

THE MAGAZINE OF LEE UNIVERSITY

TORCH

FALL 2017

Sisters & Soccer
More than a Teammate



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A look at the new apartments,
Dirksen Row

GROWING A LEGACY AT LEE:

100 years
of a Lee family

VIRALITY: What it Means

and Why it Matters
Voices exceeds
26 million views

LEE UNIVERSITY TORCH

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REMEMBERING MATRIARCH, MISSIONARY, PROFESSOR Ellen Merritt French

by CAROLYN DIRKSEN | Director of Faculty Development

Ellen French came to Lee as an Assistant Professor of English in the fall of 1976, and although she was at Lee for only fourteen years, she had an incalculable impact. When I first learned that Ellen French was joining the Lee faculty, to be honest, I was intimidated. Although I had never met her, Ellen's reputation preceded her. She was a career missionary who had raised five sons abroad, taught English to outcaste women in India, served in ministry all over the world, and led the Women's Ministry arm of the denomination, encouraging female ordination. She seemed fierce and radical, and in pictures I had seen of her, she looked regal and daunting, so I awaited her arrival with a sense of awe and just a dash of foreboding. When I met her, she was, in fact, regal and daunting, fierce and radical, but she was also warm and kind and witty and clever, and—at least from my end—it was love at first sight.

I was an ambitious 29-year-old who was just finishing my doctorate. In 1976, there were not a lot of strong Christian women on the path ahead of me to show me how to be a wife, a mother, and a professional who made Godly

use of her gifts and opportunities. Ours was the road not-so-often taken in those days, but there was something in Ellen's unself-conscious boldness that let me know I had a guide who could show me the way, someone whose leadership I could trust. I didn't realize at the time that I was joining a

throng of women from Puerto Rico, and India and Haiti and Peru, and from all over the US who were following that same rare light. For the next fourteen years, I worked side by side with Ellen. For part of that time, I was her department chair, and for part of it, she was mine, but regardless of our roles, she was my role model.

Ellen was brilliant. I know that because she didn't take the stereotypical 1970s female approach of keeping it coyly hidden. Nor did she overcompensate by using her intelligence as a weapon. It was simply one of the gifts from God that she used for His purposes the way another person might play the piano or paint a portrait. She never showed off or put other people down; she just thought and spoke and conducted herself in the most natural way that allowed the light of her intelligence to shine through. Married on the day of her graduation from Bible Training School, she had pieced her subsequent education together between and around the birth and rearing of her sons and her many worldwide ministry opportunities. When she landed at Lee, she decided, at age 58, to start her doctorate at Middle Tennessee State University. For the next four years she taught full time and commuted 130 miles one way to take a full slate of classes. Her dissertation was on the literature of the Holocaust, and she developed a course on this topic, which opened the eyes of a generation of students. In spite of all her responsibilities, she was always an avid reader, and one of my absolute favorite pastimes was sitting in Ellen's office talking about good books.

In the classroom, Ellen was tough. She had high expectations, and as one of her former students reflected, "She didn't suffer fools gladly." But she also had the gift of believing in students, in seeing their promise behind all their foolishness, and she was willing and able to draw out their strengths and lead them to their own successes. Her office



was next to mine, and I heard her in earnest conversations with students, not cutting them any slack but calling on them to achieve. If they wanted sympathy for their follies, they had come to the wrong place. But if they wanted stern advice about the requirement of honest hard work, they were talking to the master. Many of her former students have told me that she wouldn't give up on them no matter how easily they gave up on themselves. Ellen prepared them for the tough world she knew they were entering, but she prepared them out of an abundance of love. In all her sternness, she was also surprisingly gentle, able and willing to dive into students' sorrows, to wipe their tears and hold their hands and always to hold them up in prayer. It was not surprising when she earned the Excellence in Teaching Award in 1988. This week social media has been abuzz with stories from her former students, praising her for the impact she had on their lives both intellectually and spiritually. She was that teacher that they never forgot, the one that set them on a path that led to a more perfect future.

Ellen was also startlingly funny. She had a quick wit that hit its target with laser accuracy and was masked by a deadpan delivery. She wasn't one to giggle and twitter, but she could double the rest of us over with a perfectly delivered punch line. She brought all her humor and intelligence and interpersonal skill to her leadership of the department, hiring new faculty and instituting new programs, stretching a tight budget with all the skill of a

long-term missionary mother. In fourteen years she became so fundamental to the fabric of Lee that she was named Faculty Emeritus upon her retirement.

This is my favorite story about Ellen: In the first edition of *Like a Mighty Army*, Charles Conn listed all the career missionaries in the Church of God, putting an asterisk next to the names of those who were accompanied by their spouses. When she came home on furlough, Ellen asked for an appointment with Dr. Conn, which he eagerly granted. She greeted him graciously and thanked him for the attention he had given to missionaries in his book, then she let him know that after raising five sons on the mission field, teaching in Bible schools on three continents, developing curriculum, preaching, and planting churches around the world, she was not an asterisk. After that meeting, Dr. Conn quite agreed. I was copy editor of the second edition of *Like a Mighty Army*, and I heard this story from Dr. Conn himself, while we were adding information about the accomplishments of women who were career missionaries alongside their husbands. This story is funny and sweet, but it belies a path of life that made a significant difference to all of us who have followed. Ellen taught us that we are important in God's sight, that our work is important, and that we have the right and the responsibility to speak up for ourselves. I am grateful that this powerful, Godly woman shaped my life and the lives of countless other women and men who had the privilege of knowing her. §



1982 Faculty of the Language Arts Department: (L-R) Janet Rahamut, Ellen French, Raymond Barrick, Anetta Wyatt, Sabord Woods, Eleanor Barrick, Robert Humbertson (chair), Carolyn Dirksen, Ruth Lindsey

ATHLETIC TRAINING, STILL EXCELLING IN TRANSITION



Lee's athletic training (AT) education program is transitioning from a bachelor's to a master's program.

"Lee's AT program has had a strong history of placing exceptional professionals into the field of athletic training at various work sites, including traditional high school settings, college athletics, and industrial safety programs," says Dr. DeWayne Knight, who serves as the program's physician medical director. "We are looking forward to this transition as an opportunity to reach another level of excellence for our program."

The graduate program will begin May 2018 in compliance with a joint decision made by the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), and the Athletic Training Board of Certification (BOC) to require a minimum of a master's degree to practice athletic training.

The program's newly named director, Dr. Taz Kicklighter, seeks to continue a tradition of excellence in preparing its students.

"I'm so proud of the hard work of our students," Kicklighter said. "Their success on the BOC exam reflects their desire to provide high quality healthcare. Additionally, I feel we are producing empathetic and caring students who truly see athletic training as a calling, not just a profession."

ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING YEAR

"We are thrilled to have the semester underway with another record-breaking year at Lee," said Phil Cook, VP for Enrollment. "Our student body is bigger and more academically prepared than ever, and our campus wide retention efforts are producing great results. This kind of success is especially gratifying in today's extremely competitive higher education environment."

The overall headcount of 5,370 students is the largest ever. This number is a combined total of Lee students from all classifications, on and off campus.

Lee also experienced a record number of 1,020 graduates during the 2016-2017 academic year.

"This is a truly significant accomplishment," said Cook. "To have more than 1,000 students complete their degrees in one year is remarkable. These totals reflect the recent growth of our enrollment, but it also confirms the quality of students choosing Lee. You cannot have this kind of success without an outstanding faculty and staff. This is a result of their hard work and further demonstrates the kind of university Lee is becoming."

CONVOCATION WEEK AT LEE UNIVERSITY

Lee University's fall Convocation brought a time of spiritual rejuvenation and reflection to the campus' students, faculty, and staff.

"We always look forward to Convocation week each semester," says Campus Pastor Dr. Jimmy Harper. "It is a powerful time that God uses to draw us closer in our relationship with Him. If we can set aside quality time with God, He always shows up and impacts our lives through His Word and through our times of worship."

Guest speakers included Bryan Loritts, lead pastor of Abundant Life Church in Silicon Valley, California; Rebekah Lyons, author of "Freefall to Fly: A Breathtaking Journey Toward a Life of Meaning" and "You are Free: Be Who You Already Are"; and Lee alum and American Idol runner-up Clark Beckham. Jonathan Etienne, a 2012 Lee graduate, led a worship service to wrap up Convocation Thursday morning. He serves as Worship and Creative Arts Director at Free Chapel in Gainesville, Georgia.



U.S. NEWS RANKS LEE TOP REGIONAL UNIVERSITY



Lee University saw its ranking rise once again this year in the popular U.S. News & World Report "Best Colleges 2018" edition.

This year Lee claimed its spot in the top 50 U.S. News & World Report "Best Regional Universities." Lee was ranked at #48 out of 142 Southern universities, including masters-level universities, both public and private.

Lee was also listed in the prestigious category called "A+ Schools for B Students," which lists several dozen top-tier colleges and universities alphabetically by regions. This ranking included only 25 schools from the South. Lee was included along with schools such as Samford University, Berry College, and Appalachian State University.

LEE THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2017-18 PRODUCTIONS



"This is a season filled with plays that are less known, but will be very interesting for our audiences," says Associate Professor of Theatre Dr. Christine Williams. "We are hoping that our audiences will trust us and take the opportunity to see a new play, a unique collection of plays, or an older classic produced in a newer style."

A sci-fi play "Marjorie Prime," a humorous path of "An Evening of Comedy: A Collection of Short Plays" by David Ives, a world premier "When Mountains Move" written by Lee's own Stacey Isom Campbell, and the 1897 French classic, "Cyrano" are plays being showcased this season.

Visit <http://www.leeuniversity.edu/theatre> for additional information, dates, time, and locations.

FOURTEEN FACULTY RECEIVE PROMOTION IN RANK

The Lee University Board of Directors recently awarded promotion in rank from associate professor to professor to four faculty members and promotion in rank from assistant professor to associate professor to ten faculty members.

The four faculty members promoted to professor include Dr. Shane Griffith, Dr. Hermilo Jasso, Dr. Brad Moffett, and Dr. Sara Ortega-Higgs.

The ten faculty promoted to associate professor include Dr. Richard Albright, Dan Buck, Matthew Fisher, Dr. Andrew Harnsberger, Mary Mathias-Dickerson, and Drs. Brian Peterson, Mark Proctor, Randy Sheeks, Arlie Tagayuna, and John Wykoff.

NEWLY RENOVATED DINING HALL OPENS



On Tuesday, Aug. 22, Lee University dedicated the newly renovated Deacon Jones Dining Hall just in time for students' first day of fall classes.

To celebrate the dining hall's new look, students, faculty, and staff gathered outside the dining hall for a ribbon-cutting ceremony following the semester's first chapel service. Lee President Dr. Paul Conn, along with Regional Vice President for Sodexo Dining Services Cal Thetford and Student Leadership Council Chair Mannah Berg, cut the ribbon. A "first slice ceremony" immediately followed where Conn cut and presented the first slice of pizza to Berg.

New additions include an outdoor hangout area with a fire pit, a vegetarian bar, more "made-to-order" stations, meeting spaces, Papa Conn's Pizza, and more.

"We wanted to have a dining facility that felt more like a restaurant than a school cafeteria," said Conn. "We want this dining hall to be the center of gravity for social life, not just for eating, but also for students all across our campus."



NEW FACES OF LEE

New Faculty for Fall 2017

Lee Taps Walker To Lead Ministerial Development

by BRIAN CONN | Director of Public Relations

Dr. Mark L. Walker, veteran Atlanta area pastor, joined the Lee University family on August 1 to lead the school's ministerial training programs.


In addition to his faculty role as Chair of the Department of Christian Ministries, Walker will serve as a senior administrator, with a seat on the President's Cabinet as Vice President for Ministerial Development.

In his combined roles, Walker will lead an ambitious new initiative in Lee's goal of training young men and women for ministry. Using his skills and experience, he will help prepare aspiring pastors, missionaries, youth and family ministers, chaplains, and other students working toward a career in ministry.

"Dr. Walker's accomplishments in pastoral ministry, combined with his academic background, provide a unique preparation for this important assignment," said Lee President Dr. Paul Conn.

Walker will be coming to Lee from his role as senior pastor of Mount Paran North Church of God, one of the denomination's largest congregations, with campuses in Marietta and Canton, Georgia. He has served as a pastor there for 25 years, and senior pastor since 1997. Prior to that he pastored First Assembly of God in Orlando, Florida.

Walker has been a member of the Lee University Board of Directors since 2010. With a national reputation as a popular teacher and preacher, Walker frequently appears in seminars and conferences across the country. He has been elected on multiple occasions by his ministerial peers in the Church of God to its highest deliberative bodies, the International Executive Council and the North Georgia State Council.

Walker earned his PhD in organizational leadership from Regent University and his master's and bachelor's degrees in counseling and business administration from Georgia State University, respectively. 



LUIS ALMEIDA
Communication Arts

PhD, The Pennsylvania State University
MS, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
BS, Slippery Rock University



ANDREA PHILLIPS
Communication Arts

PhD, Texas Tech University
MA, Dallas Theological Seminary
MS, BS, Texas Christian University



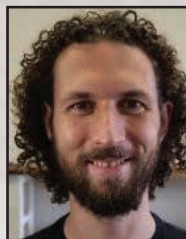
BETSY POOLE
Language & Literature

PhD, MS, University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa
BA, Mississippi College



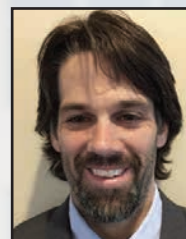
DAVID HARKINS
Natural Sciences & Mathematics

PhD, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
BS, Wofford College



THADDEUS MCRAE
Natural Sciences & Mathematics

PhD, University of Miami
BA, Cornerstone University



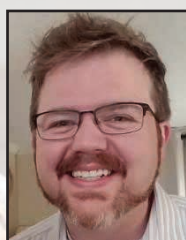
ANTHONY MINUTOLO
Natural Sciences & Mathematics

MS, BS, University of Tennessee at Knoxville



JASON SCHMURR
Natural Sciences & Mathematics

MS, PhD, Oregon State University
BA, Wheaton College



SHANE BROWN
Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education

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MS, BS, Lee University



KATHY ESTES
School of Business

PhD, Anderson University
MBA, University of Illinois at Springfield
BA, Illinois College



MARC GILBERT
School of Business

MBA, Indiana University
BS, Georgia Institute of Technology



BETH SEYMOUR
School of Business

MA, Bryan College
BS, University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa



SUSANNE BURGESS
Music Education

EdD, University of Tennessee
MM, Memphis State University
BA, California State University, Fullerton



JOONG HAN (JONATHAN) JUNG
Music Performance

DMA, MA, MM, Eastman School of Music
BM, University of Auckland



LYNN JENKINS-NYGRN
School of Nursing

MSN, Colorado Christian University
BSN, Wright State University



NANCY LABINE
School of Nursing

PhD, East Tennessee State University
MSN, BSN, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga



SHANNON MCBRAYER
School of Nursing

MS, Capella University
BS, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga



RACHEL TOLLIVER
School of Nursing

MSN, Western Governors University
BSN, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga



MARK WALKER
Christian Ministries

PhD, Regent University
MS, BA, Georgia State University



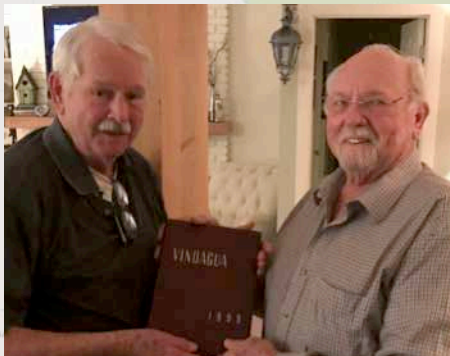
CASEY COLE
Theology

MA, BA, Lee University

Who's Where?

1979

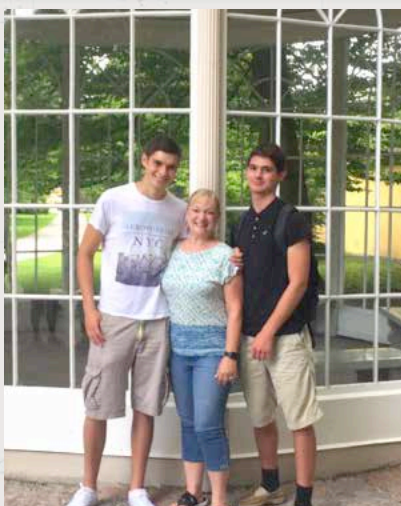
Michael Swilley and his wife, **Kristy Ricks Swilley**, attended Lee in the late 70s. Likewise, both of their fathers, **Harry Swilley** and **Frank Ricks**, attended Lee College during the 50s. Pictured above are the patriarchs of the Swilley and Ricks families reminiscing over the 1953 *Vindagua* in Michael and Kristy's home in Atlanta, Georgia.



Harry Swilley & Frank Ricks

1982

Tammy Simmons and her family recently toured Salzburg, Australia. While attending Lee University, Tammy played Leisel in "The Sound of Music." During their visit to Salzburg, they were able to tour places the film was made, but mentioned the gazebo was her favorite.



Tammy Simmons & family

1985

Dannie ('85) and Precious ('84) Williams live in Leesburg, Florida and have been married for 32 years and have two daughters. Dannie and Precious graduated from Lee with accounting degrees. After years in Corporate America, they entered into the ministry together as senior pastors. They are currently pastors at Citadel of Hope Ministries in Leesburg, Florida, where they have served in that capacity for the past 27 years.



Dannie & Precious Williams

1989

Andréa Santos was named the 2016 West Virginia State Teacher of the Year, and has spent the last two years traveling the country and representing her state nationally from the White House to Microsoft Headquarters. Her classroom has been chosen by the National Endowment for the Arts to study student outcomes involving poetry in the classroom. Currently, Andréa teaches high school Spanish, coaches Slam Poetry, and works for the Department of Education on global competency and diversity policies and curriculum. She is also the co-director of music at the Switzer Church of God.

1991

Jeff Earlywine is the president of RPM Business Solutions. This is a business/ministry that equips people and businesses around the world to reach their potential. This is done in the states with professional business coaching and consulting and internationally through coaching and training seminars. Jeff has just published his first eBook: a free book that shares concepts that he has proven to overcome hurdles in life and business. You can download your free copy at www.RPMBusinessSolutions.com.

1992

Cindy Croffut holds a masters degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Alabama and recently completed her PhD in Education from Wingate University in North Carolina. Cindy has been a teacher, curriculum coordinator, and principal in schools since graduating from Lee in 1992. She is currently Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning for 30 elementary schools in Union County, North Carolina. She and her husband, Rick ('92), reside in Waxhaw, North Carolina where they raised their three children.



Cindy & Rick Croffut

1995

Ty Abernathy, an associate research professor and research fellow at Mississippi State University, began his 20th year at the institution this fall. He helps lead a first-year student success and retention initiative/program at the Social Science Research Center and teaches various lifespan development courses as a faculty member in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Foundations.



Ty Abernathy

1996

Jamison Taylor is currently the Director of Modern Worship at FUMC Alabaster in Alabama and owns Jamison Taylor's School of Music and Chapel Lake Recording Studio in Pell City, Alabama.

2003

Kristan Ware (BME 2003, MM 2007) and his wife **Holly Ware (MAT 2008)** relocated to Wilmington, North Carolina for a year and are now back in Cleveland, Tennessee. While in Wilmington, Kristan transitioned into law enforcement after 11 years as a music educator. Holly has been a teacher for almost 10 years. Kristan is now a Collegedale, TN police officer and Holly is teaching business and computer tech as well as coaching volleyball at Central High School in Chattanooga.



Kristan & Holly Ware



2004

Phil Brown graduated Lee with a BA in Psychology in 2004 and went on to complete an MDiv at Church of God Theological Seminary in 2008 and an MEd in Curriculum and Instruction at Purdue University. He is currently enrolled in the PhD in Higher Education program at Liberty University. Phil has served in higher education since 2006 in several capacities. Currently, he is an Instructional Designer with Moody Bible Institute's School of Distance Learning in Chicago, Illinois. In addition, he teaches adjunct Bible and Theology courses for Moody Bible Institute and Lee University, and is an independent consultant on course design for institutions of Christian higher education. Brown and his wife, Amy, live in Benton, Tennessee. Of their six children, Emilie is a senior at Lee and LiLi is a freshman.

2014

Lindsay (Beard) Simpkins currently lives in Columbus, Georgia with her husband, Josh. Lindsay works as a Physician's Assistant (PA) at a local pediatric office. Lindsay graduated from PA school at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in December 2016. Her husband, Josh, currently serves as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army in Fort Benning, Georgia. Josh and Lindsay attend Crosspointe Church in Columbus. They have an Australian Shepherd puppy named Max.

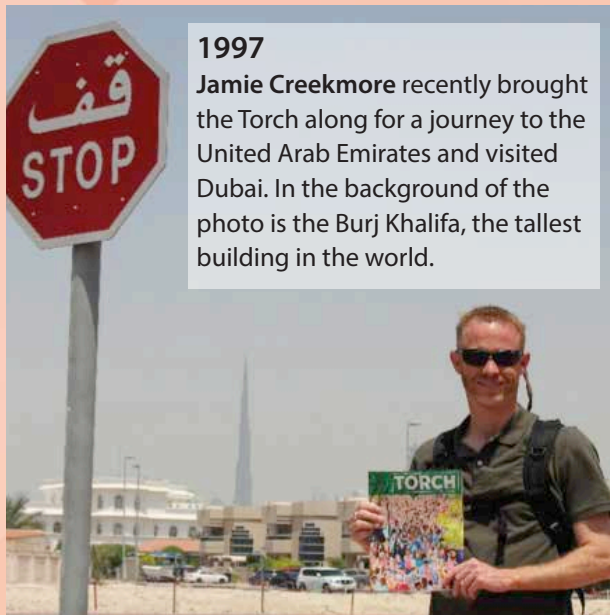
A Lee-union took place this summer in Kona, Hawaii on June 17th, 2017 for the wedding of **Emmaline Elliott**, a third generation Lee graduate, and Miles Pennell. Below are represented a few friends and family that traveled across America to the Big Island of Hawaii to be together for this special reunion.



(L-R) Jason Shrable (2009), Paloma Elliott Shrable (2009), Caleb Cox (2013), Lorien George (2013), Dr. Winston Elliott (1947), Lucille Elliott (1949), Keith Elliott (1980), Susan Elliott (1981), Emmaline Elliott Pennell (2014), Miles Pennell, Stephanie Elliott Daniels (2011 & 2014), Reagan Daniels (2011 & 2014), Baby Annaethia Daniels (future class of 2035), Kendra Hause Blalock (2015), David Blalock (2017), Michael Pierce (2013)

We want to hear from you!

If you would like to submit information for Who's Where or TORCH Travels, please go to www.leeuniversity.edu/AlumniUpdate.

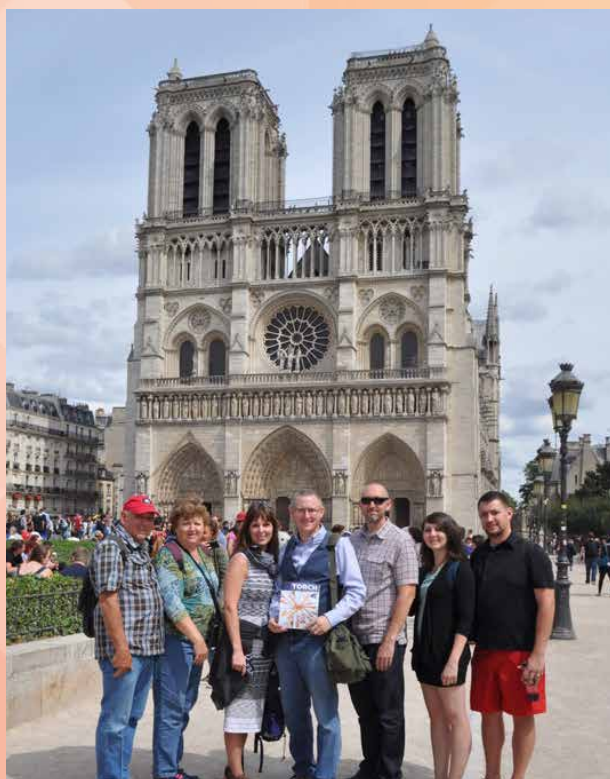


1997

Jamie Creekmore recently brought the Torch along for a journey to the United Arab Emirates and visited Dubai. In the background of the photo is the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world.

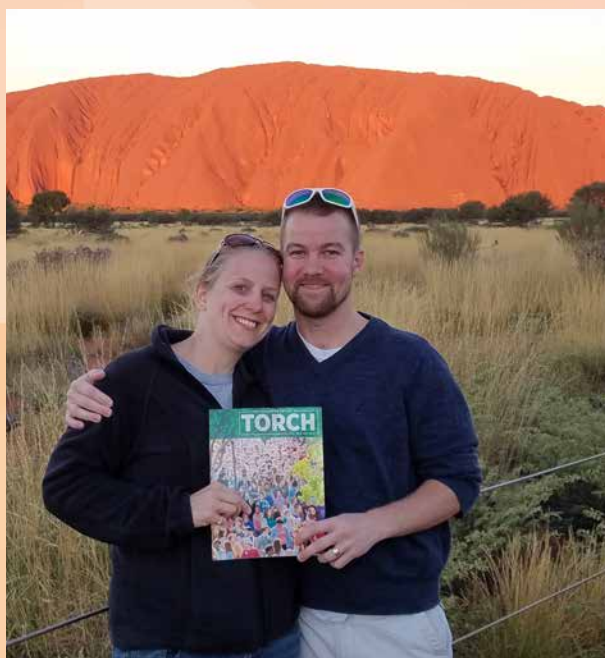
2001

Frankie and Joyce Tyson celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in Paris with their family. Frankie ('79) and Joyce ('99) work as missionaries in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Adam ('01) and Rachel ('00) live in Villanova, Pennsylvania with their five children. Aaron ('04) and his wife Katie live in Weaverville, North Carolina. Angela ('12) lives in Asheville, North Carolina. Andrew and his wife, Yadira, live in Hendersonville, North Carolina.



2007

Steve Baughman ('07) lives with his wife, **Jen Baughman (Small '03)**, and son, Nathanael Baughman, in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Steve is a special education teacher for grades 4-5 and Jen is an English teacher for grades 9-12. Jen is also finishing her EdD at the University of Florida and plans to graduate in December 2017. A favored hobby of theirs is traveling during the summers. Here they pose with The Torch near Ayers Rock in the "Red Centre" of Australia's Northern Territory.



2011

Ashley (Carroll) Davis ('11), Micholas Davis ('07), Jonathan Sawyer ('06), and Pat Carroll ('59) visited Jerusalem, Israel in May of this year.



HOMECOMING 2017

November 3 & 4

THE CHORUS OF YOUR LIFE

When we were young, and eager to break free from those familiar strands that held us to the past, old traditions were of little importance. All that mattered to us then was what lay ahead. Now we see better the beautiful rhythm that emerges from traditions. Between the persistent drumbeat of daily schedules we have learned to value the deeper cadence that rises from the traditions we practice. Over time, we've recognized that our traditions remind us of who we are and what we value. With their mystic chords of memory, traditions help us sing the chorus of our life.

On November 3 & 4, we invite you to come again and celebrate one of our oldest traditions – Homecoming. Come back to see everyone. Come back to walk the handsome campus and learn about the exciting changes that have happened since you graduated. Most of all, come back to your alma mater and sing the chorus of your life.

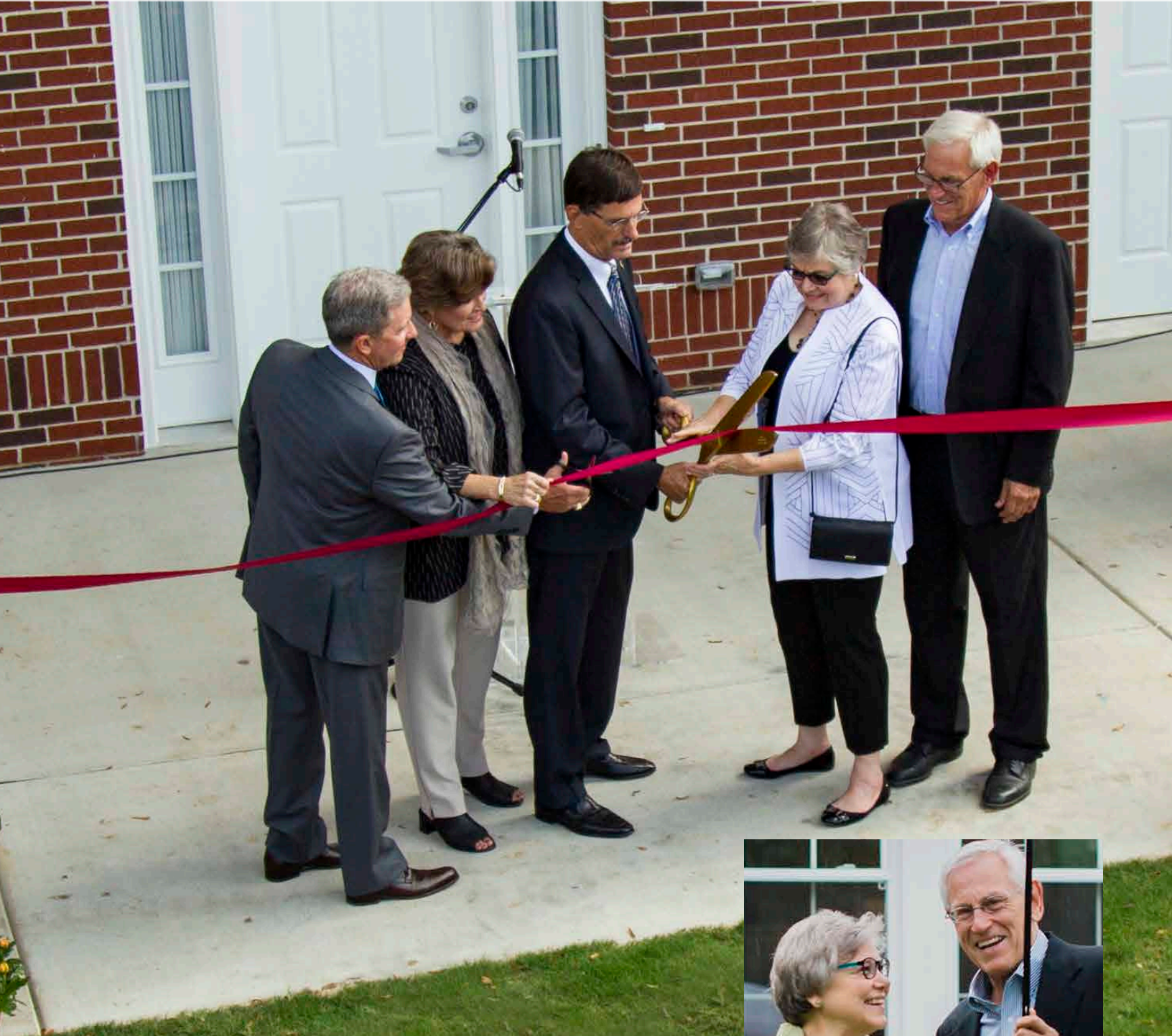


WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Dirksen Row

6

by PAUL CONN | President



7

We named a new building at Lee last week. It's our newest women's residence hall, and we're calling it "Dirksen Row," in honor of Carolyn and Murl Dirksen. We did the ribbon-cutting at noon on a lovely sunny Friday, with the Board of Directors, all the vice presidents, and other VIP's – including the girls who actually live in the new dorm – there for the ceremony.

So now we have "Dirksen Row," and it brings to mind the many questions I hear about how things are named on our campus. Who names these things, anyway? And why is this one a "row" instead of a "hall"? Why do we have a "college" of education, when we have a "school" of music? And how is a "student union" different from a "student center"? Or do you ever wonder why Humanities has a "center" while Science and Math has a "complex" and communications has a mere "building"? And who in the world is Simmons, or Keeble, or Brinsfield, anyway? Come to think of it, is "Buzz Oates" really somebody's name? Or have you ever wondered why the music building has its own name (Curtsinger Building), while the religion building is just called the religion building? And is it true that, once a name goes on something, it never comes off? Or is there a statue of limitations on these things? And of course, there's the question that's been asked a lot the last few years: why don't we have a name for the chapel, other than just "The Chapel!"

There is an old saying, on college campuses, that everything seems to be named for donors and dead presidents. That's true most places. Donors typically get things named for them while they are still alive, so they can enjoy the fruit of their largesse. And presidents usually have to wait until they are dead, presumably to guarantee they can't do anything to embarrass the institution after leaving office. (I'm guessing on that one.)

But at Lee, this bit of conventional wisdom isn't true at all. Of course we have lots of things named for donors. Medlin, Livingston, Nichols, Sharp and Davis, Squires, and many other names entered the Lee vocabulary because of the generosity of donors. And we have lots of dead presidents' names on campus too. But in fact, buildings have been named for presidents who were not only still living, but in several cases, still serving as president. But the biggest difference at Lee is that we love to name things for outstanding faculty members: Bowdle and O'Bannon, Beach, Schimmels, Butler and Souther, and now Dirksen.

No one who has been at Lee for the past fifty years wonders why a new building was named for the Dirksens. This faculty team was a "power couple" before the phrase ever became popular. They have been leaders in the academic life of Lee since the 1970s, and Carolyn will be retiring from full-time service at the end of this school year. For a building to bear their name is a pretty obvious decision at a place like Lee, where the biggest stars are not presidents or donors, but teachers.

And yes, actually, sometimes names *do* get taken *off* buildings. It happened once at Lee. The Board of Directors, which decides such things, voted to name a ramshackle old building "Payne Hall," in honor of a deceased former president. As the story was told to me, the building was such a dump, the family objected to their father's name being on it. So the board yielded to their wishes and named it Providence Hall instead. It was torn down long ago, fortunately. §



BURRUS, BROOKS HONORED AT GSC TOP 10 BANQUET

Lee women's golfer Sam Burrus and track and field standout Justin Brooks were among the "Top Ten" honorees as the presentations were made at the Gulf South Conference's (GSC) Annual Awards Banquet in June at the Hilton in Pensacola Beach, Florida.

The awards, based on athletic, academic and extracurricular achievement during the 2016-17 academic year, recognize the top five male and top five female student-athletes as the cream of the GSC crop.

SAAC RAISES OVER 11,000 FOR MAKE-A-WISH

After setting a lofty goal of raising \$10,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation last season, the Lee University Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) exceeded that mark and raised a grand total of \$11,407.

Thanks to exceeding the \$10,000 threshold, Lee will now have the opportunity to reveal a wish to a kid during the upcoming school year. The SAAC is a committee made up of student-athletes assembled to provide insight on the student-athlete experience. The committee also offers input on the rules, regulations and policies that affect student-athletes' lives on National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member institution campuses. NCAA Division II SAAC representatives around the country have partnered with Make-A-Wish to help grant wishes to children in need.

FORMER FLAMES CLIMBING THE RANKS OF PRO BALL

The Lee baseball team has a rich tradition of sending players to the professional ranks, and currently there are six former Flames playing in the Minor Leagues.

The former Lee standouts playing professional baseball are Jorge Saez (Catcher, New York Yankees AA), Brandon Cuniff (Pitcher, Miami Marlins AAA), Trent Hill (First Base, Miami Marlins A), Jeff Ibarra (Pitcher, San Diego Padres AAA), Kris Hall (Pitcher, Oakland Athletics AA) and Justin Alleman (Pitcher, San Francisco Giants A).

GOLF HAS FIVE RECEIVE ALL-AMERICAN SCHOLAR HONORS

The Lee women's golf team placed four players on the prestigious Women's Golf Coaches Association (WGCA) All-American Scholar list.

Red-shirt juniors Sam Burrus and Caroline Moore earned the honor for the third consecutive season and were joined by freshmen Haverly Harrold and Annika Gino. The criteria for selection to the All-American Scholar Team are some of the most stringent in all of college athletics. The minimum cumulative GPA is 3.50.

Lee men's golf junior Corey Sheppard was named a Srixon/Cleveland Golf All-American Scholar by the Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA) this past summer. Sheppard helped lead the Flames to a No. 10 final ranking and their second straight trip to the NCAA Regional Championship this past season. The native of Salisbury, England carded a 73.67 scoring average and was named to the GSC All-Tournament team. In the classroom, the Sports Management major holds a 3.28 cumulative GPA.

THREE LADY FLAMES LAND ON PRESEASON ALL-GSC TEAM

A league-high three Lee women's soccer players have been named to the Preseason All-GSC Team while the Lady Flames were picked to finish second in the coaches' poll.

Senior forward Summer Lanter, the 2016 GSC Co-Player of the Year, lands on the team after leading the Lady Flames offensively with 37 goals over the last three seasons. Goalkeeper Haley Gribler, a Second Team All-GSC selection last season, also received the preseason honor for the Lady Flames. Gribler helped Lee finish first in the GSC last season with a .827 save percentage. Senior defender McKenzie Bricker also landed a spot on the team after receiving All-GSC Second Team honors a year ago.

POTTEIGER ERA SET TO BEGIN FOR MEN'S SOCCER

Derek Potteiger will begin his first season on the sidelines as coach of the men's soccer team beginning this fall.

Potteiger, a two-time All-American at Penn State University, former first assistant at the United States Naval Academy (2009-13), and former head coach at Gordon College (2013-2016), was named the Lee University men's soccer coach on January 19.

Potteiger looks to play an up-tempo, exciting brand of soccer noting, "My vision for playing is fast. Tempo and pace are words that are going to resound through our program at Lee."

The Flames were picked to finish fifth in the GSC Preseason Coaches' Poll. Lee ranked in the league's top five in 2016 in both scoring average and goals against average.

CONLEY NOMINATED FOR NCAA WOMAN OF THE YEAR HONOR

Former Lee University volleyball player Catherine Conley has been named one of two nominees from the Gulf South Conference for the prestigious NCAA Woman of the Year honor.

Conley graduated Magna Cum Laude from Lee this past spring and ranked in the top 12 in hitting percentage in the conference the past two seasons.

SARTORI NAMED PRESEASON ALL-GSC

In what should come as no surprise to fans of Lee University volleyball over the last two seasons hard-hitting junior Silvia Sartori landed on the Preseason All-GSC team for the second straight year.

Sartori finished third in the league in kills-per-set (3.48) before missing the final few games with an injury last season. The outside hitter from Belgrade, Serbia led the Lady Flames with 305 slams while adding 282 digs and 32 blocks.

MEN'S, WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY PICKED TO WIN GSC

The Lee University men's cross country team was unanimously selected by the GSC men's cross country coaches as the favorite in the 2017 preseason poll while the women's team received five first place votes and edged Union University as the GSC women's cross country coaches' top pick.

Head Coach Caleb Morgan and the Flames will be looking to 3-peat as GSC Champions, having won the conference crown in each of their first two seasons of NCAA Postseason eligibility. The men received first place votes from all 12 head coaches to rack up 144 points. The Lady Flames tallied 158 points to be chosen as the preseason favorites for the second year in a row, and after coming up just short last season will be searching for their first league title.

SISTERS AND SOCCER

by GEORGE STARR | Director of Radio Broadcasting

It is truly amazing to dig back in the record books and view the huge role sisters have played in establishing the university as one of the nation's premier programs in women's soccer. Tracking back to the late 90s and continuing into the upcoming 2017 season, sisters have garnered a major portion of the spotlight.

With siblings always a key part of his arsenal, former head coach Matt Yelton's teams posted a 252-42-11 record over a 13-year period. The Lady Flames powered their way past National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) opponents, winning a remarkable four consecutive national championships (2008-2011). The streak ended with a heartbreaking penalty-kick loss to Olivet Nazarene in the 2012 national tournament semifinal round.

"We never really set out to recruit sisters as a part of our recruiting strategy but once we started having a group of sisters come through the program we realized it was a really good fit to what we tried to accomplish within our teams," explained Yelton. "One of the areas we always focused on was trying to create a family atmosphere within the team; having sisters within the team certainly helped build that type of environment."

"I always believed it was a good sign that the program was headed in the right direction when a younger sister made the choice to attend Lee and be a part of the women's soccer program," the highly successful coach pointed out. "If the older sister wasn't happy with the team, the younger sister certainly wasn't going to choose Lee."

"We had a fantastic run of sisters playing for us and they all represented the team and school remarkably well on and off the field. We were extremely fortunate to have these girls play for us and each and every one of them played a pivotal role in the development of the Lee soccer program."

The ladies not only helped put Lee on the national map with the championship runs, they departed from the NAIA and stepped up to NCAA Division II, leaving with nine straight appearances in the NAIA nationals and a 96-game

conference (TranSouth, SSAC) winning streak. Add all the conference and region tournament titles to the mix and you see many Lee women's soccer records remain unbroken in the NAIA archives.

The move to NCAA DII was another challenge for the sisters and Lee women's soccer, but they immediately made their presence felt, even during the two-year provisional status leading into full membership in Gulf South Conference (GSC) and NCAA. Since 2013 the Lady Flames are 55-16-8 against all DII opponents and 39-7-5 in the rugged GSC. They claimed an unofficial GSC regular-season title in 2014.

Under the guidance of current head coach Chris Hennessey, the Lady Flames have earned two consecutive NCAA DII national tournament berths. And yes, sisters continue to play a primetime role.

Sisters Summer and Anna Lanter continue to carry the sisters' banner. Summer, a senior, is an All-American forward while Anna, a freshman, will be battling for her share of playing time as a defender. Clair, Summer and Anna's older sister, was an All-American defender, All-American Scholar and a member of three national championship teams.

"To accomplish a goal with a group of individuals you love is truly a remarkable feeling, and I was blessed to be able to experience three times."

Said Clair: "The Lee soccer coach at the time, Matt Yelton, was my club coach so he had sparked my interest early on. He was a fantastic coach so I knew I would like to continue to play for him. Being very competitive, I also loved that the soccer team was successful, and I wanted a chance to compete at a high level. I tell people all the time that I should be the spokesperson for Lee. I only have wonderful things to say and look back with the fondest memories. I loved the family that I developed on the soccer team, but I equally valued my time as a political science



major. I was fortunate enough to have kind, thoughtful, and brilliant professors that invested in me as a student and person. They were able to add immeasurable value to my life in a short amount of time."

"I had a wonderful four years at Lee," she added. "I will never forget how special it was each time we won nationals. To accomplish a goal with a group of individuals you love is truly a remarkable feeling, and I was blessed to be able to experience it three times."

Summer followed her older sister and Anna is just beginning another chapter in the Lanter adventures. "I looked at many different colleges before deciding I wanted to attend Lee," commented Summer, who enters her final Lee season as not only a DII All-American, but also the 2015 GSC co-player of the year. "At first I wasn't really considering Lee because I didn't want to follow in Clair's footsteps. After visiting many different universities, including Lee, I decided that Lee was where I was going to feel the most at home. Once I was on campus I quickly found out it was awesome following in Clair's footsteps because everyone loved her. Even though she was gone when I came to school, being her sister made me feel like the cool kid on campus."

Anna had known for several years that Lee was pretty much in her plan since Clair's freshman year at the university. "My parents fell in love with the school and pushed for me and Summer to attend Lee. I was always hesitant to follow my siblings because I have always been known as either Clair's or Summer's little sister. All the (Lee) girls were so great and I was impressed that they prayed together and for each other.

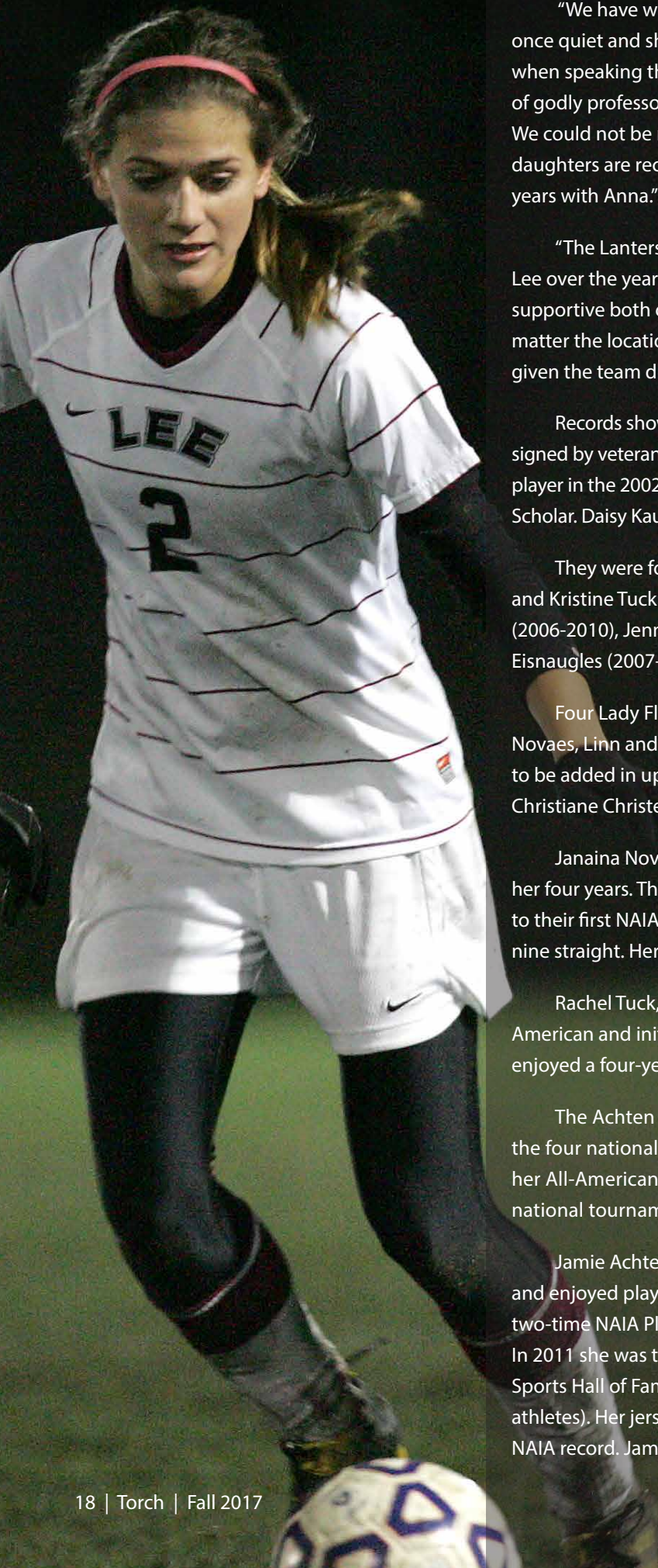
That's what sealed the deal for me."

Like so many fathers, Greg Lanter found a need to learn the sport of soccer. "Our oldest daughter Paige was our first experience with soccer," said Jena Lanter, the mother of four. "She instantly loved the sport. We knew nothing about soccer, so Greg learned as much, as fast as he could so he could help with her teams."

"Our daughters worked extremely hard and we sought excellent instruction," she injected. "They all have very competitive personalities and good work rates so they improved quickly. We were fortunate they gravitated to different positions on the field and didn't feel pressure to out play their sisters. They share a common bond and similar experiences and that has made them very close."

"As parents, it has been a fantastic ride and wonderful to watch," said Greg. "We have witnessed hard losses with teary finishes, and "over the top" happy victories with fantastic teammates. There have been many 'glory' moments with each daughter."

"Along the way, we met and loved the soccer coach (Yelton) at Lee. He persuaded Clair to play for him. Lee was a perfect fit for our family. The soccer was fantastic, winning three national championships, but more importantly Clair grew intellectually and spiritually. The university developed the whole person and Clair grew in wisdom and compassion. The person graduating from Lee was even better than the one we sent to Lee."



"We have watched Summer also grow and mature in a very similar manner; once quiet and shy she has grown stronger, more confident, and even bold when speaking the truth. We are very thankful for the guidance and instruction of godly professors that have invested much into the person she is becoming. We could not be more pleased with the education and college experiences our daughters are receiving at Lee. We are excited and look forward to four more years with Anna."

"The Laners have brought much more than soccer to the program and to Lee over the years," remarked coach Hennessey. "The entire family has been very supportive both on campus and in the community. They are at every game, no matter the location. I am personally very thankful for all the support they have given the team during the past few years."

Records show the winning surge began in 1998 when Melissa Kauffman was signed by veteran coach John Bratcher. Melissa was named the most valuable player in the 2002 TranSouth Conference Tournament and was an All-American Scholar. Daisy Kauffman joined her sister for one year.

They were followed by Janaina and Luana Novaes (2004-2008), Rachel and Kristine Tuck (2006-2010), Linn, Christiane and Benedicte Christensen (2006-2010), Jenna and Jamie Achten (2006-2011), and Chelsea and Ali Eisnaugles (2007-2013).

Four Lady Flames are members of the Lee Athletic Hall of Fame (Janaina Novaes, Linn and Christiane Christensen and Rachel Tuck), and more are certain to be added in upcoming years. Rachel Tuck, Janaina Novaes, and Linn and Christiane Christensen have had their jerseys retired.

Janaina Novaes tallied an eye-catching Lee career-record 118 goals during her four years. The three-time, first-team All-American directed the Lady Flames to their first NAIA National Tournament appearance in 2004, beginning a run of nine straight. Her career ended with an 82-14 record.

Rachel Tuck, a rugged defender, was women's soccer's first NAIA All-American and initial player to have her jersey retired. Her sister Kristine also enjoyed a four-year career. Both were academic scholars.

The Achten sisters teamed with the Christensen twins to help produce the four national crowns. Jenna Achten totaled 45 goals and 20 assists during her All-American career. She was voted the MVP Offensive Player in the 2009 national tournament.

Jamie Achten was the most decorated player of all the outstanding sisters, and enjoyed playing with Jenna for two years. The highly skilled forward was a two-time NAIA Player of the Year and named All-American on four occasions. In 2011 she was the CoSIDA Scholar Athlete of the Year and the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Athlete of the Year (which included all the state's NCAA D1 athletes). Her jersey was retired in 2012 and her 91 career assists still remains an NAIA record. Jamie also tallied 83 career goals. §



"As parents, it has been a fantastic ride and wonderful to watch. We have witnessed hard losses with teary finishes, and 'over the top' happy victories with fantastic teammates. There have been many 'glory' moments with each daughter."



HEART OF A CHAMPION

A story of perseverance from the doctor's office to the hardcourt

by CARMAN LASTORIA | Director of Sports Information

What is it that drives certain athletes to never give up?

While a box score can provide data identifying who did well in the contest, most coaches are searching beyond the numbers. They are looking for the athlete that possesses that indefinable attribute that separates the good from the great and the winners from the losers. You certainly can't teach it. It's either there or it's not.

The description often ascribed to these types of unique players is, "they have heart." It's the person that doesn't give up easily. It's the person that rises to the top when the stakes get higher and the pressure is on.

For Lee women's basketball head coach Marty Rowe, it's pretty clear who has one of the biggest "hearts" on his squad. It's junior Tori Lentz. A native of Knoxville, Tennessee, Lentz is a hard-nosed forward who came off the bench her freshman year to provide valuable minutes as a shutdown defender, rebounder, and energy-giver for the Lady Flames.

In a word, she played with heart.

After her freshman season, one in which the Lady Flames were 20-10 overall and 15-7 in the Gulf South Conference, Lentz discovered that her heart, the same heart that helped her push through the challenges on the court, was beating at such a rapid pace that she needed to get it checked out by a cardiologist.

Her story from there is one of continual triumph and perseverance in the midst of unsettling times for a young college athlete. Learning to give up control, trust God and others, and press through pain and setbacks, she grew as a player, person, and believer.

We had a chance to sit down with Lentz recently and ask her about the challenges and successes of her first two seasons and how her journey at Lee thus far has shaped her life and strengthened her faith.

CL – Take us through the events that happened last summer as you were just finishing up a successful freshman season and looking forward to your sophomore year.

TL – This past year has been such an up and down feeling for me. I've often felt like a grandma. Last spring I was having some heart problems. My heart just felt like it was racing constantly. I had an EKG performed and it was abnormal so I went to the cardiologist and they diagnosed me with Supraventricular Tachycardia, which basically means that my heart races when it shouldn't. I tried medicine, but that didn't work, so I had to have a Cardiac Ablation in September to help regulate my heartbeat. It was a scary and stressful time for me, but thankfully it ended up being a very successful procedure.

CL – Was there ever a thought that you might not get back on the court again to play the game you love?

TL – There was plenty of doubt and uncertainty surrounding the procedure and my future as a basketball player. But in the midst of all of that God was in control. During my procedure, the surgeon had to work through complications that would have caused most doctors to settle on putting in a pacemaker. She was able to find another way to fix the issue, however, and avoid putting in a pacemaker which would have certainly put an end to my basketball career. She knew I was an athlete, and worked through several scenarios in order to solve the problem without placing my basketball career in jeopardy. It really was such a blessing even though the surgery took longer than expected.

***"...God doesn't call us to walk alone
and He certainly places people
in our path to help us out."***

CL – So after all that you come back and play last season before some more obstacles come your way. Tell us about that.

TL – Late in the season my hip really started bothering me but I thought it was just a typical end of the season type pain so I just played through it. Eventually it got to the point where I couldn't walk normally and when I would play it would go numb so I had it looked at and I had a labrum tear causing me to miss the final two regular season games and the playoffs.

CL – Did you ever feel like you just wanted to throw in the towel and give up after this second physical setback?

TL – After the hip injury I just felt like ok, this must be a joke. But you really do learn to let go, trust God, and be patient in those moments. It was certainly frustrating, but I was surrounded by tremendous support from my teammates and coaches so I knew I could fight through it again.

CL – What lessons have you learned by having to overcome these physical roadblocks?

TL – This has taught me a lot about who I am as a person and about my relationship with the Lord. With my heart condition, I had to trust the Lord and overcome that fear of the unknown. Even though there were definitely some physical issues associated with it, that was much more of an internal struggle: a trial of my faith and learning to trust without clear answers. With my hip, though, I was forced to be totally dependent on other people to help because I literally couldn't move on my own. I believe the Lord used these issues to teach me to appreciate everything that I have and that I have to learn to give up control at times in my life and trust Him and also be willing to let other people help me. That was a tough lesson because I've always been a really independent person, but God doesn't call us to walk alone and He certainly places people in our path to help us out.

CL – Speaking of those people, often times we hear athletes refer to their teammates as family. How has the bond you have with your teammates helped you through these challenging times?

TL – My teammates have been unbelievably encouraging and supportive throughout this whole ordeal. They have always offered to help, never complained, and would never let me try and do it on my own even when I insisted. When I look back on my Lee experience, my favorite part will be my relationship with my teammates. During the tough times they truly had my back and I can't imagine having to go through this challenge without them.



CL – Looking forward Tori, what's the next step for you?

TL – I am heading in the right direction with my rehab, but trying to get back into game shape has proven to be harder than I anticipated. I think I was a little naïve at the beginning of this recovery process, but in a lot of ways that has actually helped me to maintain positivity even in the tough times of conditioning. I know I can't rush that process and I'm learning to be grateful to God for this incredible opportunity to be back on the court with my teammates and playing for the Lady Flames. I want to be an example for the girls and inspire them to keep pushing through when times get tough, both on the court and off the court.

If inspiring others is the goal it is safe to say that Lentz is succeeding in that endeavor over the last year. Her resiliency and faith have certainly been an inspiration to her teammates and her coach.

"Tori is a true example of fighting through adversity and she does whatever it takes to help our basketball team," said Rowe. "Her toughness and ability to overcome are great attributes she brings to our program."

On November 4, in front of what is always a packed Walker Arena crowd for the annual Homecoming Game, students, alumni, and fans will see the No. 13 jersey of Tori Lentz come running out of the locker room as the Lady Flames host Bryan College at noon.

Lentz will be called on to play her usual tough minutes in the post, wrestling for position on rebounds, and diving on the floor for loose balls while attacking the opposition with tenacious defense.

And she'll do it all with tremendous heart. ♡

For more information on Tori Lentz and the Lee women's basketball team, make sure to log on to goleeflames.com and follow the Lady Flames on social media @LeeUFlames.



by the **NUMBERS**

#48

Lee's US News
and World Report
Ranking, up from
#56 last year



\$202,960

Amount awarded in scholarships
at the Church of God Teen
Talent competition

11,049

Number of campers
hosted on campus
over the summer



52



Number of different
nations from which
our students come



31

Number of years
Paul Conn has served
as university president

2



Number of students from
Afghanistan currently
enrolled at Lee

901



Number of new freshmen
enrolled this fall



\$4,000,000

Amount spent on renovations to
Deacon Jones Dining Hall

Growing a **LEGACY AT LEE**

by JEROME HAMMOND | VP for University Relations



Earl Hamilton

On what would turn out to be the coldest New Year's morning in a century, 19-year-old Roy Earl Hamilton of Sobel, Tennessee sat in a dark, borrowed, upstairs room at 2524 Gaut Street, Cleveland, Tennessee. He and 11 other hopeful students quietly watched as the stalwart Reverend Nora Chambers lifted and rang a small bell at precisely 9:30 am, calling to order the inaugural session of Bible Training School. It was Tuesday, January 1, 1918. In more ways than one it was a beginning.

By the time the session ended on April 5 of that year, only half of the original class remained enrolled. Earl Hamilton was one of them. He returned the next fall and persisted until the spring of 1919 when he was awarded one of the first diplomas issued by the new Church of God institution. In the year-and-a-half of his enrollment, Hamilton displayed a commitment that would quite literally stretch across the full century of Lee's existence, influencing the formation of the institution's character.

At colleges and universities around the country, a growing importance is being placed on entering students whose family members also attended the institution. These students are known as Legacies. They are considered so important to the strength and future of the school that highly selective colleges are giving enrollment priority to freshmen Legacies. In essence, Legacies are like family to an institution.

Lee University is also recognizing the importance of Legacies. Vice President for Enrollment Phil Cook says Legacies help the school to maintain a continuity and identity over time. "We want the people who know us best to say 'yes' again to Lee. They know our history and our values. Their children arrive with an understanding of Lee that is very much like family."

Todd and Shana Fulbright Garner ('94, '94) are what Cook is talking about. Shana's late father, Junus Fulbright ('65) arrived at Lee from Asheville, NC, already an evangelist. He joined a Greek club at Lee and became student body president his junior year. After graduation he served on Lee's National Alumni Board before enthusiastically sending his three daughters to Lee. Shana, the middle daughter, has a son, Grayson, in the freshman class. "Lee was his choice," she smiles, "but we may have influenced the decision a little. We wanted him to have the same Lee experience."

Michelle Russell Flanagan ('93) understands. Her parents, Tommy Russell ('69) and Sharon Godfrey ('69) loved their time at Lee. Tommy joined the Lee Singers and won the Tharp award as



Ryan Washington | great, great grandson of Earl Hamilton

a promising minister of music. Sharon joined Campus Choir and took part in Parade of Favorites. Growing up in Florida, Michelle remembers all the Lee stories. "It was the only place I wanted to go," she recalls. When she arrived she followed her father as a Lee Singer and her mother as a P.O.F. contestant. "I loved it," she says. This fall her daughter, Rachel, moved into Sharp-Davis Hall as a freshman. "I am so grateful for what Lee means to our family, and so excited for Rachel," Michelle says.

Director of Alumni Relations, Patti Cawood, says, "We have so many families that are 2, 3 and even 4 generations deep. That is remarkable for such a young institution. I think it says a lot about the experience each generation is having, and the deep loyalty of our alumni. We love our Legacies!"

Entering the freshman class this year is perhaps Lee's deepest Legacy. Living on the fourth floor of Bowdle-O'Bannon Hall is Ryan Washington. Ryan is the great, great grandson of Roy Earl Hamilton of Sobel, Tennessee. Between Earl and Ryan are three generations connected to Lee. Earl's daughter, Beatrice Odom, taught at Lee for more than 30 years. Her son, Franklin Odom ('74), and his daughter, Christy Washington ('99), complete a link that stretches across Lee's 100 years, concluding with Ryan.

Throughout 2018 Lee University will commemorate its centennial anniversary. "It seems fitting that all over campus Lee Legacies will help us celebrate this institutional journey from hope to reality," says Cawood. "They were, after all, a big part of the journey." And maybe, early on the morning of January 1, Ryan and his family will walk over to Gaut Street and think about a long-ago commitment that began their Lee legacy. ☺



Rachel Flanagan, Ryan Washington, Grayson Garner

VIRALITY:

What it Means and Why it Matters

by JAYSON VANHOOK | VP for Information Systems

On Sunday, May 14th, the Voices of Lee published a music video on Facebook based on the popular Bethel Worship song “No Longer Slaves.” The song was arranged by current student and Voices of Lee member Kadison Beaver. Just 24 hours later, the video had reached over 700,000 people and had been viewed 250,000 times. We were all amazed by the initial success and reach of this video; little did we know that this was just the beginning of the story. Two days later, that same video crossed the 1 million view threshold, and by the end of the first week, the video had reached over 10 million people and had been viewed more than 5 million times. Fast-forward two months and the Voices of Lee was ready to share another message. This time, the video was of Voices performing a Phil Nitz (’11) arrangement of Hillsong Worship’s “What a Beautiful Name” in The Chapel. The video post only took 22 hours to reach 1 million views. Just five days later, 13 million people had watched the music video.

It was clear by anyone’s definition that this content had officially gone viral, but what does that mean exactly? While digital marketing experts have differing ideas on what constitutes viral content, the general consensus is that virality as a metric consists of two main factors: number of content views and speed of spread. Simply reaching a high number of views over a long period of time does not constitute virality. One must also consider the speed in which the content spreads from person to person. Rob Alderman (’00), Senior Partner of the Alderman Group, a digital content and communications agency, explains, “The general rule is that content is viral when it gets 5 million views within a 3-5 day period. It’s not just the high number of views that make something viral. It’s also the timeline.” By definition, both “No Longer Slaves” and “What a Beautiful Name” went viral.

So what makes a video go viral, and more specifically, why have these Voices of Lee videos reached millions of people? Certainly, these are questions for

which we would like to have definite answers. If one could know the formula for virality, then one could repeatedly make this happen, and therefore have a very large stage to share their message. We know, however, that there is no exact formula; rather, this phenomenon is often the result of a combination of factors that converge at the right moment in time. Of course, that doesn’t stop a whole industry of digital marketing professionals from trying to learn more in order to manufacture opportunities for virality in the future.

Rob Reid (’98), Founder and CEO of The Reid Effect Production Studios in Phoenix Arizona, has developed creative web-based

video content for some of the world’s biggest brands such as Adidas, Xbox, and Major

League Baseball. He states, “I probably get a dozen calls a year for a ‘viral video.’ And then I have to go and ruin their day with a sad truth – there is no guaranteed recipe.” He adds that there are no hard and fast guidelines, and simply recreating new content based on very similar content that has previously gone viral will rarely lead to success.

“Just 24 hours later, the video had reached over 700,000 people and had been viewed 250,000 times.”

While there is general consensus that a formula for virality is not knowable, most digital marketing experts acknowledge that there are certain common elements that can be found in viral content. Reid explains that some of these elements are obvious. “Having a major celebrity in your video will increase interest exponentially; tapping into their existing audience can have a tremendous impact on views. A video of an important current event can have the same effect. The interest level and demand is high for that specific content, which is why you often see viral videos that are terribly shot and often not edited in any way.” Alderman adds his take on the question:

"People share what they are passionate about – humor, love, anger, and in this case [the Voices of Lee videos], worship to God." He goes on to say, "viral videos aren't much different than anything else in life. The best stuff generally rises to the top."

Jeff Salyer ('01), Lee University's director of Media Services and the individual responsible for social media marketing at the institution, explains a lot of what makes media content go viral is timeliness and relevance. He states, "Often this begins within a niche audience and then spreads very fast within personal networks outside of the initial audience. Typically an influencer, someone with many followers, will play a big role in spreading the media content." He goes on to explain that algorithms of the various social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) play a large role in spreading media. "Social media platforms want to keep users engaged, so they curate a timeline that they hope keeps users scrolling. This is why timelines are not necessarily real-time or sequential in your feed." Good content gets rewarded in social media algorithms, and thus has the potential of being seen and shared by more individuals.

Harvard Business Journal published results of a study that provides insight into this question in an article called "Why Some Videos Go Viral." The study, conducted by the marketing technology company Unruly, analyzed 430 billion video views and 100,000 consumer data points. Their analysis indicated that psychological response (how the content makes you feel) and social motivation (why you want to share it) are the two most powerful drivers of viral success. The article stated, "The greater the intensity of feeling the content evokes, the more likely people are to share it." Content that moves people will be shared, and the motivations behind sharing mentioned in the article include self-expression, social good, shared passion, demonstrating/expressing interest and knowledge about current trends and events, and wanting to be the first to break some news or important content.

Simply stated: understanding why a video goes viral is complicated, but we can begin to see from these explanations why the Voices of Lee videos spread so far and so fast. Alderman explains, "The videos played directly to their base. The songs were right. The setting was right. There are certain people who love what Voices





makes, and they are happy to share it with others.” He goes on to say, “Great content is going to get shared, and what Voices of Lee put out was great. It’s great because it sounded great. It’s great because it looked great. It’s great because it was released at the right time to the right people.”

One of the key elements in the virality of these two videos was the engagement of Lee alumni and friends with our social media brands. As soon as the content was posted, they began sharing immediately. Based on their comments, they were genuinely proud to be associated with the Voices of Lee and the university, and many shared out of a sense of pride and boosterism. For others, comments indicated they were genuinely touched by the music and worship and therefore wanted to share with their friends. Whatever the motivation, the videos spread outside of the Lee sphere quickly. As the video spread, it filled the feeds of some big influencers, who in turn shared the videos to their large networks. Kirk Cameron, star of the late 80’s hit TV show “Growing Pains,” shared the video, and this had noticeable impact on the number of people reached and subsequent views. Reid describes his own experience with the video as it spread across the Internet: “As alumni of Lee University and former members of Voices of Lee, my wife [Tiffany McLuhan Reid (’99)] and I were well aware of the new video Voices released, but as residents of Phoenix, Arizona (a long way from Cleveland, Tennessee), we were surprised to see local friends sharing the Voices videos within a few days on Facebook, having no idea who this group was or our connection to it.” Alumni all over the country had the same experience.

Weeks and months later, the Voices of Lee videos continue to gain views. As of September, total views for “No Longer Slaves” exceeds 12 million with over 233,000 shares and 100,000 comments, while total views for “What a Beautiful Name” exceeds 26 million with over 350,000 shares. Prior to the first video, the Voices of Lee had just over 20,000 people following their Facebook page. Today, they have over 223,000 Facebook followers. These numbers are hard to wrap your mind around, but there is no question that the impact is significant for both the Voices of Lee and Lee University. We are thankful for alumni and friends who are proud of Lee and willing to share its content with their personal networks. As a result, millions of people were touched by these two videos, and who knows what impact this will have on brand awareness for the university. S



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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

AN ALUMNI PROFILE

by BRIAN CONN | Director of Public Relations

For those of us in the Lee University family, it's easy to get excited about what is happening here on campus. We constantly want to share it with our alumni out there in the world. What's new? What has changed? What has remained? But it's equally exciting to hear what is happening with alumni across the country, to discover what experiences they are having, and how they are carrying their Lee experience with them through life's journey. We had the opportunity to catch up with two such alumni, Matt and Kelley Mondi, and we asked them a bit about life post-Lee.

The Mondis live in the Augusta, Georgia, area. After graduating from Lee, Matt and Kelley both attended medical school, Matt at UNC-Chapel Hill and Kelley at Wake Forest University School of Medicine. Both completed residencies at Wake Forest, he in general surgery and she in family medicine. Both practicing physicians, they have the interesting perspective of a couple balancing the pressures of their roles in health care with those of raising a family.



Matt, 43, is a private practice general surgeon and partner at Augusta Surgical Group and Kelley, 40, is a family physician at Family Physicians of Evans. They have four children: Jacob (10), Nathan, (9), Jonas, (7) and Reagan (5). Recently the Mondis have initiated the process of adopting two siblings from Haiti, so their big, happy family is soon to get even

bigger. They attend Stevens Creek Church and enjoy running and cycling and sports with the kids.

Torch: So we like to talk about calling at Lee. What does that look like for you as Christians in the health care marketplace?

Kelley: Our faith is a natural part of healthcare. We're seeing all kinds of people, of all ages. People come in doing well, and a lot of times sick and often in a point of crisis: marriage stresses, kids in crisis, career pressures. When caring



for people, it's hard not to work Jesus into that. It's natural to ask people about their faith, or to share mine. Maybe that's easy because of what part of the country we live in, but we are finding that people readily receive that. It's important for me to look to my faith as a constant source of help, and so it's natural, even necessary, to incorporate that as a part of helping others. I pray with my patients or invite them to church or help get them to a counselor who I know incorporates a Christian worldview into their work with clients.

Matt: Before I operate on people, I'll ask if I can pray with them before I go in to operate on them. I see it as similar to military chaplains praying with soldiers. People are scared and realize they are going into a dangerous situation. But I've found 99% of people are comforted by this request and want to pray with me. It seems to me to be a perfect time to point to God, and so far it doesn't seem to erode people's confidence, but rather to bring a measure of peace to a fearful moment in their lives.

Torch: What did Lee do to encourage this?

K: Our faith is integrated into life at Lee. It's not a separate thing; it's your life, incorporated daily. When you leave the Lee nest, suddenly there are people with different viewpoints, and I think that makes you stronger in your faith. When it comes to "adulting," you are already seasoned and have cultivated that

faith, and you're more prepared to incorporate it into what you are doing. Lee is not necessarily a place where everybody thinks the same way, but having attended there, it's not hard to be a Christian physician. I started there from day one approaching science and the other disciplines with an eye for how this works with a Christian worldview. I can't know for sure, but I suppose if I'd been somewhere else, I may have been less grounded and willing to share.

M: Interacting with mentors like Dr. Lois Beach, Dr. Conn or Dr. O'Bannon was pivotal. Each one of them helped me to integrate the demands for success in a professional realm



while preserving faith. Dr. Beach says, "Hey, this is the MCAT. You have to work your tail off, but here's why. God has a plan for you and wants to use you in this field." Seeing Dr. Conn work at super high levels of excellence but still with a heart for students and ministering to them was important for me. As we are working during a very challenging time in healthcare with seismic shifts going on in medicine, it is an enormous help to us that we were trained at Lee to approach our daily work as our ministry and not simply a job. We were able to see that approach to work and life modeled for us while we were at Lee, and it left a lasting imprint that still influences our daily practice of medicine.

Torch: Matt, you mentioned working in Dr. Conn's office staff. Can you think of anything you learned working there that helped you or informed what you do right now?

M: Dr. Conn really elevated my belief in myself and what I was capable of accomplishing. I felt like I rose to a higher level of expectation.

Torch: Do you try to emulate that?

M: Definitely. Teaching students and other trainees gives me a good opportunity to be a mentor, and when I can I try to help elevate others in the same way.



Torch: Kelley, you played varsity volleyball your freshman year. Did this experience stay with you in any way?

K: Actually, one particular thing stuck with me that keeps coming up today. I played the year Coach Andrea Orr Hudson implemented a bedtime rule, something like 9 p.m. If you didn't go to bed on time, you would run sprints and take a lot of hits in the next practice. She would come in, and I'd raise my hand and take the punishment. People would ask, why didn't you just go to bed? Back then I thought, I wasn't there to go to bed on time. I was there to study. Now I wish I could go to bed at 9 p.m.! So much can be said for getting good sleep. I talk to patients about that all the time, how solid sleep can improve their clarity, effectiveness, and state of mind. They'll be better off, ready for the day. In spite of my stubbornness at the time, I think she was right. I should have conformed back then.

Torch: People know about the demands of medical school. But in your case, it seems a daunting idea to pursue that course as a young married couple, both in school. How did you make it through school and residency? Is there a secret to it, any tricks you think helped you through?

M: We stayed together. We went to church. We tried to maintain some semblance of health and fitness. All the disciplines that set us up for success were severely taxed, but if we didn't have those, I don't think we would have made it through with an intact marriage. It's just a tough prospect, with all the demands pulling you in different directions.

K: Yes, it's that foundation of "us," that home base. Without that we would have had plenty of reasons to throw in the towel. It's a struggle if you aren't continually on board with the commitment. Also coming out of school, the financial struggle can overwhelm a lot of people. So we had to keep coming back to making an effort, making time for what was important to us as a couple.

Torch: Based on your experience working in the health care industry, and being a Lee alum, what do you foresee as the future impact of the new nursing program, and how do you think it blends with what you remember about the Lee culture?

M: It's a really natural fit. Coming out of Lee and going into a caregiving role, it's easy for people to incorporate faith-based excellence into nursing. We see every day that an important determinant in people surviving a hospital stay is the quality and quantity of nurses in the hospital. Having attentive and caring nursing is crucial. It's going to be a real asset for people to have someone taking care of them the way you want your momma treated. It's a difference between a really excellent and decent caregiver. When you see people going the extra mile...that's one of those cultural things I got at Lee. Treat people the way you want your momma treated.

K: People talk about Matt as such a good surgeon. They say, "He was so good to me and cared so much about me." It's because of Jesus. We say that it's not anything special about *us*, it's Jesus in us. We are grateful to Lee for that foundation. It's important in any field, but in healthcare we see that people's idea of great care is often a result of that center – Jesus. It the very same center that Lee focuses on.

M: On the other side of this same question, I don't see any disadvantage going from Lee into that profession. Coming from Lee, I felt better prepared for the difficult human parts of caregiving.

K: Difficult people come along, and it may be tempting to just give them a piece of your mind, but we just keep reminding ourselves, "hands and feet of Jesus, hands and feet of Jesus." We get over the hurdle that way and are able to deliver the care people need when it may be easier to get bogged down in conflict.

Torch: You were in school at Lee with a group of people who are now out practicing health care. Was there a study group of those of you in that area of preparation or some friendships formed back then you still keep in touch with? Who are they?

K: We both had roommates who were pursuing similar goals. I lived with Sarah Lane Bumps, who is a radiology resident physician in the U.S. Navy, Melissa Hill is a social worker at Duke University Health System, and Melinda Bigham Jeter is now an orthopedic physician's assistant in Florida.

M: I lived with Eloa Adams, who is a pediatric intensivist in California and Kevin Barber, an ophthalmologist in Florida. And there were other fellow students in the science department around the same time, like Christy Kile who is now practicing endocrine in Georgia; Scot Holman, ophthalmology in Florida, and Chris Paul, anesthesiology, also in Georgia.

K: Plus basically the whole group of us who went to Honduras in '95 for medical missions. There were 18 to 20 of us, and we keep in touch with many of them. Melinda and Kevin were on that trip, plus Julie Dalton Munson-Jackson, Toby Anderson, Charlene Garrett, Sonia Gilstrap, Nicole Sykes, and Jason Richardson, just to name a few – almost everybody who went on that trip is in a health profession or some other form of ministry and care. Matt took a similar trip with Kevin, Eloa and Jeff Laughlin to Nicaragua in '97. We look back on those trips as a launching point for so many of us. It's a perfect way to gather like-minded students with faculty mentors, take all this raw material in their heads and hearts and let them see how to put it into motion. §



The Evangelistic Singers' Story, Part 1

by GLORIA SCOTT-RICHMOND | Director of Evangelistic Singers & ANGELIA KEINLEN

The Evangelistic Singers' story began in 1969 when a growing group of African American students at Lee College were searching for a way to participate in ministry. In the fall of 1966, Lee admitted its first African American students, Larry Cox, Hazel Edwards, and Deborah Bacon. By 1969 the group of African Americans had grown, and Sam Ellis, Quan Miller, and Patricia Williams (now Miller) became the first black members of the Lee College Pioneers for Christ (PFC). Excited about ministry and God's call to spread the gospel, they quickly learned that they would not have the opportunity to travel with the PFC Invasion Teams. Miller shares that the PFC sponsors, "... felt as though some of the areas were not safe for blacks during that time." Ellis remembers, "A few times I attempted to go on weekend Invasions; and was left standing on the street with my bags packed watching the bus pull away. I was told that churches would not allow me to come and minister with PFC because I

was black." Disappointed and dismayed, Ellis was determined to find a way to fulfill the calling to evangelize.

After seeking the proper approval, with a growing number of black students on board, it was official. A preaching, teaching, singing team, recognized by Lee College was born as the Evangelistic Crusade Team. The original evangelistic group included Samuel G. Ellis, Quan L. Miller, Patricia A. Williams-Miller, Gabriel Shaw, Mollye Barnett, and Pauline Washington. Ellis and the Millers are credited as being the co-founders of the organization. All the members preached, Miller provided music, and Williams-Miller directed the group.

In the second year, the group more than doubled with the following new members: Eugene Dawson, Johnny Webster, Willie Griffin, Jr., Joanne Anderson, Shirley Hires, Hazel Ivy, Carolyn Huntley Ellis, Mary Alice Huntley, Ginger Pratt, Bobby Bowles, Chartine Bowles-Griffin, Wendell Vaughn, Marjorie



William-Dawson, Madra Ramsey-Thompson, and Willie Riley. The group sang Black Jubilee, Gospel, Hymns, and contemporary music written by Andrae Crouch and Edwin Hawkins who were popular at that time. "All of us were intercessors and prayer warriors," Miller recalls. "We often prayed and fasted together. The group was focused on ministry with an evangelistic mindset. Also, we were diligent in the pursuit of our education at Lee College. We represented the school well."

Pivotal mentors were used by the Lord to launch the co-founders' vision into reality. Ellis remembers, "While I was at lunch in the old Student Center, a black pastor, Bishop C. L. Drummond from Knoxville, Tennessee, approached me. 'Are you Sam Ellis? I came to get you to preach for me.' On Friday nights, Saturday and Sunday mornings, he took me to various black churches throughout this region and Kentucky."

Miller recalls, "We met Bishop Drummond through Dr. Samuel Ellis in 1969 after forming The Evangelistic Crusade Team. He was a well-respected man of God in the city of Knoxville as well as in the COG. He was also the coordinator and driver for our Evangelistic Crusades in Tennessee and Kentucky. He drove weekly from Knoxville to Lee College to pick us up and carry us to most, if not all of our engagements. Bishop Drummond was in his mid-80s and was noted for being a worshipper and a praiser!"

Other pivotal mentors of the Evangelistic Crusade Team who served as the first sponsors at Bishop Ellis' request were Drs. Murl and Carolyn Dirksen. "Our families have a close relationship. In fact, Murl and Carolyn are the godparents of my eldest child, Khadija Ellis." Miller added, "The Dirksens volunteered to sponsor and cover us. They understood our hearts concerning ministry."

The co-founders acknowledged the role of supporting churches during the formative years of the Evangelistic Crusade Team. Tennessee host churches included Inman St. Church of God in Cleveland, pastored by Bill Cheeks and David Poitier; a Knoxville church pastored by Drummond; and a Chattanooga congregation pastored by Bishop Pinkney. Churches in Hazard and Harlan, Kentucky, pastored by Drummond and Bishop A. B. Wayne, and the Mobile, Alabama church pastored by Bishop W. C. Menendez also provided support. EVS also ministered in several white churches in Georgia. When they traveled, they lived in the homes of the church members. "Most of the churches were small and could not afford to give," Miller remembers. "When they could give, we generally left the offering at the churches because they took very good care of us while we were in their homes."



Evangelism continued to be the foundation of the group's work, and the message of the gospel was paramount. During the time that Pastor David Poitier served at Inman Street COG, the Evangelistic Crusade Team instituted a gathering that would continue for decades. Every Friday was "Joy Night," a time of prayer, praise, worship, and ministering of the Word by various students. A Coffee House Ministry was established in the same black community, sharing gospel tracts, food and one-on-one witnessing ministry.

Meanwhile back on the Lee College Campus, the co-founders sought to make a positive social difference. In February 1970 Ellis approached President Charles Conn about starting a Black Emphasis Week and bringing black preachers for the chapel services. The goal was to end prejudices held from lack of understanding. Dr. Conn agreed, and the Evangelistic Crusade Team aided in preparation for the event.

In 1971-1972, the event was expanded. The Millers recall, "We asked President Conn if we could have some time in February to recognize black history. He gave his permission, and we developed a class which was offered for credit. During a selected week in February, we were permitted on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to bring in different black ministers to speak in each chapel service; and the Evangelistic Crusade Team sang. We highlighted important history about famous black people for their inventions, academics, etc. We ended the week with a formal dinner called the 'Black and White Banquet.' The event was sponsored by the school and was free. We were trying to bridge together the black and white students with the hope of coming together. I really believe that moment in Black History was an eye opener to many of the students and professors on campus."

"These important events came at a crucial juncture in Lee's history," C. Dirksen recalls. "Most Lee students had attended segregated schools and had only second-hand knowledge of the African American community, but the Black Emphasis Week events were hugely successful. The African American pastors brought passion to the pulpit that challenged and touched the white audience, and people were fascinated by the historical facts they were hearing for the first time. The students who formed the Evangelistic Crusade Team were exactly what Lee needed. They were talented, hard-working committed Christians, and their impact on the Lee community was immense and culture changing."

The message of our co-founders to the current and future Evangelistic Singers is this:

"You must never forget that first and foremost our goal is to win the lost. Jesus said, 'I have come to seek and to save the lost.' From the beginning, The Evangelistic Singers' goal was to evangelize through singing and witnessing to attract people to the Lord Jesus Christ. Singing and the lives of the singers were paramount to witnessing to the unsaved. It is imperative that this should never be detracted (or) extracted from the mission and the mandate of the ministry." §



From the President

Back to Square One

As we approach our celebration of Lee's Centennial Year in 1918, it is particularly appropriate that we are turning our attention back to Square One.

For this institution, Square One was the mission of preparing students for full-time vocational ministry. When that earliest version of Lee began one hundred years ago, the whole point was to train ministers. And now, on the eve of 2018, we are beginning to give fresh, creative attention to that same task of preparing pastors, missionaries, youth and children's ministers, who are called to serve in churches and parachurch ministries.

This mission has always been a big part of the Lee landscape – all through the different periods of our history: the small pre-collegiate institute called BTS (Bible Training School), the days when Lee Bible College flourished, the period when we had a Division of Religion within the structure of a liberal arts college, and now as a School of Religion within the university umbrella.

Ministerial training has always been there, and in any given year, right up to now, there have been hundreds of Lee students preparing to serve in full-time ministry. It is part of the DNA of Lee, as much now as ever.

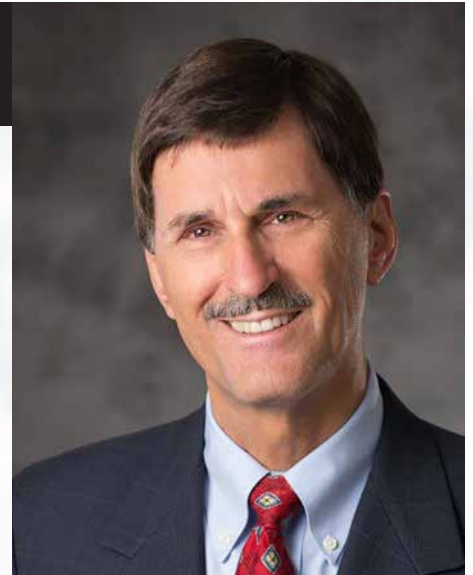
What has changed, of course, is that the Lee University of today does so many other things as well. It may seem to our alums that we pay lots more attention to other things, as we have built excellent programs in nursing, digital media, accounting, lab sciences, counseling, and many more. The attention, the students, and the money seem to have gone in those directions, while ministerial training continues at a steady and reliable pace.

Starting this fall, we are turning our attention back to Square One. As we work hard to do other things well, we are determined to learn how to do ministerial training better. To help us achieve that, we

have created a new position, Vice President for Ministerial Development, and recruited an outstanding, veteran pastor to lead this part of our work. Dr. Mark Walker joins us not just as a member of the President's Cabinet, but also as the chair of the Department of Christian Ministries. After twenty years as senior pastor of Mount Paran North Church of God in Marietta, Georgia, he has moved to Lee to lead our new emphasis on our original mission.

We believe God calls us to minister in many "secular" fields, and that a life spent in business, medicine, the arts, or any other profession can be a ministry and a mission field all its own. So we will continue to train students to live out their calling in all those professions.

But for one hundred years, our core mission has been to prepare students to serve in pulpits and traditional ministries, and we are determined not to become complacent in that task. Back to Square One.



Paul Corbett

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