Thompson offered to make an additional contribution for each gift made by one of his father's classmates.

Schumann, now the only surviving member of the original Vero Beach Boys, has fond memories of his lifelong friend Jim Thompson, Coach Thompson and the role each played in his choice to attend Mercer, a decision that impacted the rest of his life.

"Heeding the advice of Coach Thompson on attending Mercer enabled me to acquire an education in journalism that made my 40-year newspaper career possible," said Schumann. "After graduating, the five of us continued to maintain close ties for the rest of our lives, which included having lunch together when each of us had a birthday. Of course, Jim outranked us all, having achieved the rank of colonel in the U.S. Army."



After 50 years officiating football games, Jim Thompson tosses the coin at the matchup between Vero Beach High School and Olympic Heights in the Citrus Bowl, on Nov. 14, 2008.

Reflecting on his Mercer experience, Jim once wrote, "If the years at Vero Beach High School were good, the years at Mercer University were probably the grandest and most glorious years of our lives." This sentiment was best expressed through his ongoing dedication, loyalty and support for his alma mater.

In one of his Class Agent letters, Jim encouraged support from his classmates saying, "You should be proud to be a graduate of Mercer University. It has changed immensely since 1954, and the future is even brighter. Be a part of that future!"

With more than 90 years of combined loyalty and support from three generations of Thompsons, and with the support of other loyal alumni and friends like the Thompsons, Mercer's future grows brighter by the day.

MERCER CELEBRATES NEW PRESIDENT'S CLUB LIFE MEMBERS

On April 22, during the University's 56th annual celebration of **The President's Club**, Mercer recognized its most generous supporters and honored its newest Life Members. The celebration began with dinner and was followed by a dessert reception at the Bibb Mill Event Center in Columbus.

The Mercer University President's Club was established in 1964 to recognize alumni and friends who provide a nucleus of support for the University. Friends and alumni of Mercer who contribute \$1,000 or more during the calendar year are eligible for membership in The President's Club.

The University's highest level of leadership giving, President's Club Life Member, is conferred on those individuals and churches who have contributed at least \$100,000 to Mercer. At this year's event, the following were recognized for achieving Life Member status: **L.A. "Andy" and Patricia "Patsy" Barger**; **L.E. Brown**, CLAS '61, (posthumously) and **Nancy Childs Brown Cornett**, CLAS '60, MED '00; and **Maurice Solis** and **Lee Johnson**.

Back row l-r: President William D. Underwood, L.A. "Andy" Barger, Maurice Solis, Tony Brown (son of L.E. Brown and Nancy Childs Brown Cornett)
Front row l-r: Lee Johnson, Patricia "Patsy" Barger, Melanie Brown Ketchum (daughter of L.E. Brown and Nancy Childs Brown Cornett)



Answer the Call

A Macon native and daughter of 1998 School of Business alumnus **Michael Hamlin**, **Brianna Hamlin** began dreaming of attending Mercer when she was in eighth grade. She has fond memories of attending Mercer athletic events as a child, including the inaugural game of Mercer's return to football in 2013. "I would read my dad's *Mercerian* and think about how much I could accomplish as a Mercer Bear," Hamlin recalled.

Hamlin is a sophomore in the School of Business pursuing a degree in economics. She is also beginning her second year as a member of the Mercer Phonathon, a student outreach team that employs current students to connect with our alumni, parents and friends. The team consists of 15-20 student callers who reach out to members of the Mercer community to discuss important happenings on campus, invite philanthropy to the Mercer Fund and express our gratitude to our donors.

"I love being able to talk with alumni and hear about their Mercer experiences," said Hamlin. "I would not be able to afford a Mercer education without the support of alumni and friends, and Phonathon gives me the opportunity to thank our donors for their support."

Our outreach team will be calling alumni and friends throughout the fall and spring semesters. So, when you see Mercer on your caller ID, please *answer the call*. You'll have the opportunity to talk with an amazing Mercer student like Brianna. You may also go online and make a gift through our secure site at www.mercer.edu/givenow.

Gifts to The Mercer Fund have the power to change students' lives. For more information, contact the Office of University Advancement at (800) 837-2911 or www.mercer.edu/givenow.



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2022-23 MERCER BASKETBALL

HEAD COACH
SUSIE GARDNER



HEAD COACH
GREG GARY



MEN'S SCHEDULE

NOV. 3	LAGRANGE – EXHIBITION GAME
Nov. 8	@ East Carolina University
NOV. 11	MILLIGAN COLLEGE
Nov. 15	@ Georgia State
NOV. 19	WINTHROP
Nov. 21	@ Florida State
Nov. 25	Hostile Community Classic
–Nov. 27	–Savannah (Robert Morris, Fairfield University, Towson State)
DEC. 2	KENNESAW STATE
DEC. 6	MIDDLE GEORGIA COLLEGE
Dec. 10	@ Florida Gulf Coast
DEC. 17	MOREHEAD STATE
Dec. 21	@ Troy University
Dec. 29	@ Samford*
DEC. 31	UT CHATTANOOGA*
JAN. 4	WOFFORD*
Jan. 7	@ Western Carolina*
JAN. 11	FURMAN*
Jan. 14	@ East Tennessee State*
Jan. 19	@ VMI*
Jan. 21	@ UNC*
JAN. 25	EAST TENNESSEE STATE*
Jan. 28	@ The Citadel*
FEB. 2	UNC*
FEB. 4	VMI*
FEB. 8	SAMFORD*
Feb. 11	@ UT Chattanooga*
Feb. 15	@ Wofford*
FEB. 18	WESTERN CAROLINA*
Feb. 22	@ Furman*
FEB. 25	THE CITADEL*

* SOCON GAME
HOME GAMES IN ALL CAPS

March 2-5, 2023
SoCon Tournament, Asheville, NC

WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

NOV. 7	MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE
Nov. 10	@ Central Florida
Nov. 12	@ Bethune Cookman
Nov. 17	@ Wake Forest
NOV. 20	GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN
Nov. 25	Las Vegas Invitational
–Nov. 26	(Colorado State, Texas Tech)
NOV. 30	ALABAMA
DEC. 4	SOUTH ALABAMA
Dec. 7	@ Georgia
Dec. 10	@ Troy
Dec. 19	@ Kennesaw State
DEC. 21	FLORIDA GULF COAST
Dec. 29	@ Florida Gulf Coast
JAN. 1	ANDERSON
JAN. 5	UNC*
JAN. 7	WESTERN CAROLINA*
Jan. 12	@ East Tennessee State*
Jan. 14	@ UT Chattanooga*
JAN. 21	SAMFORD*
JAN. 26	WOFFORD*
JAN. 28	FURMAN*
Feb. 2	@ Western Carolina*
Feb. 4	@ UNC*
FEB. 9	UT CHATTANOOGA*
FEB. 11	EAST TENNESSEE STATE*
Feb. 18	@ Samford*
Feb. 23	@ Furman*
Feb. 25	@ Wofford*

* SOCON GAME
HOME GAMES IN ALL CAPS

March 2-5, 2023
SoCon Tournament, Asheville, NC