

THE MAGAZINE OF SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

# seasons

FALL 2017



**National Champion**

See page 42

# Contents



## Alumni Honorees

Samford University will recognize six outstanding graduates at homecoming in November—Joel Brooks '99 and Stephen Dillard '92 (Alumni of the Year), Lauren Lunceford '09 (Outstanding Young Alumna), and Jade '93 and Shelah '96 Acker and Amy Jo Young Osborn '02 (Humanitarians of the Year).



## Restoring Daniel House

Samford is embarking on a renovation and facility improvement project to help restore its 140-year old London study center. Alumni and others are invited to take part by giving to this worthy goal. The Daniel Foundation provided a challenge gift of \$150,000 to help initiate the effort.



## Shikhin Archives to Library

Samford's archaeological project in the ancient Israeli village of Shikhin has produced numerous discoveries over the past six years. This summer's work uncovered part of an oil lamp maker's house and workshop. Project leader James Strange recently donated all printed materials from the Shikhin dig to the Samford library.

2	From the President
3	Samford Report
6	Digital Feedback
7	Homecoming Information
8	Albert Brewer Tribute
12	60 Years in Homewood
16	Science and Religion
17	QEP Update
18	Cycling Across America
19	King Letter Use
20	Dominican Sojourn

21	Davis Lecture Set
22	What's in a Name?
23	Robert Smith Jr. Honored
24	Collective Impact
25	Slawson Wilson Fellow
26	Center of Excellence
27	Pharmacy Research
28	Predicting Fall Risks
29	Public Health Interns
30	Alumnus Spotlight: Devyn Keith

31	Faculty Spotlight: Amy Hoaglund
33	Baddorf in Antarctica
34	Mary Wyatt and Construction
36	Class Notes
38	New Arrivals
40	In Memoriam
42	Sports
44	Tributes

## Seasons Fall 2017 • Vol. 34 • No. 3

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**Cover:** Karisa Nelson of Samford University won the Division I national championship in the women's indoor mile. Here, she competes in the NCAA outdoor track and field championships (see page 42).

### Alumni Association Officers

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*Seasons* is published three times annually by Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, Alabama 35229, and is distributed free to alumni of the university, as well as to other friends. Postmaster: Send address changes to Office of University Advancement, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35229.

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Produced by Samford Division of Marketing and Communication



Samford students and employees pitch in to help new students move in at the start of school.

# *From the President*



## A Devoted and Committed University Family

**Samford University's mission statement**, displayed prominently in our publications and across campus, is succinct and challenging: "To nurture persons in their development of intellect, creativity, faith and personhood." While not cited as often, our core values offer depth to our understanding and practice of mission:

- Belief in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord
- Engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus
- Learning and responsible freedom of inquiry
- Personal empowerment, accountability and responsibility
- Vocational success and civic engagement
- Spiritual growth and cultivation of physical well-being
- Integrity, honesty and justice
- Appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions
- Stewardship of all resources
- Service to God, to family, to one another and to the community

Welcoming new students to our campus community as we embark on our 176th year of service, I am more mindful than ever of the significance of these values. They are appropriate for Samford as an institution; they are equally important for us as individuals, across the span of our lives. I am thankful to share this journey with such a devoted and committed university family.

As always, please keep Samford in your prayers.

Andrew Westmoreland  
President

# Samford Moves into Year 176

**Samford opened its 176th year this fall with a projected record enrollment and unmistakable signs of physical progress. The summer was anything but quiet as workers labored to complete projects that were part of phase one of the campus master plan for improvement. More than 30 projects were completed as the campus readied for the arrival of some 5,500 students. Included were infrastructure upgrades, residence hall improvements and new construction.**

The most noticeable project is the new Tri Delta residence hall on west campus. The facility houses 70 students, bringing to approximately 2,375 the number of campus residents.

Also new is a paved and lighted pedestrian walkway between west campus and west village.

The first wave of renovations for Howard College of Arts and Sciences, a new home for world languages and cultures in Russell Hall, was completed in August. Also in August, the philosophy, sociology and religion departments moved from Burns and Chapman halls into the space vacated by world languages and cultures in Dwight Beeson Hall so that Burns and Chapman hall renovations could begin.

When complete in summer 2018, Burns, Chapman, Ingalls and Russell halls will be the new home for the Howard College of Arts and Sciences departments of history, religion, classics, philosophy, English, mathematics and computer science, world languages and cultures, psychology, political science, geography and sociology.

Work will continue on various other projects through the school year.

Among other projects, more than 1,200



new windows were installed along with weather stripping that is expected to bring \$51 million in savings over the next 20 years. ▶

*To keep up with campus master plan progress, go to [samford.edu/about/campus-master-plan](http://samford.edu/about/campus-master-plan).*

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## Forbes Ranks Samford #1 in Alabama

**Samford University is the top-ranked higher education institution in Alabama, according to new national rankings released Aug. 3 by Forbes Inc. In the respected annual publication, Samford is ranked ahead of all other public and private colleges and universities in the state of Alabama.**

Now in its 10th year, the Forbes Top Colleges ranking involves “return-on-investment-centric logic: and a thorough assessment of key educational outcomes, including superior return on investment, leadership and success, and the student-consumer experience,” according to *Forbes*. Samford is ranked #182 of the 650 colleges and universities included in the annual ranking.

“These rankings further affirm Samford’s value, affordability and academic stature,” said Samford President Andrew Westmoreland. “We acknowledge that these types of rankings can be subjective from year to year, but also are a great source of pride for Samford students, employees and alumni who celebrate the strong national reputation of their university.”

The Forbes Top Colleges ranking has always emphasized the importance of postgraduation success. According to *Forbes*, “The most direct return on investment a student can earn from a college education is postgraduate success. A high-paying or high-impact career largely justifies four years of academic work and tuition bills, so we continue to make this sector our highest priority.”

Samford places heavy emphasis on career counseling and preparing its students for success upon graduation. The university continually monitors and reports on the placement of its recent graduates. In recent years, 97% of all undergraduate alumni have been employed, enrolled in graduate school or pursuing post-graduate internships within six months of graduation.

Samford continues to be nationally ranked for academics, affordability and value by a variety of other major rankings, including *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Economist*, *Kiplinger’s Personal Finance* and *The Wall Street Journal*. ▶

# Samford to Honor SIX ALUMNI by Philip Poole WITH ANNUAL AWARDS

SIX Samford University alumni, representing a wide range of achievement in law, education, ministry, missions, philanthropy and community service, will be honored during 2017 homecoming festivities with the university's annual alumni awards.

Alumni of the Year honorees were nominated by members of the Samford community, and selected by a committee of Samford Alumni Association representatives and university administrators. They are distinguished in their professional careers, community and church involvement, and in

their ongoing service to Samford. The awards were first presented in 1956, and 120 alumni have been honored since.

The award to an outstanding young alumnus honors a graduate from the past 10 years, and 10 individuals have been recognized.

The Humanitarian of the Year award was established in 2016 to recognize Samford graduates of distinction, wide respect and acknowledged leadership who have made outstanding contributions to better the lives of those around them by staying true to the Samford mission.



Brooks



Dillard



Lunceford



Shelah and Jade Acker, center, with Vice President for Advancement Randy Pittman, left, and President Andrew Westmoreland



Amy Jo Young Osborn with daughters Zoe, left, and Anabelle

## Alumni of the Year

**Joel Brooks '99** and **Stephen Dillard '92** have been named Alumni of the Year, the highest honor the university bestows on graduates.

Brooks is founding pastor of Birmingham's Redeemer Community Church. He earlier founded the University Christian Fellowship collegiate ministry through Mountain Brook Community Church. He earned a Master of Divinity in 1999 and has continued to be involved with Beeson Divinity School. In the nomination, it was noted that "Joel's ministry has reached so many people and has shown the calling Joel has to share Christ with others."

Dillard, who earned a Bachelor of Arts in history in the prelaw program, serves as chair of Samford's Atlanta alumni chapter and is a member of the Bulldog Club supporting Samford athletics. He has been a practicing attorney in Georgia and recently was appointed as chief judge of the Court of Appeals of Georgia. In 2016, he was the featured homecoming showcase alumnus for Howard College of Arts and Sciences. According to the nominating committee, Dillard "has been a wonderful representative of Samford, not only through his professional accomplishments, but his involvement in his community and with Samford."

## Outstanding Young Alumna

**Lauren Lunceford** is the Outstanding Young Alumna, an award that was established in 2009 to recognize recent graduates for professional achievement and involvement with Samford. Lunceford received a Bachelor of Science in 2009 and earned a master's degree in gifted education in 2011. She continues to be involved with Orlean Beeson School of Education in several volunteer roles.

Lunceford is a teacher at Cahaba Heights Elementary School in Vestavia Hills, Alabama. She taught for several years at Mountain Brook's Cherokee Bend Elementary School, where she was named Teacher of the Year for 2016-17.

## Humanitarians of the Year

Three individuals, including a husband and wife team, are being recognized with the Humanitarian of the Year award.

**Jade and Shelah Hubbard Acker** are founders and directors of Refuge and Hope International, a multifaceted ministry based in Kampala, Uganda, which they founded in 2004. They serve through the missions auspices of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Their nomination noted that they "are devoted to this community,

putting aside their own comforts for the betterment of their neighbors."

The Ackers' commitment to ministry and missions began when they met on a university-sponsored mission trip. Jade received a Bachelor of Science in history and mathematics in 1993, and Shelah earned a Bachelor of Arts in religion in 1996.

The Ackers will be in Uganda during homecoming, so they were presented their awards at a special ceremony July 31 on campus.

**Amy Jo Young Osborn** of Birmingham is cofounder and president of the Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer, named for her infant son who lived only nine weeks due to an extremely rare and aggressive form of pediatric cancer. She and her husband started the foundation in 2006, and it has assisted more than 70,000 children in 28 states and 38 hospitals.

Osborn received a Bachelor of Arts in journalism in 2002 and worked as a photojournalist for Southern Progress Corp.

The honorees will be recognized on Friday, Nov. 10, and at other events throughout the weekend. ▀

.....  
*See page 7 for more homecoming details.*

**FACEBOOK  
CHATTER**



**f** A little throwback . . . and a fun memory from **Graduation 2017!** Read what the mom of a 2017 graduate had to say about this moment:

"The night before at dinner we had been talking about what a servant leader Dr. Westmoreland is. We mentioned the word 'genuine.' Our older son, who works for Chick-fil-A corporate asked, "What do you think makes a person 'genuine'? What qualities define that word in a person?" And we as parents and our graduating son gave some examples. Then, after the 7th graduation, the music grads were gathering for a photo and Dr. Westmoreland was walking by, and they beckoned him to join him for a photo. We said to our older son — "THIS is what we mean when we say he is 'genuine.'" We are most grateful for the time our son spent there."

*Photo Credit: Elizabeth Turnage, mother of Robert Turnage, Class of 2017*



**Instagram** SAMFORD UNIVERSITY, @samfordu **We're just days from Commencement ceremonies! Who's been the biggest inspiration to you as you reach for your dreams?**



**Instagram** SAMFORD UNIVERSITY, @samfordu **President Westmoreland and Samford VPs served up pancakes tonight to students during exam study break! They are the best!**



**Twitter** ED CHERRY, @SUCybrarian **World first Twitter page discovered in the 1945 @SamfordU #EntreNous yearbook**

**TOP COMMENTS BY FOLLOWERS**

**Twitter** ELIZABETH BRAGG, @elizabeth\_bragg **holy moly go to a school where the dean of your college takes an hour out of their day during the summer to pray and encourage you @SamfordU**

**Twitter** ANNA, @aajohan3 **i am so obsessed with samford and i'm not even in college yet help**

**Twitter** BOBBY BOWDEN, @TheBobbyBowden **Thanks for the hometown reception at Samford University yesterday!**

**Twitter** STEPHANIE, @StephSmith470 **On Samford's campus for the first time in four years and have literal tears of joy. I love my alma mater. @SamfordAlumni @SamfordU**

**Twitter** SAMFORD UNIVERSITY, @samfordu **"I don't think you find a lot of schools that stress community service as much as Samford does." - Korrie Sauder [Sophomore] #SUGivesBack - Samford University, @samfordu**

**COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEW BULLDOG LOGO**



**Twitter** SAMFORD UNIVERSITY, @samfordu **Refined. Inspiring. Distinctive. How would you describe Samford's new bulldog? #Samford #Samford Athletics #SamfordBulldog #FootballSeason**

**Twitter** DANNY SHERMAN, @dannysherman **MAJOR UPGRADE.**

**Twitter** LESLIE COOPER @dancer81 **So cool!! Go Bulldogs!**

**Twitter** ANTHONY, @AL\_Sub\_Sailor **Dominant, just like our football team will be this season!**

**Twitter** THOMAS CASEY @T\_casey84 **Impressive! #SamfordAthletics**







# Homecoming Alumni Events

## Daniel House Reunion Tea

**Friday, Nov. 10, 3-5 p.m.**

at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Andrew Westmoreland

Reconnect and network with fellow alumni, enjoy English tea and treats, and find out how you can be a part of building Daniel House's future.

## Alumni Candlelight Dinner\*

**Friday, Nov. 10, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Join fellow alumni and friends for this time-honored tradition as we celebrate the rich history of Samford University and Howard College. All guests are also encouraged to attend "The Beesons," an exciting awards program recognizing alumni award recipients.

## Family Homecoming Dinner\*

**Friday, Nov. 10, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Join fellow alumni and their families for a Samford Family Homecoming Dinner. This casual, kid-friendly opportunity is designed for alumni with young families to fellowship together, enjoy dinner and participate in family-friendly activities.

*\*Alumni are invited to attend the dinner of their choice.*

## Samford University Alumni Awards Program

**The Beesons**

**Friday, Nov. 10, 8-9 p.m.**

Join us as we celebrate and honor the alumni recipients of prestigious honors, including Alumni of the Year, Outstanding Young Alumna of the Year and Humanitarians of the Year. This will be a fun, memory-filled experience that you won't want to miss.

## Alumni Association Tailgate on the Quad

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.**

School spirit at its finest. Enjoy community with fellow alumni, families, students and friends as we celebrate homecoming on the quad by cheering on our Bulldogs. There will be food trucks available for lunch and activities for children.

## Samford vs. ETSU Football Game

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 2 p.m.**

Join Samford alumni, students and fans as we cheer on the Bulldogs at Seibert Stadium!

## Reunion Events

**Class of 1967 Reunion Breakfast**

**50 Year Reunion**

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 9 a.m.**

**Howard Room**

**Class of 1992 Reunion Tailgate**

**25 Year Reunion**

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 11 a.m., Quad**

**Class of 2007 Reunion Tailgate**

**10 Year Reunion**

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 11 a.m., Quad**

**Golden Bulldog Luncheon**

Alumni who graduated 50+ years ago

**Saturday, Nov. 11, 11:30 a.m.**

**Seibert Hall**

## We look forward to seeing you!

For a complete schedule of all homecoming activities and events, go to [samford.edu/go/homecoming](http://samford.edu/go/homecoming) or download the Guidebook app. For questions or additional information, contact the Office of Alumni Programs and Annual Giving.

**205-726-4065 or [sualumni@samford.edu](mailto:sualumni@samford.edu)**

# Brewer Worked to Give Others A CHANCE TO EXCEL

by William Nunnelley



Albert Brewer received the 2012 Samford Medallion.

Albert Brewer was “a quiet, thoughtful problem-solver,” said historian Wayne Flynt in his book *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*. Brewer “typified the emerging New South governors who were transforming Southern politics” during the last third of the 20th century. He championed educational and constitutional reform, establishment of a state ethics commission and recruiting new industry.

Brewer worked to accomplish his goals during his three-year term as Alabama governor (1968-71). His administration produced the largest appropriations increase for public schools in state history, and he introduced measures to economize the operation of state government. He remained “a lifelong champion of equitable, efficient and effective government for Alabama,” said Tom Spencer of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA).

After joining Samford in 1987, Brewer continued his progressive work, helping the university establish PARCA as the state’s first independent, nonpartisan organization to provide information on government issues. He served as PARCA’s first executive director and later as chairman until 2013, and as chairman emeritus until his death Jan. 2, 2017.

PARCA filled a need that Brewer first discovered when he served in the Alabama legislature in the 1950s and ‘60s while also



Brewer speaks at the dedication of Brewer Plaza in 2008.



Brewer addresses high school students attending Samford's 2014 J.D. Calling program.

practicing law.

"The proponents of a bill would come and talk to us—these are lobbyists—and then the opponents would come and talk to us, and they would give their best case," Brewer recalled in 2006. "You'd figure, well, the truth must be somewhere in between.

"It didn't change when I became governor. These were the only sources of information that we had, people who represented the interests involved."

In addition to his work with PARCA, Brewer taught at Samford's Cumberland School of Law for more than two decades. "He served the university with distinction, as he did everything in life, and taught constitutional law to generations of students," said Samford President Andrew Westmoreland. The law school honored Brewer and his late wife, Martha, by naming the newly designed space in front of its law school building Brewer Plaza in 2008.

Over the years, Brewer generously supported Samford and the law school with his giving, endowing several scholarships and providing donations to other law school funds. His total lifetime giving, combined with his estate gift, was approximately \$4.4 million. Brewer also served as chairman of the Campaign for Samford from 2009 until 2014, during which time the university raised \$202 million.

"Gov. Albert Brewer was simply one of the finest gentlemen I've ever been associated with," said W. Randy Pittman, Samford's vice president for advancement. "With his résumé of accomplishments, he had every opportunity to garner accolades, but instead chose to serve with quiet humility and to exhibit extraordinary generosity so that others might have a chance to excel. He has left an incredible legacy at Samford." ▾

## The Brewer Legacy OF GIVING

• **In 1991**, Albert Brewer gave \$239,000 to endow the Martha F. Brewer Scholarship for a Samford undergraduate in honor of his wife.

• **In 2007**, he endowed the Daniel Austin Brewer Professionalism Award for a law student in honor of his father, giving \$25,000.

• **In various gifts**, he endowed the Albert P. and Martha F. Brewer Scholarship in the law school, currently valued at \$1,996,000. The proceeds of his estate are providing an additional \$810,000 for this scholarship fund.

• **In 2013**, Brewer endowed the Albert P. Brewer Chair of Ethics and Professionalism in the law school, giving \$500,000. The proceeds of his estate are providing an additional \$1,000,000 for this endowment.

• **In addition**, Brewer's daughter and son-in-law, Alison and Mark Calhoun, established a separate Albert P. Brewer Scholarship in the law school.

# Restoring Samford University's Daniel House One Story at a Time

by Karen Templeton

**Nestled in** the same London neighborhood as the former homes of Winston Churchill, T.S. Eliot, Alfred Hitchcock and John Lennon is the 140-year-old Daniel House.

The Victorian townhouse serves as the setting for one of Samford University's most popular study abroad programs. In addition to courses taught by Samford faculty, British professors lecture in offerings that focus on British theatre, history, culture and life. Students also participate in experiential learning courses or internships.

Given the age and consistent use of the house over the years, the university is



Artwork by Kaleigh Hartley '14

embarking on a renovation and facility improvement project to help restore its history and ensure it is accessible to students for years to come. The project also entails developing a plan to make better use of the home's resources so that more students can be accommodated and most rooms can host dual purposes.

The Daniel Foundation announced a special challenge gift of \$150,000 to boost efforts and encourage more participation. The Foundation's involvement is meaningful to the Daniel House alumni, enabling significant renovations to be made to the home.

"We are looking at ways to maximize the space of the house and really use its full potential," said Lauren Doss, director of Samford's Global Engagement Programs. "Additionally, we'll incorporate modular furniture that can be used for basic living, such as a kitchen table that can be used during mealtime and then folded up and stored so that the space can be used for another purpose, such as class time. Daniel House is so important to our university and our students' development that we want to get started on this renovation project soon."

As part of the *Forever Samford* campaign, fundraising efforts are targeted at \$2 million for the Daniel House renovations. To meet this goal, the Division of University Advancement and Daniel House alumni are identifying Daniel House Champions, former program residents who will reach out to their cohorts to encourage giving to the renovation project.

Daniel House Champions will focus on reuniting their study abroad cohort groups to help fund parts of the house most meaningful to them. Making small recurring gifts as a team will make significant differences and solidify their cohorts' mark on the home. For instance, a group of five making monthly gifts of \$83 or a group of 10 committing to \$50 a

month for five years will fund the remodel of a bedroom or sitting room. This comes with an opportunity to name the room for a cohort, or a friend or mentor, leaving that history in the home forever.

"As an alumna, I know there are so many stories and memories we share among the group we traveled with," Doss said. "This is a great opportunity to invest those memories in the home in a tangible way."

Volunteers will be encouraged to share their stories and inspire their fellow cohorts to contribute and focus on a specific part of the home, stories building on one another to keep the beautiful row house standing tall into the future.

"Like many Samford students, I grew up not too far from Birmingham, and London was my first sustained experience in a wider world," said 2007 alumna Mary Kathryn Covert Steel, Daniel House campaign chair. "Spending a semester at the Daniel House transformed my life. It gave me the opportunity to better understand the global political landscape, European history, as well as religion and culture. It also provided the time for self-reflection at an important juncture in

my life: determining what I wanted to do professionally, where I wanted to live and to some extent, who I wanted to be.

"In speaking with my fellow alumni 10 years later, I found that our stories are all similar: they, too, considered Daniel House as a life-changing experience and counted it among the highlights of their Samford experience. Because I received a scholarship to study at Samford, I know how meaningful it can be to provide the same educational opportunities to future students."

This fundraising effort is a unique chance for Daniel House alumni, whether students or faculty, to reconnect with friends, and build enthusiasm and momentum behind ensuring the Daniel House legacy, Steel added.

**Those interested in volunteering as a Daniel House Champion or in helping in another way can contact Karen Templeton at [ktemplet@samford.edu](mailto:ktemplet@samford.edu).**

*Karen Templeton is director of annual giving in Samford's Division of University Advancement.*

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**To respond** and learn more, go to [alumni.samford.edu/events](http://alumni.samford.edu/events).



60 YEARS

60

YEARS

**The first classes on the current campus** began Sept. 16, 1957, making this academic year the 60th anniversary of Samford in Homewood. The transition from the former East Lake campus actually began almost a decade earlier through the visionary leadership of then-President Harwell G. Davis, but the move became official during the summer of 1957. That first year was

Davis Library was one of Samford's original buildings.

THEN

# IN HOMEWOOD

especially challenging with unfinished buildings, limited sidewalks, minimal landscaping and lots of mud. Today, the campus is nationally recognized for its Georgian-Colonial architecture and lush surroundings. As the late Thomas E. Corts, Samford's president from 1983 to 2006, said, "Of all earthly treasures, the Samford campus is Major Davis' monument."

Brooks Hall was completed in 1966.



# *Samford Will House Archives of* **SHIKHIN EXCAVATION PROJECT** *by Sean Flynt*



Shikhin volunteers work under shade cloths to beat the summer heat.



Samford University religion Professor James Riley Strange directs the collaborative Shikhin Excavation Project with Associate Director Mordechai Aviam of Kinneret College's Institute for Galilean Archaeology. The project, in Israel's Galilee region, has produced a number of unique and important discoveries documented in a collection of materials Strange has donated to Samford's University Library.

Strange, Aviam and a team of students and volunteers have worked at the ancient village of Shikhin for six seasons. Their excavations in May and June this year uncovered part of the house and workshop of an oil lamp maker. Although the house was typically simple, with packed earthen floors and, probably, mud plaster on the walls, it held a unique surprise. In an area thought to have been a courtyard, the team discovered a special kiln for firing oil lamps and other small vessels, with two complete, identical oil lamps and a small bowl still inside.

Many kilns from various periods have been discovered in Israel—all of them used to fire jugs, storage jars, cooking pots and other large vessels. These usually measure more than 16 feet in diameter. The kiln in the Shikhin potter's house, the first of its kind found in Israel, measures less than three feet in diameter, with a central pillar made of stone and brick that supported an upper floor. That floor was pierced with holes to allow the heat from the fire below to bake the fragile vessels.

Eleven bronze coins were found in a small pot near the kiln. The latest coin, dating to the



middle of the second century A.D., helps date the period of oil lamp production at Shikhin, and allows the excavators to suggest that the potter's house and the rest of the village was abandoned about that time.

Because oil lamps were intended for daily use, they were ubiquitous in houses of the ancient world. In the Roman period, lamps were made in two (upper and lower) stone molds, and the upper one was usually decorated. On the lamps and molds from Shikhin, one commonly sees clusters of grapes, pomegranates, rosettes, tendrils, leaves, and occasionally objects such as vases or amphorae. One of the most beautiful Shikhin molds is decorated with a ring of pomegranates and vines. Another finely made fragment of an oil lamp was decorated with ethrogs: citrus fruits used at the festival of Sukkot or Booths. Four years ago, Samford alumnus Aaron Coyle-Carr '12 discovered a fragment of an oil lamp decorated with a seven-branched menorah with palm fronds on either side.

For decades, the design and decoration of the oil lamps has been known from the southern region of Judea following the destruction of the Second Temple (70 A.D.) and the Second Jewish Revolt (135 A.D.), but it is now clear that similar oil lamps were also manufactured in Galilee.

At the conclusion of the 2017 excavation season, Strange donated to Samford's University Library all the printed materials from the Shikhin Excavation Project, covering 2011 through 2017. Strange pointed out that many universities hold important archaeological archives, and said he has always hoped the Shikhin materials, starting with field books and growing to include digital materials, photographs and technical drawings, would be at Samford for future scholarship. ▀

*Strange welcomes students, alumni and other volunteers to participate. Students receive eight hours of academic credit.*



Students search for archaeological artifacts and information in squares four meters by four meters; sunset at Shikhin; the 2017 dig team.



# Templeton Grant Helps *Center for Science and Religion*

by Sean Flynt

**Samford University's Center for Science and Religion** is seeking new support as it concludes a multiyear, grant-funded program of guest speakers, pastor workshops and collaboration with other Samford programs and local churches.

Since its founding in 2009, the center has become an important promoter of science and religion discussion, education and research on campus, producing a number of papers and books, securing grants and developing a unique academic program. Much of that work has been supported by 2014 grants of \$200,000 from the John Templeton Foundation and an additional gift of \$81,620 secured with assistance from the Issachar Fund.

The grants helped the center present 10 guest lecturers, pastor workshops, and an international transhumanism conference and book, each designed to create a welcoming and supportive space for participants to explore pressing issues at the intersection of science and faith, including transhumanism, genomics, mind-brain issues and artificial intelligence. "I want people to feel like they can talk about these things without feeling like somebody is hammering them," said Steve Donaldson, Samford math and computer science professor, senior fellow and program director for the center.

Josh Reeves, assistant professor of science and religion, has served as the center's grant administrator and director of its New Directions in Science and Religion project. Although he is the primary administrative figure in the center, funds for his position ran out this summer with the conclusion of the 2014 grants. A new grant of \$116,000 from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, approved by the foundation's trustees in June, will allow Reeves to remain

at Samford for two more years.

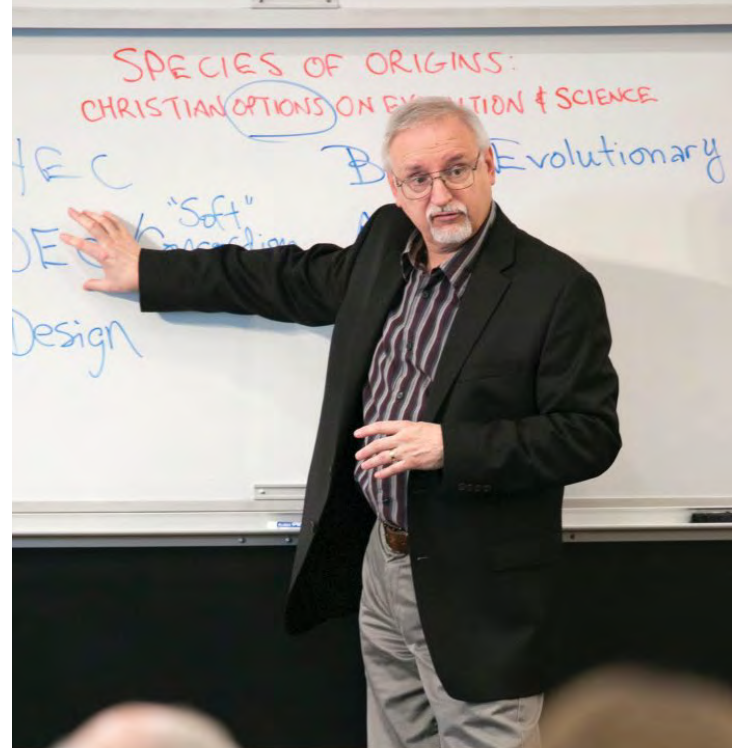
As part of the new grant, Reeves will continue to teach and work on a new book about Christian skepticism of science. In the absence of a permanent source of funds, he will also participate in the time-intensive work of exploring, securing and administering new grants to continue the center's work.

Although Reeves and Donaldson hope such grants will continue, their long-term goal is for the center to have institutional funding sufficient to insulate it from the boom-and-bust cycle of grants and changes in employees.

"We need an endowed fund to support ongoing work," Donaldson said. Toward that end, the Forever Samford campaign includes a \$6 million Center for Science and Religion goal to support research, student scholarships, educational programs and an endowed chair. The chair is the largest part of that goal, and plays a key role in the success of the other work. "Until we get that, this center is still a labor of love," Donaldson said.

In the short term, the center will focus on recruiting more students for Samford's science and religion academic major and minor, and continue to engage young people through more guest speakers and church partnerships like its ongoing Science and Theology for Emerging Adults Ministries (STEAM) Project with Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Homewood.

"We're helping young Christians think about these issues in responsible ways," Reeves said.



Old Testament scholar John Walton lectures at a science and religion event.

With the foundation of knowledge in science and religion Samford provides, these new generations of believers will understand that they don't have to choose between the two. ▀

**Those interested in facilitating discussion groups with the Center for Science and Religion or in helping in another way can contact Rhonda White at [rwhite7@samford.edu](mailto:rwhite7@samford.edu) or 205-726-4371.**

*Sean Flynt is executive director of external relations for Howard College of Arts and Sciences.*

# QEP Level Up Project

## MOVES TO IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

Samford's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was reviewed during the March on-site visit of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Reaffirmation Committee and met the standards established by the accreditation body. As a result, the Level Up project moved from the planning to the implementation stage over the summer.

The primary goal of Level Up is to help faculty design (or redesign) assignments to enhance student learning, particularly related to information literacy and critical thinking. QEP Director Eric Fournier worked with Core Texts faculty during their June workshop to begin a dialogue about the challenges faced by students in Cultural Perspectives. Later in June, other Core Text faculty and University Library faculty met in an assignment design charrette to work to improve Cultural Perspectives assignments.

The charrette was modeled after a process developed by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Faculty began the session by presenting their assignment. Verbal feedback from participants followed. Finally, participants provided feedback with a written form. Library faculty contributed by suggesting ways that elements of information literacy related to the Association of College and Research Libraries' "scholarship as conversation" frame could be integrated into the assignments.

According to Fournier, "The charrette process gives faculty an opportunity to share their work and learn from each other in a critical but nonjudgmental setting. And, faculty walk away with very specific suggestions to improve their assignments with the ultimate goal of improving student learning."

"The University Library faculty has assisted with the conceptual framework for the QEP, and is excited to help bring it to life beginning this summer and fall," said Lauren Young, instruction coordinator for reference and research services, University Library. "We look forward to forming new partnerships on campus to help students achieve stronger information literacy proficiencies during their tenure at Samford."

"The charrette was a tangible way for library faculty to be partners in the teaching

and learning process," said Fournier. "As the QEP develops, there will be more opportunities for faculty from schools and departments across the university to be involved in this innovative program."

To learn more about the QEP, go to [samford.edu/go/qep](http://samford.edu/go/qep).



Faculty discuss ways to improve Cultural Perspectives assignments.

## Toone Bicycles Across America, 3,070 Miles in 10 Days



When Samford computer science professor Brian Toone took part in the bicycle Race Across America in June of 2015, he said he might participate again to put into practice the lessons he learned. He did so again in June, cycling 3,070 miles in 10 days, 2 hours and 53 minutes from Oceanside, California, to Annapolis, Maryland.

He was the first American to finish this year's grueling endeavor, and ranked third in his category (under 50 years old) and fourth overall. He averaged 12.64 miles per hour.



"It's amazing how knowing what to expect makes so many things go smoother," Toone said afterward. "Dealing with the heat was easier this year. Dealing with sleep was much easier. Nutrition was so much better thanks to [support crew members] Lauren Parrish and Brian Barnett."

Toone said headwinds, which he didn't face in 2015, were among the hardest factors to deal with in this year's race.

Overall, "the experience was amazing," said Toone. Highlights included sprinting against a rider from the Czech Republic and barely passing him less than one second from the summit marker of Wolf Creek Pass in Colorado, and benefiting from

tailwinds in eastern Ohio.

Low points were the cold outside Flagstaff, Arizona, headwinds in Kansas and sleep deprivation late in the race.

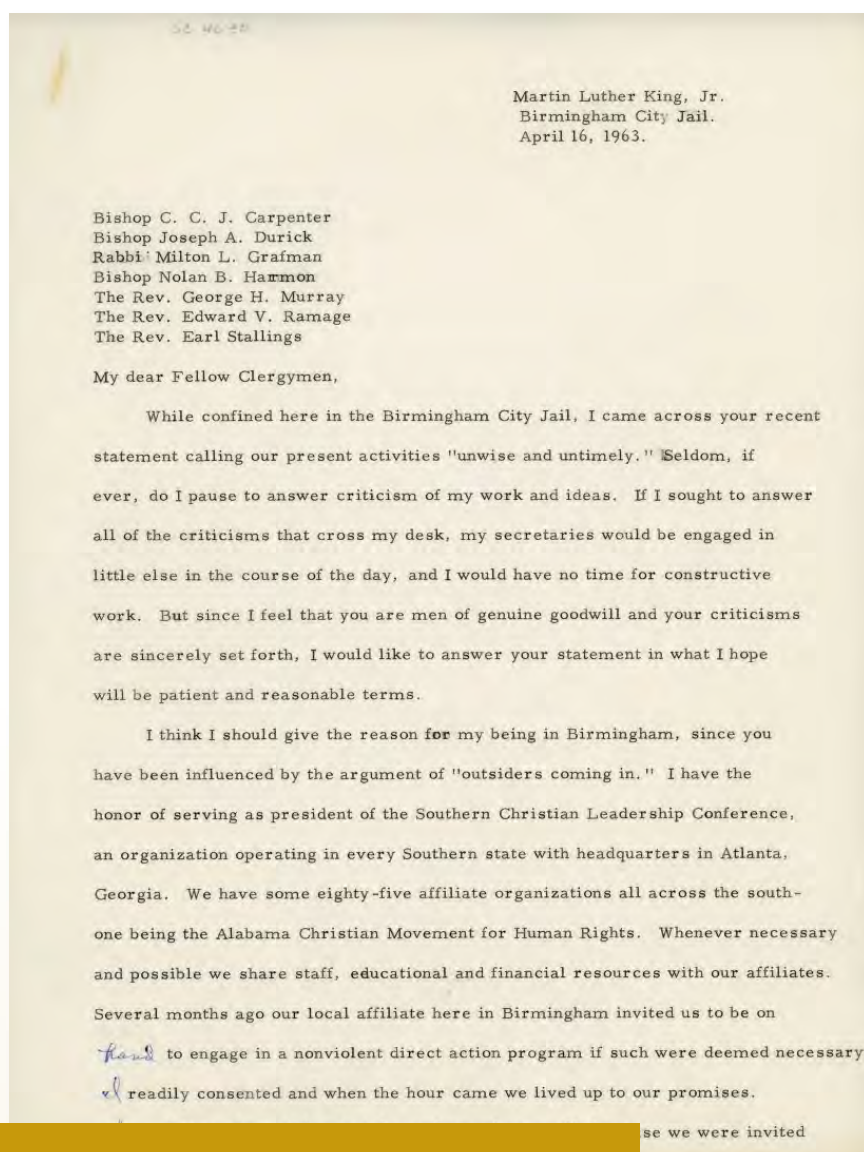
Toone was racing this time to raise awareness and money to fight Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy through the Hope4Gabe organization. His efforts helped raise more than \$40,000.

Toone is collaborating with three others to publish data collected during the race through a grant from Appalachian State University. Other researchers are from the University of Kansas, Delta State University and Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia. ▀

# Samford's Copy of King Letter TO BE USED IN UPCOMING FILM

by Gerald Smith

Samford University is known to have many gems within the university's historical collection.



Rare items such as this are preserved in the University Library and would not be possible without financial support. Gifts to the Special Collection may be accepted through the Elizabeth Wells Special Collection and Archives Endowed Fund.

Page One of King's  
20-page letter.

Among those gems is a copy of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" held by Special Collection in Harwell G. Davis Library. Willie Pearl Mackey (King) took the scraps of paper that King wrote on in jail and typed them in letter form. This early copy is believed to have been sent to the executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Convention before the letter was officially published.

Recently, a television company in the United Kingdom contacted Samford archivist Becky Hyde and requested to use Samford's copy of the letter in an upcoming film on King. They will take the copy to interview Willie Pearl Mackey King about her role in the Civil Rights Movement, according to Jennifer Taylor, Samford's Special Collection chair.

"It's really exciting that someone who had a huge part in history is being given something from Samford University for her to talk about her role in the movement," Taylor said.

Samford will be listed in the credits of the film for providing assistance, and the film will be broadcast to mark the 50th year since King's death. Every Cultural Perspectives student at Samford will also read the letter during the next academic year.

The letter is just one of many treasures found in Samford's Special Collection, Taylor said. In addition to Samford archives, the collection also houses archival materials from the Alabama Baptist State Convention, Alabama churches, Alabama history and other materials donated to the collection through the decades.

The Special Collection staff provides research assistance and hosts tours of the collection for individuals and groups.

The collection is open to the public Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Hours may vary when the university is not in session. ▶

*Gerald Smith is a journalism and mass communication major and a news and feature writer in the Division of Marketing and Communication.*

# Flexibility and the Unexpected Characterize Dominican Tour

by Ashley Smith

**Will Featherston is a junior who plays clarinet in the Samford Orchestra. He spent spring break traveling with other Samford students and employees on a 10-day trip to the Dominican Republic. The trip impacted the 50 or so participants in different ways, but unexpected elements were a common theme.**

"I was surprised by how spontaneous we ended up being," said Featherston. "Flexibility was our mantra." He said he especially enjoyed the opportunity to practice with a Dominican youth orchestra. "It was great to play with students close to my age and share techniques."

Sarah Derrick, a junior music education major and music worship minor, echoed the surprising nature of the trip and found meaning by sharing Christ. "It was transformational for me," she said. She shared a story of one church performance where language barriers disappeared thanks to music and worship.

Trip participants from Samford's School of the Arts and the Department of World Languages and Cultures (WLAC) held public concerts, worked with the National Youth Symphony Orchestra, performed in churches, visited schools to teach children about music, and even found time for a mountain rafting trip.

The Dominican trip was led by Samford's orchestra director, Brian Viliunas, who initiated the tour several years ago based on his experience with the Youth Orchestra of the Americas that traveled globally on goodwill missions. This was Samford's second tour, and the intent is to allow students two opportunities to participate during their time at Samford. The relationship with the Dominican



Samford Orchestra performs on Dominican tour.

Republic developed through fellow faculty member Jeff Flaniken and his contacts. The success of the trip relied on the assistance and coordination of local pastor and musician Hector Santana.

"The first trip was a typical orchestra tour, but having developed this relationship with the local cultural organizations and ministry has made the experience so much more meaningful," said Viliunas.

Successful collaboration among different disciplines was a key component of the trip. WLAC chair Mike Ledgerwood accompanied the trip along with three other interpreters from the world languages program, two students and faculty member Heather West. "The four of us were in constant demand as translators," said Ledgerwood.

The group visited many schools and churches during the tour, setting up "instrument petting zoos" for young children.

"The hands-on experience [of the trip] was awesome in terms of music education," said Derrick. "As a sophomore, I had not had the opportunity to work outside the classroom, and it was extremely beneficial to dive into a classroom setting."

Grant Dalton, director of the jazz band, said, "Many students really learned to see themselves as music educators on this trip, and that was an exciting experience for me as their professor." He felt students gained a new performance perspective as well. "Many ensemble members had never played to such large public audiences nor received the resounding affirmation for their craft. After our jazz concert in Colonial City, students felt it was the best performance of their lives, given the crowd's enthusiasm."

According to Viliunas, one of the most meaningful concerts took place at a small university on a Saturday morning. "It was on the fifth floor of a building that only had air conditioning on that floor, and over 1,200 students came. Most of the audience had never seen a traveling orchestra before, and I remember the sea of phones recording the concert. Even though the venue was sparse and rustic, Samford students were inspired by the significance of their performance." ▾

*Ashley Smith is marketing and communication coordinator for Samford's School of the Arts.*

# Pulitzer Prize Winner Fagin to Deliver Davis Lecture

by Sean Flynt

Pulitzer Prize-winning science and environmental journalist Dan Fagin will present the 2017 J. Roderick Davis Lecture at Samford University Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. in Wright Center Concert Hall. The university's Howard College of Arts and Sciences and the Frances Marlin Mann Center for Ethics and Leadership are partnering to host the free public lecture by the author of *Toms River*, a gripping, true account of childhood cancers caused by industrial pollution in the town of Toms River, New Jersey.

Fagin is professor of journalism at New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, and director of the NYU Science, Health and Environmental Reporting Program. Among his many academic appointments, he was a Templeton-Cambridge Journalism Fellow in Science and Religion in 2005. In short, the author is engaged with multiple aspects of Samford's academic and religious missions.

"We trust Dr. Fagin will heighten understanding of what it means to live responsibly, and especially how living responsibly has to result in tangible effects for local communities," said Mann Center Director and former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Drayton Nabers. He said the Mann Center contributed to that goal this summer by collaborating with Howard College, Samford's School of Public Health and Judson College on a community-based learning course in biology and public health in Perry County, Alabama.

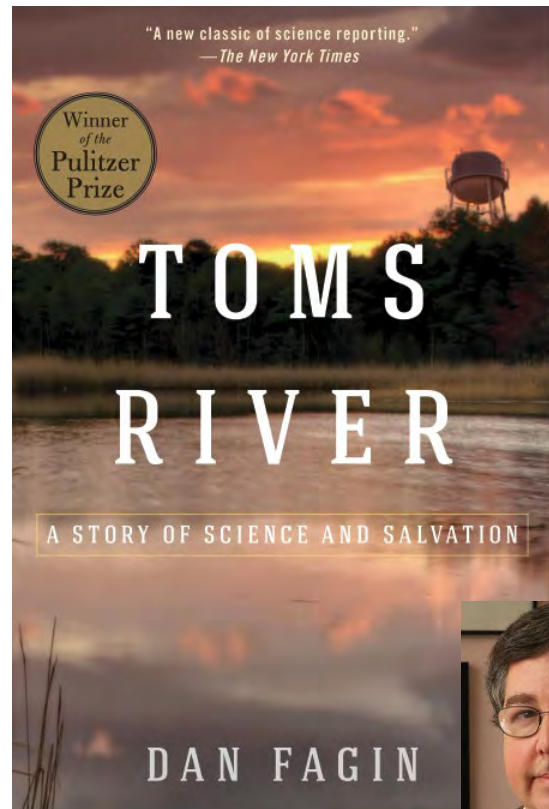
During that work, inaugural Mann Center Faculty Fellows Betsy Dobbins (biological and environmental sciences) and Rachel Casiday (public health) addressed issues Fagin raised in his celebrated 2014 book about chemical pollution of the Toms

River, the childhood cancers it caused and the resulting legal battle.

Dobbins lamented that Fagin's book is not a story of "the bad old days, before people understood the impact of toxic chemicals on human health and the environment.

"In 2015, companies self-reported 84.5 million pounds of toxic chemicals released into the land, air and water in Alabama alone," Dobbins said. "That equals 19 pounds of toxic chemicals for every man, woman and child in Alabama."


Reflecting on the role a university can play in addressing such problems, Dobbins described an approach that calls on multiple academic disciplines. "For the public to understand the impacts on human health and the environment, we need biologists, chemists, physicists, mathematicians and computer scientists to describe the problem chemical, and model its distribution in land, air and water," she said. "Once described, those in history, sociology and political



Dan Fagin, right, wrote Toms River study.



science can put the science into perspective, and those in English, communication and journalism can help translate the problem for the broader public."

Speaking at Samford this fall, Dan Fagin will describe how successful that approach can be. 

*Sean Flynt is executive director of external relations for Howard College of Arts and Sciences.*

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

## *Brock Scholar Fogle Sees Many Opportunities*

**A person's name can say a lot about them, and that's especially true for junior Brock Fogle, a Brock Scholar business major concentrating in economics and social entrepreneurship in Samford's Brock School of Business.**

"Pretty much every time I mention being a Brock Scholar, there is a comment about it," said Fogle. "I sometimes even wear my Brock School of Business shirt that has my name in big letters on it."

Last summer, Fogle spent two months living in Yunnan, China, working with a variety of businesses throughout the province. He describes his experience as one of the most beautiful, yet difficult, times of his life. Standing 6-feet-7 with red hair made it difficult for Fogle to blend in.

"I had never learned Mandarin before, yet I spent a large portion of my time in situations where that was the only language

being spoken," said Fogle. "My roommate did not speak any English either, so we spoke to each other through something that was akin to charades."

Although he faced his fair share of challenges, Fogle says the time he spent in China helped him develop personally, professionally and spiritually.

"Understanding, respecting and being part of a foreign culture is extremely difficult," said Fogle. "It pushes you to your limits and puts you in survival mode at all times."

While in China, he spent time living in the local city, working on a dairy farm, forging through the jungle on coffee plantations and working with local underground churches.

"The people were some of the most resilient that I have ever met," said Fogle. "Their love for each other and their love for the Lord is something that I now have as a standard to live my own life up to."

Although Fogle did not return to China this summer, he had the opportunity to work with the Christian Service Mission in Birmingham, where he assisted in the organization's community development efforts that include creating a thrift store.

The Brock Scholars program has provided Fogle with the knowledge and contacts to make these types of opportunities happen. He also has been able to develop personal relationships with many professors in Brock School of Business who have helped him develop opportunities and to lay out a plan for his future.

"They [the professors] have challenged me and given me opportunities that I would not have had any other way," said Fogle. "Without Samford, Brock Scholars and Global Missions Scholars, I would not have the same story or the same experiences that I've had. I would not be the same person I am today." ▀



Brock Fogle

"Understanding, respecting and being part of a foreign culture is extremely difficult. It pushes you to your limits and puts you in survival mode at all times." ..... BROCK FOGLE



# Robert Smith Jr. Marks 20 Years at Beeson Divinity School, Receives Prestigious Preaching Award

by Kristen Padilla

**“Preaching is harder** for me today than it has ever been for me in my life,” said Robert Smith Jr., Beeson Divinity School’s Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity. Because with each passing year, he realizes “the weight of the responsibility of representing God and speaking on his behalf.”

Smith was 17 years old when he accepted the call to preach during a visit to New Mission Missionary Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Ten years later, he was called to pastor the same church where he had first received his call, serving for almost 20 years. His first sermon was titled, “Lord, I shall preach the gospel,” based on Luke 4:18, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.”

This text and sermon title would prophetically describe the kind of ministry Smith was to have over the next five decades.

While serving as pastor of New Mission, Smith felt called to go back to school. He received a Bachelor of Science in 1984, followed by a Master of Divinity in 1988, and finally a Doctor of Philosophy in 1993. Smith eventually left the pastorate in 1995 to teach full time at his alma mater, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, but he never left the pulpit. In 1997, Smith accepted a teaching post at Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School, where he celebrates 20 years of service this fall semester.

During his more than 20 years teaching at a seminary level, Smith has filled pulpits on Sunday mornings around the nation and world. He has lectured and taught on the subject of preaching at conferences such as the Gospel Coalition, the E.K. Bailey

Preaching Conference and Morling College Preaching Conference in Sydney, Australia. He wrote *Doctrine that Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life* and is what Beeson Divinity School Dean Timothy George describes as “the real thing.”

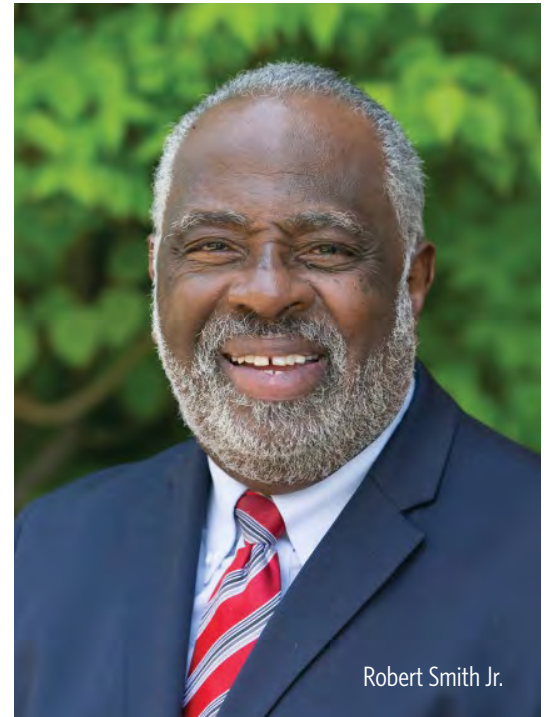
“For two decades, Robert Smith Jr. has taught at Beeson Divinity School with brilliance and compassion. He is not only a professor who can preach, but also a preacher who pastors our entire community,” said George. “God continues to use this beloved scholar to advance his kingdom and to enrich the whole body of Christ.”

This July, Smith was recognized for his many years of service and contributions to preaching as the recipient of the 2017 E.K. and V.M. Bailey Living Legend Award. This award has been given annually during the E.K. Bailey Preaching Conference in Dallas, Texas, since 1996, the inaugural year of the conference.

The award given to Smith reads, “We salute you on being one of the most compelling, creative, prophetic and prolific biblical preachers of our time. Your life witness, voice and literary contributions have awakened American preaching and pulpits.”

Oftentimes, people are recognized for their achievements after they have died, which is partly why this award was so meaningful to Smith. “It means that God has blessed me to be alive to receive the award,” he said. “I feel unworthy, but I am not ungrateful.”


“It also means I’ve been placed in a line of preachers that are legendary, like Gardner C. Taylor, C.A.W. Clark, James Earl Massey, Stephen Olford, Willie Richardson, and E.K. Bailey. I’ve been cast into that kind of light in which I feel like, at best, I should be placed in their shadows and not stand alongside them, but even in their shadows I



Robert Smith Jr.

feel dwarfed and unworthy and out of place. It’s not an award that I put on my shelf, but it’s an award that reminds me that God has made a great investment in my life. Therefore, with all that I have and all that I am, I need to give back to our Lord and to the church.”

What’s next for Smith? To continue doing what he has done for 51 years—preach the gospel.

“All I know is that I have had fun in the pulpit, and the pulpit has become a playground of the Spirit for me,” said Smith. “Preaching is not just something I have to do. Preaching is something I can’t keep from doing. That’s who I am. I am a preacher, by God’s grace.” 

*Kristen Padilla is coordinator of marketing and communication for Beeson Divinity School.*

# Education School Leading Way to Collective Impact

by Sara Roman

**Samford's Orlean Beeson School of Education recently presented Neuroscience of Education, a conference aimed at identifying ways to improve education systems.** More than 120 superintendents, principals, school leaders and teachers from throughout Alabama attended the May 2 program sponsored in partnership with the Goodrich Foundation. They represented more than 20 school districts and several private schools as well as the Alabama State Department of Education and Alabama Department of Public Health.

The conference was a continuation of the 2016 Alabama-Finland Summit aimed at the same goal, according to Samford Professor David Finn. Finland has been able to make and sustain a leadership role in student achievement worldwide.

Keynote speaker Lori Desautels, assistant professor at Butler University, shared her passion for engaging students through neuroscience in education and explained to participants why it is crucial for educators to provide students with all the tools they need to learn in the classroom.

Educational neuroscience is an emerging discipline that blends knowledge and strategies from the fields of psychology, pedagogy and neuroscience to help student achievement.

"We have to remove barriers to student success by helping students and families access comprehensive wraparound services," said Walter Gonsoulin, conference attendee and deputy superintendent of Jefferson County Board of Education. "These services include, but are not limited to, primary health, dental care, vision care and mental health care."

Tarsha Bluiett, Samford education associate professor and M.S.E. Elementary

Education program director, said, "Through the discussions at the previous summit and conference, we now know the brain is impacted by health and wellness factors, and we know in order for our students to learn, wraparound services need to be addressed. Now the question is, as educators, how do we meet those needs?"

The education school plans to address that question in a room full of education, health and development experts Oct. 12, when it will again partner with the Goodrich Foundation for a follow-up conference. United Way of Central Alabama will join the conversation, and the topic will be collective impact.

"Collective impact occurs when [agencies] join forces and coordinate efforts," said Julie Hannah, Samford assistant professor of education. "We are thrilled that this summit will be an extension of their work."

The Bold Goals Coalition, hosted by United Way, will be a part of the October effort. It has brought many agencies, businesses and education entities together to collectively address issues for children and families, said Hannah.

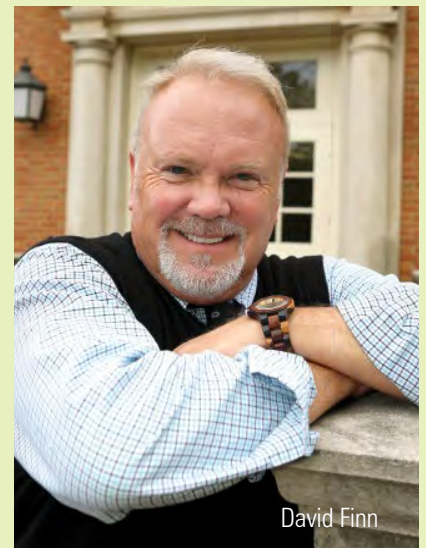
The ultimate goal of the event planning committee is to bring experts in the areas of education, health and development to the table to collaborate for the betterment of our youth.

"We know that these issues are all interconnected, but in order to address them, we have to work together," said Bluiett. "By bringing in health and developmental experts to work with leaders in our education systems, it is possible to meet the needs of families and remove the barriers to learning." ▾

*Sara Roman is coordinator of marketing and communication for Orlean Beeson School of Education.*



Tarsha Bluiett



David Finn



Julie Hannah

# *Law Graduate Slawson Studies* Legal Field with Wilson Fellowship

by Polly Manuel

Guice “Chip” Slawson, a 2017 graduate of Samford University’s Cumberland School of Law and native of Montgomery, Alabama, is one of 15 exceptional young lawyers from across the country recently named this year’s James Wilson Fellows by the James Wilson Institute on Natural Rights and the American Founding, located in Washington, D.C.

According to its website, the mission of the institute is to “restore to a new generation of lawyers, judges and citizens the understanding of the American Founders about the first principles of our law and the moral grounds of their own rights.”

Each year, the institute accepts applications and selects 15 of the best and brightest young conservative legal thinkers from across the country to serve as fellows and participate in a week of seminars led by the institute’s founder and director, Professor Hadley Arkes, as well as other prominent legal scholars. From July 30 to Aug. 5, Slawson and 14 other fellows spent an all-expenses-paid week in Washington studying the moral underpinnings of the law and the jurisprudence of natural rights.

“Like most things in academia,” said Slawson, “the seminars were invaluable for showing me how much I don’t know. Spending a week learning about natural law challenged me to think about the why’s and how’s of the law that tend to get glossed over in law school, where we are limited to honing our focus on learning legalese and the modern legal framework. Participating as a fellow forced me to dig deeper and question the underlying sources and reasons

for our laws and system of governance.”

In addition to the coursework, Slawson also valued the opportunity to meet and network with the other fellows, including numerous Ivy League graduates, counsels to members of Congress and clerks for federal judges.

The application process for the fellowship was not unlike applying to law school, according to Slawson. He was required to submit a résumé, transcripts, several references, and a personal statement explaining why he was interested in the fellowship and why he considered himself a worthy candidate. He was notified of his acceptance in early May.

“The committee had some pretty intense conversations with my references, one of whom was Judge John Carroll, one of my professors,” said Slawson.

Prior to receiving his J.D. and M.B.A. cum laude from Samford University, Slawson received a B.A. in political science from Rhodes College. During law school, he served as a law clerk for the Senate Judiciary Committee, where he worked primarily on immigration policy and federal judicial



Guice Slawson

nominations.

Slawson hopes the lessons he learned during his week at the institute will benefit him as he begins his career serving as a research assistant in the Department of Justice’s Office of Legislative Affairs in Washington. After one year there, he will fulfill a one-year clerkship with Judge Joel Dubina on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Birmingham. ▀

*Polly Manuel was coordinator of marketing and communication for Cumberland School of Law.*

# A Center of Excellence

## *Ida Moffett School of Nursing Earns National Designation for Excellence in Nursing Education*

by Sarah Waller

**Samford University's Ida Moffett School of Nursing has been named a Center of Excellence for Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing in Washington, D.C.**

Samford received this designation in recognition of excellence in the category of "Promoting the Pedagogical Expertise of Faculty."

"The success of our school has been possible through the continuation of the legacy of its namesake, Ida Vines Moffett, and her belief in academic excellence, caring, compassion and service, which are the foundational pillars of our school. The key to continuing Mrs. Moffett's legacy is our faculty," said Nena F. Sanders, vice provost of Samford's College of Health Sciences and nursing school dean.

"This designation validates the quality of their work and their dedication to our students. Today, more than 6,000 nurses who have graduated from our programs are impacting the lives of others throughout the United States and the world," she said.

Examples of the school's accomplishments are its outstanding first-time licensure and certification pass rates, leadership and participation in interprofessional education, and multiple opportunities for service learning, including international missions.

The maxims espoused by Moffett and described in her biography, *Courage to Care*, served as the theme for the document. Testimonies from College of Health Sciences faculty, nursing students, alumni and community representatives were included as supporting evidence of the faculty's expertise and commitment to excellence.

"Mrs. Moffett is quoted as saying, 'Caring is the shining thread of gold that holds together the tapestry of life.' As a committee, we used this quote, along with other 'Moffett Maxims,' to showcase how Mrs. Moffett's legacy is woven through the school's curricula and embraced by its employees, students and alumni," said John Lundeen, associate professor and chair of the Center of Excellence application submission committee.

The honor comes as the school celebrates 95 years of nursing excellence. Even though Ida Moffett School of Nursing has experienced significant growth and transformation since its foundation in 1922, the school's objective remains unchanged—to prepare registered nurses who provide exceptional, compassionate, patient-centered care.



Ida V. Moffett, right

Ida Moffett School of Nursing will receive this prestigious award at the National League for Nursing's Honors Convocation and President's Gala in conjunction with its annual Education Summit in San Diego, California. ▀

*Sarah Waller is coordinator of marketing and communication for the College of Health Sciences.*

**"Caring is the shining thread of gold  
that holds together the tapestry of life."**

**Ida V. Moffett**



# Ambrosetti, Wang Receive AFPE's Gateway to Research Award

by Sarah Waller

**Adam Ambrosetti, a fourth-year McWhorter School of Pharmacy student, has garnered national attention for his research with Associate Professor Robert Wang. This summer, he was named a Gateway to Research Scholar by the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education (AFPE). Ambrosetti is the first Samford student to receive this award.**

While the course of his research has spanned more than two and half years, Ambrosetti began his experience with an interesting observation that occurred within his first week.

In 2015, Ambrosetti was selected as a summer research intern with Samford's Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Lab, working alongside Wang, who is known for his cystic fibrosis research.

Cystic fibrosis is largely a protein misfolding disease, caused by mutations in the gene encoding a cell surface anion channel known as the cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR). The majority of drugs prescribed to cystic fibrosis patients only treat the symptoms and not the root cause. ORKAMBI®, the first drug that targets the root cause of cystic fibrosis in the majority of patients, suffers from low clinical efficacy.

Ambrosetti began his research by studying a compound called B6, which was designed by Samford professor Bobby Riggs as an anticancer agent. An analogue of B6 has the potential of influencing protein folding. Wang had the idea to test the impact of this class of compounds on CFTR in a cell model. One specific approach was to test the effect of combining B6 and lumacaftor, one of the two active ingredients of ORKAMBI®. Interestingly, B6 and lumacaftor synergistically enhance the maturation of CFTR in the cell model. To say it plainly, it is likely that B6 can significantly enhance the efficacy of ORKAMBI®.

"It's exciting to have a discovery like that right when you jump in, but it's a bit misleading for what science is really like," Ambrosetti said. "I thought if this happened in the first week, imagine what we can do in three months."

Ambrosetti spent the remainder of the summer validating his findings. Later that fall, Ambrosetti and Wang submitted an abstract to the Experimental Biology Meeting, and it was accepted for both poster and oral presentation.

The experience had Ambrosetti hooked. The following spring, he entered into the second phase of his research, looking at how the combination of B6 and lumacaftor improves the functionality of CFTR. Yet, a major obstacle stood in his way.

A year and a half before, Jake Thompson, a 2017 alumnus and a then summer research intern, started to establish a CFTR functional

assay, an investigative procedure, with Wang.

"This assay, despite its potential, was challenging, and the reproducibility was low," Ambrosetti said. "It fell out of favor in the cystic fibrosis field for this very reason."

Nonetheless, Wang recommended that Ambrosetti pick up where Thompson left off and continue to optimize the assay to study B6.

"We basically tweaked the assay over and over and over again until it was reproducible," Ambrosetti said. "I worked all summer and throughout the fall. It wasn't until the spring of 2017 that the assay was completely optimized."

The development of this assay led to some very interesting findings that inspired them to write a scientific manuscript. Today, Ambrosetti is using this assay to complete his research project on B6.

"Through this experience, I've learned there is no eureka in science, only progress. It happens during fall-off-your-chair moments as well as amid frustrations over failed experiments. At the end of the day, all of it is science," Ambrosetti said. ▀

***As a Gateway to Research Scholar, Ambrosetti received a \$5,000 stipend from AFPE that will support his continued research during his final year of pharmacy school. Emily Kirby, a 2015 alumna, and Yifei Fan also contributed to this research.***



Adam Ambrosetti

# PHYSICAL THERAPY PARTNERS WITH Retirement Community to Assess Fall Risks

by Sarah Waller

**In Samford University's School of Health Professions, students are empowered with confidence, compassion and knowledge by the school's commitment to exposing them to a variety of population-based specialties.**

This summer, Samford's Department of Physical Therapy partnered with Danberry at Inverness, a retirement community near Samford's campus, for a project that was initiated by one of Danberry's residents.

Earlier this spring, Associate Professor Scott Bickel met with Danberry resident Hank Boger and staff member Cleo Clency. Boger, a man in his 90s, had started his own research project, using a piece of equipment to try to predict a person's need for a walker, wheelchair or cane.

"In hearing about his research and how they wanted to continue, I thought, this is great. This is definitely something we want our students to experience," Bickel said. "I explained to Mr. Boger that physical therapists can measure the same parameters that his equipment could by simply conducting certain tests."

So, the project began. Bickel and Assistant Professor Sarah Ross took the 2018 Doctor of Physical Therapy cohort, then taking a geriatrics course, to Danberry to conduct physical performance assessments in coordination with a wellness program organized by Danberry.

"We tested residents at the beginning and end of a wellness program, one that encouraged them to track their steps using a pedometer," said Robyn Newberry, a third-year physical therapy student. "There was about a month of time in between our pre- and post-assessments."

Thirty-five Danberry residents volunteered to take part in the pre-assessment work.

"We had an intake station to collect information like the person's name and normal vital signs," said Laura Johnson, a third-year physical therapy student. "Then we worked with each person through a series of five to six testing stations."

The majority of these tests were used to determine a fall-risk prediction. A "six-minute walk" tested a person's endurance, and a "timed up-and-go" worked to evaluate one's balance. While no single test can determine a person's risk of falling, cumulatively, students are able to provide a prediction based on the overall results.



Physical therapy student Ellen Pugh works with Danberry resident Hank Boger.

"Our students were meeting a need because residents don't often see a physical therapist until something goes wrong," Bickel said. "Instead, their work focused on prevention and health promotion."

This project gave students hands-on experience with older individuals, conducting tests similar to ones they might see in a clinical setting.

"Long term, we would like to do projects like this regularly. It provides good experience for the students, and it's good for the volunteers. Plus, it would be great to go back next year and see how these same people have improved or declined," Bickel said.

For some students, the experience confirmed their calling to work with the aging generation.

"I was always close to my grandparents, and watching them go through physical therapy inspired me to pursue this career," Newberry said. "Every population we work with is interesting, but this project has confirmed that I want to work with geriatric populations." ▀

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*Sarah Waller is coordinator of marketing and communication for the College of Health Sciences.*

# Public Health Students Intern with Jefferson County Department of Health

by Sarah Waller

**Samford University's School of Public Health works to equip its students with the knowledge and experience to address the profound health challenges facing the world today. This summer, three Samford students had the opportunity to intern with the Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH), providing them firsthand experience in the public health sector.**

The students are at different stages in their education. Hunter Johnston is a second-year pharmacy student pursuing a coordinated degree, combining his Doctor of Pharmacy with a Master of Public Health. Kelsey Rowe is a senior public health major, and Grace Okoro is in her second year of the Master of Public Health program.

While their internships took place within the same organization, their experiences were completely different, which further demonstrates the vast array of opportunities that lie within public health.

It was Johnston's second summer working with JCDH's Department of Preparedness and Response. "When I took this internship, they told me I would never be bored, and it was true," Johnston said.

Johnston has been able to see firsthand the county's work in practicing its emergency preparedness plans. "We did one just today with the Jefferson County Healthcare Coalition. It was a tabletop exercise for pandemic influenza," Johnston said.

As Johnston pursues a dual degree, the internship has exposed him to experiences that engage both of his fields of study. "Because of my pharmacy background, I've been able to pack some of the naloxone kits and talk with pharmacy residents working at the health department," he said.

What has surprised Johnston the most is the role JCDH plays in providing clinical services for county residents. "I didn't realize how many people actually come to the health department for clinical services," Johnston said. "I'll confess, I thought it was just a government building."

Rowe had the opposite perspective coming into the summer. "I always thought the health department just provided health services; people come to see a doctor or a nurse. I now know that the career opportunities here are much greater," she said.

Rowe worked in JCDH's Division of Clinical Services, contributing to the work of managing patient inflow. She processed data relating to patients enrolled in Medicaid, and corresponded with individuals who have been long lapsed or no longer qualify.

"This work is done to guarantee that people who actually need care from the health department can receive it," Rowe said.

Her biggest takeaway from the summer is learning about all the different roles within the public health sector. "Public health is a

culmination of a lot of people coming together. Everyone plays an important role," she said.

Okoro agrees. After spending the summer working for the Department of Finance and Administration, she has seen what it takes behind the scenes to care for JCDH's employees.

"My supervisor is the human resources manager, and we work on multiple projects that involve interdisciplinary groups," Okoro said. "JCDH has four locations, which has given me the opportunity to network and meet people in variety of roles."

Okoro's main project was assisting in the management and correspondence for JCDH's employee wellness programs.

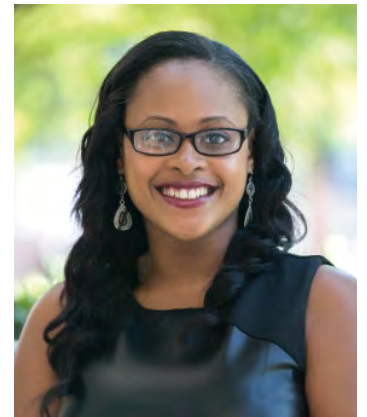
"Public health is about meeting people where they are. It's learning about how they live, work and play in order to be effective in meeting their needs," Okoro said. "This internship has made it very clear to me that I'm in the right line of work. I'm doing something that I'm good at, and I feel passionate about it."

Both Okoro and Rowe will both continue to work with JCDH this fall. ▀

.....  
*Sarah Waller is coordinator of marketing and communication for the College of Health Sciences.*



Hunter Johnston



Grace Okoro



Kelsey Rowe

# 5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT

## DEVYN KEITH



### What Samford faculty member had the most influence on you and why?

A number of faculty put in a lot of unpaid overtime. [Kristie] Chandler and her staff saw something in me that I didn't see in myself. Not only did they want to see me through graduation, but they also believed in the notion of learned experience, which helped me get jobs and internships off campus as well as start my nonprofit Brothers of One voice. The coaching staff and the administration played a very big role in helping me stay the course, even when it wasn't in their job description to do so.

### How did you become interested in local politics?

I've always seen the importance of its impact. Though I'm not sure I've liked the politics part, I have understood that the beauty of democracy is found in municipal governance: no parties of which to attach yourself, and you get the opportunity to see immediate change to everyday issues. Everyone wants good schools, safe neighborhoods, great parks, clean streets, updated infrastructure and overall high quality of life. If you can get a few elected officials in one accord, you can get those things without the polarization of R or D next to their names. Most of the federal leaders today started in someone's city hall or state house.

**Why did you choose Samford?** It's a long story, but in short, this is without a doubt where God knew I needed to be. I signed my scholarship to play football understanding I was not only going to play for a great coach [Pat Sullivan], but that I was going to have the best degree in the state of Alabama.

.....  
**Degree/Year:** B.A., family studies, 2012

**Hometown:** Huntsville, Alabama

**Current:** City Councilor

**Bonus Fact:** Keith played on the Samford football team as an undergraduate.  
.....

### How did your Samford degree prepare you for what you are doing now?

A lot of the socioeconomic policy we work on comes back to the family. Understanding the impact of public systems/policies on the families of our city as well as the potential repercussions of a decision allows you a much better perspective when thinking about legislation.

### What advice would you give to students interested in pursuing local politics as you have done?

"Wing it to win it!" (I may need to copyright that for a future book deal!) But, you have to care now. The issues that we face in federal politics usually bubble up from some local movement. History shows us that local change has power to make national impact. If you truly care about moving the needle on an issue, more than likely, you can do so at a local city council meeting. If you can't and it's because the person who has the powers doesn't want to, you can do like I did: round up your craziest friends, clean off your kitchen table, dump your piggy banks, take on a 28-year incumbent and four other candidates, knock on every door every day, listen 10 times more than you talk, dump more piggy banks, knock on more doors, believe in yourself and your team, and you'll look up one day and be the youngest elected person ready to bring much needed change. ▶

.....  
*Keith's and Hoaglund's responses have been edited for length. To read their complete profiles, go to [samford.edu/spotlight](http://samford.edu/spotlight).*





## AMY HOAGLUND

### Why do you teach? Why do you teach at Samford?

I have wanted to teach since I was in elementary school. I feel that teaching is a spiritual gift and that the gift matures with experience. I consider it a privilege to teach at Samford and train teachers for the future. One cohort of 30 Samford preservice teachers represents 600 children who will be impacted their first year of teaching alone! That same cohort of teachers has the potential to impact 12,000 students over the course of their 20-year careers. What we do in teacher education influences every other academic discipline and profession. I am very grateful, however, that I can teach at a university where I can emphasize the importance of developing spiritual gifts and how the use of those gifts can have an everlasting influence.

### What is one thing you want your students to know when they graduate from Samford?

Isaiah 6:8-11 reads, "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" Whenever you serve, you will be judged. Knowing that you were uniquely made for that reason will give you the fortitude to press on. Your students desperately need you! Everyone remembers their teachers—all of them, good or bad—and they have changed who they are as people. They have poured into them and made an impact on their character as well as their profession. They did it through working hard and being there, talking to them, loving them for who they are, seeing them as the people they can be. You all are growing into leaders and mentors and trendsetters in education, but you are also growing up and recognizing what it means to make an everlasting impact. A simple word or a kind deed, something

that you may deem insignificant, can live on in the hearts of your students forever.

**What is your favorite non-Samford activity?** I have three daughters who attend Westminster School at Oak Mountain. They are involved in cross country, track, soccer, theatre, voice and piano, so the majority of my non-Samford time is spent chauffeuring them around to their various activities. I would not say driving is a favorite activity, but I am with my girls, which is my favorite hobby.

### How did your background prepare you for your current role at Samford?

I was selected my first year of teaching to participate in an intensive mentoring program with Jefferson County schools. They were conducting research on effective strategies for mentoring first-year teachers. I was assigned a full-time mentor, and it was an amazing experience for me professionally and personally. I developed professionally as a teacher, but more importantly for the role I play now, I developed as a mentor. I saw how my mentor interacted with me, and how she encouraged me to take chances and grow professionally.

#### Position:

Associate Professor,  
Curriculum and Instruction

**Teaching at Samford since:** 2008

**Bonus Fact:** Dr. Hoagland was the Sallie Mae National Teacher of the Year in 1991 while teaching at Leeds (Alabama) Elementary School.

### What's one thing that most students do not know about you?

I love making hilarious videos with my children. We make elaborate movies that are parodies of television shows. My fallback career was sketch comedy artist, so I am living that out through my children. ▶

# EXPERIENCE THE ARTS



Hosting more than 200 events annually to thousands of visitors, Samford Arts brings world-renowned artists and performances to Birmingham. Join us for our 2017-18 season, which includes a wide variety of shows as well as productions by our community partners: the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Alabama Ballet and Opera Birmingham.

## Sampling of Fall 2017 Schedule

Tonight at the Wright presents  
**Gaither Vocal Band**  
Sept. 8

Emma Taylor Theatre for Youth presents  
**How I Became a Pirate**  
Sept. 29–Oct. 1

Davis Architects Guest Artist Series presents  
**Vadym Kholodenko**  
Oct. 5

Tonight at the Wright presents  
**Harry Potter in Concert**  
in partnership with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra as part of their Red Diamond® SuperPops Series  
Oct. 20 and Oct. 22

Tonight at the Wright presents  
**Ashley Campbell**  
Nov. 3

Michael J. and Mary Anne Freeman Theatre and Dance Series presents  
**True West** and **Crimes of the Heart**  
Nov. 2–12

Dr. Chandler and Jane Paris Smith Opera Series presents  
**Hansel and Gretel**  
Nov. 30–Dec. 3

Tonight at the Wright presents  
**Christmas with Act of Congress**  
in partnership with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra as part of their Red Diamond® SuperPops Series  
Dec. 1

For a full calendar of events, times and additional information, go to [samford.edu/arts/events](http://samford.edu/arts/events) or [tickets.samford.edu](http://tickets.samford.edu).



**Samford University**  
School of the Arts

205-726-2853 | Events are subject to change

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# BADDORF IN ANTARCTICA

## Ministering to NSF Station

by Gerald Smith

**Samford University alumnus Brett Baddorf is spending his winter in a rather cool way.**

He and his wife, Sarah, are more than halfway through a 10-month stay in Antarctica. With Baddorf at the South Pole, Samford now has alumni on every continent in the world.

The South Pole Station where the Baddorfs live and work is one of three operated by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The site supports unique projects ranging from cosmic observations to seismic and atmosphere studies.

Sarah serves as the station's physician, while Brett is the logistics person and unofficial chaplain for the 46 people in residence. He leads the station's church service Sunday mornings. He said he leans on many things he was taught by his Samford professors.

Baddorf was a religion major, and ran cross country and track before graduating in 2003. He became a Christian as a Samford student one night in Pittman Hall. From then, the decision became clear to Baddorf that he wanted to be a religion major and spend his life as a Christian minister.

"Everything changed from that night in Pittman Hall. God reached into my heart and claimed it his own," he said.

In response to how he believes Samford helped him get to where he is now, Baddorf thanked many professors from his department, such as Sigurd Bryan, James Barnette, David Bains, Paul Holloway, Penny Marler and Kenneth Roxburgh.

"Their lectures inspired a deeper faith and helped discern a lifelong calling into the

ministry. Their open-door policy allowed for countless conversations, leading to the direction in choosing a seminary, mentoring and countless other benefits," Baddorf said. "The encouragement and guidance of my professors during my Samford days have given me the confidence and wisdom I have needed every step of the way since graduation.

"I think the best thing I learned at Samford was to be open to what God is doing in the world."

In a message written earlier this year, Baddorf compared the summer heat of his hometown Memphis, Tennessee, with the winter in Antarctica.

"Sarah actually prefers the cold winter of the South Pole to the hot summer of Memphis. She is fond of saying, 'Minus 90 degrees in dry Antarctica is more comfortable than a positive 90 degrees in humid Memphis.' And this is coming from a girl who generally prefers a warm climate to a cold one." ▀

**Follow the Baddorfs' adventures:**

[whyeveryoneshouldmovetoneozland.blogspot.com](http://whyeveryoneshouldmovetoneozland.blogspot.com)

**blogspot.com**

**Twitter: @brettbaddorf**

**Facebook: Brett Baddorf**

**Instagram: brettbaddorf**

*Gerald Smith is a journalism and mass communication major and a news and feature writer in the Division of Marketing and Communication.*



# From Widow to Construction EXECUTIVE

*'I can see God's hand in so much'*

by Roy S. Johnson

**Mary Burrett Wyatt '00 can smile about it now. Even laugh about it.**

About how she didn't even know how to tighten a hard hat the first time she put one on.

About how little she knew about construction just two years ago. No more than dinner-table conversation with her husband John, president of Wyatt General Contractor LLC, at their Vestavia Hills, Alabama, home. "He'd say, 'Mary, we have a bid coming up on Thursday,'" she recalled with a bright, energy-fueled smile. "'We really need this job. It's right in our wheelhouse. Pray it goes well.'"

John launched WGC in 2012, about the time his father, Gary C. Wyatt, shuttered his own construction firm. Gary had launched his company the same year John was born, in 1976. After creating WGC, John asked his father to come work with him.

In April 2015, John began construction on what was to be the gem of his burgeoning portfolio: the \$20 million Homewood Suites in Five Points South, seven stories high with 105 suites. It was to be a cornerstone of the area's newest revival.

"Definitely the biggest project for John, the most high-profile," Mary said. "He was very excited to have a project in downtown Birmingham under his belt. It

was the first big project he was going to see through. He was very proud, very proud."

Just a few months later, in August, Mary was at home one evening when John, a certified instrument-rated pilot since he was 19, called to say he was going to do some flying. "He wanted to talk to the girls," Mary recalled. At the time, Mary Evelyn, the oldest, was 5 years old; Vivi Rose was 3.

Around eight o'clock, Mary began wondering why John was not home. She knew he did not like flying after dark. She called his cell phone, but he didn't answer.

She usually has the tail number, which allowed her to track the plane, but this time she didn't. Instead, Mary searched "Shelby County Airport," where she knew

John was flying. She was going to call them. But the first image that filled her screen showed a plane on fire.

John, a 2001 Samford graduate, died when his Cirrus SR 22 crashed in a cleared field just south of the runway. He was 38 years old.

Suddenly, Mary was thrust into several roles for which she admits she was not prepared: widow, single mother and head of a major construction company—a company just beginning its largest and most important project.

"They say don't make any major decisions in the first year [after a tragic event]; that was



May Wyatt breaks ground for a project with help from daughters Mary Evelyn, left, and Vivi Rose.



## Portrait, Room Memorialize John Wyatt

**A PORTRAIT** of the late John Wyatt '01 hangs in Samford's Cooney Hall, home of Brock School of Business. It was unveiled in June during a ceremony that included Wyatt's family and friends, and others from the Samford community.

The oil painting by artist Jamie Lott Wilson memorializes the Samford business school graduate and supporter who died in a plane crash in 2015. The portrait, which portrays Wyatt hiking the Appalachian Trail with college friends, hangs in room 239A Cooney Hall, a breakout room that Samford trustees dedicated to Wyatt's memory.

"We thank them for their magnanimous tribute to John and for recognizing his sincere interest in the business school," said his sister, Jennifer Wyatt Carter. The painting was commissioned with the help of a gift from a family friend, and from Samford alumna Mary Louise Hodges and the estate of A. Gerow Hodges.

out the door," Mary said. "That was not a reasonable option; I had a construction company and two young girls."

Thankfully, Mary learned, John's life insurance policy was sizable enough to prevent them from having to move from their home.

With that weight lifted, Mary was able to turn her attention to the construction company. She had to finish the two projects John had just begun: a daycare center/school for Woodland Park Church of Christ and Homewood Suites, the one of which he was most proud.

"You just don't just close the doors to a construction company," Mary said. "It would have been catastrophic for everyone involved had I just thrown in the towel. I knew I had the team in place—John had the team in place—to get jobs done, to get the hotel done, get the church done.

"But [staying open] didn't come without a lot of wrestling, anguish and self-doubt. Can I do it? I don't know anything about construction. Can I learn enough to see it through?"

One day, not long after the funeral, Mary donned that hard hat—with some help making it fit—and a pair of work boots and, climbed a ladder to the mezzanine area 20 feet above the ground. "That's when it felt real," she recalled. "I wanted to be all-in. I wanted to live and breathe the job and see what my husband was so proud of."

Mary speed-learned the industry's lingo and vocabulary, immersed herself in all aspects of the business, such as insurance, surety bonding and more. She learned to read financial reports, often sitting on her couch alone late at night surrounded by spreadsheets, blueprints and construction manuals.

"It helped me through the grief, gave me this closeness to John, too," she said softly. "From start to finish, [the project]

was very cathartic for me."

She also believes her efforts helped her daughters. "They were watching me live and breathe resiliency," she said.

As time progressed, Mary says her confidence grew, aided by the support of her team, as well as many subcontractors who, she says, took her "under their wing."

Mary says her faith was "greatly" tested in the months since her husband's death, through the strains of growing as a construction executive and, of course, being a mother to two young daughters.

"Yet, as Christians, we live with the hope that I know we'll see John again," Mary said. "It's not a permanent end. And that's what the girls know, too. We talk about that all the time.

"So, yes, I wrestle with God on the whys and feel like prayers weren't heard at times. But as I look back on the last almost two years, I can see God's hand in so much—his provision for our family. I have a very grateful heart."

Now, Mary talks of Wyatt with confidence. She wants to expand into government and utility projects while retaining Wyatt's core in hospitality, faith-based and educational projects. She sees Wyatt as an opportunity to create jobs as part of Birmingham's resurgence.

She also wants to be a model for women entrepreneurs, particularly in the male-dominated construction industry.

**Editor's note:** This story is excerpted from a feature published by al.com. To read the full story, go to [http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/index.ssf/2017/05/from\\_widow\\_to\\_construction\\_exe.html](http://www.al.com/news/birmingham/index.ssf/2017/05/from_widow_to_construction_exe.html). Reprinted with permission of the Alabama Media Group/AL.com. All rights reserved.

# CLASS NOTES

Compiled by the Office of Alumni Programs and Annual Giving with information submitted by July 20, 2017.

## 1960s

'68 **Ken Hall** is a new member of the Board of Trustees for the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky.

## 1970s

'70 **William "Terry" Martin**

recently retired after 43 years as an academic librarian. He served in multiple colleges and universities starting in 1973, including Samford. He received his M.L.S. from the University of Alabama.

'71 **Dale Sanford Gantt** retired after teaching 40 years of high school Spanish.

'75 **Charles Venable** was ordained as deacon in the Episcopal Church Oct. 1, 2016.

'76 **Tom McLeod** was featured in the *Birmingham Business Journal* in May 2017. The article spoke to his music background and how it helped shape his technology career. He and his wife, Annette, started McLeod Software in 1985, which has grown into one of the largest software companies in Alabama. **1**

## 1990s

'92 **Stephen Louis A. Dillard** of Macon, Georgia, was unanimously elected by his colleagues to serve as the 30th Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Georgia. Chief Judge Dillard assumed the position on July 1, 2017, and he is responsible for the administration of the Court, supervising the Court's fiscal affairs, initiating policies, and representing the Court in its relations with other courts, agencies of the government, the State Bar of Georgia, and the general public. **2**



'92 **Jeff Roberts**

was recognized in the March 2017 issue of *Barron's* magazine among the Top 1,200 Financial Advisors in the United States and the Top 3 in Alabama.

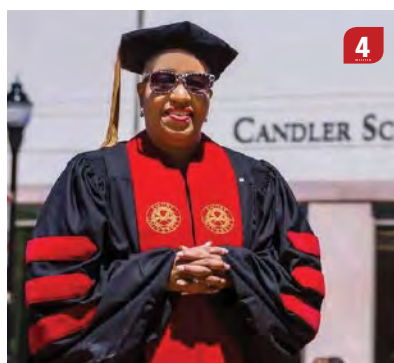
'96 **Christopher Macturk** opened

a divorce and family law practice, Evolution Divorce & Family Law, PLLC, in Richmond, Virginia.

'98 **Samuel Garrison** was appointed by Florida Governor Rick Scott to the St. Johns River State College District Board of Trustees. His term began in May 2017.

## 2000s

'00 **Michael Smith**, AAGO, is the newly appointed minister of music at St. Thomas' Church, Whitmarsh, Pennsylvania, which was founded in 1698. He oversees the music program of the 1,600-member parish, and works closely with the clergy team to align the program's goals with that of the whole parish and will develop a strategic plan for the future of the music program. **3**



'00 **Scarlet Thompson** was recently appointed executive vice president at Civitan International. She recently served as vice president of development at the Arc of Jefferson County and was previously with the American Cancer Society. She lives with her husband and three children in Hoover, Alabama.

'04 **Carmen Walker** received her D.Min. from Candler School of Theology in May 2017. She serves as senior pastor at Lee Chapel AME Church in Edgewater, Alabama. She is also lead chaplain for Homestead Hospice. **4**

'05 **Robert "Matt" McKinney** served under Maryland Governor Larry Hogan for nearly three years, and has been appointed to serve as the White House liaison to the Peace Corps. **5**

'07 **Angela Armstrong Randall** accepted a position as product application specialist at the Kimball Office in Atlanta, Georgia.

'07 **Leo Randall** accepted a position as a sales representative at Mountain Motorsports Mall of Georgia.

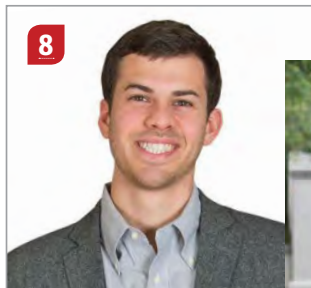
'07 **Timothy Worley** is assistant professor of communication arts and sciences at Penn State University.

'09 **Ashley Bonner Reid** married Chris Reid in Ozark, Alabama, March 25, 2017. They live in Nashville, Tennessee. **6**

## 2010s

'13 **Jordan Cole** was recently named one of the 2017 Rising Stars of Money by the *Birmingham Business Journal*. **7**

'13 **Arthur Strauss** was recently named one of the 2017 Rising Stars of Money by the



*Birmingham Business Journal* and was promoted to executive vice president of Strauss Financial Group Inc. He is married to Holly Benson Strauss '13, a nurse practitioner with Birmingham Internal Medicine Associates. **8**

'14 **Darion L. Sutton** married **Kayla Marx Sutton '15** in October 2016. They live in Atlanta, Georgia, where he works for Insight Global and she works for Cushman & Wakefield. **9**

'15 **Kristina Stacks** was named executive director of Better Basics by its board of directors based on her more than 20 years of experience in varying positions at all levels of education, including educator and administrator. She also has experience in radio and television. **10**

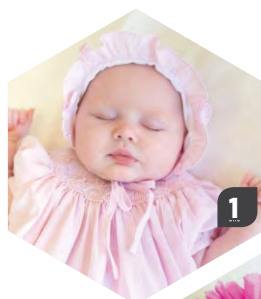


'16 **Megan Gagliardi** was featured in *Comebacktown.com*, a Birmingham news/human interest site. The article detailed her care at UAB and recovery from both a heart transplant and cancer while a student at Samford. **11**

'17 **Callie Sumpter** completed an internship this summer with Congresswoman Terri Sewell, Seventh Congressional District of Alabama. **12**



## NEW ARRIVALS



1



2a



2b

'98 Leo and **Vanessa Freeman Zerhusen** of San Diego, California, a daughter, Marylee Frances, born Jan. 5, 2017. **1**

'00 Brandon and **Virginia "Ginny" Sloane Raeuchle** of Bardstown, Kentucky, twin sons, Hudson Reed and Bennett Stuart, born Feb. 15, 2017. **2**



3



4



5

'03 Allan and **Shelley Sager Blocker** of Birmingham, a daughter, Audrey Anne, born April 17, 2017. She joins older siblings Will and Maggie. **3**

'04 Krista and **Alexander "Alex" Koskey**, of Brookhaven, Georgia, a son, Alexander Frank IV, born Oct. 24, 2016. **4**

'05 Andy and **Mollie Michel Evans** of Helena, Alabama, a daughter, Anderson Marie, born Aug. 12, 2016. **5**



6



7

'05 Matthew and **Amanda Wilkins Johnson** of Birmingham, a daughter, Hattie Ryan, born Jan. 19, 2017. **6**

'05 John and **Sarah Haymond Reis** of Evansville, Indiana, a son, Caleb Thomas, born May 12, 2017. **7**



8



9



10

'06 Jordan and **April Fernandez Ciervo '07** of San Diego, California, a son, Shepherd Justice, born Dec. 22, 2016. **8**

'06 Nathan and **Katie Bullock Speulda** of Hillsboro, Oregon, a daughter Abigail Caroline, born Aug. 14, 2014. **9**

'07 David and **Kimberly Parish Bailey '07** of Fort Thomas, Kentucky, a daughter, Ruth Abigail, born Nov. 28, 2016, adoption finalized June 19, 2017. **10**



11



12

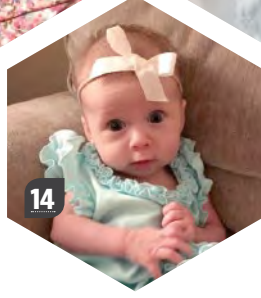
'07 Cari Short Freer and **Stephen Freer '08** of Vilnius, Lithuania, a daughter, Odessa Stephanie, born in February 2017.

'07 Kevin and **Anna Swindle Keller** of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, a daughter, Margaret "Maggie" Elizabeth, born March 31, 2017. **11**

'08 Arthur and **Alyson Snow Roberson** of Pelham, Alabama, a son, Ethan Arthur, born Jan. 26, 2017. **12**



13



14

'09 Morgan Glasscock Estes and Chet Thomas Estes, of Hoover, Alabama, a son, Caden Thomas, born April 13, 2017.

'09 James and **Kathryn "Kate" Collins Morris** of Homewood, a daughter, Collins Ann, born June 7, 2017. **13**

'10 Keith and **Kandice Kelley Pearson** of Birmingham, a daughter, Karis Paige, born May 2, 2017. **14**





'11 **Matthew** and **Elizabeth Craig Culbreth '12** of Marietta, Georgia, a son, Brantley Michael, born Aug. 14, 2016. **15**

'11 Justin and **Emma Lane Isbell** of Fultondale, Alabama, twin sons, Cooper Scott and Connor Lane, born March 19, 2017. **16**

'12 **Christina Rutledge Ricks** and **William "Will" Ricks '13** of Mobile, Alabama, a daughter, Anna Cleveland, born Feb. 22, 2017.

'12 Ricky and **Rachael Clark Lackey** of Cairo, Georgia, a son, Reed Lessie, born Feb. 15, 2017. He joins older brother Ricky and sister Rebecca Jane. **17**

'13 Drew and **Caitlin Williams Jackson** of Vestavia Hills, Alabama, a daughter, Elizabeth Drew, born Feb. 28, 2017. **18**

'14 Jonah and **Emily Smith Riley** of Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico, a son, James Woodman, born Jan. 28, 2017. **19**

'14 Daniel and **Ashley Perez Woodard** of Hoover, Alabama, a daughter, June, born May 30, 2017. **20**

## Tom and Marla Corts

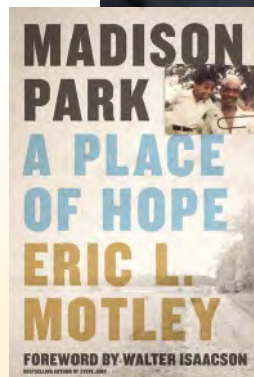
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# IN MEMORIAM

**'42 Edwina Wallace Alexander**, age 96, of Auburn, Alabama, died July 15, 2017. She was a founder of the Auburn Alpha Delta Pi Alumnae Club during the 1950s and served as the club's first president. She was a homeroom mother, Brownie Scout leader and member of numerous organizations, frequently serving in a leadership role. She was a member of the Light Horse Harry Lee Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

**'47 Iva Nelle Hurt Ricker**, age 91, of Talladega, Alabama, died July 9, 2017. She taught middle school in the Talladega City School System and was active in Woman's Missionary Union.

**'48 Norah Neal Danley** of Memphis, Tennessee, died March 22, 2017.

**'54 Charles "Buddy" Hearn**, age 86, of Albertville, Alabama, died July 9, 2017. Captain of the Bulldog football team his senior year at Howard College, he was a well-known high school football coach and a member of the DeKalb County Sports Hall of Fame.

**'56 Weyman L. White**, age 89, of Opelika, Alabama, died June 2, 2017.

**'58 James "Jim" Coleman**, age 86, of Pensacola, Florida, died in June 2017. After serving in the Korean War, he was a member of the first graduating class of the new Howard College campus in Homewood. After attending New Orleans Theological Seminary, he was a member of the Alabama Baptist State Executive Board. He was a pastor to the people of Alabama and Florida until retirement. He continued to serve as director of the Employee Assistance Program at the Pensacola Naval Air Station.

**'58 Sarah Alice Robertson Overton**, age 76, of Speedwell, Tennessee, died July 2, 2017. She was a member of Haynes Flat Baptist Church, where she served as a teacher, clerk, historian and choir member. She was an involved member of garden clubs in Tennessee and Kentucky, as well as a life member of the National Garden Clubs and a master flower judge.

**'59 Gloria Buie Moring**, age 81, of Headland, Alabama, died July 13, 2017. She was a beloved educator and member of Headland United Methodist Church.

**'60 Clifford Eugene Copeland**, age 86, of Atlanta, Georgia, died June 7, 2017. He was founder of Copeland Drugs Inc. and involved with First Baptist Church of Atlanta.

**'62 Hilton Morgan Green**, age 81, of Douglasville, Georgia, died June 29, 2017. He served as an

educator, coach and principal. In retirement, he continued as an official for basketball and softball games at schools and recreation departments. He lettered in basketball at Samford.

**'66 James C. Wade**, age 73, of Clemmons, North Carolina, died May 2, 2017. He received his Doctor of Ministry from Southern Baptist Theology Seminary, and served churches in Kentucky, Indiana, North Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. In addition to his pastorates, he served on several boards, including the Alabama Baptist Executive Board, Georgia Baptist Executive Board and Truitt McConnell College. He had a passion for missions and worked four times in Ukraine, and in Mexico, Nigeria and Costa Rica.

**'67 Clarence "Sam" Jones**, age 81, of Pell City, Alabama, died June 16, 2017. He was the first administrator for St. Clair Regional Hospital in Pell City. He also served as chairman of the Alabama Hospital Association and on the boards of directors of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama and the Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services System.

**'67 Charles "Charlie" White**, age 72, of Newnan, Georgia, died July 17, 2017. He worked as a regional sales manager for 40 years. He later followed his passion for coaching at Canogate Elementary in Coweta County, retiring after 10 years of service.

**'68 Janie Ledlow Shores**, age 85, of Montrose, Alabama, died Aug. 9, 2017. She was the first woman law professor in Alabama and the first female member of the Alabama Supreme Court. She taught at Samford's Cumberland School of Law before being elected to the state supreme court in 1974, where she served four terms. She was a Samford Alumna of the Year in 1983. She held a law degree with honors from the University of Alabama Law School.

**'72 Julian Parke Keith, J.D.**, age 71, of Selma, Alabama, died July 17, 2017. He was a former prosecutor for the city of Selma and assistant district attorney.

**'73 Donald R. Harrison, J.D.**, age 69, of Dadeville, Alabama, died June 30, 2017. He served as Alabama's youngest state senator from 1976 to 1982 for Montgomery, Elmore and Crenshaw counties. He was a member of East Lake Community Church in Montgomery.

**'75 Kenneth Maddox**, age 65, of Birmingham died June 23, 2017. After attending New Orleans Theological Seminary, he served in several churches, most recently as director of missions for Mud Creek Baptist Association.

**'75 Marlin Harris**, age 64, of Prattville, Alabama, died May 18, 2017. He was active with the Southern Baptist mission field, serving in Bangladesh as the mission's business manager. He then worked as an auditor for the state of Tennessee. Returning to the mission field after intense language studies, he and his wife were assigned to Asunción, Paraguay, where he became administrator of Baptist Medical Center. With over a decade of mission work, he joined the faculty of Prattville High School in 2001, where he became chair of the language department. He led a very active Spanish club that was extremely successful in many state language club competitions. He founded the Junior Civitan Club at Prattville High School.

**'89 John Brian Daniels, J.D.**, age 67, of Largo, Florida, died June 11, 2017. He was with the Pinellas County State's Attorney's Office, retiring after 35 years.

**'91 Linda Laughlin Sample**, age 68, of Northport, Alabama, died July 15, 2017. She was devoted to spending time with her aging parents and was a lifelong animal lover.

**'95 Chad Klauser**, age 43, of Manhattan, New York, died May 14, 2017. He earned his medical degree from University of Alabama Birmingham, and was director of Carnegie South Imaging for Women and director of the Maternal Fetal Medicine Program at White Plains Hospital. He specialized in high-risk fetal and maternal medicine, and wrote more than 60 peer-reviewed articles in professional journals.

**'99 Timothy Tawbush Sr.**, age 49, of Rainbow City, Alabama, died July 9, 2017. He was a member of Meadowbrook Baptist Church.

## OTHER SAMFORD FAMILY

**Lynn Lowrey Buchanan Walker**, age 99, of Birmingham died June 18, 2017. A member of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church, she taught in the Mountain Brook school system.

**Mildred "Mit" Easley deGruy**, age 86, of Mobile, Alabama, died June 8, 2017. In 1950, she attended Howard College and was elected president of the Pharmacy Wives Club.

**Chawance U. Intraboona**, age 69, of Hanceville, Alabama, died July 7, 2017. She taught at Hayden Elementary School, and taught Sunday school and vacation Bible school for many years.

**Herman "Harry" McKinion Jr.**, age 75, of Semmes, Alabama, died June 12, 2017. After attending Howard College, he worked in consumer finance and was a member of Crawford Baptist Church.

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*Compiled by the Office of Alumni Programs with information submitted by July 20, 2017*

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Chris and Barbara Blackerby

**“As a proud Samford alum, and now the father of a current Samford student, it seems fitting that I include my alma mater in my estate plan.** Samford made a huge impact on my life, and this is just a small way to say thank you. I have continued to be involved with Samford since graduation, and I value more each year the relationships we formed at Samford. Barbara and I have participated in the Bulldog Club and have supported different campaigns over the years, but we discovered that by giving through our wills and other estate options, we could have a lasting impact on Samford students for years to come. We first made the choice to include Samford in our estate plan when we were quite young, but whether you are young, old or somewhere in the middle, it's always the right time to consider a gift through your estate. We know that we are creating a legacy that will outlive us. I hope more alumni will include a gift to Samford through their estate, and continue the rich legacy that we have all enjoyed.”

**Chris B. Blackerby '88**

## Nelson Named SoCon Female Athlete of the Year

**Samford's Karisa Nelson**, a junior standout on the track and cross country teams, was named the Southern Conference's Female Athlete of the Year in May. The award was presented at SoCon league meetings in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

"The year Karisa has had so far has been incredible," said Samford Athletics Director Martin Newton. "Her historic accomplishments have made everyone at Samford proud. Not only is she outstanding on the track, but she has also proven herself in the classroom in a challenging major like biochemistry, and she gives of herself selflessly in several community service initiatives."

Nelson becomes just the second Bulldog to win the award, joining volleyball's Michaela Reesor, who received the award for the 2014-15 school year. As a junior last spring, Nelson became Samford's first Division I national champion as she won the women's indoor mile. Her time of 4:31.24 was four seconds better than her previous

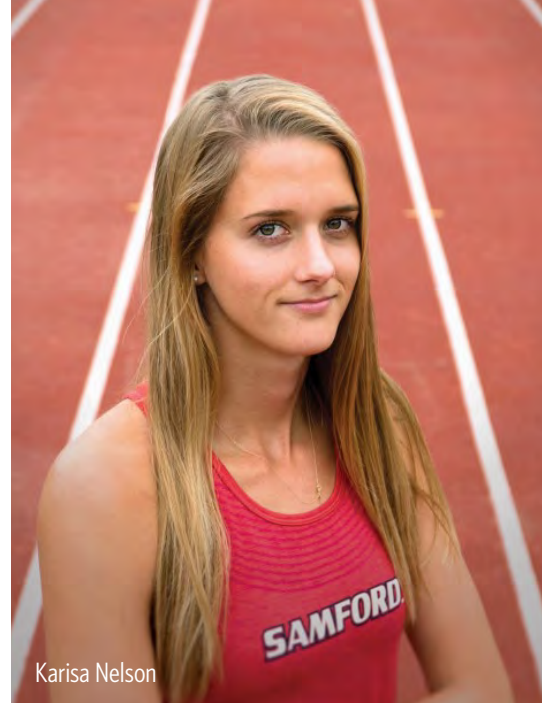
best time. Earlier in the winter, she won the indoor mile at the Southern Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships.

In the spring, she won the women's 1500-meter run at the SoCon outdoor championships. Later, she competed at the NCAA Outdoor East Regional, also in the 1,500-meter run, and qualified for the NCAA Championships by placing third with a time of 4:11.86.

She continued to solidify herself as one of the top distance runners in the nation by finishing third in the 1,500-meter competition of the 2017 NCAA Outdoor Championships in Eugene, Oregon. Her time was 4:13.96.

During the fall of 2016, Nelson was named the league's Women's Cross Country Runner of the Year after winning the 5K event in Chattanooga. She placed 21st at the NCAA Cross Country Championships and earned honorable-mention All-America honors.

Nelson holds a 3.0 GPA in biochemistry



Karisa Nelson

and has been named to the Southern Conference Academic Honor Roll. In addition to her studies, she has volunteered with the Christian Services Ministry and has been a part of an initiative to plant trees on Lakeshore Drive adjacent to Samford's campus.

The conference's athletics directors and a media member representing each conference school select the SoCon Athlete of the Year awards annually. The award recognizes athletic achievement, academic performance and civic involvement. ▀

## Women's Basketball Has Experienced Squad



Kassidy Blevins

### Women's basketball Coach Mike

**Morris** will have three starters, seven other returnees and four freshmen on his 2017-18 roster. Leading the way will be senior guard Hannah Nichols, last year's leading scorer at 13.3 points per game (ppg). Nichols, a senior, has tallied 1,079 points in 91 career games and hit 37.3 percent of her 3-point attempts. She also led the team in scoring (14.1 ppg) as a sophomore.

Guard Kassidy Blevins (9.5 ppg) and forward Samantha Fitzgerald (6.9 ppg) are the other returning starters. Also back are guards Katie Allen, Charity Brown, Cassidy Williams, Paige Serup and Ta'Naisha Hill,

forward Olivia Crozier, and center Leslie Golden.

Freshmen include guard/forward Shauntai Battle, guard Raven Omar, forward Makaila Woolard and center Natalie Armstrong. Battle scored more than 1,500 points and helped McGill-Toolen Catholic High of Mobile, Alabama, to a 109-24 record during her career.

Samford went 12-19 last year but upset Georgia of the Southeastern Conference, 65-59, along the way. The Bulldogs, seeded sixth, defeated third-seeded East Tennessee State, 67-64, in the opening round of the Southern Conference Tournament. ▀

## Men's Basketball Looks Forward to Another Successful Season

**The Samford men's basketball team** enjoyed its most successful campaign in 11 years last season, winning 20 games and setting the school record for points scored (2,834). Coach Scott Padgett's team seems primed to continue its success. All five starters and 12 of the 13 squad members return for the 2017-18 season.

Padgett has moved the basketball program in a winning direction since becoming head coach three years ago. Samford recently rewarded his success by giving him a five-year contract extension.

The Bulldogs went 20-16 last season and earned an invitation to the College

Insiders Tournament, where they beat Canisius in the opening round, Samford's first postseason tournament win in history.

Samford's offense featured four double-digit scorers: Demetrius Denzel-Dyson (16.1), Wyatt Walker (12.9), Alex Thompson (11.7) and Chris Cunningham (11.4). Walker led the Southern Conference in rebounding (9.7 a game), and Cunningham set a school record for assists with 225.

Nonstarter Josh Sharkey set a freshman record for assists with 151 and established the school record for steals with 71. ▶



Chris Cunningham

## Soccer Picked to Win SoCon

**The Samford women's soccer team** won both the regular season title and Southern Conference Tournament in 2016. With an imposing array of proven players returning, the Bulldogs are in a good position to defend their titles. They were picked to win the SoCon for the fourth straight year by league coaches.

Jermaine Seoposenwe, last year's SoCon Player of the Year, returns after scoring 16 goals and 38 points. Also back are SoCon Freshman of the Year Allie Lourie, All-SoCon first-team goalkeeper Anna Maddox and SoCon All-Freshman Team member Taylor Meneide.

Seven starters return from the 2016 team that went 15-4-2. Yelton's team readied for 2017 playing its usual tough preconference schedule (Florida State, Alabama, Michigan State and others), pointing toward conference play starting Sept. 22 at Western Carolina. ▶

## Volleyball Fields a Young Team

**Samford volleyball** went 21-14 and won the Southern Conference tournament last year, led by all-conference player Erin Bognar. The Bulldogs advanced to the NCAA tournament but lost in the first round to Kansas.

Bognar has graduated now, and second-year Coach Keylor Chan fields a young team this fall. Defensive specialist/libero Morgan St. Germain is the only senior. Other experienced players include outside hitter Kelsi Hobbs, a SoCon All-Freshman Team selection, and four juniors: transfer Elise Watford, Taylor Anderton, Krista Boesing and Alana Schouten.

Six true freshmen join Chan's squad, along with another transfer, Courtney Johnson.

After a taxing 14-match preconference schedule, the Bulldogs open SoCon play Sept. 22-23 hosting The Citadel and Wofford. ▶

## Nelson, Guillorel Lead Cross Country

**Samford's cross country** teams will rely heavily on two runners who last year helped the Bulldogs to their highest finishes ever in the Southern Conference Championships: Karisa Nelson for the women's team and Arsene Guillorel for the men. Nelson won the SoCon women's championship race, and Guillorel finished third in the men's race. Their performances led Samford to second-place team finishes in both championships.

They are not the only talented runners on Coach Pat McGregor's squad. Paul Richardson, Michael Rohdy and Josh Salter are other strong competitors for the men. Emma Garner, Anna Long and Haley Ward are the same for the women.

McGregor had a tremendously successful first year coaching the runners. Now, he looks forward to more of the same in 2017. ▶

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