The Vision is NOW

Winning with solar.
Transforming health care.
Pioneering education.
A New Beginning

Appalachian ceremoniously broke ground on a new health sciences building in June and construction is underway. Page 8

Photo by Marie Freeman '85
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We value your input

Tell us what grabbed your attention, stirred your imagination, sparked a great Appalachian memory or made you think about an idea or issue in a new or different way. We want to know your thoughts — please share them with us.

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When we were framing this issue of Appalachian Magazine, the vision for Appalachian State University was top of mind: to prepare students to lead purposeful lives as engaged global citizens who understand their responsibilities in creating a sustainable future for all.

As we explored story ideas it occurred to me that at any given moment we could honestly say, "Our vision is being realized daily." In this issue we share elements of the university's vision as manifested in the lives of our students, staff and faculty over the past year.

…to prepare students to lead purposeful lives

Certainly Nurse Mary Shook (page 12) has led a purposeful life and has inspired a generation of health care professionals. Her aspirations as the university’s first nurse are mirrored and magnified in the expectations we hold for the Beaver College of Health Sciences (page 9), now under construction with an anticipated completion date of August 2018. The students who will study and learn there will go on to serve as has Hannah Sheets Adams (page 11), one of our early nursing school graduates who has come home to Boone.

…as engaged global citizens

The opportunities for global experience here on campus and abroad are myriad. The Institute of International Education's 2016 Open Doors Report ranked Appalachian third nationally among the top 40 master’s degree granting institutions for the total number of students who studied abroad for credit in 2014-15 and third nationally for the number of students who participated in short-term programs for academic credit. In 2015, proposals for 80 faculty-led programs were submitted, 77 of which were approved.

The number of international students at Appalachian has increased steadily in the past decade, with the figure up nearly 300 percent from 35 students in 2006-07. There are currently 160 international students enrolled at Appalachian.

A young business scholars’ trip to Costa Rica to better understand the coffee supply chain, a Cuban music student’s serendipitous opportunity to study here, and the celebration of the William R. Holland International Business Fellows’ 20th anniversary of applied business experience in Asia are testimony to the many different aspects of engaged global citizenry.

…creating a sustainable future for all.

Our leadership in sustainability is known nationally and is a consideration in every decision we make regarding curriculum, growth, community engagement and stewardship. The Dougherty brothers founded Watauga Academy in 1899 to improve education and therefore quality of life in our region. As an institution, we have steadfastly continued to live by – and practice – this same philosophy, with the mission to improve the environment, economic and social equity of our community, region and world.

We’ve shared a David and Goliath story about our exceptional solar vehicle team’s efforts around sustainable transportation (page 16). Our cover photograph of the solar car on King Street in Boone is visual proof the vision is indeed now! We have committed to helping this burgeoning program rise to the next level. But, truly, sustainability is woven into everything we do at Appalachian and, consequently, into most of the articles in this issue of Appalachian Magazine. Please read on and see for yourself.

From the Chancellor

Sheri N. Everts
Chancellor
Celebrating 100 YEARS

The Blue Ridge Parkway and other national parks — gateways to a variety of careers for volunteers and Appalachian alumni. Page 30
Appalachian has begun work on the first project funded by the Connect NC bond.

By Elisabeth Wall    Photos by Marie Freeman ’85
Construction of Beaver College of Health Sciences underway

Under sunny skies and with a row of black and gold beribboned shovels at the ready on the sidelines, Appalachian State University Chancellor Sheri N. Everts welcomed more than 300 guests to the official groundbreaking of a new Beaver College of Health Sciences (BCHS) facility in late June. University faculty, staff and students, project partners, government officials and interested members of the High Country community gathered under a tent at the building site located adjacent to Watauga Medical Center in Boone.

“This is a great day,” Everts said. “Our project is shovel-ready and we will begin work within the next month.”

Construction of the 203,000 square foot facility began in July and is moving along at a clip. The facility is in part funded by $70 million allocated from the Connect NC bond, which was passed in March. “Our state will benefit from this investment, and thanks to the bond a home for the Beaver College of Health Sciences is now a reality,” Everts said. Occupancy of the building is slated for August 2018.

Nearly 20 percent of Appalachian’s students are taught by Beaver College of Health Sciences faculty. Including nursing, there are six departments and 16 undergraduate and graduate degrees offered in the college, from disciplines including communication sciences and disorders, and nutrition and health care management.

Everts recognized then-president and CEO of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System (ARHS) Richard Sparks and the ARHS board of trustees. The board has partnered with the university through more than 10 years of planning and donated the 9.2-acre parcel of land on which the building is being constructed.

N.C. State Budget Director Andrew Heath, on site to speak for then Gov. Pat McCrory, said this is the first bond-funded project to get underway.

Because North Carolinians supported the bond, Heath said, “Future generations of students will have the opportunity to study health sciences here at App State in the state-of-the-art Beaver College of Health Sciences building. This facility will help prepare students for high demand medical careers and further enhance health and quality of life in the region and in the state.”

An historic occasion

Following Heath’s comments, the chancellor introduced Donald C. Beaver as “an Appalachian alumnus and pioneer in health care” for whom the college was named in 2015. Everts noted that after receiving his Bachelor of Science degree from Appalachian in 1962 and a Master of Arts degree in 1964, Beaver found work at Watauga Hospital (now Watauga Medical Center.) “Now his leadership and vision are building a bright future for his alma mater and the system where he began his career,” Everts said.
Above: University, health care and state officials ceremoniously break ground on the new health sciences building at Appalachian State University. Pictured left to right are Richard Sparks, then-president and CEO of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System; Andrew T. Heath, budget director for the State of North Carolina; Frederick K. Whitt, founding dean of the Beaver College of Health Sciences; Chancellor Sheri N. Everts; Donald C. Beaver, Appalachian State University Board of Trustees member; and Vickie Beaver.

Top Right: Donald C. Beaver, for whom the Beaver College of Health Sciences is named, speaks during the groundbreaking ceremony as Chancellor Sheri N. Everts looks on.

Bottom Right: Andrew T. Heath, budget director for the State of North Carolina, speaks to attendees at the June 23 groundbreaking of the Beaver College of Health Sciences building. With him on the dais are, from left, Appalachian’s Provost Darrell Kruger, former Appalachian Regional Healthcare System President and CEO Richard Sparks, Chancellor Sheri N. Everts, Donald C. Beaver and founding Dean Frederick K. Whitt.
Oncology nurse Adams ’14 returns to serve Boone

By Elisabeth Wall

Hannah Sheets Adams ’14 has come back home.

Adams is a member of the third graduating class of nurses from Appalachian State University’s Beaver College of Health Sciences. Her first position out of college was in the oncology unit of Wake Forest Baptist Health in Winston-Salem. Two years later she has returned to work at Watauga Medical Center’s radiation oncology department.

At Baptist, Adams was responsible for direct patient care, including giving medications, hourly rounding, drawing blood, charting and managing care on a vast array of patients from oncology to the Intensive Care Unit. For the most part, Adams worked specifically with bone marrow transplant patients. “I love that patient population,” she said. “Bone marrow transplant is life-changing.”

At the radiation oncology unit, Adams said, she is “responsible for new patient intake, drawing labs, occasionally giving medications, and working closely with Dr. [Yvonne] Mack and the radiation therapists.”

She said one major factor for returning to this area was “because it’s Boone! This is a nice place to be, a nice place to work.”

Adams was first exposed to Appalachian as a high-schooler in the university’s Upward Bound program, which provides academic support to high school students so they may complete high school, enroll in college and successfully obtain a college degree.

Despite the Upward Bound connection, Adams said her parents told her “‘to aim low’ because they couldn’t afford to send me to a four-year university. But I was stubborn and found myself at Appalachian [in the] ACCESS program. I graduated with no student debt.” The ACCESS program offers students from low-income families in North Carolina a four-year university education at Appalachian debt free.

Adams was also the recipient of the first Kenneth E. Peacock Spirit of ACCESS Award for embodying the difference the ACCESS scholarship program was created to make in someone’s life.

Adams plans to continue her education at Appalachian in the future. “Not now,” she said. “But I will come back. Maybe for a nursing education degree or palliative care.” When she does, she’ll be coming home again.
Nurse Mary Stevenson Shook
a lifelong commitment to the well-being of the Appalachian Community

by Phoebe A. Pollitt, ’89 MA, Ph.D., R.N.

Editor’s note: A professor in the Department of Nursing, the author researches North Carolina nursing history and collects oral histories of older nurses. She is also an Appalachian alumna, having earned a master’s degree in education in 1989.

On a crisp, fall day in September 1949, Mrs. Mary Stevenson Shook, R.N., walked into her office in what was to be the student infirmary in White Hall on the Appalachian State Teachers College campus. She found two basement rooms separated by a half bath located on the basement floor of the dormitory, a single bed without linens, exposed water pipes and heating ducts, no supplies or equipment and no telephone. In addition, she had no allotted budget.

Then Nurse Shook heard a mouse. Demonstrating her “can-do” attitude, she promptly walked over to the Administration Building and told ASTC’s business manager, Bernard Dougherty, nephew of one of the college founders, she was “not going to work with rats.”

Her third stop that day was the local drugstore, where she bought some aspirin and a thermometer so she could start taking care of students. Relying on her ingenuity, spunk and determination, it was not long before Appalachian State Teachers College had a functioning student health program where Shook made a lifelong commitment to the health and well-being of Appalachian students, faculty and staff.

Appalachian’s first health care provider
Mary Stevenson (Shook) was born Dec. 10, 1918, near Taylorsville in North Carolina’s Alexander County at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Desiring to help others, she chose nursing as her career. The young woman followed her older sister, Lucille, into the Grace Hospital School of Nursing at Lees-McCrae College in nearby Banner Elk. After graduating from the arduous program in 1941, Stevenson accepted a job as a floor nurse and eventually became the nursing director of the operating room at Grace Hospital.

In order to excel in her new position, Stevenson soon completed advanced training in Operating Room Technique and Management at the University of Pennsylvania. She enjoyed her work in the operating room and acquired a reputation as a caring and skilled nursing supervisor. When a severe polio epidemic hit Western North Carolina in 1944, a summer camp near Hickory was converted into the Emergency Polio Hospital. “Every week we would work straight through in the operating room and then go to Hickory to relieve the nurses at the polio hospital. We just had to help each other,” she recalled.

Major changes occurred for her in 1945 when Stevenson married Zeb Shook, who would become the Appalachian State Teachers College acquisitions librarian. The couple moved to Boone, where she
Mary Shook, R.N., holds a copy of the 1955 yearbook Rhododendron, which was dedicated to her.
began her career in student health. A new accreditation rule mandating health services on campuses spurred the administrators at ASTC to hire their first nurse. Shook was the only health care professional employed on the campus from 1949 until 1952, when Nina Martin, R.N., filled in for Shook’s first maternity leave. For many years, Shook singularly provided all the counseling services and health education on campus in addition to caring for physical health needs. The first physician hired by ASTC, Dr. Evan Ashby, arrived in 1965.

From fevers to sex education
Out of her small basement office in White Hall, then located across from the school cafeteria, Shook took care of everything from fevers to sex education. Although considered a faculty member, she had no job description, was on call 24/7, and took care of anyone and everyone on campus and in the community who needed her help. Her presence on campus was ubiquitous; she taught numerous health lessons to ASTC and Appalachian High School students and provided care at sporting and other campus events. Monday mornings in the fall were reserved for “football clinic,” when she would take care of players injured in weekend games.

Dressed in her full white uniform and cap, she often accompanied the college’s founder, Dr. B.B. Dougherty, on official travel. She even gave B-12 and allergy injections to people who vacationed in Watauga County in the summer months. In addition to her nursing work, Shook found time to sponsor the campus YWCA with another faculty member and worked with the Presbyterian student group on campus. Her daughters remember her bringing many students who were suffering from homesickness or needed some special attention into their home.

Before the arrival of a campus physician, when a student required specialized care, she grabbed whomever she could find to help “load [the patient] into ‘Old Brown’,” the infirmary’s aged, brown station wagon, and take them to a nearby doctor. Local physicians Drs. Len Hagaman, J.B. Hagaman, Henry Perry Sr., Henry Perry Jr., Bill Smith and Hadley Wilson dispensed care and counsel to the campus community whenever Shook asked.

When a flu epidemic hit the campus a couple of years after she arrived, 3,000 out of the 4,000 students on campus fell ill. The cafeteria employees made hot soups and fruit juice available to the afflicted patients. Dormitory “house mothers” cared for the sick, but when fevers reached over 103 degrees for 12 hours, parents were called to pick up their children because there were not enough beds or personnel on campus to handle the epidemic. Shook was stretched thin checking on ailing students across campus.

Help, in the form of more nurses, arrived in 1952. When Shook was nine months pregnant with her first daughter, Tanya, she was called to a student’s room around midnight to adjust bandaging on the student’s sprained ankle. She took care of the student and then gave birth to her daughter four hours later. Nurse Martin was hired to fill in for Shook for a three-month maternity leave, but after eight weeks, she called Shook pleading with her to return to her duties. Soon, Martin was employed as a day nurse in the infirmary. Over time, early infirmary nurses included Lucille Hovis, Merle Vick, Pat Light, Issa Saylors and Sandy Hagler. Eventually, Inez Williams joined the team as a night nurse. While Shook was pregnant with her second daughter, Myra, Appalachian nurses successfully battled another flu epidemic in 1957. As vaccines developed in the 1950s to prevent polio and the flu, Shook and her team subsequently immunized thousands of students, faculty and staff against these diseases. Over time, as more nurses and physicians were added to the Student Health Services staff in the 1960s and 1970s, Shook continued to work with patients while taking on an administrative position at the infirmary.

1955 yearbook inscription:
“For one whose sympathy, understanding, and loving counsel has endeared her to all who know her and has made her such a vital part of life on our campus and for one whose friendship has meant so much to all of us, We, the staff of the 1955 Rhododendron, dedicate this volume to one whom we respect and love so dearly.”
A leader in her profession

In addition to her on-campus activities, Shook became a founding member of the Student Health Association of North Carolina and an active member of the Southern College Health Association. She attended annual meetings around the state and the Southeast, getting to know other student health professionals and bringing new ideas back to the Appalachian campus. Shook was elected president of the Southern College Health Association in the early 1960s, the first nurse and the first woman to hold that office. During her tenure as president, she worked ardently to increase the membership of the organization since many college health services around the South had yet to join. While doing so, Shook made life-long friends whom she would bring to Appalachian. Colleagues from institutions like Duke University and Clemson University came to know the campus and Boone area well.

Shook has received numerous honors and awards. The 1955 Rhododendron, the college yearbook, was dedicated to her, and she received an Outstanding Service Award from the university in 1982. She was instrumental in designing the current Student Health Services building, and upon her retirement from Appalachian State University in 1983, it was named in her honor. In 1984, the National College Health Association conferred the Ollie B. Moten award on Shook for the culmination of a lifetime of service. Gov. James Hunt bestowed the Governor’s Award for Outstanding Service to North Carolina on her in 1982. She became a Distinguished Fellow in the American College Health Association in 1982 and was inducted as an honorary member into Delta Kappa Gamma, a national education sorority.

Today Shook is a spry 97-year-old who treasures her 63-year marriage to Zeb, who passed away in 2008. Still recognized anywhere she goes for administering flu shots and caring for sick students during her 40 years at Appalachian, she lives alone near campus and takes pleasure in her children, grandchildren and other family members. She remains an active member of First Presbyterian Church.

Shook looks back fondly on the people she helped and the friends she made at Appalachian. Over her long career, Nurse Shook left an indelible mark on the Appalachian Community.
Racing the SUN
An Appalachian team seeks to change the future of transportation with a solar race car

By Megan Hayes '97    Photos by Marie Freeman '85
“Our team not only sees this as a project and a challenge – they see this as part of the larger picture that has to do with integrating sustainability into building a solar race car.”
– Dr. Jeremy Ferrell, faculty advisor

What do you get when you take a dozen Appalachian State University students, three passionate faculty, and an institutional commitment to sustainability? As it turns out, you get a race car powered by the sun that wins third place in a three-day track race and places sixth in a cross-country race lasting eight days and nearly 2,000 miles. You get innovations in sustainable technology. You get a roadmap to the car of the future.

In a recent survey, 55 percent of Appalachian students indicated that the university’s commitment to sustainability influenced their decision to attend. And while each person’s definition of sustainability is a bit different – personal choices are often at the center of how people choose to define the concept – it is clear that the students on this team are committed to improving the quality of life for the next generation, and that means developing technology that will lessen the negative impact of humans on the environment.

Students from a variety of majors – some you might expect, like sustainable technology and engineering physics, and some you might not, like interior design and music industry studies – came together to form Team Sunergy and change the future of transportation.

Advising them were three faculty mentors: Dr. Jeremy Ferrell, assistant professor of sustainable technology in the Department of Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment, and Chris Tolbert and Brad Johnson, both adjunct instructors who coached the team on solar car development and electronics and automation, respectively.

Dr. Lee Ball, interim director of the Office of Sustainability, led outreach efforts and with countless faculty and staff, lent support and expertise.

The idea behind Apperion

The brainchild of a student with a fascination with sustainable technology and a love for race cars, Apperion, the solar vehicle, took shape after a conversation Dan Blakeley, then an undergraduate student, started with Ferrell. Inspired by his experience converting a gas-powered golf cart into an electric vehicle in Chris Tolbert’s Sustainable Transportation course, Blakeley was keen to build a solar race car. He sought out Ferrell because of his research in biofuels and alternative transportation. True to the entrepreneurial spirit of Appalachian faculty, Ferrell told Blakeley he’d like to “jump in” on the project, and a vision for a solar car started to become a reality. Within a year, they had developed a race car prototype. Two years later, Blakeley, now a graduate student pursuing dual degrees in appropriate technology and engineering physics, led the first-ever North Carolina team into the American Solar Challenge (ASC), an international competition in which collegiate teams design, build and race solar vehicles.

After qualifying for the ASC, Appalachian’s Team
Apperion, Appalachian’s solar vehicle, and the solar vehicle team make an appearance on the field and on the jumbotron during halftime at the Parent’s Weekend football game in Kidd Brewer Stadium, Nov. 5.

Sunergy secured a third place win in the track race phase of the ASC qualifier, the Formula Sun Grand Prix. They went on to place sixth in the ASC’s 1,975-mile, cross-country race that covered seven states and lasted eight days. One of 20 teams to qualify for entry into the competition, Team Sunergy became one of only 12 to complete the ASC and one of only three to drive across the finish line on its own power on the final day.

**More than an engineering project**

When asked why their accomplishments are significant, the team members echoed a common refrain: “We’re not an engineering school.” Presented neither as badge of honor nor a weakness, this response by every team member is a fact: of the 20 teams that entered the competition, only two are liberal arts institutions. Perhaps, Appalachian team members suggested, this gave them a competitive advantage because they approached building a solar car not from an engineering standpoint but as a sustainability solution.

“Our team not only sees this as a project and a challenge – they see this as part of the larger picture that has to do with integrating sustainability into building a solar race car,” said Ferrell. “This is what really distinguishes our students: they see the importance of making our transportation sector cleaner, and of using clean energy to power it.”

“For us, this is a sustainability challenge,” stated Duvey Rudow, the team’s assistant director and a senior physics major. “For engineering schools, they say, ‘How do we build a solar car?’ because it’s an engineering problem for them. For us, we say, ‘OK, how do we make a more efficient form of transportation?’”

Sustainability education is a relatively new field,” said Ball, “and Appalachian has been a part of it since before the S-word emerged in the lexicon. We have a deep understanding – and the ability to articulate – all the different ways people can connect to sustainability. Every discipline connects to it, and we get that at Appalachian.”
Dan Blakeley
Graduate student, accelerated admissions
Appropriate Technology and Engineering Physics
**Team role:** Project Director and Founder
**What we heard:** Commands respect. So chill. He has it all — he’s a veteran, a Ranger, a graduate student, he has the skills and he’s a natural-born leader.

Duvey Rudow
Senior, accelerated graduate program
Physics
**Team role:** Assistant Project Director
**What we heard:** Outgoing, flamboyant. Switched his major from performance arts to physics. Told team if Apperion placed in the qualifying race, he’d let them cut his long hair any way they wanted.

Jake Barnes
Senior
Physics
**Team role:** Electrical Co-assistant Director
**What we heard:** On track for graduation in four years. He aspires to become a Naval Special Warfare Officer in the SEAL teams. On the down low, he is the solder king.

Pedro Franco ’16
Master of Science in Technology, renewable energy engineering concentration
**Team role:** Electrical Director
**What we heard:** A major player for the team and on top of everything. After graduation Franco flew to Brazil for one day to see family, returning the next to be on site for the competition.

James Furr
Freshman
Sustainable Technology, minor in physics
**Team role:** Electrical Team – “jack of all trades, master of none”
**What we heard:** Furr is the youngest of the team. Loves cars and sustainability, so joining the team was a no-brainer. Chose Appalachian because “above all it feels genuine, it’s a homey place.”

Andrew Grimes
Senior
Finance and Banking, Computer Science
**Team role:** Interim Business Director
**What we heard:** Super organized and a stellar teammate. Grimes is quite tall and held up the shell during pit stops. He also was the person willing to do the team’s laundry at 1 a.m.

Abby Hastings
Senior
Physics
**Team role:** Co-mechanical Director
**What we heard:** She’s a major player with the pit crew. A self-confessed giggler. Hastings’ parents, supportive as always, joined her at the race. She credits her dad with giving her an Erector Set as a young girl and steering her toward science.

Jon Linck
Senior
Sustainable Technology
**Team role:** Co-mechanical Director
**What we heard:** Pit boss – stoic, very solid, chill. Linck leads with a strong mechanical intellect and a fundamental understanding of electronics. Pragmatic, he summarily drilled holes in the flooded wheel bases while the rest of the team was wondering what to do.
Jongmin Na
Senior
Physics
**Team role:** Electrical Team
**What we heard:** Na left the team after the trials to return to Korea. Promises of keeping in touch, sad faces and tears from the team. He plans to pursue a graduate degree in physics.

Lindsay Rudisill
Senior
Music Industry Studies, concentration in marketing and promotion
**Team role:** Public Relations
**What we heard:** Rudisill has her heart set on working in the auto industry. She’s one of two women on the team and sees no barriers to her opportunities. She gained some driving experience with Sports Car Club of America and qualified as one of the team’s four drivers.

Logan Ward
Senior
Physics
**Team role:** Electrical Co-assistant Director
**What we heard:** As a physics major, Ward is more technical than some on the team. He’s also one of the four drivers. Mature and rarely flustered. Solid.

Bailey Winecoff
Senior
Sustainable Technology
**Team role:** Racing Specialist
**What we heard:** How we get around and how we live matters to Winecoff. He is president of the Human Powered Transportation club and a former intern in the Office of Sustainability.

Dr. Jeremy Ferrell
Assistant professor
Department of Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment
Coordinator for sustainable technology and program advisor for the solar vehicle team
“About a quarter of the carbon emissions in our world are coming from transportation systems. [These students] will be the engineers and designers of solar-powered cars and low-footprint transportation.”

Brad Johnson
Program director
Department of Physics and Astronomy
“Hard work pays off. You can do lots of cool things if you are willing to put in the hard work, and these students are definitely ready to work.”

Chris Tolbert
Sustainable transportation instructor
Appalachian State University and West Wilkes High School
“We’re going to take what we’ve learned and put it into a practical vehicle. The vehicle you will drive to work... that will haul passengers and cargo. That’s what’s next.”

Dr. Lee Ball
Interim Director of Sustainability
Appalachian State University
Support, Outreach, Education and Development for the Team
“What’s happening here is extremely important. We have this opportunity to teach people about solar energy and sustainability. It’s not just an engineering challenge for us – we’re really interested in advocating this technology.”
Learning the fundamentals of teamwork

In interviews with team members and faculty, this narrative emerged: While Team Sunergy sweated the details from maximizing battery power to soldering wires to finding sponsors and acquiring insurance, right down to choosing the car number – 828 to represent the Boone area code – they learned the fundamentals of teamwork. They faced failures and false starts, overcame seemingly tremendous funding obstacles, shared late-night meals, bickered, laughed and cried together, and in the process became a team that trusted one another, learned to disagree with respect, and when to lead and when to follow.

“These skills will serve them well in the future,” Ball said. “When they go into the professional world, they will remember that it takes an interdisciplinary team and holistic approach to find a solution to a problem.”

Ferrell agrees. “Our students are learning how to put a project together, execute dozens of different tasks, be highly organized, manage money, clearly articulate what they are doing and develop leadership,” he said. “This kind of leadership will make them stand out when they go on to work at Tesla motors or SpaceX or become founders of their own entrepreneurial endeavor with clean energy or clean transportation, or whatever connection they find with sustainability.”

Envisioning the future: solar transportation

The team sees their accomplishments as a new start line. Next up, building a car that will move the technology closer to a vehicle consumers will drive on a daily basis.

“Hopefully, [future generations] will be driving solar cars and won’t have to think about problems like the emissions coming out of their cars every time they are driving,” said Andrew Grimes, the team’s interim business director and a senior finance and banking major. “For them, the solution will already be here.”

As Team Sunergy departed campus for the ASC competition, Chancellor Sheri N. Everts captured the significance of their enthusiasm for making the world a better place. The team’s work, she said, “represents the bold, confident and pioneering attitude that so perfectly represents our campus and its vision to build a brighter future.”

Team Sunergy’s passion for – and understanding of – sustainability led them down a road that began with a conversation, took them on a 2,000-mile journey and ultimately will lead to the car of the future.
“No idea is a bad one” is the mantra for brainstorming in design-thinking problem solving, and the baseline for solutions. Shown here is an ideation board for AppLab 2016. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

Pioneering education with AppLab

By Elisabeth Wall

Gather a team of college students with skill sets and interests as diverse as Sheldon’s from “The Big Bang Theory” to Joey’s from “Friends.” Challenge them to collaborate and create a project model, fully researched and tested, to impact, say, climate change in their community. Then, have the teams present solutions to a panel of business-savvy judges and, taking suggestions and improvements they may have gleaned, begin to think of marketing the concept.

Kern Maass, associate dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts, along with assorted Appalachian State University faculty, have been working to refine a lab like this for the past two years.

AppLab is a problem-based learning model focused on teams of faculty and students working with community and industry partners to solve real-world problems through design thinking. The cross-curricular AppLab experience first was offered spring semester 2015 and again in spring 2016.

“Solving real-world problems through an intense exchange of ideas and talents among faculty, students and the community is an important piece of the Appalachian story,” Maass said. “This is just one way we are differentiating our university in a challenging educational market. An innovative education should involve an innovative process.”

Maass said they are working to refine the model for next fall. Some of the past challenges included space – the project requires a space that is accessible 24/7, large enough to hold group meetings and flexible enough to be re-configured as needed; understanding and buy-in from all the colleges; the ability to incentivize faculty participation; funding; and post-project review. “For the most part,” Maass explained, “the teams are comprised of seniors, and when the semester is over, we lose the students and the momentum to test our thinking.” A major goal as the project moves forward is to find ways to involve students earlier and for longer periods of time.

Important milestones have been reached: a space has been identified and funding for the fall 2017 semester now allows the opportunity for viable projects and concepts to continue in the spring. Additionally, open forums will be held each semester to engage faculty and build awareness throughout the campus community. “If we apply our own design thinking to AppLab,” Maass said, “the evolution of the project over the past two years is precisely what we are trying to teach. We’ve done the teamwork, the research and the experimentation. AppLab 2017 will benefit tremendously from past experience.”
Calculating the true cost of coffee in Costa Rica

Students experience the rich and raw side of Costa Rica’s coffee industry, and consider the value of people, planet and profit

By Elisabeth Wall    Photos by Marie Freeman ’85
Over winter break in 2015-16, Dr. Ken Corley, professor in the Walker College of Business (WCOB), along with local resident and java entrepreneur Don “Bald Guy” Cox ’93, took 18 Appalachian State University students to Costa Rica for a deep dive into the workings of the coffee industry.

The focus of the trip was an examination of the coffee supply chain. The students saw and learned far more than what an average eco-tourist might. They walked the coffee farms and co-ops, heard from coffee agents and distributors, worked with migrant workers, saw their housing, and visited mills, factories, shipping and distribution centers – “in large part because Bald Guy has such rich relationships in Costa Rica,” Corley said.

There are many obstacles for a small coffee producing country like Costa Rica, Corley explained – plant disease, poverty, unfair trade practices, low water quality and a diminishing workforce to name a few – but with education and a shift in sustainable priorities and consumer awareness, he and Cox have hope for the industry and the people.

**With eyes wide open**

Opening the eyes of the Appalachian students is a beginning, Cox said. “Millennials like changing the world. The coffee business emerged from colonial conquest and it’s been that way since the 15th century. The honesty with which we evaluate the supply chain helps the students engage, evaluate. This experience...”

“If you aren’t doing business for good, why are you doing business?” asked Bald Guy Brew proprietor Don Cox ’93 at the second annual Business for Good event hosted by Appalachian State University’s WCOB in August. Cox teamed up with a WCOB professor last winter to show students the reality of the Costa Rican coffee supply chain and posed the question: “Is this doing business for good?”

*Students pose in Costa Rica with Don “Bald Guy” Cox, back row, center, sixth from left. Third from left is Boone native Melanie Ward ’13 ’16 MBA.*
Harvesting ripe coffee beans is a tedious and life-long occupation, often starting in the toddler years. This Guaymi Indian woman may earn $18-$20 for a day’s work.
gives them exposure to a culture they have never seen before. When they see a Guaymi Indian lady who has been picking [coffee beans] all day earn $18 to $20, when they know regardless if her beans are labeled ‘fair trade’ or ‘organic’ she will not realize another dime of the higher priced end product, they begin to get a little frustrated. There’s a lot of hype in a cup of coffee,” he continued. “This group has great DNA for sustainable living and this will impact how they go forward.”

It all comes back to our concept of fair trade, said Melanie Ward ’13 ’16 MBA, a Boone area native. “You see the children working, see where they live, all under the stamp of fair trade. What should we do? Stop buying coffee? We can tell the story. I always go back to the people. We talk in our sustainable business classes about people, planet, profit.” As to career choices she will make: “If you don’t support the people in your supply chain, or your employees, whoever you’re interacting with,” she said, “everything will crumble or fall apart. You can’t hide what you’re doing if it isn’t ethically right. So, start with the people. That will help your business strategy, that will impact your success.”

A taste of the culture

There was down time for the students to get a taste of the culture – try local food, visit a volcano, zip line through the canopy of a rainforest and snorkel in the Pacific. And, visiting an emerging second world country pushed many of the students out of their comfort zones. Ward was tentative about taking the trip from the start. “I grew a lot, faced my fear of heights, I did repelling, I had critters under my pillow in my sheets… Sure, I had pre-travel jitters, but I grew up from it.”

Toward the end of their Costa Rica adventure, the Appalachian students were given seedling coffee plants to sow. Corley’s dream is that in the not-so-distant future there will be a hillside of thriving plants, sown by Appalachian students, tended by farmers who are fairly paid for their labor; their coffee beans graded on quality, shipped openly and without undue tariffs and red tape; and enjoyed, guiltlessly, by coffee cravers everywhere.
Maintaining a healthy community

Prioritizing the health and safety of the Appalachian Community is paramount to a community that can live – and learn – to its full potential. At Appalachian, important initiatives are underway in this regard.

Keeping students safe

By Elisabeth Wall

Partnering with The Jed Foundation Campus Program (The Campus Program), Appalachian has added another action tool to its initiative to support student well-being and mental health.

The program is designed to help schools prevent what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics identifies as the two leading causes of death in young adults – unintentional injuries, including those caused by prescription drug overdoses or alcohol poisoning, and suicide.

Appalachian is among the first cohort to join The Campus Program, which is designed to help colleges and universities assess and enhance mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention programming. Participating schools make a four-year commitment to work with The Campus Program to evaluate and identify opportunities to augment these activities on campus. The Campus Program provides schools with a framework for supporting student mental health, as well as assessment tools, feedback reports and ongoing technical assistance from The Campus Program team.

Improving the health of our campus

By Dr. Alex Howard

Appalachian recently joined a growing group of diverse, motivated institutions and organizations working every day to move campuses across our nation toward better health by taking the American College Health Association’s Healthy Campus Pledge. The university is now considered a Healthy Campus 2020 Partner. The pledge demonstrates our campus’ commitment toward achieving the Healthy Campus 2020 goals and objectives.

Healthy Campus 2020 is the companion framework to Healthy People 2020, the federal government’s health promotion and disease prevention initiative for achieving better health across the United States. Healthy Campus 2020 provides a framework for improving the overall health status on campuses nationwide. Strategies extend beyond traditional interventions of education, diagnosis, treatment and health care at clinical levels and involve embedding health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academics.

Becoming a Healthy Campus Partner reflects Appalachian’s commitment to health and well-being while joining the national movement to create healthier campuses. Appalachian has undertaken a number of initiatives to promote the health and well-being of students, to include the development of a Student Well-being Improvement Team (SWIT). This cross-campus collaborative serves the Appalachian Community by providing leadership and guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of strategic health and wellness initiatives.
Daniel McLendon ’12, in Arches National Park in the Colorado Plateau.
Photo courtesy of Daniel McLendon
President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service (NPS), a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior responsible for protecting the 35 national parks and monuments then managed by the department and those yet to be established. Today more than 20,000 NPS employees care for America’s 400+ national parks and other sites. They also work in communities nationwide to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities.
The Blue Ridge Parkway meanders for 469 miles. The rangers and a cadre of volunteers play a large part in protecting the diversity of plants and animals, and maintaining the park for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

Appalachian alumni Marinell Chandler ’13, a sustainable development major with a concentration in environmental studies; Tim Federal ’12, a graduate of Appalachian’s master’s program in geography with a concentration in geographic information science (GIS), and geography major Dan McLendon ’13 have all become rangers within the NPS – no easy task by all accounts. They each shared their stories and the paths that landed them these most coveted jobs.

Marinell Chandler – ‘This is my park and I hope to work here a long time’

Chandler lives just inside the Denali National Park and Preserve, which encompasses 6 million acres of Alaska’s interior. Its centerpiece is 20,310-foot-high Denali (formerly called Mount McKinley), North America’s tallest peak. She works with 50 rangers who are the front line of the Division of Interpretation at the park’s entrance – those rangers who interact daily with visitors, staff the visitor center and lead guided hikes and educational programs.

Chandler got her foot in the door with NPS through the Student Conservation Association (SCA) as one of two interns hired to assist in the care of the 30-plus canine rangers and educate the roughly 50,000 visitors that visit each summer.

Chandler worked at the kennels providing care for the park dogs during two peak summer seasons. “Once our summer season is officially over we begin fall training,” she said. “It’s important to mention the dogs’ true purpose of providing access and protection in the Denali Wilderness. [To prepare], our dog teams run for several miles each day with carts or ATVs to rebuild their strength and endurance.”

Daniel McLendon – ‘a bit of a weather nerd’

Unlike Chandler, McLendon prefers to work in the field – alone and in nature. For his interview, he called from “the middle of nowhere in Utah, in Arches National Park, in the Colorado Plateau… I haven’t seen another person all day. It’s raining and that’s just weird. I laugh and I’m happy about it. But I also know a little rain can be deadly. I’m kind of a weather nerd. And it’s shaped me as a person.” He paused. “Global warming is for real.”

McLendon completed an internship with the Blue Ridge Parkway on an exotic plant management team. “I was out of town a lot… eight days you’re in the back country, then off for six. That’s a pretty cool long weekend. But, if you want this job,” he explained, “you have to volunteer, do the internships… and that means being overworked and underpaid. It’s the name of the game.”
McLendon is on the Lake Mead Exotic Plant Management Team, a regional crew that conducts exotic species surveys, eradication efforts and monitoring for a handful of national parks and a variety of public lands across the southwestern U.S. It’s physically rigorous, McLendon said – rugged work. Treatments range from hand-pulling weeds to spraying herbicides to clear-cutting stands of invasive trees. He described bouts with poison ivy, a run in with a scorpion and a particularly treacherous truck caravan down a narrow gorge with a vertical drop of 1,000 feet, no guard rails and a developing mudslide. “But I sleep at night knowing I’ve enabled a small bit of native habitat to coexist… that it’s not being bombarded by an invasive plant that is choking out the vegetation.”

Tim Federal – “Data is key to understanding the natural resource issues in our parks”

Federal, whose portal into the NPS was also a CSA internship, is data manager/crew lead for the Lake Mead Exotic Plant Management Team – McLendon’s team. He is responsible for logistics for a traveling crew of 20 or more and for maintaining a robust geodatabase of all the work the team does – building metrics for infested and treated acreage, monitoring exotic species infestations, and evaluating how these infestations are changing over time due to the teams’ eradication efforts.

Federal wants to remain in the field of restoration ecology and natural resource management, with an emphasis on using geospatial technology “to gain better resource data that gives us a deeper understanding of the many natural resource issues facing our parks today. The work we do,” he explained, “drives home a sense of ownership and stewardship of the beautiful lands and natural resources that many of us take for granted.”

As much as she loves Denali, Chandler said, “I miss the Appalachian community. Living around people who had the same love for the outdoors as I did, and having professors who encouraged me to follow my passion for our country’s natural places inspired me tremendously, and I will always remember that.”

At 20,310 feet, Denali, formerly known as Mt. McKinley, is North America’s highest peak and the centerpiece of Denali National Park and Preserve.
A panoramic view of Arches National Park, north of Moab in the state of Utah. The park offers a landscape of contrasting colors, landforms and textures.

Photo courtesy of Daniel McLendon

Ranger Daniel McLendon ‘12 – Passionate about the outdoors, McLendon came to Boone to escape city life. He became a biological-science technician after a trip to Peru with Appalachian’s Dr. Baker Perry. Headquartered in Boulder City, Nevada, he works several desert regions. Automotive experience prior to college comes in handy in the backcountry where he maintains a fleet of service vehicles.

Photo courtesy of Daniel McLendon

Ranger Tim Federal ‘12 MA – Earned his master’s in geography with a concentration in geographic information science. He worked four seasons in Alaska national parks, starting with an internship in 2010. He now leads the data management crew for Lake Mead Exotic Plant Management Team and hopes to continue in the field of restoration ecology and natural resource management.

Photo courtesy of Tim Federal
Ranger trainer/graduate student Valerie Brey – hiker, kayaker, educator – earning a master’s in college student development, slated to graduate in 2018. Oversees the Blue Ridge Parkway Corps, supervising volunteers who hike the trails, interact with visitors, and protect the Rough Ridge area of the Parkway. Her dream: to work as a program coordinator for outdoor recreation in higher education.

Photo courtesy of Valerie Brey

Ranger Marinell Chandler ’13 – The BP oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico her senior year of high school piqued an interest in environmental conservation; an alternative service experience in the Virgin Islands led her to the NPS. She worked summers at Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska and two seasons at Denali’s Sled Dog Kennels. She now staffs the entire east district of the park.

Photo courtesy of Marinell Chandler
Making history at the Mob Museum

By Elisabeth Wall   Photos by Troy Tuttle ’07

Diana Rafferty ’11, right, is the curator of collections for the Mob Museum and Carolyn Fisher ’07, left, is the museum’s education manager.
The actual wall that caught the bullets from the 1929 St. Valentine’s Day massacre is there. So is the hazmat suit from the hit AMC series “Breaking Bad.” A larger-than-life Dick Tracy cutout stands guard over one of the exhibits, a pixelated reminder that crime does not pay.

But the big surprise?

Against all odds, even in a betting town, two public history majors from Appalachian — 2,500 miles to the east — discovered each other working just two cubicles apart.

Carolyn Fisher ’07 is the curator of collections for the museum. On her first day at work a colleague introduced her to the museum’s education manager, pointing out that like Fisher, she majored in public history. When Fisher asked where she had studied, Diana Rafferty ’11 replied, “Oh, Appalachian State. It’s in a little town in the North Carolina mountains. You probably never heard of it.”

“How does that happen?,” Fisher asked, practically squealing. “There are millions of museums and we are miles and miles away from Boone.”

The Appalachian impact

Fisher, who grew up all over the world, said family members from Charlotte suggested she tour the university. “I fell in love with everything about the town. I decided Boone would be my home, where I’d tell people I was from.”

For Rafferty, who also moved a great deal, Boone was the first place she was able to choose to live. “Appalachian helped me learn about myself,” she said. “I had access to things in culture I never had before. My history classes were phenomenal. Dr. Joe Gonzalez taught me a class on the civil rights movement. I credit him for many of the opinions I have on the world today. Dr. Tim Silver changed my perspective on my country and where I stand. Dr. Richard McGarry was a mentor.”

Fisher stumbled on public history while scrolling online through a list of Appalachian majors. “Wait,” she said, recalling her find. “I didn’t know this was an option. Get a job where you could do historic preservation or archeology or work in museums? There is a misconception that history is a useless degree. Public history has opened so many doors for me.”

Rafferty, agreed, saying history is a great stepping stone. “You can go on to be a lawyer, an activist, a politician,” she said. “History and current events collide. You don’t have to stay in the past. You can study history and still look forward.”

Rafferty had planned to live in Las Vegas after graduation. “I knew the museum was a place I could
“Breaking Bad’ effectively dramatized organized crime and today’s illicit drug trade.”
– Geoff Schumacher, director of content for The Mob Museum
work with my degree. It was just about to open when I moved there. Within a year I was program associate and within three, education manager,” responsible for hiring and training a staff of educators. She also oversees summer camps and outreach programs.

**A cool title, a cool job**

Fisher’s path was slightly less direct. While at Appalachian, she earned two internships with The Student Conservation Association. After graduation she bounced back and forth across the country, working in various positions at seven different national parks over the course of five years. She was a museum technician in Death Valley when she applied for the job at the Mob Museum.

“Curator of the collection is a pretty cool title – and a pretty cool job,” Fisher said. She manages intellectual property and the physical well-being of the artifacts, negotiates loan agreements, donations, inventory and acquisitions.

What’s the attraction, why is this type of museum important? Rafferty was quick to reply: “If we aren’t dealing with how history impacts us today, we’re not doing it right. Prohibition informs our drug laws today. What happened in ancient Rome, happens here today. Crime still happens. We need to learn to avoid it, or to fix it.”

“History is telling stories,” Fisher added. “Our job is to tell that story… and show what it means to [a person’s] life now and those before us, and after us.”

appalachianmagazine.org/videos/id/597

Rafferty ’11, at top, manages intellectual property rights and the physical well-being of the artifacts owned by the museum. Below, a Roaring ’20s exhibit is appropriately framed by whiskey kegs and bottles, the prohibition of which encouraged and expanded mob activity.
By Elisabeth Wall

The Walker College of Business William R. Holland International Business Fellowship is an applied business experience in Asia, with an emphasis on student research, engagement and innovation. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the exchange partnership with Fudan University in Shanghai, China. Each year, a select group of students from Appalachian and Fudan embark on what Program Director Jesse Pipes described as “a journey – an experiential learning opportunity that gives students exposure to understanding both the cultural context and the business environment of tomorrow.”

The students are paired for a semester to complete a business research project. They telecommunicate throughout the semester and then work together in person – the Fudan students spend two weeks in the U.S. in the spring and the Appalachian students visit China over the summer.

The program has many takeaways, Pipes said. International exchange, networking and career opportunities, leadership training, collaborative and innovative thinking are just a few.

But, while Pipes and the students agree the research and academic rigors of the program are important, some less obvious transformative aspects of the exchange were captured in a recent University Communications FYI podcast. Graduate student Haley Holland ’14 (no relationship to the eponymous donor William R. Holland) and Ben Hinson, a 2015 fellow majoring in international business and economics with a minor in Chinese, shared thoughts about their fellowship with Pipes.

Holland, a first generation college student, described the experience as “like being on an airplane. You grab your seatbelt, you hook it together and you get ready for a ride.” For Hinson, “It felt like we were part of a bigger family.”

Hinson posited that although politics and business were the initial motivators for the détente with China, “the relationship of China and the United States going forward is something that is going to be done by business leaders and individuals, by cultural exchanges – getting to understand each other’s cultures and each other’s lives. And what the Holland Fellows does is that. It opens up the conversation.”
By Elisabeth Wall

At the beginning of the fall semester, Harry M. Davis, professor of finance and past chair of the Department of Finance, Banking and Insurance, shared some thoughts about the economy, globalization, education and his personal accomplishments.

What is your economic forecast for the next five years for the High Country and for North Carolina?

We’re going to experience historically slow growth in the U.S. and North Carolina economy. North Carolina will do better than the national economy. Surely in the next 24 months we’re going to enter a recession that will last up to 10-12 months, or for as long as 24 months. It will be shallow and relatively short. Recovery [from the Great Recession] is now the fourth longest in the post-World War II period. Generally when expansions go that long, you have to have a recession before too much longer. There will be a [student loan] bubble burst that will lead to a recession. We cannot get enough growth to have a positive impact on salaries and wages, so incomes are not growing rapidly. The middle class is definitely getting smaller relative to both ends of the spectrum. We have the slowest productivity rate in this recovery than any other in 65 years. Productivity leads to higher salaries and wages. Without it [the middle class] doesn’t get those increases. The very rich get increases because theirs are caused by other things. And the poor get left out altogether.

Why is productivity down?

The post-war baby boomers are retiring at an incredible rate. They have tremendous experience and knowledge and are taking it out of the workforce. People coming into the workforce have good skills but they don’t have...
“We should bring together knowledge and money to make the best innovations to help mankind. If universities enter into such arrangements and actually benefit financially, wouldn’t that be the best possible thing for scholarship funding, research funding, all the things we think are important?”

experience and knowledge… as a result, we have a decline in the rate of productivity.

What is the most crucial issue facing our state at this time?

Our secondary education system – both in the U.S. and in our state – is failing. It does a poor job educating the youth of this state. We have turned our junior college and community college system into preparatory schools for the university system. We deserted or failed generations of high school students who didn’t want to go to college. We didn’t train them. We didn’t give them access to training. We didn’t support the technical skills.

What is the most valuable tool Appalachian can give students to succeed in the real world?

Skills that can be used every day in the business place. Technology is changing so rapidly, the knowledge base is changing so rapidly, you have to have those skills to thrive. Another thing we can’t give them but somebody needs to, is a work ethic. If you work hard, you will succeed.

Do you agree there is a negative backlash surrounding global expansion for U.S. businesses? What impact will that have on students’ opportunities?

Globalization is a great thing for the general population… a wonderful thing to raise income levels around the world. If we block international trade in any meaningful way, other countries will attempt to block trade with us, which will slow down world growth and which will hurt our students’ chances for getting jobs in the international market.

What are your thoughts about private-public partnership (P3) applications for our campus?

One of the biggest shortcomings of higher education is it has not partnered more frequently with the business community. We should bring the two together – knowledge and money – to make the best innovations to help mankind. If universities enter into such arrangements, and actually benefit financially, wouldn’t that be the best possible thing for scholarship funding, research funding? All the things we think are important?

What was the most rewarding time in your teaching career at Appalachian?

I lost most of the sight in both of my eyes about four months ago. I’m going right on – still working, still teaching, still lecturing, still giving public speeches. I’ve invented ways to do it. In some ways this may be the most rewarding time in my entire life in the sense that I get up every morning trying to figure some way to deal with this disability. It’s been very positive for me to keep looking for more ways to get around it. When I can give a public speech to several hundred people and I can do that and I can hardly see and they clap at the end, I feel pretty good – particularly when they want me to come back.

About professorships

A distinguished professorship requires at least $500,000 in funding. When approximately two-thirds of that amount in gifts and/or pledges is made, the university may apply for matching funds from the State of North Carolina for the remaining third, creating an endowment of at least $500,000. For giving opportunities, visit give.appstate.edu.
Crystal Clear...

this collection may inspire a young chemist or geologist
See for yourself.

The mineral collection of the late James E. Wilson is on display at Appalachian State University’s Department of Geology’s McKinney Geology Teaching Museum located in Rankin Science Building. It’s free and open to the public.

news.appstate.edu/2016/01/25/minerals-donated
A chance remark yields a second chance for Cuban virtuoso

By Elisabeth Wall

When Fidel Leal, described by a Cuban music critic as “one of the most advanced and important Cuban pianists of his generation to storm into the first decade of this century” saw the bottom line on the cost of a music education at the New England Conservatory in Boston, he was crestfallen. Completely out of his price range, he returned to Cuba, his dream of earning a master’s in music in America unfulfilled.

Fate stepped in when an official at the U.S. Interest Section (now the U.S. Embassy) in Havana told Appalachian State University Associate Vice Chancellor for International Programs Jesse Lutabingwa about the plight of the young pianist she had come to know. Lutabingwa shared the information with Hayes School of Music (HSOM) Dean William Pelto, who reached out to Leal.

“I was just sitting in my place and Dean Pelto called,” Leal said. “Would you like to consider our school?” he asked me. I checked Appalachian out and it was great. Teachers here were perfect.” The application process began, out-of-state tuition was waived and Leal came to Appalachian fall semester 2016 as a graduate assistant.

During the process, Pelto heard Leal perform during a Mozart festival in Old Havana and met briefly with Leal’s father after the concert.

Leal is effusive about the support of Pelto and Lutabingwa and the overall kindness of the Appalachian Community. “They were very nice in New England,” he said, “but there is some kind of difference. Maybe it is southern. Your teachers really care about you, really try to help. If they can’t, they feel sorry.”
He said it was a serendipitous coincidence, too, that his piano professor here, Dr. Bair Shagdaron, is Russian – “a person who is like of the same school, you know? In Cuba we talked about Russia and the school of piano like a legend. It is new to study with this teacher but also known, because we are the same. Do you understand?”

Pelto said the university has interest in continuing a sustained relationship with colleagues in Cuba, as does the HSOM. The international opportunities there are robust, he said, because of the rich musical roots – European traditional, popular and folkloric – and the very different culture that is now so easily accessible.

Because of Leal, Pelto said, the university already has an official relationship and it has been a successful one.

Leal was born in Matanzas, Cuba, a city about 100 kilometers from Havana. He started studying piano at the age of 7. He received his Bachelor of Arts summa cum laude in 2013 from the Higher Institute of Arts in Havana. Leal debuted with the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba in 2006. Since then he has performed with Cuba’s most important symphonic and chamber orchestras and has concertized in Costa Rica, Switzerland and France.

There is not a master’s program in Havana, so his plan had always been to study in the U.S. or in Europe. After his expected graduation in 2018, he would like to pursue a doctor of musical arts degree in the U.S. Although a classical pianist, he is interested in exploring jazz improvisation and theory.
Have you checked out *The Schaefer Center Presents*?
This remarkable performance series features a diverse mix of music, dance and theatre performances throughout the academic year. Artists often remain on campus to engage in meaningful residency work with students that connects their performances to the university's teaching mission. In addition, students work backstage and in the box office, playing a critical role in the operation of the venue, while gaining important skills and experience.

**Upcoming events include...**

**Saturday, February 25, 7pm**
**Lake Street Dive**
This eclectic quartet’s retro sound combines a refreshing blend of pop, classic R&B, jazz and soul with an infectious, easygoing groove.

**Tuesday, April 4, 7pm**
**The Nile Project**
This unique collaboration brings together artists hailing from along the great river that connects 11 countries and over 400 million people, to make music reflecting cultural traditions of the oldest place on earth.

**Wednesday, February 8, 7pm**
**Jessica Lang Dance**
Known for repertoire rich with stunning movement and dynamic visuals, Jessica Lang Dance transforms classical ballet into emotionally engaging contemporary work.

For tickets and more information 1-800-841-ARTS • 828-262-4046 • theschaefercenter.org
Like so many young men growing up in the Queen City, Steve Wilks ‘92 dreamed of playing on the game’s grandest stage. His skills and determination helped mold him into a standout defensive back in a talent-rich program at West Charlotte High School. Today, he’s assistant head coach and defensive backs coach of the Carolina Panthers of the National Football League.

“I had the desire to play college football pretty early in high school,” Wilks said following a recent Panthers off-season practice. “When you see your teammates play well and start to get scholarship offers, the process becomes very intriguing for you.”

Many students at Appalachian can trace their first exposure to the university back to a trusted high school teacher or coach. Wilks’ relationship with Bruce Hardin, his head football coach at West Charlotte, provided reassurance that becoming a Mountaineer was the right decision.

“Coach Hardin played at App State and he sent many of my teammates to Boone,” Wilks recalled. “Coach had a good relationship with Appalachian football Coach “Sparky” Woods (1984-88) and his entire staff. That helped me feel very at home with the recruiting process.”

Wilks played as a member of Appalachian’s defensive backfield from 1987-91. He tallied 103 career stops for the Black & Gold while intercepting four passes and blocking four kicks during his career.

Woods left Boone following the 1988 season and was replaced by Jerry Moore, a well-connected head coach with a power football pedigree – a transition at the top that helped Wilks discover a passion for football beyond the playing field.

“We had been recruited by Coach Woods and we had relationships with those guys. There was a bit of resentment toward Coach Moore at first,” Wilks said. “Once we opened up and listened to Coach Moore we were able to buy in to the way he did things very quickly. He would never discredit any player and he believed everyone had something they could contribute.”

Wilks, like Moore, has built a career in coaching largely on relationships and rewarding the value every player brings to a program.

After college, Wilks blew his first whistle as an assistant coach at Charlotte’s Harding High School in 1992. Following a brief stint playing for the hometown Charlotte Rage of the Arena Football League, Wilks resumed coaching for good. He became defensive coordinator at Johnson C. Smith, sparking a successful coaching career that has included nine stops in the college ranks and three NFL assignments. He returned to Boone as defensive backs coach for the 2001 season.

“I feel like I learned how to treat players when I was at Appalachian,” Wilks said. “Coach Woods always addressed us by calling us men, because that’s the way he wanted us to think of ourselves and that’s how he expected us to act. Coach Moore treated everyone the same. That, to me, is why his walk-on program was so successful. Those kids knew that he would give them a chance to prove themselves.”
Gerald and Julia Adams became friends at Appalachian State Teachers College in the 1950s. He played football, she was a cheerleader. After graduation, they went their separate ways, each embarking on a successful career in education and starting a family. Life moved on. But the Appalachian spirit has a funny way of bringing people back together. At a Black & Gold Reunion in 1993, they reconnected. Each had lost their spouse years before and was single again. Gerald ’54 had recently started a second career as fundraiser for Appalachian’s Yosef Club, and Julia ’56 was nearing retirement as supervisor of health education in Florida’s Duval County.

“I was sitting there at the reunion and Gerald came over and asked me to dance,” recalled Julia.

The couple – known as Mr. and Ms. Yosef because of their commitment to Appalachian athletics and affinity for dressing in black and gold – married three years later. The university’s beloved Yosef mascot was a member of their wedding party.

Their love for each other, and Appalachian, shines bright. In lieu of wedding gifts, they asked guests to consider donating to an athletic scholarship endowment at the university. Thousands of dollars were raised, forming a new scholarship that gives a deserving student-athlete the opportunity to pursue a college education.

Gerald and Julia have founded or supported many scholarships for student-athletes and cheerleaders. Their generosity also has supported academic scholarships, the ACCESS scholarship for North Carolina’s lowest-income families, an Appalachian Summer Festival, the Alumni Association’s Athletics Facilities Enhancement Campaign, the annual Diversity Celebration, and the Appalachian Fund. Whenever someone they know passes away, they make a financial contribution in that person’s memory. Their most recent financial contribution to Appalachian has been a charitable gift annuity.

“If you think about the difference Appalachian has made in our lives and the potential it gave us to have successful careers and families, helping a young person have that same experience gives us such great joy,” Julia said. “We feel honored and blessed to be able to give back to Appalachian because this great university has certainly brought a lot of happiness to our lives.”

“Seeing these kids graduate and be successful in life is our main reason for giving,” said Gerald. “We have some students here who without a scholarship may have ended up on drugs or something. If you can give them a chance, it makes them a better citizen and builds better communities and better places to live.”

“We hope that by our example younger alumni will see how they can give back, too,” said Julia.

The couple emphasize that the amount of a person’s gift doesn’t matter as much as their involvement.

“We have nearly 95,000 living alumni. If every graduate gave just $10, the university would have nearly $1 million,” Gerald said. “That’s the cost of just four cups of coffee. What are you willing to give up to give to Appalachian?”

They also give generously of their time, serving on scholarship selection committees and with the Appalachian Alumni Association. Each has served as president of the alumni association and received the association’s Outstanding Service Award.

Gerald and Julia each have three children from their previous marriages. Together they have 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Their granddaughter Barbara Adams is a junior at Appalachian.

Editor’s note: Gerald and Julia Adams were the subject of this article written seven years ago and reprinted here. It is a love story we’d like to share once again.

Photos by Marie Freeman ’85
Appalachian lost a close member of its family on Wednesday, Nov. 9. Gerald Adams ’54, dubbed “Mr. Yosef” for his support of the Yosef Club and countless other university programs and scholarships, died at his home in Boone. He and his wife, Julia ’56, were Grand Marshals at Appalachian’s 2016 Homecoming parade on Oct. 21. Only days later his family announced he had been diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer.

Farewell, Mr. Yosef

Right: Gerald Adams ’54 was a football player for Appalachian State Teachers College in the 1950s.

Left: Gerald and Julia ’56 Adams, known as Mr. and Mrs. Yosef because of their commitment to Appalachian athletics and affinity for dressing in black and gold.
Kidd Brewer Stadium, The Rock, routinely has standing room only on football Saturdays. In the team’s second Sun Belt season, the Mountaineers have secured a place in the Sun Belt Conference bowl games. On joining the conference in 2014, Chancellor Sheri N. Everts said, “The move to the Sun Belt Conference means more opportunities for our student-athletes and that is exactly what they are – students first – who also show the amazing dedication and work ethic to participate in their sport at the college level.”

Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
Dr. Michael Mayfield, vice provost for undergraduate education at Appalachian State University, never meant to be a teacher.

According to his wife Misty he “fell into it by accident.” It’s true – at his first conference presentation as a graduate student, he actually fell from the stage. He tells folks, she said, the humbling experience of climbing back up and carrying on resonated and he’s been on stage as an educator ever since.

Could that small humiliation be why his coworker Sonya Long said Mayfield is the most compassionate, caring person with whom she’s ever worked? His record as an educator also is impressive: He has been in the classroom, teaching geography in some capacity since 1982 and as faculty in the Department of Geography and Planning at Appalachian since 1988. He was named Educator of the Year by the North Carolina Geographical Society in 2012 and presented with the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus ('80) award by University of Tennessee Knoxville.

In 2010, Mayfield stepped in as interim vice provost for two years. After a national search, he was appointed to the position in 2012. As vice provost he has had administrative responsibilities for many areas within University College, where all entering students begin their education, including the General Education and the First Year Seminar programs. During his tenure he shepherded two major revisions of the General Education curriculum.

“Mike has the ideal disposition and experience to have successfully advanced the General Education curriculum changes,” Provost Darrell Kruger said. “He is calm, deliberate and an engaged listener. Moreover, he is flexible yet also willing to state his position respectfully when it differs from others.”

After six years as an administrator, Mayfield is returning to the classroom as an associate geography professor in the spring of 2017.

Mayfield was not interviewed for this article because his coworkers wanted the honor to be a surprise. In an article published after his appointment as vice provost, Mayfield said, “I have always loved teaching and working with students and I miss that, but in this position I have the opportunity to influence policy that impacts a lot of students at Appalachian.” According to Kruger, “Job well done.”

Dr. Mayfield, welcome back to the classroom.
Faculty of Distinction

Ok-Youn Yu, Faculty Member of Distinction
College of Fine and Applied Arts
Associate Professor and Interim Assistant Chair, Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment

By Wes Saylors

One of the most notable projects Dr. Ok-Youn Yu, associate professor and interim chair in the Department of Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment, has led is the Nexus project. As its principal investigator, Yu has received a total of $270,000 in grants since 2014, including the EPA P3 Award and a NC Bioenergy Research Initiative Grant. Yu explains, “The Nexus at Appalachian is a multidisciplinary team of faculty and students housed in the Department of Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment, whose research lies at the intersection of agriculture energy, and natural resources.”

The project has been developing inexpensive and efficient biomass greenhouse heating technologies that provide affordable and sustainable means to improve food-growing capacities and the standard of living for farming communities in rural Appalachia while reducing the use of fossil fuels.

This is completed by using on-farm biomass resources, like agricultural waste and wood chips, to produce energy. Extending the growing season with heated greenhouses increases the availability of local food throughout the year. In turn, this expands available markets and increases farmers’ profits.

According to Yu, “The Nexus research greenhouse heating serves the community by enhancing access to fresh local produce.” Both the local environment and economy are helped by the conservation of fossil-fuel energy while reducing greenhouse gas and smog emissions as a result of traditional farming practices.

The greenhouse is located at the Watauga County landfill and includes an above-ground 1,500-gallon water storage tank and an aquaculture pond. The site has been set up to serve as a gathering place for faculty, students and local community members who are interested in learning about sustainable practices. This facility will be a valuable addition to the resources available to Appalachian, both for research and education.
Karen Caldwell, Faculty Member of Distinction
Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies
Professor, Department of Human Development and Psychological Counseling

By Wes Saylor

Dr. Karen Caldwell is interested in the interrelationship between the mind and the body. A professor in the Department of Human Development and Psychological Counseling, she teaches graduate students counseling and family therapy. Her specialty is expressive arts therapy.

Caldwell views expressive arts therapy as a way of supporting health and human development. “I do this by using an interdisciplinary, integrative, arts-based approach to counseling,” noted Caldwell.

Graduates of her department’s Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program and Marriage and Family Therapy Program provide mental health services in a variety of settings, including college counseling centers, community agencies and private practices. “I also teach an undergraduate Tai chi class,” Caldwell added, “which is quite a bit of fun for me and also a way to introduce students to mind-body exercise modality.”

This modality is evident in the classes Caldwell teaches: “We use a combination of imagery, symbols, storytelling, ritual music, dance, drama, poetry, visual arts and movement during class.” And, as if her passion for the tools of expressive arts and their therapeutic value weren’t evident, she added, “I feel very alive when I’m engaged with students in those classes.”
Ethiopia is rapidly expanding its higher education system in an effort to modernize the nation’s economy. Among the challenges in this endeavor: producing enough Ph.D.-level faculty to teach in its public universities, which the government has increased from two to more than 30 in the past 15 years.

As a Fulbright Scholar in 2015-16, the Reich College of Education’s Dr. Vachel Miller taught doctoral students in the new educational policy and leadership program at Bahir Dar University (BDU) in Ethiopia. This is the same academic program Miller helped develop, aided by a small grant from the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia that facilitated exchanges between BDU and Appalachian.

Miller said he found the yearlong teaching opportunity highly rewarding – so much so, he extended his stay another month through Fulbright.

“I was able to develop a collaborative learning community among the students and open new ways for them to think about leadership and change in the higher education system in Ethiopia,” Miller wrote in his final report to the Fulbright Scholar Program. “In this respect, the Fulbright year enabled me to have a significant influence in a program that intends to train future professors and educational leaders in Ethiopia.”

He also engaged in two research projects with Ethiopian colleagues: mapping inequalities in students’ access to secondary schooling and interviewing academic department heads about the challenges they face during this period of educational expansion.

Miller said BDU has invited him back and welcomes other international faculty, too. Ethiopia’s higher education system is expanding so fast, Miller said, BDU and other universities can’t staff their own graduate-level programs with enough Ph.D.-trained Ethiopian faculty.

In the meantime, Miller has returned to Appalachian as program director of the Department of Leadership and Educational Studies’ graduate program in higher education. “Ethiopia certainly presents rich case material of global dynamics linking the U.S. and Ethiopia,” he said. He teaches Globalization of Higher Education among other classes.
If one wants to know how encrypted messages were sent between Allied forces during World War II and how those encrypted messages were often intercepted and decoded by the opposing side, Dr. Rick Klima just may be your man.

Think Alan Turing during World War II. Or Benedict Cumberbatch playing Alan Turing in 2014. Klima’s students recently worked on the construction of an electromechanical device that replicates the operation of an Enigma Cryptographic machine.

A professor and assistant chair in Appalachian’s Department of Mathematical Sciences, Klima’s main area of scholarship is in applications of linear and abstract algebra, primarily in cryptology and error correcting codes. But, in his role as faculty and academic mentor in The Honors College for all honors STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) majors, his teaching takes any number of directions. During the recent high-drama election cycle, he taught Math and Fairness in Democratic Elections, wherein one of the student projects involved creating hypothetical models for alternative elections. Another interdisciplinary course involved the creation of a new cryptographic method that uses music in the encryption and decryption of information.

“I love studying areas in which mathematics overlaps with other disciplines and with popular culture,” he said. “Teaching honors courses gives me an avenue for exploring some of these areas with talented students who otherwise may never be exposed to how mathematics is relevant in their everyday lives.”

Klima recently attended his second National Collegiate Honors Council meeting, solidifying his commitment to honors students at Appalachian and beyond. “I am keenly aware of my good fortune to be at Appalachian,” he said. “I am able every day to engage a talented, diverse and versatile student body in small classes with what I find most interesting about mathematics, the most fascinating subject in the world.”
The 2016 recipients of the Alumni Association’s Honorary Alumni Award were Faye and John Cooper of Valle Crucis and The Honorable Roy James Maness of Troy.

**Faye and John Cooper**

For more than two decades, Faye and John Cooper, owners of Mast General Store and 2001 recipients of the Appalachian Alumni Association’s Outstanding Service Award, have supported Appalachian’s academics, performing arts and athletics programs.

Through both individual and corporate support, the couple has ensured the success of An Appalachian Summer Festival and a Mast Store Endowed Scholarship for Business. They support student-athletes through the Yosef Club and share their expertise as guest lecturers for Appalachian’s Walker College of Business and Hayes School of Music.

The Coopers have been primary sponsors of the Department of Theatre and Dance Main Stage Season. They have also underwritten the department’s Community Education and Outreach program, which provides daytime performances for area school students, and have provided ticket subsidies for future Mountaineers considering theatre and dance programs during college.

**Mayor Roy James Maness**

Maness, mayor of the Town of Troy for the past 37 years, has advised dozens of Appalachian’s student interns and recent graduates. A collaboration between the university’s public administration degree programs and the Town of Troy allowed more than 50 students over the last two decades to complete local government internships there. Maness has personally mentored many of those students.

A 2010 recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, Maness has been recognized as a person of exemplary service to the state of North Carolina. He credits the knowledge gained from his public service as essential to his ability to mentor student interns and recent graduates. Many of his mentees now work in government agencies throughout the state, including a few who continue to work in Troy.

In 2006, friends of Maness, along with members of the Appalachian State University Local Government Alumni Association, established the Mayor Roy Maness Local Government Endowed Scholarship. To date, this scholarship has supported nine Appalachian students pursuing careers in town administration and city and county management.
Young Alumni Award

Susan Branch ’99

By Elisabeth Wall

While in high school, Susan M. Branch ’99 visited a friend enrolled at Appalachian. Awed by the beauty of the area, she researched the school and discovered “small class sizes and a great business college. I was ready to be a Mountaineer,” she said. Her parents thought an HBCU (historically black college or university) a good idea, she said, and were skeptical about her choice. Branch persevered.

On the way to tour the campus, she recounted “Mom and I drove up that windy [old Highway 421] and got stuck behind a pickup truck with its tailgate down. There was a stiff, dead cow in the back! My mom, she’s looking at me, she says, ‘Susan Michelle, what have you got yourself into?’”

Not an auspicious beginning – but a happy ending. According to Branch, a successful attorney who serves on the university’s Board of Trustees, “I took advantage of everything Appalachian had to offer.”

Branch was a member of the Student Judicial Board, Black Student Association Advisory Board, Pi Sigma Epsilon, Ladies Elite and the Omicron Kappa Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She sent her “very first email ever from a computer in the student union,” she said. She enjoyed a study abroad experience in Australia and played intramural basketball. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in marketing.

Appalachian, she said, “prepared me for the move to the big city of D.C.” (Branch earned a Juris Doctorate from Howard University School of Law in 2002.) “It helped me grow and increased my self confidence. It is a place to get a superior education, form lifelong friendships and grow into a well-rounded, global citizen.”

Revisiting the Multicultural Center for her interview, Branch said in her time, the center was a “safe and welcoming place where I could connect with other students of color, have forums about things that affected us on campus or talk about issues that were occurring nationally. I’m glad to see it is still as welcoming and as safe a place.”

Recently named to the Board of Trustees, she is a past member of the Appalachian State University Foundation Board of Directors and Alumni Council. “I am honored to serve,” she said, “because Appalachian has given so much to me. I was taught to give back to the community… that gives so much to you. Whether it’s my time, talent or treasure, I want current and future Mountaineers to have even better opportunities than I had.”

appalachianmagazine.org/videos/id/665
Outstanding Service Award

Hayes Smith ’82 and Kenan Smith ’84

By Elisabeth Wall

Hayes ’82 and Kenan ’84 Smith are a daunting duo. Both well over 6 feet 3 inches tall, they fill a room with their presence. They finish each other’s sentences, one nodding as the other speaks. They believe in God, hard work, Mountaineer athletics, sustainability and having fun. (They showed up for a video recording wearing false buck teeth.) They also believe in “paying it forward” for their alma mater, and do so in a big way.

“Giving back, that’s what it’s about,” Kenan Smith said. “Pay it forward. We are lucky enough to be able to give. If you can give, give. It’s a privilege.”

Hayes Smith has served on the Alumni Leadership Committee, the Parents Association Board of Directors, The Yosef Club Advisory Board and is a current member of the Walker College of Business Advisory Council. Kenan Smith is equally active – he also has served on the Alumni Leadership Committee, was a member of the Appalachian State University Foundation Board of Directors and has recently been named to the Board of Trustees. They have provided generous support, especially for scholarships and career placement for graduating students, and they support Appalachian athletics.

In an interview in the athletics offices, high above Kidd Brewer Stadium, they shared their commitment to helping students. “We especially like to give to folks who really want to work hard,” Hayes Smith said. “The ones who are working two jobs and trying to make it.”

Perhaps the brothers’ most visible – and fiscally impactful – commitment has been to the Appalachian Energy Summit, an initiative they were instrumental in the conception of and have championed for the past six years. The initiative has realized more than $500 million in avoided energy costs for the University of North Carolina system. “That’s real North Carolina tax dollars saved,” Kenan Smith pointed out, “that can be put to good use in other areas of education.”

Huge advocates of sustainable business, the brothers noted Appalachian has successfully integrated sustainability across all the academic disciplines. For certain, they were both visibly excited when talking about Apperion, the university’s solar vehicle. “It won’t be long,” Hayes Smith promised, “before we see that car sitting on top of the Big A out there on the field.” [The solar car and team were recognized on the field at the Nov. 5 football game against Texas State.]
James “Jim” M. Deal Jr. ’71 is one of Appalachian State University’s native sons. There’s not much about the university or the Boone community he doesn’t know. And, if it comes to furthering education and opportunity, he’s likely been a major player.

In front of Chapell Wilson Hall where he attended high school almost 50 years ago, Deal recounted watching Edwin Duncan Hall being built on the old football field, learning to swim in the old gym and attending church in what is now the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts. His grandfather, Dr. R. K. Bingham, played cards with Dr. B.B. Dougherty, one of Appalachian’s founding brothers, and most of his childhood neighbors were professors. Walking home from school in the afternoons, he’d stop in for a visit and a snack with his grandmother, Jennie Bingham. Her home is now the historic Dan’l Boone Inn, which also had been his grandfather’s medical office and Boone’s first hospital.

Deal’s mother, a teacher, and her five siblings attended Appalachian; so did Deal’s sister, his wife and two of his children. Deal left Boone briefly to complete a law degree at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill (’74) and has practiced law in Boone since. He has been a steadfast advocate for teachers and the advancement of education — a commitment fostered by his personal connection with the high school, the university and the dedicated teachers in his immediate family.

Over the last three decades, he has served on the board of directors for the Appalachian State University Foundation Inc., Appalachian’s Board of Trustees and the UNC Board of Governors. Additionally he served multiple terms on the Watauga Board of Education and as a County Commissioner. He was instrumental in the planning and construction of the new Watauga High School, which is a LEED®-certified building and “built for the future,” Deal said.

“One of the best programs we have going [at Appalachian] is sustainability,” Deal remarked. “So many students come here because they are environmentally concerned. They want to leave the world a better place than when they came. App gives you that opportunity.”

Deal said the relationship the university shares with the community is “the best of both worlds. The symbiosis works perfectly. The university provides benefits to the community, the community derives those benefits but at the same time students are getting real life experiences [in the community] that will help them develop skills and obtain jobs.”

Much of Deal’s legal work is planned giving. He encourages “those who were fortunate enough to go to Appalachian to give back. ‘From those to whom much is given, much is expected,’” he quoted.
By Megan Hayes ’97

For nearly two decades, Appalachian has provided a reading selection to incoming students as a means of establishing a common experience among new students, helping to develop a sense of community, and introducing them to a part of the academic life they are beginning at Appalachian. This University College program, now called the Common Reading Program, actively engages students around a common reading experience as an introduction to the value Appalachian places on the intellectual and academic development of its students. Part of this experience is attending convocation, at which the Common Reading selection’s author delivers the keynote address.

The 2016 Common Reading selection was award-winning author, documentary maker and screenwriter Jon Ronson’s latest book, “So You’ve Been Publicly Shamed.” The book explores the phenomenon of public shaming, including people who have been shamed, those who have done the shaming – including Ronson himself – and ultimately the journey he took from viewing shaming as a freeing, democratizing process to viewing it as a process that reduces our society to one that is intolerant and unaccepting of the complexities of what it means to be human.

In his address, Ronson urged students to push beyond their comfort zones and embrace what is new and different about college life. “If you are thinking, ‘I hope it’s not going to be like high school,’ it’s not,” Ronson assured them. “It is much better. College is a place of adventure and freedom. It was where I found my confidence, and my voice.”

Ronson’s exploration of social media and the consequences borne by those who engage – even with the best of intentions – on these platforms was a catalyst for conversations across Appalachian’s campus about social media behavior, engagement and personal responsibility.

Ronson is the author of nine books, including the best-selling “The Men Who Stare at Goats,” a regular contributor to the public radio show “This American Life” and has written for the British national daily newspaper The Guardian as well as for GQ and The New York Times.

Beginning the college journey with a thought-provoking read

Beginning the college journey with a thought-provoking read

Beginning the college journey with a thought-provoking read
Appalachian has 22 distinguished professorships on its campus. The Walker College of Business (WCOB) boasts four of those. They are the Freeman Insurance Professorship, the Governor James E. Holshouser Jr. Distinguished Professorship in Ethics, Independent Insurance Agents of N.C. Insurance Professorship, and the Kenneth E. Peacock Accounting Professorship.

Why are professorships critical? Haley Childers, communications director for the WCOB, noted, “A distinguished professorship, one that has qualified and completed approval for a state funding match, is crucial for attracting and retaining top talent in the classroom at Appalachian. Business professionals understand that organizations must be competitive to excel. Professorships like the David A. Thompson Professorship in Applied Investments and the Harry M. Davis Distinguished Professorship in Banking will allow the dean to create competitive financial packages as she recruits future faculty members to lead our programs. These professorships allow us to attract the best leaders in their fields to educate our students, continuing the legacy created by folks like those the professorships are named for.”

The David A. Thompson Professorship in Applied Investments is fully funded and the state match has been requested. Already, the Harry M. Davis Distinguished Professorship in Banking has raised over $500,000. The calendar year-end goal is $677,000. “Once we apply for state matching,” Childers said, “it will be a $1 million endowed professorship.”

The professorships honor Professor of Banking and North Carolina Bankers Association Economist Harry M. Davis and Finance Instructor and Bowden Investment Co-Advisor David Thompson.
By Meghan McCandless

The Sustainable Development Teaching and Research Farm at Appalachian’s Blackburn Vannoy property is a gem hidden in the hills of Ashe County. The property, maintained by the Goodnight Family Department of Sustainable Development, spans more than 365 acres and provides a 157-acre tract for experiential learning.

One of just a few active farms associated with a university nationwide, it’s a remarkable learning environment for students and faculty, and an excellent resource for the local community as well. Once a family farm, it’s a living place to see best practices in action, offering students the opportunity to apply what they are learning in the classroom. It also provides a historical dimension – including the long-term consequences of land use – that students rarely see.

Faculty use the farm to showcase sustainable agriculture techniques, including intercropping, permaculture design, crop rotation, sustainable livestock husbandry and more. Several sustainable development courses, such as applied farm operations and silviculture, meet regularly at the farm. Harvests are often sold to local restaurants or donated to food pantries, and the department provides 15 shares of community supported agriculture to encourage engagement beyond the university.

“The farm is a really special place,” said Dr. Richard Rheingans, chair of the Department of Sustainable Development. “It allows us to think about sustainability in a larger context and it brings to life the connection between ecology and social dynamics. It connects students to the university and to Appalachia.”

The farm has grown and changed over time, and the department, in conjunction with the university, has long term goals that include fostering additional interdisciplinary teaching and applied research, providing more community engagement and rehabilitating outdated facilities, like the barn, in accordance with the conservation easement.

“The farm is a hallmark for Appalachian, and a resource for both the university and the community,” said Rheingans. “We aim to address food insecurities in the area, monitor land use practices and ensure our buildings are safe and functional while preserving the historical significance that makes the farm so unique.”
Devin K. Hoffman awarded $7,500 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

By Elisabeth Wall

Devin K. Hoffman, Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship recipient, is one of 252 undergraduates nationally and three in North Carolina to receive the $7,500 award in 2016. The prestigious scholarship, established in 1986 in honor of Sen. Barry Goldwater, fosters and encourages outstanding students to pursue careers in mathematics, natural sciences and engineering. More than 1,150 students competed for the 2016 awards.

Department of Geology Professor Andy Heckert, who was a Goldwater Scholarship recipient in 1991, said Hoffman has been performing at top level since arriving at Appalachian. “Devin’s really built up his people skills – engaging children at outreach events, being the unquestioned leader of my student research group and as president of the Appalachian Geological Society.”

Hoffman is a Chancellor’s Scholar, among the highest-achieving students at Appalachian. From Franklinton, North Carolina, he chose Appalachian because he was able to start his research with Heckert immediately and build his research resume.

His concentration is in paleontology, specifically researching the tooth enamel microstructure of phytosaurs, fossil reptiles superficially resembling a crocodile. He has presented results of his work at major meetings and will be a co-author on a forthcoming manuscript. This year he will present research at the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Hoffman has wanted to be a paleontologist since he was 3 years old after finding fossils in his back yard in Ottawa, Ontario and seeing dinosaurs in the museum there. He believes it is important to study paleontology to better understand mass extinctions and their causes. Philosophical about the impending sixth mass destruction, he said: “Species go extinct all the time. Periods of extinction are followed by periods of massive diversification. My positive outlook is we’ll have a new chapter in evolution.”

Devin K. Hoffman with Professor Andy Heckert
Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

College of Arts & Sciences

cas.appstate.edu
By Wes Saylors

In 2012, Wake Forest School of Medicine and Appalachian State University’s Beaver College of Health Sciences began their partnership to address health care needs in rural North Carolina. The combined efforts of Wake Forest’s 44-year-old physician assistant program and Appalachian’s Beaver College of Health Sciences are working to expand training opportunities for physician assistant students.

A partnership has also developed between the Department of Nursing at Appalachian and Wake Forest. The goal is to enhance the clinical training of four-year BSN graduates in high-need specialty clinic areas. “We have been highly impressed with the quality of the nursing students from Appalachian,” said Cathleen Wheatley, chief nursing executive and vice president of clinical services at Wake Forest Baptist Health.

“The partnership with Wake Forest School of Medicine has been transformational for our students from both programs,” said Dr. Fred Whitt, founding dean of the Beaver College of Health Sciences. Bringing a private university medical school together with a regional public university was the first partnership of its kind in the University of North Carolina system. “The innovative and entrepreneurial spirit and determination to make this partnership a reality only benefits the citizens of Western North Carolina,” said Dr. Reamer Bushardt, department chair of physician assistant studies at Wake Forest. “We have strong programs in medicine and PA at Wake Forest, and Appalachian has the premier college of health sciences in Western North Carolina.”
Encouraging creativity through emerging technologies

By Wes Saylors

Emerging technology efforts in Belk Library and Information Commons can be traced back to the establishment of the Digital Media Studio when the library building was built in 2005. Fast-forward to 2014 and, according to Scott Rice, the library’s coordinator of technology services, “Emerging technology got a big jump when we established the technology checkout desk.” Among the offerings are Arduinos and Raspberry Pis, as well as tablets, GoPro cameras and virtual reality gear.

Rice has been with Appalachian for nine years, and the prospect of being the e-learning librarian was exciting because the intersection of teaching and technology “is one of my core research interests.” The classroom is changing rapidly and Rice, along with Emerging Technologies Librarian Hannah Pope, helps faculty and students meet those changes. Access to emerging technologies prepares students not only for today’s classroom, but for the jobs of the future.

With the technology available at the library, faculty can include 3D printing, robotics and other technologies into their curriculum.

“Sessions and demos are available to any faculty who are interested in these technologies,” said Pope. “Measuring academic success can be more than just a standard term paper,” said Pope. “Faculty around campus are discovering the benefits of integrating emerging technologies with their instruction.”

Rice and Pope feel emerging technologies encourage creativity and the cultivation of new skills. This translates into a larger impact on campus, “whether it is through scholarship, class projects or self-initiated entrepreneurship,” said Pope.

Students work in the Digital Media Studio in Belk Library and Information Commons. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
By Wes Saylors

This past summer, Kaaren Hayes, the director of Parent to Parent High Country Family Support Network, ran into a family that had entered early intervention when their child was 2 years old. The child, now a woman, remembered Hayes fondly and told her, “I can’t imagine anyone I’d rather grow old with than you.”

Hayes began work with Parent to Parent in 1988 as its first staffer. Now the director, she works hard to ensure that the mission continues. Parent to Parent serves a seven-county area (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancy counties), providing free and confidential services to families and children. Parent to Parent’s mission includes service-learning and internships, which Hayes said are valuable to Appalachian students. In addition to giving students the opportunity to be directly involved with their community and diverse populations, Hayes noted, “It makes the book learning real.”

These students attend support meetings and meet with families and hear their stories. Hayes values the energy that the students bring. They value her, too. “Interns tend to come back to me,” she laughed. In fact, four students who have since graduated from Appalachian continue to stay involved, helping plan the annual Spooky Duke race, which is one of the two main fundraising events and the largest community engagement event for the program. This year’s race, which was held on Oct. 29, brought in nearly 400 runners, more than 75 volunteers and over $13,000 in funds that will support local families. The network’s other event is the annual Dance Marathon, held each spring. About 200 students dance the night away, with costume changes and themes.

“I value what the students give us,” Hayes said, “and I think they value what they get.”
Connecting graduate students to key resources while building community

By Wes Saylors

Dr. Robert Sanders, associate dean of the Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies, understands that graduate students are attracted to Appalachian’s academic and research opportunities. But, he also realizes, they have additional needs. “Given their experience, intentions, expectations and circumstances that require a more targeted approach that focuses on their professional, personal and social needs.”

Enter a new initiative, Gradconnect.

Sanders has seen graduate schools moving toward a model of “providing opportunities for professional and personal development,” that target “the specific needs of a more experienced, academically focused student preparing for the workforce.”

To that end, the graduate school created the position of director of graduate enrolled student services and development to oversee all services provided to graduate students.

Laura Padgett ’02 MA, who received her master’s in higher education from Appalachian, was hired for the position in 2015. Her responsibilities include working with units across campus and the Graduate Student Association Senate to identify the needs of Appalachian’s graduate students, both personal and professional. Padgett schedules workshops, orientations and seminars to meet those needs. “In doing so,” said Sanders, “she provides opportunities for graduate students from 65 programs to learn and work in an interdisciplinary community of learners.”

The Gradconnect program is a direct result of a pilot program in spring semester 2016. Gradconnect has offered 24 different events, bringing together more than 930 graduate students for the fall term.

Sanders hopes that this graduate community will be “a hallmark to the graduate experience at Appalachian.” He also hopes to make it a foundational part of recruiting and retention efforts.
By Wes Saylors

Dr. Mélisse Brunet arrived at Appalachian’s Hayes School of Music (HSOM) at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester. Already, she is continuing the tradition of promoting the highest level of music performance in a school that ranks among the 15 largest comparable programs in the United States. Brunet, an assistant professor and director of orchestral activities in the HSOM, completed her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Michigan in the spring of 2016. After a national search, she was offered her position at Appalachian.

The responsibilities of the director of orchestral activities are varied. Brunet teaches conducting classes and coaches chamber music, and she will also be involved in the supervision of student teachers placed in public school orchestral programs. Perhaps her highest-profile responsibility, however, is conducting. She is the conductor for the Appalachian Symphony Orchestra and the Appalachian Opera Orchestra, which collaborates with the Appalachian Opera Theater on a major production each the spring.

Brunet has embraced her new role, and is doing her part to develop the next generation of musical leadership for the state, region and nation.

Students in Appalachian’s HSOM study in four undergraduate degree programs: Music Education, Music Industry Studies, Music Performance and Music Therapy. In addition, the school offers two graduate degree programs, Music Therapy and Performance. Dean William Pelto said, “Students, along with our faculty and staff, form a caring, respectful and inclusive community of musicians and scholars.”

Hayes School of Music

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photo submitted
Rachel Sledge, left, along with her colleague and fellow honors student Elisabeth Moore, presented research at the Federation of European Neuroscience Forum in Copenhagen, Denmark. Photo submitted

An Appalachian global experience: one honors student’s journey

By Wes Saylors

Rachel Sledge is excited about the numerous research opportunities available to her through The Honors College at Appalachian. Sledge is a senior exercise science major from Tampa, Florida, whose family has strong ties to western North Carolina. “In many ways,” she said, “being here feels like home.”

Sledge’s Honors College studies add rigor and opportunity to her studies in Appalachian’s Beaver College of Health Sciences. This past summer, Sledge traveled to Copenhagen, Denmark, to present at the Federation of European Neuroscience Forum on behalf of IMPUSLE: The Premier Undergraduate Neuroscience Journal, which is housed at Appalachian. Sledge has been involved with the journal since her freshman year, and currently serves as the magazine’s editor-in-chief.

She described her week in Copenhagen with senior Elisabeth Moore, the journal’s managing editor, as “an incredible experience.” The opportunity to present at a renowned international conference was enhanced by time spent soaking up another culture and a different country. She half-jokingly talks about being lost “85 percent of the trip,” but this in itself was a learning experience.

“We wanted to do a canal tour… I remember reading on the tour’s website that they had a location on Amager Strand… [which] had a stop on the metro. So we took the metro to the stop… and found ourselves in what looked like a little seaside village… The sand was dark black and gray, and the Baltic Sea was frigid… We could see Sweden in the distance. After talking to some locals, we discovered that the canal tours were in a completely different part of town.”

She did eventually find the canal tour, “which was quite fun,” but she the experience provided the biggest lesson that travel provides: “You just have to go with whatever life throws at you and count it as life experience.”
By Denise Ringler

It was the fall of 2008, and Budd and Nanette Mayer were enjoying a few days in Manhattan. They were anticipating a dinner across town at the home of their good friend, violinist Gil Morgenstern and his family. But there was a problem. It was Halloween, a holiday New Yorkers celebrate as if it were New Year’s Eve. When the Mayers headed out for the evening, the city was bursting with activity and it was impossible to hail a cab. Just when their host was about to give up on seeing his friends, Morgenstern recalled “looking out of my window, and 21 floors down, seeing Budd and Nanette arrive, cheerfully undeterred by the chaos around them, in the rear of a pedi-cab” – transport typically reserved for tourists seeking a novel way to navigate the city.

This story comes as no surprise to Budd and Nanette’s friends, because it illustrates the way in which they have always approached life’s challenges: with determination, optimism, humor and a sense of adventure.

This past spring, we lost Budd Mayer, a beloved friend, leader and long-time arts patron whose generosity, wisdom and vision enabled Appalachian to sustain a diverse array of arts and humanities programming that has shaped the cultural landscape of western North Carolina for more than three decades. To all who knew him, Budd Mayer was forward-thinking, creative and a true innovator. He was a man who followed his dreams, and for whom philanthropy was a family value.

Following service in World War II, Budd and Nanette married and moved to Arlington, Virginia, where a lack of automobiles and proximity to grocery stores triggered a bold idea: home delivery of frozen foods. Budd converted a bus into the “Frostmobile,” and in short time he became a one-man food broker in Miami. The business grew, eventually servicing much of the eastern seaboard.

The Mayers summered in North Carolina and supported a variety of programs at the university: An Appalachian Summer Festival and the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, the Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies, Belk Library and Information Commons, the Department of Theatre and Dance, the Hayes School of Music and the Yosef Club, among others. In 2012, Appalachian awarded Budd and Nanette with honorary degrees. Explains Nanette, “The university has greatly enriched our lives; we got back much more than we gave. I know Budd would want to share that message.”

*With thanks to the Mayer family for their contributions to this article.*
Increasing support for student veterans

By Ken Keuffel

Appalachian marked Veterans Day with the grand opening of the Major General Edward M. Reeder Jr. Student Veteran Resource Center.

The center, on the second floor of the Plemmons Student Union, builds on Appalachian’s “long and proud tradition of working with veterans and their families to help navigate their journey through higher education,” said Chancellor Sheri N. Everts. “I am extremely proud of the increased support our Student Veteran Resource Center will provide.”

A student veteran resource center can increase the chances that student veterans will remain in school, research shows. The Appalachian center, in an effort to be a one-stop shop, will offer such services as peer-to-peer mentoring, tutoring, sessions on time-management and study skills, work-study opportunities as well as help with obtaining GI Bill benefits and getting the most out of them. Peer-to-peer mentoring, long advocated by Appalachian’s chapter of the Student Veterans Association, links an incoming student veteran with one who has been at Appalachian for some time; that way, the latter can help the former navigate what is often unfamiliar territory.

Reeder ’81, a retired two-star major general with the U.S. Army, also was awarded Appalachian’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2013. His career is noted with professional accolades and acts of bravery and compassion.

The opening of the new center affirms Appalachian’s recent designation as a 2017 Military Friendly School® by Victory Media, the premier media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life. The university has been awarded the honor since 2010.

The designation places Appalachian in the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace military students, and to dedicate resources to ensure their success in the classroom and after graduation.

“Appalachian has a long history of supporting student veterans,” said Alice Roess, chair of Appalachian’s Board of Trustees. “I am so pleased and proud we are able to take this next step, and honor Maj. Gen. Reeder’s service to our country at the same time.”

“I had four goals when I got out of high school, and one was I wanted a quality education. Two, I wanted to play Division I football. Three, I wanted to go to a quality ROTC program. And four, I didn’t want it to cost my parents any money.”

— Edward M. Reeder Jr. ’81, retired two-star major general with the US Army and renowned “warrior diplomat.” His career is filled with professional accolades and acts of bravery and compassion. He was awarded Appalachian’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2013. On Nov. 11, 2016, Appalachian’s Student Veteran Resource Center was named in his honor.
Shooting from the hip

At this year’s Alumni Awards luncheon, brothers Hayes and Kenan Smith lined up for their official portraits with Chancellor Everts. Their antics had her laughing so hard she was unable to pose for a serious photograph. I snapped one frame of those crazy Smith brothers doing their thing and later, when I uploaded the images to my computer, the unadulterated joy and happiness of this unstaged moment instantly became a favorite Appalachian moment of mine.

by Marie Freeman ’85
University Photographer