

Austin College

MAGAZINE | 2021 ISSUE

A close-up photograph of two hands, palms facing each other, with fingers curled to form a heart shape. The hands are light-skinned and the background is a soft, out-of-focus yellow.

'ROOS RESPOND

On the
Front Lines

Finding a
New Normal

Transformed:
Student Success



The new Sally and Jim Naton Theatre provides not only upgraded and aesthetic seating but modernized theatrical lighting and controls, new curtains and rigging, a new sound system and speakers, and a laser projector and retractable screen for presentations, movies, and visual effects. The upgrades will allow improved production value and a greater variety of events.

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PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMMERT

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PHOTO BY CARY S. WACKER

ON THE BACK COVER:

TEDXAustinCollege 2020 continued as planned, though safely distanced and with some schedule changes. Ideas Worth Spreading were the mainstay of the event, held in Sally and Jim Nation Theatre in Ida Green Communication Center and marked by a traditional red X alongside Margaret Jonsson Fountain and Plaza.



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PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMBERT



"Life—It goes on! Austin College goes on. Let us look ahead with renewed hope and resolve."

Dear Friends,

Several times this past fall, I shared a quote from the American poet Robert Frost. He summed up all he had learned about life in just three words: "It goes on." Despite all of the disruptions and challenges of the past year, I am proud to say that the extraordinary experience Austin College students receive goes on as well.

In August, we welcomed another diverse class of first-year and transfer students. This year's Opening Convocation ceremony was held later in the evening, outdoors, socially distanced, and also live-streamed. Under a starlit Texas sky, I was reminded that with each new class, we add new voices that enrich our community. We add new voices that deepen the experience for all. We go on.

The theme of this issue of *Austin College Magazine* is "'Roos Respond." You will see highlighted here several members of 'RooNation who are responding to needs throughout our country and the world. The Austin College community has always worked to meet the needs of the world wherever we find ourselves, but the past year has brought many of those needs into sharp focus, along with new challenges.

We are all working to be equal to this moment in history, whether we are educators in schools, at home, or working remotely. The many alumni who serve in health care have responded to meet a historic crisis head on, and still others respond in countless ways in congregations, neighborhoods, and families, connecting us through their words, their music, their presence, and their sheer persistence. Here on campus, I want to particularly recognize our faculty and staff who have responded by making it possible for students to continue their educational journeys no matter the obstacles they have faced.

'Roos have also responded to support the College philanthropically. This past fall, the POWER Austin College campaign concluded, having surpassed our ambitious \$125 million goal. This makes POWER Austin College the largest campaign in the history of the College. The response of 'RooNation to the campaign has allowed for vitally important scholarships and for a number of construction and renovation projects. The new North Flats, a 133-bed facility, was completed on time and under budget. The creation of Sally and Jim Nation Theatre and Learning Commons in Ida Green Communication Center is finished and is stunning. Renovations in Craig Hall, Hannah Natatorium, and Hughey Gymnasium, including the Jim Rolfe Court, are also complete.

I remind all of our students that 'RooNation exists not only here and now but it also extends beyond the borders of campus, beyond their time here, and that they will always be part of it. Seeing 'Roos respond in the countless ways you'll read about in this latest issue of the magazine will make you proud to be a part of this extraordinary community.

Life—It goes on! Austin College goes on. Let us look ahead with renewed hope and resolve.

Proud to be a 'Roo!

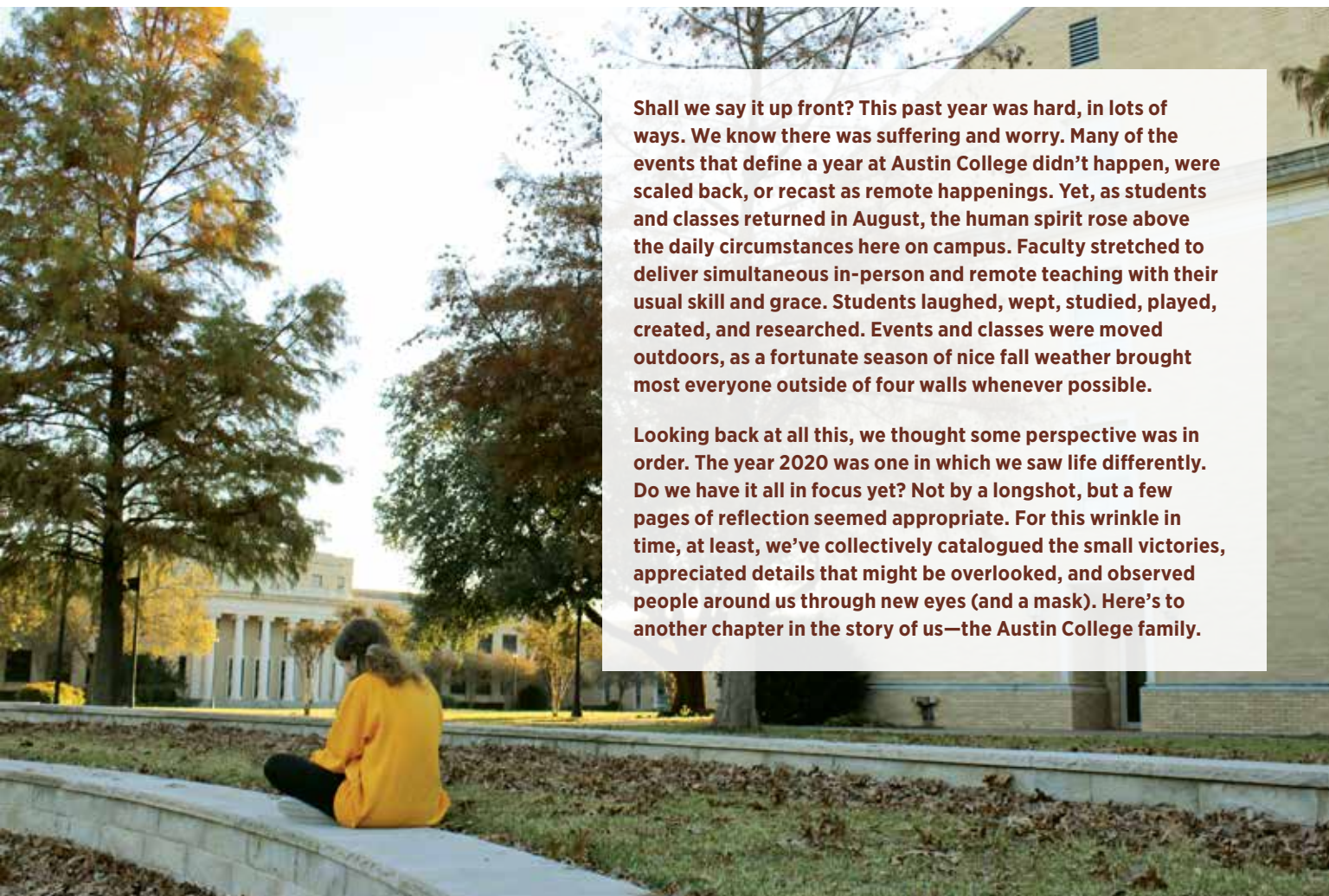
Sincerely,

STEVEN P. O'DAY, J.D.
President
Austin College

SEEING 20/20

Life certainly looked **different in** the Year of COVID-19

Collected and Captioned By Cary S. Wacker



Shall we say it up front? This past year was hard, in lots of ways. We know there was suffering and worry. Many of the events that define a year at Austin College didn't happen, were scaled back, or recast as remote happenings. Yet, as students and classes returned in August, the human spirit rose above the daily circumstances here on campus. Faculty stretched to deliver simultaneous in-person and remote teaching with their usual skill and grace. Students laughed, wept, studied, played, created, and researched. Events and classes were moved outdoors, as a fortunate season of nice fall weather brought most everyone outside of four walls whenever possible.

Looking back at all this, we thought some perspective was in order. The year 2020 was one in which we saw life differently. Do we have it all in focus yet? Not by a longshot, but a few pages of reflection seemed appropriate. For this wrinkle in time, at least, we've collectively catalogued the small victories, appreciated details that might be overlooked, and observed people around us through new eyes (and a mask). Here's to another chapter in the story of us—the Austin College family.

PHOTO BY MOLLY CORSO '23

Alternative Spring Break to Arkansas in March 2020 became the last official travel of the year for students. After that, life took a different path. At “home” on campus, the changing seasons kept the journey interesting.



COURTESY PHOTO

The volunteers returned to remote-only learning in Spring Term 2020



PHOTO BY MOLLY CORSO '23



PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMMERT

A different path:
Marigold petals
strewn at the
Día de Muertos
display in
October



PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMMERT



PHOTO BY MOLLY CORSO '23



PHOTO BY CARY S. WACKER



PHOTO BY HANNA PAINE '21



**Packing meals at
First We Serve;
Campus Activity Board
(CAB) outdoor games;
choir rehearsal;
an outdoor classroom**



With most 'Roos back on campus for Fall Term 2020, Opening Convocation was held outdoors for the first time ever, and in perfect weather.

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER MANIET



PHOTO BY RANDALL JONES '22



PHOTO BY JENNIFER LIANG '21



PHOTO BY MINDY LANDECK

Several campus buildings gained new life, including the new Sally and Jim Nation Learning Commons in Ida Green Communication Center. Below, the Nations (at center) on tour.

Elsewhere on campus, nature's abundance brought beauty and renewal.

PHOTO BY HANNA PAINE '21



PHOTO BY HANNA PAINE '21

PHOTO BY HANNA PAINE '21



PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMMERT



PHOTO BY CARY S. WACKER

Students gathered for an official photo shoot for Admission Office messaging. Even with a new normal, 'Roos have created bonds that will last a lifetime.



On the Front Lines

'Roos Responded in 2020 from the front lines of all walks of life; the next pages offer glimpses into a few of those 'Roo experiences. Every story represents many 'Roos—some leading, some serving, some planning, some just hanging on through 2020 and into 2021. As you continue to respond professionally and personally on every front, our thoughts—and our thanks—are with you all. — The Editors



By Cassie Beane Thompson '02

Woven through the education at Austin College is the message that each of us can make a difference. I couldn't save the earth, but I could go with my sorority to volunteer at Sneed Environmental Research Center. I couldn't fix all of the disparities facing children in low socioeconomic households, but I could go with my Psychology class and give one little girl more individual attention. The belief that each of us doing our part will together improve the world

is a hallmark of an Austin College graduate.

I completed my Master of Science in Nursing degree and passed certification to be a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner as the calendar flipped to 2020. I had spent the last decade working as a Critical Care Nurse, which I loved, but was ready to move into a different role. I accepted a position on a medical center's Geriatric Psychiatry team and started counting the weeks until my credentialing came through and I could start.



Meanwhile, the medical community began bracing itself for the incoming COVID-19 impact. My future employer understandably delayed all new employee start dates until it could work through the emergent changes and preparations. Then the images and pleas for help started coming out of New York. My ICU had already hired and trained my replacement. A state-of-disaster-level pandemic had landed in my country. I was in a position to respond with desperately needed skills. It was later odd to me when people started commending my bravery. Bravery hadn't occurred to me; I was just doing what I could and should. I couldn't stop COVID-19, but I could do my part. Easter Sunday, five days after I first sent out a few emails asking if I was needed, I had a signed contract and was on a (mostly empty) plane headed to New York City.

I was blessed to have a circle of support and prayers surrounding me from the start. One of the first to reach out was my Alpha Delta Chi (ADX) pledge sister Dr. Nicole Corrigan-Garrett '02, a Dallas pediatrician. She sent me a message of love and prayers my first week in NYC, then asked, "What do you need? How can I help?" I assured her I didn't need anything; I had brought my own full-face gas mask and was in a safe hotel. She wasn't deterred and insisted there had to be something she could do. I looked around my sterile hotel room (except for a couple of pictures my own sons had drawn) and thought about the similarly barren break room of the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU) I was helping. Could her kids mail me pictures they drew? "Really?" I described the bleak physical environment we were in, away from our families and working impossible hours against a daunting opponent.

"I'm on it."

The hotel shuttle was making a hospital loop twice a day, delivering the next shift of RNs and bringing back the last shift's exhausted

group. That was all we did, sleep and work. We technically had a day or two off per week, but only a few (with medical conditions themselves) took it. With the colossal shortage of staff, nurses were working every day. There was no staff COVID testing; if you were physically capable of showing up, you worked. Get up, shuttle to the hospital, fight a losing battle for 12-13 hours, shuttle back to the hotel. Leave your shoes in the hallway. Drop your bag immediately inside the door, and go straight into the shower. Undress in the shower, and scrub. Remember, at that point we still knew so little about the virus, and we weren't taking chances. Step out of the shower and into sleepwear. Place scrubs into a trash bag that would be dropped off at the front for professional cleaning. Spray the shower and your bag with whatever disinfectant you had managed to find. Maybe eat dinner, just as often collapse directly into bed. Get up eight hours later, put on scrubs, go to the shuttle. I know the hospital's staff nurses were living similarly. The morbidity and mortality numbers were horrific. We were throwing rocks at Goliath.

I was blessed to have a circle of support and prayers surrounding me from the start.

The area's mail system was struggling, so the hotel was only getting USPS deliveries two to three times per week. Yet less than a week after my texts with Nicole, I stumbled off the shuttle one night to find a small package and several brightly

colored envelopes. The package was from my ADX big sister, Rev. Leigh Wisner '01. Inside were several drawings and crafts from her kids, with a letter from Leigh that was as close to an actual hug as she could send. The cards were from a few other Alphas, most with kids' drawings. I put all of the pictures and cards on my mirror and the crafts on my bathroom counter before going to sleep.

The next morning as I got ready, I kept looking at the kids' artwork and grinning. I took pictures of them and shared them with the other nurses on the shuttle, my heart a little lighter than it had been since arriving. I wound up



COURTESY PHOTOS



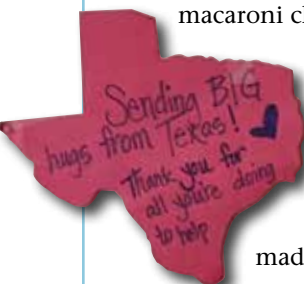


promising several that we could make a traveling exhibit so they could wake up to them, too. But that plan was soon set aside. I had only given the kid art suggestion to Nicole and one dear neighbor. But the neighbor put the request on our neighborhood Facebook page, and Nicole did the same on the ADX page. Early on, Dr. Maheshika Sivathasan '03 copied the ADX post over to the Austin College Alumni Community page. I had pictures, cards, and crafts pouring in from Texas and beyond. I got mail from alumni who graduated before I was born and from current students. There were drawings, prayer cards, macaroni chains, and wood ornaments, and an egg-carton caterpillar received a place of honor on the mirror frame's top ledge. I gave items to any of the other nurses who asked. What had been a numbing routine was now broken up each night as I made sure to send a thank you to every

child, person, or family I heard from. I particularly wanted each kiddo to know that their effort was making a difference to all of us on the front lines. I considered it future Kangaroo education to show their individual contributions were making a difference to strangers they would never meet.

My mirror was quickly full and the mail kept coming. The CICU break room wall had one child's picture, and otherwise fliers and notifications that were mostly outdated. I asked the director if I could take down the expired pages, reorganize the rest, and put up support mail from Texas. He consented. By that time, our amazing military had arrived with enough seasoned nurses to more than double the staff, so we were actually getting short lunch breaks. The next day, another nurse and I spent our lunch break making the transformation.

It's hard to fully explain staff reactions when seeing the display for the first time. The initial reaction was always confusion. (To my knowledge, there was nothing like it anywhere in the hospital.)





Then smiles. Laughter. Tears. Cell phone pictures. Entire breaks were spent looking at each picture and reading each card. Seeing my name mentioned in several cards, many came to thank me. My repeated response was, “That’s how Texans roll.”

The weeks went on. As the COVID-19 tide changed, trauma numbers suddenly exploded. My last 2.5 weeks, I worked in the suddenly overflowing trauma ICU. They had a similarly barren break room transformed by Kangaroo kid artwork. The CICU break room was even being visited from non-unit staff who had heard about the Texas board. Trauma ICU was a locked unit, but their wall still had high viewing numbers by the trauma service nurses, techs, respiratory techs, and residents.

As we all now know, our efforts to halt COVID-19 fell short. For most of my time there, the hospital morgue overflowed into 10 large refrigerated trucks. Inside the CICU, a few thought they faintly heard something one day above the

constant din of beeps and alarms. We learned after shift change about the incredible parade of fire and police who had circled the hospital with horns and sirens to show support.

Important drugs got rationed, the PPE gown quality became more and more dubious, the staff’s COVID rate of infection (and deaths) grew. The group I was with was offered contract extensions, which every nurse declined. But by early May, we usually got a lunch break. Instead of inhaling a protein bar and using the restroom twice per shift, we got to sit in the break room and eat real food—surrounded by cards and every possible type of children’s artwork—feeling the love, support, and prayers sent to us by Austin College alumni. With our overwhelming gratitude and appreciation, that is what I would like an article about my time in NYC during COVID-19 to be about. ■



A Broad Worldview Helps Doctors Face a Global Challenge

Hundreds of Austin College alumni work in the medical profession, delivering care in varying specialties all over the world.



Dr. Tamir Anver, D.D.S. '08

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon

Texas Center for Oral Surgery and Dental Implants
Denton, Texas

As an oral surgeon, my 10 years of post-graduate training, which included dental school, medical school, and a surgical residency, provided me with a unique skill set that allows me to manage complex cases and compromised patients. That experience moved to a whole new level in spring 2020, when conventional health care was shut down and dental offices were permitted only to

see emergencies. Most of the practices in the area did not feel comfortable handling even emergencies due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and the lack of appropriate PPE, but those concerns didn't do away with the patients who genuinely needed help. Many of them ended up in my office, but with the support of my family, and the mission of service rooted in me from my Islamic faith, I experienced exactly zero days of shutdown. I firmly believe that my daily prayers for the safety of my family, my staff, and my patients allow us to stay focused on helping patients during a frightening and uncertain time.



Dr. Edgar Araiza, M.D. '07

Orthopedic Trauma Surgeon

Methodist Dallas Medical Center
Dallas, Texas

The first weeks of the pandemic, not all trauma patients were tested for COVID-19 as they were presenting to the hospital for their accidents. We operated on patients for six weeks without knowing the amount of personal exposure. After we started testing and recognized how prevalent the disease was in the community,

we began reusing our respirator masks in order to save PPE for our cases. We have increased our stockpile of PPE, but the initial weeks were scarce. Now, you will get urgent/emergent care to stabilize and save you, regardless of the COVID-19 status. But, if you are positive for COVID, there can be a delay of 10 to 21 days depending on your symptoms and overall health.

Austin College prepares you for worldwide pandemics by exposing you to the world ... and teaching you the importance of multiple points of view, research, training, and cooperation required to address modern dilemmas. Austin College pushes you to not live in a bubble that does not exist.



See <https://acmagazine.austincollege.edu/doctors2021> for more alumni feedback on how COVID-19 has affected their work in all kinds of medical settings. Thanks to all who responded.



Dr. Virginia Wells, M.D. '81

Chief Medical Officer, Director of Medical Services | Team Physician

William & Mary University
Williamsburg, Virginia

Serving on the W&M Public Health Advisory Committee required me to use the evaluative and analytical skills fostered in the Arts. Tackling the COVID response required both critical and creative thinking—skills I believe my education at Austin College afforded me.

The COVID restrictions have been an adjustment for the student-athletes as they are accustomed to spending time together outside of practice. Because they were unable to gather socially, it was difficult for the older students to mentor the incoming student-athletes.

Additionally, the adjustment to practicing and training in masks was difficult as we had to try several different brands to find one that was comfortable and allowed the players to breathe when the intensity of practice was elevated. The uncomfortable nasal swab COVID testing was not a favorite activity for the William & Mary student-athletes; however, our success with low prevalence of infection after nine weeks of training helped to reinforce the notion that all these mitigation efforts were worth it.



Dr. Linya Yang, M.D. '00

Family Medicine Physician

Beth Israel Lahey Health
Boston, Massachusetts

Working as a physician during COVID-19 has been a challenge but an overall learning and rewarding experience. As a family medicine physician at a large Boston hospital, I went from seeing patients in my office to mostly telemedicine within two days.

These visits have been interesting as they bring me into my patients' homes and vice versa. I have to be creative with how I do a physical exam as I tell and/or show a patient what to do which, I believe, creates a partnership in care. My experiences have allowed me to focus more on the patients' words, especially when discussing mental health concerns or patient fears with COVID-19.

Being able to care for my patients and others during the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced why I decided to go into medicine. While I will admit there were times when I was afraid and worried that my staff, family, or I would become ill with COVID-19, even with taking all precautions, I would not trade my experiences from the past several months. ■

Finding a New Normal

Alumnus Oversees High School Construction for District

By Leigh-Ellen Romm

In the middle of what was an open field in southwest Sherman stands the new Sherman High School. Sparkling, modern, planned and executed right down to the outlets, the building opened to students in January 2021, smack in the middle of a global pandemic.

Dr. Tyson Bennett '92, Sherman ISD Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, managed the financial oversight of that project while shepherding the district through the state-ordered switch to virtual classes for Texas public schools at the onset of COVID-19 safety protocols.

Tyson said it would have been astounding if as a college student he could have glimpsed the “new normal” for today’s teachers and students. “I say even now, if we could take a picture of everyone sitting around with masks on, and show it to us 12 months ago, what would we have thought was going on?” he said. “I would have had no clue. We don’t have to go back 40 years to be astounded by our situation today.”

In 1992, after completing his bachelor’s degree in Business at Austin College, he entered ministry school for a year. He then returned to Sherman and Austin College to complete his Master of Arts

in Teaching degree in 1995. He earned his Ph.D. in Education Leadership in 1997 from Southern Mississippi University. For Tyson, a strong call to serve has driven his educational and vocational decisions.

“If I had been told or given a glimpse of the future at that particular time ... I would have been fired up! There’s no better way to serve than through a situation like this,” he said.

Sherman ISD announced in February 2020 that due to weather-related construction challenges the new school would open in January 2021, rather than August 2020. Students would begin the 2020 school year in the current high school, then move to the new building after winter break.

With that settled, students left for Spring Break in early March 2020—and they did not return to their classrooms. Rising concern for public health brought on shutdowns and sweeping COVID-19 protocols.

To quickly move to remote instruction, SISD provided electronic devices to families with need and parked Wi-Fi buses in locations around town. Teachers mobilized to produce and pass out learning packets, and like their counterparts





everywhere, pulled off a miracle to connect with their students in a whole new way.

"We were in here every day getting remote learning and teaching going," Tyson said. "Then, that morphed into a feeding program for our whole community. Using USDA waivers and programs, we fed more than 200,000 meals and snacks in 47 days. That's not just SISD kids; we fed every kid, 18 years of age or under, who showed up in a car at our locations all across our city."

"Pretty quickly I could already tell; this was going to explode," he said. "I emailed as many folks as I knew who were partners with the schools and had a heart for the kids—churches, service organizations like Kiwanis and Rotary, and other groups to use the opportunity to meet other pressing needs."

With Tyson's direction, Sherman ISD not only provided food to children, but also collaborated to supply toiletries, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, and food for people over 18 years of age. "I said, come, set your tent next to our tent—we'll feed the kids, and you can give your items and boxes of food for families. It was all a part of taking advantage of a captive audience that was coming

to us, and knowing we had people in our community who wanted to serve."

When reflecting on the big news from February that the new school opening would be delayed, Tyson said, "Well, it is serendipitous, ironic, or however you want to term it. I thought to myself, I'm so glad we're not opening a new building in August, because that's going to be large enough—but to be dealing with that in the midst of reconnecting with students you haven't seen since March ... then put in all the COVID protocols," Tyson said. "We could say, it has worked out."

While students work their way through the pristine halls of Sherman High, adding an even newer normal to the one they already manage, Tyson is proud of the way the community has come together. "It is only by the community that we have this project. And, it's with their support we can continue to take care of each other." ■



Making a Way

Educators Share Innovations in
Time of COVID

Katherine Abbey '10/MAT '11

Librarian
Woodway Elementary School
Fort Worth, Texas



KEEP READING

When leaving school in March 2020, I had an ongoing challenge to get books into my students' hands—and back out of them, to be honest. I wanted to encourage them to keep reading when access to books is limited, and to assist students and parents with getting technology and accessing their virtual classrooms. I have assisted my campus with distributing technology, have recorded videos of myself reading, and have acted as a liaison between campus leadership and teachers trying to deliver instruction from their homes.

PERSEVERING

Most educators are involved in the profession due to the impact we can have on our students' lives and the relationships we build in the process. This school year, we have tried to welcome in a new group of students and work hard to build all those essential relationships. Students need to know we care and that they can trust us, before they learn. It's hard to do from the other side of a screen, with a mask on, and as they sit in classrooms with partitions far away from peers and normalcy. We are working to find solutions and persevere, so that we all come out stronger on the other side.

Laura Brown '07/MAT '08

STEM Teacher
Pioneer Technology and Arts Academy
Greenville, Texas



STAYING FLEXIBLE

This school year has definitely been one like no other! It has been difficult to really get in the swing of things and find a groove for the kids, as we had to start virtually, come in-person, and then switch back to virtual learning. I've tried to create engaging lessons that are easily transferable from virtual to in-person, such as interactive quizzes, digital one-pagers, and group video recordings. I think we're all trying to do the best we can while navigating these challenging times. Being flexible for both the teachers and students has been a major theme for this crazy school year.



Kierra Gaither '18/MAT '19
8th Grade Science Teacher/Coach
Connally Junior High
Elm Mott, Texas

Laurie James, BSN, RN, NCSN '89
Special Education Nurse Liaison
Grand Prairie ISD
Grand Prairie, Texas



UTILIZING THE OUTDOORS

My previous work with tuberculosis management and HIV prevention gave me a solid background for dealing with the current pandemic. We left school for spring break in March and didn't return in person. In May, we had 30 almost-3-year-olds whom we were legally required to screen and assess for district-funded preschool. As the only Special Education Nurse in the district, I created a "contactless" vision and hearing model, using functional screening on the portico outside the preschool where I work, screening most kids in their car seats. We assessed 26 students by summer's end. The contactless screening idea was so successful that I continued to utilize it through September.



Clay Scarborough '99/MAT '01
Principal
Navarro High School
Seguin, Texas

PRIORITIZING SAFETY

Our administration team at Navarro High has focused on making sure two things are happening. First, we are making the building and our procedures as safe as possible. In short, let's control what we can control in the building and prevent COVID-19 from spreading. After we are as safe as we can be, then secondly, we are focusing so that teaching and learning happen the best ways they can whether the student is in the classroom or online. We have made it this far. We hope we can make it the whole year.





This Family Is All In

By Vickie S. Kirby

Coach Michelle Filander led the Austin College women's basketball team to victory at the Southern College Athletic Conference (SCAC) championship on March 1, 2020. The players have the rings to prove it, but those “blingy” rings certainly aren't needed to recall the elation and adrenaline rush of the 76-67 victory over rival Trinity University.

Only a few weeks previous, **Coach Bob Filander's** men's and women's teams enjoyed their own successes at the SCAC Swimming and Diving Championship Meet. The teams broke 13 Austin College records at the meet.

In the Filander home, spirits were definitely high. Those wins produced excitement, pride in their athletes, and validation of what their teams had been doing and learning every day. The coaches know well that those kinds of victories can be elusive, even with talent, diligence, and spirit from their athletes.

The highs and lows of sports are all too familiar to the coaches. During high school, Michelle Bielanski earned many basketball honors, including a variety of Ohio All-State and Player of the Year accolades, plus a scholarship to the Division I Robert Morris University in Pennsylvania.

In her second season, she suffered a season-ending injury. She transferred to Ohio Wesleyan University, and another injury ended her basketball career. Her coach asked her to take a role on the coaching staff. Though she'd had no interest in coaching, she decided to try it while she finished her degree. (Interestingly, her original plans were to complete graduate school in Forensic Psychology and tap some family connections for inroads to the FBI at Quantico.) As she persisted with coaching, she helped lead a team to the NCAA Final Four, ending the run at No. 3 in the nation, experiencing the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat with her team.



COURTESY PHOTO



COURTESY PHOTO

VICTORY! The women's basketball team won the SCAC Championship in March 2020, and Coach Michelle Filander was overjoyed to be part of the post-game celebration (above with trophy and at left, taking her turn at cutting down the net). That win earned the team some championship bling, below.



PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMBERT

Meanwhile, over in Pennsylvania, Bob Filander was a winning track and swimming athlete and a successful student at Washington & Jefferson University. Upon graduation, he began the career he had planned: teaching high school English ... Shakespeare in particular. Soon, Bob's college swim coach contacted him for help starting a water polo team. Bob volunteered for a time and then became a part-time coach. Eventually, he became the head water polo coach at Washington & Jefferson.

Soon, a new female assistant coach from Ohio joined the women's basketball staff at Washington & Jefferson. The rest, as is often said, was history and the beginning of the Filander coaching family. The young couple moved to Sherman in fall 2010 when Michelle took on the head women's basketball coach job at Austin College.

Bob did not have a coaching position when they moved to Texas so he volunteered with the 'Roo swim teams. In May 2012, things got busier as the Filander household grew with the birth of their daughter, Seton. Then in fall 2013, Bob was selected as the head coach for the 'Roo swimming and diving programs, and the activity level went up another notch for the family.

As luck would have it, Bob's and Michelle's programs both compete in winter sports schedules. Training and conditioning for swimming get underway in mid-September, with daily two-hour practices at either 6 a.m. or 4:30 p.m. Basketball begins mid-October with Monday through Saturday practices, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Come January, swimming and diving training builds to two hours twice a day.

The important concept of the student-athlete—that academics come first in the mix—is forefront in the Filanders' coaching philosophy. "I do not coach professional women's basketball players," Michelle said. "I want to coach doctors and lawyers; that provides the vision of how our priorities align.

We walk that out by the way we schedule practices at the end of the class day, by how we leave campus for away games at the last possible times. Still this is college basketball. When the time comes for basketball, we want basketball to be the priority. We don't want it to come above academics, but we do want it to come above other things."

Bob said that many schools run double swim practices in the fall, and he thinks differently about that training. "First-years are in a whole new environment in the fall semester," he said. "To run double daily practices when they are adjusting to new schedules, new environments, and new academic demands is not a recipe for success. Our schedule moves to double practices in January, and we've found great success in it. First-years need that second practice then, when the academics are a bit more open. Then they can finish their academics and work hard in practice."

Of course, just as the Austin College students adjust to their schedules, so must their coaches, and Michelle calls theirs "a circus." The family grew again in April 2018 with the birth of a son, Sutton. Michelle said that thankfully, Bob's parents have traveled from Pennsylvania to Sherman each year since, renting an RV spot locally from Labor Day through Memorial Day, to help keep the circus performing on schedule.

Michelle said the births of their children have improved her coaching. "It makes me consider how I would want someone to treat my child," she said. "I think it is true for Bob, too. It really has enhanced the vibe and made us better coaches."

She thinks their children and their circus have helped their athletes, too. "At times it's been all hands on deck," Michelle said. "The athletes know they have to help. It creates that humanization piece that is important. The crazy creates humanity. There's real benefit in that. The humanity creates relationship." ■



COURTESY PHOTO

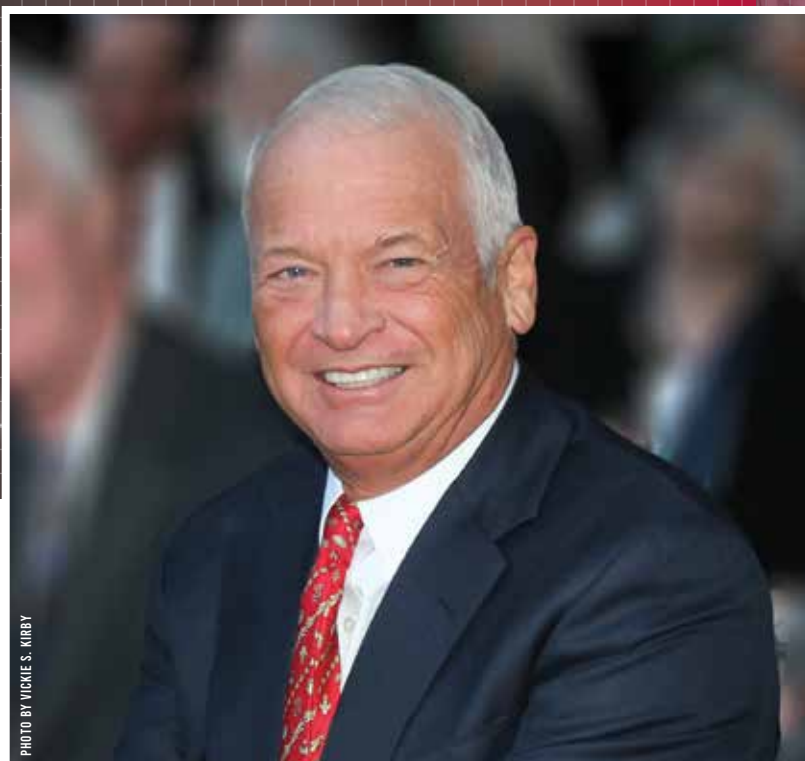
JUST KEEP SWIMMING—In normal seasons, when most students head for home right after finals in December, the swim and



PHOTO BY VIOLETTE SARGENT

dive teams are in the midst of training and competition. They will get a few days off for the holiday, but only a few. To make things a bit more fun, Coach Bob takes

the teams on a training trip, often to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs or to Florida. "Training can be monotonous sometimes," he said. "It's faces in the water looking at a black line. Once a year, we go somewhere fun; Colorado has top facilities, the advantage of altitude training, and the fun of snow and hiking. In 2019, students got to train next to Olympian Katie Ledecky. Other times we go to Florida and train outdoors, and have the sun and the beach. In both places, we have the bonus of team bonding." The teams continue their workouts but maybe enjoy them a bit more.



A Dream Realized

By Vickie S. Kirby

In December 2020, **Don Gibson, M.D.**, put aside his scalpel for the final time after 35 years as a cardiovascular surgeon in Houston, Texas.

He'd long planned to be a doctor. As a seventh grader, he wrote Johns Hopkins Medical School to request an application. Not many years later, the West Texas boy was recruited to Austin College and graduated in 1975, ready to pursue his dreams.

Don began study at Baylor College of Medicine and upon finishing his coursework, took on residencies in General Surgery and Thoracic Surgery. Every year, 200 to 300 people applied for residencies under the tutelage of medical legend and cardiovascular surgery pioneer Dr. Michael DeBakey, who was Chair of the Surgery Department and President of Baylor College of Medicine.

"I was happy to be (one of three) chosen for Dr. DeBakey's program, though when I was his

resident, we were working too hard to realize how great a doctor he was," Dr. Gibson said. "Through the passing of time, and the hindsight view of his career and the worldwide advances he made in the treatment of heart and vascular disease, I saw what a great man he was and how much he meant to me. I became the surgeon I am because of the training I had with him."

In the intervening 35 years, Don says he had a "very nice career," spent entirely in Houston at Memorial Hermann Hospitals, Houston Methodist Hospital, and UT Health Science Center. For the past eight years, he also was teaching at UT Health Science Center at Houston, taking his turn at passing on knowledge to residents in the cardiovascular operating room and in all aspects of patient care.

Gibson estimates he completed 5,000 heart surgeries and another 5,000 thoracic and vascular

Michael DeBakey, M.D., received an honorary Doctor of Science from Austin College in 1995 when he presented the Commencement address.

surgeries during his career. “My job as a surgeon was to make people’s lives better and to prolong their lives,” he said. “I told my patients I was not doing procedures to have them go home and sit on the couch for the rest of their days. I operated so they could go on with *living*.”

Don would sometimes see patients out in the community. One day in 2018, a man walking near him asked what he did for a living. Don answered that he was a heart surgeon. The man smiled and said, “You’re Dr. Gibson.” Turns out Don had performed a quadruple bypass on the man 17 years previously. That chance encounter just happened to take place on the starting line of a triathlon!

The retelling of that story more than two years later still brings a quiver to Don’s voice. “It was very emotional for both of us at the time,” Don said. “The man was 77 years old in 2018. I am fortunate to have been in the position to make an impact on people’s lives through the years.”



Don competed in triathlons (swimming, cycling, and running events) for several years, though he says he was never any good at it. “My goal was just to finish,” he said. “It was a way to get some exercise and meet new people.”

Don and his wife, Diane, have been married for 35 years. Diane is a retired cardiovascular anesthesiologist, and they have four adult children:

a son in New York, and daughters in Texas, Chicago, and New York. Though Don had a busy and stressful life as a surgeon, he made an effort to be an engaged parent when his children were growing up. Diane took a 10-year hiatus from work to care for the family, and Don did his best to be present for all the school events and parent meetings. “I didn’t miss many,” he said, of the swimming, track, golf, choir, band,

and other involvements of their kids. The family also was active at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church and did a lot of traveling.

Since 2007, Don served on the Austin College Board of Trustees and said he was fortunate to witness the wonderful leadership of three presidents of the College over 12 years. After a short break, Don returned to active service on the Board, pleased to devote time and resources to the College. “Serving on the Board is a way I can give back to the College,” Don said. “Being a physician was all I ever wanted, and because of Austin College I have been able to fulfill that dream. Who would have thought some kid from far West Texas could have this life? Austin College made it possible.” ■

Don and Diane have long looked forward to retiring to the Texas Hill Country. Diane retired in July 2020 and moved to their Hill Country ranch. Don joined her on weekends through the fall and made the move himself in December. He may take his time deciding what he wants to do but he doesn’t expect to feel bored. Instead, he and Diane are making plans for travel, and he sees himself playing some golf, working on the ranch, and enjoying time with family.



“My job as a surgeon was to make people’s lives better and to prolong their lives,” he said. “I told patients I was not doing procedures to have them go home and sit on the couch for the rest of their days. I operated so they could go on with *living*.”

— Dr. Don Gibson ’75



PHOTOS BY LANCE HAYNES '92

Fredericksburg

TravelAddicts.net proclaims, “Fredericksburg [Texas] has more fun things to do than most cities five times its size. There seems to be a festival or event happening most weekends of the year regardless of the season.”

Who wouldn’t want to visit? When visitors arrive, they need a place to stay, and no one wants to see “No Vacancy” when making plans. **Lance Haynes ’92** knew he could be part of that business.

He made a sizable investment in the area (translation: put all his money into a land purchase and personally began building cottages) as he saw the area as “pretty much recession proof.” Of course, no one plans for a pandemic.

In fall 2018, he opened two cottages, which were immediately booked, and he never had a weekend vacancy through 2019. The same was true for most weekdays. In April 2019, he had 100% weekend occupancy, 78% for the entire month.

A year later, after COVID-19 arrived, he had 0% occupancy for March and April 2020. Lance had worked in a variety of careers since graduating from Austin College. He has tackled sales, served as a fire fighter and paramedic, worked in the oil business, and created a wedding venue. He’d also written a book, finessed woodworking abilities, and honed photography skills.

This time, however, he had put everything into The Vines at Fredericksburg. He had counted on “recession proof,” and while COVID-19 was not a

No One Plans for a Pandemic

By Vickie S. Kirby



recession, the results were much the same, if not worse, as people gave up unnecessary travel.

“March and April were horrible for me personally,” Lance said. “This is it, I thought. I was terribly depressed.” He said he had previously had to use his retirement funds for family needs so had nothing to fall back on. All the resources he had were part of this venture, and things were not looking good. As he could, he kept working on building more cottages.

Somewhat inexplicably, in early fall 2020, visitors returned to Fredericksburg in droves. October’s visitor numbers were high. But in November as virus numbers were spiking all over the country, Lance’s worries returned. He continued doing what he could.

He builds toward his ultimate plan for The Vines—nine units including cottages and luxury glamping tents, and a wedding area with decks and an arbor walkway. He hopes eventually to rent the entire venue to wedding parties, but individual



units will remain available when weddings are not scheduled.

In the meantime, he looks out his window and watches his deer neighbors pass by, enjoys the sunset, and prepares to welcome his next set of guests. He’s counting on this. ■

Pastoring in 2020



By Revs. Josh Sutherlun '01 and Amy Poling Sutherlun '00

The wisdom writer of the book of Ecclesiastes memorably said, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted ...” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2).

He can hardly be faulted for failing to foresee the 2020 season, making no mention of “a time to stay home, and a time to order curbside; a time to click ‘leave meeting,’ and a time to buy or sew or scavenge a mask.”

We’ve been in ministry almost two decades and this season has, hands-down, been the strangest/hardest/most surprising and disruptive yet (you know all the adjectives—you’ve lived through it, too).



“This coronavirus season has been a time to defy disconnection with new forms of community, loving our neighbors with unprecedented generosity, and a time to believe ...” —Revs. Amy and Joshua Sutherlun



COURTESY PHOTOS

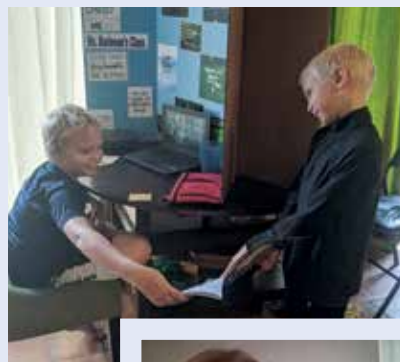
For us, as co-pastors of a congregation, it has been:

- A time to hold our first hug-banned funeral service mid-March, and then close the doors of the sanctuary for the next 25 Sundays.
- And, a time to build an altar in our living room, stacking board game boxes and books to get the webcam at a flattering angle for our faces while cropping out our children and cats sprawled on the couch in what would become their new worship posture.
- A time to make ancient rituals—hymns, prayers of lament, the breaking of bread—digital so they can be streamed to congregants who are sipping coffee in their PJs while Chromecasting that week’s liturgy, rather than wrangling children into shoes and husbands into ties to rush out the door to church.
- And, a time to transform the natural face-to-face interactions of a community of faith into virtual substitutes that turn out to be poor-but-desperately-needed approximations.

- A time to bury a 91-year-old woman who had overcome immobilizing infirmities to be in church every Sunday, yet didn’t get to worship in her sanctuary a single time during the last six months of her life.
- And, a time to remind our shut-ins (now nearly everyone) that they are remembered, valued, loved by their pastors, their whole church family, and the God who was with them in the anxious isolation. A hundred Easter lilies left their usual glorious posts on the church steps to grace the front porches of every single congregant’s home, fragrant symbols of resurrection hope.

This coronavirus season has been a time to defy disconnection with new forms of community, loving our neighbors with unprecedented generosity, and a time to believe, even when it might not seem apparent, that God makes everything beautiful, in God’s time (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

... and Parenting in a Pandemic



COURTESY PHOTOS

As co-pastors we each work part-time and flexible hours, meaning we also each have chunks of the day when we're the "at-home" parent. We regularly (and with varying degrees of fluidity) make the work-to-home and reverse transition—been doing it for 14 years, through the arrival and wild growing years of our four kids, now ages 14, 12, 10, and 9.

And yet none of that prepared us for the sudden onset of the world's longest and least-fun spring break. With all of us quarantining at home, every day became "bring your kid to work" day. Or maybe it was "bring your work to your kids" day. Or "let your work and kids intermingle in a totally chaotic way" day. Every day. For all the hours. When school was in session, up to six people might need a device to Zoom at the same time. And "This link doesn't work, Mom." And "Honey, is the Wi-Fi on?" And "He stole my headphones!"

Once school was out for the summer, the days stretched long, lazy, and hot. No sports. No camps. No friends coming over. Week at Grandma's not allowed. River closed. Road trip to Yellowstone canceled. All of which meant endless, unstructured time together as a family. All day everyday was Legos, rollerblades, board games, soccer, Minecraft, running, and waiting for something to happen ... with the same siblings. (How did only children and their parents survive without built-in playmates?)

The two of us walked the neighborhood every night, debriefing all the things that hadn't happened that day, hoping our now nearly feral kids didn't burn the house down or fall off the roof while we were gone.

Of course, there was bickering and boredom, desperation and despair mingled in among the

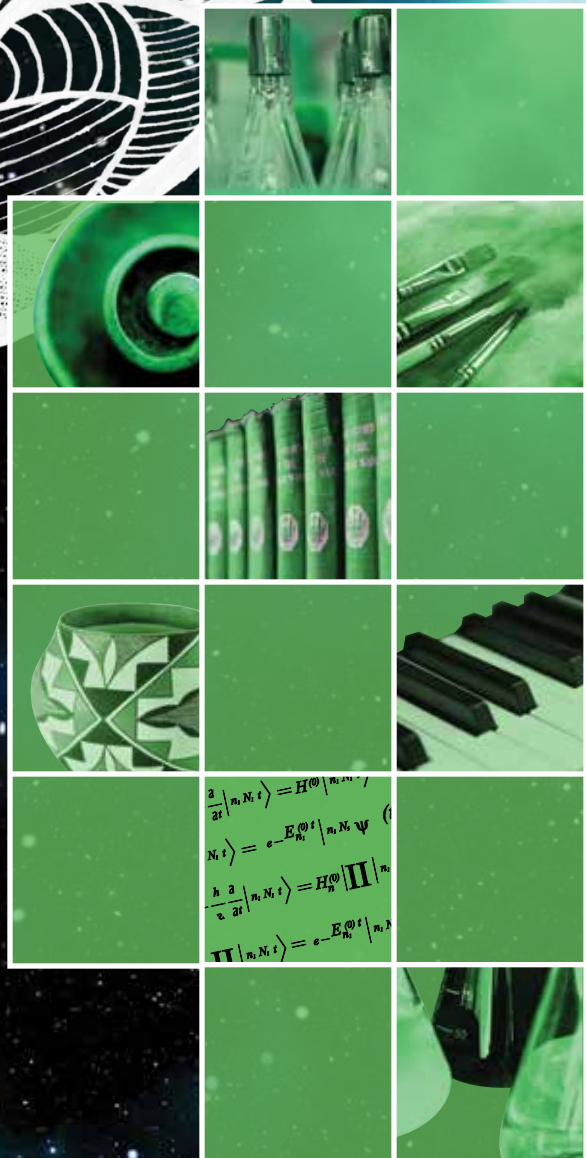


new hobbies and precious sibling bonds. Co-parenting became cope-parenting in some healthy (and not-so-healthy) ways. We by no means "killed it" during the global

pandemic, but we managed not to kill each other. We got good enough at slow, to choose our busy more wisely. We've grown some in gratitude and shrunk some of our certainty. We guarded closely the friends and family in our "bubble" and know them more richly for it. And, each of us, almost always, remembers to bring our mask when we leave the house. Shoes? Less often.

Revs. Josh Sutherlun '01 and Amy Poling Sutherlun '00 have served as co-pastors of First Presbyterian Church of San Marcos, Texas, since 2013. ■

CREATE at 5:



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Spreading its Wings

By Cary S. Wacker

Words like *develop*, *discover*, and *explore* are embedded in the lexicon of learning at Austin College, and they are powerfully exemplified within the **Center for Research, Experiential, Artistic, and Transformative Education**. Five years on since its founding, CREATE has supported one of every three graduating students in directed research and creative scholarship, and fostered a remarkable 130,000 hours of research time by students across every major offered at Austin College.

When Biology Professor **Dr. Lance Barton**, CREATE's Director, launched the center in 2015, his vision was to build a community around hands-on, active research in which undergraduate students are fully engaged in knowledge creation to seek solutions to research problems.

Today, CREATE is thriving as the campus nerve center for students pursuing deep, transformative, scholarly engagement within their respective disciplines, as well as those creating original works in the Humanities. Barton, now the holder of the Richardson Chair for CREATE, leads the center's efforts to support intellectual opportunities, including the Departmental Honors program—the senior thesis program for top students—and summer research. The center also sponsors the annual Austin College Student Scholarship Conference (ACSC), a multi-day showcase of professional-level presentations by students sharing their research and creative work. Each year's event involves over 160 students and provides a dynamic platform for presenting novel scholarship to peers and faculty.

Since 2015, a total of 519 students have engaged in formal research, creative scholarship, or artistic presentations. The participants' diversity almost perfectly mirrors the demographics of

the student body: 48% were students of color and 32% were among those with high financial need. CREATE is opening a path for any talented student to be guided and encouraged in creative, scholarly efforts, and a high percentage of CREATE alumni continue to post-graduate programs that further their interest in research and professional development.

With impressive statistics rolling in and the impact on student outcomes ever growing, Barton shared some thoughts on the metamorphosis of CREATE. His comments reflect the ongoing commitment on campus to empower Austin College students to take flight.

How has CREATE evolved since its beginning?

"I think the biggest items have been recognition and collaboration. I feel like the faculty, students, and campus offices know CREATE and work with us; consequently, the program is really starting to develop effectively. Student research touches on so many aspects of what we do well as an institution, and partnerships with our Johnson Center [for Faculty Development], Scarbrough Writing Center, Career Services, and others have been effective in helping CREATE build the outreach on campus. I must also say that CREATE has a great steering committee and



“CREATE is really an umbrella of support for various programs. Many hard-working people deserve the credit. In any single year, there are 36 to 52 faculty sponsoring a student—for an honors thesis, research, or major project. Over five years, 88 unique tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track, visiting, and adjunct faculty have sponsored a student to present at ACSC.” — Dr. Lance Barton, CREATE Director

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMBERT

program coordinators that have enabled the campus to work cohesively around a common set of values. This is reflected in small tweaks to campus programs that bring everyone to a new level of excellence. Our work is not complete, but we have shared our ideas and practices, learned from each other, and have advanced the program with shared ideas.”

What do you consider most distinctive about CREATE?

“Honestly, that is a hard question. I learn a lot from my colleagues at other colleges and universities around the country, and we share numerous ideas. The kinds of programs that we offer are similar, but what stands out to me about what CREATE does well is that it engages a diverse set of students. We have been paying attention and asking questions about inclusion from the beginning. Our goals have often focused on removing barriers to participation. We’ve always worked with students and faculty to integrate new ideas and forms of intellectual scholarship and creative activities instead of forcing a particular model. This emphasis on inclusion and support has helped broaden the quantity and quality of opportunities associated with CREATE.”

35
Academic
programs doing
research

263
Research posters
produced
by CREATE
participants in
five years

25
States visited
for research or
conferences
2017-2020

6
Countries visited
for research
2017-2020

What do you think is attractive/motivating to students who are part of CREATE?

“Each student has a unique story; at the same time, I’d like to think that when students engage in research and creative activities that they do it to learn, to learn how to learn, to engage with faculty in meaningful ways, to discover something new, maybe something new about themselves, and to be a part of a community of scholars and researchers. As we have heard time and again, while this process can be fulfilling, it can also be difficult and at times isolating, as a student engages deeply with the project. I hope that CREATE provides value to those students by building community, providing opportunities to feel connected, and helping faculty to mentor students effectively and productively. For both faculty and students who are part of CREATE, we want to affirm that their work is valued by more than just themselves and empower them to achieve great things.”

Throughout the academic year, CREATE faculty members provide guidance for all stages of the research process, and every faculty member is impacted by students’ participation. ■

George Melchor '17

George Melchor followed a different path in arriving at **Dr. Lance Barton's** research lab from his hometown of Uvalde, Texas, where he attended community college. Through Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, a personal connection from Denison introduced him to research opportunities at Austin College, and George's first visit to campus was guided by Barton, his soon-to-be mentor. The unique experience as an undergraduate leader in Barton's cancer research lab and additional in-course research with Associate Professor of Psychology **Dr. Renee Countryman** cemented George's love for the lab. He's currently working on a Ph.D. in the Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience at Georgetown University. "My graduate research focuses on understanding the complex relationship between the immune system and the cells attacked in multiple sclerosis throughout the disease process," says George. "My time at Austin College totally prepared me for this kind of intricate research."



Abigail Goodman '21

The stage is a second home for Abbey Goodman, a double major in Psychology and Theatre with a minor in Gender Studies. She is staging and directing *Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight*—a play about a gifted 18th century scientist whose extraordinary mind set her apart from other women of French aristocracy. "I've been doing extensive research into her work and the historical period in order to create costuming, sets, and lighting as I prepare for the show."

Andres Hernandez '22

Pre-med student Andy Hernandez is double majoring in Biology and Music—and has managed the two in perfect harmony. Among his accomplishments, he's a member of several string ensembles including a quartet directed by Professor of Music **Dr. Ricky Duhaime**. "We've been recording compositions by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and Dvořák as performances and for entry in international competitions," says Andy. "I've also been arranging some of the compositions."



Paul Mpunga '21

Classes with **Dr. David Aiello**, Associate Professor of Biology, spurred Paul Mpunga's interest in research, and he joined the Aiello lab in summer 2018. Since then, the Biology major and Neuroscience minor has been part of a student team examining complex interactions that affect cells' calcium regulation. He presented his research at the Texas Genetics Society annual meeting in 2019 and the Austin College Student Scholarship Conference in 2020.

Emily Aller '21

Cancer research is a focus for Emily Aller, double major in Biology and Anthropology. "My work has the potential to inform development of new chemotherapies," she says. She is building on the continuum of over 60 students mentored in the Barton lab in the study of how protein breakdown in cells leads to disease. Emily's CREATE experience has included additional research at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and presentations across the country.



TRANSFORMED

SUCCESS INITIATIVE MEETS STUDENT NEEDS



By Leigh-Ellen Romm

Success is as varied and nuanced as the people who define it. Being the best, the first, the richest come to mind. Clearing hurdles, influencing opinion, or solving problems also ring true. Is it an outcome or is it a process? Success is complicated.

“The *narrow* definition of college success, I suppose, is that students are retained and they graduate on time,” said **Dr. Karla McCain**, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Chemistry. “I think at Austin College, we believe that student success is more than that. We mean that students have the kind of quality, deep-learning experiences that are the hallmark of an Austin College education. We want our students to do more than just meet requirements. We want

them to have a life-changing experience, and that’s all part of what student success is here.”

Austin College wants its students to not only complete college but also be transformed by the learning experience.

To help fulfill that intention, Austin College has welcomed **Traci Howard Moore** as Director of Student Success and Transitions within its Academic Affairs Division. Moore’s professional experience in higher education includes work in admissions, career counseling, and development of persistence in underrepresented students. She has a bachelor’s degree in Social Work from University of Nebraska at Omaha and a master’s degree in Educational Leadership from San Diego State University.

She arrived on campus in August 2020 to develop the new program. At the same time, she has helped prepare students for on-campus learning with COVID precautions in place and

synchronous remote learning for students who elected that option.

Vice President of Academic Affairs **Dr. Beth Gill** said, “The Student Success Initiative is designed to be a data-driven, proactive, holistic, and comprehensive student-centric strategy that will impact how we recruit, enroll, orient, advise, and support students at Austin College.”

Gill said that at the core of the program is an overall, data-driven strategy for early identification of students’ needs based on an analysis of what is known about their academic performance, and social and experiential engagement.

Chartered nearly 175 years ago, Austin College has always expected success for its students. How is it different in 2021? “The students have changed,” Moore said. “Student bodies have become more diverse, especially at Austin College with more representation of first-generation college students and students of color.”

Demographics from 2019 show a minority majority of 54.2% for first-year, first-time Austin College students and 52.6% minority for the student body overall. McCain agreed with Moore and points out that Austin College has many more students now who come from family backgrounds that don’t include any college or, if the parents or siblings have attended college, not at private, liberal arts schools.

Moore said, “Colleges have realized that they need to provide support to help students fill in areas where they may be deficient or need a little bit of help—not only with content but with study skills and social connections.”

She continued, “I think student success now is not just defined by what the student does—but has positioned schools to look at what we do to make sure we are providing and helping the students find success in their terms—understanding that we have to meet the students where they are.”



Traci Howard Moore
Director of Student Success and Transitions

THE INTERVENTION TEAM

RESIDENCE LIFE

STUDENT LIFE

ACADEMIC SKILLS CENTER

SCARBROUGH CENTER
FOR WRITING

CAREER SERVICES

HEALTH SERVICES

COUNSELING SERVICES

ATHLETICS ACADEMIC
ADVISING

HEALTH SCIENCE ADVISING

At Austin College, success is for all—not just those who know a secret or have a key. Here, it is possible for everyone to be featured in their own success story.

“Once students who would benefit from targeted proactive support are identified, Traci coordinates the support strategy and provides the leadership necessary to broaden and deepen academic support services and student life connections between departments,” Gill said. “She creates the infrastructure and support for students to identify and achieve their academic goals. Much like a case manager in a clinical setting, Traci takes a comprehensive and holistic view of each student’s particular needs and coordinates the support they need to resolve academically related student challenges.”

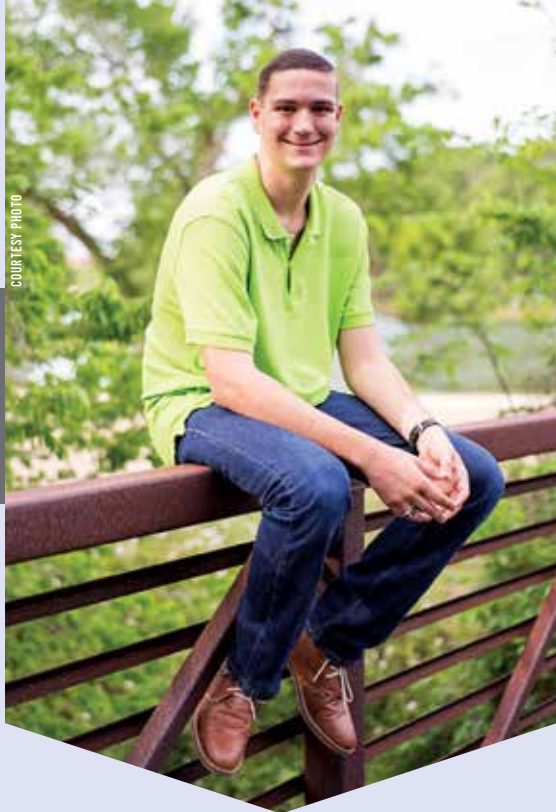
Moore’s role enables her to transcend divisional boundaries, so the team works proactively before the student loses confidence and is unable to recover. This collaboration includes an early alert referral program designed to expedite support.

“As we’re building this program, it’s pretty broad in terms of the areas of focus,” Moore said. “The intervention team and faculty can submit an alert about a student who is struggling in class. That alert comes to me and we look at these students and develop a plan to help them. I coordinate that process.”

“It’s not usually just that the student needs tutoring, it also may be that the student is dealing with a family issue, mental health, or may not feel connected,” Moore continued. “All these things could be happening and may be impacting their academic performance.” The intervention team includes Residence Life, Student Life, Academic Skills Center, Scarbrough Center for Writing, Career Services, Health Services, Counseling Services, Athletics Academic Advising, and Health Science Advising.

Moore said, “I always try to preface my introduction and outreach to them with my name, title, and what I do, and here’s why I’m contacting you. I think students are relieved in some way. I tell students that, we wouldn’t be here right now, having this conversation if your faculty member

Continued on Page 40



LEARNING & LEADING

Miles Ledet '22

Major: History

Minor: Education

Miles Ledet found the Academic Skills Center before he located his residence hall as a first-year student at Austin College.

"I think that was something I knew I was going to need," he said. "I was blessed to have a high school that kept me involved with learning accommodations. I was always well informed with what was going on. So, I started doing the paperwork before coming to campus."

ASC staff members reported work with 460 students in Fall Term 2020, which is 36% of the student body. In non-COVID years, the percentage of students hovers closer to half of the student body. This fall, 160 of the students supported by the

ASC are registered for ADA services and accommodations. "It's a very inviting place," said Miles. "If you come often enough, staff members Laura Ramsey and Kate Boessen will get to know you." The ASC has regularly scheduled review sessions, peer tutoring by appointment in person or online, and the opportunity to have a standing appointment for academic coaching.

Miles now works as a Peer Tutor, specializing in organization and time management for students who are on the autism spectrum or have learning differences. "I want to teach fourth grade, so I'm getting a good sense of how to work with people who aren't necessarily struggling academically, but don't know how to do things that may be common sense to others." He also assists with essay-based writing.

Miles plans to apply for the Austin Teacher Program and take his place at the front of a fourth-grade classroom.

As of early November, the **five most tutored subjects** in Fall Term 2020 were **Chemistry** with 184 hours, **Math** with 62 hours, **Organization** with 61 hours, **Spanish** with 49 hours, and **Biology** with 46.



Dr. Lisha Daniels Storey, Scarbrough Writing Center Director and Assistant Professor of Writing, works with a group in an outdoor classroom space on campus. Collaboration, face to face or virtually, is a key component of developing bonds that support student persistence and success in both academic and personal areas.

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUMBERT

didn't care about you. Someone is concerned and trying to make your journey happen."

Even under pressure and during times of difficulty, students can learn, grow, and transform with guidance from the intervention team.

Meanwhile, McCain regularly conducts research with students and faculty about their experiences at Austin College to understand the students' needs and assess their risk levels for success.

"My model is built on academic variables and one financial variable—like GPA and credit hours, and account balance. Those help identify the students who have quantifiable challenges. The other important work we've done is qualitative," she said. "In spring 2020, I did a lot of interviewing of faculty mentors who had Communication/ Inquiry classes and who had students who did not

come back for a second year. I asked them, 'Why do you think that student didn't come back?'" she said. "Getting to some of the *why* is very informative and important in our thinking about this initiative."

"It turns out, I routinely heard that some students were doing well academically and were really engaged in their courses—yet they left the College. A lot of them fell into this category of students who were not athletes, weren't Greek, weren't science majors. They never seemed to really find their social niche or *their people*," McCain said.

McCain says that research conducted since COVID shows that students are concerned about their futures. "Far and away, the thing that holds the most interest right now is what they're going to do when they graduate," she said. "Even in the

POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE

The **Scarbrough Writing Center** has **17 Peer Writing Assistants**, with **193 appointments** between September 1 and October 31, in addition to visiting classrooms and organizing remote writing events for students.

midst of everything going on, they are telling me they are struggling with time management and organization—but that’s not actually what they want to learn about. They want to learn about career exploration.”

This research is informing communication and programming to build a strong foundation for all Austin College students. McCain listed several ideas for the future, such as adding a social aspect to the Honors program, teaching financial literacy, providing broader programming about mental well-being, and developing work-study jobs that help students learn to use professional competencies while working on campus.

At Austin College, success is for all—not just those who know a secret or have a key. Here, it is possible for everyone to be featured in their own success story.

All students and their families have access to the new Student Success webpage at www.austincollege.edu/ss. The page introduces and links to many offices dedicated to supporting students. Students can make appointments for assistance in many areas from physical and mental health, academic and writing tutoring, and more. There are also downloadable resources for time management and study skills, and student-produced videos with firsthand tips from peer tutors.

“We are improving tools and proactively communicating with students to create an efficient referral process and coordinated case management system,” Gill said. “Ultimately, our efforts will improve student retention, persistence, and graduation rates.”

With the work of the Student Success and Transitions office, students at Austin College can emerge strong, multi-faceted, and transformed—like diamonds. ■



WATCH FOR RISING CONFIDENCE

BEFORE

the Scarbrough Writing Center session
18.65% felt VERY CONFIDENT
about their ability to complete the task.

.....
36% felt CONFIDENT

CONFIDENCE LEVELS OF SCARBROUGH WRITING CENTER SURVEY RESPONDENTS

AFTER

the Scarbrough Writing Center session
50.6% felt VERY CONFIDENT
about their ability to complete the task.

.....
42.3% felt CONFIDENT

That's 92.9% of respondents leaving the session feeling CONFIDENT.

Confidence in applying what they learned to future writing:
50.6% VERY CONFIDENT / 44.2% CONFIDENT



An Expert in the House

By Leigh-Ellen Romm

PHOTOS BY NICHOLAS HUMBERT

Saritha Bangara Helps Shape College COVID-19 Policy

Every morning, Monday through Friday, members of the President's COVID-19 Health Task Force pull up to the big table in the board room to discuss what's new—new in science, new in testing, and new cases of COVID-19 on campus. There, along with the administrators and staff, is **Dr. Saritha Bangara**, Co-Director of the Public Health Program and Assistant Professor of Public Health, who has become the expert, the voice, and the face of COVID-19 messaging on campus.

Saritha joined the Austin College faculty in 2015 as a Visiting Professor, teaching "Introduction to Public Health" alongside Professor Emeritus of Biology George Diggs, who had a vision for a new Public Health Program. While still a Ph.D. student of Epidemiology at University of North Texas Health Science Center, Saritha helped focus that vision into a reality—a reality that has grown into one of Austin College's top majors.

Epidemiology combines Saritha's desire to

work with people with her interests in pathology, disease process, and statistics. She says that while doing research at Mayo Clinic she realized that 12 hours a day in the lab, although interesting, was not for her. People are important to her, and teaching fills her desire for interaction. In 2016, Saritha became a tenure-track faculty member and co-director, with Diggs, of the Public Health Program. Although her career in higher education and public health has had a fairly recent start, it is just in time for a global pandemic.

"In epidemiology school they talk a lot of pandemics," she said. "You know, they talk about the Spanish flu and even HIV, but I did not imagine that I would have this experience of working with this new data. As weird as it sounds, it's kind of exciting to have this opportunity."

In January 2020, novel coronavirus and COVID-19 began to make its way to the newscasts and headlines. "Honestly in January, I didn't think it was going to be this bad," Saritha said.

“However, by March, we knew it was going to be an explosion of cases. It’s a terrible time for a lot of people, but I feel like we are trying to make a difference and are able to do so with education. If we want to prevent deaths and infections, prevention stems from understanding,” she said.

At Austin College, Saritha works with the COVID-19 Health Task Force to educate the community and enforce protocols that have kept students, staff, and faculty safe. After students left campus in March 2020, the team took the time necessary to prepare for their return in fall.

“From June through August, testing was still not widely available,” she said. “We were not able to accomplish as much from an epidemiological perspective then. But, so much has happened in such a short time,” she said. As an epidemiologist on the Health Task Force, Saritha blurs the lines between faculty and administration as she contributes her expertise to important policymaking for the College.

“I feel very comfortable,” she said. “I think here, if you can justify and show data about why you think something will work, it is easy. One thing I pushed for the entire summer was, we have to test,” she said. “The masks, distancing, and hand washing are great. But, testing does pick out

the asymptomatic people who are walking around with their friends and with the virus. If not for testing, it’s really hard to identify that.”

The campus had only 22 cases between mid-September when testing became available and Thanksgiving Break. A communication campaign of signs, flyers, reminders through the College’s

AC Mobile App, and videos set on repeat in major campus buildings helped remind students of the necessary protocols: wear a mask, wash your hands, and stay at least six feet apart. In a video sent to students and their parents, Saritha herself delivers a warm, yet firm,

message regarding behavior that can lead to exposure, such as parties. Just don’t, she says.

Then she introduced one of the most powerful influences of all, peer pressure. In October, the College launched the ‘Roos Care Public Health Ambassador Program, with Saritha as advisor. The program provides guidance from students to students about healthy behaviors and social norms related to COVID-19. Six students were selected from applicants to educate and empower others about healthy decision-making through helpful and non-threatening exchanges.

Saritha expects ‘Roos Care Ambassadors to continue long after COVID-19 is under control. “We anticipate after COVID, which will be awhile,



there will be plenty to do. The ambassadors will work to inform their peers on the health dangers of tobacco and alcohol. When flu season comes, the ambassadors will educate students about how to stay healthy regardless of the season or the temptations.”

“I can tell students all I want about the risks of alcohol use,” Saritha explained. “But, when it comes from a peer, they can get a conversation going. We can continue the ambassador program in many ways. I don’t see it ending.”

For an epidemiologist, a pandemic is a bit of an adrenaline rush—but not one that anyone wants to go on forever. “This is the busiest semester of my life, even more than my last as a Ph.D. student,” she said. Even with teaching responsibilities, supervising the ambassadors, attending daily task force meetings, and hosting weekly COVID-19 information sessions via Zoom, Saritha has a new research project coming up—completely unrelated to COVID.

In early November 2020, she was awarded a \$90,000-plus grant from The Discovery Foundation for her project, “Women’s Health Education for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence at the Grayson Crisis Center.” Studies have shown that women who report a history of domestic abuse are at greater risk for a variety of illnesses, such as heart disease and cervical cancer.

Saritha and her team of student researchers, working in partnership with Grayson Crisis Center, will conduct focus groups with Crisis Center clients to learn about their health issues and develop interactive health education modules. This will benefit the clients, the Crisis Center, and the students who will have a learning opportunity usually reserved for graduate-level work.

While others may be wondering if COVID-19 will ever end, Saritha is capitalizing on the opportunity to do what she does best and enjoys most—learning about disease and working with people to keep them healthy. ■

'Roos Care Public Health Ambassadors

These students were selected as 'Roos Care Ambassadors to educate and empower their peers about healthy decision-making through helpful and non-threatening exchanges.



Mariam Abeje '22
Murphy, Texas
Major: Health Care Administration
Minor: Chemistry



Sushma Pai '22
McKinney, Texas
Major: Public Health
Minor: Accounting



Abiel Cardenas-Botello '21
Brownsville, Texas
Major: Public Health
Minors: Spanish and Nonprofit Organizations & Public Service



Harsha Tamtam '22
Seguin, Texas
Major: Biochemistry
Minors: Mathematics and Classics



Sarah Joseph '22
Sunnyvale, Texas
Major: Health Care Administration
Minors: Chemistry and Biology



Kathy Tran '22
Garland, Texas
Major: Health Care Administration
Minors: Chemistry and Biology



A Voice for Good Health

By Vickie S. Kirby

During summer 2020, **Jeff Levin, M.D., '79** was sometimes called the “Dr. Fauci of East Texas.” The doctor who spent his career at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler (UTHSC–Tyler) became the area’s voice for public health and safety.

Since 2014, Dr. Levin had served as the Local Health Authority for Smith County, but when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, he became a tireless voice to keep the public informed with updated health and scientific information. He was instrumental in the Emergency Operation Center co-led by the City of Tyler and Smith County, and at the forefront of keeping leaders informed to best serve their citizens.

Additionally, as the designated “Responsible Official” for the Public Health Laboratory of East Texas, Levin oversaw the laboratory during its transformation to a COVID-19 testing center for patients all over East Texas, working to ensure that the lab prioritized testing procedures so that medical professionals, first responders, and vulnerable patients could obtain accurate results.

Though Levin considered the Dr. Fauci reference an extreme honor, he said it exaggerated his role—though he definitely believes in following science and basing decisions on evidence. Others see the wisdom of his words.

In July, Levin was a 2020 co-recipient of the W.T. “Doc” Ballard Award for excellence in public health, given by the Northeast Texas Public Health District as its highest accolade for outstanding service.

After a career with UTHSC–Tyler that included many roles, from Professor to Vice President for Academic Affairs to Provost, Levin retired in August 2020. Originally, it was the center’s Occupational Lung Clinic and work with asbestos disease that drew him to the Health Science Center. He didn’t plan to stay long. Thirty-two years later as he retired, he and his wife, fellow ‘Roo Ginny **Harleston '79**, look forward to new adventures together. ■

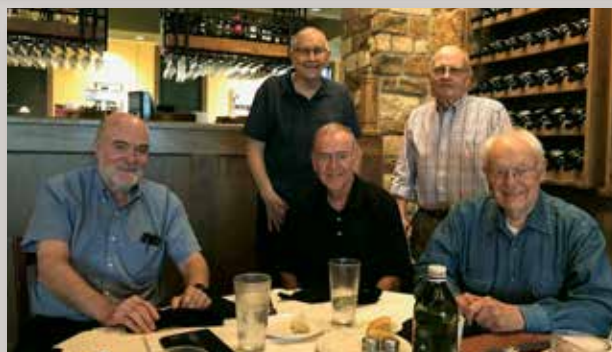
Jeff graduated from Austin College in 1979 and headed to The University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio, graduating in 1983. He then completed a residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Missouri and a residency in Occupational Medicine at the University of Kentucky, while earning a master’s degree in Public Health. He is board certified in both specialties of medicine and holds a doctorate in Public Health (DrPH) in the areas of Epidemiology and Environmental Health.



Audrey Rose '18 is shown with some of the third grade students who captured her heart during her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in the Canary Islands during 2019-2020. For 2020-2021, she has been selected as the Fulbright Cultural and Pedagogy Mentor for the Canary Islands. She says she is "incredibly fortunate to have another year in the city of Las Palmas on Gran Canaria, *el continente en miniatura* (The Miniature Continent)" and work with wonderful students, teachers, and Fulbrighters.



College Week at Robertson Elementary in Frisco ISD brought out the 'Roos from among the teachers and administrators! Celebrating their alma mater, left to right, are **Jennifer Jackson Bordelon '02** (MAT '03), third grade; **Emily Campbell '20** (MAT '21), first grade; **Rachel Sartor '18** (MAT '19), third grade; and **Dr. Kyla Parker Prusak '04** (MAT '05), principal.



Months ago, when 'Roos could still gather, this group met regularly for conversation and to share a few memories. Left to right, the alumni are, standing, **Jim Jecker '57** and **Frank Seaman '59**; and, seated, **Ira Anderson '58**, **Bob Nolan '58**, and **David Fox '58**. **Mike Murray '58** stepped away to shoot the photo. The group is sometimes joined by **Joe Turner '58** and **Bill Walker**, who taught on campus in the mid-1950s, according to Murray.

- Page 55 **'ROO LEGACIES**
- Page 56 **ALUMNI BOOKSHELF**
- Page 58 **'ROO-MATES**
Recent Weddings
- Page 60 **JOEYS**
Additions to the 'Roo Family



Golden 'Roos **Carol Jordan Taylor '69** and **Danny Taylor '67** celebrated 50 years of marriage in 2020.

'ROONOTES

1965

Price Smith marked 50 years as an attorney in fall 2020 and decided to take down his shingle. In a Wichita Falls newspaper article, he said he had always wanted to be a trial attorney, so he spent his life in work he loved. He said he is retiring now for health reasons.

1967

Larry Francell has compiled a history of Austin College's Pi Chi Epsilon fraternity, with the help of many of his fraternity brothers. Alumni interested in a copy should contact him at larry.francell@sbcglobal.net or P.O. Box 2176, Fort Davis, TX 79734.

1972

Gregory West earned a Diploma in Anglican Studies at Bexley Seabury Seminary at the University of Chicago in May 2020. He is semi-retired after 38 years of practicing Emergency Medicine, specializing in rural safety net hospitals. He and his wife, Cynthia, live in Brandenburg, Kentucky. Holding a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, he also is a Licensed Lay Reader and preacher in his home Episcopal parish, conducting services once a month for the past 10 years. He earned a Ph.D. in Physiology and

Biophysics as well as a medical degree from the University of Louisville.

1973

Gary C. Johnson, Partner with Reed Smith law firm, splits time between Houston and Austin, adding the expanding Austin



office to his area of work in the firm's Energy and Natural Resources Group. He handles major energy and infrastructure deals that span the globe and the energy spectrum and has more than four decades of experience as a leading lawyer in the oil and gas industry, having served as In-House Counsel for three energy companies before moving to private practice.

1977

Claude Webb was named Executive Director of Administrative Services for Melissa High School in 2020, having spent 10 years as Girls Athletic Director. He joined Melissa ISD in 2007, initially serving as an Athletic Coordinator, Basketball Coach, Cross Country Coach, and Government and Economics teacher at Melissa High School.

1981

Virginia Wells, M.D., is the Chief Medical Officer, Director of Medical Services, and Team Physician to William & Mary's Tribe Athletics program. She moved



to Athletics in 2019 after serving 11 years as Director of William & Mary's Student Health Center. Prior to her work at the university, she served as Assistant Professor of Medicine and Hospital Epidemiologist at the Medical College of Virginia. She also had practiced in the Williamsburg area. When COVID-19 ended athletics competition, she found her specialties in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases allowed her to serve as an educational resource to colleagues throughout the university about how to do their jobs safely.

1982

Charla Glass Aldous is co-founder of Aldous/Walker Law Firm in Dallas. The firm was honored as a 2020 Elite Trial Lawyers Law Firm of the Year in the dram shop category by American Lawyer Media and The National Trial Lawyers.

1983

Kayoko Orita Tanaka now lives in Yokohama, Japan.

1984

Rodney Moore continues to receive accolades for his work in law. He was named to Texas Best Lawyers 2020 and to The Best Lawyers in America for Corporate Law in Mergers and Acquisitions Law, for which recognition is based on peer-review surveys. At the international law firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges, Rodney is Co-Managing Partner of the Dallas office and a Partner in the firm's Private Equity practice. He also spends significant time in the firm's Houston office.

1988

Helen Lowman has published her dissertation *Building Renewed Relevance: Portraits of CEOs Rebranding Iconic Nonprofit Organizations*. The research looked particularly at the leaders' drive for innovation and the practices they incorporated for the successful rebrand. Helen completed her Ph.D. at Antioch University's Graduate School of Leadership and Change. She has been President and CEO of Keep America Beautiful since 2017. She has more than 20 years of leadership experience in the areas of international diplomacy and development, youth engagement, environmental education, disaster resilience, global leadership, volunteerism, social justice, and human rights.

CAPTURING DEDICATED SERVICE ON CANVAS



John Deckert '72 received a 2020 Marine Corps Heritage Foundation Award for portrayal of Marine Corps history, traditions, and culture through photography, art, documentaries, journalism, poetry, and nonfiction and fiction writing. John's 2017 to 2019 art creations received The Colonel John W. Thomason Jr. Award for combat art.

Each of the 19 winners received a gold medallion and a commemorative brick along the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park pathway adjacent to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia. The museum's permanent collection includes 35 of John's commissioned military paintings.

John and his wife, **Anne Williams**, met at Austin College before she transferred to UT Austin. They found each other 35 years later and have been happily married since. They live in Santa Rosa, California, where the prolific artist has recently completed paintings of many of the first responders who battled the wildfires there.



1988 (continued)

Andrew “Thomas” Smith is owner and partner with the Hard Smoke BBQ catering company of Frisco. The company provides gourmet food for any event, thanks to an executive chef Thomas calls “world class.” The company serves North Texas.

1989

Michelle Frymire joined CWT, a business-to-business travel management company in May 2019 as Executive Vice



President and Chief Finance Officer. In September 2020, the company created

three new global operating units, and Michelle became President of the Strategy and Transformation unit, overseeing areas of finance, technology, talent and performance, enterprise projects, and strategy. She remains CWT’s Chief Financial Officer. She has nearly 20 years of travel industry experience, with CFO roles at Starwood Vacation Ownership and Delta Technology (a division of Delta Airlines). Previously a member of the Texas

Women’s Foundation Economic Leadership Council, Michelle now sits on the board for Family Gateway in Dallas.

Nick Kagal is Vice President of Health Information Technology at Mitchell Martin, Inc. The New York-based organization provides nationwide staffing and recruiting services through staff augmentation, placement, direct hire, and payroll services. Nick is leading and developing the company’s new Health Information Technology.

Bill Ucherek II re-established Ucherek Law Firm in Dallas, Texas, and joined McCullough Mediation in Dallas in December 2019. He successfully completed the Basic and Family Mediation Training courses in compliance with the Texas Mediation Trainers’ Roundtable Standards. Also, he and his wife, **Brenda Montfort-Ucherek ’88**, enjoy traveling between Lake Texoma, Taos, and Dallas since their three boys—Nicholas, Jared, and Walker—have left the nest.

1992

Jarrod Foerster took office in June 2020 as elected public

member of the Board of Trustees of the Texas Bar Foundation. Jarrod is the



Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer of Flagship Capital

Partners in Houston, Texas, overseeing all capital formation, investor relations, and asset management functions. Before co-founding Flagship in 2003, Jarrod was Acquisitions Officer with Camden Property Trust and began his career in Real Estate Investing as Financial Analyst for Rainwater, Inc. Jarrod was appointed by the Supreme Court of Texas in 2017 and unanimously confirmed by the Texas Senate to a three-year term as a public member of the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas. He served as chair of the Audit and Finance Committee and as a member of the Executive, Budget, and Legislative Policy Committees.

1993

Sallye Fogarty Norris was named the 2020 Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association

(TEPSA) Region 10 Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year in recognition of exceptional leadership in the day-to-day operations of schools. Assistant principal at Taylor Elementary in Frisco ISD, she has worked in education for 18 years, teaching all elementary grades except fourth. “I want students to trust me so that they have another person they can turn to here at Taylor to help guide them to make good choices,” Sallye said in a news release. “Building relationships while keeping students accountable is a pillar of how I go about my day.”

1994

Jay Dew was named the Edward R. Campbell Press Director of Texas A&M University Press in February 2020. He had served as the Interim Director since fall 2019. Jay began his publishing career at the University of Oklahoma Press and had served as Editor in Chief at Texas A&M University Press since 2016. He holds a Ph.D. in American History and is active in the Western History Association, Texas State Historical Association, Western Writers of America, and other professional



EXPLORE THE CHISHOLM TRAIL

Scott Metelko ’88 became Executive Director of Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan, Oklahoma, in February 2020. He founded an entertainment design and fabrication firm creating themed environments in 1993 and has had extensive experience in museums, theme parks, and entertainment venues. Before the move to Duncan, he and his wife lived in Florida, where his work included Marco Island Historical Museum and Naples Depot Museum. He had previously been Executive Director for the Mid-America Air Museum in Liberal, Kansas.

1994 (continued)

organizations. "Stewardship of the university's publishing imprint is a duty that I approach with deep respect, and I will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend it," Dew said. Texas A&M University Press, founded in 1974, publishes 50 to 60 books annually over a wide range of subjects.

1995

Brian Grandjean is a Licensed Professional Counselor



and has worked in the mental health field for more than 15 years. He completed

a Ph.D. in Marital and Family Therapy in 2016 from Texas Woman's University. As the Director and Clinician for Emerald Palace Practice in Allen, Texas, he treats a wide range of family therapy issues, with a specialty in the treatment of high-functioning children and adults with autism. He also works with individuals who exhibit signs of Asperger Syndrome and Social Communication Disorder. He also is the Founder and Executive Director of Tracks

4 Kids, a nonprofit that runs social skills programs for children on the autism spectrum.

1996

Stephanie McDonald, Chief of Staff at Central Health in Austin, Texas, since 2015, has been named Vice President of Enterprise Alignment and Coordination for the organization that assists low-income residents to access health care. She collaborates with Central Health's affiliates and partners to support strategic work priorities of the health care district across Travis County. She previously had been Vice President of Public Policy for Austin Chamber of Commerce and earlier, Executive Director of Waller Creek Conservancy.

1998

Stephanie Barnes joined the Collin County-based Plunk Smith law firm in spring 2020. With 15 years of



experience in business and civil litigation in state and federal courts

throughout Texas, Stephanie has been recognized on the

annual Texas Super Lawyers Rising Stars list of the state's top young lawyers and has achieved an AV Preeminent Peer Rating in the Martindale-Hubbell legal directory. She is a former officer of the Eastern District of Texas Bar Association and member of the Eastern District of Texas Local Rules Advisory Committee.

Timothy Andrew Kennedy

was ordained as an Episcopal priest on January 16, 2020. He became Chaplain of the Episcopal School of Dallas in 2019 while in the final stages of his priestly discernment. He completed ordination requirements in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C., and was ordained as a Transitional Deacon in June 2019. In addition to his chaplain role, his priestly vows allowed him to begin a sacramental ministry at ESD.

1999

Justin Miller, City Administrator in Lakeville, Minnesota, since 2014,



received the 2020 James F. Miller Leadership Award from the League of

Minnesota Cities. The annual award is the league's highest honor for appointed city officials. Justin is a credentialed manager through the International City/County Management Association and a former board member for the League of Minnesota Cities. He has served on the Downtown Lakeville Business Association and Lakeville Arenas Board, and as the past chair of the Dakota Communications Center Board. The League of Minnesota Cities serves more than 830 member cities through advocacy, education and training, policy development, risk management, and other services.

Caryn Schenewerk is the Vice President of Regulatory and Government Affairs for Relativity Space, the world's first autonomous rocket factory and launch services leader for satellites. She is responsible for the development and execution of the company's federal, state, and local government strategy. She previously served as Senior Counsel and Senior Director of Spaceflight Policy at SpaceX, where she focused on civil and commercial space.

NEWSOM IS PRESIDENT AT SOSU



Thomas Newsom '91 became President of Southeastern Oklahoma State University in April 2020. Before assuming the presidency, he spent a year at A&M Commerce as Interim Vice President for Student Success and Dean of Students. He previously spent five years as President of Mesalands Community College in Tucumcari, New Mexico. He had also worked in numerous leadership roles at The Art Institutes, including a six-year stint as President of The Art Institute of Dallas and four years as Vice Chancellor at South University. He began his career in Sports Information, working at Baylor University and Northwestern State University before serving as Director of Media Relations for the Southland Conference.

2000

Omar J. Alaniz became a Partner in 2020 at the international law firm Reed Smith's Financial Industry Group in Dallas. A restructuring and bankruptcy lawyer with more than 17 years of experience, Omar left his role as Partner at Baker Botts for the new position. In 2019, he joined the National Bankruptcy Conference, which advises Congress on bankruptcy law, and is a member of the board of the Dallas Hispanic Law Foundation. He served



several years as an Adjunct Professor at SMU's Dedman School of Law.

Arturo Lopez, who now uses the last name **Ballesteros**, spent several years working for the legislature in Austin before his return to North Texas. He lives in Plano and works for the North Texas Toll Authority as Director of Government Affairs. He is happy to be a proud 'Roo living a short hop from campus.

Reid Heim joined the football coaching staff at Guyer High School in Denton, Texas, as Defensive Coordinator in 2020. He previously was Director of Quality Control and Special Teams with the University of Colorado-Boulder. Before the move to Colorado, he was Linebacker Coach at Dallas Jesuit and was the Assistant Head Coach at Richardson.

Amy Poling Sutherlun MAT '01 presented the sermon, "Benediction," for Austin College's Virtual Baccalaureate Service



May 16, 2020. She and her husband, **Joshua '01**, have served as co-pastors

of First Presbyterian Church of San Marcos, Texas, since 2013. They have four children.

2001

Katie Battaia Clark became a Partner at Thomas Coburn in February 2020. She has broad commercial litigation experience related to troubled and insolvent businesses and has represented companies, fiduciaries, secured and



unsecured creditors, and lenders. She also has worked with

constituencies from every segment of the capital structure in federal and state court reorganization, liquidation, and litigation proceedings. She was named to the *Lawdragon* media list of 500 Leading U.S. Bankruptcy and Restructuring Lawyers for 2020.

2002

DeCorian Hailey began his leadership as Principal at Braswell High School for



the Fall 2020 Term. He was appointed to his new role in March

2020. At the time of his selection, he was Associate Principal at Guyer High School, where he had served for five years. He previously was a teacher and coach in DeSoto ISD before moving to Garland, Frisco, and Lake Dallas ISDs.

Chris Pendergrass became President of Ulrich Barn Builders of Texas in July 2019. He brought 20 years of experience in manufacturing and 10 years of full P&L responsibility, leading family owned manufacturing businesses through extensive growth, cost reductions, and leadership transitions. In addition to his Austin College degree in Chemistry, he earned a degree in Chemical Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis and an MBA from the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin. Chris is an active member of YPO and serves on the Manufacturing Excellence Network board. Ulrich Barn Builders is a leading manufacturer of storage sheds and lifestyle structures such as cabin shells, playhouses, and finished cabins.

Stacey Shaw became Technology and Transactions Counsel at American First



Finance in Dallas at the end of 2019. She has been a Licensed Attorney since

November 2005, completing Texas Tech University School

LIVING OUT HER MO-RANCH MEMORIES

Allison M. Harris '05 is Vice President of Development for Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly, where she leads the ranch's giving program. Established in 1949, Mo-Ranch is a camp and conference center in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, open to all to meet, stay, play, and pray. The 500 acres of Mo-Ranch are nestled along the north fork of the Guadalupe River in Hunt, Texas. Allison grew up going to Mo-Ranch, and it remains a special place for her. Even before remote work was the norm, she worked mostly from her home in Austin and with donors in other Texas cities.





MASUCCI HELPS CITY OF PLANO EARN EPA WATERSENSE AWARD

Katie Masucci '11 is Senior Environmental Education Coordinator for the City of Plano, Texas, focusing on the implementation of water efficiency and water quality education and outreach. She was pleased to have a part in the City of Plano earning the EPA WaterSense Partner of the Year Award in 2019, one of only three such awards. Plano also received the Partner Award in 2018 and had received another recognition from the organization in 2017. Katie prepared the applications and accepted the honors on behalf of the city at a ceremony in October 2019 in Las Vegas at the WaterSmart Innovations Conference.

2002 (continued)

of Law that spring. She and her twin boys, 4, live in Grapevine, Texas, with their recently adopted German shepherd mix.

2004

Sara Anne Giddings is Chair-Elect of the Texas Young Lawyers Association Executive Committee for the 2020-2021 bar year. Owner of Giddings Law Firm in San Angelo, Texas, Sara's practice involves assisting businesses, including oil and gas service companies, with compliance, master service agreements, contracts, employee handbooks, and taxes. She also specializes in estate planning, business planning, probate, and tax law.

2005

John Anness co-founded AR6 Construction & Engineering in April 2019 and serves as Owner/President of Construction. AR6 is a small business general contractor and structural engineering

firm providing design and construction services, with an emphasis on design-build project delivery. The U.S. government is the firm's primary client, with AR6 as General Contractor on multi-discipline construction management projects. Also operating AR6-Cram Roofing JV, John says the group experienced exceptional early-stage growth and has expanded operations beyond Texas.

2007

Edgar Araiza, M.D., joined Methodist Dallas Medical Center, a Level 1 Trauma Center, as Orthopedic Trauma Surgeon in 2018. He had recently completed an Orthopedic Trauma Fellowship at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, where he also served as an Assistant Instructor in Orthopedic Trauma. He completed his residency in Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Kansas School of Medicine after earning his medical degree at The University of Texas Medical School at

Houston. He and his wife, Gloria, now live in the Kessler Park area of Dallas.

David Savage, M.D., was elected to a three-year term on the American Medical Association's Council on Medical Education in June 2020. He is a third-year internal medicine



resident at UC San Diego in 2020-2021. His wife, Elizabeth Frost, began a Ph.D. program in global public health at UCSD and San Diego State University in fall 2020, and the couple relocated to San Diego from Cleveland, Ohio, where David worked the previous two years as a resident at the Cleveland Clinic.

2011

Kristen Sunny is at work in San Francisco, leveraging the power of technology to educate youth and empower women in Malawi to make sustainable change in their

communities. Upon moving to California, she worked in development at Bay Area Discovery Museum in San Francisco. She's since made a career switch, graduated from a Product Design bootcamp, and while looking for a full-time position, has taken on a pro bono project with the Centre for Youth and Development. She recommends Catchafire <https://www.catchafire.org/>, to find similar opportunities based on interests and time commitments.

2012



Hannah Alexander became the Austin, Texas, Staff Attorney for Proyecto Defensa Laboral, a nonprofit organization that empowers low-income workers to achieve fair employment through education, direct services, organization, and

strategic partnerships. She is a longtime ally of Workers Defense and defender of working families in Texas.

2014

Brittnay Connor is a 2020-2021 Teach Plus DFW Policy Fellow, selected by Teach Plus Texas. The highly selective, year-long leadership program allows deepened knowledge of education policy and expanded influence. She also was the 2020 Dallas Rotary Service-Above-Self Elementary Teacher of the Year. In fall 2020, she moved within Dallas ISD to become a third grade self-contained dual language teacher at Geneva Heights IB. There, she pilots Student Voices, a club for elementary students to advocate for their community and school. She also was invited to join the Dallas ISD Association of Hispanic School Administrators.

2015

Taylor Crouch-Dodson is an Analyst for the Office of Performance and Innovation, an internal consulting firm at the City of Minneapolis. The firm's work includes performance management of city services and human-centered design thinking for

improvement of city service processes. In May 2017, Taylor earned a Master in Public Policy degree from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and that fall, married **Kelsey Dodson**. The Crouch-Dodson couple purchased a home in the Ericsson neighborhood of Minneapolis in 2018.

Kusha Mohammadi graduated from The



University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston in May 2020, earning a Ph.D. in Biostatistics with a minor in Epidemiology and breadth in Bioinformatics. His dissertation work addressed an estimation issue for continuous-time semi-Markov models when analyzing categorical outcomes over time. He also accepted a position as a Principal Biostatistician at Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, where he supports early clinical development studies.

2017

Brady Flanery graduated in May 2020 from Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law. There, he was

in the International Law Review Association and interned with Dallas ISD, the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, and the U.S. Department of Labor, and was an extern for the



Honorable Judge Amos Mazzant in the Eastern District of Texas in Sherman. In 2018, Brady studied at Oxford University for the summer semester. He is an associate with Eichelbaum Wardell Hansen Powell & Muñoz, P.C., a school law firm in Plano, Texas.

Michelle Gonzalez graduated in May 2019 from the C.T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston-Main with a master's degree in Accountancy. She completed an audit internship with Grant Thornton during winter 2018 and began working as an External Auditor with Grant Thornton in September 2019. She also is studying to become a licensed CPA in the State of Texas.

Will Kollett was selected during summer 2020 as Girls Basketball Coach at

Grapeland High School in Grapeland, Texas. The team has advanced to the state tournament the past two seasons, and the new coach plans to make that three in a row. Will's first coaching opportunity was as a 2017 midseason interim coach at Broadus High School; he was promoted to Head Coach for the next year. He also coached at Cushing High before accepting this offer. At Grapeland, he also coaches volleyball, which was a new sport for him, but he had confidence his coaching staff would educate him as needed.

2019

Taylor Goyen joined Sul Ross University Athletics in summer 2020 as Assistant Soccer Coach for both the men's and women's programs. Having served as an undergraduate Assistant Coach for the Austin College men's program in 2018-2019, Taylor spent the 2019-2020 season at Schreiner University as Women's Assistant Soccer Coach. Before playing at Austin College, he played at Oachita Baptist University, and the current Sul Ross soccer coach was an assistant coach in that program. Taylor is pleased to work with his former coach. 🦘

MITCHELL WORKS AS LAND USE PLANNER



Evelyn Mitchell '13 lives in Washington, D.C., and works as a Land Use Planner and an Equity Lead for the Department of Planning and Development in Fairfax County, Virginia. She reviews projects for the Public Facilities branch and helps the divisions within her department implement the county's equity policy. Evelyn spent nine weeks in fall 2019 volunteering with the National Building Museum's Design Apprenticeship Program for high school students, which she loved!

ALUMNI SPEAK AT 2020

TEDx AustinCollege



These alumni were among the five speakers for TEDxAustinCollege, offering “Ideas Worth Spreading” on October 3 in Ida Green Communication Center’s new Sally and Jim Nation Theatre before a safely distanced and masked audience.



The Truth About ‘These Kids’ and ‘Those Teachers’

Brittney Connor '14 is a Dallas ISD teacher who has focused her career on making positive change for schools and students on the brink. She shared her perspectives of the truth about “these kids” and “those teachers” so often mentioned in the media. She said that kids and teachers in even the most difficult circumstances are resilient, innovative, and working harder than most know. She also offered advice on how to meaningfully support teachers and kids in the public education system.



Our Differences Are Our Superpowers: Thinking Beyond the ‘Dis’ in Disability

Betsy Walling Furler '89 lives in Houston, Texas, and is the founder and CEO of For All Abilities. She is an expert in employee and student accommodations and a pioneer in the use of mobile apps for individuals with disabilities. Betsy pivoted her training as a speech pathologist into a career in tech, determining how to make technology accessible for people with diverse abilities. She said she has seen time and again that the “dis”abilities people have are really the differences that help them stand above the rest. She believes that differences are superpowers and challenges her audience to adopt that attitude.



Get Your Head in the Game: Let Fear Be Your Fuel

Tim Crossley '20 believes it is fear—fear of the unknown, and fear of failure—that prevents people from achieving their dreams. For Tim, there is no greater teacher than his time on the football field. He shared personal experiences with fear, and how he uses it as a motivator instead of allowing it to hold him back. Tim graduated in May 2020 and is finishing his Master of Arts in Teaching degree in the Austin College Austin Teacher Program. He is in front of the classroom this year, teaching middle school Texas History and coaching football, basketball, and track in Mesquite, Texas.

See all 2020 TEDxAustinCollege talks: www.austincollege.edu/tedx

Continuing Their Family Traditions

The Class of 2024 includes many students following family members into 'RooNation. Several have siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, or grandparents who attended Austin College recently or years ago. Space doesn't allow all of those students to be shown, but most students whose legacy connections are their parents are pictured below.



Olivia Berggren, daughter of Dr. Andy Berggren and Laura Reed Berggren (both '91)



Foster Ellis, son of Scott Ellis '89



Nick Estes, son of Todd Estes '90



Elizabeth Funderburk, daughter of Mindy Birk Funderburk '98



Qyla Johnson, daughter of Palmer Johnson '98



Josh Magers, son of Angela Magers MAT '98 and Bill Magers '85
Brothers are Zachary '21 (far left) and Kennon '23 (middle)



Averial McKinley, daughter of Shelley McKinley '91



Josh Sangalli, son of Dr. Marc Sangalli '88



Abbey Sizemore, stepdaughter of Desirae Castaneda Rowell '00

FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS



Sydney Hardin graduated cum laude with a major in Finance and minor in Accounting in 2020. Her dad, **Bobby Hardin**, graduated cum laude with a degree in Business Administration in 1992.

Bobby started his career at Bank of America in Dallas. Soon after, he earned his Executive MBA degree from The University of Texas at Dallas. Today, he is a Managing Director for the Financial Services Consulting practice at Ernst and Young.

Sydney was a Finance/Accounting Peer Tutor at the Academic Skills Center and a teaching assistant for the Investment Management class. During summer 2019, she interned in Dallas at Texas Capital Bank in the Mortgage Finance division.

In August 2020, Sydney began her career as a Credit Analyst at Texas Capital Bank in Dallas. Continued success to both!

ALUMNI BOOKSHELF



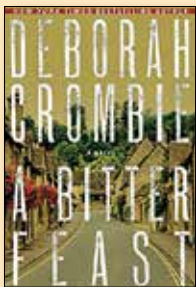
David Marquis '73 has written a novel, *The River Always Wins*, published by Deep Vellum Publishing. The book jacket explains that the book, a lyric essay, “explores the narrative of drops that come together, gather their power, and chisel away the rock to create the course of their lives and our society. Through flood and drought, the river finds a way to something

greater than itself.” It goes on to say that through the “musicality of refrains and short chapters, this prose poem creates a rhythmic understanding of the power of water to both challenge and heal.”

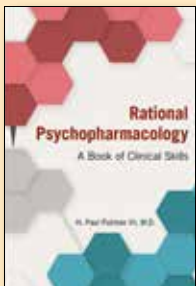


Sam Steele '73 has written, illustrated, and published a book, *On the Road to the Cross*, that includes 20 stories about events he experienced in parish ministry. Learn more at www.upmspi.com. Named a Distinguished Alumnus of Austin College in 2001, Sam has held several Presbyterian pastorates in his career, including Bay City, Spearman, and Terryton,

Texas; Broken Bow, Oklahoma; and DeQueen, Arkansas.

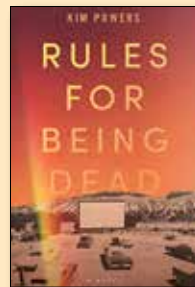


Deborah Darden Crombie '76 released her latest book in October 2019, the 18th in the critically acclaimed Duncan Kinkaid/Gemma James English mystery series. The *New York Times* best-selling author has received several accolades for her work and has loyal readers always anxious for her next novel.



Paul Putman, M.D., '78 has written a new book, *Rational Psychopharmacology: A Book of Clinical Skills*, which was published in June 2020 by American Psychiatric Association Publishing. The book, a clinical companion for mastering and practicing the art and science of psychopharmacology, is designed

to help practitioners in training and practicing clinicians who wish to improve their skills. In the book, Paul acknowledges the influence of Austin College faculty **Dr. Hank Gorman** and **Dr. Shelly Williams** in development of his thinking on the topic. Paul is a psychiatrist and writer in Austin, Texas, and a Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.



Kim Powers '79 announces publication of his latest novel, *Rules for Being Dead*, in August 2020. The publisher called it “a deeply personal, nostalgic, coming-of-age story with a ghostly twist, set in a small Texas town in the 1960s.” The publisher’s materials included, “Early readers called this book a blend of *The Lovely Bones* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, with a hint of *The Last Picture Show*.” Kim is the author of the novels *Capote in Kansas* and *Dig Two Graves*, as well as the memoir *The History of Swimming*, a Barnes & Noble Discover Award winner and Lambda Literary Award finalist for Best Memoir of the Year. He also wrote the screenplay for the indie film *Finding North*. Kim is the Senior Writer for ABC’s much-lauded 20/20. He lives in Manhattan and Asbury Park, New Jersey.



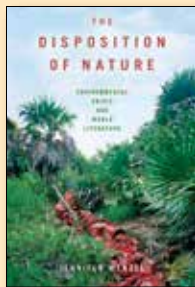
Don Hartshorn '89 announced the release of his first published novel, *The Guilty Die Twice*, in March 2020 by TCK Publishing. A legal thriller, the book summary begins: “Two attorney brothers. Two bullet-riddled corpses. Two sides to the story. ... Ten years ago, a capital murder case in the heart of Texas split the Lynch family in two. Now, estranged lawyer brothers Travis

and Jake Lynch find themselves on opposing sides of the courtroom in a high-profile, grisly double murder case—with another accused criminal’s life on the line.” Don hopes to eventually make a living as a writer, but until that happens, he and his brother-in-law own a consulting business doing IT work.



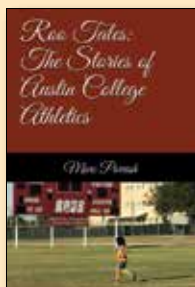
Alyssa Banta '90 wrote and photographed the documentary photo and word book *The Texas Ranch Sisterhood: Portraits of Women Working the Land*, which became available in 2020. For the book, she spent over a year following more than a dozen Texas women “through their

grueling daily routines, from the messy confines of the working chute to the sprawling reaches of the back pasture,” according to the publisher. Alyssa also has purchased two historic houses in Fort Worth’s North Side neighborhood, where she had previously bought several historic houses, apartments, duplexes, and more, all within two miles of downtown. She owns three companies: Rent Historic Fort Worth, Panther City, and Alyssa Banta Photography. She serves on the board of Historic Fort Worth Inc. and is a member of the Austin College Alumni Board.



Jennifer Wenzel '90 has written the book, *The Disposition of Nature: Environmental Crisis and World Literature*, published in 2019 by Fordham University Press. She earlier co-edited *Fueling Culture: 101 Words for Energy and Environment*, a collection of short keyword essays on the intersections between energy and culture that included an entry on Texas. Wenzel is Associate

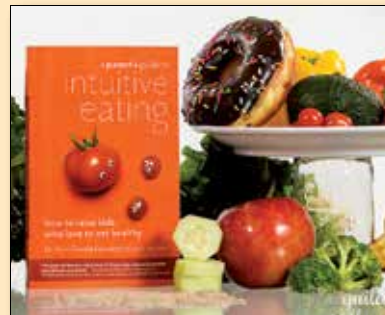
Professor in the Departments of English and Comparative Literature and in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University.



Marc Parrish '92 has finished his first book about Austin College. *'Roo Tales: The Stories of Austin College Athletics* tells of some amazing seasons and personalities from Austin College sports history. The book is available for purchase from Amazon. Marc is working on future books about Austin College, focusing on 'Roo history and Athletic Hall of Honor Legends.

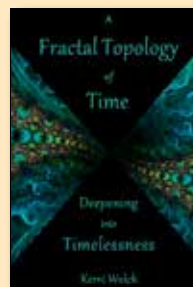
'Roos on social media are likely familiar with Marc's frequent and quite enlightening 'Roo Tales, which appear in the Facebook group

GoRoos. Marc is a member of the Austin College Alumni “A” Athletics Board and a winner of the College's Carroll Pickett Award for most valuable tennis player. He lives in Austin, where he and his wife, Dianne, work at The University of Texas System and raise their two children, Alex and Malia.



Yami Cazorla-Lancaster '01 has written *A Parent's Guide to Intuitive Eating: How to Raise Kids Who Love to Eat Healthy*. Dr. Yami is a board-certified pediatrician,

certified lifestyle medicine physician, certified health and wellness coach, author, and speaker. A passionate promoter of healthy lifestyles, she believes plant-based diets help prevent chronic disease. Her pediatric practice is in Yakima, Washington, where she lives with her husband and two sons.



Kerri Welch '01 has published *A Fractal Topology of Time: Deepening Into Timelessness*, which looks at the science of temporal perception and uses a fractal model of time to bridge qualitative and quantitative understandings. A Ph.D., Kerri teaches Math and Physics for Philosophers and Artists at California Institute of Integral Studies. A self-described

Philosopher of Time, Professor, writer, and astrologer, she lives in Austin, Texas.

2000

Lauren Herring and Zachary Reff were married August 15, 2020, in Charlotte, North Carolina. The outdoor ceremony was officiated by the Reverend Dr. David McKechnie, Austin College Senior Trustee. The newlyweds live in the greater Charlotte area. Lauren has spent the last 10 years in the health care sector and is currently Vice President for Commercial Excellence for a global contract research organization. Zach is a Lean Solutions Manager, delivering continuous process improvement to clients.

2007

David Savage and Elizabeth Frost were married in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on September 20, 2019. The wedding party included Josh Gray of Abilene, Texas, and Mario Sanchez of Houston, Texas. The newlywed couple lives in San Diego, California, where David is completing his final year of internal medicine residency at the University of California San Diego. Elizabeth is beginning a doctoral program in Global Health at UCSD and San Diego State University.

2009

Lisa Simpson and Eric Emery were married COVID-style in a small backyard wedding in front of their parents on June 26, 2020, in Dallas, Texas. Lisa is the Director of Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations at Austin College, and Eric is an android developer at BottleRocket Studios in Dallas. They live in McKinney with their dog, Hobey. Carolyn Stone Wheeler '11 photographed the event.

2010

Emily Bull and Barrett Schmidt were married October 19, 2019, in San Antonio, Texas. Emily's godmother, Sallie Sampsell Watson '78, officiated, and her godfather, Paul Putman '78, attended. The two are longtime friends of Emily's parents, Mary and Steven Bull '78. Among many 'Roos present were attendants Dallas Key and Karen Edwards Key '09 plus their daughter and future 'Roo Lily Ann, who was the flower girl, and attendant Daniel Jackson '10. Emily began work in February 2019 at UT Health San Antonio as a Senior Grant Writer in the Office of Institutional Advancement. She had spent the previous six years living and working in Shirati, Tanzania, as the Director of Operations and Development for Maji Safi Group, a public health NGO. She remains a board member for the NGO.

2011

Saranya Sundaram and Nirav Patel were married September 28, 2019, at the Omni in Frisco, Texas. Saranya had completed a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, with an emphasis in Neuropsychology, at Palo Alto University, including a pre-doctoral internship at Emory University in Adult/Geriatric Neuropsychology. In September 2020, she began a two-year Clinical Neuropsychology postdoctoral fellowship at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. Nirav is a Senior Cybersecurity Analyst at Southwest Airlines. As the relationship between the newlyweds had been mostly long distance since they met five years ago, they are very excited to live in the same city!

Natalie Taylor and Craig Sanders were married on October 26, 2019, in Bernalillo, New Mexico. Leslie Leonard Sorensen and Stephanie Almanza were in the wedding party, and Ashley Hagauer Somers and Ashley Overturf attended. Craig is a writer, and Natalie is pursuing a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Writing Studies at The University of Texas at El Paso.

2016

Cole Caldwell and **Meghan White** were married in November 2019 in Anna, Texas. Cole is a Military Forecasting Analyst at Bell Helicopter and plans to earn an MBA. Meghan received a master's degree in Occupational Therapy in 2018 from The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and works at Children's Health Hospital in Dallas.

Lauren Wheeler and **Robert Hutton '14** were married June 6, 2020, in Wynne Chapel's new Sallie Majors Chapel at Austin College. They had a small, intimate ceremony with 11 people in the space where they first met in 2013 at Sunday Night Worship. Chaplain John Williams '84 officiated, and Katie Bosler-Staton '15 was the photographer. Lauren, who earned a bachelor's degree in Nursing at Oklahoma City University Kramer School of Nursing in 2018, is a Registered Nurse at Sanford Broadway Hospital in Fargo, North Dakota. Robert accepted a position as English teacher at Fargo North High School in the 2020-2021 year, after teaching for five years in Texas.



Zachary Reff and Lauren Herring '00



Elizabeth Frost and David Savage '07



Lisa Simpson '09 and Eric Emery



Emily Bull '10 and Barrett Schmidt



Saranya Sundaram '11 and Nirav Patel



Craig Sanders and Natalie Taylor '11



Cole Caldwell '16 and Meghan White '16



Lauren Wheeler '16 and Robert Hutton '14

2002

Lydia Bean and her husband, Norman Lee, welcomed the birth of their first child, Micah Junhong Bean-Lee, in May 2020. They named him Micah “that he may grow to ‘do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly’ with God” (Micah 6:8).

Lydia is a Fellow at New America and completed a run for the Texas House of Representatives in November 2020. Though votes fell short to win the seat, she is proud of her historic campaign. Norman is a public artist and principal at RE:site Studio.



*Micah Junhong
(Bean-Lee '02)*



*Cora Jane
(Robinson '03)*



*Bradley Harper
(Bucy '06)*



*Faye Elizabeth
(Austew '07)*



Adler Fletcher with dad Clint, mom Macie, and grandparents Danny '78 and Katie Nutt Buck '81 (Buck '07)

2003

Charlie Robinson and **Kristin Orsak Robinson** announce the birth of their third daughter, Cora Jane Robinson, on November 4, 2019. The family, including daughters Tessa, 9, and Ada, 10, lives in Nashville, Tennessee.

Clint Buck and his wife, Macie, welcomed their first child, Adler Fletcher Buck, on July 1, 2020, in San Antonio, Texas. Adler is the first grandchild for Danny '78 and Katie Nutt Buck '81.

Daniel Navarrete and **Beth Meadows Navarrete '08** welcomed their son, Oscar Navarrete, on January 15, 2020. The family lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. When not playing with Oscar, Beth is a Small Animal Veterinarian and Daniel is a Policy Analyst at the U.S. Department of Labor.



*Oscar
(Navarrete '07)*



*Waverly Kate
(Ohr '07)*

2006

John Bucy III and **Molly Daugherty Bucy '07** announce the birth of their daughter, Bradley Harper Bucy, born January 25, 2020. The family lives in Austin, Texas.



*Mabel Lee
(Rylander '07)*



*Raymond Lawrence "Quade"
(Solano '08)*

2007

Kristin (Austin) Austew and **Matthew (Stewart) Austew '08** announce the birth of their daughter, Faye Elizabeth Austew, on April 30, 2020, in Bordentown, New Jersey. (The parents created a new, joint name upon their marriage.) Matt is a Senior Software Engineer with nThrive, and Kristin is Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Bordentown.

Morgan and **JR Ohr** announce the birth of Waverly Kate Ohr on June 6, 2019. She is pictured on her first birthday.

Dean Rylander and **Melanie Ogé Rylander '09** announce the birth of their daughter, Mabel Lee Rylander, on September 12, 2020. Dean and Melanie own two small businesses in Dallas.



*Mary Mason Georgia with big sisters Helen and Daphne
(Anders '09)*



Lily Maree with big brother Henry
(Anderson '10)



Natalie May
(Kuo-Lillie '10)



Luna Rhiannon
(García-Bergeron '13)



Violet Ruth
(Frey '14)



Tucker Weldon
(Lee '11)



Elizabeth Jane
(Jennings '13)



Cooper
(Baugus '15)



Lily Ann
(Key '10)

2008

Austin Solano and Cari Hubbard Solano '08 announce the birth of their son, Raymond Lawrence "Quade" Solano, on July 1, 2019. The family lives in Aledo, Texas.

2009

Mason Anders and Courtney Baker Anders '08 welcomed Mary Mason Georgia Anders on August 24, 2020. The family, including big sisters Daphne and Helen, lives in Dallas. Mason finished his residency in July and is a Medical Physicist for West Physics.

2010

Brett Anderson and Reba Cunningham Anderson announce the birth of Lily Maree Anderson on March 27, 2020. The family, including big brother Henry, 3, lives in Denver, Colorado.

Dallas Key and Karen Edwards-Key '09 welcomed their daughter, Lily Ann, on February 22, 2019. They live in Plano, Texas, and hope that Lily will be a future 'Roo herself!

Emily Kuo-Lillie and her husband, Dan Lillie, announce the birth of their daughter Natalie May Kuo-Lillie on February 5, 2020. The family lives in Seattle, Washington, and would love to connect with 'Roos in the area. Natalie's godmother is Anna Shields.

2011

Matthew and Jane Jennings Lee announce the birth of their son, Tucker Weldon Lee, on June 15, 2020. The family lives in Coppell, Texas, close enough to show Tucker the Austin College campus soon. Matt works at Aurora Innovations, a company that develops autonomous vehicles, in Coppell. Jane is a Montessori teacher providing virtual learning for children in Colorado.

2013

Karah García and her husband, Joey Bergeron, welcomed their baby 'Roo, Luna Rhiannon García-Bergeron, on August 16, 2019.

Taylor and **Samantha Matulis Jennings** announce the birth of their daughter, Elizabeth Jane Jennings, born September 10, 2020. The family lives in Houston, Texas, where Taylor works as an engineer for NASA, and Samantha works in human resources for TechnipFMC.

2014

Josh Frey and Bliss Froelich Frey '15 announce the birth of their daughter, Violet Ruth Frey, on April 14, 2020. Bliss is a third grade dual-language teacher in Coppell ISD, and Josh works in finance. The family lives in Grapevine, Texas.

2015

Dakota Baugus and Ashley Murphy Baugus '16 announce the birth of their son, Cooper Baugus, on June 12, 2020. The family lives in Pullman, Washington, where Dakota is an Associate Dentist, and Ashley stays at home to care for Cooper.

ALUMNI

1946	Jean Margaret McClenahan Bowman .	November 4, 2020	1966	Gwendolyn Askew Bullard	December 12, 2019
1946	Helen Williams Miller	February 13, 2020	1966	Jane Kelley Chapman	March 7, 2020
1946	Ross W. Stoddard Jr.	August 28, 2020	1966	James R. Dunn	August 30, 2020
1949	William Bassett	May 31, 2020	1966	Jerry Wayne Durham	November 20, 2020
1949	Robert Garcia	December 14, 2019	1966	Margaret Coslett Hill	February 18, 2020
1949	Jerry McCann	December 10, 2019	1966	Sue Ann Martin Jarvis	April 16, 2020
1949	Billy "Bert" Sherron	June 1, 2020	1966	Richard Thoms	December 28, 2020
1951	Gene Coppedge	December 5, 2019	1967	Bill Baker	June 25, 2020
1951	Alice Campbell Risinger	May 27, 2020	1967	Carol Stuart Huelbig	July 8, 2020
1952	John Chester	August 14, 2020	1967	Linda Wolf Milbourn	June 22, 2020
1953	Charles Robert McKnight	December 8, 2020	1967	James Norwood	June 22, 2020
1954	Joann Ragan Henson	September 26, 2020	1968	Molly Fenton Hallmark	May 26, 2020
1954	Mary Frances Evans Van Pelt	February 11, 2020	1968	Arlene Ratz	October 23, 2019
1955	Carolynn Hall Cobbs	January 19, 2020	1968	Stephen White	April 26, 2020
1955	Stan Cobbs	June 8, 2020	1969	Susan Hill Cabrera	January 4, 2020
1956	Billy Byron Redding	August 22, 2020	1969	Juanita Harris Grady	February 4, 2020
1957	J. Ron Ferrill	December 13, 2019	1969	Margaret Coslett Janssen	February 21, 2020
1957	Frankie Jo Wall Little	November 27, 2020	1969	Elizabeth Ann Granger Reagan	August 17, 2020
1958	Charles Wayne Arledge	June 19, 2020	1970	Gus "Sparky" Greer	December 18, 2019
1958	George Cowden	July 7, 2020	1970	Julie Ellis Starr	December 7, 2020
1958	Clovis M. Swanner Jr.	September 3, 2020	1971	Paul Bolton Jr.	December 31, 2019
1959	L.D. Allison Jr.	July 25, 2020	1971	Roger V. Dickey	December 4, 2020
1959	Bert Allen Bronaugh	March 30, 2020	1971	Beth Ann Olds Epskamp	May 11, 2020
1959	Richard Jarrell	April 1, 2020	1973	James Peak Downs	October 10, 2020
1959	Patricia Myers Polk	January 16, 2020	1974	Julie Shafer Kollhoff Ciuro	August 6, 2020
1960	Ruth Theresa "Tita" Bello	May 27, 2020	1974	Donald L. Gaffney	September 3, 2020
1960	Robert Glen Gammon	December 19, 2020	1974	Doretta House Nelson	January 28, 2020
1960	James W. Hanna	August 23, 2020	1974	Gregg Miller Raymond	December 29, 2020
1960	Hugh Kemp	March 23, 2020	1974	Bruce Twaddell	November 25, 2019
1960	Dorothy "Dottie" Richardson Maines	July 17, 2020	1975	Charles Birdwell Beard Jr.	December 24, 2020
1960	Robert Tate	December 21, 2020	1975	Mark Clark	March 12, 2020
1961	Maridelle Foster Crake	February 14, 2020	1979	Camille DeSalme	August 17, 2020
1961	Charles E. Smith	September 20, 2020	1982	William H. Bowers	April 6, 2020
1962	Janyce Benton Cobb	August 3, 2020	1984	Chris Elliott	September 17, 2020
1962	Lester Furry	November 14, 2019	1984	Dominic Tafelski	December 21, 2019
1962	Thomas "Jerry" Gready	March 14, 2020	1985	Jay Wampler	March 16, 2020
1962	Elmer "Lee" Grisso	June 26, 2020	1986	John Blake Crosby III	December 27, 2020
1962	Rufus Head	June 18, 2020	1987	Lora Elliott	June 27, 2020
1962	Margaret Estes McCord	December 13, 2020	1987	John "Carlyle" Greenfield	November 22, 2019
1963	Donald Cates Baker	November 5, 2020	1990	Roy Brit Whittenburg	November 24, 2020
1963	Billy Thomas Henderson	December 5, 2020	1992	Christopher Carver	February 29, 2020
1963	Jim Rogers	July 19, 2020	1993	David Milam	July 6, 2020
1964	Don Moore	May 3, 2020	2001	Alexander Brock Shugart	December 17, 2020
1965	Roy Alexander Bobo II	September 30, 2020	2003	Katie Tipton Palmer	April 22, 2020
1965	Alice Martin Davis Day	September 6, 2020	2008	Drew Kelly	June 15, 2020
1965	Elizabeth "Betsy" Johnson Pense	February 29, 2020	2011	Sarah Ann Soret Nickodam	September 7, 2020

Friends We Will Miss

Janet Heeter Bass, director of Student Life at Austin College from 1984 to 1995, died suddenly on December 25, 2020.

Marj Carpenter, who received an Austin College Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree in 1992, died June 13, 2020.

Orange Hughes Jr. died August 3, 2020. He was a member of the College's Physical Plant staff from September 1975 to March 14, 1997, when he retired.

Jim Lehrer, who received an Austin College Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree in 1991, died January 23, 2020.

Jimmy Mansfield died July 16, 2020. He worked at Austin College from 1986 to 2005 as a plumber, painter, and finally, as Robbie Kubela Rogers Lake Campus Manager in 2005.

Darrell Reed, Manager of Austin College's Robbie Kubela Rogers Lake Campus from 2005 to February 2019, died February 16, 2020.

Marilyn Wilson, "Miss June," a former Austin College Continuing Education Program instructor, died October 25, 2020. After touring the world as a professional ballerina, she returned home to Denison, Texas.

Remembering Bernice Melvin



Dr. Bernice Melvin, Professor Emerita of French, died July 29, 2020, in Charlottesville, Virginia, where she had lived near family since retiring from Austin College in 2015. Her daughter, Alyssa, announced her mother's passing as Bernice had requested, with little fanfare. Her most revealing comment about Bernice may have been, simply, "If you wish to honor her, please do so by remembering her unflinching kindness, amazing ability to find the best in anyone, and unflagging optimism and joy in life. On her behalf, thank you all for your friendship. Be well."

The many, many responses shared publicly by students and colleagues did indeed speak of her kindness, treasured friendships, her love of teaching and of France, and her mentorship of students and fellow faculty. Bernice joined the Austin College faculty in 1980 and in 1984, was installed in the Margaret Root Brown Chair of Foreign Languages and Literatures. She served for several years as the Dean of Humanities and, later, as Director of the Johnson Center for Faculty Development and Excellence in Teaching.

Dr. Melvin was honored by the College with its Homer P. Rainey Award for Outstanding Achievement and Service in 2007. In 2013, she received Austin College's Excellence in Teaching and Campus Leadership Award, recognizing her having "made a distinct difference in the teaching climate in areas such as classroom teaching, campus leadership, pioneering



pedagogy, and instructional support." In 2019, the Johnson Center named its continuing sabbatical lecture series the Bernice S. Melvin Sabbatical Series in her honor.

Senior Chris Miller



The Austin College community was saddened by the death of senior **Chris Miller** of Houston, Texas, on December 18, 2020.

Chris was hospitalized for the majority of Fall Term 2020 battling COVID-19, and his friends and family hoped he was headed for recovery when he was released in late October. Complications ensued, and sadly, he died December 18.

Completing a major in Business Administration and a minor in Art at Austin College, Chris was a member of the Class of 2021. An engaging, thoughtful, and outgoing friend to all, Chris was an active member and officer of Chi Delta Eta fraternity, a little brother of Kappa Gamma Chi sorority, and a member of Black Expressions.

Austin College Board of Trustees

The Austin College community celebrates the lives of three senior members of the Board of Trustees of the College who died in 2020.

Joseph Fallon Sr.



Senior Trustee Joseph Robert Fallon Sr. of Sherman died February 27, 2020. Fallon was an active member of the Austin College Board of Trustees in the 1970s and 1980s, and remained a senior trustee until his death. An influential Sherman business leader, he enjoyed a successful career in insurance for more than 50 years. He supported scholarships at Austin College during his board service, and his family encouraged memorials to the Joe Fallon Scholarship at Austin College.

Betty Robbins Hurst



Senior Trustee Betty Robbins Davis Hurst of Longview, Texas, died on June 13, 2020. She was elected to the College's Board of Trustees in 1986 and served on the College Development Committee until she was named a senior trustee in 1994. She particularly supported student scholarships through her generosity to the College. She was an active business and community leader in Longview, with roles in oil and gas, travel, real estate development, and investments. She served various service organizations of her community, as well as Trinity Episcopal Church and Trinity School of Texas. She also loved to travel the world.

Louis Zbinden Jr.



Senior Trustee Louis H. Zbinden Jr. died on September 11, 2020. The Presbyterian leader served on the active board and the College Relations and Church Relations committees from 1973 to 1985, and remained a member of the senior board until his death. A supporter of scholarships and various other Austin College projects, Zbinden also reinforced the long legacy of leadership between the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the College. He was very active in community service in San Antonio, where he was Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church from 1971 until 2004.



The Tradition of the Austin College Alumni Association

By Clint Buck '07

“Austin College has, without doubt, as loyal a group of men in her Alumni Association as any other college in the state. They are active in all the interests of the college, and have ever proved true to their Alma Mater. At no time have they ever been called upon for anything that did not meet with hearty response.”

—*The Chromascope*, Volume 20, 1920.

The 1890s were a time of significant change and development for Austin College. The school was attracting a professional faculty focused on the liberal arts, the YMCA and literary societies had become active, and the first local fraternities and intercollegiate sports teams were formed.² With these changes came an increase in students' pride in and allegiance to the school,³ likely contributing to the formation of the Austin College Alumni Association.

By 1910, the Alumni Association was “becoming a powerful factor in the life of the college.”⁴ Prior to that, in 1899, the Association's President, George C.F. Butte, helped fund the publication of the first volume of *The Chromascope* by soliciting \$100 from the Board of Trustees.⁵ Later, in 1920, the Association helped secure 16 acres of land next to the College as an athletic park.⁶

Since those beginning times, the Alumni Association and its board have sought to enhance the lives of Austin College alumni and students and help support Austin College as an institution. Every student who graduates from Austin College or attends at least one year before leaving in good standing is a member of the Alumni Association, which now exists to promote the interests of the alumni, the College, and its current students.

Recognizing the school's alumni as associated in a collective helps remind us that engrained in Austin College's nature is a commitment to each other. In 1852, the Austin College Catalogue



Proud AC Alumni: Lisa Simpson Emery '09, Casey Titus '09, Steven Zaborowski '08, and Clint Buck '07

described the College as “a temple of learning” where its students would serve their “fellow man.”⁷ Today, our service to each other is still, perhaps, the most fundamental aspect of being a 'Roo. More than 120 years after its formation, we members of the Alumni Association continue to find ways to connect with each other and the school, support our fellow alumni, and ensure that Austin College will continue to be a place that allows its students to flourish. In doing so, we have ably continued the long-standing tradition of our alma mater and its Alumni Association. ■

Clint Buck '07 is a lawyer, musician, and President of the Alumni Board, the governing body of the Alumni Association. He and his wife, Macie, live happily in San Antonio, Texas, with their son, Adler, and pets, Cotton and Charlotte.

¹*The Chromascope*, Volume 20, 1920

²Cummins, Light Townsend. *Austin College: A Sesquicentennial History, 1849-1999*

³Cummins, Light Townsend. *Austin College: A Sesquicentennial History, 1849-1999*

⁴*The Chromascope*, Volume 11, 1910

⁵*The Chromascope*, Volume 1, 1899

⁶*The Chromascope*, Volume 24, 1924

⁷*The Chromascope*, Volume 45, 1945

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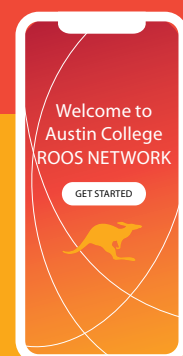
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