

The Stater

A Magazine for the Alumni and Friends of Southern Arkansas University



**CONTINUING
THE LEGACY**

Story on pages 6-7

A Commitment to the Future

January 12, 2023, will always be remembered as the date that the future of one of our SAU colleges was transformed. On that date, we were so very fortunate to formally announce the commitment of Joan and Jack Dempsey to fully endow the College of Liberal and Performing Arts. Because of their generous \$1,000,000 gift, SAU now has the *Dempsey College of Liberal and Performing Arts*.

We know that for Joan and Jack, this was a gift of love to a place that meant so much to Joan as an undergraduate student. As you will see in this edition of *The Stater*, Joan fondly recalls the professors who guided her, challenged her, and set her path for an incredible career of service in the U.S. military and in the U.S. government.

However, this commitment is more than about renaming a college at SAU. It is about the thousands of faculty and students' lives that will be enriched by Joan and Jack Dempsey's vision and the resources this new endowment will provide.

As long as there is an SAU, there will be a Dempsey College of Liberal and Performing Arts to provide meaningful educational opportunities in fields such as history, criminal justice, music, art, game and animation -just to name a few - for generations to come.

We will forever be grateful, Joan and Jack!

All the best,



Trey Berry, Ph.D.
President

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 20-24

Spring Break

May 4

Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner

May 5

Spring Commencement

May 31

First Summer Session Begins

June 23

Rip Powell Invitational

June 26-29

Mulerider Kids College

June 29

First Summer Session Ends

July 5-7

Mulerider Teen College

July 6

Second Summer Session Begins

August 3

Second Summer Session Ends

August 4

Summer Commencement

August 15

Blue & Gold Day

October 7

Homecoming 2023

*Dates are subject to change,
please see SAU website for
updated information.



Historic Enrollment Numbers

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The Stater

The Stater is published twice a year through the partnership of the University Communications and Marketing Office and the Division of Advancement as a service to the alumni and friends of Southern Arkansas University.

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FIELD EXPERIENCE

SAU MARINE BIOLOGY STUDENTS GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY IN OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI

by Rachel Jenkins

Near the sandy beaches of Ocean Springs, a cozy town of less than 18,000 residents, sits The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory. Established in 1947, the GCRL is home to the Summer Field Program.

In June 2022, eight Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, students traveled to Ocean Springs to take classes while working alongside researchers. Two of those students were Whitney Brown, a senior from Bryant, Arkansas, and Landrey Pruitt, a senior from Cabot, Arkansas.

"We were doing the fisheries' projects—actual studies that were going to NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). It was hands on. We were working with sharks," Whitney said, "and who gets to work with sharks?!"

USM is an affiliate partnership in which SAU students receive in-state tuition rates and credits for coursework that transfer seamlessly. The Summer Field Program affords marine biology majors like Landrey and Whitney hands-on training, extending what they're learning in Arkansas' freshwater sites to the coast, and all while not veering too far from home.

"We're still close enough, at a six-and-a-half-hour drive, to the Gulf that there is this corridor and this established partnership. It's at a comfortable distance to still have access to the field experience," said Dr. Jesse Filbrun, associate professor of biology and marine biology advisor.

Dr. Filbrun has been teaching at the GCRL since 2019. After completing his postdoctoral

research in Southern Mississippi, Dr. Filbrun is familiar with the institution and its staff.

"Independent of talking to me, GCRL faculty were impressed enough with our students that they invited them to do independent research in July. It's not every student that gets to do that. We had a great group this summer, and they reflected well on SAU and me as their advisor. It's exciting to see that," Filbrun said.

Whitney Brown's internship consisted of gill netting and longlining for both the shark and fish sides of the fishery. While she cooed over baby sharks and stingrays, Whitney also understood the gravity of GCRL's mission.

"Sharks are overfished on the coast. So, the fishery is making sure the populations aren't bottoming out, and the same with the fish."

Landrey Pruitt spent much of her internship in the lab, sorting through driftnet samples. One of her fondest memories, though, was helping a researcher who was tracking sturgeon migration patterns. She collected sturgeon, cleaned the receivers and recorded data.

"When we were on the boat, I felt like a pirate," Landrey said. "It was so much fun."

An important benefit of the Summer Field Program experience is the number of professional networks SAU students form. For example, Landrey was invited to present research with her colleagues at a convention in 2023.

Both Landrey and Whitney highly recommend the GCRL Summer Field Program to their peers; however, some students miss this opportunity as climbing room and board costs are a barrier. Please contact the Division of Advancement at (870) 235-4078 or visit www.saufoundation.org/make-a-gift.



Contributed Photo

Whitney Brown holding one of the many baby sharks caught for research.



Contributed Photo

The researchers out at sea preparing to dive deep into the mission of the GCRL.





THE SAU OUTDOOR CAMPUS

A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

Students, faculty, and staff have acres of new classroom space for field research, hands-on learning, and competition. SAU's partnership with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) is making the SAU Outdoor Campus possible.

Until 2019, the primary use of the nearly 700-acres included hay production to support operation of the SAU Farm and timber management. The completion of the FB&T Trap Shooting Range and the addition of the SAU Department of Biology Scientific Study Area caught the attention of AGFC Commissioner J.D. Neeley, Director Austin Booth, and other AGFC leaders.

Last summer, the SAU Outdoor Campus planning team, consisting of faculty, staff, administration, as well as AGFC experts held a two-day strategic planning workshop led by Tabbi Kinion, AGFC Education Division Chief. A 10-year development plan that includes enhancements to support academic and recreational opportunities for the campus and the community was created.

The vision for the SAU Outdoor Campus includes accessible facilities and infrastructure, expanded recreational and educational opportunities, an engaged and active surrounding community,



Photo by Thomas Turner

The barn on SAU's Outdoor Campus is being renovated into a field research station.

restored and sustainable native wildlife habitat, dedicated educational research space, and sustainable land management models.

Sustainable timber management will continue to be a priority, with a renewed focus on forest management for the renewal of wildlife habitats and species diversity. Silvopastures for farm operations and cattle research will be introduced. A large pond will be added to serve as a research facility, offer fishing opportunities, and be utilized by the AGFC Family and Community Fishing Program.

Year one projects include the creation of a 3-D archery course and a fixed distance archery range. Also planned for year one is the expansion of the existing trap shooting facility from 3 fields to 5 fields to make possible more youth trap shooting competitions in South Arkansas.

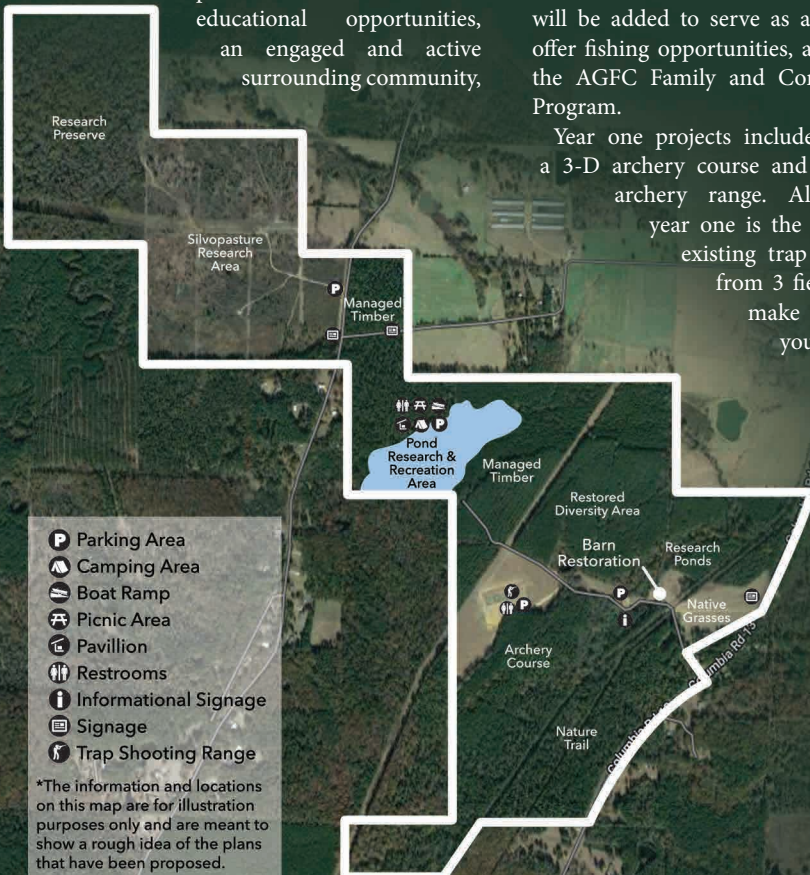
Enhancements to the existing nature trail are currently ongoing. The interpretive nature trail improvements should be completed by early summer 2023. The strategic plan also includes the addition of several trails to create multiple options for outdoor enthusiasts.

A series of shallow ponds for ecological research are included in the plan, as well as the establishment of field research stations for the College of Science and Engineering. Currently, students and faculty conduct research projects on the property, and the expansion of research opportunities will broaden their efforts. For example, when you see a piece of tin laying on the ground, don't pick it up! That is snake habitat research. Bird boxes are visible on poles and trees throughout the property, and students can be seen collecting plankton in the existing ponds.

The creation of pollinator gardens, quail habitats (the hopeful return to the song of the Bob White), maintaining and enhancing waterfowl habitats, and building facilities to support expanded community use are also part of the plan.

Land management plans include improving the forest and eradicating invasive species. AGFC has hosted Learn to Burn workshops at the Outdoor Campus, with plans to schedule more in 2023. Additional AGFC workshops and activities will be hosted at the Outdoor Campus as projects move from planning to development.

For more information about the SAU Outdoor Campus, contact Sheryl Edwards at (870) 235-5090 or via email at saedwards@saumag.edu.





INTRODUCING THE DEMPSEY COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

by Rachel Jenkins

Joan Dempsey's legacy at Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, began with her father James A. Riddle, who graduated in 1961 when it was still called Southern State College.

"I grew up in Stamps and Lewisville in Lafayette County, right next door," the 1981 alumna said. When she graduated from high school, Dempsey had several options but, in the end, chose SAU because it "felt comfortable and safe."

After her freshman year, however, Dempsey made the bold decision to follow in her father's footsteps once again. Riddle was a career Navy man, and Dempsey had grown up on his stories of serving in the military. She left Magnolia, "not because I didn't like SAU, but because I didn't know what I wanted to do." Eager to set out and explore not only the world but herself, Dempsey enlisted in the Navy and moved to Japan, where she served for three years.

When Dempsey returned to Arkansas and SAU, she chose to pursue a degree in political science. She credited the program and its devoted professors for laying an educational foundation that would equip her to compete with students from ivy league schools, and at one-tenth the cost.

“Dr. James Willis poured so much red ink into my college career,” Dempsey recalled. “Sometimes it was green ink. He seemed to change colors with a lot of whimsy.”

Equally dedicated to his students’ growth was professor William Nolan, who made a phone call to the dean of public administration at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville on Dempsey’s behalf. She was connected to the presidential management internship program—a path that ultimately led Dempsey to a Master in Public Administration degree and a job in Washington, D.C.

“It’s the selfless gifts of people like professors Nolan and Willis that make institutions like SAU unbelievably important in our lives,” Dempsey said, reflecting on her life’s trajectory.

During her federal government career, Dempsey held two presidential appointments. First, she served as deputy director of central intelligence in the Clinton administration. Second, she served as executive director of the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board during the Bush administration. During her career with the DoD, Dempsey served as deputy director of intelligence at the Defense Intelligence Agency, as the deputy assistant secretary of defense for Intelligence and Security, and as the designated (acting) assistant secretary of Command, Control Communications and Intelligence. After retiring from the government in 2005, Dempsey began a career in the private sector as an executive vice president at the technology consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton with revenue responsibility in the firm’s largest market-facing organization.

And she excelled in every role. The 2004 recipient of the Security Affairs Support Association William O. Baker Award, Dempsey was also granted an honorary doctorate from the Joint Military Intelligence College. She received the National Intelligence Medal of Achievement, the Intelligence Community Seal Medallion, the Distinguished Civilian Service Award from the Secretary of Defense, and the American University Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership.

With 25 years of experience working in the federal government as well as leading in the private sector, Dempsey has been uniquely positioned to support other businesses. Today, Dempsey serves on four corporate boards and one advisory board.

“That foundation was laid in Magnolia, Arkansas,” Dempsey said. “It never dawned on me in 1978, sitting in a political science class at SAU, that one day I’d be running a billion-dollar business in a private sector company or sitting on the board of 10 billion-dollar companies, helping them figure out how to grow and deal with business challenges like I do today.”

Now, the ’81 alumna is giving back to SAU and the College of Liberal and Performing Arts.

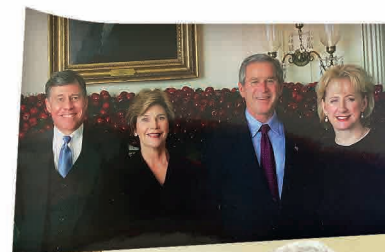
The Dempsey College of Liberal and Performing Arts will continue SAU’s legacy of providing a well-rounded, quality and affordable education to students in the region. Joan and husband Jack’s one million-dollar commitment will fund an endowment to benefit the college through scholarships, classroom enrichment, travel and faculty professional development.

“The generous gift made by the Dempseys greatly changes the educational experiences we can provide in the College of Liberal and Performing Arts, and the change will be for generations to come!” said Interim Dean of Liberal and Performing Arts Dr. Deborah Wilson. “When I first learned of this incredible gift, the words “game changer” immediately came to mind.”

And changing the game is exactly what Dempsey aims to do. For much of her career, in both government and private business, Dempsey’s work has revolved around technology. What she discovered was an imbalance between technology and liberal arts promotion.

“Without that liberal arts education that teaches you how to think critically and communicate well, I think technology is meaningless. I believe very strongly that we need to combine technology and technology fields with liberal arts.”

“Every dollar you invest in SAU has a ripple effect that creates opportunities far beyond just an individual student,” Dempsey said. “It’s a way to give back to these communities that nurtured us growing up and are experiencing tough times. We are thrilled to be able to make this investment.”





SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE NEWS BRIEFS



College of Education and Human Performance



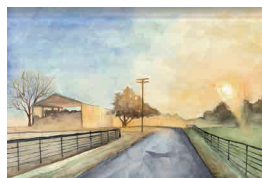
Dr. Clinton Petty

- Dr. Clinton Petty, assistant professor of education and EDAS program director, recently published an original research article in Learning Environments Research entitled “Examining mathematics teacher motivation during lesson study: the role of contextual factors for perceived relatedness.” This international journal ranks in the top quartile of educational journals and has a three-year impact factor of 3.79. Dr. Petty’s research examines how environmental and contextual factors shape teacher motivation during lesson study using self-determination theory.
- The first cohort of candidates for the Educational Diagnostician/Examiner: Grades K-12 certificate program began the program in the summer of 2021 and completed their program in December 2022. This fully online program leads to licensure as an educational examiner, which allows candidates to provide educational testing services for K-12 schools. These candidates have completed many hours of coursework and internship to learn how to educationally test and diagnose students with diverse learning needs.
- Over 150 high school and university students met on the SAU, Magnolia, campus in November for the Educators Rising Region 5 Conference. Funded by a Walton family grant, the Arkansas Department of Education partnered with Educators Rising and SAU to host this recruiting event. Conference events included interactive breakout sessions where students heard from leaders in education as well as competitions that allowed students to showcase their knowledge and skills as future educators. This event was the result of a great partnership between the local service cooperatives, area school districts, and the SAU College of Education and Human Performance. Teacher Education Faculty Dr. Lisa Oden serves as the Educators Rising Region 5 Coordinator.

Dempsey College of Liberal and Performing Arts



- The SAU Chamber Singers and Heritage Singers performed “A Little Night Music” concert on Friday, October 21, in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church, Magnolia. Music selections explored the cosmos and humankind’s relationship to it. Special guests included pianist Mr. Michael Womack, members of the SAU Percussion Ensemble, speaker Mr. Ben Gesselman, and tenor Dr. Dave Ekstrum. Admission to this concert was free to the public.
- The Mulerider band had a record-breaking membership, with the 2022 class being the largest in the University’s history. The band is comprised of 195 students. Director of Bands, J.P. Wilson, indicated earlier this fall that this number makes SAU’s band one of the largest marching bands in the state of Arkansas.



“Morning Light”
Artwork by SAU art professor
Rhaelene Lowther.

- Art professors Anna Zusman and Rhaelene Lowther presented their joint show “Quotidian Moments through Different Lenses” at the Texarkana Regional Arts & Humanities Council. The show, based on their pandemic nature walks, ran from late September through the end of October.
- SAU psychology students Darius Edwards and Aaron Smith presented their research “Barriers to college students accessing mental health services” with Dr. Jennifer Rowsam at the Arkansas Counseling Association Annual (ArCA) Conference in North Little Rock in November.

- MPA student Anayelid Vasquez was awarded the Arkansas City Management Association’s 2022 Henry M. Alexander Scholarship Award.



Dr. Amber Overholser

- Dr. Amber Overholser, associate professor and MPA program director, was appointed by Governor Asa Hutchinson to serve on the Criminal Detention Facility Review Committee for District 7. The agency’s mission is to provide an annual review for each jail, adult detention facility, and juvenile detention facility in the state of Arkansas based on current review standards. “It fits directly into Public Administration as far as checking boxes and learning more about the process by which people are confined. I feel very lucky to be a part of that,” Dr. Overholser said.
- SAU alumna and poet Donika Kelly ‘05 won the 2022 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. Kelly was recognized for outstanding literary contributions to the understanding of racism and human diversity. Her book of poetry *The Renunciations* is described as “a book of resilience, survival, and the journey to radically shift one’s sense of self in the face of trauma.” Donika received her MFA from the University of Texas, Austin, and her Ph.D. from Vanderbilt.

Rankin College of Business

- The David F. Rankin College of Business held the annual Hall of Fame Dinner on November 4, honoring three alumni: Ed Choate ‘75, Dr. Daniel Kyle ‘59 and Allison Schultz ‘85.
- Six students participated in the Rankin College of Business Internship Program during the spring semester, and nine more completed internships during the summer. Additionally, four graduate students participated in internships during the summer. Dr. Robin Sronce, dean of the College of Business, said, “We’re very proud of our Internship Program. It’s an opportunity for our students to gain valuable workplace experience.”
- The Entrepreneur Pitch & Idea Competition, or Epic, was held in November. Winners

included students from Ag Business, MBA – Social Entrepreneurship, and MPA – Social Entrepreneurship. The winners were: Patrick Wingfield, third; Ainsley Purifoy, second; Carley Rains, Kanasha Evans and Roy Williams, first; and Garrett Hensley, Soar prize winner.



Pictured from left to right: Lindsay Givens '12, instructor of management. Easton Wheatley, Natalie Phillips, Uchenna Jong Loy, Eli McCarver, Kristerica Scott, Ronnie Watson '97, assistant professor of management. Ian Murphy, Riyan Stockton, Kim Rand, Brian Teutsch '96

- Students traveled to Houston, Texas, in September for RCB on the Road. Advisory Council members funded, organized, and hosted the trip, which included tours of HCA Houston Healthcare Clear Lake, HCA Healthcare Gulf Coast Supply Chain, and Baker Hughes. Students also enjoyed an Astro's game and alumni event.



Mulerider Sense is housed at the Rankin College of Business and sponsored the SAVE10 Campus Tour. Students have begun peer counseling.

- Mulerider Sense is SAU's NEW financial literacy program built to show, teach, and prepare students for the financial battles they could face after graduation.



The GTEDC is a regional non-profit economic development group consisting of a board of directors which are elected by the GTEDC membership from Calhoun, Columbia, and Ouachita and Union counties. The region has accomplished a great deal and is looking forward to meeting the economic challenges ahead.

- The Rankin College of Business partnered with Golden Triangle Economic Development Council to sponsor The Golden Triangle Economic Forecast Conference in October. Speakers included Dr. Michael Pakko, chief economist and state economic forecaster at the Arkansas Economic Development Institute at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and Andrew Clyde, president and CEO of Murphy USA, Inc.
- Congratulations to the 2022 State Star, Janell Owens Reeves. The State Star award is the highest accolade for Arkansas Small Business and

Technology Development Center employees, recognizing extraordinary performers who have made significant contributions to their state network and display strong commitment to the state's small businesses and entrepreneurs. Owens Reeves and all the State Stars were honored at the 43rd Annual America's SBDC Annual Conference hosted in San Diego. Janell is director of the ASBTDC regional office at Southern Arkansas University, a role she has held since 2017.

- The Rankin College of Business Backpack to Briefcase program expanded to include a networking event with local alumni as well as a dinner to recognize interns who participated in the program.

College of Science and Engineering

- A generous donation of \$100,000, given by Françoise Hendricks in memory of Baxter and Callie Ainsworth Hendricks, Leonard and Ruth Sedberry, Mattie Lou Sullivan Sedberry, Tillman Baxter Hendricks, and Mary Nell Sedberry Raborn, has advanced simulation technology and provided additional hands-on training for nursing students. The department utilized a portion of the donation to purchase a new SimMan simulator with life-like human responses that will provide students with real-world experiences in a simulated health care environment. The funds also allowed the department to acquire a new simulation laptop that monitors vital functions as students work with the patient simulator. A touchscreen patient monitor enhances the student's learning experience, simulating what takes place in nursing practice.

A smaller portion of the funds were used to upgrade technologies within the simulation center. "Through the generosity of our donors, we can commit to improving resources to secure excellent evidence-based practices within an ever-changing health care technology landscape," said Dr. Karen Ainsworth Landry, chair of the department of nursing.



Pictured left to right: Chris Tart, Seth Horn, Mackenzie Beard, Sarah Thomas, Bravyn Bell, Dr. Trent Wells, Janie Wilson

- Six SAU Agricultural Education students recently attended a teacher professional development workshop at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) in Huntsville, Texas. The workshop, titled "Bumper Pull Trailer Building 101," was designed to expand upon agriculture teachers' competence at building large agricultural mechanics projects and was facilitated by Dr. Ryan Saucier of SHSU. The six SAU students who participated in the

workshop were Chris Tart, Seth Horn, Sarah Thomas, Bravyn Bell, Mackenzie Beard, and Janie Wilson. Dr. Trent Wells, assistant professor of agricultural education in the SAU Department of Agriculture, organized the trip. "My desire is that by participating in this workshop, these six students will be better-prepared to competently teach agricultural mechanics to their own students someday," said Wells. The SAU Foundation provided funds to help cover trip expenses.

- Two engineering students, Brandon Ravenscraft and Jonathan Bunnell, participated in the ATMAE Student Division Robotics Competition at the 2022 ATMAE Annual Conference held in Louisville, Kentucky, in November. Engineering professors Md Islam and Mahbub Ahmed accompanied the students. This trip was funded through a travel scholarship provided by the SAU Foundation.



Dr. Hayder Zghair

- Dr. Hayder Zghair, assistant professor of industrial engineering, was presented the Outstanding Service Award in recognition and appreciation for his work as Conference Chair and his contributions to the industrial engineering and operations management profession. The award was presented at the Industrial Engineering and Operations Management Conference in June.



- Dr. Daniel McDermott and Dr. Jeremy Chamberlain of the SAU Department of Biology received a \$40,000 grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences through the Arkansas IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) program. This grant is in collaboration with Dr. Lori Neuman-Lee at Arkansas State University (ASU) and Dr. Tiffany Weinkopf at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). This project aims to establish snakes as a novel model for studying the innate immune system in animals.

FACULTY AND STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Faculty Spotlight – Dr. Daniel McDermott



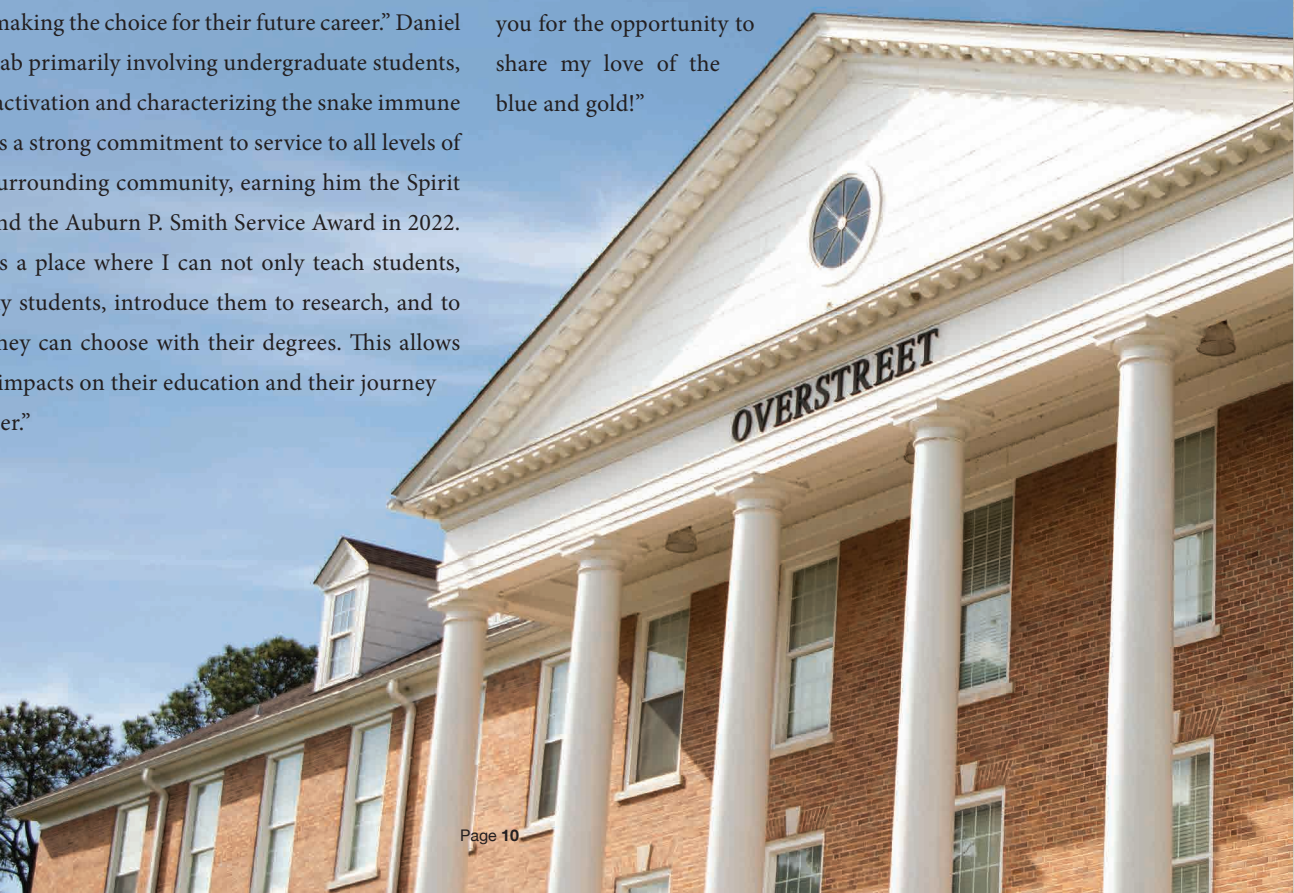
Dr. Daniel McDermott joined the Southern Arkansas University Biology Department in the Fall of 2018. Daniel received his B.S. in Biology at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska. He then attended the University of Iowa, received a Ph.D. in Immunology, and then joined the University of Colorado for his postdoctoral training. Daniel then moved to Magnolia to begin working at SAU, where he currently teaches Principles of Biology, Microbiology, and Immunology. Daniel advises Pre-Health students and introduces them to possible career paths in the medical and healthcare fields. Daniel's background growing up in rural Nebraska prepared him to work with students from rural communities. "Growing up in a rural community, I was unaware of the different opportunities that a biology degree would afford me until I got to college. For me, it is important to introduce our students to the different career paths they can take so they can be fully prepared in making the choice for their future career." Daniel also oversees a research lab primarily involving undergraduate students, examining immune cell activation and characterizing the snake immune system. Lastly, Daniel has a strong commitment to service to all levels of the University and the surrounding community, earning him the Spirit of SAU Award in 2020 and the Auburn P. Smith Service Award in 2022. "I love SAU because it is a place where I can not only teach students, but I can get to know my students, introduce them to research, and to the many career paths they can choose with their degrees. This allows me to make meaningful impacts on their education and their journey towards their future career."

Staff Spotlight – Marcela Brunson



Marcela McRae-Brunson graduated from Southern Arkansas University with a BBA in Accounting in the spring of 1993. Two days later, she began her full-time career as a secretary in the Office of Financial Aid. From student worker to director of financial aid, and with many positions in between, Marcela has called SAU home for almost 30 years and counting. Although she possesses

a fierce work ethic, SAU has taught her tenacity, empathy, and leadership; these qualities were gifted and reinforced by the administration and colleagues along the way. "I love working at Southern Arkansas University because of the commitment to our students and each other," Marcela raved. "We organically create a family, and I believe that concept will always be a part of our legacy. My two favorite times of the year are freshman orientation and the commencement ceremonies. Both occasions allow me to feel rejuvenated and proud to be a part of this University. Assisting in funding higher education for students allows us to touch lives while increasing the value of our community and beyond." Marcela notes that SAU has taught her several aspects beginning as a 20-year-old and continues to do so. "Be committed to something bigger than yourself because the possibilities are endless when all can dream; our legacies are all intertwined, so keep supporting and lifting each other up; and lastly, we all have a superpower. Use it for good." Marcela concluded, "Although being the director of financial aid is challenging, being a part of this movement is rewarding. It is an honor to be recognized, so thank you for the opportunity to share my love of the blue and gold!"





Photos by Thomas Turner

FAMILY DAY



THE LARGEST FAMILY DAY IN SAU'S HISTORY

by Jessica Greaves

Families from near and far gathered on campus for SAU's annual Family Day! However, this Family Day broke records with the number of people that attended the events throughout the day. September 24, 2022, brought a full and exciting day of family-friendly events. The day began with the SAU Department of Theatre performing "A Year with Frog and Toad," open for all to attend. Following this performance, different campus organizations set up tables and fun games for families to interact with. The time-honored Bed Race tradition hosted by the Residence Hall Association was next on the agenda, where Eichenberger Hall took home the trophy. Next, the SAU Greek organizations gathered

at the pond beside the Engineering building for the Great Greek Canoe Race, where Tri Sigma and Alpha Gamma Rho won the races. The day proceeded with the highest-attended Mulegating anyone has ever seen! Delicious food, family, friends, and the pre-game pep rally featuring SAU's largest Marching Band and nationally-competitive Cheerleading squad were enjoyed by all who attended. Following the Mulegating events, families and Mulerider fans walked across the Alumni bridge to enter Wilkins Stadium for the Mulerider football game. There's no better way to end a successful Family Day than with a packed-out stadium of over 7,000 people cheering on the Muleriders!



Freshman Steak Dinner - Arguably one of SAU's tastiest traditions, the Freshman Steak Dinner never disappoints as we welcome the newest class of Muleriders.



Celebration of Lights - SAU ends each year with the most festive tradition - Celebration of Lights! This tradition offers an abundance of holiday cheer with lighting displays, photos with Santa, train rides, festive food, stories from Mrs. Claus, and a special presentation of a Christmas movie.

around campus

Photos by Thomas Turner

(1) Homecoming - Seniors Kendall Reid and Hope Hesterly were crowned the 2022 Homecoming King and Queen! SAU was grateful to see so many wonderful friends, family, and alumni during this year's Homecoming festivities. **(2&4) Halloween Carnival** - No Halloween plans on a busy Monday evening? Not a problem at SAU! The Student Activities department partnered with Aramark on campus to host a not-so-spooky Halloween Carnival. Photos by Jessica Greaves **(3) Commencement** - Best wishes to the newest class of Mulerider Alumni!



Greek Life Hosts Powderpuff Football - Members of SAU Greek Life battled it out at the first annual Greek Powderpuff Football game at Wilkins Stadium.



1



Mulerider Madness - There's no better way to kick off basketball season than with Mulerider Madness!



**SAU College of Education and Human
Performance receives grant from**

Forward ARKANSAS

**“ SAU put forward a
transformative vision and plan
for their educator preparation
program that has the potential to
be a model for the state,... ”**

Ben Kutyló
Executive Director
Forward Arkansas

The College of Education and Human Performance at Southern Arkansas University has been selected as one of two phase II recipients of a grant from Forward Arkansas. SAU is being awarded \$798,830 as part of the implementation of phase II. This grant is a part of the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Design Collaborative to aid in comprehensive ongoing technical assistance from expert partners and to increase the quantity, quality, and diversity of Arkansas's teacher workforce. SAU will be receiving direct funding and comprehensive ongoing technical assurance that totals more than 1.9 million dollars.

The EPP Design Collaborative, a competitive grant initiative to find institutions committed to alleviating Arkansas's teacher shortage, was introduced by Forward in 2021. Ever since, Forward has helped partner colleges create phase II plans for transformation using tools and advice from U.S. Prep and 2Revolutions, two leading national experts. Sixteen of Arkansas's 19 universities EPP's applied for the Design Collaborative, and eight were chosen during phase I. The recipients of the phase II grants are SAU and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UA-Little Rock).

"Our department truly believes that every candidate 'comes with a purpose and leaves with a promise,'" remarks Dr. Neelie Dobbins, chair of the department of teacher education. "Our promise is to prepare every candidate to be day one ready teachers to help all learners be successful. We are excited for the support from Forward Arkansas as we transform education in south Arkansas."

The goals for SAU emphasize expanding the quantity and variety of candidates applying to and completing the program and changing the overall teacher-candidate experience to be more practice-based so that teachers are prepared for their classrooms on day one. The plans include several innovations:

- Year-long paid residency programs where candidates spend the year working in a partner school as a resident teacher, all while still in training and with the assistance of devoted mentor teachers.
- Cooperative partnerships with regional school districts.
- The collection of comprehensive data on teacher candidates and graduates in their first five years in the field.

"SAU put forward a transformative vision and plan for their educator preparation program that has the potential to be a model for the state," remarks Executive Director of Forward Arkansas Ben Kuttylo. "Our hope is that this grant and the implementation support they receive from our partners will help SAU make their vision a reality over the next three years."

With funding from the Walton Family Foundation and Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Forward Arkansas was founded in 2014 with the goal of enhancing student results overall. Forward Arkansas collaborates with districts, schools, educational partners, and state leaders to reform education, strengthen educator capacity, and provide equitable resources so that every student has access to and is equipped for opportunities in life and the workplace. Visit www.forwardarkansas.org to learn more.



A FEW OF THE RECENT ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHANGES AT SAU

SAU Sports Hall of Fame Induction

Center Photo: (Left to Right) Dwayne Smith '60, John Long '08, Kyle Slayton '96, Greg Hampton '97, Gaby Mendoza '07, Sandra Haley Taylor '79, Glenn Bucy '74 **Right Photo:** The 1965-66 and 1966-67 Mulerider Men's Basketball teams claiming their entrance into the SAU Sports Hall of Fame.



The 19th class of the Southern Arkansas University Sports Hall of Fame was officially inducted on Friday, September 30, during a special ceremony inside the Grand Hall of the Donald W. Reynolds Campus and Community Center. Seven former student-athletes and two championship teams made up the newest class which took center stage during halftime of the Muleriders' Homecoming game the following day.

Four former student-athletes represented the hall's Modern Era: NAIA Track & Field All-

American Greg Hampton '97, NCAA consensus DII Baseball All-American John Long '08, Gulf South Conference All-Decade Cross Country Team runner Gaby Mendoza Bradford '07 and NAIA Baseball All-American Kyle Slayton '96, while three more former student-athletes were inducted as Golden Era members: NAIA Football All-American Glenn Bucy '74, All-AWISA honoree Sandra Haley Taylor '79 and NAIA Basketball All-American Dwayne Smith '60.

The 1965-66 and 1966-67 Mulerider Men's

Basketball teams, led by legendary hall of fame head coach W.T. Watson, won a collective 48 games over two seasons, captured consecutive Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference regular season and invitational tournament championships and earned back-to-back berths to the NAIA National Tournament. The two squads became just the second and third teams to be inducted into the SAU Sports Hall of Fame. To learn more about this year's induction class, visit www.MuleriderAthletics.com.

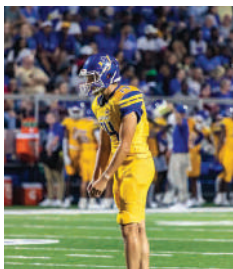


Muleriders stay active in Magnolia

Mulerider student-athletes remained active in and around Magnolia during the fall semester. "Muleriders in Magnolia," the department's community service initiative, saw 96% of the University's student-athletes log community service hours from July 1 through December 31. The 400+ Muleriders that participated logged over 3,000 hours across 29 different opportunities that supported eight organizations with a total economic impact of \$87,310.



Austin Patricia



Austin Wilkerson



Ava Tanner



Cole Williams



Isla Olivas



Jacob Berry



Jariq Scales



Landry Rogers



Logan Warren



Mathew Whitten



Morgan Schuster



Sander Jans

CSC Academic All-District Honorees

Nine Mulerider student-athletes were honored for their academic achievement this fall. Five Mulerider Football players and four Mulerider Volleyball players were named College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-District honorees in late November.

Senior offensive lineman Austin Patricia (3.57 GPA – Engineering), redshirt sophomore running back Jariq Scales (3.59 GPA – Sport Management: Coaching), sophomore tight end Matthew Whitten (3.95 GPA – K-12 Physical Education and Health), grad placekicker Austin Wilkerson (magna cum laude graduate – pursuing MBA) and sophomore wide receiver Cole Williams (4.0 GPA – Business

Administration: Management) were all honored with Scales and Wilkerson each earning their second Academic All-District plaudit. Additionally, the pair was named first team CSC Academic All-Americans.

Junior outside hitter Landry Rogers (3.96 GPA – Elementary Education), junior setter Morgan Schuster (3.94 GPA – Biology: Pre-Health), sophomore middle hitter Isla Olivas (4.0 GPA – Business Administration: International Business) and sophomore middle hitter Ava Tanner (4.0 GPA – Business Administration: Financial Planning) represented Mulerider Volleyball as Academic All-District selections.

Multiple Muleriders earn All-Great American Conference honors

Redshirt sophomore running back Jariq Scales headlined six Mulerider Football players that received All-GAC recognition following the 2022 regular season. Scales earned first-team plaudits for the first time in his career after being named a second-team performer in 2021. Additionally, Scales was named a D2CCA All-Super Region 3 Second-Team performer.

Grad placekicker Austin Wilkerson (All-GAC Second Team) and senior right tackle Austin Patricia (All-GAC Honorable Mention) again found themselves on all-league teams, while grad defensive end Prince Udenze (All-GAC Second Team), junior linebacker Jacob Berry (All-GAC Honorable Mention) and sophomore center Thomas Bowman (All-GAC Honorable Mention) earned all-league plaudits for the first time in their respective careers as Muleriders.

Sophomore outside hitter Landry Rogers and junior setter Morgan Schuster represented Mulerider Volleyball on the All-GAC Honorable Mention team. The postseason accolade is the first for Rogers in her career, while Schuster becomes

the first Mulerider to earn three all-league plaudits since her head coach Alli O'Banion '18 was named a three-time All-GAC performer from 2015-2017.

Senior Rob Kraus and sophomore Logan Warren each ran their way onto All-GAC teams. Kraus earned a ninth-place finish at the GAC Championships to grab first-team honors with his second all-league performance, while Warren again was named a second team performer in consecutive seasons after finishing 16th at the league championships.

Senior tennis player Lena Milosevic claimed a flight title at the GAC Individual Championships for the third time in her career as she won the Flight 2 singles competition in mid-October. Freshman Tamiya Lintz won Flight 7 singles in her first-ever appearance at the league championships. For the Mulerider Men, freshman Adrian Gheorghe earned a Flight 4 singles victory and teamed up with freshman Melvin Vix to win Flight 2 doubles. Grad Sander Jans won the Flight 1 singles title.



All for one, one for all.

by Jacob Pumphrey

Photos by Thomas Turner

On June 23, 1972, the transformational legislation known as Title IX was officially signed into law. Those 37 words, which are a part of the Education Amendments that were signed by President Nixon on that midsummer day, would ultimately change the course of women's athletics in the United States forever.

A revolution of change and equality had begun, it was noted by many, including Southern Arkansas University Sports Hall of Famer and trailblazing pioneer of women's athletics nationally, Dr. Margaret Downing.

In her article "Title IX Reminiscences: From Washington, D.C. to the local campus," Downing penned "Title IX was the final step in placing women's sports programs on secure footing at colleges and universities across the United States. It was a long, hard struggle, but, mothers and fathers decided their daughters should have the same opportunities as their sons to attend college."

On December 3, inside the auxiliary gym of SAU's W.T. Watson Center, a special event took place prior to tipoff of Mulerider Basketball's Great American Conference games against Harding. More than 50 former and current female student-athletes and coaches, representing seven different decades of women's athletics at SAU, gathered to fellowship and reminisce on the past 50 years since the signing

of the legislation, while also hearing special remarks from former female student-athletes and administrators.

SAU President Dr. Trey Berry spoke on a personal level to those in attendance and ended with an observation of how Title IX has affected his 15-year old daughter who, according to Berry, is "obsessed with volleyball." "What is so telling to me, and this is a legacy of all of you, is that there has not been a moment in her mind when she started playing sports that she was limited against any other athlete, male or female." Berry added, "Folks, that is your legacy."

SAU Director of Athletics Steve Browning began his remarks by asking all former and current female student-athletes and coaches to stand. "These young ladies (current female student-athletes) that are in the middle here are getting to benefit from your hard work, your dedication, your perseverance, your grit, your tenacity...and this is why we are here."

Former Riderette Champion and two-sport standout for Dr. Downing in the mid-1970s, SAU Sports Hall of Famer Janet Cooper Wood '78, known as "Coop" to her proud teammates, spoke of the respect that she has for Dr. Downing and how she witnessed her coach continually fight for an equal playing field. "She fought tooth and nail for us," noted Wood.

"It didn't have anything to do with her, she fought for us." Additionally, Wood spoke about the first scholarships and mentioned her teammates in attendance that were among the first to be awarded athletic scholarships at SAU.

The ceremony concluded with former Mulerider Women's Tennis student-athlete and current graduate assistant in SAU's Office of Advancement Serena Gill '22 who was not only one of the first in her family to move more "than 30 minutes down the road" from her home in Wolverhampton, England, but also was faced with the reality that many universities were cutting their tennis programs around the time she and her future teammates were looking for a place to play. "We were fortunate to have the ability to attend a university that was investing in their tennis program and their student-athletes," noted Gill.

The event was capped during the Mulerider Women's Basketball game as all of those in attendance were honored on the court during halftime. As the on-court celebration neared an end, former Riderette Champion Karlene Hooker "Korny" '78 led the entire group in a chant. "All for one, one for All."



Remembering Dr. Margaret Downing



On Tuesday, January 17, Southern Arkansas University and Mulerider Athletics suffered a tremendous loss as Dr. Margaret Downing passed away at the age of 91.

A trailblazing pioneer for women's athletics not only at Southern Arkansas University, but around the country, Dr. Margaret Downing enjoyed a Hall of Fame, 19-year coaching career that spanned from 1965-66 through 1983-84. During that time, Dr. Downing coached basketball, volleyball, golf, track and field, swimming and diving and slow-pitch softball at SAU. In addition to coaching these programs and helping establish each, Dr. Downing also served as the Women's Sports Coordinator, which was the role of Athletic Director for women's athletics at SAU.

In her 19 seasons leading the Riderette Basketball program, Dr. Downing recorded an overall record of 223-163 and led SAU to six conference championships and two conference co-championships on the hardwood. Under her leadership, SAU won a conference title in volleyball in 1974 and finished second twice in her three seasons as head coach. Downing's swimming and diving teams won an AWESA championship in 1967 and claimed an AWISA title in 1969 to go along with a pair of conference runner-up performances. Her 1980 softball team won the AWISA title. Following the 1977-78 season, Downing was named AWISA's first coach of the year.

Dr. Downing was not only instrumental in the start of women's athletics at SAU, but was at the forefront of helping guide women's sports in the state of Arkansas with the development and governance of the Arkansas Extramural Sports Association (AWESA) and later the Arkansas Women's Intercollegiate Sports Association (AWISA). Both entities allowed for organized competition for women's athletics, which had been nonexistent at the intercollegiate level, in the state of Arkansas prior to the absorption into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and later the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

In addition to her coaching accolades and achievements, Dr. Downing was a renowned professor on SAU's campus where she made significant impacts that resonate to this day for thousands of former students. Following her coaching career, Downing's teaching career moved into a full-time role which resulted in her being named SAU's Honor Professor (1987-88) in addition to serving as chair of the University's Department of Health, Kinesiology and Recreation (1991-1997) and as the dean of SAU's School of Education (1998-2002).

Downing's impact on women's athletics at Southern Arkansas University and throughout the state of Arkansas is immeasurable, but her advocacy for the betterment of women's athletics did not stop there. Downing sought change through action and her involvement on the national stage was just as influential. She managed United States women's basketball teams in multiple Pan-American games and at the World Tournament, served on the U.S. Olympic Committee for Women, the U.S. National Basketball Committee, the International Basketball Committee for Women and held terms as president and secretary of the U.S. Olympic Committee for Women's Basketball.

Before arriving for a long and distinguished career at SAU, Dr. Downing coached at three Arkansas High Schools, Monticello, Arkansas High in Texarkana, and North Little Rock, the Tennessee School for the Deaf, and at two colleges, Connecticut State College and Ouachita Baptist University.



Calling the SHOTS

Gina Cross '96 takes her refereeing career to new heights

by Rachel Jenkins

Contributed Photo by Andy Mead Photography

In 2019 Gina Cross made history when she stepped onto the court in Tampa, Florida, as the first standby referee called into a NCAA Final Four game. But the legendary Notre Dame versus Connecticut game wasn't the first time Cross offered an assist when needed.

Cross was working for ACXIOM and taking night classes at Webster University in Little Rock when she received a call that would change the course of her career. A basketball tournament for four-year-olds was about to start, and the program needed a referee. As a former Mulerider basketball player, Cross agreed to help and the rest was history.

"I had no idea there were camps for officials—no idea I could make a career out of this," Cross says.

Cross grew up in Laneburg, Arkansas, where the sign reads "Population 105," but Cross says, "They were probably counting a few dogs and cats."

Though her town was small, its support was significant. Cross credits several individuals who encouraged her to pursue her dream of playing basketball. Her father is known to many as Mr. Bill, a carpenter and friend to everyone. Her mother, Charlotte, was more than a homemaker, having held a variety of jobs that instilled in Cross the work ethic she has today. Her high school basketball coach Glyndon Franklin, who was also her math and physics teacher, treated Cross and her teammates like they were his own children.

Cross had scholarship offers from multiple colleges. When a few of her teammates committed to play Mulerider basketball and her older sister, Suzanne Watkins '94, earned her master's in education from SAU, Cross decided Magnolia was the right fit for her. With basketball scholarship in hand, Cross attended SAU and graduated in 1996 with a degree in chemistry.

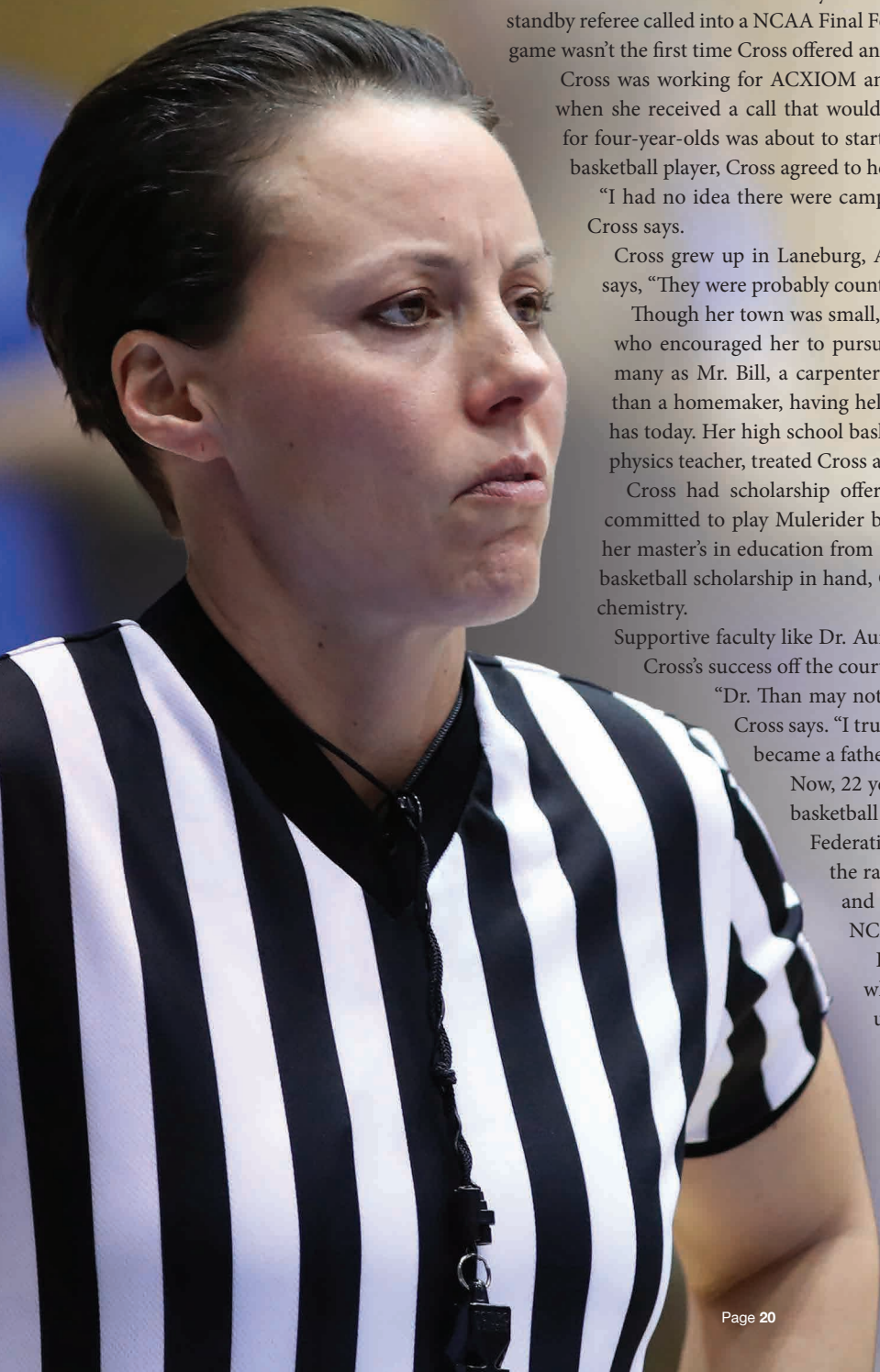
Supportive faculty like Dr. Aung Than and staff like Sarajane Telford were instrumental in Cross's success off the court.

"Dr. Than may not have been my advisor, but I took all the advice from him," Cross says. "I trusted him, even with decisions post-college related to jobs. He became a father figure. He kept me in the chemistry program."

Now, 22 years after that phone call to fill in as a referee for a children's basketball tournament, Cross has traveled the world as an official for the Federation Internationale de Basketball Amateur (FIBA), climbed the ranks at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and run referee training camps. However, reflecting on the 2019 NCAA Final Four championship, Cross has mixed emotions.

Familiar with ACL injuries, Cross says, "I knew immediately when official Michol Murray went down that she wasn't getting up. That's the worst way to get put in the game. I want to be on the court because I was selected not because my partner got hurt." With no time to waste, Cross jumped to action and provided a seamless transition for a nail-biting game.

After decades on the court, Cross was selected to referee the Stanford versus South Carolina Final Four game in 2021 and the Stanford versus UConn Final Four game in 2022. To everyone's relief, no standbys were needed.



FB&T DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

AN EVENING WITH ARCHIE MANNING

by Jessica Greaves

It isn't every day that SAU has the honor of hosting individuals on campus for an evening filled with a wonderful dinner and entertainment. However, the night of November 10, 2022, was one of those evenings. Farmers Bank & Trust and SAU annually collaborate to hold the Farmers Bank & Trust Distinguished Speaker Series. The Distinguished Speaker Series brings in people from far and wide from various backgrounds. The 2022 speaker was football legend, Archie Manning.

Though Manning's legacy may have begun on the field, he continues to captivate audiences from the lectern discussing his phenomenal career and transition into the business world. He serves as a public relations and business consultant for several local, regional, and national companies, including Reebok, Gatorade, Direct TV, and CBS Sports.

He attended the University of Mississippi, where he was an All-American Quarterback, and his number was retired. He was voted Mississippi's Greatest All-Time Athlete in 1992 and was named Mississippi's Most Popular Athlete of the Century. He was elected to the 50-Year All-South Team (1940-1990), named one of the Top 25 Athletes of the Century in Louisiana, and he and his son Peyton were named among the 100 All-Time Greatest College Football Players. Manning was inducted into the National Football Foundation College Hall of Fame and is a member of other Halls of Fame, including Louisiana and Mississippi.

Manning shared thoughts on his life and the importance of his family life. "My mother used to harp on maintaining your priorities. You can get your kids to align and maintain their priorities. When you look up priorities in the dictionary, it says what's most important. Faith should come first, family comes next, and other activities follow." He stressed that he and his wife, Olivia, strived to be normal and not emphasize being celebrities. He stated, "I am just another daddy." Manning's consistent message about the importance of his faith and family was a resounding takeaway from the evening.



(Above) Pictured is one of the several Gold Table Sponsors ready to enjoy great company, delicious food, and an earful of Archie Manning's stories. (To the right) Recipients of this year's Farmers Bank & Trust/Dr. Bob Burns Distinguished Speaker Scholarship Endowment are students Karli Rabb and Seth Horn.



Photos by Thomas Turner



Mallory Hall Dedication

Photos by Thomas Turner

During this year's Homecoming Festivities, Southern Arkansas University honored Dr. Kathleen Jordan Mallory with the dedication and renaming of University Hall to Mallory Hall. Alumni, friends, family, and community members all joined in celebrating the legacy of a true trailblazer who dedicated her career to SAU and its students.

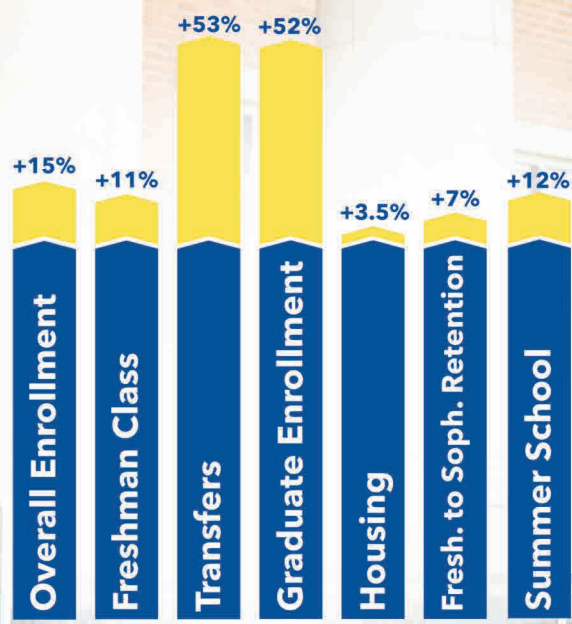
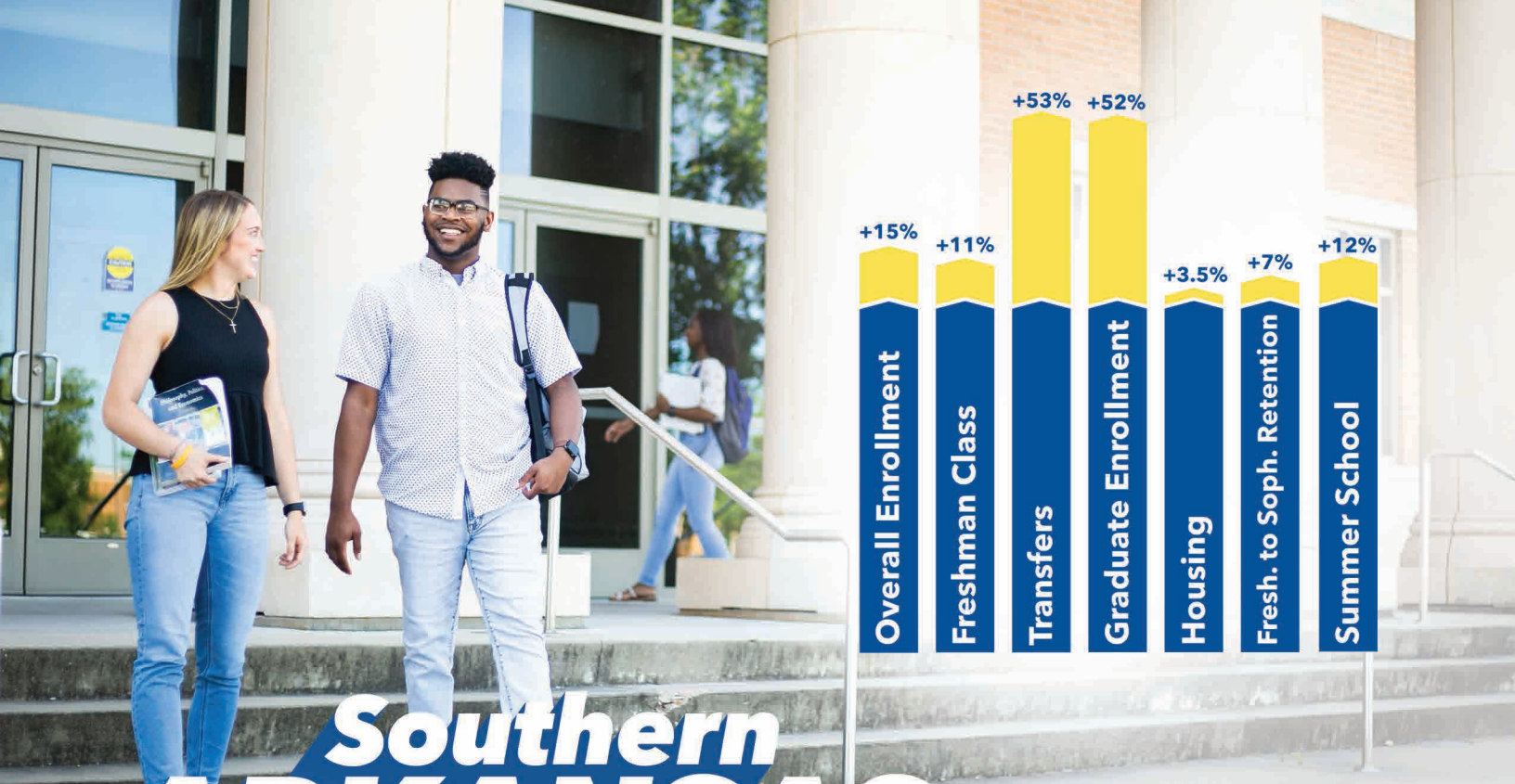


Dr. Mallory's daughter, *Robin Story '80 and husband, Jeff Story, receive a plaque from Representative David Fielding. *Robin Story passed away on December 30, 2022.



Alumni, friends, and community members enjoyed words from various speakers honoring the legacy of Dr. Mallory.





Southern ARKANSAS University

Enrollment

5,094
Students

Representing

31

Countries &
31 States

SAU Welcomes the Largest Enrollment in the School's History

SAU exceeded its enrollment predictions with increases in first-year, transfer, and graduate students in the fall 2022 semester. SAU's commitment to offering in-demand programs and providing a "culture of caring" approach has provided a tremendous appeal to a diverse group of students.

"We feel so completely fortunate to reach this historic level in our enrollment. So many people in our SAU community worked tirelessly and built strong relationships with our student body and their families to make this milestone happen," says Dr. Trey Berry, SAU president. "This has been a complete team effort! Our SAU family goes above and beyond to make SAU feel like home for our students."

SAU provides students with the complete college experience in a caring environment of service, innovation, and community. With more than 100 degree options in four distinct colleges and the School of Graduate Studies, SAU initiates new degree programs to fit the needs of career and professional trends of today.





MURPHY USA MULERIDER CLUB INVITATIONAL

For the third consecutive year, sponsors and participants came together to support Mulerider Athletics at the Murphy USA Mulerider Club Invitational held at Mystic Creek Golf Club in El Dorado, AR, on October 21, 2022.

Highlighted by the continued support and generosity of Murphy USA, as the presenting sponsor for a third straight year, the tournament had a total of 31 teams which helped raise over \$40,000 to support the Mulerider Club, the fundraising arm for Mulerider Athletics that provides additional support for all 16 programs and over 400 student-athletes.



Team Burson (Left to Right) Sonia Barker '89, Billy Burson '70, Suzy Burson, Jake McCorbey



Team Vance (Left to Right) Robert Johnson, Will Vance '88, Jordan Vance, and Jacob Vance

Major Sponsors from this year's tournament included:

- **Presenting Sponsor** - Murphy USA
- **9th Hole Sponsor** - Ideal Construction
- **Lunch Sponsor** - Four R Marketing
- **Official Beverage & Beverage Cart Sponsor** - MK Distributors, Inc.
 - **Hole in One Sponsor** - Farmers Bank & Trust
 - **Prize Money Sponsor** - Dixie Maintenance, Inc.
 - **Gold Sponsors** - South Ark Orthopaedic's & Sports Medicinemand H & E Equipment
- **Blue Sponsor** - FASTSIGNS

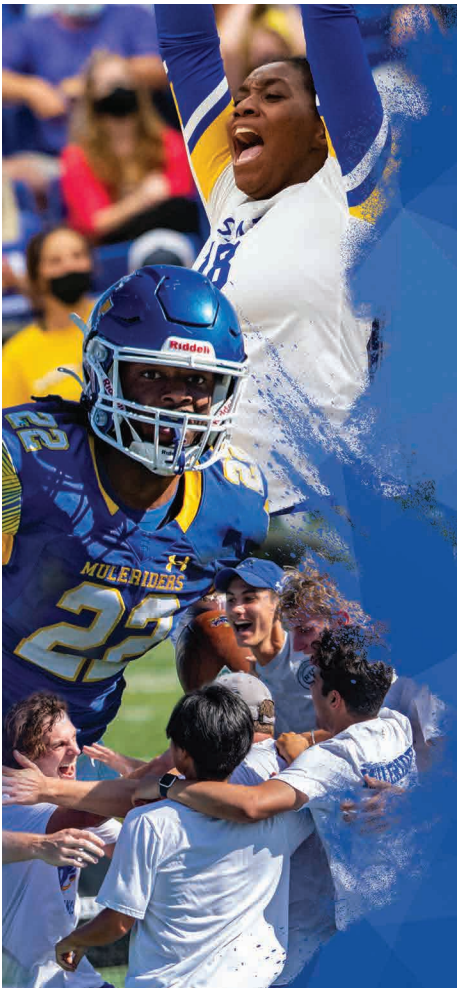


Team Jester (Left to Right) Jeff Jester '84, Rex Burks '83, John Gosdin '77, Zach Burks



Team Hooker (Left to Right) Karlene Hooker '78, Hilton Stewart '62, Gigi Hazel, and Tina Cheatham '79

For more information on the tournament or if you would like to be a sponsor, please visit www.saudevelopment.com/MUSAMC or call (870) 235-4325.



MULERIDER[®] — CLUB —

Join the Mulerider Club today!

The Mulerider Club is the official fundraising arm of Mulerider Athletics. Through annual memberships, members provide financial assistance for all sixteen programs that make up Mulerider Athletics and impact over 400 student-athletes directly on the playing surface and in the classroom.



Southern Arkansas University

Rip Powell[™] 13th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament

Save-the-Date
Friday, June 23, 2023
Magnolia Country Club

presented by

Mustard
SEED

For more information on the tournament or if you would like to be a sponsor, please visit www.sau alumni.com/RipPowell or call (870) 235-4287.



Mulerider Alumni Event

Mulerider Alumni gathered for a fun evening at Topgolf as they played golf and enjoyed networking with fellow Muleriders in Northwest Arkansas.

To stay up-to-date with SAU Alumni Association events, visit www.saualumni.com/events



Boon Tan '87



Greg Hall '16



Alumni enjoyed dinner and a brief University update before heading out to golf.



Larry Lundeen '88 and Steve Shipman '90

(Left) SAUAA Board of Directors Chair Drake '14 and Alejandra Frisby.

Mulerider Alumni Event

Murphy USA Mulerider Alumni gathered for lunch at MuleKick @ MAD and enjoyed hearing a University update from Dr. Berry.



Nikki Avery '94



SAU Alumni gather for food and fellowship.



Pate Bauldree '10



Alumni Online Directory & Member Profile



Our new online alumni directory features are making it easier than ever to connect with fellow Muleriders!

As part of the Mulerider Alumni Family, we hope you will take a few minutes to complete this process and activate your account. It will only take 5-10 minutes!

First download the Mulerider Alumni App, then open it. Click the 'First Time Login' button below and follow these three easy steps:

1. Enter your first and last name.
2. Select your name from the list shown.
3. Enter your Member ID. Your member ID can be found on the Mulerider Alumni App on the member card tile.

After creating your account:

- Update your profile by clicking 'My Profile' in the top right of the screen.
- Visit the online directory at www.saualumni.com/directory.
- Or you can download the Mulerider Alumni App and click the 'My Profile' and 'Directory' tiles. Log in using the email and password created in registration.

Access our step-by-step guide at www.saualumni.com/guide
If you need any assistance, please email us at saualumni@saumag.edu or call (870) 235-4079.

1960 – 1969



Melvin Daniel '67 was inducted into the Arkansas FFA Legendary Owl Hall of Fame.

1970- 1979



Ted Waller '70 retired as superintendent of Columbia Christian School in Magnolia, AR.

1980-1989



Gammye Moore '83 '96 was inducted into the Arkansas FFA Legendary Owl Hall of Fame.



Beth Weldon '83 joined Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund as the Development Manager.



State District Judge **Jack Barker '84** was elected to serve as a representative for the Fourth Congressional District on the Arkansas District Judges Council.



Sarah Whitten Hersey '85 received the Wellstar Oncology Services Nurse of the Year Award.



Gary '85 and LeAnn '86 Miller both retired from teaching after 34 years. Gary was also a coach during his teaching career.



Stacy Buchanan '89 was named Lead Teacher in the Pre-k room and Curriculum Specialist at Central Baptist Church Wee Care Magnolia.



Kim Wyrick '89 retired from Magnolia High School after 32 years in education, 19 of those with Magnolia School District. She is pictured with her husband, **Jamie '89**.

1990-1999



Jeffrey Alphin '90 '02 became the Director of District Services for the El Dorado School District.



Selena Blair '93 was elected President of the Arkansas County Treasurer's Association (ACTA).



Sammy Cox '93 was elected to serve as the President of the Arkansas Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association.



Kelly Chambers '95 was named the Farmers Bank & Trust Nashville Market President.



Terra Purifoy '95 was named the K-3 Music Teacher at Fairview Elementary School in Camden, AR.



Kelly Crenshaw '97 started a new position as Sr Specialist Production Planning at Tyson Foods.



Kelli McLelland '97 '01 was named the Principal of Taylor Elementary School.



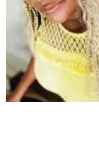
Chris Coker '98 completed the Teachers Teaching with Technology (T3TM) Teacher Leader Cadre and was chosen as a T3TM Instructor.



Jennifer Pierce '98 was recognized in the 2023 edition of The Best Lawyers in America.



Cassandra ReLynn '99 appeared as a warden on the television show Days of Our Lives.



Kezzie Rudd-Walton '99 was promoted to Educational Diagnostician at Grand Prairie ISD in Grand Prairie, Texas.



Talesha Tatom '99 was announced as the Vice President and Senior Retail Loan Officer for Farmers Bank & Trust's Magnolia Market.

2000-2009



Virginia Harman '02 '22 accepted the position of General Manager/CEO of Mountain Parks Electric in Granby, CO.



Courtney McHenry '03 led the Taylor High School softball team to a 1A State Championship.



Lindsey Powell Townsend '03 was selected as one of *SWARK Today's 20* Under 50 honorees. She is a Real Estate Agent at Lance & Associates Real Estate in Hope, AR.



Stacey Stanberry '04 '08 was named the Clinical Faculty Site Coordinator for the College of Education at SAU.



Jessica Bilbo '06 was named Teacher of the Year for the Texarkana School District. She is the Library Media Specialist at Harmony Leadership Academy.



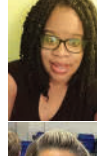
Brett Brzeski '06 joined Mustard Seed Wealth Management as the manager of the Texarkana office.



Laura Gordon '06 '08 '20 was named the Dean of Students at Camden Fairview Middle School.



Melanie Castleberry '07 was named the Dean of Students at Fairview Elementary in the Camden Fairview School District.



LaQueisha Messer '07 was recognized as the 2021-2022 Building Teacher of the Year at Camden Fairview Middle School.



Jamie Scott '07 was named RN Administrator of SouthernCare Hospice in Bossier City, LA.



Jessica Talley '07 was recognized as one of six Bessie B. Moore Award winners for the 2021-2022 school year. The Bessie B. Moore Award is a program launched by Economics Arkansas to honor

exemplary teachers who successfully develop outstanding economic and personal finance classroom projects.



Haley Burrow '08 '12 completed her Ed.D. with a focus on Educational Leadership and Accountability from Capella University.



Mandy Davenport '08 '14 became the new counselor at Taylor Schools.



Kaci Travis Johnson '08 '12 '22 was hired as the Guidance Counselor at Yocum Elementary in El Dorado, AR.



LaChandra Williams '08 LPC/CRC became Program Director at Delta Family Center in Hamburg, Ar.

2010-2019



Raelyn Harris '10 was promoted to Call Center Supervisor at Peoples Bank.



Leslie Sharp '10 was promoted to Lakewood Branch Manager at Peoples Bank.



Keysha Hill '11 was hired as the Head Girls' Basketball Coach at Magnolia High School.



Travis Atchison '13 became a Clinical Director at Guardian Recovery Network while completing his Ph.D. in Psychology.



Haley Bell '13 was promoted to Executive Director of Alumni Relations at SAU.



Angela Roberson '15 was promoted to Director of Community Outreach at the Medical Center of South Arkansas.



Kaci Wallace '13 was named the payroll secretary for the Bossier Parish School Board.



Payton McDonald '14 joined Ouachita Medical Center in Camden, AR, as an Emergency Medicine Physician.



Dee Ann Ward '14 '19 was recognized as one of *Four States Living's* 2022 40 Under 40. She is a counselor at Ashdown High School.



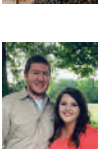
Bryan Brickley '15 joined The Diamond Agency as a Graphic Designer.



Zackary Bever '16 graduated from Chamberlain University with his master's degree in nursing and started a new job as a Nurse Practitioner in South Alabama.



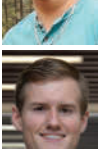
Janae Capshaw '16 opened her business, Kiderventions Learning Center, which is an educational organization that provides individualized interventions for K through 12-grade students.



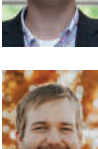
Cameron Imler '16 was promoted to Tysons Hatchery Manager in Star City. He is pictured with his wife, Tristen.



Cord McMahan '16 began a new position as the Maintenance Manager at Southern Aluminum.



Joshua Corbitt '17 graduated from the University of Arkansas with a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering. He started a position as a Process Safety Engineer at Future Fuel in Batesville, AR.



Jes Holtzclaw '17 accepted a position as Mechanical Engineer II with Albemarle.



Kara O'Neal '17 graduated from UAMS with her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences with an emphasis in Microbiology and Immunology.



Zikerious Ware '17 accepted a job as the new Sports Coordinator for the City of New Smyrna Beach.



Dakotah Cooper '18 was promoted to Area II Superintendent at Albemarle Corporation.



Ashton Curry '18 accepted a position as the Emergency Room Clinical Educator at Christus Shreveport-Bossier Health System.



Sarah Gerral '18 graduated from the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine. She now works as a Small Animal Associate Veterinarian at the El Dorado Animal Hospital.



Victoria Hart '18 opened two businesses, Hart of a DOULA, LLC, and Hart of NANNY, LLC. Hart of a DOULA, LLC provides mental, physical, and emotional support to expecting mothers,

their partners, and their families. Hart of NANNY, LLC offers childcare for newborns to 12-year-old children.



Renee Jorgenson '18 was named the Band Director at Prairie Grove Junior High School.



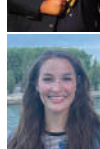
Michelle Page '18 was promoted to Head School Director at Faith Christian Academy in Texarkana, AR.



Kia Ragland '18 '22 recently became a Case Manager at Southwest Arkansas Counseling & Mental Health Center in Texarkana. She is pursuing her licensure for counseling in the state of Arkansas.



Taijee Bunch '19 was named a Theatre I and Technical Theatre teacher at South west Magnet High School in Little Rock.



Kira Davis '19 obtained her Master of Science in Biology with an emphasis in Molecular Biology. She is now a microbiologist at the Arkansas Department of Health in Little Rock.



Yady Smith '19 received a Medical Laboratory Scientist Degree from UAMS and is now working at UAMS's Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute in the Molecular Diagnostics Lab.



Mason Telford '19 is an International Financial Analyst for JB Hunt Transportation.

2020-2023



Tremayne Bell '20 accepted a position as a Property Accountant for Merit Energy Co. in Dallas, Texas.



Morgan Brazzel '20 '22 joined the SAU Advancement Team as the Assistant Director of Advancement Relations.



Holly Chandler '20 was hired as the 8th grade English Teacher for the new Star Academy program at Magnolia Middle School.



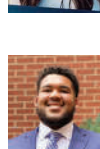
Abbie Guin '20 has joined the Organization and Member Programs Department for the Arkansas Farm Bureau as the District Director of the Southeast District.



David Lawver '20 was promoted to Manager II of Sales at JB Hunt Transport.



Katy Medford '20 accepted a position as an H2F Athletic Trainer at Fort Bragg Army Base in North Carolina. She also started a canine-assisted therapy program called the H2F Therapy Dog Program.



Steven Taylor '20 '22 became a Customer Relations Representative with Oxy.



Je'Len Berry '21 was promoted to Assistant Director of Alumni Relations at SAU.



Kristopher Gage Burns '21 was accepted into Jacksonville University's Doctorate of Occupational Therapy program in Jacksonville, FL.



Brian Jeans '21 was accepted into UAMS to study nuclear medicine.



Dre Lawson '21 was hired as the Defensive Line Coach at Crossett High School.



Carlee Lindsey '21 became a Special Education Teacher at Central Elementary School in Magnolia, AR. She is pictured with her husband, Colten.



Melanie Martin '21 will be the new fourth-grade Literacy Teacher at Central Elementary School in Magnolia.



Jessamyn Smith '21 started a new job as the Customer Service and Logistics Specialist for Tyson World Headquarters.



Karly TerBurgh '21 started a new position as a Merchandise Coordinator at Riceland Foods, Inc.



Nathan Westmoreland '21 accepted a position as a Structural Design Engineer with Canam Steel Corporation.



Mattie Winfield '21 was named the Tiger Girls Recruitment Coordinator at LSU.



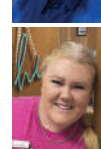
Hannah Cordell '22 accepted a position teaching Elementary Music and Beginning Band at Joann Walters Elementary School in Dierks, Ar.



Chloe Cox '22 was accepted into the Physician Assistant program at Presbyterian College.



Hayden Fanning '22 was accepted into the Louisiana Tech Doctorate of Business Administration program.



Bethany Gammill '22 accepted a position as a 4-H agent at the Union County Cooperative Extension office.



Andrea Green '22 became the Assistant Band Director at Arkansas High School in Texarkana.



Matthew Harris '22 was hired as a Band Director for the Tanque Verde Unified School District in Tucson, AZ.



Spencer Havel '22 was accepted into the NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry.



Jesse Hollifield '22 began a new position as a Park Ranger for the US Army Corps of Engineers - Lake Ouachita.



Ka'Daisha Hopkins '22 was named the Prevention Specialist and Outreach at Special Health Resources.



Macy Lamkin '22 accepted a teaching position at Magnolia High School as a Special Education Teacher.



Brenna Leggett '22 began her teaching career as an Agriculture Teacher at Hermitage High School.



Abdulbaki Liadi '22 started a new position as a Design Engineer at Southern Aluminum.



Morgan McDaniel '22 became the Junior Graphic Designer with the Texas Exes at the University of Texas at Austin.



Neely Purifoy '22 was named an Agriculture Teacher at El Dorado High School.



Olivia Reeves '22 began her teaching career as a 7th-grade Social Studies teacher at Barton Junior High in the El Dorado School District.



Autumn Rowe '22 was promoted to Accounting Specialist at Peoples Bank.



Molly Scriber '22 began her career as a Financial Advisor at Garcia Wealth Management.



Josey Webb '22 was accepted into the Mississippi State University graduate program to study Agriculture and Education Extension. She also received a Graduate

Assistantship where she will be working with the Farm to Classroom Program and building Ag Literacy materials for primary and secondary school teachers.



Madelynne West '22 started their first year as an MFA Lighting Design Candidate at Indiana University and began their term as the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT) Heart

of America Region Director at Large for Membership.



Amy White Emerson '22 was named a third-grade teacher at Central Elementary School in Magnolia, AR.



Hunter Williams '22 was hired as a second-grade teacher at East Side Elementary School in Magnolia, AR.

Weddings



Aaron '19 and Taylor (Eddy) Autrey '18 were married on September 10, 2022.



Cole '18 and Katy Beth (Dickerson) Crumpler '21 were married on October 8, 2022.



Payton and Holly (Pennington) Daniell '21 were married on June 11, 2022.



Lake and Kira (Gibbs) Davis '19 were married on January 1, 2022.



Chance '17 and Melissa Dearing were married on June 4, 2022.



Trey '22 and Alexis (Boyd) Hall '21 were married on November 11, 2022.



Austin and Reagan (Grubbs) Hamm '18 were married on September 16, 2022.



Hunter and Madison (Byrd) Hanson '21 were married on July 21, 2022.



Garrett '17 and Taylor (Hinds) Humphries were married on October 9, 2021.



Briston and Carley (Hale) Rains '21 were married on August 6, 2022.



Stephen '18 and Kaitlin (Kitchens) Miller '19 '21 were married on October 2, 2021.



Pake '20 and Savannah (Pillow) Montgomery '18 were married on June 10, 2022.



Hunter '17 and Amberlyn (Pollard) Morris were married on October 22, 2022.



Ty and Lauryn (Ross) Noe '15 were married on October 8, 2022.



Dakota and Stephanie (Rhodes) Spells '18 were married on June 4, 2022.



Peyton and Rachel (Payne) Stone '20 were married on October 15, 2022.



Braydon '21 and Victoria (Taylor) Todd '20 '22 were married on May 21, 2022.



Brock and Kinsey (Watkins) Turner '20 were married on September 24, 2022.

Little Muleriders®



Rufus and Melanie (Byars) Bailey '04 announce the birth of their daughter, Taryn Blake Bailey, born on July 6, 2022. She was 7 lbs. 3 oz. and was 18 inches long.



Joshua '16 and Lacey (Blackwell) Barham announce the birth of their daughter, Sutton Lucille Barham, born on November 23, 2021. She was 6 lbs. 14 oz. and was 19.5 inches long.



Jason '05 and Britta (Halliday) Clark '15 announce the birth of their son, Deacon Carter Clark, born on February 18, 2022. He weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. and was 21 inches long.



Cody and Christie (Martin) Cox '12 announce the birth of their daughter, Brynlee Anna Cox, born on June 10, 2022. She weighed 6 lbs. 10 oz. and was 19.25 inches long.



Tyler '11 and Lilly (Giles) Herring '19 announce the birth of their son, Wade William Herring, born on October 19, 2021. He weighed 8 lbs. 15 oz. and was 19.25 inches long.



Ryland '20 and Kaisi (Baker) Ochs '21 announce the birth of their daughter, Merrin Elise Ochs, born on June 3, 2022. She weighed 9 lbs. 13 oz. and was 19 inches long.



Jarrin '12 '15 '18 and Camella (Garland) Walton announce the birth of their daughter, Hynslee Rai Walton, born on December 14, 2021. She weighed 5 lbs. 14 oz. and was 17 inches.

In Memory of

1930-1939

Esther Hill Cook '35
August 4, 2022

1940-1949

Jewel Byron "Doc" Grimmert '49
November 10, 2022

1950-1959

Ralph Paul Johnson '50
September 2, 2022

James "Jim" Cook '54
June 2, 2022

Dorsey "Andy" Andrew Collins '56
July 2, 2022

Peggy Jo Huddleston '57
March 28, 2022

Agnes Irene Williams Moss '58
June 19, 2022

Ronald "Ronnie" Lee Ribble '58
July 15, 2022

William "Bill" Russell '58
August 27, 2022

Frank Turk '58
August 7, 2022

Jack Dempsey Brown '59
August 14, 2022

1960-1969

Velvin Sheffield Hampton '60
June 16, 2022

Joanne Tullis '60
October 23, 2022

David Edward Wilkins '60
June 6, 2022

Sarah Frances Culpepper Lee '61
May 4, 2022

Donald Howlett '62
October 8, 2022

Frances Whisenhunt '62
April 16, 2022

Csaba Gyula Finta '63
August 12, 2022

Brenda Mendenhall '63
July 3, 2022

James "Coach" Thomas Pettitt '63
September 5, 2022

Sonia Barnita Henninger Smith '63
April 29, 2022

Dr. Raymond Cammack '64
September 9, 2022

John Thomas Formby '64
June 23, 2022

David Duncan Smith '64
July 21, 2022

Genevieve Abdella Fouse '66
June 26, 2022

Richard Miller '67
June 6, 2022

Ronald Van Hardcastle Sr. '68
September 11, 2022

Colin Talbot '68
May 12, 2022

Samuel Wade Tatom, Jr. '68
August 28, 2022

1970-1979

Ila Aldridge '70 '76
September 25, 2022

Dennis Fuller '71
September 24, 2022

Bettye Olver '71
May 14, 2022

Melba Annette Burns Savage '71
August 12, 2022

Marian "Susie" Howard '72
September 21, 2022

Forrest Leslie Kyle '72
September 12, 2022

Billy Ray Cathey '73
March 7, 2022

Myrtle Foster McGaugh '73
October 1, 2022

William Martin "Dusty" Pedigo '75
September 10, 2022

Hugh "Sam" Riner, Jr. '75
August 18, 2022

Richard Scott '77
May 20, 2022

Louise Dailey Hooks '78
October 23, 2022

Margie Ann Orr '78
June 9, 2022

Nancy Williams '78
July 29, 2022

Keith Burton '79
May 5, 2022

David Wingfield '79
September 25, 2022

1980-1989

Robin Jordan Story '80
December 30, 2022

Rosemary Brown '81
June 9, 2022

Glenn Ray Wilson '81
May 26, 2022

Eugenia Ford '84
September 25, 2022

Robert Neal Jeffrey '84
August 27, 2022

Lavella Dornan '86
November 1, 2022

Donna Rainey '88
July 23, 2022

1990-1999

Christopher Gasaway '92
May 11, 2022

Dolores Ann Haynes '92
June 28, 2022

Rev. James Dell Keith '90
June 18, 2022

2000-2009

Nancy Lee Roberts '00
May 17, 2022

Joe Lawrence '02
October 2, 2022

Thomas Guy Davis '04
May 19, 2022

Kimberly Wheelus '04
July 22, 2022

2010-2019

Haylee Clark '17
August 26, 2022

Staff, Faculty, Students & Friends

Peggy Ann Bridges
May 24, 2022

Kathryn Lewis Dickson
October 27, 2022

Dr. Margaret Downing
January 17, 2023

Nan Gee
September 29, 2022

Joseph Kaar
September 22, 2022

Richard Metzelaars
June 4, 2022

Ted Jackson Monroe
July 19, 2022

Dr. Marian Neef
August 22, 2022

The Honorable "DJ" Rowan
May 21, 2022

Stephen L. Strange
May 19, 2022

Dr. Rosemary "Rosie" Vance
August 8, 2022

Selwyn James Whitehead
August 12, 2022

David Wilson
November 8, 2022

A.L. "Mac" Wynn, Jr.
June 4, 2022

SAU BOARD PROFILE

**MULERIDER CLUB
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

The Mulerider Club is directed and led by Director of Athletics Steve Browning and advised by the Mulerider Club Advisory Board. Members of the board are below:

**Mulerider Club
Advisory Board Members:**

Chair -Max Dyson

Vice - Chair - Tera Cranford

Treasurer - Jeff Whitener

Board Member - Gary Don Farrar

Board Member - LeRoy Martin

Board Member - Olivia Graham

Board Member - Steve Goodheart

Board Member - Jeff White

Board Member - Jeff Venable

Board Member - Karlene Hooker

Board Member - Andy Sharpe



**MULERIDER
CLUB**

We want your feedback!



Scan the QR code to take a brief survey about how we can make the Mulerider Club better.



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DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Awards Dinner

Thursday, May 4, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Reynolds Center, Grand Hall

For ticket information, please call the
Alumni Association office at (870) 235-4079.

SAU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Southern Arkansas University

Rickey Burnell 2009 & 2020 - Distinguished Young Alumni Award

Isaac Woods 2004 - Distinguished Young Alumni Award

Joey Baker 1977 - Distinguished Alumni Award

Eric Cowling 1988 - Distinguished Alumni Award

Allen Loe 1978 - Distinguished Alumni Award

Rhonda Rhynes, Esq. 1976 - Distinguished Alumni Award

Dr. John Cotton 1963 - Distinguished Golden Rider Award

Janet Poppleton 1972 - Distinguished Golden Rider Award

Dr. Kathleen Mallory - Lifetime Achievement Award (Posthumous)