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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Official Magazine of Appalachian State University
It’s official — a university flower

By Dr. Linda Coutant ’01 ’17

Summer and seasonal wildflowers may fade, but the colors of the black-eyed Susan will illuminate throughout the year in the hearts of Mountaineers.

The native perennial, which grows abundantly on campus, was named Appalachian State University’s official flower by the Board of Trustees Sept. 22. Chancellor Sheri Everts announced at the start of the 2017-18 academic year she would put forth a resolution based on the idea from Horticulture Specialist Daniel Burleson.

“I love Daniel’s idea,” Everts said. “Our remarkable Landscape Services gardeners, who exemplify our institutional commitment to sustainability, keep our campus emblazoned with nature’s black and gold at the start of every fall semester.”
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE
BLACK-EYED SUSAN AS THE OFFICIAL
UNIVERSITY FLOWER

Approved by the Appalachian State University Board of Trustees on September 22, 2017.

Whereas, environmental and geographical beauty is a hallmark of Appalachian State University and the Appalachian Experience;

Whereas, Appalachian’s Landscape Services team exemplifies our institutional commitment to sustainability through its gardening practices and choice of native plant species;

Whereas, the official colors of Appalachian are black and gold;

Whereas, each summer the campus and surrounding landscapes bloom with the gold petals and black center of the perennial wildflower known as black-eyed Susan;

Whereas, the black-eyed Susan’s colors peak as Appalachian begins its academic year and students embark on new endeavors;

Whereas, Appalachian supports through its research and installation of honeybee hives the health of pollinating insects, who drink nectar from this wildflower and are vital to our ecosystem;

Whereas, Appalachian values the ideas of employees and the meaning they find in the place where they live and work;

Whereas, Appalachian celebrates traditions that reflect the best of who we are;

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Board of Trustees for Appalachian State University, endorse Horticulture Specialist Daniel Burleson’s idea to make the black-eyed Susan the official flower of Appalachian State University and an Appalachian campus tradition.

James Barnes, Chair
September 22, 2017
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Veterans Day 2017 — this photo captures generations dedicated to service to our country. Appalachian is designated a Military Friendly School — this year ranking No. 9 among large public universities. Read more about our commitment to this deserving population on page 20. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
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During my tenure at Appalachian, I have witnessed firsthand how leadership, faculty, staff and students weave sustainability into their lives. They live like they mean it — an approach to life we think sets Appalachian and its community apart.

Our Chief Sustainability Officer Dr. Lee Ball once shared with me a simple and elegant definition of sustainability: when everyone and everything, in any given situation, wins — that is sustainable.

In this issue, we share win-win stories about faculty who are teaching by example, students — traditional and otherwise — who advocate for others and a community that is engaged in advancing social justice. Other stories include:

• Our 2017 class was our largest and most diverse. Read how leaders in the Division of Student Affairs are positioned to care for, engage and transform these students and their lives.

• Our Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Willie C. Fleming explains inclusive excellence — a win-win by any definition. You’ll find examples of programs and initiatives that show our commitment to that concept.

• Our excellent faculty work closely with students both in the classroom and on research projects, many as participants in faculty research grants and contracts. Some examples of the outstanding academic endeavors taking place are included here.

• Our reputation for providing an innovative, interdisciplinary and integrative academic experience is borne out again and again on our academic Colleges’ pages.

• Arts opportunities on our campus rival those of major cities worldwide, and we have evolved from simply presenting the arts to engaging arts audiences of all ages in meaningful ways.

• Our athletics programs successfully challenge more than 450 student-athletes both physically and mentally — another win-win. Read about how you might support our student-athletes through the university’s A Mountaineer Impact initiative.

I hope you are inspired by these stories and that you will share them with others. You can relay proudly that Appalachian has been defining sustainability since 1899. We continue to do so each day. We remain bold, pioneering and optimistic — characteristics exemplified daily by our faculty, staff, students and alumni. This magazine is dedicated to each of you who define the Appalachian spirit.

From the Chancellor

Sheri Everts
Chancellor
With this issue, Appalachian Magazine is moving to a once-a-year publication schedule. This will allow us to use the print format to share long-lasting stories that showcase major university initiatives and to be sustainable regarding use of resources.

For daily App State news, events, full-length features, photo galleries, podcasts, videos and more, make today.appstate.edu your homepage. Join us, today.

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12,500 copies of this document were printed at a cost of $32,898 or $2.63 per copy. Appalachian State University is committed to sustainable practices. Please recycle.
We hear it over and over, in hundreds of iterations from visitors and members of the Appalachian Community:

“Your campus is different.”
“Everyone is so kind.”
“There’s just a feeling here.”
“My professor really cares.”

Is it merely good manners? Mountaineer resiliency? Our extraordinary location? Or, is it that Appalachian State University attracts certain types of individuals, and then nurtures their natural inclinations to be authentic and fully engaged — from demonstrating their commitment to sustainable living and social justice, to others who simply are intentional about the options life serves up every day: which products to buy, friends to choose or ethical path to follow?

In this issue of Appalachian Magazine, you will meet faculty, staff, students and alumni who live, teach and act intentionally — who are living like they mean it.
Using her education to change the world ...  

Accounting major earns U.S. citizenship, gives back to Ethiopia

By Haley Childers and Dr. Linda Coutant ’01 ’17

Born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Maheder Yohannes is a first-generation college student majoring in accounting at Appalachian.

Having immigrated to America at age 10 under dire political and familial circumstances, the senior received her U.S. citizenship in February 2017. She returned to Ethiopia in December 2017 to visit extended family — and also give back some of the educational benefits she has received.

“I appreciate learning, growing and expanding my knowledge. In the words of the late Nelson Mandela, ‘Education is the most important weapon which you can use to change the world.’ My education is my important investment, and I work hard every day in order to ensure that my parents’ sacrifices are not in vain,” she said.

In her research, she said she learned that one out of three children of primary school age in Ethiopia is not in school. “Children as young as seven shine shoes and sell chewing gum, sweets, lottery tickets and other small items on the streets so they can make ends meet for themselves and their families,” Yohannes said.

She created a YouCaring crowdsourcing page to help provide school supplies and required uniforms for children in Addis Ababa during her visit.

“As fortunate as I have been, I can’t imagine returning to that land empty-handed,” she said.

On her return from Ethiopia, she begins an accounting internship in Charlotte, North Carolina, with PricewaterhouseCoopers in early 2018. She has already completed two internships with Ally Financial in Charlotte, which she secured through contacts made during the Walker College’s Business Connections event.
Professor’s practice what they teach, operate their home at net positive energy use with solar panels

By Elisabeth Wall

Dr. Jim and Jennifer Westerman, both professors at Appalachian, made a decision that has saved the equivalent of 276 trees and avoided 10,624 pounds of CO2 emissions so far this calendar year: having 50 solar panels installed on their 1972 home. They are also accumulating enough energy credits to power their family of four through the High Country’s less sunny winter days, and then some.

The Westermans’ home is operating at net positive energy consumption, meaning the total amount of renewable energy created at their home exceeds the total amount of energy used by the family on an annual basis. They expect to generate three times the energy they will use during the summer months.

“The extra goes back to the grid,” Jim Westerman explained. The local power company has a program that gives them credit for the extra power.

Concerns about climate change were their primary motivation. “It is positive for the environment,” Jim Westerman said, “and it sets an example of environmental sustainability for our kids.”

Both professors are deeply entrenched in sustainability efforts. Jim Westerman is director of sustainable business and the James E. Holshouser Distinguished Professor of Ethics in the Walker College of Business (WCOB). “Sustainable business is the future,” Jim Westerman said. “Businesses must be more aware of their environmental impacts and be connected to communities.”

Jennifer Westerman is an associate professor in the College of Fine and Applied Arts’ Department of Sustainable Development. Her research and teaching interests include environmental literature, environmental humanities, environmental and social justice, working-class studies and environmental writing.

“I love my job at Appalachian and my students,” Jennifer Westerman said. “Many students Appalachian attracts have immense passion and an incredible drive for social change. They want to do meaningful work in this world. I feel it’s my responsibility to model some of the things I teach.”

The Westermans in front of their home, which holds 50 solar panels and generates enough power for their family of four with extra to share. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
Drs. Zach and Alisha Farris address conservation and health crises in Madagascar

By Mary Giuncia

Drs. Alicia and Zach Farris, both professors at Appalachian, are doing research in Madagascar that is improving lives there and enlightening students here.

Zach Farris, visiting assistant professor in the Department of Health and Exercise Science, is exploring deforestation and conservation issues that affect wildlife, with a focus on Madagascar’s native aye-aye — found nowhere else on earth.

Alisha Farris is an assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition and Health Care Management within the Beaver College of Health Sciences. She is investigating food insecurity and malnutrition and compiling community nutrition assessments.

Protecting aye-ayes and ecosystems

Madagascar’s aye-ayes evolved in isolation over the last 200 million years and are found nowhere else on earth, Zach Farris said. When he arrived in Madagascar 15 years ago, they were dying off in the national parks that had been established to protect them.

His research over the next 10 years led to the discovery that domestic and feral dogs and cats were killing the native species as prey, driving them out of protected natural areas and spreading diseases and parasites. The people couldn’t afford to spay, neuter or vaccinate their dogs and cats, and there were few veterinarians in the country to perform such services.

Rather than depend on private or government solutions, Zach Farris and some of his colleagues founded the Mad Dog Initiative, a nonprofit that provides veterinary services to pets for free and flies veterinarians to Canada for training.
Combating malnutrition and food insecurities

Alisha Farris has conducted research in Madagascar on how Malagasy people travel to reach food markets, how they get there and whether they can afford nutritious food. Her data, including the heights and weights of the villagers, will form the basis of a community-based plan to improve malnutrition and food insecurity. Such studies are valuable in the Appalachian classroom, she said, as they give her students real-world examples of a community nutrition assessment.

“When it comes to nutrition and health and sustainability, all of those things are connected in a big messy problem that can’t be solved in a silo. They have to be solved by all of us working together,” Alisha Farris said.

Global to local lessons

Although nearly 10,000 miles separate Boone, North Carolina, from Madagascar, Zach Farris believes what happens there matters here, and that this may be the most valuable lesson he can offer his students.

“Deforestation in Madagascar is going to have consequences for the rest of us here,” he said. “In southern Madagascar, we’ve seen the collapse of some ecosystems and the most intense food famines we’ve seen in Africa. Our tax dollars are going to try and address this problem. Our service workers are going to those areas. Had we been involved before, that might not have happened.”

“Whether I am providing an education program in Madagascar or standing in front of my class here at Appalachian, I have to know where their base knowledge is (and) ... make lessons or topics relevant and applicable. ... When we make it personal and accessible, then it comes to life and people take hold of it and truly learn it,” Zach Farris said.

For summer 2018, the couple hopes to incorporate Appalachian students into a study abroad program. The simplicity of life in the Madagascar villages where the Farrises work can provide students with a quick understanding of the complex factors that interact to create conservation and health crises.
Thwarting Human Traffickers

Alumni Matt and Laura Parker operate a nonprofit that helps find and free slaves

By Ken Keuffel

Noi*, a young girl from Thailand, is one of over 800 slaves whose rescue The Exodus Road has facilitated in its five-year history. Working in tandem with police in five countries, the organization has saved hundreds of slaves and led to the arrest of nearly 300 human traffickers.

In 2012, Matt Parker and his wife Laura, both 2000 graduates of Appalachian, started The Exodus Road, a Colorado Springs, Colorado-based nonprofit that helps find and free slaves in India, Southeast Asia and the Americas. Matt Parker is CEO of The Exodus Road, and his wife, Laura Parker, serves as the nonprofit’s vice president of communications.

Noi was rescued after Matt Parker received her text asking for help, in which she said, “I’ve been trafficked.” Traffickers had flown her to the Kingdom of Bahrain, an island nation in the Middle East, where they deceived her and locked her in the room of a hotel. She faced the prospect of working involuntarily in the sex industry.

“It’s always the same,” Matt Parker said, reflecting on the rescue of Noi and others. “These are human beings — little boys, little girls. They have a future … a name … parents … a history. They have so much that has been taken away from them. To get the information that we’ve got them, that they’re safe — it’s like this huge exhale.”

The Parkers, both natives of Hickory, North Carolina, first began to appreciate the scale of the human trafficking problem in 2010, when they moved with their three children to Thailand. Matt Parker directed a home for children and a charitable foundation. Until then, he had been a youth pastor at a church in Colorado.

The home Matt Parker ran in Thailand provided education for Noi and other impoverished girls from the Hill Tribes region of northern Thailand, an area where human trafficking is rampant. As the Parkers learned more about human trafficking, they discovered that efforts to combat it were underfunded.

“Law enforcement is often understaffed and underfunded and overwhelmed with the issues they are battling,” said Laura Parker, a Chancellor’s Scholar at Appalachian who received a bachelor’s degree in elementary education with a minor in English.

The Exodus Road has addressed this problem by supplying much-needed technology, investigators, case support and evidence gathering to enable or encourage law enforcement to conduct raids or rescue missions.

Matt Parker, a communication major, stressed that his organization works in partnership with local authorities, having spent years to develop the right relationships.

“We believe in collaboration, that no one wins unless we all win,” he said.

Learn more about the organization at www.theexodusroad.com

*An alias the Parkers used to protect the girl’s identity.
We believe every person with the desire for an advanced education should have access to our university and have equal access to the benefits that foster a socially just and equitable culture.

In these pages, you’ll read about Appalachian’s higher expectations — the name of the UNC System strategic plan now in place — concerning access and inclusive excellence:

• support of the UNC System strategic plan, specifically in regard to an open and accessible pathway to education;
• proactive efforts to value, respect and support all members of our campus community, including underrepresented groups within a welcoming campus climate;
• a space, resources and recognition for student veterans;
• a dedicated location and recognition for NPHC’s Divine Nine; and
• a new vision and mission for the Division of Student Affairs.
Affirming a commitment to success

By Megan Hayes ‘97

On Sept. 22, 2017, Chancellor Sheri Everts and UNC System President Margaret Spellings signed an agreement affirming Appalachian’s commitment to the goals of the UNC System strategic plan — Higher Expectations.

The plan challenges Appalachian to continue strengthening its focus on increasing enrollment and achievement for low-income and rural students, as well as in critical workforce programs such as health care, STEM and teacher education.

In an address to faculty and staff at the beginning of the fall semester, Everts said, “These initiatives are ambitious, but achievable, and they are consistent with our founders’ mission to increase access to education for those students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to achieve a college education.”

In crafting the strategic plan, the UNC Board of Governors visited each university to solicit input from students, faculty and staff, then worked with each university’s leadership to establish goals for higher education in North Carolina, as well as for each individual institution.

The UNC System office will publish annual progress reports for each university, as well as the overall system metrics.

Read more about the plan here: northcarolina.edu/strategic-planning
Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Willie C. Fleming has a goal of “inclusive excellence” at Appalachian.

“This means all should have access to the excellence this university offers,” Fleming said. “Every person deserves equitable and fair treatment, a chance and an opportunity to obtain whatever is ‘excellent’ and available to others in our community.”

The term further suggests “that the words inclusive and excellence are synonymous,” he said. “As we increase the number of underrepresented faculty, staff and students, we are simultaneously increasing our excellence.”

In his leadership role, Fleming provides the vision, leadership, coordination and strategic planning for improving Appalachian’s campus diversity and inclusion so that everyone — all students, staff and faculty — are valued, supported and respected.

Assessing levels of value, support and respect

Fleming’s work focuses on more than numbers. It focuses on expanding what many see as a welcoming Appalachian environment into a culture that better fosters social justice and equity.

“We continue to study campus climate to assess how we value, respect and support members of our underrepresented groups, as well as the general campus community,” Fleming said.

“Our goal mirrors the intent of the Association of American Colleges and Universities — that a high-quality, practical liberal education should be the standard of excellence for all students.

The AAC&U says that making excellence inclusive requires that we uncover inequities in student success, identify effective educational practices and build such practices organically for sustained institutional change,” he said.

“If we are to be an inclusive campus, it is critical that all members of our university community have equal access to the benefits that foster a socially just and equitable culture,” Fleming said.

Beyond recruitment and retention

In his 18 months on campus, Fleming has worked on meeting and/or continuing the work of the 14 diversity initiatives identified by the 2013 Chancellor’s Commission on Diversity, as well as these additional programs:

• Chancellor’s Student Advisory Board for Diversity Recruitment.
• Faculty Fellows Program.
• Partnerships with historically black colleges and universities.
• Fleming Scholars and Mentors program.
• Inclusion Infusion Project, including a three-day Summer Diversity Inclusion Institute in 2017 for faculty, staff and administrators.
• Collaboration with Inclusive Excellence Director Dr. Brandy Bryson, with Appalachian’s Center for Academic Excellence — a new faculty-driven initiative to support faculty in creating inclusive curricula and classroom dynamics.
Fleming said he was encouraged by campus participation in the Inclusion Infusion Project last spring, which was funded through a grant from the University of North Carolina General Administration. A total of 1,895 students and 328 faculty, staff and administrators took an inclusion needs survey, and 95 faculty, staff, administrators and students participated in focus groups. Their input helped shape programming in the Summer Diversity Inclusion Institute that explored bias, micro- and macroaggression and encouraged inclusion practices, he said.

‘Equity-minded practitioners’

As a licensed professional counselor and former professor of counseling, Fleming brings compassion to his work.

“We all have some ‘junk in our trunk,’” he said with a smile, acknowledging that everyone has biases, judgments and preconceived notions. Fleming often quotes author Howard Ross, who said the question isn’t whether people have bias, but rather what their biases are.

“We bring our whole self to our interactions, including the aspects that are unconscious,” he said. “Implicit bias is most lethal, because individuals aren’t aware of the denigrating character defects they carry into situations and interactions. However, too often unconscious bias, unchecked, will manifest as microaggressions, microinvalidations, microinsults and microassaults.”

The good news is, research shows diversity education can modify those automatic biases, Fleming said.

“My hope, which drives my work with bias education, is to result in people being aware of the denigrating effects biased behavior can have on others who are already experiencing less privilege. It is my belief that most people do not want to contribute to the stress and hostility of people who are already marginalized,” he said.

“The AAC&U reminds us that diversity, inclusion and equity are the core principles in promoting an inclusively excellent learning community,” Fleming said. Referencing AAC&U’s tenants, he continued, “To become ‘equity-minded practitioners,’ we have to be willing to engage in the necessary, and sometimes difficult, conversations and decision-making that can lead to transformational change for student learning and achievement. That can happen, when we become courageous.”

Appalachian’s 2013 Diversity Statement:

Appalachian State University is committed to developing and allocating resources to the fundamental task of creating a diverse campus culture. We value diversity as the expression of human similarities and differences, as well as the importance of a living and learning environment conducive to knowledge, respect, acceptance, understanding and global awareness.
Active Involvement

Sophomore Abraham Howell received an Academic Excellence Scholarship to come to Appalachian, as well as the Dr. Willie C. Fleming Scholarship, which is granted to students who demonstrate a desire to promote cultural diversity.

Fascinated by Latino culture, he joined the Hispanic Student Association — and encouraged two friends to join, too. He also became an officer in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology Club.

Howell said he has no problem making friends, and he supports diversity at Appalachian by engaging with existing groups.

“I’m not a starter, but I will definitely try anything at least once,” Howell said. “Getting involved is an active way to show I’m interested in diversity and that diversity is good for the community. I want to be known as someone who wasn’t afraid to do new things.”

Next, he said he may join the Advocates Promoting Positive Self Image (APPSI) club.

“App is great — I love it,” Howell said.
Supporting Appalachian’s Veterans

Open one year, Student Veteran Resource Center provides key services and important connections

By Mary Giunca

One year after opening, the Major General Edward M. Reeder Jr. Student Veteran Resource Center at Appalachian is a haven for many of the student veterans, especially during peak hours of use between 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. The center is seeing an average of 28 students a day, said Eric Gormly, coordinator of student veteran services at Appalachian.

“The students talk about the joy the center brings them,” Gormly said. “I think what they value most is the camaraderie. That’s one thing you miss when you leave the military.”

Few people consider the culture shock that awaits service members transitioning out of the military into civilian life, said Gormly, who served in the U.S. Marines for six years. He said he draws on his own experiences to make the center user-friendly. A recent survey is further guiding development of services.

The center, located in the Plemmons Student Union, offers one-stop services for the 302 veterans and active-duty military personnel on campus. Since last November when the center opened, that group has logged over 3,000 visits to the center, Gormly said.

“They see school as a mission,” Gormly said. “I’m not going to say they take school more seriously, but they’re graduating in four years and they have higher graduation rates and GPAs than their counterparts. That’s true at Appalachian and (throughout) the nation.”

For more information about the center and its offerings, visit studentveteranservices.appstate.edu

“I am pleased the center has proven so popular with our student veterans … More, I am honored these students who have served our country so unselfishly have chosen Appalachian.”

— Chancellor Sheri Everts
Marina Ruff, sophomore  
**U.S. Army medic**

*Hometown:* Concord, North Carolina  
*Major:* Nursing  
*Campus involvement:* Major General Edward M. Reeder Jr. Student Veteran Resource Center

Serving as a medic in the U.S. Army pointed Ruff toward studies in nursing.  
“I’m very intrigued by medicine and how far it’s come and what medicine can do to help people,” she said. “And I like to help people.”

She’s enjoying her courses in biology, anatomy and medical ethics.  
“I really learned how to think more broadly in ethics,” she said. “I had a black and white view on some issues. It really helped me expand my train of thought.”

Ruff has found a second home on campus at the center. In fact, Appalachian was the only college she applied to, she said, because of its attention to student veterans.

“The thing I value most at the SVRC is the camaraderie that I miss from being in the military,” she said. “I wish that more veterans knew about the benefits Appalachian State offers student veterans.”

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**A Military Friendly School**

Since 2010, Victory Media, the premier media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life, has awarded Appalachian the designation of Military Friendly School. 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.
Under the leadership of J.J. Brown, who served as Appalachian’s dean of students from 2010-17, Student Development has a new name and the Division of Student Affairs has a new, division-wide commitment to developing lifelong learners and leaders. Brown became vice chancellor for student development in May 2017. He immediately began an in-depth exploration of the mission, vision and values for the division, and in mid-June, with support from the division’s leadership and other staff, he proposed a name change for the division to Student Affairs.

“This change will allow our division to further align our programs and services with student affairs research and principles across the country,” said Brown. There’s also a practical benefit, he pointed out, in that, “it also aligns us symbolically with our colleagues in Academic Affairs and Business Affairs.”

The change, however, goes far beyond the division’s name. The work over the summer led to new mission and vision statements, and additional guidance for the division regarding diversity and inclusive excellence.

The division’s new mission statement emphasizes developing lifelong learners and leaders by engaging and challenging students within a culture of care and inclusion. The new vision is to “aspire to transform all students through a foundation of care and engagement.”

These three key areas of emphasis — care, engage, transform — now guide all decision-making for the division, and are rooted in the division’s history and decades-long commitment to student success. Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Leroy Wright, who was a leader in the...
We aspire to transform all students through a foundation of care and engagement.”
— Student Affairs vision statement

Dr. Jonathon Hyde joins Student Affairs as dean of students

Dr. Jonathon Hyde joined Student Affairs as dean of students on Nov. 30, 2017. Prior to joining Appalachian, he served as director of residential life and education at Louisiana State University, where he also held the position of interim associate dean of students and director of student advocacy and accountability.

Hyde will report to the vice chancellor for student affairs and provide direct leadership, administration and general oversight for the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Psychological Services Center for students, Parent and Family Services, the Student Legal Clinic and Off-Campus Student Services, Student Conduct, Student Health Services and the Department of Wellness and Prevention Services.

Hyde holds a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Southern California and Master of Science degrees in higher education and criminology and criminal justice from Florida State University.
Centrally located next to the Veterans Memorial garden and near the B.B. Dougherty Administration Building, a grassy swath in front of I.G. Greer Hall is shaded in summer and protected in winter months by a cropping of hardwoods. The area is slated to become a formal gathering space for the historically black Greek-letter organizations that make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), often collectively called the Divine Nine.

Across the United States, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have developed a tradition of providing a gathering space for the Divine Nine. For well over 50 years, it has been an established HBCU tradition to provide these plots as a visible way to commemorate legacies of the Divine Nine on college campuses.

Appalachian’s students have been advocating for such a space for close to 10 years. According to Appalachian’s Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Willie C. Fleming, “When Chancellor Everts arrived on campus, students, faculty and staff brought the idea to her attention and she was immediately supportive of the project.” Students and staff presented their findings, along with a conceptual design, to Appalachian’s Board of Trustees.

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Embracing a rich tradition
— space and recognition for the NPHC’s Divine Nine

By Elisabeth Wall

The site designated for the National Pan-Hellenic Council’s (NPHC) Plots and Gardens project provides background for an architect’s conceptual design of the project. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
Today is a historic day not just for NPHC Greeks but for all of Appalachian! Today is the day that we dedicate a space on campus that recognizes the existence, perseverance and excellence of all seven NPHC organizations (on our campus). This will be a revered place where undergraduates and alumni can gather for fellowship and to celebrate a proud legacy.
— Appalachian Board of Trustees Secretary Susan Branch ’99

Fleming said. With the board’s endorsement, the space was dedicated over the 2017 Homecoming weekend. “This has been a long time coming,” Chancellor Everts said. “And it is time.”

In her speech at the dedication, Jaelyn Felder, president of both the National Pan-Hellenic Council and Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society at Appalachian, said the plots will give the NPHC greater visibility on a predominately white campus. As an important diversity recruiting tool, she said one goal would be to fully educate the Appalachian Ambassadors, students who direct campus tours for potential students and their families, about the NPHC and the Plots and Gardens project.

“The plots will also be NPHC’s ceremony space as well as our community hang out,” Felder said. “We will use the space during the organization’s Founder’s Day, new member presentation shows and for our special events.”

At the dedication, Felder reminded the crowd that student, faculty, staff and alumni NPHC members have held influential positions throughout Appalachian’s history. “There are NPHC members that stand as some of the greatest leadership on this campus,” she said. “This greatness should be appreciated, and these plots, this land that you are all standing on, will do that.”

Learn more at: diversity.appstate.edu

The following fraternities and sororities make up the NPHC, often collectively called the Divine Nine. Seven of the nine NPHC organizations, indicated by asterisks, have chapters on Appalachian’s campus.

• Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, founded 1906 at Cornell University*
• Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, founded 1908 at Howard University*
• Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, founded 1911 at Indiana University*
• Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, founded 1911 at Howard University*
• Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, founded 1913 at Howard University*
• Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, founded 1914 at Howard University*
• Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, founded 1920 at Howard University*
• Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, founded 1922 at Butler University
• Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, founded 1963 at Morgan State University
Appalachian is intentional in developing an intense research profile, particularly in environmental issues and health-related initiatives. We believe faculty must maintain a vigorous research portfolio to remain current in their field, to refresh their intellectual interests and to offer their students the opportunity to conduct their own primary research — the latter a benefit of attending an undergraduate teaching institution.

We strive to achieve a balance that keeps faculty intellectually engaged while working closely with students both in the classroom and on research projects, many as participants in faculty research grants and contracts. Students come to Appalachian with a strong desire to serve the local community, and the university supports their commitment by offering opportunities for volunteer work and service-learning. In 2015-16 we offered close to 100 service-learning and community-based research courses. Students often say these opportunities to work in the community open their hearts and minds to ways they can make a difference, and in turn influence their choice of major and career path.
When Middle Fork Elementary School opens for the 2018-19 school year in August 2018, it will have a new name: Appalachian State University Academy at Middle Fork. Appalachian’s Reich College of Education (RCOE) will partner with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WS/FCS) district to develop Middle Fork into a new laboratory school. Appalachian was selected as one of nine institutions within the University of North Carolina System charged with establishing a laboratory school in accordance with North Carolina House Bill 1030, which passed in June 2016. The initiative partners the two education systems together to improve the performance of the Middle Fork students, particularly in the area of reading literacy, while also offering opportunities for curriculum development for RCOE faculty and students. The University of North Carolina Board of Governors selected Appalachian because of the quality of its educator preparation program.

Dr. Melba Spooner, dean of the RCOE, sees benefits for everyone involved. “Middle Fork Academy students will benefit from a new curriculum established by RCOE professors. Middle Fork teachers will have opportunities to implement the new curriculum with support from RCOE students. RCOE students will benefit from mentorship from experienced Middle Fork teachers in addition to their RCOE faculty. RCOE faculty will have the opportunity to develop an innovative, new curriculum. It’s a win-win all around.”

The RCOE and WS/FCS have a history of collaboration that dates back nearly 20 years. Initiatives have included teacher professional development, a reading education master’s program in Winston-Salem and a partnership that provides support for literacy professional development to school system teachers.

Students in the new Academy at Middle Fork will be Appalachian students, making this incoming class the youngest in history. Middle Fork teachers will be Appalachian employees.

Chancellor Sheri Everts will oversee the lab school, to include establishing an advisory board, the academic program for the school, and standards of performance and conduct for the school. The implementation team for the lab school will spend the 2017-18 academic year in several stages of planning.
The Appalachian Energy Summit — students present, share perspectives

By Elisabeth Wall

Each year a select number of students from across the UNC System are invited to attend the Appalachian Energy Summit. Students have opportunities to present their work, exchange ideas and network with potential employers. Last year, more than 30 students presented energy-related posters and competed for the chance to serve as a highlight speaker on policy, sustainability or implementation ideas. The audience consists of all the summit’s attendees, affording students high visibility with potential employers and educators.

Sustainable development major Devyn Barron, a sophomore from Cary, North Carolina, interviewed a number of students at the 2017 summit, asking them to share their thoughts about the value of the energy summit and sustainability in general. She shared her thoughts as well.

Sustainability became particularly important when Barron served as president of an environmental club in high school. “Being surrounded by likeminded people who were all passionate about ensuring a safe and clean future for generations to come truly empowered me. … Building relationships with people who want what is best for everyone around the globe can honestly make you feel unstoppable … I have great hope for our future, and I believe majoring in sustainable development is going to help me begin the journey to join others in making the greatest impact.” ~Devyn Barron, sophomore

“Indoor air quality and ventilation is what I am most passionate about. My degree is in building science, so I’ve been concentrating on how we can maximize ventilation and how we can keep our buildings safe and healthy and also keeping our energy in line so we aren’t wasting a lot of resources.” ~Rachel Dodgen, ’17 MS

“One of the things I see is that issues with sustainability, like climate change and other issues, often disproportionately affect (those) disenfranchised, and I think a lot of those people affected are women. Especially in developing parts of the world.” ~Visiting student

Read more of Barron’s stories at: sustain.appstate.edu/initiatives/energy-summit/2017/perspectives
“I have been working in the innovation space for most of my career, and I believe passionately that the world needs more innovators,” said Dr. Mark Lewis, assistant professor of management in the Walker College of Business (WCOB). Lewis, who has taught design thinking in the college for four years, is co-chair of AppLab — a collaborative project between the College of Fine and Applied Arts and the WCOB.

“We need to develop students that have both left-brained and right-brained skills, who have the capacity to look at problems and opportunities through an interdisciplinary lens.” Even more, he continued, “We need to develop students who combine these cognitive skills with the grit, perseverance, attitude and tenacity that innovators must possess.”

AppLab is a multidisciplinary design thinking course focused on developing sustainable solutions to complex, real-world problems. The class is led by multidisciplinary faculty, and engages students from across campus. Projects are defined by outside “clients” — companies and nonprofit entities. Students work directly with those professional partners to help solve issues the clients have identified. Working in teams on an in-depth semester-long project, students engage across disciplines to creatively contribute to the larger community.

Sophomore and innovator Sarah Miner has a passion for creating equity in health care. Through AppLab, she is part of an interdisciplinary team of students developing a mobile medical unit for residents of rural Malawi. “I’m learning teamwork, empathy mapping, research skills and design thinking,” she said. “It’s my favorite class this year.”

“Where you live, your socio-economic status, gender and race can all affect access to health resources,” said Miner, who works part time as a certified nursing aid. “I want to attend physician assistant school and work in underserved areas, and later become an osteopathic physician.”
Since 2010, Appalachian has had consistent grant funding totaling more than $1 million for research projects dedicated to understanding the relationship between honeybee health and beekeeping practices.

Dr. Wilkes and students from the Department of Computer Science have collaborated with leading bee researchers from around the U.S. to build the world’s largest honeybee health database as part of the Bee Informed Partnership.

These grants have allowed faculty and students from departments in the Walker College of Business — working with Department of Computer Science faculty and students — to build a comprehensive data platform that records data for better management of beehives.

Under the Healthy Hives 2020 initiative, current work of Dr. Joseph Cazier and Dr. Ed Hassler in the Walker College of Business and Dr. James Wilkes in the Department of Computer Science, along with their students, is focused on data analytics to study beekeeping practices and hive health outcomes.

The goal is to develop “genius hive” technology that results in best management practices for beekeepers and growers of pollinated crops to follow.
More than $15 billion in U.S. agricultural production depends on honeybees. Luke Craig, of Boone, N.C., right, a graduate student in computer science, explains Appalachian's BeeMon system to UNC Board of Governors member Robert Rucho. Photo by Marie Freeman '85

BeeMon monitoring system helps beekeepers reverse the decline of honeybees

More than 30 percent of the food humans eat depends on honeybee pollination.

In recent years, beekeepers have faced significant losses to their populations of managed honeybees. Many researchers are studying this phenomenon, attempting to determine its cause and how its effects can be mitigated.

Appalachian’s BeeMon system was created as a result of five years of research and development in the Visual and Image Processing Lab in the Department of Computer Science to allow beekeepers to observe their hives. It also provides significant data to researchers in the field.

Appalachian’s BeeMon project:

• captures audio, video and other sensor data, using a system that is reliable, inexpensive and causes minimal disruption to the bees’ behavior;

• automatically captures sensor data to be used on local personal computers and can send the data to a remote server for analysis;

• has the ability to operate continuously in an outdoor apiary environment, allowing for constant, near real-time data collection; and

• has successfully involved many undergraduate and graduate students over the past six years.

The BeeMon project was made possible by funding from the Lowe’s Distinguished Professor research fund.
Co-Director of University Documentary Film Services (UDFS) Dr. Beth Davison proposed the creation of University Documentary Film Services in 2008 as a place where students and faculty could check out video equipment and learn how to use it for a project.

Today, it is a vibrant, interdisciplinary program that teaches, engages in and presents documentary work grounded in collaborative local and global partnerships that use photography, film/video, audio and narrative writing to capture and convey memory, life, research, theory and culture.

The program coordinates existing documentary film efforts and resources on campus; provides information and support for producing documentaries; offers classroom instruction and workshops about basic documentary skills; and disseminates campus documentary projects.

It is also an important research asset for the community. In 2015, Davison premiered “The Denim Dynasty,” a documentary about North Carolina’s influential Cone family. From that emerged an on-going project she is particularly excited about.

In collaboration with the National Park Service, she is working on a film focusing on Flat Top Manor, the 13,000-square-foot mansion built by Moses and Bertha Cone in 1901. The production

As a teacher of sociology research methods, Davison has a passion for documentaries: an outlet that reaches a broad audience in an accessible manner.
University Documentary Film Services community partners include:

Blowing Rock Historical Society • Blowing Rock Charity Horse Show • Boone Film Festival • Blue Ridge Conservancy • Blue Ridge Parkway • Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development • F.A.R.M. Cafe • Hiddenite Arts & Heritage Center • Jones Center • Middle Fork Greenway Oral History • New River Conservancy • OUT in the High Country • Todd Listening Project • Valle Crucis Community Park • Watauga County Beekeepers Association • Western Youth Network

is interdisciplinary, drawing on oral histories of estate workers collected by public history students in the 1970s and current theater students who will create period clothing and help reenact excerpts from the oral histories. Communication and music industry students will help in postproduction.

Both “The Denim Dynasty” documentary and the Flat Top Manor production will be screened in the new minitheatre soon to be constructed on the ground floor of the manor house. This, and a similar planned documentary project with Grandfather Mountain, will “be seen by literally thousands of visitors each year,” Davison said. “It is super exciting for our students to play a role in producing something that will be so broadly viewed,” she said.
The value of student research

By Dr. Linda Coutant '01 '17

Appalachian encourages undergraduate research, which gives students the opportunity to work side by side with their professors on meaningful research or creative endeavors and then present their findings at regional, national and international conferences.

Students have said the experience raises their skills in critical thinking, writing and collecting and analyzing data — while also boosting their confidence and improving their time management and work accountability.

All this can give a leg up in applying to graduate school or seeking employment, according to university officials.

“Student-faculty engagement in research, scholarship and creative expression is a hallmark of the Appalachian undergraduate student experience,” said Provost Darrell Kruger. “These high-impact academic experiences are truly transformational. They prepare our graduates to enter the workforce or graduate school equipped to improve the world.”

Working directly with a faculty mentor “prepares them to hit the ground running in a graduate program, or as a new hire,” said Dr. Susan McCracken, director of career development and economic engagement.

Chris Eubanks '13, who is working on his Ph.D. in chemistry at Duke University, said “having three years of research before coming into a graduate program was very helpful.” The opportunity to apply for grants through Appalachian’s Office of Student Research also helped him develop his scientific writing.

Eubanks and his mentor, Dr. Michael Hambourger in the Department of Chemistry, explored new ways to produce hydrogen for fuel cells.
According to the World Health Organization, cholera is estimated to result in approximately 100,000 deaths worldwide every year.

*Vibrio cholerae* is the causative agent of the devastating disease and can exist in the human host in microbial communities called biofilms, which make this organism highly tolerant to host defense mechanisms and potentially aid in disease progression.

Dr. Ece Karatan, professor in Appalachian’s Department of Biology, received a second National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant in early 2016 that will fully fund her research in cholera and microbial biofilms for the next three years.

With this continued support, Appalachian faculty and students are studying the process of biofilm formation in *V. cholerae* in order to understand the environmental signals and the genetic networks that regulate this behavior. The new laser scanning confocal microscope (LSM) purchased by Appalachian using National Science Foundation grant funding in late 2016 provides greater image clarity when studying the gene function of the deadly bacteria.

“Without student participation it would be impossible to make any progress for this type of research, so students are really key for the success of my research program and those of most faculty members in biology,” Karatan said.

The grant, which totals $395,720, also provided partial or full funding for the master’s degree research of six graduate students, and this research has resulted in two peer-reviewed publications.

Karatan’s research indicates one of the proteins that regulates *V. cholerae* biofilm responds to external cues, and in turn, that protein talks to a second protein, which then cues the bacterium to make more biofilms. If she can interrupt or break the cycle, it’s possible she can prevent *V. cholerae* from setting up in the intestines.

Many different bacteria have genes that encode two proteins that look just like the ones she is studying, and no one has investigated any of them. “We can look at these bacterial genomes and predict bacterial signaling in all types of hosts and locations,” she said.
NSF grants provide tools for expanded research

Appalachian’s William C. and Ruth Ann Dewel Microscopy Facility received a $430,900 award from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in late 2016 to purchase a new state-of-the-art laser scanning confocal microscope (LSM).

A LSM is an essential tool for studying cell and gene function in animals, plants and microorganisms. The LSM has improved the quality and expanded the scope of the research, training and educational activities in several scientific disciplines at Appalachian, especially for biology and chemistry.

“It is very important that we keep using the microscope in many different, positive ways … to impact our faculty and staff research, student and graduate student training, and community outreach,” said Dr. Guichuan Hou, director of Appalachian’s microscopy facility and professor in the Department of Biology.

Hou led a team that wrote the grant proposal. The team included three faculty members from the Department of Biology — Dr. Ted Zerucha, Dr. Sue Edwards and Dr. Andrew Bellemer — as well as Dr. Jennifer Cecile from the Department of Chemistry.

Spring semester of 2017, the NSF also awarded the College of Arts and Sciences’ William C. and Ruth Ann Dewel Microscopy Facility $562,842 for a new scanning electron microscope (SEM), the only one in the UNC System.

New perspectives with Appalachian’s SEM

An image of sand grains from Erwin Quartzite in eastern Tennessee made possible by the SEM and its Chroma CL detector. The gray secondary electron image, left, is made from electrons bouncing off the surface of the rock, and does not show much detail. The cathodoluminescence image, right, shows the identical sand grains, but with light emitted from the surface. Photo by Drs. Sarah Carmichael and Gabriele Casale

A map created with the new SEM of reactions between pyroxene and feldspar crystals in the Farmington Gabbro, an igneous rock unit being mined for aggregate by Vulcan Materials Co. Each color corresponds to a different element. Photo by Bonnie Nguyen, Tristan Bedell, Jesse Kimel and Lauren Richardson

The SEM was installed in spring 2017 and is in heavy use for teaching and research at Appalachian. Photo by Dr. Jamie Levine
By Mary Giunca

Digging a snowpit, setting up tents or strapping bags on horses high in the Andes is a long way from Greensboro, North Carolina. For Evan Montpellier, who loves science and working with his hands, fieldwork for his Master of Arts in geography at Appalachian pointed the way to a fulfilling course of study.

Montpellier’s fieldwork has taken him high into the Andes to look at precipitation patterns and deep into forests of both Montana and the North Carolina coast to study tree rings.

“The best part of fieldwork is being outside and getting to see what you’re researching,” said Montpellier, who earned his bachelor’s degree in geography at Appalachian in May 2017. “Being able to gather information in different areas and bring it back to the Appalachian Mountains is really a unique opportunity.”

Montpellier is now working on a Master of Arts in geography as part of an accelerated graduate admissions program that allowed him to start taking graduate courses during his senior year. By doing so, he earns both his bachelor’s and master’s in about five years.

Dr. Baker Perry, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Planning, said that Montpellier was a valuable part of his team in the Andes, where they studied past weather patterns to better understand future weather patterns across the globe.

“He’s willing to dig deep and learn new techniques,” Perry said. “In the field, we work in very challenging conditions. He’s always there to give a hand, whether that be digging a snowpit or setting up tents — he’s super helpful.”

Montpellier also did fieldwork with Dr. Peter Soulé, professor in the Department of Geography and Planning, where he learned to analyze tree rings for their insights into weather long past.

“It’s incredible to look at a tree ring core you’ve dated back 500 years,” he said. “You’re reconstructing history. It’s fascinating to me to know that there were early explorers walking past these trees and we have a snapshot of what conditions were like then.”

Montpellier is featured in a promotional video for Appalachian about sustainability. View at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6y14Y9iVTE

Evan Montpellier, a graduate student in geography from Greensboro, N.C., enjoys being outside for the fieldwork his major requires. He’s traveled to the Andes to study precipitation and to Montana and the North Carolina coast to analyze tree rings. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
Sustainability Growth and Development

Appalachian consistently earns accolades for sustainability leadership. The Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) — the standard bearer for measuring sustainability in higher education — ranked Appalachian first among institutions with master’s programs and second overall in curriculum in its 2017 Sustainable Campus Index. We have earned AASHE’s Gold STARS status consistently since 2012, making Appalachian its second-highest rated university to date.

Our leadership role in sustainability is born out on the following pages, where you may read how:

• Our reputation as leaders and innovators in sustainability advantageously positions us in a marketplace of increasingly socially conscious students while opening doors for graduates to industries that are doing business for good.

• Appalachian provides leadership, research opportunities and savings for students, faculty and citizens across the state.

• Our plans for campus expansion are defined by sustainable best practices, prioritize innovative research and learning, and benefit the community.
Who is Team Sunergy?

Student-led and student-driven, Team Sunergy began in 2013 in the imagination of then-undergraduate student and Army veteran Dan Blakely ’15, when he collaborated with classmates to convert a gas-powered golf cart into a solar-fueled vehicle.

Now a team of undergraduate and graduate students dedicated to research, hard work and interdisciplinary problem solving, Team Sunergy has proven its prowess on the race track and in engineering challenges, taking podium spots in its first two years competing internationally in the “brain sport” of solar vehicle racing with its first-generation vehicle, Apperion.

Find out more about Team Sunergy’s success, its next-gen vehicle and its process of problem solving for a better future at sunergy.appstate.edu and follow the team on Twitter: @AppStateSVT
A leader in the state for energy efficiency

By Megan Hayes ’97

As the initiator and host of the Appalachian Energy Summit, held annually since 2012, Appalachian has assumed a leadership role in reducing the UNC System’s energy costs. Since 2012, its inaugural year, the summit has provided a platform through which UNC campuses together with industry partners have avoided more than $500 million dollars in utility costs, representing almost 9 billion pounds of CO2 emissions.

Each year a select number of students from across the UNC System are invited to attend the summit. Read more about what the summit means to these students on page 28 of this magazine and at sustain.appstate.edu/initiatives/energy-summit/2017/perspectives

Increased efficiency on campus

• From 2006-17, gross square footage increased by 27 percent while total energy cost was reduced by 50 percent.

• Leading the UNC System in energy efficiency and renewable energy practices, Appalachian has avoided $28.3 million in energy costs while reducing the university’s carbon footprint since 2004.

• Engaging faculty, staff and students, energy efficiency projects offer opportunities for applied research and hands-on practice.

• Recent student research projects include working with New River Light and Power to predict peak energy hours, understand customer usage and determine ways to decrease customer demand during peak energy.

• In August 2017, Chancellor Sheri Everts announced she was prioritizing the university’s Zero Waste initiative and setting a goal to divert 90 percent of campus waste from the landfill by the year 2022.
Campus expansion will be a win-win

Projects prioritize innovative research and learning, and benefits to the community.
This world-class facility will expand our capacity to provide health care professionals for North Carolina. With qualified health care professionals and health care educators, Appalachian can help meet the demand created by a critical shortage of health care access, particularly for residents in the rural areas of our state.

— Chancellor Sheri Everts

Funded by the Connect NC Bond and supported by voters from across North Carolina, the new Beaver College of Health Sciences facility advances the university’s goal of housing the preeminent and most comprehensive academic center for health professions in Western North Carolina.

The 203,000-square-foot facility, slated to open in fall 2018, features 420 rooms to house classrooms, seminar rooms, labs and offices. The facility is located on 92 acres donated by Appalachian Regional Healthcare System and is adjacent to the medical center, athletic fields and facilities.

It is the largest capital improvement project in university history, and is proceeding on time and on budget.

Watch the building progress live: healthsciences.appstate.edu
Innovation and scholarly excellence

Appalachian’s pioneering spirit combines with core values of scholarly excellence, leadership and service to create a peak environment where innovation connects our strategic plan and academic mission for the greater good of our community and world. Our strengths in broad-based sustainability — focusing on economics, the environment and equity — provide trail markers for research, innovation and collaboration.

The Broyhill Inn property is slated to become the innovation campus of the future. Set on 77 acres at the top of Bodenheimer Drive, the location holds decades of history and value to the campus and community. Adjacent to the university’s biological preserve, the property currently houses research facilities, including Appalachian’s iconic wind turbine, “living laboratory” research gardens and a robust stormwater management system.

Ideas for development of the property are in development, fueled by university faculty and staff expertise, student passion and creativity, as well as existing and developing programs to engage our campus and community in innovative thought leadership with a goal of creating a bright future for our region, state and world. Learn more: appstate.edu/innovation

“...At Appalachian, our success is found in our response to this question: “How do we engage our academic mission through teaching, learning, service, research, innovation, creativity and intercampus and intercommunity collaborations in all disciplines to support the understanding and development of economically, environmentally and equitably sound communities?”
— Chancellor Sheri Everts
Sustaining smart and sound development

Appalachian and Watauga County made an exchange for sustainable growth in 2017, when the university purchased a 74-acre tract of property that was the site of the old Watauga High School. Located at 400 High School Drive in Boone, the property is the largest undeveloped tract near the university’s campus.

Appalachian agreed to pay $15.5 million over 20 years for the property and, in exchange, turned over ownership of its Business Affairs Annex building, located at 1039 State Farm Road in Boone, to the county. When the exchange was announced in April 2017, County Commissioner Vice Chairman Billy Kennedy said, “The university is the county’s largest economic engine. It makes sense to find ways to partner together, allowing the university to grow in a sustainable manner and allowing the county to enrich the lives of our citizens.”

Options for development of the new acquisition include student residence halls, a day care facility and student recreation fields. The property’s current parking configuration accommodates 500 spaces, which could offer a short-term alleviation for limited parking available on the university’s main campus.

“A trusting and symbiotic relationship between the university and surrounding community has advanced, enriched and enhanced quality of life in the High Country for more than a century. This transition is a true win-win in sustaining smart and sound development opportunities for the university and the county, from which our entire community will benefit.”
— Chancellor Sheri Everts
In 1968, Appalachian officially evolved from a single-purpose teachers college into a multipurpose regional university. Enrollment was close to 5,000, and full-time faculty had grown to more than 300.

Across the country, students were engaged in the civil rights movement and protesting the Vietnam War. At home, Doc Watson was making music, the Mountaineers were dominating in basketball and the Volkswagen van was a hot ride. Ice cream sundaes were 19 cents at Boone Tastee-Freez.

Then, and now, the precious features that set Appalachian apart — academic excellence, a commitment to community, faculty collegiality and a beautiful mountain setting — sustain us. This magazine is dedicated to all of our faculty, staff, students and alumni who define the Appalachian spirit.
marks the 50th year of Appalachian as a state university.

The pioneering spirit necessary to overcome the mountains’ hardships has characterized Appalachian since 1899, giving our university a special niche in higher education that continues today. After more than a century, students still feel the pull of this unique place to transform their lives, and Appalachian has remained focused on providing students with educational experiences that are not only life-changing but world-changing.

In 1968, under the leadership of Dr. William H. Plemmons, Appalachian State University became a multipurpose regional university serving Western North Carolina and offering four undergraduate degrees through the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Fine and Applied Arts and the College of Education.

Appalachian’s sustainability mission thrives. The university has grown into a destination of choice for high-achieving, intellectually curious students with a desire for meaningful community engagement, a knack for exploring and developing creative solutions to complex problems, and a passion for discovering the “win-wins.”

Read more about Appalachian’s history: appstate.edu/about/history
William Howard Plemmons, president of Appalachian State University from 1955-1969, right, with his wife at the President’s House, built 1957, south of campus. Visible in the background are Chapel Wilson Hall, built 1938; the Demonstration Elementary School Building, built 1954; the Education Building, built 1925; and part of Smith-Wright Hall, built 1940. Under Plemmons, Appalachian State Teachers College (1929-1967) and Appalachian State University (1967-present) replaced many older campus buildings with newer, updated buildings, including Sanford Hall, built 1969; B.B. Dougherty Administration Building, built 1968; the first Belk Library, built 1968; Rankin Science Hall, built 1961; and Lillie Shall Dougherty Hall, built 1962. Photo courtesy of the Appalachian State University Historical Photographs Collection.
Black Mountain College Semester 2018 — sustaining culture of place

By Ellen Gwin Burnett ’05

Black Mountain College was founded in North Carolina’s Swannanoa Valley in 1933 by a band of academic dissidents led by John Andrew Rice, whose papers are housed in Appalachian’s W.L. Eury Collection, and closed its doors in 1957. Yet, to this day, it remains the greatest academic adventure ever launched on American soil.

BMC’s tradition of progressive, experiential education with commitment to collaboration and respect between students and faculty.

The semester will link BMC to place by drawing from archives, original field interviews, regional news, excerpts from the exhibition’s companion publication Appalachian Journal, and more.

Each of these activities promises to have wider impacts on student learning at Appalachian, public education programming and external partnerships.

cas.appstate.edu/blackmountaincollege
Hydrosphere Outreach Day
— Sept. 21-22
“Studies have shown the importance to conservation goals of providing opportunities for young and old to make connections to their local areas. Events like ours help kids create bonds between natural places near them, and also meet the goals of the eighth-grade science curriculum — a true win-win for our community.”

— Dr. Shea Tuberty, professor of invertebrate physiology and aquatic ecotoxicology

Outstanding Alumni Award 2017
Rod “R.T.” Smith
Rod Smith earned an MA in English from Appalachian in 1975, and founded literary journal, Cold Mountain Review. He has published 15 collections of poetry, six volumes of short fiction and three literary anthologies. Smith has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and has won the Cohen Prize from Ploughshares along with three Pushcart Prizes. cas.appstate.edu/support/alumni-and-friends/outstanding-alumni-award

Dr. Edward M. Allen Jr. Scholarship Recipient
Shaleeya Lothery
Major: MA in political science
Concentration: American government
Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina
“This scholarship (in political science) paid for the remainder of my tuition that financial aid did not cover, which made it possible for me to better focus on my education, being well-rounded and getting more involved,” she said. cas.appstate.edu/students/scholarships/success-stories
Teaching and research farm a symbol of innovation, sustainability and creative best practices

By Dean Phyllis Kloda

A focal point for the Goodnight Family Sustainable Development Department is our Teaching and Research Farm and Agroecology Laboratory located in Fleetwood, North Carolina, in nearby Ashe County. Students utilize the farm to enhance their classroom lessons about agroecology, agroforestry and sustainable farming practices. Results from research on the farm are shared with local community members to encourage sustainable agricultural practice in the region.

The department has a resource program to assist small-scale growers. High-quality equipment is available to community members to support sustainable farming, including an Incubator and Mobile Processing Unit (MPU) on a trailer.

Students and faculty have forged a partnership with Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture to donate produce to several local organizations, including F.A.R.M. Cafe, a pay-what-you-can restaurant in downtown Boone, and our own Appalachian Food Pantry and Free Store in the Office of Sustainability. Three hundred pounds of produce was donated over the summer.
The Climate Stories Narrative is a collaborative effort that arose in a grassroots way because of a shared sense of urgency about climate change among the faculty of Fine and Applied Arts. The idea began with a small group of six faculty from each department and the number has grown considerably to 25 participants in a short amount of time. These faculty across the college have partnered to create an interactive, two-part Climate Stories Narrative workshop in which they incorporate pedagogical and theatrical models as a means for accessing and communicating experiences creatively and accurately. The goal of the narrative is to bring new knowledge to the classroom and grow the capacity of students to express their climate stories both on campus and beyond. Photo submitted

In 2015-2016 IDEXlab students conceptualized and built the MOBIlab. The concept was to create a small classroom lab space which could be transported to various sites for research purposes. The MOBIlab is being used to its fullest capacity at Beech Mountain, the site of the soon to be MobiLANDING. Led by graduate student Hazel Chang and students in the Department of Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment, the MobiLANDING will become a research platform for wind energy. Photo submitted

“The College of Fine and Applied Arts is truly an innovative and unique college. We have a strong team of diverse, talented and committed faculty whose priority is to deliver transformational learning experiences in and out of the classroom. I feel very fortunate and honored to serve as dean.”
— College of Fine and Applied Arts Dean Phyllis Kloda

Points of Pride:

- Faculty awards include the Rome Prize, a Fulbright, two Chancellor’s Innovation Scholar awards, a Steelcase Education Active Learning Center Grant, the North Carolina Theatre Conference College/University Award and 2016 Career Achievement inductee to the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame.

- Student achievements include: WASU FM Radio Station took several honors at the Intercollegiate Broadcast System awards ceremony, Team Appalachian (In)sight placed second in the Suburban Family Housing category at the Race to Zero Competition, several took top honors at the Planning and Visual Education (PAVE) 2016 Design Competition, four students were honored at the International Phaistos Project, an undergraduate student was awarded a Fulbright, work was selected for the American College Dance Association Gala Concert and a team of five graphic arts and imaging technology students took the top award at the Phoenix Challenge.
What does it mean to be first for teaching? It means we put kids first!

We teach the teachers who fight for every child. We start by requiring every education student to take courses in social justice and diversity (from race to class to ability — and everything in between). We teach students how to make classrooms inclusive learning spaces — how to shatter stigmas and stereotypes. We challenge our students to serve the campus and the community.

Our students, faculty and alumni are actively working to sustain and grow education in their communities, thus inspiring the next generation of teachers.

Want to solve the world’s biggest problems? First, teach!

Points of Pride:

- Our Conceptual Framework guides faculty to include rigorous social justice curriculum in 100 percent of courses.
- Our ACCESS Scholarship fund (est. 2013) has made eight awards to first-generation education students.
- Our events encourage conversation: Public Schools First NC, Black Minds Matter and Teaching Justice, Teaching Love.
- 100+ children served each year at the Anderson Reading Clinic — N.C.’s first and only!
- Appalachian Educators Club hosted 23 high school juniors at its 2017 Social Justice Summit.
In his new podcast with University Communications, “What’s Your Truth,” Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Program Services Nickolas Jordan invites guests to join him on his journey to find truth in the universe.

appalachianmagazine.org/podcasts/truth

Judson MacDonald, 2016-17 Appalachian Outstanding Student Teacher of the Year: “Students need fearless champions!” MacDonald noted that the inspiring educators with whom he has worked taught him to incorporate love, empathy and justice into the classroom.

news.appstate.edu/2017/09/14/judson-macdonald-2

Illustration by Jim Fleri

Serving all populations — the Lucy Brock Child Development Lab Program (pictured above), N.C.’s longest running, and the new Appalachian Family Therapy Pilot Clinic are designed to serve the needs of students and families from diverse populations. Photo by Marie Freeman ’83

“Our reputation for preparing quality educators as well as our commitment to student and alumni success contributes to the value of an Appalachian education.”
— Reich College of Education Dean Melba Spooner
For the sixth consecutive year, a team of Appalachian students won the regional CFA Institute Research Challenge — an annual global competition that provides university students with hands-on mentoring and intensive training in financial analysis. Working together to research and analyze a publicly traded company, teams of finance and banking students from the Walker College have won seven of the nine years that the competition has been held in North Carolina, and Appalachian is the only university in the state to have a team in the finals for all nine years. Photo submitted

Economics students from Appalachian received an honorable mention, as did Princeton University and The University of Chicago, in the College Fed Challenge. The team placed first in their regional and district competitions before moving on to the finals in Washington, D.C. The students are pictured with economics professor Dr. Mark Strazicich, left, and Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System Janet L. Yellen, front row, right. Photo submitted

Walker College accounting students attended the Beta Alpha Psi Southeast Regional Meeting, where they placed second in the community outreach competition, presenting on an innovative new program providing financial literacy training for foster children. The team’s performance earned them the opportunity to travel to the national conference in Anaheim, Calif., where they participated in an international day of literacy. Pictured are the BAP students, with accounting associate professor Dr. Tracy Reed, right, in Anaheim. Photo submitted

What has 18 wheels and runs on corn chips? Thanks to a food solution, from two sustainable, business students, a chip producer’s transportation fleet well could. Kelsey Simon ’17, left, and Ali Moxely ’17, right, honors alumna, placed second in the international Food Solutions Challenge. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

“Our students participate in a number of regional, national and international competitions, gaining invaluable, hands-on experience in their respective fields of study while beating out high-level competitors along the way.” — Walker College of Business Dean Heather Hulburt Norris

Follow @walkercob on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
By Haley Childers

For the past four years, retired Bank of America CEO Ken Lewis has helped cultivate the next generation of business leaders through his participation in the Martha Guy Summer Institute (MGSI). Sharing career advice and recounting experiences are just a couple of the many ways Lewis is making a big impact on future business leaders.

Through a recent gift, Lewis helped establish the Lewis Family Scholarship in Business at Appalachian, which will provide one student a full scholarship to study in the Walker College and a second major scholarship to another, each renewable for four years.

Intended management major and Holly Springs, North Carolina, native Zoe Alexandra Chaplin is the first recipient of the Lewis Family Scholarship, which will cover tuition and fees, room and board, and other expenses. The second scholarship has been awarded to Appalachian freshman Sean James, who plans to major in finance and banking.
“I am honored to collaborate with such a creative and passionate team of professionals who are dedicated to teaching and graduating students who will become ethical, competent and compassionate practitioners.” — Beaver College of Health Sciences Dean Marie Huff

On June 23, 2016, Appalachian broke ground for the future home of Beaver College of Health Sciences (BCHS). The building will encompass 14 of the 16 degree programs and allow students across various academic programs to obtain experiential training together in shared spaces. This commitment to interprofessional education will provide students from BCHS a competitive advantage as they acquire creative thinking and problem solving academic and clinical skills needed to be contributing members of the health care profession.

Give to the Beaver College of Health Sciences: give.appstate.edu/healthsciences

See a live view of the future home of the Beaver College of Health Sciences at give.appstate.edu/news/id/149

Construction of the new BCHS facility progresses. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
By Audrey Gurkin ’16

When the first physical education courses began at Appalachian in 1921, the Beaver College of Health Sciences (BCHS) was still 90 years off in the future. Those first classes set Appalachian on a journey to becoming a nationally recognized name in the health care world. As our degree programs developed, our students continued to rise to new challenges and explorations in the field. From this drive and dedication, our outstanding students allowed our health care programs to grow into a college, creating a home for related degrees that were once spread throughout campus.

Now 96 years since the first physical education courses, our growth has continued and expanded into the communities we serve. In August of 2018, BCHS will move 14 of our 16 degree programs into our new facility located across from Appalachian Regional Healthcare System. The BCHS building will serve as a home to innovative ideas and training for students to serve the health care needs of people of rural North Carolina and beyond.

Points of Pride:

• 3,425 undergraduate and graduate students.
• 100 percent of tenure track faculty hold terminal degrees.
• 100 percent of programs offer clinical, field, internship, practicum or service learning courses.
• 95 percent average pass rate for licensure or certification exams.
“The Hayes School Music offers opportunities for students to learn through experience and connections to professions that engage their passion for music with career opportunities.”
— Hayes School of Music Dean James Douthit

The Hayes School of Music Faculty are active scholars, performers, teachers and practitioners with international recognition. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

Hayes School of Music ensembles have enjoyed a rich history of performance regionally, nationally and internationally. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

Points of Pride:
The Hayes School of Music —
• fosters a caring, respectful and inclusive community that focuses on individual student growth and development;
• offers performance opportunities for all students that allow them to grow as scholars and musicians; and
• boasts a teaching faculty of active scholars, performers, educators, practitioners and leaders in the music industry.
Appalachian celebrates 20 years of music therapy and success as one of the nation’s leading programs

By Dr. Cathy McKinney

Appalachian State University and the Hayes School of Music celebrated the 20th anniversary of the school’s music therapy program with two days of workshops in September. The program, which began with 23 undergraduates in the first introductory class, now serves over 80 graduate and undergraduate students.

Students have provided supervised clinical services in the local area, beginning with three sites in Boone, North Carolina, and expanding to 20 agencies and facilities in the region currently. Graduates have taken their skills to 30 states and three foreign countries.

A Master of Music Therapy (MMT) degree was added in 2006 and is designed to facilitate advanced practice in board-certified music therapists. The music therapy faculty have grown from one and a half positions in 1997 to four full-time and two part-time positions today. Members of the faculty are leaders who are active in publication and presentations at local, state, national and international levels.
Blazing a trail to success
By Dean Max C. Poole and Laura Padgett ’02

Imagine being 26.9 years old having left a permanent job of three years to relocate to Boone, North Carolina, to pursue a graduate degree. You’ve taken out loans to pay for tuition and living expenses, and your primary focus is completing your graduate degree as quickly as possible. However you feel socially and intellectually isolated because you are overwhelmed by a substantially larger and younger undergraduate community that has different interests and needs than you at this point in your life. If you can visualize this student, then you have met our typical graduate student at Appalachian.

The Trails to Success program is specifically crafted to meet the unique professional and personal needs of our graduate students. The program blends elements of professional and career development, personal development, and academic skills with opportunities to network with other graduate students. Consequently, our students have eagerly embraced the program, and last year, over 2,000 graduate students attended the 71 workshops, seminars and other networking opportunities that were offered through the program. We are delighted that Trails to Success is enriching the experience of our graduate students as they each pursue their own trail to success.
“I am always inspired by the determination, enthusiasm, and intellectual zeal with which our graduate students complete their degrees and begin their careers.”
— Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies Dean Max C. Poole

The tension builds among graduate students competing in the annual Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition, one of the opportunities in the Trails to Success program. Participants are expected to present their research in just three minutes in layman terms. The winner earns a research/travel award and a free trip to compete in the southeastern regional competition. Photo submitted

Chowing down at the annual graduate student cookout. Forging a graduate student community is a prime goal of the Trails to Success program. Photo submitted

Points of Pride:
• 87.1 percent of all entering master’s degree students graduate by their third year at Appalachian.
• The average time for degree completion is 2.1 years.
• Total graduate enrollment is 1,794, up from 1,700 in fall 2016 — an increase of 5.5 percent.
• Alumni tracking data indicate that 94.9 percent of our master’s degree graduates enter the workforce with a job after graduation.
• 76.5 percent of our graduate alumni remain in North Carolina.
• Appalachian offers one doctoral program, three specialist programs, 38 master’s degree programs and 25 certificate programs.
Honors College alumna travels for social justice

By Dr. Garrett Alexandrea McDowell

What is Honors at Appalachian State University? Ask Marit Barber ’17. She has done it all — service, research, international experiences and internships, all in an interdisciplinary framework. Marit spent two weeks in India this past March working with the nonprofit organization Freedom 4/24, which “exists to bring freedom and justice to victims and survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.”

Marit is now pursuing her Master of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her professional goal is to integrate all aspects of health (mental, biological, spiritual) into the care of migrant populations, and to work specifically with victims and survivors of human trafficking. With her work in Honors at Appalachian, she is well prepared to launch her career.

For her Honors thesis on human trafficking, Marit completed a literature review and policy analysis that included a proposal to improve U.S. policy moving forward. She is currently working to expand that research by analyzing how the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement will impact human trafficking.
In the words of our new dean, Dr. Jeff Vahlbusch: “The Honors College is a vibrant community with extraordinary courses and advising, state-of-the-art facilities, and outstanding students and faculty pursuing intellectual, personal and professional development.”

Points of Pride:

- **Corbin Ester ’15** attends Harvard Medical School, following a Postbac with the IRTA/CRTA program. [honors.appstate.edu/news/harvard-just-one-option-corbin-ester](http://honors.appstate.edu/news/harvard-just-one-option-corbin-ester)

- **Elyse Lawson ’16** was accepted by University of Copenhagen after spending the past year in Denmark interning for Sand Madsen Consulting. [honors.appstate.edu/news/elyse-lawson-home-copenhagen](http://honors.appstate.edu/news/elyse-lawson-home-copenhagen)

- **Devin Hoffman ’17** was awarded a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and a NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. [honors.appstate.edu/news/devin-hoffman-wins-nsf-graduate-research-fellowship-program-award](http://honors.appstate.edu/news/devin-hoffman-wins-nsf-graduate-research-fellowship-program-award)

- **Hanna Malcolm ’17** was awarded the President’s Diversity Fellowship to pursue her Ph.D. at Indiana University Bloomington. [honors.appstate.edu/news/hannah-malcolm-awarded-fellowship-indiana](http://honors.appstate.edu/news/hannah-malcolm-awarded-fellowship-indiana)

- **Ryan Hellenbrand ’17** was awarded a Fulbright grant to work with migrants in Innsbruck, Austria. [honors.appstate.edu/news/honors-senior-ryan-hellenbrand-awarded-fulbright-austria](http://honors.appstate.edu/news/honors-senior-ryan-hellenbrand-awarded-fulbright-austria)
“I was intrigued to learn about the Library Student Employee Scholarship program when I interviewed for the dean position at Appalachian. What a wonderful way to support and contribute to our student employees, and I am excited to continue such a worthy, worthwhile endeavor.” — University Libraries Dean Dane Ward

The Library Student Employee Scholarship funding is sustainable with six endowments:

- In 2010, the Library Advisory Board established the Emma Horton Moore Student Employee Scholarship Endowment in honor of the first head librarian at Appalachian.

- The Randy and Sara Charles Stevens Endowment was established in 2011. The Stevens endowment was the first to reach maturity and is earmarked for first-generation college students, with special consideration given to applicants from counties within the Appalachian region.

- In memory of their daughter, Ronny and Patsy Turner established the Nicki Lynn Turner Scholarship, which was recently included in University Scholarships for freshmen.

- The Mary Reichel and Rao Aluri Scholarship was established by donations and well wishes from friends in 2013, when Dr. Reichel stepped down from her tenure as dean of libraries. The fund awards four scholarships per year with additional donations from the Reichel/Aluri family.

- The John and Bettie Bond Scholarship gives preference to first-generation students.

- Barbara and Larry Freiman established the newest endowment in 2016, which will fund its first recipient in fall 2018.
University Libraries scholarships support student employees

By Lynn Patterson

The Library Student Employee Scholarships were established because library personnel realized the financial struggles many students experience even though they work hard for Belk Library and Information Commons and for their education. The Library Advisory Board initiated the scholarship program in 2007, when three $500 scholarships were awarded.

To date, University Libraries has established six endowment scholarships and an additional program level called the Library Atrium Scholars, which enables donors to support the same student throughout their time at Appalachian.

University Libraries typically employs 140 students per year. Students perform a variety of jobs: staffing service points, shifting and shelving books, digitizing print materials and assisting with technology requests. Student employees work closely with library staff and are crucial to the library’s providing excellent services and collections.

Library scholarship winners maintain high GPAs and are engaged in activities around campus and in the community. After receiving library scholarships, student employees report they have been able to borrow fewer student loans, are less concerned about day-to-day expenses and are more focused on their studies.

This year, University Libraries funded 17 scholarships at $1,000 and above. Over the past nine years, approximately 100 of our deserving student employees have received over $75,000 in scholarship awards. Currently, 11 percent of library student employees receive scholarships.

The program continues to grow as more library supporters become aware of the impact these awards have on our student employees as they pursue their educational goals.

To make a donation, please visit library.appstate.edu/giving
Jamie Inlow, director of As-U-R, an intensive student support program offered by the Student Learning Center, has worked with junior Ronshad Shabazz since his freshman year. Their working relationship has grown into a friendship both of them say they value. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85

Appalachian’s University College impacts retention rates

By Mary Giunca

Established in 2007, University College offers a range of academic support programs that have helped steadily raise the school’s retention rate. At 88.8 percent, the 2016-17 freshman class retention rate set a record high for Appalachian, ranking it fourth among schools in the University of North Carolina System.

The college’s Student Learning Center offers support specially designed for first-generation students, nontraditional students, student-athletes and students with learning disabilities. But, according to Jamie Inlow, director of As-U-R, the center is also “an amazing resource for any student — even if they may be struggling to bump a solid B up to an A.”

In addition to academic support, the center’s programs expose students to service, research and an array of cultural and intellectual enrichment opportunities. Inlow’s program, As-U-R, is an intensive student support program that helps students develop critical executive functioning skills, including planning and organization, that may not be taught in high school.

Ronshad Shabazz, a junior majoring in criminal justice at Appalachian, said during high school he never mastered study or time management skills he needed to succeed in college. Inlow began working with Shabazz his freshman year. They meet several times a week, and Shabazz is on a path to graduate in 2019.

Shabazz described Inlow as a giving, selfless person who has made him glad he chose Appalachian. “As long as you surround yourself with people who are going to better you and have your best interests at heart, you’ll survive college,” he said.
Newly named Student Learning Center dubbed ‘The Disco’

By Mary Neal Meador

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) is now the Student Learning Center, located on the second floor of D.D. (Dauphin Disco) Dougherty Hall. It’s been dubbed “The Disco” in honor of the university founder and for the fitting translation of disco from Latin, which is “to learn.” The graphic to the right was created by Wes Waugh, director of support services/technology infrastructure for the center. The lobby and entrance now include elements that reflect the history of D.D. Dougherty’s contributions to Appalachian.

The center is comprised of University Tutoring Services, Academic Strategy Instruction, As-U-R and holistic academic advising of three student groups, including ACCESS (Appalachian Commitment to College Education and Student Success), Student Support Services and Academic Services for Student-Athletes.

Appalachian history exhibit in the works

Graduate students enrolled in the Interpretation in Museums history class are collaborating with the Student Learning Center, Belk Library and Information Commons Special Collections and the Appalachian History Committee to produce an exhibition on the early history of the university. This exhibit, supervised by Dr. Andrea Burns, associate professor in Appalachian’s Department of History, will be installed in the lobby of the historic Dauphin Disco Dougherty Hall in December 2017, and will incorporate historic photographs, artifacts and other interpretive materials. Doris Stam, author of “Mountain Educators: The Dougherty Family and the First Fifty Years of Appalachian” (Watauga Press, 2010), is offering her guidance to students throughout the course of this project. Stam is a direct descendant of B.B. and D.D. Dougherty, who founded the Watauga Academy in 1899.

Write on!

The University Writing Center offers free one-to-one consultation services to writers at all stages of the writing process — from working out how to approach assignments to checking citations. All of the consultants are experienced writers and attentive readers from different academic disciplines, and they can help with any kind of writing; whether it’s related to coursework or not. The center is located in Belk Library and Information Commons, open daily and walk-ins are welcome.

Each Monday, the center introduces a consultant on its Facebook page — #MeetYourConsultantMonday.

University College

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Building community through the arts

By Denise Ringler

Even those who don’t see themselves as artists are able to discover their creative voice in one of the many workshops offered by Appalachian’s Turchin Center for the Visual Arts and organized by Pegge Laine, the center’s director of outreach.

Two years ago, Laine had a realization: as successful as the Turchin Center’s outreach program had become, it was not reaching one of the university’s closest neighbors — Junaluska, Boone, North Carolina’s historic African-American community, located just a few blocks from campus.

In February 2016, Laine contacted a group of women who are members of the Boone Mennonite Brethren Church in Junaluska. The group, eager to become involved in art-making, began meeting at the church to create art. By summer, the group began meeting at the Turchin Center to continue discovering their hidden talents as artists.

Meanwhile, 10 miles away in the western region of Watauga County, Laine was teaching another art class to a group of seniors at the Western Watauga Community Center. While there, she became involved with the Western Clay Guild, a predominately white group of potters.

“Why not bring the two groups together?” she wondered.

On the day of their first meeting, the Junaluska group came to the community center, in a part of the county that was largely unfamiliar to them. Laine thought, “Will these two groups … from completely different worlds get along? … Will differences in geography, race, culture and politics matter?”

Two years later, the answer to those questions is clear. Not only do the groups like each other, they’ve become like family. The community center is their favorite place to be every Wednesday, where they work in their preferred art form — clay — while sharing stories and memories, and sometimes singing when the spirit moves them.

“Had it not been for their shared love of the arts,” observes Laine, “these two groups would never have come together. Making art together allows us to explore our common roots as humans — roots which are ultimately more important than any of our differences.”

Members of Boone Mennonite Brethren Church gather at the church to create art as part of a Turchin Center for the Visual Arts outreach program. Photo by Sandra Black
The focus of arts programming on Appalachian’s campus has moved beyond presenting the arts to engaging arts audiences in meaningful and significant ways.

A rich array of programming offered by the Office of Arts and Cultural Programs, the Office of Arts Engagement and the Turchin Center for the Visual Arts supports the university’s teaching mission while enhancing the cultural landscape of our region and quality of life for all of its residents.

**The Schaefer Center Presents** offers a variety of music, dance, and theatre programming, as well as residencies and master classes that promote global learning and bring artists together with audiences. Steeply discounted ticket prices are available for students, enabling them to experience world-class arts programming during their time at Appalachian. Recent offerings include Ailey II Dance Theater, Jason Isbell, Lake Street Dive, The Nile Project and Taj Mahal with Keb’ Mo’.

An Appalachian Summer Festival has earned a reputation for offering an exciting mix of well-known artists — from Midori and James Galway to the Dance Theatre of Harlem, MOMIX, Chicago, Nickel Creek, Chris Botti, Pink Martini and The Band Perry — alongside emerging artists poised to become the stars of tomorrow. With an annual attendance of 25,000 and a large group of generous donors and corporate sponsors, the festival has attained financial self-sufficiency while offering a variety of free events and ticket prices that are typically 30-40 percent less than prices charged by comparable venues for the same artists.

The **Turchin Center for the Visual Arts**, located in the heart of downtown Boone, North Carolina — at the crossroads of campus and community — offers free admission for 20,000 visitors annually. The center partners with downtown businesses in hosting Boone’s monthly First Friday celebrations and showcases nationally and internationally renowned artists, as well as the finest artists of the region. The center’s arts education and outreach programming provides workshops, gallery tours and a mobile arts van that brings the visual arts to underserved communities across the region.

The **APPlause! K-12 Performing Arts Series** offers access to low-cost performances for nearly 8,000 students in public, private and home schools across Western North Carolina. Field trip experiences that combine performances with campus tours and visits to the Turchin Center result in a rich learning experience for students. The series’ programming encompasses symphony, opera, dance, classical music, theatre, as well as international programming and the student edition of the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour.
Creative Unbound

Showcasing diverse abilities through art

By Anna Ward ’92 ’03 MA

The Creative Unbound project provides college-age students with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to pursue postsecondary education, with a focus on employment and independence. The project is an entrepreneurial collaboration between the Reich College of Education’s Scholars with Diverse Abilities Program (SDAP) and the Walker College of Business’ Center for Entrepreneurship and Association of Student Entrepreneurs.

Through Creative Unbound, students, faculty, artists, designers and administrators collaborate to create an e-commerce platform and microbusiness plans for students in SDAP and community members with disabilities. This interdisciplinary project provides students with opportunities for community engagement, combines business with the arts and promotes social equity for underserved members of our community.

SDAP is funded through a five-year grant initiative from the U.S. Department of Education (75 percent) and Appalachian (25 percent). Creative Unbound received a $10,000 Chancellor’s Innovation Scholars grant and generates its own funds through revenue sharing with the SDAP students.

creativeunbound.com

Mieszko Kwiatkowski, left, a graduate of Appalachian’s Scholars with Diverse Abilities Program (SDAP), poses with an original piece of his abstract artwork. Kwiatkowski, an individual with Down Syndrome, began painting at the age of three.

Tyler Leblanc, right, holds a puppet version of one of the cartoon characters he created. The star of his cast is a yellow rabbit named Freddie, pictured front and center on the table. Leblanc, who is a passionate fan of animation, graduated from SDAP in May 2017. Photos by Marie Freeman ’85
Lights, camera, ACTion!
— Appalachian and the Community Together inspires civic engagement

By Elisabeth Wall

Over the years, it evolved from a vaudeville stage and silent movie theatre to a twin cinema showing second-run films, before closing its doors in 2007. An aspiring developer stripped the building of nearly all of its remaining architectural finishes on both the exterior and interior in 2008 before running into financial difficulties and calling a halt to the work.

Now, the Appalachian Theatre of the High Country Inc. (ATHC) — a nonprofit organization committed to restoring the theatre’s former glory, preserving its history and transforming the building into one of the High Country’s premier arts and culture venues — is bringing the Appalachian Theatre back to life, and Appalachian students are helping every step of the way.

Since ATHC purchased the property in 2013 and began efforts to restore and revitalize the theatre, students have volunteered on almost a weekly basis, according to Keith Martin, the John M. Blackburn Distinguished Professor of Theatre in the Department of Theatre and Dance and vice chair of the ATHC Board of Trustees. They have been covering phones, changing letters on the marquee, assisting with tours and supporting the effort to complete the restoration of the façade and replicating the marquee to its original appearance, and, he said, “I’m pretty sure it was students who found pieces of broken glass in the crawlspace underneath the theatre, allowing us to match the façade colors exactly.”

This service is one of many the university’s Appalachian and the Community Together (ACT) program provides to Boone, North Carolina, and the surrounding community each year. ACT partners with more than 160 local organizations. These partners utilize faculty expertise and provide service-learning and volunteer opportunities to students, allowing them to develop valuable problem-solving skills in the field. In turn, students have provided more than $22.5 million in value to the community in the last 10 years — more than 1.1 million hours of service using the $24.24 per hour national standard for volunteer time, plus nearly $631,500 in funds raised.

Now, that’s ACTion that merits a round of applause.

ACT aspires to:
• develop students as leaders through experiential learning;
• collaborate with faculty to integrate civic engagement within curriculum; and
• engage community partners as co-educators and provide connection to university resources.
Established in 2005 as Appalachian’s student-run record label, Split Rail Records is dedicated to providing music industry experience for students at Appalachian.

Split Rail Records discovers new, high-quality music and launches the careers of aspiring musicians and future industry leaders affiliated with Appalachian while demonstrating the highest degree of integrity and professionalism. This endeavor allows students in the music industry studies program and from across the university to gain real-world experience working with local musicians to create commercially viable recorded albums.

Students supplement their classroom learning with the opportunity to choose artists, work in the R.F. Gilley Recording Studio to produce the album, and market the finished product nationally.

The label has recently expanded its scope to include booking and promoting local shows and collaborating with Lost Province, a local microbrewery.

Split Rail has gained national recognition and has been featured in regional and national publications, including The New York Times and Billboard Magazine.
Mountaineer women’s hoops coach honored for achievements and courage

By Chase Colliton

By setting herself apart in her commitment to coaching student-athletes and athletics, Appalachian State women’s basketball head coach Angel Elderkin was presented with the Richard “Doc” Costello Special Achievement Award at her alma mater, the University of Southern Maine, in late September.

Elderkin’s award at her alma mater was part of the University of Southern Maine’s 2017 Husky Hall of Fame Banquet and Induction Ceremony, and her former head coach, Gary Fifield, presented the award.

“It was an honor and privilege to have someone so influential in my life, coach Gary Fifield, present me with the Richard A. Costello Achievement Award,” Elderkin said. “I am grateful to the University of Southern Maine for the impact it has had on my life and for developing the character skills necessary to win not just on the court, but in life.”

In 2016-17, Elderkin faced and overcame adversity while she battled endometrial cancer during the basketball season. Because of her strength and courage, she received the U.S. Basketball Writers Association (USBWA) Pat Summitt Most Courageous Award at the Final Four in Dallas.

Elderkin helped her team increase its win total by two games from the previous season and led Appalachian State women’s basketball to its first Sun Belt Conference Tournament win with a 79-58 victory over Coastal Carolina University in the first round.

Appalachian State head coach Angel Elderkin was presented with the Richard “Doc” Costello Special Achievement Award at her alma mater, the University of Southern Maine (USM), prior to the start of the 2017-18 season. Photo by Jason Johns (USM Photography)
Appalachian State game days — better than ever

By Jason Huber

New high-definition video boards and audio systems at Kidd Brewer Stadium and in the Holmes Convocation Center highlight the most recent facility improvements made possible by A Mountaineer Impact, A Drive for Excellence initiative announced in February by Director of Athletics Doug Gillin.

In August, Appalachian State unveiled its first big enhancement with a 2,500-square-foot LED display video board and a ribbon board at Kidd Brewer Stadium, which hosts Appalachian State’s football team, and a 1,200-square-foot center-hung display in the Holmes Convocation Center, which hosts Appalachian State basketball and volleyball, the High Country Grizzlies and many concerts and events.

“We are thankful to the several key donors who have already stepped up in support of this project,” Senior Associate Athletics Director Brian Tracy said. “In addition, the success of the Go Fight Win Campaign last September was instrumental in this video board project.”

The new video board at Kidd Brewer Stadium is the largest of its kind among Group of Five FBS teams in the country, and uses the same LED technology that Duke, the University of South Carolina and the Carolina Panthers use in their scoreboards after partnering with Daktronics.

A record-breaking 35,126 fans witnessed the enhanced game day experience during Appalachian State’s game against Wake Forest University on Sept. 23. An additional 300 bleacher seats in front of Owens Field House has increased seating capacity at the stadium, which has hosted more than 30,000 fans twice in the first two months of the 2017-18 season.
Appalachian State softball shines in the community

By Taylor Story

Appalachian State softball, under the direction of first-year head coach Shelly Hoerner, is into the spirit of giving.

On Oct. 1, the team hosted a free clinic for children to come and hone their skills alongside the players and coaches.

Hoerner and her Mountaineer team gathered at Swasmsak Lloyd Family Stadium not knowing what the turnout would be during their first time hosting a free clinic. Kids ages five and up were invited to come and learn skills and drills from players performing them at one of the highest levels of college softball.

“Getting kids involved is hard, especially in softball,” sophomore Keri White said. “This sport is challenging, but one also has to have the heart to be a better player. There were over 100 players at this camp, and I know that we felt very accomplished. We gave them our tips and advice on how to keep playing in the game of softball, even when it gets hard.”

In an attempt to increase the popularity of softball among young girls in this region, Appalachian State and its coaching staff are making an effort to introduce the sport to a future generation of players.

“It’s important for kids to be active in today’s society,” Hoerner said. “It’s important we show our community why we love it so much, and I think the girls did a great job.”

One player on the team, sophomore infielder Laura Sales, has never been one to shy away from volunteering.

“The thing that drives me to volunteer and help others is simply that I am passionate about serving others,” Sales said. “I like to think of it as if I am putting on an event or trying to promote something. I would want someone to help me, so that’s why I help others — because I want to treat people the way I would want to be treated.”

Sales has a resume that includes work with organizations such as the Hospitality House of Boone and Cornerstone Summit Church. She helped Appalachian State freshmen move into their dorm rooms and walked dogs from the local animal shelter, all in her free time while in Boone.

The work she does outside of softball shows up on and off the field with her team.

“She is very caring about everybody,” Hoerner said. “She cares about others more than herself. We talk about the person next to us. It’s about the person to our right or left. She likes to give — she likes to give her time to help others — and I love that about her.”

Hoerner and Appalachian State’s softball team will continue to seek engagement opportunities with the community in an attempt to draw more attention and interest to the sport in the future.
Appalachian recognizes Summeys as Family of the Year

By Mary Giunca

Rebecca Summey likes to say she bleeds black and gold. Her parents met at Appalachian State University, where she is currently a senior, and her brother, Adam Summey, is a freshman. Summey’s road to Appalachian was almost detoured — twice.

When Summey was in high school, her father died from brain cancer, and during her junior year at Appalachian, Summey underwent emergency surgery and had to take a semester off.

Her family’s support, particularly that of her mother, Julie Johns Summey ’91 ’92 MM, helped keep her on track.

“My mom was the support for all of us,” she said. “There was a period of time when I thought, ‘What’s it going to take for us to go to college still?’ She wouldn’t let us slack off. She was adamant that we were going to follow our dreams.”

Summey’s parents met when they were in Appalachian’s Marching Mountaineers. Her mother was a music education major who returned to earn her master’s in music education. Her father, Charles Summey ’92, started out in the music program, but graduated with an engineering degree. Though they lived in Simpsonville, South Carolina, the family frequently traveled to Boone for football games and other alumni events.

“We are truly each other’s support network when it comes to personal matters and academic issues,” Summey said. “I know that I will always have my mom behind me, through the rest of my college career and beyond. If my father were still here today, I know for sure he would also be thrilled to watch both of his children attending their dream school and attaining their dream degrees.”

The Summey family’s dedication to Appalachian, and each other, was recognized by the Office of Parent and Family Services when they received the inaugural Family of the Year Award at the Family Recognition Breakfast on Oct. 21. The new award recognizes the important role students’ families play in their college success and is open to all Appalachian students.

“We’ve been through a lot as a family, but we stayed strong,” Summey said.
At a ceremony Nov. 9 in the Holmes Convocation Center, Appalachian State announced a commitment of $10 million to support the university’s A Mountaineer Impact initiative. Chancellor Sheri Everts and Director of Athletics Doug Gillin announced the commitment from Mark Ricks, a 1989 alumnus of the university. The commitment represents the university’s largest outright gift to date.

“A Mountaineer Impact provides essential resources for Appalachian Athletics. “This generous gift will ensure the continued excellence of a program that will attract sought-after student-athletes and provide them with resources and opportunities so they can make a difference at our university and beyond,” Everts said.

Nearly 300, including student-athletes representing every athletics program, attended the event. “The trajectory of the program under Doug Gillin and the entire department is worth our investment, and I’m blessed to be able to make an impact to carry that momentum forward,” Ricks said. “I encourage other Mountaineer supporters who can give to please step up.”

Ricks is the owner of Double Wood Farm, an equestrian sanctuary for retired show horses. He was director of global protective operations at Mars Inc. from 2005-17.

The project goal of A Mountaineer Impact is to provide a solid financial foundation for the university’s athletics programs by raising, over a five-year period, commitments of $60 million in private support. “We can’t thank Mark Ricks enough for his generosity to his alma mater and our athletics program,” Gillin said. “This is a tremendous leadership gift toward our overall goal for A Mountaineer Impact.”

By Megan Hayes ’97 and Joey Jones

A $10 million gift — Mark Ricks’ commitment will support A Mountaineer Impact initiative
Evan Atkinson, a journalism major from Raleigh, N.C., who is a junior at Appalachian, aspires to a career in music journalism. Atkinson is part of the Plemmons Leadership Scholars Program, which helps students develop their leadership skills. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
When Evan Atkinson was in high school, his parents told him to look at whatever college he wanted and they would find a way to pay for it.

“That was very sweet of them, but I don’t know how accurate it was,” he said. “My dad has a rare immune disorder and needs monthly blood transfusions to boost his immune system. His medical bills are huge.”

Even with his parents’ support, Atkinson, a journalism major from Raleigh, North Carolina, said he likely would have had to work a number of part-time jobs rather than immerse himself in the opportunities college had to offer, if not for the Plemmons Leadership Scholars Program.

“I think the opportunities you get through the Plemmons program push you to do so much more than you think you can do,” he said. “The scholarship has given me space to learn and to go out and take advantage of every opportunity I’ve been given.”

As Atkinson, a junior, looks back on his college journey, he can tick off a number of accomplishments of which he’s proud, including speaking before a crowd of over 1,000 people at a recent campus event.

“I was terrified of public speaking when I came to college,” he said. “This year they needed some people to speak before a crowd of over 1,000 people at a recent campus event.

“Walk for Awareness,” an annual silent walk through campus to commemorate lives lost to violence in the Appalachian community.

“My gut reaction was, ‘Oh gosh, how many people?’ But I said, ‘Of course I’ll do it.’ The Evan who came to college couldn’t imagine speaking in front of so many people.”

A number of opportunities in event planning, mentoring and marketing have given him tremendous confidence, Atkinson said.

“I feel like no matter what I’m going to do, I’m going to be effective,” he said. “I’ve been given enough opportunity and time to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes.”

Atkinson is aware of other Plemmons scholars’ influence and impact after graduation.

“In looking at Plemmons alumni stories, there are people running for congressional office, people who are doctors, lawyers and fire fighters — people who change people’s lives on a daily basis,” he said.

As the student coordinator for the scholarship, Atkinson wants potential donors to be aware of the impact they can make by supporting student scholarships.

“You’re not just investing in a person,” he said. “More than that, you’re investing in the impact that person’s going to make.”

Plemmons Leadership Scholars

• 10 scholarships awarded each year.
• Students selected on the basis of leadership and involvement in high school and community.
• $2,000 in support for tuition and fees.
• In-depth, four-year program to help strengthen students’ natural leadership skills through community service and enrichment opportunities.
• Funded in part by donor contributions to the Appalachian State University Foundation.
Appalachian alumnus Brock Long leads FEMA’s mission of support

By Jessica Stump

Long, center, and his wife, Amanda “Mandi” Long, far right, along with their sons, Jonah, far left, and Isaac, front and center, pose for a family photo in front of the United States Capitol building in June 2017, following Long’s confirmation hearing before the U.S. Senate. Photo courtesy of Long

It’s not every day an Appalachian State Mountaineers fan watches their football team play from the altitude and comfort of Air Force One. Appalachian alumnus William Brockmann “Brock” Long ’97 ’99 MPA did just that this past September, when Appalachian faced the University of Georgia Bulldogs in the season opener.

Long, a native of Newton, North Carolina, serves as the administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which employees 19,000 individuals nationwide. As administrator, he is the principal advisor to the president, as well as the secretary of homeland security, and is responsible for the preparation for, protection against, response to and recovery from all-hazard incidents.

Long has more than 16 years of experience in homeland security, including previous employment with FEMA as a regional hurricane program manager and a hurricane evacuation liaison coordinator. He also served as director of Alabama’s Emergency Management Agency; statewide school safety coordinator for Georgia’s Emergency Management Agency; and is former executive vice president of emergency management consulting firm, Hagerty Consulting.

After receiving his Bachelor of Science in criminal justice he transitioned directly into Appalachian’s Master of Public Administration (MPA) program. He is also a graduate of the Executive Leader Program offered by the Naval Postgraduate School.

Long said Appalachian’s MPA program helped prepare him for the management challenges he faces in his current role. “The faculty and staff (of Appalachian’s Department of Government and Justice Studies) are awesome about helping both undergraduate and graduate students and really have their best interests in mind; they want to see them succeed,” he said.

Long stressed the importance of building relationships through networking, especially within the government arena, and said Appalachian’s strong “footprint” within the local and regional sectors of government offers such opportunities for students.

The agency is currently working simultaneously on 31 disasters in the U.S., and approximately 5 million individuals have signed up to receive FEMA assistance following the devastating effects of hurricanes Harvey, Maria and Irma during the 2017 hurricane season.

Long said FEMA’s hurricane relief efforts during the past three months have surpassed those for all other major hurricanes, such as Katrina, combined.

When not tasked with emergency management, Long and his family visit the High Country regularly, and he has made several return trips to Appalachian to speak to both student and alumni groups.

Long, far right, attends a briefing with President Donald Trump, center, Vice President Pence, second from left, Homeland Security Advisor Tom Bossert, far left, and Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Elaine Duke, second from right, in the White House Situation Room on Sept. 26, 2017, to discuss relief and recovery efforts for Puerto Rico after the island was devastated by Hurricane Maria. Photo courtesy of Long
Armanti Edwards ’09 may be the best player to suit up for the Black and Gold. The Mountaineer football icon won two national titles, four Southern Conference championships, two Walter Payton awards and put his stamp on the greatest upset in college football history — all while graduating from Appalachian in three and a half years with a degree in graphic arts and imaging technology.

It was too perfect when the Carolina Panthers traded up to take Edwards in the third round of the 2010 NFL draft. A homegrown hero getting to play at the game’s highest level in his own backyard is the type of tale only seen in movie scripts.

The last seven years have added to the plot. Edwards’ college career was met with the harsh reality of the NFL. Drafted into a coaching change, Edwards was never on stable ground in Charlotte and was cut during his fourth season with the Panthers. He played for two teams in a total of 41 games over five years, and caught just six passes for 131 yards after transitioning to wide receiver, never once sniffing the end zone.

Many in the sport wrote him off. His physical health slowed him a time or two, but like the stubborn warrior we watched deliver so many times when the odds were stacked against him, Edwards’ perseverance was met with reward.

Edwards played the 2017 season for the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League (CFL) and helped the franchise win their 17th Grey Cup, which is the equivalent of the NFL’s Super Bowl title. Playing his first healthy season in several years, the Appalachian State Hall of Famer ranked ninth in the CFL, with 83 receptions, and 15th in yardage (962 yards) while scoring four touchdowns in the year.

“I can’t really explain it. This season was very relieving and gratifying,” said Edwards. “For one, I finally got to prove to all the naysayers and to myself that I can play the wide receiver position and be effective at it. This was my first season as a professional that I got a chance to play for the entire season. Not practice, but actually play entire games. And not for just five to 10 plays a game.”

Edwards played an injury-shortened 2016 season in Saskatchewan and was traded to Toronto just before the start of the 2017 campaign. He brought experience as a winner to a franchise that would complete a worst-to-first run at a CFL title with a lanky kid from Greenwood, South Carolina, serving as a top offensive weapon.
Three alumni were recognized by the Alumni Association over Homecoming weekend 2017. They are Sarah Freed ’09 of Seattle; Robert Thomas “Tommy” Sofield Jr. ’76 of Boone; and Dale E. Tweedy ’89 of Mooresville.

Young Alumni Award

A graduate of the Walker College of Business (WCOB), Freed is an entrepreneurial social responsibility leader with a decade of experience contributing solutions to systemic global sustainability challenges.

Freed founded and was the first president of Appalachian’s chapter of AIESEC, a worldwide student-run organization that aims to develop the leadership potential of youth through experiential learning, volunteer experiences and professional internships.

She is the co-founder of Obliquity Group, an international consulting firm that provides third-party, independent audits and performance benchmarking of corporate social responsibility programs. She recently was named community partnerships manager for Uber, where she will lead the organization’s social responsibility strategy.

“My work has brought me to more than 25 countries where I’ve experienced firsthand the power that the private sector can have in addressing core issues related to some of the world’s most pressing problems,” she said.

“Her commitment to making the world a better place was clearly evidenced when she turned down an opportunity to pursue a career with one of the nation’s largest accounting firms to pursue her passion for working with the less economically advantaged in Africa,” said Marty Meznar, WCOB’s associate dean for global and civic engagement. “Freed makes regular visits from her home in Seattle to speak and to mentor our students,” he said.

Freed earned her bachelor’s degree — magna cum laude — in accounting and international business and graduated from Cambridge University with a Master of Studies in sustainability leadership.
Outstanding Service Award

Sofield Jr. was captain of the 1975 Mountaineer football team, became a captain of industry and is a champion for his teammates, students and alma mater.

Sofield came to Appalachian from Virginia Beach, Virginia, in 1971 and has been a Mountaineer since. His sophomore year, he opened a Boone sub shop. The purchase in 1985 of a steel building manufacturing company has expanded over the years into multiple companies and business ventures, including the manufacture of steel arch buildings, tornado shelters and safety-compliant storage facilities. He is also involved in real estate development and management.

Since graduating with his Bachelor of Science in physical education (K-12), Sofield has been a solid supporter of Appalachian athletics. He and his family provided the lead gift for the $50 million for the Sofield Family Indoor Practice Facility. Additionally, he serves on various university boards, including the Athletics Feasibility Committee and the Board of Visitors.

But, according to nominators’ remarks, Sofield’s true impact has been from his quiet and consistent support for any number of student-athletes and former teammates. Distinguished Alumni Award winner for 2002, Chris Swecker ’78 said Sofield “is the touchstone for several generations of students and former athletes. Tom realized that Appalachian and his football scholarship dramatically changed the trajectory of his life. He and his wife, Debbie, are determined to do the same for others.”

Distinguished Alumni Award

Before enrolling at Appalachian, Tweedy jumped from airplanes as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army. Since, he’s been jump-starting business ventures and careers as a serial entrepreneur and mentor.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in industrial technology, Tweedy successfully built and sold numerous businesses — from business re-engineering and system integration firms to technology staffing and multinational importing firms. He is currently a partner with Stonegate Developers LLC.

The Mooresville resident is a dedicated coach — of both youth sports and young entrepreneurs. He created the Dale Tweedy Mentoring Program located within Appalachian’s Transportation Insight Center for Entrepreneurship. He started the program in 2008 in order to share his career success and experience in the classroom.

Tweedy has coached a number of local youth football and lacrosse teams, and he has coordinated and financed camps at Appalachian for his coaches and players. According to nominator Lt. Col. David Wayne Cox ’90 ’00 MA, Tweedy and his wife, Jill, have mentored a number of at-risk youth, “taking at least one troubled teen into their home and family to try and give him the tools and other things needed to succeed in life.”

At Appalachian, Tweedy worked as a resident advisor and was president, captain, coach and player for the club rugby team. He also was an Appalachian Student Ambassador. He worked for Outdoor Programs, teaching a range of sports from rock climbing to cycling. He remains an avid athlete, competing in hundreds of triathlons. He often competes, sporting Appalachian’s black and gold, to raise money for charities.

“Every day, our passionate and successful alumni enhance the value of an Appalachian degree — earning advanced degrees, starting new businesses and building distinguished careers both at home and abroad. These three exemplary individuals have earned recognition … because they are stellar representatives of our university through their work, service and philanthropy.”

— Chancellor Sheri Everts
He was Chancellor of Appalachian, a professor in the Walker College of Business and a widely respected figure on campus to several generations of students.

In 2017, Chancellor Emeritus Dr. John E. Thomas added another distinction to his resume when he was named the 2017 Homecoming Grand Marshal.

The title of Grand Marshal is given to the individual or couple who have helped support the mission and purpose of Appalachian. Grand Marshal(s) are selected each year by the Office of the Chancellor and the Appalachian Alumni Association. The Student Government Association hosts a reception for the Grand Marshal during Homecoming Week.

Patrick Setzer ’90 ’98 MA, executive director of alumni affairs, said that Thomas was a natural choice for the honor.

Thomas served as chancellor from 1979-93, during years of pivotal growth for the university, Setzer said, and was known as a genuine, kind man who made the well-being of students a top priority.

“Think about the impact of someone who served as chancellor during those years,” Setzer said. “We were growing in terms of student population. There was construction growth. There was program growth. We were turning a page.”

By Mary Giunca

From grand chancellor to Grand Marshal

Dr. John E. Thomas, former chancellor of Appalachian, was the Grand Marshal for the Homecoming Parade, Friday, Oct. 6, 2017. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85
From 1981-83, I was an Appalachian student living on the second floor of Cone Residence Hall. For those two years, the view from my window was a trash-laden lot with what looked like a few toppled gravestones. The area was a notorious party spot. Just above the lot was a weed-covered chain-link fence blocking people from entering the Boone Town Cemetery.

I remember learning the empty lot was an old slave cemetery and was sad to see the obvious disparity between how the white cemetery was kept separate from the slave cemetery, and the lack of reverence for any burial ground.

In 2010, I photographed Appalachian geology students there who were using ground-penetrating radar and electrical resistivity to confirm the location of over 160 African-American graves. Doing so reminded me of looking through that window almost 30 years earlier.

Then, in October 2017, I attended a community dedication and unveiling of the Historic Black Cemetery grave marker, which finally honors the memory of the souls buried there.

I like to think that, as the view has changed from Cone, so have the ways of thinking.

By Marie Freeman '85
University Photographer
Appalachian students gather with Chancellor Sheri Everts to form the traditional “Block A” at Kidd Brewer Stadium on Aug. 28, the day before classes began for the fall 2017 semester. In August, Appalachian State University welcomed 18,811 students to campus, including 3,306 first-year students who comprise the largest and most diverse incoming class in the university's history. Photo by Marie Freeman ’85