

1856

# MARS HILL

THE MAGAZINE OF MARS HILL UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2020



## ELEVATING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**INSIDE:**  
Criminal Justice Offers  
Unique Opportunities

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It has been an incredible year of transformation on The Hill. We have begun to see the first fruits of hard work to establish the Cothran Center for Career Readiness. This is a center for career discernment and readiness, a place to make life decisions and to prepare for the real world.

Just recently, I learned about three newly-minted alumni who found incredible jobs in human resources, physical therapy, and accounting following their December graduation. I looked back and saw that they had worked with our Cothran Center to find their path in life as they prepared to leave Mars Hill. These individual stories and many others reinforce to me that Mars Hill University has made significant, life-changing imprints on these young lives.

We are transforming the student experience on campus and seeking to invigorate our programs as well as the physical campus. We have successfully launched the Ammons Athletic Fieldhouse, a renovated Lions Den dining facility, a new academic support center, and a new esports competition lab. We have begun to do visioning work to kick-start our dream of building a new state-of-the-art university center, a hub for student activity that will intersect with faculty and staff activity at a high level. We began key planning exercises after Christmas to ensure that Mars Hill University will be on the cutting edge and prepared for a digital future that will attract students in decades to come.

We are transforming athletics. New facilities, record Lions Athletic Club fundraising, and a determination to compete at high levels in the South Atlantic Conference have yielded tremendous support for Lion athletes this year. That support has translated into updated facilities, new equipment, and campus pride.

We are transforming arts programs on campus as we have been very aggressive in recruiting new music students with presidential music scholarships and theatre students through new Blackwell scholarships. We are planning for a bright future in our art areas.

There is no way to adequately describe our determination and energy to showcase this great campus. People frequently tell me that “there is just something about this place.” I know that is true, I see it playing out as we energize our campus, and I can’t wait to see you at one of our events in the coming years. God has richly blessed us and for that we are grateful.

Roll Hill!

Tony Floyd, J.D.  
President

## ELEVATING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

by Dr. Dave Rozeboom,  
Vice President for Student Life

Many believe that college is about education and learning. And certainly, it is. But we also know that as much learning happens outside the classroom as in it. The total educational experience is about more than knowledge itself; it is about individual growth and transformation.

Transformation takes place when a student comes to knowledge of self and purpose, and thriving institutions foster this development. One might call it *elevating the student experience*.

I’ve had the privilege of teaching at just about every level (elementary, junior high, high school, college), and I have been a consultant at many institutions of higher learning. Those experiences have made it clear to me that, while there is no silver bullet for keeping students at an institution, we know it is directly tied to creating environments which promote student engagement, development, and learning—vibrant environments that offer appropriate challenge and support. In turn, helping students thrive as individuals is critical for fostering learning (especially for those students who don’t seem to want to learn).

I think this quote from author Richard Keeling, in the book, *Learning Is Not A Sprint*, is apropos:

“We no longer believe that learning is the passive corollary of teaching, or that students do, or should, simply absorb material presented in lectures and textbooks. The new concept of learning recognizes the essential integration of personal development with learning; it reflects the diverse ways through which students may engage, as whole people with multiple dimensions and unique personal histories, with the tasks and content of learning.”

So elevating the student experience means helping students learn and thrive, not just survive.

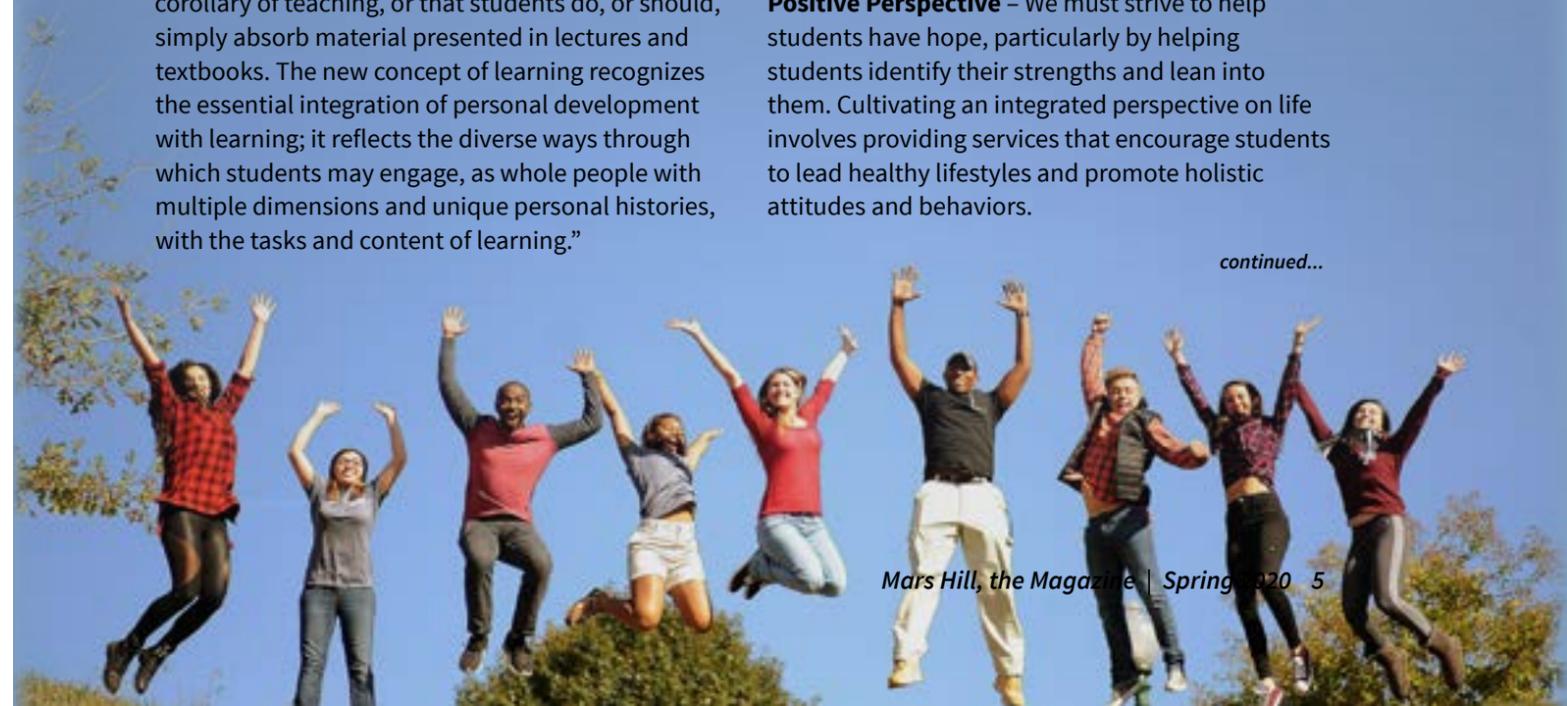
What follows is my quick take on the MHU application of the thriving student research done by renowned educator, Dr. Laurie Schreiner:

**Social Connection** – We must strive to help students find their tribe, their niche, their sense of belonging in the greater MHU community. Strengthening campus community involves enhancing experiences to encourage meaningful student involvement leading to a purposeful, open, just, disciplined, and engaged community.

One way we are doing this is developing a communication plan between admissions and student life. We need to find out what students participated in during high school and offer them opportunities for connection at MHU, including but not limited to Greek organizations, club sports, and other club and organization involvement. Another effort is to improve the spaces for our students. This may take the shape of a campus center in the future, but for now, we are upgrading spaces in Wren, like the Recreation Center (formerly called Outdoor Center/Game Room), the Student Leader area, and Taylor Fitness Center, as well as the residence halls.

**Positive Perspective** – We must strive to help students have hope, particularly by helping students identify their strengths and lean into them. Cultivating an integrated perspective on life involves providing services that encourage students to lead healthy lifestyles and promote holistic attitudes and behaviors.

*continued...*



For example, we are working to more fully integrate the efforts of the Cothran Center for Career Readiness in the First Year Seminar, and having conversations with the MHU Wellness Committee on how to infuse orientation events and programming efforts with thinking about all aspects of wellness (mental, physical, etc.).

**Academic Determination** – We must strive to help students develop grit and resilience, as well as wisdom to know and use the appropriate support for success. This involves knowing our students and connecting them to the right resources.

The development of an Academic Support Center this past fall was a step in the right direction. We are now focusing on bolstering those resources and tying them more closely to other support areas. We also invested in a proven early alert software which we have named LionTrax, and which will keep track of students and alert critical faculty and staff when students are struggling to keep up. Given the investment by faculty and coaches, we expect to see gains in helping our students persist to graduation.

**Diverse Citizenship** – We must seek to help students value the strengths of diversity. We also must strive to design intentional pathways that foster leadership. This involves empowering students to lead by providing diverse experiences that focus on the ability to influence others for good. It also means enhancing existing and developing new transitional experiences that support students' developmental progression and success through graduation.

There are a whole host of efforts in this area—everything from supporting our Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and its programming, to developing a more unified and strengthened approach to student leadership. For example, in December we split the First Year Mentor position into two parts—one (now called Lion Leader) to focus on orientation, and the other, First Year Mentor, to focus on peer assistance in the classroom. One of the goals of these mentor positions is that upper classmen can help new

students feel at home in a more diverse community than they may have experienced before.

**Engaged Learning** – We must strive to help students differentiate between performance and learning! Promoting engaged student learning involves infusing student environments and student life programming with activities that target intellectual growth and enhance classroom learning.

One way to do this is to help students connect with faculty outside of the classroom. There are a

*Transformation takes place when a student comes to knowledge of self and purpose, and thriving institutions foster this development.*

—Dr. Dave Rozeboom



number of faculty who already are fully integrated in the co-curriculum. Our greatest room for growth in this area is the development via residence life of a faculty partner program (an intentional partnership between faculty and the Student Life Department, leading to student connections). We know that students who connect with faculty outside of the classroom are four times more likely to graduate. We are currently cultivating relationships and partnerships as we think strategically how to grow this area.

**Spiritual Meaning** – Frederick Buechner said, “our greatest joy comes when our strengths meet the needs of the world.” We know the importance of a holistic education and must encourage spiritual formation and an understanding of calling. This involves promoting moral development and the understanding of all of life as service by exposing students through programs and experiences to the central tenets of the Christian faith and encouraging personal exploration of values, ethics, and morality.

We are working closely with the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life to create parallels and connections in strategic planning for the future.

So what other aspects contribute to an elevated student experience?

Faculty, staff and administrators must have a **customer service orientation**. One of the principles that businesses use is finding ways to say “yes” to their customers, or if they must say “no,” to do so kindly. Students pick up very quickly if faculty and staff are just doing a job or if there is a full investment in them. Are we treating students with dignity and respect?

Student experiences cross academic and non-academic lines, and we know that **partnerships** across areas help foster a seamless student experience. Indeed, I believe that working together will foster synergy, and such synergy will indeed help us transform the lives of our students. This requires constantly looking through the lens of the student. Is the way we are operating best for the student, or for some other university constituency? Are we collaborating to make for a seamless experience?

Even if resources are limited, educators must have an unrelenting focus on intentional and **continuous improvement**. We must have a good rationale for why and how we do what we do. This desire to be better comes from institutional pride, and is seen even in small acts like picking up trash.

Student Life is working with all areas of MHU to develop a strategic plan, one that gets the right personnel in place, pays attention to facilities and what they say about MHU, develops intentional programming and policies, and utilizes assessment and accountability.

Transformation results from learning. Ultimately, transformational work that elevates the student experience requires working with students by “meeting them where they are.”

Let me leave us with this challenge. We have a great responsibility to transform lives—to be intentional, to engage students, and to work together to create a seamless learning environment. I am so excited to work with you and see how God blesses our collaborative efforts!

Dave Rozeboom, or “Dr. Boom,” as he’s known to students, joined Mars Hill University in August as the new vice president for student life. He previously was vice president for student life at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas.

Rozeboom has a Ph.D. in educational administration and higher education administration from Texas A&M University. He received his master’s degree from the University of Akron and his bachelor’s from Calvin College.

## THE SPRING PHONATHON CAMPAIGN IS IN FULL SWING

If you receive a call from an “828” area code, please pick up—one of these students wants to talk to you.

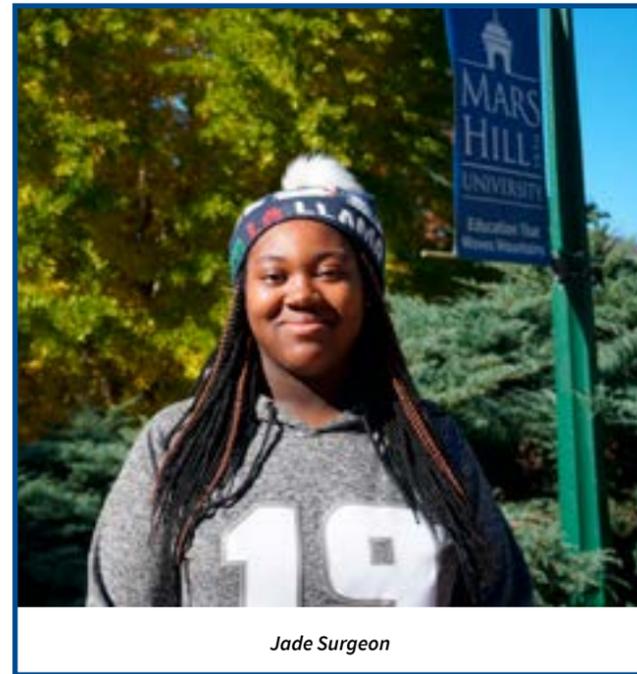
During the fall phonathon campaign, student callers spoke to over 450 Mars Hill alumni, received 253 gifts, and raised \$22,200 for the Mars Hill Fund (which addresses Mars Hill’s greatest needs).

We look forward to talking with you soon!



# GET TO KNOW YOUR LIONS!

by Jaime McKee '00, Director of Online Presence



Jade Surgeon

**Jade Surgeon** is from Greensboro, N.C., and is in her second year at MHU. She's studying elementary education and is part of Student Government Association.

Jade is interested in photography and does her student work in the Cothran Center for Career Readiness. Like many others, she said the smaller class sizes appealed to her when she chose to attend Mars Hill.

"It is very comforting to know that I am not just a face in the crowd or a number in a database filled with other student numbers. You have the opportunity to have a real connection with your teachers, like working one-on-one with them if you are struggling and figuring out a solution."

**Jerry Clark** is a senior political science major from Gastonia, N.C. He was drawn to Mars Hill because of the proximity to Asheville and the variety of outdoor activities in the area. His mom is a fellow Lion who graduated from Mars Hill College in 1983!

This year, Jerry is the vice president of the Student Government Association and is involved in many student groups including Black Student Association, College Democrats, Ethics Bowl, Delta Kappa Theta, and Pi Sigma Alpha (the political science honor society.) He was also selected as homecoming king by his fellow students.

His favorite class at Mars Hill has been his senior seminar course, where he wrote his senior thesis, "The Act of Restorative Justice: Black Reparations in Various Forms."

His thesis, he said, "discussed the racial wealth gap in America and the historical, economic and social context behind it.



Jerry Clark, with Homecoming Queen Jada Howard, and Jerry's mom, Debrah Clark '83

"Dr. Heather Hawn really prepared me to conduct thorough research on topics that are very close to home and potentially impactful in future endeavors," he said.

## Have you made plans to be on "The Hill" for HOMECOMING 2020? SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 2-3

Highlights will include:

- Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament
- Forever Lions 5K Race
- Alumni of the Year Award
- Homecoming Reunions celebrating 50-, 40- and 25-year anniversaries
- Induction into the The Golden Spire Society for those celebrating their 50th reunion
- MHU vs. Newberry Football Game



**Make plans now to attend!**

Visit [www.mhu.edu/homecoming](http://www.mhu.edu/homecoming) for upcoming details. Go Lions!



Samantha Detter

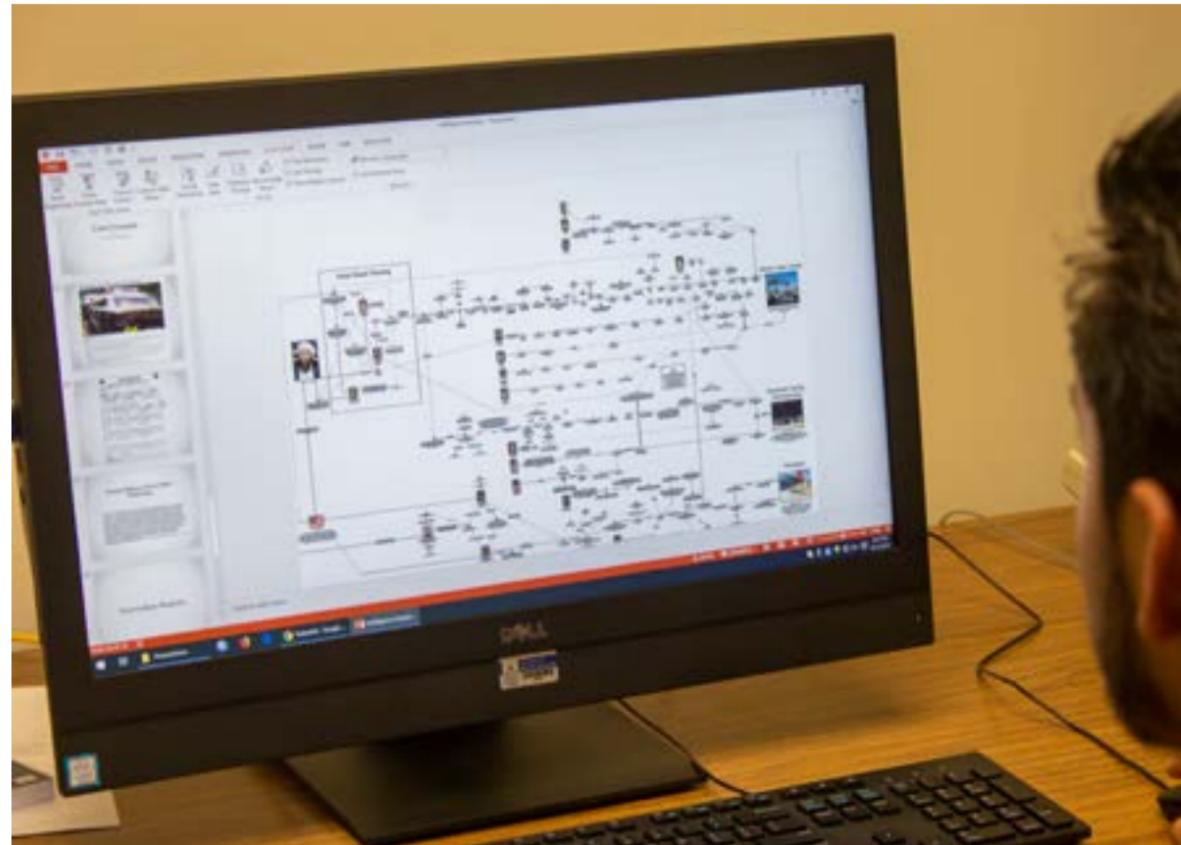
**Samantha Detter** is a senior majoring in apparel and interior merchandising and will graduate with a minor in business administration. Originally from Winter Haven, Fla., she attended high school in the Asheville area and chose Mars Hill because of the small community feel and the close proximity to her family.

Samantha is involved on campus as a First Year Mentor, an Orientation Leader, and a member of Sigma Alpha Omega. Her favorite class has been Visual Merchandising and she has enjoyed learning to create window displays and shadow boxes, and designing spaces.

In addition, Samantha has been helping create content for the university's Instagram accounts and hopes to intern with Disney World next fall.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE STEPS OUT ON THE CUTTING EDGE

*Intelligence Analysis, Real-World Research, and Online Programming Create a Unique Set of Offerings*



*By Dr. Heather Zurburg King  
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice*

Association analysis. Threat assessment. Open source intelligence. These are some of the concepts being taught to the students in Mars Hill University's Certificate in Intelligence Studies program. This newly launched, online certificate is just one of a few significant additions to the criminal justice department at Mars Hill University. In addition to the certificate program, students on campus now have the opportunity to conduct their own research in the Criminal Justice Research Lab. Another sweeping change coming out of Mars Hill University's criminal justice department is the

transition of the Master of Arts in Criminal Justice program to completely online.

The intelligence certificate is a 15-credit online program designed to expose traditional and non-traditional students to the skills and knowledge necessary to work in the field of analysis. As the program coordinator for the certificate program, I have worked with my colleagues in the criminal justice department to create a program that will enable students to be part of this cutting-edge field, not just in criminal justice, but in all other industry

sectors that use intelligence analysts, such as the financial and medical fields.

There are only a handful of universities across the nation that are offering this kind of program at a certificate level. With this intelligence certificate and the types of courses that we are packaging together and presenting, we have a program that is extremely rare. While a lot of the big universities may look at this kind of thing as supplemental knowledge, we at Mars Hill have operated from the premise that this integration of technology and analysis is the direction we are going as a society.

This certificate not only gives students exciting real-world application to their studies but allows them to apply for jobs in the field knowing they are already trained on the very software they will likely use as an analyst working in agencies at the local, state, and federal levels. That's a cost savings for the hiring agency, because they don't have to train the new hire. And it's also a huge advantage, because now they have someone who, on day one, can jump in and start using this software to develop cases for them.

As part of this program, students not only read about what intelligence analysis is, but they actually do it.

The Criminal Justice Research Lab officially began offering the opportunity for students to work on research in an area of interest in 2019. The focus of the projects running out of the lab is currently human trafficking and various aspects in understanding and identifying that crime. Forced labor and sex trafficking is happening across the entire country, from small rural towns to large metropolitan cities.

Every student is working on a project that potentially could be published. Examples of projects from last semester include one student who researched how forced labor affected the supply chains of tomato agriculture in Florida. The student's project looked to expose why some corporations signed on to support better working conditions, while others did not. Another student did a legislative overview of the various states and how their trafficking statutes stacked up to each



*Left and above: Dr. Heather Zurburg King uses an association analysis grid from the 9/11 terrorist plot to teach a student about the topic.*

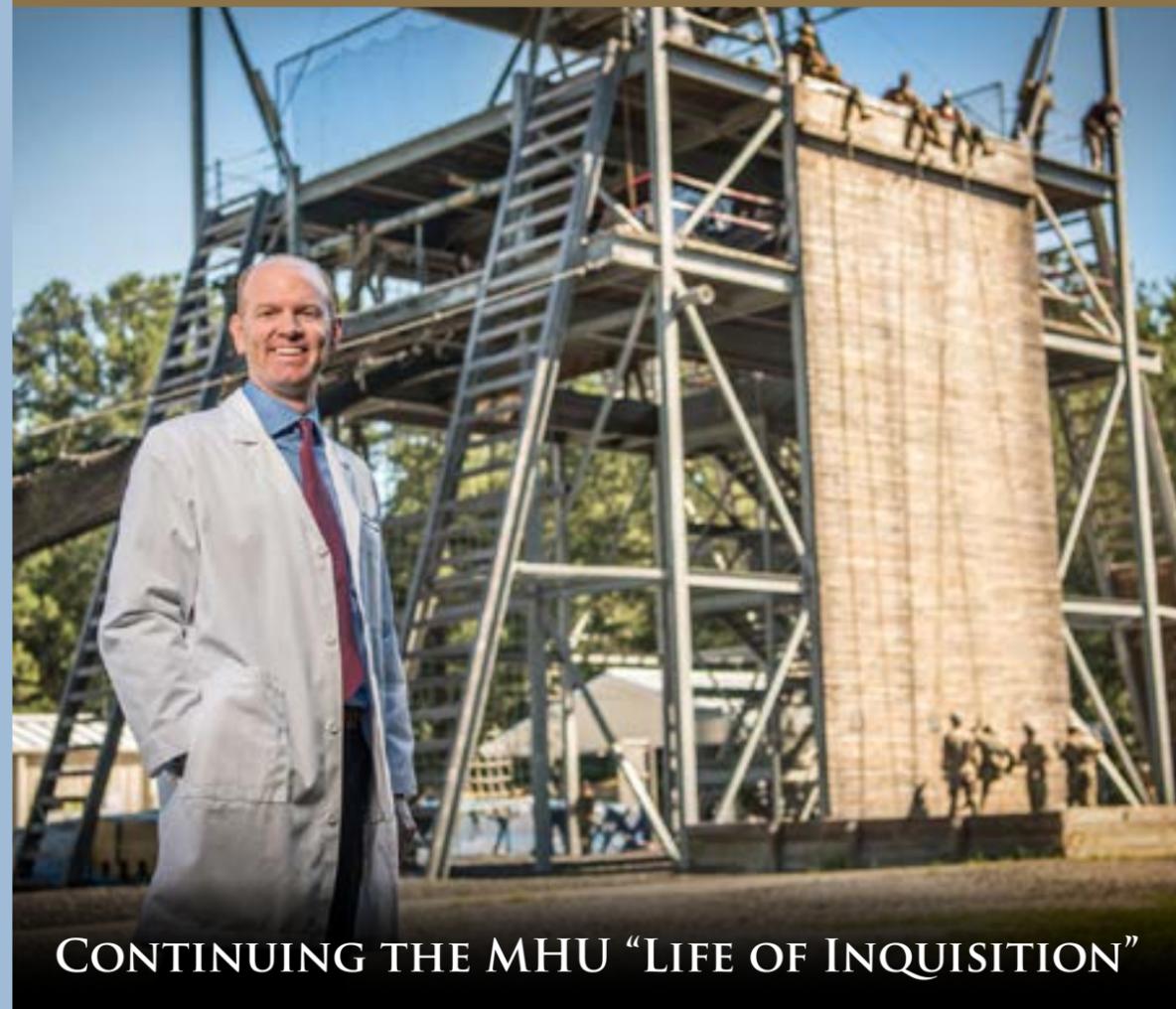
other in terms of preventing and prosecuting this crime. A third student examined sex trafficking and the nexus to street gangs in the Atlanta metropolitan area.

According to Dr. Barb Sims, chair of the criminal justice department, the presence of the Criminal Justice Research Lab, and the diversity of experience and research interests among faculty members is a plus for students going through the criminal justice program. The professors, which include herself and Dr. Zurburg King, in addition to Dr. Craig Goforth and Dr. Kweilin Lucas, have expertise in areas as varied as terrorism, local law enforcement, organized crime, online youth victimization, campus sexual assault, and the prosecution of hate crimes.

"This diversity among the faculty in criminal justice has allowed the program to develop and implement a first-rate graduate program and to launch a fully online certificate program in intelligence studies just this spring. Without having faculty with experience in graduate education program development and with knowledge and experience in the world of intelligence and cybersecurity, we could not have successfully offered these programs to our internal and external community of learners," Sims said.

The external community, Sims said, includes people who are now serving in law enforcement roles, and

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CONTINUING THE MHU “LIFE OF INQUISITION”

**Ben Jackson '04 Receives Multi-Million-Dollar Grant to Study Stress Fractures in Soldiers**

Stress fractures, as common and ubiquitous as they may seem, are the number one injury for soldiers involved in military training, and they cost the U.S. military over \$100 million per year in lost training time, retraining, and even premature military discharge. That's why the U.S. Department of Defense is funding a study that could significantly reduce the down time for soldiers with stress fractures, to be led by Dr. J. Benjamin Jackson, an orthopedic surgeon, Director of Research for the Palmetto Health-University of South Carolina Orthopedic team, and an MHU alumnus from the class of 2004.

Dr. Jackson has received a \$2.9 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to study ways of improving the recovery time for soldiers returning to active duty following stress fractures. The study will cover a four-year period, beginning this fall, when Dr. Jackson and other experts in physical therapy and bone endocrinology will work with soldiers undergoing basic training at Fort Jackson, the nation's largest U.S. Army combat training center.

“There is no higher risk population for stress fractures than military trainees,” Jackson explained. “These are the most common reasons of injury

during both basic training and military service due to the extreme demands placed on our soldiers. We felt like it would be a great study to help improve the health and readiness of soldiers at Fort Jackson.”

The study—titled Fracture Recovery for Returning to duty (Teriparatide STRONG)—is a non-surgical, self-administered treatment that enables soldiers to stay with their units during rehabilitation and has the potential for a long-term protective effect. The treatment protocol uses the drug Forteo, a synthetic hormone, that uses the body's natural hormones and is commonly used to treat osteoporosis by actively building bone.

The treatment now will be used on a wider, controlled scale with the Fort Jackson soldiers who have been diagnosed with severe stress fractures, and their recovery times will be documented.

Enlisted members who sustain stress fractures of the tibia, also known as the shin bone, will be asked to participate in the study, and Jackson is confident this approach will help the stress fractures heal more quickly and get soldiers back into the field sooner.

Along with a lengthy list of publications and book chapters, Jackson's curriculum vitae includes a number of studies conducted during his tenure as director of research, focusing on bones, joints, tendons, or vertebrae, and the maladies that are common to athletes and non-athletes alike. Jackson is not content to just practice orthopedics, but to push the limits of knowledge for orthopedic surgeons and practitioners. That need to investigate, he said, was something that was encouraged and developed during his time as a student at Mars Hill University.

“One of things that MHU encourages is a life of inquisition,” he said, “and it's that spirit that has driven me toward searching out problems and finding solutions that are good for the practice of medicine and ultimately helpful for society.”

In the fall of 2000, Ben Jackson was a high school senior from Lexington, S.C., who was considering several colleges and universities. A Grayson

*continued...*

*Faculty Focus, continued...*

can benefit from the knowledge and skills offered by the intelligence certificate. “We aimed to attract people from the field who are advanced in their particular area of work. Those individuals need a shorter period of time to complete this type of program and their careers support advancement through receiving unique certifications such as the one we now offer. We also wanted, however, to offer this program to our internal students as part of their already-existing major.”

Additionally, the Master of Arts in Criminal Justice officially transitioned to fully online in January 2020. It offers a graduate-level study of the field for students from a variety of undergraduate degrees, as well as a seamless transition to graduate school for C.J. majors. And although the master's program is fully online, Sims said these students have the same easy access to professors and support at Mars Hill as those who attend in person.

Regardless of whether they are students in the undergraduate criminal justice program, the graduate criminal justice program, or the intelligence certificate, the purpose of the initiatives of the MHU Criminal Justice Department is to produce graduates at all levels who are ready to transition immediately into the field of their choice and to have the skills and knowledge necessary to excel.

Prior to teaching at Mars Hill University, Dr. Heather Zurburg King was an intelligence analyst for the Office of Statewide Intelligence at Florida Department of Law Enforcement, where she worked in the Financial Fraud and Organized Crime Units. There, she became the subject matter expert on human trafficking for headquarters. She worked extensively with the Human Smuggling & Trafficking Center (HSTC) out of Washington, D.C. and other analysts in various Fusion Centers across the country.

Go to the Magazine EXTRAS page on the MHU website to see an interview with Dr. Zurburg King and some of her students. [www.mhu.edu/extras](http://www.mhu.edu/extras)

scholarship, combined with active recruitment for the MHU cross county team from Coach Mike Owens, convinced him to become a Mars Hill Lion.

While at MHU, Jackson met Jill Atkins (also class of 2004), the woman who would become his wife. Ben and Jill were both active in student government, and in service learning projects which form the memories of their dating years. He said that she has had a critical role in the opportunities that he has had and credits her with this success.

When Jackson came to Mars Hill, he already knew that he wanted to be a physician, but during his time at MHU, a research internship with Dr. Tom Gross, an orthopaedic surgeon from his hometown, convinced him that he had found his life's calling in orthopedics and orthopedic research.

When Jackson graduated from MHU, he attended Wake Forest University School of Medicine. In 2014, he became an assistant professor of orthopedics at the University of South Carolina. The following year, he was named Director of Orthopedic Research



*Ben and Jill Jackson, with their sons:  
Noah, Owen, Wyatt, and Webb*

at Palmetto Health-USC, and the year after that, he became the head team physician for the USC track and field and cross country teams. Currently, Jackson is an associate professor, while continuing to be Director of Research at Palmetto Health.

While treating athletes at USC, Jackson became aware that the osteoporosis drug Forteo™ was often used as a successful “off-label” treatment for stress fractures. Since Palmetto Health is located practically on the doorstep of Fort Jackson, Jackson knew that stress fracture subjects would be easy to come by.

“Ft. Jackson is literally the world’s largest military training facility, and it has more stress fractures per capita than anywhere else in the world,” he said. “The standard treatment for a stress fracture is rest. For men and women training to defend our country, resting means their intense physical preparation is delayed.”

While the study’s primary goal is to get soldiers back to basic training more quickly, it also is hoped to reduce the rate of repeat stress fractures among soldiers. About 250 soldiers are expected to be included in the study during the four-year period.

Jackson said if the study proves the treatment to be successful, it could lead to a paradigm shift for the treatment of stress fractures not only in the military but also for everyone from the collegiate or professional athlete to the weekend warrior.

“The effects of this study could be broad, even affecting the way that stress fractures are managed in the military and for civilian patients with this novel, non-operative treatment. It’s just an amazing opportunity.”

The Jacksons currently live in Columbia, S.C., with their four sons: Noah, Owen, Wyatt, and Webb.

## RANDY HENDERSON NAMED ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Mars Hill University has named Randall “Randy” Henderson Jr. of Fort Myers, Fla., as Alumnus of the Year for 2019. Henderson, a member and class president of the MHU class of 1979, was honored at the class reunion for the class of ’79, and at halftime of the university’s homecoming game on October 19.

Henderson, a native of Asheboro, N.C., serves as the mayor of the City of Fort Myers in Lee County. He is also the CEO of Corbin Henderson Company, a real estate firm in Fort Myers.

Henderson has been a resident of Fort Myers for 40 years, where he has had a lengthy career in banking. He has also spent nearly 20 years as a public servant in Fort Myers, having served as a city council member for nine years and now serving his third term as mayor.

In addition to his role as a public servant and a business leader, Henderson is an active community volunteer, currently serving as an advisory board member for Keiser University, the Edison Pageant of Lights, and The Salvation Army. He is a past president of the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce and Fort Myers Kiwanis Club, and previously served as chairman of the City of Fort Myers Conference and Convention Council. In 2015 Randy was named president of the Florida League of Mayors at the organization’s annual business meeting and served 2015-2016.



*President Tony Floyd (left) recognizes Randy Henderson as Alumnus of the Year at the 40th reunion for the Class of '79.*

A private pilot, Henderson enjoys flying both for business and personal pleasure and is an avid fisherman. He and his wife, Ginny, who is also a member of the MHU class of 1979, have been married for 40 years and have three adult children, a daughter-in-law, a son-in-law, and two granddaughters.

Each year during homecoming festivities, Mars Hill University recognizes one or more alumni of the year who have distinguished themselves in various ways. Criteria considered for the award are: commitment to their alma mater, service to others, leadership in the church, or performance in the professional world.



*Dr. Don and Brenda Russell are shown at left in 2019. Don Russell will retire this year after serving as a member of the math faculty since 1973.*

*Brenda Russell was a member of the faculty of the home economics/fashion and interior merchandising faculty from 1981 to 2007.*

*In the pages that follow, colleagues express their thoughts on the legacy that the Russells have left at Mars Hill University.*

## DON RUSSELL THE MAN BEYOND THE NUMBERS

*by Marty Gilbert '99, Assistant Professor of Computer Science*

Over the past 18 years of my career as a computer science professor at Mars Hill University, a number of my colleagues and other members of the Mars Hill community have influenced me positively in various respects. I hope, and believe, I am a better teacher and a better man for my association with the Mars Hill community.

Out of all of my relationships on campus, there is one man who has influenced me more than any other, Dr. Don Russell. As Dr. Russell makes plans to retire at the end of this academic year after 47 years of teaching at MHU, I realize how very much of my career, my teaching style, my classroom demeanor, and even my mannerisms in the classroom were adopted from him.

My respect for Dr. Russell, or “Doc”, as my college roommate and I called him, is immense. Since we became colleagues, he has told me many times to call him Don, but to me, he will always be “Doc,” a name that is at once both respectful and endearing.

Dr. Russell’s professional influence on the Mars Hill campus is indelible and lasting. He was for many years the division chair and department chair for mathematics at MHU. In the early 80s, he founded the computer science program in which I now teach. He authored two textbooks, which he and other professors used to teach math for two decades, and any profits made from the books went to scholarships for students. In the course of his career, he taught over 40 distinct courses; he served on numerous faculty committees, including Plans and Policies and Personnel; and he received the Gibbs Outstanding Teacher Award, an award given by the MHU faculty to encourage and reward outstanding performance as a classroom teacher.

These facts tell an important story. But the effect of Dr. Russell’s life and character on me have had a deeply personal side as well.

I first sat under Doc’s teaching as a freshman in Calculus II in 1996. In that class, and in many

subsequent classes, I absorbed what was perhaps the most enduring lesson I have learned from Doc: that class time is to be prized. It’s not that Dr. Russell never joked around with his students—in fact, his dry and quirky sense of humor is legendary. Rather, he commanded an authority in the classroom that instilled in his students a sense that learning is, in itself, a sacred endeavor. Our brief time in the classroom was not a time for visits to the bathroom, or talking to friends, but for the high task of learning higher mathematics.

The one area where we students often tried—and sometimes successfully—to get him “off topic,” was in the area of sports. Dr. Russell is a die-hard fan of athletics, and he has a mind that naturally grasps statistics. (His dissertation, I believe, dealt with statistics and how they are used in the arena in major league baseball.) If a student could introduce the topic of sports, Dr. Russell might go down the rabbit hole of quoting little-known statistics and facts about various teams and players. Sometimes for fun, I would fact-check him after class, and I was amazed at how rarely he was wrong.

I was, and am, often awed by Dr. Russell’s power of recall. He never forgets anything, or so it seems. I remember that when, as students, we would make some remark about his brilliance, he would downplay his intelligence. I felt, then and now, that the humility he displayed was a real and true part of his character.

When I became a professor at Mars Hill in 2002, I enjoyed the almost-daily interactions with Dr. Russell, as our offices were adjacent. I found that when questions of policy or compensation at MHU arose, it was often Dr. Russell who was an advocate for me and other young faculty members. Dr. Russell was never a “squeaky wheel” on campus, but he has certainly been a respected voice of advocacy on several occasions.

*continued...*

On the MHU campus, Dr. Russell is well-known for an extremely consistent—and early—schedule. He rises early, works out, does some office work, goes back home, and returns to work before most of us arrive for the day. He is a fixture at the Mars Hill tennis courts, where he and a number of friends have continuing friendly matches twice a week. At an age where most people have already retired, Dr. Russell has modeled for those around him that when it comes to healthy habits of mind and body, age is truly just a number.

Dr. Russell is not the kind of man who is demonstratively affectionate, and yet he is a deeply caring man who connects with students and others in ways that let them know they are important to

him. For example, he tends to “keep up” with his students. By that, I mean, he knows the facts of their lives, including hometowns and career goals. And if they are student athletes, he knows their stats, their prospects, and their characteristics as a player. And that “keeping up” continues long after students have left his classroom. When former students see Dr. Russell, they are often amazed to know that he remembers the facts of their lives, their families, and their careers, especially if those careers involve mathematics!

People like Don Russell have created the ethos of Mars Hill as a place where people and learning are valued. May it ever be so.

date teaching methodologies, and a connection to the world of work.

Brenda has the ability to inspire the best in others, both her coworkers and her students. Students benefitted from her uncompromising standards and steel reserve. Time and again, Brenda challenged students to reach the next level and to find their personal best. This might occur during one of the laboratory sessions in textiles, during a private conference, or through an email with a graduate. Often these challenges occurred outside of the secure confines of MHC, on the numerous field trips, New York fashion study tours, or market trips to Atlanta and High Point.

One of Brenda’s many talents is her creative vision. Scarcely a semester passed in the 26 years of her tenure that she wasn’t involved with some project on campus as an ad hoc consultant. A short list includes: Huffman Parlor (when it was a women’s residence hall), the Mars Hill Visitor Center, the Mars Hill Retirement Community, the Carter-Humphrey Guest House, Spilman lobby and apartment, Founders Hall, the Meares Stadium press box, Dickson-Palmer Townhouse Apartments, Edna Moore Parlor, and Pittman Dining Hall.

During her tenure at MHC she was recognized with the Snow Caring Award for “exceptional care for students.” She was faculty sponsor for several sororities and for the honor society, Alpha Chi, and served on many faculty committees, including Plans and Policies, Curriculum, and Faculty Enrichment and Renewal. She also spearheaded the “staffulty bash” for many years with retired theatre arts professor C. Robert Jones.

In addition, she has held a variety of leadership positions in the broader community including: The Costume Society of America, the N.C. and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Delta Kappa Gamma Education Society International, and the Mars Hill Woman’s Club. She has served on the board of directors for Mars Hill Handi School and Mountains of Madison Enterprise, and the board of trustees at Mars Hill Baptist Church, as well as other committees and positions of the church. She is currently Co-President of the Mars Hill Woman’s Club.

## BRENDA RUSSELL INSPIRING STUDENTS TO THEIR PERSONAL BEST

by Becky Cody '77, Professor of Apparel and Interior Merchandising

A reliable source tells me that when Brenda McKinney began her career at Clemson University, she developed a reputation as the most fashionable woman on campus, and she was the first female to dare wear a pants suit. She was then what she later taught her freshmen fashion students to recognize—a fashion leader. But then, Brenda has been a leader in many ways throughout her career.

She grew up in Liberty, S.C., and began her career at Clemson in the offices of the state Extension Service. There she developed an avid interest in the field of home economics, in particular in the area of apparel.

Around that time a dashing young Ph.D. candidate in the college of mathematics at Clemson developed an avid interest in Brenda. And the rest, as they say, is history. Dr. and Mrs. Don Russell chose to make Mars Hill their home in 1973 and Mars Hill University the focus of their lives.

That focus broadened when their two sons, Jeffrey and Kenneth, arrived. Their sons grew up in Mars Hill and later entered prestigious careers in law and engineering. Jeff is a partner with the law firm Tharrington Smith in Raleigh, N.C., and Kenneth

is a computer engineer with Cisco Systems in San Francisco/San Jose, Calif.

Brenda entered MHC in the fall of 1973 as a home economics student and graduated summa cum laude 3 ½ years later. She earned a master’s degree in home economics at Western Carolina University as a top honor graduate and went on to study at Kent State, University of Tennessee, North Carolina State University, and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

In the fall of 1981, Brenda became a part-time faculty member in the Department of Home Economics at Mars Hill College, where she shared a faculty position, office, and desk for several years with me. Who would have guessed that MHC would be “ahead of the curve” with a flex-time position in the early 80s?

Staying ahead of the curve is what Brenda has done ever since. She moved to a full-time faculty position, later assumed the responsibilities of department chair, and retired as a full professor in 2007. She led the department in the transition from Home Economics to the Department of Fashion and Interior Merchandising. She consistently provided the leadership to maintain a department with a strong curriculum, cutting edge technology, up-to-



Right, top to bottom: (1) the Russells in 1976, at Brenda’s graduation from Mars Hill College and (2) on vacation with their sons, Jeff and Kenneth, in 1986. (3) In 2003, the family poses with Bogie the Boxer and (4) in 2019, Don poses with Kenneth (l) and Jeff (r).

## PRESIDENTS SIGN DIRECT ENTRY ADMISSION PROGRAMS



Graduates from both Blue Ridge Community College and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College who want to continue their education with a bachelor's degree now have a direct pathway to do so at Mars Hill University.

In recent months, Mars Hill President Tony Floyd signed agreements with Blue Ridge President Laura Leatherwood and AB-Tech President Dennis King creating "Promise Programs" which guarantee direct entry from each of the community colleges into MHU. The programs will streamline the process for associate's degree graduates to pursue bachelor's degrees at Mars Hill.



*Top, left: Floyd signed an agreement creating a direct-entry admission program for BRCC graduates with President Laura Leatherwood on the BRCC campus on October 7, 2019.*

*Bottom, left: On January 22, 2020, he signed an agreement for a similar direct-entry admission program for AB-Tech graduates with President Dennis King on the campus of MHU.*

## Senior Class Legacy Gift



Last semester, MHU created the first Senior Class Legacy Gift. This new campaign encourages graduating seniors to give an amount equal to their class year to the Mars Hill Fund. (For example, 2019 graduates were encouraged to give \$20.19.) Mars Hill hopes that this campaign will instill a spirit of philanthropy in its most recent graduates. This academic year, Mars Hill alumnus Wayne King '79 is matching each senior's gift.

Seniors who made the legacy gift in 2019 received "philanthropy cords" to wear at graduation, indicating their support for their alma mater.

Kelsey Rediski '19 is shown at left with the cords she wore at graduation.

## INNOVATIVE ESPORTS PROGRAM BUILDS EXCITEMENT

Mars Hill University will add esports to its lineup of student offerings beginning in the fall of 2020.

According to Esports Coach Sterling Henderson, who was hired in November to spearhead the program, esports will offer a different dimension to life at MHU that may resonate with some students who may not have a strong interest in more traditional activities or sports.

"There is a new excitement at Mars Hill University around the emergence of esports on campus. A growing number of high school students connect with the idea of having esports as part of their university experience," Henderson said. "I believe the esports program will play a factor in a lot of future students' decision to attend Mars Hill, as well as encourage them to really engage with all the university has to offer."

Esports is short for "electronic sports" and involves competitive multiplayer video gaming. Although esports will be part of the athletics department, the interaction with digital systems and futuristic computer graphics will involve different interests and aptitudes than those normally associated with traditional athletic competition, Henderson said.

"Esports is truly the place where a wide variety of students come together," Henderson said. "Competition through either the varsity team or the club team will teach students valuable skills like teamwork, perseverance, and effective communication, while the sense of belonging will ensure they stay in school to receive an excellent education at MHU."

The Mars Hill program is somewhat innovative in the region, in that it will be one of few programs to include both a varsity team (with an expected roster of 12 student-athletes next year), and a club team. Both teams will compete against other university teams in spectator-sport events.

"Esports is one of the fastest growing sports in the country," said Rick Baker, Director of Athletics. "We are extremely excited about starting a new esports program at Mars Hill. It has a very large fan base

and adding esports will offer our students another popular engagement opportunity."

Henderson comes to Mars Hill after spending several months at Electronic Arts as a QA Tester, investigating potential bugs in the software and recommending solutions and improvements to the studio.

Henderson also brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the esports world to The Hill, serving as general manager of Carolina Gaming and the Owner of Nfinite. With Carolina Gaming, Henderson assisted in launching the Blue Brigade stream team initiative and recruited and trained content creators as well as streamers, and assisted in developing business strategies and partner relations.

Henderson began his journey into esports as a player and team manager for various organizations between 2015-2017.

As coach of the up-and-coming program, Henderson has been visiting local high schools to speak with potential MHU students and introduce the program.

"I am looking forward to bringing competitive esports to Mars Hill University and building an excellent program for current and future students. North Carolina has some great collegiate esports programs and I look forward to the day Mars Hill University is counted among those."



*Coach Henderson has been talking with students at local high schools about the new MHU esports program. Here, he is shown with students at Madison High School.*

### Kish Named Director of Alumni and Trustee Relations

Joy Kish '82, Ed.D., who has served Mars Hill University for over eight years in areas devoted to enhancing internal and community relations, has been named the university's new senior director of alumni and trustee relations.

According to Bud Christman, vice president for advancement, "Joy is an outstanding person to further develop our alumni relations program. Alumni of all generations, many with whom she has already developed relationships, will find her approachable, passionate for her alma mater, and successful as a community builder. She is a consummate professional who gets things done!"

In her new position, Dr. Kish will retain her role as liaison to Mars Hill's board of trustees. Her office will be located on the second floor of Blackwell Hall, within the Office of Advancement. Dr. Kish began her new position February 1, 2020.



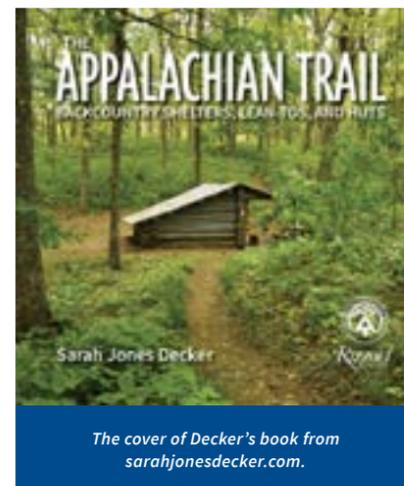
### MHU Adjunct Professor Releases Book of AT Shelter Photos

"The Appalachian Trail: Backcountry Shelters, Lean-Tos, and Huts," a documentary book of photographs by Sarah Jones Decker, will be released in April 2020 by Rizzoli, a major NYC publisher of fine photography books.

Decker, an adjunct professor of art and photography at Mars Hill University, has photographed all of the over-250 structures along the 2,200-mile route. Her documentary project, the first of its kind, involved the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the community of hikers, historians, writers, and clubs that celebrate, study, and advocate for the Appalachian Trail.

A resident of Madison County, Decker said she loves the AT, and loves having it in her "backyard." In addition to teaching at MHU and being involved in the WNC arts community, Decker and her husband operate Root Bottom Farm in Marshall. MHU's Weizenblatt Gallery will host an exhibition of Sarah's photographs in June with exact dates, to be announced later.

Information on ordering Sarah's book is available at [Sarahjonesdecker.com](http://Sarahjonesdecker.com).



The cover of Decker's book from [sarahjonesdecker.com](http://sarahjonesdecker.com).

### Reception for Music Alumni



The MHU Office of Advancement hosted a reception for music department alumni in conjunction with the North Carolina Music Educators Association Conference in November 2019. Over 50 alumni and friends gathered for fun and fellowship at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem.



Mars Hill University held its first "lighting of the luminaries" on Wednesday, December 11. The quad was lined with 637 personalized luminaries, honoring those that made gifts to the Mars Hill Fund from June 1 through December 11. The Office of Advancement, which created the display, plans to make "lighting of the luminaries" an annual event.



### Jansen-Shelley Athletic Training Facility Dedicated

MHU dedicated the new Jansen-Shelley Athletic Training Facility during halftime of the men's basketball game on Wednesday, January 22. With the opening of the state-of-the-art athletic training facility in the new Jo Ellen Ammons Athletic Field House came the opportunity to renovate and improve the facility in Chambers Gym. Head athletic trainer Allen Shelley and others put in a lot of work to create this new training operation, which will allow athletic trainers to better care for multiple athletes simultaneously. The facility is named in honor of Shelley and MHU's longtime athletics team physician and medical director, Dr. Jay Jansen.



## LIONS ATHLETIC CLUB MOMENTUM DRIVES IMPROVEMENTS

The Lions Athletic Club, the new fundraising arm of Mars Hill University Athletics, got underway in the fall of 2019 and has enjoyed tremendous success in its initial few months of activity.

According to Lions Athletic Club Director Stuart Jolley '86, the initiative has successfully rejuvenated the previous athletic club, called The Pride. To date, a steering committee consisting of Mars Hill trustees, board of advisors, alumni, parents, coaches, and staff, has led the club in raising \$167,673, and securing 223 active members.

"We started a campaign to generate new interest in Mars Hill athletics fundraising efforts and cultivate relationships with former athletes, parents, and fans to enhance the student-athlete experience at Mars Hill University," Jolley said. "We rebranded the initiative as the Lions Athletic Club, improved hospitality and parking areas for home football and basketball games, and added paid tailgate parking in three lots surrounding the stadium that raised \$8,387 for the club." Jolley said the club so far has secured sponsorships with Bojangles', Carolina Farm Credit, Comfort Inn of Mars Hill, Highway 55, Papa John's, Republic Services, and Twisted Laurel Eatery.

Funds generated so far have been used to beautify space in Chambers Gymnasium, including the addition of furniture and a 55-inch LED 4K display in the lower lobby. According to Athletic Director

Rick Baker, additional improvements to Chambers Gymnasium and Harrell Pool are planned for the spring and summer to elevate the student experience at MHU.

"We are continually working to procure additional corporate sponsors to support Lion Athletics and we are currently in negotiations with several corporations and businesses to hopefully get them to join us in the near future and maintain these relationships for the long-term," he said.

Current efforts are making a significant difference compared to the last few years. In its inaugural year, the new Lions Athletic Club has added additional members and raised almost ten times more funds than in 2018-19.

A single gift of \$10,000 kicked-off the club's fundraising efforts and in late December, the fund received a gift of \$50,000.

"The enthusiasm of the club is extremely inspiring and we hope to eclipse the \$200,000 mark before the end of the spring semester," Jolley said.

"The success of the club so far is overwhelming and we want to build on this momentum to increase the Lions Athletic Club's donation pool and number of members each year so we can provide the best possible experience for our remarkable student-athletes. Any gift, no matter how much supporters donate, will make a difference in our student-athlete experience."

To donate online or obtain additional information on the Lions Athletic Club visit:  
[www.mhu.edu/lionsathleticclub/](http://www.mhu.edu/lionsathleticclub/)

## POLIZZI BECOMES FIRST WOMAN ON NCAA D2 FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

by: Adam Williams  
Director of Sports Information

Assistant Athletic Director and Director of NCAA Compliance Monica Gordy Polizzi was named to the NCAA Division II Football Committee this past August.

Polizzi began her four-year term on September 1, serving as the first woman on the committee and the fourth member from the South Atlantic Conference to do so.

"I am excited for Monica to experience this opportunity and represent Mars Hill on such an important NCAA national committee," Director of Athletics Rick Baker said upon news of her appointment. "Her work ethic and attention to detail will serve this committee well."

Of the four SAC members to serve on the committee, Polizzi is the second member from Mars Hill University. Head football coach Tim Clifton served from 2007-2010. Clifton said, "It's awesome that Mars Hill has the first woman to serve on the national committee. I think Monica will do a great job and she'll represent Mars Hill proudly."

"Monica's experience and professionalism makes her a perfect choice to serve on the NCAA Division II Football Committee," South Atlantic Conference Commissioner Patrick Britz stated when asked to comment. "She will be an excellent representative of Mars Hill University and the South Atlantic Conference."

Polizzi served as co-chair of the football regional advisory committee for Super Region II, responsible for regional rankings and in assisting with the selection of teams to make the Division II football playoffs as a member of the national

committee. She represented the committee as a site representative at playoff games, as well as attended and worked the national championship game in McKinney, Texas, with fellow committee members.

"It was extremely intimidating joining a predominantly male committee and being so involved with a predominantly male sport," Polizzi stated. "I had to get used to, and get over, being the only female in most situations. I am extremely thankful for the other seven members of the football committee, as well as our NCAA championships liaison. I can't say enough about our committee and the way they welcomed me and gave me a fair shot just like anyone else."



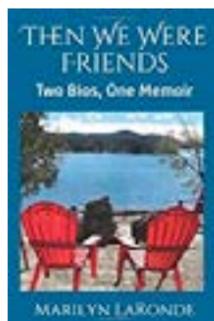
Polizzi attended the annual postseason meeting held in Indiana, in February where the committee reviewed the year and championship feedback, analyzed new bracketing procedures, and discussed how they could continue to enhance the student-athlete experience and grow Division II football.

"This committee has afforded me the opportunity to visit other facilities and see what our regional and national opponents are doing," Polizzi said. "Being able to observe what other programs are doing organizationally on game day has allowed me to bring those ideas back to our campus to enhance our game day experience."

Polizzi served two years on the Softball Regional Advisory Committee and was also a site representative for regional and super regional softball events. She is also active on several committees within the South Atlantic Conference.

*Mars Hill, the Magazine of Mars Hill University* welcomes your personal snapshots when you send in news of weddings, babies, accomplishments, etc. Send your news and photos to [alumni@mhu.edu](mailto:alumni@mhu.edu), or Alumni Office, P.O. Box 6792, Mars Hill, N.C. 28754.

**Marilyn Gillespie LaRonde '59** has written a book titled *Then We Were Friends*, a memoir about her friendship with Ellison Jenkins, who taught religion and philosophy at MHC for over 45 years. The book is for sale on Amazon.



**Frances “Bee” Mayo '68** of New Bern, N.C., was named Woman of the Year by the 2019 Salute to Women of the Military: Past and Present. Bee was the first non-veteran to receive the award. She started the salute in 1987 and has served on the planning committee every year since. The event recognizes women as a vital part of the nation’s armed forces.

**William “Bill” Henderson '68** received a service award from Alamance County Emergency Services Association in November 2019, for fifty years of service as a volunteer for the rescue unit. He was also recognized by Alamance County Commissioners for his service to the community.

**Michael Barry and Phyllis Query Mills (both class of '69)** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary July 12, 2019, with a June cruise tour of Alaska, and a family gathering with their two sons and their families. The Millses live in Clemmons, N.C.

**Phyllis Sledge Stiles '79** has retired as coordinator of Bee City USA, a nationwide organization she founded in 2012, to promote the protection of pollinators. Bee City USA began in Asheville, N.C., but has grown into a network of nearly two hundred cities and college campuses spanning 41 states and Washington D.C. In June 2018, the original organization Stiles founded became part of The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.

**Betsy Criminger Lowery '82** has published a two-part Christian novel series: *A Stranger's Promise* and *No Doubt It's Love*. They are available in softcover or e-book format from the publisher, WestBow Press, as well as Amazon and Barnes and Noble. Lowery is also the author of *Pause*:

*Everyday Prayers for Everyday Women*, a devotional book released in 2004. Readers may follow information about Betsy and her future novels on her facebook page, “Books by Betsy Lowery,” or on Twitter and Instagram, @hiyabets. She also publishes e-devotionals on her blog, *Called-Out Life*, at <https://calledoutlife.wordpress.com/>.

**Donna Gardner, '86**, Ph.D., has retired after 29 years with McDowell County Schools. Most recently, she served as the principal of West McDowell Middle School. Gardner started her teaching career in Yancey County, and then came to McDowell County Schools in 1990.

**William “Paul” Whitaker, Jr. '91** has received the Coach of the Month Award for October 2019. Whitaker has been a football coach at West Henderson High School since 1993 and head coach since 2010. The award is presented by Asheville Chevrolet to outstanding coaches in western North Carolina.

**Steven Keith Glenn '93**, Ph.D. has been named the superintendent of Greenwood County School District 50, in Greenwood, S.C. He lives with his wife, Susan, and son, Dawson, in Abbeville County, S.C.

**Bryan Keith Mills '93** has been named athletic director at North Stanley High School in Albemarle, N.C. Mills previously taught social studies and coached for 26 years at North Rowan High School, in Spencer, N.C.

**Michael Treadway '93** has been named the new principal of Smokey Mountain Elementary School. Previously, he was director of student support services for Swain County Schools. He was principal at Swain County High School for two years, at Swain West Elementary School for two years, and worked with gifted sixth-graders there before serving as an assistant principal.

**Stephen Russell Barrington '94** of Wake Forest, N.C., has been named the new economic development director of Sampson County. Barrington was previously an account executive with Emsi, a company specializing in leveraging data to spur economic development. He has also served as director of business engagement for the Wake County/Capital Area Workforce Development

Board, as economic development project manager for the Wake Forest Chamber of Commerce and as executive director of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce.

**Patrick Cash '11** and his wife, Jamie, welcomed their daughter, Kendall Ann Cash, in April 2019.

**Skyler Assif Matthews '13** obtained M.B.A./J.D. degrees in 2018 from the University of West Virginia. She is now an associate attorney at Steptoe and

Johnson PLLC in the firm’s Charleston, West Va., office.

**Lauryn Christians Higgins '14** graduated this year with her master’s degree in journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she now works as a professor. She is also a contributor to National Public Radio.

**Abigail Curry '17** recently began a new position as a special education teacher at Howard B. Stroud Elementary School in Athens, Ga.

## IN MEMORIAM

*Since the last issue of Mars Hill, the Magazine, we have learned of the following deaths of alumni and other members of the MHU community.*

**Dr. Harold Eugene Lindsey '39**, Lincolnton, N.C., September 27, 2018

**Rev. James “Norman” Ellis '40**, Cadiz, Ky., July 21, 2019

**Gwendolyn “Gwen” Kendrick Keeter Putnam '41**, Cherryville, N.C., September 12, 2019

**Joseph “Joe” Edward Boykin, Jr. '42**, Durham, N.C., September 1, 2019

**Dr. William Ries Gabbert '42**, Owensboro, Ky., November 1, 2019

**Leonora “Eoline” Hobbs Hord '42**, Kings Mountain, N.C., September 11, 2019

**Margaret Rhea Griffin Sisemore '42**, Hixson, Tenn., September 14, 2017

**Rev. Kenneth Bryan Sexton, Sr. '43**, Raleigh, N.C., September 30, 2019

**Marjorie Virginia Greene Smith '43**, Jacksonville, Fla., July 10, 2019

**Haywood “Cullen” Swindell '43**, Greensboro, N.C., September 21, 2019

**Idella Elizabeth Fallaw Bodie '44**, Aiken, S.C., January 2, 2019

**JoAnne Barrett Johnson '44**, Chattanooga, Tenn., August 6, 2019

**Irene “Renie” Kathleen Brown Leonard '44**, Hickory, N.C., July 29, 2019

**Katherine “Kay” Garland Marks '44**, Raleigh, N.C., August 20, 2019

**Dr. Harold Benjamin Spangler '44**, Greensboro, N.C., December 12, 2019

**Raeford “Ray” King Turner '44**, Greensboro, N.C., October 31, 2019

**Jane N. Pegg Wilson '44**, Chattanooga, Tenn., June 27, 2015

**Lera Britt Randall '45**, Boone, N.C., June 14, 2019

**Rachel Winifred Yates Wall '45**, Concord, N.C., December 23, 2017

**Mary Grey Helton Alexander '46**, Chapel Hill, N.C., July 22, 2019

**Phyllis Crinoline Carter Dale '46**, Spruce Pine, N.C., October 12, 2019

**Nina “Patty” Lee Evans Gillespie '46**, Hickory, N.C., December 19, 2019

**Doris Marie Penland Hunter '46**, Burnsville, N.C., October 2, 2019

**James Edward “Ed” Landers '46**, Winston-Salem, N.C., September 15, 2019

**Joe Cephas Beam '47**, Morehead City, N.C., November 9, 2019

**Sarah Catherine Lenox Brown Hagan '47**, Fairview, N.C., July 2, 2019

**Ada “Bess” Ruppelt Bush Perkinson '47**, Durham, N.C., December 3, 2019

**Mary “Edith” Little Caldwell '47**, Charlotte, N.C., November 24, 2019

**Mary Ruth Callaway Duncan '47**, Goose Creek, N.C., July 11, 2019

**Cecelia "Jane" Early Kaleel '47**, Clinton, N.C., September 10, 2019

**Ruth Virginia Scroggs Martin '47** Morganton, N.C., December 5, 2019

**Wylma Rebecca Hollingsworth Monteith '47**, Stanley, N.C., August 21, 2019

**Ethelyn "Lyn" Rose Shaw Rees '47**, Archer, Fla., June 24, 2019

**Betty Neoma Huffman Richards '47**, Chattanooga, Tenn., March 7, 2019

**Catherine Lee Meadows Rogers '47**, New London, N.C., March 9, 2019

**John "Jack" W. Walker '47**, Tallahassee, Fla., December 15, 2019

**Rev. Wendell Eugene Witte '47**, Lakeland, Fla., January 6, 2018

**Glenn "Buck" Harrison Campbell '48**, Greensboro, N.C., September 17, 2019

**Anne-Bruce Chandley Ferm '48**, Kingman, Ariz., July 14, 2016

**Patricia "Pat" Bethany Bradford Howard '48**, Houston, Texas, January 25, 2020

**William "Bill" Thomas Martin '48**, Winston-Salem, N.C., November 24, 2019

**Barbara Estelle Arnold Alexander '49**, Jamestown, Tenn., December 30, 2019

**Boyd Henry Gaskin '49**, Greenville, S.C., June 27, 2019

**Frances Muriel Baldwin Hoots '49**, Fletcher, N.C., December 6, 2019

**Dr. Margaret Middleton Howell '49**, Clearwater, Fla., August 25, 2019

**Ida "Crystal" Stanley Meares '49**, Wilmington, N.C., December 11, 2019

**LTC Richard Monroe Parris, Sr. '49**, Denver, N.C., April 29, 2019

**Sara Jean Langley Talley '49**, Greer, S.C., September 21, 2019

**LTC (Ret.) Robert "Bob" Kenneth Weinkle '49**, Asheville, N.C., January 23, 2020

**Mae Frances Johnson Aycock '50**, Stone Mountain, Ga., November 7, 2019

**Dorothy "Dot" Louise Caldwell Black '50**, Matthews, N.C., December 16, 2019

**Charles Andrew Conley, Jr. '50**, Franklin, N.C., December 7, 2019

**Marie Dempsey Dukes '50**, North East, Pa., September 15, 2019

**Helen "Marie" Dowdy Helms '50**, Kitty Hawk, N.C., January 3, 2020

**Marion Thomas Tysor Lucas '50**, Asheboro, N.C., August 10, 2019

**Betty Frances Pate Reep '50**, Southern Pines, N.C., August 28, 2019

**Rev. John Edward Saunders, Sr. '50**, Mooresville, N.C., October 5, 2019

**Myrtle "Ila" Graham Stallings '50**, Granite Falls, N.C., July 31, 2019

**Carolyn Ann LaPrade Compton '51**, Goldsboro, N.C., January 30, 2020

**Clifford Alen Jenkins '51**, Brandywine, Md., February 26, 2019

**Talmage Newton Penland '51**, Candler, N.C., November 9, 2019

**James Kenneth "Ken" Riddle '51**, Swannanoa, N.C., September 5, 2019

**James "Jim" Thomas Tanner '51**, Asheville, N.C., April 12, 2019

**Mildred Joanne Henry Akes '52**, High Point, N.C., August 26, 2019

**Alvin "Bill" Dean Andrews, Jr. '52**, Elkin, N.C., December 16, 2018

**Duane Houghton Brown '52**, Stone Mountain, Ga., October 12, 2019

**Alma Moretz Davis Cauthen '52**, Columbia, S.C., November 30, 2019

**Wendell George Gross '52**, Hagerstown, Md., May 1, 2018

**Jean Rachel Luffman Humber '52**, Chapel Hill, N.C., October 20, 2019

**Mary Dean Hedrick Trotter '52**, Chapel Hill, N.C., November 13, 2019

**Betty Ann DeBorde Bowman '53**, Hickory, N.C., July 8, 2019

**Martha Frances Yates Brady '53**, Landrum, S.C., April 10, 2019

**Thomas "Tom" Homer Moretz '53**, Flowery Branch, Ga., October 11, 2019

**Ray Hubert Morgan '53**, Weaverville, N.C., June 14, 2019

**Robert "Bob" Eldridge Watson '53**, Fuquay Varina, N.C., August 20, 2019

**Dr. James "Jim" Harold Ballard '54**, Charlotte, N.C., August 2, 2019

**Phyllis Phillips Duncan '54**, Spruce Pine, N.C., September 14, 2019

**Carolyn Gaynella Ervin '54**, Charlotte, N.C., April 6, 2019

**Dr. Robert Guy Fulbright '54**, Waynesville, N.C., June 25, 2019

**Charles "Charlie" Hilliard Greene '54**, Gastonia, N.C., July 22, 2019

**Wanda Jeanne McCurry Hicks '54**, Asheboro, N.C., December 24, 2019

**Finley Richard Johnson, Sr. '54**, Newland, N.C., June 8, 2019

**Darlene Glenda Hughes Kanemura '54**, Arlington, Texas, January 22, 2020

**Sylvia Sue Tysor McElhannon '54**, Eden, N.C., January 17, 2020

**Charles James Miller '54**, Chapin, S.C., July 28, 2019

**Amy Lucille Fisher Pace '54**, Hendersonville, N.C., August 24, 2019

**Annie "Ruth" Mann Patterson '54**, Concord, N.C., November 14, 2019

**Grace Vivian Sullivan Suddreth Hoffstein '54**, Wilmington, Del., May 22, 2019

**LTC William "Bill" Thomas Wallace, Sr., USAF, Ret. '54**, Slidell, La., August 3, 2019

**Henry "Dewey" Young, Jr. '54**, Cary, N.C., July 4, 2019

**Carolyn Etheredge Hart Breland '55**, Lancaster, S.C., November 29, 2019

**Rev. Gayle Dean Brown '55**, Greensboro, N.C., January 19, 2020

**Robert "Bob" Edward Cole, Sr. '55**, Punta Gorda, Fla., January 9, 2020

**Rev. Ernest Hudson Ferrell '55**, Durham, N.C., December 21, 2019

**Phyllis C. Yates Goff Harvel '55**, Winston-Salem, N.C., July 28, 2019

**Barbara Jeanne Carpenter Heltzel '55**, Culpeper, Va., November 18, 2019

**Rev. Rowe William Teague '55**, Hickory, N.C., July 8, 2019

**Lois "Yvonne" Lominac Amico '56**, Greensboro, N.C., January 12, 2020

**Juanita "Nita" Bernice Horton Austell '56**, Hillsborough, N.C., December 17, 2019

**Robert "Bob" Norman Craddock '56**, Charlotte, N.C., July 4, 2019

**Anita Frances Copeland Earp '56**, Beaufort, N.C., November 27, 2018

**Dr. Robert Richard Hallman '56**, Atlanta, Ga., October 8, 2019

**Larry Everette King '56**, Greensboro, N.C., February 1, 2019

**Winston White Leonard '56**, Asheville, N.C., September 12, 2019

**Robert "Bob" Drake Watson '56**, Asheboro, N.C., October 19, 2019

**Rev. Charles Thomas "Tom" Bodkin '57**, Raleigh, N.C., September 21, 2019

**Dorothy Alene Eatmon Siler '57**, Candler, N.C., August 17, 2019

**William Larry Whitehurst '57**, Nashville, N.C., September 28, 2019

**Bertie "Irene" Merritt Allsopp '58**, Fort Mill, S.C., December 4, 2019

**Emory Dean Chrisawn '58**, Burnsville, N.C., January 1, 2020

**Marjorie Alice Keith Harrison '58**, Fuquay Varina, N.C., August 17, 2019

**Dicky Harold Kirby '58**, Gastonia, N.C., November 14, 2019

**David Edward McManaway '58**, Greenville, S.C., August 14, 2019

**Franklin Deams Pollock '58**, Roxboro, N.C., December 19, 2019

**David Wayne Waymire '58**, Binghamton, N.Y., February 16, 2019

**Charles "Charley" Frederick Culpepper, Jr. '59**, Perry, Ga., May 28, 2018

**Jarvis Gray Dickens '59**, Laurel Springs, N.C., August 13, 2019

**Joseph "Joe" Carmon Greene '59**, Indian Trail, N.C., September 18, 2019

**Sara Cornelia "Connie" Criminger Hamilton '59**, Charlotte, N.C., August 27, 2019

**Peggy Joyce Avant Shaw '59**, Lawrenceville, Ga., August 7, 2019

**Thomas "Tom" Maxwell Eutsler '60**, Asheville, N.C., June 22, 2019

**John Malcolm Jones '60**, Charlotte, N.C., December 1, 2019

**William "Bill" Eugene Casey '61**, Former Trustee, Fayetteville, Ga., July 24, 2019

**William "Bill" Ira Young '61**, Burnsville, N.C., October 30, 2019

**Raiford Douglas Baxley, Jr. '62**, Wagram, N.C., February 15, 2017

**Thomas "Tim" Matthew Viar '62**, Baton Rouge, La., September 12, 2019

**James Claude Willis '63**, Cartersville, Va., June 12, 2019

**Michael "Mike" Evan Burke '65**, Asheville, N.C., August 10, 2019

**Nathaniel "Nat" Wilson Coffin '65**, Durham, N.C., September 15, 2019

**William "Bill" Dean Smarr '65**, Greenville, S.C., May 6, 2019

**Sandra Ann Edwards Briggs '66**, Mars Hill, N.C., August 22, 2019

**Jerry Richard Burleson, Sr. '66**, Charlotte, N.C., March 20, 2018

**James "Jim" Calvin Cooke '66**, Hudson, N.C., August 26, 2019

**Nancy "Sue" Davis Figley '66**, Doswell, Va., August 8, 2019

**Millard Bruce Murdock '66**, East Flat Rock, N.C., September 17, 2019

**Jack Eldridge Trent '66**, Roanoke, Va., October 16, 2019

**Dr. Ellen Anne Cauthen Utley '66**, Eatonton, Ga., September 28, 2019

**Linda Ray Lowe Maddox '67**, Johnson City, Tenn., December 20, 2019

**Rev. Barry Lewis Brown '68**, Travelers Rest, S.C., November 3, 2019

**Geraldine Greene Kepley '68**, Winnabow, N.C., September 30, 2019

**James "Robert" Yates '68**, Cornelius, N.C., October 2, 2017

**Mary Ellen Saunders Young '68**, Aiken, S.C., June 8, 2019

**Rev. Roy Vincent "Vince" Young, Jr. '68**, Christiansburg, Va., October 20, 2019

**Dianne Marie Capps Ebeyer '69**, Dubach, La., November 4, 2019

**Rev. Joseph "Harry" Hawk, Sr. '69**, Andrews, N.C., August 5, 2019

**Nancy Cornelia Berry Bridges '70**, Matthews, N.C., September 16, 2019

**Marshal John Goodman, Jr. '70**, Fayetteville, N.C., October 11, 2019

**Dennis Caye Wells '70**, Mars Hill, N.C., October 23, 2019

**Rev. Donald "Don" Edward McCaskill '71**, Biscoe, N.C., July 23, 2019

**Meloney "Millie" Joyce Ivey Clark '72**, Newark, Ohio, September 19, 2019

**Stephen "Steve" Miller Robinson '73**, Greenville, S.C., July 20, 2019

**Ronald Wayne "Butch" Turner '73**, Franklin, Va., July 24, 2019

**Joseph Ishmael Bridges '74**, Raeford, N.C., December 11, 2019

**Franklin "Frank" Ray Frisby, Jr. '74**, Marshall, N.C., November 15, 2019

**Karl Raymond Keesecker '74**, Erwin, Tenn., August 17, 2019

**Johnny Wayne Taylor '75**, Moore, S.C., December 28, 2019

**Dr. Steven Alan Williams '77**, Asheville, N.C., December 18, 2019

**Rev. Dr. Lester "L.E." Edward Williamson '78**, Greenville, S.C., July 12, 2019

**Carlos Levern Showers '79**, Black Mountain, N.C., January 27, 2020

**Janie Quay Edwards Franklin '81**, Marshall, N.C., July 21, 2019

**Margaret Malinda Greene Hayes, '83**, Kernersville, N.C., January 28, 2020

**Norman "Curtis" Heyward, Jr. '83**, Rome, Ga., April 3, 2017

**Elizabeth "Liz" Penland Chambers '88**, Marshall, N.C., October 21, 2019

**Melanie Paige Creson Ledford '92**, Marion, N.C., November 11, 2019

**Jill Lauren Dyer '94**, Eden, N.C., July 2, 2019

**James Vincent "Vince" Redmon '06**, Winchester, Ky., April 11, 2019

**Martha Guy**, Former member, Board of Advisors, Newland, N.C., October 12, 2019

**Dr. Roland William Doepner**, Retired Faculty, Spartanburg, S.C., August 6, 2019

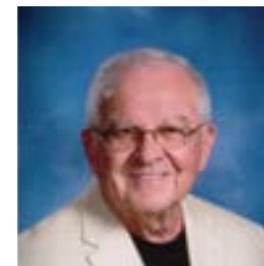
**Dr. Don Gehring**, former Dean of Students, Saint Simons Island, Ga., February 11, 2020

**Charlotte Norton**, Retired Staff, Mars Hill, N.C., February 28, 2020

**James "Jimmy" Edward Ramsey**, former Trustee, Mars Hill, N.C., January 29, 2020

### Dr. Robert Fulbright – Christian Statesman

*by Bud Christman, Vice President for Advancement*



Robert Fulbright

When Dr. Robert Guy Fulbright passed away last June at the age of 83, he left behind deeply connected roots to Mars Hill University as well as a legacy in Christian education. A 1954 graduate of Mars Hill College, Bob was the son of another MHC graduate,

Evalee Snelson '29. His aunts were Pauline Snelson '33, Martina Carter '38, and Frances Snelson '37, the legendary assistant to three Mars Hill presidents (Moore, Blackwell, and Bentley). His sister, Sylvia '68, also graduated from Mars Hill, as well as his brother-in-law, Doug Echols '67, who currently serves on the university's Board of Advisors.

After leaving Mars Hill, Mr. Fulbright received his B.A. from Furman University, and both a M.A. and Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Seminary. His commitment to the church and to the development

of quality educational teaching materials resulted in a career woven between church service and the oversight of Baptist publications. Dr. Fulbright served on the staff of four churches as minister of education in Alabama, Texas, and Missouri. In addition, he also supervised elementary education, was head of Broadmen Press, and director of the Bible Teaching Division for 15 years at the Baptist Publishing House in Nashville. In acknowledgement of his expertise, he served on the 1970 White House Conference on Children and Youth.

Upon returning to his native western North Carolina at age 62, he was named professor of Christian education at the divinity school at Gardner-Webb University and Senior Christian Education Consultant for Smyth and Helwys Publishing.

Named MHU Alumnus of the Year in 1981, Dr. Robert Fulbright embodied the very best of a Mars Hill graduate through a life of service that he committed to enhancing, enriching, and educating the least, the last, and the lost.



P.O. Box 370  
Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

# THANK YOU!



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## #DAY4MHU

March 4, 2020