

UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

Tribute to Retirees

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

September 7, 2019

Sponsored by the Association of Retired Faculty and Staff and the University of West Georgia Foundation

Anne C. Richards & Martha Ann Saunders (Eds.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARFS) and the University of West Georgia Foundation gratefully acknowledge the photographic contributions of Steven Broome and Xiaojuan "Yo" Christian, the invaluable assistance of Terri Bussey, and the "extra-mile" efforts of the Publications and Printing staff in the production of this publication. Special thanks to Denice King-Perdue for a variety of support services, to Kevin Hemphill for ARFS website management, and to Denice King Perdue for her coordination of the retiree reunion.

ARFS Coordinating Council Members (2018-2019)

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UNIVERSITY of SWest Georgia.

Dear Colleagues:

I'm pleased to have this opportunity to thank you for your years of committed work and steadfast pursuit of quality in every walk of our university. You have worked hard. More importantly, I want to say with the loudest speaker I am allowed to hold, congratulations on your retirement. Congratulations! As you know only too well, our faculty and staff are an integral and sustaining part of who we are as a university, and I hope you are as proud and excited to have contributed to its development and accomplishment as we are of your accomplishments.

Your loyalty and passion have helped make UWG the exciting place it is today, a place focused firmly on student success and on aspiring to be the best comprehensive university in America--sought after as the best place to work, learn, and succeed. UWG is poised well for further greatness, and you have played a vital role in the journey that has led to its success.

Though you are retiring, you remain a part of the UWG family. I hope you will stay in touch with us and tell us about your new adventures via social media, email, or note. We certainly plan to keep you informed about events and special initiatives, and we hope to see you on campus. To stay even more active with the University, please consider joining the Association of Retired Faculty and Staff as a way of keeping up with UWG and with news about your fellow retirees. And--if you are interested in being part of the part-time retired employee pool to help campus units during times of employee extended leave, please contact Ms. Tracy Williams (twilliams@westga.edu).

Wherever your path may take you, whether you stay physically close to the University of go jet-setting around the globe, I hope you carry fond memories of the University of West Georgia and of all the amazing ways in which you helped make a positive difference in the lives and experiences of students, your colleagues, and this institution.

With warmest regards,

Shap. Cup

Dr. John Micheal Crafton Interim President

The Association of Retired Faculty & Staff (ARFS)

was established in 2004 as a voluntary association of the university's retired faculty and staff who joined together for several purposes: to maintain social connections with university colleagues; foster continuous involvement between the University of West Georgia and its retired employees; support the intellectual, social, and physical wellbeing of retired faculty and staff; and continue to make meaningful contributions to the future of the university and to the academic community.

Membership in ARFS is free and retirees decide for themselves how much involvement they wish to have in the organization and its activities.

Each year, ARFS recognizes persons from the faculty and staff who have retired from full-time employment at the university. At this time, they receive a medallion from the university with their name, department, and years of service engraved on it. They are also included in this commemorative booklet. Recent retirees who cannot attend the reception where the booklets and medallions are presented will receive these items by mail.

Besides recognizing retirees in these ways, ARFS organizes programs featuring the national and/or international adventures of our traveling colleagues, and plans occasional participation in campus tours, off-campus trips, service projects, parades, plays, and concerts. A newsletter, called the *Rejuvenator*, is distributed quarterly to the membership. If you have suggestions about other activities you would like to see us organize, do let us know.

About seven years ago, ARFS joined a national organization of retiree organizations in higher education known as AROHE and, through a state subsidiary of that group (known as GA-HERO), some of us have attended meetings with retirees in higher education from all around Georgia. In these meetings, we have learned a lot about what other retiree organizations are doing. Any of you are welcome to join those who attend these meetings.

Four years ago, the University System of Georgia created a retiree council (USGRC) to advise the Chancellor's Office and the Board of Regents on matters of consequence to retirees. The president of ARFS is our "official voting member" at this meeting, and we are also allowed a designated "alternate member" in the event our official voting member cannot make the meeting. Currently, Anne Richards is serving as the "alternate member" in order to take notes to pass along to others. Since it came into being, the USGRC has focused almost exclusively on the transition for Medicareeligible retirees to the Aon Retiree Healthcare Exchange, but is beginning to turn its attention to many other issues of concern to retirees, including access to library resources on system campuses. Retirees who are approaching Medicare-eligibility have expressed a desire to talk with persons who have already transitioned from the USG healthcare plan to working with Aon. If you would be interested in sharing some of your experiences of this process with them, do let us know.

To become a member of ARFS is easy. Just contact either Kathryn Grams (kgrams@ westga.edu) or Denice King-Perdue (dking@westga.edu, 678-839-6384) to let us know you want to join. If you're willing to give us an email address, we can provide you with information we learn from meetings of AROHE, GA-HERO, and the USGRC as well as about the University and what's happening in the lives of other UWG retirees. We invite you to become an active member of this organization by attending some of our meetings and annual programs, and/or just checking out the information we provide now and then. We also hope you will take advantage of some or all of the benefits available to you as a retiree. There are a lot of them, such as a courtesy parking hang tag, eligibility for free membership to utilize all facilities in the Campus Center (secured in 2017), a copy of the current academic year's Faculty and Staff Directory (along with a listing in it if you choose), eligibility to check out books from the Ingram Library, reduced rates on West Georgia Theatre Company performances, and a 10% discount on purchases made at the University Bookstore. We continue to look into the possibility of securing other benefits as well.

UWG Retiree Legacy Scholarship

ARFS is pleased and proud to announce that the current recipient of the UWG Retiree Legacy Scholarship is William Wortham. Thanks to all who have given so generously to the scholarship fund, \$25,000 was raised in a three-year period to endow this scholarship. William Wortham is a UWG freshman in the College of Education Health & Community Wellness program and a relative of UWG retiree, Dannie Smith.

For Future Applicants:

Students may apply by going to the University of West Georgia Scholarship Portal (http://www.westga.edu/scholarships) and following the instructions. Scholarship Application will open annually in October. The scholarship deadline for incoming students is February 1st. Priority will be given to students who apply before February 1st, but applications will be considered until a candidate is selected. Please contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (at admiss@westga.edu) with any questions.

Eligibility Criteria:

* Recipients will be full-time graduate or undergraduate students who are retirees of

the institution or who are direct descendants of an immediate family relation of a

retired faculty or staff member (with a minimum of 10 years of service to the institution).

- * Recipients will have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5, with preference given to applicants who have a higher GPA.
- * Preference will be given to applicants with a demonstrated financial need as

determined by the UWG Financial Aid Office.

Retired Faculty & Staff Tribute Booklet

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

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Adel M. Abunawass, Ph.D.

Position(s) held: Professor and Chair

Department: Computer Science

Years of Service: 1999-2019

Tribute Statement:

Adel Abunawass came to West Georgia in the summer of 1999, well-suited to lead a shiny new Computer Science department poised for growth. Aside from his brilliant mind, among Adel's best characteristics are his kindness and compassion, never in short supply for those who knew him these last 20 years. Adel also set the bar high for himself, his faculty, and his staff, and ultimately



brought about numerous department successes. He worked diligently to get the program accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). He led in the development of a sought-after curriculum that attracted large numbers of majors. Adel also championed the establishment of a Master's Degree in Computer Science specifically designed for students who did not have undergraduate degrees in the field. This program has been ranked among the very top of online Computer Science degree programs.

He has been a wise and trusted friend to me and very likely many, many others. Always the consummate professional (with a heart of gold), Adel worked well with a variety of colleagues across the campus. He took great pride in nurturing teaching and learning so both students and faculty alike could deliver their best. Adel was a strong leader and exceptional teacher who will be missed by the many folks he impacted during his career at UWG.

[Pauline Gagnon, Professor and Dean, College of Arts and Humanities, and Interim Dean, College of Science and Mathematics, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

As this publication went to print, Adel was still in the process of determining what he planned to do in his retirement.

Bonnie B. Bar (AS '76, Nursing)

Position held: Associate Professor Emerita

Department: Nursing

Years of Service: 1982-2018

Tribute Statement:

Bonnie Bar, a West Georgia College graduate, was a member of the first group of Associate Degree Program graduates in Nursing in 1976. Believing that degree was not enough for her, however, she continued her nursing education and subsequently completed both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Nursing.



Bonnie was very instrumental in the development of an initiative in the Nursing Department known as Caring Groups. It began with volunteer participation in a mutual support group for students but became a cornerstone piece of the departmental curriculum, emphasizing caring as the essence of nursing.

Bonnie was also one of the first faculty members to explore the holistic nature of health/illness. An enthusiastic supporter of holistic nursing interventions, Bonnie presented papers at international Holistic Nursing meetings and was a consultant to other schools of nursing exploring the possibility of including holistic concepts in their nursing school curricula.

One of the things that made Bonnie stand out as a faculty member was her passion for all things good. She had a passion for teaching, for helping students, and for caring for others as well as a dedication to self-care. Colleagues and students will especially remember her for the ways in which her passion manifested itself along these lines. Without a doubt, she will be greatly missed in the School of Nursing

[Jeanette Bernhardt, former Chair and Professor Emerita, Department of Nursing, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Bonnie is enjoying opportunities for hiking, walking, and exercising. She plans to become a volunteer for the Emergency Shelter in town. And she also expects to become a facilitator teaching in the Carroll County Child Advocacy Center's "Darkness to Light" program, aimed at educating adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to sexual abuse of children.

Christine B. Berding, Ph.D.

Position held: Assistant Professor

Department: Tanner Health System School of Nursing

Years of Service: 2014-2019

Tribute Statement:

Dr. Christine Berding has had a rewarding career as a nurse and nurse educator. In 1992 she began her career at the Medical College of Georgia, now Augusta University, and was one of the first nurses in the state to become a Governor's Teaching Fellow. Christy remained with the university in Augusta until 2014, serving as the



Co-Director of the BSN program from 2008-2014. During her time there, she was inducted into the College of Nursing, Academy of Nurse Scholars in Education, as well as the university's Educational Innovation Institute. In 2012, she received the Outstanding Faculty of the Year award for the College of Nursing. Christy is still in touch with many of those students today.

Christy came to UWG to teach in the online graduate programs at the Tanner Health System School of Nursing (THSSON) in 2014. The school's caring philosophy drew Christy to THSSON, which she exemplified in the online environment. In 2015, she obtained certification as a nurse educator from the National League for Nursing and received the Jane Van de Verde Nurse Educator Award from the Georgia Association of Nurse Educators for her outstanding work with students.

An inquisitive spirit and the pursuit of lifelong learning have led Christy to continue professional development and enhanced knowledge of health and wellness. In addition to her interests in complementary therapies, holistic nursing, and spirituality, she has completed clinical training in mind-body medicine, cognitivebased compassion therapy, and mindfulness-based stress reduction. Most recently, Christy completed a certificate course in health and wellness coaching. I will miss Christy, her smile, and her enthusiasm for teaching and learning. I celebrate, however, her pursuing her passion for health coaching and having more time to spend with her family and friends. And I look forward to keeping in touch with Christy as she moves into the next chapter of her life.

[Cynthia Brown, Associate Professor, THSSON, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Soon after retirement, Christy will be taking a course at Emory to prepare for sitting for a Board certification exam to become a certified health and wellness coach.

"Tommy" Brown

Position held: Construction Superintendent

Department: Campus Planning & Facilities/ Grounds

Years of Service: 1983-2018

Tribute Statement:

Tommy was the Superintendent over out-plant construction at the university, which involved the building of a variety of outside structures (such as bus stop structures and the arbor near the Callaway Building). He also handled the building and repair of concrete structures (including guttering and



curbs), and the implementation of plans for the placement of signage and art work on campus.

He was a person we could count on to handle any job when we needed someone to get it done, and done right. No task was too big or too small for him. Being friendly and very dependable, he was a pleasure to work with and is very much missed.

He still can be seen walking on campus every morning, but you have to be here early if you want to catch him to talk. He also continues to meet for breakfast on a weekly basis with former co-workers.

[Sean Connors, Athletic Fields/Out-plant Construction Superintendent, Campus Planning and Facilities, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In his retirement, Tommy says he's "piddling around the house" and enjoying doing whatever it is he wants to. He also enjoys traveling in his RV camper and hopes to take a trip out West.

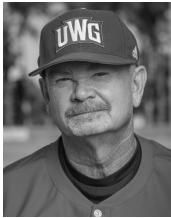
Stanley ("Skip") Fite (M.Ed. '81, Physical Education)

Position held: Head Coach, Baseball **Department:** Athletics Administration

Years of Service: 2009-2019

Tribute Statement:

Skip Fite was a baseball "lifer" who began and ended his impressive coaching career at West Georgia. Fite's entry into the coach profession began as a graduate assistant at West Georgia in the 1970s. and he spent the final 10 seasons of his 39-year head coaching career back in Carrollton.



Fite began his head coaching career in the southeastern part of the state, spending four years in charge at Brewton-Parker. Next, he enjoyed a 25-year tenure as head coach at Augusta, formerly known as Augusta State.

In the summer of 2009 Fite was given the task of rebuilding West Georgia's struggling baseball program. The high point came in 2016 when the Wolves surpassed the 40-win plateau, and earned the program's first trip to the NCAA Region Tournament since 1998.

His 10 seasons in charge at UWG produced 254 victories, many All-America, All-Region and All-GSC players, and dozens of student-athletes who earned either Gulf South Conference Academic Honor Roll or Academic All-GSC Honors. The latter number includes Cade Marlowe, who in 2019 became the first male student-athlete at West Georgia since 1998 to claim the Gulf South Conference Commissioner's Trophy.

A native of Douglasville and graduate of Valdosta State, Fite ended his impressive career with a total of 954 wins as a collegiate head coach. He is a 2014 inductee into the Georgia Dugout Club Hall of Fame.

[Mitch Gray, Sports Information Director, Athletics Administration, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

After nearly 40 years of coaching at the collegiate level, Skip plans to "take it easy for a little bit" in his retirement. The first thing he expects to do after that is paint the inside of his house and do outdoor things paired with camping trips. He hasn't left baseball for good, however, as he'll also be traveling as a baseball instructor for youth baseball players in a tri-state region.

Vincent Gibson

Position(s) held: Program Analyst, Data-Base Administration, Software Support

Department(s): Business and Finance/Information Technology Services

Years of Service: 1997-2018

Tribute Statement:

Vince Gibson began work at UWG at a time when the university was starting to move to Peoplesoft as its financial and budgetary reporting system. He was instrumental in developing applications and reports that allowed users across campus to access this financial data and use it to make decisions.



He also created automated jobs that download Human Resources data each morning and serve as the backbone of the electronic Personnel Action Request (ePAR) process on campus.

Vince wrote programs that helped automate and support jobs for campus departments like the Post Office and the Central Warehouse. He supported databases for dozens of applications at UWG that play a critical role for the departments that own them.

Even after being retired for nine months, automated processes and applications that Vince created are still running. Some of these were first written over a decade ago and they continue to provide contemporary functionality that is critical to the campus as a whole.

[Joshua Browning, Manager of Application Support, and Hugh Russell, Director of Information Solutions, Information Technology Services, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement

In his retirement, Vince says he's "living the dream" in Florida while continuing to work with charities supporting veterans, including the one he and a friend established five years ago in Bremen, GA. Named the American Warrior Garage, it is a place where returning veterans can get training in such areas as metal fabrication, welding, wiring, general auto maintenance, and car restoration. Those who want to go further and make a career or a living as automotive technicians are also supported in achieving their goal. The American Warrior Garage was selected for transformative remodeling assistance by Discovery channel star Richard Rawling's Garage Rehab program. Publicity from the selection not only brought world-wide attention to the American Warrior Garage but also has led to the development of contacts with both the USO and the VA that have assisted veterans in completing technical school degree programs in automotive technology.

Michael Ginther

Position held: Groundskeeper II

Department: Campus Planning & Facilities/ Grounds

Years of Service: 2007-2019

Tribute Statement:

Michael is an honest, hard-working, and good person who was very diligent and meticulous in his approach to the jobs assigned to him on campus. He helped the department develop and implement a new painting system for our athletic fields which increased the speed and efficiency of production in this area.



He was a father figure to many in our department--someone who could be stubborn and set in his ways, but also someone who typically pushed for doing things in ways that were beneficial and best for the campus. He was a dependable worker and I very much enjoyed working with him. I consider him a friend and a part of my family. My wife and child have also developed close relationships with him and his family.

[Sean Connors, Athletic Fields/Out-plant Construction Superintendent, Campus Planning & Facilities, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In his retirement, Mike plans to travel more than he's had the time to do while employed.

Deborah B. Hardegree

Position held: Records Coordinator

Department: Admissions

Years of Service: 1997-2019

Tribute Statement:

Since her first days at the University of West Georgia in 1997, Deborah Hardegree has impacted the lives of countless prospective students who made their way to the University. A Carrollton native who worked in UWG's Undergraduate Admissions Office, Deborah was able to help students Go West for 22 years, always putting those students first and looking for ways to help



make their goals a reality. Deborah's positive attitude coupled with her incredible work ethic made her a joy to work with and brought much success to the University and to each student she helped.

Each of the hundreds of thousands of files she touched was a life to Deborah-unique, important, and worthy of the care and attention that she brought to every single task she completed in her role. Her impact on the office of Admissions, on the University, and on the thousands of students for whom she processed applications and admissions decisions is far-reaching and will continue long past her tenure at UWG.

[Katie Ross, Associate Director of Operations, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Immediately upon her retirement, Deborah headed for Texas to visit with her son and his family. She also has plans to go to the beach in the summer and spend time there with her grandchildren.

James A. Hembree

Position held: Landscape Superintendent Department: Facilities/Grounds Years of Service: 1995-2019

Tribute Statement:

James Hembree retired as the Landscape Superintendent after more than 23 years of employment at UWG. Professionally, he used his degree in Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Georgia and other employment experiences to make the campus beautiful for the university community, residents of Carrollton and Carroll County, and other visitors. According to



Marshall Lott (current UWG Landscaping Superintendent), "James brought a passion and dedication to his craft that helped establish UWG as the standard by which other university campus landscapes are measured. James used his extensive knowledge of plant material, both native and exotic, to develop landscapes across campus that were both pleasing to the senses as well as sustainable. As a leader, James inspired those working under his direction to be the best that they could be, and, as a team, their efforts have helped make the UWG campus a place that students, faculty, staff, and visitors can be proud of for years to come."

James also shared his time and talents outside of his employment responsibilities. He helped the Native Plant Society and the Master Gardeners of Carroll County in many ways, including presentations and sharing of plants. He was very active in the Boy Scouts of America, particularly with Troop 900 in Douglas County, where he provided many years of leadership as Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, and Committee Member (Outdoor Activities). All three of his sons became Eagle Scouts at Troop 900. He was also active in district level activities and helped many Scouts to earn merit badges. In addition, James often served as a judge in Botany at the West Georgia Regional Science and Engineering Fair from 2001 to 2015.

In December, 2018, I donated money to the UWG Foundation to plant a tree on Front Campus in honor of my colleague and friend, James Hembree.

[Bob Powell, Professor and Chair of Physics and Director of the Observatory Emeritus, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

James has celebrated his retirement by backpacking/hiking the length of the Appalachian Trail with one of his sons (covering 2200 miles from Georgia to Maine over 180 days). He hopes to stay active digging in the dirt, doing organic farming, and growing plants. He has been spending his retirement money capitalizing his 12-acre farm for these purposes

Loretta "Jo" Hite

Position held: Business Operations Director

Department: Tanner Health System School of Nursing (THSSON)

Years of Service: 2001-2018

Tribute Statement:

Ms. Hite's contributions to Nursing during her more than seventeen years at UWG were invaluable ones. Her exceptional planning, organizational, and problem-solving skills helped Nursing expand from a department in the College of Arts and Sciences to an independent School of Nursing. She managed all personnel matters



and multiple budgets and directed the complex day-to-day business operations for a unit with program offerings on four campuses as well as nearly 100 clinical agency contracts, professional student and faculty documents, and regulatory and accreditation agency requirements. In addition, she directed the School's move to new buildings in Carrollton and Newnan, coordinating students, faculty, and staff and the purchase and relocation of high-tech simulation equipment.

To all of us in Nursing, Jo was a highly productive, efficient and essential team member who could manage change effectively. Her commitment to quality and excellence was enhanced by her comprehensive knowledge of business operations and attention to detail. It was not uncommon for her to have fixed a problem before we even became aware of it. "Jo knows" was a frequent phrase heard in response to any question about departmental or university policies and procedures and informal networks at UWG.

Committed to serving the institution, Jo enthusiastically embraced the values of hard work, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, and caring. Her integrity and honesty were evident and unquestionable. Faculty and students trusted Jo to do what was needed and depended upon her daily. She was always there when we needed her, and it has been (and continues to be) a privilege to know her.

[Kathryn Grams, Ph.D., RN, Dean and Professor Emerita, THSSON]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Jo plans to spend more time with her husband and family, travel with her husband, and begin once again to do painting and arts and crafts projects.

Christopher Winn Huff, Ph.D.

Position(s) held: Associate Professor, Interim Dean of University Libraries

Department: Ingram Library

Years of Service: 1994-2019

Tribute Statement:

Chris Huff joined the West Georgia faculty in 1994 as a Systems Librarian. Prior to that appointment, he held positions with Cobb County Public and then Lake Lanier Regional library systems. Selected as Ingram Library's recipient of the UWG's 2007 Centennial Fellowship, he completed the Peabody Professional Institute in



Academic Library Leadership at Vanderbilt University in 2008.

In 2009, he was appointed Associate Dean of Libraries. In 2010, he became the first elected Chair of UWG's Faculty Senate after serving as Chair Pro Tem from 2008 to 2010. He represented UWG on the University System of Georgia Faculty Council (USGFC) from 2008 to 2011, and served as co-chair of the Council in 2012. Chris also acted as Project Advocate for the \$8 million renovation of Ingram Library and Speaker Murphy Office Project, completed in 2011. He was active on the 2013 Presidential Search and Screening Committee. In 2017-2018, he served a year as the library's interim dean. Additionally, since 2010, he has been a board member and consultant to HEGA, an independent school for middle and high school students.

The library will miss Chris's unique perspective and his willingness to examine various aspects of a situation or problem. His work as Project Advocate for the Library's award-winning design as well as his role in promoting shared-governance in Faculty Senate and within the library leaves a lasting legacy for the library.

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Chris said he doesn't plan to do "anything outstanding" of a professional nature in his retirement, but is looking forward to different ways of experiencing time. Living in a house built in the 1880's, he knows there is always something to deal with in maintaining it. He also says he will still be wandering with his wife, family, and biota in their abiotic and built wonderlands. Some colleagues believe he will undoubtedly spend time expanding his collection of books with topics spanning his many interests. [Andrea Stanfield, Interim Dean, Ingram Library, UWG]

Barbara Kawulich, Ph.D.

Position held: Professor of Educational Research Emerita

Department: Leadership Research & School Improvement

Years of Service: 1999-2018

Tribute Statement:

Dr. Barbara Kawulich is a passionate educator and a fervent advocate of qualitative research. She has energetically worked with UWG students and continues to collaborate with colleagues around the world to advance this central research methodology. As an academic with many



distinguished publications and presentations to her credit, Barbara has meaningfully contributed to the discourse regarding methods of exploring and understanding phenomena.

Barbara exhibits high standards and expectations, guiding and leading many Doctor of School Improvement students to complete high-quality research. She also displays great patience and perseverance in supporting doctoral candidates, often spending hundreds of hours reviewing dissertation drafts and providing detailed feedback to students. It's been a pleasure to watch students express their approval, respect, and gratitude to her for the tireless efforts she has made on their behalf. A talented singer with a sharp sense of humor, a passionate and caring educator, Dr. Kawulich cannot be replaced. She is one of a kind.

[Andy Nixon, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership, College of Education, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Barbara has undergone five surgeries in the past year and a half (thankfully all of them minor), but is now back to swimming and participating in Zumba classes on a regular basis. She enjoys the opportunities retirement provides her for being at home, cooking on a regular basis, setting her own schedule, getting up when she wants to, and not having to do everything extracurricular on a Sunday. She is still active professionally, and, with international colleagues, has recently had an article published on the state of the art of qualitative research and how it has developed.

Mary Hutcheson Ledbetter, CPhT

Position held: Certified Pharmacy Technician **Department:** Health Services **Years of Service:** 2004-2019

Tribute Statement:

During 2003, while working in Bowdon a brief time for Rite-Aid Pharmacy, I first met Mary. After working with her just a few days, I felt like I had known her my entire life. She is "good-people," and we established a great rapport and friendship almost immediately. Soon after that, my career path took me in a different direction. I told Mary that I would be honored for her to join me in a new



position, once that was established. One day the stars aligned, and I phoned Mary to ask her to join me at Health Services Pharmacy at UWG, to become my Certified Pharmacy Technician. Thankfully, Mary accepted the offer, and we spent the next fifteen years serving the wonderful students of this University.

In all of these years of service, Mary met each student, many of whom she knew by name, with a smile and a kind word. Her kindness and smile did not stop at the pharmacy counter; she extended them to all the people she worked with, and everyone she talked to. Everyone at Health Services loved her, and she loved all of them. From the time we first met one another, we have shared many laughs and many tears. We have watched her grandchildren and my own children grow up from grade school age into young adulthood. We even got to share in the birth of her first greatgrandchild.

I have learned a lot from Mary during all these years. She may not even be aware that, while she was just living her life, she was teaching me so much about my own. I am a better person for having known her. I can never thank her enough for her service to Health Services Pharmacy and our students, and for being a true friend to me. I will always miss her and wish her the best as she GOES WEST to live in Ranburne, AL.

[Roddy Miles, RPh, Pharmacist-in-Charge, Health Services, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, many of Mary's days have been filled with activities involving her grandchildren and her great-grandchild. For example, she has been very busy assisting as a volunteer in a Bowdon prekindergarten every morning. She is also the designated person to pick up her grandchildren from school. In the midst of all this, she says she is not really working, but is simply "having fun."

Ronnie J. Mayfield

Position held: Automotive Mechanic Foreman

Department: Campus Planning and Facilities, Motor Pool

Years of Service: 1990-2019

Tribute Statement:

During the course of his employment on campus, Ronnie was an outstanding, respected, and model employee in Facilities. He exemplified the "Best of the Best." So often we look at a career and wonder what a person's significant accomplishments were. In Ronnie's case, I can attest to the following:



- * He did his job to the best of his ability every day.
- * He was approachable by his co-workers and those he served.
- * He enjoyed his job and greeted all with a warm smile and a friendly nature.
- * He was always patient and professional.
- * He made safety his prime responsibility.

Through the years, Ronnie and Rick West (his co-worker) developed a great relationship that produced outstanding results for the university. The motor pool enjoyed a wonderful reputation due to the care, cooperation, and professional atmosphere fostered by this dynamic duo.

As commitment and loyalty became an integral part of the work ethic at Facilities, Ronnie was able to articulate and communicate a shared sense of what Facilities was all about by just doing his job. He was the consummate team player. Providing top-flight service became one of Ronnie's prime responsibilities. What can you say about a man who came to work every day, showed up even when he did not feel well, and contributed without fanfare and applause? He became the Cal Ripken in Facilities. With the assurance of experienced professionals for almost 30 years, Ronnie's motor pool was always trusted to do a great job the first time. [Mike Renfrow, Assistant Vice President (retired), Campus Planning and Facilities, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

When interviewed for this booklet, Ronnie said that he planned to figure out what he would do in retirement once he retired. Mike Renfrow believes he'll undoubtedly seek to become a real "shade tree mechanic," take trips to Lake Weiss, visit the house he and Laura own at Laguna Beach, FL, and play with their Yorkie puppies.

Jo Etta Miller (M.Ed.'14, Professional Counseling)

Position(s) held: Training Specialist/Business Operations Specialist/Lead Auditor/Director

Department(s): Human Resources/Student Affairs & Enrollment Management/Budget, Planning & Finance/ Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

Years of Service: 2006-2019

Tribute Statement:

After retiring from a successful career as the School Business Administrator for the Forrest



County Agricultural High School District in Mississippi in 2004, Jo Etta and her husband relocated to the West Georgia area. She began working at UWG in 2006, first in Human Resources and then in Internal Audit. In 2008, I made one of the best decisions ever when I hired her as the first Business Operations Specialist for the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management. I was looking for a person who could "explain financial concepts to non-financial people." Jo Etta did that--and so much more. Her professionalism, work ethic, positive attitude, and sense of humor made her a joy to work with. She quickly became a leader both in the division and in the university as a whole, serving as a resource for budget managers all over campus. By helping student leaders manage their student organization budgets, she became a mentor to many of them.

Jo Etta then decided to pursue a Master's Degree in Counseling with an emphasis in College Student Affairs. She was an excellent student, served as an inspiration to the other students, and graduated with her M.Ed. in 2014.

When Dr. Scot Lingrell became Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, he recognized Jo Etta's value and promoted her in 2011 to Director of Budget Planning & Finance in his division. According to Dr. Lingrell, "Jo Etta was an innovator who was never satisfied with the status quo. She was known across campus as a person who would help anyone in need. Her mission was to help others be the best they could be, and that attitude was contagious for everyone who knew her."

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Jo Etta has returned to Hattiesburg, MS to be nearer to her family. In addition to serving as caregiver to her mother, her retirement plans include spending time with her family, traveling, playing tennis, golfing, walking, and reading.

[Melanie McClellan, Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Emerita, UWG]

Mark S. Parrish, Ph.D. (M.Ed. 'O2, Professional Counseling; Ed.S. 'O4, Professional Counseling)

Position(s) held: Associate Professor, Department Chair

Department(s): Counseling and Educational Psychology/Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling

Years of Service: 2008-2019

Tribute Statement:

The College of Education's rise to leadership in serving the public can be traced to Dr. Mark Parrish's enormous contributions over the past decade.

In his professorial role in Professional Counseling, Mark's research, publications, and service focused on counseling Native populations as well as on family counseling related to chemical dependency, inappropriate adolescent behaviors, and aggression. Mark is also a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Georgia. In that capacity he served as a lead therapist for Tanner Behavioral Health, working with adolescents and providing family therapy and addiction counseling to support youth in recovery. On campus, he served as Director of the PREVENT@ UWG Campus Suicide Prevention Program, which provided comprehensive resources for UWG students and established a legacy of support that continues to this day.

Perhaps his greatest contribution has been as Department Chair of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling. He led two nationallyaccredited programs as each grew to become the largest in Georgia. With eight programs at the undergraduate through doctoral levels, the department also serves hundreds of clients in the College of Education's (COE's) Comprehensive Community Clinic. A professor in his department captured the impact of his leadership as follows: "Dr. Parrish has been the rock of our department during his eleven years at UWG. His caring personality, warm compassion, high expectations, and ability to empower individuals have made him an unforgettable professor and an honorable department chair." His administrative colleagues feel the same way. He has consistently been the go-to person for resources, friendship, and sound advice. Godspeed, Mark. You will be missed.

[Dr. Dianne Hoff, Dean, College of Education, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In his retirement, Mark expects to go to Savannah to pick up a camper trailer, which he'll use in Georgia to keep up with his 16 grandchildren. He expects to have no lapses of time in which to be bored.



Dawn Putney, Ph.D.

Position(s) held: Professor, Assistant Dean

Department(s): Curriculum & Instruction, Media and/Instructional Technology/College of Education (Assistant Dean)

Years of Service: 1994-2018

Tribute Statement:

Dr. Dawn Putney's career as a teacher, administrator, and college professor spans over 40 years. After many years as a classroom teacher and college professor, Dawn joined the UWG faculty in 1994 as a part of the Summer Opportunity School and served in that role for three years before being appointed to the position of Assistant Dean for the



College of Education. Following two stints in this capacity, she returned to full-time faculty status in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, teaching a wide variety of Early Childhood Education courses. She also began taking media and technology courses, enjoyed them immensely, and developed a high level of expertise in these fields. This led to her securing a position in the Department of Media and Instructional Technology, where she remained until her retirement in 2018.

Anyone who knew Dr. Putney would tell you she was an extraordinarily dedicated faculty member who tirelessly gave time and expertise to her college, her colleagues, and her students. She was the truest friend, an inspiring colleague, and a remarkable teacher. Her door was always open and she could be counted on to complete any task given to her by her department, the college, or the university. Dr. Putney served on or chaired over 45 different committees at the departmental level, 30 committees at the college-level, and 20 university-wide committees during her tenure at UWG. Because of her leadership skills, Dawn was often asked to chair ad hoc work groups and to fill in for administrators whenever needed. She mentored dozens of tenure-track faculty members through the tenure and promotion process while remaining active in multiple professional organizations and while serving as President and Coordinator of the Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society from 1997 until her retirement.

Teaching excellence was at the core of who Dawn was as a person. Twice named to Who's Who Among America's Teachers (1998, 2000), in 1997 she was awarded the College of Education's Excellence in Teaching Award. Enriching student lives through literature and technology were perennial passions of Dr. Putney's. She presented on these themes all over the United States and even served as an Editor for the World Organization for Early Childhood Education Newsletter, a nongovernmental organization of the United Nations.

In every way that a person can be missed, she will be missed. We thank her for sharing her life with us and wish her the best in her retirement.

[Jill Drake, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Dawn is caring for her husband and mom, and also finding time for digging in the dirt and stitching together all kinds of quilts (for both artistic and utilitarian purposes).

Sally O. Roberts (BA '74, French)

Position held: Director Department: Publications & Printing Years of Service: 1993-2019

Tribute Statement:

I have had the pleasure of supervising Sally Roberts during the past six years and have found her to be one of the kindest and most caring leaders with whom I've had the opportunity to work. Sally consistently brought suggestions to me that were intended to improve safety, comfort, productivity, etc. for her team in Publications & Printing. Additionally, she always advocated for



pay increases, promotions, and modified work hours for persons on her staff.

In addition to possessing strong and sincere "people skills," Sally was committed to continuous improvement in everything she did. When she attended meetings, she took copious notes, asked insightful questions, and was always willing to share her own personal feelings and experiences. Sally also took new learnings back to her work team, sharing them so that all could benefit.

Sally had a very impressive work ethic. She found it difficult to turn down or delay any customer request for products or services. As a result of her drive and commitment to quality and service, the UWG Publications & Printing team won numerous awards from their peers in the industry. In fact, while many other university print shops, as well as private-sector shops, closed over the past five years, UWG's Publications & Print shop has continued to grow and thrive.

Sally Roberts will be missed at the University of West Georgia. She has been a friend to so many, a role model, and simply a pleasure to work with.

[Mark Reeves, Associate Vice President for Business Services and Auxiliary Enterprises, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Sally bought a 20-year-old camper and, with a travel buddy, plans to take it on several trips to the North Georgia or North Carolina mountains, and even make a sweep out west. She also says it's possible they will attend concerts along the way.

E. Jane Simpson, JD

Position held: University General Counsel Department: University General Counsel Years of Service: 2009-2019

Tribute Statement:

Jane Simpson was an invaluable colleague during her tenure as the university's general counsel--the first person to hold that title at our university. Her tireless efforts, predominantly completed behind the scenes, brought structure and uniformity to our policies and legal processes. As the inaugural university attorney, Jane established the Office of Legal Services and set the tone for any colleague who follows her.



In addition to her outstanding work in founding and maintaining this office, Jane also proved a deft trailblazer for critical committees on our campus--from policy and governance to accessibility and best practices. Instrumental in securing the trademark for our "Go West" brand and consistently educating the campus community on current legal issues, she was a stalwart, thoughtful colleague who will be missed by many on campus and beyond.

We wish Jane the best in her future endeavors. Retirement will offer her new and refreshing opportunities, which we know she'll embrace wholeheartedly, just as she embraced the daily challenges and opportunities found within her work on campus. We hope she will keep in touch, visit often, and continue to be well in her retirement.

[Dr. Micheal Crafton, Interim President, University of West Georgia]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Jane enjoys cycling and mountain biking. She and husband Richard are renovating a church built in 1909 into a three-bedroom home as their first and quite reverent "house-flipping" project. Additionally, they are endeavoring to found a Carroll County chapter of Cycling Without Age, a global initiative that offers seniors and others with physical limitations rides on a "trishaw," a three-wheeled bicycle. Learn more at www.CyclingWithoutAge.com

Lyn J. Steed (BA '73 ,History; MEd.'74, Special Education; Ed.S. '90 ,Early Childhood)

Position(s) held: Instructor/Lecturer

Department(s): Curriculum & Instruction/Early Childhood

Years of Service: 2006-2019

Tribute Statement:

In 1973, Lyn Steed earned a bachelor's degree in History with a minor in Secondary Education at West Georgia before embarking on a career as a classroom teacher. Once actively teaching, she earned two additional degrees from West Georgia: a Master of Education degree in 1974 and a Specialist in Education in 1990.



After more than 30 years as an award-winning teacher, Lyn joined the Early Childhood Education faculty in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at UWG. From the beginning, the students in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program embraced Mrs. Steed. She had a gift for connecting with the students and the content of her courses was attainable and relatable. Part mother and part mentor, from phone calls in the middle of the night to working one-on-one with students for hours to complete the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (EdTPA), Lyn could be counted on to see each of her students through the obstacles they faced as they progressed through the Early Childhood Education program. Both the students and the faculty in the program knew that if there was a student issue in need of being resolved or a student cause needing to be championed, Lyn was the first and best choice for the job.

Her passion for students and the teaching profession and her strong work ethic made Lyn a productive and valued colleague in the department. She quickly established herself as a leader in the department and was regularly asked to work on many projects and initiatives normally outside of the role of an Instructor. Her achievements as an Instructor resulted in her earning the rank of Lecturer in 2015. In that same year, she took on the role of ECE EdTPA Coordinator and Field Experience Director, serving in that capacity until her retirement.

The expertise and years of experience Lyn brought with her when she joined the faculty of the University of West Georgia made her a tremendous asset to her department and programs in which she served. At the center of all she did and contributed to the development of new programs and courses was an effort to see students succeed. Her legacy as a caring and dedicated teacher-educator will not soon be forgotten because countless lives are being changed by teachers who will attest she is the reason they realized their dream of becoming a teacher. The students, the programs, and the department will never be the same now that she has retired. Without question, Mrs. Lyn Steed will be sorely missed

[Jill Drake Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Lyn plans to do whatever she wants to do, but has already decided this will include part-time-teaching, gardening, catching up on reading, exploring new historical places, and being one of the caretakers for her 96-year-old mom.

Rita Wardein Tekippe, Ph.D.

Position held: Associate Professor, Art History

Department: Art

Years of Service: 2001-2018

Tribute Statement:

Dr. Rita Tekippe earned her Ph.D. from the Ohio State University and went on to become a well-respected art historian in the field of medieval art. She is a founding member of the International Society for the Study of Pilgrimage Arts (ISSOPA), and the former executive director of *Peregrinations*, the ISSOPA newsletter (now online). Her research has been published in the collection *Push Me, Pull*



You ("The Grand Procession at Tournai"), and she served as subject editor on art essays in The Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage and has edited and written for numerous other publications. She co-wrote ART 1100 Art Appreciation OER (now a widely-adopted free text) with other university colleagues across the state of Georgia, and co-edited the monumental two-volume Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles, which includes her essay on processional pilgrimage.

Noted for her rigor and dedication to student excellence, Rita infused the Art History area with a rich array of courses ranging from Early Christian, Byzantine and Medieval Art & Architecture, to the History of Drawing, and Survey of Non-Western Art (Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas, as well as upper-level Asian studies focused on India, China, and Japan). Among her favorite courses to teach were American Art & Architecture, and Art of the Seventeenth Century. As she also holds an MFA in Painting, Rita brought a studio practitioner's perspective to her pedagogy and scholarship.

Rita co-founded the Georgia Undergraduate Art History Forum (and the Consortium of participating Georgia schools)--an annual statewide event highlighting student research in art history. She was visionary in her development of the department's Visual Resources Center, especially as it adapted to the digital age, and this Center remains a critical resource for faculty and students. Her dedication to and regard for the Department of Art was ever apparent in her tireless efforts to assist with the National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD) self-study and review. She has been deeply committed to the value of online learning and worked to develop a wide array of online offerings in art history, as well as promoting interdisciplinary offerings in cooperation with others scholars at UWG.

Rita is a generous and thoughtful colleague who has always been totally committed to the department's success. Her excellence in scholarship, dedication to teaching, and genuine kindness will be sincerely missed. And we wish her well in her next endeavors.

[Eilis Crean, M.F.A., Professor of Art; Nathan K. Rees, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Art History; and Debrah Santini, M.F.A., Professor of Art--Department of Art, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

Rita plans to resume research she hasn't had time for previously along with her studio practice in her new studio in north Georgia.

Bryan Thompson

Position held: Custodian Associate

Department: Campus Planning and Facilities/ Custodial Services

Years of Service: 2011-2018

Tribute Statement:

Bryan Thompson was a very hard-working and dependable employee who could always be counted on to show up for work and to get there on time. No matter what he was asked to do, he did it and never got angry. Not surprisingly, he was honored as one of the "Best of the West" employees in May 2017.



He dressed neatly and well on the job. He was also a very nice guy who got along with everyone, had no complaints about others, had a big heart, and was kind and respectful to all--the type of person you would want for a neighbor. His co-workers were like family to him. He often expressed concern about others' situations and wanted to make sure they were doing well.

Bryan would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. He kept a lot of his co-workers lifted up on a daily basis and also when they were dealing with something serious. No one can replace him; he was the thread that mended us back together when things weren't going as they should. It was always a good experience to be around Bryan and he is *really* missed.

[Scott Phillips, Foreman, Floor Crew; Ali Mohammed, Intermediate Head, Floor Crew; Linda Bridges, Superintendent, Floor Crew, Campus Planning and Facilities/Custodial Services]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In his retirement, Bryan plans to be working part-time doing a variety of side jobs, including cleaning a warehouse, handling a bread route, and helping his dad with landscaping projects.

Bernard Upshaw

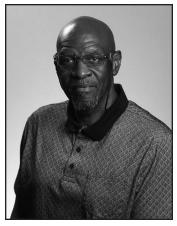
Position held: Client Services Technician -Associate

Department: Information Technology Services

Years of service: 2008-2018

Tribute Statement:

Before becoming employed at the University of West Georgia, Bernard worked for a company that serviced Dell computers statewide. As a result, from the first day he was on the job at UWG, he was helpful to the Information Technology Services (ITS) department. Bernard's knowledge and handson experience with a range of Dell computers,



especially Dell laptops, enabled him to make significant contributions to the UWG community as well as to his co-workers. He was also a Dell Certified Technician, which facilitated his being able to maintain servicing and the ordering of parts campus-wide for various types of Dell computers.

Bernard always did his best to find a resolution to computer problems on campus. His office was typically filled with multiple computers and parts as he sought to deal with the range of hardware problems that arose. His contributions extended to the UWG students through the initiative known as Student Information Technology Services (SITS), for which he coached SITS technical student assistants to resolve problems with students' computers. His past experience in previous service companies with various laptop manufacturers helped him know how to fix multiple problems or guide those in the SITS office to do so.

In addition to his regular work assignments, Bernhard is very fond of being a part of athletics events on campus by taking pictures at these events. One of his passions is taking pictures using multiple cameras and various lens sizes. It should not come as a surprise if fans continue to see him taking pictures at UWG Athletics events, even at the away games. Another passion of his is playing Sudoku. He owns multiple SUDOKU books that he worked on and solved in his spare time and on weekends.

[Vedat Gunay, Project Manager, Office of IT Strategic Planning, Information Technology Services, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In his retirement, Bernard plans to do some traveling, continue with his photography, and take on some contract IT work.

Alice Debose Wesley

Position held: Departmental Assistant

Department: Graduate School

Years of Service: 1999-2019

Tribute Statement:

It seems Ms. Alice and I have been friends since birth, but that cannot be since she's older than I and was born in Mississippi. She is a woman who is very proud of her Mississippi roots, and will let you know that she is. We worked together in the Graduate School for about 10 years, and have been attached at the hip since that time. Ms. Alice has a heart for people and



hands to work. She brings great laughter and excellence to whatever she touches and wherever she goes. I've had the pleasure of working with her at UWG as well as at her church functions. She's always hands on and about business with joy.

Ms. Alice is a "one of a kind" who does more than work in the Graduate School; she thoughtfully serves the Graduate School staff, students, and anyone who comes through the doors with a smile, a "Hi y'all," and food. She's an excellent cook and always seems to know when a student needs more than just direction. She has a great listening ear and an eagle eye for detail. Her compassion, her generosity, and love for her position will truly be missed. Ms. Alice is a "one of a kind!"

[Trisha Wells, Graduate Studies Associate, College of Social Sciences, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Alice plans to spend more time with her husband and grandchildren, and do some traveling. She also says she has a lot of recipes she wants to experiment with.

Diane Wise, MSN, RN, CNM, CNE

Position held: Assistant Professor

Department: Nursing

Years of Service: 2008-2019

Tribute Statement:

Diane has served as a Captain in the United States Air Force, a labor and delivery nurse, a Certified Nurse Midwife, a home-health nurse, and as a nurse educator. She has published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at national nursing conferences. She continues to be an active member of local, state, national, and international professional associations and has received accolades from students and peers for making a positive impact on students in nursing education.



All those accomplishments over time have afforded her the opportunity to retire proudly, knowing she has made a positive impact on the health of future generations.

Listing all of her accomplishments, however, does not sum up the heart and soul of her truest, most indispensable qualities.

Diane is enthusiastic. She uses any project or assignment as an invitation to cheer people on to the next level of accomplishment. She uses her creativity and energy to produce enjoyable and meaningful experiences, whether it be a zombie run, a holiday party, or a service-learning project for patients, students, colleagues, and the community. Her energy is motivating and infectious.

She is well-intentioned. Any decision Diane made in planning a class activity, determining measures of student success, communicating policy concerns with colleagues, or engaging in professional discourse has always been executed with a pure heart and the best of intentions for a positive outcome.

Diane is introspective. She will step back to look at her experiences and the consequences of her decisions, to reflect on their meaning and value in her life. She has an uncanny ability to receive wisdom from such introspection to help her navigate next steps in her life journey.

She can be seen as rebellious because she often thinks and acts "outside the box" and makes decisions that are outside of the norm or prescribed parameters. But it's important to understand that her underlying intention is to serve as an advocate for humanity. In this capacity she will stand solidly against any perceived foe in order to protect vulnerable living beings, human or animal.

In her essence, Diane Wise has a clear understanding of her place in this world. She lives her life following the truth as she understands it. She is a spiritual being and lives an authentic life which she credits all to God.

[Amy Farmer, RN, MSN, FNP-BC, Associate Professor and BSN Director, Tanner Health System School of Nursing, UWG]

Hobbies/Plans for Retirement:

In her retirement, Diane plans to enjoy her pets, camping, reading, writing, travel, and rest. She also expects to do some home health-care work in the area of Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) infusion therapy.

In MEMORIAM

Oliver L. Calvert - Parking and Transportation

Dr. Tom Carrere - Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Robert Claxton - Professor Emeritus, History

Dr. Robert Coe - Professor and Chair of Music Emeritus

George W. Cook - Foreman, Maintenance

Dr. Marilyn Neil - Professor (Early Childhood) Education

- Dr. Thomas Padgett Professor, Management/Business Information Systems
- Dr. James Early Perry Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science Emeritus

Karen Rankin, M.S.N. - Assistant Professor, Nursing

- Brenda S. Simonds Administrative Assistant, Anthropology
- Dr. Mel Steely Professor Emeritus, History; Director, Political Heritage Collection

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